

FIRST SEMESTER

Paper No. HSH: 401 (Hard Core)

SOCIETY AND POLITY IN EARLY INDIA (UPTO C.E. 2ND C.)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To know the state and society in early India as articulated in historiography
2. To know the Harappan society and polity based on archaeological evidences
3. To know the society and polity during the Vedic age as well as the rise of heterodox sects – Buddhism and Jainism.
4. To know the nature of the state and society during the Mauryan period.
5. To know the society of the Megalithic culture and during the Sangam age.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing the paper, students will come to know the following :

1. Realize the different types of sources and historiography for the study
2. Understand the nature of Harappan society and polity
3. Realize the nature of the Vedic society and polity
4. Understand to nature of state and society under the Mauryas
5. Realize the nature of society during the Megalithic and the sangam age.

1. Historiographical Considerations: State and Society as represented in the colonial writings – Oriental Despotism and the Asiatic Society – the nationalist response – Marxist intervention.
2. The Harappan Society and Polity: The Proto-history- Harappan Traditions - Archaeological evidences for the Harappan Society and State.
3. The Vedic Society and polity: Social organization in Rigvedic period – the process of transition from Lineage society to state – Later Vedic Period: The eastward migration and settlement of the Ganga valley – the use of iron and the democratization and proliferation of agriculture – rise of new arts and crafts – *gahapathi* and *sethi* - emergence of *varnas* and Ashramas – the rise of heterodox sects – Buddhism and Jainism.
4. The Mauryan State and Society: The formation of the Mauryan Empire – State in *Arthasastra* – State and Dhamma under Asoka.
5. Society and polity in South India: Megalithic traditions – social groups and rituals – Sangam society and economy.

Select Reading:

Chakravarthi, Uma, Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism, Delhi, 1987.
Herman Kulke (ed.), the State in India, New Delhi, 1984.
Kosambi, D.D., An Introduction to the Study of Indian History, Bombay, 1956.
Majumdar, R.C., ed., The Age of Imperial Unity, vol. II of the History and Culture of the Indian People, Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.
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Ratnagar, Shereen, Understanding Harappa: Civilisation in the Greater Indus Valley, Delhi, 2001.
Ratnagar Shereen., Enquiries into the Political Organisation of Harappan Society, Pune, 1991
Roy, Kumkum, The Emergence of Monarchy in Northern India, New Delhi, 1994.
Sharma. R.S., Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India, Rpt. Delhi, 1993
_____. Light on Early Indian Society and Economy, Bombay, 1962.
_____. Material Culture and Social Formation in Ancient India, Delhi, 1980. Sharma.
_____. Sudras in Ancient India, Delhi, 1980.
_____. The State and Varna Formation in the Mid-Ganga Plains, Delhi, 1996.
Thapar, Romila, Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations, Delhi, 1980.
_____. From Lineage to State, Bombay, 1980
_____. Interpreting Early India, New Delhi, 1992.
_____. Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas, Oxford University Press.
_____. The Mauryas Re-visited, K.P. Bagchi & Company, New Delhi, 1984
Wagle, Narendra, Society at the Time of the Buddha, Bombay, 1969.
Claessen, H.J.M. and P. Skalnik, The Early State, The Hague, 1978
Krader, L. The Formation of the State, London, 1968
Mabbet, I.W., Truth, Myth and Politics in Ancient India, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1980.
Richard Fox, Kin, Clan, Raja and Rule, Oxford University Press.
Neelakanta Shastri and Srinivasachari, Advanced History of India, Madras, 1970.
Sherwani H.K., History of Medieval Deccan (1295 – 1724), Hyderabad, 1974.
Burnell A.C., Elements of South Indian Paleography, Madras, 1994.
Bilgrami S.A.A., Land Marks of the Deccan, Delhi, 1927
