

# Ancient History for SSC CGL 2022

## ○ PREHISTORIC PERIOD

- **Paleolithic era** – Old stone age. Stone tools were made by Man. Roughly from 2.6 million years ago to 15000 BC approx. Man's occupation was hunting and food gathering. Sites – Bhimbetka caves in M.P.
- **Mesolithic era** – Late stone age. Sharpened stone tools. Man was hunter and gatherer. Up to 4000-5000 BC. Sites – Bagor in Rajasthan, Langhnaj (Gujrat).
- **Neolithic era** – New stone age. Agriculture, hunting, fishing, domestication of animals were main features. Period later than 6000-5000 BC. **Wheel was discovered.** Sites – Mehrgarh (Pakistan), Koldhiva (U.P).
- **Chalcolithic age** – 5000 BC to 1000 BC roughly. Use of metals among which copper was prevalent. Sites – Brahmgiiri(near Mysore).
- **Bronze age** – Tools made of bronze (Copper+Tin) were used. 3000 BC to 1000 BC. Harappan or Indus valley civilization is an example in India.
- **Iron age** – Painted gray ware culture. 1200 BC to 200 BC . Vedic period is an example.

All these periods are overlapping as the sources show an estimation. But as an estimation :

Paleolithic > Mesolithic > Neolithic > Chalcolithic  
>Bronze age > Iron age

## ○ HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION

- **Geography** – N.W India, Pakistan, N.E Afganistan.  
India – Gujrat, Rajasthan, Western U.P, Haryana, Northern Maharashtra, Punjab, Jammu.
- **Characterstics** – 1. Town planning – Settlements were divided into Upper part and lower part. Grid system town planning , Excellent drainage system. 2. Agriculture – Wheat ,Rice, barley, Mustard were cultivated. 3. Inland and foreign trade was extensive. 4. Crafts – Spinning & weaving of cotton, pottery making, metal working. 5. Indus script has not yet been deciphered.
- **Sites** – Harappa in Pakistan on banks of river Ravi, Mohenjodaro in Sindh(Pakistan) on banks of river Indus is a UNESCO World Heritage site, Kalibangan in Rajasthan on banks of river Ghaggar, Lothal in Gujarat, Dholavira in Gujrat(Rann of Kutch).
- **Sources** – Infrastructure, pottery, tools, bones, beads, seals, stones etc.
- **Harappan Civilization was discovered in 1921-1922 by Sir John Marshal, Daya Ram Sahni, M.S. bhatt.**
- **First Director- General of Archaeological Survey of India is Alexander Cunningham.**

## ○ THE VEDIC AGE

- 1500 B.C to 500 B.C period
- Vedas were composed , so Vedic age.  
**Rigveda**(Oldest veda, 1400 BC).
- Started by Indo-Aryans who are believed to have migrated to India from Western Asia and Europe.
- Spread all along Gangetic plains.
- Main source of knowledge about Aryans is **Rigveda**.
- Main occupation is agriculture.
- Grouped into tribes in an earlier period whose head was called *RAJAN*.
- Later Vedic culture gave rise to the caste system (in 600-700 B.C).
- People were religious. Worshipped natural things on which they did not have any control(Sun, Rain, Water, Fire etc.)
- Later sources are **Brahmanas** and **Upanishads** which told us about the later Vedic age(800 BC – 550 BC).

## ○ MAHAJANAPADAS

- 16 Mahajanapadas. They were large territorial areas. Eg: Kuru, Magadha, Vajji, Panchala, Gandhara, Avanti are well known.
- **Dharmasutras** : Rules to be followed by rulers of Mahajanapadas. Taxes were to be collected from cultivators, traders and artisans.
- **Magadha** : Most powerful Mahajanapada (present day Bihar and Jharkhand).
- Kamboja and Gandhara were mostly North western Mahajanapadas (In present day Pakistan and Afghanistan).
- Main rulers of Magadha : Bimbisara (Haryanka dynasty, Capital- Rajgir) > Ajatshatru (Son of Bimbisara, Capital- Patliputra) > Udayin > Shishunaga (Shishunaga dynasty) > Mahapadma Nanda (Nanda dynasty) > Mauryan Empire .
- **Alexander invaded during the reign of the Nanda dynasty in 326 BC. He fought the famous battle of Hydaspes (Beas) with Porus.**
- Longest epic is Mahabharata written by Sage Vyasa.
- Ramayana epic is written by Valmiki.
- Mahabharata is supposed to be earlier than Ramayana. Both the epics have been edited many times since they were originally composed.

# ○ MAURYAN EMPIRE

- Established by Chandragupta Maurya in 321 B.C .
- Overthrown Nanda dynasty.
- Chandragupta was succeeded by Bindusara, his son.
- Bindusara is succeeded by Ashoka, his son in 268 B.C.
- Above were the 3 main rulers.
- Ashoka fought the famous Kalinga war in 261 B.C which he won but the life destruction in war changed his outlook and decided not to fight any more wars and also stopped animal slaughter for rituals. He encouraged the welfare state.
- Chandragupta Maurya embraced Jainism.
- Ashoka embraced Buddhism and promoted Buddhism to its glory.
- Two main written sources of the Mauryan empire are **Arthashastra** written by Chanakya and **Indica** written by Megasthenes .
- Megasthenes was the ambassador of Selucus Nicator in the Mauryan court during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya.
- **Ashokan edicts** are also reliable sources.
- The Ashokan pillar at Sanchi is made the national emblem of India.
- Last Mauryan king was **Brihadratha** who was killed by **Pushyamitra Shunga** who laid the foundation of Shunga dynasty.

## ○ BUDDHISM

- By Gautam Buddha (Siddhartha, Shakya Muni).
- He was born in 563 B.C in Lumbini, Nepal.
- He belonged to the Shakya kshtriya clan.
- He attained Moksha in Kushinagara, U.P .
- Attained enlightenment at Bodhgaya, Bihar.
- 1<sup>st</sup> sermon at Sarnath, U.P .
- 5 symbols of Buddhism :
  - Bodhi tree or Peepal : Symbol of enlightenment
  - Wheel : Symbol of Dharmachakrapravartana (Death)
  - Stupa : Mahaparinirvana
  - Horse : Mahabhinishkraman
  - Elephant + Lotus : Birth
- **Mahabhinishkraman** – Buddha encountered old, sick, dead, beggar and left palace & comfort at the age of 29 with his horse. This process is called Mahabhinishkraman.
- **Mahaparinirvana** – Attainment of Moksha by Buddha.
- **Dharmachakrapravartana** – Record of 1<sup>st</sup> teaching by Gautam Buddha when he attained enlightenment.
- Gautam Buddha did not believe in : 1. Soul and God 2. Supremacy of Brahmins 3. Authority of Vedas. 4. Rituals and sacrifices.
- 4 Buddhist councils :
  - 1<sup>st</sup> in 483 B.C in Rajgriha or Rajgir under the patronage of Ajatshatru .
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> in 383 B.C in Vaishali under the patronage of Kalasoka .
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> in 250 B.C in Patliputra under the patronage of Ashoka
  - 4<sup>th</sup> in 1 AD approx in Kashmir . Kanishka was king.

- 3 Main texts of Buddhism:
  - Vinaya Pitaka - primarily concerned with aspects of the discipline of Monks.
  - Sutta Pitaka – Buddha’s lectures or teachings.
  - Abhidhamma Pitaka – About Dharma and phenomenon.
- The 5th Buddhist council took place in Mandalay, Myanmar in 1871 .
- The 6th Buddhist council took place in Yangon, Myanmar in 1954 to 1956.
- Division of Buddhism :
  - **Mahayana** : Believe in Idol worship, the higher wheel, Buddha as God. Largest followers. In China, India and Japan mostly.
  - **Hinayana(Theravada)** : Buddha as a human saint, believed in symbol worship, lesser wheel, believed in old teachings. In S.E.Asia, Srilanka, Tibet, Myanmar mostly.
- Buddhist literature was written mainly in **Pali** while Jain literature was written in **Prakrit** mainly.

## ○ JAINISM

- Lord Rishabh Nath was the founder.
- A total of 24 teachers or Tirthankaras in Jainism.
- Lord Vardhaman Mahavira was the last Tirthankara.
- Lord Mahavir was born in 540 B.C . He was the contemporary of Gautam Buddha.
- At the age of 30 , he left his home in pursuit of spiritual awakening. Wandered for 12.5 years in intense meditation and severe penance (no comfort, extreme difficulty imposed upon oneself).
- Attained Kevala-Gyan or enlightenment at Sal tree on river Rijupalika, Jimbikagram.
- He is also known as Arihant, Mahavira, Tirthankar, Nirgrantha, Jina.
- He attained Nirvana at Rajgir.
- Mahavira rejected the authority of Vedas and Vedic rituals.
- He did not believe in the existence of God.
- He gave a statement : Man is the architect of his own destiny.
- Main Jain festivals : Mahavir Jayanti, Paryushana, Bhadrabahu.
- 2 Jain Councils :
  - 1<sup>st</sup> at Patliputra, 300 B.C by Shool Bhadra . Outcome was that Mahavir's teachings were compiled in Angas.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Council at Vallabhi(Gujrat), 512 A.D . Outcome was the division of Jains into Digambara(No clothes, more strict Code of Conduct) and



Swetambara(White clothes, they can adjust themselves ).

- **Anekantavada or Syadvada** : This theory was propounded by Lord mahavira.
  - Most important doctrine of Jainism.
  - Talks about Pluralism(No absolute truth) and multiplicity of viewpoints.
  - Truth and reality are perceived differently from different points of views.
- Doctrines of Jainism :5 in number (Panchmahavrata) are Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya(Don't steal), Aparigraha(Don't acquire property), Brhmacharya .

## ○ POST MAURYAN PERIOD

- After the fall of the Mauryan empire , many big and small kingdoms emerged. We will discuss some prominent ones:
- **Satavahanas** in deccan india (Parts of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh) .
  - Founder – Simuka in 235 B.C
  - Satakarni I was a prominent king. Gautamiputra Satakarni was another important king who added his mother’s name.
  - Satavahanas ruled till 200 AD and little beyond.
- **Sungas** – in the Northern part . By Pushyamitra Sunga who was a general in the Mauryan empire.
  - Indo-greeks (Yavanas) invaded western India during Sungas’ reign.
- **Yavanas** – Indo Greeks. Came from the west.
  - Menander (165-145 B.C) was their most illustrious king. His kingdom was extended from Afghanistan to eastern UP at one time. He was converted to Buddhism.
  - Indo Greeks were the first rulers who issued coins with the portraits of kings and their names.
  - **Milinda Panho** – Buddhist text. Important. Recorded discourse between Greek king Menander and Buddhist sage Nagasena.
- **Parthians(Pahlavas)** – From Iran. Volones was founder. Gondophernes was the main ruler.

- **Sakas** – Came from Central Asia. Tribal origin. Overthrown Indo Greeks.
  - Ruled roughly from 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C to 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D
  - Ruled vast parts of India and were divided into different branches.
  - Rudradaman was a famous king . He is mentioned in Junagadh rock inscriptions. He ruled over a vast part of India.
  - Sakas later came to be known as **Kushans**.
  - Kushans had the same origin . They also came from possibly Central asia- Iran.
  - **Kanishka** was Kushans' greatest ruler who is credited to start the Saka era in 78 A.D . Kanishka adopted Buddhism. 4<sup>th</sup> Buddhist council was held under his reign.
  - During Kanishka's rule, Taxila and Mathura emerged as great centres of art and culture.
  - **Kanishka** was a great patron of Buddhism who took Buddhism to China and Central Asia along silk route.
  - **The Gandhara school of art** came into existence in the Saka and Kushan era.

## ○ THE SANGAM AGE – SOUTH INDIA

- 3 kingdoms – Cholas , Cheras and Pandyas .
  - The main source of information about sangam age is **Sangam literature.**( written in Tamil).
  - Tamil is considered as the oldest of all languages spoken in South India.
  - **Cholas** – Chola kingdom occupied the area around Kaveri delta. (Present day Karnataka and Northern Tamilnadu).
    - Their ruled area was also called Cholamandalam.
    - Main cities – Tiruchirapalli, kaveripattinam, Uraiyur (capitals at various times).
    - The most celebrated early Chola kings were **Karikala.**
    - He did great work to improve irrigation, agriculture, and the safety of the kingdom.
    - After the death of Karikala , Chola kingdom became weak and some weak rulers ruled but other kingdoms defeated them in war. The Chola kingdom became very small in the 4th century A.D and remained so till 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D .
  - **Pandyas** – Occupied area of modern day South Tamilnadu. Main cities were Madurai(capital), Tirunelvalli.
  - **Cheras** – Ruled the area around modern day Kerala. Also called Keralaputras.
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- **After the fall of the Mauryan empire, We saw that there was no powerful kingdom which ruled a vast area for a significant period of time. We saw many important kingdoms. This**

period of Ancient Indian History was very unstable. This led to the emergence of the Gupta Empire in the 4th Century A.D .

## ○ THE GUPTA EMPIRE

- In around 320 A.D , Chandragupta I founded the Gupta empire.
- He adopted the title of **maharajadhiraja** and he was the first king to issue gold coins.
- Samudragupta(his son) succeeded him as the ruler.
- Samudragupta expanded the empire further to the south.
- Samudragupta's son Chandragupta II succeeded him. The Gupta empire reached its peak during Chandragupta's rule.
- Chandragupta II adopted the title of **vikramaditya** after he defeated mighty Saka dynasty(his most important battle) in present day Gujrat.
- Great Sanskrit poet Kalidas was a member of Chandragupta II s court.
- Fa-Hien, a Chinese scholar, visited India during 405 AD – 411 AD during his rule.
- Kumaragupta I succeeded Chandragupta II .
- Skandagupta succeeded Kumaragupta I . He fought wars with foreign tribes by the name Hunas.
- Skandagupta was the last powerful ruler of the Guptas . After his death, some weak rulers came and the Gupta empire fully declined around 560 AD .
- The Gupta period is also known as the Classical **age** in Indian history.
- Famous literary works of Kalidas – Meghadutam, Raghuvamsa, Kumarasambhava, Abhigyanshakuntalam .

Kalidas was a poet in Chandragupta II 's (Vikramaditya) court .

- Literary works of Vishnu Sharma – Hitopadesa, Panchtantra.
- Followers of vaishnavism in South India were called- Alvars.
- Followers of Shaivism in South India – Nayanars .

## ○ HARSHAVARDHAN(606 – 647 AD)

- Belonged to the Pushyabhukti family.
- **Hieun Tsang** visited India during the reign of Harsha.
- Capital city of Harsha's empire – **Kannauj** .
- His famous biography **Harshacharitra** was written by **Banabhatta** .
- Harsha was defeated by **Pulakesin II** , the Chalukya king of badami.
- Book **Si-Yu-Ki** was written by **Hieun-Tsang**.

## ○ OTHER KINGDOMS AFTER HARSHA

- **Pala Dynasty(760 AD – 1142 AD)** – In Bengal . Dharampala was the most famous king . Palas were mainly Buddhists. Nalanda University achieved its peak status during Palas.
- **Rashtrakuta Dynasty(757 AD – 973 AD)** – In the Deccan plateau (Parts of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa, M.P etc.).
  - Founded by **Dantidurga**.
  - **Amoghavarsha I** was also a famous king.
  - **Rock cut monolithic Kailash temple at Ellora** was built by Rashtrakutas.
- **Gurjara-Pratihara Dynasty (720s AD– 1030 AD)** – In Northern and Central India (Parts of Rajasthan, Gujrat, Haryana, M.P, U.P etc) .
  - **Raja Mihir Bhoja, Mahendrapala I** – Most famous kings.
  - **Temple art of Khajuraho** – Famous world known architecture .
- **Chalukya Dynasty(550 AD- 750 AD) –(Andhra Pradesh and Northern Karnataka), Capital – Badami**
  - **Pulakesin II** is their most famous ruler who defeated Harshavardhana.
- **Pallava Dynasty** – Parts of Andhra Pradesh , Karnataka and T. Nadu , Capital – Kanchipuram
  - **Shore temple , UNESCO World Heritage Site, at Mahabalipuram** – Most famous Pallava architecture.
- **Chola Empire** – Parts of Tamilnadu . One of the longest surviving dynasties.

- **Rajaraja Chola I and Rajendra Chola I** were the most famous kings.
- **Brihadeshwara temple at Thanjavur** – Very famous, Made by Rajaraja Chola I.
- **Gangaikondacholapuram** – Rajendra I
- **Chola architecture is very famous.**

## ○ RAJPUTS

- **Tomaras** built the city of Delhi.
- **Chandellas** ruled in Bundelkhand. They are credited with construction of many temples in Khajuraho.
- **Prithviraj Chauhan** – One of the most celebrated Rajput rulers, belonged to the Chauhan dynasty. He defeated **Muhammad Ghori** in 1191 AD in 1<sup>st</sup> battle of Tarain. However in 2<sup>nd</sup> battle of Tarain , he was lost by Muhammad Ghori in 1192 AD .
- **Mahmud of Ghazni(in Afghanistan)** attacked India 17 times and took away vast wealth. He plundered the famous Somnath temple in Gujarat. He never intended to rule India.



# MEDIEVAL HISTORY

## ○ THE DELHI SULTANATE

- **Slave dynasty**(1206 AD - 1290 AD)
  - **Qutb-ud-din-Aibak** founded the slave dynasty after the death of Muhammad Ghori. He was a Mamluk. He was the slave of Muhammad Ghori.
  - **Qutb-ud-din-Aibak > Iltutmish > Raziya Sultan > Nasiruddin Mahmud > Balban (important kings only).**
  - **Raziya Sultan** (Daughter of Iltutmish )was the first woman ruler of Delhi.
  - *Iqta* was introduced as a revenue tax by **Iltutmish**.
- **Khilji dynasty** (1290 AD- 1320 AD)
  - Founded by **Jalaluddin Khilji** (Turkish) . Succeeded by **Alauddin Khilji**.
  - Expanded under Alauddin Khilji. He avoided Mongol invasion during his reign.
- **Tughlaq dynasty (1320 AD – 1414 AD)**
  - **Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq** founder.
  - **Ghiyas-ud-din-Tughlaq > Mohammad-bin-Tughlaq > Firoz shah Tughlaq (Main rulers only)**
  - Mohammad-bin-Tughlaq took many decisions which back-fired on him. So he is referred to as an “ ill starred idealist “ .
- **Sayyid dynasty**(1414 AD – 1451 AD)
  - Founded by **Khizr Khan**.
- **Lodi dynasty** (1451 AD – 1526 AD)
  - **Bahlul Lodi** – Founder
  - **Bahlul Lodi > Sikandar Lodi > Ibrahim Lodi**

- **Sikandar Lodi** founded the city of Agra.

## ● MUGHALS

- **Babar** was the founder. He defeated Ibrahim Lodi in the 1st **battle of Panipat in 1526.**
- Mughals belonged to Turko-Mongol origin (descendents of Genghiz khan and Timur). Culturally they were more Persian.
- Babur fought in the battle **of Khanwa in 1527 against Maharaja Rana Sanga of Mewar.** Mughals won the battle.
- **Humayun** took the reign in 1530. He fought the Battle **of Kanauj in 1540 against Sher Shah Suri and the Mughals lost.** From 1540 till 1556, Mughal empire was interrupted and Sher Shah Suri was the emperor.
- In 1556, Mughal empire was re-established when **Akbar**, son of Humayun (with the help of Bairam Khan, his general), defeated Hemu(former general of Sher Shah Suri) in the 2nd **battle of Panipat.**
- Akbar was the most celebrated ruler of the Mughal empire when the Mughal empire reached its peak.
- Akbar's son **Jehangir** succeeded him in 1605. His famous wife's name was Noor Jahan.

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