

## CHAPTER 17

### Religion and Society in Early Times

India is a multi religious country. People worship gods and goddesses in many ways. Some people offer flowers to their sacred idols, some perform yagnas, some chant holy hymns silently and some do not worship any idols. Some people never pray at all. Now let us know some religious practices and beliefs of early people of the Indian Society.

#### Hunter-Gatherers

You had read about the early hunter-gatherers. We know a little about their religious beliefs from their paintings and some burials. We can also try to imagine their religion by studying the religion of today's hunter-gatherers like the Chenchus.

- What do you think they would pray for? Who do you think they would pray to?

It appears that painting and dance were important parts of the religious lives of the hunter-gatherers. They probably painted hunting scenes or danced to imitate a hunting scene in the belief that this will give them a good hunt. Sometimes they dressed themselves as animals, wore masks and danced. All of them also danced hand in hand. Hunter-gatherers believed that the forests and wild animals were sacred and had to be worshipped. Animals should not be killed except in need. They worshipped many animals too by drawing their pictures on caves.



*Fig. 17.1: Masked dance*

Doesn't this masked dancer look powerful and awe inspiring? Look at his head dress the decorations on his arms, and the staff in his hand.



*Fig. 17.2: Wild boar of Bhimbhetka*

Archaeological excavations show that many early hunters buried the dead along with some objects of use – probably they believed that life continues even after death and hence made these arrangements for the afterlife of the dead persons.

A twelfth century book in Tamil called Periyapuram describes the religious practices of hunter-gatherers living near Sri Kalahasti while narrating the famous story of Bhakta Kannappa. An old woman acted as priestess and made offerings of meat, honey, fruits and flowers to the gods and goddesses of the forest.

To this day, the Chenchus of Nallamala hills worship forest goddess called Garelamysamma or Gangamma by making offerings to her and by dancing. They also worship Mallayya of Srisailam and Narasimha of Ahobilam. They believe that these gods had married Chenchu girls and therefore they were their sons-in-law.



*Fig. 17.3: Chenchu dance*

- What kind of change do you think would have come about in the religion of the early farmers and herders?

## Early farmers and herders

Archaeological excavations in early villages show that they probably worshipped 'Mother Goddesses' or mother earth. They probably believed that the crops and cattle would prosper with her blessings. Mother Goddesses were worshipped in the form of small images, or simply in the form of a stone, a tree or a plant.



Fig. 17.4 Baked clay figure of Mother Goddess from Mehargarh (5000 years old)

The early animal herders of the Deccan have left behind the 'ash mounds'. Some archeologists believe that these may be the remains of seasonal bonfire rituals just as people still do on Holi, Deepawali and Pongal festivals.



Fig. 17.5: Figures of animals engraved on rocks - (Maski - about 4000 years old)

Shepherds in India today are known by different names across the country. 'Dhangar' in Maharashtra, 'kurubas' in Karnataka and Kuruma/ golla/ yadava in Andhra Pradesh. They worship special deities like Vitthoba in Maharashtra, Renuka, Yellamma, Mysamma, Pochamma etc. in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Farmers rear animals and have close interaction with herders. Hence, both of them worship similar gods. A common mode of worship is the building of small shrines for these gods and goddesses in a corner of the village. On special occasions, festivals are organised in which animals like buffalo, ram, cock are sacrificed and cooked rice offerings are made by the entire community. They usually pray for good harvest, freedom from disease, welfare of children etc.

Our people have been worshipping several trees like Peepal, Neem, Jammi, Banyan and plants like Tulasi. Pot shreds from very ancient times have pictures of Peepal leaves painted on them indicating that people had great regard for these trees.



Fig. 17.6: Old painted pot shreds found in Mundigak in Afghanistan five thousand years ago

Many farmer communities also worship animals like elephants, tigers, snakes, monkeys etc. It is believed that these practices have their origin in very ancient period.

## Religion in the Indus Valley Civilisation

Several cities emerged in the north west parts of the sub-continent in the plains of the Indus river some 4600 years ago. These cities lasted for nearly 900 years and then declined. This is also called Harappan culture (after Harappa, which was excavated first by the archaeologists). These cities were inhabited by many kinds of crafts persons (potters, carpenters, stone bead makers,

gold and silver jewellers, weavers, coppersmiths, masons, etc.) besides traders, administrators and rulers. Among the ruins were found baths, granaries, storehouses, public buildings, roads, drains and houses of ordinary people. However, until now no big temple was found. Several mother goddess figures were found. It also seems that they held several trees including the peepal as sacred and also probably worshipped some animals. Pictures of a male god were also found.

- Look at the picture below carefully and describe it. Does it resemble any God you know?



Fig. 17.7: Figure of a male god from Harappa



Fig 17.8: Mother Goddess of Harappan culture

Some believe that this may be a god similar to Shiva worshipped in later times in various parts of India. From other pictures it seems that the people of Indus took out processions carrying banners in honour of their gods during festival times.

## Religion of the Vedas

The Vedas are the earliest surviving literature of the Indian sub-continent. There are four Vedas: the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, and the Atharva Veda. Of these, the Rig Veda is the oldest and was composed about 3500 years ago. The Vedas composed by *Rishis* consisted of hymns and prayers for welfare.

These hymns were in praise of various gods and goddesses. Three gods were especially important: Agni, the god of fire; Indra, a warrior god; and Soma, a plant from which a special drink was prepared. Priests taught students to recite and memorise each syllable, word, and sentence, bit by bit, with great care. Most of the hymns were composed, taught and learnt by men. A few were composed by women.

The hymns were recited mainly during the performance of *yagnas* or rituals during which offerings were made to the fire. Let us read a hymn and try to see what they prayed for.

### Prayer to Indra

*Indra, Please come and accept our offerings. Just as the hunter moves in search of prey, we too are going to war in search of wealth.*

*Indra, please help us to win the war. O Indra, give us limitless wealth, Fulfil our wishes by granting us hundreds of cows.*

### Vishvamitra and the Rivers

**Vishvamitra:** *O rivers, come down from the mountains like two swift horses, like two shining cows that lick their calves. You move like chariots to the sea through the power of Indra. You are full of water and wish to unite with one another.*

**The rivers:** *We, who are full of water, move along the path the gods have made for us. Once we start flowing, we cannot be stopped. Why do you pray to us, o sage?*

**Vishvamitra:** *O sisters, please listen to me, the singer who has come from a distance with his chariots and carts. Let your waters not rise above our axles, so that we can cross safely.*

**The rivers:** *We will listen to your prayers so that you can cross safely.*

- Who are the two hymns addressed to?
- What do you think the Rishis are offering to the Gods?

◦ What are they praying for?

◦ Do you think these people would be hunter-gatherers or cattle herders or people living in villages and cities?

There are many prayers in the Rig Veda for cattle, for children (especially sons) and for horses. Historians who study the Vedas guess from these descriptions that the Vedic people mainly reared animals like cows and horses. They lived in the north western part of India in the region between the Hindukush Mountains and the Yamuna River.

The Vedic people lived in small Janas or tribal habitations, each with its own leader. The tribes also had some priests called Brahmins who performed the sacrifices and recited the hymns. They were given gifts by the leaders and the ordinary people of the tribe. These tribes often had to fight with each other to control cows and pastures and water sources. Horses were yoked to chariots that were used in battles, which were fought to capture cattle.

Some hundred years later, these tribes settled down in villages on the banks of the river Ganges and Yamuna. They began cultivating crops like rice and wheat. During these times, the janapadas were getting established and the leaders of the tribes were trying to become kings. During these times, the Vedic hymns were compiled in the Yajur Veda and the Atharva Veda. They now describe very elaborate rituals; especially fire sacrifices which lasted not only many weeks and months but also cost a lot of wealth and animals. In these hymns, we see the kings praying for power over other members of the tribe, for better crops and victory in wars.

It was during these times that we see the emergence of the idea that society should be divided into castes; and that women should be kept out of important roles. The books mention four castes, the Brahmins who were considered the highest and were expected to conduct sacrifices and recite Vedas; the Kshatriyas who were next to them and were expected to rule over the others; the Vaishyas who tended cattle, tilled the fields and gave gifts and tributes to Brahmins and Kshatriyas; and finally, the Sudras who were the lowest in the position and had to serve the other three castes. These ideas were not accepted by all and many people argued against them.



*Map: showing settlements of Vedic people*

### **Worshipping dead ancestors - the Megaliths of the Deccan**

These stone boulders are known as megaliths (literally big stones). These were carefully arranged by people, and were used to mark burial sites. The practice of erecting megaliths began about 3000 years ago, and was prevalent throughout the Deccan, South India, in the North-East and Kashmir.



Fig. 17.9: Megalith - Burial site

While some megalithic burials can be seen on the surface, several are underground. Sometimes, archaeologists find a circle of stone boulders or a single large stone standing on the ground. These are the only indications that there are burials beneath. Sometimes, megaliths contain more than one skeleton. These indicate that people, perhaps belonging to the same family, were buried in the same place though not at the same time.

All these burials have some common features. Generally, the dead were buried with distinctive pots, which are called Black and Red Ware. Also found are tools and weapons of iron and sometimes, skeletons of horses, horse equipment and ornaments of stone and gold.

It seems that these people were among the first in the subcontinent to use iron tools on a large scale. They also practiced rice cultivation using tank irrigation. They considered it important to worship the dead ancestors of the tribe by building such megalithic memorials or burials.

- Does your family worship or show reverence to the ancestors? Find out which of your ancestors are worshipped – both male and female. Share it in your class.

## New questions in the Age of the Janapadas and cities

You had read about the janapadas, mahajanapadas and the cities in the Ganges Valley. In these places people of different backgrounds, hunter-gatherers, herders, artisans, Vedic people, and others interacted with each other and settled down together. They learnt each other's religious practices and ideas and adopted them. Thus, a mixed religious culture developed in which people performed Vedic sacrifices, worshipped fire, sun, rivers, mother goddesses and animals like monkeys, elephants snakes and trees. They also worshipped their ancestors and believed that souls continued to live even after the death of the body and were reborn. But people were not satisfied with just observing these religious rituals – they were raising new questions and were seeking answers to them and were keen to discuss them with each other. Many people abandoned all other work and set out to find answers to these questions. Would you like to know about some of them?

## What happens after death?

There is a famous story about a boy of young age called Nachiketha. Perhaps you have heard this story. A question arose in his mind: "What happens after death?" He thought that since Yama was the god of death, he should ask him for an answer. Nachiketha went straight to Yama to question him. In this quest for knowledge, he did not even fear the god of death! So, Nachiketha went to Yama and asked him, "what happens after death?"

Yama wanted to avoid answering this complex question. He offered Nachiketha lots of gold, silver and cows, if only he would not insist on asking this question; 'For even the gods do not know the answer!' But Nachiketha stuck to his question and forced Yama to answer. This story is from a book called the Kathopanishad.

- What do you think that happens to us after death? Discuss in the class.

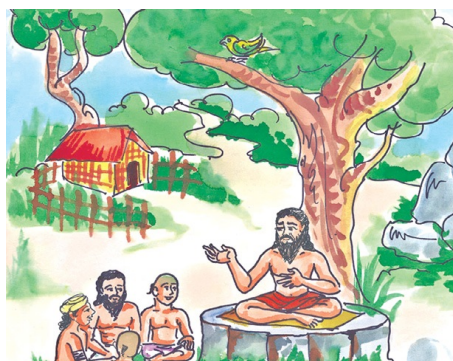


Fig. 17.10: Rishi teaching his disciples in an ashram

## What is it that will never perish?

In those days, many people went to live in the forests in *ashrams*. In these *ashrams*, they meditated and pondered over several questions. They also had discussions with people who came to visit them, and shared their teachings with others. People who lived in *ashrams* like this were called *Rishis* and *Munis* (sages). Several kings too were in the forefront of this kind of thinking. The views of these *rishis* and kings can be read in texts called the Upanishads. Yagnavalkya and Uddalaka Aruni were famed *rishis* of those times.



The rishis were in search of something which would neither die nor be afflicted by sorrow. They called this indestructible being the *Atma* or *Brahman*. They believed that by understanding the *atma* or *Brahman*, immortality could be attained. In order to know the *atma*, one had to perform penance or *tapasya*.

## Parivrajakas

There were other seekers of truth who did not live permanently in any one place. They left their homes and wandered from village to village and forest to forest. Hence they were called *parivrajakas* (wanderers) or *Bhikshus* (mendicants or those who begged). Among these *parivrajakas*, Vardhamana Mahavira, Gautama Buddha, Makhkhali Goshala and Ajita Keshkambalin became very famous.

### How can one attain liberation from the Cycle of Birth and Death? -Vardhamana Mahavira

Vardhamana Mahavira was born in a *ganasangha*. He left his family and home at the age of 30 years, and became a *parivrajaka*. He was seeking an answer to the question, “How can we get rid of the cycle of birth and death in this world?” After years of meditation and hard penance, Mahavira finally found an answer to his question.



Fig. 17.11: Sarnath Buddha

Mahavira taught the people that when we inflict sorrow on other living beings, we add to our load of sins. Therefore, as far as possible we should avoid hurting any living thing, however small. In order to become free from our burden of previous sins, we must be austere, put our bodies through a lot of hardship and perform penance. In this way, we can be freed of our sins and become liberated.

Mahavira kept wandering for spreading his teachings among the people. A large number of people began to follow his preaching. Thus began Jainism.

### Why is there sorrow in this world? How can one attain freedom from sorrow? - Gautama Buddha

Like Mahavira, Gautama Buddha too was born in a *ganasangha*. He found that people everywhere were miserable and in conflict with each other. He began to think, ‘How can we get rid of this misery?’

Gautama also left his family and home in search of answers to such questions. He became a *Parivrajaka*, and after years of penance and meditation, arrived at some answers to these questions.

According to Gautama Buddha, sorrow is caused by excessive craving and desire. We can attain freedom from sorrow if we control our desires. In order to gain control over our desires, we need to live a balanced and controlled life, and should not cause pain to any living being. Buddha taught that one should avoid extremes - extreme penance or extreme pleasure, but instead follow a middle path. That is why Buddhism is also called the ‘Great Middle Path’. The teachings of Buddha came to be known as Buddhism.

The teachings of Buddha and his followers have been compiled in three collections (Thripitikas) called the Sutta Pitaka, the Abhidhamma Pitaka and Vinaya Pitaka.

- Fill in the blanks.
  1. ....lived in ashrams whereas.....wandered from place to place.
  2. The views of rishis like Yagnavalkya are recorded in the.....
  3. The religion spread by Mahavira is known as.....
  4. The religion spread by Buddha is known as.....
- What is the question to which Nachiketha was seeking an answer?
- What were the rishis seeking?
- Why did Mahavira say that we must not give pain to any living beings?
- What did Buddha suggest as a way of getting rid of misery?
- You too must have seen many sadhus who wander from place to place. What do they do and what do they preach? Discuss in the class.
- Relate what you have heard about Atma and Tapasya.

## Key words

Ash mounds  
 Mother goddess  
 Pot shreds  
 Hymns  
 Sacrifices  
 Megaliths  
 Penance  
 Parivrajaka  
 Thripitikas  
 Great Middle Path

Improve your learning

**1. Match the following AS<sub>1</sub>**

- |                      |                                       |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Dancing           | ( ) A. Great Middle Path              |
| 2. Megaliths         | ( ) B. Hunter-gatherer society        |
| 3. Gautama Buddha    | ( ) C. Ancestor worship               |
| 4. Upanishads        | ( ) D. Jainism                        |
| 5. Ahimsa            | ( ) E. Changeless reality             |
| 6. Mother Goddess    | ( ) F. Vedic People                   |
| 7. Yagnas            | ( ) G. Early Farmers                  |
| 8. Burning Festivals | ( ) H. Earliest sacred book of Indian |
| 9. Processions       | ( ) I. sub-continent. Early Herders   |
| 10. The Vedas        | ( ) J. Harappan cities                |

**2. List some Religious practices of the people of the following AS<sub>1</sub>**

<b>Hunter-gatherers</b>	<b>Present day Society</b>
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**3. Write the common characteristics/ tenets of Buddhism and Jainism AS<sub>1</sub>**

**Discuss and Write:**

- How best do you think we can express our thanks to trees and animals like snakes? AS<sub>6</sub>
- Prepare an essay on various religious practices continuing since long time in your area and present them in the Literary Association Meeting to be held in your school. AS<sub>6</sub>
- We sometimes see people causing suffering to, and terrorising animals. What do you think about this? Do we have the right to cause pain to any living being? AS<sub>6</sub>
- Why did people worship dead ancestors and kept boulders on the buried sites? AS<sub>1</sub>
- Identify the megalith areas in India map and colour those areas. AS<sub>5</sub>
- Write down how different religious customs are practiced in your area? AS<sub>4</sub>
- Read the para under the title 'What is it that will never perish?' of page 151 and comment on it. AS<sub>2</sub>

**Project:**

- Draw pictures of different modes of worship and prepare a small booklet on it for your school library.
- Visit different places of worship in your area. Interact with the Head priest/ Religious Head with the following questionnaire, note down his/ her views and prepare a report.
  - Why do people come to this place?
  - How do they conduct worship here?
  - What are your views on *Moksha*/ Salvation?

d) Do you think this kind of worship is indispensable/ essential for the humankind? How?

## CHAPTER 18

### Devotion and Love towards God

In the previous chapter we acquainted ourselves with various beliefs, traditions and rituals of people living in very ancient times in our subcontinent. During the Mauryan period and after, the religious lives of the people living in different parts of the subcontinent began to change rapidly. This was also the time when traders were contacting the small hunting and farming communities and empires were trying to gain control over all of them. At the same time Brahmins following the Vedas, Buddhist and Jaina Sramanas spread all over the country and interacted with these communities.

The Brahmins established *ashramas* in different areas and performed sacrifices and conducted religious discussions. The Sramanas too established *viharas* and *stupas* and preached the teachings of the Buddha or Jaina. At the same time, the Brahmanas and Sramanas adopted several features of the religion of the people they interacted with. Thus, the worship of mother goddesses, snakes, animals, trees and dead ancestors were adopted by the Brahmins, the Buddhists and the Jainas. They also adopted the practice of using paintings or sculptures to worship, even though many of them discarded the idea of animal sacrifices, as they believed in *ahimsa*. Thus, gradually people began following mixed religious practices and beliefs.

- Can you see a similar combination of different religious traditions in the religion practiced in your own home? Discuss in the class.

#### Hindu Religion

Hindu religion as we know it today, evolved over thousands of years. Over these years, it has assimilated several religious traditions and teachings of saints and thinkers. The term 'Hindu' actually came to be used only after 1000 CE. It derives from the word 'Sindhu' meaning the river Sindhu (or Indus) which has to be crossed to enter the Indian subcontinent from the North West.

However, some of the main features of the Hindu religion had taken shape well before 500 CE - this consisted of Vedic yagnas, worshipping deities like Shiva, Vishnu and Durga, building temples, pursuit of Moksha through penance etc. The Vedas, Upanishads, The Ramayana, The Mahabharata (of which the Bhagawad Gita was a part) and the Puranas came to be regarded as sacred books. In the following paragraphs, we will study the Bhakti movement.



Fig. 18.1: Gudimallam Lingam

#### Bhagawatas and Shaivas

The Bhagavatas worshipped Vishnu or Narayana. They believed that Vishnu was the ultimate god, who created this universe and was all powerful and all knowing. They also believed that Vishnu took birth on the Earth in various forms or incarnations (*avatara*) to save the world from evil. The most important *avataras* are Rama and Krishna. They became very popular in different parts of the country around 2000 years ago.

If you remember, the Buddhists or Jainas or Upanishadic thinkers did not emphasise worship of any god as the road to salvation or *moksha*. They advocated meditation, abandoning desires, or purifying oneself through penance etc. But the Bhagavatas believed that intense devotion and worship of Vishnu alone could relieve us from all problems and would lead to salvation. They thought that *yagnas*, or giving alms to Brahmins etc., or even reciting the Vedas was not necessary. They built temples and worshipped images of Krishna. Archeologists have found remains of some of the earliest temples built some two thousand years ago in Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh and in Rajasthan too.



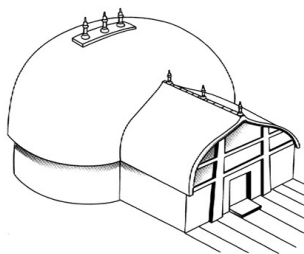


Fig. 18.2: An early temple of Krishna from Vidisha

About the same time, some other people began to worship Shiva in a similar manner. They too built small temples with images of Shiva or a *Lingam*. If you go to Gudimallam in Chittoor district, you can see one of the earliest *Lingam* images of Shiva, probably carved more than 2000 years ago. Some people also worshipped goddess Durga in the same manner.

Even as Vishnu, Shiva and Durga was being worshipped as Supreme God, the Buddhists and Jainas also began worshipping the Buddha and the Tirthankaras (Earliest Jaina gurus). They made beautiful images of the Buddha and the Tirthankaras and set them up in *stupas* or temples called *Chaityas* and worshipped them. These were built in many places in Andhra Pradesh also, like in Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda, Jaggayyapeta, Bhattiprolu, etc. Even though the Buddha or Mahavira did not claim to be gods, they began to be treated as Supreme god's representatives by now.

- Can you see the similarities between the Bhagavatas, the Shaivas and the Buddhists?
- Have you seen worship of gods in temples? Describe the procedure of the worship in temples. Discuss what you know about them in the class with each other.

## Story tellers

You probably love listening to stories from your elders, from religious story tellers or performers like puppetry.

- Can you describe any such performance in the class?
- Have you attended any story telling in temples? If so, describe it.

People of ancient period also loved to listen to stories. In those days bards and religious story tellers (like *harikatha*) used to wander around telling stories of the various gods and goddesses like Shiva, Vishnu or Durga or stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Stories related to the Buddha were also told. People gathered in large numbers to hear them. These story tellers not only related the stories they had learnt from their elders but also learnt new stories from the people. Suppose some people worshipped snakes and had stories about snake gods, the story tellers learnt those stories and added them to their collection of stories. In this way, the story tellers combined various stories of gods and goddesses, religious teachings and methods of worshipping. Gradually these began to be written down. The Buddhist stories were written down as the *Jataka* stories and the stories about Vishnu or Shiva were written down as *Puranas*.

These Puranas, besides combining various religious traditions also extolled one or the other god as the Supreme God who was all powerful, all knowing etc. They advocated worshipping of the God as the easy way to solve one's problems and attain salvation.

## Love for the supreme God – Bhakti Movement

About 550 Common Era, in Tamilnadu there arose a new movement of devotion to God. They were the followers of Vishnu or Shiva. They did not believe in performance of any elaborate ritual like yagnas or animal sacrifices. They were also very opposed to religions like Buddhism and Jainism, which did not believe in any God. Instead, they believed that intense love for Shiva or Vishnu and a desire for union with Him alone was the path for salvation. They did not pray for solving problems or for riches or power, but for union with God or a vision of the God. They also believed that anyone irrespective of their caste or community could love God. All devotees together sang songs of love for the God and danced in joy.

Some of the Bhaktas went to different temples and composed songs on the deity in the local language so that they are understood by the masses. These songs were sung by the devotees for several generations before they were finally collected and written down around 1100 CE. As a result of their efforts, a large number of these temples became famous and important. Temples like Sri Kalahasti and Tirumala are some such temples. It appears that under the influence of these Bhaktas, gradually people took worshipping Shiva and Vishnu.

- Compare the religious beliefs of hunter-gatherers with the Bhakti movement.
- Can you compare the religious beliefs of the Vedic period and the Bhakti movement?

## Alvars and Nayanars

Twelve main devotees of Vishnu were called the Alvars – the most important among them being Periyalvar and Nammalvar. Andal the daughter of Periyalvar is the only woman among them. Most of them travelled to different temples of Vishnu and composed and sang songs called *Pasurams*. Here we give you some of the songs of Nammalvar to think and understand its meaning.

## Creation

*In that original moment (Vishnu), our lord and father  
Made earth, water, fire, wind and sky  
And the mountains;  
Made the two lights, sun and moon,  
And other such bodies;  
Then the rain, and all that lives by rain,  
And the gods of rain.*

In this verse, you can see that Nammalvar considers Vishnu to be the creator of the universe, but at the same time talks of him as being his own father and lord. Thus, the all-powerful God is as close as a father is to his son.

### **Hide and Seek**

*You dwell in heaven  
Stand on the sacred mountain, sleep on the ocean, roll around in the earth  
Yet hidden everywhere, you grow invisibly;  
Moving within numberless outer worlds  
Playing within my heart, yet not showing your body  
Will you always play hide and seek?*

In the aboveverse, Nammalvar is pointing out that the Lord is present everywhere but is not appearing before him. He is desperately seeking a vision of God, but the God is not showing Himself to Nammalvar. He is unable to have a glimpse of God.

- Why does Nammalvar feel that God is playing hide and seek with him?
- How is Nammalvar expressing his intense love for Vishnu?

The Nayanars were 63 in number and were devotees of Shiva. They came from different castes, including Kannappa, a hunter and Nandanar, a *Pulaiya*, or an outcaste. Some of them like Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar and Manikka Vasakar went from one temple to another and composed songs in praise of Shiva. A couple of them like Karaikkal and Arraiyar were women. Here are some verses from *Tevaram* and *Tiruvacakam* composed by them.

*We are not the subject of any king.  
we are not afraid of the god of death.  
we will not undergo torture in the hell.  
we will not suffer distress in this life.  
we will be feeling joy always.  
we will not know what diseases are.  
we won't submit to anyone.  
we will always enjoy happiness only; we have no suffering at any time.*

**(Appar)**

In this verse Appar is saying that devotees of Shiva are neither afraid of any king nor of death, disease and hell. They are ever happy.

In another verse, Appar is saying that he does not care for those who are offering him worldly riches. On the other hand, he only respects those who are devoted to Shiva even if they are poor, sick or of low status.

*Shiva grabbed me lest I go astray  
I bowed, I wept, danced, cried aloud.  
I sang, and I praised him...  
Love pierced me like a nail driven into a green tree.  
Overflowing, I tossed like a sea,  
Heart growing tender, body shivering,  
While the world called me mad and laughed at me,  
I left shame behind, took as an ornament.*

**(Manikka Vasakar)**

In this verse Manikka Vasakar is expressing the joy he felt on getting a vision of Shiva and how others could not understand his joy.

### **Christianity**

Just as people in the Indian subcontinent started worshipping a Supreme God and believed that love and devotion to God is the

path for salvation, people in other parts of the world too developed similar ideas. In the Middle East in the region now called Israel and Palestine developed a new religion called Christianity started after Jesus Christ.

He was born at Bethlehem near Jerusalem (now in Israel) about 2000 years ago. Jesus Christ preached that all people are equal. He taught us to love one another. He taught the importance of peace, love and compassion. He advised the people not to follow the practice of “Tit for tat”. He believed that even an enemy could be won over by love.



Fig. 18.3: St.Thomas Basilica, Chennai. This was built in 1523

The Bible is the holy book of the Christians and it contains the teachings of Christ. Read the following extracts from his famous teaching ‘Sermon on the Mount’:

- *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven...*
- *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*
- *Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.*
- *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.*
- *Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.*
- *Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.*
- *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*
- *Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
  - *Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.*

Christ was arrested and crucified by the rulers of his time.

Saint Thomas a follower of Jesus Christ came to India with Roman traders and brought with him the teachings of Christ. St. Thomas propagated Christianity in South India.

- Describe the worship of God in a church?

## Islam

In Arabia around the same time of Appar and others in India a new religion arose which emphasised devotion to one God. The new religion was Islam, which was founded by Prophet Mohammad.

Prophet Mohammad was born in Arabia at Mecca in 570 CE. Prophet taught that there is only one God and that all human beings are His creation. The way all the children are equal before their parents, all human beings are equal before god. God or Allah has no shape and therefore it is wrong to worship idols. He taught that all men are brothers. He emphasised the importance of love for the whole of humanity. Mohammad is considered as a Prophet or messenger of Allah. The teachings of Allah are written in a book called Quran. It is the holy book of Islam. Read some of the verses from the Quran in translation:



Fig. 18.3: Cheraman Mosque, in Kerala this is believed to be the first Mosque in India

## Al fatiha

*In the name of Allah, the most beneficent the most merciful. All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds. The most beneficent, the most merciful. The lord of the day of Judgement. Thee alone we worship, thee alone we seek for help. Guide us to the right path. The path of those, upon whom thou has bestowed favours. Not of those, who thou has cursed once; not of those whom have gone astray.*

### ***Sura al ikhlas***

*“The truth is: Allah is One. Allah is Besought of all, needing none. He neither begot anyone, nor was begotten. And equal to Him has never been any one.”*

Islam was brought to India by Arab traders who visited the ports of India.

- Have you seen worship of gods in a Mosque? Describe the procedure of the worship.

### **The belief in a Supreme God**

Can you see some common ideas emerging among the Hindus, Christians and Muslims? They all believed in the existence of one Supreme God and the need to worship Him. They also believed in equality, love and respect for all human beings irrespective of their wealth, education or social status. These ideas were increasingly adopted by a very large number of people. Kings and rulers also adopted these ideas and started encouraging their subjects to practice these religions. They built vast temples, churches or mosques in which people could worship.

Historians try to understand why these new ideas came about and became popular during this period. They feel that as tribes and small kingdoms were being merged into larger states, people were attracted to the idea of God of all people and not just of one tribe or caste or a small kingdom. Kings and emperors also encouraged such ideas and often tried to claim to be representatives of those Supreme Gods themselves. In this way, they may have tried to win the support of their subjects.

Historians also feel that as the difference between rich and poor, powerful and powerless increased, many people were very unhappy about this growing inequality and the suppression of the poor and the powerless. Perhaps they tried to assert the equality of all human beings through devotion to the Supreme God. Some historians feel that Buddhism and Jainism, which emphasised meditation and control over one's desires, lost their popularity as people preferred to have faith in Gods for solving their problems.

At the same time, we should remember that a large number of people did not agree with these new ideas and continued to follow their old religious ideas. Some in fact did not believe in the existence of an all-powerful God at all.

### **Key words**

Sculptures  
Incarnations  
Tirthankaras  
Salvation  
Jataka stories  
Pasurams

### **Improve your learning**

1. Imagine a discussion between a Buddhist monk and a hunter-gatherer and how they learnt from each other. Write a short dialogue between them. AS<sub>6</sub>
2. Can you see any similarities and differences between the early and the Vedic religion? AS<sub>1</sub>
3. In what ways were the early Bhagavata and Shaiva thinking different from that of the Buddhists and Jainas? AS<sub>1</sub>
4. Discuss how the Puranas helped in bringing together different religious practices in the country. AS<sub>1</sub>
5. Can you point out the most important difference between the early beliefs and the beliefs of the Bhaktas of Tamil Nadu? AS<sub>1</sub>
6. Underline two lines of the Sermon on the Mount that you like the most. Give reasons. AS<sub>6</sub>
7. In what way did the Prophet Mohammad explain the equality of all human beings? AS<sub>1</sub>
8. Can you list the similarities and differences between the religious feelings? AS<sub>3</sub>
9. Read the para under the title ‘The belief in a Supreme God’ of page 161 and write your comment. AS<sub>2</sub>
10. Write your view on the religious programme held recently in your area. AS<sub>4</sub>
11. Point out the following in the world map: AS<sub>5</sub>  
(a) Jerusalem (b) Mecca (c) Kerala State  
(d) Chennai (e) Sindhu River (Indus)

### **Project :**

Prepare an album with pictures of different religious festivals observed in India.

## **CHAPTER 19**

# Language, Writing and Great Books

Deepika went to Nellore Railway Station for going to her village. She was surprised to hear the railway information announced in so many languages. She also saw the name Nellore written in three different ways. She started wondering why there are so many languages and ways of writing.



Fig. 19.1: Display Board - Nellore Railway station

## What is language?

Dogs bark and birds tweet, but we humans are the only living things on the earth which speak 'language'. Human beings can make a variety of sounds from their mouth that no animal or bird can. This enables us to speak and develop language.

- Try to imitate different animals and birds or the sound of rain or cars or trucks. See the wide variety of sounds we can make.

Language has become so much a part of our lives that we seldom stop to think about it. We think and understand with the help of language. We communicate with each other with the help of language. We learn from others with the help of language. We use language to play. We do so many things with the help of language!

First of all, we use language to help us to organise and plan our own work. Don't you always speak about your work as you do it?

Secondly, we use language to draw the attention of others and also to ask them to do something or the other: 'Oh just look at the bird!', 'Oh Mother! Please buy me that toy!', 'Stop. Don't move!'

Thirdly, we use language to create new things and just to have fun. Like we make funny sentences, funny words, funny poems and laugh and make others laugh.

Fourthly, we try to understand the world around us with the help of language and also try to imagine things which do not exist around us with the help of language. Can we think without using any language? Or can we imagine stories about far off times and places if we did not have any language? We investigate and use our reason to find out about something. But we cannot do this without language.

Fifthly, we use language to tell others about what we feel and experience. Suppose an early hunter-gatherer saw a tree full of ripe fruits in a far off place, how could she, if she couldn't use any language, tell her friends what she found and where? Suppose you are hurt and in pain, how can you tell your parents about it without using any language?

Surely, you too can think of many more examples of how we use language and what language does for us. It appears that human beings have been speaking and using language right from the earliest times when they gathered food in the forests. Language has helped people to pass to their children the information they acquired about what they saw, what they learnt and what they felt. So each generation of people can build on what the earlier generation knew and add to it. We can learn from people all over the world and we can tell them about what we think and know. Language thus brings together people who are far away from each other, even people who are now long dead and those who are living. Isn't it wonderful!

## Why are there so many languages?

Language is developed by a group of people living together. They decide to call the drink that quenches their thirst as water. Another group of people who may be living far away from the first group may decide to call the same drink as *NEELLU*. Another group may call it as *THANNI*. They mean the same but they use different sounds or symbols for it. That is why people developed different languages such as English, Sanskrit, Persian, Chinese, Swahili, Hindi, Telugu, etc.

Often it also so happened that one group of people who spoke a language got separated into different sub groups and each group in turn developed different languages based on the old language. We say that all these languages belong to one family. Thus, originally a group of people spoke a language, which today we call Early Dravidian. When the people who spoke this language began to live in distant places and mixed with other people, they developed new languages. Among them are Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Gondi etc. These are today mainly spoken in South India. There is another language family in India called the Indo-Aryan family. The famous languages of this family are Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, etc. There are some other language families in India about which you will learn in higher classes.





Fig. 19.2: Display Board - Hyderabad Railway station

As people travelled and mixed with each other, their languages too mixed with each other and people adopted several words from each other's languages. Thus, Telugu today uses many words taken from Sanskrit, Marathi, Arabic, Persian and English.

## Writing and Script

We write and read languages with the help of scripts. As you know we use many kinds of scripts – we use Roman script, Devnagari script, Arabic script .... Telugu script and Tamil Script... Actually we can write any language in any script! For example, we can write the word Hyderabad in all these scripts –

In fact, we can even make new scripts. Would you like to develop your own secret script? Try doing it, you will have some fun!

While it may seem easy and funny to you now, actually it took human beings thousands of years to develop scripts like the ones we use today.

In the beginning, they just drew pictures instead of writing. To say that the goat is running, they would make a picture of a goat and another picture of two running legs! Slowly the scripts as we know them developed. Four thousand years ago, the people of Indus Valley used scripts, but we do not know how to read them.

मेरा नाम रघु	Hindi
నా పేరు రఘు	Telugu
רָאגְרוּ דִּיאָ נָאמֶען יִימ	Yiddish
میرا نام رگو	Urdu
jina langu ni raghu	Swahili
רָאגְרוּ דִּיאָ נָאמֶען יִימ.....	Spanish

Fig. 19.3: Different types of scripts



Fig. 19.4: Indus script

Most of the scripts we use in India today (Devnagari, Telugu and Tamil, for example) actually developed from Brahmi Script used by Ashoka. One of the earliest inscriptions found in Andhra Pradesh region is from Bhattiprolu stupa in Krishna District. This was inscribed around 200 B.C.

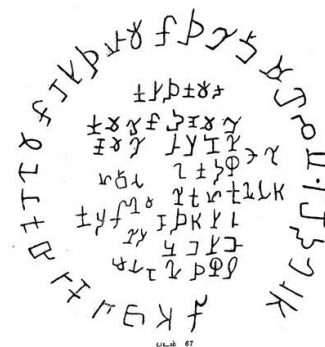


Fig. 19.5: Bhattiprolu inscription

- Write your name in as many scripts as possible on a card sheet and display it in the class.
- Take three Telugu words and write them in at least three other languages – you may use Telugu script to write all of them like this:

Telugu – Amma Tamil – Tai

English – Mother Sanskrit – Matru

Persian – Madar Marathi – Aai

Hindi – Maa

◦ Think how the following persons would have used writing. Who would have needed it more?

Kings and Emperors, Traders

Peasants, Peasant women

Brahmin Priests, Buddhist Monks

Poets, Artisan-women

Labourers, Soldiers

## What did people write on?

In the beginning, people probably wrote on cloth, leaves, barks etc, which decayed and got destroyed with time. Some people even wrote on pots by scratching on them. Some of these pots have survived. However, the earliest writing of a long text that has survived to our own time is Ashoka's inscriptions which were engraved on rocks or stone pillars.

In many parts of South India, people wrote on palm leaves which were cut to a definite size. They used a pin like pen to scratch on the dried leaf and coloured it with black ink. In North India, they used the barks of Bhoja trees, which grew in the Himalayas. These barks peeled off just like paper and one could easily write on them using ink. In those days, paper was not in use.

## Poems, Songs and Stories

You may have listened to many poems songs, sayings and stories from your parents or grandparents. Many of these were not written down but passed on from one generation to another just as your parents told you. This is called oral literature – that is literature which has been passed from mouth to mouth. This was the earliest form of literature. The earliest people composed poems, songs and stories and told them to their children who in turn told them to their children. They also passed on their understanding of the world through sayings and proverbs, which too were similarly taught.

- Collect at least three stories, three songs and ten sayings from your elders, write them on a poster and display them in the class.
- Try to illustrate the stories and prepare a hand written book.

## Vedas

The Vedas were also initially composed and taught orally. They were preserved for over three thousand years in this manner. These were later written down.

Here read a very interesting verse from the Rig-Veda on how the universe started:

*Who knows it for certain – out of what it was born and wherefrom this creation came? The Gods appeared only later – after the creation of the world. Who knows, then, out of what it has evolved?*

*Wherefrom this creation has come, whether he has made it or whether he has not – he who is the superintendent of this world in the highest heaven – he alone knows, or, perhaps even he does not know.*

*(Nasadiya Sukta, from the Rig-Veda)*

Have you also wondered how the world started? This verse tries to imagine how it would have been before the world started and how the world would have started. Can you write about what you think about this problem?

## The great Epics – the Ramayana and the Mahabharata

Epics are deeds of heroic and legendary figures. They describe conflicts between good and evil, 'dharma' and 'adharma'. Every country has its own epic and in India we have two important epics – the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The Ramayana is the story of Rama and Sita and the fight between Rama and Ravana. The Ramayana tries to portray an ideal human being - an ideal son, an ideal wife, an ideal brother, an ideal ruler, etc. This epic, composed by Valmiki, is considered to be the first *Kavya* in Sanskrit literature. Initially, it was recited orally by wandering preachers and later on edited and written down.

The Mahabharata is the story of the conflict between two sets of cousins, the Kauravas and the Pandavas. It finally ended in a great war which was won by the Pandavas with the help of Lord Krishna. It portrays a very wide range of human beings and the moral dilemmas they face and how they try to resolve those dilemmas. It is one of the largest poems in the world and contains hundreds of small stories. This was composed by Vyasa and again recited orally by wandering story tellers and eventually written down.

Historians believe that even though these epics were composed much earlier they were given their final form about 1600 years ago.

## Jataka Stories

You had read about Gautama Buddha in an earlier lesson. His followers believed that he had taken several births earlier to preach dharma to fellow human beings and animals. They wrote many stories about these births of the Buddha and compiled them in the form of Jataka stories. These are delightful stories, which you may like to read. These too were collected and written down around 1600-1800 years ago.

### The story of Kisagotami

Here is a famous story about the Buddha:

*Once there was a woman named Kisagotami, whose son had died. She was so sad that she roamed through the streets of the*

city carrying the child and asking for help to bring him back to life. A kind man took her to the Buddha.

The Buddha said: "Bring me a handful of mustard seeds, and I will bring your child back to life."

Kisagotami was overjoyed and started off at once. But the Buddha gently stopped her and added: "The seeds must come from the house of a family where nobody has died."

Kisagotami went from door to door, but wherever she went, she found out that someone or the other - father, mother, sister, brother, husband, wife, child, uncle, aunt, grandfather, grandmother - had died.

What was the Buddha trying to teach the sorrowful mother?

## Sangam Literature in Tamil

Tamil was the language that was spoken in a large part of South India in the early days. Sangam literature is a collection of poems composed by a large number of poets and poetesses. They wrote about heroes who bravely fought wars in defence of their tribes, about the love of brave heroes and beautiful girls, about the beauty of the landscapes and seasons and their effect on human beings.

Read this poem from the Sangam collection addressed to a small king:

*Your land lies within a dense forest with elephants everywhere*

*As if they were cows, and scattered blacks that look like buffaloes..*

*I have something to tell you! You must be as careful in watching over your land, as you would be in raising children.*

## Books on Medicine and Surgery

### Books on Medicine and Surgery

In earlier times there were many people who studied why people fell ill, how they can be cured, how people hurt in wars could be healed, etc. They collected herbs and other things and prepared medicines. They also wrote about these medicines and about the ways to lead healthy lives. Some of these books have come down to us. One such famous book is called *Charaka Samhita*. Another book which focusses on surgery is called *Sushruta Samhita*. These books laid the foundation of Ayurveda, the traditional Indian system of medicine and health. They taught people not only about the medicines they should take during illness but also about the ways to lead a balanced and healthy life.

- Identify the medicinal plants in and around your house and prepare a list of their uses.
- Find out from your parents any sayings about health and medicine and note them down to prepare a small booklet.

## Books on Astronomy and Mathematics

Our ancestors were fascinated by the heavenly bodies like the sun and moon, the stars and the planets. They observed them day after day and noted that things in the sky kept changing over time. Some changes took place every minute, some took place more slowly over several days or months or even years. They noted all these carefully and found out that the skies had two or three distinct kinds of bodies – the sun which rose and set every day and gave us warmth, the moon which grew big and vanished over the month, the planets which moved slowly against the background of the stars and the stars which shone brightly but did not change their position with reference to each other. Slowly many people felt that these stars, planets, sun, and moon contained secrets about the entire universe and that we should understand them better by observing them more carefully and by calculating their movements. One such person was Aryabhata who wrote his book called *Aryabhatiyam* in which he said that the earth rotates causing day and night and that actually the sun did not go around the earth. People did not agree with him in those days.

Aryabhata and other mathematicians of ancient India also adopted the decimal system of numbers and place value system writing numbers the way we do today. Earlier Romans wrote one hundred and two as CII or one hundred twenty seven as CXXVII (C= 100; X = 10; V = 5 and I = 1). They did not use any zero. This created lot of problem in adding etc.

With the decimal system and place value system we can write this simply as 102 or 127. Today this system of writing numbers is adopted throughout the world.

### Key words

Epic

Inscription

Sangam Literature

Decimal system

Ayurveda

Improve your learning

1. What is the importance of language? AS<sub>1</sub>
2. How can you say that Aryabhata was the father of astronomy? AS<sub>1</sub>

3. Differentiate between Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. AS<sub>1</sub>
4. Mention a few inventions in Mathematics. AS<sub>4</sub>
5. Look at a currency note and write down the difference scripts on them. Identify the language. Is the same script used for different languages? Which are they? AS<sub>5</sub>
6. Refer to any general knowledge book, list out and tabulate five great books in Telugu language and other languages. AS<sub>3</sub>
7. How did the work done in various fields by the ancient Indian scientists inspired the present Time scientists? AS<sub>6</sub>
8. Locate the following in India map. AS<sub>5</sub>
  - a) Bihar b) Tamil Nadu c) Uttar Pradesh
  - d) Maharashtra e) West Bengal
9. Read the para under the title 'The great Epics' of page 167 and comment on it. AS<sub>2</sub>

**Project:**

Prepare a Flow Chart on the establishment of languages.

## CHAPTER 20

### Sculptures and Buildings

Archaeologists digging very ancient cities of Indus Valley found some very nice stone and bronze sculptures besides seals carved on stones and baked clay figurines. These were made some 4000 years ago. You can see some of their pictures here. You can see that these depict everything in a natural manner. We don't know what they were used for.



*Fig. 20.1: A small bust of a male person of importance – was he a priest or a king?*



*Fig. 20.2: A beautiful Harappan Seal showing a bull*



*Fig. 20.3: A bronze statue of a girl standing*



*Fig. 20.4: A mother goddess figurine of terracotta*

A little later, the art of casting metal figures spread to Maharashtra. Some very exquisite bronze figures were found during digging. These were probably made some 3000 years ago. Do you think they could have been toys?



*Fig: 20. 5. Daimabad Bronzes*

The next important phase of sculpture belongs to the Mauryan period, that is around 2200 years ago. King Ashoka set up some tall, smoothly polished pillars in many places. They were usually made of one piece of stone. Messages of Ashoka were carved on them. They also had at their top some figures of animals. These are called capitals. The most famous among them is the Lion Capital of Sarnath set up by Ashoka in the place where the Buddha first preached his teachings. These four majestic lions facing the four directions hold on their pedestal the Wheel of Dharma.

- Do you feel that the lions look natural or do they look artificial, posing for the sculpture?
- You must have seen these often. Where do you see pictures of these lions?

These pillars and the Lion Capital represent the power and majesty of the Mauryan emperors. Compare this capital with the Bull capital in Rampurva. Here you can see that the bull looks more natural and quite similar to the Harappan seal's bull.



*Fig. 20.6: Sarnath Lion Capital*



*Fig. 20.7: Rampurva Bull*



### Portrait of Ashoka from Kanaganahalli



Fig. 20.8: Recent discoveries at Kanaganahalli in Karnataka brought out a stone portrait of king Ashoka, with an inscription in Brahmi letters read 'Ranya Asoka' (King Asoka). You should remember that this was made some three hundred years after the death of Ashoka and as such may not have any resemblance with him.

### Buddhist Stupas and Viharas

Given below is the picture of one of the most famous stupas in India – the Sanchi Stupa. Look at the photo. You can see that it is like a hemisphere (half ball) – just as the way the sky looks when you look up.



Fig. 20.9: Sanchi stupa in Madhya Pradesh. It is one of the most important stupas built by King Ashoka. Can you identify the hemisphere, the platform, the umbrella and the fence?

A stupa is built on a platform. In the centre of a stupa were buried relics of the Buddha or important monks (relics are remains of the body like teeth, bone, hair etc). The hemisphere is fully packed and you cannot enter it like a temple. Above it rises a pillar topped by umbrellas. The stupa is usually surrounded by a stone fence with decorated gateways. Initially, in the time of Ashoka, these were built of mud, brick and wood but later on made with stones.

The stupa has many meanings – it is supposed to represent the Buddha. At the same time, it is believed that the dome of the stupa represents the universe with the central pillar being the axis around which everything revolves and which connects the world below, the earth and the heavens. Pilgrims worship the stupa by offering flowers etc, and going round it in *pradakshina* and meditating in front of it.

◦ Can you compare a stupa with a temple and tell the similarities and the differences between them and how people worship in them?

Archeologists have found remains of stupas from very early times in several places of Andhra Pradesh like Amaravati, Bhattiprolu, Ramatirtham, Salihundam etc. A crystal casket containing the relics of the Buddha was found at Bhattiprolu Stupa.



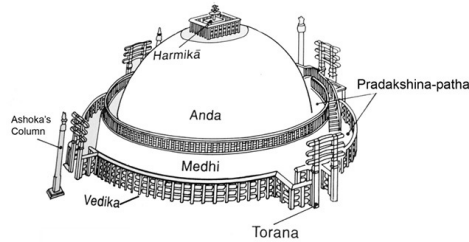
Fig. 20.10: Remains of Salihundam stupa. Can you see a spoked wheel kind of formation in the foundation of the stupa?

Amaravati Stupa in Guntur district is the most famous one in Andhra Pradesh. This was built during the rule of Satavahanas about 1900 years ago.

Fig.20.11 shows a sculpture panel depicting the stupa. Can you see some flying figures on the top? These are supposed to be gods from heavens who came to worship the Buddha. At the bottom, you can see some men and women bowing down and worshipping. You can also see the four lions on the gateway. What do you think they signify?



Fig. 20.11: Amaravathi stupa



Plan of stupa

Fig. 20.12: Reconstruction of Amaravathi stupa

Today the Amaravathi stupa is just a mound of rubble. All that we can do is to imagine how this great stupa was in the past. The panels help us imagine how it must have looked 1900 years ago. As you can see from the picture, the stupa was covered with panels of sculptures depicting the Buddha and his teachings. These panels were found by the British and were taken away by them to London. Some of the panels that could not be transported were kept in Madras Museum. Based on these panels people have tried to imagine how the stupa would have looked like. See the picture of reconstruction and compare it with the panel.

Another important stupa was the Nagarjunakonda stupa. It was a part of Vijayapuri, the capital city of Ikshvaku kings. It was on the banks of the Krishna River. Vijayapuri had a large number of stupas, viharas and palaces. It also had a beautifully designed amphitheatre and ghats leading to the river. Unfortunately, today the entire city lies under water – submerged in the Nagarjunasagar dam. A large number of sculptures and other remains have been removed and kept in a museum nearby.

Look at some of the sculpture panels from Nagarjunakonda and Amaravati given below. These sculpture panels represent the earliest sculptural activity in South India. You can get a glimpse of people of those times from them.



Fig. 20.13: A panel from Amaravati showing calming of an elephant (Nalagiri) by the Buddha. The royal elephant went out of control and the people on the street were panic stricken. However, on seeing the Buddha the elephant calmed down and bowed down to him. Can you see how they show a story in a panel? What could be the message of the story?



Fig. 20.14: A panel from Nagarjunakonda showing the admission of six princes and the barber Upali into the Sangha. In order to teach the princes humility, the Buddha admitted Upali first and the rest after him. You can see Upali seated on a low stool besides the Buddha



Fig. 20.15: Panel from Sanchi shows the daily life of villagers. This is a beautiful panel which shows the visit of the Buddha to a village. Can you make a list of activities being done by the people in this panel? Do you get to see similar scenes in today's villages?

As time went on, sculptors started making large and complete figures instead of just the reliefs shown above. Large statues of the Buddha gave people an idea of the peaceful, calm and serene personality of the Buddha. The most famous sculptures of the Buddha come from Gandhara in the Northwest, Mathura and Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh (Fig: 17.11). We can see some of these sculptures in Nagarjunakonda too.

*Viharas* were the monasteries or living places of Buddhist monks where religious education was imparted. A vihara usually had small rooms around an open courtyard and had a small shrine containing a stupa or an image of the Buddha at one end. This shrine was called a *chaitya*, which was also a prayer hall for the monks.

There are cave viharas excavated on hill sides like in Nasik and Karle. These too have some beautiful sculptures carved on them. You will read about them below.

The other *viharas* were built with brick or stone blocks like in Takshashila, Nagarjunakonda and Nalanda, which became great places of learning. In Viharas, monks taught Buddhist scriptures to disciples. Along with imparting education in Viharas, monks were treating the physical ailments of people. We find many inscriptions from these viharas, which tell us that ordinary men and women – farmers, traders, soldiers, and artisans – made liberal donations for building and expenses of these viharas.

Buddhist holy places of learning had attracted the pilgrims from other countries. Chinese pilgrims Fa-hi-an, Itsing and Hu-en-Tsang came to visit places associated with the life of the Buddha as well as famous monasteries.

**Pilgrims** are the people who take up journeys to holy places to worship.

Hu-En-Tsang, and others spent time studying in Nalanda (Bihar) the most famous Buddhist monastery of the period. This is how he describes it:

*“The teachers are men of the highest ability and talent. They follow the teachings of the Buddha in all sincerity. The rulers of the monastery are strict, and everyone has to follow them. Discussions are held throughout the day, and the old and the young mutually help one another. Learned men from different cities come here to clear their doubts. The gate keeper asks new entrants difficult questions. They are allowed to enter only after they have answered them. Seven or eight out of every ten are not able to answer.”*

## Rock cut Chaityas and Early Temples

Traders, artisans and kings of the time of the Satavahanas donated generously to build a unique kind of chaityas and viharas in several places in Maharashtra like Karle, Bhaja, Kanheri and Nasik. These were built like caves on hill sides. Stone workers, using chisel and hammer, carved rocks and reproduced the structures the carpenters had made with wood. They made large prayer halls, stupas and small rooms for monks – all in the rock. They also carved beautiful images of people and animals and some times of the Buddha. Look at these pictures of the Karle chaitya, which was built about 2100 years ago.

- Do you think the man and the woman shown in the sculpture had equal status? Give reasons.
- Which part of the chaitya do you think was carved out first and which part was carved the last?

Even during these times, carpenters and masons are making temples and chaityas with mud, wood and stones. Some of these temples are for gods like Krishna while others are for the Buddha. But they have not survived. At Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh, we get one of the earliest surviving stone temples. This is a very simple structure, with just a small room (called *garbhagriha*) in which the idol of the Buddha was kept, and a small open porch or *mandapa* with no walls but only pillars. The door and the pillars are beautifully carved. However, the temple has a flat roof without any tower or *shikhara* on it. This was built around 1600 years ago. See the pictures.



*Fig. 20.16: Outside gate of Karle cave chaitya*



*Fig. 20.17: Inside a Chaitya*



*Fig. 20.18 & 20.19: Sculptures from Karle*



*Fig. 20.20: Early Buddhist temple from Sanchi*

### **Key words**

Chaitya  
Vihara  
Relics  
Monks  
Stupa  
Monastery

### **IMPROVE YOUR LEARNING**

1. Why do you think Ashoka chose lions and bulls to put on his pillars rather than cows or parrots? What animal would you have chosen if you were in his place? Give reasons for your choice. AS<sub>1</sub>
2. Look at the sculpture panel from Kanganahalli and identify the features that distinguish the king from the other people. AS<sub>1</sub>
3. Many stupas of Andhra Pradesh are on the banks of rivers (like Salihundam, Nagarjunakonda, Amaravati etc). Why do you think the monks selected them to build stupas? AS<sub>1</sub>
4. Look at the sculpture showing the calming of the elephant. Who are the people watching the event from a height? AS<sub>1</sub>
5. Observe the dresses of men and women in the sculptures and draw them in a notebook? How are they different from the dresses we wear today? AS<sub>4</sub>
6. Why do you think only the rock cut viharas and chaityas survived till today? AS<sub>1</sub>



7. Compare the features of a Chaitya and a temple. Do you think the mode of worship in a Chaitya and a temple would be different? AS<sub>1</sub>
8. Why are the Buddhist Stupas and Chaityas sacred? AS<sub>6</sub>
9. How did the Buddhist monks probably use the Viharas and Chaityas? AS<sub>1</sub>
10. Locate Buddhist and Jain sites in Andhra Pradesh outline map? AS<sub>5</sub>
11. Read the first para of page 176 and comment on it. AS<sub>2</sub>

### Project:

Visit a place of worship in your village or town and draw a sketch of the structure. Try to get the name of each part, its meaning and use. Prepare a report about this place of worship and conduct an exhibition in your class.

## ACADAMIC STANDARDS

Time should be spent in making sure that children comprehend the passages given in the textbook. While-reading questions are useful in this context. They include the aspects reasoning, cause and effect, justification, mind mapping / concept mapping, observation, analysis, thinking and imagination, reflection, interpreting etc. The key concepts have been discussed subconceptwise in every chapter with examples and are also given as keywords.

- 1) **Conceptual understanding:** Promoting learning of basic concepts through inquiry, discussion, reflection giving examples through case studies interpreting, observation etc.
- 2) **Reading the text (given), understanding and interpretation :** Occasionally there are case studies about farmers, labourers in factory, or images that are used in text which do not directly convey the concept. Time should be given for children to grasp the main ideas, interpret images etc.
- 3) **Information skills:** Textbooks alone cannot cover all aspects of social studies methodology. For example children living in an urban area can collect information regarding their elected representatives or children living in the rural area can collect information about the way irrigation / tank facilities are made available in their area. These information may not exactly match with that of the textbooks and will have to be clarified. Representing the information that they have collected through projects are also an important ability. For example if they collect information about a tank – they may decide to draw an illustration or map etc along with written material. Or represent the information collected through images or posters. Information skill includes, collection of informatic tabulation / records and analysis.
- 4) **Reflection on contemporary issues and questioning:** Students need to be encouraged to compare their living conditions with that of others in different regions or different times. There may not be a single answer to these situations of comparison. Giving reasons for a certain happening or a process is important.
- 5) **Mapping skills:** There are different types of maps and pictures used in the textbook. Developing ability related to maps as abstract representation of places is important. There are different stages of developing this ability, from creating a map of their classroom to understanding height, distance as represented in a map. There are illustrations, posters and photographs used in the textbook, these images often relate to the text and are not merely for visual effect. Sometimes there are activities like, ‘ write a caption’ or ‘read the images’ about architecture etc.
- 6) **Appreciation and Sensitivity:** Our country is diverse in terms of language, culture, caste, religion, gender, etc. Social studies does take into consideration these different aspects and encourages students to be sensitive to these differences.

## Appendix

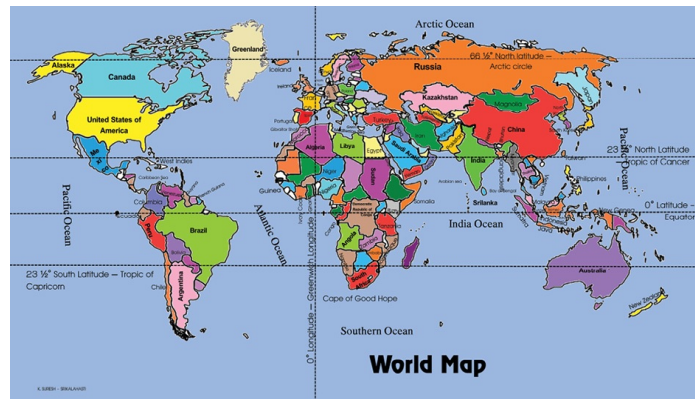
(The additional maps are to be used wherever necessary).

### 1. Andhra Pradesh Political map





## 2. World Political map



## 3. India Political Outline map



S T A T E S				U N I O N T E R R I T O R I E S	
Jammu & Kashmir	Srinagar, Jammu	Gujarat	Gandhinagar	New Delhi	New Delhi
Himachal Pradesh	Simla	Goa	Panaji	Chandigarh	Chandigarh
Punjab	Chandigarh	Karnataka	Bangalore	Andaman Nicobar	Port Blair
Haryana	Chandigarh	Andhra Pradesh	Amaravathi	Lakshadweep	Kavarathi
Uttaranchal	Dehradun	Tamil Nadu	Chennai		
Rajasthan	Jaipur	Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram		
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	Sikkim	Gangtok		
Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	West Bengal	Kolkata		
Bihar	Patna	Odisha	Bhubaneswar		
Jharkhand	Ranchi	Chhattisgarh	Raipur		
West Bengal	Kolkata	Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad		
Odisha	Bhubaneswar	Tamil Nadu	Chennai		
Chhattisgarh	Raipur	Pondicherry	Pondicherry		
Maharashtra	Mumbai				
Daman & Diu	Daman				
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	Dadra				
Goa	Panaji				
Karnataka	Bengaluru				
Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad				
Telangana	Hyderabad				
Maharashtra	Mumbai				



1. [Untitled-2](#)