

**Debra Thana Sahid Kshudiram Smriti Mahavidyalaya (Autonomous)**

**Syllabus for 4 Year B.A. Major in History**

**1<sup>st</sup> Semester**

**Paper 1: Ancient India from the Earliest Times to 325 BCE (Credits 04)**

Unit 1: Understanding Early India

1.1: Historical theories and interpretations of the Indian past

1.2 The idea of Bharatavarsha: Indian subcontinent with all its diversity and cultural traditions

1.3 An overview of literary and archaeological sources

Unit 2: Neolithic to Chalcolithic settlements

2.1 The earliest village farming community in India—transition from pastoral life to the practice of agriculture: Mehrgarh and its various cultural phases

2.2 The first Urbanization in the Indian subcontinent—Indus civilization: contemporary perspectives through a historiography

2.3 The early Harappan, Harappan and late Harappan phases: technology, architecture, religion and maritime trade.

2.4 End/transformation of the Indus civilization: different theories.

Unit 3: The Aryans in India: Vedic Age

3.1 The historiography of the concept 'Aryan'

3.2 The spread of Aryan settlements in India

3.3 The period of the Vedas, Brahmanas and Upanishads: pastoralism, agriculture and other occupations

3.4 Political development, culture and rituals

Unit 4: North India in the sixth century BCE

4.1 Establishment of kingdoms, oligarchies and chiefdoms: sixteen Mahajanapadas

4.2 The Autonomous Clans

4.3 Rise of Magadhan imperialism

4.4 The Persian and the Greek Invasions of India and Their Impact

Unit 5: Ideas and institutions in early India

5.1 Varna and Jati: the issue of upward mobility among the Shudras

5.2 Slavery: ancient forms and modern debates

5.3 Untouchables

5.4 Women

5.5 Forms of marriage

Unit 6: Cults, doctrines and metaphysics

6.1 The religion of the Vedas

6.2 The unorthodox sects – Buddhism, Jainism and the doctrine of the Ajivikas

6.3 Scepticism and Materialism

Unit 7: Aspects of the economy in the age of Buddha

7.1 Economic changes: use iron, rural economy, trade and crafts, guilds

7.2 Taxation

7.3 The Second Urbanization

Unit 8: The cultural milieu

8.1 Education

8.2 Language and Literature

8.3 Science and Technology

**Suggested Readings:**

A. L. Basham, The Wonder That Was India

D.D. Kosambi, An Introduction to the Study of Indian History

---, Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline

Romila Thapar, Early India from the Origins to c. AD 1300

Hermann Kulke and D. Rothermund, A History of India

R.C. Majumdar, ed., The Vedic Age (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan series, Vol. 1)

---, ed., The Age of Imperial Unity (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan series, Vol. 2)

Upinder Singh, A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India

Ranabir Chakravarti, Exploring Early India: Upto c. AD 1300

Jean-Francois Jarrige et al, eds., Mehrgarh: Field Reports from Neolithic Times to the Indus

Civilization

Bridget Allchin and F.R. Allchin, The Rise of Civilization in India and Pakistan

B.B. Lal and S.P. Gupta, eds., Frontiers of the Indus Civilization

Gregory L. Possehl, The Indus Civilization: A Contemporary Perspective

---, ed., Ancient Cities of the Indus

Shereen Ratnagar, Encounters: The Westerly Trade of the Harappan Civilization

Asko Parpola, Deciphering the Indus Script

Nayanjot Lahiri, ed., The Decline and Fall of the Indus Civilization

R.S. Sharma, Material Culture and Social Formations in Ancient India

---, Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India

---, Sudras in Ancient India: A Social History of the Lower Order Down to c. AD 600

Dev Raj Chanana, Slavery in Ancient India

G.S. Ghurye, Caste, Class and Occupation

T.W. Rhys Davids, Buddhist India

Brian K. Smith, *Classifying the Universe: The Ancient Indian Varna System and the Origins of Caste*

Sukumari Bhattacharji, *Women and Society in Ancient India*

Patrick Olivelle, ed., *Between the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE*

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Semester**

### **Paper II - Social Formations and the Cultural Patterns of the Ancient World (Credits 4)**

Unit I. Evolution of humankind; Paleolithic and Mesolithic cultures.

Unit 2. Food production: Beginnings of agriculture and animal husbandry.

Unit 3. Bronze Age Civilizations, with reference to any one of the following: i) Egypt (Old Kingdom); ii) Mesopotamia (up to the Akkadian Empire); iii) China (Shang); IV) Eastern Mediterranean (Minoan) economy, social stratification, state structure, religion.

Unit 4. Nomadic groups in Central and West Asia; Debate on the advent of iron and its implications

Unit 5. Slave society in ancient Greece: Agrarian economy, urbanization, trade.

Unit 6. Polis in ancient Greece: Athens and Sparta; Greek Culture.

### **REFERENCES**

Burns and Ralph. *World Civilizations*

*Cambridge History of Africa, Vol. I*

Gordon Childe, *What Happened in History*

G. Clark, *World Prehistory: A New Perspective*

B. Fagan, *People of the Earth*

Amar Farooqui, *Early Social Formations*

M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy*

Jacquetta Hawkes, First Civilizations

G. Roux, Ancient Iraq

Bai Shaoyi, An Outline History of China

H. W. F. Saggs, The Greatness that was Babylon

B. Trigger, Ancient Egypt: A Social History

UNESCO Series: History of Mankind, Vols. I - III./ or New ed. History of Humanity

R. J. Wenke, Patterns in Prehistory

G. E. M. de Ste Croix, Class Struggles in the Ancient Greek World

J. D. Bernal, Science in History, Vol. I, V.

Gordon Childe, Social Evolution

Glyn Daniel, First Civilizations

Hauser, A Social History of Art, Vol. I.

Gitashri Bandana Sengupta, Peloponesiyo juddha (in Bengali)

Sujato Bhadra and Kunal Chattopadhyay, Prachin Greecer Samaj o Sanskriti

Supratim Das, Greecer Itihas