

5

State and Society up to 1000 CE

The Big Questions (Page - 95)**1. How did society and state organise themselves prior to 1000 CE?**

Ans. Before 1000 CE, Indian society developed from small family-based groups such as kula and jana into larger territorial units called janapadas and mahājanapadas. Society was guided mainly by traditions and customs, while states developed formal systems of administration and governance. Over time, both centralised monarchies and local self-governance emerged, with village assemblies and local bodies managing matters such as disputes, revenue collection, security and infrastructure.

2. How did states and societies emerge and spread to different parts of the Indian subcontinent?

Ans. States and societies developed as janas grew into janapadas and mahājanapadas. Later, powerful kingdoms and empires emerged and spread across different regions. Agriculture, migration, trade and cultural exchanges helped connect people and regions across the Indian subcontinent.

3. How did the ideas of dharma and chakravarti samrat help create unity in social values and governance, and promote the idea of the Indian subcontinent as one political entity?

Ans. The idea of dharma helped unite people by promoting shared values, justice and righteous conduct across different regions. The concept of a chakravarti samrāt represented the ideal of a powerful ruler with authority over a vast territory. Grand rituals such as the aśhvamedha yajña expressed the ruler's power and connections with different territories. Together, these ideas encouraged a sense of the Indian subcontinent as a culturally and politically connected region.

4. How did different social, administrative, and occupational groups take shape over time and come together culturally?

Ans. Initially, society was broadly divided into four varṇas—Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśhyas and Śhūdras. Over time, factors such as occupation, intermarriage, migration and the growth of local communities contributed to the formation of numerous jātis. Despite social differences, various groups remained connected through shared cultural values, education, traditions and economic networks such as śhreṇis (guilds), which brought together artisans, traders and other occupational groups.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page - 96)

As you read the chapter, follow the timeline at the bottom of each page. Notice the important events, changes, and connections across time. Think about which event interests you the most and why. By the end of the chapter, share one event you would like to explore further and document:

Event to Explore Further: Rise of the Mauryan Empire**1. What happened?**

Ans. The Mauryan Empire emerged as a large and powerful empire that brought many regions of the Indian subcontinent under one political authority.

2. When did it happen?

Ans. It began around 322 BCE and became one of the major empires of early India.

3. Why do you think it matters?

Ans. It is important because it shows the development of large-scale political organisation, administration and governance and the growing idea of connecting different regions under a common **political system**.

LET'S RECALL (Page - 100)

In previous grades, you have read that the name 'Bharata' first appears in the R̥ig Veda. It is used in reference to the 'Bharata jana', or the people who were ruled by the family of the Bharatas. What does this tell us about how early communities identified themselves and their rulers?

Ans. The reference to the 'Bharata jana' in the R̥ig Veda shows that early communities often identified themselves through kinship groups or tribes (jana). Their identity was closely connected with their ancestral families and ruling clans, such as the Bharatas. It also shows that rulers were often identified by the family or clan to which they belonged.

THINK ABOUT IT (Page - 101)

In modern democracies, heads of government exercise power but are bound by constitutions and parliaments, which function as representative bodies that check the powers of elected leaders. Do the roles of the raja and the assemblies in Vedic times suggest a similar principle? Can we say that systems of governance in Indian history- since their early institutionalised forms were guided by the idea of ensuring people's participation in the political process?

Ans. Yes, there is a meaningful parallel between Vedic governance and modern democracy. In Vedic times, the rājā exercised authority but was supported and advised by assemblies such as the sabhā, samiti and vidhata, which encouraged discussion and collective decision-making.

This suggests that the idea of people's participation in governance has deep roots in Indian traditions. However, these assemblies were not democratic in the modern sense, as they did not provide universal participation or equality. Nevertheless, they reflect the important principle that power should not be concentrated in one person and that consultation and collective decision-making are important in governance.

LET'S ANALYSE (Page - 102)

If you visualise the maps of the Indian subcontinent of the second and first millennium BCE, you will find more settlements concentrated in the Ganga region in the latter map. Archaeological findings from this region during the first millennium BCE provide increasing evidence of the use of iron implements, a wider variety of grain, and the characteristic PGW pottery. Further, in the second half of the first millennium BCE, particularly in the middle Ganga region (from present-day Prayagraj to eastern Bihar), there is evidence of a refined deluxe ware' called NBPW, known for its smooth, glossy black surface. Archaeologically, this phase marks the emergence of a richer, more advanced material culture. Literary sources from this period also contain numerous references to expanding agricultural activities, increased grain output, greater crop variety—particularly paddy—and the use of iron implements.

Can you identify the crucial factors behind this change?

Ans. The crucial factors behind this change were:

- Increased use of iron tools, which made clearing forests and farming easier.
- Expansion of agriculture, especially the cultivation of paddy and other crops.
- Growth in food production, which supported a larger population.
- Development of better pottery such as PGW and NBPW, showing improved craftsmanship.
- Rise of trade and settlements, leading to the growth of towns and stronger political organisations like the janapadas and mahājanapadas.

These developments led to increased agricultural production, larger settlements and the growth of more complex societies and states.

LET'S RECALL (Page - 105)

You may remember from your previous grades that the three important kingdoms of southern India, the Cholas, Cheras, and Pandyas, had their own royal emblems. The tiger was the emblem of the Cholas, the bow represented the Cheras, and the fish symbolised the Pandyas. Much of what we know about these early Tamil kingdoms comes from Sangam literature, the earliest Tamil literary tradition, which dates between 300 BCE and 300 CE. The Chera, Chola, and Pandya rulers were known as the three crowned kings

or “Vendar of Tamilakam”, and their kingdoms flourished in fertile rice-growing regions. Sangam poems also describe brave and ambitious kings, including a Chera ruler who earned the title *adhirāja* after defeating several crowned kings. These poems further mention Vedic *yajñas* and links with epic traditions. However, these early kingdoms should not be confused with the later imperial Chola, Chera, and Pandya kingdoms that emerged many centuries later.

Ans. The Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas were three important early kingdoms of southern India, known as the three crowned kings or Vendar of Tamilakam. Their royal emblems were the tiger for the Cholas, bow for the Cheras and fish for the Pandyas.

Much of our knowledge about these kingdoms comes from Sangam literature, the earliest Tamil literary tradition, dating from about 300 BCE to 300 CE. Their kingdoms flourished in fertile, rice-growing regions. Sangam poems describe their brave and ambitious rulers, mention Vedic *yajñas* and links with epic traditions, and provide information about their political and cultural life.

These early kingdoms should not be confused with the later imperial Chola, Chera and Pandya kingdoms, which emerged many centuries later.

THINK ABOUT IT (Page - 108)

Texts such as the *Mahābhārata* and the *Arthaśhāstra* describe the king’s duties as protecting people and ensuring justice. Why do you think it was important for rulers to protect people and ensure justice? What do these descriptions tell us about ideas of governance and the relationship between rulers and subjects during that period?

Ans. Protecting people and ensuring justice were important because they helped maintain peace, security, law and order, and the welfare of the kingdom. A ruler who provided protection and fair justice could gain the trust and support of the people.

These descriptions show that ancient Indian ideas of governance viewed the king as responsible for the well-being of his subjects. The relationship between the ruler and the people was based on duty, protection and justice, rather than simply on the exercise of power.

THINK ABOUT IT (Page - 111)

Why do you think different rulers chose to record their inscriptions on the same stone instead of a new one? Discuss your answers with your classmates.

Ans. Different rulers may have chosen the same stone because:

- It connected their rule with earlier rulers and showed continuity.
- The stone was probably located at an important public place where many people could see the inscriptions.
- Keeping inscriptions together helped preserve historical records in one place.
- It showed respect for earlier rulers, their achievements and public works, while allowing later rulers to add their own messages.

THINK ABOUT IT (Page - 112)

How would dividing a kingdom into provinces, districts, and villages have helped rulers manage their empires? What villages have helped rulers manage their empires? What similarities can you identify between these administrative divisions and the system of governance in India today?

Ans. Dividing a kingdom into provinces, districts and villages made it easier for rulers to manage large empires effectively. Local officials were responsible for collecting taxes, maintaining law and order, settling disputes and carrying out the ruler’s orders, while villages managed local matters such as irrigation and revenue collection.

The administrative system of early kingdoms had similarities with India’s system of governance today:

- Both are divided into larger and smaller administrative units.
- Local officials work under higher authorities.
- Different levels manage administration, revenue and law and order.
- Villages and local bodies manage many local affairs.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page - 118-119)

Read the verse given above and discuss it in groups. As you do so, think like historians—look for clues in the source and use them to understand what life may have been like.

While discussing, keep these questions in mind:

What does the source tell us? (evidence)

What can we understand from it? (interpretation)

What might it not tell us? (limits of the source)

Now answer the following:

1. What occupations are mentioned in the family described in the verse? What does this indicate about the nature of occupations in Vedic society?
2. How does the above verse challenge the idea that social status and occupation were fixed by birth?
3. What different occupations do you find in contemporary society?

After the discussion, compare your group's responses with those of another group and note the similarities and differences in interpretation. Did all groups interpret the source in the same way? What does this tell us about how historians use evidence to understand the past?

Ans.

1. The verse mentions occupations such as a poet, a physician and a grinder of grain within the same family. This indicates that people in Vedic society could follow different occupations, and occupations were not necessarily limited to a single family profession.
2. The verse shows that members of the same family followed different occupations. This suggests that occupation was not always fixed by birth and that people could choose or practise different professions.
3. Today, people work in many different occupations, such as teachers, doctors, engineers, farmers, lawyers, scientists, businesspeople, artists, drivers, technicians and software professionals.

• **What does this tell us about historians?**

Different groups may interpret the same source differently because historical evidence can provide clues but not complete information. Historians examine the evidence carefully, consider its context and limitations, and then develop interpretations based on what the source tells them.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page - 126)

Compare your school life with the life of a student in a gurukula in early India. Think about aspects such as daily routine, subjects studied, relationship with teachers, discipline, and living arrangements. What advantages and challenges do you think each system of education might have for students?

Ans.

Aspect	My School Life	Student in a Gurukula
• Daily routine	- Students follow a fixed school timetable.	- Students followed a disciplined daily routine and lived with the guru.
• Subjects	- Subjects include languages, mathematics, science, social science, etc.	- Students studied the Vedas, grammar, logic, philosophy, mathematics, science, medicine, music and other subjects.
• Teachers	- Teachers teach students in classrooms and guide them in their studies.	- Students lived closely with the guru and learned through direct interaction and daily activities.
• Discipline	- Discipline is maintained through school rules and schedules.	- Students followed a highly disciplined lifestyle and practised self-control and service to the guru.
• Living arrangements	- Students generally live with their families and attend school during the day.	- Students lived with the guru in the gurukula.

Advantages and challenges:**Gurukula System****• Advantages:**

- i. Provided close and personal guidance from the guru.
- ii. Gave equal importance to knowledge and moral values.
- iii. Developed self-discipline and practical life skills.
- iv. Created a strong bond between the teacher and students.

• Challenges:

- i. Had limited access to specialised subjects and modern technology.
- ii. Students had to stay away from their families for long periods.
- iii. Educational facilities were available only at selected centres.

Modern School System**• Advantages:**

- i. Provides access to modern knowledge, technology, laboratories and libraries.
- ii. Offers a wide range of academic and extracurricular subjects.
- iii. Allows students to live with their families while studying.
- iv. Provides better preparation for higher education and diverse careers.

• Challenges:

- i. Students may receive less individual attention in large classrooms.
- ii. There is often greater emphasis on examinations and marks.
- iii. Students may have fewer opportunities to develop practical life skills compared with the gurukula system.

THINK ABOUT IT (Page - 129)

Why do you think irrigational structures like dams and canals were considered so important that their construction was recorded in inscriptions?

Ans. Irrigation structures were important because agriculture depended on a reliable supply of water. Recording their construction in inscriptions highlighted the ruler's role in public welfare and the economic development of the kingdom.

These structures:

- Increased agricultural production.
- Provided farmers with water during dry periods.
- Contributed to the prosperity of the kingdom.
- Showed the ruler's concern for the welfare of the people.
- Became lasting achievements that could be remembered by future generations.

One Point Learning

Questions and activities (Page - 134-135)

1. How did political organisation change from the Vedic period to the age of large empires such as the Mauryas and the Guptas? Explain the administrative system of the early Indian states.

Ans. Political Organisation and Administration:

- Early Vedic society was organised into janas (clans) led by a rājā, with assemblies such as the sabhā, samiti and vidhata.
- Janas gradually developed into janapadas and mahājanapadas, with Magadha becoming powerful and leading to the Mauryan Empire.
- The Mauryan state had seven constituents (Saptāṅga) and a well-organised administrative system of provinces, divisions and villages.
- The Guptas continued many earlier practices while introducing some new administrative posts.
- Later kingdoms such as the Pallavas, Chālukyas and Cholas combined centralised rule with local village administration.

2. Describe the role of the king, important officers, and the methods used to govern large territories.

Ans. The king was the head of the state and was responsible for protecting the people, maintaining law and order, and ensuring justice. He was assisted by a council of ministers (mantri-pariṣhad), which included important officials such as the treasurer, chief tax collector, legal advisor and commander-in-chief.

Other officers, such as pradeśhikas, managed judicial and administrative matters at the district level, while city officials looked after revenue collection and law and order. Large kingdoms were divided into provinces, divisions, districts and villages, making administration easier. Village assemblies also managed local matters such as irrigation, justice and tax collection, combining central authority with local administration.

3. After studying this chapter, what do you think were the most important features of the state and society in India before 1000 CE?

Ans. The most important features of state and society in India before 1000 CE were:

- The development of janas, janapadas, mahājanapadas and large empires.
- The growth of organised administration under kings, ministers and officials.
- The division of kingdoms into provinces, districts and villages for effective governance.
- The importance of dharma, justice and the welfare of the people in ideas of kingship.
- A flexible social structure (varṇa and jāti) that, while becoming more rigid over time, originally allowed for considerable social and occupational mobility.
- The growth of agriculture, trade and guilds (śhreṇis).
- A continuity of cultural and intellectual traditions - including literature, education, and religious practices like Bhakti - that persisted despite changing political powers.

Together, these features contributed to the development of a diverse yet culturally connected society and organised states across the Indian subcontinent.

4. What do early texts such as the Ṛig Veda, Arthaśhāstra, and the Mahābhārata reveal about political and social life?

Ans. The Ṛig Veda, Arthaśhāstra and Mahābhārata provide valuable information about the political and social life of early India.

- **Ṛig Veda:** Describes janas (clans), assemblies such as the sabhā, samiti and vidhata, occupational diversity and the four varṇas.
- **Arthaśhāstra:** Explains statecraft, administration and the Saptāṅga theory, along with the importance of an active king and cooperation in governance.
- **Mahābhārata:** Highlights the duties of the king, justice, ethical conduct and the welfare of subjects, along with the idea of samatva (sameness).

Together, these texts show that early Indian society and governance were closely connected with dharma, duty, justice and the welfare of the people.

5. What can we learn from early Indian society about varṇa and the role of women?

Ans. Early Indian society shows that the varṇa system divided society into four broad groups—Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśhyas and Śhūdras. However, social status and occupations were not always strictly fixed by birth, and people could follow different occupations.

Women also played important roles in society. Some women were scholars and thinkers, participated in religious activities, and are associated with hymns in the Ṛig Veda, such as Ghoṣhā, Lopāmudrā and Apālā. This shows that women could contribute to the intellectual and cultural life of early India.

6. Explain how assemblies like sabhā and samiti limited the power of the rājā. Which modern institutions perform similar functions today?

Ans. The sabhā and samiti were important assemblies in Vedic society that allowed people and community leaders to discuss important matters and advise the rājā. They helped prevent the rājā from exercising unlimited power by encouraging consultation and collective decision-making. In modern India, Parliament and State Legislatures perform similar functions by discussing laws and government policies and holding the executive accountable.

7. What do the terms varṇa and jāti refer to in early Indian society? How were they different, and what factors may have contributed to the formation of various jātis?

Ans. Varṇa refers to the broad social categories into which society was traditionally divided: Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśhyas and Śhūdras. Jāti refers to the numerous smaller social groups associated with particular communities, occupations and local traditions.

The main difference is that varṇa was a broad classification, while jāti represented more specific and numerous social groups. Various jātis developed over time due to factors such as occupation, migration, intermarriage, regional differences and the formation of new communities.

8. Why do you think education in early India emphasised both knowledge and moral values? How might this have benefited society?

Ans. Education in early India emphasised both knowledge and moral values because education was meant to develop a person's intellectual abilities as well as character. Students were taught knowledge along with discipline, self-control, duties and ethical values. This helped create responsible individuals, maintain social harmony and promote a well-ordered society.

9. Look at the major trade routes of early India (Fig 5.12). How do you think these routes helped people in the exchange of goods, skills, beliefs, and cultural practices.

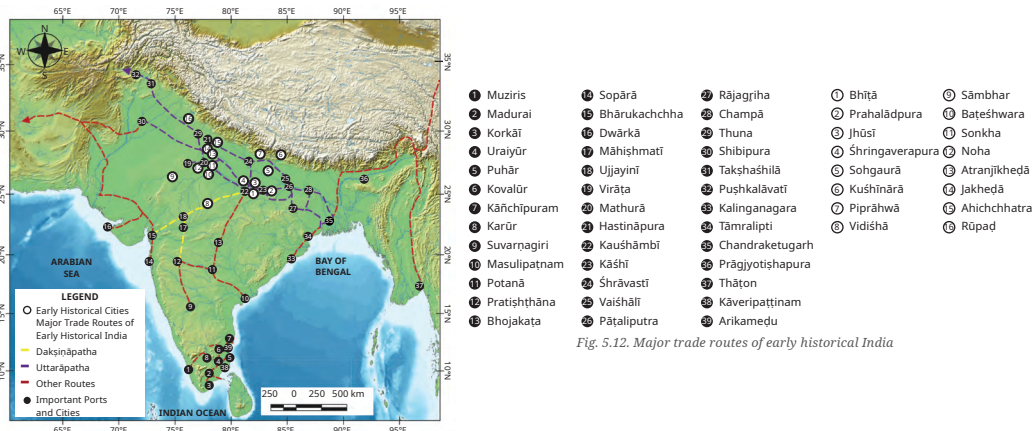


Fig. 5.12. Major trade routes of early historical India

Ans. The major trade routes of early India connected different cities and regions. They helped people exchange goods such as grains, textiles, metals and other products. Along these routes, traders, travellers and craftsmen also shared their skills and knowledge. The movement of people helped spread religious beliefs, languages, customs, art and cultural practices from one region to another. Thus, trade routes played an important role in economic and cultural exchange and in connecting different parts of early India.

10. What might have been the advantages and challenges of ruling a large empire in the absence of modern communication systems?

Ans.

- **Advantages:**
 - i. A large empire provided more land, resources, wealth and manpower.
 - ii. It allowed rulers to control important trade routes and regions.
 - iii. Different regions could contribute to the economic and military strength of the empire.
- **Challenges:**
 - i. Messages and orders travelled slowly over long distances.
 - ii. It was difficult to maintain law and order in distant areas.
 - iii. Collecting taxes and information from faraway regions was challenging.
 - iv. Rulers could not respond quickly to rebellions, conflicts or local problems.
 - v. They had to depend on local officials and administrators to govern distant territories.

11. Many ideas about governance come from texts composed by scholars and advisors of the king. What might be some limitations of relying only on such sources?

Ans. Relying only on texts written by scholars and royal advisors has some limitations:

- They often describe ideal governance rather than actual conditions.
- They mainly reflect the views of rulers and elites.
- The experiences of ordinary people, women and other social groups may be missing.
- They may overlook local governance, public resistance and everyday life.
- Therefore, historians should compare such texts with inscriptions, archaeological evidence and other sources to get a more complete picture of the past.

12. Read the source and answer the questions:

The Nāśhik cave inscription (2nd century CE) of Uṣhavadāta records:

“Uṣhavadāta, son of Dinika, son-in-law of king Nahapāna ... has bestowed this cave on the Saṃgha generally; he has also given a perpetual endowment, three thousand—3000 kāhāpaṇas, which, for the members of the Saṃgha of any sect, and any origin dwelling in this cave, will serve as cloth money and money for outside life (kuśhaṇa); and those kāhāpaṇas have been invested in guild dwelling at Govadhana—2000 in a weavers’ guild, interest one pratika (monthly) for the hundred, (and) 1000 in another weaver’s guild, interest three quarters of a paḍika (monthly) for the hundred.”

(a) What does this source tell us about the economic role of guilds?

Ans. The source shows that guilds played an important economic and financial role. They accepted money as deposits, invested it and paid regular interest. The money was used to provide financial support to the Buddhist Saṃgha.

(b) Why were guilds trusted with money deposits?

Ans. Guilds were well-organised and established groups of traders and craftspeople. Their experience in economic activities and ability to manage money and pay interest made them reliable institutions for handling deposits.

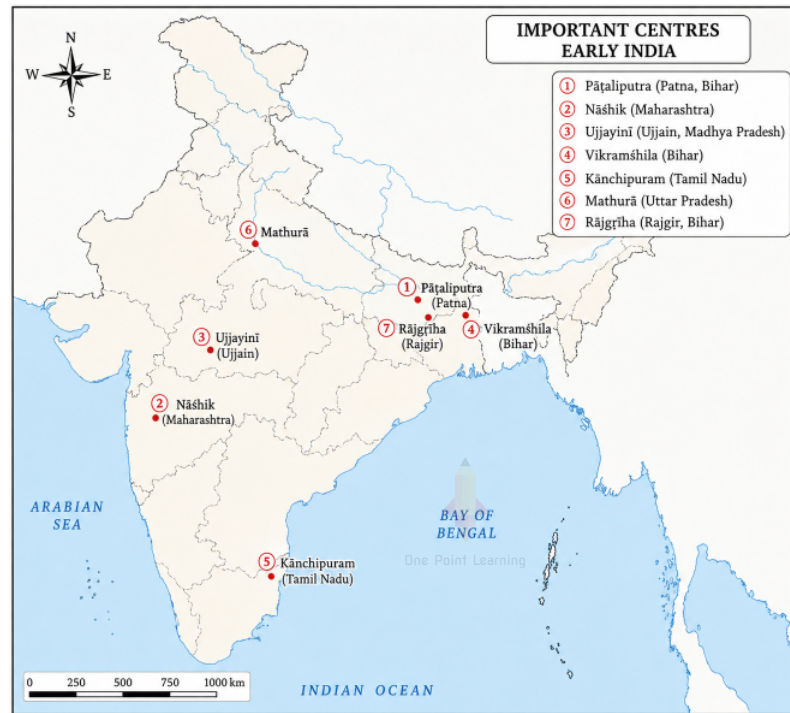
(c) Identify the donor and the donees from the given source.

Ans.

- **Donor:** Uṣhavadāta, son of Dinika and son-in-law of King Nahapāna.
- **Donees:** The Saṃgha, or Buddhist monastic community, whose members lived in the cave and benefited from the endowment.

13. Mark and locate on the map of India the following important centres: Pāṭaliputra, Nāśhik, Ujjayinī, Vikramśhila, Kānchipuram, Mathurā, Rājgrīha.

Ans.



Mark and label the following places on an outline map of India:

- Pāṭaliputra - Patna, Bihar
- Ujjayinī - Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh
- Kānchipuram - Tamil Nadu
- Rājgrīha - Rajgir, Bihar
- Nāśhik - Maharashtra
- Vikramśhila - Bihar
- Mathurā - Uttar Pradesh

14. Prepare a short presentation or poster on one of the following—

a. Life in the Vedic society

Ans.

LIFE IN THE VEDIC SOCIETY

A Simple and Peaceful Way of Life

1. SETTLEMENTS

- People lived in small villages called 'Grāma'.
- Houses were made of wood, mud, straw and bamboo.
- Villages were usually near rivers.

2. OCCUPATIONS

- Agriculture was the main occupation.
- People also reared cattle.
- Other work included crafts, trade and teaching.

3. SOCIAL ORGANISATION

• Society was divided into four Varnas:

- Brāhmanas (priests and teachers)
- Kṣatriyas (warriors and rulers)
- Vaiśyas (farmers, herders, traders)
- Śūdras (servants and workers)

• People lived together in harmony and followed their duties.

• Family system was joint and respected.

Brāhmanas Kṣatriyas Vaiśyas Śūdras

4. EDUCATION

- Education was given in 'Gurukula'.
- Students (Brahmacharins) lived with the Guru.
- They studied the Vedas, scriptures, grammar, music, warfare, medicine and many other subjects.

5. POSITION OF WOMEN

- Women were respected and had important roles in the family.
- They could take part in religious ceremonies and discussions.
- Some women were scholars like Gārgī and Maitreyī.

6. RELIGION AND BELIEFS

- People worshipped natural forces like Agni (fire), Indra (rain), Varuṇa (water), Sūrya (sun) etc.
- Yajñas (sacrifices) were performed to please the gods.
- They believed in the law of Karma and the importance of truth (Satya) and duty (Dharma).

7. FOOD AND DRESS

- Food included cereals (rice, barley), fruits, vegetables, milk and ghee.
- People wore simple clothes made of cotton and wool.
- Ornaments were worn by both men and women.

IMPORTANCE

The Vedic society was based on simple living, hard work, respect for nature, learning and strong moral values. It laid the foundation of Indian culture and traditions.

b. Early education system (gurukula)

Ans.

EARLY EDUCATION SYSTEM (GURUKULA)

The Gurukula system was the ancient Indian system of education. In this system, students (Brahmacharins) lived with their teacher (Guru) in his ashram and learned knowledge, values and life skills.

1. WHAT IS GURUKULA?

- 'Guru' means teacher and 'Kula' means family.
- Gurukula was a place where students lived with the Guru like members of a family.
- Education was free and based on respect, discipline and self-control.

2. LIFE IN GURUKULA

- Students lived in simple huts near the Guru's ashram.
- They woke up early, bathed, prayed and did their duties.
- They helped in household work like collecting firewood, bringing water, cleaning etc.
- They lived a simple and disciplined life.



3. SUBJECTS TAUGHT

- Vedas and scriptures
- Grammar, mathematics, astrology
- Science, medicine, philosophy
- Skills like archery, music, art and crafts
- Moral values and good conduct



4. TEACHER (GURU)

- Guru was highly respected and loved by students.
- He guided students in studies as well as in life.
- Students offered 'Guru Dakshina' as a mark of respect and gratitude.



5. FEATURES

One Point Learning

- Education was for all, mainly for boys (girls also received education in some families).
- Based on personal attention, moral values and character building.
- Aim was overall development of body, mind and soul.



IMPORTANCE

The Gurukula system laid the foundation of India's rich cultural heritage and values. It produced learned, wise and responsible citizens who served the society and the nation.

c. Trade and guilds in early India

Ans.

TRADE AND GUILDS IN EARLY INDIA

BUILDING WEALTH, CONNECTING PEOPLE

Trade and guilds played an important role in the growth of towns, economy and society in early India.

1. TRADE IN EARLY INDIA

- Trade was carried on both within the country and with other countries.
- Merchants travelled by land and by sea.
- Important trade routes connected towns, cities and ports.
- Goods traded included cloth, spices, jewellery, ivory, metal goods, salt, sugar, and pearls.



2. IMPORTANT CENTRES OF TRADE

- Inland centres: Pataliputra, Ujjayini, Mathura, Taxila, Varanasi, Kanchipuram.
- Ports: Bharukaccha (Broach), Sopara, Kaveripattinam, Tamralipti, Muziris.
- These centres were linked by roads, rivers and sea routes.



3. GUILDS (ŚREṆĪ)

- Guilds were associations of craftspeople, traders or merchants.
- Members of the same occupation joined together.
- They had their own rules and regulations.
- Guilds looked after the welfare of their members.
- They maintained quality, fixed prices and settled disputes.
- Guilds were rich and powerful and sometimes lent money at interest.



4. GOODS TRADED



5. FOREIGN TRADE

- India had trade relations with Rome, West Asia, Central Asia and South-East Asia.
- Roman coins have been found in many places in India.
- Indian goods were exported and gold and silver were brought in.



6. IMPORTANCE OF TRADE AND GUILDS

- They helped in the growth of towns and cities.
- They created employment for many people.
- They increased wealth and brought prosperity.
- They promoted cultural exchange and strengthened connections.



Trade and guilds were the backbone of the early Indian economy. They not only created wealth but also helped in the social and cultural development of the country.



d. Role of women in early Indian society
Ans.

ROLE OF WOMEN IN EARLY INDIAN SOCIETY

Women played an important role in early Indian society. Their position and status are reflected in literature, inscriptions, laws and the lives of ordinary people.

1. IN THE FAMILY

- Women were an important part of the family.
- They managed the household, brought up children and took care of elderly members.
- They were respected as mothers, wives and sisters.



2. IN EDUCATION AND LEARNING

- In the Vedic period, girls had the right to education (Upanayana).
- Learned women like Gargi, Maitreyi and Lopamudra took part in discussions and debates.
- They studied the Vedas, philosophy, grammar, music and arts.
- In later period, women's education became more limited.



3. IN ECONOMIC LIFE

- Women took part in many economic activities.
- They worked in agriculture, animal husbandry, weaving, spinning, pottery, and other crafts.
- Some women were traders and shopkeepers.
- They also managed property and wealth in some cases.



4. IN RELIGION AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

- Women took part in religious rituals and ceremonies.
- They were devotees and philosophers.
- Some became Buddhist nuns (Bhikkhunis) and Jain nuns.
- Women saints and poetesses contributed to spiritual literature.



WOMEN – PILLARS OF FAMILY, SOCIETY AND CULTURE

5. IN POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION

- Some women took part in political life.
- Queens and royal women advised kings and took part in administration.
- Examples: Prabhavati Gupta, Nagānandā, Didi Nāgāmattā, and Rudramadevi (in later period).
- In some cases, women ruled kingdoms as capable leaders.



6. LEGAL RIGHTS AND STATUS

- In early times, women had rights to property, gifts (stridhan) and inheritance in some cases.
- Dharmashastra texts mention respect and protection of women.
- Over time, their rights became restricted due to social customs and laws.



7. ACHIEVEMENTS OF WOMEN

- Women excelled in various fields—learning, poetry, music, dance, medicine and art.
- Famous names: Gargi, Maitreyi, Lopamudra, Apālā, Vishpālā (warrior), Amrapali (courtesan and donor).
- Their contributions enriched Indian culture and tradition.



Gargi Maitreyi Lopamudra Amrapali

8. CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN

- In later periods, practices like child marriage, purdah, and restriction on education limited women's freedom.
- Social customs and patriarchal attitudes created inequality.
- Reformers and rulers later worked to improve women's status.



IMPORTANCE

Women were not just supporters but active contributors to the development of early Indian society. Their roles in family, economy, religion, education, politics and culture built a strong foundation for society.

One Point Learning