Chandragupta As A Great Ruler

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ABSTRACT: Chandragupta Maurya[a] (350-295 BCE) was the first emperor of the Mauryan Empire in Ancient India who expanded a geographically-extensive kingdom based in Magadha and founded the Maurya dynasty.[6] He reigned from 320 BCE to 298 BCE.[7] The Maurya kingdom expanded to become an empire that reached its peak under the reign of his grandson, Ashoka, from 268 BCE to 231 BCE.[8] The nature of the political formation that existed in Chandragupta's time is not certain.[9] The Mauryan empire was a loose-knit empire.[10]

Chandragupta Maurya was an important figure in the history of India, laying the foundations of the first state to unite most of India. Chandragupta, under the tutelage of Chanakya, created a new empire based on the principles of statecraft, built a large army, and continued expanding the boundaries of his empire until ultimately renouncing it for an ascetic life in his final years.

Prior to his consolidation of power, Alexander the Great had invaded the North-West Indian subcontinent before abandoning his campaign in 324 BCE due to a mutiny caused by the prospect of facing another large empire, presumably the Nanda Empire. Chandragupta defeated and conquered both the Nanda Empire and the Greek satraps that were appointed or formed from Alexander's Empire in South Asia. He set out to conquer the Nanda Empire centered in Pataliputra, Magadha. Afterwards, Chandragupta expanded and secured his western border, where he was confronted by Seleucus I Nicator in the Seleucid–Mauryan war. After two years of war, Chandragupta was considered to have gained the upper hand in the conflict and annexed satrapies up to the Hindu Kush. Instead of prolonging the war, both parties settled on a marriage treaty between Chandragupta and Seleucus I Nicator's daughter Helena.

KEYWORDS: Chandragupta, history, India, Alexander, empire, Mauryan, conflict, asia

I.INTRODUCTION

Chandragupta's empire extended throughout most of the Indian subcontinent, spanning from modern day Bengal to Afghanistan across North India as well as making inroads into Central and South India. Contemporary Greek evidence states that Chandragupta did not give up performing the rites of sacrificing animals associated with Vedic Brahminism, an ancient form of Hinduism; he delighted in hunting and otherwise leading a life remote from the Jain practice of Ahimsa or nonviolence towards living beings.[11][12] Chandragupta's reign, and the Maurya Empire, set an era of economic prosperity, reforms, infrastructure expansions, and tolerance. Many religions thrived within his realms and his descendants' empire. Buddhism, Jainism and Ājīvika gained prominence alongside Vedic and Brahmanistic traditions, and minority religions such as Zoroastrianism and the Greek pantheon were respected. A memorial for Chandragupta Maurya exists on the Chandragiri hill along with a seventh-century hagiographic inscription.

Chandragupta's life and accomplishments are described in ancient and historical Greek, Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain texts, though they significantly vary in detail.[13] The historical sources which describe the life of Chandragupta Maurya vary considerably in detail. Chandragupta was born about 340 BC and died at about 295 BC. His main biographical sources in chronological order are:[14]

- Greek and Roman sources, which are the oldest surviving records that mention Chandragupta or circumstances related to him; these include works written by Nearchus, Onesicritus, Aristobulus of Cassandreia, Strabo, Megasthenes, Diodorus, Arrian, Pliny the Elder, Plutarch and Justin.
- Hindu texts such as the Puranas and Arthashastra; later composed Hindu sources include legends in Vishakhadatta's Mudrarakshasa, Somadeva's Kathasaritsagara and Kshemendra's Brihatkathamanjari.
- Buddhist sources are those dated in fourth-century or after, including the Sri Lankan Pali texts Dipavamsa (Rajavamsa section), Mahavamsa, Mahavamsa tika and Mahabodhivamsa.
- 7th to 10th century Jain inscriptions at Shravanabelgola; these are disputed by scholars as well as the Svetambara Jain tradition.[15][16] The second Digambara text interpreted to be mentioning the Maurya emperor is dated to about

the 10th-century such as in the Brhatkathakosa of Harisena (Jain monk), while the complete Jain legend about Chandragupta is found in the 12th-century Parisishtaparvan by Hemachandra.

The Greek and Roman texts do not mention Chandragupta directly, except for a second-century text written by the Roman historian Justin. They predominantly mention the last Nanda Empire, which usurped the king before him. Justin states Chandragupta was of humble origin and includes stories of miraculous legends associated with him, such as a wild elephant appearing and submitting itself as a ride to him before a war. Justin's text notes Chandragupta and Chanakya defeated and removed Nanda from his rule. [17] Megasthenes' account, as it has survived in Greek texts that quote him, states that Alexander the Great and Chandragupta met, which if true would mean his rule started earlier than 321 BCE. He is described as a great king, but not as great in power and influence as Porus in northwestern India or Agrammes (Dhana Nanda) in eastern India. As Alexander didn't cross the Beas river, so his territory probably lied in Punjab region.[18]

The pre-4th century Hindu Puranic texts mostly mirror the Greek sources. These texts do not discuss the details of Chandragupta's ancestry, but rather cover the ancestry of the last Nanda king. The Nanda king is described to be cruel, against dharma and shastras, and born out of an illicit relationship followed by a coup.[19] The Chanakya's Arthasastra refers to the Nanda rule as against the spiritual, cultural, and military interests of the country, a period where intrigue and vice multiplied.[19] Chanakya states that Chandragupta returned dharma, nurtured diversity of views, and ruled virtuously that kindled love among the subjects for his rule. [19]

One medieval commentator states Chandragupta to be the son of one of the Nanda's wives with the name Mura.[19] Other sources describe Mura as a concubine of the king.[20] Another Sanskrit dramatic text Mudrarakshasa uses the terms Vrishala and Kula-Hina (meaning - "not descending from a recognized clan or family.") to describe Chandragupta.[21] The word Vrishala has two meanings: one is the son of a Shudra; the other means the best of kings. A later commentator used the former interpretation to posit that Chandragupta had a Shudra background. However, historian Radha Kumud Mukherjee opposed this theory, and stated that the word should be interpreted as "the best of kings".[21] The same drama also refers to Chandragupta as someone of humble origin, like Justin.[21] According to the 11th-century texts of the Kashmiri Hindu tradition – Kathasaritsagara and Brihat-Katha-Manjari – the Nanda lineage was very short. Chandragupta was a son of Purva-Nanda, the older Nanda based in Ayodhya. [22][23][24] The common theme in the Hindu sources is that Chandragupta came from a humble background and with Chanakya, he emerged as a dharmic king loved by his subjects.[25]

The Buddhist texts such as Mahavamsa describe Chandragupta to be of Kshatriya origin.[26] These sources, written about seven centuries after his dynasty ended, state that both Chandragupta and his grandson Ashoka – a patron of Buddhism – were from a branch of the Shakya noble family, from which Gautama Buddha descended from.[27] These Buddhist sources attempt to link the dynasty of their patron Ashoka directly to the Buddha.[28] The sources claim that the family branched off to escape persecution from a king of the Kosala Kingdom and Chandragupta's ancestors moved into a secluded Himalayan kingdom known for its peacocks. The Buddhist sources explain the epithet maurya comes from these peacocks, or Mora in Pali (Sanskrit: Mayura). [27][3] The Buddhist texts are inconsistent; some offer other legends to explain his epithet. For example, they mention a city named "Moriya-nagara" where all buildings were made of bricks colored like the peacock's neck.[29] The Maha-bodhi-vasa states he hailed from Moriya-nagara, while the Digha-Nikaya states he came from the maurya clan of Pipphalivana.[26] The Buddhist sources also mention that "Brahmin Chanakya" was his counselor and with whose support Chandragupta became the king at Patliputra. .[29] He has also been variously identified with Shashigupta (who has same etymology as of Chandragupta) of Paropamisadae on the account of same life events.[30]

II.DISCUSSION

The 12th-century Digambara text Parishishtaparvan by Hemachandra is the main and earliest Jain source of the complete legend of Chandragupta. It was written nearly 1,400 years after Chandragupta's death. Canto 8, verses 170 to 469, describes the legend of Chandragupta and Chanakya's influence on him. [26][31] Other Digambara Jain sources state he moved to Karnataka after renouncing his kingdom and performed Sallekhana – the Jain religious ritual of peacefully welcoming death by fasting.[32][33] The earliest mention of Chandragupta's ritual death is found in Harisena's Brhatkathakosa, a Sanskrit text of stories about Digambara Jains. The Brhatkathakosa describes the legend of Bhadrabahu and mentions Chandragupta in its 131st story.[34] However, the story makes no mention of the Maurya empire, and mentions that his disciple Chandragupta lived in and migrated from Ujjain – a kingdom (northwest Madhya Pradesh) about a thousand kilometers west of the Magadha and Patliputra (central Bihar). This has led to the proposal that Harisena's Chandragupta may be a later era, different person..[34][2][35]

None of the ancient texts mention when Chandragupta was born. Plutarch claims that he was a young man when he met Alexander during the latter's invasion of India (c. 326-325 BCE). Assuming the Plutarch account is true, Raychaudhuri proposed in 1923 that Chandragupta may have been born after 350 BCE.[36] According to other Greco-Roman texts, Chandragupta attacked the Greek-Indian governors after Alexander's death (c. 323 BCE) with Seleucus I Nicator entering into a treaty with Chandragupta years later.[37] Seleucus Nicator, under this treaty, gave up Arachosia (Kandahar), Gedrosia (Makran), and Paropanisadai (Paropamisadae, Kabul) to Chandragupta, in exchange for 500 war elephants. [18]

The texts do not include the start or end year of Chandragupta's reign.[38] According to some Hindu and Buddhist texts, Chandragupta ruled for 24 years.[39] The Buddhist sources state Chandragupta Maurya ruled 162 years after the death of the Buddha.[40] However, the Buddha's birth and death vary by source and all these lead to a chronology that is significantly different than the Greek-Roman records. Similarly, Jain sources composed give different gaps between Mahavira's death and his accession.[40] As with the Buddha's death, the date of Mahavira's death itself is also a matter of debate, and the inconsistencies and lack of unanimity among the Jain authors cast doubt on Jain sources. This Digambara Jain chronology, also, is not reconcilable with the chronology implied in other Indian and non-Indian sources.[40]

Historians such as Irfan Habib and Vivekanand Jha assign Chandragupta's reign to c. 322-298 BCE.[41] Upinder Singh dates his rule from 324 or 321 BCE to 297 BCE.[5] Kristi Wiley states he reigned between 320 and 293 BCE.[15]

One medieval commentator states Chandragupta to be the son of one of the Nanda's wives with the name Mura.[19] Other sources describe Mura as a concubine of the king.[20] Another Sanskrit dramatic text Mudrarakshasa uses the terms Vrishala and Kula-Hina (meaning - "not descending from a recognized clan or family.") to describe Chandragupta.[21] The word Vrishala has two meanings: one is the son of a Shudra; the other means the best of kings. A later commentator used the former interpretation to posit that Chandragupta had a Shudra background. However, historian Radha Kumud Mukherjee opposed this theory, and stated that the word should be interpreted as "the best of kings".[21] The same drama also refers to Chandragupta as someone of humble origin, like Justin.[21] According to the 11th-century texts of the Kashmiri Hindu tradition – Kathasaritsagara and Brihat-Katha-Manjari – the Nanda lineage was very short. Chandragupta was a son of Purva-Nanda, the older Nanda based in Ayodhya. [22][23][42] The common theme in the Hindu sources is that Chandragupta came from a humble background and with Chanakya, he emerged as a dharmic king loved by his subjects.[25]

According to the Digambara legend by Hemachandra, Chanakya was a Jain layperson and a Brahmin. When Chanakya was born, Jain monks prophesied that Chanakya will one day grow up to help make someone an emperor and will be the power behind the throne.[43][31] Chanakya believed in the prophecy and fulfilled it by agreeing to help the daughter of a peacock-breeding community chief deliver a baby boy. In exchange, he asked the mother to give up the boy and let him adopt him at a later date.[26][31] The Jain Brahmin then went about making money through magic, and returned later to claim young Chandragupta,[31] whom he taught and trained. Together, they recruited soldiers and attacked the Nanda kingdom. Eventually, they won and proclaimed Patliputra as their capital.[31]

The Buddhist and Hindu sources present different versions of how Chandragupta met Chanakya. Broadly, they mention young Chandragupta creating a mock game of a royal court that he and his cowherd friends played near Vinjha forest. Chanakya saw him give orders to the others, bought him from the hunter, and adopted Chandragupta.[44] Chanakya taught and admitted him in Taxila to study the Vedas, military arts, law, and other sastras.[44][45]

After Taxila, Chandragupta and Chanakya moved to Pataliputra, the capital and a historic learning center in the eastern Magadha kingdom of India. They met Nanda there according to Hindu sources, and Dhana Nanda according to Pali-language Buddhist sources.[46] Chandragupta became a commander of the Nanda army, but according to Justin, Chandragupta offended the Nanda king ("Nandrum" or "Nandrus") who ordered his execution.[43] An alternative version states that it was the Nanda king who was publicly insulted by Chanakya.[47] Chandragupta and Chanakya escaped and became rebels who planned to remove the Nanda king from power.[48][note 1] The Mudrarakshasa also states that Chanakya swore to destroy the Nanda dynasty after he felt insulted by the king.[50][47]

The Roman text by Justin mentions a couple of miraculous incidents that involved Sandracottus (Chandragupta) and presents these legends as omens and portents of his fate. In the first incident, when Chandragupta was asleep after having escaped from Nandrum, a big lion came up to him, licked him, and then left. In the second incident, when Chandragupta was readying for war with Alexander's generals, a huge wild elephant approached him and offered itself to be his steed.[51]

III.RESULTS

According to the Buddhist text Mahavamsa Tika, Chandragupta and Chanakya raised an army by recruiting soldiers from many places after the former completed his education at Taxila. Chanakya made Chandragupta the leader of the army.[52] The Digambara Jain text Parishishtaparvan states that this army was raised by Chanakya with coins he minted and an alliance formed with Parvataka.[53][54] According to Justin, Chandragupta organized an army. Early translators interpreted Justin's original expression as "body of robbers", but states Raychaudhuri, the original expression used by Justin may mean mercenary soldier, hunter, or robber.[55]

The Buddhist Mahavamsa Tika and Jain Parishishtaparvan records Chandragupta's army unsuccessfully attacking the Nanda capital. [53] Chandragupta and Chanakya then began a campaign at the frontier of the Nanda empire, gradually conquering various territories on their way to the Nanda capital.[56] He then refined his strategy by establishing garrisons in the conquered territories, and finally besieged the Nanda capital Pataliputra. There Dhana Nanda accepted defeat, and was killed by Buddhist accounts,[57] or deposed and exiled by Hindu accounts.[58]

Greco-Roman writer Plutarch stated, in his Life of Alexander, that the Nanda king was so unpopular that had Alexander tried, he could have easily conquered India.[48][59] After Alexander ended his campaign and left, Chandragupta's army conquered the Nanda capital Pataliputra around 322 BCE with Chanakya's counsel.[43]

Historically reliable details of Chandragupta's campaign into Pataliputra are unavailable and legends written centuries later are inconsistent. Buddhist texts such as Milindapanha claim Magadha was ruled by the Nanda dynasty, which, with Chanakya's counsel, Chandragupta conquered to restore dhamma.[60][61] The army of Chandragupta and Chanakya first conquered the Nanda outer territories before invading Pataliputra. In contrast to the easy victory in Buddhist sources, the Hindu and Jain texts state that the campaign was bitterly fought because the Nanda dynasty had a powerful and well-trained army.[62][61]

The conquest was fictionalised in Mudrarakshasa, in which Chandragupta is said to have first acquired Punjab and allied with a local king named Parvatka under the Chanakya's advice before advancing on the Nanda Empire.[63] Chandragupta laid siege to Kusumapura (now Patna), the capital of Magadha, by deploying guerrilla warfare methods with the help of mercenaries from conquered areas.[64][65] Historian P. K. Bhattacharyya states that the empire was built by a gradual conquest of provinces after the initial consolidation of Magadha.[66]

According to the Digambara Jain version by Hemachandra, the success of Chandragupta and his strategist Chanakya was stopped by a Nanda town that refused to surrender.[67] Chanakya disguised himself as a mendicant and found seven mother goddesses (saptamatrika) inside. He concluded these goddesses were protecting the town people.[67] The townspeople sought the disguised mendicant's advice on how to end the blockade of the army surrounding their town. Hemacandra wrote Chanakya swindled them into removing the mother goddesses. The townspeople removed the protective goddesses and an easy victory over the town followed. Thereafter, the alliance of Chandragupta and Parvataka overran the Nanda kingdom and attacked Patliputra with an "immeasurable army".[67] With a depleted treasury, exhausted merit, and insufficient intelligence, the Nanda king lost.[67]

These legends state that the Nanda king was defeated, but allowed to leave Pataliputra alive with a chariot full of items his family needed.[68] The Jain sources attest that his daughter fell in love at first sight with Chandragupta and married him.[67][26] With the defeat of Nanda, Chandragupta Maurya founded the Maurya Empire in ancient India.[3][69]

The Indian campaign of Alexander the Great ended before Chandragupta came into power. Alexander had left India in 325 BCE and assigned the northwestern Indian subcontinent territories to Greek governors.[70][71] The nature of early relationship between these governors and Chandragupta is unknown. Justin mentions Chandragupta as a rival of the Alexander's successors in north-western India.[41] He states that after Alexander's death, Chandragupta freed Indian territories from the Greeks and executed some of the governors.[72] According to Boesche, this war with the northwestern territories was in part fought by mercenaries hired by Chandragupta and Chanakya, and these wars may have been the cause of the demise of two of Alexander's governors, Nicanor and Philip.[73] Megasthenes served as a Greek ambassador in his court for four years.[69]

According to Appian, Seleucus I Nicator, one of Alexander's Macedonian generals who in 312 BCE established the Seleucid Kingdom with its capital at Babylon, brought Persia and Bactria under his own authority, putting his eastern front facing the empire of Chandragupta.[74][75] Seleucus and Chandragupta waged war until they came to an understanding with each other. Seleucus married off his daughter, Berenice, to Chandragupta to forge an alliance.[75]

R. C. Majumdar and D. D. Kosambi note that Seleucus appeared to have fared poorly after ceding large territories west of the Indus to Chandragupta. The Maurya Empire added Arachosia (Kandahar), Gedrosia (Balochistan), and Paropamisadae (Gandhara).[76][77][b] According to Strabo, Seleucus Nicator gave these regions to Chandragupta

along with a marriage treaty, and in return received five hundred elephants.[78] The details of the engagement treaty are not known.[79] However, since the extensive sources available on Seleucus never mention an Indian princess, it is thought that the marital alliance went the other way, with Chandragupta himself or his son Bindusara marrying a Seleucid princess, in accordance with contemporary Greek practices to form dynastic alliances. An Indian Puranic source, the Pratisarga Parva of the Bhavishya Purana, described the marriage of Chandragupta with a Greek ("Yavana") princess, daughter of Seleucus.[80] The Mahavamsa also states that, seven months after the war ended, Seleucus gave one of his daughters, Berenice (known in Pali as Suvarnnaksi) in marriage to Chandragupta.[81]

Chandragupta sent 500 war elephants to Seleucus, which played a key role in Seleucus' victory at the Battle of Ipsus.[82][83][84] In addition to this treaty, Seleucus dispatched Megasthenes as an ambassador to Chandragupta's court, and later Antiochos sent Deimakos to his son Bindusara at the Maurya court at Patna.[85]

IV.CONCLUSIONS

The circumstances and year of Chandragupta's death are unclear and disputed.[2][15][16] According to Digambara Jain accounts, Bhadrabahu forecast a 12-year famine because of all the killing and violence during the conquests by Chandragupta Maurya. He led a group of Jain monks to south India, where Chandragupta Maurya joined him as a monk after abdicating his kingdom to his son Bindusara. Together, states a Digambara legend, Chandragupta and Bhadrabahu moved to Shravanabelagola, in present-day south Karnataka.[131] These Jain accounts appeared in texts such as Brihakathā kośa (931 CE) of Harishena, Bhadrabāhu charita (1450 CE) of Ratnanandi, Munivaṃsa bhyudaya (1680 CE) and Rajavali kathe.[132][133][134] Chandragupta lived as an ascetic at Shravanabelagola for several years before fasting to death as per the Jain practice of sallekhana, according to the Digambara legend.[135][32][136]

In accordance with the Digambara tradition, the hill on which Chandragupta is stated to have performed asceticism is now known as Chandragiri hill, and Digambaras believe that Chandragupta Maurya erected an ancient temple that now survives as the Chandragupta basadi.[1] According to Roy, Chandragupta's abdication of throne may be dated to c. 298 BCE, and his death between 297 BCE and 293 BCE.[64] His grandson was emperor Ashoka who is famed for his historic pillars and his role in helping spread Buddhism outside of ancient India.[137][136]

Along with texts, several Digambara Jain inscriptions dating from the 7th–15th century refer to Bhadrabahu and a Prabhacandra. Later Digambara tradition identified the Prabhacandra as Chandragupta, and some modern era scholars have accepted this Digambara tradition while others have not,[2][15][16] Several of the late Digambara inscriptions and texts in Karnataka state the journey started from Ujjain and not Patliputra (as stated in some Digambara texts).[15][16]

Jeffery D. Long – a scholar of Jain and Hindu studies – says in one Digambara version, it was Samprati Chandragupta who renounced, migrated and performed sallekhana in Shravanabelagola. Long states scholars attribute the disintegration of the Maurya empire to the times and actions of Samprati Chandragupta – the grandson of Ashoka and great-great-grandson of Chandragupta Maurya. The two Chandraguptas have been confused to be the same in some Digambara legends.[139]

Scholar of Jain studies and Sanskrit Paul Dundas says the Svetambara tradition of Jainism disputes the ancient Digambara legends. According to a fifth-century text of the Svetambara Jains, the Digambara sect of Jainism was founded 609 years after Mahavira's death, or in first-century CE.[140] Digambaras wrote their own versions and legends after the fifth-century, with their first expanded Digambara version of sectarian split within Jainism appearing in the tenth-century.[140] The Svetambaras texts describe Bhadrabahu was based near Nepalese foothills of the Himalayas in third-century BCE, who neither moved nor travelled with Chandragupta Maurya to the south; rather, he died near Patliputra, according to the Svetambara Jains.[15][141][142]

The 12th-century Svetambara Jain legend by Hemachandra presents a different picture. The Hemachandra version includes stories about Jain monks who could become invisible to steal food from royal storage and the Jain Brahmin Chanakya using violence and cunning tactics to expand Chandragupta's kingdom and increase royal revenues.[31] It states in verses 8.415 to 8.435, that for 15 years as king, Chandragupta was a follower of non-Jain "ascetics with the wrong view of religion" (non-Jain) and "lusted for women". Chanakya, who was a Jain follower, persuaded Chandragupta to convert to Jainism by showing that Jain ascetics avoided women and focused on their religion.[31] The legend mentions Chanakya aiding the premature birth of Bindusara,[31] It states in verse 8.444 that "Chandragupta died in meditation (can possibly be sallekhana.) and went to heaven".[143] According to Hemachandra's legend, Chanakya also performed sallekhana.[143]

REFERENCES

1. Mookerji 1988, p. 40.

2. ^ Dikshitar 1993, pp. 264–266.

3. ^ Chandragupta Maurya, Emperor of India Archived 10 March 2018 at the Wayback Machine, Encyclopædia Britannica

4. ^ Upinder Singh 2016, p. 330.

5. ^ Upinder Singh 2016, p. 331.

6. ^ Chakrabarty, Dilip K. (2010), The Geopolitical Orbits of Ancient India: The Geographical Frames of the Ancient Indian Dynasties, New Delhi, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, p. 29, ISBN 978-0-19-908832-4, We are assuming that the basic historical-geographical configuration of the Magadhan power was achieved before the beginning of the Maurya dynasty, whose founder Chandragupta Maurya simply added to it the stretch from the Indus valley to the southern foot of the Hindukush, giving the Mauryan India a strong foothold in the Oxus to the Indus interaction zone of Indian history. The evidence is in some cases, as in the cases of Gujarat, Bengal, and Assam, shadowy, but if Chandragupta had undertaken expeditions in these directions, there would have been echoes of these expeditions in the literary traditions.

7. ^ Fisher, Michael (2018), An Environmental History of India, From the Earliest Times to the Twenty-First-Century, New Approaches in Asian History Series, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, p. 71, ISBN 9781107111622, Chandragupta (r. 320 – c. 298 BCE) led a rebellion that seized power in Magadha and founded the Maurya Dynasty. He located his capital Pataliputra (today's Patna) at an especially strategic trading and defensive location, on the south bank of the Ganges where the Son River joined it. The actual origins of the Maurya family remain uncertain, but consensus holds that Chandragupta was low-born. One popular account asserts he was the previous king's son by a low-ranked queen or concubine and overthrew his royal half-brothers. Maurya means "peacock," and some Jain texts identify his family as low peacock herders, ranked by Brahmans as Shudra at best.

8. ^ Bose, Sugata; Jalal, Ayesha, Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy, London and New York: Routledge, p. 39, The political history of the centuries following the rise of Buddhism and Jainism saw the emergence and consolidation of powerful regional states in northern India. Among the strongest of these was the kingdom of Magadha, with its capital at Pataliputra (near the modern city of Patna). The Magadhan kingdom expanded under the Maurya dynasty in the fourth and fifth centuries BCE to become an empire embracing almost the whole of the subcontinent. Chandragupta Maurya founded the dynasty in 322 BCE, just a few years after Alexander the Great's brief foray into northwestern India. The Maurya empire reached its apogee under the reign of Ashoka (268–231 BCE)

9. ^ Stein, Burton; Arnold, David (2010), A History of India (2 ed.), Wiley-Blackwell, p. 16, ISBN 978-1-4051-9509-6, Around 270 bce, the first Indian documentary records, issued by the Buddhist king Ashoka, were added to the Greek source. Though Ashoka's inscriptions were deciphered in the nineteenth century, we still cannot be sure about the political formation that existed under this Mauryan king, much less under the kingdom's founder, Ashoka's grandfather Chandragupta, who was possibly a contemporary of Alexander. Evidence in the form of a Sanskrit treatise called the Arthashastra – depicting a centralized, tyrannical, spy-ridden and compul sively controlling regime – probably does not pertain to Mauryan times. If its political world was not pure theory, it could only have been achieved within a small city-state, not a realm as vast as that defined by the distribution of Ashoka's inscriptions, over some 1500 miles from Afghanistan to southern India.

10. ^ c Ludden, David (2013), India and South Asia: A Short History, Oneworld Publications, pp. 29–30, ISBN 978-1-78074-108-6 Quote: "The geography of the Mauryan Empire resembled a spider with a small dense body and long spindly legs. The highest echelons of imperial society lived in the inner circle composed of the ruler, his immediate family, other relatives, and close allies, who formed a dynastic core. Outside the core, empire travelled stringy routes dotted with armed cities. Outside the palace, in the capital cities, the highest ranks in the imperial elite were held by military commanders whose active loyalty and success in war determined imperial fortunes. Wherever these men failed or rebelled, dynastic power crumbled. ... Imperial society flourished where elites mingled; they were its backbone, its strength was theirs. Kautilya's Arthasastra indicates that imperial power was concentrated in its original heartland, in old Magadha, where key institutions seem to have survived for about seven hundred years, down to the age of the Guptas. Here, Mauryan officials ruled local society, but not elsewhere. In provincial towns and cities, officials formed a top layer of royalty; under them, old conquered royal families were not removed, but rather subordinated. In most janapadas, the Mauryan Empire consisted of strategic urban sites connected loosely to vast hinterlands through lineages and local elites who were there when the Mauryas arrived and were still in control when they left."

11. ^ Majumdar, R. C.; Raychauduhuri, H. C.; Datta, Kalikinkar (1960), An Advanced History of India, London: Macmillan & Company Ltd; New York: St Martin's Press, If the Jaina tradition is to be believed, Chandragupta was converted to the religion of Mahavira. He is said to have abdicated his throne and passed his last days at Sravana Belgola in Mysore. Greek evidence, however, suggests that the first Maurya did not give up the

performance of sacrificial rites and was far from following the Jaina creed of Ahimsa or non-injury to animals. He took delight in hunting, a practice that was continued by his son and alluded to by his grandson in his eighth Rock Edict. It is, however, possible that in his last days he showed some predilection for Jainism ...

12. ^ The authors and their affiliations listed in the title page of the reference (which has the Wikipedia page An Advanced History of India) are: R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D. Vice-Chancellor, Dacca University; H. C. Raychaudhuri, M.A., Ph.D., Carmichael Professor of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University; and Kalikinkar Datta, M.A., Ph.D. Premchand Raychand Scholar, Mount Medallist, Griffith Prizeman, Professor and Head of the Department of History, Patna College, Patna

13. ^ Mookerji 1988, pp. 2–14, 229–235.

14. ^ Mookerji 1988, pp. 3–14.

15. ^ Wiley 2009, pp. 50–52.

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