

# HISTORY

## Chapter 9: Traders, Kings and Pilgrims



## Traders, Kings and Pilgrims

### Emergence of New Kingdoms along the Coast of South India

About 200-300 years ago, many new kingdoms emerged in South India. The long coastline of South India gave impetus to various trade activities in this region.

- The kingdoms which controlled the river valleys (the Kaveri River Valley was the most fertile river valley in Southern India) and coastal areas became extremely rich and powerful.
- The word '*muvendar*' was used for the heads of the three ruling families of the Cholas, Cheras and the Pandayas.
- The city of Puhar or Kaveripattinam, the port city under the Cholas and Madurai, the capital of the Pandayas, were two important cities at this time.
- These kings did not receive regular taxes but demanded gifts from the people. On military expeditions, they collected tribute from the neighbouring kingdoms. The sangam poets wrote compositions in the honour of the kings, who in turn rewarded them with expensive gifts.
- Later, the Satvahanas emerged as a powerful kingdom in this region. Gautamiputra Shri Satakarni was the most important ruler of this kingdom. He sent his army to the eastern, western and southern coast of the Indian subcontinent.
- We learn about him from the inscription composed by his mother, Gautami Balashri.
- Lords of the Satvahana kingdoms were known as the Lords of the *Dakshinapantha*, which literally means the routes leading to the south.



Coins depicting the satvahan king,  
Gautamiputra Shri Satakarni

## Trade on the Sea Routes

South India at this time was famous for gold, precious and semi-precious stones and spices, especially pepper. The demand for pepper was so high in the Roman Empire that it was known as black gold. The traders from South India carried pepper to the Roman Empire in their ships. Many Roman coins have been found in South India. Traders also sailed from the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. They were helped by the monsoon winds while crossing these seas.

## The Silk Route

- Silk was first made in China about 7,000 years ago. Raw silk is first extracted from the cocoons of silk worms, spun into threads and then woven into cloth.
- Since silk was in demand in West Asia and Europe, the land routes which were followed by the traders while travelling to these distant lands while carrying silk with them came to be known as the silk route.
- Many kings wanted to control a large part of the silk route so that they could obtain tribute and gifts from the merchants trading in silk.
- In return, these kings protected the traders from robbers when they passed through their kingdoms.



The Silk Route

## The Kushanas

About 200 years ago, the Kushanas ruled India.

- They ruled over Central Asia and North-West India.

- The Kushanas controlled a large part of the silk route.
- Peshawar and Mathura, apart from Taxila were two prominent centres under their control.
- The Kushanas were among the earliest rulers in India to issue gold coins. These coins were used by the merchants trading along the silk route.
- Kanishka was one of the most important Kushana rulers.



### The Spread of Buddhism

Under the Kushanas, not only did Buddhism spread rapidly but also evolved into a new form.

- Kanishka organised the Buddhist Council, where Buddhist scholars met and discussed important matters.
- Ashvaghosha, a poet who lived in the court of Kanishka, composed 'the Buddhacharita' a biography of Buddha.
- Ashvaghosha and many other Buddhist writers began to write in Sanskrit during this period.
- Mahayana Buddhism, a new form of Buddhism emerged during this time. In this new form, statues of Buddha were made. Mathura and Taxila were the two centres where the statues of Buddha were constructed.



- There was a rise in the belief of Bodhisattva. These were persons who were said to have attained enlightenment. They now began to be worshipped. The worship of Bodhisattva spread to Central Asia, China, Japan and Korea.
- Buddhism rapidly spread to western and southern India. Various caves were hollowed out for the monks to live in.
- Buddhism also spread in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia, but the older form of Buddhism was more popular in these areas.



**Bodhisattva**

### **Pilgrims**

Many pilgrims came to India in order to make a holy journey to the various Buddhist places. Prominent among these were Fa Xian, Xuan Zang and I-Qing. They visited many Buddhist places and monasteries and left a detailed account of the social and economic conditions which were prevailing in India at that time.



## The Bhakti Movement

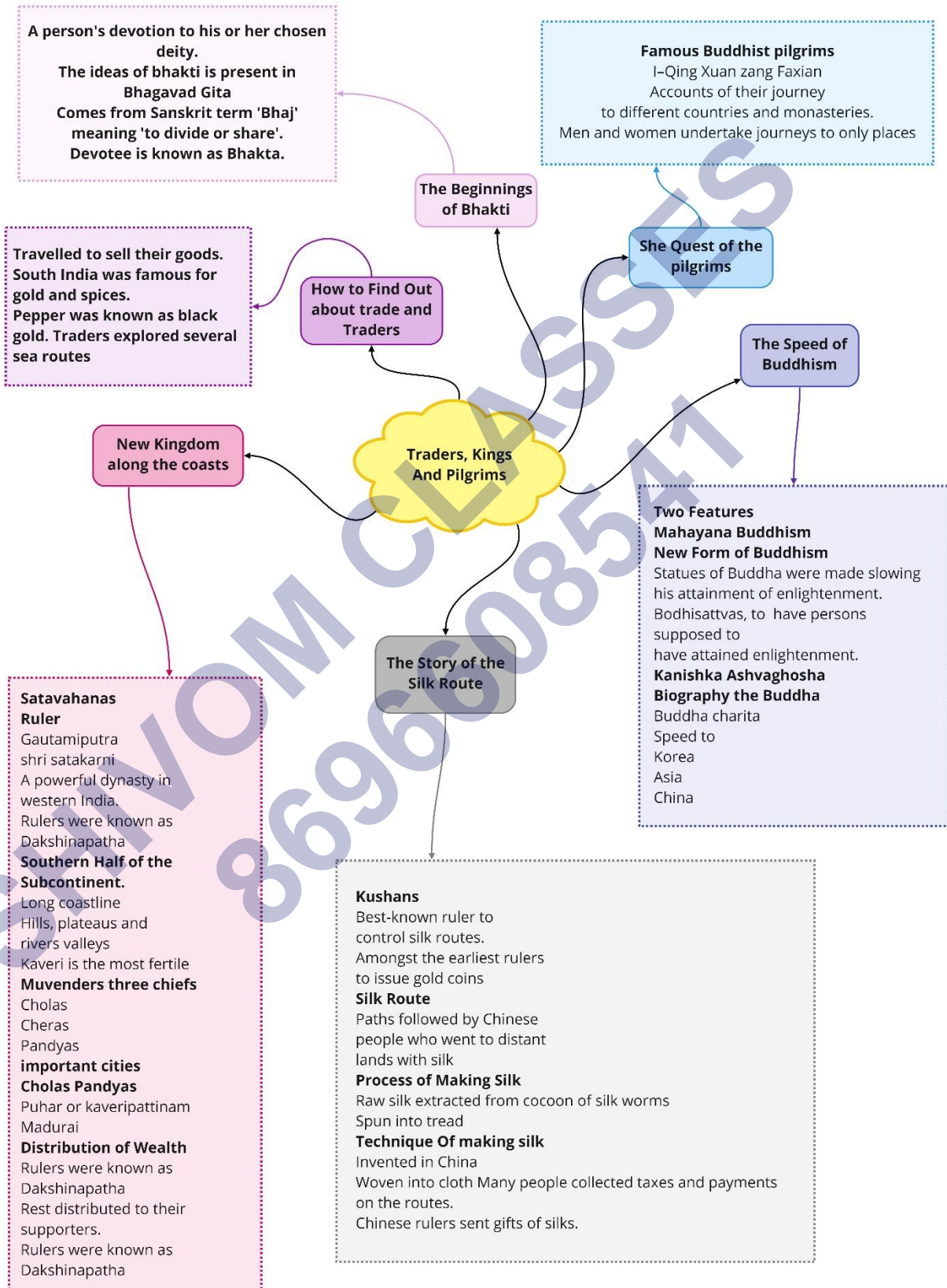
While Buddhism was spreading in India, many developments were taking place in Hinduism as well.

- Various deities such as Vishnu, Shiva and Durga began to be worshipped.
- These deities began to be worshiped through Bhakti. The concept of Bhakti was explained in the Bhagwad Gita, which is a part of the holy epic Mahabharata.
- The word Bhakti is derived from the Sanskrit word bhaj which means 'to divide or share'.
- Bhakti laid stress on devotion and individual worship of gods and goddesses. It did not believe in sacrifices.
- It put forth that the path of Bhakti could be followed by all the people irrespective of their caste or economic position.
- It came to be believed that if a devotee worshiped a chosen deity, then it would appear in a form which the devotee desired. This led to the building of beautiful images of these deities.
- Various pieces of sculpture and architecture were made during the Bhakti period. Many developments were also made in the field of literature during this time.





Class : 6th Social Studies (History)  
Chapter - 9 : Traders, Kings And Pilgrims



## Important Questions

### ➤ Multiple Choice Questions:

Question 1. Xuan Zang translated the manuscripts from:

- (a) Pali to Sanskrit
- (b) Pali to Chinese
- (c) Brahmi to Chinese
- (d) Sanskrit to Chinese

Question 2. Bhakti comes from the Sanskrit term bhaj meaning:

- (a) to pray
- (b) to borrow
- (c) to divide or share
- (d) to see

Question 3. The Kushana's two major centres of power were:

- (a) Taxila and Naland
- (b) Nalanda and Peshawar
- (c) Peshawar and Mathura
- (d) Taxila and Mathura

Question 4. Gold coins were issued first by:

- (a) Ashoka
- (b) Kaniska
- (c) Harshvardhan
- (d) Cholas

Question 5. Central Asia, China, Korea and Japan were famous for:

- (a) Worship of Durga
- (b) Worship of Mahaveer
- (c) Worship of Shiva
- (d) Worship of Buddha

Question 6. Traders carried their goods in ancient time, through:

- (a) Road by Bullock-cart
- (b) Air rout



- (c) Sea route
- (d) All of these.

Question 7. What was found in South India which referred about Roman traders?

- (a) Gold coins
- (b) Iron coins
- (c) Brass coins
- (d) Paper coins

Question 8. Precious stones, gold, elephants, chariots and fine cloth were given to:

- (a) Public
- (b) Army men
- (c) Women
- (d) Poets

Question 9. Rich, glossy colour and smooth texture make it a highly valued fabric. This is:

- (a) Cotton
- (b) Polyester
- (c) Tericot
- (d) Silk

Question 10. Fa-Xian was a pilgrim of:

- (a) Rome
- (b) China
- (c) Iron
- (d) Afghanistan

Question 11. It contains the advice of Lord Krishna to Arjun to abandon all dharmas and surrender to God. Only God can set him free from every evil

- (a) Ramayana
- (b) Quran
- (c) Bible
- (d) Bhagavad Geeta

Question 12. The best-known of the rulers who controlled the Silk Route were the

- (a) Mughals
- (b) Satvahanas

- (c) Mauryas
- (d) Kushanas

Question 13. Where is Sanchi is at present

- (a) Bihar
- (b) Madhya Pradesh
- (c) Uttar Pradesh
- (d) Himanchal Pradesh

Question 14. South India was famous for gold and spices especially \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) Pepper and Cardamom
- (b) Rice and Cardamom
- (c) Millets and precious stones
- (d) Pepper and precious stones

Question 15. Single minded devotion to one god

- (a) Prarthana
- (b) Bhajan
- (c) Bhakti
- (d) Pray

➤ **Match The Following:**

	Column-I		Column-II
1.	Muvendar	A.	Mahayana Buddhism
2.	Lords of the Dakshinapatha	B.	Buddhacharita
3.	Ashvaghosha	C.	Satavahana rulers
4.	Bodhisattvas	D.	Chinese pilgrim
5.	Xuan Zang	E.	Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas

➤ **Fill in the blanks:**

1. Puhar was an important port on the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Around 200 years later a dynasty known as the Satavahanas became powerful in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. South India was famous for \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Fa Xian began his journey back home from \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Statues of the Buddha were made in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. About 2000 years ago, wearing \_\_\_\_\_ became the fashion amongst rulers and rich people in Rome.

### ➤ Write true (T) or false (F):

1. Amongst the river valleys, that of the Kaveri is the most fertile.
2. Only rich, belonging to the so-called 'high' castes, man could follow the path of Bhakti.
3. Nalanda, (Bihar) was the most famous Buddhist monastery of the period.
4. Muvendar is a Sanskrit word meaning three chiefs.
5. Sometimes, Chinese rulers sent gifts of silk to rulers in Iran and west Asia.
6. Satavahanas became powerful in eastern India.
7. At Taxila a new form of Buddhist art influenced by the Greek style was developed.

### ➤ Very Short Questions:

1. Name the ruler who controlled silk route effectively.
2. Where is the site of Eran located?
3. Which was the capital kingdom of Pandyas?
4. Where was Jesus Christ born?
5. Which port was under the cholas?
6. What is Buddhacharita?
7. Which Kushana ruler organized a Buddhist council?
8. Where can evidences of trade be found?
9. Which is the oldest form of Buddhism?
10. What was the most valued export commodity to the Roman Empire from India?
11. Name the three chiefs mentioned in Sangam poems.
12. Which form of Buddhism was popular in South-Eastern countries?
13. Where the philosophy of the Bodhisattvas was most popular?
14. Where we find discussions between Krishna and Arjuna?
15. From which word the term Bhakti has been derived.

### ➤ Short Questions:



1. What do you know about Syrian Christians?
2. Why do you think ordinary people were attracted to Bhakti?
3. Making silk is a complicated process. Why?
4. From where is the word 'Hindu' derived?
5. Why did kings want to control the Silk Route?
6. Who was Kanishka?

### ➤ Long Questions:

1. Why was silk so expensive?
2. What were the main features of Bhakti?
3. Write about the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims.
4. What kinds of evidence do historians use to find out about trade and trade routes?
5. How did Buddhism grow during Kushana dynasty?

### ANSWER KEY –

### ➤ Multiple Choice Answer:

1. (d) Sanskrit to Chinese
2. (c) to divide or share
3. (c) Peshawar and Mathura
4. (b) Kaniska
5. (d) Worship of Buddha
6. (c) Sea route
7. (a) Gold coins
8. (d) Poets
9. (d) Silk
10. (b) China
11. (d) Bhagavad Geeta
12. (d) Kushanas
13. (b) Madhya Pradesh
14. (d) Pepper and precious stones
15. (c) Bhakti

### ➤ Match The Following:

	Column-I		Column-II
1.	Muvendar	E.	Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas
2.	Lords of the Dakshinapatha	C.	Satavahana rulers
3.	Ashvaghosha	B.	Buddhacharita
4.	Bodhisattvas	A.	Mahayana Buddhism
5.	Xuan Zang	D.	Chinese pilgrim

➤ **Fill in the blanks:**

1. East coast
2. Western India
3. Gold, spices and precious stones
4. Bengal
5. Mathura and Taxila
6. Silk

➤ **Write true (T) or false (F):**

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. False
5. True
6. False
7. True

➤ **Very Short Answer:**

1. Kushanas.
2. Madhya Pradesh.
3. Madurai was the capital of the Pandyas.
4. Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem.
5. Puhar or Kaveripattinam port was under the Cholas
6. Buddhacharita is a biography of the Buddha.
7. The most famous Kushana ruler, Kanishka organized a Buddhist council.

8. Evidence of trade can be found in the Sangam poems.
9. Theravada is believed to be the oldest form of Buddhism.
10. Pepper.
11. Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas.
12. Theravada Buddhism.
13. China.
14. Bhagavad Gita.
15. Bhakti comes from the Sanskrit term bhaj meaning 'to divide or share.'

### ➤ Short Answer:

1. The Christians of Kerala, known as Syrian Christians because they probably came from West Asia, are amongst the oldest Christian communities in the world.
2. Ordinary people were attracted to Bhakti because it emphasised devotion and individual worship of a god or goddess, rather than the performance of elaborate sacrifices.
3. Making silk is a complicated process because raw silk has to be extracted from the cocoons of silk worms, spun into thread and then woven into cloth.
4. The word 'Hindu', like the term 'India' is derived from the river Indus. It was used by Arabs and Iranians to refer to people who lived to the east of the river, and to their cultural practices, including religious beliefs.
5. The kings want to control the Silk Route because they could benefit from taxes, tributes and gifts that were brought by traders travelling along the route.
6. The most famous Kushana ruler was Kanishka, who ruled around 1900 years ago. He organized a Buddhist council, where scholars met and discussed important matters.

### ➤ Long Answer:

1. It was very expensive, as it had to be brought all the way from China, along dangerous roads, through mountains and deserts. People living along the route often demanded payments for allowing traders to pass through.
2. **The main features of Bhakti are:**
  - Those who followed the system of Bhakti emphasised devotion and individual worship of a god or goddess, rather than the performance of elaborate sacrifices.
  - According to this system of belief, if a devotee worships the chosen deity with a pure heart, the deity will appear in the form in which he or she may desire.



3. The best-known of these are the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims, Fa Xian, who came to the subcontinent about 1600 years ago, Xuan Zang (who came around 1400 years ago) and I-Qing, who came about 50 years after Xuan Zang. They came to visit places associated with the life of the Buddha as well as famous monasteries. Each of these pilgrims left an account of his journey.
4. Fine pottery, especially bowls and plates, were found from several archaeological sites throughout the subcontinent. Traders may have carried them from the places where they were made, to sell them at other places.

South India was famous for gold, spices, especially pepper, and precious stones. Pepper was particularly valued in the Roman Empire, so much so that it was known as black gold. So, traders carried many of these goods to Rome in ships, across the sea, and by land in caravans. There must have been quite a lot of trade as many Roman gold coins have been found in south India.

5.
  - The most famous Kushana ruler was Kanishka, who ruled around 1900 years ago.
  - He organized a Buddhist council, where scholars met and discussed important matters.
  - Ashvaghosha, a poet who composed a biography of the Buddha, the Buddhacharita, lived in his court.
  - A new form of Buddhism, known as Mahayana Buddhism, developed.
  - The worship of Bodhisattvas became very popular, and spread throughout Central Asia, China, and later to Korea and Japan.