

B.A- PART-1, PAPER-1

THE GUPTAS-SOURCES (PART-1)

MD. NEYAZ HUSSAIN
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR & HOD
PG DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
MAHARAJA COLLEGE, VKSU, ARA
(BIHAR)



INTRODUCTION

- History, does not normally repeat itself. This adage is emphatically proven with the story of the two greatest dynasties of Indian history: The Mauryas and the Guptas. A Chandragupta founded the Maurya dynasty in 320 B.C.; exactly six hundred years later another Chandra Gupta founded the Gupta dynasty, in 320 A.D. A coincidence that cannot be ignored. The Gupta dynasty rule over India for about two hundred years. —The Gupta period, writes *Dr. Barnett*, —is in the annals of classical India almost what the Periclean age is in the history of Greece. This dynasty freed India from foreign shackles of Kushana-Sassanian and broke the Huns who were invincible throughout Asia and Europe. This is probably



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the dynasty which gave Vikramaditya, an immortal legendary ruler of India. Like any other dynasties of India, the history of the Imperial Gupta dynasty is a dark cloud. Though we might know the first ruler of this dynasty however their origin and rise to king-hood is obscured in mystery. However study of the Guptas has held a very prime position in Indian history and correctly pointed out by *V A Smith*, who states, —With the accession of the Guptas, light again dawns, the veil of oblivion is lifted and the history of India regains unity and interest.



SOURCES

Although the timeline of dynastic succession is at times ill-defined, the Gupta rule is an important epoch in Indian history. Several sources have been made available to us, through the scholarly labours of Indologists, both of the East and of the West, for the reconstruction of an almost correctly datable history of the times of the Gupta dynasty- —the dynasty which had liberated Indians from the Kushan-Sassanian shadow, the dynasty which broke the Hun, unbreakable throughout Asia and Europe, the dynasty which made the name Vikramaditya, a tradition immortal in their country. Literature-both religious and secular, writings of foreign travelers, inscriptions, coins and monuments etc., constitute various sources of the history of the Guptas.

(To be continued)