



POST-MAURYAN PERIOD: NATIVE DYNASTIES, FOREIGN INVASIONS, AND **TRADE**

(c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



RISE OF
NATIVE DYNASTIES



FOREIGN
INVASIONS



TRADE &
COMMERCE



CULTURE &
DEVELOPMENTS



Post-Mauryan Period:

Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade

(c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



INTRODUCTION

A. TIME FRAME

- c. 185 BCE to 300 CE
- Follows the decline of the Mauryan Empire.
- Ends with the rise of the Gupta Empire.



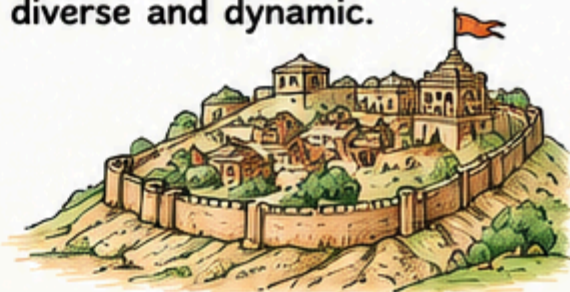
INTRODUCTION

The Post-Mauryan Period marks a time of political fragmentation, rise of regional powers, foreign invasions and cultural & economic development in the Indian subcontinent.



B. POLITICAL SCENARIO

- Decline of a centralized empire led to the **rise of regional kingdoms**.
- Power shifted to local rulers and chiefs.
- Political landscape became diverse and dynamic.



C. NATIVE DYNASTIES

Several indigenous dynasties emerged and ruled over different parts of India.

- **Shungas** – Magadha
- **Kanvas** – Magadha
- **Satavahanas** – Deccan
- **Indo-Greeks** – North-West
- **Sakas (Indo-Scythians)** – North & West India
- **Kushanas** – North India



D. FOREIGN INVASIONS AND SETTLEMENTS

- Greeks, Sakas, Pahlavas (Indo-Parthians) and Kushanas entered India.
- Some came as invaders, others as traders.
- Many settled in India and ruled over regions.



E. TRADE AND ECONOMY

- Trade **flourished** with India, Central Asia, Rome, and Southeast Asia.
- Use of **coins** increased.
- Development of inland and maritime trade.
- Ports like Bharukachchha, Sopara, Muziris were important trade centers.



F. CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT

- **Buddhism**, **Jainism** and **Brahmanism** all flourished.
- Spread of Buddhism to Central Asia and Southeast Asia.
- Development of **art**, **architecture** and **literature**.
- Gandhara art and Mathura art flourished.



G. SIGNIFICANCE

- ✓ This period laid the foundation for cultural integration and economic prosperity.
- ✓ Regional powers and foreign groups contributed to the cultural diversity of India.
- ✓ It set the stage for the emergence of the Gupta Empire, the "Golden Age" of India.





Post-Mauryan Period: Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade (c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



1. NATIVE DYNASTIES OF POST-MAURYAN INDIA A. THE SHUNGA DYNASTY (c. 185 – 73 BCE)

1. ORIGIN AND FOUNDATION

- Founded by Pushyamitra Shunga.
- He was a Brahmin and the commander-in-chief (Senapati) of the Mauryan army under the last Maurya emperor, Brihadratha.
- Around 185 BCE, Pushyamitra assassinated Brihadratha and established the Shunga dynasty.
- **Capital:** Pataliputra.
- The dynasty ruled from c. 185 – 73 BCE.



Pushyamitra Shunga

SHUNGA DYNASTY (c. 185 – 73 BCE)

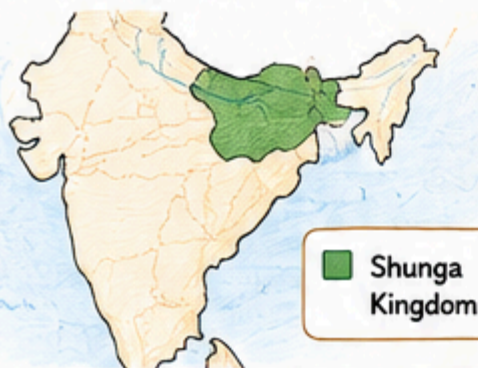
The Shungas were the first major indigenous dynasty to rule in North India after the decline of the Mauryas.

2. IMPORTANT RULERS

Ruler	Key Points
Pushyamitra Shunga	• Founder of the dynasty. • Performed two Ashvamedha sacrifices to assert his sovereignty.
Agnimitra	• His life is described in the play 'Malavikagnimitram' by Kalidasa.
Vasumitra	• Commander who defeated the Indo-Greeks (Yavanas).
Bhagabhadra	• The last notable ruler.
Devabhuti	• The last ruler; overthrown by the Kanvas.

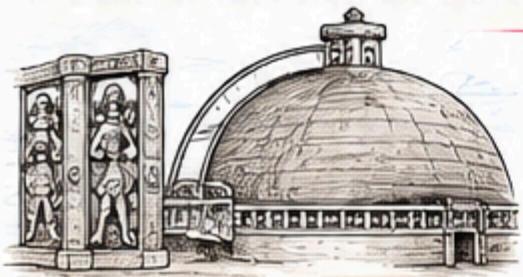
3. EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM

- Ruled mainly in Magadha and central India.
- Influence extended to parts of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and possibly to the regions of the Ganga-Yamuna doab.



5. RELIGION AND CULTURE

- Pushyamitra is sometimes portrayed in Buddhist texts as a persecutor, but there is no strong archaeological evidence.
- He was a great patron of Brahmanism and performed Ashvamedha sacrifices.
- Buddhism continued to flourish during the Shunga period.
- Development of art and architecture:
 - Construction of many stupas and railings (e.g., Bharhut, Sanchi).
 - Floral motifs, yakshas, and narrative reliefs on railings.
 - Growth of Vaishnavism and Shaivism.



6. ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS



- Defended India against foreign invasions, especially the Indo-Greeks.



- Performed Ashvamedha sacrifices to establish imperial authority.



- Encouraged literature, art, and architecture.



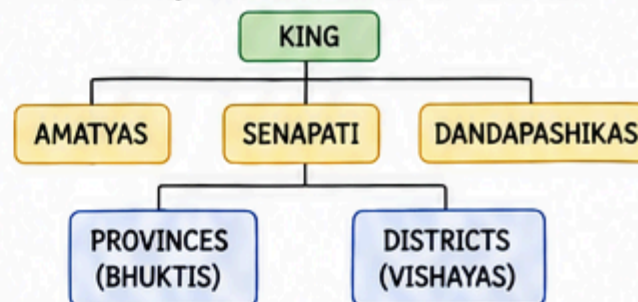
- Stupas and Buddhist monuments were constructed.



- Sanskrit drama grew during this time (e.g., works of Kalidasa belong to this era).

4. ADMINISTRATION

- Maintained many Mauryan administrative traditions.
- The empire was divided into provinces (Bhuktis) and districts (Vishayas).
- Officials like Amatyas, Senapati, and Dandapashikas were appointed.
- Revenue system was based on land tax.



7. DECLINE

- The last ruler **Devabhuti** was weak and unpopular.
- The minister Vasudeva (a Kanuva) overthrew him around 73 BCE and founded the Kanva Dynasty.
- Thus, the Shunga rule came to an end.



Coins of Shunga Period

SUMMARY

The Shunga Dynasty marked the beginning of the Post-Mauryan period. It safeguarded India from external threats, revived Brahmanical traditions, and promoted art, literature and architecture while continuing many Mauryan administrative practices.





Post-Mauryan Period:

Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade

(c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)

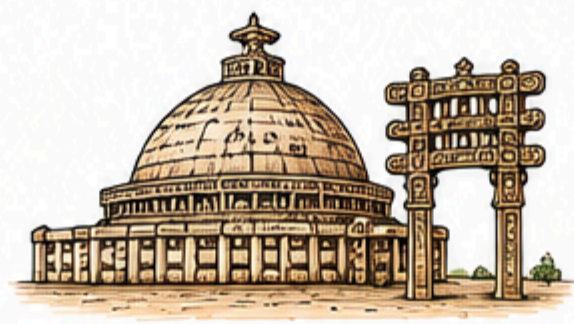


1. NATIVE DYNASTIES OF POST-MAURYAN INDIA

B. THE KANVA DYNASTY (c. 73 – 28 BCE)

1. ORIGIN AND FOUNDATION

- Founded by **Vasudeva**, the minister (a Brahmin) of the last Shunga ruler, Devabhuti.
- Around 73 BCE, Vasudeva overthrew Devabhuti and established the Kanva Dynasty.
- The dynasty derived its name from the gotra (clan) of the Kanva Brahmins.
- Capital:** Pataliputra.
- Ruled from c. 73 – 28 BCE.



KANVA DYNASTY

(c. 73 – 28 BCE)

The Kanvas succeeded the Shungas and ruled a smaller kingdom for a short period before the rise of the Satavahanas.

2. RULERS OF THE KANVA DYNASTY

Ruler	Key Points
Vasudeva	Founder of the dynasty; overthrew the last Shunga ruler Devabhuti.
Bhumimitra	Consolidated power.
Narayana	Little is known.
Susharman	Known only from Puranic lists.
Vasudeva II	The last ruler; dynasty ended around 28 BCE.



NOTE

Details about the Kanva rulers are very scanty; known mainly from Puranas.

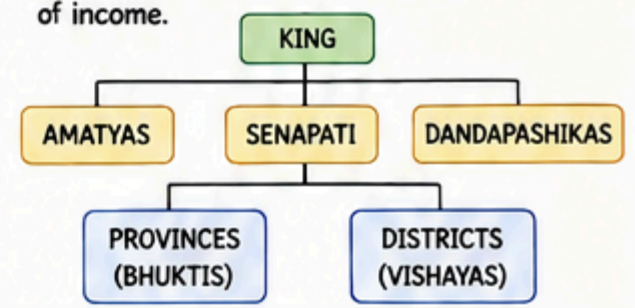
3. EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM

- The Kanva kingdom was smaller than that of the Shungas.
- Mainly confined to Magadha and nearby areas of Bihar.
- Possibly extended to parts of Uttar Pradesh.



4. ADMINISTRATION

- Continued many administrative practices of the Shungas.
- Divided the kingdom into provinces (Bhuktis) and districts (Vishayas).
- Officials such as Amatyas, Senapatis and Dandapashikas were appointed.
- Land revenue was the main source of income.



6. RELIGION AND CULTURE

- Brahmanism was strongly supported by the Kanva rulers.
- Vedic sacrifices like Ashvamedha were performed.
- Buddhism continued to be patronized by the people.
- Sanskrit was the language of literature and inscriptions.
- Art and architecture were a continuation of the Shunga style.



5. ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS



Patronized Brahmanism; performed Vedic sacrifices.



Buddhism continued to flourish alongside Brahmanism.



Literary works such as the *Harivamsa* (part of Mahabharata) are associated with this period.



Art and architecture, including stupas and railings, continued to be developed.



Economy based on agriculture, trade and land revenue.

7. DECLINE

- The last ruler Vasudeva II was weak and unable to maintain power.
- The rising power of the Satavahanas under Simuka challenged Kanva rule.
- Around 28 BCE, the Kanva Dynasty was overthrown by Simuka, the founder of the Satavahana Dynasty.



Coins of Kanva Period

SUMMARY

The Kanva Dynasty was a short-lived but important successor of the Shungas. Though little is known about its rulers, it played a role in continuing Brahmanical traditions, supporting literature and art, and maintaining administrative practices before the rise of the Satavahanas.





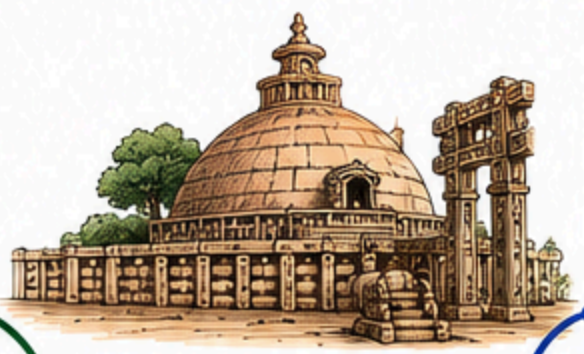
Post-Mauryan Period: Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade (c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



1. NATIVE DYNASTIES OF POST-MAURYAN INDIA C. THE SATAVAHANA DYNASTY (c. 1st CENTURY BCE – 3rd CENTURY CE)

1. ORIGIN AND FOUNDATION

- Founded by **Simuka (Sishuka)**.
- The name 'Satavahana' means 'one who belongs to the Satakarni lineage'.
- Believed to be of **Andhra** origin.
- Rose to power in the Deccan around the 1st century BCE.
- They ended the rule of the Kanvas in the Deccan.
- **Capital (early):** Pratishthana (Paithan) on the Godavari.



SATAVAHANA DYNASTY (c. 1st CENTURY BCE – 3rd CENTURY CE)

The Satavahanas (also called Andhras) were one of the most important indigenous dynasties that ruled a large part of peninsular India.

2. IMPORTANT RULERS

Ruler	Key Points
Simuka (Sishuka)	Founder of the dynasty.
Krishna	Extended the kingdom.
Sri Satakarni (I)	Most powerful early ruler; performed Ashvamedha sacrifice.
Gautamiputra Satakarni	Greatest ruler; defeated the Shakas, Yavanas and Pahlavas; restored glory of the dynasty.
Vasisthiputra Pulumavi (II)	Extended rule to the Tamil country; promoted trade.
Yajna Sri Satakarni	Performed many Vedic sacrifices; issued coins.

3. EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM

- Ruled a vast area of the Deccan.
- Bounded by:
 - North: Narmada River
 - South: Krishna River
 - West: Arabian Sea
 - East: Bay of Bengal
- Included parts of Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha.



4. ADMINISTRATION

- Well-organized administration.
- The kingdom was divided into:

KING

AHARAS (Provinces) RATTAS (Districts)

GRAMAS (Villages)
- Officials: Amatyas, Mahamatras, Dandapashikas, Senapatis.
- Revenue system was based on land tax and trade duties.
- Local self-government existed in villages and towns.

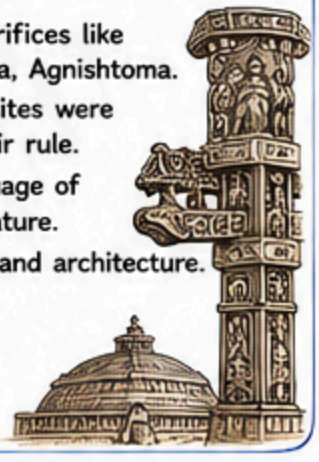
5. ECONOMY AND TRADE

- Agriculture was the main occupation.
- Important crops: Rice, cotton, pulses, sugarcane.
- Flourishing trade (internal and external).
- Major ports: Sopara, Kalyan, Bharukachchha (Broach), Masulipatnam.
- Exported: Cotton textiles, beads, ivory, spices, gemstones.
- Trade with Rome, Southeast Asia and the Middle East.



6. RELIGION AND CULTURE

- Patronized Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism.
- Performed Vedic sacrifices like Ashvamedha, Rajasuya, Agnishtoma.
- Important Buddhist sites were developed during their rule.
- Prakrit was the language of inscriptions and literature.
- Great patrons of art and architecture.
- Notable sites:
 - Amaravati Stupa
 - Nagarjunakonda
 - Kanheri Caves



7. COINS AND INSCRIPTIONS

- Issued lead, copper, silver and potin coins.
- Coins bear Prakrit legends in Brahmi script.
- Symbols on coins: Ujjain symbol, ship, Elephant, Chaitya, Tree-in-railing, etc.



Important Inscriptions

- Nashik Inscriptions
- Naneghat Inscription
- Karle, Kanheri and Amaravati Inscriptions

8. DECLINE

- Successors of Gautamiputra Satakarni were weak.
- Pressure from the Western Kshatrapas, Ikshvakus and Abhiras.
- Gradual disintegration in the 3rd century CE.
- The dynasty finally came to an end around 300 CE.



- ✓ The Satavahanas were one of the greatest indigenous dynasties of the Deccan.
- ✓ They built a strong kingdom, promoted trade, and supported art, literature and religion.
- ✓ Their rule laid the foundation for the cultural and economic unity of peninsular India.
- ✓ They acted as a bridge between North and South India in terms of polity, economy and culture.





Post-Mauryan Period: Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade (c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



1. NATIVE DYNASTIES OF POST-MAURYAN INDIA D. THE CHEDI (MAHAMEGHAVAHANA) DYNASTY OF KALINGA

1. ORIGIN AND FOUNDATION

- Founded by Mahameghavahana, also known as Kharavela I.
- He belonged to the Chedi clan.
- Rose to power in Kalinga around the 1st century BCE.
- The dynasty is also called the Mahameghavahana Dynasty.
- Established after the decline of Mauryan influence in Kalinga.
- Capital:** Toshali (modern Dhauli, near Bhubaneswar, Odisha).



CHEDI (MAHAMEGHAVAHANA) DYNASTY OF KALINGA (c. 1st CENTURY BCE – 1st CENTURY CE)

An important native
dynasty that ruled
Kalinga after the decline
of the Mauryas.

2. IMPORTANT RULERS

Ruler	Key Points
Kharavela (Mahameghavahana I)	- Founder and greatest ruler. - Known from the Hathigumpha Inscription. - Expanded and consolidated Kalinga.
Hathigumpha Inscription	- Composed in Prakrit language using Brahmi script. - Records the achievements of Kharavela.
Other Rulers	- Names of later rulers are not clearly known. - Dynasty continued for a few generations.

3. EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM

- Kalinga under Kharavela extended from the Mahanadi in the north to the Godavari in the south.
- Included modern Odisha and northern Andhra Pradesh.
- Varanasi and parts of South Kosala were also brought under his influence.



4. ADMINISTRATION

- The administration was centralized under the king.
- The kingdom was divided into provinces and districts.
- Officers like Amatya, Mahamatras, and Senapatis were appointed.
- Revenue system was well organized.
- Local self-government existed in towns and villages.



5. ACHIEVEMENTS OF KHARAVELA

- Defeated the Yavanas (Indo-Greeks) and drove them out of Kalinga.
- Re-established the glory of Kalinga and extended his rule.
- Captured and repaired the ancient city of Kalinganagara.
- Brought the Nandankanan (a pleasure garden) back to Kalinga from Magadha.
- Performed many religious works and public welfare activities.
- Patronized art, music, and literature.



6. RELIGION AND CULTURE

- Kharavela was an ardent follower of Jainism.
- Performed many Jain religious activities and donations.
- Also respected other religions and sects.
- Development of art, architecture, music and dance.
- Flourishing of Prakrit literature.
- Construction of public works like wells, tanks, and gardens.



7. DECLINE

- After Kharavela, the successors were not strong.
- The dynasty gradually lost power due to internal weakness.
- Kalinga came under the influence of other powers in the 1st century CE.
- The dynasty came to an end by the early centuries of the Common Era.



8. HATHIGUMPHA INSCRIPTION – A KEY SOURCE

- Found in the Hathigumpha rock shelter near Udayagiri (Odisha).
- Composed in Prakrit language in Brahmi script.
- Describes the achievements of King Kharavela year by year.
- An important source for the history of Kalinga and this dynasty.



KEY TAKEAWAY

The Chedi (Mahameghavahana) Dynasty of Kalinga, with Kharavela as its greatest ruler, revived the glory of Kalinga and left behind a rich legacy of administration, culture and public welfare.





Post-Mauryan Period: Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade (c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



2. FOREIGN INVASIONS FROM CENTRAL ASIA A. THE INDO-GREEKS (BACTRIAN GREEKS)

1. ORIGIN AND ENTRY

- Greek rulers under Eucratides in Bactria (modern Afghanistan) came into conflict with the Shunga Empire.
- Around the mid-2nd century BCE, the Indo-Greeks crossed the Hindu Kush and entered India.
- They first captured the north-western regions (Gandhara and Punjab) and later advanced into the Gangetic plain.
- They were the first major foreign power to establish a stable rule in India.



2. IMPORTANT RULERS

Ruler	Key Points
Diodotus I	Founder of the Indo-Greek Kingdom in India.
Euthydemus I	Extended the kingdom up to the Ganga plain.
Demetrius I (Soter)	The greatest ruler; conquered a large part of north India including Mathura and Pataliputra (possibly).
Menander I (Milinda)	Most famous ruler; known for his wisdom and patronage of Buddhism; featured in 'Milindapanha'.
Apollodotus II	Last important ruler; after him the power declined.

INDO-GREEKS (BACTRIAN GREEKS)

Greek rulers from Bactria who moved into India and ruled parts of the north-western region.

c. 2nd century BCE – 1st century CE

3. EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM

- Core region: Gandhara, Kabul valley, Punjab and parts of Rajasthan.
- Under Demetrius I, extended up to Mathura and possibly Pataliputra.
- The kingdom gradually declined in the 1st century BCE.



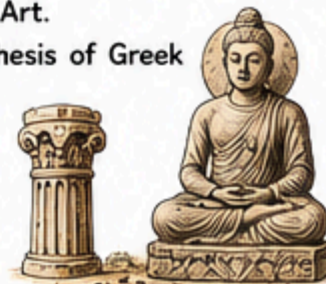
4. ADMINISTRATION

- Adopted Hellenistic administrative traditions with Indian practices.
- Provinces were governed by satraps or governors.
- Cities were well-organized with civic administration.
- Issued coins and maintained a regular revenue system.



6. RELIGION AND CULTURE

- Initially followers of Greek polytheism.
- Many rulers, especially Menander, embraced Buddhism.
- Built temples, stupas and monasteries.
- Important center of Greco-Buddhist art – Gandhara School of Art.
- Promoted cultural synthesis of Greek and Indian traditions.



9. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- ★ The Indo-Greeks were the first foreign rulers to establish a stable kingdom in India.
- ★ They paved the way for Indo-Scythians, Kushan and other Central Asian powers.
- ★ Their rule marked an important phase of cultural interaction between Greece and India.



KEY TAKEAWAY

The Indo-Greeks played a crucial role in India's history by introducing Hellenistic ideas, art, coinage and administration, and by fostering Indo-Greek cultural synthesis.

7. CONTRIBUTIONS

- Introduced Hellenistic culture and influenced Indian art.
- Developed coinage system on a large scale.
- Greco-Buddhist art (Gandhara School) – a unique blend.
- Promoted knowledge exchange in science, astronomy and philosophy.
- Encouraged trade and urban development.

5. COINS AND SCRIPT

- Indo-Greeks introduced a large number of silver and copper coins.
- Coins were bilingual – Greek (obverse) and Kharoshthi/ Brahmi (reverse).
- Featured Greek deities (Zeus, Athena, Herakles) on one side and Indian symbols on the other.
- Coins helped in trade and cultural exchange.



Coin of Menander I (Milinda)

8. DECLINE

- After the death of Apollodotus II, the kingdom weakened due to succession disputes.
- Pressed by attacks from Scythians (Indo-Scythians) and native powers.
- Gradually lost territory during the 1st century CE.
- Finally disappeared by the early 1st century CE.



TIMELINE

c. 2nd century BCE
Indo-Greeks enter India from Bactria

c. 150 – 100 BCE
Demetrius I expands kingdom

c. 100 – 50 BCE
Menander (Milinda) rules

c. 1st century CE
Indo-Greek power declines





Post-Mauryan Period: Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade (c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



2. FOREIGN INVASIONS FROM CENTRAL ASIA B. THE SHAKAS (SCYTHIANS)

1. ORIGIN AND ENTRY

- The Shakas (Scythians) were Indo-Iranian nomadic tribes from Central Asia.
- They were pushed towards India by the pressure of the Xiongnu (Hun) tribe.
- They entered India through the north-western passes (Khyber Pass) around the 2nd century BCE.
- They first occupied the north-western regions and later spread to western and central India.
- They are also called the Western Kshatrapas in later period.



THE SHAKAS (SCYTHIANS)

Nomadic tribes from Central Asia (Scythia) who entered India in waves and established powerful kingdoms in various regions.

c. 2nd century BCE – 3rd century CE

2. IMPORTANT GROUPS AND RULERS

Group / Dynasty	Key Rulers
Indo-Scythians (Saka in the North-West)	• Maues (the first important ruler) • Azes I and Azes II • Ruled in Kabul, Gandhara, Punjab and Mathura.
Western Kshatrapas (Saka Kshatrapas)	• Chastana (restored his power) • Rudradaman I (most famous ruler) • Ruled in Gujarat, Malwa, Kathiawar.
Kshatrapas of Malwa	• Established rule in Ujjain and central India.
Other Branches	• Spread to Maharashtra and parts of Rajasthan.

3. EXTENT OF THEIR KINGDOM

- Indo-Scythians ruled in the regions of Gandhara, Kabul valley, Punjab and Mathura.
- Western Kshatrapas ruled in Gujarat, Kathiawar, Malwa and parts of Rajasthan.
- They controlled important trade routes linking India with Central Asia, Persia and the Roman world.



4. ADMINISTRATION

- Shakas adopted Indian administrative system.
- They appointed Kshatrapas (governors) to rule provinces.
- Their administration was well organized with revenue collection and law & order.
- They issued coins and maintained a regular system of weights and measures.



5. COINS AND SCRIPT

- Shakas issued silver, copper and lead coins.
- Coins had Greek legends on one side and Kharoshthi or Brahmi script on the other.
- They continued the Greek style of portrait coins.
- Their coins are important sources for history and chronology.



Coin of Azes II (Indo-Scythian)



Coin of Rudradaman I (Western Kshatrapa)

6. RELIGION AND CULTURE

- They were tolerant towards all religions.
- Patronized Buddhism, Brahmanism and Jainism.
- Many Shaka rulers became followers of Hinduism.
- Built temples, stupas and supported trade and urban development.
- Blending of Greek, Iranian and Indian cultures (Indo-Scythian art at Gandhara is a great example).



7. CONTRIBUTIONS



- Maintained and protected trade routes between India, Central Asia and the Mediterranean world.



Encouraged agriculture, irrigation and urban growth.



Issued good quality coins which promoted economy.



Promoted art and architecture (Gandhara School of Art flourished under Indo-Scythians).



Helped in cultural fusion between Indian and Hellenistic traditions.

8. DECLINE

- Power weakened due to internal conflicts and struggles among rulers.
- Pressure from the Parthians in the west and Kushans in the north.
- Gradually lost their territories.
- By the 3rd century CE, their political power declined, though they left a lasting cultural legacy.



9. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- ★ The Shakas were the first step in the continuous flow of foreign powers into India after the Mauryas.
- ★ They played a key role in the development of trade, art, culture and urbanization.
- ★ Their rule paved the way for the rise of the Kushans.



KEY TAKEAWAY



The Shakas (Scythians) were important foreign rulers who established strong kingdoms in India, contributed to trade, culture and art, and left behind rich historical evidence through their coins and inscriptions.





Post-Mauryan Period: Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade (c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



2. FOREIGN INVASIONS FROM CENTRAL ASIA C. THE KUSHANAS (YUEZHI TRIBE)

1. ORIGIN AND ENTRY

- The Kushanas were originally the Yuezhi tribe from the regions north of the Oxus (Amu Darya) in Central Asia.
- They were displaced by pressure from the Xiongnu (Huns) around the 2nd century BCE.
- Under the leader **Kujula Kadphises**, they moved into Bactria and then entered India.
- They gradually established their power in the north-west and the Gangetic plain.



THE KUSHANAS (YUEZHI TRIBE)

The Yuezhi tribe from Central Asia established the Kushana Empire in India and became one of the most powerful dynasties of the early centuries CE.

c. 1st century CE – 3rd century CE

2. IMPORTANT RULERS

Ruler	Key Points
Kujula Kadphises	• Founder of the Kushana power in India. • Captured parts of Gandhara.
Vima Kadphises	• Great conqueror; expanded the empire in North India. • Defeated the Shakas and Western Kshatrapas. • Adopted the title 'Maharajadhiraja'.
Kanishka I (Greatest Ruler)	• Ruled a vast empire from Afghanistan to Mathura and from Kashmir to Gujarat (Bay of Bengal not included). • Great patron of Buddhism. • Convened the 4th Buddhist Council at Kashmir (traditionally). • Era of Kanishka (78 CE) is very important in Indian history.
Huvishka	Continued the empire; issued many coins.
Vasudeva I	Last important ruler of the dynasty.

3. EXTENT OF THE EMPIRE

- One of the largest empires of ancient India.
- Extended from Bactria and Afghanistan in the west to Mathura in the east.
- From Kashmir in the north to Malwa and Gujarat in the south.
- Important regions: Gandhara, Punjab, Kashmir, Mathura, Pataliputra (influence), Central India.



4. ADMINISTRATION

- The empire was divided into provinces (bhuktis) and districts (vishayas).
- Provincial governors (Kshatrapas) and officers were appointed.
- Efficient revenue system based on land tax and trade.
- Municipal administration existed in towns.
- Law and order were well maintained.



5. COINS AND SCRIPT

- Kushanas issued a large number of gold, silver and copper coins.
- Coins bear images of Greek, Iranian and Indian deities.
- Bilingual legends – Greek (obverse) and Kharoshthi or Brahmi (reverse).
- Gold coins of Kanishka are very important sources.



Gold Coin of Kanishka
Obverse (Greek)



Reverse (Kharoshthi)

6. RELIGION AND CULTURE

- Kushanas were religiously tolerant.
- Patronized Buddhism, but respected Brahmanism, Jainism and other faiths.
- Kanishka was a great patron of Buddhism.
- Development of Mahayana Buddhism during this period.
- Built many stupas and monasteries.
- Important Buddhist sites: Purushapura (Peshawar), Taxila, Mathura.
- Gandhara art flourished – a blend of Greek and Indian styles.



7. CONTRIBUTIONS

- Promoted trade along the Silk Route connecting India with Central Asia, China and Rome.
- Encouraged agriculture, irrigation and urban development.
- Development of art and architecture (Gandhara School, Mathura School).
- Issued high quality coins – standard weight and purity.
- Helped in cultural exchange between India, Central Asia, West Asia and the Mediterranean world.



8. DECLINE

- After the death of Vasudeva I, the empire weakened.
- Successors were weak and lost control over provinces.
- Pressure from Sassanids in the west and other regional powers.
- By the 3rd century CE, the Kushana Empire disintegrated.



9. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- ★ The Kushanas were the most powerful foreign rulers in India.
- ★ Their empire played a key role in political stability and economic prosperity.
- ★ They promoted art, culture, religion and international trade.
- ★ The Kushana Era (78 CE) is an important historical marker.
- ★ They laid the foundation for cultural synthesis in ancient India.



KEY TAKEAWAY

The Kushanas (Yuezhi) built a vast empire in India, promoted trade and culture, patronized Buddhism and left behind a rich legacy of art, coins and administrative practices.





Post-Mauryan Period: Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade (c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)

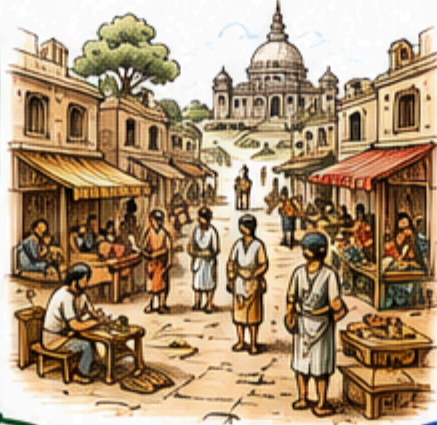


3. POST-MAURYAN ECONOMY, TRADE, AND CRAFTS A. GUILD SYSTEM (SHRENIS) • B. INDO-ROMAN TRADE

A. GUILD SYSTEM (SHRENIS)

1. INTRODUCTION

- Guilds or Shrenis were associations of artisans, merchants and bankers.
- They played a vital role in the economic, social and political life.
- Mentioned in Buddhist, Jaina texts, inscriptions and literature.
- They existed in both urban and rural areas.



2. CHARACTERISTICS

- Based on occupation (e.g., weavers, potters, metal workers, carpenters, traders).
- Had their own rules, regulations and internal administration.
- Elected a head – Jetthaka / Pramukha.
- Collected membership fees and fines.
- Maintained discipline and quality control.
- Had a common fund used for welfare activities and emergencies.



3. FUNCTIONS

- Regulated production, quality, prices and wages.
- Protected the economic interests of members.
- Provided loans and financial assistance to members.
- Resolved disputes and maintained law and order.
- Spent on charity, religious activities and public works.

4. TYPES OF GUILDS

a) Industrial Guilds

- Included artisans and craftsmen.
- Organized production of goods.
- Ensured technical standards.



b) Mercantile Guilds

- Included traders, merchants and bankers.
- Controlled trade and commercial activities.
- Carried goods across regions and abroad.



5. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Inscriptions: Nasik, Karle, Sanchi, Mathura, etc.
- Literary Sources: Buddhist texts (Jatak tales), Jaina texts, Arthashastra, Puranas.
- Foreign Accounts: Megasthenes refers to guilds.



6. IMPORTANCE

- ✓ Strengthened urban economy and trade.
- ✓ Promoted specialization and mass production.
- ✓ Provided social security to members.
- ✓ Encouraged trade and entrepreneurship.
- ✓ Contributed to cultural and religious development.



POST-MAURYAN ECONOMY, TRADE, AND CRAFTS

B. INDO-ROMAN TRADE

1. OVERVIEW

- Indo-Roman trade flourished from the 1st century BCE to the 3rd century CE.
- Strengthened after the establishment of the Roman Empire.
- Red Sea ports under Roman control connected India with the Mediterranean world.



2. TRADE ROUTES

Sea Route	Indian ports → Arabian Sea → Red Sea ports (Myos Hormos, Berenike) → Nile → Mediterranean Sea → Rome.	
Land Route	Ujjain, Taxila → Bactria → Iran → West Asia → Mediterranean world.	

3. INDIA'S EXPORTS



Cotton textiles



Pepper & spices



Precious & semi-precious stones



Ivory



Steel, iron & indigo

4. IMPORTS FROM ROME



Gold & silver coins



Wine



Coral



Glassware

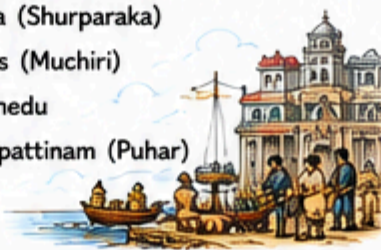


Luxury items

5. IMPORTANT PORTS

Indian Ports

- Barygaza (Bharuch)
- Sopara (Shurparaka)
- Muziris (Muchiri)
- Arikamedu
- Kaveripattinam (Puhar)



Roman/West Asian Ports

- Myos Hormos
- Berenike
- Alexandria (Egypt)
- Antioch
- Rome



6. EVIDENCES

- Roman coins found in large numbers in India (Augustus, Tiberius, Nero, etc.).
- Roman pottery, glassware and amphorae.
- References in the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (1st century CE).
- Inscriptions and literary sources.



7. SIGNIFICANCE

- ★ Guilds promoted economic organization and industrial growth.
- ★ Indo-Roman trade brought wealth, cultural exchange and economic prosperity.



- ★ India became an important part of the ancient world economy.
- ★ Helped in the growth of towns, crafts, shipbuilding and banking.





Post-Mauryan Period: Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade (c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



4. SCHOOLS OF ART AND SCULPTURE

1. GANDHARA SCHOOL

- Flourished in the region of Gandhara (Modern Pakistan and Afghanistan).
- Strongly influenced by Hellenistic (Greek) art.
- Used grey schist (stone) as the main medium.
- Famous for realistic human figures, drapery, wavy hair and mustaches.
- First images of Buddha in human form were created here.
- Subjects: Buddha, Bodhisattvas, Jataka tales, Greek gods, daily life.

Key Sites: Taxila, Peshawar, Swat Valley, Hadda.



2. MATHURA SCHOOL

- Flourished in the Mathura region (Uttar Pradesh).
- Indigenous in origin with no foreign influence.
- Used red mottled sandstone.
- Known for robust, spiritual and life-like figures.
- Developed images of Hindu deities, Jain Tirthankaras and Buddha.
- Emphasis on spiritual expression and symbolism.

Key Sites: Mathura, Kankali Tila.



SCHOOLS OF ART AND SCULPTURE

The Post-Mauryan period witnessed the flourishing of art and sculpture in different regions, reflecting diverse influences, materials and techniques.

COMMON FEATURES

- Religious themes dominated – Buddhist, Jain and Hindu.
- Use of stone, wood, terracotta, metal and ivory.
- Development of iconic images of Buddha and other deities.
- Art reflects cultural synthesis of Indian and foreign elements.
- Patronage by dynasties, merchants, guilds and monks.



3. AMARAVATI SCHOOL

- Flourished in the lower Krishna valley (Andhra Pradesh).
- Associated with the Satavahanas.
- Used white limestone.
- Famous for intricate carvings, railings, pillars and stupas.
- Depicted Jataka tales, life of Buddha and nature motifs.
- Art is dynamic, detailed and full of movement.

Key Site: Amaravati Stupa.



5. BARABAR CAVES (ROCK CUT ARCHITECTURE)

- Built during the Mauryan and Post-Mauryan period.
- Associated with Ajivikas (Mauryan period) and later improved.
- Excellent example of rock-cut architecture.
- Polished interiors and simple design.

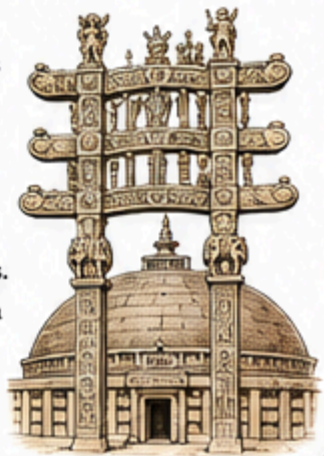
Key Sites: Barabar Caves (Bihar), Nagarjuni Hills.



4. SANCHI SCHOOL

- Flourished in Central India.
- Associated with the Shungas and Satavahanas.
- Known for architectural excellence and sculptural carvings.
- Stupas, gateways (toranas) and railings are masterpieces.
- Depicts Buddha's life, Jataka tales, animals, yakshas and floral designs.

Key Site: Sanchi Stupa.



6. WESTERN INDIA SCHOOLS

- Flourished in regions like Ujjain, Nasik, Karle, Bhaja and Junnar.
- Known for rock-cut caves, chaityas and viharas.
- Art reflects trade prosperity and Buddhist patronage.
- Detailed carvings on pillars, facades and interiors.

Key Sites: Karle Caves, Nasik Caves, Bhaja Caves.



7. MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES

Stone	Terracotta	Metal (Bronze, Copper)	Ivory
Used in sculpture, stupas, pillars and cave architecture.	Used for toys, figurines and ornamental pieces.	Used for images, figurines, utensils and decorative items.	Used for carvings, combs, inlay work and luxury items.

Techniques: Carving, polishing, casting, moulding, engraving and inlay.

8. KEY THEMES IN ART

	Life of Buddha and Jataka Tales
	Buddhist Symbols – Stupa, Dharma Chakra, Bodhi Tree, Lotus
	Hindu Deities – Vishnu, Shiva, Kartikeya, Yakshas
	Jain Tirthankaras
	Nature – Animals, Birds, Trees, Flowers
	Daily Life – Musicians, Dancers, Warriors, Women

9. SIGNIFICANCE

- Art became more regional and diverse.
- Iconic representation of religious figures began.
- Blend of Indian traditions with foreign influences.
- Patronage encouraged art, architecture and craftsmanship.
- Left a rich cultural legacy that influenced Indian art for centuries.



TIMELINE OF ART DEVELOPMENT

3rd century BCE
Mauryan Art
(Pillars, Caves, Polished Stone)

2nd – 1st century BCE
Shunga Period
(Stupas, Railings, Decorative Motifs)

1st century BCE – 1st century CE
Satavahana Period
(Amaravati School, Cave Architecture)

1st – 3rd century CE
Kushan Period
(Gandhara & Mathura Schools Flourish)

3rd century CE
Regional Styles and Art Traditions Continue





Post-Mauryan Period:

Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade

(c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



QUICK EXAMINATION

FACTS



REMEMBER

- Small facts
- Build strong memory
- High scores!

NATIVE DYNASTIES – Indigenous dynasties that emerged after the Mauryas and ruled different regions.

FOREIGN INVASIONS – Invasions and settlements by Greeks, Shakas (Scythians) and Kushanas.

TRADE & ECONOMY – Growth of trade, crafts, guilds and urban centers with domestic and international connections.

QUICK EXAMINATION FACTS

- Satavahanas were the most powerful dynasty of the Deccan.



- Pratishthana (Paithan) was the capital of the Satavahanas.



- Gautamiputra Satakarni was the greatest ruler of Satavahana dynasty.



- Kharavela was the famous ruler of the Chedi (Mahameghavahana) dynasty of Kalinga.



- Hathigumpha Inscription (Udayagiri) is the main source for Kharavela.



- Indo-Greeks were the first foreigners who established their rule in India.



- Menander (Milinda) was the most famous Indo-Greek ruler.



- Indo-Greeks ruled in regions like Gandhara, Punjab and Mathura.



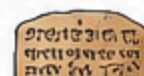
- Shakas (Scythians) entered India through the north-western passes.



- Rudradaman I was the most famous ruler of the Western Kshatrapas.



- Junagadh Inscription of Rudradaman I is in Sanskrit.



- Kushanas were originally from the Yuezhi tribe of Central Asia.



- Kanishka was the greatest ruler of the Kushana dynasty.



- Kanishka convened the 4th Buddhist Council at Kashmir.



- Kushana Empire extended from Afghanistan to Mathura and from Kashmir to Gujarat.



- The Post-Mauryan period witnessed growth in agriculture, trade, crafts and industries.



- Guilds or Shrenis played a vital role in economic and social life.



- Important guilds: Weavers, goldsmiths, potters, carpenters, bankers, merchants.



- Ujjain, Taxila, Pataliputra, Mathura and Bharukaccha were important trade centers.



- Sopara, Kalyan and Muziris were important sea ports.



- Indo-Roman trade flourished through the ports of the Red Sea.



- Exports: Pepper, spices, cotton, silk, ivory, gems, beads, steel.



- Imports: Gold, silver, wine, coral, glassware, luxury items.



- Roman coins (Augustus, Tiberius, Nero) have been found in India.



- Rock-cut architecture developed: Barabar Caves, Nasik Caves, Karle Caves.



- Art Schools developed: Gandhara, Mathura, Amaravati, Sanchi and Western Indian styles.



- Buddhism, Jainism and Brahmanism all flourished during this period.



- This period laid the foundation for cultural unity and economic integration in India.



ONE LINE MEMORY TRICKS



People

+



Territory

+



Government

+



Dynasties

+



Trade



Growth

+



Order

+



Justice



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Post-Mauryan Period:

Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade

(c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



MCQs



Page 1

1 Who was the most famous ruler of the Chedi (Mahameghavahana) Dynasty of Kalinga?

- (A) Samprati
- (B) Kharavela
- (C) Rudradaman I
- (D) Kanishka

Correct Answer: (B) Kharavela

Explanation:

- Kharavela was the most renowned ruler of the Chedi (Mahameghavahana) Dynasty.
- He is known from the Hathigumpha Inscription (Udayagiri Caves).
- He was a great administrator, warrior and patron of arts and Jainism.



Hathigumpha Inscription

2 Which foreign power was the first to establish its rule in India after the Mauryas?

- (A) Shakas (Scythians)
- (B) Indo-Greeks (Bactrian Greeks)
- (C) Kushanas
- (D) Hunas

Correct Answer: (B) Indo-Greeks (Bactrian Greeks)

Explanation:

- The Indo-Greeks were the first foreigners who established their rule in India (c. 2nd century BCE).
- They came from Bactria (present-day Afghanistan) and ruled in regions like Gandhara, Punjab and Mathura.
- Menander (Milinda) was their most famous ruler.



Coin of Indo-Greek King

3 The Saka (Scythian) ruler Rudradaman I belonged to which dynasty?

- (A) Western Kshatrapas
- (B) Satavahanas
- (C) Shunga Dynasty
- (D) Kanva Dynasty

Correct Answer: (A) Western Kshatrapas

Explanation:

- Rudradaman I was the most famous ruler of the Western Kshatrapas.
- His Junagadh Inscription (c. 150 CE) is an important source.
- He was a great administrator and patron of Sanskrit literature.



Junagadh Inscription

4 Which dynasty was originally of the Yuezhi tribe and gave India one of its greatest emperors, Kanishka?

- (A) Indo-Greeks
- (B) Shakas
- (C) Kushanas
- (D) Satavahanas

Correct Answer: (C) Kushanas

Explanation:

- The Kushanas were originally the Yuezhi tribe from Central Asia.
- Kanishka was one of their greatest rulers.
- He convened the 4th Buddhist Council at Kashmir and promoted Buddhism.



Coin of Kanishka

5 Which of the following was a major feature of Indo-Roman trade during the Post-Mauryan period?

- (A) Trade was limited to overland routes only.
- (B) Roman gold coins have been found in India.
- (C) There was no import of luxury goods from the Roman Empire.
- (D) Trade was confined to the Ganges valley.

Correct Answer: (B) Roman gold coins have been found in India.

Explanation:

- Indo-Roman trade flourished through Red Sea ports.
- Large number of Roman gold coins (Augustus, Tiberius, Nero) have been found in India.
- Exports included spices, cotton, silk, ivory, etc., and imports included gold, wine, coral, glassware, etc.



Roman Gold Coin (Augustus)



Quick Tip

Link rulers with their key sources and achievements to remember facts easily in exams.





Post-Mauryan Period:

Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade

(c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



MCQs



Page 2

6 Which Satavahana ruler is known for having issued coins bearing a ship (praha) as a symbol?

- (A) Gautamiputra Satakarni
- (B) Vasisthiputra Pulumavi
- (C) Yajna Sri Satakarni
- (D) Simuka

Correct Answer: (B) Vasisthiputra Pulumavi

Explanation:

- Vasisthiputra Pulumavi was an important Satavahana ruler.
- His coins often depict a ship, indicating his connection with maritime trade.
- Satavahanas were great patrons of trade and issued large number of coins.



Coin of Vasisthiputra Pulumavi

7 Which port was the western seaport most famous for Indo-Roman trade?

- (A) Sopara
- (B) Muziris
- (C) Bharukaccha (Broach)
- (D) Kaveripattinam (Puhar)

Correct Answer: (C) Bharukaccha (Broach)

Explanation:

- Bharukaccha (Broach) was a major port on the west coast.
- It was a significant emporium for Indo-Roman trade.
- It was situated on the Narmada river.



Port of Bharukaccha (Broach)

8 The 4th Buddhist Council was held during the reign of which Kushana ruler?

- (A) Kujula Kadphises
- (B) Vima Kadphises
- (C) Kanishka
- (D) Huvishka

Correct Answer: (C) Kanishka

Explanation:

- Kanishka, one of the greatest Kushana rulers, convened the 4th Buddhist Council at Kashmir.
- It was presided over by Vasumitra.
- It helped in the spread of Buddhism to Central Asia, China and other regions.



Kanishka (Kushan Emperor)

9 Which of the following was NOT an important export item from India during the Indo-Roman trade?

- (A) Spices
- (B) Cotton textiles
- (C) Wine
- (D) Ivory

Correct Answer: (C) Wine

Explanation:

- India exported spices, cotton textiles, ivory, silk, precious stones, steel, etc.
- Wine was an import from the Roman Empire, not an export from India.
- Gold, silver and coral were also imported.



Indian Exports to Roman Empire

10 Which of the following is a rock-cut cave associated with Western Kshatrapa ruler Rudradaman I?

- (A) Nasik Caves
- (B) Barabar Caves
- (C) Ajanta Caves
- (D) Karle Caves

Correct Answer: (A) Nasik Caves

Explanation:

- Rudradaman I's inscription is found in the Nasik Caves.
- The inscription is in Sanskrit and is an important source for the history of Western Kshatrapas.
- It records his achievements and repairs of the Sudarshana Lake.



Nasik Caves



Quick Tip

Focus on dynasties, rulers, inscriptions, coins, trade routes, ports and cultural contributions to score high in MCQs!





Post-Mauryan Period:

Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade

(c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



MCQs



Page 3

11 Which of the following inscriptions is NOT associated with Kharavela?

- (A) Hathigumpha Inscription
- (B) Junagadh Inscription
- (C) Kalinga Inscription
- (D) Udayagiri Inscription

Correct Answer: (B) Junagadh Inscription

Explanation:

- The Hathigumpha Inscription (Udayagiri Caves) is associated with Kharavela, the ruler of Kalinga.
- The Junagadh Inscription is associated with Rudradaman I, the ruler of the Western Kshatrapas.
- Kharavela's inscription is the earliest example of Brahmi script in an extended form.



Hathigumpha Inscription
(Udayagiri Caves)

12 Which of the following best describes the administration of the Kushana Empire?

- (A) Highly centralized with village assemblies
- (B) Feudal and decentralized
- (C) Centralized with provincial governors (Kshatrapas)
- (D) Republican in nature

Correct Answer: (C) Centralized with provincial governors (Kshatrapas)

Explanation:

- The Kushana Empire was well-organized with the king at the head.
- The empire was divided into provinces, districts and sub-districts.
- King appointed officials such as Kshatrapas (governors) to administer the provinces.



Extent of Kushana Empire

13 The art of Gandhara School shows maximum influence of which of the following cultures?

- (A) Persian
- (B) Greek
- (C) Egyptian
- (D) Chinese

Correct Answer: (B) Greek

Explanation:

- Gandhara School developed in Gandhara region (modern Pakistan and Afghanistan).
- It shows strong influence of Hellenistic (Greek) art.
- Features: Wavy hair, realistic drapery, and human figures similar to Greek sculpture.



Buddha (Gandhara School)

14 Which of the following was an important import during Indo-Roman trade?

- (A) Pepper
- (B) Cotton
- (C) Gold and Silver
- (D) Ivory

Correct Answer: (C) Gold and Silver

Explanation:

- India exported goods like spices, cotton, silk, ivory, beads, gemstones etc.
- In return, gold, silver, wine, coral, glassware and luxury items were imported from Roman Empire.
- Large number of Roman gold coins found in India indicates inflow of gold.



Roman Gold Coins
found in India

15 Which of the following statements is CORRECT about the Shakas (Scythians)?

- (A) They entered India through the Deccan plateau.
- (B) They were originally from Central Asia.
- (C) They ruled for a long time in the Ganga valley.
- (D) They were originally seafarers.

Correct Answer: (B) They were originally from Central Asia.

Explanation:

- The Shakas (Scythians) were nomadic people from Central Asia.
- They entered India through the north-western passes.
- They established their rule in western and north-western India.



Shakas (Scythians)



Quick Tip

Make short notes of rulers, inscriptions, coins, trade routes and art schools for quick revision.





Post-Mauryan Period:

Native Dynasties, Foreign Invasions, and Trade

(c. 185 BCE – 300 CE)



MCQs



Page 4

16 Which of the following was the main capital of the Satavahanas?

- (A) Mathura
- (B) Ujjain
- (C) Pratishthana (Paithan)
- (D) Pataliputra

Correct Answer: (C) Pratishthana (Paithan)

Explanation:

- Pratishthana (modern Paithan in Maharashtra) was the capital of the Satavahanas.
- It was an important center of trade and culture.
- The dynasty ruled over a large part of Deccan and western India.



Pratishthana (Paithan)

17 Which of the following coins is associated with the Indo-Greek ruler Menander (Milinda)?

- (A) Punch-marked coins
- (B) Bilingual coins
- (C) Roman gold coins
- (D) Kushana copper coins

Correct Answer: (B) Bilingual coins

Explanation:

- Menander issued bilingual coins with Greek on one side and Kharoshthi script on the other.
- His coins help historians understand the culture and economy of that period.
- Menander is also known from the book 'Milinda Panha'.



Bilingual Coin of Menander (Milinda)

18 Which of the following was a characteristic feature of the economy during the Post-Mauryan period?

- (A) Decline in trade and industries
- (B) Growth of agriculture, trade, crafts and urban centers
- (C) No use of coins in trade
- (D) Dependence only on bartering system

Correct Answer: (B) Growth of agriculture, trade, crafts and urban centers

Explanation:

- The Post-Mauryan period saw economic prosperity.
- Agriculture, trade, crafts and industries grew significantly.
- Many urban centers and trade routes developed.



Trade and Economic Prosperity

19 Which of the following ports was famous on the eastern coast for Indo-Roman trade?

- (A) Sopara
- (B) Kaveripattinam (Puhar)
- (C) Muziris
- (D) Bharukaccha (Broach)

Correct Answer: (B) Kaveripattinam (Puhar)

Explanation:

- Kaveripattinam (Puhar) was an important port on the eastern coast.
- It was a major center of trade with Rome and Southeast Asia.
- It was the capital of the Cholas.



Kaveripattinam (Puhar) Port

20 Which art school is known for the use of red sandstone and was primarily developed in the Mathura region?

- (A) Gandhara School
- (B) Amaravati School
- (C) Mathura School
- (D) Sanchi School

Correct Answer: (C) Mathura School

Explanation:

- Mathura School used red sandstone extensively.
- It is known for well-proportioned, life-like sculptures of Buddha, Jaina Tirthankaras and Hindu deities.
- It developed in the Mathura region.



Buddha Sculpture (Mathura School)



Revise names of rulers, dynasties, inscriptions, coins, trade routes and art schools regularly for better retention.





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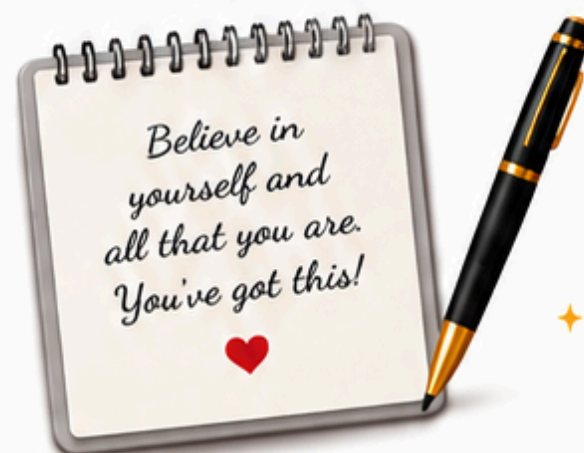
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