

CORE COURSES SEMESTER 2

Core Course III

History of India- II

Course Objectives:

This course is about early historical and early medieval periods of Indian history. It explores the transition from proto-historical to early medieval phase highlighting major changes that shaped the character of the Indian civilization. Highlighting the features of early historic times, the course tries to trace the emergence of state system from tribal stage to 'early-state' stage and at the same time seeks to underline the important developments in the arena of economy, society and culture. The purpose of this course is to familiarise the students with the ways in which historians work with the sources of various kinds and reach at conclusions.

Learning Outcomes:

After completing this course, the students will be able to

- Discuss various kinds of sources that the historians utilize to write the history of early historical and early medieval India.
- Analyse the processes and the stages of development of various types of state systems like monarchy, republican and centralized states as well as the formation of large empires.
- Discuss the ways in which historians have questioned the characterization of the Mauryan state.
- Delineate the changes in the fields of agriculture, technology, trade, urbanization and society and the major points of changes during the entire period.
- Describe the factors responsible for the rise of a good number of heterodox religious systems and adjustments and readjustments by various belief systems.
- Trace the processes of urbanization and de-urbanization & monetization and monetary crisis in early India.
- Analyse critically the changes in the *varna*/caste systems and changing nature of gender relations and property rights.
- Write and undertake projects related to literature, science, art and architecture.

Course Content:

Unit: I. Introducing the early historical: Sources (600 BCE onwards) and historiographical trends

Unit: II. Changing political formations (c. 600 BCE to c. 300 CE)

- [a] The *mahajanapadas*; monarchies and *ganas/sanghas*
- [b] The Mauryan empire: political structure; the nature of *dhamma*
- [c] Post-Mauryan polities with special reference to the Kushanas and the Satavahanas
- [d] Tamilakam

Unit: III. Economy and society (c. 600 BCE to c. 300 CE)

- [a] Expansion of agrarian economy and production relations
- [b] Urban growth: north India, central India, the Deccan and south India; craft production; trade interactions across India, Asia and beyond
- [c] Social stratification: class; *varna*; *jati*; untouchability; gender; marriage and property relations

Unit: IV. Towards early medieval India (c. 4th century to 750 CE)

- [a] Introducing the early medieval: changing perspectives
- [b] The nature of polities: the Gupta Empire and its contemporaries; post-Gupta polities -- Pallavas, Chalukyas and Vardhanas
- [c] Agrarian expansion; land grants; changing production relations; graded land rights and peasantry
- [d] Urban patterns; trade and currency
- [e] *Varna*; the proliferation of *jatis*; changing norms of marriage and inheritance

Unit: V. Religion, philosophy and society (c. 600 BCE – 750 CE)

- [a] Shramanic traditions with special reference to Buddhism and Jainism
- [b] Consolidation of the Brahmanical tradition
- [c] Puranic Hinduism

Unit: VI. Cultural developments (c. 600 BCE – 750 CE)

- [a] A brief survey of creative literature; scientific and technical treatises
- [b] Art and architecture; forms of patronage

ESSENTIAL READINGS AND UNIT WISE TEACHING OUTCOMES:

Unit I: This unit seeks to take stock of the nature of sources and the historiography for the period between 600 BC to 750 CE. **(Teaching Time: 1week Approx.)**

- Allchin, F. R, *et al.* (1995). *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia: The Emergence of Cities and States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 2 pp. 10-25 & chapter 5 pp. 54-72.)
- Chattopadhyaya, B. D. (1994). *The Making of Early Medieval India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press. (Introduction, pp. 1-37.)
- Sharma, R. S. (1995). *Perspectives in Social and Economic History of Early India*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal. (Second edition. See especially, Chapters 16 and 18.)
- Salomon, Richard. (1998). *Indian Epigraphy: A Guide to the Study of Inscriptions in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and the other Indo-Aryan Languages*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapters 4(pp. 7-71) and 7(226-251).
- Thapar, Romila. (2002). *Reading History from Inscriptions: Professor D. C. Sircar Memorial Lecture Delivered at the University of North Bengal*. Kolkata: K. P. Baghchi. Pp. 1-17

Unit II. This unit would enable students to trace the history of changing political formations in India from the mahajanapadas to the Mauryan and the post-Mauryan states. **(Teaching Time: 3 weeks Approx.)**

- Alcock, Susan E. (*et. al.*) (2001). *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 6, pp. 155- 178.)
- Allchin, F. R. (*et al.*) (1995). *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia: The Emergence of Cities and States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 6 (pp.73-98) & Chapter 10 (pp. 185- 221).
- Chattopadhyaya, B.D. (2003). *Studying Early India: Archaeology, Texts, and Historical Issues*. Delhi: Permanent Black. Chapter 3 (pp.39-47).
- Gurukkal, Rajan. (2010). *Social Formations of Early South India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 6 and 7 pp.136-165.)
- Sharma, R.S. (1996). *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas. (Chapters XV(pp.197-232), XVIII (pp. 275-290), XIX (pp.291-310), XX (pp. 311-320, XXIII (pp.371-402) (Available in Hindi also)
- Singh, Upinder. (2008). *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. Delhi: Pearson Longman. (More relevant parts are Chapters 6, 7 and 8)(Also available in Hindi)
- Thapar, Romila. (1987). *Mauryas Revisited*. In Romila Thapar, *Cultural Pasts: Essays in Early Indian History*. Delhi: OUP. PP. 462-488.(Available in Hindi also)
- Thapar, Romila. (2012). *Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. PP. 119-227.(Also available in Hindi)

Unit III. This unit will apprise students of the socio-economic developments up to 300 CE, with particular attention to agrarian relations and production as well as varna, jati, gender and class relations. **(Teaching Time: 3 weeks Approx.)**

- Allchin, F.R. *et al.* (1995). *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia: The Emergence of Cities and States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Chapters 5,6,7 & 8 PP. 54-151)
- Chakravarti, Uma. (1996). *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal. (Chapters 2,3,4 and 5. pp. 7-149)
- Champakalakshmi, R. (1996). *Trade, Ideology and Urbanization: South India 300BC to Ad 1300*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 1 and 2. pp. 24-154)
- Jaiswal, Suvira. (1998). *Caste: Origin, Function and Dimensions of Change*, Delhi: Manohar. (pp.1-131.) (available in Hindi also)
- Sahu, B. P. (2006). *Iron and Social Change in Early India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. (pp. 1-31).
- Sharma, R. S. (1983). *Material Culture and Social Formations in Ancient India*. Delhi: Macmillan. (pp.89-116.) (available in Hindi also).
- Sharma, R. S. (1990). *Sudras in Ancient India: A Social History of the Lower Order Down to circa. A. D. 600*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas. (pp. 90-254) (Available in Hindi also).
- Singh, Upinder. (2008). *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. Delhi: Pearson Longman. (Chapters 6 and 8.) (Available in Hindi also).

Unit IV. This unit introduces students to the varied perspectives on the early medieval India with regard to the nature of polities, agrarian expansion as well as social and urban processes. **(Teaching Time: 2weeks Approx.)**

- Chattopadhyaya, B. D. (1994). *The Making of Early Medieval India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 7 & 8.)
- Roy, Kumkum. (ed.) (2001). *Women in Early Indian Societies*. Delhi: Manohar. (Introduction and pp. 113-122.)
- Sharma, R. S. (1990). *Sudras in Ancient India: A Social History of the Lower Order Down to circa. A. D. 600*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas. (pp. 245-326.) (Available in Hindi also)
- Sharma, R.S. (1980). *Indian Feudalism*. Madras: Macmillan. (Chapter 1.) (Also available in Hindi).
- Sharma, R.S. (1996). *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas. (Chapters XXI, pp.321-348 and XXIII (III, pp. 386-392) (Available in Hindi)

- Singh, Upinder. (2008). *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. Delhi: Pearson Longman. (Chapters 9 and 10.) (Available in Hindi also)

Unit V. This unit traces the religious and philosophical developments in the period of study especially with regard to the emergence of the Shramanic traditions and the consolidation of the Puranic tradition. **(Teaching Time: 3 weeks Approx.)**

- Brockington, J.L. (1997). *The Sacred Thread: A Short History of Hinduism*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. (2nd edition). PP.1-129
- Jaiswal, Suvira. (1981). *The Origin and Development of Vaisnavism: Vaisnavism from 200 BC to AD 500*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal. (Chapters 3 (pp.32-115), 6 (pp. 167-228) and 7 (pp. 229-235). (available in Hindi also)
- Shrimali, K. M. (2017). *Prachin Bhartiya Dharmon ka Itihas* (प्राचीनभारतीयधर्मोकाइतिहास). Delhi: Granth Shilpi. (In Hindi). PP. 1-80.
- Singh, Upinder. (2008). *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. Delhi: Pearson Longman. (Chapters 6,8, 9& 10) (Available in Hindi also)

Unit VI. This unit aims at familiarising students with the salient developments during the period of study in the field of art and literature as well as science and technology. **(Teaching Time: 2 weeks Approx.)**

- Huntington, S. (1985). *The Art of Ancient India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain*. New Delhi: Weather Hill.(pp. 41-321)
- Basham, A.L. (1954). *The Wonder that was India: A survey of the history and culture of the Indian subcontinent before the coming of the Muslims*. Calcutta: Rupa. pp. 348-507. (Available in Hindi also)
- Singh, Upinder. (2008). *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. Delhi: Pearson Longman. (Chapters 7 (pp. 356-366), 8 (pp. 445-471), and 9 (pp. 526- 545) (Available in Hindi also)

SUGGESTED READINGS:

- Chakravarti, R. (2010). *Exploring Early India up to c. AD 1300*. Delhi: Primus. (2016, 3rd edition). [Also available in Hindi]
- Desai, D. (2013). *Art and Icon: Essays on Early Indian Art*. Delhi: Aryan Books International.
- Gethin, Rupert. (1998). *The Foundations of Buddhism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Habib, Irfan and Faiz Habib. (2012). *Atlas of Ancient Indian History*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Jaini, Padmanabh S. (1979). *The Jaina Path of Purification*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Jha, D.N. (ed.) (2003). *The Feudal Order: State, Society and Ideology in Early Medieval India*. New Delhi: Manohar.
- Karashima, N. (ed.) (2000). *A Concise History of South India: Issues and Interpretations*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Kosambi, D. D. (1956). *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan. (Available in Hindi also)
- Lahiri, Nayanjot. 2015. *Ashoka in Ancient India*. Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Mukherjee, B.N. (1989). *Rise and Fall of the Kushana Empire*. Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay.
- Olivelle, P. (ed.) (2006). *Between the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Olivelle, P., J. Leoshko and H.P. Ray. (Eds.) (2012). *Reimagining Asoka: Memory and History*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Pandey, G. C. (1990). *Bauddha Dharma ke Vikas ka Itihas (बौद्धधर्मकेविकासकाइतिहास)*. Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Hindi Sansthan. (3rd edition)
- Pollock, Sheldon. (2007). *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*, Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Ray, H.P. (1994). *The Winds of Change: Buddhism and the Maritime Links of Early South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Ray, H.P. (1986). *Monastery and Guild: Commerce under the Satavahanas*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Roy, Kumkum. (2010). *The Power of Gender & the Gender of Power: Explorations in Early Indian History*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Sahu, B. P. (2015). *Society and Culture in Post-Mauryan India: c. 200 BC- AD 300*. Delhi: Tulika.
- Sharma, R. S. (1987). *Urban Decay in India c.300- c. 1000*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal. (Available in Hindi also).
- Shrimali, K.M. (2007). *The Age of Iron and the Religious Revolution*. Delhi: Tulika.
- Singh, Upinder. (2016). *The Idea of Ancient India: Essays on Religion, Politics, and Archaeology*. Delhi: Sage.
- Thapar, R. (2003). *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300*. Delhi: Penguin. [Also available in Hindi]
- Thapar, Romila. (1998). *Recent Perspectives of Early Indian History*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan.

Teaching Learning Process:

Classroom lecture method, group discussion,, student presentations in class and/or in tutorials, assignments. Supporting audio-visual aids like documentaries and power point presentations will be used wherever necessary. Overall, the Teaching Learning Process shall emphasise the interconnectedness of themes within the different rubrics to build a holistic view of the time period/region under study. The process shall consistently underline how various macro and micro-level developments/phenomena can be historicised.

Assessment Methods:

Students will be regularly assessed for their grasp through debates and discussions covered in class. Two written assignments will be used for final grading of the students. Students will be assessed on their ability to engage with a sizeable corpus of readings assigned to them for written submissions, i.e. being able to explain important historical trends and tracing historiography reflected in the assigned readings.

Internal Assessment: 25 Marks

Written Exam: 75 Marks

Total: 100 Marks

Keywords:

Early Historical Period, Early-Medieval Period, Second Urbanization, *Mahajanapada*, *Ganasangha*, *Dhamma*, *Tinai*, *Varna*, *Jati*, Untouchability, *Varnasankara*, *Sreni*, Buddhism, Jainism, *Stupa*, *Dravida*, *Nagara*, Gandhara art, Mathura Art, Indian feudalism, Integrative Model, Brahmadeya, Puranic Hinduism, Patronage.