

The 13th Major Rock Edict

Ashoka ruled most of all India from about 268 BC to 232 BC. In this time he had edicts inscribed in pillars, which some can be found till this day. His main message was one of non-violence and existing peacefully. The purpose of this paper is to go into detail regarding The 13th Major Rock Edict specifically out of the 14 Edicts that were inscribed on rock.

Throughout history, many empires have imposed policies on their empires. These all required strict obedience. Of these rulers and lawmakers, Ashoka of the Mauryan empire stands out for the diversity of his policies. After reflecting about the deaths of the slain in his military campaigns he converted to Buddhism (see Ashoka's remorse). He became a pacifist and spread this ideology throughout much of Southeast Asia and even Afghanistan among other nations. He enforced laws against violence and the animals were considered citizens. Ashoka put an end to the Vedic animal sacrifices that took place within Hinduism. He sent missionaries to spread his ideals of Buddhism. Ashoka is known for some of the earliest rock inscriptions on Dhama, which means law. The 13th Major Rock Pillar is a culmination of the previous Major Rock Edicts and is followed by only one more. Later, Minor Rock Edicts were added to the collection.

The main purpose of this Edict is to communicate to the people of the empire to practice Pacifism and his vision of a peaceful life. Not to enact violence toward each other. It spoke of a turning point in Ashoka's life after witnessing the destruction of the Kalingan people. It said that there were 100,000 deaths, 150,000 deported, and there were thousands more who died by means like disease and starvation. After seeing this he repented and decided to live his life completely to peaceful means. He said that the ideal way to conquer people is through the Dhamma, and not war. He said that he wrote the dhamma to remind his sons and his

grandsons not to pursue conquest through war, only through the dhamma. He also stated that if any of his children did conquer, to let their punishment be light and to do so with forbearance. In conclusion, The 13th Rock Edict tells a story of a king who becomes remorseful after seeing the great number of casualties that resulted from his military campaign against Kalinga. He decided to turn his life around completely, and to invest his life into something different. Buddhism, Pacifism, and the Dhamma. It was under Ashoka's rule that India became unified and it was also under his rule that Buddhism became a world religion. In a class of his own he taught many a way that could lead to a peaceful existence.