

OXFORD IN INDIA READINGS

Themes in Indian History

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THE STATE IN INDIA

1000 – 1700

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The timeline of Indian history takes us on the journey of India starting from ancient India that included Bangladesh and Pakistan, up to free and divided India. 1700 bc – 500 bc. Vedic Period, when the sacred Vedic Sanskrit Texts in India were compiled. 1700 bc – 1000 bc. Early Vedic Period. The period of the compilation of Rig Veda. Caste system becomes rigid and families become patriarchal. 1700 BC. The Late Harappan and the Early Vedic Period coincide. 1300 BC. The end of the Cemetery H Culture. 1000 BC. Iron Age in India. 1000 bc – 500 bc. Later Vedic Period. Agriculture became the predominant economic activity. There was a change in the political organization and the involvement of people in administration. 600 BC. India is a federal union comprising 28 states and 8 union territories, for a total of 36 entities. The states and union territories are further subdivided into districts and smaller administrative divisions. The Indian subcontinent has been ruled by many different ethnic groups throughout its history, each instituting their own policies of administrative division in the region. During the British Raj, the preceding Mughal administrative structure was mostly kept. Much like the states of ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, the foundations for that history were established by Paleo-lithic foragers who migrated to and populated the region, and then Neolithic agriculturalists who settled into villages. A century of archaeological work in India that began in 1920 not only revealed a lost civilization but also a massive one, surpassing in size other major early riverine civilizations of Afro-Eurasia, such as ancient Egypt and the Mesopotamian states. In an area spanning roughly a half million square miles, archaeologists have excavated thousands of settlements (see Map 3.2). For example, for the first half of the Vedic Age (1700 – 1000 BCE), we are largely limited to archaeological sites and one major text called the Rig Veda. This is the first of four Vedas. "For its comprehensive survey and a highly readable collection of compelling articles by noted scholars, The State in India should be required reading for all students of South Asia."--The Historian. About the Author. Hermann Kulke, Professor of Asian History, Kiel University.