

India: From the Year 1.4 million BCE  
to the Year 1818 CE  
A Compilation of 20 Twitter Threads from  
2022 on India's History, Literature, Philoso-  
phy, and Culture

\*\*This document is a compilation of Twitter Threads published on the Twitter Account of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Although they are based on authentic academic research, these write-ups only offer a superficial summary of the topic. These threads are based on various sources and lectures by individual scholars and aim to provide basic information to readers. They do not reflect Institute's views or position\*:

1

## The Geographic Details of India Mentioned in the Shatapatha-

Brahmana (शतपथब्रह्मण्यम्)

Shatapatha-Brahmana is the Brahmana text associated with the Shukla Yajurveda.

This enormous Samhita was said to have consisted of 100 adhyaya-s, and thus was deemed "Shatapatha."

The Shatapatha-Brahmana is replete with references to debates in the royal court of the Videha kingdom. Videha kingdom corresponds with modern-day parts of Bihar and Jharkhand.

Shatapatha Brahmana gives decisive clues about the spread of Vedic culture from the north-western parts of India to the eastern parts of the country. We find repeated references to the regions of Kuru, Panchala, Kosala, and Videha in the Shatapatha-Brahmana as opposed to the areas around the Sindhu river in the earlier Vedic texts, such as the Rigveda.

Shatapatha-Brahmana (1.4.1.10) mentions the Sadanira (T) river as the boundary between the Kosal and Videha kingdoms. Sadanira river is the modern-day Gandaki (Tus) river.

Another interesting point is the tale of Manu and Matsya (fish) and the great floods (Â³). While there are distant and vague allusions to the story in the Atharva Veda, the full extent of the story first appears in the Shatapatha Brahmana.

These are merely some tiny glimpses of the Shatapatha-Brahmana. Beyond these aspects, it greatly elaborates on many topics such as vidya-s, rituals and ritualistic practices, and philosophy.

\*\*\*

There are further definitions of Dharma given in the different systems of philosophy like the Purva-Mimãmsa, Vaishesika, etc. They maintain "that is Dharma from which results the happiness and supreme blessedness."

In the Buddhist works, however, the word 'dharma' means 'the whole teaching of Buddha. Another meaning, 'an element of existence of matter, mind, and forces' is also suggested for the term 'Dharma.'

In the Puranas, social service and removal of sufferings and distress are treated as the highest Dharma, as noted in the History of Dharmashastra by Shri. P.V. Kane.

Dr. Kane has also pointed out that the meaning of Dharma is shifted to vratas, bhakti, nama-smarana, dana, bathing in a sacred place, and visiting holy sites, thereby securing higher results with little effort, particularly at the time of the compositions of the Puranas.

Lastly, in the Kularnava'-Tantra, the kula-dharma is treated as superior to all the dharmas, such as sacrifices, pilgrimages, vratas, etc.

The idea of Dharma is hence a complex one. It is an amalgamation of philosophy, psychology, and interpersonal behavioural practices. It offers a relevant discourse in our era of uncertainty, crisis, and many challenges.

Therefore, we at the Bhandarkar Institute have decided to launch a mini-YouTube series on the idea of Dharma, based on the "History of Dharmashastra" by Shri P. V. Kane and "Essence of Dharmashastra" by Shri S.G. Moghe. This thread is based on the same â€“ <https://youtu.be/XSDmmPuRPBY>

13

### How to Overcome the fear of Death?

Death is one of the biggest fears and fixations of humanity. Death, and especially what comes after, is probably the greatest enigmas of our existence. The uncertainty, anxiety, and mystery surrounding Death have led to the eternal desire to conquer and to understand Death.

Upanishads and several other ancient Indian texts have deliberated on this existential mystery. We are going to gain a glimpse of it through three stories.

Nachiketa was the son of a person called VajshravÄ•.

VajshravÄ• once arranged a sacrifice. In the sacrifice, he offered himself as Dakshina in his entirety. When one offers oneself entirely, his son, too, is included in that.

A kind and honest soul even at a young age, Nachiketa asked his father as to whom he would be presented he pledged? His father ignored him for the first time. But when Nachiketa persistently asked the same question, VajshravÄ• retorted, "I am going to donate you to Death."

This reaction was purely driven by anger.

But when Nachiketa heard that his father had given him to Death and saw that Death hasn't come to fetch him, he decided to go to Death, to Yama, himself.

For three days, Nachiketa waited for Yama outside Yama's abode.

When Yama saw the young boy, he was startled. He, though, first apologised for making Nachiketa wait. Yama said, "It is a sin if a guest starves at your doorstep. As my repentance, I grant you three boons."

15

Yama elaborated upon "Atmasvaroopa" and the difference between Atman and the body. Yama said Atman is understood by them, whose organs had satiated and whose grief had vanished. When organs disappear in mind, mind in intellect, and intellect in Atman, everything merges in the Atmatattva, and 'jiva' and 'brahman' are in union.

This is Atmajnana.

Only those who are "anandmaya," full of happiness, can realise the Atman. Atman is not understood by just teaching or just by the intellect. It is understood only when the Atmatattva feels its Knowledge should "happen" to a person.

Yama's last advice is the famous quote, 'uttishthata jagrata...' - Get up, wake up and go to a guru, acquire the Atmajnana.

This shows that Nachiketa won over Yama and, thereby, Death. He did so through the pursuit of Knowledge. So, wisdom or Knowledge can triumph over the fear of Death.

Now we come to the well-known story of Satyavana-Savitri.

This story occurs in the Aaranyaka parvan of the Mahabharata. In this story,

she stops Yama with her love for her husband.

When Yama took away Satyavan's life, he freed the soul stuck in the bonds of the body. As a result, Satyvan's body became lifeless. Savitri stopped Yama. She insisted that she wished to accompany her husband wherever he went, including the afterlife.

She was astute and articulate. Yama gave in to her love and her intellectual argument. He was pleased with her talk and told her to ask for a boon.

17

The critical point here is, in the story of Yama-Nachiketa, Nachiketa wins over Death by the power of Knowledge- Jnana, Savitri wins over Death by the power of love- Priti and Markandeya rishi has won over Death by the power of devotion, bhakti.

The discussion on the principle of Death is the common thread in all these three stories. On a broader level, these stories also indicate some ways to deal with and overcome the debilitating feeling of fear.

This write-up is a part of a lecture by Dr. Gauri Moghe on Upanishads in the online course, Vedvidya - Veda-s to Vedaanga-s. It is an online course by B.O.R.I., which is available on [www.bharatvidya.in](http://www.bharatvidya.in) at the following link - <https://bharatvidya.in/p/veda-s-to-vedanga-s>. The course offers a comprehensive introduction to Vedic Literature and also draws upon Vedic tradition in offering glimpses of oral tradition and unique original footage of a Yajna and Veda Pathashaalaa. The course fee is INR 1500.

\*\*\*

19

## Five thoughts on governance and economy from the Shanti-Parvan of the Mahabharata

Shanti-parvan is a dialogue between Yudhisthira and Bhishma. In his dying moments, Bhishma advises Yudhisthira on the intricacies of Raj Dharma. The term Raj-Dharma is a broad term including governance, jurisprudence, personal behaviour of the king, and policy-making. Here are five pieces of Bhishma's advice on taxation and financial management of the kingdom.

1. A king who wishes for the state's safety must spend on defence but should also invest in keeping the peace. A king who desires this should incorporate a tax for this purpose in their regime. (Shanti-Parvan 12.69)
2. It is mentioned in multiple places that the overall taxation should constitute 1/6th of a person's income. (Shanti-Parvan 12.71)
3. A king ought to focus on empowering the livelihoods of the people. Mahabharata mentions three activities in this context: agriculture, cattle and animal husbandry, and trade. Bhishma advises Yudhisthira to protect people engaged in these activities. (Shanti-Parvan 12.89)
4. Like a gardener who nurtures their garden and only plucks an austere and just amount of flowers and fruits, a king must tax his people in a similar careful manner. (Shanti-Parvan 12.72)
5. Taxes should be collected with due consideration to the context of time and place. Taxes should be increased gradually. (Shanti-Parvan 12.89)

Shanti-Parvan, along with the subsequent Anushasana-parvan, remains a treasure trove of ancient wisdom into the best practices of human behavior in various contexts

\*\*\*

These verses and the translations are taken from the Introduction to Shanti Parvan, the 16th volume of the Critical Edition of Mahabharata published by the Bhandarkar Institute. It was edited by Shri Shripad Krishna Belvalkar: the founding father of the Bhandarkar Institute.

This is a minor glimpse of the incredible epic that is Mahabharata. Visit "18 Parvans of Mahabharata - An Introduction to the Incredible Epic" to learn more about this foundational heritage of the Indian civilization. - <https://bharatvidya.in/p/18-parvans-of-mahabharata>

\*\*\*

23

that a Brahman is someone very learned, and Shraman is the learned one who has renounced everything.

4. Ashoka says that spreading Dhamma through education and conviction (not through enforcement) has gradually changed people's thinking.
5. The nomination of Dhammamahamatras •knowledgeable and respected individuals whose job is to spread Dhamma among the public.
6. In the 6th Inscription, Ashoka mulls over a king's duties. He mentions that it is his (Samrat's) duty to be available for his people all the time irrespective of what he may be doing. He expresses his desire to work relentlessly (without "Trupti") for his people.
7. Ashoka declares that people of all genders, Panth, or religions are welcome to continue living in his state with their respective dhamma-shraddha. There is a mention of policies for the public in his and his neighboring kingdoms.

8. Along with the description of his visit to Bodhgaya, there is something about "Vana-bhojana" - hunting of animals is no more practiced. Instead, whenever the king goes to the forest, he presents gifts to the Brahman and the Shraman and seeks their advice on adhering to Dhamma.
9. In the 9th inscription, Ashoka denounces popular religious ceremonies and their excesses. Instead, he places a premium on following the Dhamma in daily life and urges to help Bhrahmanas and Shramanas. Dhan/Arth (Finance) is as important as Dhamma.
10. Ashoka denounces the pursuit of fame and a selfish chase for success.
11. Ashoka again emphasizes Dhamma's significance and says it is the best policy to follow.

25

### Paper in Ancient India

The antiquity of writing in India is a very tricky subject. Oral tradition preserved the lineage of ancient literature impeccably. However, the earliest-available evidence of writing only goes to the 4th/5th century B.C.E.

Against this backdrop, some references to paper usage in Ancient India offer a curious insight.

Alexander the Great had appointed Nearchus as his ambassador in Punjab faround 327 B.C.E. Nearchus, in his report on India, mentions seeing people making paper by beating cotton cloths. (Max Muller in History Of Ancient Sanskrit Literature). Pt. G. H. Ojha cites observations of Megasthenes in his book, The Palaeography of India (1894). Megasthenes (306 BCE) indicated that India in the Mauryan era used paper for writing horoscopes and almanacs.

Another reference comes from the article "Outline of Palaeography" by H.R.



Kapadia, in Bombay University Journal, May 1938. In the case of ancient Jaina literature, Kapadia mentions that though no Jaina work is found written in ancient times, it appears that India knew how to make paper in the 3rd century B.C.E. But, Prof. P.K. Gode cites the lack of available corroborative evidence in this regard. However, the mention of the process of making the paper from cotton rags remains common in numerous accounts given above.

P.G. Gosavi, a lecturer at the Handmade Paper Institute, Pune, offers a fascinating insight in his article on this process. "The quality in paper-making Comprises two main characteristics: Strength and Durability. ... Both these characteristics result from the chemical bond, which is termed as the degree of polymerisation ... the purest form of which is found in the cotton just plucked ... paper made from fresh cotton is durable for around 500 years. ... However for various purposes, rags have been the more popular raw material for paper-making, and they are the next best raw material for the purpose".

### Ancient Origins and evolution of Yoga

Probably the earliest allusion to Yoga can be traced back to a rare seal found in the Mohenjodaro excavation bearing the imprint of a Siva-like Yogi (M.G. Dhadphale in his preface to "Yogasutra of Patanjali by Prof. K.S. Arjunwadkar). Patanjali's "Yogasutra" is the first known composite guide on Yoga. Today we find little information on Patanjali, and his chronology remains a matter of conjecture. In his book "The Yoga of Patanjali," M. R. Yardi suggests that Patanjali belonged to the first century C.E.

However, various ideas of the Yoga philosophy appear separately and sometimes in unison in various ancient texts.

The word Yoga appears in the Vedanta literature. Especially the Shvetashvatara Upanishad, which is known as the locus classics of Yoga. It gives a vivid description of Yoga. The Bhagavadgitā elaborates upon the same, as well.

Jainism and Buddhism also have their Yogic traditions. Their terms sometimes differ from the Pāṣṭajala vocabulary; yet in doctrine, they are akin to what is known later as Rajayoga/Rājavidya/Rājaguhya.

Philosophically, Yoga shares many ideas with Buddhism and the Samkhya philosophy.

Yoga originates from the Sanskrit word "Yuj," which means "to join," "unite," "yoke," "attach," and "harness." Thus, Yoga means the union of two entities, which implies the method that can help Jivatman unite with the Paramatman. Late M. R. Yardi proposes another point of view in which the word "Yuj" denotes contemplation.

## About Bharat Vidya - The online learning platform for Indian History and Heritage

www.bharatvidya.in is an online learning platform of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI), which provides on-demand and self-paced access to online courses on diverse topics related to India's history and heritage.

The first six courses published on the platform are-

 $\hat{a}_{-}$  $\hat{a}_{-}$ 

## Veda-Vidya – Veda-s to Vedaanga-s (introductory course for beginners)

[illegible]

18 Parvans of Mahabharata – Introduction to the Incredible Epic

Kalidasa and Bhasa - Two Icons and Two Iconic Plays

Fundamentals of Archaeology

Digital Sanskrit Learning

Courses on Bharat Vidya are based on primary sources, and are purely academic. Through Bharat Vidya, we aim to reach people at large and schools and colleges that lack qualified resources on the subjects. The courses are compliant with the new National Education Policy.

Readers can also follow BORI on social media handles for regular updates on the Institute's new content, courses, and publications.

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/Bhandarkarl>

Facebook - <https://facebook.com/BORIPUNE>

LinkedIn - <https://linkedin.com/school/bhandarkar-oriental-research-institute/...>

YouTube - <https://youtube.com/@bhandarkarorientalresearch2553...>

Koo - <https://kooapp.com/profile/BORIIndia...>

Instagram - [https://instagram.com/bori\\_1917/](https://instagram.com/bori_1917/)

Medium - <https://medium.com/india-in-depth>

3

Niyamas being five and mention the same Yamas and Niyamas. The terminology used in these texts does not differ from that of the Patañjali Yogasūtra. Practices such as Hath Yoga differ from the Yoga philosophy. Hath Yoga is a narrower idea that focuses on postures and Mudras and is more physical in its approach than philosophical.

We can safely assert that, for the last 2000 years, the science and the philosophy of Yoga have remained a continuous tradition in essence and in

practice,. It has positively influenced people during all these centuries, as well. Unsurprisingly even today millions of people are turning to Yoga for the remedies of mind and body. There cannot be a more remarkable testimony to the relevance and influence of Yoga.

### Yoga Manuscripts at the Bhandarkar Institute

The Bhandarkar Institute is fortunate to host around 200 rare and old manuscripts on Yoga. The oldest manuscript in the collection dates back to 1413 CE. The name of the manuscript is "Yogashastrantargat Shloka."

### Publications on Yoga by the Bhandarkar Institute

Bhandarkar Institute has been actively engaged in the research on Yoga and has several publications on the topic. One of the very first publications of the Institute was the second revised edition of the Yogasutras of Patanjali with the scholium of Vyasa, edited by Rajaram Shastri Bodas. It was published in 1917. "The Yoga of Patanjali" by the Late Mr. M.R. Yardi remains one of the most influential books on the topic. It was first published in 1979. Later in 2006, the Institute published "Yogasutras of Patanjali" by K.S. Arjunwadkar and "Yoga Doctrines in Mahapurana-s" by G.K. Pai in 2007.

\*\*\*

### The Spread of Indian Medicine across the Ancient world

As we saw in previous threads, Indian civilisation had developed interactions with other ancient societies a few thousand years ago. And as the societies evolved, these interactions expanded to include exchanges of ideas on science, astronomy, mathematics, and medicine. Most of these civilisations had their own approach and methods of medicine. And yet Indian medicine proved

to be a significant export of ancient India.

In this thread, we will trace some examples of this.

This thread is based on excerpts from the article "The Expansion of Indian Medicine Abroad" by Jean Filliozat (College De France, Paris). It was published in "India's Contribution to World Thought and Culture" in 1964.

We see several parallels between the medicinal practices of ancient Greeks and ancient Indians. "For example, we find both in the Hippocratic Collection and in the Ayurvedic treatises the idea of breath (pneuma in Greek and prana in Sanskrit) ... pervading throughout the body to produce all movements and changes and also being a form of the wind in nature." However, it is impossible to conclude if one borrowed it from the other entirely.

Filliozat gives us two examples of Indian influence.

"An example of this is the similarity of a general theory explained in Plato's Timaeus with the famous tridosha theory of classical Ayurveda. Conceptions referred to by Plato, without any indication of origin, are isolated in the Greek tradition. "(In Plato's thinking) Health rests upon the correct association between three elements: pneuma, which represents the wind, chole, the gall, which represents the fire, and phlegma, which is a form of water. ... "These respectively correspond to prana, pitta, and Kapha - the tridosha of the Sanskrit tradition. As these doshas, especially the association between the gall and the

In Cambodia, where the name of Sustuta (Susruta) occurs in the Sanskrit epigraphy, several inscriptions give Sanskrit lists of drugs presented to temples under king Jayavarman VII around 1200 C.E.

In Tibet, Indian medicine got its greatest popularity. It had been fully adopted in

the country. In the 8th century, a significant work in four parts (catustantra, in Tibetan: Rgyud bzhi) entitled "Amritahridaya" is said to have been translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan. "The teaching embodied in this text is ascribed to Buddha Bhaisajyaguru. The original Sanskrit is unknown, and some scholars have supposed it never existed. But some passages are literal translations of quotations from Caraka or Susruta. This work was commented upon in Tibet and translated from Tibetan into Mongolian. It was brought to Russia at the end of the last century from Mongolia and gained great popularity there too.

Pozdneev partly published a Mongolian version together with a Russian translation."

On the other side, Indian medicine has been known in Persia and Arabic countries through Arabic versions or reports from Āyurvedic texts, chiefly in the initial period of the development of sciences in Islam. "In 850 C.E., the Persian physician Ali ibn Rabbun at Tabari has written a treatise, the "Firdaus ul Hikmat," in which is included detailed information about Indian medicine."

This is a brief but broad overview given by Jean Filliozat. And it is an awe-inspiring journey to say the least.

\*\*\*

35

Ptolemy's "Atlas Geographia" as a 'Poduke emporion' in the mid-first century C.E.

We find the reflection of this on the Indian side as well. Various works of the Sangam tradition, e.g., "Pattupattu" (written well before 300 CE), provide accounts of the Romans and the trade with the Romans. Here, the Romans were called Yavans (Yavanaha).

These references talk of the export of Black Pepper, Italian wine, and sounds made by loading and unloading ships, to mention a few points.

Despite having been such a booming town for almost a thousand years, Arikamedu was lost to history for centuries until the French East India Company accidentally discovered ancient ruins in the 1730s.

It was later excavated extensively by Sir Mortimer Wheeler, then Director General of A.S.I., in the 1940s and by Jean-Marie Casal. A.S.I. has continued to study the site ever since.

Excavations at the site have uncovered substantial evidence of a Roman trading settlement, including amphorae, lamps, glassware, coins, and beads made of stone, glass, gold, and gems.

These discoveries suggested that the settlement engaged in considerable trade with the Roman and later Byzantine world between the 2nd century B.C.E. to the 8th century C.E. That is around 1000 years.

Arikamedu was also a centre of manufacturing in its own right producing textiles, particularly the cotton fabric muslin, jewelry, stone, glass, and gold beads (It was particularly famous for this).

Sites such as Arikamedu tell the story of a comprehensive exchange between the Roman world and the Indian Subcontinent. It shows that the interaction

### Sources of information on Shankaracharya

Sri Shankara Bhagavatpada, known as Sri Adi Shankaracharya, was the eminent philosopher of Advaita philosophy. His contributions to Indian culture and civilisation are immense. The Acharya's life history has been told through various biographies. This write-up enlists five significant treatises that provide rich

information on Adi Shankara.

1. "Sankara-Vijaya" by Anantanandagiri

This biography is considered to be older than others. It contains 74 prakaranas or chapters. Many chapters were devoted to the Acharya's victory over heretic sects.

2. "Sankara-Vijaya" by Vyasacala

This was printed and published by the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library of Madras in 1954. This is an excellent Kavya in 12 cantos, totalling 1,192 verses.

3. "Sankaradigvijaya"

This was 1st published in Nagari script. This biography has become popular because it has been recently printed in some of the regional languages and, due to the large amount of information on events in the life of Adi Shankara found in it.

4. "Sankara-Vijaya-Vilasa"

This biography of Shankaracharya is ascribed to an ascetic Cidvilasa. At the end of each chapter, the colophon states that it is a story of Adi Shankara narrated by Cidvilasa to Vignanakanda.

39

### Ancient Origins of Idli

We all love southern dishes, and they are popular all over India. The nutritional value of all these foods is excellent. Like many other Indian dishes, they have a long history and a great cultural significance. And Idli perhaps the most well-known and loved of these delicacies.

It might surprise many that the innocuous Idli comes with a long history and



heritage. The oldest available reference to Idli goes back 1100 years, to the ninth century B.C.E.

Idli is referred to as 'Iddlige' by Shivkoti Acharya, author of the ninth-century Kannada literary work 'Vaddaradhane .'

In the eleventh-century Kannada encyclopedia Lokopkar, the composer Chamundarai has described the Idli recipe.

Idli's reference is also found in the magnificent encyclopedia "Manasollhas," composed by King Someshwar III around 1129.

There is a phrase like Idrika, and the word "Indulika" is used in the text. Suffice to say, similar to many other celebrated and venerated recipes of India, Idli too carries a rich and unique legacy of its own.

\*\*\*

41

A few examples: - a recipe for gun powder mixture - chemical tests for identification of ores - methods of collecting pure metal using the principle of displacement in a sequence that fits the modern electrochemical series.

It won't be an overstatement to assert that the history of Indian alchemy, chemistry, and metallurgy would not be complete without considering the contents of this book.

The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute is proud to publish the translation of such a seminal text. Dr. Vijaya Deshpande authors the translation.

\*\*\*

43

Influences on the Local Deities

These influences can be seen in the localisation of the Indian deities. We can see its extent in the article written by Daniel Berounsky - Tibetan ritual texts concerning the local deities of the Buryat Aga Autonomous Region, Part II.

It goes as follows - Indra (dbang po), Yama (gshin rje), Varuna (chu bdag), Yaká'Éa (gnod sbyin), Agnideva (me lha), Raká'Éasa (srin po), VÄ•yudeva (rlung lha), BhÅ«ta ('byung po), Brahma (tshangs pa) and VanadevÄ« (sa'i lha mo). Even today, one of the area's most popular deities and temples is the Tibetan version of Saraswati. <https://www.buddhistdoor.net/features/the-mystical-image-of-sarasvati-in-buryatia/>

### Ramayana -

The Ramayana is also known in Siberian folklore. The Research Institute of the Siberian Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. has the manuscripts of Prof. Golstunsky's work on a short version of the Ramayana in the Kalmuk language.

### Gangin-os, or Holy Water of Gahga in Siberia

Dr. Lokesh Chandra recounts a personal experience in his article and the story behind it. "The Siberian Buryats revere the Holy Water of GangÄ«. The writer has carried it to these remote regions. Before receiving the Holy Water, the Patriarch recited Sanskrit mantras and visibly moved. The Patriarch continued reciting Sanskrit mantras while GangÄ«-jala poured from the Indian to the Buryat vessel.

### Ä•vurveda in Siberia

45

From < 3000 km<sup>2</sup> to 25,00,000 km<sup>2</sup> - the Journey of the  
Maratha Empire

In 1645, the seed of what will become an Empire a century later was sown by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in his teen years.

It began with the conquest of Fort Torna, which lies approximately 50 km southwest of Pune. In the next 25 years, the Maratha kingdom rose to prominence under the exemplary leadership of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Its farthest frontier was Gingee in Tamil Nadu and its impregnable fort. Later, the fort proved the strongest bastion in the most delicate hour.

Shortly after Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's Death, Emperor Aurangzeb invaded the kingdom, and what ensued was 27 years of massive struggle in the Deccan.

A great turmoil and an epic clash of will and fortitude in every sense, the Decan Wars shaped the future of the Indian Subcontinent.

These 27 years saw the remarkable but short reign of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, his brutal execution by Emperor Aurangzeb, the increasingly intrusive presence of European powers, internal political strife in Mughal and Maratha durbar, Aurangzeb's conquest of Bahamani forces, the fierce resistance of Marathas under Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj (and Maharani Tarabai, Senapati Santaji Ghorpade & Senapati Dhanaji Jadhav), the captivity of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, and then finally, the Death of the Emperor Aurangzeb.

After a short internal struggle, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj took reign of the kingdom, and he appointed Balaji Vishwanath as his Peshwa.

An inflection point in time, this juncture harbingered the century of Maratha Supremacy.

rulers (Shah Jahan to Tipu Sultan), European powers, Rajputs & other Hindu rulers - had far-reaching implications on the Modern history of India.

\*\*\*

49

### 5. Pre-Harappan Pit Dwelling Site of Girawad (Haryana)

Pit-dwelling site is a peculiar type of settlement. In such sites, we find that ancient men dug pits 3 to 5 meters in diameter in the ground for occupation.

These are found in places that experience harsh winters.

These are excerpts from a lecture by Dr. Pramod Jogalekar, which is a part of the online course "Fundamentals of Archaeology". The course is available for on-demand access on [www.bharatvidya.in](http://www.bharatvidya.in), the online learning platform of B.O.R.I., at the following link - <https://bharatvidya.in/p/fundamentals-of-archaeology>. The course fee is INR 1800.

\*\*\*

5

"Vedvidya From Veda-s to Vedaanga-s" is an online course by B.O.R.I., available on [www.bharatvidya.in](http://www.bharatvidya.in) at the following link - <https://bharatvidya.in/p/veda-s-to-vedanga-s>.

The course offers a comprehensive introduction to Vedic Literature and also draws upon Vedic tradition in offering glimpses of oral tradition and unique original footage of a Yajna and Veda Pathashaalaa. The course fee is INR 1500.

\*\*\*

However, the small trading town of Lothal had a natural nemesis: floods. Every few years or floods would ravage the village. The flood of 2,350 BCE was particularly brutal, and it levelled the town completely.

The people of Lothal created an opportunity out of the calamity.

While planning the new town, or rather a new city, they added an artificial dock for berthing larger ships, and in a more significant number than was hitherto possible. The engineers built the dock away from the main water-stream but still close enough to the city so that the vessels could be safely berthed even during the storms.

In the first instance, a trapezoid basin, 214 Å— 36 meters, was excavated on the eastern margin of the city and enclosed with massive brick walls. The excavated earth was used to make bricks for constructing the wharf, warehouse, and private dwelling. The structure's design reveals that all problems relating to dockyard engineering, such as the rate of silting, the velocity of the current, and the thrust of water in the basin, were carefully considered. First-class kiln-fired bricks were used in the construction.

Dr. S. R. Rao (A.S.I.), in his 1964 essay "Shipping in Ancient India," offers an astonishing comparison of Lothal with the modern-day ports of Mumbai and Vishakhapatnam.

Name of the port

1. Lothal

2. Bombay

3. Visakhapatnam

Name of the dock-  
yard

Length Width Depth Remarks

209.3 m(E) 34.7 m(S)

224 m(W) 36.4 m(N)

(a) Mere Weather

(b) Hughes

(divisible in 2 compartments of varying length)

152.4 m

304.8 m

111.46 m

19.96 m

30.48 m

4.15 m

at high

tide; 2 m.

at low tide

6.71 m

10.06 m

Minimum

depth

over silt

-do-

-do-

18.29 m 4.27 m Below L.W.

==