



FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES

COURSE: B.A.LL.B. 1st Semester

SUBJECT: HISTORY - I

SUBJECT CODE: BAL 102

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Lecture-20



Age of Mauryas

With the rise of the Mauryas to power, India entered into a splendid and glorious epoch of her history.

For the first time, almost the whole of India became united as a great empire and came under one imperial administration. For the first time also, the political power of India was felt by the foreign powers outside with the victory of Indian forces over them.

It was not merely the military power of the Mauryas which made India great, but her subsequent moral role in spreading the Indian religion and culture outside which made her greater still.

The civilizing mission of the third Maurya, Asoka, opened a new chapter in the history of Asian civilisation, and prepared path for the spread of Buddhism far across the frontiers of India.

Under three great emperors of the Maurya dynasty, India enjoyed a strong and sound administration as well as a phase of peace and prosperity. There was a tremendous cultural upsurge in various spheres, such as, religion, philosophy, literature and architecture which made the epoch memorable. The legacies of the Maurya age continued to influence the Indian thought for a long time to come.

The Maurya period was rich in sources of history, both Indian and foreign, literary and epigraphic. Kautilya's Arthashastra, though the identity of its author as well as the time of its writing remains disputed, provides much information about the Mauryan state.

The Indika of Megasthenes, though lost in its original form, and its extracts available only in fragments in the accounts of other Western classical writers, gives invaluable information about the Indian affairs of that time. The accounts of the foreign writers, and the inscriptions of Asoka throw much light on the time of the Mauryas. History appears in bright shape and chronological order becomes well established.

From every point of view, the age of the Mauryas was an age by itself. Rightly does V.A. Smith sum up the character of the age, saying:

“The advent of the Mauryan dynasty marks the passage from darkness to light for the historian. Chronology suddenly becomes definite, almost precise; a huge empire springs

into existence, unifying the innumerable fragments of distracted India, the Kings who may be described with justice as Emperors, are men of renown, outstanding personalities whose qualities can be discerned, albeit dimly, through the mists of time; gigantic worldwide religious movements are initiated, of which the effects are still felt; and the affairs of secluded India are brought into close touch with those of the outer world.”

MCQ

1. Who among the following assassinated the last Mauryan King Brihadrath?

- A. Pushyamitra Sunga
- B. Vasudeva
- C. Bhadrabahu
- D. Kanishka

2. Who among the following was the hero of Kalidasa's drama malvikagnimitran?

- A. Vasumitra
- B. Agnimitra
- C. Susarman
- D. Bindusara

3. Who among the following was the immediate successor of Ashoka?

- A. Kanishka
- B. Rudradaman I
- C. Simuka
- D. Gautami Putra Satkarni

4. Who was the first Indo-Greek ruler to issue gold coins in India?

- A. Gondophernes
- B. Kadphises
- C. Rudradaman I
- D. Menander

5. Which of the following was written by Sushruta Samhita?

A. Sushruta

B. Kalidasa

C. Vishakhadutta

D. Aryabhata