



# FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES

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

SUBJECT: HISTORY - I

SUBJECT CODE: BAL 102

NAME OF FACULTY: Dr. Sadhna Trivedi

# Lecture-4



## Sources of Indian History

### Foreign Accounts

- **Herodotus** was dependent upon the Persian sources for his information about India.
- Herodotus in his book *Histories* (written in many volumes) describes about the Indo-Persian relations.
- A detailed account of the invasion of India by Alexander was written by **Arrian**.
- The Greek kings send their ambassadors to *Pataliputra*. Megasthenes, Deimachus, and Dionysius were some of them.
- **Megasthenes** came in the court of Chandragupta Maurya. He had written about the Indian society and culture in his book called as '**Indica**'. Though the original work has been lost, but it had been frequently quoted in the works of later writers.
- A book '*Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*' written by an anonymous Greek author who settled in Egypt on the basis of his personal voyage of Indian coast in about A. D. 80 gives valuable information about the Indian coasts.
- In the second century A. D., **Ptolemy** had written a geographical treatise on India.
- The Greek writing about India, however, is based on secondary sources. They were ignorant of the language and the customs of the country and hence their information is full of errors and contradictions.
- Many Chinese travelers visited India as Buddhist pilgrims from time to time; three important pilgrims were –
  - Fa-Hien (Faxian) – visited India in 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.
  - Hiuen-Tsang (Xuanzang) – visited India in 7<sup>th</sup> century and

- I-Tsing (Yijing) – visited India in 7<sup>th</sup> century.
- Hiuen-Tsang had given valuable account about Harshavardhana and some other contemporary kings of Northern India.
- Fa-Hien and Hiuen-Tsang traveled many parts of the country and they have given an exaggerated account of Buddhism during the period of their visit.
- Hiuen-Tsang mentioned Harsha as a follower of Buddhism while in his epigraphic records, Harsha mentions himself as a devotee of Siva. Such contradictions may be considered due to the fact of multi-religious nature of Indian rulers, which might confuse a foreigner.
- Al-Biruni gave important information about India. He was Arab scholar and contemporary of Mahmud of Ghazni.
- Al-Biruni studied Sanskrit and acquired knowledge of Indian society and culture through literature. Therefore, his observations are based on his knowledge about Indian society and culture, but he did not give any political information of his times.

### MCQ

**Q.1 The Venetian traveler who travelled with his wife and reached Vijayawada around 1420 was....**

- (A) Anthanasius Nikitin
- (B) Nicolo de Conti
- (C) Ibn Batuta
- (D) Ferishta

**2.The Turko-Afghan rule in India lasted for about....**

- (A) two centuries
- (B) three centuries
- (C) four centuries
- (D) a little over one century

**3. Where and when was the second Buddhist council held?**

- [A]Patliputra in 250 B.C.
- [B]Sri Lanka in 1st century B.C.
- [C]Vaishali in 383 B.C.
- [D]Mandalay in 1871 A.D.

4. Who among the following succeeded Samudragupta as the next ruler of Gupta Dynasty ?

[A] Chandragupta II

[B] Chandragupta I

[C] Vishnugupta

[D] Mahendra

5. Which among the following places have given the earliest evidence of agriculture in Indian subcontinent?

[A] Pratapgarh

[B] Mehrgarh

[C] Quetta

[D] Kalat



