

Ancient History (stone Age to 700 A.D.)

Earth's beginnings are often traced back 4.5 billion years, but human evolution only counts for a little speck of its history. The Prehistoric Period—or when there was human life before records documented human activity—roughly dates from 2.5 million years ago to 1,200 B.C. It's generally categorized in three archaeological periods: the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age.

From the invention of tools made for hunting to advances in food production and agriculture to early samples of art and religion, this enormous time span—ending roughly 3,200 years ago (dates vary with the region)—was a period of great transformation.

Stone Age

1. Palaeolithic age

In the Paleolithic period (roughly **2.5 million years** ago to 10,000 B.C.), early humans lived in caves or simple huts or tepees and were hunters and gatherers. They used basic stone and bone tools, as well as crude stone axes, for hunting birds and wild animals.

Agriculture was not known to them hence the life was not properly settled. It has been evident that people survived on trees and fruits and lived in caves and hills.

1. Lower Paleolithic Age: It was mainly spread in Western Europe and Africa and early humans lived a nomadic lifestyle. No specific human group was the carrier of the Lower Paleolithic period, but many scholars believe that this era was a contribution of Neanderthal-like Palaeolithic men (Third stage of hominid evolution)

2. Middle Paleolithic Age was mainly associated with the early form of man, Neanderthal, whose remains are often found in caves with evidence of the use of fire. He got his name from the valley of Neander (Germany).

Neanderthal was a hunter of prehistoric time. The Middle Paleolithic man was a scavenger but few pieces of evidence of hunting and gathering were traced. The dead were buried before burial.

3. Upper Paleolithic Age was characterized by the appearance of new flint industries and Homo Sapiens (Modern type men) in world context. This was the last part of the Paleolithic Age which gave rise to the Upper Paleolithic culture.



This period covered approximately 1/10th time of the total Paleolithic Period but in a short span of time, primitive man made the greatest cultural progress. The culture has been referred as the Osteodontokeratic culture, i.e. tools made up of bone, teeth, and horns.

- Nagaur
- Didwana

2. Mesolithic Age

Bagor

- On the bank of river Kothari in Bhilwara District.
- A most ancient source of animal husbandry is found here.
- Tools are excavated in large numbers.
- Excavated by Virendranath Mishra.
- Biggest Mesolithic Site in India.

Tilwara

- On the bank of river Luni in Barmer district.
- Evidence of animal husbandry is found here.
- Excavated by Virendranath Mishra.

Chalcolithic Age

- The period is marked by the use of stone – metal; copper was the 1st metal to be used by man(End of the Neolithic period saw the use of metals)
- Technologically it applies to pre-harappans; in various parts of the country appeared after Harappan civilization.
- They were primarily rural communities residing in hilly areas where rivers are available nearby
- They knew the art of copper smelting
- They used wheel turn black and red pots and were the first to use painted pottery
- Major sites- Southeastern Rajasthan, western part of Madhya Pradesh Western Maharashtra and southern and Eastern India; jorwe culture; kayatha culture etc.
- Some of the major chalcolithic cultures in Rajasthan are:

Ahar - Banas Culture (3000 to 1500 BC)



- Also known as Banas Culture/ tamravati and dhoolkot
- Lies mainly in the river valleys of Banas and its tributaries ; in South-Eastern Rajasthan
- About 90 sites of this culture have been discovered; important among them are gilund, Aahar, Ojiana, balathal, pachamta
- Provides the evidence of early farming rural communities who were contemporary to the Indus valley civilizations
- A small chopper made of thin sheet of copper is important antiquity of Ahar culture.
- The faience of the Harappan type is also noteworthy to an established relationship with other contemporary cultures.
- They were rural farming communities also engaged in livestock keeping and hunting
- Main crops were wheat, barley, Millets , Bajra and Jawar.
- Remarkable refinement in Technology ; invention of first wheel industrial activities ; mass production of ceramics ;Metal Works and development of Bead industries
- Beads were made in in Shell, Bone, Ivory, semi-precious stones, steatite and Terracotta
- Evidences of terracotta bull; names as banasian bull
- Houses were square-shaped & large made up of stones; walls were made of mud\ mud bricks
- They carried on trade with Indus Valley Civilization people
- Evidence of rice has been noticed in the form of Impressions on potsherds
- Technology
- They mainly used copper metal and produced also used polished stone tools and used microliths as well
- Evidences of coins & seals dating back to period 3rd BC to 1st BC – a coin having a mark of Trishul on the side & greek god Apollo on the other

Gilund

- It is located in Rajsamand district and drained by three rivers that is Kothari Banaras and berach
- Excavation carried out under BB Lal in 1959 -60
- Use of burnt bricks on large scale
- Evidence of two distinct phases- early Ahar phase: 3000- 2000 BC and late Ahar phase: 2000 - 1700 BC
- First phase:



-represent chalcolithic phase; evidence of few microliths along with copper objects

-Evidence of clay lines ovens & chulhas

- Residential houses for made of mud brick and plastered with mud

-Use of black and red ware pottery

-Terracotta figurines search s bull with prominent hump and longhorns are noticeable

- Second phase :

- Evidence of grey ware pottery

- this site remain inhabited in 1st AD also; evidences Red ware pottery of Kushan period ,red polished ware pottery etc

Balathal

- it is located in Vallabh Nagar tehsil of Udaipur; on the banks of the Katar river
- discovered by VN Mishra in 1962- 63
- it also gives evidence of two phases- early chalcolithic period:3000 to 1500 BC and early historic period 5th to 3rd Century BC
- major findings- a skeleton belonging to period around 2000 BC has been found; gives the earliest evidence of leprosy in humans (till now)
- A huge mansion of 11 rooms, and a fort resembling structure has been found.
- Early chalcolithic phase:
 - marked by the presence of well plant structures
 - houses are single or multi-roomed having a square or rectangular shape
 - Locally available granite and gneiss rock were used for the Since loose stone was not available they were quarried from locally available rock
 - stone or mud-brick houses, made wheel thrown pottery copper implements
 - practiced dry field agriculture focused on barley and wheat
 - both stone and copper tools have been found which includes saddles, querns, hammer stone etc & copper objects like choppers, knives, chisels have also been found.

The site was abandoned for a long period of time; till the inhabitation was seen in early historic period.

- Early historic period:



- large scale evidence of use of iron objects
- houses were made up of mud & daub with the plastering of mud
- Use of stone & mud for construction

Ojiana

- Maximum among all the excavated sites of Ahar culture.
- The first settlers were cultivators and preferred this hillock, skirted by low lying fertile land for settlement.
- The painted black-and-red ware is present in all the phases
- Marked change in shapes and firing technique in different phases; Paintings were executed both on the exterior as well as on the interior.
- Red ware remains the main ceramic type found in all the phases.
- Other evidence of pottery: black-slipped ware, burnished and unburnished-black ware, grey ware, tan ware and red slipped ware.
- Evidence of painting
- pots are decorated with incision, pinching and designs
- Phase 1:
 - No evidence of complete house plan of found only but thin patches of mud floors above the rock and thick deposit of construction debris found;
 - Their house were made of sun-dried mud-bricks.
 - mud-brick did not prove very useful on the hill slop
- Phase 2
 - Stones used for construction.
- Phase 3
 - Wattle-and-daub houses mark a sharp decline.
 - Thick layer of ash, burnt and baked pieces of mud-plaster and pot-holes capped with charcoal have been found
 - Indicate a devastating fire that de-stored the last settlement on the site.
- Distinctive features:

-large number of terracotta bulls, both naturalistic and stylized, with a great variety of shape and size

-White paintings on these bulls make them unparalleled in contemporary cultures in India. These white-painted bulls, termed as Ojiyana bulls which perhaps served as cult objects and as it appears white paintings was applied during the ceremony or rituals



-Another important discovery is the terracotta figurines of cow; Modelling of cow here was quite common; as is evidence from the variety of modelling. These were also perhaps the cult objects.

Pachamta

- Excavation began in 2015 under the project called the Mewar Plains archaeological assessment
- the area lies in the Udaipur district of Rajasthan; close to Gilund
- Belongs to Ahar-Banas culture
- Period- 3000 BC to 1700 BC
- Major findings- perforated jars, shell bangles, terracotta beads and semi-precious stones; lapis lazuli
- Evidences of early pottery & brick structures

Indus Valley Civilization

1. Kalibangan

- Located on the bank of river Ghaghghar in Hanumangarh District.
- Discovered by Amlanand Ghosh in 1953.
- Excavated by Brijvasilal in 1961.
- Evidence of ploughed field is found.
- Evidence of growing Barley and Mustard are found.
- Cylindrical seal of Mesopotamia is found here.
- Houses were made from Raw bricks (Kachhi Int).
- The drainage system was not properly developed.
- Evidence of Earthquake.

2. Sothi (Sothi Civilization)

- It was a rural civilization.
- Located in Ganganagar District.
- Situated on the plain of Ghaghghar and Chautang River.
- It is also called Kalibanga 1st.
- Historian mentioned it as the origin place of Harappan civilization.

Mahajanpada Period (600 BC to 300 BC)

- Marks the period of 2nd urbanisation in India
- Features:



- Pottery- Northern black polished ware
- Use of metal money
- Presence of complex administrative systems with large standing armies
- An efficient tax collection system
- Use of iron ploughshare & rice transplantation
- Consisted of both monarchies (such as Magadha, Avanti, anga etc) as well as republics

Mahajanapadas of Rajasthan

Matsya

- Capital: - Viratnagar
- Presently covers districts of Alwar, Bharatpur and Jaipur
- 1st mentioned in Rigveda. Here matsya has been mentioned as rival of famous king sudas
- Mentioned in shatpatha brahamana- matsya ruler dvaitvan performed ashvamedha yajna on banks of saraswati river;
- In gopath brahamana, they have been related to shalvas and in kaushitki Upanishad, they are related to kuru panchlas
- Mahabharat era- refers to a King Sahaja, who ruled over both the Chedis and the Matsyas, which implies that Matsya once formed a part of the Chedi kingdom. Pandavas spent their one year of exile in the Matsya region
- The Mahabharata refers to a King Sahaja, who ruled over both the Chedis and the Matsyas, which implies that Matsya once formed a part of the Chedi kingdom.
- Mentioned in Buddhist text anguttara nikaya; which gives a list of 16 mahajanapads, but its power had greatly dwindled and it was of little political importance by the time of Buddha

Shurasena (Brajmandala)

- Presently covers Braj region in Uttar Pradesh; - Alwar, Bharatpur, Dhaulpur and Karauli.
- Capital city- Mathura
- Strategic importance as a center of trade - due to its location at the intersection of the Gangetic Plain met with the routes to Malwa (central India) and the west coast



- According to the Buddhist text *Anguttara Nikaya*, it one of the 16 Mahajanapadas) in the 6th century BCE.
- Also mentioned in the Hindu epic poem, the Ramayana.
- The ancient Greek writers (e.g., Megasthenes) refer to the Souraseni and its cities, Methora and Cleisobra.
- The Buddhist texts refer to Avantiputta, the king of the Surasenas in the time of Maha Kachchana, one of the chief disciples of Gautama Buddha, who spread Buddhism in the Mathura region.
- Archaeological remains:
 - The earliest period belonged to the Painted Grey Ware culture (1100-500 BCE)
 - Northern Black Polished Ware culture (700-200 BCE).

Kuru

- Capital: - Indraprastha (Delhi)
- Represents a flourishing Iron Age in northern India
- Covers present day states of Delhi, Haryana, Punjab and some parts of western Uttar Pradesh,
- Developed into the first recorded state-level society in the Indian subcontinent.
- It became the dominant political and cultural centre of the middle Vedic Period during the reigns of Parikshit and Janamejaya
- Declined in importance during the late Vedic period & became weak by the Mahajanapada period in the 5th century BCE.
- There is a Jataka reference to king Dhananjaya, introduced as a prince from the race of Yudhishtira.
- In the 4th century BCE, Kautilya's Arthashastra also mentions the Kurus following the *Rajashabdopajivin*(king consul) constitution.

Some Other Janapada of Rajasthan

Shivi Janapada

- Excavated by D.R. Bhandarkar.
- It was republic situated between Chittorgarh and Udaipur district
- Capital: - Madhyamika (Present name Nagari)
- Remained under the rule of mevs for long; so also known as medpaat/praagvaat
- Mentioned in Panini's Ashtadyayi
- A large number of Buddhist stupas have also been found



- Inscriptional Evidences of Greek attack 2379 years back
- It is believed that Buddhists got constructed many structures here- devariya shiva temple, hathi bhata etc
- Hathi bhata site gives evidences of a Buddhist palace.

Arjunayana Janapada

- Present Alwar and Bharatpur District & some parts of Tonk
- They emerged as political power During Sunga Period.

Malav Janapad

- Present Jaipur and Tonk district.
- Capital: - Nagar (Tonk)
- Republican form of state
- Mentioned in Mahabhashya of Patanjali
- Evidence of punch marked coins made of silver have been found
- Statue of Mardini has been found
- Evidence of Sunga art - Maa Durga on lion

Yaudheyas

- Present Hanumangarh and Ganganagar district.
- It belongs to the period 1000 BC to 300 excavation work was done by dr Hannah Reid who belongs to Sweden
- Republican form of state
- Mentioned in Ashtadhyayi and Ganapatha of Panini.
- It was a confederation of 3 republics viz. Punjab with capital, bahu dhanyak situated in North Panchal and 3rd in Northern Rajasthan.
- Copper bronze coins of Yaudheyas have been found in bahu dhaynak
- Effect of Gandhara Art is seen on Terracotta
- Few punch-marked coins are also found some coins relating to the reign of Kanishk are also found and their power declined by the time of kushanas.
- Coins of Vasudev Chauhan the founder of Chauhan dynasty
- Evidence of the cultivation of rice and their staple diet

Shalvya

- It was situated in Alwar district.



Rajanya

- It was situated in Jodhpur and Bikaner region.

Mauryan Period

1. Bairat (Viratnagar)

- It was capital of Matsya Mahajanapada.
- It was a part of the Mauryan Empire.
- In 1837, Ashoka's Rock Edict was discovered by Capt. Burj from Bijak-ki-Pahadi.
- Evidence of the Buddhist stupa sites was found.
- In 634 A.D Huang Tsang visited Bairat.
- Sculptures, coins, pottery, seals and metal objects were found from the excavation.
- It was excavated by Daya Ram Sahni in 1936.
- According to Maan Sarovar inscription of 713 A.D., Maan Maurya was the ruler of Bairat. This inscription also mentions the name of 4 rulers. Maheshwar, Bhoj, Bhim and Maan.

Post Mauryan Period

- Greek ruler Menander attacked Rajasthan in 150 B.C.
- 16 Greek coins were found from Bairat.
- Coins were found from the Rang Mahal of Hanumangarh belonging to the Kushan period.
- The first Saka king in India was Maues who ruled in Gandhar and extended his power in northwest India.

Gupta Period

- According to Prayag Prashasthi (Allahabad Inscription), Samundragupta defeated many republican kingdoms.
- Samundra Gupta defeated Rudradaman II in 351 A.D. and captured southern Rajasthan.
- Vikramaditya Defeated last Shaka ruler and whole Rajasthan came under Gupta dynasty.
- Maximum Gupta period coins are found from Bayana (Bharatpur) belonging to Kumar Gupta.
- Baran(Rajasthan) inscription mention about Gupta.



- Durga Temple (Kota) and Shiv Temple (Chachanura) are the best examples of Gupta architecture.

Post Gupta Period (Huns, Vardhan and Gurjars)

- In 503 A.D, Toranmal of Hun Dynasty defeated Guptas and captured Rajasthan.
- Mihirkula built Shiva temple in Badauli.
- Later Mihikula was defeated by Narsingh Baladitya Gupta and Rajasthan was reoccupied by Guptas.
- The capital of Gurjar-Pratihara was Bhinmal.
- Chinese traveller Huang Tsang visited Bhinmal during his period.
- Brahmagupta belongs to Bhinmal.
- Gurjar Pratihara stopped Arab invasion from North West.

Evolution of Rajaputas

The appearance of rajputras as mercenary soldiers is proved as early as 7th century CE from the reference in Bakshali manuscript found in the North-West Frontier Province and subsequently from the Chachnama in Sindh in 8th century CE. In all bardic traditions of this period the Rajputs are depicted as horsemen. It may not be again ignored that the Pratiharas, one of the clansmen of the Rajputs of early medieval period felt pride to bear the title of hayapati, "the lord of horses". The military character of the rajputras is also reflected from Lekhpaddhati (a collection of the models of documents from Gujarat and Western Marwar region) which refers to assignment of land-grants to them in return for the performance of military services to the state or the overlord. Regarding the military obligation, one of the charters in the above-mentioned text provides us with the details that a rajputra applies to a ranaka (feudal chief representing the state) for a fief and when he is granted a village he is required not only to maintain law and order within it and collect revenues according to the old just practices but also to furnish 100 foot-soldiers and 20 cavalymen for the service of his ranaka overlord at his headquarter. The fact that he was not allowed to make gifts of uncultivated land to temples and Brahmanas indicates his limited rights over the land granted to him, which he could sub-infeudate to others. Sometimes, the rajputras were also provided cash endowment for the supply of military soldiers in the service of the overlord. In addition to the military service rendered to his immediate overlord ranaka, the rajputras were also asked to pay the revenue in both cash and kind on the land assigned to him for cultivation. The amount of the revenue was strictly to be paid within the specified time limit. If the rajputra failed to do so, it was not to be paid without a fixed amount of interest imposed as late payment.



The origin of Rajputs is shrouded under mystery. Scholars are hardly in unison over their origin and a number of views are in currency pertaining to their origin.

Agnikula Origin of the Rajputs : A Myth Chand Bardai in his Prithviraj Raso (12th century) refers that the Chalukyas, Pratiharas, Paramaras and Chahamanas have their origin from the fire pit of Vashistha. According to Raso, Vishvamisra, Agastya, Vashistha and other sages began a great sacrifice at Mt. Abu. Daityas (demons) interrupted it and then Vashistha created from the sacrificial pit three warriors in succession: the Padihara (Pratihara), the Solanki, and the Paramar

Other Views B. N. S. Yadav has traced the emergence of the early Rajput clans in Rajasthan and Gujarat during the period of political and social confusion and chaos which may be characterised by a declining economy following the invasions and settlements of the foreigners and collapse of the Gupta empire. The rising feudal tendencies, according to him, created favourable circumstances for the emergence of ruling landed aristocracy connected intimately with land. Attached to this background, he traced out the rise of the military clans of the Gurjaras, Guhilots, Chahamanas, Chapas etc. in northern India during 650-750 CE. However, their rise as independent ruling clans may be traced back to the 8th century, when Gurjara-Pratiharas as the first Rajput ruling clan established their hold over Kanauj and other regions in the northern India.

Political structure

Inter-state rivalries are represented by the struggle for supremacy. The king was the supreme head of the state and the conductor of the overall executive, judicial and military administration. To some extent, he was assisted in administrative matters by the queens, a number of whom figure in the records of different dynasties of our period. However, none of them is possibly found entrusted with any administrative post. Their involvement in administration is borne out indirectly in some of the land-grants. They are sometimes found granting land grants with the formal permission of the King. The ministerial council acted as a consultative body on all the important matters of polity. The office of the ministers was generally hereditary. The officials often adopted the feudal titles like rajaputra, ranaka, thakkura, samanta, mahasamanta, raut etc. in addition to the administrative posts like mahasandhivigrahika dutaka, maha-akshapatalika and others. The combining hereditary position and feudal ranks made these officials more powerful. The territorial administration consisted of the vishayas, bhuktis and other sub-divisions was usually fully governed by a class of power feudatories entitled usually as mandaleshvaras, mandalikas, samantas, thakkuras, ranakas, rajaputras etc. The administrative heads in villages apart from the village headman were the panchkulas (a body of five members in a village like panchayat), mahajanas and mahattaras



(village elders). The official posts and designations of administrative officials at various levels were different under various Rajput clans.

Other Archeological Sites

Ganeshwar

- Located on the bank of river Kantali in Sikar District.
- It throws light on the origin development and spread of chalcolithic culture
- Based on radiocarbon dating and comparative studies by Archaeologist RC Agrawal
- Its inhabitation has been placed around 2800 BC
- Among the sites of copper culture, it is the most ancient
- In this way it can be called as the progenitor of chalcolithic cultures in India
- It revealed over 1000 copper objects including 400 arrowheads 50 fish hooks 60 flat cells and numerous other objects like harpoons, needles, bangles
- A large number of arrowheads shows the presence of a specialised craft industry
- The objects show a high percentage of pure copper content
- Evidence of vitrified clay lumps, charred wood and metallurgical slag show highly advanced metal processing skills
- With its microliths and other stone tools, Ganeshwar culture can be ascribed to the pre-Harappan period.
- Ganeshwar people were mainly engaged in agriculture and hunting; was primarily a rural culture
- They mainly supplied copper objects to Harappa.
- Although their principle craft was manufacture of copper objects but they were unable to urbanize on the lines of Indus Valley Civilisation.

Sunari, jhunjhunu

- Excavated in 1980-81
- Located on the banks of Kantali river in jhunjhunu district
- Evidence of iron smelters; considered as the most ancient discovered in India yet
- Mechanism of temperature control is also found in the smelters
- Major findings include arrows front part of Spears iron balls and black polished ware which are considered to be of Mauryan age
- Evidence of beads of Terracotta and Stone bangles of shells and Terracotta images have been found



- Evidence of iron arrows science towards the practice of hunting along with agriculture
- Evidence of images of the mother goddess and agree for food storage has also been found
- It is opined that this region was inhabited by Vedic Aryans
- A distinct iron bowl is also found here; not discovered from any other site yet
- Evidence of Grey coloured vessels with designs
- Remains of the Mauryan, shunga & kushana period are also found in subsequent layers in good quantity

Kurada

- In Nagaur district.
- Called Town of Tools.
- Kurada (nagarur)
- The site was excavated around 1934
- a large number of copper objects have been found; 103 in number
- Known as a centre of copper objects
- Remains of Perforated jars have been found; Throws light on relations between Iran and this region

Iswaal

- In Udaipur district.
- Industrial Town (Because of presence of Iron Mine in Ancient time)
- Excavated by the archaeology department of Rajasthan Vidyapeeth Udaipur
- The site was inhabited from proto history to mediaeval Times
- 5 layers of stratification have been found
- Most interesting finding: iron smelters which had been in use for nearly two thousand years
- Evidence of iron ore, iron objects & pipes have been found
- The site was inhabited from proto history to mediaeval Times
- 5 layers of stratification have been found

Gardara

- In Bundi district.
- Rock paintings of ancient India are found.



Jodhpura

- It is found near Kotputli , Jaipur on the banks of Sabi river.
- Ochre coloured pottery site which is extremely rolled and fragile
- Jodhpur is the only site where habitational deposits of OCP has been found with the following features: well-made floors, mud huts hearth, terracotta human male figurines and bull figurines
- They lead a sedentary life similar to early farming communities
- Domestication of animals and cultivation of crops like rice and barley
- The site dates around 2800 BC
- Major findings:
 - Iron smelters used to make iron out of iron ore
 - Mauryan period - black pottery ware black Burnished polished ware

