

Indo-Greek Rule

- Northern India was split into several kingdoms after the decline of the Mauryas.
- The Sungas came to power in about 185 BC in the Magadha region.
- After sungas kanvas came to power but he was later defeated by the Satavahanas originally from the Deccan.
- The central Asia and Northwest powers were constantly attacken Northwest India.
- In 180 B.C the Indo-Greek or the Graeco-Indian Kingdom was established, when the Graeco-Bactrian king Demetrius invaded the Indian subcontinent.

The initial presence of Greeks in India

- Alexander general Seleucus Nicator, founded the Seleucid Empire after Alexander invaded the northwest part of the subcontinent.
- After the war between the Seleucus and Chandragupta Maurya, he surrendered most parts to the west of the Indus, including the Hindu Kush, today's Afghanistan, and Balochistan to the Mauryan King.
- After the war megasthenes were sent to reside at Maurya's court.
- Deimachus and Dionysius were the other residents at Mauryan court.
- In the Mauryan Empire, Greek communities lived in the north-western part as evident from Ashoka's edicts.
- Mauryas take care of foreigners like Yavanas and Persians.
- Greeks were called Yavans and Yonas in ancient Indian sources

Greek Kingdom

- In between the 2nd century BC to the origin of the first century AD, the Indo-greek kingdom was ruled by over 30 Hellenistic kings in the northwest and north India.
- In 180 BC Graeco-Bactrian king Demetrius attacked India.
- He occupied southern Afghanistan and parts of Punjab.
- The Greek kings understood Indian culture and became political entities with a mix of Indian culture and Greek culture.

- The Indo- Greek kingdoms were under the Euthydemus rule for about 25 years.
- Many coins of this period were found under the earth and most of the information we get about this period is from these coins carrying Indian and Greek inscriptions on them. Most of the coins found contain Indian deities.
- After the death of Demetrius, the civil wars among the many Bactrian kings facilitated the independent kingdom of Apollodorus I, Apollodorus was the first proper Indo-Greek king.
- Gandhara and western Punjab were also covered in his kingdom.
- There are many Kings in Indo-Greek where Buddhists and Buddhism were expanded under Greek kings rule.
- Greek kings apply their most of the influence is mostly seen in art and sculpture, particularly the Gandhara school of art.

Menander I (Reign: 155 or 150 BC – 130 BC)

- Minedra, Minadra, or Milinda were the other names of Menander I Soter.
- He was the first king of Bactria.
- His kingdom extended from Ravi River in the east to Kabul River valley in the west and from Swat valley in the north to Arachises (Helmand in Afghanistan).
- He went as far as Rajasthan and Pataliputra.
- Menander I was converted to Buddhist and patronized the faith.
- His son Strato I succeeded Menander I and he died in 130BC.
- In 100 BC the Milinda Panha records a dialogue between Buddhists and the Milinda sage Nagasena.
- This script is available in the Pali version now, but this is originally written in Sanskrit.
- In the end, Milinda accepts Buddhism and converts.

Coins of Indo-Greeks

- Coins present in the north side of the Hindu Kush region during the rule of Indo-Greeks

- Gold, silver, copper, and Nickel coins were circulated in the north of Hindu Kush.
- The coins had an image of Greek Legends.
- The Indo-Greek coins contain a royal image of the Greek deities (Zeus, Athena, and Apollo) on the reverse.

Coins present in the south side of the Hindu Kush region during the rule of Indo-Greeks

- Most of the coins on the south side of the Hindu Kush were mostly in square shape and there were only silver and copper coins.
- The coins were made under the Indian weight standards.
- They had bilingual inscriptions-Greek and karoshi.
- In the coins, most of the religious symbols were inspired by Indian standards

The Decline of the Kingdom

The Decline of the Indo-Greek Kingdom

- The ultimate Indo-Greek king was Strato II.
- He governed the Punjab region till 55 BC, some states until 10 AD.
- Their rule terminated with the incursions of the Indo-Scythians (Sakas).
- It is considered that the Greek people continued for several centuries more in India under the Indo-Parthians and the Kushans.