



Ancient History Study Notes PDF

Ancient History of India Notes

Ancient History of India

India has a rich and diverse history that spans over 5,000 years. From the Indus Valley Civilization to the Mughal Empire, India has seen the rise and fall of many powerful kingdoms and empires. The ancient history of India is a subject of great interest to historians, archaeologists, and enthusiasts alike. In this article, we will explore some of the key aspects of ancient Indian history, including important personalities, historical places, books, temples, and builders.

Origin of Indian History

The earliest known civilization in India is the **Indus Valley civilization**, which emerged around 2600 BCE in the northwestern regions of the Indian subcontinent. The civilization was characterized by advanced urban planning, drainage systems, and trade networks, and is thought to have influenced the development of the subsequent Vedic period.

The Vedic period, which spanned from 1500 to 500 BCE, is marked by the composition of the Vedas, the sacred texts of Hinduism, and the rise of the first Indian states and kingdoms. This period saw the development of Sanskrit, the classical language of India, and the spread of Hinduism and Buddhism.

Important Topics of Ancient History of India

The ancient history of India encompasses a wide range of topics, from politics and religion to art, architecture, and science. Some of the most significant subjects include:

- **The rise and fall of empires:** India has seen numerous powerful empires throughout its history, from the Mauryan empire, which dominated the Indian subcontinent in the 3rd century BCE, to the Gupta empire, which ushered in a golden age of literature, art, and philosophy in the 4th to 6th centuries CE.
- **Religion and philosophy:** India has given birth to some of the world's major religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, as well as important philosophical traditions, such as Yoga and Ayurveda.
- **Art and architecture:** India boasts a rich tradition of art and architecture, including the famous cave temples of Ajanta and Ellora, the exquisite temples of Khajuraho and Hampi, and the Mughal monuments of the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort.
- **Science and mathematics:** Ancient India made significant contributions to the fields of mathematics, astronomy, and medicine, with scholars such as Aryabhata, Brahmagupta, and Charaka laying the foundations for modern scientific knowledge.



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Ancient History of India Map

To understand the geographical scope of ancient India, it is helpful to consult a map. The Indian subcontinent is a vast landmass that encompasses present-day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and parts of Afghanistan and Myanmar. The map of ancient India shows the extent of various empires, kingdoms, and dynasties that ruled over the region throughout history.

Ancient History of India Timeline

A timeline of the ancient history of India provides a useful overview of the major events and periods that shaped the country's past. Here are some of the key milestones:

- Indus Valley civilization (2600-1900 BCE)
- Vedic Period (1500-500 BCE)
- Mauryan Empire (321-185 BCE)
- Gupta Empire (320-550 CE)
- Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526 CE)
- Mughal Empire (1526-1857 CE)

Ancient History India: Important Personalities

Throughout its history, India has produced many remarkable personalities who have left their mark on the world. Some of the most notable figures include:

- **Gautama Buddha:** The founder of Buddhism, Gautama Buddha was born in Nepal in the 6th century BCE. He taught the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path to attain enlightenment, which became the basis of Buddhism.
- **Emperor Ashoka:** Ashoka was the third ruler of the Mauryan Empire, who reigned from 268 to 232 BCE. He converted to Buddhism after the brutal Kalinga War and became known for his policies of non-violence, religious tolerance, and social welfare.
- **Emperor Akbar:** Akbar was the third Mughal emperor, who ruled from 1556 to 1605 CE. He was known for his religious tolerance, artistic patronage, and administrative reforms, which earned him the title of Akbar the Great.
- **Mahatma Gandhi:** Gandhi was the leader of India's independence movement and a champion of non-violent resistance. He inspired movements for civil rights and freedom across the world, and his legacy continues to inspire people to this day.
- **Alexander :** he was the ruler of Macedonia in Greece. He attacked India in 326 BC and captured up to river Bias.
- **Ajatasatru :** Son of Bimbisara. He established the city of Pataliputra.
- **Arien:** Greek historian who wrote about Alexander's Indian invasion.
- **Ashwaghosh :** Buddhist monk who initiated Kaniskha to Buddhism wrote Buddha charita, Sutralankar and Sandaranand.
- **AmarSimha :** Sanskrit scholar in the court of Chandragupta who wrote Amarakosha.



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- **Aryabhata** : He analysed the reasons for Solar and Lunar eclipses and declared that the Earth is round. Wrote Aryabhattiyam.
- **Bimbisara** : Founded the Magadhan Empire or Haryanka dynasty. He was the first influential king of ancient India.
- **Banabhatta** : Court poet of Harshavardhana and author of Harsha Charita and Kadambari.
- **Charak** : He was an Ayurvedic expert wrote Charak-Samhita and established the Aitereya branch of Ayurvedic medicines.
- **Amoghavarsha** : He was a famous Rashtrakuta ruler.
- **Dhanananda** : He was a powerful king of Magadha. Alexander did not go forward to invade Magadha only after hearing his reputation.
- **Darius I** : The ruler of Iran (Persia) who invaded India in 6th century BC.
- **Gautami Putra Shatakarni** : He was the most famous Satavahana king in 2nd Century.
- **Harisena** : He was the writer of Prayaga Prashasti or Allahabad Pillar Inscription.
- **Kharavela** : Ruler of Kalinga in I century AD. The Famous Hathigumbha inscription belonged to him.
- **Kanishka** : (I century AD) : Most powerful Kushan king. Started Shaka Era. Organised fourth Buddhist council at Kundalvan near Kashmir.
- **Karikala** : Chola ruler who founded the city of Puhar (Kaveri patanam) in I century BC.
- **Kautilya** : also known as Vishnugupta or Chanakya. He wrote *Arthasasthra*, which is compared to 'The prince' of Machiavelli.
- **Kalidas** : Famous Sanskrit poet who wrote, *Raghuvamsa, Kumara Sambhavam, Abhigyanam Shakuntalam, Vikramorvasiyam and Malavikagnimitram*. He also wrote *Meghadootam and Ritusamharam*.
- **Kamban** : A Tamil poet of 11th century who wrote Ramayan in Tamil.
- **Mihir Bhoja** : Famous Pratihara ruler of 9th century.
- **Kalhana** - Famous Kashmiri poet and historian. He wrote *Raja Tarangini*.
- **Marco Polo** : Venitian Traveller to India in 13th century.
- **Menander** : He came to India as a foreign aggressor in II Century BC. *MilindaPanho*, a book written by Nagasena, is about him.
- **Nagarjuna** : Famous Buddhist monk. He propounded the philosophy known as *Madhyamika*.
- **Makkali Gosala** : Philosopher of 6th Century BC. He was the founder of Ajivika sect.
- **Mihirkula** : Huna conqueror defeated by Yashodharma.
- **Skand Gupta** : Last mighty Gupta ruler.
- **Shushrut** : He was a doctor of Ayurvedic medicine. He started the Dhanwantri branch and was an expert in Plastic Surgery.
- **Pulikeshin II**. Most powerful king of Chalukyas of Vatapi who defeated Harshavardhana in North and Mahendravarman of South.



- **Pushya Mitra sunga** : He killed the last Mauryan ruler and laid the foundation of Sunga dynasty in 185 BC.
- **Pliny** : He was a Roman historian who wrote the *Natural History*. He wrote about the Mauryas of India.
- **Panini** : Sanskrit scholar specially of Grammar. He wrote *Ashtadyayi*.
- **Varahamihira** : He was famous astronomer who wrote Brihat Samhita.
- **Sankaracharya** : He was born in Kaladi in Kerala. He propagated Advaita Philosophy.

Ancient History India: System

- **Samkya**- Sage Kapila
- **Yoga**- Patanjali
- **Vaisheshika**- Kanada
- **Nyaya**- Akshapada (Gautama)
- **Mimamsa**- Jaimini

Symbols of Buddha

- **Birth**- Lotus and Bull
- **Renunciation**-Horse
- **Enlightenment** -Bodhitree
- **First Sermon** -Dharma Chakra
- **Nirvana (Death)**-Footprints

Famous Eras

- **Vikram Era** -58 BC
- **Saka Era** - 78 AD
- **Gupta Era**- 320 AD
- **Hijra Era** -622 AD
- **Kollam Era**-825 AD
- **Illahi Era** -1583 AD

Ancient History India: Historical Places and Their Importance

India is home to many historical places that have great cultural, religious, and architectural significance. Some of the most important historical places in India include:

- **Taj Mahal**: The Taj Mahal is a magnificent mausoleum in Agra, built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. It is considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World and a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- **Ajanta and Ellora Caves**: The Ajanta and Ellora Caves are a series of rock-cut temples and monasteries in Maharashtra, dating back to the 2nd century BCE. They are renowned for their intricate carvings and paintings, which depict scenes from the life of Buddha and other deities.
- **Hampi**: Hampi is an ancient city in Karnataka, which was the capital of the Vijayanagara Empire in the 14th to 16th centuries CE. It is home to many impressive temples, palaces, and monuments, including the Virupaksha Temple and the Vittala Temple.



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- Khajuraho Temples: The Khajuraho Temples are a group of Hindu and Jain temples in Madhya Pradesh, built between the 9th and 11th centuries CE. They are famous for their erotic sculptures and intricate carvings, which are considered some of the finest examples of Indian temple art.
- **Ayodhya**- Birthplace of Sri Rama (UP)
- **Amber Palace**- Rajasthan
- **Aghakhan Palace**- Pune (Maharashtra) (Gandhi and Kasturba were kept in prison here)
- **Kedarnath**- Holy place of Hindus (Uttarakhand)
- **Amarnath**- Pilgrim Centre (Kashmir)
- **Elephanta caves**- Near Mumbai
- **Ellora Caves**- Maharashtra - 34 cave temples (Hindu, Buddha - Jaina)
- **Rajgir**- Jain Temple in Bihar
- **Golden Temple**- Amritsar - Harmandir Sahib of Sikhs
- **Golgumbus**- Bijapur (Karnataka) Tomb of Muhammed Adil Shah
- **Tanjore**- Capital of Cholas - Brihadveswara Temple
- **Charminar**- Hyderabad (Monument of Plague Eradication)
- **Konark Temple**- Orissa (Sun Temple)
- **Qutab Minar**- Delhi
- **Khajuraho**- Near Bhopal (M.P.) 80 temples
- **Mahabalipuram**- Centre of Pallava Architecture (Tamil Nadu)
- **Kurukshetra**- Battle of Mahabarata (in Haryana)
- **TajMahal**- Agra (UP) Built by Shah Jahan
- **Sanchi**- Buddhist Stupa (Madhya Pradesh)
- **Haridwar**- Holy Place of Hindus (Uttarakhand)

Books for Ancient History of India

There are many excellent books on ancient Indian history that provide a comprehensive and insightful view of the country's past. Some of the best books on ancient Indian history include:

- **India: A History** by John Keay: This is a comprehensive and engaging history of India, spanning from the Indus Valley Civilization to the present day. It covers a wide range of topics, including politics, culture, religion, and economy.
- **The Wonder That Was India** by A.L. Basham: This classic work provides a comprehensive overview of Indian history and culture
- **Chandra Vyakaran**- Chandragomin
- **Amar Kosh** - Amar Singh
- **Niti Shastra** - Kamandak
- **Kamasutra** - Vatsya yana
- **Panchasiddhantika**- Varahamihira
- **Ashtanga Hridaya** - Vaghbhatta
- **Hastyaurveda**- Pulkapya
- **Sankhyakarika**- Iswarkrishna



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Ancient History India: Temples and Builders

Ancient India is a land of rich cultural heritage and architectural wonders, with its many temples and monuments standing as a testament to the country's glorious past. These temples and monuments were built by skilled craftsmen and artisans, who dedicated their lives to creating some of the most magnificent structures the world has ever seen. In this article, we will explore the world of ancient Indian temples and the master builders behind them. Additionally, we will also take a look at where to find the ancient history of India in PDF format, providing readers with easy access to valuable information about the country's past.

- **Kailas Temple at Ellora** - Krishna I
- **Chunnakesava Temple, Belur**- Vishnuvardhana
- **Rathas at Mahabalipuram**- Narashimhavarman I
- **Brihadeswara Temple, Tanjavur**- RajaRaja Chola
- **Shore Temple, Mahabalipuram**- Narasimha VarmanII
- **Lingaraja Temple, Bhavaneswar** - Eastern Gangarubs
- **Karjuraho Temples**- Chandellas
- **Rajarajeshwara Temple, Tanjavur**- Raja raja I
- **Meenakshi Temple at Madurai**- Nayaka Rulers
- **Shiva Temple at Tanjavur**- Raja Raja Chola



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