

India: The Ancient Past: A History of the Indian Subcontinent from c. 7000 BCE to CE 1200

By Burjor Avari

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India: The Ancient Past provides a clear and systematic introduction to the cultural, political, economic, social and geographical history of ancient India from the time of the pre-Harappan culture nine thousand years ago up until the beginning of the second millennium of the Common Era. The book engages with methodological and controversial issues by examining key themes such as the Indus-Sarasvati civilization, the Aryan controversy, the development of Vedic and heterodox religions, and the political economy and social life of ancient Indian kingdoms.

This fully revised and updated second edition includes:

- Three new chapters examining the differences and commonalities between the north and south of India;
- Extended discussion on contested issues, such as the origins of the Aryans and the role of feudalism in ancient India;
- New source excerpts to introduce students to the most significant works in the historiography of India, and questions for discussion;

- Study guides, including a list of key issues, suggested readings and a selection of internet sources for each chapter;

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This richly illustrated guide provides a fascinating account of the early development of Indian culture and civilization that will appeal to all students of Indian history.

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Editorial Review

Review

Praise of the first edition:

'An engaging narrative of a complex civilization.' – *Minerva*

'Burjor Avari's balanced and well-researched book is a most reliable guide to the period of Indian history that it covers. It displays considerable mastery of primary and secondary literature and distils it into a wonderfully lucid exposition. This book should be of interest to both lay readers and academic experts'. - Lord Bhikhu Parekh, *University of Westminster*

Praise of this edition:

'This book is the ideal guide to India's ancient past. In this updated and expanded edition, it is a more useful resource than ever, offering students and teachers alike a comprehensive and balanced overview of the key trajectories and debates in the history of pre-modern India. It deftly handles controversial issues and through its carefully curated selection of source materials invites the reader's direct engagement with this riveting history.'
Sebastian R. Prange, *University of British Columbia, Canada*

'With great equanimity and poise, *India: The Ancient Past* does an excellent job of presenting one of the world's splendid pasts. Equipped with rich details, lucid prose, and accessible materials, it is up-to-date with current scholarship and presents a concise yet detailed chapter-by-chapter denouement of the broad sweeps of ancient India's history . Brevity of topics, primary source extracts, and insightful analyses are a few among the many features that make this textbook a joy to teach with.'
M. Raisur Rahman, *Wake Forest University, USA*

'India: The Ancient Past improves hugely upon other college texts on the eras from the Stone Age to 1200 CE, in that it is accessible, comprehensive, politically neutral, often entertaining, and remarkably explanatory. This new edition is even better than the first on all counts, and is the best I have seen in over 40 years of teaching.'
Richard Barnett, *University of Virginia, USA*

About the Author

Burjor Avari MBE is Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of History at the Manchester Metropolitan University. He has taught history at school and university levels for over five decades. His previous publications include *Islamic Civilization in South Asia: A History of Muslim Power and Presence in the Indian Subcontinent* (Routledge, 2013).

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