

SUMMARY NOTES

CHAPTER 1 & CHAPTER 2 OF

ANCIENT INDIA

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The Importance of Ancient Indian History

CHAPTER I

- ***People are not considered civilised unless they know writing.*** This is also true of the languages that we speak today. Ancient Indian history is interesting because India proved to be a crucible of numerous races. The pre-Aryans, the Indo-Aryans, the Greeks, the Scythians, the Hunas, the Turks, etc., made India their home.
- The kings who tried to establish their authority from the Himalaya to Cape Comorin and from the valley of Brahmaputra in the east to the land between Indus in the west were Universally practiced were ***called chakravartins.***
- ***This kind of unity was attained at least twice. In 4th century B.C. Asoka extended his power to the whole country, except for the extreme South.***
- ***Again, in the fourth century A.D. Samudragupta carried his victorious arms*** from Ganga to the borders of the Tamil Land.
- In seventh century the ***Chalukya king, Pulakeshin defeated Harshavardhana*** who was called the lord of the whole of north India.
- ***Despite the lack of political unity political formations, all over India assumed more or less a single form.***
- We find continuous efforts for the linguistic and cultural unity of the country. ***In the third century B.C. Prakrit served as the lingua franca of the country.*** Throughout the major portion of India, ***Asoka's inscriptions were written in the Prakrit language.***
- ***Later Sanskrit acquired the same position*** and served as the state language in the remotest parts of the country. ***The process became prominent in the Gupta period*** in the fourth century A.D.
- ***Although politically the country was divided into numerous small states in the post-Gupta period, the official documents were written in Sanskrit.***
- ***In north India arose the varna/caste system*** which came to prevail almost all over the country. The foreigners who came to India in ancient times were absorbed in one caste or the other. The caste system affected even the Christians and the Muslims. The converts belonged to some caste, and even when they left Hinduism to join the new religion, they continued to maintain some of their old caste practices.

The Construction of Ancient Indian History

CHAPTER 2

- The ancient Indians left innumerable material remains. ***The stone temples in south India and the brick monasteries in eastern India*** still stand to remind us 'of the great building activities of the past'.
- ***Since most sites have been dug vertically,*** they provide a good chronological sequence of material culture.
- ***Horizontal diggings, being very expensive, are very few in number,*** with the result that excavations do not give us a full and complete picture of material life in many phases of ancient Indian history.
- ***In the dry climate of*** western Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and north-western India antiquities are found in a better state of preservation, ***but in the moist and humid climate*** of the middle Gangetic basin and in the deltaic regions even iron implements suffer corrosion and mud structures become difficult to detect.
- ***It is only in the phase of burnt brick structures*** or stone structures that impressive and large-scale, remains are found in moist and alluvial areas.
- Some people in south India buried along with the dead, their tools, weapons, pottery and other belongings in the graves, which were encircled by big pieces of stone. ***These structures are called megaliths,*** although all megaliths do not fall in this category.
- The science which enables us to dig the old mounds in a systematic manner, in successive layers, and to form an idea of the material life of the people is called ***archaeology.***
- ***Material Remains' dates are fixed according to the radio-carbon method,*** for which facilities exist in India.
- ***The history of climate and vegetation is known through an examination of plant residues, and especially through pollen-analysis.*** Thus, on this basis it is suggested that agriculture was practised in Rajasthan and Kashmir as far back as 6000 B.C.
- An ***examination of animal bones enables us to find out whether the animals were domesticated,*** and also to point out the uses to which they were put.

COINS:

- ***The study of coins is called numismatics.*** Paper came into use in fourteenth century in India, before that ***ancient coins were made of metal-copper, silver, gold, or lead.***
- ***Coin moulds made of burnt clay have been discovered in large numbers. Most of them belong to the Kushan period*** i.e. the first three Christian centuries. The use of such moulds in the post-Gupta period almost disappeared.
- Since ***there was nothing like the modern banking system in ancient times***, people deposited money in earthenware and also in brass vessels and maintained them as precious hoards on which they could fall back in time of need.
- ***Our earliest coins contain a few symbols, but the later coins mention the names of kings, gods or dates.*** The areas where they are found indicate the region of their circulation. ***This has enabled us to reconstruct the history of several ruling dynasties***, especially of the Indo-Greeks who came to India from north Afghanistan and ruled here in the second and first centuries B.C.
- ***Coins also throw significant light on economic history.*** Some coins were issued by the guilds of merchants and goldsmiths with the permission of the rulers. This shows that crafts and commerce had become important. Coins helped transactions on a large scale and contributed to trade.
- ***We get the largest number of coins in post- Maurya times. These were made of lead, potin, copper, bronze, silver and gold.***
- ***The Guptas issued the largest number of gold coins.*** All this indicates that trade and commerce flourished, especially in post-Maurya and Gupta times. But the fact that only a ***few coins belonging to the post-Gupta period have been found indicates the decline of trade and commerce at that time.***
- Coins also contain religious symbols and legends which throw light on the art and religion of the time.

INSCRIPTIONS:

- ***Far more important than coins are inscriptions. Their study is called epigraphy***, and the ***study of the old writing used in inscriptions and other old records is called palaeography.***
- Inscriptions were carved on seals, stone pillars, rocks, copper plates, temple walls and bricks or images.

- *In the country as a whole the earliest inscriptions were recorded on stone.*
- *But in the early centuries of the Christian era copper plates began to be used for this purpose.*
- Even then the practice of engraving inscriptions on stone continued in south India on a large scale.
- We have also in that region a ***large number of inscriptions recorded on the walls of the temples to serve as permanent records.***
- *The earliest inscriptions were written in the Prakrit language in the third century B.C. Sanskrit was adopted as an epigraphic medium in the second century A.D and its use became widespread in the fourth and fifth centuries. Even then Prakrit continued to be employed.*
- *Inscriptions began to be composed in regional languages in the ninth and tenth centuries.*
- *Most inscriptions bearing on the history of Maurya, post-Maurya and Gupta times have been published in a series of collections called Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.*
- In the case of south India topographical lists of inscriptions have been brought out. Still there are more than 50,000 inscriptions, mostly of south India, which await publication.
- The ***Harappan inscriptions***, which await decipherment, seem to have ***been written in a pictographic script*** in which ideas and objects were expressed in the form of pictures.
- ***Ashokan inscriptions were engraved in the Brahmi script***, which was ***written from left to right***. But some were also incised in the ***Kharosthi script, which was written from right to left***. However, the ***Brahmi script prevailed in the whole country, except for the north-western part.***
- ***Greek and Aramaic scripts were employed in writing Ashokan inscriptions in Afghanistan.***
- ***Brahmi continued to be the main script till the end of Gupta times.***
- An epigraphist can decipher most inscriptions of the country up to about the eighth century, if he has carefully learnt Brahmi and its variations. But afterwards we notice strong regional variations in this script, which is called by different names.

- ***The earliest inscriptions are found on the seals of Harappa*** belonging to about 2500 B.C. They have not been deciphered so far. ***The oldest inscriptions deciphered so far were issued by Asoka in the third century B.C.***
- ***An Ashokan' pillar inscription was found by Firoz Shah Tughlaq in Meerut.*** He brought it to Delhi and asked the pandits of his empire to decipher it, but they failed to do so.
- The same difficulty was faced by the British when in the last quarter of the eighteenth century they discovered Ashokan inscriptions. ***These epigraphs were first deciphered in 1837 by James Prinsep***, a civil servant in the employ of the East India Company in Bengal.
- ***We have various types of inscriptions.*** Some convey ***royal orders and decisions regarding social, religious and administrative matters to officials and people in general. Ashokan inscriptions belong to this category.***
- ***Others are votive records*** of the followers of Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishnavism, Saivism, etc., who put up pillars, tablets, temples or images as marks of devotion.
- ***Still other types eulogise the attributes and achievements of kings*** and conquerors, and never speak of their defeats or weaknesses. ***To this category belongs the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta.***
- ***Finally, we have many donative records*** which refer specially to gifts of money, cattle, land, etc., mainly for religious purposes, made not only by kings and princes but also by artisans and merchants.
- ***Inscriptions recording land grants, made mainly by chiefs and princes***, are very important for the study of the land system and administration in ancient India. ***These were mostly engraved on copper plates.*** They record the grants of lands, revenues and villages made to monks, priests, temples, monasteries, vassals and officials. ***They were written in all languages, such as Prakrit, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu.***

LITERARY SOURCES:

- Although the ancient Indians knew writing, as early as 2500 B.C. ***our most ancient manuscripts are not older than the fourth century A.D.*** and have been found in Central Asia.
- ***In India they were written on birch bark and palm leaves, but in Central Asia***, where the Prakrit language had spread from India, manuscripts were also written on sheep leather and wooden tablets.

- Although **old Sanskrit manuscripts are found all over the country**, they mostly belong to south India, Kashmir and Nepal.
- The ***Rig Veda may be assigned to circa 1500-1000 B.C.***, but the collections of the ***Atharvaveda, Yajurveda, the Brahmanas and the Upanishads belong roughly to 1000-500 B.C.***
- ***Almost every Vedic text contains interpolations***, which generally appear at its beginning or end but are not rare in its middle.
- The ***Rig Veda mainly contains prayers, while the later Vedic texts mainly comprise not only prayers but also rituals, magic and mythological stories. However, the Upanishads contain philosophical speculations.***
- The two epics and the major Puranas seem to have been finally compiled by *circa* A D. 400. ***Of the epics the Mahabharata is older in age*** and possibly reflects the state of affairs from the 10th century BC to the 4th century AD.
- Originally it consisted of 8800 verses and was called *Jaya Samhita* or the collection dealing with victory. These were raised to 24000 and came to be known as ***Bharat, named after one of the earliest Vedic tribes.*** The final compilation brought the verses to 100,000 which came to be known as the *Mahabharata* or the *Satasahasri, Samhita*. It contains ***narrative (for Vedic times), descriptive (post-Vedic times) and didactic material (Post Maurya and Gupta times).***
- ***Ramayana of Valmiki*** (originally 6000 verses raised to 12000 and eventually to 24000) was composed later than Mahabharata.
- ***Grand public sacrifices to be made by princes and men of substance belonging to the three higher varnas are set out in the Shrautasutras, which provide for several ostentatious royal coronation ceremonies.***
- ***Similarly, domestic rituals connected with birth, naming, sacred thread investiture, marriage, funerals, etc. are prescribed in the Grihyasutras. Both relate to 600-300 B.C.***
- ***Sulvasutras, prescribe various kinds of measurements for the construction of sacrificial altars. They mark the beginnings of the study of geometry and mathematics.***
- ***The religious books of the Jainas and the Buddhists*** refer to historical persons and incidents.
- ***The earliest Buddhist texts were written in Pali***, which was spoken in Magadha or south Bihar, and was basically a form of Prakrit.
- The most important and interesting portion of the non-canonical literature is provided by the stories of the previous births of Gautama Buddha. It was believed that before

he was actually born as Gautama, the Buddha passed through over 550 births, in many cases in the form of animals. **Each birth story is called a Jataka, which is a folk tale.**

- The **Jatakas throw invaluable light on the social and economic conditions** of the period between the fifth and second century BC. They also make incidental references to political events in the age of the Buddha.
- The **Jaina texts were written in Prakrit** and were eventually compiled in AD sixth century in Valabhi in Gujarat. It helps us to reconstruct the political history of eastern UP and Bihar in the age of Mahavira. It refers repeatedly to trade and traders.
- To the class of **secular literature belong the law-books, called the Dharmasutras and Smritis, which, together with their commentaries, are called Dharmashastras.**
- They prescribe the duties to be performed by the different varnas as well as by kings and their officials. They set out the rules for marriage together with the laws according to which property is to be held, sold, and inherited. They also prescribe punishments for persons guilty of theft, assault, murder, adultery, and the like.
- An important law-book is the **Arthashastra of Kautilya**. The text is divided into fifteen books. The earliest portions reflect the state of society and economy in the age of the Mauryas. It provides rich material for the study of ancient Indian polity and economy.
- Of the **non-religious texts, the grammatical works Astadhyayi of Panini** is important for historical construction. Panini lived in the north-western part of the subcontinent. He is not mentioned in the Pali texts which principally represent Bihar and UP.
- Panini is dated to around 450 B.C. by **V.S. Agrawala, who has written about Panini's India in both Hindi and English**. In his view, no other text provides as much information about the janapadas or territorial states of pre-Mauryan times as Panini's does.
- **Patanjali's commentary on Panini**, dated 150 BC, supplies valuable information about post-Maurya times.
- We also have the **works of Bhasa, Sudraka, Kalidasa, and Banabhatta**. Apart from their literary value, they mirror the conditions of the times to which the writers belonged.
- **The works of Kalidasa** comprise kavyas and dramas, the most famous of which is **Abhijnanashakuntalam**. Besides being great creative compositions, they provide us with glimpses of the social and cultural life of the Guptas.

- In addition to Sanskrit sources, we have some of the ***earliest Tamil texts in the corpus of Sangam literature***. This literature was compiled by poets who assembled together called 'sangam' and literature produced was called Sangam literature.
- The Sangam literature comprises about 30,000 lines of poetry arranged in eight ***anthologies called Ettuttokai***.
- The poems are collected in ***groups of hundreds such as Purananuru*** (The Four Hundred of the Exterior). There ***are two main groups Patinenkil Kannakku (The Eighteen Lower Collections) and Pattuppattu (The Ten Songs)***. The former is generally assumed to be older than the latter, and hence is considered to be of great historical importance.
- The Sangam texts have several layers, they can be ***detected on the basis of stages in social evolution***.
- ***The Sangam texts are different from the Vedic texts, particularly the Rig Veda. They do not constitute religious literature***. The short and long poems were composed by numerous poets in praise of various heroes and heroines and are thus secular in nature.
- ***They are not primitive songs, but literature of high quality***. Many poems mention a warrior or a chief or a king by name and describe in detail his military exploits.
- ***The Sangam texts refer to many settlements, including Kaveripattanam*** whose flourishing existence has now been archaeologically corroborated. What it says about trade and commerce is confirmed by foreign accounts and archaeological finds.

FOREIGN ACCOUNTS

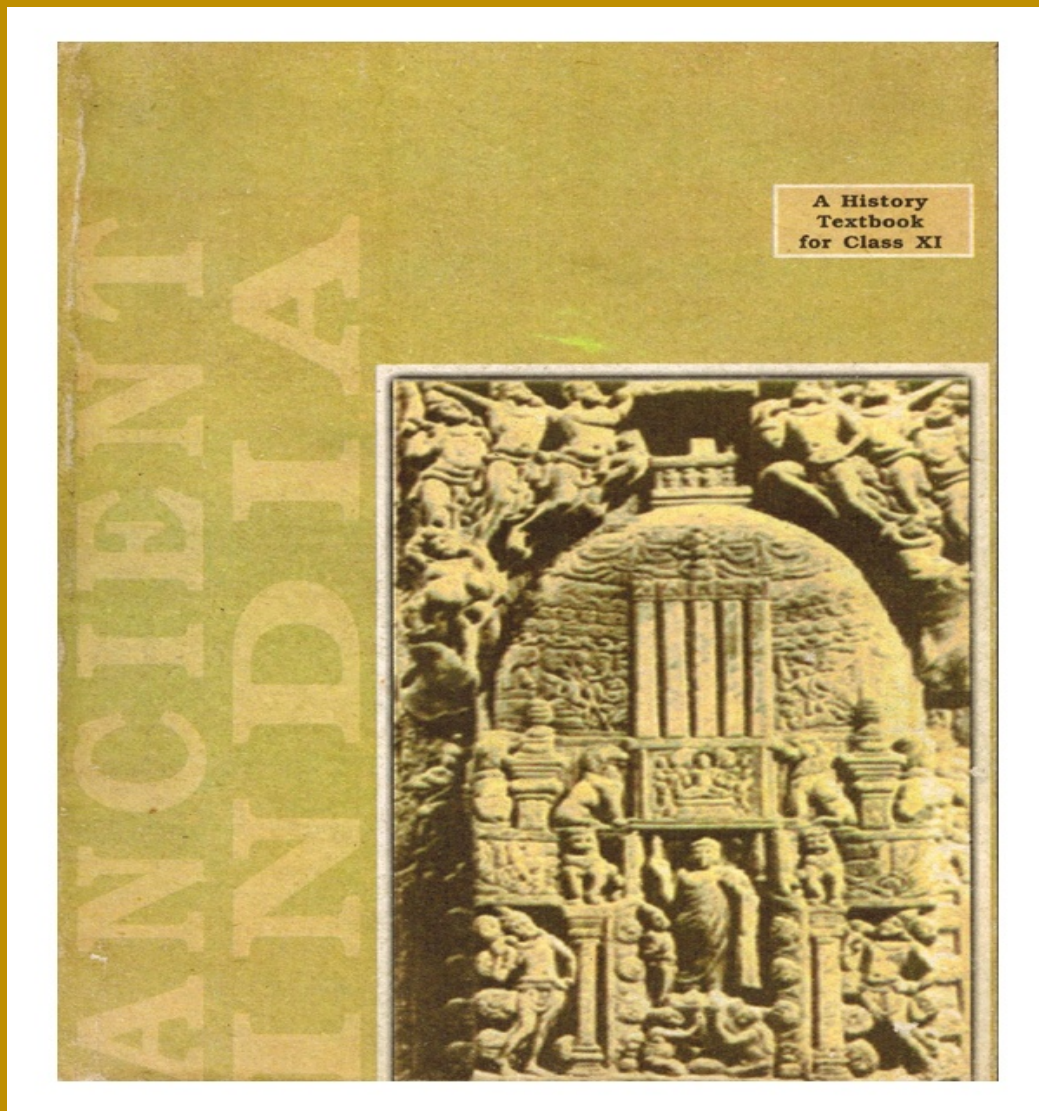
- Indigenous literature can be supplemented by foreign accounts. It is remarkable that ***Alexander's invasion finds no mention in Indian sources***, and it is entirely on the basis of the Greek sources that we have to reconstruct the history of his Indian exploits.
- The ***Greek writers mention Sandrokottas, a contemporary of Alexander the Great, who invaded India in 326 BC. Prince Sandrokottas is identified with Chandragupta Maurya, whose date of accession is fixed at 322 BC***.
- ***The Indika of Megasthenes, who came to the court of Chandragupta Maurya***, has been preserved only in fragments quoted by subsequent classical writers. It furnishes valuable information about administration, social class and economic activities in the Maurya period.

- ***The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea and Ptolemy's Geography***, both written in Greek, provide valuable data for the study of ancient geography and commerce. The date ascribed to the first ranges between AD 80 and 115, whereas the second is attributed to about AD 150.
- ***Periplus of the Erythrean Sea***, which was written by an anonymous author, describes the ***Roman trade in the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean***.
- ***Pliny's Naturalis Historia***, which relates to the first century, was written in Latin, and tells us about ***trade between India and Italy***.
- ***Of the Chinese travellers, mention may be made of Fa-hsien and Hsuan Tsang***. Both of them were Buddhists and came to this country to visit the Buddhist shrines and to study Buddhism. ***The first came in the beginning of the fifth century and the second in the second quarter of the seventh century***.
- ***Fa-hsien describes the social, religious, and economic conditions in India in the age of the Guptas, and Hsuan Tsang presents a similar account of India in the age of Harsha***.

HISTORICAL SENSE

- ***The Puranas speak of four ages called krita, treta, dvapara, and kali***.
- ***Vikrama Samvat began in 57-8 BC, Shaka Samvat in AD 78, and the Gupta era in AD 319***.
- During the third century BC Ashokan inscriptions demonstrate considerable historical sense. Ashoka ruled for thirty-seven years. ***His inscriptions record events that happened from the eighth to the twenty-seventh regnal year***.
- Similarly, in the first century BC ***Kharavela of Kalinga*** records a large number of events in his life year by year in the ***Hathigumpha inscription***.
- Indians display a considerable historical sense in biographical writings, a good example of which is the composition of the ***Harshacharita by Banabhatta*** in the seventh century. It describes the early career of Harshavardhana. Although highly exaggerated, it gives an excellent idea of court life under Harsha and the social and religious life in his age.
- Later, several other charitas or biographies were written. ***Sandhyakara Nandi's Ramacharita*** (twelfth century) narrates the story of the conflict between the Kaivarta peasants and the Pala prince Ramapala, resulting in the latter's victory.
- ***Bilhana's Vikramankadevacharita*** recounts the achievement of his patron, Vikramaditya VI (1076-1127), the Chalukya king of Kalyan.

- *Similar historical works may have been written in south India*, but thus far only one such account has been discovered. This is called ***Mushika Vamsha*** and was written by Atula in the eleventh century.
- However, the best example of the earliest historical writing is provided by the ***Rajatarangini or The Stream of Kings written by Kalhana*** in the twelfth century. It is a string of biographies of the kings of Kashmir and can be considered to be the first work to possess several characteristics of historical writing as it is understood today.
- Ancient history has so far been constructed principally on the basis of literary sources, foreign and indigenous. Coins and inscriptions play some part, but the texts receive greater weightage.



SUMMARY NOTES

CHAPTER 3 & CHAPTER 4 OF

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CHAPTER 3

The Geographical Setting

- The Indian subcontinent is a well-defined geographical unit, mostly situated in the tropical zone. It is bounded by the ***Himalayas on the north and seas on the other three sides***. The Himalayas protect the country against the cold arctic winds blowing from Siberia through Central Asia. This keeps the climate of northern India fairly warm throughout the year.
- On the north-west, the ***Sulaiman mountain ranges which are in southward continuation with the Himalayas, could be crossed through the Khyber and Gomal passes***. The Sulaiman ranges are joined southward in Baluchistan by ***the Kirthar ranges which could be crossed through the Bolan pass***. Through these passes two-way traffic between ***India and Central Asia has been going on from prehistoric times***.
- ***Even the Hindukush, the westward extension of the Himalayan system***, did not form an insuperable barrier between the Indus system and the Oxus system. The passes facilitated trade and cultural contacts between India on the one hand and Central and West Asia on the other.
- ***The Pamir plateau did not prevent Kashmir from becoming a transmitting centre of Buddhism for the adjacent areas of Central Asia***.
- ***The foothills of the Himalayas lent themselves to easier clearance than the jungles on the alluvial soil of the plains***. It was easy to cross rivers in these areas because of their narrower width, and hence the earliest routes skirted along the foothills of the Himalayas from the west to the east and vice versa. It was therefore natural that the ***earliest agricultural settlements were founded in the foothills and uplands, and trade routes followed the terai route***.

RIVERS

- The heart of historical India is formed by its important rivers which are swollen by the tropical monsoon rains.
- These consist of the plains of the Indus system, the Indo-Gangetic -divide, the Gangetic basin, and the Brahmaputra basin.

- ***Proceeding from west to east we find the annual rainfall gradually increasing*** from 25 cm to over 250 cm. The Indus vegetation based on 25 to 37 cm rainfall and possibly the western Gangetic vegetation based on 37 to 60 cm rainfall ***could be cleared with stone and copper implements and made fit for cultivation, but this was not possible in the case of the mid-Gangetic vegetation*** based on 60 to 125 cm rainfall, and certainly not in the case of the lower Gangetic and Brahmaputra vegetation based on 125 to 250 cm rainfall.
- The thickly forested areas, which also had hard soil, could be cleared only with the aid of iron implements which became available at a much later stage. ***Therefore, the natural resources of the less rainy western area were utilized first, and large-scale human settlements generally spread from west to east.***
- The Indus and the western Gangetic plains ***principally produced wheat and barley, while the middle and lower Gangetic plains largely produced rice***, which also became the staple diet in Gujarat and south of the Vindhyas.
- ***The Harappan culture originated and flourished in the Indus Valley***; the Vedic culture originated in the North-West Frontier Province and the Punjab and flourished in the western Gangetic basin; the post-Vedic culture, mainly based on the use of iron, thrived in the mid-Gangetic basin. The lower Gangetic valley and north Bengal really came into focus in the age of the Guptas; and finally, the Brahmaputra valley covering Assam gained importance in early medieval times.
- Above all, it was the rivers that demarcated political and cultural boundaries, which were also formed by mountains. Thus, in the eastern part of the Indian peninsula, ***the area known as Kalinga, covering the coastal belt of Orissa, was situated between the Mahanadi to the north and the Godavari to the south.*** Similarly, ***Andhra Pradesh largely lay between the Godavari to the north and the Krishna to the south.***
- The deltaic plains formed by these two rivers (Godavari and Krishna) at their mouths shot into prominence by the beginning of the Christian era when they ***became studded with towns and ports under the Satavahanas and their successors.***
- Finally, a major part of ***Tamil Nadu was situated between the Krishna to the north and the Kaveri to the south.*** The Kaveri valley extended in the south roughly to the Vaigai river, and in the north to the south Pennar river. ***It formed a distinct geographical zone and became the seat of the Chola power a little before the beginning of the Christian era.***
- This area was different from ***north Tamil Nadu, which consisted of uplands and came into prominence under the Pallavas in the fourth-sixth centuries.***
- ***The eastern part of the peninsula is bounded by the Coromandel coast.*** Although the coastline is flanked by the Eastern Ghats or steps, the ***ghats are not very high and have several openings caused by the eastward flow of the rivers into the Bay of Bengal.*** Thus, ***communication between the eastern coast, on the one hand, and other parts of Andhra and Tamil Nadu, on the other, was not difficult in ancient times.***

- The western part of the peninsula does not have such distinct regional units. We can, however, locate ***Maharashtra between the Tapi (or Damanganga) to the north and the Bhima to the south.***
- ***The area covered by Karnataka seems to have been situated between*** the Bhima and the upper regions of the Krishna to the north and the Tungabhadra to the south. ***For a long time, the Tungabhadra provided a natural frontier between the warring powers to its north and south.***
- ***The sea coast along the western part of the peninsula is called the Malabar coast.*** Although the coast came to have several ports and small kingdoms, communications between the coast and the adjoining areas of Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Kerala were rendered ***difficult by the Western Ghats with difficult passes to cross.***
- In between the Indus and the Gangetic systems to the north and the Vindhya mountains to the south lies a vast stretch of land which is ***divided into two units by the Aravalli mountains.***
- Situated at the end of the north-western portion of the Deccan plateau, Gujarat includes the less rainy Kathiawar peninsula. ***The coastal area of this state is fairly indented, and therefore suitable for the establishment of several harbours.*** Therefore, since ancient times, ***Gujarat has been famous for its coastal and foreign trade,*** and its people have proved to be enterprising traders.
- ***The eastern part of Madhya Pradesh, mostly covered by the Vindhyas, became historically important in Gupta times*** in the fourth and fifth centuries. However, western MP includes Malwa, which has been the scene of historical activities from the sixth century BC onwards.
- ***Malwa served as an important hinterland for the Gujarat ports, and many wars were fought*** between the Deccan and the northern powers for the possession of Malwa and Gujarat. ***The Shakas and the Satavahanas fought*** for the possession of this key area in the first and second centuries, and the ***Marathas and the Rajputs*** in the eighteenth century.

NATURAL FRONTIERS AND CULTURAL CONTACT

- ***The Vindhya mountains cut right across India from west to east and formed a boundary between north and south India.*** The speakers of the Dravidian languages lived south of the Vindhyas, and of the Indo-Aryan languages north of them. In between lived tribal peoples in the Vindhya regions where they are still found.
- The coastal areas along the Eastern and Western Ghats attracted settlers and traders, and the south was engaged in flourishing foreign trade.
- A two-way traffic among them for resources ***produced a network of interconnection between the different regions of the country and created composite culture.***

MINERALS AND OTHER RESOURCES

- *In historical times, more temples and pieces of sculpture were made of stone in the Deccan and south India than in the plains of northern India.*
- *Copper (it was first metal to be used)* is widely distributed in India. The richest copper mines are located in the Chhotanagpur plateau, *particularly in Singhbhum district.*
- *Rich copper deposits are also to be found in the Khetri mines in Rajasthan.*
- India today produces virtually *no tin, and this was scarce even in ancient times. As bronze is made by mixing tin with copper, we do not find many bronze objects in prehistoric times.*
- *The Harappans possibly procured some tin from Rajasthan but their main supply came from Afghanistan, and even this was limited.* Hence, although the Harappa people used bronze tools, their number in comparison to those found in western Asia, Egypt, and Crete is very small, and their tools contain a smaller percentage of tin.
- *Therefore, the major part of India had no proper Bronze Age, that is, an age in which tools and implements were largely made of bronze.*
- *The formation of the first empire in Magadha* in the sixth to fourth centuries BC *owed much to the availability of iron just south of this region.*
- *Andhra possesses large lead resources,* which explains the large numbers of *lead coins in the kingdom of the Satavahanas, who ruled over Andhra and Maharashtra* in the first two centuries of the Christian era. Lead may have also been obtained from towns in Rajasthan.
- *The earliest coins, called punch-marked coins, were made largely of silver, although this metal is rarely found in India.*
- Large quantities of gold dust, which were carried by river streams from the Himalayas, were *collected from the deposits of river channels in the plains.* These deposits are *called placers.* Gold is found in the Kolar goldfields of Karnataka.

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

- *Gautama Buddha* used to suspend his mission of teaching Buddhism annually for four months during the rainy season and *stay at such places as Rajagriha, Vaishali, and Shravasti for varsha-vasa.*
- In ancient India, rivers came to be regarded as divine. *The Rig veda depicts the Sarasvati as a goddess. However, in post-Vedic times, the Ganga emerges as the mother goddess,* and the tradition persists to this day.
- Many ancient texts condemn the slaughter of animals. *Gautama Buddha was the first person to stress the need to protect cows in a Pali canonical text called the Suttanipata.*

PRINCIPAL LANGUAGE GROUPS

- India is a land of numerous languages. According to Grierson, *the editor and compiler of The linguistic Survey of India, nearly 180 languages and about 550 dialects are spoken by Indians.*
- *These languages belong to four important groups: the Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman, Dravidian, and Indo-Aryan.*
- *The Austro-Asiatic languages in India seem to be the earliest* and are generally known because of Munda speech.
- The speakers of this language are found as far east as Australia and as far west as Madagascar near the eastern coast of Africa. *They, however, have a large number of speakers in Southeast Asia.*

AUSTRO-ASIATIC

- *The Austric language family is divided into two subfamilies, Austric-Asiatic* spoken in the Indian subcontinent and *Austronesian* spoken in Australia and Southeast Asia.
- *The Austric-Asiatic subfamily has two branches: Munda and Mon-Khmer.* Mon-Khmer represents the Khasi language which is spoken in the Khasi and Jaintia hills in Meghalaya in north-east India and also in the Nicobar Islands.
- However, the Munda tongue is spoken in a much larger area. *The Santhals, who constitute the largest tribal group in the subcontinent, speak it in Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, and Orissa.*

TIBETO-BURMAN

- *The second group of languages, that is Tibeto-Burman,* is a branch of the Sino-Tibetan family.
- In the Indian subcontinent, Tibeto-Burman speech *extends along the Himalayas from north-eastern Assam to north-east Punjab.*
- *Although both the Austric and the Tibeto-Burman forms of speech are much older than the Dravidian and Indo-Aryan, no literature developed in those tongues because, unlike the Indo-Aryans and the Dravidians, they did not have any form of writing.*

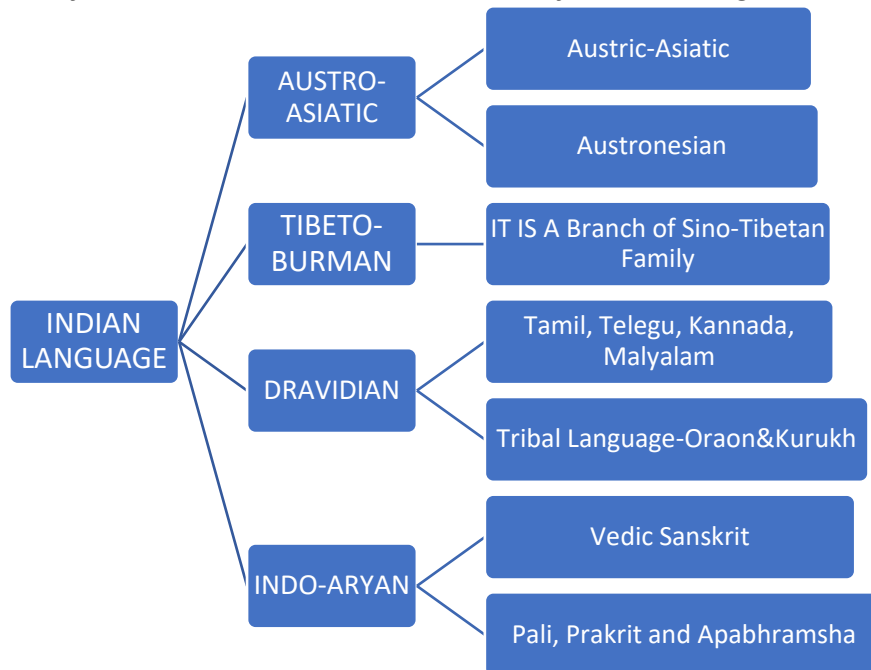
Dravidian

- *The third family of languages spoken in India is Dravidian.* This form of speech covers almost the whole of south India and is also prevalent in north-eastern Sri Lanka.

- **The earliest form of Dravidian speech, Brahui**, is found in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent located in Pakistan.
- It is said that the Dravidian language travelled via the Pakistan area to south India where it gave rise to Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam as its main branches, **but Tamil is far more Dravidian than the other languages. Oraon or Kurukh, spoken in Jharkhand and central India, is also Dravidian, but is spoken mainly by members of the Oraon tribe.**

INDO-ARYAN

- **The fourth language group, Indo-Aryan belongs to the Indo-European family.**
- **The Old Indo-Aryan covers Vedic Sanskrit. The middle Indo-Aryan covers Prakrit, Pali, and Apabhramsha from about 500 BC to AD 1000.**
- **Large numbers of Munda and Dravidian words are to be found in the Rig Veda.**



ETHNIC GROUPS AND LANGUAGE FAMILIES

- In the Indian subcontinent, each of the four language families is attributed to each one of the **four ethnic groups into which the people of India are divided. These four groups are Negrito, Australoid, Mongoloid, and Caucasoid.**
- Due to intermixture of languages, neither do the people concerned retain their original features nor does the language retain its original character. **It is, therefore, not easy to assign a particular language to any one ethnic group.**

CHAPTER 4

The Stone Age

- *The evolution of Earth's crust shows four stages. The fourth stage is called the quaternary. It is divided into two epochs called Pleistocene (ice age) and Holocene (post-ice age).*
- *The first epoch lasted from 2 million BC to 12,000 BC, the second began in about 12,000 BC and continues to this day.*
- *The birth of the creature called Australopithecus was the most momentous step in the evolution of the human line. Australopithecus is a term that originated in Latin and means southern ape.*
- *Humans form part of the hominid line of evolution and Australopithecus was the last of the pre-human hominids. That is why this species is also called proto-human.*
- *The full-fledged modern man called Homo sapiens sapiens is traceable to about 115,000 years ago in southern Africa in the late Stone Age called the Upper Palaeolithic.*
- *Only a few fossils relating to human evolution have been discovered in the subcontinent. None the less, some of the earliest skull fossils have been found in the Siwalik hills covering India and Pakistan. These skulls appear in the Potwar plateau, in Punjab province of Pakistan, which developed on sandstone. These skulls are called Ramapithecus and Sivapithecus.*
- *Ramapithecus was the female, but both belonged to the same group. Nevertheless, an almost complete hominid skull was discovered in 1982 in the middle valley of the Narmada at Hathnora in MP. This fossilized skull was called Homo erectus or upright human but is now anatomically recognized as archaic Homo sapiens.*

PHASES IN THE PALAEOLITHIC AGE

- *The Palaeolithic Age in India is divided into three phases in accordance with the type of stone tools used by the people and also according to the nature of climatic change.*
- *Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Pradesh is an important site, and the caves and rock shelters of Bhimbetka near Bhopal also show features of the Lower Palaeolithic age.*
- *Caves and rock shelters for use by human beings in the Upper Palaeolithic phase have been discovered at Bhimbetka.*

THE MESOLITHIC AGE: HUNTERS AND HERDERS

- The Upper Palaeolithic age came to an end with the end of the ice age around 10,000 BC.
- ***In 9000 BC began an intermediate stage in Stone-Age culture, which is called the Mesolithic age.*** It intervened as a transitional phase between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic or New Stone ages.
- ***The Mesolithic people lived on hunting, fishing, and food gathering; at a later stage they also domesticated animals. The first three occupations continued the Palaeolithic practice, whereas the last developed in the Neolithic culture.***
- ***Adamgarh in MP and Bagor in Rajasthan provide the earliest evidence for the domestication of animals*** in the Indian part of the subcontinent; this could be around 5000 BC.

ART IN THE OLD STONE AGE

- ***The people of the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic ages practised painting.*** At Bhimbetka, the rock paintings extend from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Mesolithic age and in some series even up to recent times.
- ***Perching birds that live on grain do not figure in the earliest group of paintings.*** These paintings evidently belong to the hunting/gathering economy.

EARLIEST HUMAN ORGANIZATION

- Members of a clan would always marry outside the clan, but bands established mutual aid relationships.

EARLIEST RURAL SETTLEMENTS IN BALUCHISTAN

- ***The only known Neolithic settlement in the Indian subcontinent, attributed to 7000 BC, is in Mehrgarh,*** which is situated in Baluchistan, a province of Pakistan.
- ***In the dried basin of Hakra, a tributary of the Indus,*** forty-seven Later Neolithic settlements have been found. Evidently, they paved the way for the rise of the Harappan culture.

USE OF BONE TOOLS IN THE SITES OF BURZAHOM AND CHIRAND

- ***In the north-west, Kashmiri Neolithic culture was distinguished by its dwelling pits,*** wide range of ceramics, the variety of stone and bone tools, and the complete absence of microliths.

- ***Its most important site is Burzahom, which means 'the place of birch',*** situated 16 km north-west of Srinagar. It probably had a hunting and fishing economy and ***seem to have been acquainted with agriculture.***
- ***The people of Gufkral (literally the 'cave of the potter'),*** a Neolithic site, 41 km south-west of Srinagar, ***practised both agriculture and animal husbandry.***
- ***It is interesting that at Burzahom, domestic dogs were buried with their masters in their graves.***
- ***Neolithic sites such as Koldihwa and Mahagra in Allahabad district are known for the cultivation of rice in the fifth millennium BC.***

NEOLITHIC SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH INDIA

- An important group of Neolithic people lived in south India, south of the Godavari river. ***South India has the largest number of Neolithic settlements, because of the easy availability of stone.***
- ***The Neolithic settlers in Piklihal were cattle-herders.*** They domesticated cattle, sheep, goats, etc., and set up seasonal camps surrounded by cowpens made with posts and stakes in which they accumulated dung. When it was time to move, the entire camping ground was set at fire and cleared for the next session of camping. ***Both ash mounds and habitation sites have been found in Piklihal.***

FARMING AND CEREALS

- ***The Neolithic settlers were the earliest farming communities.*** These Neolithic people led a settled life and produced ragi and horse gram (kulathi), and even rice.
- ***The Neolithic people of Mehrgarh were more advanced. They produced wheat and barley and lived in mud-brick houses.***
- ***During the Neolithic phase, several settlements became acquainted with the cultivation of cereals and the domestication of animals.***

PROGRESS IN AND LIMITATION OF THE NEOLITHIC PHASE

- The period between 9000 and 3000 BC saw remarkable technological progress in western Asia. ***The people developed the arts of cultivation, weaving, pot-making, house building, stock raising, writing, and the like.*** This process, however, started a little late in India.
- ***The people of the Stone Age suffered from one great limitation.*** As they had to depend almost entirely on tools and weapons made of stone, they could not find settlements far away from the hilly areas. ***They could settle only on the slopes of the hills in rock shelters and the hilly river valleys.*** Also, even with great effort, they were unable to produce more than they needed for bare subsistence.

Q1. Consider the following statements which can be considered as a reflection of the linguistic and cultural unity of the country during 3rd century B.C.

1. In the third century B.C. Pali served as the lingua franca of the country.
2. Throughout the major portion of India, Asoka's inscriptions were written in the Prakrit language.

Which of the following statements is/are correct

- A. 1 Only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Q2. During which period, Sanskrit emerged as the state language even in the remotest part of the country?

- A. Maurya
- B. Post-Maurya
- C. Gupta
- D. Post-Gupta

Q3. Excavation can provided us with a full and complete picture of material life in many phases of ancient Indian history. Consider the following statements in this regard

1. Since most sites in India have been dug horizontally, they provide a good chronological sequence of material culture.
2. Vertical diggings, being very expensive, are very few in number, led to incomplete picture of the material life.

Which among the following statements is/are correct

- A. 1 Only
- B. 2. Only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Q4. Which among the following reasons could be attributed to the incomplete picture of the material life in the Ancient India?

1. ***Dry climate of*** western Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and north-western India.
2. ***Moist and humid climate*** of the middle Gangetic basin and in the deltaic regions.
3. Few ancient sites in India were ***dug horizontally***.

Choose the correct combination of statements

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 2 only
- D. All of the above

Q5. Which among the following is considered as most apt method to fix the dates of the material remains of Ancient India.

- A. Radio-Carbon Method
- B. Pollen Analysis
- C. Study of bone remains of animals
- D. Study of different layers of soil (pedology)

Q6. Paper came into use in fourteenth century in India, before that *ancient coins were made of which metals*

1. Lead
2. Copper
3. Gold
4. Silver

Select the correct option

- A. 1, 2 and 3 only
- B. 2, 3 and 4 only
- C. 1, 3 and 4 only
- D. All of the above

Q7. Ancient coins were made of metal as well as of burnt clay having some pictorial representation. Consider the following statements in this regard

1. Our earliest coins mention the names of kings, gods or dates that enabled us to reconstruct the history of several ruling dynasties.
2. Coin moulds made of burnt clay have been discovered in large numbers. Most of them belong to the Kushan period.

Which among the following statement(s) is/are correct

- A. 1 Only
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Q8. Consider the following statements in the context of coins found in Ancient India

1. We get the largest number of coins in post- Maurya times.
2. The Guptas issued the largest number of gold coins.
3. Few coins belonging to the post-Gupta period have been found indicates the decline of trade and commerce at that time.

Which among the following statements are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. All of the above

Q9. Consider the following statements

1. The Study of inscriptions is called Epigraphy
2. The Study of coins is called Numismatics
3. The Study of old writing used in inscriptions and other old records is called Palaeography

Which among the following statements are correct

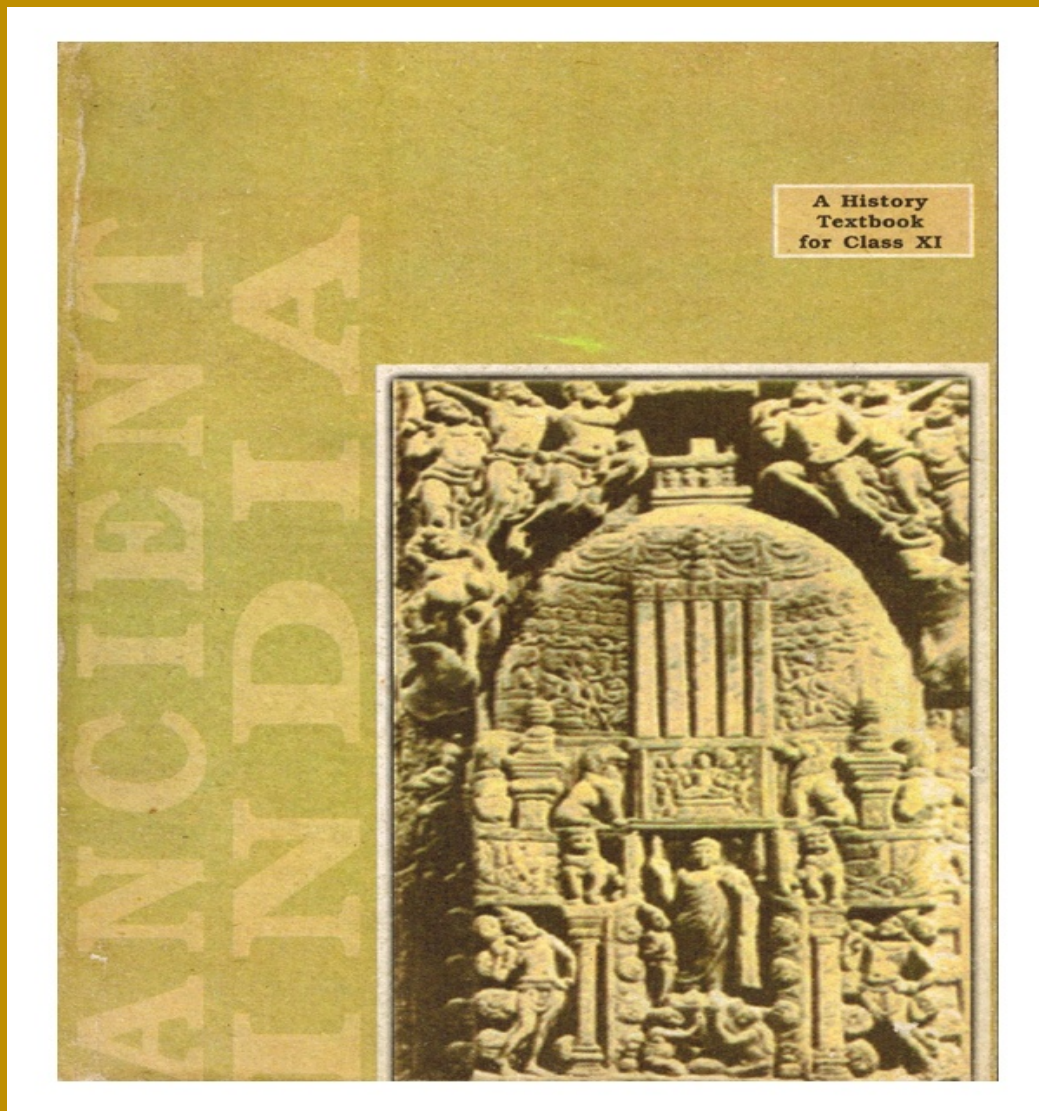
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Q10. We have various types of inscriptions of different categories during the ancient times. Consider the following statements in this context

1. Inscriptions recording land grants, made mainly by chiefs and princes were mostly recorded/engraved on the pillars and walls of the temples.
2. Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta conveyed royal orders and decisions regarding social, religious and administrative matters to officials and people.

Which among the following statement(s) is/are correct

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ANSWERS OF MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

CHAPTER 1 & CHAPTER 2 OF

ANCIENT INDIA

RS SHARMA(NCERT-XI)

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- A. Firoz Shah Tughlaq
- B. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq
- C. Shah Jahan
- D. Akbar

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3. Brahmanas and Upanishads are considered as a great repository of philosophical speculations.

Which among the following statement(s) is/are correct?

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1. Ramayana of Valmiki was composed later than Mahabharata.
2. Mahabharata is also known as *Satasahasri Samhita* and originally as *Jaya Samhita*.

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2. *Sulvasutras* mark the beginnings of the study of geometry and mathematics.

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1. Each birth story of Gautam Buddha is known as Jatakas.
2. The Jatakas throw invaluable light on the social and economic conditions of the period between the fifth and second century BC.

Which among the following statement(s) is/are correct

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- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Q17. Consider the following statements regarding text of Ancient India

1. Both Dharmasutras and Arthashastra are considered as secular literature
2. Dharmasutras and Smritis, which, together with their commentaries, are called Dharmashastras.

Which among the following statement(s) is/are correct

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- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Q18. Consider the following statements about the Sangam text

1. The Sangam texts are different from the Vedic texts, particularly the Rig Veda. They do not constitute religious literature.
2. The Sangam literature comprises lines of poetry arranged in eight anthologies called Ettuttokai.
3. Sangam text can be considered as primitive song of high quality.

Which among the following statement(s) is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
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Q19. The Greek writers mention Sandrokottas, a contemporary of Alexander the Great. Prince Sandrokottas is identified with

- A. Mahapadma Nanda
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- D. Ashoka

Q20. Consider the following statements in the context of trade in Ancient India

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Q21. Consider the following statements regarding these two Chinese travelers

1. Fa-hsien came to India much before the Hsuan Tsang.
2. Hsuan Tsang describes the social, religious, and economic conditions in India in the age of the Guptas, and Fa-hsien presents a similar account of India in the age of Harsha.

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Q22. The Puranas speak of four ages. Arrange these ages in their chronological order from earlier to later

1. Dvapara
2. Krita
3. Kali
4. Treta

Choose the correct order

- A. 2-4-1-3
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Q23. Match the following eras

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|------------------|-------------|
| 1. Vikram Samvat | a) 78 AD |
| 2. Shaka Samvat | b) 57-58 BC |
| 3. Gupta Era | c) 319 AD |

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- A. 1-a; 2-b; 3-c
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Q24. Match the following

Author

1. Banabhatta
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4. Bilhana

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- a) Rajatarangini
- b) Harshacharita
- c) Ramacharita
- d) Vikramankadevacharita

Select the correct option

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Q25. In the first century BC *Kharavela of Kalinga* records a large number of events in his life year by year in the

- A. Allahabad Pillar Inscription
- B. Hathigumpha Inscription
- C. Bhadra Inscription
- D. Asanapat stone inscription



15 MULTIPLE-CHOICE
QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS(02)

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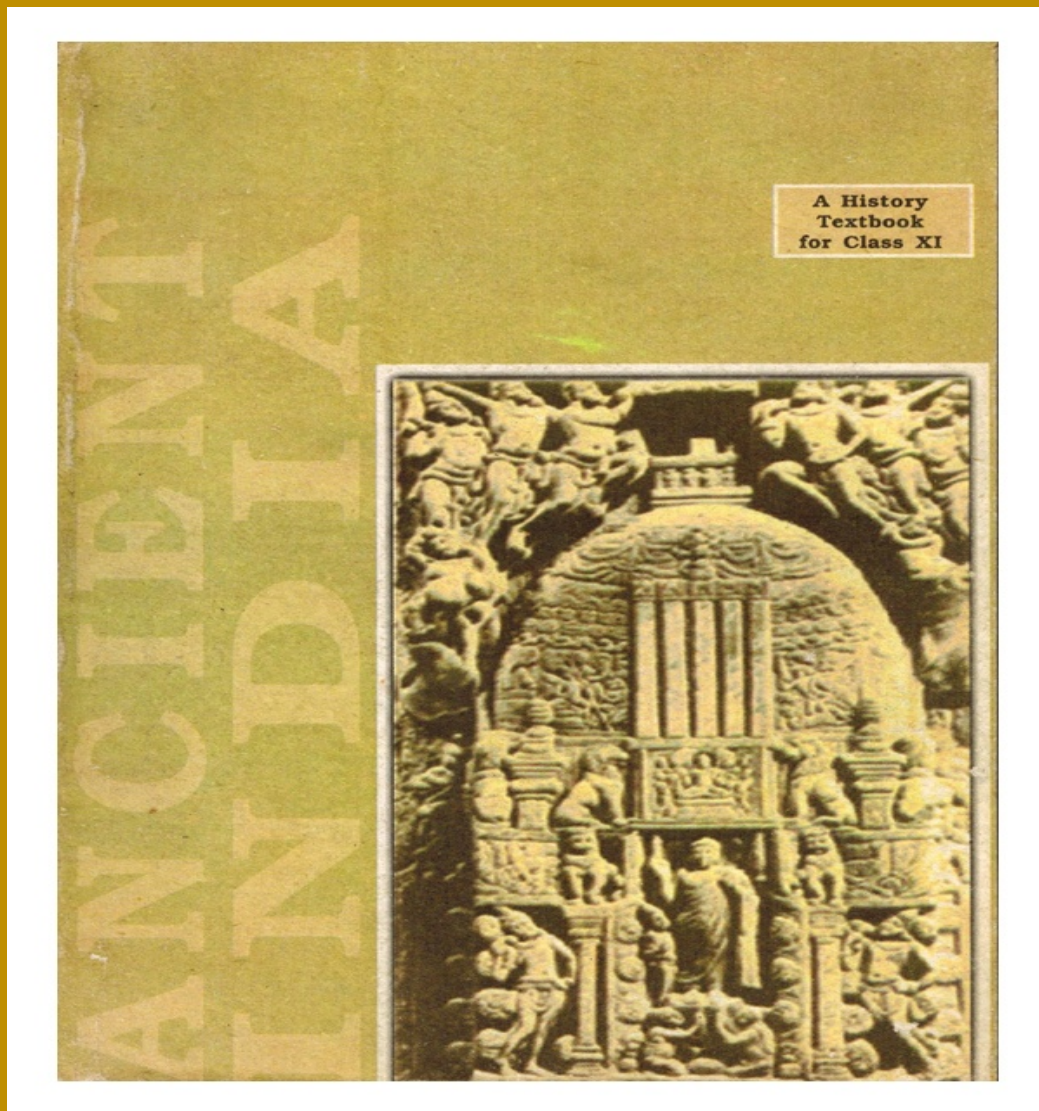
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- C. 1-d; 2-b; 3-c; 4-a
- D. 1-d; 2-a; 3-b; 4-c

Q25. In the first century BC *Kharavela of Kalinga* records a large number of events in his life year by year in the

- A. Allahabad Pillar Inscription
- B. **Hathigumpha Inscription**
- C. Bhadra Inscription
- D. Asanapat stone inscription



SUMMARY NOTES

CHAPTER 5 & CHAPTER 6 OF

ANCIENT INDIA

RS SHARMA(NCERT-XI)

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CHAPTER 5

The Stone-Copper Phase

- *The end of the Neolithic period saw the use of metals. The metal first used was copper*, and several cultures were based on the use of copper and stone implements. Such a culture is called Chalcolithic, which means the copper stone phase.
- In various parts of India, the *Chalcolithic cultures followed the Bronze Age Harappa culture*.
- The Harappans *used bronze and had urbanized* on the basis of the produce from the flood plains in the Indus Valley.
- The people living in the Chalcolithic age in south-eastern Rajasthan, western MP, western Maharashtra, and elsewhere *domesticated animals and practised agriculture*.
- People certainly ate beef and pork, but they did not eat pork, on any considerable scale. What is remarkable is that *these people produced wheat and rice, and in addition to these staple crops they also cultivated bajra*.
- *They produced several pulses such as lentil (masur), black gram, green gram, and grass pea*. Almost all these food grains have been found at Navdatoli situated on the bank of the Narmada in Maharashtra. Perhaps at no other place in India has so many cereals been discovered as a result of excavation.
- *Daimabad (in Godavari valley) is famous for the recovery of many bronze goods*, some of which were influenced by the Harappan culture.
- *Cotton flax and silk threads made of cotton silk and of semal silk* (cotton tree) have been found in Maharashtra, indicating an expertise in the manufacture of cloth.
- *Both the settlement pattern and burial practices suggest the beginnings of social inequalities* in Chalcolithic society.
- *Chronologically, there are several series of Chalcolithic settlements in India*. Some are pre-Harappan, others are contemporaneous with the Harappan culture, and yet others are post-Harappan.

- ***Pre-Harappan and post-Harappan Chalcolithic cultures and those coexisting*** with the Harappan have been found in northern, western, and central India.
- ***In the southern and eastern parts of India, Chalcolithic settlements existed independently of the Harappan culture.***

IMPORTANCE OF THE CHALCOLITHIC PHASE

- ***Barring the alluvial plains and the thickly forested areas,*** traces of Chalcolithic cultures have been discovered almost all over India.
- ***During this phase, people mostly founded rural settlements on riverbanks*** not far removed from the hills.
- ***In south India, the Neolithic phase imperceptibly faded into the Chalcolithic,*** and so these cultures are called Neolithic-Chalcolithic.
- ***The Chalcolithic communities founded the first large villages in peninsular India*** and cultivated far more cereals than were known to the Neolithic communities.
- ***The burial practices were different.*** In Maharashtra, the dead body was placed in the north-south position, but in south India in the east-west position. There was virtually complete extended burial in western India, but fractional burial in eastern India.

LIMITATIONS OF CHALCOLITHIC CULTURES

- ***In all probability, the domesticated animals were slaughtered for food and not used for milk and dairy products.***
- ***Neither hoe nor plough has been found at Chalcolithic sites.*** Perforated stone discs alone were tied as weights to the digging sticks which could be used in slash-burn or jhum cultivation.
- ***The general weakness of Chalcolithic cultures is evident from the burial*** of a large number of children in western Maharashtra. Despite a food producing economy, the rate of infant mortality was very high.
- ***People were unaware of the art of mixing tin with copper*** and thus forging the much stronger and useful metal called bronze. Bronze tools facilitated the rise of the earliest civilizations in Crete, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and also in the Indus Valley.
- ***The people of the Copper-Stone age could not write, nor did they live in cities as did those of the Bronze Age.*** All these elements of civilization figure for the first time in the Indus region of the Indian subcontinent.

- ***The OCP (Ochre colour pottery) people may have been the junior contemporaries of the Harappans,*** and their area was not far removed from that of the Harappans. We may, therefore, expect some give and take between the OCP people and the bronze using Harappans.

CHAPTER 6

The Harappan Civilization

- *The Indus or the Harappan culture is older than the chalcolithic cultures* which have been treated earlier, but as a bronze-using culture it is far more developed than the latter.
- *In 1853, A. Cunningham*, the British engineer who became a great excavator and explorer, noticed a Harappan seal. Though the seal showed a bull and six written letters, he did not realize its significance.
- *Much later, in 1921, the potentiality of the site of Harappa was appreciated* when an Indian archaeologist, *Daya Ram Sahni, started excavating it. At about the same time, R.D. Banerjee*, a historian, excavated the site of Mohenjo-daro in Sindh. Both discovered pottery and other antiquities indicative of a developed civilization.
- Large-scale excavations were carried out at *Mohenjo-daro under the general supervision of Marshall in 1931.*
- *Mackay excavated the same site in 1938. Vats excavated at Harappa in 1940.*
- *In 1946 Mortimer Wheeler excavated Harappa*, and the excavation of the pre-Independence and pre-Partition period brought to light important antiquities of the Harappan culture at various sites where bronze was used.
- *In the post-Independence period, archaeologists from both India and Pakistan excavated the Harappan and connected sites. Suraj Bhan, M.K. Dhavalikar, J.P. Joshi, B.B. Lal, S.R. Rao, B.K. Thapar, R.S. Bisht, and others worked in Gujarat, Haryana, and Rajasthan.*
- *All scholars agree on the urban character of the Harappan culture, but opinions differ on the role of the Sarasvati identified with the Hakra-Ghaggar river and also on the identity of the people who created this culture.*
- *It developed in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent.* It is called Harappan because this *civilization was discovered first in 1921 at the modern site of Harappa* situated in the province of Punjab in Pakistan, they were linked by the Indus.
- *A third city lay at Chanhudaro* about 130 km south of Mohenjo-daro in Sindh, and *a fourth at Lothal in Gujarat* at the head of the Gulf of Cambay. *A fifth city lay at Kalibangan, which means black bangles*, in northern Rajasthan. *A sixth, called Banawali*, is situated in Hissar

district in Haryana. ***It saw two cultural phases, pre-Harappan and Harappan, similar to that of Kalibangan.***

- ***The Harappan culture is traceable in its mature and flourishing stage to all these six places,*** as also to the coastal cities of Sutkagendor and Surkotada, each of which is marked by a citadel.
- ***Dholavira, lying in the Kutch area of Gujarat, has Harappan fortification*** and all the three phases of the Harappan culture. These phases are also manifested in Rakhigarhi which is situated on the Ghaggar in Haryana and is much larger than Dholavira.

TOWN PLANNING AND STRUCTURES

- ***The Harappan culture was distinguished by its system of town planning.*** The remarkable thing about the arrangement of the houses in the cities is that they followed a grid system, with roads cutting across one another virtually at right angles.
- ***The most important public place of Mohenjo-daro seems to have been the great bath,*** comprising the tank, which is situated in the citadel mound, and is a fine example of beautiful brickwork.
- ***In Mohenjo-daro, the largest building is a granary. In Kalibangan many houses had their own wells.***
- ***The use of burnt bricks in the Harappan cities is remarkable*** because in the contemporary buildings of Egypt dried bricks were primarily used.
- ***The drainage system of Mohenjo-daro was very impressive.*** In almost all the cities, every house, large or small, had its own courtyard and bathroom.
- ***Perhaps no other Bronze Age civilization paid so much attention to health and cleanliness as did the Harappan.***

AGRICULTURE

- ***In earlier times, the Indus region had more natural vegetation which contributed to rainfall.*** It supplied timber for baking bricks and also for construction. In course of time, the natural vegetation was destroyed by the extension of agriculture, large-scale grazing, and supply of fuel.
- ***A far more important reason for the fertility*** of the area seems to have been the annual inundation of the Indus, which is the longest Himalayan river
- ***No hoe or ploughshare has been discovered, but the furrows discovered*** in the pre-Harappan phase at Kalibangan indicate that the fields were ploughed in Rajasthan during the Harappan period.

- ***Gabarbands or nalas enclosed by dams for storing water were a feature*** in parts of Baluchistan and Afghanistan, but channel or canal irrigation was probably not practised.
- ***The Indus people produced wheat, barley, rai, peas, and the like.*** Two types of wheat and barley were grown. A substantial quantity of barley was discovered at Banawali. In addition, sesamum and mustard were grown.
- ***However, the position seems to have been different with the Harappans at Lothal.*** It seems that as early as 1800 BC, the people of Lothal grew rice, the remains of which have been found.
- ***In all probability, cereals were received as taxes from peasants*** and stored in granaries for the payment of wages as well as for use during emergencies.
- ***The Indus people were the earliest people to produce cotton,*** and because of this, the Greeks called the area Sindon which is derived from Sindh.

DOMESTICATION OF ANIMALS

- ***Although the Harappans practised agriculture, animals were raised on a large scale.*** Oxen, buffaloes, goats, sheep, and pigs were domesticated.
- ***Humped bulls were favoured by the Harappans.*** There is evidence of dogs and cats from the outset, and asses and camels were bred and were obviously used as beasts of burden, and the latter may also have been used for ploughing.
- ***Evidence of the horse comes from a superficial level of Mohenjo-daro*** and from a doubtful terracotta figurine from Lothal.
- ***In any case, the Harappan culture was not horse centred.*** Neither the bones of a horse nor its representations have been traced in early and mature Harappan cultures.
- ***Elephants were well known to the Harappans,*** who were also acquainted with the rhinoceros.
- ***Harappans in Gujarat produced rice and domesticated elephants*** which was not the case with the Mesopotamians.

TECHNOLOGY AND CRAFTS

- ***The rise of towns in the Indus zone was based on agricultural surplus,*** the making of bronze tools, various other crafts, and widespread trade and commerce. ***This is known as the first urbanization in India,*** and the Harappan urban culture belongs to the Bronze Age.

- However, the kits used for the manufacture of bronze goods left by the Harappans are so numerous as to suggest that the **bronze smiths constituted an important group of artisans in Harappan society.**
- **A piece of woven cotton has been recovered from Mohenjo-daro,** and textile impressions have been found on several objects. Spindle whorls were used for spinning. Weavers wove cloth of wool and cotton. Huge brick structures suggest that bricklaying was an important craft and attest to the existence of a class of masons. **The Harappans also practised boat-making.**

TRADE AND COMMERCE

- The importance of trade in the life of the Indus people is supported not only by granaries found at Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, and Lothal but also by **finds of numerous seals, a uniform script, and regulated weights and measures covering a wide area.**
- **They were aware of the use of the wheel,** and carts with solid wheels were in use in Harappa. It appears that the Harappans used a form of the modern ekka **but not with the spoked wheel.**
- **The Mesopotamian records from about 2350 BC onwards refer to trade relations with Meluha,** which was the ancient name given to the Indus region. The Mesopotamian texts speak of two intermediate trading stations called Dilmun and Makan, which lay between Mesopotamia and Meluha. Dilmun is probably identifiable with Bahrain on the Persian Gulf.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

- The citadel or the first locality was where the ruling class lived, and the lowest tower was where the common people dwelt. The middle settlement may have been meant for bureaucrats and middle-class merchants. **However, whether hierarchy in settlements corresponded to occupational divisions or socio-economic differentiation is not clear.**
- **Social differentiation is indicated by different residential structures,** with the number of rooms varying from one to twelve. The city of Harappa had two-roomed houses, probably meant for artisans and labourers.

POLITY

- **We may identify some important elements of the state in the Indus Valley.** In the Harappan culture, the citadel may have been the seat of sovereign power, the middle town may have been the area where the bureaucrats lived or the seat of government, and **the great granary at Mohenjo-daro may have been the treasury.**

- ***We have no clear idea of an organized force or standing army,*** but a heap of sling stones and the depiction of a soldier on a potsherd at Surkotada may suggest a standing army. In any case, the state was well established in the mature Harappan phase.
- ***No religious structures of any kind have been excavated apart from the great bath, which may have been used for ablution.***
- The Harappan rulers were more concerned with commerce than with conquest, and ***Harappa was possibly ruled by a class of merchants.*** However, the Harappans did not have many weapons which might mean the lack of an effective warrior class.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

- ***In Harappa numerous terracotta figurines of women have been found.*** In one figurine, a plant is shown growing out of the embryo of a woman. The image probably represents the goddess of earth and was intimately connected with the origin and growth of plants.
- ***We do not, however, know whether the Harappans were a matriarchal people like the Egyptians.*** In Egypt, the daughter inherited the throne or property, but we do not know about the nature of inheritance in Harappan society.

THE MALE DEITY IN THE INDUS VALLEY

- ***The male deity is represented on a seal.*** This god has three-horned heads and is represented in the sitting posture of a yogi, with one leg placed above the other. ***This god is surrounded by an elephant, a tiger, a rhinoceros, and below his throne there is a buffalo, and at his feet two deer. The god so depicted is identified as Pashupati Mahadeva, but the identification is doubtful because the bull is not represented*** here, and horned gods also figure in other ancient civilizations.
- ***Numerous symbols of the phallus and female sex organs made of stone have been found*** in Harappa and were possibly meant for worship. The Rigveda speaks of non-Aryan people who were phallus worshippers. Phallus worship thus begun in the days of Harappa was later recognized as a respectable form of worship in Hindu society.

TREE AND ANIMAL WORSHIP

- ***The people of the Indus region also worshipped trees.*** The depiction of a deity is represented on a seal amidst branches of the pipal.
- ***Animals were also worshipped in Harappan times, and many of them are represented on seals.*** The most important of them is the one-horned animal unicorn which may be identified with the rhinoceros. Next in importance is the humped bull.

- Evidently, therefore, the inhabitants of the Indus region worshipped gods in the form of trees, animals, and human beings, **but the gods were not placed in temples.**
- **The Atharva Veda, which is associated with the non-Aryan tradition,** contains many charms and spells, and recommends amulets to ward off diseases and evil forces.

THE HARAPPAN SCRIPT

- The Harappans invented the art of writing like the people of ancient Mesopotamia. As the script has not been deciphered, **we can neither judge the Harappan contribution to literature, nor say anything about their ideas and beliefs.**
- **Unlike the Egyptians and Mesopotamians, the Harappans did not write long inscriptions.** Most inscriptions were recorded on seals and contain only a few words. These seals may have been used by the proprietors to mark and identify their private property.
- **The Harappan script is not alphabetical but largely pictographic.** Attempts have been made to compare it with the contemporary scripts of Mesopotamia and Egypt, but it is the **indigenous product of the Indus region** and does not indicate any connection with the scripts of western Asia.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

- **The urban people of the Indus region also needed and used weights and measures for trade** and other transactions. Numerous articles used as weights have been found. **They show that in weighing, largely 16 or its multiples were used:** for instance, 16, 64, 160, 320, and 640.
- **The Harappans also knew the art of measurement.** Sticks inscribed with measure marks have been found, and one of these is made of bronze.

SEALS AND SEALINGS

- **The greatest artistic creations of the Harappan culture are seals.** Seals were made of steatite or faience and served as symbols of authority. They were hence used for stamping. However, there are few stamped objects, called sealings, in contrast to Egypt and Mesopotamia. Seals were also used as amulets.

TERRACOTTA FIGURINES

- They represent birds, dogs, sheep, cattle, and monkeys. Men and women also find a place in the terracotta objects, and the second outnumber the first. **The terracotta pieces represent unsophisticated artistic works.**

STONework

- ***We do not find much stonework in Harappa and Mohenjo-daro because stone could not be procured by the two great cities.*** The position was, however, different in Dholavira located in Kutch.

END OF THE INDUS CULTURE

- The mature Harappan culture, broadly speaking, existed between 2500 and 1900 BC. ***The entire lifestyle appears to have been uniform: the same town planning, the same seals, the same terracotta works, and the same long chert blades.***
- ***By the nineteenth century BC, the two important cities of Harappan culture, Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, disappeared,*** but the Harappan culture at other sites faded out gradually and continued in its degenerate form in the outlying fringes of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, and western UP until 1500 BC. It is difficult to account for this cultural collapse.
- ***The environmental factor may have been important.*** In the Harappan zone, both the Yamuna and Sutlej moved away from the Sarasvati or the Hakra around 1700 BC.
- ***It appears that crafts and commerce collapsed because of the sudden end of the long-distance land and sea trade with Mesopotamia.*** Beads of hard materials, especially stone, were made in the Harappan zone and sent outside. The break in their exports to Mesopotamia deprived the craftsmen of their livelihood. ***Similarly, the break in the supply of tin to the Valley dealt a great blow to the artisans employed in making bronze.***
- ***The exhaustion of the soil may have diminished cereal production and starved the urban people.*** Once the aristocracy living in the cities failed to exercise its control over crafts and cultivation, Harappan culture collapsed.

MATURITY

- ***The Harappan cities are indicative of well-planned growth,*** but their Mesopotamian counterpart show haphazard growth. Rectangular houses with brick-lined bathrooms and wells together with their stairways are found in all Harappan cities, but ***such town planning is not evident in the cities of western Asia.***
- ***No other people in antiquity had built such an excellent drainage system except perhaps those of Crete in Knossos,*** nor did the people of western Asia show such skill in the use of burnt bricks as did the Harappans. The Harappans produced their own characteristic pottery and seals, and, above all, ***they invented their own script, which neither resembled the Egyptian nor the Mesopotamian.*** No contemporary culture spread over such a wide area as did the Harappan.

WAS THE HARAPPAN CULTURE VEDIC?

- ***Sometimes Harappan culture is called Rig Vedic, but its principal features do not figure in the Rig Veda.*** Planned towns, crafts, commerce, and large structures built of burnt bricks mark the mature Harappan phase. ***The Rig Veda does not feature these.*** As will be shown later, the ***early Vedic people lived on cattle rearing supplemented by agriculture and did not use bricks.*** The early Vedic people occupied virtually the entire Harappan zone, but also lived in Afghanistan.
- ***The Rig Veda mentions only barley, but the Harappan knew about wheat, sesamum, and peas. The rhinoceros was known to the Harappans but unknown to the early Vedic people. The same is true of the tiger.*** The Vedic chiefs were horse-centred, which is why this animal is mentioned 215 times in the Rig Veda, but the horse was hardly known to the urban Harappans. The Harappan terracotta's represent the elephant, but unlike the horse it is not important in the earliest Veda.
- ***We have no clear idea about the languages of the Harappans, though the Indo-Aryan language spoken by the Vedic people continues in South Asia in a variety of forms.***