

BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

- The concept of God was not well defined which led to the belief that Buddhism is an atheist religion
- It is believed that the universe has a beginning and an end unlike Jainism
- In Buddhist philosophy, soul of a person dies with the body. Most other religions like Jainism and Hinduism believe that soul is eternal.
- Samuth Pratyuth Prathipath
 - Cause and effect theory
 - There are twelve cycle as this is a cyclic effect
- Concept of Kshan(moment) – A person is different than what he was a moment ago.
- The concept of Nirvana is an 'ultimate' peace that is achieved after a lengthy process of mind-body transformation during which the uprooting and final dissolution of the volitional takes place.
- Buddhist Sangha
 - Members of Sangh were called Bhikshus or Bhikshunis
 - Viharas were the place were Buddhist monks lived
 - The prayer hall was called Chaitya
 - Rules for living in the Viharas were given in a book called Vinaya Pitaka compiled under the leadership of Monk Upali
 - A strict dress code was to be followed which was generally deep red and the Bhikshus were supposed to have only one meal a day and that meal had to be begged for.
 - No ornaments were allowed, alcohol was strictly banned and Brahmacharya lifestyle was supposed to be followed.
- No discrimination on the basis of caste was done though Buddhism did not fight the casteism.

Four Buddhist Councils

- The First Buddhist Council was held under the patronage of king Ajatasatru.
 - Monk Mahakasyapa presided the council
 - It was held at Sattapanni caves Rajgriha (now Rajgir).
- Second Buddhist council was held at Vaisali
 - It was presided by Shatakambri
 - For the first time Buddhism was divided into two sects – Mahasamghika and Sthaviravada
- Third Buddhist Council was held at Pataliputra
 - It was held during the time of King Ashoka
 - It was presided over by Moggaliputta Tissa
 - Abhidhamma Pitaka was compiled during this council
- Fourth Buddhist Council was held at Kundalwan in Kashmir
 - It was held during the reign of King Kanishka
 - The council was presided over by Vasumitra
 - Asvaghosa, a great philosopher and poet who wrote Buddhacharita was present in this Council

Reasons for the Popularity of Buddhism

- a) Simplicity of the religion
- b) Buddhist Sangha was well organised and disciplined
- c) Use of common man language – Prakrit; Buddha used Ardha Magadhi, a form of Prakrit
- d) Personality of Buddha

Reasons for decline of Buddhism

- a) It lost its Identity
- b) Corruption in Sangha
- c) Revivalism of Brahmanical religion
- d) Physical attack supported by Brahmanical priests and supported by the kings
- e) Lack of Royal Patronage
- f) Arrival of Islam

MAURYAN DYNASTY

- The Mauryan Dynasty was founded by Chandragupta Maurya who was the king from 321 to 298 B.C.
- The other important rulers of this dynasty were Bindusara and Ashoka.

Chandragupta Maurya

- Greeks called him Sandrokottos or Androkottos
- According to Puranas he was the son of Dhana Nanda
- He killed his father and became the king with the help of a man named Chanakya, also known as Vishnu Gupta
- With the help of Chanakya he became the king of Magadha. Pataliputra became his capital.
- He defeated Seleucus Nicator who became his friend later. Nicator also sent an ambassador **Megasthenes** to Chandragupta's court in 304 BC
- Accounts of Megasthenes are found in a book written by him called **Indika**.
- Chandragupta was the empire builder of Mauryan Empire
- He introduced an organised revenue system
- He divided the empire into four provinces
- During his last days, Chandragupta migrated to Sharavanabelagola with a Jain scholar and performed Santhara or Sallekhan i.e. fast to death.

- Kautilya's Arthashastra mentions 18 Tirthas(head posts) and 28 Adhyakshas. These helped in managing the empire.
- Mantri (Prime Minister) and Chief Priest were the important posts in the empire and it is believed that Chanakya (Kautilya) held both the posts during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya and Bindusara.
- **Bhaga** was one of the most important tax collected
- Hiranya was cash only tax
- Pranaya was the tax collected during emergency period
- The coins used were made of silver, copper or bronze and were called Karshapana or Pana

According to Kautilya, the elements of the state are:-

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|-------------|---------|
| 1. The King | 5. Fort |
| 2. Minister | 6. Army |
| 3. Country | 7. Ally |
| 4. Treasury | |

Indika

- Megasthenes mentioned that there were 7 classes in India
- These were Philosophers, craftsmen, soldiers, inspectors, counsellors & chauffeurs
- The state collects 1/4th of the produce as revenue
- Pataliputra was 16-18 km long and 323.5 km wide

The Province Capitals were:-

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|----------|---|-------------|
| 1. North | – | Taxila |
| 2. South | – | Suvarnagiri |
| 3. East | – | Tosali |
| 4. West | – | Ujjain |

The ARTHASHASTRA mentions the important functionaries known as MAHAMATRA or TIRTHAS. These are:-

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|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. YUVARAJA: | Crown prince |
| 2. SENAPATI: | Commander-in-Chief |
| 3. MANTRIPARISHAD ADHYAKSHA: | Head of the council of Ministers |
| 4. MANTRIN: | Minister |
| 5. PUROHITA: | Chaplain |
| 6. DAUVARIKA: | Palace usher |
| 7. ANTARVAMSIKA: | Officer of the Royal Harem |
| 8. PRASASTA: | Minister in charge of Encampment |
| 9. SAMAHARTA: | Chief Revenue collector |
| 10. SANNIDHATA: | Controller of Stores |
| 11. NAYAKA: | Commandant |
| 12. PRADESTA: | Magistrate |
| 13. KARMANTIKA: | Chief Architect |
| 14. DANDA PALA: | Chief Army officer |
| 15. DURGA PALA: | Officer-in-charge of Fort |
| 16. ANTAPALA: | Officer-in-charge of Frontier post |
| 17. ATAVIKA: | Chief of the Forest tribe |

Bindusara

- Bindusara was the son of Chandragupta Maurya and Queen Durdhara.
- According to a Jain work Rajavalikatha, his original name was Simhasena.
- During his reign the Maurya Empire saw significant expansion southwards.
- He was also known as Amitraghata or Amitrakottos (Greek term meaning killer of enemies)
- He was a follower of Ajivika sect.
- **Deimachus**, Ambassador from Seleucid Empire, came to India during his reign. He was sent by Antiochus I

Ashoka

- King Asoka, the third monarch of the Indian Mauryan dynasty, has come to be regarded as one of the most exemplary rulers in world history.
- He was born in about 304 B.C. and became the third king of the Mauryan dynasty after the death of his father, Bindusara.
- His given name was Ashoka but he assumed the title Devanampiya Piyadasi which means "Beloved-of-the-Gods, He Who Looks on with Affection."
- In 262 B.C., eight years after his coronation, Asoka's armies attacked and conquered Kalinga, a country that roughly corresponds to the modern state of Orissa.
- The loss of life caused by battle, reprisals, deportations and the turmoil that always exists in the aftermath of war so horrified Ashoka that it brought about a complete change in his personality.
- After the war Ashoka dedicated the rest of his life trying to apply Buddhist principles to the administration of his vast empire. He received help from Upagupta in his conversion to Buddhism.
- He had a crucial part to play in helping Buddhism to spread both throughout India & abroad and probably built the first major Buddhist monuments.
- He visited Bodh Gaya in his 10th year of coronation and Lumbini in his 20th Year of coronation.
- Ashoka's edicts (medium used by kings to converse with his people) were of different type like major rock, minor rock, pillar rock, cave rock.
- Languages used were Prakrit, Greek and Aramaic and the Scripts used were Brahmi, Kharosthi, Greek and Aramaic.