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Ancient, Medieval History, Art & Culture



Table of Content

S No.	Chapter Title	Page No.
1	Indus Valley Civilization	1
2	Vedic Age	7
3	Jainism and Buddhism	14
4	Mahajanapadas, Mauryan and Post–Mauryan Era	20
5	Gupta and Post–Gupta Dynasties	33
6	Chola, Chalukya and Pallava Dynasties	41
7	Art and Architecture in Ancient India	47
8	Delhi Sultanate (1206–1526 AD)	59
9	Vijayanagar Empire	75
10	Mughal Empire (1526–1857)	79
11	Bhakti and Sufi Movement	92
12	Paintings	101
13	Dance and Music	108
14	Schools of Indian Philosophy	118
15	Fairs and Festivals	122

1 CHAPTER

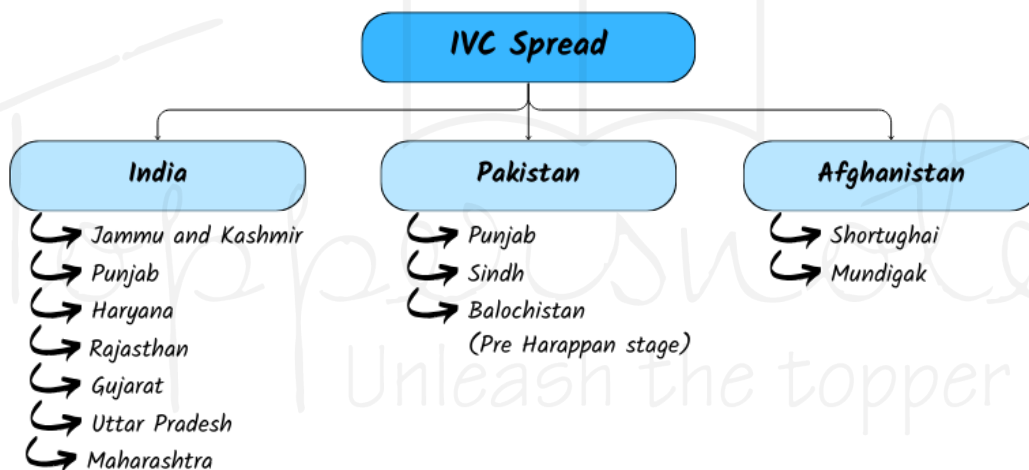
Indus Valley Civilization

Indus Valley Civilization

- The Indus Valley Civilization, also known as the Bronze Age or Harappan Civilization, was an urban civilisation that developed around the Indus/Sindhu River and its tributaries. This civilization flourished approximately between 2600 BCE and 1700 BCE. It was named the "Indus Valley Civilization" by John Marshall, the Director of the Archaeological Survey of India. The first site to be excavated was Harappa, discovered by Daya Ram Sahni in 1921, which is why the civilization is also referred to as the Harappa Civilization.

NOTE: Alexander Cunningham was the first chairman of the Archaeological Survey of India. He is also known as the Father of Archeology.

IVC Spread



<p>Manda (J&K)</p> <p>Sutkagendor (Balochistan) (Near Makran Coast)</p> <p>Alamgirpur (Uttar Pradesh)</p> <p>Daimabad (Maharashtra)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Northern most site: Manda (J&K) ➤ Southern most site: Daimabad (Maharashtra) ➤ Eastern most site: Alamgirpur (Uttar Pradesh) ➤ Western most site: Sutkagendor (Balochistan, Pakistan).
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Important Features of IVC

1. Town Planning:

- The settlement was divided into two parts:

a) Citadel -

- ✓ The citadel, often referred to as the Acropolis, was the elevated and more compact part of ancient towns like Harappa, Mohenjodaro, and Kalibangan.
- ✓ It was walled and physically separated from the Lower Town.
 - In Lothal, while the citadel was not enclosed by walls, it was built at a higher elevation.
- ✓ This area served as the residence for kings, priests, and other prominent figures, and it also housed important administrative buildings, granaries, and common baths. The citadel played a crucial role in the organization and governance of these early urban settlements.

b) Lower Town

- ✓ The Lower Town, situated at a lower elevation but larger in size, served as the residential area for the common people of ancient towns. This section was also walled, providing a measure of protection for its inhabitants.

NOTE: Site without Citadel: Chanhudaro.

- The Harappans used baked and unbaked bricks and stones for construction.
- The houses were built of baked bricks and mortar while the drainages were built with burnt bricks. Sun-dried bricks were also used.
- Most of the bricks were of uniform size. The average size of brick used for houses was 7 1/2 x 15x30 cm. but for the construction of fortification walls the size of the brick was bigger viz. 10x20x40 cm.
- Houses were built on both sides of the street. The houses were either one or two storeys.
- Most of the houses had many rooms, a courtyard and a well. Each house had toilets and bathrooms.

c) Grid System of Roads and streets:

- ✓ Roads and streets were intersecting at right angles.
- ✓ Roads were wide with their widths of 9 to 34 feet.
- ✓ Lanes were of 1 to 2.2 meters.
- ✓ Roads of Kalibanga were 1.8, 3.6, 5.4 and 7.4 meters wide..

d) Great Bath

- A large rectangular tank in a courtyard at Mohenjo Daro, surrounded by corridors on all sides, was made with a floor of burnt bricks sealed watertight with gypsum mortar.
- Located in the citadel, this tank was used for ritual bathing by the people.



e) Great Granary

- Discovered in Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, this rectangular structure was built on a high platform in the citadel to protect it from water. It was used for storing grains and was the largest building in the area, measuring 150 feet in length and 50 feet in breadth.

Note: Granary at Harappa - Total 12 (2 rows with 6 granaries each).

f) Drainage system

- A well-developed drainage system with manholes coated with Gypsum mortar was found.
- For conservation of water reservoirs were constructed in the south of the citadel. (16 small or large reservoirs have been discovered from Dholavira).

2. Agriculture

- Evidence of cultivation in the Indus Valley Civilization includes wheat, barley, peas, mustard, sesame, cotton, and rai.
- Terracotta models of plough have been discovered in Cholistan and Banawali (Haryana), while a plough field was found at Kalibangan (Rajasthan).
- Additionally, the Gaobar Band/Nala was constructed in Baluchistan and parts of Afghanistan to store water.
- Traces of canals have also been found at Shortughai (Afghanistan). The civilization was the first to produce cotton, known as "Sindon," and evidence of spinning wheels has been uncovered.

3. Domestication of Animals

- Evidence of domestication of animals like Buffalo, goat, sheep, pigs and oxen were found.
 - ✓ Cow was not domesticated by them.
- Asses and Camels were domesticated to carry goods.
- Evidence of a Horse was found at Surkotada (only single bone found).
- They knew about Elephants (Evident from their presence on the seal).

4. Seal

- Seals were the pictographic Geometrically shaped (square, rectangular and circular) objects, mainly made from soft river stone steatite.
- Seals were used for many purposes such as trading, amulets, educational purposes etc.
- Notable example – the 'Pasupati Seal' – a deity has been depicted along with several animals.
 - ✓ **Animals on seals:** Buffalo, elephant, tiger, deer, Rhino (One horned rhino).
- Another seal depicts seven figures, including a horned figure, paying obeisance to the Pipal tree.



5. Tools and Crafts

- Bronze and copper tools were found.
- People of IVC had no knowledge of Iron.
- Their major occupations include Textile, brick layering, boat making, bead making/jewellery making, etc.

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- Jadeite stone: was found in Daojali Hading (Assam).
 - Gold ornaments found (bought from Karnataka).
 - They knew Pottery making as the potter's wheel has been found (Red and Black pots were found at different sites).

6. Trade

- Seals of IVC found in other civilizations indicate that trade was flourishing among the civilizations. Trade relations with Mesopotamia (Iraq), Afghanistan, Sumer (Baghdad), Dilmun /Dimun (Bahrain), Magan (Oman) have been found.
 - ✓ Ur was a significant port city in Mesopotamia known for its role in trade and cultural exchanges.
 - ✓ The mention of IVC centres as Meluha / Meluhha occurs in Mesopotamian myths.
- Weights and measures found which indicate standardisation of trade.
- No currency was used; the Barter system was prevalent.
- Shortughai was an important trading colony of the Indus Valley Civilization in Afghanistan.
- Important trade items: Metals (Gold, Silver, Bronze etc.), Gems (Lapis lazuli, turquoise, carnelian etc.), Terracotta pots, Seashells, Ivory, Cotton (called as Sindon by foreigners) etc.

7. Worshipped

- Phallus: Male yoni/genital organ.
- Male deity was Pasupati represented in seals sitting in Yogic posture.
- Mother Goddess: in terracotta figurines.
- Worshipped trees, and animals also.

8. Script

- The script was Pictographic; known as Boustrophedon (written right to left then left to right then right to left). The script of IVC has not been deciphered yet.

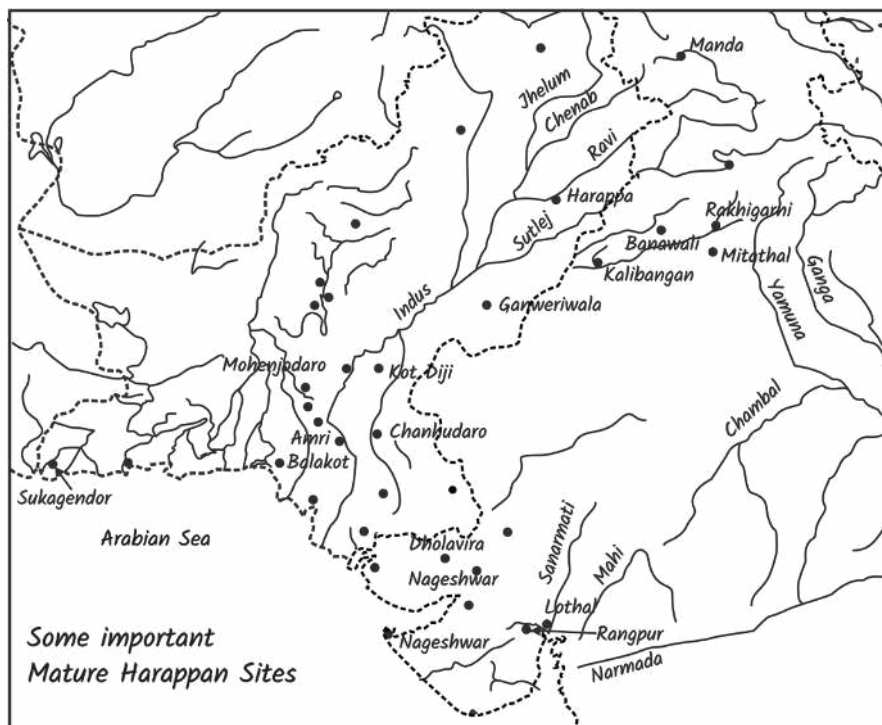
9. Sculptures

- A dancing girl statue made up of Bronze in Tribhanga Mudra has been discovered.
- Bearded man: made of Steatite has also been discovered.
(Both obtained from Mohenjadar).

10. Types of Burials

- Double burial/Pot burial/was found in Lothal.
- Complete burial and post-cremation burial found in Mohenjo-Daro.
- Wooden Coffin burial found in Harappa.
- Extended burials were found in Sonauli, Uttar Pradesh.

Important sites of IVC



Site / Year	Place / River / Discovered by	Characteristics
1. Harappa (1921)	Place: Punjab, Pakistan River: Ravi Discovered by: Dayaram Sahini	2 rows 6 granaries each. Lingam, yoni and mother goddess (Terracotta).
2. Chanhu-daro	Place: Sindh, Pakistan River: Indus Discovered by: Gopal Majumdar	Only city without a Citadel, Bead making factory.
3. Mohenjodaro (1922)	Place: Sindh, Pakistan River: Indus Discovered by: R.D. Banerjee	Known as Mount of Dead. Citadel, great bath and great granaries. Clay figure of the mother goddess. Bronze dancing girl statue. Bearded man.
4. Lothal (1955)	Place: Gujarat River: Bhogava Discovered by: S.R. Rao	First man-made port, dockyard, terracotta ship, fire altar, joint burial found, chess, bead factory. Earliest evidence of rice cultivation in South Asia.
5. Balathal and Kalibanga	Place: Rajasthan River: Ghaggar Discovered by: A. Ghosh	7 Fire alters, black bangles, ploughed field, Bones of camel.

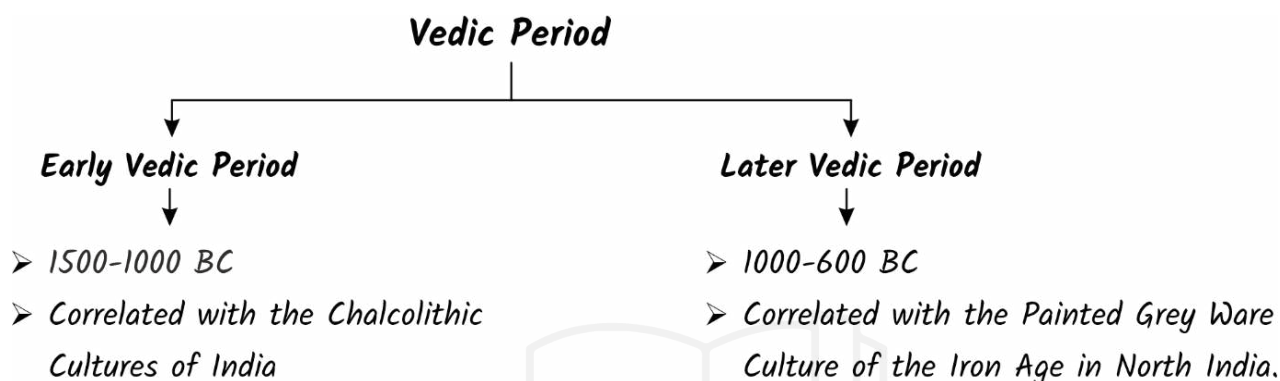
6. Surkotada	Place: Gujarat Discovered by: Jagatpati Jhoshi	First actual remains of the horse bones.
7. Sutkagendor	Place: Pakistan	Coastal cities, westernmost site.
8. Dholavira (1990)	Place: Gujarat Discovered by: Jagatpati Jhoshi Excavation started by: R.S. Bisht	Great Reservoir World Heritage Site in 2021 (40 th in India).
9. Rakhigarhi (1990)	Place: Haryana River: Ghaggar Discovered by: Amrendra Nath	Largest site in India, terracotta wheel and toys, chert blades, a bone point, and pottery with graffiti were found. Land townships were enclosed with mud and burnt brick homes. A stacked set of hopscotches. A seal with an alligator symbol.
10. Bhirrana	Haryana	Oldest IVC site.
11. Banawali	Place: Haryana, River: Ghaggar Discovered by: R.S. Bisht	Lack of Grid pattern, dried Saraswati River.
12. Ropar	Place: Punjab, India River: Sutlaj	Burial with dog, oval burial pits. Roper in the first Harappan site of independent India.
13. Alamgirpur	Place: Meerut, Uttar Pradesh River: Yamuna	Easternmost site.
14. Mehrgarh	Place: Pakistan	Pottery, copper tools.
15. Kot Diji	Place: Pakistan	Tar, statues of Bull and mother goddess.
16. Balu	Place: Haryana	Remnants of various plants earliest evidence of Garlic.
17. Daimabad	Place: Maharashtra	Southernmost site, Bronze Chariot.
18. Kerala-no-dhoro	Place: Gujarat	Salt production centre.
19. Manda	Place: Jammu and Kashmir	Northernmost site.
20. Rangpur	Place: Gujarat	Remnants of various plants - rice, bajra and millets - cultivation

2 CHAPTER

Vedic Age

The advent of nomadic and pastoral Aryans from Central Asia to Indian subcontinent marks the beginning of Vedic Period.

The Vedic Period can be divided into two ages –



Early Vedic Period (1500-1000 BC)

- The major source of information about Aryans in India is Vedic Literature, written in Sanskrit.
- Rig Veda mentions the Aryans and Sapta Saindhav region as their major geographical region.
- Sapta Saindhav was the region of 7 rivers namely:
 - i. Indus (Sindhu)
 - ii. Jhelum (Vitasta)
 - iii. Chenab (Asikni)
 - iv. Ravi (Parusni)
 - v. Beas (Bipasha / Vipasa)
 - vi. Sutlej (Sutudri)
 - vii. Saraswathi (Naditama / Harkhawati)
- The Nandi Sukta of Rig Veda mentions the River Ganga in the east and Kumbha (Kabul River) to the west.
- The Rig Vedic hymns reflect the political, social and economic aspects of life during this period.
- It talks about the conflict between Aryans and Dasas or Dasyus (non-Aryans) and mentions the defeat of a chief called Sambara by Divodasa of the Bharata clan.

Rig Veda

- One of the 4 Vedas (Rig Veda, Sam Veda, Atharva Veda and Yajur Veda).
- Earliest specimen of Indo-European language.
- It is the collection of prayers offered to Agni, Indra, Mitra, Varuna and other Gods
- It consists of 1028 hymns organised in 10 mandalas or books-
 - ✓ 11 to VII mandalas were composed first.
 - ✓ I and X mandalas were composed at the end.

Geographical Extent of the Early Vedic Period

In the Indian subcontinent, the early Aryans lived in the areas of eastern Afghanistan, Pakistan, Punjab and the fringes of Western Uttar Pradesh.

Zend Avesta

The Zend Avesta is a Persian/Iranian text of Zoroastrianism. This book speaks about the lands and gods of the people speaking the Indo-Iranian languages. It has references to the regions of northern and north-western parts of India. It has terms which show linguistic similarity with the Vedas. This text is an indirect evidence that the early home of the Aryans was outside the Indian subcontinent.

Society of the Early Vedic Period

- Society was organized on the lines of Kula (family), Vis (Clan), Gram (community).
- Kula was the most important unit of society, and head of the Kula was 'Kulapa'.
- Four Varnas – Brahmins, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Sudra.
 - ✓ It was based on Profession and inter varna mobility was possible.
- Women were given equal opportunities as men for spiritual and intellectual development.
- Women poets like Apala, Viswavara, Ghosa and Lopamudra.
- No child marriage.
- Widow remarriage: Niyoga.
- Love marriage was allowed and known as Gandharva Vivaha.
- Patriarchal society.
- Slavery was practiced. There were 2 kinds of slaves, Das (defeated Aryans) and Dasyus (non-aryans).

Economy of the Early Vedic Period

- The main occupation was cattle rearing, and its importance is highlighted through many words associated with cattle mentioned in Rig Veda: Gopa – cow, Gopajanya – Master of cow, Duitri – Milcher of cow, Godhuma – Wheat, Godhuli – Dusk, Gavisthi – Search for cows.

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- Articles with copper, bronze and iron were also prevalent in the economy.
 - Gold coins called Nishka were used.
 - No formal system of taxation but Bali was offered to the chief of the community voluntarily.

Polity during the Early Vedic Period

- The polity was not much based on geographical territories rather it was based in the tribal communities. The tribal community was called Jana and the head of the Aryan Tribal community was known as Rajana.
- Rajan was assisted by Sabha, Samiti and Vidhata.

1. Sabha	The community of a few privileged (elder members of Jana), is also attended by women.
2. Samhita	Community of common people responsible for electing the Rajana. Attended by males only.
3. Vidhata	For religious purposes and decision-making related to religion. Attended by both males and females.

- **Ranking of Officials -**
 - ✓ Purohita: King is assisted by him.
 - ✓ Senani: Army chief
 - ✓ Gramani: Village head

Religion during the Early Vedic Period

- Worshipped Nature - Prithvi (Earth), Indra (Thunder), Agni (Fire), Vayu (Wind), Aditi (Female God), Varuna (Rain), Savitri (Gayatri Mantra dedicated to it).

Pottery

- Ochre colored pottery.

Vedas

- Aryans after arriving in the Indian sub-continent started to compose Vedas in Sanskrit Language.
- The first Veda to be composed was the Rig Veda which is the most important source of information about the Aryans.
- They are orally passed (Shruti) from one generation to another.
- Vedas are called Apaurasheya because it is said that they are not created by man but gifted by God. There are a total of 4 Vedas and 4 subdivisions of each.

Types of Vedas

Rig Veda	Sama Veda	Yajur Veda	Atharva Veda
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Oldest Veda. ➤ Refers to Saptasindhu or land of seven rivers. ➤ Composed in the early Vedic period. ➤ 1028 Sanskrit hymns, organized into 10 Mandalas – has hymns used for sacrificial purposes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hymns recited by Hotri. ➤ Focuses on worldly prosperity & natural beauty. ➤ Deities: Lord Indra (Chief Deity), Agni, Varuna, Rudra, Aditya, Vayu, Ashwini twins. ➤ Goddesses: Usha, Prithvi, Vak. ➤ Upanishads – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aitareya 2. Kaushitaki etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Also known as “Book of Chants”. ➤ Focus on melody and songs. ➤ Total hymns: 1875 (75 original + rest sourced from Sakala branch of Rig Veda). ➤ Upanishads – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chandogya 2. Kena Upanishad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collection of rites & mantras. ➤ 2 major recensions (Samhita) – Shukla and Krishna. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ These Samhita’s are also called Vajasaneyi Samhita and Taittiriya Samhita. ➤ Important Upanishads – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brihadaranyaka 2. Katha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Also known as Brahma Veda. ➤ Attributed to 2 rishis: Atharvan & Angiras; hence called Atharvangirasa. ➤ Veda of magic formulas. ➤ Focuses on the treatment of several ailments. ➤ 2 Major Recensions (Sakhas) – Paippalada & Saunakiya. ➤ Important Upanishads – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manduka: “Satyameva Jayate” is taken from here. 2. Maha Upanishad: “Vasudeva Kutumbkam” taken from here.

NOTE: Mandalas of Rigveda

- Gayatri Mantra: by Rishi Vishwamitra (in 3rd Mandala).
- 2-7th Mandala was first made.

- 10th Mandala mentions - Purush Sukta; it talks about the origin of Universe from the body parts of Lord Brahma -
 - ✓ Mouth- Brahmins
 - ✓ Arms- Kshatriya
 - ✓ Thighs- Vaishya
 - ✓ Feet - Shudra
- 9th Mandala mentions: Lord Soma.

Geographical Information mentioned in Rigveda -

- a. Himvanta Parvat (Himalaya)
- b. Munjavat Parvat (Hindu Kush)
- c. Sapta Sindhu (7 rivers) - Vedic Aryans lived here.

Sub-divisions

1. **Samhita** - Collections of hymns and prayers forming the core of the Vedas, centered on rituals.

2. Brahmanas

- Part of Sruti literature (revealed knowledge).
- **Composition Period:** Between 900-700 BC.
- Each Veda has an attached Brahmana (collection of texts with commentaries on Veda) -
 - a. Rig Veda: Aitareya Brahmana, Kaushitaki Brahmana
 - b. Sama Veda: Tandya Mahabrahmana, Sadvimsha Brahmana
 - c. Yajur Veda: Taittiriya Brahmana, Shatapatha Brahmana
 - d. Atharva Veda: Gopatha Brahmana
- A mixture of legends, facts, philosophy and detailed explanations of Vedic rituals.
- Contains instructions for conducting rituals and explains the symbolic significance of sacred words used in these rituals.

3. Aranyakas

- Texts attached to each Veda describe the philosophy behind Vedic rituals and sacrifices.
- Covers life cycles (birth and death) and the soul.
- Taught by forest-dwelling Munis (holy and learned men).

4. Upanishads

- The last part of the Vedas, hence called "Vedanta".
- Passed down orally by the teacher to students.
- Treatises on monastic and mystical aspects of Vedas in Sanskrit.

- Discusses human life, the way to salvation (moksha), the origin of the universe & mankind, the life-death cycle and the material & spiritual quests of man.
- 200 known Upanishads; 108 Upanishads have been called the Mukhtika Canon.

NOTE: Satyakam Jabala

A Vedic sage, a follower of the sage Gautama, who appears in Chapter IV of the Chandogya Upanishad. He challenged the stigma of being an unmarried mother.

Vedangas

- The Vedangas are six auxiliary disciplines essential for understanding and preserving the Vedas.
- They include
 - ✓ Shiksha (phonetics)
 - ✓ Kalpa (ritual)
 - ✓ Vyakarana (grammar)
 - ✓ Nirukta (etymology)
 - ✓ Chandas (meter)
 - ✓ Jyotisha (astronomy)
- They probably developed towards the end of the Vedic period, around the middle of the 1st millennium BCE.

NOTE -

- Shiksha and Chandas aid in the proper recitation of the Vedic mantras.
- Vyakarana and Nirukta help understand the meaning of the Vedic mantras.
- Jyotisha and Kalpa guide on the appropriate times and methods for performing the Vedic rituals.

Later Vedic Period (1000-600 BC)

- The discovery of Iron in 1000 BC marked the beginning of the Later Vedic Period.
- With the help of Iron tools, they started clearing forests and started expanding into other areas.
- Satapatha Brahmana refers to the expansion of Aryans to the eastern Gangetic plains.
- Other 3 Vedas (Sama, Atharva and Yajur) were written in this period.
- In the later Vedic text there is mention of the Ganga, Yamuna, Gandak and Sadnira rivers.
- **Kuru Tribe** was the most important tribe of the Later Vedic Period. It consisted of 2 Clans - Pandava and Kaurava.
 - ✓ Parikshat and Janamejaya were the famous rulers.

NOTE: Mahabharata

(950 BC) compiled in 4th century (400 AD).

Economy of the Later Vedic Period

- The land became the most important economic wealth. There was no formal system of taxation.
- Chief means of Livelihood- Agriculture.
 - ✓ Barley, rice and wheat were grown.
- Besides Nishka, gold and silver coins like satamana and krishnala were used.
 - ✓ Traded with countries like Babylon.
- Metalwork, leatherwork, carpentry and pottery made great progress.
- Wooden plough-share (Rura).

Polity of Later Vedic Period

- *Rajana became the most important position at this time.*
- *The Priestly class assumed a very important role of aiding and advising Rajana.*
 - ✓ *To confer supreme power to the Rajana priestly class devised ritual sacrifices such as*
 - a. *Rajasuya (consecration ceremony, in this ceremony accession of Rajana to the throne happens with the blessings of the priestly class).*
 - b. *Asvamedha (Associated with territory expansion)*
 - c. *Vajpeya (chariot race)*
- *Titles: Rajavisvajanan, Ahilabhuvanapathi, Ekraat and Samrat.*
- *Important Officials –*
 - a. *Purohita: King is assisted by him*
 - b. *Senani: Army chief*
 - c. *Gramani: Village head*
- *Changes in Sabha, Samiti and Vidhata –*
 - ✓ *Sabha: Women are no longer allowed to sit in it.*
 - ✓ *Samiti: Lost its relevance.*
 - ✓ *Vidhata: No longer existed.*

Society in the Later Vedic Period

- *The Varna system got rigid and inter varna mobility restricted; the Gotra system was consolidated.*
- *The life of a person was divided in 4 Ashrams –*
 - a. *Brahmacharya (Study Period).*
 - b. *Grihastha (Married life).*
 - c. *Vanaprastha (Partial retirement from household life to attain wisdom).*
 - d. *Sannyasa (Complete retirement to attain enlightenment).*
- **Religion**
 - ✓ *Prajapathi (the creator) emerged as the most important god.*
 - ✓ *Vishnu (the protector) and Rudra (the destroyer) also emerged as important gods.*
- **Pottery** → *Grey-coloured pottery.*

NOTE –

- *The game of chess, known as ‘Ashtapada’, probably started between the 7th and the 8th century AD in India. Later, during the Gupta empire, it was called "Chaturanga."*
- *‘Daapada’ is a variation that is played on a larger 10x10 board. A variation known as ‘Chomal Ishto/ Eshto’ is played on a smaller 5x5 board in Gujarat.*