

- Introduction to the Age of Reorganisation
- Dynasties of the Age of Reorganisation
- The Shunga Dynasty
- The Satavahana Dynasty
- The Chedi Dynasty
- Kingdoms and Life in South India
- The Chola Kingdom
- The Chera Kingdom
- The Pāṇḍya Kingdom
- Invasions of the Indo-Greeks
- The Kushana Empire
- Timeline of Dynasties and Rulers (200 BCE to 300 CE)
- Glossary
- Quick Reference
- Solved Examples
- Practice Set
- Answer Key

Introduction to the Age of Reorganisation

After the death of Emperor Ashoka, the Maurya Empire began to weaken. Around 185 BCE, the last Mauryan ruler was assassinated by Pushyamitru. This period was characterised by internal conflicts and foreign invasions, which led to the reorganisation of political powers across the Indian subcontinent.

The political landscape saw the rise of various dynasties, both indigenous and foreign, which influenced the culture, trade, and social life of the region. This period is marked by the blending of local and foreign elements in art, literature, and governance.

Dynasties from within the Subcontinent	Dynasties from outside the Subcontinent
Śhūngas	Indo-Greeks
Chedis	Śhakas
Sātavāhanas	Kuṣhāṇas
Cholas	
Cheras	
Pāṇḍyas	

Q: What were the main causes that led to the Age of Reorganisation in ancient India?

A: The main causes were the weakening of the Maurya Empire after Ashoka's death, assassination of the last Mauryan ruler by Pushyamitra and the breakup of the empire and rise of new dynasties.

Dynasties of the Age of Reorganisation

The Age of Reorganisation saw the emergence of several important dynasties, which can be broadly classified into two groups:

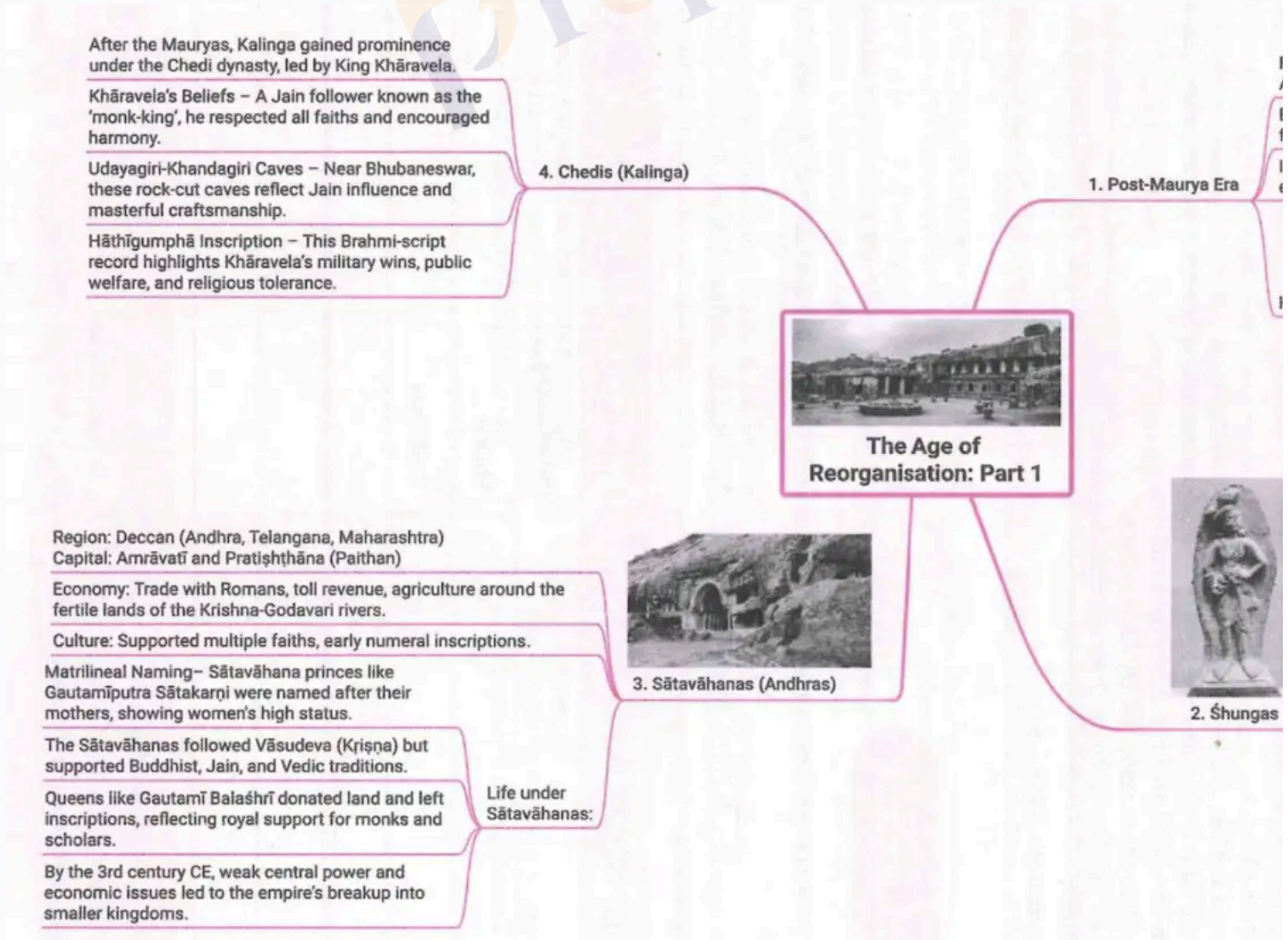
- **Indigenous Dynasties:** Shungas, Chedis, Satavahanas, Cholas, Cheras, and Pandyas.
- **Foreign Dynasties:** Indo-Greeks, Shakas, and Kushanas.

These dynasties contributed to the political, cultural, and economic development of India during this period.

Mnemonic to Remember Dynasties

P-C3-S2: Pandyas, Cheras, Cholas, Chedis, Shungas, Satavahanas

K-I-S: Kushanas, Indo-Greeks, Shakas



Exam Question

Q: Name two dynasties from the Age of Reorganisation that originated outside the Indian subcontinent.

A: The Indo-Greeks and Kushanas originated outside the Indian subcontinent.

The Shunga Dynasty

The Shunga dynasty was founded by Pushyamitra Shunga after the fall of the Maurya Empire. It was located in north and central India.

- Pushyamitra performed the Aśhvamedha yajña, a grand Vedic horse sacrifice, to assert his power.
- The Shungas promoted literature, art, and architecture, including the famous Bharhut Stupa.
- The dynasty maintained contacts with the Greeks and revived Vedic rituals and Sanskrit language.

Exam Question

Q: What was the significance of the Aśhvamedha yajña performed by Pushyamitra Shunga?

A: The Aśhvamedha yajña was a grand Vedic horse sacrifice performed to prove the king's sovereignty and power over other rulers.

The Satavahana Dynasty

The Satavahanas, also known as the Andhras, ruled large parts of the Deccan region, including present-day Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and

- Their capitals were Amrāvātī and Pratiśṭhāna.
- The economy was based on trade, including maritime trade with the Romans, and agriculture.
- Satavahana queens like Gautamī Balāśhri made land donations and performed Vedic rituals such as the Aśhvamedha yajña.
- Inscriptions in Brahmi script have been found in caves like Naneghat and Nashik.
- The Satavahanas supported Vedic scholars, Jain monks, Buddhists, and followers of Vāsudeva (Krishna), showing religious tolerance.
- The empire declined by the 3rd century CE due to economic decline and weak central control, leading to fragmentation.

Exam Question

Q: How did the Satavahanas demonstrate religious tolerance?

A: The Satavahanas supported various religious groups including Vedic scholars, Jain monks, Buddhists, and followers of Vāsudeva (Krishna).

The Chedi Dynasty

The Chedis, ruling in the Kalinga region, gained prominence under King Khāravēla, a follower of Jainism.

- Khāravēla is known for religious tolerance and military victories.

- He built the Udayagiri–Khandagiri caves, which contain inscriptions such as the Hathigumpha inscription written in Brahmi script.

Exam Question

Q: What is the significance of the Hathigumpha inscription?

A: The Hathigumpha inscription provides valuable historical information about King Khāravēla's reign, his military achievements, and religious

Kingdoms and Life in South India

During the post-Mauryan period, the southern kingdoms of Cheras, Cholas, and Pāndyas remained independent and became powerful between 300 and 600 CE, known as the Sangam Age, famous for rich Tamil literature expressing themes of love, valour, and generosity.

Exam Question

Q: What was the Sangam Age known for?

A: The Sangam Age was known for its rich Tamil literature and culture, highlighting themes such as love, valour, and generosity.

The Chola Kingdom

The Chola king Karikala was a prominent ruler who defeated the Cheras and Pāndyas.

- He built the Kallanai (Grand Anicut) on the Kaveri River near Srirangam to divert water for irrigation, turning the delta into the 'rice bowl' of the region.
- This irrigation system still supports agriculture in Tamil Nadu today.

Exam Question

Q: What was the importance of the Kallanai built by Karikala?

A: The Kallanai was an ancient dam that helped in irrigation, making the Kaveri delta fertile and supporting agriculture in Tamil Nadu.

The Chera Kingdom

The Cheras, also known as Keralaputra, ruled western Tamil Nadu and Kerala from their capital Vanji (Karur).

- They promoted Sangam literature and were famous for overseas trade with Rome and West Asia.
- Exports included spices, timber, ivory, and pearls.
- The Cheras issued their own coins, indicating a developed economy.

Exam Question

Q: What were the main trade goods exported by the Cheras?

A: The Cheras exported spices, timber, ivory, and pearls through overseas trade.

The Pāṇḍya Kingdom

The Pāṇḍyas were known for strong administration and ruled parts of Tamil Nadu with their capital at Madurai.

- They had active trade relations with Greeks and Romans and possessed naval power.
- They contributed to art, architecture, and the welfare of their people.
- The Pāṇḍyas were famous for their pearls.

Exam Question

Q: What was the significance of the Pāṇḍya kingdom in trade?

A: The Pāṇḍya kingdom had active trade with Greeks and Romans and was known for its naval power and pearl trade.

Invasions of the Indo-Greeks

The Indo-Greeks invaded parts of northwestern India after Alexander the Great's campaigns.

- They introduced a cultural fusion of Indian and Greek elements, evident in coins and architecture.
- The Heliodorus pillar was built to show respect for Indian beliefs.
- The Shakas (Indo-Scythians) succeeded the Indo-Greeks and started the Shaka Samvat calendar, which is still used as India's National Calendar.

Exam Question

Q: How did the Indo-Greeks influence Indian culture?

A: The Indo-Greeks introduced a blend of Indian and Greek culture, seen in their coins and monuments like the Heliodorus pillar.

The Kushana Empire

The Kushanas came from Central Asia and ruled a large part of northern India.

- They supported trade, art, and religion, promoting the Silk Route trade.
- Their coins featured both Buddha and Shiva, showing respect for multiple religions.
- The Gāndhāra and Mathurā schools of art flourished under their rule, blending Indian and foreign styles.
- Sanskrit literature, including the Ramayana and Mahābhārata, grew during this period.

Exam Question

Q: What was the cultural significance of the Kushana Empire?

A: The Kushana Empire promoted religious tolerance, trade, and the development of art and Sanskrit literature, blending Indian and foreign influences.

Timeline of Dynasties and Rulers (200 BCE to 300 CE)

Time Period / Year	Event / Change	Significance
c. 185 BCE	Pushyamitra Shunga founds the Shunga dynasty	Marks the end of Mauryan Empire
c. 100 BCE	Khāravela rules the Chedi dynasty	Known for religious tolerance
1st–2nd century CE	Gautamiputra Satakarni rules Satavahanas	Strengthened Satavahana empire
c. 100–200 CE	Kanishka rules Kushana dynasty	Promoted Buddhism and culture
2nd century CE	Karikala rules Chola kingdom	Built Kallanai dam, enhanced agriculture
185 BCE – 75 BCE	Shunga dynasty reign	Revival of Vedic culture and art
100 BCE – early centuries CE	Shakas (Indo-Scythians) rule northwest India	Introduced Shaka Samvat calendar
100 BCE – 300 CE	Satavahanas rule Deccan region	Promoted trade, agriculture, and art
1st century CE – 300 CE	Kushanas rule northern India	Flourishing of trade, art, and culture
2nd century BCE – 3rd century CE	Cholas, Cheras, Pāṇḍyas active in South India	Known for Tamil literature and art

Exam Question

Q: What does the timeline of dynasties from 200 BCE to 300 CE indicate about India's political scenario?

A: The timeline shows multiple dynasties ruling simultaneously across India, indicating political fragmentation but also cultural and economic diversity.

Glossary

- Matrimonial Alliance:** An alliance arranged through marriage, usually between royal families to strengthen political ties.
- Aśhvamedha Yajña:** A grand Vedic horse sacrifice ritual performed by kings to assert their sovereignty.
- Sangam Age:** A golden age of Tamil literature marked by poet gatherings called Sangams, known for rich poetry and culture.

Quick Reference

- Pushyamitra Shunga:** Founder of Shunga dynasty, performed Aśhvamedha yajña.
- Satavahanas:** Ruled Deccan, promoted trade and religious tolerance.
- Khāravela:** Jain ruler of Chedis, known for inscriptions and religious harmony.
- Cholas, Cheras, Pāṇḍyas:** Southern kingdoms known for Tamil literature and trade.
- Indo-Greeks and Shakas:** Foreign rulers who influenced Indian culture and introduced new calendars.
- Kushanas:** Central Asian rulers who promoted trade, art, and religion.

Solved Examples

Example 1: Explain the significance of the Shunga dynasty in post-Mauryan India.

Answer: The Shunga dynasty, founded by Pushyamitra Shunga, marked the revival of Vedic rituals and Sanskrit culture after the Mauryan decline. It is known for the Bharhut Stupa, and maintained contacts with foreign powers like the Greeks.

Example 2: Describe the contributions of the Satavahanas to Indian society.

Answer: The Satavahanas ruled the Deccan region and were known for their trade, including maritime commerce with Rome. They supported the development of inscriptions in Brahmi script. Their queens played important roles in religious and social activities.

Practice Set

Easy

- Who founded the Shunga dynasty?
- Name the three main southern kingdoms during the Sangam Age.

Moderate

- What were the main features of the Satavahana administration?
- Explain the cultural contributions of the Kushana Empire.

Challenging

- Discuss the impact of foreign invasions on the political landscape of post-Mauryan India.
- Analyze the significance of the Sangam literature in understanding ancient South Indian society.

Answer Key

- **Easy:**
 - Pushyamitra Shunga
 - Cholas, Cheras, and Pāṇḍyas
- **Moderate:**
 - The Satavahanas had a decentralized administration with strong local governance, supported trade and agriculture, and promoted art and culture.
 - The Kushana Empire promoted trade on the Silk Route, supported art blending Indian and foreign styles, and encouraged Sanskrit literature.
- **Challenging:**
 - Foreign invasions led to the fragmentation of the Mauryan Empire, introduction of new cultural elements, and the rise of regional powers.
 - Sangam literature provides insights into the social values, political structures, and cultural life of ancient South India, highlighting the importance of education and social justice.