

UPSC PRELIMS 2018



ANCIENT HISTORY

Book

R.S . SHARMA

Chapter 1 to 4

No. of pages

32 pgs

32 pgs reduced to 6 pgs

**EFFECT : Studying time reduces from
1 hour 36 mins (96 mins) to JUST 18 mins**

SAMPLE NOTES : ANCIENT HISTORY : RS SHARMA : ULIMATE PLAN TO CLEAR PRELIMS 2018 BY LAWXPERTSMV INDIA

Chapter 1 : The importance of Ancient Indian History

PAGE 1 :

- First 2 paras : Why the study of Ancient History is important? To understand how we evolved.
- UNITY IN DIVERSITY : Various ethnic groups made their home in India. Who are they? *Pre-aryans, Indo-Aryans, the Greeks, the Scythians, the Hunas, the Turks.*
- Did they maintained their original form after reaching India ? No, they commingled with Indian culture.

AREA	ELEMENTS
North	Aryan elements had vedic + sanskritic culture
South	Pre-Aryan has Dravidian + tamil culture ; Sangam Literature - during 300 B.C. – A.D. 600 – used pali + Sanskrit terms.
East	Inhabited by Pre-Aryans, who spoke Munda or Kolarian Languages. Evidence shows the <i>use of cotton, navigation, digging stick etc.,</i>

PAGE 2 :

- Religions in Ancient India such as Hinduism, Jainism & Buddhism – had deep underlying unity inspite of great diversity.
- Perception of Ancient People ? : Unity or hostility ? It was unity.

Key words : *Bharatavarsha / Bharatasantati / Chakravatins / Sindhu*

<i>Bharatavarsha</i>	Bharatas, an Ancient Tribe – whose name was given to whole country
<i>Bharatasantati</i>	People of that Ancient Tribe
<i>Chakravatins</i>	Kings who tried to establish their authority over bharatavarsha. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd century - Ashoka ; 4th Century – Samudragupta
<i>Sindhu</i>	Indus river

- Lingua franca of the people – during 3rd Century : *Prakrit* ; later *Sanskrit* acquired similar status (during 4th century Gupta Period) .

PAGE 3 & 4 :

- EPICS : *Ramayana* + *Mahabharata* = were given same importance across India.
- VARNA SYSTEM : Arose from North India – became prevalent almost all over the country.

RELEVANCE OF THE PAST TO THE PRESENT?

- Restoration of Ancient culture and Civilisation V. Preservation of Ancient Heritage in Art and Architecture.
- Comparison of S&T
- Social Justice or Injustice?
- Why should be get rid of the past? Caste system , Sectarianism, Women Subordination = as they hinder Integration & development of the democractic country.

Chapter 2 : Modern Historians of Ancient India**1. COLONIALIST VIEWS AND CONTRIBUTION :**

British Rule in India after 1765 required knowledge about Indian manners + social system. So they started translating the ancient texts (epics, puranas, semi-biological works etc..) to English.

- Hindu law of inheritance : Manusmriti → A code of Gentoo laws.
- ASB – 1784 Calcutta by SW.Jones : *Abhijnanashakuntalam* → English.
- Wikins translated : *Bhagvadgita* → English.
- Bombay AS -1804 ; AS of Great Britain – 1823
- Revolt of 1857 : eye-opener that they did not understand Indians properly; Works of Max Muller (*Sacred books of the East series*).

What british told V. reality ?

2. NATIONAL APPROACH AND CONTRIBUTION :

Irked with british distortions of Indian history, Indian scholars, who had received western education, reconstructed Indian ancient history with nationalist ideas of Hindu revivalism.

- RL Mitra : caste system vis-à-vis division of Labour in Europe.
- RG Bhandarkar : reconstructed political history of satavahanas + vaishnavism
- VK Rajwade : Maratha history + evolution of marriage
- PV Kane ; History of the dharmasastra : ancient social laws and customs
- DR Bhandarkar : Ancient Political Institutions + Ashoka.
- HC Raychaudari : History of Ancient India from Bharta (Mahabharta) War.
- RC Majumdar : *History & Culture of the Indian people* = Hindu revivalism.

- K.A.Nilakanta : History of Ancient India + South India = Nature of Polity ; Supremacy of Brahamanas
 - VA SMITH ; about Alexandar Invasion
 - KP Jayaswal + AS Alterkar : Role of Indigenous rulers in liberating from Shakas + Kushanas.KP also known for exploding the myth of Indian despotism in his Hindu Polity 1924.
3. SHIFT TO NON-POLITICAL HISTORY :
- AL BASHAM : Wonder that was India
 - DD KOSAMBI : Study of Indian History (his writings of Karl Marx) ; His book was to FIRST survey to show **social + economic development**.

Chapter 3 : Types of Sources and Historical Construction

Page : 11 : MATERIAL REMAINS:

Material remains – as mounds (remains of old habitations) – can be classified as

Single culture (only one culture) : Eg : PGW ; Satavahanas ; Kushan culture

Major Culture : One culture is important others are not.

Multi Culture : Many important culture in succession and overlapping fashion Eg: Ramayana and Mahabhartha

- Mound excavation can be either – vertical and horizontal.
 - ✓ Dry arid climate sites have **more remains left behind** than moist and humid climate sites.
 - ✓ Even 2500 B.C. Gangetic plains material culture can be found.
 - ✓ Dead people with their belongings encircle in a big stones = Megaliths.

Not important = Archaeology ; radio-carbon dating method; pollen analysis.

- Whether Agriculture was practised in Rajasthan 7000BC ago ? **Yes**. Including Kashmir.

Page 12 : COINS : Study of coins = Numismatics. ‘

1. Ancient india – no paper currency – only metal (*Copper, Silver, Gold, Lead*) coins made from **burnt clay moulds** had been used during **Kushan period**; this practice disappeared during **post-gupta period** (this shows the decline of trade & commerce)
2. No modern banking system ; earthen pots + brass vessels = used to store coins (Indian + Roman where found in them)
3. Coins earlier contained *symbols* ; later the names of *Kings, Gods, Dates*.

This helped to decipher who ruled - where. Fact : Indo-greeks (from north afghan) ruled india in 2nd and 1st century B.C.

4. Coins used for : donation/ mode of payment/ medium of exchange.

5. With the permission of rulers, some coins issued by guilds of merchant + gold smiths. It shows the importance given to crafts and commerce.

6. FACTS :

- Largest no. of coins found after post-maurya period.
- Largest no of Gold coins issued Guptas.

PAGE 13 : INSCRIPTIONS : - Study of Inscriptions = *Epigraphy* ; study of old writings in inscriptions = *Palaeography*.

Where were inscriptions found > Carved in seals/stone pillars/rocks/ copper plates/temple walls/bricks/images.

- Earliest inscription is on "STONE" (later this method is followed by south Indians esp. in temple walls)
- During Christian era, "COPPER PLATES" is used for inscriptions.

Language of Inscription : Earliest = Prakrit (3rd century B.C. – 10th century A.D) ; Sanskrit (2nd century – 5th Century A.D.)

- *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* = collection of inscriptions bearing history of Maurya, Post-Maurya + Gupta.

Harappan Inscriptions - pictographic script

Ashokan Inscriptions =

Brahmi Script = written from L to Right. Found all over India .

Kharoshthi script = Written in R to Left. Found in North-western India.

Greek +Arabic scripts = Pakistan + Afghanistan.

USES OF INSCRIPTION :	
Ashokan Inscriptions	Royal Orders/ Decision regarding social, religious & administrative matters
Jainist, Buddhist, vaishnavism/shaivism inscriptions	Devotion
Allahabad inscriptions	Attributes + Achievements of Kings + conquerors (not of their defeat)
Chief + princes	Land grants by them (inscription in copper plates in All languages including prakrit,Sanskrit, tamil, telugu)

Chapter 4 : The Geographical Setting

PAGE 23:

- General facts on geography of India (outdated)

Important facts :

- Monsoon played important role in establishing trade between west Asia + Mediterranean area + S-E asia.

During N-E Monsoon

West asia traders -> to india

During S-W Monsoon

Returned from India → West asia

PAGE 25 :

- How mountains acted as an barrier against invasions + mountain passes enabled trade India and Central + West Asia.
- How valleys of Kashmir + Nepal became repositories of Sanskrit manuscripts.
- How foothills of Himalayas – centre for agriculture + states and terai region became trade routes.
- Rivers + Rainfall pattern.

Indus + Western gangetic plains = produced Wheat + Barley

Middle + Lower Gangetic Plains =produced Rice (also used by Gujarat + Vindhya)

PAGE 26 :

CULTURE	SPREAD
Harappan Culture	Indus Valley
Vedic Culture	North- West frontier province + Punjab + western Gangetic basin
Post-vedic Culture	Based on use of Iron in Middle Gangetic Basin
Gupta Age	Lower Gangetic valley + North Bengal
Medieval times	Brahmaputra valley covering assam

- Rivers used for = commerce + communication until the arrival of British.
- Rivers made the areas fertile but also washed away *ancient buildings + towns* = villages beyond recovery.
- Rivers marked the political +cultural boundaries. Eg : Kalinga area was between Mahanadi and Godavari. Tamil nadu between Krishna and Kaveri.

MAPPING THE AREAS: PAGE 28 :

- Eastern part : Coromandal coast.
- Western part : Maharashtra (between Tapi+ Bhima) etc..

- ✓ **Tungabhadra river : contested area** : between chalukyas of badami + rashtrakutas on north and Cholas + Pallavas in South.

North - Bhima + Krishna

Karnataka

South - Tungabhadra

- ✓ Malabar coast : Kerala.

- ✓ **Rajasthan** + Thar desert between Indus in north + Vindhya mountain in South.

West of aravalli	South-east of aravalli
Rajasthan is desert	Here land is Fertile due to two reasons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Human settlements in chalcolithic period ✓ presence of khetri Copper mines

- ✓ Gujarat : Rivers Narmada, Tapi, Mahi, Sabarmati + Kathiawar peninsula. Famous for coastal + foreign trade + enterprising trade.
- ✓ Madhya Pradesh : Eastern part = important during Gupta period ; Western Part including Malwa = many wars fought between Deccan and northern powers. (1st and 2nd century = Between Shakas and Satavahanas ; 8th century : between Marathas and Rajputs)

Due to defensibility of natural frontiers : one ruler cannot control the other areas and this resulted in EACH AREA HAVING DISTINCT CULTURE WITH ITS OWN STYLE OF LIFE AND LANGUAGE.

- All languages in North + western India came from Indo-Aryan stock + Sanskrit was used all over India.

North of Vindhya mountains - spoke Aryan languages
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Middle of Vindhya mountains - spoke tribal languages
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South of Vindhya mountains - spoke Dravidian languages
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- **Vindhya mountains - not a great barrier** - therefore there was give-and take in culture + movement of people.

PAGE 29-32:

In Ancient times, timber houses & palisades were used than burnt bricks (Pataliputra) ; All kinds of stones (including sandstones were used for construction)

- Copper is widely distributed in country. Find where, who and how it was used.
- FACT : Pre-vedic + Vedic used copper.
- Tin was scarce in Ancient times as in today. (used by Harappa)
- Iron ores widely used (Magadha, Satavahanas etc..)
- Silver coins (punch-marked) were used. (Akbar period)
- Gold & pearls.