



EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA

SACREDNESS ASSOCIATED WITH EDUCATION/LEARNING

- Learning always began with a ceremony called as VIDYARAMBHAM from time immemorial in BHARAT.
- Upanayanam.
- Deep sense of sacredness associated with learning and teaching.



India was an Educational Hub in the Entire World

- Mad rush for gaining education in India. Just like how there is a craze to somehow get into some very leading universities in the US and London.
- Most of the civilised part of the world wanted to get a degree from India.
- Students came from China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, West Asia etc.
- Fa-Hien, Xuanzang, Yijing were some well-known students from China.
- In fact, many students did not come to India directly but went to places like Indonesia where they could learn Sanskrit, then they would enter India.
- They were ready to take dangerous routes to reach India, journey across mountains, seas, forests, valleys etc – all for getting into the top Indian universities.
- After reaching, there was no guarantee that they would crack the entrance, as 80% would get rejected.



GOALS OF INDIAN EDUCATION



- Indian education aimed at both the inner and the outer dimension of a person.
- The inner and outer goals of gaining knowledge could not be divorced from each other as any knowledge in the tradition is ethically inflected.



GOALS OF INDIAN EDUCATION

❑ GROOMING THE INNER DIMENSION OF A PERSON

- ❖ Inner values included,
 - Truth, patience, regularity, self-mastery, humility, self-denial, purity of self (*sattvaśuddhi*), cognition of the underlying unity of life, nature and environment, reverence for all beings which were cultivated by Indian education.
 - Learners were taught to grow by pursuing the realisation of *purushartha chatushtaya* (four ends of life),
 - dhArma* (righteousness),
 - Artha* (material well-being),
 - kāma* (enjoyment), and
 - moksha* (liberation from worldly ties).



GOALS OF EDUCATION



□ GROOMING THE OUTER DIMENSION OF A PERSON

- ❖ The outer goal was to,
 - Master a discipline, history, art of debate, law, medicine etc., although,
 - Physical education was important, and students participated in,
 - i. krīdā* (recreational games)
 - ii. vyāyāma prakāra* (various types of exercises),
 - iii. dhanurveda* (archery, sword play etc.) for acquiring martial skills,
 - iv. yoga-sādhana* (*prānāyāma, āsana, nāaīśuddhi* etc.) for developing control over the sense organs.

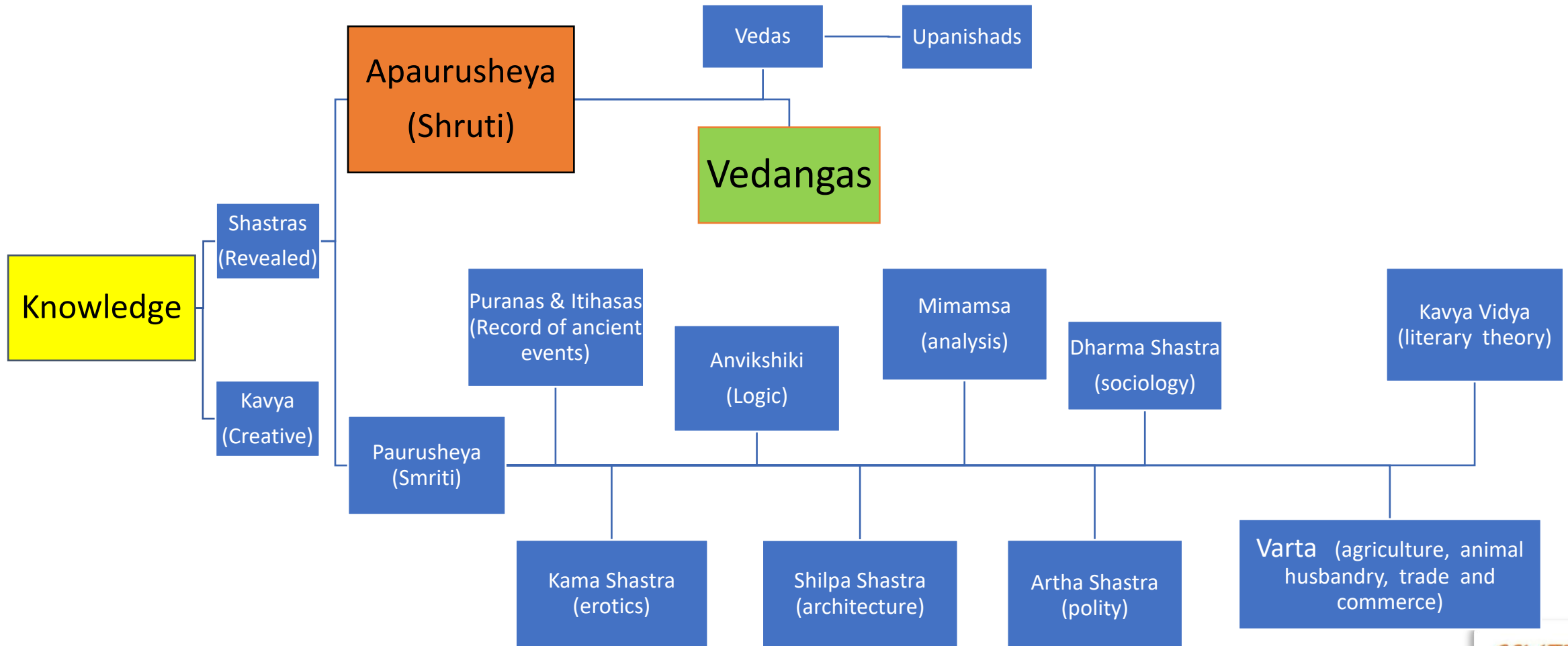
EXAMINATIONS IN THOSE TIMES



- Examinations had a different form in the Indian system.
- In order to demonstrate what they had learnt, students engaged in the exercise of learned DEBATES (śāstrārthA) and defended their position.
- Advanced students were often called upon to teach beginners and, in the process, acquired some valuable teaching experience as well.

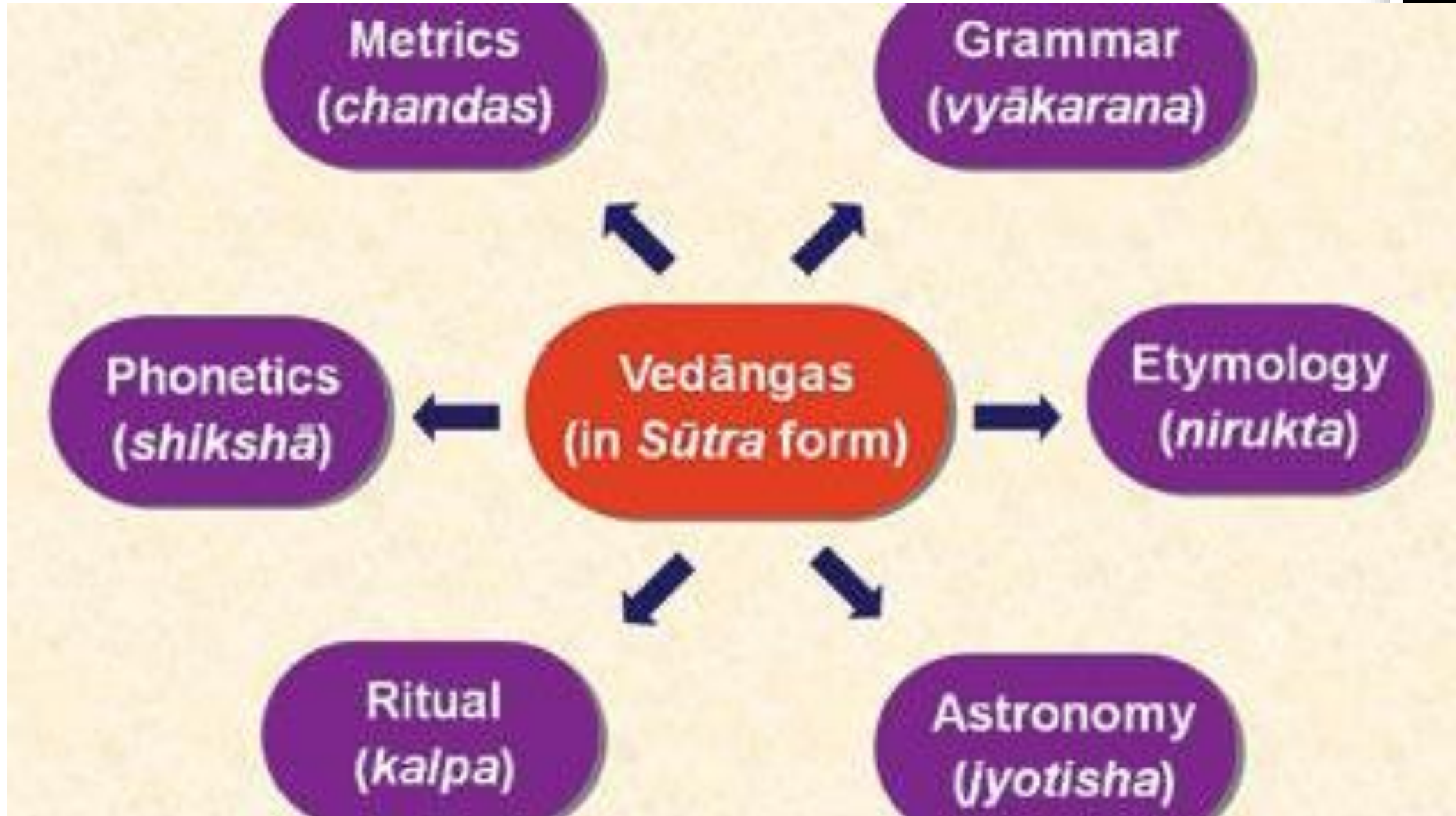
TEACHING AND LEARNING

Knowledge is ONE but for the purpose of education, it is divided into various disciplines.



VEDAS





Learning had three distinct stages as told by *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*

LEARNING

SRAVANA (students listened intently to the teacher)

MANANA (they thought, reflected and removed any doubts that may arise)

NIDHIDHDHYASANA (students observed carefully, remembered minutely and meditated on what they had acquired.)



TEACHER- GURU-ACHARYA

- The Teacher and the Student
- Highly honoured.
- Guide who helped students escape the darkness of ignorance.
- Attain the light of knowledge.
- The teacher's house was the centre of the *acharyakula*, the *gurukula*.
- The student and the teacher had a symbiotic relationship and students were treated as members of the teacher's family.

Yama

Ahimsa
(Non-Harming)

Satya
(Truthfulness)

Asteya
(Non-stealing)

Brahmacharya
(Abstinence)

Aparigraha
(Non-greediness)

Niyama

Saucha
(Purity)

Santoshā
(Contentment)

Tapas
(Austerity)

Swādhyāya
(Self-Study)

Ishwar Pranidhāna
(Surrender to God)

Yama Niyama

Ethical Preparation in

THE STUDENT

- Students living with the teacher led a life of
 - self-control,
 - abstinence,
 - obedience and
 - Devotion.
- Regulated their lives by adhering to
 - *yAMA* (self-restraint) and
 - *niyAMA* (five observances), that is,
 - śAUCĀ — purity of body, mind, thought;
 - SANTOCA — positive contentment;
 - tAPAS — austerity;
 - svādhyāya — self-study, introspection; and
 - īśVARAprANIDhāNA — faith in and surrender to the gods.

Centres of Education

- **1st stage:** Education in India began in the village itself at home and in the temples.
- **2nd stage:** From there the aspiring student moved to *gurukulas*, centres of learning around great teachers.
- **3rd stage:** from there the aspiring scholar went to *vihāras* and universities.
- **4th stage:** After that, the best of them became teachers. In fact *parivrājakas* who walked around the country village to village, promoting *loksangraha*, general welfare, by imparting right values and *jñāna*.

➤ Temples, and later mosques, in villages were the first schools for children.

Inscription of the period of Rājendra Colā I

- Another inscription of the period of the great monarch Rājendra Colā I (1012-1044 CE) mentions of a village which made an endowment for establishing an education centre.
- It would provide free boarding and teaching to at least 340 students.

Saltogi inscription

- The famous Saltogi inscription of Bijapur district of northern Karnataka describes a temple during the reign of the Rāstrakūta monarch Krsna III (939-97 CE) that housed a college with twenty-seven hostels for students from different parts of the country.
- The inscription also details how the temple supported students, teachers and how the center was maintained by endowments.

➤ Hostels and educational institutions attached to temples were looked after by the people and villages supplied daily provisions to hostels while temples provided ghee, milk and curd.

Temples as First Schools

Rishi KANVA'S ASHRAMA

Kanva, in the forest of Nandana on the banks of the river Malini, in today's Uttarakhand,

Śaunaka's āśrama
in the Naimisa
forest

Great teacher
Agastya's ashram,
near the river
Godavari

Gurukulas

Bharadvāja's
ashram, on the
banks of the
Yamunā.

- The secluded, often forested areas, where gurukulAS were generally located were known as āśrAmAS.
- These āśrAmAS bore the name of the guru.
- Ancient texts mention many such āśrAmAS where pupils gathered and lived with the teacher.

RISHI KANVA'S ASHRAM

- ❖ **The Ashram of Rishi Kanva:** It is situated in the forest of Nandana, on the banks of river Malini, a tributary of the Sarayu River. The town which is closest to Kanvashram is Kotdwara in Dist-Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand. It was not a solitary hermitage, but an assemblage of numerous hermitages round the central hermitage of Rishi Kanva, the presiding spirit of the settlement.
- ❖ There were specialists in every branch of learning cultivated in that age; specialists in each of the four Vedas; in sacrificial literature and art; Kalpa-Sutras; in the Chhanda (Metrics), Sabda (Vyakarana), and Nirukta.
- ❖ There were also Logicians, knowing the principles of Nyaya, and of Dialectics (the art of establishing propositions, solving doubts, and ascertaining conclusions).
- ❖ There were also specialists in the physical sciences and art. There were, for example, experts in the art of constructing sacrificial altars of various dimensions and shapes (on the basis of a knowledge of Solid Geometry); those who had knowledge of the properties of matter (dravyaguna); of physical processes and their results of causes and their effect; and
- ❖ Zoologists having a special knowledge of monkeys and birds. It was thus a forest University where the study of every available branch of learning was cultivated.



Rishi Shaunaka's Ashram in Naimisharanya

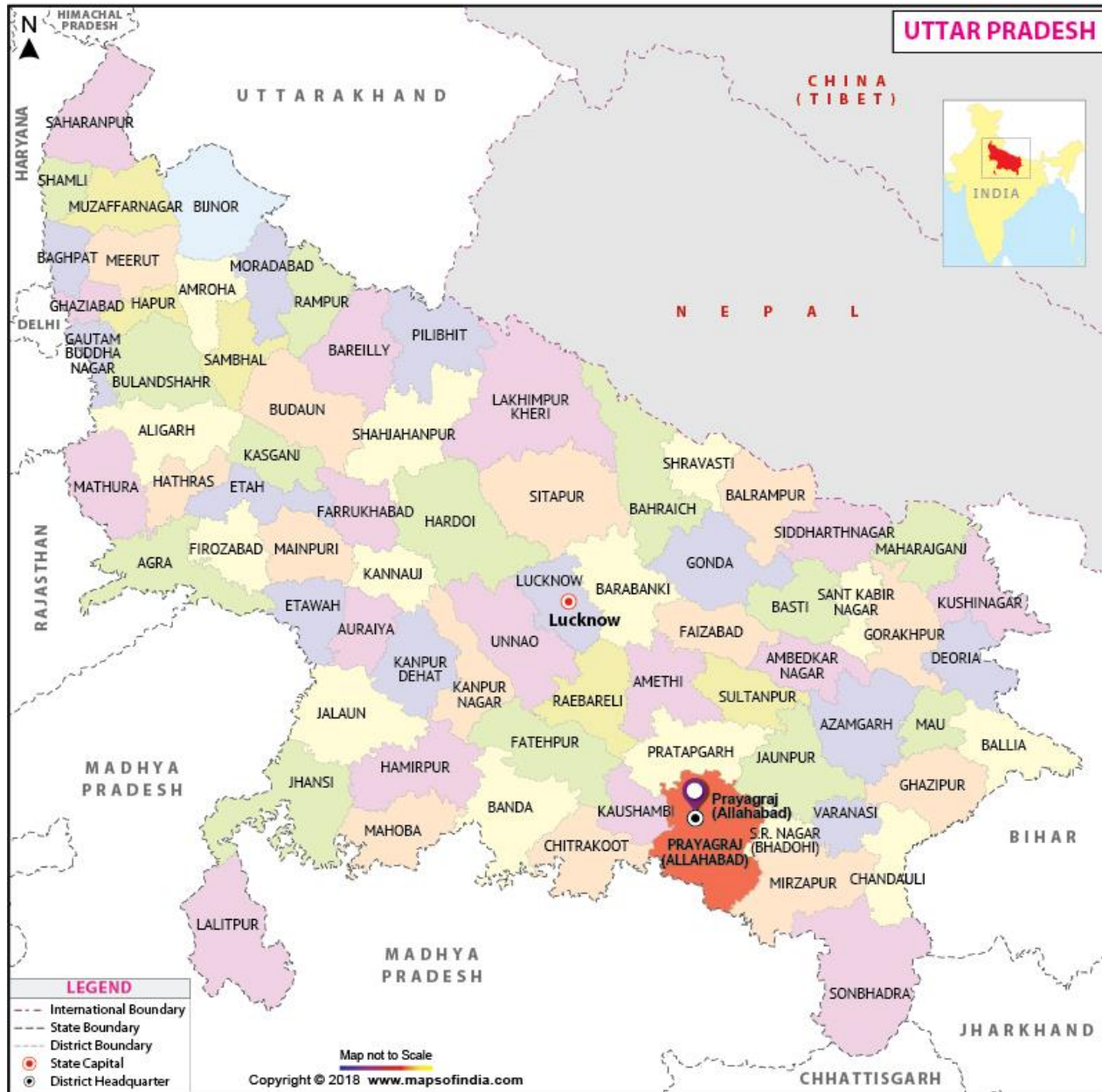
- Naimisha Aranya is a forest from ancient times located along the Gomti River, in the state of Uttar Pradesh.
- 88,000 sadhakas under the guidance of Shaunaka Rishi were engaged in the pursuit of knowledge.



- Naimisha Aranya is a place of confluence, where people interested in Samskriti, Culture and knowledge of India come together in one place.
- Just as there are many conference halls today, Naimisha Aranya was the place of conference of those days.
- This place has a tradition in different fields like sciences, literature, and poetry.



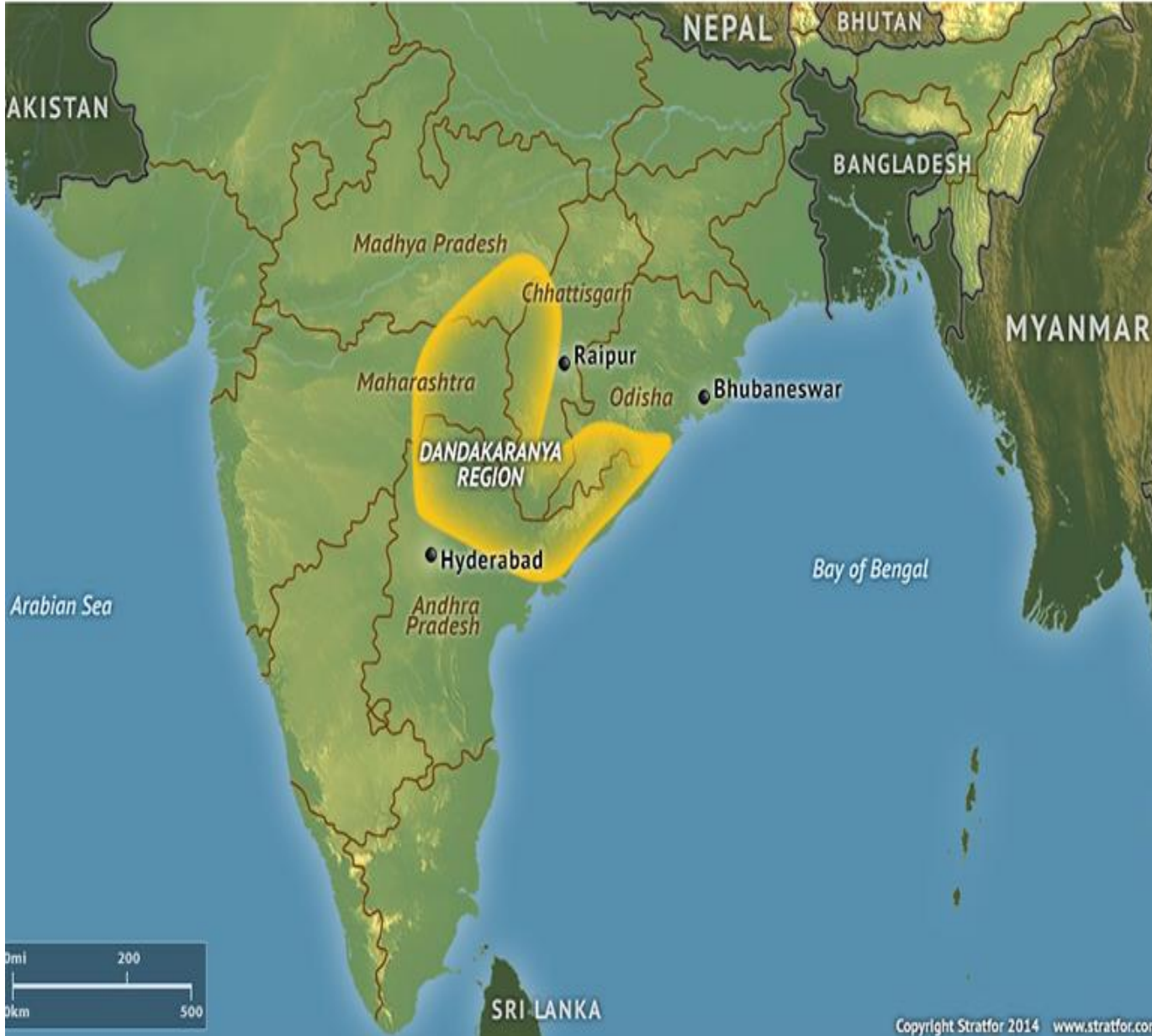
- Bhagavata is being shared in Naimisharanya (Nimisha aranya). Aranya means forest and nimisha means to blink, a moment. Naimisharanya is where once Bhagavan had destroyed thousands of demons in a blink of an eye or instantly, by Himself.
- The second meaning is more subjective. Once many rishis went to Lord Brahma and asked Him, "Lord, where should we perform our sadhana as your creation is so distracting?"
- Lord Brahma manifested a spinning chakra and released it. He told them, "Wherever this chakra stops, that is where you should do your sadhana". And the chakra stopped in Naimisharanya.



Bharadwaj Ashram

- This ashram is located on the banks of river Yamuna in Allhabad Uttar Pradesh. According to Ramayana, Rama, Sita and Lakshmana met Bharadwaj in his ashrama which was a famous educational centre.
- The Rishi gave them the exact directions to reach Chitrakoota.
- His contributions to the ancient Indian literature, mainly in Puranas and Rig Veda, played a significant role in giving an insight to the then Indian society.
- He and his family of students are considered the authors of the sixth book of the Rigveda. Bharadwaja was father of warrior Dronācārya.
- numerous treatises composed in ancient and medieval era are reverentially named after him like,
- Some sections of Dhanurveda and some sections of Caraka Samhita.

INDIA'S DANDAKARANYA REGION

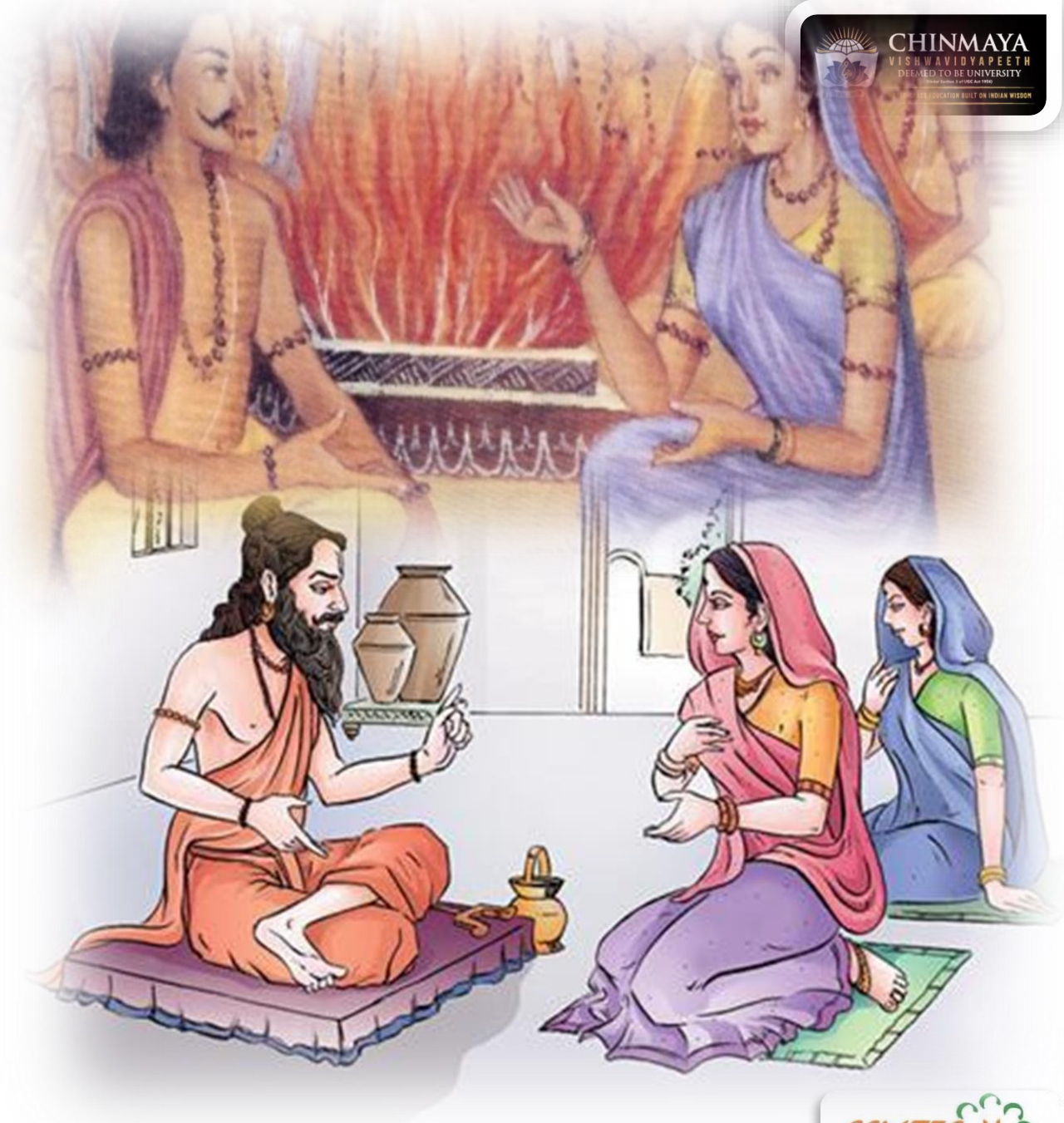


Rishi Agastya's Ashram

- The Agastyasrama, a few miles north of Nasik, on the banks of River Godavari, the ancient Panchavati, on the northern borders of the Dandakaranya Forest, on the southern slopes of Vindhya mountains.
- Agastyar is said to have had twelve disciples to whom he taught the different arts and sciences, and who were afterwards employed by him in instructing the people.
- One name which we know is,
 1. Tolkappiyanar

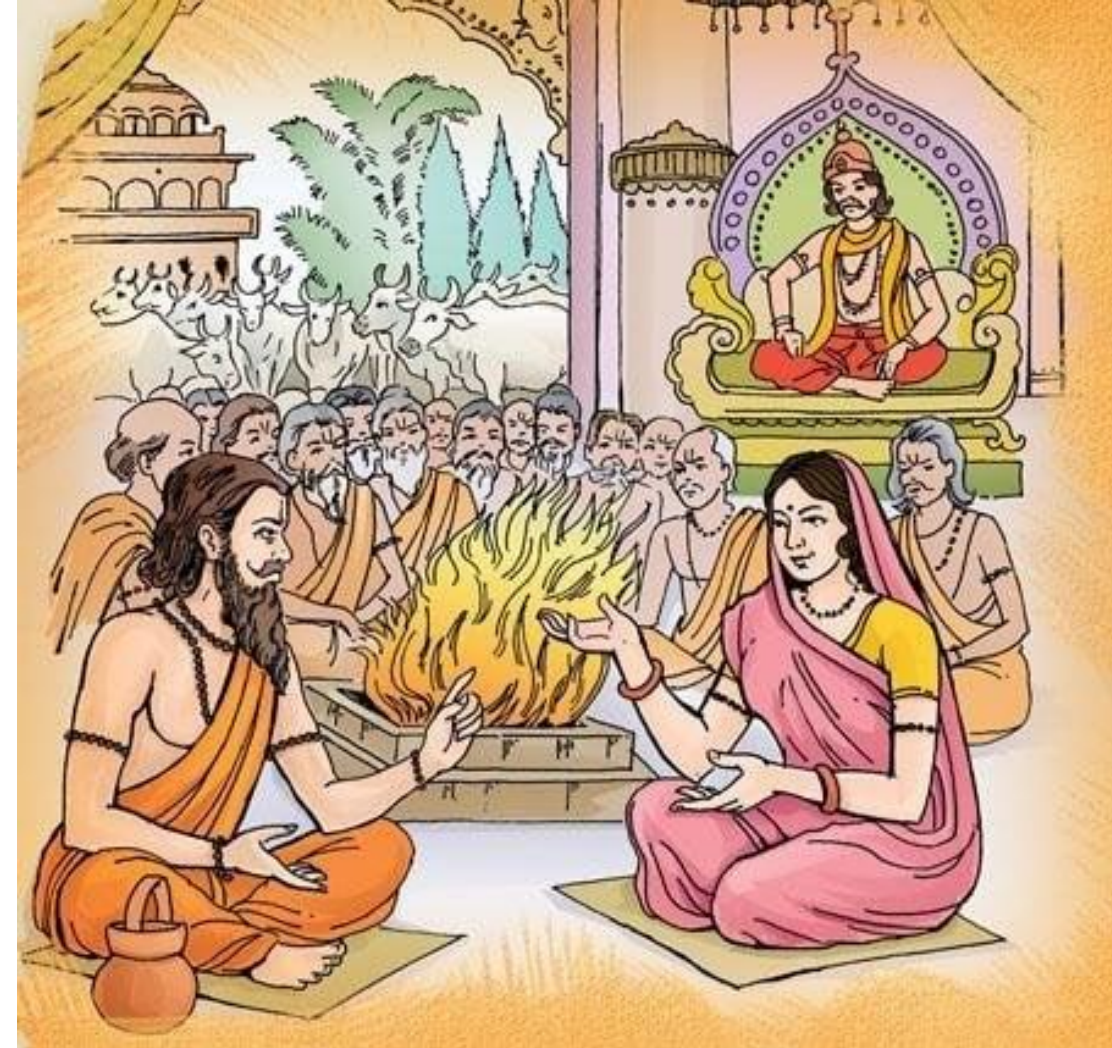
Women Scholars Of Ancient India

1. Gargī,
2. Maitreyī
3. Lopāmudrā,



Gargi

- Gargi was the daughter of sage Vachaknu in the lineage of sage Garga (c. 800-500 BCE) and hence named after her father as Gargi Vachaknavi.
- Right from a young age, Vachaknavi was very intellectual.
- She acquired knowledge of the Vedas and scriptures and became renowned for her proficiency in these fields of philosophy;
- she even surpassed men in her knowledge.
- **Gargi Vachaknavi** was an ancient Indian [philosopher](#). In [Vedic literature](#), she is honored as a great natural philosopher, renowned expounder of the Vedas, and known as [Brahmavadini](#), a person with knowledge of Brahma Vidya.
- In the [Brihadaranyaka Upanishad](#), her name is prominent as she participates in the *brahmajajna*, a philosophic debate organized by [King Janaka](#) of [Videha](#) and challenges the sage [Yajnavalkya](#) with perplexing questions on the issue of [atman](#) .
- She is also said to have written many hymns in the [Rigveda](#).^[6]
- She remained a celibate all her life and was held in veneration by the conventional [Hindus](#).^{[7][8]}





- Yajnavalkya at a particular stage of his life wished to give up his worldly life and become an ascetic.
- He called both his wives to give them his worldly possessions.
- Maitreyi reasoned that if her husband was willing to leave everything behind, it must be for something far greater and wished for that.











Maitreyi

- Maitreyi was the daughter of Mitra Rishi and the niece of Gargi and was born in Mithila.
- She was very well versed in the Shastras taught to her by her father.
- She wanted to be a spiritual disciple of Sage Yajnavalkya who was a Rishi and a householder.
- Sage Yajnavalkya was already married to a devout woman Katyayani who bore him three sons and whose main interest lay in her husband, children and home but seeing the spiritual fervour of Maitreyi his wife Katyayani agreed that she should be married to the sage to further her spiritual development.
- It is said that such was her spiritual personality that she enhanced Yajnavalkya's spiritual stature, knowledge and growth.
- Maitreyi composed ten of the thousand hymns in the Rig Veda. There ensued a dialogue between Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi which became famous and forms the second and fourth chapter of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

LOPAMUDRA

- **Lopamudra** ([Sanskrit](#): लोपामुद्रा) also known as **Kaushitaki** and **Varaprada** ^[1] was a female philosopher according to ancient Vedic Indian literature.
- She was the wife of the sage [Agastya](#) who is believed to have lived in the [Rigveda](#) period (1950 BC-1100 BC) as many hymns have been attributed as her contribution to this Veda.
- She was not only the consort of Agastya but a Rishiki in her own right, as she was the well known rishiki who visualized the "[Panchadasi](#)" mantra of the [Sakta](#) tradition of Hinduism. She was one of the prominent [Brahmavadini](#).
- Lopamudra was created by sage Agastya with the most graceful parts of animals such as the eyes of the doe, the grace of the panther, the slenderness of the palm trees, the fragrance of the [champak](#) flower, the softness of the feather on a swan's neck".

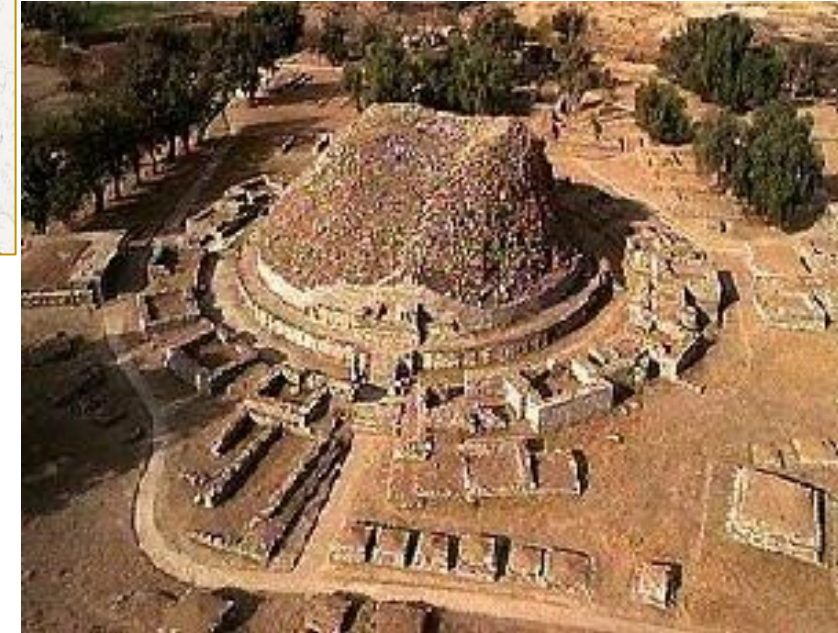
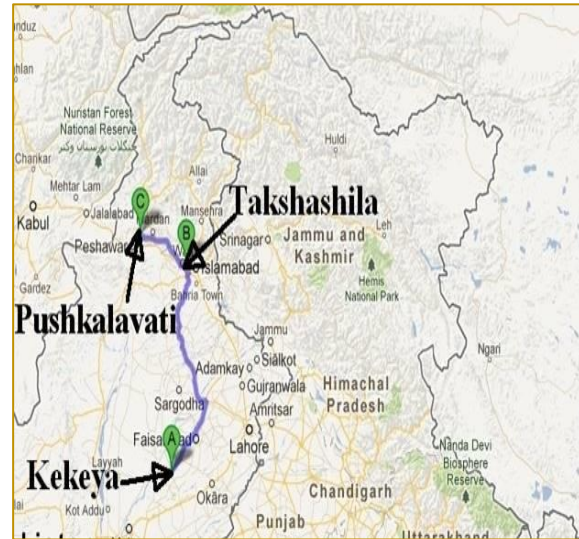


		
Ratnagiri University	Vikramshila University	Jagaddala University
		
Pushpagiri University	Odantapuri University	Somapura University
		
Nalanda University	Takshashila University	Valabhi University
	India was the only country to have University education in ancient times. The reason why they were all shattered by Invaders.	
Bikrampur University		

Vihāras and Universities IN ANCIENT INDIA

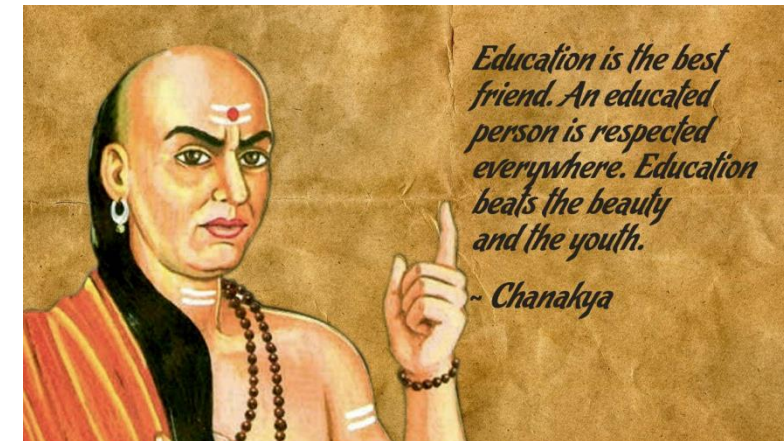
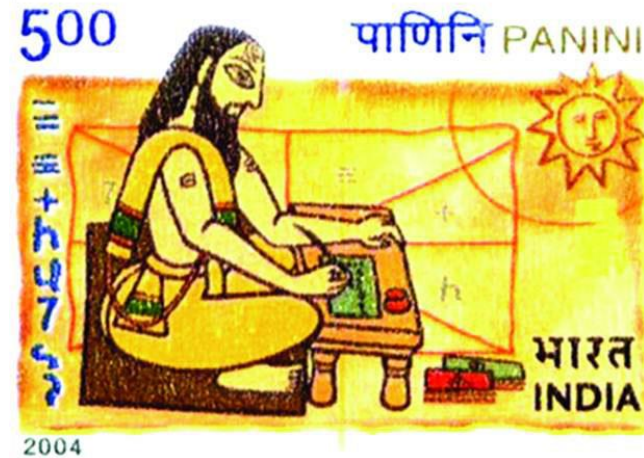
TAKSHASHILA UNIVERSITY

- Takshasila is the oldest among the universities in Ancient India. It was well known as a centre of learning as early as 700 B.C.
- The educational activities at this place must have started atleast a few centuries earlier.
- The place derived its name from TAKSHA, a son of BHARATA. The Ramayana narrates how Bharata, after defeating the Gandharvas, founded the two famous cities Takshasila in the Gandharva Desa for Taksha and Pushkalavata for the other son Pushkala in the Gandhara.
- The site initially began to develop as a loosely connected group of buildings where learned persons resided, worked and taught. Over the years, additional buildings were added; rulers made donations and more scholars migrated there. Gradually a large campus developed, which became a celebrated seat of learning in the ancient world.

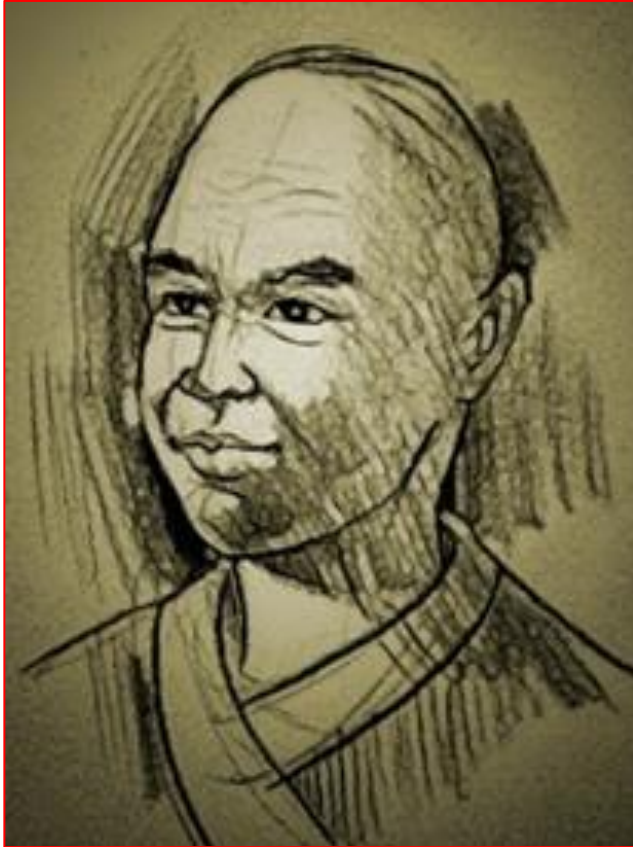


TAKSHASHILA UNIVERSITY

- Taxila University's different Schools taught many subjects.
- Medicine was given special attention; there were also schools of painting, sculpture, image-making, handicrafts and astronomy.
- Following were the legendary students here.
 1. Pānini, Indian grammarian (7th-6th cent BCE)
 2. Chanakya (3rd BCE) the well-known exponent of statecraft.
 3. Jīvaka (5th BCE) one of the most renowned physicians in ancient India, is also said to have learnt medicine at Taxila.



CHINESE TRAVELLERS



They were celebrated scholars and travelers of 7th century CE., who travelled very many places especially INDIA and their biographies have served as documents with solid evidences on the history of ancient India.

Both of them visited NĀLANDĀ in the 7th century CE. According to them.....



I-tsing (Yijing)

Hsüan- tsang (Xuanzang)

NALANDA UNIVERSITY

-the university had eight separate halls, 300 apartments, meditation halls and classrooms, all surrounded by lakes and parks.
- Education was free and there were more than 5,000 students and 1,500 teachers.
- A hundred lectures were conducted every day and the practice of learning through debates and discussions was highly developed.
- Nālandā had an imposing library called ‘Dharmagañja’ which consisted of three multi-storey buildings, ‘Ratnasāgara’, ‘Ratnarañjaka’ and ‘Ratnodadhi’, the last being nine-storey high; it contained lakhs of manuscripts.



For all these students a very high standard of morality was prescribed and students at Nalanda were taken as models of morality, and during the long existence of seven centuries not a single case of guilty rebellion has been reported.

NALANDA UNIVERSITY

Libraries of Nalanda

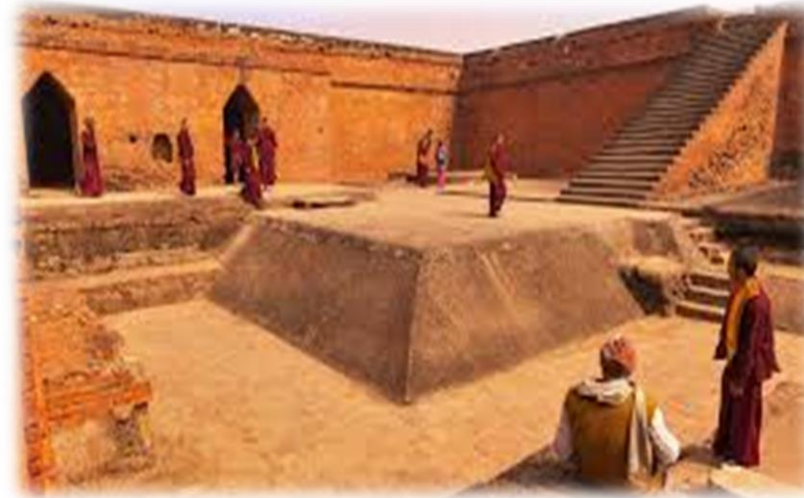
- Ratnasagara (Ocean of Jewels)
- Ratnaranjaka (Jewel-adorned)
- Ratnodadhi (Sea of Jewels, which was nine storeys high).

Great Teachers of Nalanda

- Nāgārjuna,
 - Sthiramati,
 - Śīlabhadra and
 - Śāntaraksita
- whose fame travelled as far as Tibet and China.

Destruction of Nalanda

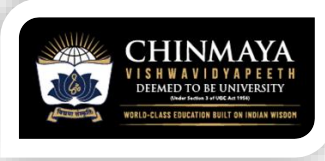
- The university was set on fire in 1193 by Bakhtiyar Khilji.



The Continuing System.....

- The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties(resilience) was the specialty of Indian Education system.
- Thus, the education system of India continued to function till the pre-colonial age.
- British administrators documented about the wide network of schools and educational institutions in various parts of India.
- William Adam reported the following.....

William Adam's Report



- 100,000 to 150,000 indigenous village schools(pathshalas) in Bengal and Bihar alone.
- Villagers supported students who came to study under teachers in the vicinity.
- Not only village schools but there were many institutions of higher learning in most districts of Bengal and southern India.
- Coimbatore district alone had over 700 indigenous schools(pathshalas).
- Reading, writing, epics, arithmetic were all taught.
- High attendance and very high literacy rate was observed.
- Dedicated teachers with superior methods of teaching was seen.
- About 78% to 80% of the students in such village schools/pathshalas were from the disadvantaged sections of society (also could be called as Shudras). Brahmins and Vaishyas were less.
- There was record of how the system was supported by local resources, including voluntary donations from interested and wealthy citizens, even illiterate peasants pitching in their bit.

SUMMARY

- The Indian concept of education was not focused on the intellect alone.
- It focused on the students' inner as well as outer development and prepared them to face the vicissitudes of life.
- In many ways, the wide and decentralized network of education centers was the foundation of India's rich cultural contributions in intellectual, artistic and spiritual spheres.



THANK YOU