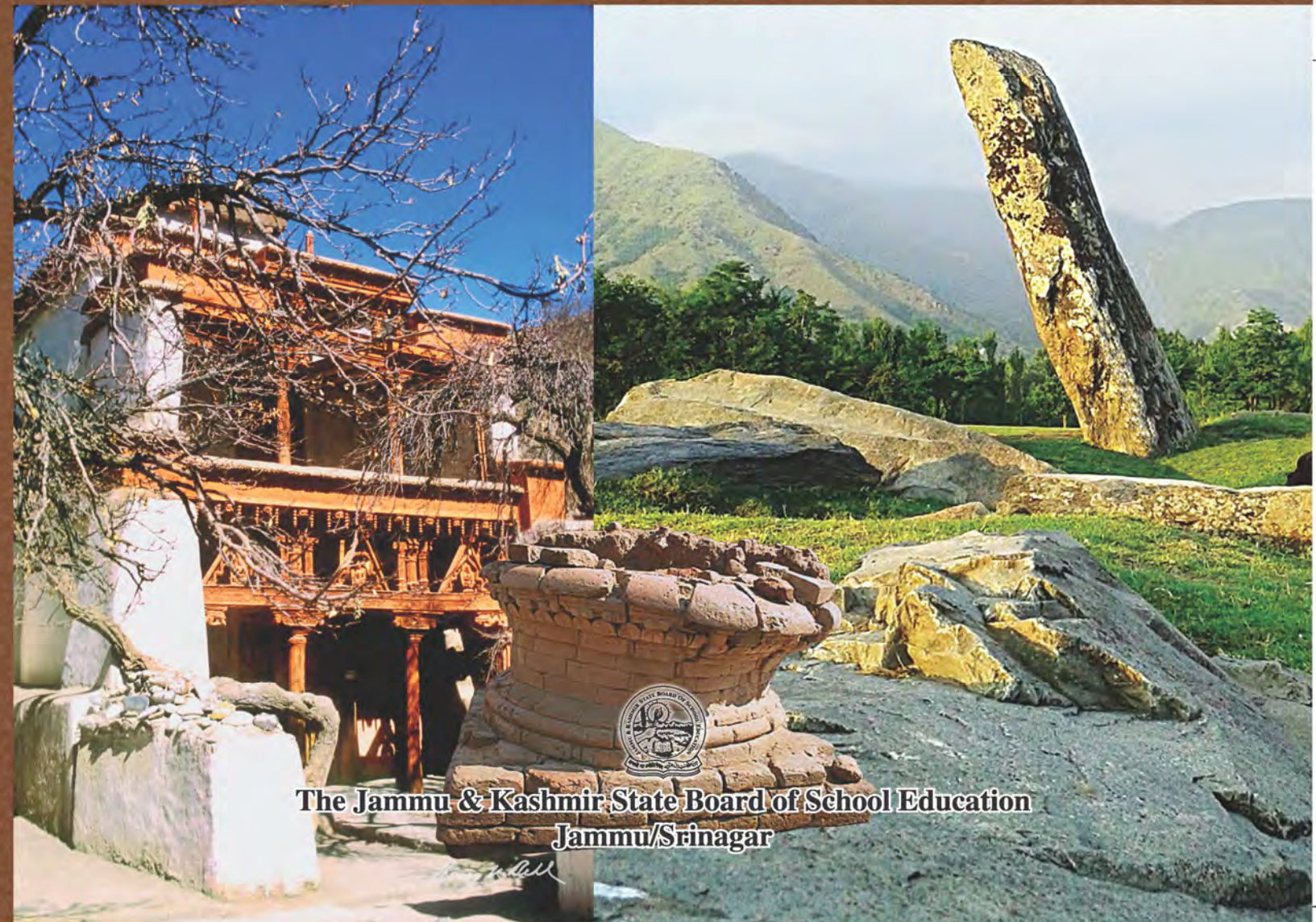


OUR PASTS-I

TEXTBOOK IN HISTORY FOR CLASS VI

Handwritten text on a palm-leaf manuscript fragment.



The Jammu & Kashmir State Board of School Education
Jammu/Srinagar



The Jammu & Kashmir State Board of School Education
Jammu/Srinagar

Social Science

OUR PASTS-I

TEXTBOOK IN HISTORY FOR CLASS VI



**The Jammu & Kashmir State Board of School Education
Jammu/Srinagar**

Published by

Jammu and Kashmir State Board of School Education Srinagar/ Jammu

Phone:

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FOREWORD

The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education has initiated the process of review and revision of the school curriculum to make it learner-centred and to depart from the legacy of bookish learning that creates a rift between the school and society, in the light of the recommendations of NCF 2005. The textbooks attempt to discourage rote learning and the maintenance of sharp boundaries between different subject areas. For instance, the themes of social science are integrated with science and studied as part of EVS up to primary classes.

It is for the first time in class VI that students study different components of Social Science separately. The textbook of history for class VI which has been redeveloped under the guidance of Prof Anita Rampal, will encourage children to reflect on their own past, by focusing about what it means to think historically. Children are capable of generating new knowledge by engaging critically with the world of school and everyday life. Inculcating creativity and initiative is possible if we enable children to be participants in learning and not receivers of a fixed body of knowledge.

This book aims at stimulating the curiosity of children and sensitizing them towards their own history and culture by extrapolating from the local and family history to the history of society. Sustaining the interest and critical creativity of children is a major collective challenge for the whole education system. The textbook is conceived in such a way that it will ameliorate the problems of curricular burden. The use of simple language and concrete contexts, keeping the original spirit of the NCERT textbook intact, has added to the beauty of the book.

The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education gratefully acknowledges the active support and encouragement offered by the Hon'ble Education Minister Shri Naeem Akhtar, in its efforts to revise the curriculum. It is also grateful for the use of the history textbook published by NCERT, New Delhi as a benchmark for the preparation and development of this textbook, through local contextualisation of the diverse realities of the children of J&K.

I place on record my appreciation and thanks to the team of experts who were involved in the development of this textbook and especially to Prof. Anita Rampal, Faculty of Education, Delhi University, but for whose guidance and sincere efforts, this book would not have seen the light of day. I recognize the contribution of Prof. Veena Pandita, Secretary BOSE for her support in the revision of this book and the Curriculum Development and Research (CDR) Wing, Academic Division BOSE, particularly Ms. Kaneez Fatima, Director Academics and Ms. Monica Sharma, Academic officer for their efforts in bringing out this book.

As an organization committed to systemic reforms and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, JKBOSE welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinement.

Prof. Zahoor Ahmad Chat
Chairman

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book is adapted from the NCERT Class VI book (2006) and draws upon the resources and contributions of the people who developed that. New material has been written with emphasis on the local history and diverse cultural context of J&K, and chapters have been significantly edited and simplified to make the language and concepts suitable for children of this age group. This book was completed in a short time owing to the active support of Ms. Kaneez Fatima, Director Academics, BOSE and Ms. Monica Sharma, Academic Officer.

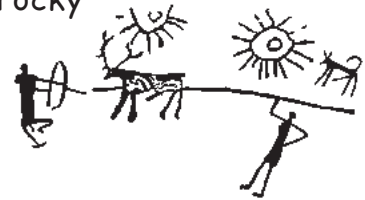
We are extremely grateful to INTACH, whose work in documentation and conservation of the heritage of Kashmir has inspired us. We thank Saleem Beg, Saima Iqbal and Anjum, for providing us information and photographs of the Shahi *Hamaam* at Shalimar Garden, even at very short notice. We thank Rashid Lone for photographs of the artefacts at Burzahom. For other photographs we thank Amit Kumar, Gulzar Danish, Prof. Anita Rampal, and late Dr. Vinod Raina. We thank Shri Jawahar Lal Bhat for the use of his translation of the Lal Ded poem. Our thanks also to Dr. Altaf Hussain Para, Amar Singh College and Shri Mushtaq Ahmad Beigh, Curator of SPS Museum, for their help in getting photographs of rare artefacts.

We express our deep gratitude to Benoy Behl, who generously offered to give us any photograph we chose from among his collection of the Alchi monastery, and his folio of the Ajanta paintings. We have three photos on Alchi (p. 54-55) and one on Ajanta (p. 90). He promised to continue to help us and we do hope to take up that offer in future.

We have retained the rich visual resources of the original book, and would like to reiterate our thanks to all the organizations and people who offered our children these remarkable treasures. We thank the Archaeological Survey of India, the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training, National Manuscript Mission, New Delhi, the Photo Archives, American Institute of Indian Studies, Gurgaon, and the University of Hyderabad, for providing photographs of inscriptions, coins, monuments, sculptures, paintings, illustrations of archaeological and historical sites and artefacts. While every effort has been made to acknowledge the source of illustrations, we apologise for any omissions that may have inadvertently taken place.

WHY STUDY HISTORY?

You are now reading this Class VI book on history. What is this new subject called history? You would surely try and guess from the name of the book - Our Past. So what is our past? You may think of an answer: our past relates to things that happened long back. But this answer leads to other questions. How long back? How do we know these stories? Which story from the past forms the subject of history? Is there only one story to tell? You may have many questions and this book will help you ask more. Ask more?! Yes, it will not give fixed answers for you to memorise. It will not burden you with a mass of 'facts'. It will not make you believe that history is all about dates - the dates of when a king or queen ruled, or some war was fought, or building was made. This book should make you think, wonder, guess, imagine, find out, compare, paint, look at details, act out, sing, write poems, work together, visit places, understand why, andwant to learn more! History can do all this. So are you ready for this journey, back in time? Going across hundreds, thousands or even millions of years? Come let us follow those who study history, looking for clues, almost like detectives, trying to solve a mystery... Digging into the ground, climbing a rocky mountain, crawling inside a cave, through a forest, along a river.... Or let's listen to a tourist guide showing us a beautiful carving or painting, explaining how those big stones were carried there, and how the colours were made from stones and plants....



History is part of a bigger group of subjects called Social Science. Social Science helps us understand our social world. It tells us about geography, about people, and how people manage their lives, their villages and cities. Most subjects of Social Science tell us about the world today, in the present. History helps us understand about the past of the present. When we live in a society, we become used to the world around us. We forget that life was not always the way we see it. Can you close your eyes and imagine that you live where no one knows about fire? What would it be without heating and cooking? Can you think of what life would be, when people did not know how to grow food? Or, what it was to live at a time when there were no roads or buses? Even a hundred years ago how did people travel from Jammu to Leh? History can help us imagine what it was to live in such pasts, in times that were very different from our present.

So history is an adventure. It is a journey across time and space. It transports us into another world, another age, in which people lived very, very differently. Their society, their beliefs and faiths, their clothes and food, their settlements and buildings, their arts and crafts - everything was so different. History can open doors into such worlds. You may shrug your shoulders and say "Why should we bother about pasts that are no longer with us, pasts that have gone by?" But history is not just about the past. It is about the present. The society we live in has been shaped by those who came before us. The joys and sorrows of

their daily lives, their attempt to sort out their questions and problems, their discoveries and inventions, slowly changed human societies. These changes were often so slow, so seemingly small, that their impact was not noticed by people at that time. Only now, when we return to the past, when we study history, can we begin to see how those changes happened, and understand their long-term effect. By reading history we can understand how the modern world has developed over these thousands of years.

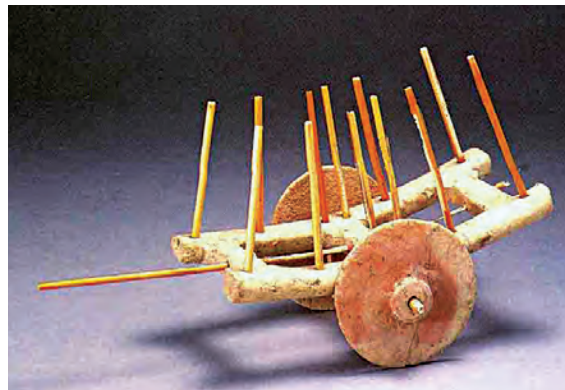
The book that you will study this year will take you back to our ancient pasts. In this book you will read not just about the kings and queens who lived very long back, but about hunters and farmers, crafts people and traders. You will see how fire came to be used, and iron tools were discovered; how wheat and rice began to be grown, and villages and towns developed. You will read about pilgrims and saints, buildings and paintings, religions and beliefs. You will find out that history is not only about great men. It is also about the lives and activities of ordinary women, men and children. History is not only about political events, it is about everything that happens in society.

Studying history can help us understand more than the past. It enables us to develop important skills, ideas and qualities. When we try and enter another world, we have to learn how to do this — to understand people whose lives were different. As we do this, we open up our minds and break out of our small present day worlds. We begin to see how other people may think and act. This can become a learning experience, of questioning and thinking, that enriches us in many different ways.

So, before you shrug your shoulders, ask yourself one question:

Do I want to know who I am? Do I want to understand how this society works? Do I want to understand the world in which I live? If you do, then you will need to know how our societies have changed. And how our pasts have shaped the present.

Neeladri Bhattacharya and Anita Rampal
Advisors, Textbook Development Committee



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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

LOOK OUT FOR THESE



Arvind plays a king

Arvind had been chosen to act as a king in the school play. He had expected to march in a beautiful dress, twist his moustaches and hold the silver-paper covered sword with brilliant style.

How can we stop people from spoiling this great Megalith in Burzahom?!



Elsewhere

What is this word in your language?

Imagine

Let's recall

Let's discuss

Let's do

- You will find that each chapter is *introduced* by a young girl or a boy.
- Each chapter is divided into sections. Read, discuss and understand each section before going to the next.
- Many of our sources are visual. Each *picture* has a story to tell. You will learn a lot by carefully 'reading' a picture and what is written next to it. Think and answer a question that may be given there.
- You will also find *maps*. Look at these and try to locate the places given in the chapters.
- Many chapters contain boxes with interesting, *additional information*.
- Chapters end with a section called *Elsewhere*. This tells you about something that was happening in another part of the world.
- At the end of each chapter, you will find a list of words that you should discuss in the languages you speak. The meaning of a word cannot be just another word. You must *make sense* of the idea behind it, by discussing where and how it is used.
- There are very few dates used. But when you hear of how many years ago you must think about about life at that time. Also try to write a date with the letters A.D or B.C. in the way shown on page 12 in chapter 1.
- In each chapter there are intext *questions and activities* that are given in a different colour. Spend some time discussing these as you go along.
- And there is a small section called *Imagine*. This is your chance to go back into the past and figure out what life would have been like.
- You will also find three kinds of activities listed at the end of each chapter — *Let's recall*, *Let's discuss* and *Let's do*.

So, you will find that there is a lot to read, see, think about and do. We do hope you enjoy it.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT, WHERE, HOW AND WHEN?

Rasheeda's question

Rasheeda sat reading the newspaper. Suddenly, her eyes fell on a small headline: "One Hundred Years Ago." How, she wondered, could anyone know what had happened so many years ago?



Where did your family live in the past

Exercise: Find out about your family and fill in the following table below.

How did you find out these things about your family? Whom did you ask? Did you read or see something? Is there something in the table that you could not answer?

| In the Past | People in your family | Where they lived | Work they did | Food they ate | Clothes they wore |
|----------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 5 years back | | | | | |
| 50 Years back | | | | | |
| 100 Years back | | | | | |

Did you find some interesting things about your family that you did not know before? What if you start thinking about the world around you in the same way? You can know so many more interesting things! Like if you try to find out what your village or city was like a hundred years ago... Was it even there, a hundred years ago...?

When you try to find out about the past you work almost like a historian!

Historians work a little bit like detectives. They

ask questions about the past. And then, they look for clues to answer these questions.

In this way, we can find out how people lived. We can find out about the lives of many different people – hunters, farmers, people who kept animals, kings and queens, traders, priests, crafts persons, artists, musicians, and scientists. What kind of work did they do? What kinds of celebrations did they have? What about their food, clothes and houses? We can also try to find out about the toys, games, stories, and the songs that children enjoyed long, long ago!

Historians have found some very exciting things in Jammu and Kashmir.

Let's go back 400 years...

The Shahi Hamaam at Shalimar Bagh

Have you heard of or seen the Shalimar Garden in Kashmir? Do you know how old the garden is? It is about 400 years old! Thousands and thousands of people from all over the world have come to the Gardens for many years.

But recently, historians found something exciting about Shalimar Garden which not many people knew before. They found some very old bricks hidden under mud, plants and grass. Was there something old and interesting under the mud?

They started digging to find out.

After some months of careful digging and cleaning they found a building. It was a *hamaam*. Do you know what a *hamaam* is? It is a place built under the floor of homes or mosques. People burn wood

The famous Shalimar Garden in Srinagar



inside the *hamaam*, to keep buildings warm. The Shalimar Garden and the *Hamaam* were made by the Mughal king Jahangir.

In the *Hamaam* at Shalimar Garden, we can see a fire-place where wood was burned to boil water. The steam from the water would pass around the bricks under the floor to heat it. It must not have been easy to build.



What do you think will happen to a building if it is under mud for hundreds of years?

Steam would pass around these brick blocks under the floor, and heat the *Hamaam*

There are people who work on old buildings. They try to repair them so that they look like when they were first built. No, not like the buildings now!

Exercise: Look at the pictures of the Hamaam on the next page. Picture 1 is before it was repaired and 2 & 3 are after it was repaired. What differences can you see before and after it was repaired? What kind of work do you think might have been done to repair it?

Many people worked on the *Hamaam* and made it look really beautiful again. If you get a chance you must go and see it.

Teacher's note

It would be good to encourage children to observe old buildings and monuments around their area. The teacher could also plan a visit to such a place, even if it is in a ruined condition. Children could write about it, make pictures and find out more about its history. They need to be made sensitive to the need to preserve this heritage, to stop other people from spoiling these, and to appreciate the efforts being made for the conservation of old buildings, and understand that this is not the same as 'reconstruction'.

Picture 1.
Shahi Hamaam
before repair.



Picture 2.
Inside the beautiful Shahi
Hamaam after repair.



Picture 3.
The Shahi Hamaam from
outside, after the repair



There are other old buildings in the main garden. People are working to clean them and repair the paintings on them. There is a laboratory at Shalimar Garden. Many of the painters working here are young artists trained to clean and preserve old paintings. You too could learn to be one.

The Shalimar *Hamaam* is only about 400 years old. Only?! Sounds strange, doesn't it?

It can be difficult to find out where your family was 100 years ago. Can you imagine where your family was 400 years ago? And 5000 years ago...??!

Living at Burzahom, 5000 years ago

Near the Shalimar Garden there is a place called Burzahom. For thousands of years, no one thought there was anything special about the place.

Almost a hundred years ago historians from different countries came to Burzahom. They saw some very big rocks standing there. These big rocks that people had put up are called megaliths. Who put up these megaliths? Why? Historians are interested in such things. They thought that there might be something under the ground. So they began to dig.



After many years of careful digging and study they made an exciting discovery. People had lived at Burzahom almost 5000 years ago!

The Megaliths of Burzahom... about 5000 years old.

Can you imagine how far back is 5000 years? How did people live then? What did they eat and wear? Difficult to imagine, isn't it? Think and discuss in class.



There are experts who dig these old places. They are the ones who tell us what was there earlier at these very old places. These experts are called archaeologists. Archaeologists are very excited when they find such places. It is a great chance to find out interesting and new things about the past.



People dug pits to make their homes underground at Burzahom

It was found that the people who lived in Burzahom made their homes by digging under the ground. The rooms were open at the top, and had steps dug in the mud to go in and out. There were also ways to go from one room to another.

When it rained or snowed, people would have covered their homes. How do you think they did this when there was no cement and tin sheets? They made roofs from the bark (*bur-ze*) of trees. These trees are called *burze* in Kashmiri (birch in English). Now you can guess why this place is called Burzahom.



Burzahom is very special. It helps us understand how people lived thousands of years ago.

Many other wonderful things were also found there... Shiny beads, painted pots, jars, arrows, necklaces, bangles, needles, wheat, barley, and *masoor daal*! Also tools made of stones and of bones. These were used for digging and cutting. Even ash (*raakh*) was found from the wood the people used to light fires thousands of year back!



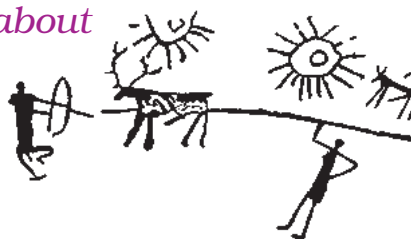
Things found at Burzahom

There were also bones of people, dogs and stags (*barasingha*). These were found from burials. The people in Burzahom lived by hunting and collecting food. They also grew crops. Which ones, did we say?



At Burzahom a hunting scene was found carved into a rock. This is a kind of drawing that people had made about their lives.

Look at this drawing. What does it tell us about the life of people at Burzahom? Which animal are these people hunting? Can you see the dog they must have kept? Why?



Hunting scene found on a rock at Burzahom.

Activity: Let's think

Think of the things you have in your home. What are they made of? What do you use them for?

| Made from... | Name of things | Use | Try to draw it |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Copper | pots, samovar, plates | eating, cooking | |
| Wood | | | |
| Paper | | | |
| Iron | | | |
| Clay | | | |

We use so many different kinds of things in so many ways! People in Burzahom also used many things. To make their homes they needed to dig under the ground. For this they used tools made of stones and animal bones. To hunt animals they used bows and arrows. The bows and arrows were made of wood. The arrow head was made of bone, to make it sharp.

How can we know about the past?

There are different kinds of clues that archaeologists

and historians look for, to find out about the past. These are called *sources*, which tell us about the people who made them.



Manuscript from Kashmir in Sharada script, over 1000 years old

Very old things can be found that people had made and used at that time. Ruins of buildings like the *Shahi Hamaam* can be found, made of brick or stone. Or paintings and things carved out of stone are found. When they dig under the ground they may find tools, weapons, pots, pans, jewellery and coins. These can be made of stone, bone, baked clay or metal. Things made of such hard materials can last for long, and are found even after thousands of years. *What about cloth or animal skin?*

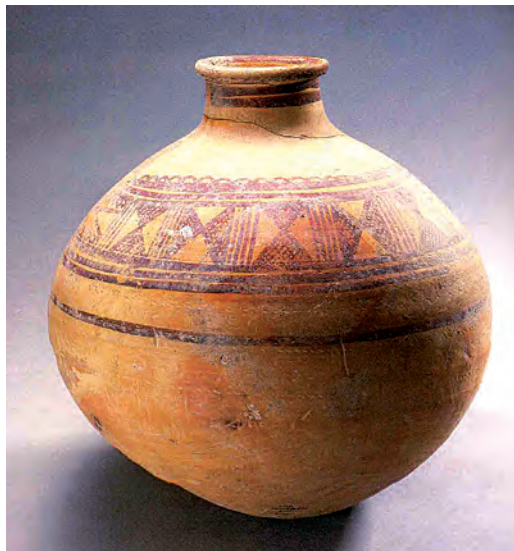
Left : A pot from an old city.

Pots like these were used about 4700 years ago.

Right : An old silver coin.

Coins such as this one were in use from about 2500 years ago.

In what ways is the coin different from the ones we use today?



As we read above, many such things were found at Burzahom, and each thing tells us something about the people who lived there. The bows and arrows tell us that they used to hunt. The ash found there tells us that they used fire. The painted pots, beads and arrows tell us they were skilled in making many things.

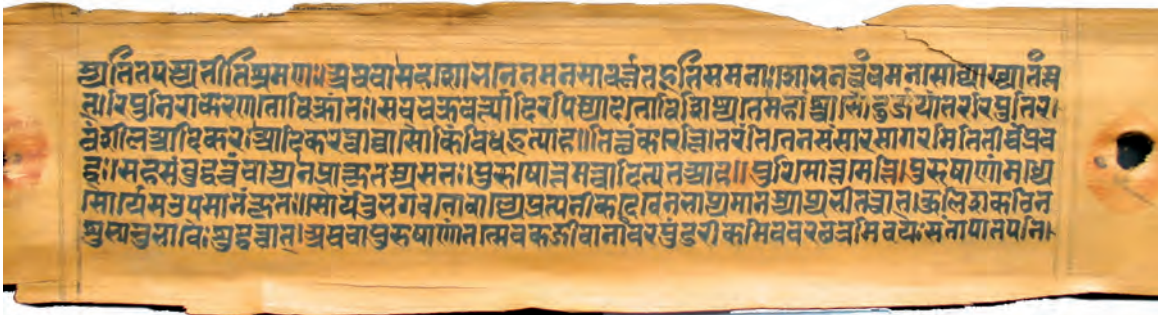


Clay slab from Kashmir: Persian poems dated 1289A.D.

Historians also use other kinds of clues. They find things that people wrote long ago. Long before paper was made, people wrote on stone, metal, leaves of a palm tree, or the bark of a birch tree (*burze*).

Old books written on palm leaves and birch bark (*burze*) are called *manuscripts*. These were written by hand. Some manuscripts that were carefully kept are still saved. In later chapters you will learn a lot more about manuscripts and what they talk about.

A page from a palm leaf manuscript. This manuscript was written about a thousand years ago. The palm leaves were cut into pages and tied together to make books.



People also wrote on much harder things like metal and stone. Sometimes kings got their orders written on metal or stone, so that people could read and follow them. There are other writings where men and women (including kings and queens) wrote about what they did. For example, kings kept records of the wars they won.

Even today people get things written on metal and stone. *Can you think of some examples of this? Do you know how this is done? Find out.*

Can you think why people wrote on hard things? What did they write with?

Once we find sources, learning about the past is like an adventure. We have some clues – some sources – and we try to put together the bits and pieces.

One past or many?

Did you notice the title of this book? Why do you think we have ‘Our Pasts’ and not just ‘Our Past’? Can there be more than one past?



This metal piece is about 2250 years old and was found in Afghanistan. It was written on the orders of king Ashoka, about whom you will read in chapter 7.

Shepherd (*bakarwaal*)

In your textbook on Social and Political Life you will read about the different kinds of work that people do and the lives they live. For example, *bakarwaals* keep sheep and goats. They spend the summer in one place and the winter in another place. Many people who live and work in villages in Jammu and Kashmir

stay in one place through the year. They grow plants for their own food and to sell. In cities people mostly make a living by making things and doing things for others. The lives that all these people live are different in many ways.

In the past too people lived different lives. For example, the lives of shepherds or farmers were different from those of kings and queens, the lives of traders (*vyapaari*) were different from those of crafts persons. People spoke different languages. They had different beliefs about religion and they lived in different places. So, the past was also different for different groups of people.

Whose pasts?

We do not know about the past of everyone. We know more about some kinds of people than others. For example, kings kept records of the wars they fought and won, so we know a lot about them. Other people who were important and had money also kept records, about the things they were buying and selling, or the gifts they were giving.

People such as hunters, gatherers, farmers or shepherds (*bakarwaal*) did not keep records of what they did. We learn about them by carefully studying the things that they left behind – like

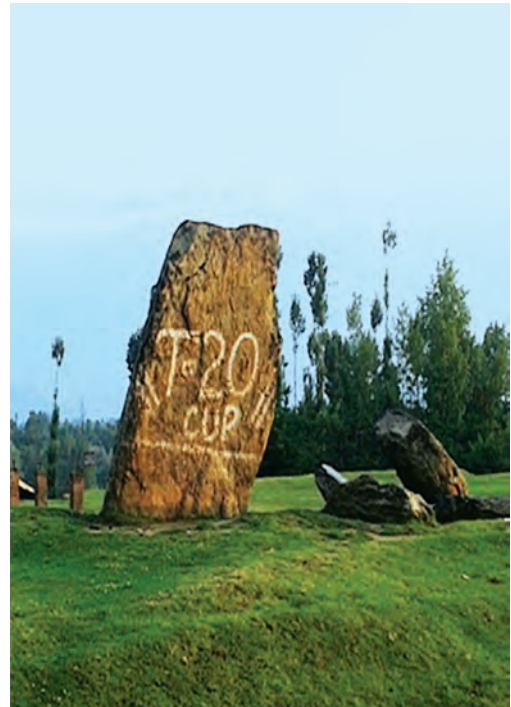
the things found at Burzahom. Though we can find out some things about their lives, there is still a lot that we do not know. For example, the grains found at Burzahom tell us that the people ate wheat, barley and masoor daal. But we do not know whether they cooked these the way we do today. Maybe some of you might become historians and archaeologists and find more interesting things!

Activity

These pictures are from Burzahom and Shalimar Garden. In all the three pictures you can see how people have written things with chalk or paint.

What do you feel about people writing on these very important rocks and buildings? Do you think it should be stopped? How? How can people be made to stop spoiling these very important things from the past?

How can we stop people from spoiling this great Megalith in Burzahom?!



A building at Shalimar Garden spoilt by people today by writing on it.

Letters with dates

When someone asks you the date you might write the day, the month and the year - which will be 2000 and something. The year we write is counted from the time when Jesus Christ was supposed to be born. If we say the year 2030, it means 2030 years after Christ was born. What is your date of birth? *So how many years after Christ were you born?* But when we say 1000 B.C. it means 1000 years Before Christ. Quickly say how many years back is that from now?

Imagine

You are a newspaper reporter. You have just been asked to interview a team of archeologists who worked at Burzahom. Prepare a list of five questions you will ask them.

Let's recall

1. What material was used to build the roofs of houses in Burzahom?
2. What does the ash found at Burzahom tell us?

Let's discuss

1. Make a list of all the things that archaeologists may find. Which of these could be made of stone?
2. What kinds of things were used by people in Burzahom to hunt animals? Have you seen any of these things?
3. Why do you think ordinary men and women did not generally keep records of what they did?
4. Describe at least two ways in which you think the lives of kings would have been different from those of farmers?

Let's do...

1. Look for the word crafts person in this chapter. List at least five different crafts that you know about today. Are the crafts persons (a) men (b) women, or (c) both men and women?
2. You need to find out where a family of *bakarwaals* or crafts persons was a hundred years back. Talk to people and make a group report. Discuss in class.
3. Look for old places that have been spoiled by people writing on them. Ask someone to take a photo. Make a list in class and write a letter to the INTACH office, informing them about this. Their address:

INTACH, IInd Floor, Directorate of Industries and Commerce Building, Pratap Park, Residency Road Srinagar 190001.
 Email: intack.jk@gmail.com
 website: <http://www.heritageofkashmir.org>

What is the word for these things in your language?

- hunters
- farmers
- pots
- wheat
- barley
- dog
- stag
- burial
- historian

Elsewhere : What was written on the Rosetta Stone?

These were writings or inscriptions on a stone at Rosetta (in Egypt). These looked like little pictures or signs - but what was written?

These were not any letters we know. Historians could not understand. Then they got some clues and solved the mystery. These were the names of a Greek king and queen!

These were the names of a Greek king and queen! Ptolmiis and Kliopadra. See - for the sound L they made the sign of a lion, for the sound A they made a bird. *What sign did they make for the sound P? What sign did they make for the sound O?*



CHAPTER 2

THE EARLIEST PEOPLE

**Rahul's train journey.**

Rahul was going from Jammu to Delhi for his cousin's wedding. They were going by train and he had got the window seat. As he watched trees and houses fly past, his uncle tapped his shoulder and said: "Do you know that trains were first used about 150 years ago, and that people began using buses a few decades later?" Rahul wondered how people travelled long distances when there were no trains or buses. Did they spend their entire lives wherever they were born? Not quite...

The earliest people: why were they on the move?

In the last chapter we talked about people who lived in Burzahom five thousand years back. But for historians that is not so long back. They also know about people who lived in some parts of the country two million years ago! That is very, very long ago!! Do you find it difficult to write this number – two with six zeroes - 2000000? You might also call it 20,00,000 twenty hundred thousand or twenty lakh years ago. So how did they live so long ago? Historians call them hunter-gatherers because they hunted and gathered food. They hunted wild animals, caught fish and birds, and they gathered fruits, roots, nuts, leaves, stems, seeds and eggs.

None of these things was easy to do. Some animals run very fast and some are much stronger than us. To hunt animals or to catch fish and birds, people need to be alert and quick. They need to make the right tools and weapons. All this can

also be very dangerous. Even to collect plants and fruits the earliest people or adivasis had to find out which plants can be eaten, and which are poisonous. Just think - how did they do this?

While trying out, some may have fallen ill, and told others not to eat a plant. They shared this knowledge with each other, through songs and stories, from the older to the younger generation. Over hundreds of thousands of years the adivasis discovered most of the fruits and plants which we eat and use for our medicines even today. Imagine how they learnt all this and then passed it on to us for millions of years.

If you go into a thick forest you may not know all this. Which root to eat, when to dig it, which to boil, or cook on fire? Which fruit to eat and how – they discovered the mango, all types of bananas, apples, pears, pineapple, lemons, and many others. Or that honey can be collected by scaring away the bees, and then used as medicine.

To do...

List all the skills and knowledge the children of these earliest people had.

Do you have any of these skills and knowledge? Which ones?

These people had to keep moving from place to place. There are many reasons for this:

- If they had stayed at one place for a long time, they would have eaten up all the available plants and hunted all the animals. Therefore, they would have had to go elsewhere in search of food.

- Animals also move from place to place in search of food. That is why hunter-gatherers who hunted them had to follow their movements.
- Plants and trees produce grains and fruits in different seasons. So, people may have moved from season to season in search of different kinds of plants.
- Plants, animals and people all need water. But some rivers and lakes dry up in the hot season. So people living near these had to move looking for water in the dry season.

Can you list some more reasons why people move from one place to another?

Remember they walked, long distances, through thick jungles, facing wild animals, crossing rivers...

Do you know of any people today who walk from place to place? What for?

But how do we know about these people who lived so long, long ago?

We know about hunter-gatherers from some of the things found, which they made with tools of stone, wood and bone. Their stone tools have survived for long...

Exercise: Some uses of stone tools are given on the next page. Make a list of things these stone tools were used for. Try to see if any of these things could be done using only a natural stone (shown in E). Give reasons for your answer.

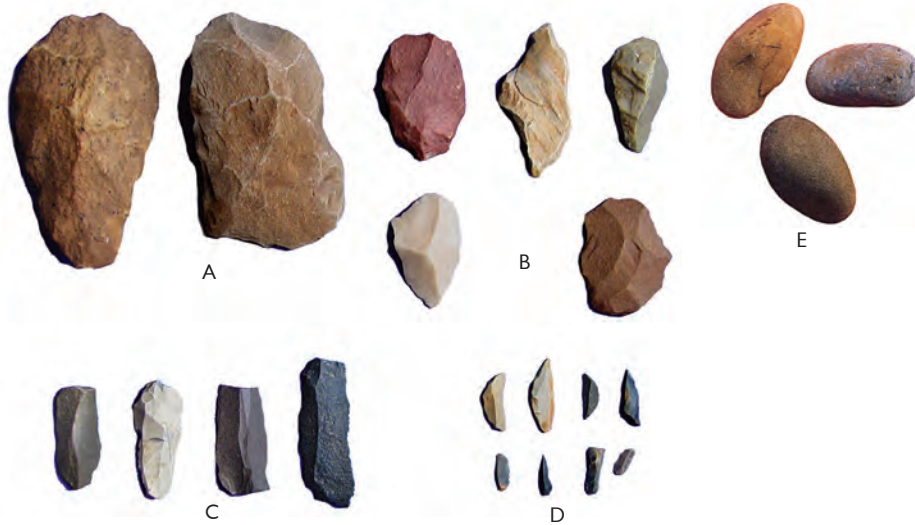


Stone tools may also have been used for :

Above : Digging the ground to collect edible roots.

On Top : Stitching clothes made out of animal skin.

Some of these stone tools were used to cut fruit, roots, meat and bone. They also used them to remove bark (*bur-ze*) from trees, and the skin



Stone tools

A: These are examples of the earliest stone tools.

B: These were made many thousand years later.

C: These were made even later.

D: These were made about 10,000 years ago.

E: These are natural stones.

of animals. Some stones may have been used with handles of wood or bone, to make bows and arrows. Some tools were used to cut wood or to light a fire. Wood was also used to make other tools or their huts.

Sites

These are places where the remains of things (tools, pots, bones, buildings, etc) were found. People made these things, used them or left them behind. These have been found on the ground, buried under the ground or even under water.

In chapter 1 we read about the site near Srinagar. What is its name? What interesting things were found there?

Choosing a place to live in

Hunter-gatherers lived mostly near rivers or lakes for the water they needed. As stone tools were important for them they also looked for places with good quality stone. At some of these 'sites' where they lived, we find blocks of stone, and tools they made. Sometimes the tools were not good so they threw them away, with the pieces of waste stone. If the stone at the site was not of good quality

they moved to another site. Some sites where they lived for long were in caves or under rocks like in the picture below.

Finding out about fire

You have read in chapter 1 about ash being found in Burzahom. This meant that people so long ago had an idea of fire. They may have used fire to cook food, for light, to keep warm, or to scare away animals.

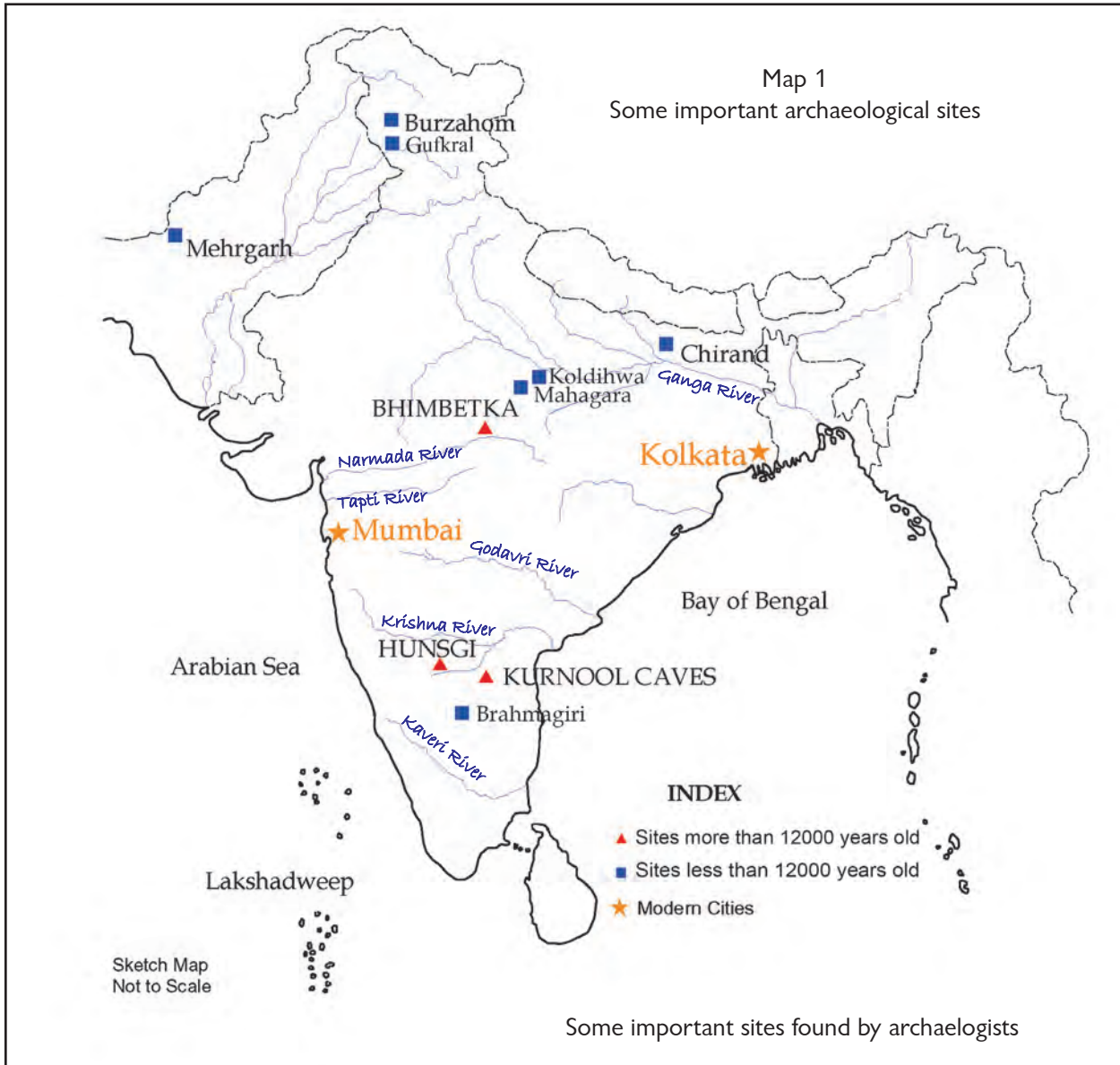
Bhimbetka (in Madhya Pradesh). This is an old site with caves and rock shelters where people lived. People chose these natural caves because they gave shelter from the rain, heat and wind. These rock shelters are close to the Narmada valley. *Can you think of why people chose to live here?*

What do we use fire for today?

A changing environment

The climate of the world has changed over many, many years. Some 12,000 years ago, the climate of the earth became warmer. Before this, the earth was much, much colder. The warmer climate made it possible for green plants and trees to grow around the world. This then led to more





animals that lived on grass, such as deer, goats, buffaloes and sheep. People started following these animals in order to hunt them.

People learnt about the habits of the animals, and were able to keep them on their own. They started fishing. They also collected grains of wheat, rice and barley which grew wild. They learnt about when they grew and how the grain became ripe. This made them think about growing plants themselves.

Rock paintings and what they tell us

People lived in caves and painted the walls of the caves. Some of the best cave paintings are of wild animals. These are in Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh and also in Uttar Pradesh. You saw a hunting scene carved on a stone at Burzahom.



A painting from a rock shelter.

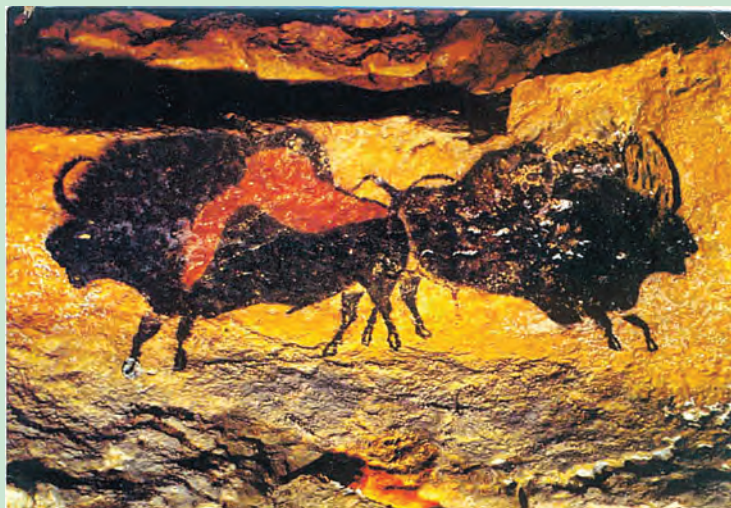
Describe the painting

Who did what?

We have seen that the earliest people hunted, gathered plants and fruits, made things from stone, wood, bones and painted on cave walls. Can we find out who did what work? For example can we find out what work did children do, or what work did men or women do? At present, we do not really know. It is possible that everyone would have done many of these things together. It is also possible that some things were done only by women and others only by men.

Elsewhere: Cave paintings in France

Look for France in your atlas. The painting above is from a cave in France. This site was discovered by four school children more than a hundred years ago. Paintings like this were made between 20,000 and 10,000 years ago. Many of these were of animals painted in bright colours. Can you guess what the animals were? Many were of bisons, wild horses, bears, etc. These colours were made from coloured stones, iron ore or charcoal. It is thought that these paintings were made for important events. Or for some ritual they did before they went to hunt. *Can you think of any other reasons?*



Can you think of any other reasons?

Imagine

You live in a rock shelter like the one at Bhimbetka. Your uncle is painting on the wall of the cave. What could you do to help him? Will you mix the colours, draw the lines or fill in the colours for him? What will the colours be made of? What are the stories he might tell you while he paints?

Let's recall

1. Complete the sentences:
 - a) Hunter-gatherers chose to live in caves and rock shelters because _____ .
 - b) Grasslands developed around _____ years ago.
 - c) Early people painted on the _____ of caves.

Let's discuss...

2. Why did the hunter-gatherers travel from place to place? In what ways are these similar to/different from the reasons for which we travel today?
3. What tools would you use today for cutting fruit? What would they be made of?
4. List three ways in which hunter-gatherers used fire. Would you use fire for any of these reasons today?
5. Make two columns in your notebook. In the left hand column, list the foods hunter-gatherers ate. In the right hand column, list some of the foods you eat. Do you notice any similarities/differences?

What is the word for these things in your language?

- fish
- birds
- honey
- bone
- stone
- ash
- rice
- hunter-gatherer
- rock-shelter
- grasslands

CHAPTER 3

FROM GATHERING TO GROWING FOOD

**Neinuo's lunch**

Neinuo was eating her favorite food — boiled rice, pumpkins, beans and meat. Her grandmother had grown the pumpkin and beans in the little kitchen garden at the back of her house. But the food was so different when she went to Delhi on a school trip. It was hot and spicy there. Why was that so?

Varieties of foods

Today, most of our food like fruits, vegetables, grain, milk and meat comes from plants grown and animals kept by people. Different plants grow in different conditions — rice, for example, needs more water than wheat and barley. This explains why farmers grow some crops in some areas and not in other areas. Different animals too, stay better in different environments — sheep and goat can live more easily than cattle (cows and buffaloes) in dry, hilly environments.

How people became farmers and herders

We saw in Chapter 2 that the climate of the world was changing, and so were plants and animals that people used as food. People started thinking about plants - where they were found, how seeds came out, fell on the ground, and new plants grew out of them. Perhaps they began looking after plants — saving them from birds and animals, to help them grow and give seeds. In this way people became farmers.

People also invited animals near the place they stayed, by leaving food for them. They slowly started keeping or taming animals. The first animal to be kept was a wild kind of dog. Later, people learnt to live with other animals which were not dangerous. These animals such as sheep, goats, cows, buffaloes and pigs lived in groups called herds, and most of them ate grass. People also saved these animals from attacks by other wild animals. This is how these people became 'herders'.

You know that shepherds (bakarwaals) herd sheep and goats. Which other animal herders do you know of? How big is the herd of those animals that they look after?

Can you think of reasons why the dog was the first animal to be tamed? Why do shepherds today keep dogs?

Taming wild plants and animals

Plants and animals that are grown and kept by people become different from wild plants and animals. Many thousands of years ago people chose some plants to grow, from among many others. Those plants were selected - which gave more grains, which were taller and stronger than others, and which did not catch diseases. Seeds from these selected plants were grown so that the new plants would be of the better type. In animals the less dangerous ones were kept. This way, some animals and plants became different from wild animals and plants. For example, the teeth and horns of wild animals are usually much bigger than those of animals we keep at home.

Look at these two sets of teeth. Which of these belongs to a wild pig and which to a tamed animal?

Growing crops and keeping animals was a very slow process. It began about 12,000 years ago. Can you imagine life 12,000 years ago? That is much earlier than even Burzahom, about which we read in Chapter 1. Some of the earliest plants to be grown were wheat and barley. The earliest animals kept were sheep and goat.



A new way of life

When you plant a seed, you will see that the plant takes some time to grow. This may be days, weeks, months and in some cases even years. When people began growing plants, they had to stay in the same place for a long time. They had to look after the plants, water them, remove wild grass, save them from animals and birds — till the grain became ripe. And then, the grain had to be used carefully. Grain had to be stored for both food and for seeds to be planted. So, people had to think of ways of storing grain. In many areas, they began making large clay pots, or wove baskets, or they dug pits into the ground. Do you think hunter-gatherers would have made and used pots? Explain your answer.

'Storing' animals

Animals multiply naturally. If they are looked after carefully, people can have milk and meat from them, when needed. So animals could be a 'store' of food. Other than food, what else could people get from animals? What are animals used for today?



Finding out about the first farmers and herders

When old sites are found scientists study the remains of plants and animal bones. They try to see if the first farmers and herders lived at the site. One of the most exciting finds is burnt grains, which show what crops were grown at that site.

Look at the map in Chapter 2. This table below shows some of the sites (of that map) where grain and bones of animals were found.

What grains were found in Gufkral? Were animal bones found there?

At which site were bones of a dog found? Where was rice found?

| Grain and Animal bones | Sites |
|---|---|
| Wheat, barley. Bones of sheep, goat, cattle | Mehrgarh (in present day-Pakistan) |
| Rice. Broken animal bones | Koldihwa (in present-day Uttar Pradesh) |
| Rice. Bones of cattle (hoof marks on clay surface) | Mahagara (in present-day Uttar Pradesh) |
| Wheat and <i>daal</i> | Gufkral (in present-day Kashmir) |
| Wheat and <i>daal</i> . Bones of dog, cattle, sheep, goat, buffalo, | Burzahom (in present-day Kashmir) |
| Wheat, green gram, barley. Bones of buffalo, ox | Chirand (in present-day Bihar) |
| Millet. Bones of cattle, sheep, goat, pig | Hallur (in present-day Karnataka) |
| Black gram, millet. Bones of cattle, sheep, pig | Paiyampalli (in present-day Tamil Nadu) |

Towards a settled life

In Burzahom people built pit-houses, dug into the ground, with steps going down. These may have saved them from the cold weather. Fire places were also found both inside and outside the pits. This gives some idea that people could cook food inside or outside, depending on the weather.

How would it have been living in a house dug inside the ground? Draw a pit house.

Tools made of stone have been found from many sites. Some tools were polished to give a sharp edge for cutting. Some were used for grinding grain and other food items. You must have seen stones used for grinding grain even today,

thousands of years later. Some tools were also made of bone.

Many kinds of clay pots have also been found. These were sometimes painted, and used for storing things. People began using pots for cooking, especially for rice, wheat and *daals* that became an important part of their food. They also began weaving cloth using different materials, like cotton, which they could now grow.



What do you think could have been stored in this jar?

Did things change everywhere and all at once? Not really. In many areas, men and women still hunted and gathered food. At other places people started farming and herding animals slowly, over thousands of years. At some places people tried to combine these activities, doing different things during different seasons.



New stone tools. Compare these with the tools shown in chapter 2. *Can you see any similarities or differences? Can you see which of these tools could have been used to grind grain, which was now grown?*

What about other practices?

History does not tell us directly about people's ways of doing many things. Scholars study the lives of farmers and herders (*bakarwaals*) today who live in groups called tribes. They find that the way tribes grow plants or herd animals today, could be similar to those of the earliest farmers and herders.

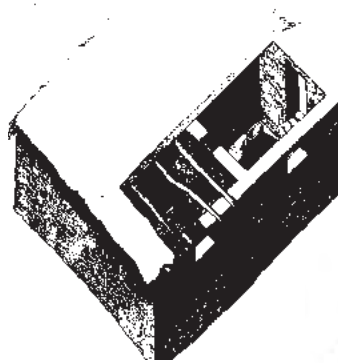
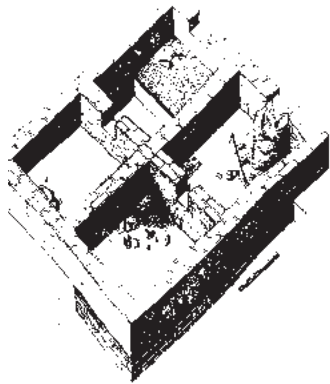
Tribes or *Adivasis*

- Usually two to three generations live together. Most families are related to one another and groups of such families form a tribe.
- People of a tribe live by hunting, gathering, farming, herding animals and fishing. Usually, women do most of the farm work - preparing the ground, planting seeds, looking after the plants and collecting grain. Children also look after plants, driving away animals and birds that might eat them. Men take herds (big groups) of animals to look for grass and plants. The cleaning of animals and milking is done by both men and women. Both women and men make pots, baskets, tools and huts. They do many group activities which bring them together – like singing, dancing and decorating their huts.
- Some men are respected as leaders. They may be old and experienced, or young, brave warriors, or priests. Old women are respected for their wisdom and experience.
- Tribes have rich cultural traditions, including their own language, music, stories and paintings. They also have their own gods and goddesses.
- What makes tribes different from many other societies you will study, is that land, forests, grasslands and water are taken as the common wealth of the tribe. Everybody shares and uses these together. There are no big differences between the rich and the poor. You have read about forests seen as the 'common bank' of Suryamani's tribe, in the EVS class V book.

Make a list of all the activities done by men in tribal societies. What do women do? Are there any activities that are done by both men and women?

A closer look — Living and dying in Mehrgarh

This site (in Pakistan), is on an important route to Iran. Mehrgarh was probably where women and men learnt to grow barley and wheat, and keep sheep and goats for the first time in this area. It is one of the earliest villages that we know about. At this site many animal bones were found. Bones of wild animals such as the

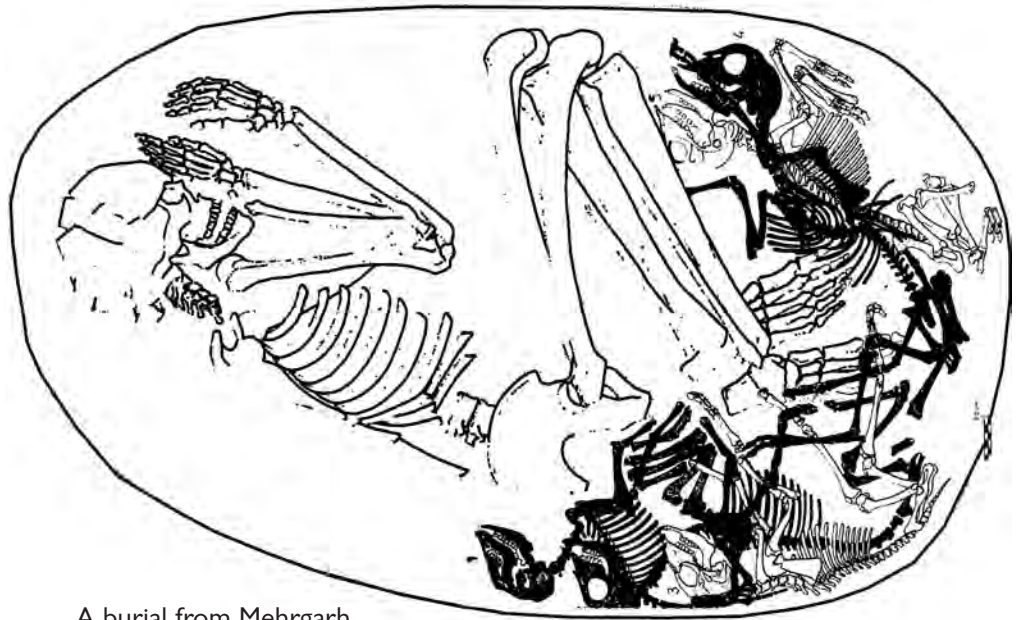


A house in Mehrgarh.
This is what a house in
Mehrgarh may have
looked like.

*Is this house similar to the
one in which you live?*

deer and pig, and also bones of sheep and goat were found.

Look at the drawings. These are remains of old houses, which are square or rectangular. Each house had four or more rooms, where food was also stored. When people die, their relatives and friends like to show respect to them. When they bury them, they take special care of them. They think that they will have some other form of life after death. They keep good things, thinking that they might need them in another life. Many interesting burial sites have been found at Mehrgarh. At one place the dead person was buried with goats, which were probably kept as food for him in his next life.



A burial from Mehrgarh.

Can you identify the skeletons of the goats?

Imagine

You are in charge of a small plot of land and have to decide what food crops to grow. What are the plants you would choose? Where would you get the seeds from? How would you plant them? How would you look after your plants?

Let's recall

- 1) Why do people who grow crops have to stay in the same place for a long time?
- 2) If Neinuo wanted to eat rice, which are the places in Jammu and Kashmir she should go to?
- 3) Why do archaeologists think that many people who lived in Mehrgarh were hunters to start with, and became herders later?

Let's discuss...

- 4) List three ways in which the lives of farmers and herders would have been different from that of hunter-gatherers.
- 5) Make a list of three animals which we talked about in the chapter. For each one, describe what they may have been used for in earlier times.

Let's do...

- 6) List the grains that you eat.
- 7) Do you grow the grains you have listed above? If yes, draw a chart to show the stages in growing them. If not, draw a chart to show how these grains reach you from the farmers who grow them.

What is the word for these things in your language?

- sheep
- buffalo
- climate
- burial
- tribe
- culture
- tradition

CHAPTER 4

IN THE EARLIEST CITIES

Saving an old building...

Jaspal and Harpreet were playing when they saw some people near an old building. Children had heard stories about ghosts and were scared to go inside it. But these people were saying:

“How beautiful this is! Look at the strong walls and the wood carving. It must be 200 years old!”

We must write to the minister to repair and conserve this beautiful house”

They were surprised at what they heard. Why would anybody be interested in such an old house? People only want the newest things!



Archaeologists found some common things in all these cities: red pottery painted with designs in black, stone weights, seals, special beads, copper tools, and long stone blades.

The story of Harappa

Many old buildings have a story to tell. Nearly a hundred and fifty years ago, when railway lines were being built for the first time in the Punjab, engineers saw buried walls of really good bricks. Without thinking about the old walls, they took out thousands of these bricks to build railway lines. Much later historians realized that this was Harappa, one of the oldest cities in this region, built 4700 years back! After a lot of digging, many other sites were found with similar buildings. These were all called Harappan cities. These are in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana and Punjab in India, and the Punjab and Sind in Pakistan. The bricks were well made and survived thousands of years, and the walls were very strong.

What was special about these cities?

Historians found many interesting things from these cities. Many of these cities were divided into two or more parts. The smaller part was higher than the other part of the city. This small and higher part was the area where rich and powerful people lived. In the lower part of the city lived farmers, workers and potters.

In some cities, very special buildings were built. For example, in Mohenjodaro, one of the cities, there is a very special tank. Imagine, thousands of years back how they planned to build this! It had bricks covered with plaster, steps going down into the tank, and rooms on all sides! Historians have called it The Great Bath. Important people may have gone for a dip in this tank on special days.



The Great Bath at Mohenjodaro

Houses, drains and streets

Houses were one or two storeys high. There were rooms built around an open space in the middle. Most houses had a separate area for having a bath and some had wells for water.

One of the most interesting things here were the drains. Some of our cities today still have no drains, or even open drains. But these drains were covered with slabs made of stone. Holes were



A street in Mohenjodaro with a drain.



Above: A well.

made in some places to clean the covered drains. All the small drains coming from the houses were made in straight lines. These were sloping towards the big drains so that water could easily flow down.

List two differences between the houses here and the houses you read about in Chapter 3.

Life in the city

Exercise: Have you seen or lived in a city? What kind of people do you find in the city? Make a list of five people and tell us what kind of work these different people do.

Many different kinds of people lived in a Harappan city. There were people who planned how to build special buildings. These could have been the rulers. The rulers sent people to far off places to get metal, beads and other things they wanted. There were also people who knew how to write. They wrote on stone tablets or seals, and other materials that have not survived. Besides, there were men and

How bricks were arranged to build walls in Harappan cities



women, crafts persons, making all kinds of things - in their own homes, or in special workshops. Many clay toys have been found, so you can imagine that long, long ago children must have played with these! And elders must have been telling them stories, about places far off, that some people were travelling to.

New crafts in the city

Let us look at some of the things that were made and found in Harappan cities. Most of the things found are made of stone, shell and metals, like copper, bronze, gold and silver. Copper and

bronze were used to make tools, weapons and jewellery. Gold and silver were also used for jewellery and jars.

The Harappans made their stamps (seals) as rectangles of stone, with animals carved on them. They also made pots with beautiful black designs.

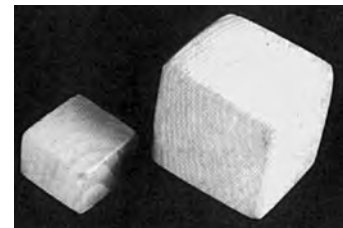
Was metal used in the villages you read about in Chapter 3? Was stone used there to make weights, for weighing costly things?

The most interesting things found are beads, weights and stones blades.



Top: Harrapan toys.

Left: A Harappan seal. The signs on the top of this seal are part of the Harappan way of writing. This is the earliest form of writing in the area, which today includes India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Tibet, Sri Lanka etc... Scholars have tried hard to read these signs but still do not know exactly what they mean.



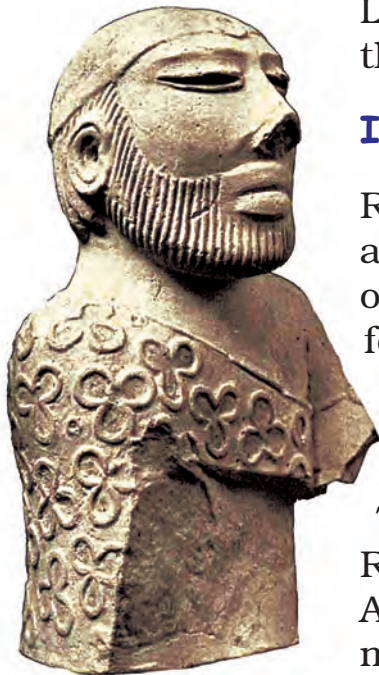
Top : Stone weights.

Notice how carefully and precisely these weights are shaped. These were probably used to weigh precious stones or metals.

Middle: Stone blades.

Left : Beads. Many of these were made out of a beautiful red stone. The stone was cut, shaped, polished and finally a hole was made through the centre so that a string could be passed through it.

Archaeologists also found pieces of cloth stuck to some silver jug at Mohenjodaro. They say that cotton was probably grown at Mehrgarh about 7000 years ago! Other things were shiny beads, bangles and earrings made from special glassy materials. Most of these things were made by expert crafts persons. These experts were trained to do only one kind of work – like cutting stone, polishing beads, or carving seals.



A stone statue of an important man found in Mohenjodaro wearing an embroidered dress

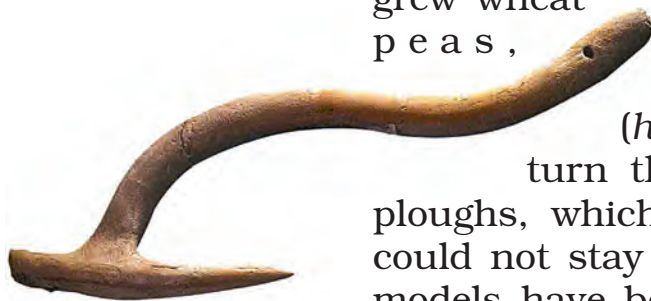
Look at how beautifully the face is carved and the beard shown on this stone statue.

In search of raw materials

Raw materials (*kuchha maal*) like wood or metals are used to make many different things. Some of the raw materials used by Harappans were found nearby. Like cotton grown by farmers was used to make cloth. But, many other materials such as copper, tin, gold, and silver had to be brought from far off places. They must have brought copper from where Rajasthan is today. They brought tin from Afghanistan and Iran – to mix with copper to make bronze. Gold could have come from as far as Karnataka.

Food for people in the cities

Many people lived in the cities, and those who lived in the villages grew crops and kept animals. These farmers and shepherds supplied food to crafts persons, rulers and others in the cities. Archaeologists have found that the Harappans grew wheat (*gaihoon*), barley (*jyaun*), *daals*, p e a s , rice, sesame (*til*), and mustard (*sarson*). A new tool the plough (*hal*) was made to dig the earth and turn the soil for planting seeds. Real ploughs, which were probably made of wood, could not stay for thousands of years, but toy models have been found. The Harappans kept many animals like cow, sheep, goat and buffalo. During the dry summer months they took herds of animals very far, looking for grass and water. They collected fruits like *ber*, caught fish and hunted wild animals like the antelope.

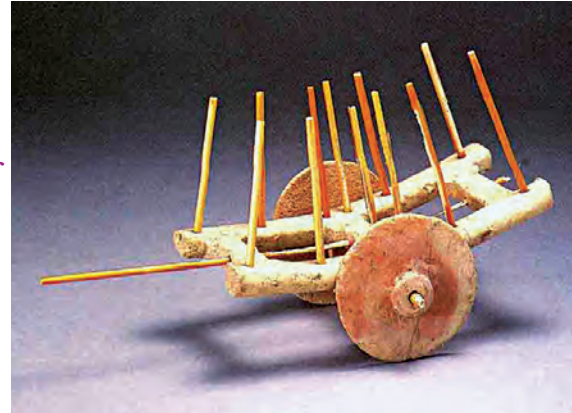


A toy plough (*hal*)

In the earlier chapters did you see any cart with wheels? How were things carried from one place to another?

Can you now think what kinds of transport were used by Harappans?

Today in many societies which do farming, only men use the plough. We do not know if the Harappans also had this custom.



Toy cart.

A closer look - the city of Lothal in Gujarat

The city of Lothal was on a river near the sea. Boats and ships came in from the sea with traders who sold many things made of stone, shell and metal. There was a store house in the city where many seals were found. Another building, which was a factory to make beads, was also found. Pieces of stone, tools for making beads, and half made beads were also found here.



Big tank in Lothal.

Seals

When costly things were sent from one place to another, traders wanted to stamp the bags so that they were sure no one opened them. After a bag was tied, a bit of wet clay was put on the knot and a wooden or a metal seal with some special mark was pressed on it. This left the special mark of the animal carved on the seal. Each person had his own special seal. If anyone tried to open the bag the mark of the seal would break.



Even today people say they have to seal their packets, or the exam sheets. Or people say they have to seal their lips – when they cannot tell a secret to others. *Have you heard of a seal? What was being sealed there?*

The mystery of the end

Around 3900 years ago we find some clues to a major change in the Harrapan cities. People stopped living in many of the cities and moved away. Writing, seals and weights were no longer used. In Mohenjodaro, we find garbage piled up on the streets, the drainage system not working properly! Why did all this happen? We are not sure. Some historians suggest that the rivers dried up. Others say the forests were gone. But these reasons do not explain the end of all the cities. Some think the rulers could not manage the cities and they lost control.

Great cities can also die. Is there something we could learn, about what we are doing to our cities today?

Elsewhere: Pyramids of Egypt

Look for Egypt in your atlas. Most of Egypt is a dry desert, except for the lands along the river Nile. Around 5000 years ago, kings ruled over Egypt. These kings sent armies to distant lands to get gold, silver, timber (wood), and precious stones. They also built huge tombs, known as pyramids. When they died, the bodies of kings were preserved and buried in these



pyramids. These carefully preserved bodies are known as 'mummies'. A large number of things were also buried with them. These included food and drink, clothes, jewellery, pots, musical instruments, weapons and animals. Some times even men and women servants were buried with the rulers. These are amongst the biggest burials known in world history.

Do you think kings would have needed these things after death?

What do you feel about burying living people with the dead rulers? Discuss.

Imagine

You are travelling with your parents, about 4000 years ago, from Lothal to Mohenjodaro. Describe how you would travel, what your parents might carry with them, and what you would see in Mohenjodaro.

Let's recall...

- 1) How do archaeologists know that cloth was used in the Harappan cities?
- 2) Match the columns

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Copper | Gujarat |
| Gold | Afghanistan |
| Tin | Rajasthan |
| Precious stones | Karnataka |
- 3) Why were these important for the Harappans - metals, a way of writing, the wheel, and the plough?

Let's discuss...

- 1) Make a list of all the toys shown in the lesson. Which do you think children would have enjoyed playing with the most?
- 2) Make a list of what the Harappans ate, and put a tick mark against the things you eat today.
- 3) Do you think that the life of farmers and herders who supplied food to the Harappan cities was different from that of the farmers and herders you read about in Chapter 3? Give reasons for your answer.
- 4) Have you seen an old water tank? Or is there one in your area? How is it different from the Great Bath at Mohenjodaro?

What is the word for these things in your language?

- copper
- tin
- bronze
- plough
- drains
- precious stones
- raw materials
- seals
- antelope
- stone weights

CHAPTER 5

WHAT BOOKS AND BURIALS TELL US



Mary in the old library

The teacher took students for a special trip. They were going to the old library for the first time! As Mary went in, she saw one shelf filled with many, very old books. The teacher said, “Those are very special books on different religions. Did you know that they also have a set of the Vedas?” What are the Vedas? Mary thought. Let us find out.

One of the oldest books in the world

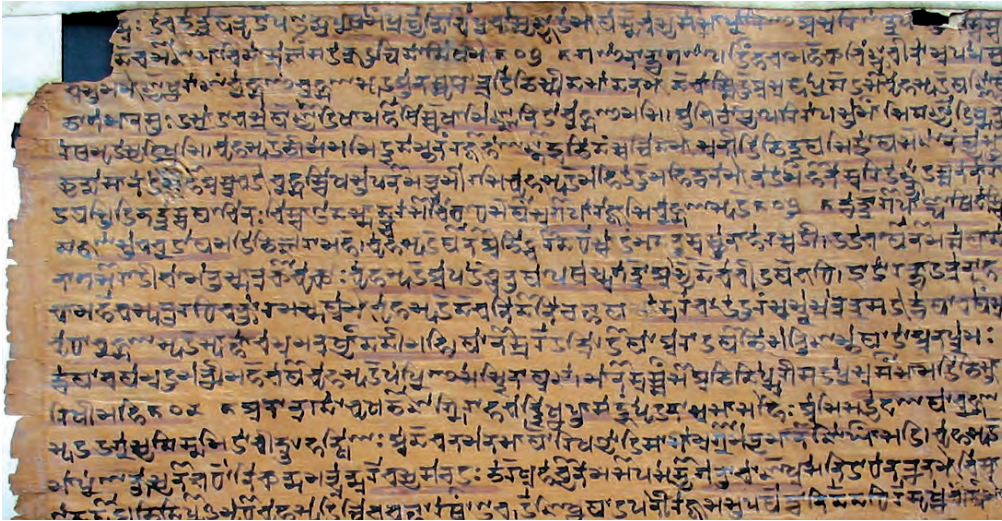
Vedas are some of the oldest books of the world. The oldest Veda, the Rig-Veda, was composed about 3500 years ago. The books we use now are written and printed. But the old books like Rigveda were recited and heard, rather than read. These poems were made by saints or *rishis*, mostly by men, but a few by women. In Rig-Veda there are praises of gods and goddesses. For example Agni, the god of fire and Indra, the god of rain, a warrior god. Priests used to teach some students to recite and memorise each word, and sentence, bit by bit, with great care.

The Rigveda is in old Vedic Sanskrit, different from the Sanskrit people learn today.

How historians study the Rigveda

Do you remember in Chapter 1, we talked about different sources historians use to study our pasts? For example, they use written sources. But let us see how historians use the Rigveda

Some of the Rigveda is in the form of dialogues.



This is a page from a manuscript of the Rigveda. The manuscript written on birch bark (*bur-ze*), was found in Kashmir. About 150 years ago, it was used to make one of the first printed texts of the Rigveda, and its English translation. It is now preserved in a library in Pune, Maharashtra.

This is part of a dialogue between a *rishi* named Vishvamitra, and two rivers, (Beas and Sutlej) that were worshipped as goddesses. Try to look for these rivers in a map.

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 *rishi*?

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 (of the wheels), so that we can cross safely.

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

Historians say that this dialogue between a *rishi* and two rivers was composed in the area where these rivers flow. They also suggest that the *rishi* lived in a society where horses and cows were valued animals. That is why the rivers are compared to horses and cows.

Cattle, horses and chariots

There are many prayers in the Rigveda for cattle, sons, and horses. Horses were used for the chariots (*rathas*) that helped fight wars. Wars

were fought for land and cattle. Some wars were also fought for water, and to capture people who were made to do all kinds of work. Some of the wealth captured through wars was kept by the leaders, some was given to the priests and the rest was given to the people. Some wealth was used for offerings made into the fire, for gods and goddesses. Offerings could include ghee, grain, and in some cases, animals.

Most men took part in these wars. There was no regular army, but people had meetings and discussed issues of war and peace. They chose their leaders who were brave warriors.

Words to describe people

There are many ways to describe people — in terms of the work they do, the language they speak, the place they come from, their family, their communities and cultural practices.

Let us see some of the words used to describe people found in the Rigveda. There are two groups who are described in terms of their work — the priests, sometimes called *brahmins*, who performed religious duties, and the *rajas*.

These *rajas* were not like the ones you will be learning about later. They did not have big cities, palaces or armies, and did not collect taxes. Their sons did not automatically become *rajas*.

Sometimes, the people who composed the Rig Veda called themselves as Aryas and called their enemies Dasas or Dasyus. Dasas were people who did not have rituals for praying like the Aryas, and probably spoke different languages. Later, the term *dasa* (and *dasi* for the female) came to mean slave. Slaves were women and men who were often captured in war. They were treated

as the property of their owners, who could make them do whatever work they wanted.

In chapter 4 you read about the pyramids where living servants were buried with the dead rulers.

Do you think they were slaves?

Stories about people, rich and poor - from where they lie buried

You have read about the big stones or Megaliths at Burzahom. These were kept to mark the sites where some people were buried. This practice began around the time 3000 BC and is found in Kashmir, in south India and in the north-east. *Can you calculate how many years from now was the year 3000 BC?*



This megalith has stones around it, and a hole which could be used as an entrance

Some megaliths can be seen on top of the ground, but some are also underground. So when archaeologists find a big stone standing (like at Burzahom) or many stones in a circle, they know that there can be a burial site under it.

Activity:

There were many things people had to do to make megaliths. We have listed some here. Try to arrange them in a correct order.

Digging pits in the ground, transporting big stones, breaking big rocks, putting stones in place, finding good rocks, shaping the stones, burying the dead.

Just guess what tools they would have used.



Iron equipment found from megalithic burials.

Top : Horse equipment.

Middle : Axes.

Below : A dagger.



The burials have somethings in common. When the dead person was buried, people also kept some special pots, some tools and weapons of iron. Sometimes skeletons of horses have also been found in burials, with things that are put on the horse. Jewellery made of gold and stone is also found.

In Brahmagiri in South India (see map in chapter 2), one skeleton was found buried with many things! It had 33 gold beads, 2 stone beads, 4 copper bangles, and one conch shell (*shankh*). Other skeletons have only a few pots. These suggest that the people who are buried in these graves were not equal. Some were rich, others poor, some rajas and others their followers.

Some burial places for certain families?

Sometimes, burials or megaliths have more than one skeleton. These show that people of the same family were buried in the same place, but at different times. Stone circles or rocks placed on the top helped people find the burial site, so that they could return to the same place.

What does studying skeletons tell us?

It is easy to find out the skeleton of a child from its small size. But there are no major differences in the bones of a girl and a boy. Can we find out if a skeleton was that of a man or a woman? Sometimes, people decide by looking at what is found with the skeleton. So if a skeleton is found with jewellery, it is thought to be that of a woman. However, there are problems with this because, men also wore jewellery.

A better way of finding out whether the skeleton is of a man or a woman is by looking at the bone structure. In women the hip area of a skeleton is generally bigger than men. This is to help women in giving birth to a child.

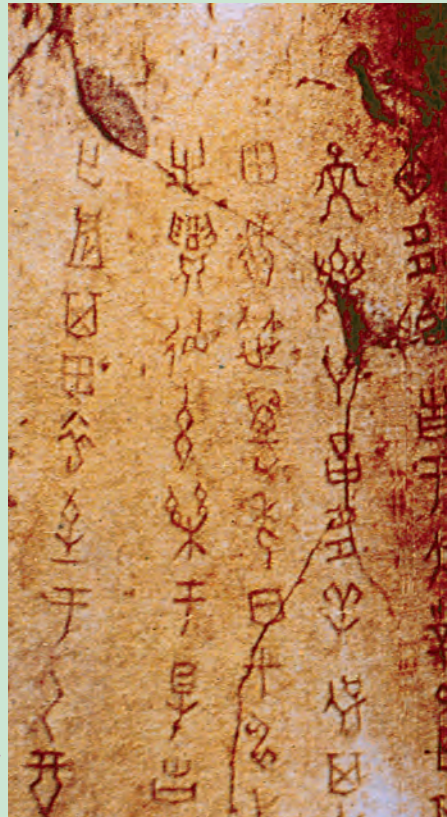
About 2000 years ago, there was a famous doctor named Charaka who wrote a book on medicine. There he says that the human body has 360 bones. This is much more than the 200 bones that are recognized today. Charaka got this number by counting the teeth, joints and the cartilage, which are not bones.

How do you think he found out about the human body so long back?

Elsewhere: Writing on bones in China

Look for China in your atlas. Around 3500 years ago, we find some of the first examples of writing in China.

These writings were on animal bones which were used to predict the future. Kings got people who knew how to write, to write questions on bones — would they win battles? Would the harvest be good? Would they have sons? The bones were then put into the fire, and they cracked because of the heat. Then some people called ‘fortune tellers’ looked at these cracks, and tried to guess what would happen in the future. Some of these bones with such written things have survived. These kings lived in palaces in cities. They collected a lot of wealth, and had big bronze pots. But they did not know how to make or use iron. *Can you see how these kings would be different from the rajas of the Rigveda?*



Let's recall...

- 1). Complete the sentences:
 - a) Slaves were used for_____
 - b) Megaliths are found in_____
 - c) Stone circles or standing rocks on the ground were used to _____

Let's discuss...

- 2) In what ways are the books we read today different from the Rigveda?
- 3) What kind of evidence from burials do archaeologists use to find out whether the buried person was rich or poor?
- 4) In what ways do you think that the life of a raja was different from that of a *dasa* or *dasi*?

Let's do...

- 5) Write down a short poem or song that you have memorised. Did you hear or read the poem or song? How did you learn it by heart?

What is the word for these things in your language?

- poem
- dialogue
- chariot
- wealth
- weapon
- skeleton
- slave
- memorise
- cattle

CHAPTER 6

KINGS, KINGDOMS AND NEW IDEAS

Election Day

It is Election Day. Shankaran's grandparents are going out to vote. They want to be the first to reach the polling booth. "What is so special about elections?" Shankaran asks. "We can choose our own rulers today" his grandfather explains. "This was not always like this..."



How some became rulers

Today we choose our leaders by voting for them. The person with the most votes wins the election. But how did people become rulers in the past?

In the past, rulers were chosen in many ways – very different from how it is done today.

Some of the Rajas we talked about in the last chapter were chosen by the jana, or the people. But about 3000 years back things changed. Some men became big Rajas because they did big 'sacrifices'. These were rituals where animals were killed to offer to the gods.

The *Ashvamedha* or horse sacrifice was one way. A horse was set free to roam around, followed by the Raja's men. The horse went into the kingdoms of other Rajas. If they stopped the horse, they had to fight the Raja who sent it. If they let the horse pass, this meant they agreed that the Raja of the horse was stronger than them. These Rajas were then called to attend the function for the horse sacrifice. They had to bring gifts for the powerful Raja.

This Raja would call himself the most powerful ruler. Many people would sing songs and pray for him. He had a special place to sit – like a throne or a tiger-skin. Have you heard of any other animal sacrifices?

Janapadas and mahajanpadas

The big *Rajas* became rulers of big areas called *Janapadas*, (this word is 'jana pada' or where people set foot and settled down). Some old houses have been found in janapadas in Purana Quila in Delhi and Hastinapur near Meerut. People there lived in huts and kept cattle and other animals. They made pots. They grew rice, wheat, barley, *daals*, sugarcane (*ganna*), seame (*til*), mustard (*sarson*). Did you notice a new crop in this list which was not there earlier?

They made earthen pots. Some of these were grey in colour, others were red. One special type of pottery found at these sites is known as Painted Grey Ware. These grey pots had painted designs, usually simple lines and geometric patterns.



Plates and bowls were made out of Painted Grey Ware. These have a nice, smooth surface. Perhaps these were used on special events, for important people, and to serve special food.

About 2500 years ago, some Janapadas became more important than others, and were called Maha-janapadas. Many Mahajanapadas had a capital city with a big fort (*quila*) and strong walls of wood, stone or brick built around them. These forts were made for many possible reasons - to save them from attacks of other kings, or to control the land and people living inside. Some rulers also built forts with big walls and gates, to show how rich and powerful they were.

Exercise: Have you ever seen a fort? On TV or by going there? Were there big walls around the fort? What were they made of?

To make such big walls thousands or lakhs of bricks had to be made. Hundreds of people had to work day and night and a lot of money was needed. To win wars and defend their forts the new Rajas needed big armies. Soldiers were now paid regular salaries. Where could these big Rajas get all this money from?

Taxes

The Rajas of Mahajanpadas could not depend only on gifts. They now started collecting money and other things from people. They kept officers to collect money and things as taxes.

- Taxes on crops were the most important. This was because most people were farmers. The tax was fixed at 1/6th of what was grown. This was called *bhaga* or a share.
- The taxes on weavers (*bunkar*) and other crafts persons were as free labour. For example, a weaver may have had to work without payment for a day every month for the king.
- Herders like shepherds also had to pay taxes by giving animals, or milk or wool.
- There were also taxes on things that were bought and sold, through trade.
- And hunters and gatherers also had to give to the Raja what they got from the forest.

Discuss:

- What do you think would have been given as tax by hunters and gatherers?



The fort wall at Kaushambi. This wall made of brick was found near present-day Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh). A part of it was probably built about 2500 years ago.

- What do you say in your language - for a person who weaves cloth or blankets (weaver); who keeps sheep (shepherd), who makes things of iron (blacksmith); who makes pots (potter)?

Changes in the way crops were grown

Around this time there were two major changes in the way crops were grown. Earlier people used a wooden plough (*hal*) to shake the soil before planting seeds. Now, people started using ploughs made of iron. With these, even hard soil could be prepared in a better way. Earlier people would throw rice seeds in the land.

How is rice grown today?

But in the Mahajanapadas, farmers began sprouting rice first, and then planting the little rice seedlings in the fields. Almost exactly like it is done today! This way, more plants could grow and people got more rice. These two changes helped people to grow more crops on more land.

A closer look -Magadha

Look for the state of Bihar in the map of India. This is where one of the most powerful Mahajanpadas used to be. It was called *Magadha*, which also had a big army.

There were many things that made Magadha the most important and powerful *Mahajanapada*. Magadha was powerful because of the following things:

- 1) It had many rivers like the Ganga and Son flowing through it. This was important for boats for transport, for more water to use, and for better crops.

- 2) The forests of Magadha had many elephants. They were caught and trained for the army. From the forests people also got a lot of wood for building houses, carts and chariots (*rath*).
- 3) A lot of iron was found in the area. It was used to make strong tools and weapons.

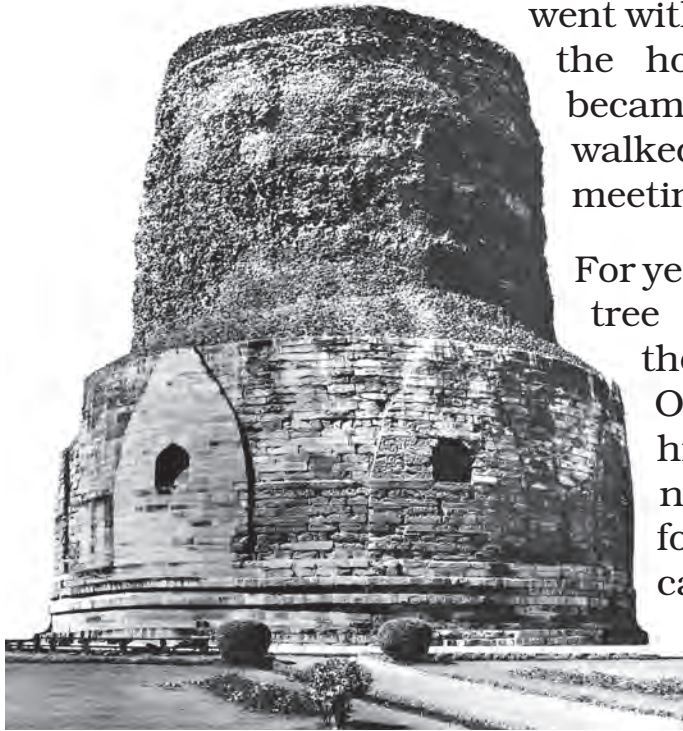
New questions, new ideas

As kings and kingdoms became powerful, they also used big armies to protect themselves. They fought wars and captured other places. Some people felt unhappy about these things. They started asking new questions, thinking of new ideas. Have you heard about Mahavira and Buddha? They also lived in a Janapada. You will now read about them and their new ideas.

The story of the Buddha

Gautama Buddha is the founder of Buddhism. He was born about 2500 years ago. He was from a very rich and powerful family. When he was born, his father asked five wise men to give him a name. They named him Siddhartha. The wise men told his father that if Siddhartha saw an old person, a sick person, a dead person or a monk he would become a great king or a great *sanyasi*.

Siddhartha's father tried hard to keep him away from any sadness in the world. But one day, on his way to a park, Siddhartha saw a sick person, an old person, a dead body and also a monk. He felt very sad. He started thinking - Why do people get old? Why do people get sick? Is it true that everyone will die one day? Will the rich and powerful kings also die? Siddhartha left his palace one night to find answers. His two good friends



The stupa at Sarnath. This building, known as a stupa, was built to mark the place where the Buddha first taught his message.

went with him – his horse Kanthaka and the horseman Channa. Siddhartha became a monk. For many years he walked from one place to another, meeting and talking to people.

For years he meditated under a *peepal* tree at Bodh Gaya in Bihar. He thought about these questions. One day, he felt that he had found his answers. He went to Sarnath, near Varanasi, where he taught for the first time. People started calling him the *Buddha* or the Wise One. He spent the rest of his life walking from place to place and teaching people.

The Buddha was a good storyteller. He used stories to teach people new ideas. Even after his death, his students kept teaching people through stories. They used many stories from the Buddha's life. Let us read one such story:

Children really liked the Buddha. Many children came to listen to him. Some of them even tried to copy him when he meditated!

Some people did not like the new things the Buddha was saying and doing. One day the Buddha was sitting under a tree and teaching. A man came and spat on his face. The Buddha smiled at the man and asked, 'What next? What do you want to say next?' The man looked surprised.

The man could not sleep the whole night. Next day he asked the Buddha to forgive him. 'Forgive?' The Buddha asked. 'But I am not the same man to whom you did that. The Ganga

goes on flowing; it is never the same again. Every man is a river. The man you spat on is no longer here... and you are also new. I can see you are not the same man who came yesterday. So let us forget about it. Come closer. Let us talk of something else.'

Think and Discuss

What do you think the Buddha meant when he said that 'every man is a river'? How do you think the man who came to the Buddha next day was different? Did he behave differently?

People found the Buddha to be a great teacher. Why?

Upanishads

Even before the Buddha, many people tried to find answers for difficult questions - about life and death, why sacrifices should be done. Some of these discussions are found in books called Upanishads. Like the Buddha, these books tried to answer questions like. 'Where have we come from?' or 'Where will we go after death?'

Upanishads were part of the Vedic books we talked about in chapter 3. Upanishad means 'coming and sitting near', and the books have dialogues between teachers and students.

Discuss: A dialogue is when people discuss something. Do you dialogue with anyone? With whom? About what?

Upanishads were written and discussed mostly by men who were brahmins and *rajās*. There are some examples of others too. There was a woman Gargi who was famous for her learning and debating about important ideas. There was

also a poor lower caste boy Satyakama Jabala, the son of a slave woman Jabali, who was famous for his learning of the Upanishads.

Panini and the grammar rules

At this time other scholars were also giving new ideas. Panini was famous for writing the rules of Sanskrit grammar. He wrote the rule like a short formula - something which we study in algebra

Jainism

As we saw, some kings in the Mahajanapadas were becoming very powerful. New cities were growing. Life in villages was also changing. Some people became very poor and suffered. Many people were unhappy with these changes.

Vardhamana Mahavira was one of these people. Mahavira lived about 2500 years ago. He was a prince born at Vaishali near Patna – now the capital of Bihar. He had questions about many things and wanted to find new answers.

When he was thirty years old, he left his home and went to live in a forest. For twelve years he lived a hard and lonely life. He found new ways of thinking and living.

Mahavira said that to gain knowledge about the world people must leave their homes. He believed people should not hurt or kill any living being. All beings want to live, he said. These rules were difficult for farmers to follow who had to kill insects to protect their crops. These were followed mostly by traders. People who followed him were called *Jainas*. They had to be absolutely honest and live very simple lives. They could not steal. The monks and nuns could not marry. Many others supported them, gave them food.

Thousands of people left their homes to learn and teach this new way of life. For hundreds of years

the teachings of Mahavira spread to different parts of India. His teachings were written down about 1500 years ago and kept at a place in Gujarat.

The sangha and monasteries

Buddha and Mahavira said that to know more about the world people should leave their homes. So they stayed as a group called *sangha* away from the big cities and villages.

The rules for the Buddhist *sangha* were written in a book which says that there were separate sections for men and women. People who joined the *sangha* lived simple lives. They meditated most of the time. They went to cities and villages to beg for food.

Everyone was allowed to join the *sangha*. Those who joined were *brahmins*, *kshatriyas*, traders, labourers, barbers, dancers, slaves, etc. They all helped each other. They had meetings to settle any dispute which took place inside the *sangha*. Many of them wrote down the teachings of the Buddha. Some of them also wrote beautiful poems, describing their life in the *sangha*.

Jaina and Buddhist monks went from place to place teaching people. But during the rainy season, when it was very difficult to travel they stayed at one place. Their followers built *kuccha* shelters for them in gardens, or they lived in natural caves in hilly areas.

When they needed *pucca* shelters, they built monasteries. These buildings were made in

Monasteries in quiet places, difficult to reach





The monastery at Alchi in Ladakh

quiet places, far from the crowds, and often difficult to reach. There are many monasteries in J&K.

Alchi monastery

Alchi is a little village in Ladakh. There is a very old monastery there. People come to Alchi from all over the world to see this monastery. Sonam sees many different people in her little village. “What are they doing here?” she wonders. Though they speak many different languages, some of them know bits of English. Sonam enjoys talking to them. “When I grow up I will be a tourist guide and take these people around!” she thinks.

Sonam wants to find out more about the monastery that these people are so excited about.

She says to her grandfather ‘*Meymelay!* Tell me about the monastery! Tell me everything!’

“I don’t know everything, but I will tell you what I know!” he smiles.

“Why do so many people come to see it?? Who made it?” Sonam asked.

“Well, many people made it. Some people made the walls, and some people painted them. The person who got it made was Rinchen Zangpo. When people wrote about Buddhism in Sanskrit, he translated and wrote those things in Tibetan. So he was good at both Sanskrit and Tibetan. People say that he got 108 monasteries made! Alchi was one of them.

The wood carvings on pillars showing the styles used by Kashmiri and Tibetan artists



The paintings here are special. Alchi is not made only in the Tibetan style. Rinchen Zangpo had lived in Kashmir to study Buddhism. When he came back to Ladakh, he brought many Kashmiri artists with him. The monastery at Alchi was made by both Kashmiri and Tibetan artists. So there is a beautiful sharing of their art styles which has made Alchi famous.

The biggest part of the Alchi monastery has got three floors. It is built in Tibetan style with mud and stone. The beautiful carving on the pillars, statues of wood and clay, and wall paintings are made by Kashmiri artists. See this statue of Avalokiteswara with a special painted *dhoti*. Some historians say the dhoti has a painting of a very, very old map of Kashmir!



The tall statue of Avalokiteswara in a beautiful painted dhoti

Historians can find clues about many things in the paintings at Alchi. Like by looking at the clothes people are wearing in different paintings. Some kings are seen to be wearing big long dresses like in Iran. Around this time people travelled between Iran and Kashmir and shared many things – like dresses, food, music, books, etc.

Sonam is amazed! “Thousand years back so many people were coming to our village.” She thought she must study more history of that time - of Ladakh, Kashmir, Tibet, Iran, and many other

places, and also about old paintings and carvings. There is so much to know! She must become a good guide who can share all these wonderful stories with tourists from all over the world.

Discuss: Can you be a good guide for people who come to your village or city? How? What can you explain and show to them?

Elsewhere

1) A prophet in Iran

Look for Iran in your atlas. Zoroaster was an Iranian prophet. His teachings are written in a book called the Avesta. The language of the Avesta, and the practices described in it are very much like those of the Vedas. The basic teachings are about Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Work.

For more than a thousand years in Iran people followed this religion on the teachings of Zoroaster. Some Zoroastrians also came to India and settled in Gujarat and Maharashtra. They are now called Parsis.

2) Democracy in Athens

Look for Greece and Athens in your atlas. Around 2500 years ago, the people of Athens set up a form of government, which was called a democracy, which lasted for about 200 years. All free men over the age of 30 were citizens. There was an assembly that met at least 40 times a year to decide on important matters. All citizens could attend these meetings.

Leaders were chosen through lottery. All those who wanted to become leaders gave in their names, and then some were selected through lottery. Citizens were expected to serve in the army and the navy. But women were not considered citizens. Also, many foreigners, who lived and worked in Athens as traders and crafts persons did not have rights as citizens.

There were also many thousand slaves in Athens, who worked in mines, fields, houses and workshops. They too were not treated as citizens.

Discuss: Do you think this was a true democracy?

Let's recall

1. Describe the ways in which the Buddha tried to teach new ideas to the people.
2. Mark if true or false:

- i) Alchi is important because it was the place where the Buddha taught for the first time.
 - ii) Rajas who let the *ashvamedha* horse pass through their lands were invited to the sacrifice.
 - iii) Archaeologists have found palaces at the sites of the janapadas.
 - iv) Many cities in mahajanapadas had forts.
3. What were the main teachings of the Mahavira?
 4. What were the taxes collected by the rulers of the mahajanapadas?

Let's discuss

5. Do you think it would have been easy for slaves to join the *sangha*? Give reasons for your answer.
6. Why did the rajas of mahajanapadas build forts?
7. How are present-day elections different from the ways in which rulers were chosen in janapadas?
8. What is similar in the way crops were grown in the mahajanapadas and how they are grown today?



What is the word for these things in your language?

- fort
- election
- meditate
- monastery
- carving
- knowledge
- kingdom
- honest
- sacrifice

CHAPTER 7

EMPIRES, CITIES AND VILLAGES

**Roshan's Rupees**

Roshan loved the smell of the fresh notes that her grandfather gave her on her birthday. For the first time she noticed something very interesting. All the currency notes had a smiling face of Gandhiji printed on the right, and a small set of lions on the left. What were the lions there for, she wondered.

A very big Kingdom: An empire

The lions that we see on our notes and coins have a long history. They were made out of stone, and placed on the top of a very big stone pillar at Sarnath (about which you read in the earlier Chapter).



The lion capital

This was done under the orders of a great king named Ashoka. About 2300 years ago, Ashoka was a very famous ruler who had a very big kingdom. Ashoka got many things written on pillars, and on rocks. Before we find out what was written, let us see why his kingdom was called an empire.

Empires are larger than kingdoms. Many small kingdoms combine to make an empire. The ruler of an empire is called an emperor. Empires needed big armies for protection and many officers who can collect tax for the emperor.

The empire that Ashoka ruled was started by his grandfather, Chandragupta Maurya, more than 2300 years ago. That is why this empire is also called the Mauryan Empire. Chandragupta was supported by a wise man named Chanakya.

There were many cities in the Mauryan Empire. These were the capital Pataliputra, Taxila, and Ujjain. Through Taxila one could go to places like Iran. The city of Ujjain was on the route from north to south India. Merchants, officers and crafts persons probably lived in these cities.

In other areas there were villages of farmers and herders. In some areas, there were forests where people collected many things like honey, firewood, flowers, etc. and hunted animals for food. People in different parts of the empire spoke different languages. They probably ate different kinds of food, and also wore different kinds of clothes.

Ruling the empire

As the empire was so large, different parts had to be ruled differently. The area around Pataliputra was under the direct control of the emperor. In empires there used to be one big capital city. It was the place where the emperor and his family lived. But there were other small capitals also. The Emperor used to send his most trusted people (like from his family), to rule in these small capitals. Officers were appointed to collect taxes from farmers, herders, crafts persons and traders, who lived in villages and towns in that area. Officers also punished those who did not obey the king's orders. Many of these officers were given salaries. Messengers took messages and orders from one place to another, and spies (*jasoos*) kept a watch on the officers. The emperor controlled all this with the help of his family and senior ministers.

Taxila and Ujjain were the other two smaller capitals. Ashoka ruled indirectly through these capitals. Many times princes from Ashoka's family were sent as governors to these places.

The Mauryans tried to control roads and rivers, because they were important for transport and trade. Mauryans used to collect funds as tax and tribute.

Tribute

Taxes, were collected on a regular basis, but tribute was collected as and when it was possible from people who gave many things, more or less willingly.

Can you think where we got all this information about the Mauryans from?

We get it from different sources, including some books. One such book is *Indika* written by Megasthenes, who had come from Greece. Let's see what he had to say about the Mauryan emperor and their capital city.

The emperor and the capital city

Megasthenes was an ambassador who was sent to the court of Chandragupta by a Greek ruler. Megasthenes wrote in his book about he saw. "The occasions on which the emperor appears in public are celebrated with grand royal processions (*juloos*). He is carried in a golden *palki*. His bodyguards ride elephants decorated with gold and silver. Some of the guards carry trees on which live birds, including a group of trained parrots, circle about the head of the emperor. The king is normally surrounded by armed women. He is afraid that someone may try to kill him. He has special servants to taste the food before he eats. He never sleeps in the same bedroom for two nights." And about Pataliputra (Patna) he wrote:

"This is a large and beautiful city. It is surrounded by a big wall. It has 570 towers and 64 gates. The houses, of two and three storeys, are built of wood and mud brick. The king's palace is also of wood, and decorated with stone carvings. It is surrounded with gardens and places for keeping birds."

Why do you think the king had special servants to taste the food he ate? Why did he have women guards?

In what ways was Pataliputra different from Mohenjo-Daro?

Ashoka, a unique ruler

The most famous Mauryan ruler was Ashoka. He was the first ruler who tried to take his message



to the people through writings on stone or metal (also called inscriptions). Most of Ashoka's inscriptions were in Prakrit language and were written in the Brahmi script.

Ashoka, the emperor who gave up war

Ashoka gave up war after his conquest of Kalinga which today is along the coast of Orissa. Ashoka fought a war to conquer Kalinga. However, he was so sad when he saw so many people killed that he decided not to fight any more wars. He was the only king in the history of the world who did not conquer the place even after winning the war.

Above : The Brahmi script. We use different scripts to write our languages. Most modern Indian scripts have developed from the Brahmi script over hundreds of years.

Here you can see the letter 'a' written in different scripts.

Ashoka's inscription about the Kalinga war

Ashoka got this written down:

"Eight years after becoming king I conquered Kalinga. About a lakh and a half people were captured. And more than a lakh of people were killed. This filled me with sadness. Why? Whenever an independent land is conquered, lakhs of people die, and many are taken prisoner. Brahmins and monks also die.

People who are kind to their relatives and friends, to their slaves and servants die, or lose their loved ones.

That is why I am sad, and have decided to observe *dhamma*, and to teach others about it as well.

I believe that winning people over through *dhamma* is much better than conquering them through force.

I am inscribing this message for the future, so that my son and grandson after me should not think about war. Instead, they should try to think about how to spread *dhamma*."

How did the Kalinga war bring about a change in Ashoka's attitude towards war?

(*Dhamma* is the Prakrit word for 'Dharma').

The Rampurwa bull.

Look at this finely polished stone sculpture. This was part of a Mauryan pillar found in Rampurwa, Bihar, and has now been placed in Rashtrapati Bhavan. It is an example of the skill of the sculptors of the time.



What was Ashoka's *dhamma*?

In Ashoka's *dhamma* there was no worship of a god, or animal sacrifices. He felt that just as a father tries to teach his children, he had a duty to teach his people. Ashoka was very much inspired by the teachings of the Buddha.

There were many things in empires which made Ashoka sad. People in the empire followed different religions, and this sometimes led to quarrels and fights. Animals were sacrificed. Slaves and servants were treated in a bad way. Then there were quarrels in families and amongst neighbours. Ashoka felt it was his duty to solve these problems. So, he appointed officers who went from place to place teaching people about *dhamma*. Ashoka also sent messengers to spread ideas about *dhamma* to other lands, such as Syria, Egypt, Greece and Sri Lanka. He built roads, dug wells, and built rest - houses. He also arranged

for medical treatment for both human beings and animals.

We read about the empire, its emperors, its capital city, and other cities of the empire. We also learnt about the working of the empire. But, what about life in villages?

See the message that Ashoka wanted to teach his people...

Ashoka's messages to his people:

“People perform many rituals when they fall ill, when their children get married, when children are born, or when they go on a journey.

These rituals are not useful.

If instead, people observe other practices, this would be more fruitful. What are these other practices?

These are:

Being gentle with slaves and servants.

Respecting one's elders.

Treating all creatures with compassion.

Giving gifts to brahmins and monks.”

“It is both wrong to praise one's own religion or criticise another's.

Each one should respect the other's religion.

If one praises one's own religion while criticising another's, one is actually doing greater harm to one's own religion.

Therefore, one should try to understand the main ideas of another's religion, and respect it.” *Are these messages important even today? Discuss.*

Iron tools and water systems: growing more food

We don't think much about the use of iron today. Things made of iron (and steel) are a part of our daily lives. The use of iron began in many parts of India around 3000 years ago. Some of the largest collections of iron tools and weapons were found in the megalithic burials. Around 2500 years ago, there is evidence for the growing use of iron tools. These included axes (*kulhadi*) for clearing forests, and the iron plough (*hal*).

New tools and the ways of growing crops had made more food available. Better systems of bringing water for crops (irrigation) also made a difference. Such water systems that were built during this time had canals, wells, tanks, and artificial lakes.

How Suyya saved Kashmir from floods

This is a story of Suyya written in the book Rajatarangini. This was written in Sanskrit by a Kashmiri poet Kalhana Pandit over 850 years ago. In poems he writes about rulers and people of those times. He writes that:

About 1200 years ago a very intelligent person called Suyya lived in Kashmir. Like today the valley of Kashmir faced regular floods at the time of Suyya. The floods would damage crops and people died of hunger. The ruler of Kashmir at that time was Avanti Varman. He was concerned about the condition of the people.

Suyya used to say that he knew the solution to this problem but did not have the money to make his plan work. One day the king heard of him and asked him to reveal his plan. Suyya put a condition that he should be allowed to spend as much money as he needs. King Avanti Varman agreed.

Jhelum is the main river in the Kashmir valley. It starts from Verinag, in the south of the valley. Jhelum meets river Sindh (Sindh nallah) which comes from Ladakh, at a place named Shadipur (in Baramulla district) just outside Srinagar. In Suyya's time Jhelum and Sindh did not meet at Shadipur but at a nearby village called Trigam. Whenever it rained heavily in the area, the villages used to get drowned. Crops got destroyed, there was no food and this caused famines.

Suyya hit upon a clever plan to clean the Jhelum river bed and shift the place where it meets Sindh. He took some pots filled with coins and went to the site in a boat. He threw few coins into the river. The poor people watching from the banks jumped into the river looking for the coins. In the process they cleaned the river bed. Suyya then made strong walls on both sides of the river. He also changed the place so that Sindh and Jhelum met at Shadipur, and shifted the river so that it passed through the Wular lake before flowing to Baramulla. By this he was able to save the valley from floods. A lot of land was now used for growing crops. New villages came up. Suyya became famous for his. He set up a town on the banks of river Jhelum and named it Suyyapur in honour of his mother. Today this town is called Sopore.

Who lived in the villages?

The kings and kingdoms you have been reading about could not have existed without the support of villages.

There were at least three different kinds of people living in most villages in the south. In the Tamil

region, there were large land-owners, ordinary farmers, and landless labourers, including slaves.

In the northern part of the country, there was a village headman who was often the biggest land owner. Usually, men from the same family held this position for many generations. Generally, he had slaves and hired workers to cultivate the land. Besides, as he was powerful, the king often used him to collect taxes from the village. He also served as a judge, and sometimes as a policeman.

There were other independent farmers, most of whom were smaller land-owners. And then there were men and women who did not own land, and had to earn a living working on the fields owned by others. In most villages there were also some crafts persons such as the blacksmith, potter, carpenter and weaver.

Knowing about cities: stories, travellers, sculpture, archaeology

We can use many kinds of evidence to find out about life in some of these early cities. Sculptors carved stones to show peoples' lives in towns and villages, as well as in the forest. Many of these sculptures were used to decorate railings, pillars and gateways of buildings. Some details about cities and villages are also written by travellers who came from other countries.

In many old cities, archaeologists have found rows of pots arranged

This is a sculpture from Sanchi, a site with stupas, in Madhya Pradesh, showing the scene in a city. Notice the way walls are shown. Are they made of brick, wood or stone? Now look at the railings. Are they made of wood?





Ring well found in Delhi. In what ways do you think this system of drainage was different from that of the Harappans?

one on top of the other. These are known as ring wells. These seem to have been used as toilets in some cases, and as drains and garbage dumps. These ring wells are usually found in individual houses.

One way of knowing about the old cities is by reading some of the Jataka stories. These were composed by ordinary people, and then written down and preserved by Buddhist monks. This is from a Jataka Story which tells us how a clever poor man became rich.

The clever poor man

Once upon a time, there was a clever poor young man who lived in a city. His only resource was a dead rat. He started off by selling it for a coin to a hotel, as food for their cat.

Then one day, there was a storm. The king's garden was covered with branches and leaves, and the gardener did not know how to clear the mess. The young man offered to clean the garden if he could keep the wood and leaves. The gardener agreed at once. The young man offered some children a sweet for every stick and leaf collected. In no time, every stick had been neatly piled near the entrance. Just then, the king's potter was looking for fuel with which to bake his pots. So he took the whole lot and paid the young man for it.

Our young man now thought of another plan. He carried a jar full of water to the city gate, and offered water to 500 grass cutters. They were pleased and said: "You have done us a good turn. Tell us, what can we do for you?" He replied, "I'll let you know when I need your help." He then made friends with a trader. One day, the trader told him: "Tomorrow, a horse dealer is coming to town with 500 horses." Hearing this, our young man went back to the grass cutters. He said: "Please give me a bundle of grass each, and don't sell your grass till mine is sold." They agreed, and gave him 500 bundles of grass. When the horse dealer could not buy grass anywhere else, he purchased the young man's grass for a thousand coins. ...

List the occupations (work) of the different persons mentioned in the story. For each one, try and decide whether they would have lived (a) only in the city (b) only in villages (c) in both cities and villages.

Why do you think the horse dealer was coming to the city? Do you think women could have taken up the work mentioned in the story? Give reasons for your answer.

Coins

Archaeologists have also found several thousands of coins belonging to this time. The earliest coins in use for about 500 years were punch marked coins, such as the one shown below. They have been given this name because the designs were punched on to the metal — silver or copper.



Crafts and crafts persons

We also have archaeological evidence for crafts. These include extremely fine pottery, generally found in north India. It is usually black in colour, and has a fine surface. Archaeological evidence for many crafts may not have survived for so many years.

Elsewhere: The building of the Great Wall of China



Before the time of the Mauryan empire, about 2400 years ago, emperors in China began building the Great Wall.

It was meant to protect the northern border of the empire. Additions to the wall were made over a period of 2000 years because the borders of the empire kept changing.

The wall is about 6400 km long, and is made of stone and brick, with a road along the top. Several thousand people worked to build the wall. There are watch towers all along, at distances of about 100-200 m.

Let's recall

1. Make a list of the occupation (work) done by different people who lived in the Mauryan Empire.
2. Complete the following sentences:
 - a) Officials collected _____ from the area under the direct control of the ruler.
 - b) Royal princes often went to the provinces as _____
 - c) The Mauryan rulers tried to control _____ and _____ which were important for transport.
 - d) People living in forests gave _____ as tax to the Mauryan officials.
3. State whether true or false:
 - a) Kalinga was the ancient name of Bengal.
 - b) Most Ashokan writings (inscriptions) on stone are in the Brahmi script.
4. List the crafts persons who would have been present in both villages and cities.

What is the word for these things in your language?

- empire
- capital
- *Dhamma*
- official
- compassion
- land owner
- evidence
- irrigation (water) system
- inscription
- currency note

Let's discuss...

5. What were the problems that Ashoka wanted to solve by introducing *dhamma*?
6. What were the ways Ashoka used to spread the message of *dhamma*?
7. Compare the drainage system in your locality with that of the cities mentioned in the chapter. What similarities and differences do you notice?

Let's do...

8. Write a short paragraph explaining to Roshan why the lions are shown on our currency notes. List at least one more thing on which you see them.
9. If you have seen crafts persons at work, describe in a short paragraph what they do.



CHAPTER 8

TRADERS, KINGS AND PILGRIMS



Shivani at the market

Shivani was waiting for the fair in her village. She loved to see and touch the pots and pans of shiny steel, bright plastic buckets, cloth printed with different designs, and toys, all of which came from the city. The men who spread out these different things came in buses and trucks and went back at the end of the day. “Why do they keep moving all the time?” She wondered. Her mother explained that they were traders — people who bought things where they were made, and sold them elsewhere.

How to find out about trade and traders

You read about the special black pottery from north India in Chapter 7. This fine pottery, especially the bowls and plates, were found in many different old sites. How do you think it reached these places?

Traders may have carried them from the places where they were made, to sell them at other places. South India was famous for gold, spices (*masaale*), especially pepper (*kaali mirch*), and precious stones. Traders also carried many of these things to Rome in ships, across the sea, and by land in caravans. Many Roman gold coins have been found in south India so there must have been a lot of trade.

Traders tried out many sea routes, like across the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. The journeys by sea were very long and difficult, so good ships had to be built.

New kingdoms along the sea coasts in south India

The Kaveri river valley of south India is the most fertile. Chiefs and kings who controlled the river valleys and the sea coasts became rich and powerful. Sangam poems mention the three chiefs, of three ruling families, the Cholas, Cheras, and Pandyas who became powerful in south India around 2300 years ago.

These chiefs did not collect tax. They collected gifts and money from the people.

They also attacked their neighbouring areas and took things and money from them. They kept some of the wealth for themselves and distributed the rest amongst their supporters, including their family, soldiers, and poets. Many poets composed Sangam poems in praise of these chiefs, who gave them gold, horses, chariots and elephants.

The story of the Silk Route

The beautiful colours and the soft cloth of silk give it a special value in most societies. But to make silk, beginning with the raw silk taken from the silk worms is a very difficult process.

Silk weaving was first started in China around 7000 years ago. For thousands of years the Chinese kept the method of making silk a secret. Some people from China who went to distant lands on foot, on horses and camels, carried silk with them. The path of their journey was called the Silk Route.

Sometimes, Chinese rulers sent gifts of silk to other rulers (in Iran and west Asia), and from there, other people started to hear about silk. About 2000 years ago, wearing silk became the

Clay tiles from Harwan near Srinagar, where a big Buddhist Council was held by Emperor Kanishka in the 1st century A.D. Kashmir was a part of his kingdom.

Can you see the river and the trees?



A sculpture from the stupa at Sanchi. Look at the tree and the empty seat below. Sculptors made this to show that Buddha understood truth while meditating under the tree.



fashion amongst rulers and rich people in Rome. It was very expensive, as it had to be brought all the way from China, along dangerous roads, through high mountains and deserts. People living along the route often demanded payments for allowing traders to pass through.

Some kings even tried to control large parts of this route. This was because they could get money and gifts from the traders. In return, the kings protected the traders who passed through their kingdoms from attacks by robbers.

The best-known rulers who controlled the Silk Route were the Kushanas, who ruled over central Asia and north-west India around 2000 years ago. Their two major cities were Peshawar and Mathura.

The spread of Buddhism

The most famous Kushana ruler was Kanishka, who ruled around 1900 years ago. He organized a Buddhist assembly, where scholars met and discussed important matters. A new form of Buddhism, known as Mahayana Buddhism, now developed.

Earlier, statues of Buddha were not made. He was shown in sculpture only through signs, like an empty seat or a peepal tree (see the picture). Now, in the new Buddhism, statues of the Buddha were made. Many of these were made in Mathura, while others were made in Taxila. Buddhism also spread to west and south India, where many caves were made out of hills for the monks to live in.



Left: An image of Buddha from Mathura, Right: An image of Buddha from Taxila. *Can you find differences between these two images of Buddha?*



Clay tiles from Harwan near Srinagar.

Some of these caves were made on the orders of kings and queens, others by traders and farmers. Many times traders stayed in these cave monasteries during their travels.

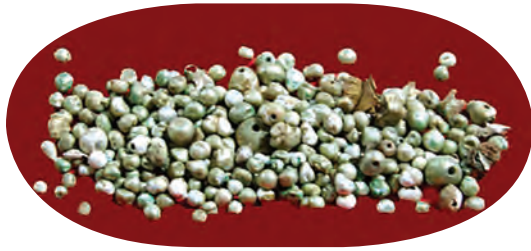
Ancient Buddhist site Ambaran, Akhnoor Jammu

Some 30 kilometers from the small town of Akhnoor, on the banks of river Chenab is located the ancient Buddhist site of Ambaran. Some very interesting things were found from this ancient site. Historians have found Buddhist stupas, walls of a Buddhist monastery, pots, bowls, and beads from this site. One of the most interesting things found from this site were different parts of a human statue like hands, feet and ears. From the things found at the site historians found that people lived at this place from 200 BC to around 700 AD. Can you find the number of years that people lived at Ambaran?



The stupa with red, burnt bricks found at Ambaran

Many historians say that Ambaran was a very



Beads found at Ambaran



Human clay statue - hands and feet found at Ambaran.

important place in ancient India. Not only was Ambaran an important Buddhist place, but many historians think that it was an important trade town on the route between Pataliputra in the east and Taxila in the west.

The long and difficult journeys of the pilgrims

As traders went to distant lands in caravans and ships, pilgrims often travelled with them. Pilgrims are people who travel to holy places to offer prayers. There are famous writings of Chinese Buddhist pilgrims, who came to study about the life of the Buddha and went to famous monasteries.

They wrote of the dangers they had on their travels. They also wrote about the places and people they saw. Some of them carried very important books with them.

Sharing learning: books to China by sea and road

Fa Xian came to India about 1600 years ago. When he was going back to China he got on a ship in Bengal, which belonged to some traders. Just after two days on the sea they were caught in a storm. The traders began throwing their things into the sea to make the ship lighter and save it from sinking. Fa Xian threw away all his personal things, but kept his books and the statues of the Buddha that he had collected. Only after 13 days the storm stopped. This is how he describes the sea:

“The sea itself is endless — it is impossible to know east or west, except by observing the sun, moon, or stars as they move across the sky. If it

is dark, rainy weather, the only plan is to steer by the wind.”

It took him more than 90 days to reach Java, where he stopped for five months, before getting on to another trade ship, which took him back to China.

Xuan Zang was a pilgrim who came about 1400 years ago. He went back to China by the land route (through the north-west, and Central Asia) carrying statues of the Buddha made of gold, silver and sandalwood. He also took over 600 manuscripts loaded on the backs of 20 horses! But 50 manuscripts were lost, when the boat on which he was crossing the Indus overturned. He spent the rest of his life translating the remaining manuscripts from Sanskrit into Chinese.

Rahul Sankrityayan

Rahul Sankrityayan was a very famous philosopher and traveller. He was born in 1893 at Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh and died at Darjeeling at the age of 70. Rahul Sankrityayan was a famous Buddhist scholar. He also knew many languages. He spent his life travelling and writing. Spent 45 years travelling to different parts of the world like Kashmir, Ladakh, Tibet, China, Sri Lanka, Iran and former Soviet Russia. To study Buddhism he went to Tibet many times and brought many beautiful Buddhist paintings and manuscripts. It is said that he used twenty horses to bring all these things from Tibet. All these things which he collected can even now be seen at Patna Museum, Patna.

Nalanda - A special centre of Buddhist learning

Xuan Zang and other pilgrims spent time studying in Nalanda (Bihar), the most famous Buddhist monastery of the period. This is how he describes it, and the difficult test to select students:



Vishnu as Varaha – a stone image from Eran, Madhya Pradesh. This grand statue is of a special form of Vishnu as the boar, or a wild pig. Vishnu took the shape of a boar to save the earth which had sunk into water. Here the earth is shown as a small woman.

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

The beginning of Bhakti

This was also the time when the worship of certain gods got importance and became a main feature of later Hinduism. These Gods included Shiva, Vishnu, and goddesses such as Durga.

These gods and goddesses were worshipped through Bhakti, an idea that became very popular at this time. Bhakti is understood as a person’s devotion to his or her chosen god. Anybody, rich or poor, belonging to the so-called ‘high’ or ‘low’ castes, man or woman, can take the path of Bhakti.

Followers of Bhakti believed in devotion to a god or goddess, rather than doing big sacrifices. If a person worships a chosen god with a pure heart, the god will come in the form he wants to see, such as a human, an animal, a tree etc. Artists then started making beautiful images of these gods.

Bhakti inspired some of the best expressions in art - sculpture, poetry and architecture.

Because the gods were special, the images of the god were kept in special homes, places that we call temples.

Lal Ded and Nund Rishi from Kashmir

A very popular bhakti poetess from Kashmir in the 14th century was Lalla, lovingly called Lal Ded (grandmother). She wrote and recited short poems called Vakh, which people even today recite. For Lalla true Bhakti did not mean leaving the home, or pretending to do rituals, but to live in the home with love for everyone.

Kenh chey ne'ndri-ha'tee wu'dee,
Ken'tsan wu'deyn nae'sar pe'yee;
Kenh chiy sa'naan karith te a'puttee,
Kenh geyh ba'zith ti a'kryey.

केंह छिय न्यंदरि हती व्वदी ।
केंचन व्वद्यन न्यसर प्ययिय ।
केंह छिय स्नान करिथ ति अपूती ।
केंह गेह बज्जिथ ति अक्रयी ।।

کینہ چھی نندره ہتی وودی
کینون وودین ناسر پیی
کینہہ چھی سنان کرتھتہ آہتی
کینہ گیتہ بڑتھتہ اکریی

'Some who seem to be sleeping are wide awake. Some who take dips regularly in holy waters are still unclean. Some who seem busy in their activities are actually detached from the world.'

Nund Rishi, as he is lovingly remembered, was also called Sheikh Noor-ud-din. He was a famous Kashmiri *rishi* and poet at about the same time as Lal Ded. His poems or Shruks, like Lalla's Vaks, are recited by people even today. Almost six hundred years back he had said: '*Ann poshi teli, yeli wan poshi*'- food will survive only till forests survive.

Elsewhere: Jesus in Bethlehem

About 2000 years ago, Christianity emerged in West Asia. Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, which was then part of the Roman Empire. He taught people to treat others with love and trust, just as they themselves wanted to be treated.

Here are a few verses from the Bible, the holy book that contains the teachings of Christ:

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (being just, honest),

For they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God.”

Christ’s teachings were liked by ordinary people, and spread through West Asia, Africa and Europe. The first Christian preachers came to the west coast of India within a hundred years of Christ’s death.

The Christians of Kerala, known as Syrian Christians because they probably came from West Asia, are amongst the oldest Christian communities in the world.

Let's recall

1) Match the following:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mahayana Buddhism | Statues of Budha |
| Sangam literature | Chinese pilgrim |
| Xuan Zang | Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas. |

- Why did kings want to control the Silk Route?
- What kinds of evidence do historians use to find out about trade and trade routes?
- What were the main features of Bhakti?

Let's discuss...

- 5) Discuss the reasons why the Chinese pilgrims came to India.
- 6) Why do you think ordinary people were attracted to Bhakti?

Let's do...

- 7) List five things that you buy from the market. Which of these are made in the city/village in which you live, and which are brought by traders from other areas?
- 8) There are several major pilgrimages performed by people in India today. Find out about any one of them, and write a short description. (Hint: who can go on the pilgrimage — men, women or children? How long does it take? How do people travel? What do they take with them? What do they do when they reach the holy place? Do they bring anything back with them?)

What is the word for these things in your language?

- design
- toys
- spices
- journey
- ship
- poetess
- silk

CHAPTER 9

NEW EMPIRES AND KINGDOMS

**Arvind plays a king**

Arvind had been chosen to act as a king in the school play. He had expected to march in a beautiful dress, twist his moustaches and hold the silver-paper covered sword with brilliant style. Imagine his surprise when he was told he would also have to sit and play a *veena*, and recite poetry! A musician-king? Who was that? He wondered.

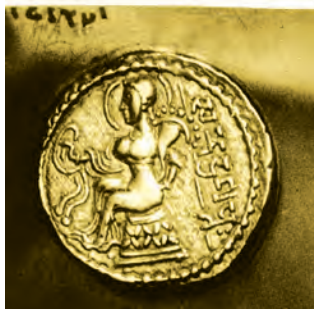
Prashastis and what they tell us

Arvind was supposed to be acting as Samudragupta, a famous ruler of the Guptas. We know about Samudragupta from a poem in Sanskrit written by his court poet, Harisena, nearly 1700 years ago. This long poem was written on the Ashokan pillar at Allahabad.

This is a special type of inscription called a *prashasti*. Have you heard of the Hindi word *prashansa*? In Sanskrit *prashasti* means 'in praise of'. These became very important from the time of the Guptas.

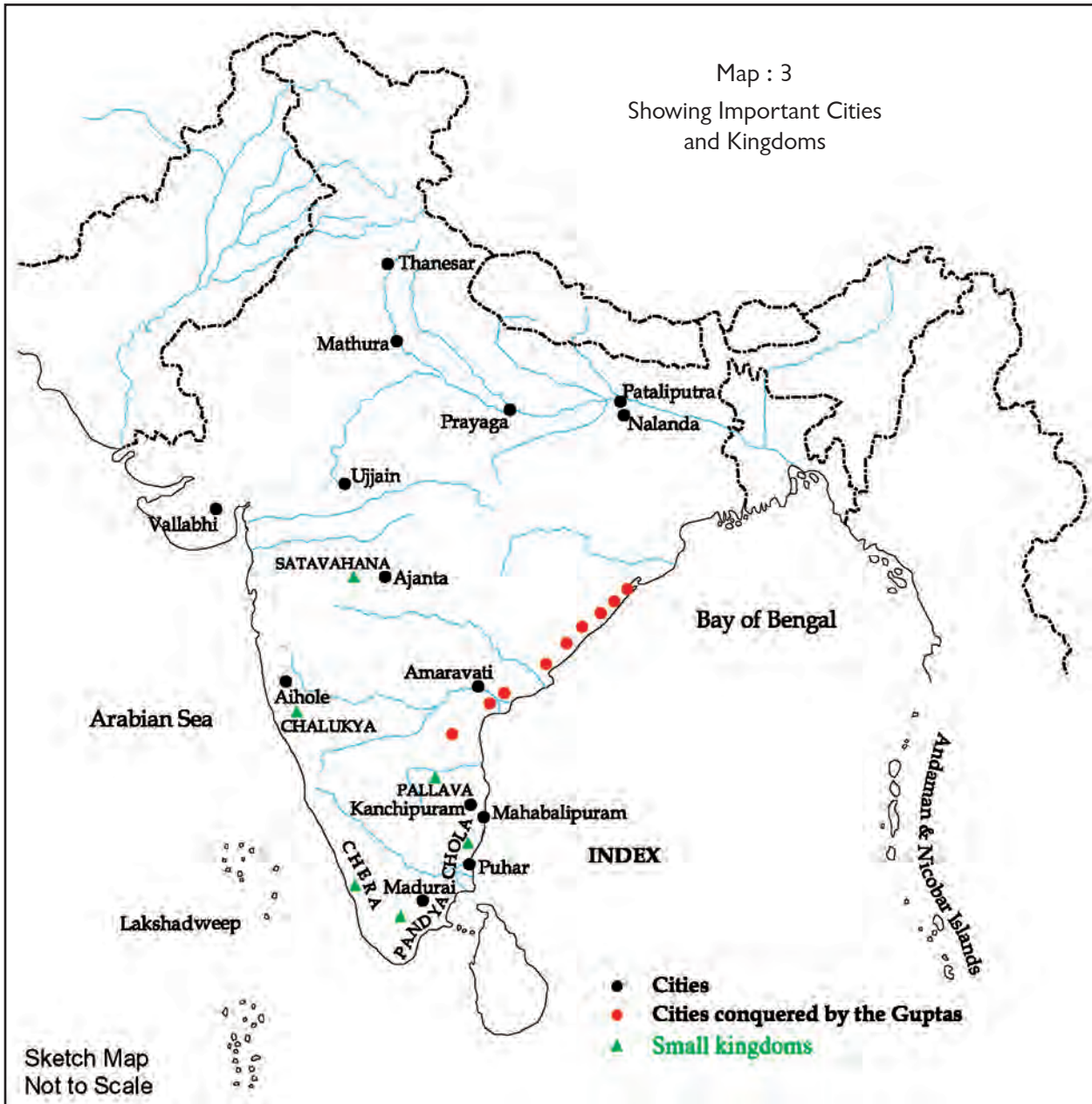
Samudragupta's *prashasti*

Let us see what Samudragupta's *prashasti* tells us. The poet praised the king in big flowery words - as a brave warrior, whose beautiful body had marks of hundreds of war axes, arrows, swords, and many other weapons. He called him a king who won many wars, who was learned and the best of poets. He is also described him as equal to the gods. The *prashasti* was composed in very long sentences. These writings give information about many other things happening at that time.



The king who played the veena.

Some other qualities of Samudragupta are shown on coins such as this one, where he is shown playing the veena.



Family-Trees

Most *prashastis* also give the long family tree with many generations of the ruler. The one about Samudragupta also talks about his great grandfather, grandfather, father and mother. His father, Chandragupta, was the first ruler of the Guptas to choose the grand title of *maharaj-adhiraja*, a title that Samudragupta also used. His great grandfather and grandfather are

mentioned simply as *maharajas*. It seems as if the family slowly became more powerful. See, which sounds more important: *raja*, *maha-raja* or *maharaj-adhiraj*? You must be seeing these titles in plays or films too.

From coins and writings we also know about Samudragupta's son, called Chandragupta II. It is believed that he supported many learned people like Kalidasa the poet and Aryabhata the astronomer (you will read more in chapter 10)

Harshavardhana and his life story

We learn about the Gupta rulers from their inscriptions and coins, and find out about some kings from their life stories or biographies. Harshavardhana, who ruled nearly 1400 years ago, was one such ruler. The king's poet, Banabhatta, wrote his biography in Sanskrit. It tells us that Harsha became king of Thanesar after both his father and elder brother died. Harsha fought many wars and conquered both Magadha and Bengal in the east, but was not successful in many other areas. He tried to cross the Narmada River to march into the south, but was stopped by a ruler belonging to the Chalukyas.

A beautifully carved temple at Aihole (Karnataka) built 1400 years ago.



The Pallavas and Chalukyas

The Pallavas and Chalukyas were the most important ruling families in south India during this period.

Aihole, the capital of the Chalukyas, was an important trading centre (see Map). It also developed

as a religious centre, with a number of temples. The Pallavas and Chalukyas often attacked one another's lands, especially the capital cities, which were very rich towns.

After some time, both the Chalukyas and Pallavas were defeated and new kings ruled, such as the Cholas. You will learn about them in later classes.

How were these kingdoms administered?

As in the case of earlier kings, tax from land remained important for these rulers.

Many new things were also tried by the kings. Kings used many steps to get the support of powerful people, who had money or political and military strength. For example:

- Some important posts were kept for the sons to get after their fathers left.
- Sometimes, one person held many offices. For example, the poet Harisena, besides being a chief law officer was also a minister of war and peace.
- Important men also had a say in local administration. These included persons like the chief banker or trader of the city and other such powerful people.

These policies were very important, but sooner or later, some of these powerful men grew strong enough to set up their own independent kingdoms.

A new kind of army

Like earlier rulers, some of these kings maintained a well-organised army, with elephants, chariots, cavalry (horse soldiers) and foot soldiers. Besides,



Coin showing queen Didda, in the 10th century A.D.

there were military leaders who provided the king with troops whenever he needed them. They were not paid regular salaries. But some of them received grants of land. They collected tax from the land and used this to maintain soldiers and horses, and get weapons and other material for warfare.

Lalitaditya of Kashmir

Around the same time as the Pallavas and Chalukyas were ruling in south India, a king named Lalitaditya of Karkota family ruled Kashmir. More than 1200 years ago, he built the grand temple of Martand, to worship the Sun god. The temple is in Mattan, in South Kashmir. He was a Hindu and built many religious places for both Hindus and Buddhists.

After him, some women rulers like Sugandha and Didda also ruled Kashmir. We get to know about



Martand or the Sun Temple, the finest piece of architecture of ancient Kashmir in the 8th century A.D..

the history of Kashmir from a book called *Rajatarangini* written by Kalhana (about which you will learn in the next chapter). There were also coins issued by queen Didda. She ruled for many years, though she could not walk and was physically challenged. She had to be carried by a woman porter when she went about her duties.

Ordinary people in the kingdoms

We can get a view of the lives of ordinary people from plays, and other writings. Let us look at some of these.

Kalidasa is known for his plays about life in the king's *sabha*. An interesting feature about these plays is that the king and most *brahmins* are shown as speaking Sanskrit, while women and other men use Prakrit. His most famous play,

Abhijnana Shakuntalam, is the story of the love between a king named Dushyanta and a young woman named Shakuntala. We find an interesting description of the condition of a poor fisherman in this play.

A fisherman finds a ring: Abhijnana Shakuntalam

A fisherman found a costly ring, which the king had given to Shakuntala, but which had been swallowed by a fish. When he went to the palace with it, the gatemmen accused him of being a thief, and the chief police officer behaved rudely with him. However, the king was happy when he saw the ring and sent a reward for the fisherman. Then, the police officer and the gatemmen decided to take a share of the reward, and went along with the fisherman to have a drink.

Even today do some people demand a share, when a poor person gets a fund or a loan?

And Banabhatta provides us with a detailed picture of the king's army on the move:

The king's army

The king travelled with a whole lot of equipment. Apart from weapons, there were things of daily use such as pots, pans, furniture, golden footstools, food, including animals such as goat, deer, rabbits, vegetables, spices, carried on carts or loaded on to camels and elephants. This huge army went with musicians beating drums, and others playing horns and trumpets.

Villagers had to serve the army along the way. They came with gifts of curd (*dahi*), *gur* and flowers, and provided food for the animals. They also tried to meet the king, and place their complaints and petitions before him.

The army destroyed many things wherever it moved. Elephants often crushed the huts of villagers, and the animals tied to the caravans of traders ran away, scared by the noise and chaos.

As Banabhatta says: "The whole world was swallowed up in dust."

The Chinese pilgrim Fa Xian noticed the condition of those who were treated as 'untouchable' by the powerful people. They made them live outside the city. He writes: "If such a man enters a town or a market place, he strikes a piece of wood, in order to keep himself separate; people, hearing this sound, know what it means and avoid touching him or brushing against him."

Assemblies in the southern kingdoms

The inscriptions of the Pallavas mention a number of local assemblies. These included the *sabha*, which was an assembly of *brahmin* land owners. This assembly functioned through subcommittees, which looked after irrigation, farming, making roads, local temples, etc.

Elsewhere: Prophet Muhammad in Arab land

Find Arabia on the Map. Although it is a desert, it was at the center of communications for centuries. In fact, Arab merchants and sailors played an important role in the sea trade between India and Europe. Others who lived in Arabia were the Bedouins, pastoral tribes depending mainly on hardy animals like camels that could survive in the desert.

Around 1400 years ago, Prophet Muhammad introduced a new religion, Islam, in Arabia. Like Christianity, Islam was a religion that laid stress on the equality and unity of all before Allah, the one supreme god. Here is a verse from the Quran, the sacred book of Islam:

“For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast, for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah’s remembrance, for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward.”

Within a hundred years Islam spread to North Africa, Spain, Iran and India. Arab sailors, who were already familiar with the coastal regions of the subcontinent, now brought the new religion with them.

Imagine

Harshavardhana’s army will visit your village next week. Your parents are preparing for the visit. Describe what they say and do?

Let’s recall

- 1) State whether true or false:
 - (a) Samudragupta was a Mauryan ruler.

- (b) The rulers of Samudragupta's kingdom brought gifts for him.
- (c) Aihole was the capital of the Pallavas.
- (d) Banabhatta was the court poet of Harshavardhana.
- (e) Martand temple was built by queen Didda of Kashmir.
- 2) What steps were taken by the kings to get the support of powerful people?
- 3) What changes do you find in the army at this time?

Let's discuss...

- 4) What do you think Arvind would have to do if he was acting as Samudragupta?
- 5) Do you think ordinary people would have read and understood the *prashastis*? Give reasons for your answer.

Let's do...

- 6) If you had to make a family history for yourself, who are the people you would include in it? How many generations would you like to show? Make a chart and fill it.
- 7) How do you think wars affect the lives of ordinary people today?

What is the word for these things in your language?

- biography
- musician
- generation
- astronomer
- story
- fisherman
- curd

CHAPTER 10

BUILDINGS, PAINTINGS AND BOOKS



Iqbal and the iron pillar

Iqbal was so excited. His brother took his wheelchair all along the stony path, near the towering Qutb Minar, and up the metal ramp. It was tough, but now he was here, in front of the famous iron pillar. This day he would never forget!

The iron pillar at Mehrauli, Delhi, is a wonderful example of the knowledge of Indian crafts persons. It is made of iron, and is about 7.2 meters high. It was made about 1500 years ago. We know the date because the name of the ruler Chandra is written on the pillar. Historians think that Chandra belonged to the Gupta dynasty. The

The iron pillar at Mehrauli.



most amazing thing about this pillar is that the iron has not rusted in all these years.

Buildings in brick and stone

The skills of the crafts persons are also clear in the buildings that have survived, such as *stupas*. The word *stupa* means a mound. While there are several kinds of *stupas*, round and tall, big and small, these have certain common features. Generally, there is a small box placed at the centre of the *stupa*. This may contain body parts (such as teeth, bone or ashes) of the Buddha or his followers, or things they used, as well as precious stones, and coins.

Often, a path was made around the *stupa*. It had railings and gates, decorated with sculptures. As part of their worship, devotees walked around the stupa, in a clockwise direction.

At times caves were made by cutting into big rocks and were beautifully decorated with statues and painted walls.

Some of the earliest Hindu temples were also built at this time. Gods and goddesses such as Vishnu, Shiva, and Durga were worshipped in these temples. Most temples had a *mandapa* which was a hall where people could get together. In some temples there is a tower called *shikhara*, and it needed careful planning to build. Look at the pictures given here. Also look for Mahabalipuram and Aihole in Map 2 (p. 81). Some of the most beautiful temples were built in these places.

How were stupas and temples built?

There were many stages in building a stupa or a temple. Usually, kings or queens decided to build these as it was very expensive. First, good quality stone had to be found, cut from the rocks, and then brought to the place chosen for the new building. Here, the rough stone blocks had to be shaped and carved into pillars, and panels, for the walls, floors and ceilings. And then these had to be put up in the right position.



The Great Stupa at Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh. Stupas like this one were built over several centuries. While the part made of bricks dates to the time of Ashoka, the railings and gateways were added during the time of later rulers



Temple at Mahabalipuram. Each of these was carved out of a huge, single piece of stone (that is why they are known as monoliths).

Kings and queens spent money from their funds, to pay the crafts persons who worked to build these beautiful structures. Also, when people came to visit the temple or the stupa, they often brought gifts, which were used to decorate the buildings.

Others also paid for the decorations and their names are written on the pillars, railings and walls. These were merchants, farmers, garland makers, smiths, perfumers, and hundreds of other men and women. So when you get a chance to go to any of these, remember how hundreds of people might have worked to make and decorate them.

To do: List the steps that were needed in the making of a temple or stupa.



A famous Ajanta painting of the Padmapani, carrying a lotus. His face shows peace and compassion.

Paintings

At Ajanta (in Maharashtra; see Map 2) many caves were cut out of the hills over centuries. Most of these caves were monasteries for Buddhist monks, and some were decorated with paintings. As the caves are dark inside, these paintings were done in the light of torches. The colours, which are clear even after 1500 years, were made of plants and minerals. The artists who created these works of art are still not known.

Recording and preserving old stories

Some of the best-known epics were written at this time, about 1500 years ago. Epics are grand, long stories, about heroic men and

women, and also about gods.

A number of Hindu religious stories that were being told earlier were written down around this time. These include the Puranas. Purana literally means old. The Puranas contain stories about gods and goddesses, such as Vishnu, Shiva, Durga or Parvati. These were written in simple Sanskrit and were meant to be heard by everyone, even those who were not allowed to study the Vedas. They were probably recited in temples by priests, and people came to listen to them.

Two Sanskrit epics, the Mahabharata and Ramayana had been popular for a very long time. Some of you may have heard these stories. The Mahabharata is about a war fought between the Kauravas and Pandavas, who were cousins. This was a war to gain control of the throne of the Kurus, and their capital, Hastinapur. The story was an old one, but was written down in the form in which we know it today, about 1500 years ago.

There are many versions of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, which are popular and performed in different parts of the country. Find out about a version in Jammu and Kashmir.



A Jain monastery in Odisha. This two storey building was carved out of a rock. Jain monks lived and meditated in the rooms. *How is the cave here different from the one in Bhimbetka?*

Rajatarangini : The story of Kashmir

Rajatarangini means a River of Kings. It is a very famous book on the history of Kashmir written by Kalhana Pandit in Sanskrit. It gives details of what was happening in Kashmir and about its kings and queens from the earliest times. Kalhana finished writing it in 1150 A.D. His work was continued by many other historians after him. It was translated into Persian by the ruler Zain-ul-abidin, also known as Budshah or the Great King. It has also been translated into many other languages.

Writing books on science

This was also the time when Aryabhata studied mathematics and the movement of the stars, the sun and the moon. He wrote a book in Sanskrit known as the *Aryabhatiyam*. He said that day and night were caused by the earth rotating on its axis, even though it seems as if the sun is rising and setting every day. For hundreds of years people did not believe this. He also found a way to calculate the circumference of a circle, which is very close to the formula we use today.

What formula do you use to find the circumference when you know the radius of a circle?

A poem by Kalidasa: The Cloud Messenger

Writers such as Kalidasa wrote in Sanskrit. Here are a few lines from his famous poem, the *Meghadoota* (the cloud messenger). The poet imagines a monsoon cloud as a messenger, between lovers who are separated from one another.

See how the poet describes the breeze carrying the cloud towards the north:

“A cool breeze, delightful as it is touched,
With the fragrance (sweet smell) of the earth
Swollen by your showers,
Inhaled deeply by elephants,
And causing the wild figs (*anjeer*) to ripen,
Will blow gently as you go...”

Do you think Kalidasa can be described as a lover of nature?

Stories told by ordinary people

Ordinary people also told stories, composed poems and songs, sang, danced, and performed plays. Some of these are saved as collections of stories, such as the *Jatakas* and the *Panchatantra*, which were written down around this time. Stories from the *Jatakas* were often shown on the railings of stupas and in paintings in places such as Ajanta.

Here is one such story:

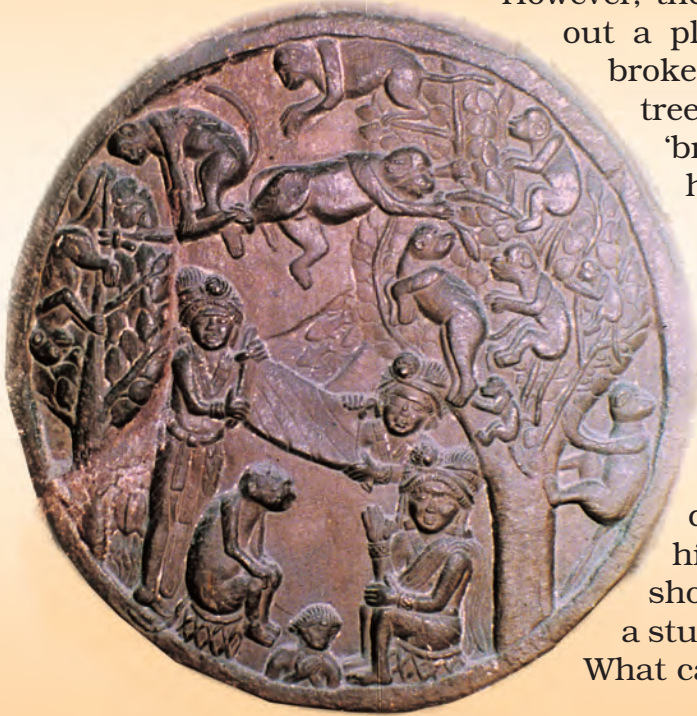
The story of the monkey king

Once upon a time there was a great monkey king, who lived on the banks of the Ganga in the Himalayas, with 80,000 of his followers. They ate the fruit of a special mango tree, which were very sweet. Such sweet mangoes did not grow in the plains. One day, a ripe mango fell into the river and floated all the way to Varanasi. There the king of the city who was bathing in the river found it, and was amazed when he tasted it. He asked his foresters to find the tree for him, and they took him all the way to the Himalayas. There, the king and his men ate as many mangoes as they could. At night, the king saw the monkeys also feasting on the fruit, and decided to kill them.

However, the king of the monkeys worked out a plan to save his followers. He broke off branches of the mango tree, and tied them to form a 'bridge' across the river. He then held on to one end till all his followers crossed over. Tired with so much work, he fell down and lay dying.

The human king saw what had happened, and tried but could not bring the monkey king back to life. When he died, the king felt sad and paid him full respect. This story is shown on a sculpture found from a stupa at Bharhut in central India.

What can you see in the picture?



Zero

Numerals from one to nine had been used earlier in different parts of the world. Now mathematicians in India made a special symbol for zero. This system of counting was used by the Arabs and then spread to Europe. It continues to be in use throughout the world.

Elsewhere: Paper in China

These days we use paper every day. The books we read are printed on paper, and we use paper for writing. Paper was invented in China about 1900 years ago, by a man named Cai Lun. He took plant fibres, cloth, rope and the bark of trees, soaked these in water, and then pressed, drained and dried the juice to create paper. Even today, handmade paper is made through a similar process. For centuries the Chinese did not tell anyone the art of making paper. It was known in Baghdad about 1800 years ago. From Baghdad it spread to Europe, Africa, and other parts of Asia including the subcontinent.

Let's recall

- 1) Fill in the blanks:
 - (a) _____ was a great astronomer.
 - (b) Stories told by ordinary people were written down in the _____ and _____ collections.
 - (c) _____ is the story of Kashmir written by Kalhana.

Let's discuss...

- 2) Make a list of the chapters in which you find mention of metal work. What are the metals objects mentioned or shown in those chapters?
- 3) Read the story on page 93. In what ways is the monkey king similar to or different from the kings you read about in Chapters 6 and 9?

Let's do...

- 4) List some steps that can be taken to make buildings and monuments accessible to differently-abled people.
- 5) Try and list as many uses of paper as you can.
- 6) If you could visit any one of the places described in this chapter, which would you choose and why?

What is the word for these things in your language?

- pillar
- bricks
- compassion
- decoration
- epic
- priest
- mango

