

History UG

Semester: 1	
Programme : History	
Course : India From the Earliest Times to c. 300 BCE	
Paper code: C1HS230111T	Credits: 4
Hours/week : 4	
Category: Core/MDC/SEC/VAC : Core	
Theory / Practical / Composite : Theory	
No of Modules : 2	

Course Overview: This course provides a comprehensive examination of the formative periods of Indian history, tracing the evolution of human civilization from the Stone Age to the threshold of the Mauryan Empire. It begins by critically analyzing the archaeological and literary sources used to reconstruct Ancient Indian history. Students will explore the trajectory of the pre-historic phases—Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic—before delving into the complexities of the Harappan Civilization, including its urban planning, economy, and debate-ridden decline.

The second half of the course navigates the Vedic Period (c. 1500–600 BCE), addressing the "Aryan Problem" and the transformation of political and social institutions. It concludes with the "Age of Transition" (c. 600–300 BCE), focusing on the rise of the Mahajanapadas, the ascendancy of Magadha, the Second Urbanization, and the emergence of heterodox religious movements like Buddhism and Jainism.

Course Outcome:

1. Identify and define the key chronological phases, archaeological sites, and terminology associated with the Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Harappan cultures.
2. Explain the significant transitions in polity, economy, and society that occurred between the Early Vedic and Later Vedic periods (c. 1500–600 BCE)
3. Apply methods of historical reconstruction to classify different types of archaeological and literary sources, demonstrating how specific evidence is used to interpret Ancient Indian history.
4. Analyze the factors contributing to the "Second Urbanization" in the Gangetic valley, distinguishing how it differed structurally and economically from the Harappan urban culture.
5. Critically evaluate competing historical theories regarding complex debates, such as the "Aryan Problem" or the causes behind the decline of the Harappan Civilization.
6. Construct a coherent historical argument linking the political rise of Magadha with the socio-economic changes and the birth of heterodox religious movements in the 6th century BCE.

Prerequisites: Basic knowledge about any prior course

SYLLABUS

UNIT/Module	CONTENT	HOURS or NUMBER OF CLASSES	CO Mapping	COGNITIVE LEVEL
I.	1. Reconstructing Ancient Indian History: Sources	18	CO1 CO2 CO3	K1,K2,K3,K4.K5,K6

	2. Pre-Historic Phase = 5 Classes An overview of the pre-Historic cultures of India: Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods		CO4 CO5 CO6		
	3. Harappan Civilization				
II.	4. The Vedic Period (c. 1500-600 BCE) a. Aryan Problem b. Early Vedic and Later Vedic periods- Polity; Economy; Society and Religion.	10	CO1 CO2 CO3 CO4 CO5 CO6	K1,K2,K3,K4,K5,K6	
	5. Age of Transition (c. 600-300 BCE) = 8 LECTURES a. Political Developments- Mahajanapadas Ganasanghas- Rise of Magadha b. Economic progress; Second Urbanization; Social features; Religion: Heterodox Religious Movements				
Text Books					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upinder Singh, A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India, 2008. • D.C. Sircar, Indian Epigraphy, Motilal Banarsi Dass, 2017 • D.C. Sircar, Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India, Motilal Banarsi Dass, 2014 • Ranabir Chakravarti, Exploring Early India (Up to c. AD 1300), Primus, New Delhi, 2016 • D.N. Jha, Ancient India in Historical Outline, Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 2020 • D.D. Kosambi- An Introduction to the Study of Indian History, Sage Publications India Private Limited, 2016 • D.D. Kosambi- The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India In Historical Outline, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, 1997 • R.S. Sharma- Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India, Motilal Banarsi Dass Publishers, 2015. • R.S. Sharma, India's Ancient Past, New Delhi, OUP, 2007 					

- R.S. Sharma, Looking for the Aryas, Delhi, Orient Longman Publishers, 1995
- Bridget & F. Raymond Allchin, The Rise of Civilization in India and Pakistan, Viking, 1997
- Romila Thapar, The Penguin History of Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300, PenguinIndia, 2003
- Romila Thapar, Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas, Oxford, 2012

Suggested readings

- Radhakumud Mookerji, Indian Shipping: A History of the Sea-Borne Trade and MaritimeActivity of the Indians from the Earliest Times, Gyan Publishing House, 2023
- Upinder Singh, Ancient India: New Research, Oxford, 2010
- A L. Basham, The Wonder that Was India Vol.1, Rupa, 1954.
- D. K. Chakrabarti, The Oxford Companion to Indian Archaeology, New Delhi, 2006.

Web Resources

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Evaluation: Theory CIA: 5(CIA)+20(Mid Sem)+5 (Attendance)=30

Semester Exam: 70

Paper Structure for Theory Semester Exam:

Total Marks: 70

Two modules of 35 marks each.

(3 questions of 5 marks from 5 options: $3 \times 5 = 15$

2 questions of 10 marks from 3 options: $2 \times 10 = 20$

Course outcomes (COs) and Cognitive Level Mapping

COs	CO Description	Cognitive levels
CO1	Identify and define the key chronological phases, archaeological sites, and terminology associated with the Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Harappan cultures.	K1
CO2	Explain the significant transitions in polity, economy, and society that occurred between the Early Vedic and Later Vedic periods (c. 1500–600 BCE)	K2
CO3	Apply methods of historical reconstruction to classify different types of archaeological and literary sources, demonstrating how specific evidence is used to interpret Ancient Indian history.	K3
CO4	Analyze the factors contributing to the "Second Urbanization" in the Gangetic valley, distinguishing how	K4

	it differed structurally and economically from the Harappan urban culture.	
CO5	Critically evaluate competing historical theories regarding complex debates, such as the "Aryan Problem" or the causes behind the decline of the Harappan Civilization.	K5
CO6	Construct a coherent historical argument linking the political rise of Magadha with the socio-economic changes and the birth of heterodox religious movements in the 6th century BCE.	K6