

LATER VEDIC CULTURE (1000 B.C. to 600 B.C)

- In this period both Literary Sources and Archaeological sources are available for a comprehensive study.
- **Ahichchhatra & Hastinapur** in Uttar Pradesh, **Nuh** in Haryana and **Atranjikhera** in Uttar Pradesh are the sites excavated which are related to the Later Vedic Period.
- Iron was used for the first time in Later Vedic period. (It was not known in early Vedic period or Harappan Civilisation). Iron was called **Shyamayas** in those days. It was first used as a weapon and not as a tool.
- Pottery is the most common archaeological finding. If there is no evidence of pottery, historians conclude that the area was not inhabited.
- In this period pottery which was found was classified as **PGW** or **Painted Grey ware**.
- Literary sources for this period include – **Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda**.
- Atharvaveda is believed to be a Non Aryan book while all other books are Aryan Books. Moreover it was written in Lower Gangetic plain unlike the other three Vedas which were written in the upper Gangetic plain.
- Atharva Veda deals with charms, spells and magic and is a good source to study the Kingdom of Magadha
- Three other sources of literatures are **Brahmanas**. Last part of Brahmanas is known as **Aranyakas**. It was also known as Forest Book or Jungle Book. Theme of the book is Romanticism – relationship between man and nature.
- The Upanishads are a collection of philosophical texts which form the theoretical basis for the Hindu religion. There are 108 Upanishads. Upanishad deal with the relationship between Man and God
- ‘Satyameva Jayate’ was derived from Mundaka Upanishad.’
- ‘Om’ was derived from Rig Veda.
- It was one of the earliest books which talks about non-violence.
- 50 Upanishads were translated from Sanskrit to Persian under the leadership of Dara Shikoh – eldest son of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan.
- 4 Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads form the Vedic Literature.
- The changes noticed between Early Vedic and Later Vedic period was that slowly people were shifting towards agricultural community.
- Iron, the hardest known substance during that time, was being used in agriculture. Also ploughs and oxen were being used.
- Other than agriculture, domestication of animals was the primary occupation of the people.
- The term **Gotra** emerged from the later Vedic period.

Pottery in other periods

1. **Simple & Black and Red** – Harappan Civilisation
2. **Ochre Coloured** – Chalcolithic Period
3. **Painted Grey Ware (PGW)** – Later Vedic Period
4. **Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW)** – Maurayan Period

Some Famous Upanishads are:-

1. Brihadaranyaka
2. Katha
3. Kena
4. Chandogya
5. Ish
6. Jabala
7. Mundaka
8. Mandukya

Changes in the Vedic Society from Early Vedic to Later Vedic Period

- As people’s primary occupation moved to agriculture, Land became more precious than cattle.
- In the settled life, King became powerful and started collecting taxes known as Bali and also started demanding ‘Bhag’ which was share in production.
- With the help of these taxes he maintained an army. To expand his land area, Kings performed Ashvamedha Yajna in which a horse was let loose for an year and the amount of area covered by the horse in that year would then belong to the owner of the horse (The King)

Ashvamedha Yajna is mentioned in **Ramayana** when Lord Ram performs the Yajna and the Yajna horse is captured by his sons – Luv & Kush (who are unaware that Lord Ram is their father).

- Other changes in lifestyle ever since agriculture became the main profession included Emergence of Janapadas, only men were allowed in Sabha and Samiti etc.
- Gods like Brahma and Vishnu emerged in the late Vedic period apart from Indra, Varun and Prithvi which were prominent in Early Vedic Period.
- In the early days, Shiva was known as Rudra.
- Number of Samskarans changed to 16 in the later Vedic Period.
- Upanayan was the most famous samskara. It was performed when a child joined school for the first time and was initially for both male and female but later females were forbidden from Samskara.

Vajpeya Yajna

- Was performed for gaining supernatural powers
- Chariot Race was performed in this Yajna

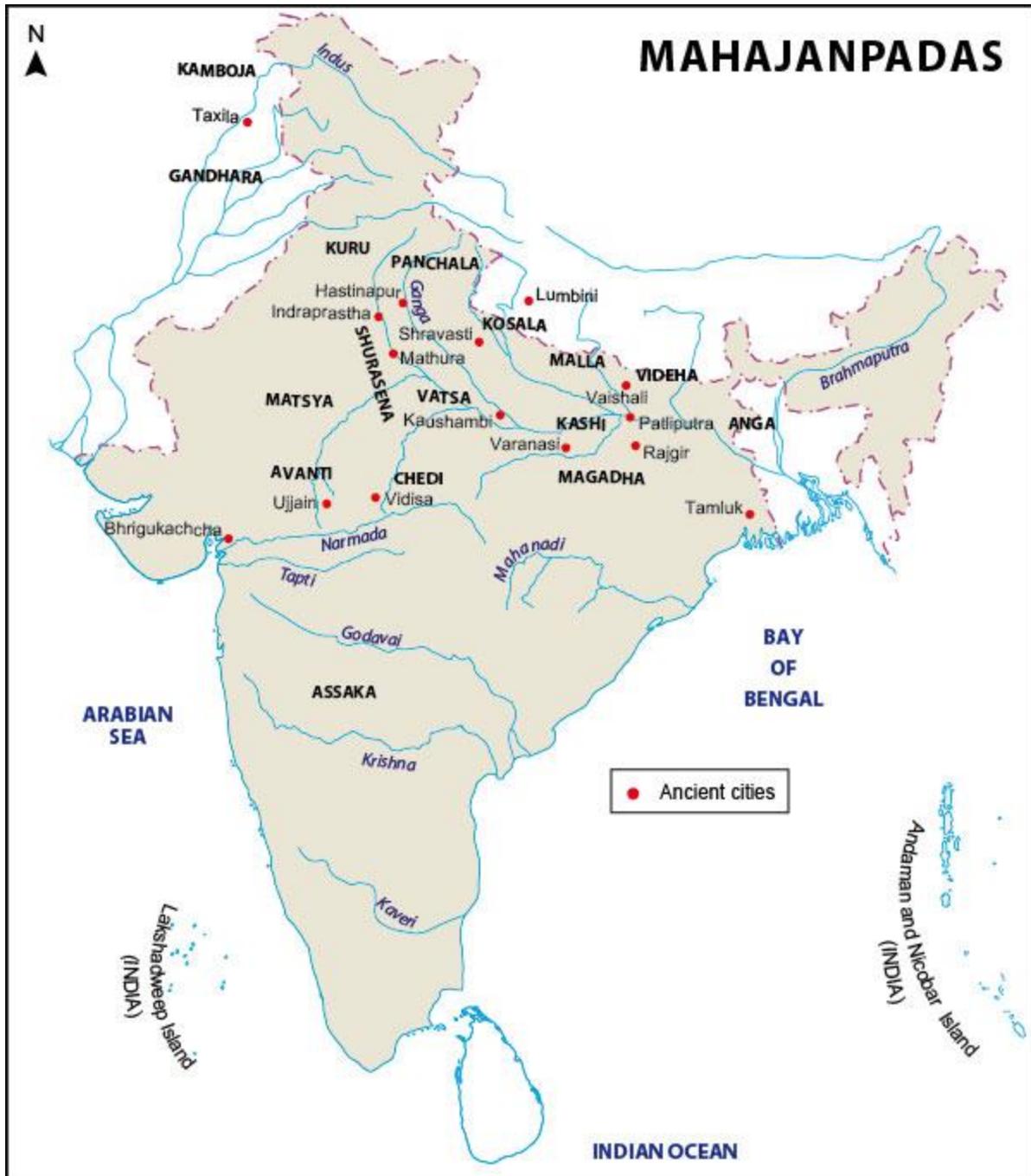
Rajsuya Yajna

- Was performed when a king was coroneted and was then performed every year on the same date

- In the later Vedic period, castes and classes were established which was known as Varna
- The people who were strong and were able to control the resources became rulers and warriors.
- These warriors claimed themselves to be Kshatriyas which became dynastic and hereditary.
- The priest class began writing the literature in such a way that no one else would be able to become priests.
- The traders, peasants and craftsmen were of a class called Vaishyas and labour class or working class were being called Shudras
- The occupation of a person depended solely upon his entire genealogy.
- **First mention of the four castes was in the Rigveda.**
- The condition of women started deteriorating in the later Vedic period. Polygyny increased in this period.
- Women were condemned by certain Brahmanas which compared them to wine and gambling and were also referred to as one of the evil.

EMERGENCE of JANAPADAS and MAHAJANAPADAS (6th - 5th century B.C.)

- This era is known in History as second urbanisation. The first period was during the Harappan period.
- There were 16 Mahajanapadas most of which were in the Gangetic Plain.
- Gangetic plain was very fertile region and agriculture was the main occupation.
- Among the 16 Mahajanapadas, 5 were more powerful than others.
- These were – Magadha (Capital – Rajgriha), Avanti (Capital – Ujjaini), Kashi (Capital – Varanasi), Kosala (Capital – Shravasti), Vajji (Capital – Vaishali)



1. Haryanka Dynasty

- This dynasty ruled from 6th century B.C. to 5th century B.C.
- Bimbisara and Ajatashatru were famous kings. Ajatashatru was the son of Bimbisara.
- They were contemporaries of Buddha and Mahavira.
- Ajatashatru killed Bimbisara and was later killed by his son Udayan.

2. Shishunaga Dynasty

- Shishunaga and Kalashoka were the famous kings of this dynasty.

Darius, an Iranian, was the first individual to attack India in 510 B.C

3. Nandas

- Mahapadma Nanda was the famous king of this dynasty
- First to annex Kalinga (modern day Orissa)
- Dhanananda was the ruler during which Alexander the Great invaded India.

JAINISM

- Jainism is an Indian religion that prescribes a path of non-violence towards all living beings.
- Its philosophy and practice emphasize the necessity of self-effort to move the soul toward divine consciousness and liberation.
- Any soul that has conquered its own inner enemies and achieved the state of Supreme Being is called a jina.
- According to Jain belief there were 24 Tirthankars (Spiritual Gurus) in Jainism.
- The first Tirthankara was Rishabdev, second was Arishtanemi, twenty third was Parshvanath, and Twenty fourth was Vardhaman.
- Parshvanath was from Varanasi and his followers were known as Nirgranth which means free from all bonds.
- Vardhaman's parents were also Nirgranth thus Vardhaman was also a Nirgranth

Vardhaman Mahavira

- He is believed to be born in 540 B.C. in Kundalagrama in Vaishali. His father's name was Siddharth and mother's name was Trishala. He belonged to Jnatrika clan.
- His wife's name was Yashoda and daughter's name was Priyadarshika.
- He left home at the age of 30 years and the age of 42 he attained supreme knowledge at Jrbhakagram.
- He gave his first sermon in a place called Vipulchal in Nalanda.
- He died in 468 B.C. at the age of 72 at a place called Pawapuri in Nalanda in Bihar.
- Main reason for less numbers of Jain followers was extreme non-violence practice.

Alexander the Great

- Alexander III of Macedon, commonly known as Alexander the Great, was a king of Macedon, a state in northern ancient Greece.
- He was born in Pella in 356 BC and was tutored by Aristotle until the age of 16
- Invaded India during 326 B.C. to 324 B.C.
- He came through Hindu Kush through Afghanistan and Pakistan
- He returned back via Sindh
- The first Indian King who surrendered to Alexander was Ambhi
- He was known as Sikander in Iran and Alakshendra in India.
- He did not attack major parts of India due to:-
 - Hot Climate of India
 - Soldiers of Alexander were very tired
 - Fear that they won't be able to defeat Nanda's huge army.

Teachings of Jainism:-

1. Non-violence
2. Not to steal
3. Always tell the truth
4. Not to accumulate wealth
5. Celibacy

First four were given by Parshavanath and the fifth was given by Vardhaman Mahavir

Philosophy of Jainism

1. **Concept of God** – Tirthankaras are superior to God and God is not the creator of Universe
2. **Regarding the Universe** – Universe has no beginning or end. Phase of rise – Utsarpini; Phase of Decline - Avasarpini
3. **Concept of Soul** – Universe is full of souls and it exists in living and non – living things. Wherever there is soul, there is suffering
4. **Concept of Nirvana** – It means free from cycle of birth and death. **Santhara** has to be performed (fasting till death). Chandragupta Maurya performed Santhara.
5. **Five stages of Knowledge** – Mathi, Sruti, Avadhi, Manahpraya, Kevalya
6. **Syadvad** – 7 possibilities of truth. Also known as Anekantvad

- Two famous sects in Jainism are:-
 - Svetambar – To wear white clothes
 - Digambar – Followers of this do not wear clothes
- Svetambaras compiled the teachings of Mahavira in a book form called Purvas. It was in Prakrit Language.
- In 5th and 6th century A.D. Jain munis assembled at Vallabhi and compiled the teachings known as Angas and was written in Prakrit
- Digambaras rejected the teachings of Purvas and Angas

- Monks led by Sthulabhadra went to Magadha and were of the Svetambara sect.
- Monks led by Bhadrabahu migrated to Sravanabelagola and were of the Digambara

BUDDHISM

- Siddharth (Buddha) was born in the year 566 B.C. in the city of Kapilavastu which is in Lumbini in Nepal
- Siddhartha was born in a royal Hindu family. His father was Suddhodana and mother was Mahamaya. He was brought up by Gautami.
- He belonged to the Shakya clan and was also a Kshatriya. He was also known as Shakyamuni.
- He was married at the age of 16 to Yashodhara and had a son called Rahul
- Four sights of Buddha were – An old man, a sick man, a dead corpse and a monk.
- He left the house at the age of 29 on his horse chariot.
- At the age of 35 he sat under a Pipal tree near the river Niranjana (modern day Phalgu River) at Bodhgaya.
- It is believed that Buddha meditated at this place for 7 weeks (49 days) and by 49th day he attained supreme knowledge and was called “the enlightened one”.
- He meditated again for 49 days after attaining supreme knowledge.
- Buddha gave his first sermon at Sarnath in Varanasi which was known as Dharma Chakra Pravartan.
- He preached in all seasons except monsoon.
- He returned back home after attaining knowledge and all his family members became his followers.
- He passed away at the age of 80 at a place called Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh.

Philosophy of Buddhism or Arya Satya

Four Noble Truths

1. The world is full of sorrow
2. The cause of sorrow is desire of materialistic things
3. There is a way to get rid of sorrow
4. To follow eight fold path is the solution for getting rid of sorrow which is popularly known as **Ashtangika Marg** – It is also known as the middle path (avoiding extremes of both materialistic life and austere life)

Buddha gave a balance between material life and austere life which was previously very difficult to attain.

Ashtangika Marg

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|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Right View | 5. Right livelihood |
| 2. Right Resolve | 6. Right exercise |
| 3. Right Speech | 7. Right recollection or memory |
| 4. Right Concentration | 8. Right Meditation |