

SOURCES OF ANCIENT INDIA

What are Sources

- ▣ Sources for the study and writing of history refer to a variety of material remains and texts that has been found through excavations; preserved through the ages and translated, respectively. These sources are of immense value for a systematic, logical, and unbiased study of ancient India, their value cannot be over emphasized. There is an abundance of source material to make a proper and scientific study of ancient History of India.

Types of Sources

- ▣ Sources have been categorized in three categories –
- ▣ Archaeological Sources
- ▣ Literary Sources
- ▣ Foreigner's Account.

Archaeological Sources

The various excavations carried out at numerous sites are ample proof that there is an abundance of archaeological source material in India.

Archaeology in India is a science of recent growth but there contribution and importance is incomparable. These sources give more reliable and authentic information in comparison to other sources. Due to their solid structures they are quite unalterable which dependable and free from subjective bias. They can also be dated very accurately, while the same cannot be said for other sources.

Types of Archaeological Sources

- ▣ Inscriptions
- ▣ Coins
- ▣ Monuments
- ▣ Seals
- ▣ Sculptures and paintings

Literary Sources

These are various written works which can be categorized as religious texts (Brahminical, Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain texts), historical works, non-religious texts like drama or plays and works related to polity is also considered as literary sources. These literary sources provide us with a number of information regarding ancient India.

Types of Literary Sources

- ▣ Religious Texts
 - Hindu Religious Texts
 - Buddhist Religious Texts
 - Jain Religious Texts

- ▣ Non Religious Texts
 - Grammatical Works
 - Historical Accounts
 - Political and Administrative Accounts

Foreigners' Accounts

There are a number of travellers throughout the expanse of ancient times who had written about India. They provide us with invaluable information through the eyes of an outside observer. These texts from the travellers of Rome, China, Greek and various other places are a rich source for ancient Indian History.

Types of Foreigners' Accounts

- ▣ Greek Accounts
- ▣ Roman Accounts
- ▣ Chinese Accounts
- ▣ Tibetan Accounts
- ▣ Arabic Accounts