

HIS5D02-HISTORICAL TOURISM

MODULE-1 HISTORICISING TRAVEL IN INDIA



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- India- one of the earliest civilization f the world
- Has always had a special fascination for the rest of the world
- Not only she attract a series of invaders starting with Alexander, but also thinkers, scholars & administrators
- Unlike today, great many people in the past travelled to India primarily in search of knowledge & spiritual solace
 - Great Indian universities like Nalanda, Taxila, Valabhi...
 - Indian philosophy, Indian religions like Buddhism , Jainism



- Travellers also came exclusively for trade & commercial purposes – India is famous for its spices & other luxurious items
- Travel in India in the distant past was not a thing of pleasure as it is the case now
- Opening of new trade routes gave a big boost to travel with or without purpose
- Travellers from distant lands started coming to India in large numbers
- With the opening of trade routes, early travellers made contact with India
- Trade relations matured into cultural relations & better understanding of each others way of life



- According to Arthashastra of Kautilya, a *mudra* /passport was essential for all travellers, & those not possessing the same were fined 12 panas – each passport had the stamp of high government official or *mudradhakshaka* and mudras were checked at various points on the way by local officers- 3rd C BC
- No travel formalities existed during the reign of Chandra Gupta II. Fa-Hien , Chinese traveller , travelled between A.D 401 & 410 without the passport

TRAVELOGUES



- It is about the places visited by or experiences of a traveller

ANCIENT TRAVELOGUES:

- MEGASTHENES:
- Greek ethnographer & explorer in the Hellenistic period
- Ambassador of Seleucus Nicator to the court of Maurya ruler Chandragupta Maurya
- Wrote “Indica” - not available but quoted by later by scholars like Arrian, Diodorus, Strabo etc
- Indica is an account of Mauryan Empire by Megasthenes - based on his travels & experiences in India
- Discussed about the society, economy, administration of India



- He described Pataliputra, the Mauryan capital as splendid
- described the country its size, shape, rivers, soil, climate, plants, animals, produc, administration, society & legend.



❑ PLINY – 3rd C CE

- Gaius Plinius Secundus – C 23-79 CE – better known as Pliny the Elder
- Roman scholar
- Wrote ‘Naturalis Historia’ – Natural History- in Latin- 37 books-10 vols- dealing with diverse subjects such as geography, ethnography, physiology & Zoology
- One of the largest single work to have survived from the Roman empire to modern day
- It is the detailed description of the voyage from Alexandria to South India on the Nile up to Coptos, through the desert to Berenice at the Red sea & then across the Indian ocean to Muziris near Cochin



C. PLINII SECUNDI
NATURALIS
HISTORIÆ,
TOMUS PRIMUS.

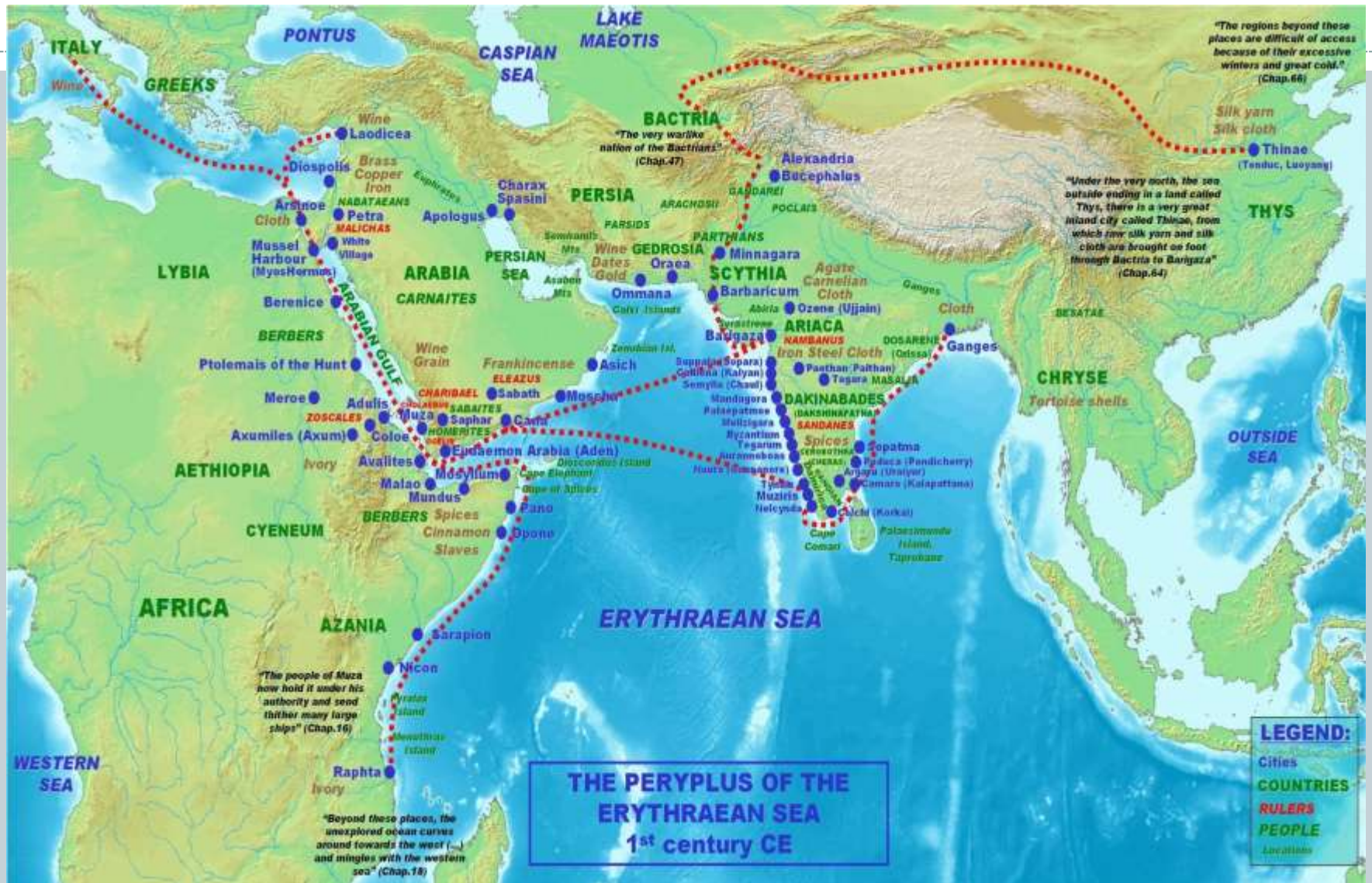
Cum Commentariis & adnotationibus HERMOLEI
BARBARI, PONTIANI, RUENANI, GLENNI,
DALECHAMPII, SCALIGERI, SALMASII,
IS. VOSSII, & Variosorum.

*Accedunt præterea varia Lelliciones ex MSS. compluribus
ad eam Paginarum accur. te indicata.*

Item JON. FR. GRONOVII Notarum Libce Singulis
ad Illustrem Virum Johanne Capelatum.



LUGD. BATAV. } Apud HACKIOS, A°. 1669.
ROTTERDAMI. }





- Discussed about the size of Chandragupta Mauryas army – infantry at 600,000- cavalry at 30,000- elephants at 9000
- Pliny appreciated the role of India in the world gem trade
- Also mentioned about Indian diamonds



- Described the drain of Roman gold to India in exchange for articles of luxury & spices- he inform us that Roman gold to the extent of over a million sterling flowed annually into India in return for spices, pepper, pearls, beryl's, tortoise –shell, aromatics, silks & other oriental luxuries
- According to Pliny, who probably quotes from the 'Indica' of Megasthenes, the king of Kalinga maintained an army of 60,000 foot soldiers, 1000 horsemen & 700 elephants



❑ FA-HIEN/FAXIAN

- Chinese pilgrim
- Travels b/w 399 to 414 CE – confined to North India only
- From north –west into Ganga valley, right down to the eastern seaport of Tamralipti in the Bay of Bengal. From there he took the sea route to Simhala & further on to southeast Asia, where he headed back to China
- He spent the rest of his life translating the enormous number of texts he had collected



- Also wrote an account of his travels called the 'Gaoseng Faxian Zhuan – A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms – Fo-Kuo-Ki
- The earliest first- hand Chinese account of Buddhist sites & practices in India
- It does not mention the reigning king Chandra Gupta II
- Several observations on life of the people
- Refer to Tamralipti in Bengal as an important centre of trade on eastern coast - these ports & towns were connected with those of Persia, Arabia & Byzantium on the one hand & Sri Lanka, China & South East Asia on the other



- The main aim of pilgrims like Faxian was to provide pious Buddhists in China with an opportunity to visualize places & events connected with the Buddha's life
- Present an idyllic & idealized picture of Indian society in 5th C – describes a happy & contented people enjoying a life of peace & prosperity
- Mentions the flourishing condition & property holdings of monasteries
- Indicates that Hinayana doctrines were popular in Gandhara, Kanauj, Kausambi areas
- He stayed at Pataliputra for 3 years learning Sanskrit



- Refers to houses dispensing charity & medicines in the city of north India
- mentions ceremony involving a procession of images at Khotan & Pataliputra
- Also tells us wealthy setthis built monasteries & endowed them with agricultural land, gardens, cattle & agricultural workers
- Chandalas lived had to live outside towns & market places
- He visited Gandhara, Taxila & Peshwar which were full of Buddhist monasteries



- He also visited Buddhist places like Lumbini, Vaisali, Nalanda, Bodhgaya & Rajgraha
- The king governs without decapitation or other corporal punishments. Criminals are simply fined, lightly or heavily, according to the circumstances of each case
- The revenue of govt was mainly derived from the rents of the crown lands
- The royal officers were paid fixed salaries & there was no occasion for them to live on the people



- It is to be observed that Fahien saw everything through Buddhist spectacles
- He ought to have seen that with the revival of Hinduism under the patronage of the Gupta kings, Buddhism had gone into the background. A study of the account of Fahien doesn't show that Brahmanism was predominant in India