

## Proto history

### प्राक् इतिहास



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➤Proto-History refers to a period between pre-history and history.

➤It is generally understood that Proto-History is the period when the knowledge of writing was there but we are unable to read it.

➤Stuart Piggott (1950) suggested that the distinction between history and pre-history in India is a peculiarly elusive one.

➤The reasons for his remark are, while the **Pre-history of Western Asiatic countries** like Mesopotamia, Egypt etc. **ended immediately after 3000 B. C.** when **records of dynasties, King-lists came to be written** which can be interpreted to form the outline of a fairly reliable chronology in terms of years before the Christian era while **in India although writing was known in the third millennium B.C.** as is evident from the seals of Harappan civilization, these have **not yet been deciphered** to help us in preparing an outline of a reliable chronology in terms of years.

➤In **India Proto-History spans the period around from 3000 B.C. to 600 B.C.** covering the **Bronze Age and Chalcolithic culture** from the beginning of Harappan civilization up to the beginning of the historical period in 6th century B.C. which is the period of Buddha and Mahavira.

➤The **sites having** the archaeological remains of **Harappans, Ochre colour Pottery (OCP), Painted Grey Ware (PGW) and Chalcolithic culture,** are included in proto-historic period and they are called proto- historic settlements.

➤But, **it is not applicable to whole period** which falls between Pre-History and Historic phase in India, like Painted Gray Ware Phase, OCP, and Chalcolithic cultures don't have the written record.

➤M.K. Dhavlikar **suggests** that literary evidence is available but **there is no archaeological evidence to corroborate it, for instance the evidence of the Vedic literature.**

➤Proto-Historical period is designated as **the starting of the use of metal** by human **with the continuity of lithic-industry,** to the beginning of understandable written recorded.

➤It can be divided into three categories on the basis of metallurgical development firstly Chalcolithic phase, secondly Bronze Age and finally Iron Age.

➤In this context duration of period which is tied around 7000 B.C. to 600 B.C. in India should be considered in proto-historic period.

➤The term '**la Protohistorique,**' was first coined by **the French,** to refer to a period transposed **between prehistory and true historical Period.**

➤The Vedic literature was in an oral state up to the 4th century AD or so, its antiquity goes back to the second millennium B.C.

➤And it is an important source for reconstructing our early social, political, religious and literary history.

➤This is a unique feature in world's history.

➤Hence, this period should be legitimately included in as Protohistory.

➤Moreover, contemporary with much of the Vedic literature there is evidence from all over India about the early metal-using communities.

➤However, this is **certainly prehistory in one sense**, because there is **no trace of writing** in any case but since **this period also runs parallel with the Vedic literature**, it has been included under Protohistory.

➤According to **Sankalia**, Protohistory defined the **period between prehistoric stage and the historical stage** covering archaeological record of **post-Mesolithic and pre-Mauryan cultures, between 3500 or 3000 B.C and 300 BC.**

## SCOPE OF PROTOHISTORY

### Social Life

### Economic Life

- Agriculture
- Animal Husbandry
- Industry
- Trade

### Administration

### Religion

### Art and Architecture

## IMPORTANCE OF PROTOHISTORY

✓The use of burnt-brick in the construction of houses and drains.

✓Planned City- Grid Pattern and drainage system

✓ Use of metals like, gold, silver, lead, copper, bronze

✓Casting of bronze statues- **LOST WAX TECHNIQUE**

✓Commercial contacts with Middle East countries

✓Advance Technologies used:

- Agriculture- Surplus production and Verities of cereals
- Use of wheel-cart for transportation
- Production of Cotton and use of cotton textile
- Use of Well

- Knowledge of **Seasons and Calendar**
- Knowledge of **Celestial Objects**- sun, moon, stars
- Knowledge of **Arithmetic and Geometry**
- Knowledge of **Binary system** (weights) and **Decimal system**
- Use of **Scale** for measurement in length
- Knowledge of **Metallurgy**
- Art of **Bead** making and **Ornaments**
- Alchemy and Chemistry**
- Medical science**