

# 10 Traders, Kings and Pilgrims

## Lesson at a Glance

- The Northern Black Polished ware was fine pottery which included bowls and plates. They were carried by the traders from the places where they were made and were sold at other places.
- South India was famous for gold, spices, especially pepper and precious stones. Pepper was in great demand in the Roman empire. It was valued as black gold there. Traders carried these goods to Rome in ships and in caravans.
- Traders discovered several **sea routes**. They took advantage of the monsoon winds to make their journeys quick, easy and comfortable.
- **New Kingdoms** developed along the coasts of the southern half of the sub-continent.
- The **Cholas, Choras** and **Pandyas** became powerful in south India around 2300 years ago.
- Puhar or Kaveripattinam, the port of the Cholas and Madurai, the capital of the Pandyas were two important cities.
- The chiefs of the three ruling families demanded and received gifts from the people. They also collected tribute from neighbouring areas. They kept some of the wealth and distributed the rest among their supports.
- Around 200 years later the **Satavahanas** gained power in western India. Gautamiputra Shri Satakarni was the most important ruler of the Satavahanas.
- China invented the technology of making silk around 7000 years ago. While the methods were kept a secret for many years, some people from China who went to distant lands carried silk with them. The paths they followed came to be known as the **Silk Route**.
- The knowledge of silk spread far and wide. Rulers and rich people in Rome began to wear silk.
- The **Kushanas** rulers controlled the Silk Route. They ruled over central Asia and north-west India around 2000 years ago. Their two major centres of power were Peshawar and Mathura. They also ruled Taxila.

- The credit of the spread of Buddhism goes to **Kanishka**, a Kushan ruler. He organized a Buddhist council where scholars met to discuss various matters.
- A new form of Buddhism, *i.e.* Mahayana Buddhism developed. Now Statues of the Buddha were made.
- Bodhisattvas were supposed to be people who had attained enlightenment.
- **Buddhism** spread throughout Central Asia, China and later to Korea and Japan. It spread to western and southern India too. It also spread to Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Jhailand, etc.
- Along with travellers pilgrims also travelled. The Chinese Buddhist pilgrims such as Fa Xran, Xuan Zang and I-Qing became very popular.
- The worship to Shiva, Vishnu and goddesses like Durga became popular with **Hinduism**. These deities were worshipped through Bhakti, which means a person's devotion to his or her chosen deity. No one was barred from following the path of Bhakti.

## TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

### Let's Recall

Q. 1. Match the following:

|                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Muvendar                   | Mahayana Buddhism          |
| Lords of the Dakshinapatha | Buddhacharita              |
| Ashvaghosha                | Satavahana rulers          |
| Bodhisattvas               | Chinese pilgrim            |
| Xuan Zang                  | Cholas, Choras and Pandyas |

Ans. Muvendar Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas

|                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Lords of the Dakshinapatha | Satavahana rulers |
| Ashvaghosha                | Buddhacharita     |
| Bodhisattvas               | Mahayana Buddhism |
| Xuan Zang                  | Chinese pilgrim   |

Q. 2. Why did Kings want to control the Silk Route?

Ans. Kings wanted to control the Silk Route to be benefited from taxes, tributes and gifts that the traders brought while travelling along the route.

Q. 3. What kinds of evidence do historians use to find out about trade and trade routes?

**Ans.** The historians use pots to find out about trade and trade routes. It shows where the pots were made and how it travelled to the different parts.

**Q. 4.** *What were the main features of Bhakti?*

- Ans.**
- Bhakti is generally understood as a person's devotion to his/her chosen deity. Anybody whether rich or poor, belonging to the so-called 'high' or 'low' castes, man or woman, could follow the path of Bhakti.
  - People who followed the path of Bhakti emphasised devotion and individual worship of a god or goddess. They never thought of performing elaborate sacrifices.
  - Bhakti inspired sculpture, poetry and architecture.

### Let's Discuss

**Q. 5.** *Discuss the reasons why the Chinese pilgrims came to India.*

**Ans.** The Chinese pilgrims who came to India were Fa Xuan, Xuan Zang and I-Qing. As they were Buddhist pilgrims, they were very much interested in the life of the Buddha and monasteries. Hence, they visited places associated with the life of Buddha to get first hand knowledge about him. They also visited famous monasteries and collected books and statues of Buddha.

Some pilgrims such as Xuan Zang spent time studying in Nalanda (Bihar), the most famous Buddhist monastery of the period.

**Q. 6.** *Why do you think ordinary people were attracted to Bhakti?*

**Ans.** Ordinary people were attracted to Bhakti because prior to this there was strict Vedic system. This system had strict feeling of caste and class. It barred some people from worship. They were not allowed to go in temples. But in Bhakti there was no such discrimination. Everyone whether rich or poor, high or low was allowed to follow the path of Bhakti in the same manner.

### Let's Do

**Q. 7.** *List five things that you buy from the market. Which of these are made in the city/village in which you live, and which are brought by traders from other areas?*

**Ans.** List of five things bought from the market:

1. Clothes
2. Items of pottery
3. Rice
4. Books
5. Shoes

Among the above things clothes, books and shoes are brought by traders from the areas (urban areas) whereas the items of pottery and rice are available in the city/village.

**Q. 8.** *There are several major pilgrimages performed by people in India today. Find out about any one of them, and write a short description.*

**[Hint.** Who can go on the pilgrimage—men, women or children? How long does it take? How do people travel? What do they take with them? What do they do when they reach the holy place? Do they bring anything back with them?]

**Ans.** There are a number of places where people go to worship. One of such places is Haridwar. It is mostly famous for the Hindus, though anyone can go there. It is important for the people because Ganga comes to the ground and people can have holy bath at this level. In fact Ganga originates from the Himalayas and upto some distance its level is so uneven that no one can go in its water. Here is the temple of Lord Shiva and other deities also. During the month of Shravana people visit this place with great enthusiasm. There they worship Lord Shiva with the Ganga water. They bring the holy water of Ganga and preserve it to use it at every religious occasion.

