

Class VII
Social Science

Chapter 6

The Age of Reorganisation





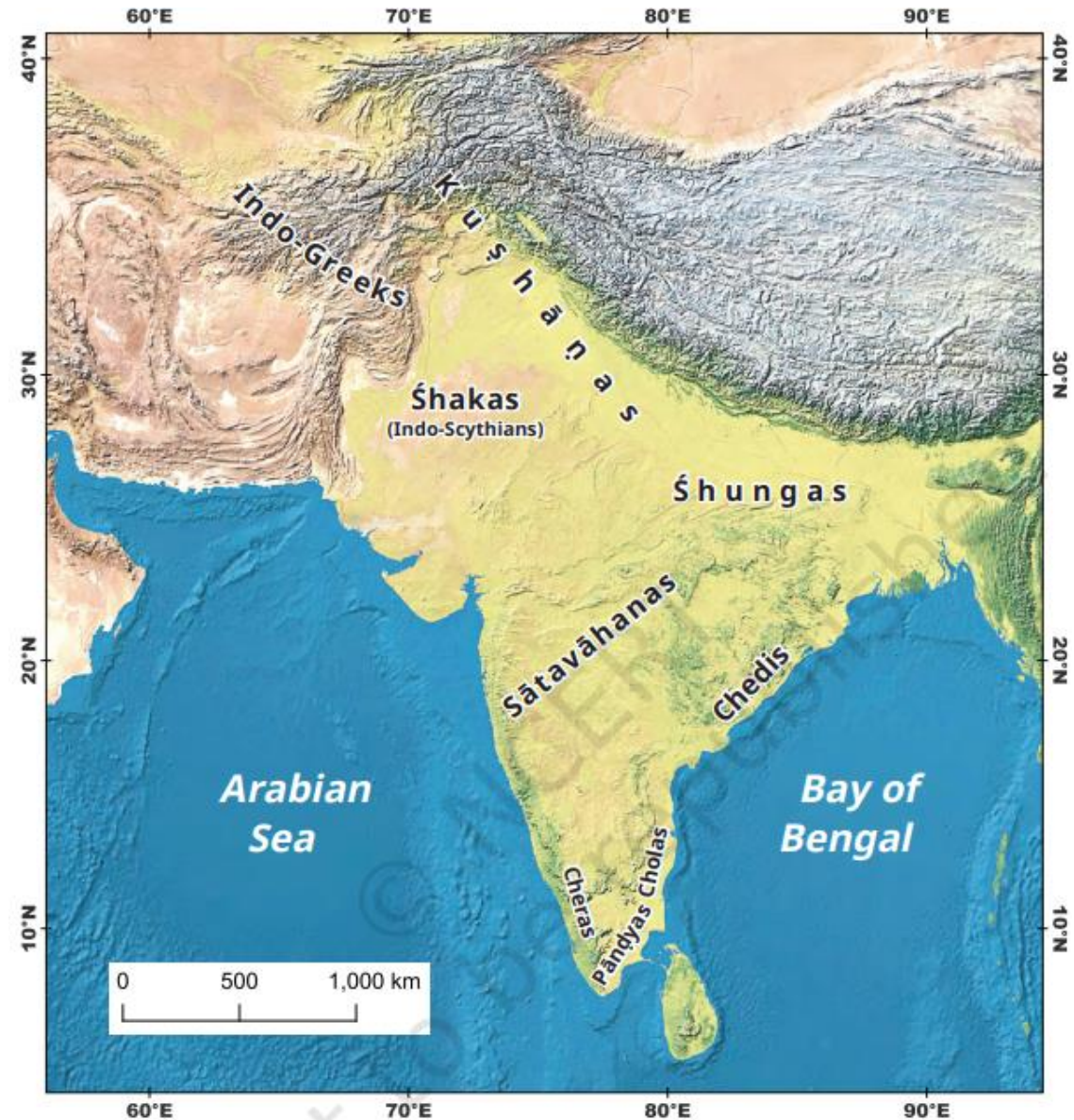
A glimpse of the art from the age of reorganisation



The Big Questions?

1. Why is the period that followed the Maurya empire sometimes called the 'Age of Reorganisation'?
2. What were the values or principles that guided emperors of that period?
3. How did foreign invaders assimilate into Indian society and contribute to cultural confluence?

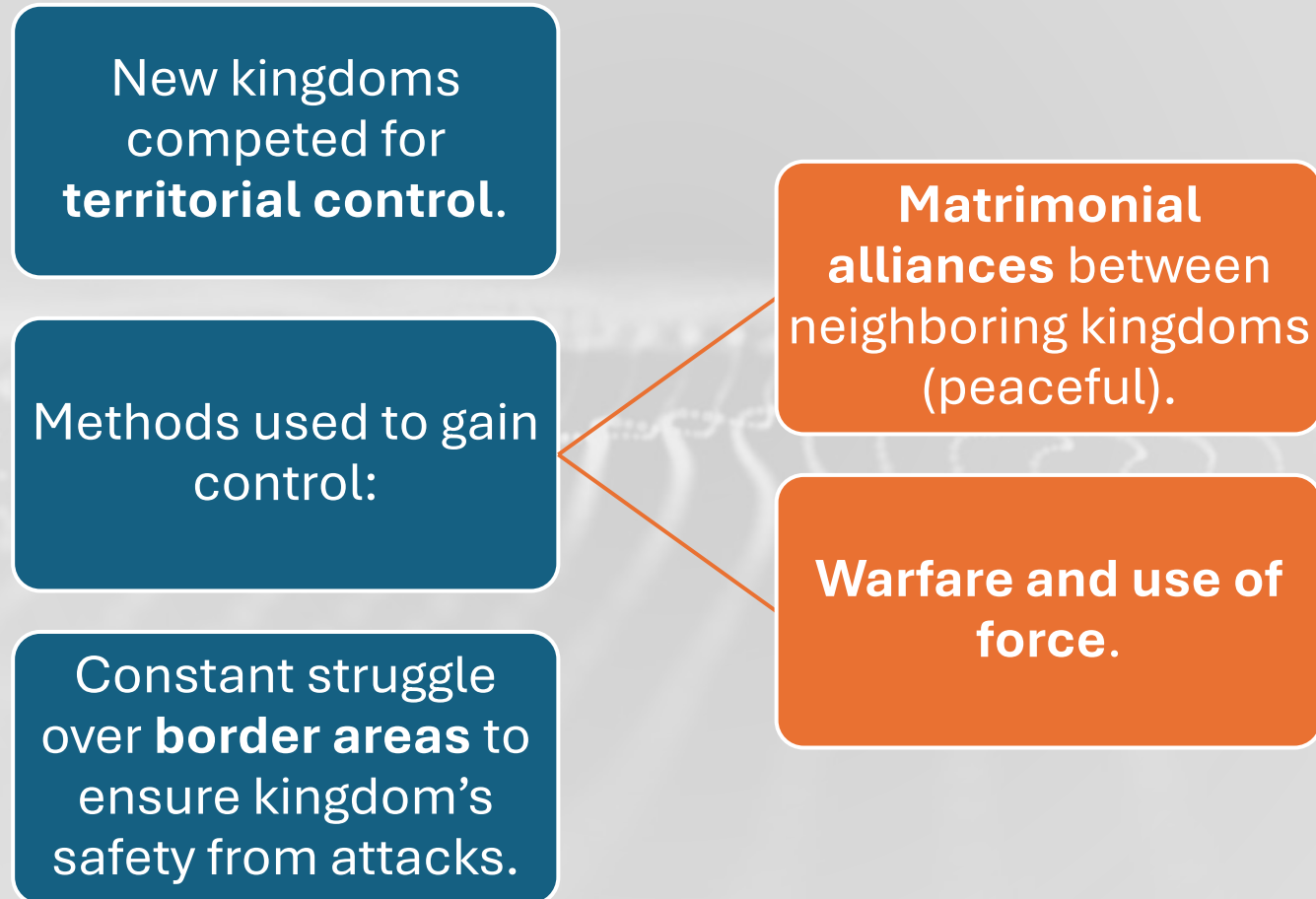
Prominent dynasties of India during the age of reorganisation





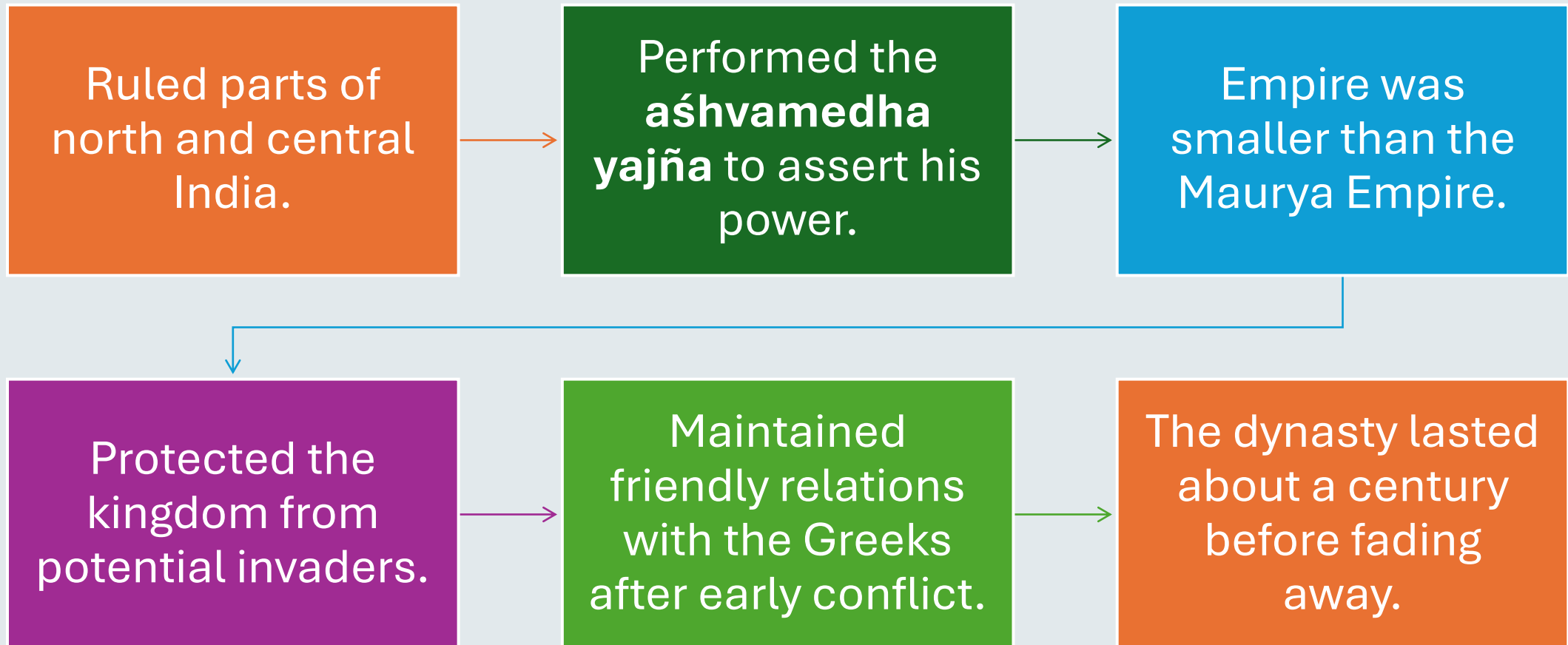
Prominent dynasties of the Subcontinent

Territorial Control in the New Kingdoms



Puṣhyamitra Śhunga founded the Śhunga dynasty.

The key achievements were:





The Aśhvamedha Yajña

- A **Vedic ritual** performed by rulers to declare kingship.
- A horse, escorted by soldiers, was set free to roam.
- Territories the horse crossed **unchallenged** became part of the king's empire.
- If another ruler stopped the horse, it triggered a **battle for supremacy**.

Śhunga Contributions to Art and Architecture

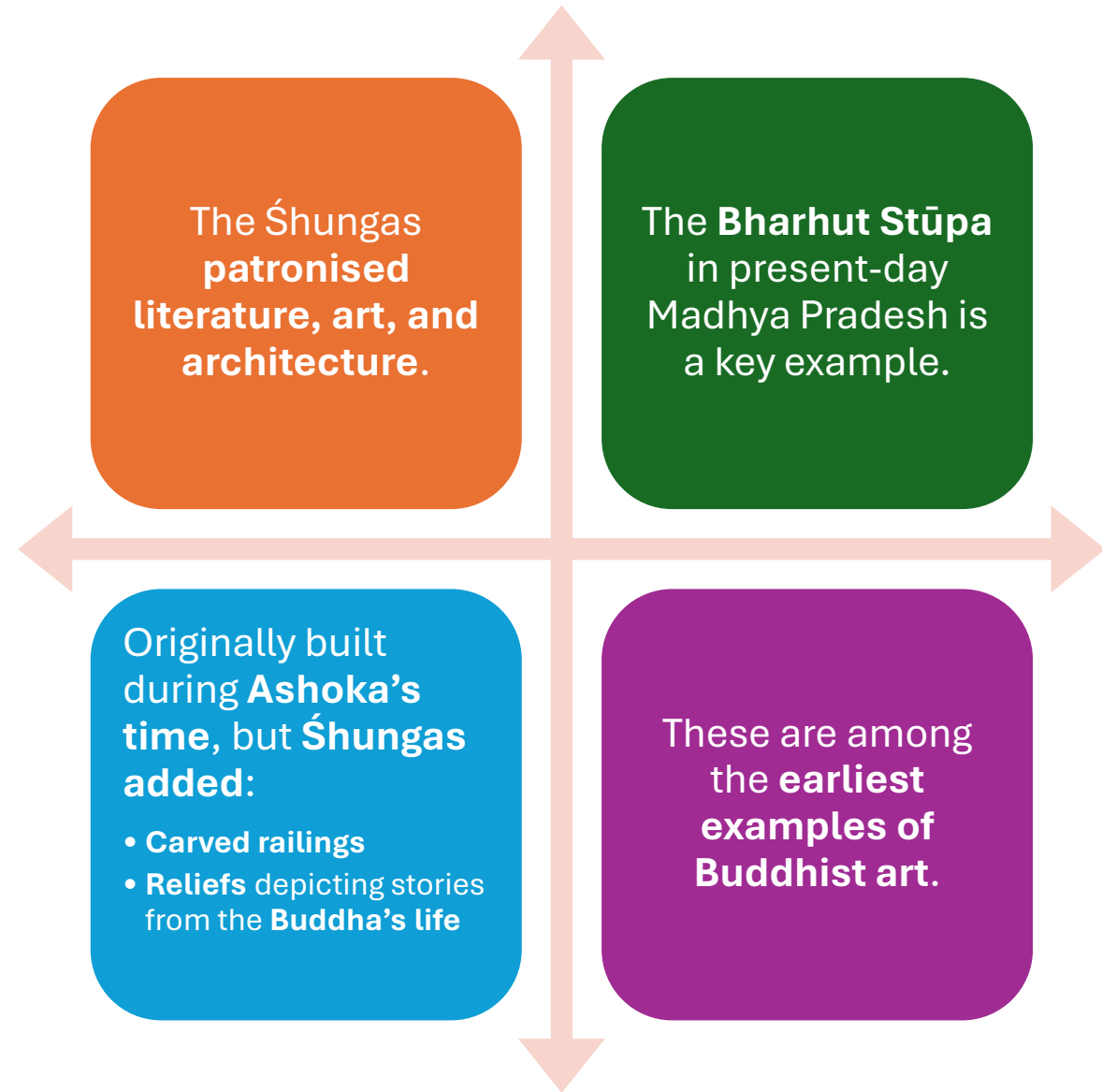


Fig.1. Railings at the Bharhut Stūpa. Fig. 2. Carving of Lakshmi on a railing. Fig. 3. A group of singers and dancers. 4. Elephants holding up the wheel of dharma





Some Śhunga Contribution to Art

1. Pillar with a Greek warrior. Fig. 2. Male figure. Fig. 3. Woman with a The Age of Reorganisation child. Fig. 4. Woman with a fan. Fig. 5. A vase. Fig. 6. Female figure with hair ornaments, terracotta. Fig. 7. Royal family.

Below is a panel from the Bharhut Stūpa. Look at the two figures on the right. What are they doing? Can you guess their profession? Notice their attire. What does this tell us about them? List other details that you notice in the panel and discuss your findings in class.



The Sātavāhanas

The **Śhungas likely engaged in conflict** with neighbouring regions, including the Sātavāhanas.

The **Sātavāhanas** ruled much of the **Deccan** from the **2nd century BCE**.

Also known as the '**Andhras**'.

Their empire included parts of **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Maharashtra**.

Major capitals: **Amrāvati** and **Pratiṣṭhāna (Paithan)**.

Trade and commerce flourished in their kingdom.

Coins and Maritime Trade under the Sātavāhanas

Sātavāhana coins have been found across **India**, from **Gujarat to Andhra Pradesh**.

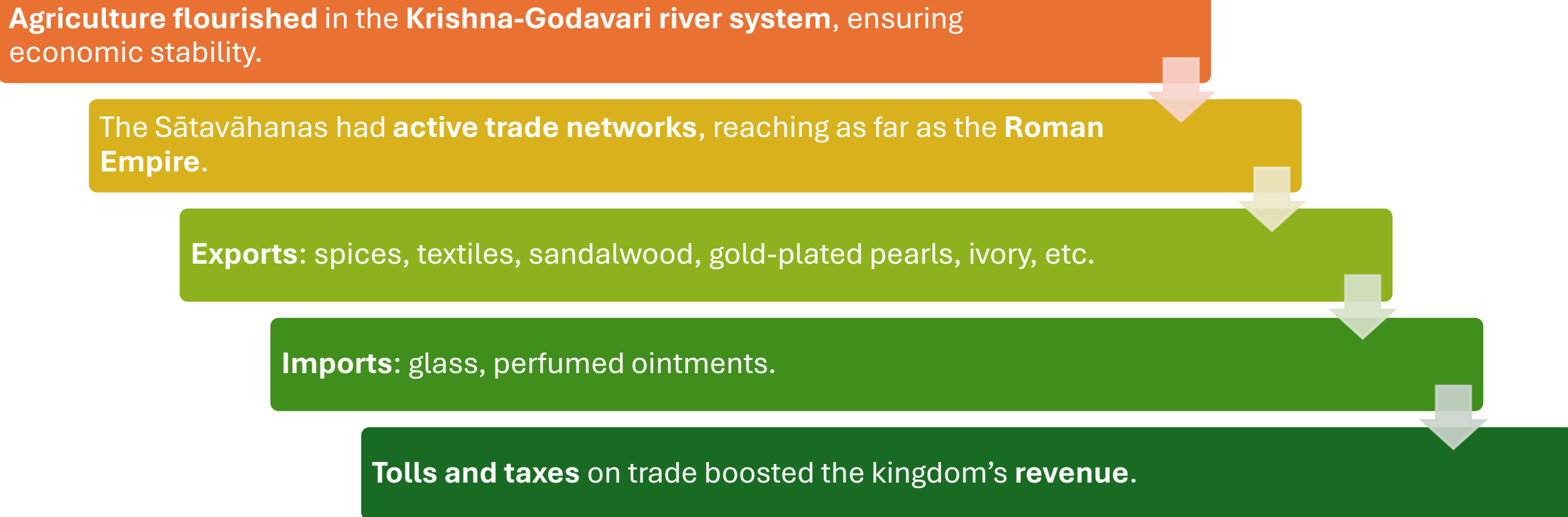
Indicates wide trade networks along **both western and eastern coasts**.

Many coins **depict ships**, highlighting the importance of **maritime trade**.

The ship designs suggest **advanced shipbuilding and navigation technologies**.

Economy and Trade under the Sātavāhanas

Agriculture flourished in the **Krishna-Godavari river system**, ensuring economic stability.



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graph TD; A["Agriculture flourished in the Krishna-Godavari river system, ensuring economic stability."] --> B["The Sātavāhanas had active trade networks, reaching as far as the Roman Empire."]; B --> C["Exports: spices, textiles, sandalwood, gold-plated pearls, ivory, etc."]; C --> D["Imports: glass, perfumed ointments."]; D --> E["Tolls and taxes on trade boosted the kingdom's revenue."];
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Exports: spices, textiles, sandalwood, gold-plated pearls, ivory, etc.

Imports: glass, perfumed ointments.

Tolls and taxes on trade boosted the kingdom's **revenue**.

Cultural Contributions of the Sātavāhanas

Economic prosperity and a peaceful political climate supported cultural growth.

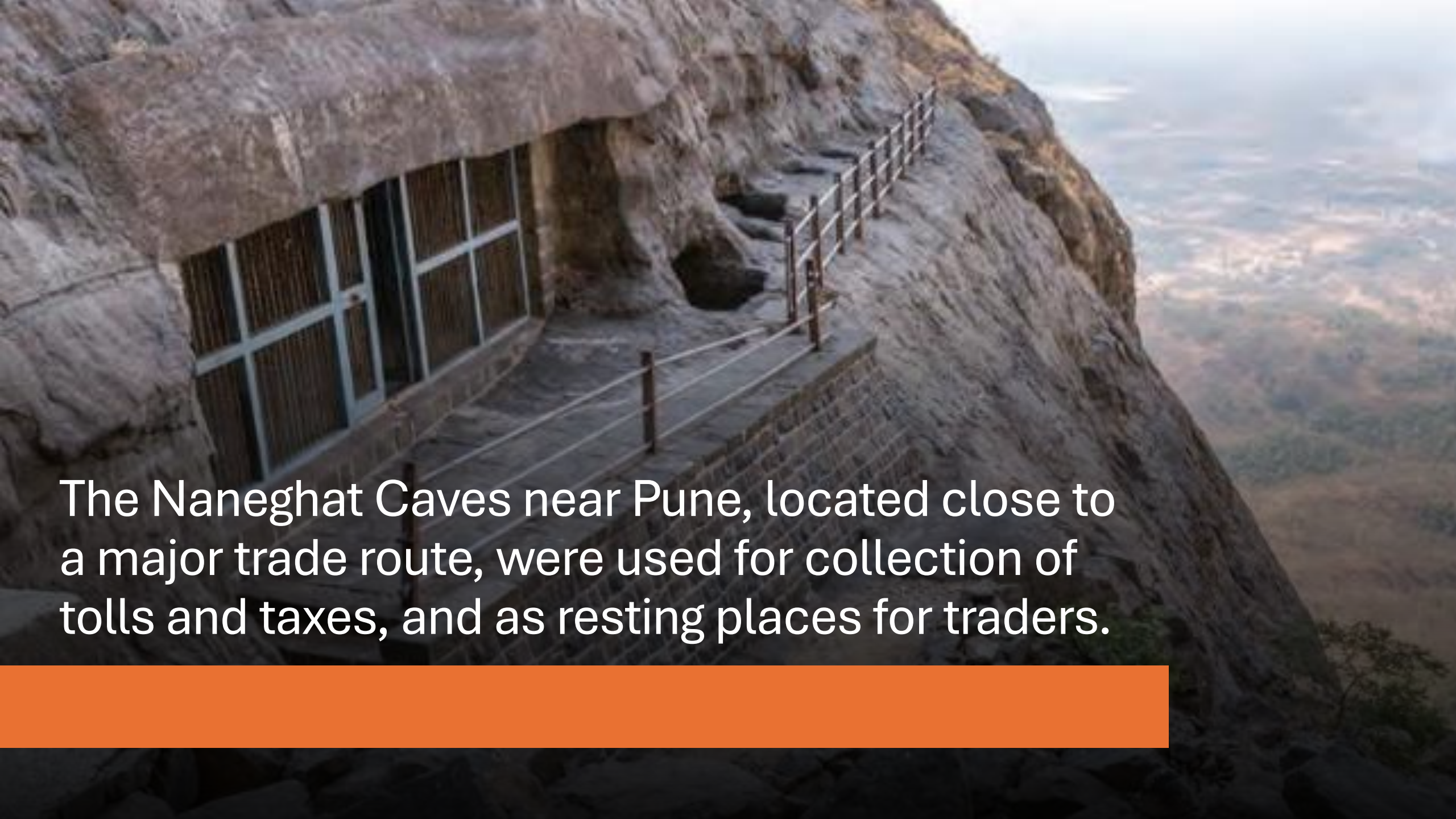


The Sātavāhanas made **significant contributions** to:

Literature

Art

Culture

A photograph of the Naneghat Caves near Pune, India. The image shows a steep, rocky cliff face with a series of stone steps leading up to a cave entrance. The cave entrance is covered by a large, flat rock overhang. A metal railing runs along the steps and the cave entrance. The background shows a vast, hilly landscape under a clear sky.

The Naneghat Caves near Pune, located close to a major trade route, were used for collection of tolls and taxes, and as resting places for traders.

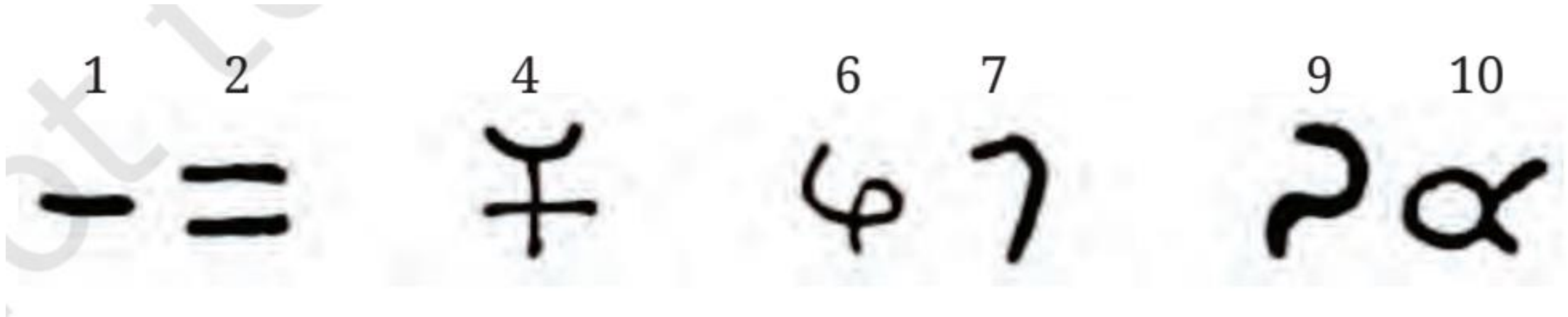
Life under the Sātavāhanas

Princes were often named after their mothers (a unique tradition).

Example: **Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi** was named after his mother, **Gautamī Balaśhrī**.

Gautamī Balaśhrī was a powerful queen who:

- **Donated land** to Buddhist monks.
- Commissioned an **important inscription at Nāśhik**, showing her influence.



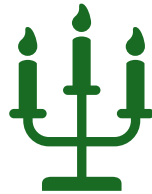
Origin of Modern Numerals

- **Inscriptions** from the Sātavāhana period were written in **Brahmi script**.
- These inscriptions include **early numerals** (symbols for numbers).
- Some numerals **resemble modern number shapes**.
- This provides evidence that **modern numerals originated in India**.

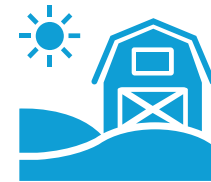
Religious Life under the Sātavāhanas



The Sātavāhanas were devout followers of Vāsudeva (Kṛiṣṇa).



They also supported other religious traditions.



Tax-free agricultural land was granted to:

Vedic scholars

Jaina monks

Buddhist monks



Karla Caves (near Lonavala, Maharashtra) were supported by the **Sātavāhanas**. 2. A yakṣa (a minor deity associated with nature) from the Pitalkhora caves, Maharashtra, carved in the Sātavāhana period.

Decline of the Sātavāhana Empire

In the **3rd century CE**, the Sātavāhana Empire **fragmented into smaller kingdoms**.

Main causes of decline:

This fragmentation allowed **regional powers to rise** and establish new kingdoms.

Weak central control

Gradual economic decline

Coming of the Chedis

- After the **Maurya Empire declined**, the **Kalinga region rose** under the **Chedi dynasty**.
- **Kharavela**, a key Chedi ruler, was a devoted follower of **Jain teachings** and called **bhikṣhu-rāja (monk-king)**.
- He respected **all schools of thought**.
- Near **Bhubaneswar**, the **Udayagiri-Khandagiri caves** were developed for **Jain monks**.
- These caves feature **intricate panels, statues, and spacious rock-cut rooms**.
- They are important examples of **rock-cut architecture**.



Fig. 6.13.1. Udayagiri caves near Bhubaneswar. Fig. 6.13.2. The Hāthīgumphā inscription. Fig. 6.13.3. Carved panel showing a scene from the Rāmāyaṇa

Kingdoms and Life in the South

Between 2nd/3rd century BCE and 3rd century CE, three major kingdoms rose in South India:

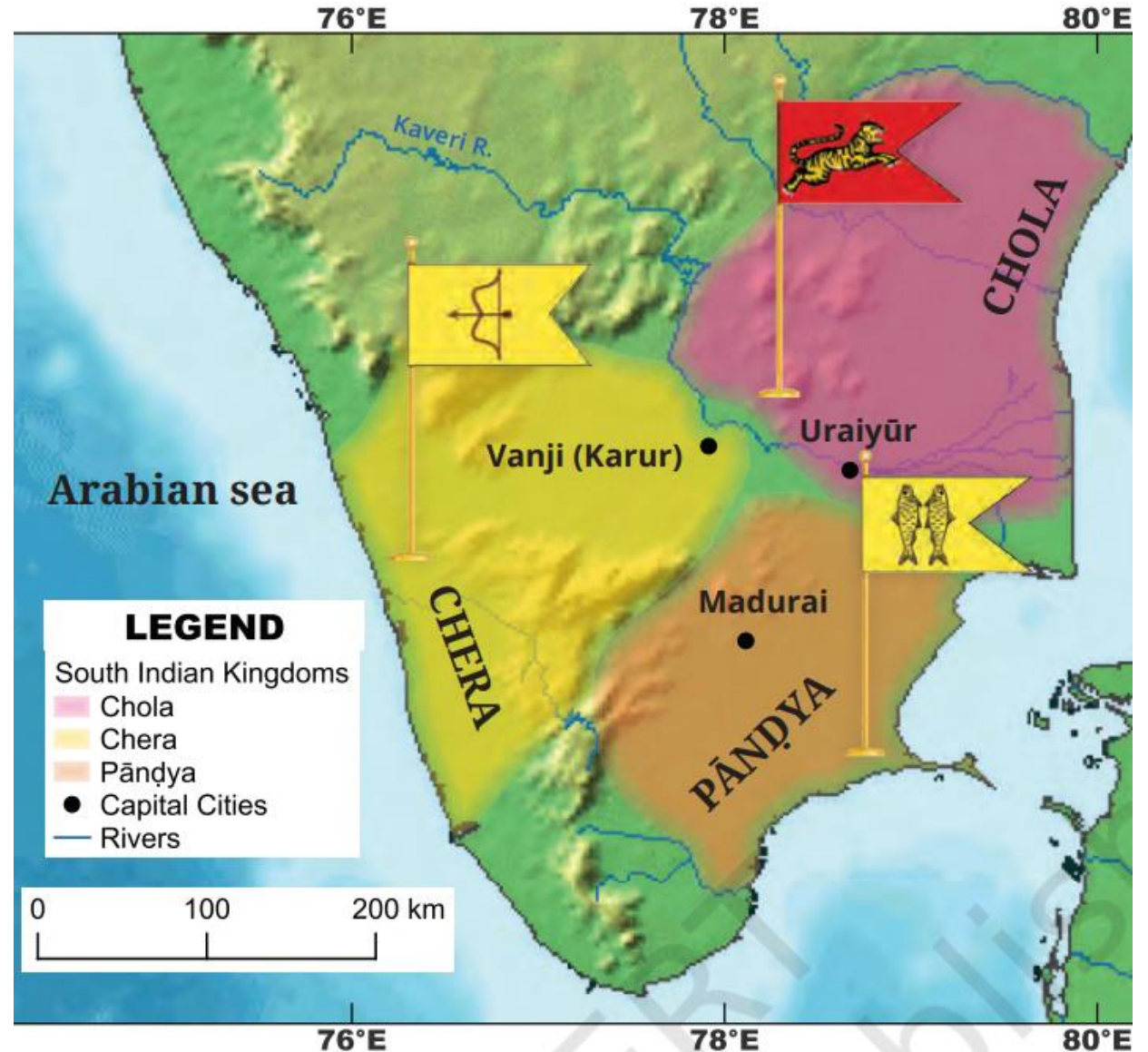
- Cheras
- Cholas
- Pāṇḍyas

These kingdoms often **competed for control** but also contributed to **trade and cultural growth**.

Aśhoka's empire did not extend into South India, indicating their **independence** during his rule.

Khāravela claimed to defeat an alliance of southern kings but did **not invade South India**.

kingdoms in the South (note that borders are approximate and fluctuated in time).



Sangam Literature and the Sangam Age



The period is known as the **Sangam Age**, named after the assembly of poets called **Sangam** (from Sanskrit *sangha*, meaning 'association').



Sangam literature is the oldest body of literature in South India.



Consists of **collections (anthologies) of poems**.



Widely used by historians to study the **society and culture** of the era.

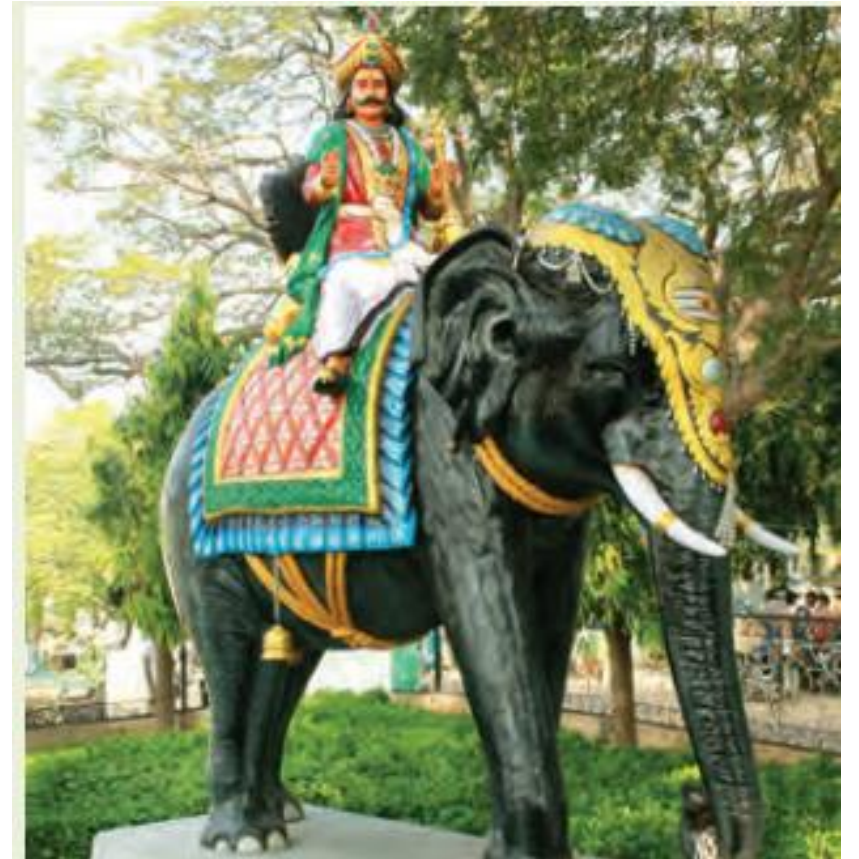


Sangam poetry skillfully expresses:

Personal emotions like love.
Societal values like heroism and generosity.

The Cholas

- The Sangams mention three crowned kings: **Cholas, Cheras, and Pāṇḍyas**.
- The **Cholas** ruled parts of South India from the **3rd century BCE to the 13th century CE**.
- King **Karikāla** defeated a combined force of the Cheras and Pāṇḍyas, establishing supremacy.
- Karikāla built the **Kallaṇai (Grand Anicut)**, a water diversion system near Srirangam island.
- The Grand Anicut diverted water from the **Kāveri River** to irrigate central and southern parts of the delta.
- This helped bring more land under cultivation, making the region the '**rice bowl of the South**'.
- The structure has been **restored multiple times** and is still in use today, supporting agriculture in Tamil Nadu.





A view of the Kallanai or Grand Anicut

The Cheras

- Also called **Keralaputra** (sons of Kerala).
- Ruled western Tamil Nadu and Kerala, with their capital at **Vanji** (present-day Karur, Tamil Nadu).
- Played a key role in **cultural and economic development** of the region.
- Patronised **Sangam poets** and encouraged **Tamil literature**.
- Known for **extensive trade** with the **Roman Empire and West Asia**.
- Exported **spices, timber, ivory, and pearls**, making the kingdom a major **trade hub**.

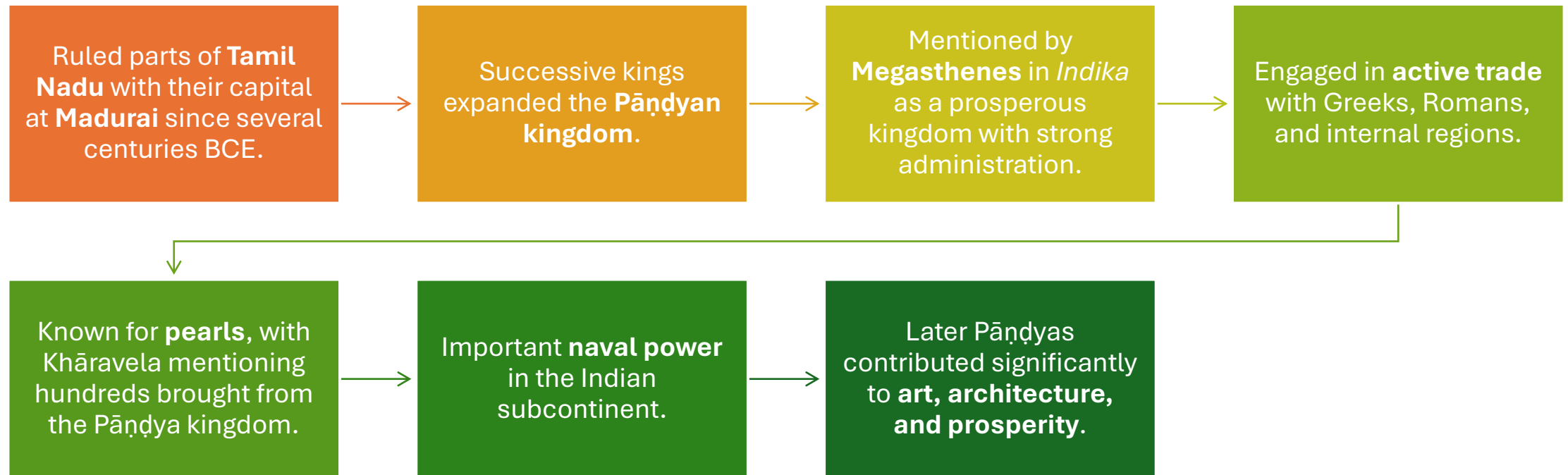




Coins under Chera Kings

- The Chera kings issued a number of coins under their reign.
- Do you notice the royal emblem of Cheras on one such coin given below?

The Pandyas



Invasions of the Indo- Greeks

- After exploring South India, we return to the **north**, where new developments took place.
- During this period, **invaders entered through the northwest frontier** of India.
- These invaders took control of **northwestern, northern, and central regions**.
- Alexander the Great's **campaign in the Indus plains** was brief but significant.
- While retreating, Alexander left behind **satraps (regional governors)**.
- Over time, these satraps became **independent rulers**, known as the **Indo-Greeks**.

The Heliodorus pillar near Vidisha



Indo-Greeks: Cultural Blend and Legacy

- Indo-Greeks took over northwest India after Mauryas.
- They blended Greek and Indian culture in art, governance, and daily life.
- The Heliodorus pillar praises Vāsudeva (Krishna) and mentions key virtues.
- Indo-Greek coins show kings, Greek gods, and sometimes Indian gods like Krishna and Lakshmi.



Fig. 6.20. An Indo-Greek silver coin with Vāsudeva-Kṛishṇa on one side

The Śhakas (Indo-Scythians)

Invaded and ruled northwest India from late 2nd century BCE to 5th century CE.

Followed the Indo-Greeks and ruled until the Kuṣhānas arrived.

Developed the **Śhaka Samvat calendar**, which is 78 years behind the Gregorian calendar (except Jan–Mar, when it's 79 years behind).

This calendar was adopted as the **Indian National Calendar in 1957.**



भारत का राजपत्र The Gazette of India

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असाधारण

EXTRAORDINARY

भाग II — खण्ड I

PART II — Section 1

प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

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No. 18] NEW DELHI, FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 2024/SRAVANA 25, 1946 (Saka)

इस भाग में भिन्न पृष्ठ संख्या दी जाती है जिससे कि यह अलग संकलन के रूप में रखा जा सके।

Separate paging is given to this Part in order that it may be filed as a separate compilation.

MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE

(Legislative Department)

New Delhi, the 16th August, 2024/Sravana 25, 1946 (Saka)

The following Act of Parliament received the assent of the President on the

Notice how dates
are provided in
both the Gregorian
and Śhaka Samvat
eras on this official
publication of the
Government of
India.

Emergence of the Kuṣhāṇas

Kuṣhāṇas came from **Central Asia** around the 2nd century CE.

Their empire stretched from Central Asia to much of **northern India**.

Their rule led to **extensive cultural mixing** and had a big impact on Indian history.

King **Kaṇiṣhka** promoted **art and culture**, encouraging new artistic styles.

Headless statue of King Kaṇiṣhka

- This famous 'headless' statue is of King Kaṇiṣhka, probably the most powerful ruler of the Kuṣhāṇa dynasty.
- The Brahmi inscription on the statue reads, 'mahārāja rājadhirāja devaputra kaṇiṣhka', that is, 'The great king, king of kings, son of God, Kaṇiṣhka'.





Coins of Kanishka

Kuṣhāṇas' Coins and Cultural Significance

Kāṇiṣhka's coin shows him holding a spear, titled '**King of Kings**'.

One side features **Buddha** with Greek script **ΒΟΔΔΟ**.

Another coin shows an emperor on one side and **Śhiva with his bull Nandi** on the other.

This shows Kāṇiṣhka's respect for **different religions** and **religious tolerance**.

Kuṣhāṇas controlled important parts of the **Silk Route**, boosting trade between India, Asia, and the West.

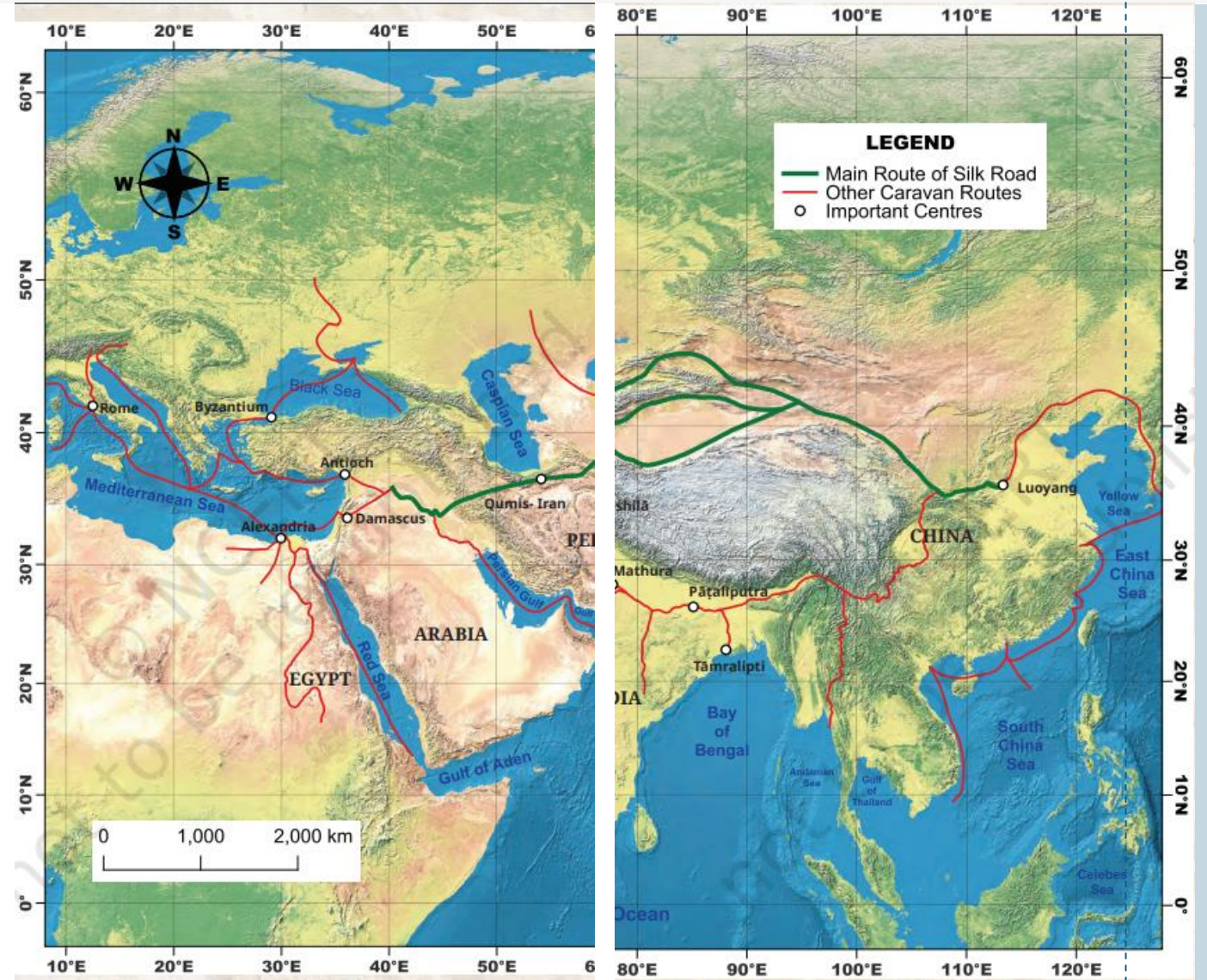
Reflection Questions:

- Why would Kāṇishka feature both Buddha and Śhiva on his coins?
- What does this tell us about his values and rule?
- Can you think of modern examples where currency has important cultural or religious symbols?



Fig. 6.24. Head of a bodhisattva (or future Buddha) from the Gāndhāra School of Art. Note the fusion of Indian and Greek features.

Some of the trade routes of the ancient world. The network marked in green shows the Silk Route connecting China with the Mediterranean world and passing through central Asia, Persia, etc.





Mathurā Style of Art

- Originated in **Mathura** (present-day Uttar Pradesh).
- Known for a **distinct Indian style** with less Greco-Roman influence.
- Primarily used **red sandstone** for sculptures.
- Depicted Indian deities like **Kubera, Lakṣhmī, Śhiva, Buddha**, and nature spirits **yakṣhas and yakṣhinīs**.
- Sculptures featured **fuller figures** with smooth, rounded modeling.

Fig. 6.26. Kubera, God of 'wealth' from the Mathura School of Art. Did you miss the prominent moustache? The moustache is a distinguishing feature of some Indian sculptures.

Cultural Exchange and Assimilation



Despite conflicts, the period witnessed **remarkable cultural exchange**.



Art and architecture show a blend of styles with a focus on **Indian themes** (mainly Hindu and Buddhist).



Sanskrit literature flourished, including epic texts like the **Mahābhārata** and **Rāmāyana**.

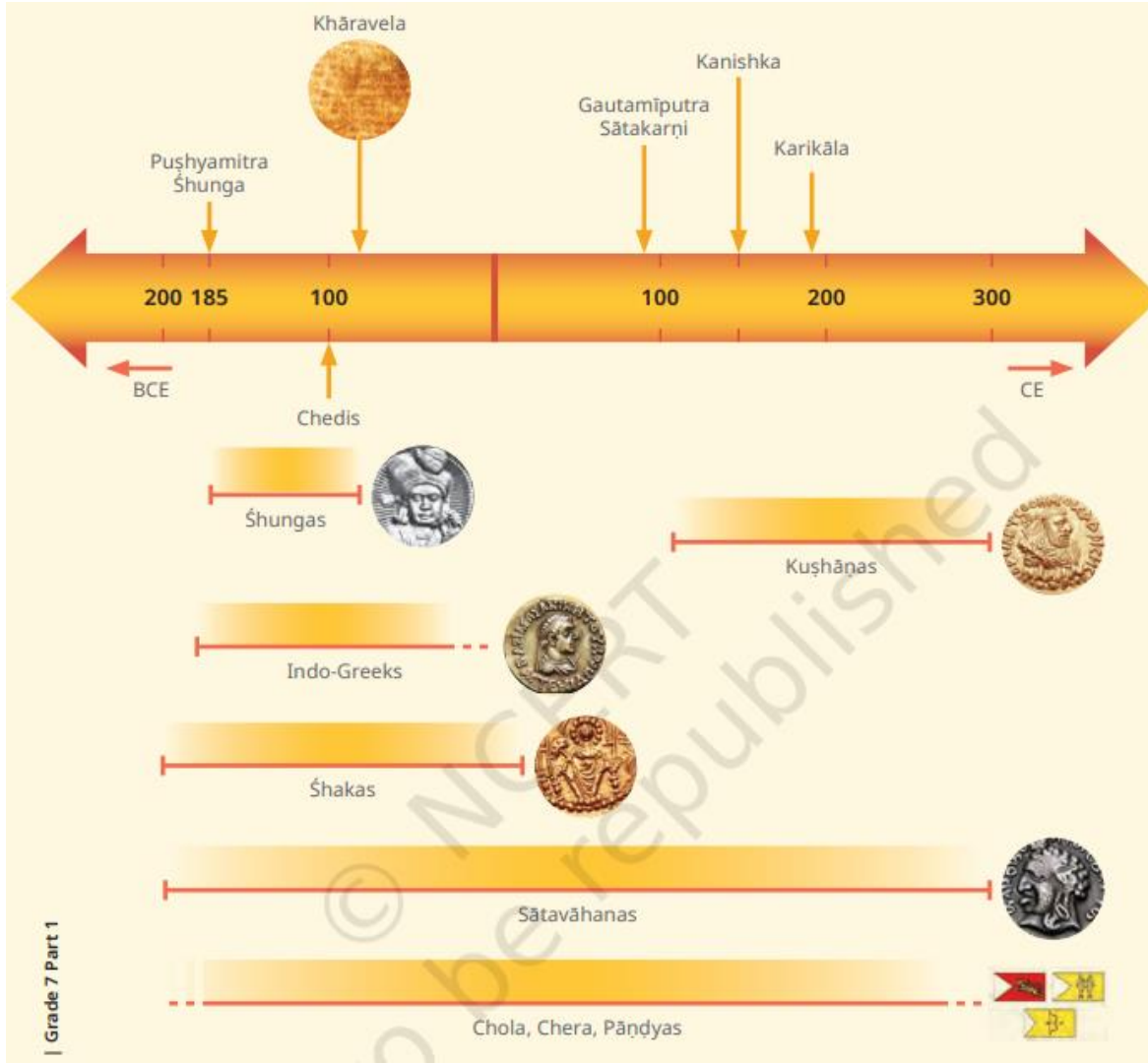


This period is a **‘Tapestry of the Past’**, highlighting ongoing interaction and assimilation across kingdoms.

Important Figures



Fig. 1. A scene of the death of Buddha. Fig. 2. Bodhisattva Maitreya. Fig. 3. Śhiva linga being worshipped by Kuṣhāna devotees. Fig. 4. A Nāga between two Nāgīs, with an inscription referring to the eighth year of Kaṇiṣhka's reign. Fig. 5. Kartikeya, the god of war, and Agni, the god of fire. Fig. 6. Standing Buddha.



TIMELINE



THANK YOU