

### **MENANDER:**

He belonged to the Demetrius dynasty. He ruled from 165 B.C. to 145 B. C. He was a contemporary of the Sunga king, Pushyamitra. Menander was a great conqueror who crossed the Beas River to conquer Kaathiawar, Broach and the territories between the rivers Ganga and Yamuna. He also attacked Pataliputra in 149 B. C. but was pushed back by Pushyamitra. Menander ruled a vast empire which included Afghanistan, Punjab, Kathiawar, Sindh, Rajputana and Mathura. His capital city was Sakla (modern Sialkot) which was a great centre of learning. He made Sialkot a city of beautiful parks and gardens which was also famous for gems and pearls. Menander's place was in the middle of the city. It was unique for its beauty.

Menander was a follower of Buddhism and he led such a pious life that the people regarded him like a god. He had become so popular with his subjects that after his death, they clamored to possess his ashes. In this way, he acquired boundless fame not only as a powerful king but also as a great philosopher.

### **ANTIALKIDAS:**

He was another famous Indo-Greek ruler. He belonged to the dynasty founded by Eukratides and his capital was at Taxila. After him the Greek state became weak as he was followed by a line of weak successors. Most of them embraced Hinduism or Buddhism and settled permanently in India. Several foreign tribes invaded India between 140 B.C. and 120 B. C. and thus caused the downfall of these empires. But for some years, even after that, a few of the Greeks chiefs ruled certain territories which in the end fell to the Kushans.

### **THE KUSHANS:**

The Kushans were a branch of the Yeuh-chi tribe who were driven out of China by the powerful Huns in the Middle of the second century B.C. Driven out of China, they wandered into Central Asia and then advanced into India through the North-Western border. On their way, they vanquished the Parthians, Bactrian and the Sakas. In the course of time, they became civilized and were divided into five branches. Among them, the Kushans emerged as the most powerful and they subdued the other four branches of their tribe. It was then that the Kushans entered India.

### **THE SAKAS:**

The Sakas were nomadic people who were driven out of their own homeland by another nomadic tribe Yeuh-Chi. Now the Sakas advanced into Bactria and Parthia and occupied large chunks of their territory. They were followed by bigger waves of Sakas and were thus forced to advance still further into India after crossing over the Hindukush and the Sulaiman Mountains. They settled in the north-western parts of India. Gradually, they spread to other parts and some of the Sakas took jobs with Parthian rulers and were appointed as governor. Later on when these Satraps became independent rulers, they continued with this title and were known as the Saka Satraps who had established their several kingdoms in the north-west of India. After sometime, they were divided into two independent branches:

(a) *Northern Satraps of Taxila and Mathura.*

(b) *Western Satraps of Nasik and Ujjain.*

## Greek Influence on India

**Critically examine the Greek influence on India.**

The people of India came in contact with the Greeks as a result of Alexander's invasion of India. But he failed to leave any permanent influence on this country as his stay in India was very short and all the time he stayed here, he kept fighting battles. But as a result of the establishment of the Greek states on the North-Western border of India in the third century B.C., the Indo – Greek interaction took place on a large scale which greatly influenced the Indians particularly in the following fields:

◆ **Trade:** The establishment of this foreign rule led to Indians trade relations with the West Asian countries. India exported cotton and woolen textiles, spices, perfumes etc. which brought enough of wealth to India.

◆ **Coinage:** The Indians learnt a lot in this field from the Greeks. Before the Greeks the Indian coins were unpolished and punch-marked and were mere lumps of metal. But the Greeks introduced the method by making beautiful coins in definite shapes by using moulds and dyes. The Indians too followed this method and made beautiful coins for themselves. From the Greeks, they also learnt the practice of putting inscriptions on both sides of the coins.

◆ **Astronomy:** The Greeks were also advanced in the field of astronomy. That is why it is admitted in the old Indian treatise 'Gargi Samhita' that the science of astronomy originated with the Greeks and they should thus be revered like gods. Probably, the Indians learnt from the Greeks the science of preparing horoscopes as well.

◆ **Sculpture:** The Gandhara School of Sculpture bears a clear mark of the Greek influence. That is why it is sometime called the Greco-Buddhist art. As a result of their contacts with the Kushans and the Greeks, the Indians now made beautiful images mostly of the Buddha which had Indian subjects and ideas executed in the Greek style and physical features. In this way, the Indian art of sculpture was greatly influenced by the Greek art.

◆ **Construction of Caves:** The Indians also learnt from the Greeks the art of constructing the caves, which are still found in this country. The caves were constructed chiefly by cutting hue rocks.

◆ **The Architecture:** The Indians borrowed from the aliens probably in this field as well, though there is no definite evidence available in this respect as a Greek specimen is yet to be excavated that would testify to this claim. Probably, it took a long period for the Greek influence to affect any modification in the Indian architecture.

◆ **Literature:** In this field, the influence of the Greek literature is hardly dissembled. Some Greek historians claim that some of the Greek poems of Homer were rendered in local languages and some Greek plays were staged at various important towns of Indian. Even if these statements are deemed to be true they do not prove in any way that the Indian literature of that time was influenced by the Greeks or any other alien literature.

◆ **Religion:** Some of the Indian and European historians hold the view that the practice of image-worship both among the Hindus and the Buddhists was a direct result of the Greek

influence. But there seems to be little truth in this view. It was the Indian religion which on the contrary influenced the aliens in the field of religion. Several of the foreign rulers like Menander, Rudradaman and Kanishka embraced Hinduism or Buddhism.

***Explain the reasons for the invasions by the Indo-Greeks, Parthians, Shakas and Kushanas.***

1. ***Weakness of the Maurya Empire:*** The Mauryan empire had become very vast by 200 B.C. When the reigns of the empire passed into the hands of the weak kings, the decline of the empire began. Gradually the dynasties from Central Asia began to replace the Mauryan kings. It is thus clear that the weakness of the Mauryan Empire prompted the foreign forces to invade India.

2. ***Weakness of the Seleucid Empire:*** One important cause of invasion was the weakness of the Seleucid Empire. On account of growing pressure from the Seythian tribes, the later Greek rulers were unable to hold their power in this area.

3. ***Construction of the Chinese wall:*** With the construction of the Chinese borders, they turned their attention towards the neighbouring Greeks and Parthians. Pushed by the Scythian tribes, the Bactrian Greeks were forced to invade India.

***Discuss the impact of the Central Asian contacts of India's political system, society and science and technology.***

Following is the description of the impact of the Central Asian contacts on India's political system, society and science and technology:

### IMPACT ON POLITICAL SYSTEM

1. The Central Asian conquerors imposed their rule on numerous petty native princes. This led to the development of a feudatory organization.

2. The Kushanas introduced the Satrapy system of government. The empire was divided into numerous satrapies and each satrapy was placed under the rule of a Satrap.

3. Some curious practices such as hereditary dual rule, two kings ruling in the same kingdom at one and the same time were introduced by the Kushanas. Thus, it appears that there was less centralization under the Kushana rulers.

4. The Greek introduced the practice of military governorship. They appointed their governors called Strategos. Military governors were necessary to maintain the power of the new rulers over the conquered people.

### IMPACT ON SOCIETY

The Greeks, the Shakas, the Parthians and the Kushanas ultimately lost their identity in India and became the part and parcel of Indian society. Since most of them came as conquerors, they were absorbed in Indian society as a warrior class that is as the Kshatriyas. Many stated that they came to be considered as second class Kshatriyas. The foreigners were assimilated into Indian society on a large a scale in the Post-Maurya times.

## IMPACT ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. **Science:** In Post-Maurya times Indian astronomy and astrology profited from contact with the Greeks. We notice many Greek terms about the movement of planets in Sanskrit texts. Indian astrology came to be influenced by Greek ideas, and from the Greek terms Horoscope, was derived the term horasastra used for astrology in Sanskrit. The Greek coins were a great improvement on punch marked coins. The Greek term drachma came to be known as drama. In return, the Greek rulers used the Brahmi script and represented some Indian motifs on their coins. Dogs, cattle, spices and ivory pieces were exported by the Greeks.

2. **Technology:** In the field of technology also the Indians were benefited from contacts with the Central Asians. Kanishka is represented as wearing trousers and long boots. Possibly the practice of making leather shoes began in India during this period. In any case the Kushan copper coins in India were imitations of Roman coins. Similarly, gold coins in India were struck by the Kushans in imitation of Roman gold coins.

Thus, the contact of Rome with ancient India introduced new practices in technology. Working in glass during this period was especially influenced by foreign ideas and practices. In no other period in ancient India did glass making make such progress as it did during this period.

## THE KANISHKA

Kanishka was no doubt one of the greatest ancient Indian kings. His achievements were great both in war and peace. He was both a great general and an able administrator who laid the foundation of an efficient administrative system .he also encouraged arts and education and attained creditable success in the fields of trade and religion.

1. **His Early Life:** Kanishka was the most powerful and well-known of the Kushan kings. He is compared with Chandragupta for his military power and with Ashoka for his patronage to Buddhism. Little is known about his early life. His capital was Purushpur (Modern Peshwar) which was the first city to be razed by the subsequent invaders. As a result, all sites associated with Kanishka were lost to the future historian. The historians do not agree even to the date of his accession. While some historians hold that he became king in 78 A.D. others like V.A. Smith, Sir John Marshall and Prof. Konow believe that Kanishka ascended the throne in 120 A.D. Secondly, we do not know anything about his parentage. Thirdly, we are in the dark about that Kushan ruler who ruled for ten years from 110 A.D. to 120 A.D. It is believed that a king known by the title of Soter Megas ruled during this period and he was not Kanishka's father. Then how Kanishka came to acquire the kingdom is still a mystery. However, it is believed that Kanishka ruled for 42 years (120 A.D. to 162 A.D.) with the seat of his government at Purushpur (Peshawar).

2. **Kanishka's Conquests:** Kanishka was a great imperialist king who greatly extended his empire within a short period. When he ascended the throne his empire consisted of Bactria, Parthia, Afghanistan, Punjab and large parts of Sindh. By his conquests, Kanishka added several other territories to his empire by conquering the following provinces:

a) **Kashmir:** His first conquest was Kashmir where he built several buildings and founded the new city of 'Kaniskapura'. He was very fond of the Kashmir valley and loved its natural beauty. It is said that he had willed to be buried in this valley after his death.

b) **War against the Saka Straps:** The Saka Straps were still powerful in Northern India. Therefore, Kanishka defeated the Saka Satraps of the Punjab and Mathura and organized his own forces. He also defeated the Satrap of Ujjain, Sahastana and wrested from in some parts of Malwa.

c) **Magadha.** Some historians believe that he conquered large parts of Magadha as well. The Buddhist texts tell us that it was during his conquest of Pataliputra that Asvaghosa, the renowned Buddhist monk of that period, met him. Asvaghosa accompanied Kanishka and was made the Vice-President of the Fourth Buddhist Council.

d) **War with China:** After having subdued the north Indian kingdoms, Kanishka turned his attention towards China. Pan Chao, the Chinese general had defeated Kadphises II and since then the Kushans had been paying a large amount as tribute. Kanishka not only stopped the payment of this tribute but also demanded the hand of a Chinese princess in marriage. The Chinese Emperor was so enraged at this that he put in prison the Kanishka's ambassador. It led Kanishka to dispatch his armies against China but had to retreat as he was no match to the great Chinese General Pan Chao. However, Kanishka made extensive preparations to lead his armies the second time. However, his second expedition proved successful. By now, Pan Chao was dead and his son was no match to Kanishka. In this way, Kanishka occupied three Chinese provinces of Khotan, Kashgar and Yarkand. It is, for these conquests that Kanishka is known as a great general in history.

e) **Extent of his Empire:** Kanishka ruled a vast empire which included besides his Indian territories, Afghanistan, Bactria, Parthia, Kashgar, Khotan, Yarkand. His Indian possessions consisted of modern Punjab, Kashmir, Sindh, Uttar Pradesh and probably of some areas in north and east as well. Thus his empire extended from Kashgar and Bukhara in the north to Sindh in the south and from Benaras in the east to river Helmand in the west.

3. **Kanishka's Administration:** Much is not known about Kanishka's administration. He was a despot who always kept in mind his people's welfare. His capital city was Purushpur (Peshawar) which was a beautiful city with mighty palaces and noble edifices. He had also built there a wooden pillar which was famous for its unique beauty. The whole empire was divided into several provinces, of which the most important were Afghanistan, Khotan, Yarkand, Kashgar, Punjab, Sindh, Kashmir and Mathura. These provinces were ruled by governors or Kshatras appointed by Kanishka himself. Kanishka's inscriptions refer to the names of Kharapallana and Vanspara who were among these governors. His rule was known for peace and order. Revolts were ruthlessly suppressed. That is only, what we know about his administration.

4. **Kanishka and Buddhism:** Kanishka's reputation rests more on his role as a patron of Buddhism than as great conqueror. His early coins bear images of Greek, Iranian and Hindu gods, which point to the fact that in the beginning he was not a Buddhist. He was a follower of the Hindu religion and worshipped the Sun-god, and the fire-god etc. His life underwent a sudden change after he came in contact with Asvaghosha, a Buddhist scholar who made him



embrace Buddhism. thereafter he devoted his whole-life as well as his material resources to the propagation of the Buddhist faith. It was due to his efforts that the religion of the Buddha spread to many other countries. Despite his staunch faith in Buddhism, he was generous and tolerant towards other religious faiths. He took the following steps for the propagation of Buddhism:

a) ***He declared Buddhism as the State Religion:*** Soon after he embraced Buddhism, he made it the state religion. He devoted all his resources to spread the Mahayana sect of Buddhism. His efforts led to the extensive propagation of Buddhism.

b) ***He built the Buddhist Monasteries:*** He built several Monasteries or Viharas for the Buddhist monks and got several of them repaired. He also built several stupas. The monasteries and viharas built by him became great centres of learning and Buddhism. The Buddhist monks and nuns were helped from the state exchequer. All these measures resulted in the rapid propagation of Buddhism.

c) ***He convened the Fourth Buddhist Council:*** During the reign of Kanishka, several controversies had arisen over the tenants of Buddhism and the simple faith of early Buddhism had become rigid. To resolve these controversies, Kanishka called the Fourth Buddhist Conference in Srinagar in which about 500 monks took part. Among the participants, the most famous were Vasumitra, Asvaghosha and Nagarjuna. By the efforts of this council several commentaries were prepared on the Buddhist texts. These commentaries were later on compiled in a book called 'Mahavibhassa'. It is the greatest work on Buddhism and is also known as the Encyclopedia of the Buddhist faith. All the resolutions passed by this council were put on copper plates which were preserved in a Stupa, especially built for this purpose. It was a result of this Buddhist Council that many of the controversies were resolved and a new sect of Buddhism not only took birth but also became popular.

d) ***Foundaiton of the Mahayans Sect.:*** After Ashoka, Buddhism had gradually lost its popularity as it had failed to change itself with the changing time. As it shunned worship, so it could not satisfy the sentiments of the common people nor could it attract them. During the reign of Kanishka some reforms were incorporated in Buddhism and a new sect known as the Mahayana sect came into being while the old sect came to be known as the Hinayana or the Lesser Vehicle. The followers of the Mahayana faith began to worship the Buddha as God. The image of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas (or various incarnation of the Buddha) were worshipped in specially erected temples. 'Nirvana' was no more considered to be the final goal of the life and stress was laid on attaining 'Swarga' or Heaven. The use of Pali was discarded in favour of Sanskrit. The Buddha now began to be worshipped like a Hindu God. Consequently, Buddhism again became popular and it spread in the South as well as in several other countries.

e) ***Literature as Means of the Buddhist Propagandas:*** Kanishka was a patron of literature. In his reign, the literature also helped in spreading Buddhism. Vasumitra, Asvaghosha, and Nagarjuna were the celebrated scholars of his time. They were the authors of several works on Buddhism. Among these the most famous is 'Buddha Charita' or Life of the Buddha which contained incidents from the Buddha's life. These texts brought several people to the fold of Buddhism.

f) **Art as a Vehicle for spreading Buddhism:** The Gandhara School of Art grew during this period. The artists and sculptors of this period became instrumental in the spread of Buddhism. They picked their themes from the life of the Buddha. The images and painting were so marvelous that many of the people being impressed by their beauty were soon attracted towards Buddhism.

g) **Sending Buddhist Monks in other Countries:** Like Ashoka before him, Kanishka too sent Buddhist monks to spread Buddhism in other countries. It was due to the efforts of these monks that Buddhism spread in Tibet, China and Japan.

5. **Kanishka, the Great Patron of Art and Literature:** Kanishka was not merely a great conqueror, but was also a lover of various arts and learning. In his reign, new styles in painting, architecture and other arts developed. There were chiefly four great centres where these arts were practiced – 1. Sarnath, 2 Mathura, 3. Gandhara, and 4. Amravati. Kanishka built a 400 feet tall wooden pillar which was unique in workmanship. According to a contemporary historian it was such a grand structure that it struck the visitors for several centuries. He also built a city called Kanishkapura in Kashmir. He built several beautiful buildings, images and monasteries at Mathura and Sarnath. In his period, the Gandhara School of Art flourished. It was a new style which employed Greek technique to depict Indian ideals and personalities. Many of the Buddhas' images were made in this Gandhara style.

Kanishka was a great lover of learning and many learned scholars lived in his court. Asvaghosha, the great Buddhist monk of his times, was a renowned philosopher, poet and dramatist. He wrote a great epic 'The Buddha Charita' in Sanskrit. Vasmitra was another Buddhist scholar who presided over the Buddhist Council held in Kashmir. He has written 'Mahavibhasa' a treatise on the Buddhist Principles. Nagarjuna was another scholar of repute. He was both a philosopher and a scientist .he wrote a book called 'Madhyamika Sutra'. It maintains that as darkness is to light so sorrow is to joy. One cannot manifest itself with out the other. Charaka, the great Indian physician also lived in his court. During this period, several important books were written in Sanskrit. Under the benevolent royal patronage, high quality works both on religious and secular subjects were written in this period.

6. **Trade and Prosperity during Kanishka's Reign:** During Kanishka's reign India's trade was prosperous. His empire was quite big and had common borders with several other big empires. Among them were the Roman Empire, the Andhara Empire, the Chinese Empire and the Parthian Empire with whom India had trade relations which brought enormous riches to the country. India exported pearls, spics, muslin and cotton, ivory and medicinal herbs and imported gold, silver, wines and other items of luxury. The trade was carried both by the land and sea routes.

### DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN HINAYANA AND MAHAYANA:

Hinayana	Mahayana
1. The Hinayanists had no belief in God. Even Buddha was not regarded as God.	1. The Mahayanists believed in different gods and worshipped Buddha as God.
2. There was no place of idol-worship in	2. Images and statues of Buddha were

<p>this branch of Buddhism.</p> <p>3. The followers of Hinayana, attainment of Nirvana was the greatest ideal of man.</p> <p>4. The followers of Hinayana believed only in Buddha not in Bodhisattvas.</p> <p>5. They used Pali language to preach their religion.</p> <p>6. It spread in the southern countries and its greatest patron was Ashoka.</p> <p>7. It has every little in common with Hinduism or Brahmanism.</p>	<p>made and worshipped.</p> <p>3. But the Mahayanists not only believed but worshiped the Bodhisattvas.</p> <p>4. The chief ideal was to attain Swarga or heaven.</p> <p>5. They used Sanskrit for preaching their religion.</p> <p>6. It spread in the northern countries and its greatest patron was Kanishka.</p> <p>7. Most of its teachings were borrowed from Hinduism and has much in common with Brahmanism.</p>
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***Describe the characteristic features of the Gandhara and Mahtura schools of arts.***

**Gandhara and Mathura Schools of Art:** The foreign princes became enthusiastic patrons of Indian art and literature and they showed the zeal characteristic of new converts. The Kushan Empire brought together masons and other artisans trained in different. Schools and countries. This gave rise to several schools of art: Central Asian, Gandhara and Mathura. Pieces of sculpture from Central Asia show synthesis of both local and Indian elements under the influence of Buddhism.

### **MAIN FEATURES OF GANDHARA SCHOOLS OF ART:**

Greek art had deep impact on Gandhara School of art. A brief account of the features of Gandhara art are outlined below:

1. First of all, statues of Buddha were made on the lines of Greek gods in this art. Before it, existence of Buddha was shown by umbrella or by tree just as Shivling marks the existence of Lord Shiva in Hinduism even today.

2. In this school of art efforts were made to infuse real looks into human organs. No effort was spared to express the minutest action of body. Especially bones, nerves and muscles of the body were clearly shown. Statue of Buddha during penance clearly proves this fact. In it Buddha's stomach is shown to be flattened inwards because of hunger and bones and nerves are clearly visible because flesh has dried up. This stature is indeed a unique creation of Gandhara art.

3. In the models of this school of art curves of clothes are very vividly depicted.

4. In this school of art idols have been adorned with clothes and ornaments. These have on one side added to beauty of idols and on the other hand have lent life-like look to them.



5. In this school of art, the idols are made on Greek style but feeling and their expressions are Indian.

6. Most of the statues made in this school of art are of stone but some of them are also made of cement, stucco and terracotta.

7. Most of the idols made under this school of art are of Lord Buddha but a few idols are of Bodhisattvas and Hindu gods.

8. In this school of art statues of women are not given much importance.

9. The Gandhara School of art had its impact on Indian art in Mathura, Sarnath and Vidisha.

2. **Mathura Art:** During Knaishka's reign besides Gandhara, Mathura was also a famous centre of art. Here Kanishka built Viharas and monasteries. Besides this centre became famous for architecture. According to some scholars Gandhara art has its distinct impact on Mathura Art. But most of the scholars are of the view that Mathura art was perfectly Indian art free from any foreign influence. According to this art, statues of not only Buddha and Bodhisattvas were made but also of Lord Vishnu, Brahman, Sun and Lord Shiva were made.

### FEATURES OF MATHURA ART:

- (i) Statues of Buddha made under Mathura Art are heavy bodied.
- (ii) Buddha is shown to be with a shaved head. He is shown without moustaches.
- (iii) Unlike the idols of Gandhara, art, the right shoulder of Buddha is covered with cloth.
- (iv) In every picture Buddha is shown seated on lotus.
- (v) In most of the picture the halo shown round picture of modern times is there.
- (vi) Under this art some statues of monks are made which appear vulgar to an ordinary spectator.
- (vii) Under Mathura art statues of monks are made of red stone.
- (viii) Under this art many statues of women were made. The statue of one woman is very beautiful. This is the idol of an attendant. In her right hand she has cosmetics and a box is in her left hand. From the idol it appears as if she is about to leave to decorate some queen or some rich woman.
- (ix) Under this art statue of Kushana rulers have also been made. Of these, headless statue of Kanishka is worthy of mention. This picture is large enough in size. It has a long coat and trousers for its dress.
- (x) This art is concerned more with heart than head. In it efforts have been made to paint inward beauty rather than outward beauty.

***Give a brief account of the growth of various crafts during the post-Mauryan period (200 B.C. to 200 A.D.) under the Sakas, Kushans and the Satavahanas.***

**Progress in the field of Science and Technology from (200 B.C. to 300 A.D.):** There was a great progress in the field of Science and technology, particularly in the field of crafts, mining and metallurgy from 200 B.C. to 300 A.D.

### **Crafts:**

Remarkable strides were made in the fields of arts and crafts during the reign of the Sakas, the Kushans, the Satavahanas and the Tamil kings (c. 200 B.C. to c. 300 A.D.) Great

advances and specialization had been reached in metallurgy, glass manufacture, architecture, sculpture, weaving, carpentry, ironsmithy, making arms, dye making, fishing etc.

The post-Mauryan period saw remarkable progress made in the crafts of weaving silk and cloth making. Mathura was a great centre of cloth-making. Ivory craft was at its zenith. Articles of ivory have been found at Rome and Afghanistan. The Indian craftsmen were well-versed with the art of glass melting and manufacturing Glass articles. The bead-cutting craft and sculpture making were highly developed. The rich wore necklaces made of diamond beads. Perfumes and several other articles of luxury were also made in abundance. Making arms and jewellery were also popular crafts. Architecture, sculpture and construction of caves were at its zenith. Indian workmen were considered master craftsmen. The Gandhara School of Art developed during this period. The chief centres of art were Gandhara, Sarnath, Amravati, and Mathura. Several monasteries, Viharas and caves were constructed during this period.

**Mining and Metallurgy** – In the post-Mauryan period (200 B.C to 300 A.D) India made much advancement in mining and metallurgy. In the contemporary literature, there is reference to eight crafts associated with the working of gold, silver, lead, tin, copper, brass, iron and precious stones of jewels. Various kinds of zinc, brass, antimony (brighter metallic substance and red arsenic (Sankhia) have also been mentioned which clearly prove the advancement made in the field of metallurgy.

Especially, much progress was made in the work and technology of iron. Not only different weapons, balance rods, socketed axes, hoes, sickles, ploughshares, razers and ladles) or large spoons with a cut of bowl) began to be made but steel was also manufactured. India iron and steel, including cutlery were in a great demand in western Asia.

The Indian craftsmen and jewelers made some unique specimens of jewellery of gold and silver which were in great demand in foreign lands, especially in the Roman Empire.

Coin-minting had also become an important craft in the post-Mauryan period. Different kinds and shapes of coins of gold, silver, copper, bronze, lead and potin were made during this period.

**Guilds of Artisans and Craft-men** – The artisans were organized into guilds. It can be drawn from the authority of various books that the artisans organized themselves into guilds to encourage their particular crafts. These guilds also acted as bankers and accepted deposits on which interest was paid. In the Mahayana form of Buddhism, the devotees deposited money with the guilds of potters, oil millers etc.

### Trade and Commerce

***What do you know about the foreign trade of India in the period 200 B. C to 200 A.D.***

Foreign trade during the post-Mauryan period was also highly developed. India had good trade relations particularly with the Roman Empire. At first, this trade was carried on by road. But by later on the Persians started interfering with it. As a result, trade through sea route started. The most famous ports on the western coast were those of Sopara and Broach and on the eastern coast Arikmedu and Kaveripattanam. Goods were collected from various

centres throughout the country and exported from these ports. Like artisans, the traders also had their guilds with a view to promote trade. They had their own constitution and rules to regulate their activities. These guilds played a vital role of insuring goods and their payment in order to protect the trader's interests. The traders usually marched in caravans and paid toll and other taxes. Some traders carried trade in partnership. The government too looked after their interests.

The trade between India and Rome flourished during this period. It was carried through the port of Alexandria, which was then an important centre of trade. The Romans imported from India muslin, pepper, silk and cotton cloth, perfumes, medicines, diamonds, pearls, ivory etc. Some articles were first imported by Indian traders from China and Central Asia and then exported to the different countries of the Roman Empire. There was constant trade in silk between India and China. Wine, luxury goods and gold and silver coins were sent to Rome. The Kushans and the Satvahanas especially benefited from their trade with the Roman Empire. The balance of trade was generally favourable to India. The Kushan rulers, encouraged by their Roman connections, issued new coins of the same design as 'dinar'. But these coins were not used in daily transactions which were carried on with coins made of glass, copper and potin. India had thriving trade relations with Egypt, Greece and Arab countries as well.

India forged trade relations with Java, Sumatra, Malaysia, Burma and China also. India brought spices from the territories of East Indies and exported it to European countries. The Chinese silk too found its way to Europe via India as the Parthian rulers of Iran had put obstacles in their way.

There were some important trade routes. The Sakas and the Kushans used two routes to approach the western coast. Both these routes met at Taxila. The first route passed through lower Indus Valley and reached Broach while the other route passed through Punjab and followed the Yamuna River to reach Mathura. Another route passed through Sravasti, the capital of the Kosala kingdom and reached Pratishan on the bank of river Godavari. Trade from East to West was carried through rivers. The boats ferried from Champa to Varanasi and from there to Kausambi. Thereafter the whole cargo was unloaded at Sindh.

