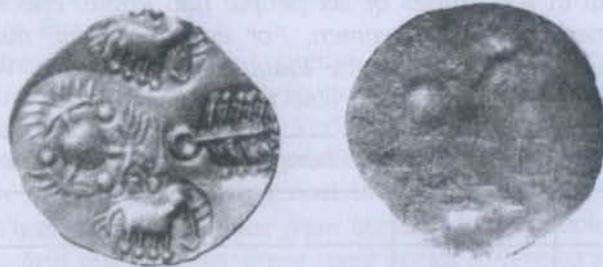


6

Kingdoms, Kings and an Early Republic

Lesson at a Glance

- Around 3000 years ago, there were some new ways of choosing 'rajās'. Some men became 'rajās' by performing big sacrifices. One of such rituals was 'ASHVAMEDHA' (horse sacrifice). The 'raja' was an important figure.
- Kingdoms were usually called the 'Janapadas', which were ruled by the 'rajās'. People lived in huts and kept animals. They grew a variety of crops.
- Some 'janapadas' later became more important than others, and they were called 'Mahajanapadas'. The capital cities were fortified.
- The new 'rajās' began maintaining armies. Payments were made using punchmarked coins.



Coins

- The 'rajās' needed **resources** to build forts and to maintain armies. Officials were supposed to collect taxes from people. Taxes were in the form of crops, labour, animals and their produce, etc.
- There were changes in agriculture too. The use of Iron Ploughshares increased, thus enhancing grain production. People started transplanting paddy. This also increased production.
- **Magadha** became the most important 'mahajanapada' in about 200 years. Transport, water supplies, fertility, forests, elephants, mines, etc. made Magadha important.
- The two powerful rulers of Magadha, **Bimbisara** and **Ajatasattu** used all possible means to conquer other 'janapadas'. **Rajagriha** was the capital of Magadha. Later it was **Pataliputra** (now Patna).

- **Vajji** was another kingdom with its capital at Vaishali (Bihar). It had a different form of government called 'gana'/'sangha', which had not one, but many rulers. These rulers performed rituals together and met in assemblies. Buddhist books depict life in the 'sanghas'.
- 'Rajās' of powerful kingdoms tried to conquer the 'sanghas'.

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

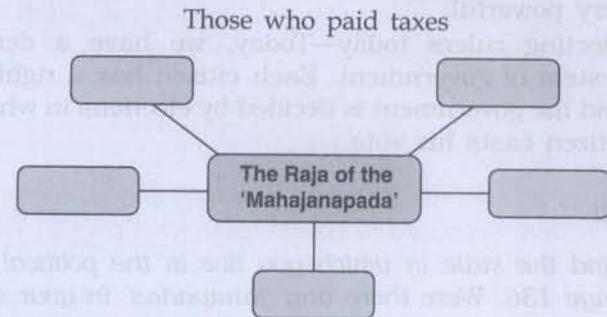
Let's Recall

Q. 1. State whether true or false:

- 'Rajās' who let the 'ashvamedha' horse pass through their lands were invited to the sacrifice.
- The charioteer sprinkled sacred water on the king.
- Archaeologists have found palaces in the settlements of the 'janapadas'.
- Pots to store grain were made out of Painted Grey Ware.
- Many cities in 'mahajanapadas' were fortified.

Ans. (a) True (b) False (c) False (d) True (e) False.

Q. 2. Fill in the chart given below with the terms: hunter-gatherers, farmers, traders, crafts-persons, herders.



Ans. Hunter gatherers, farmers, traders, crafts-persons and herders—all paid taxes.

- Farmers—one-sixth of the produce.
- Crafts-persons—in the form of labour.
- Herders—in the form of animals and animal produce.
- Traders—taxes on goods brought and sold.
- Hunter-gatherers—forest produce.

Q. 3. Who were the groups who could not participate in the assemblies of the 'ganas' ?

Ans. These groups of people were not allowed to participate in the assemblies of the 'ganas'.

(i) Women

(ii) 'Dasas'

(iii) 'Kammakaras'.

Let's Discuss

Q. 4. Why did the 'rajas' of 'mahajanapadas' build forts?

Ans. The 'rajas' of 'mahajanapadas' built forts around their capital cities because probably the people were afraid of attacks from other kings and needed protection. It is also possible that some 'rajas' wanted to show that they were rich and powerful by building large, tall and impressive walls around cities. Moreover, by fortifying, the land and its people could be controlled more easily.

Q. 5. In what ways are present-day elections different from the ways in which rulers were chosen in 'janapadas'?

Ans. Choosing rulers in 'janapadas'—Men were chosen 'rajas' by performing big sacrifices. The 'ashvamedha' (horse sacrifice) was one such ritual which was used to identify a 'raja'. The 'raja' chosen by this sacrifice was considered very powerful.

Electing rulers today—Today, we have a democratic system of government. Each citizen has a right to vote and the government is decided by elections in which each citizen casts his vote.

Let's do

Q. 6. Find the state in which you live in the political map on page 136. Were there any 'janapadas' in your state? If yes, name them. If not, name the 'janapadas' that would have been the closest to your state, and mention whether they were to the east, west, north or south.

Ans. The answer depends on the region you live in. Take the help of your teacher and the map given on page 57 in the textbook to prepare your answer.

However, a sample answer has been provided (using the state Uttar Pradesh) –

The 'janapadas' in the present-day Uttar Pradesh—Panchala, Kosala.

Q. 7. Find out whether any of the groups mentioned in answer 2 pay taxes to day.

Ans. Out of the groups mentioned in answer 2, those that pay taxes even today are *traders*.

Q. 8. Find out whether the groups mentioned in answer 3 have voting rights at present.

Ans. Today, voting rights are not decided by gender or profession. Women, 'kammakaras' and 'dasas'—all are entitled to vote today.

