

10000 BCE

History BCE

- c.10000** Stone Age society
- c. 7000** Neolithic society

- c. 2500** Indus Valley civilization

- c.1800** Indo-Aryan speaking people's settlements in riverine Punjab coincide with decline of Indus urban culture
- c.1000** End of tribal clans and chieftains and rise of republics and monarchies known as Mahajanapadas

- c.600** Internecine rivalries in northern India leading to rise of Magadha; Indus region occupied by Iranian emperor Cyrus, 519
- c.599–527** Mahavira, founder of Jain religion
- c.563–483** Gautama the Buddha

Culture BCE

- c.10000** Hunting, gathering, stone tools
- c.7000** Hunting-gathering society with beginnings of settled society, agriculture, specialized crafts, Mother Goddess cult (?)

- c. 2500** Advanced urban culture: grid-plan cities, drainage, bathrooms, social stratification, use of bronze, dry dock for ships, trade with Mesopotamia, writing on seals (still undeciphered)
- c.1800** Pastoral society: rulers, priests, and common men, composition of the Vedas, sacrifice (integral part of Vedic religion), use of horse chariots
- c.1000** Mining of iron and spread of Aryan settlements along river Ganges up to Bihar; evolution of four great *varnas* or classes, core of caste system; growth of Brahmanical religion; rise of cities, merchant classes, trade and artisanal guilds, coinage; philosophical speculations based on concepts of *samsara* and *karma*, consolidated in Upanisads; beginning of composition of epic *Mahabharata*

- 486** Buddhism, first great world religion, supported by monastic order, centred on Bihar and Gengetic Valley; first Buddhist Council held at Magadha; growth of Dhammapada, Jatakas, and other Buddhist texts

Art BCE

- c.10000** Sculpture and rock painting
- c. 7000** Painted pottery; terracotta figurines

- c. 2500** Proto-Siva; seals depicting bulls and tigers, bronze female figure, and male figures

History BCE

Culture BCE

Art BCE

468 BCE

362–321

Nanda dynasty of Magadha, during whose reign Alexander of Macedon invades Iranian province of Indus, 327–325 BCE

321

Candragupta founds centralized Mauryan empire, which extends to south, where emperor fasts to death as a Jain

268–231

Asoka renounces war after Kalinga battle and converts to Buddhism, inaugurating unique empire based on pacifism

185

Sunga dynasty replaces Mauryas at Magadha as Maurya empire disintegrates

- c. 468 Jain religion preaches non-killing of all forms of life and a strict moral code of conduct
- c. 500 Development of six major philosophical systems, grammar, and lawbooks; composition of epic *Ramayana*

327

First contact between Indians and Greeks, giving rise to legend of Alexander meeting Indian ascetics and exchanging philosophical ideas

c. 321

Mauryan empire creates efficient bureaucracy, maintaining law and order by means of extensive intelligence system; first major political treatise, *Arthashastra*, by Kautilya, inspired by cosmopolitan empire; Greek ambassador Megasthenes, who spends many years at Mauryan court, leaves lively account of Indian society

c. 268

Asoka seeks to inculcate moral lessons in his subjects through edicts inscribed on rock faces and pillars; calls third Buddhist Council and converts Sri Lanka; social reforms include animal hospital

c. 200

Rise of Gandhara-Bactria as major centre of Buddhism; growth of land trade along Silk Route connecting China and West via India and Central Asia; sea trade between Hellenistic Asia Minor, India, and China

c. 268

Asokan stone pillars; Buddhist *stupa*, *caitya* (prayer-hall), and *vihara* (monastery)

180 BCE

History BCE

180-130
Successors of Alexander's generals occupy Bactria-Gandhara; Indo-Greek kings rule Gandhara (north-west India) from capital at Taxila

155-130
Indo-Greek king Menander

128
Rise of Satavahana dynasty in South India

Culture BCE

155-130
King Menander associated with Buddhist text *Milinda Panha* (*Questions of Menander*)

Art BCE

c.120
Inception of rock-cut monasteries, notably Buddhist, which continues until fifth century CE
120
Bhagavata (follower of Vishnu?) pillar of Heliodorus, Besnagar

50 CE

History CE

78
Kanishka, Kushan emperor, ruling from Mathura in eastern India through Gandhara in north-west up to parts of Central Asia

Culture CE

78
Kanishka convenes fourth Buddhist Council, which establishes supremacy of Mahayana sect; Buddhist philosopher Asvaghosa's *Buddhacarita* written at his court; cultural revolution associated with rise of Bhakti or devotional Hinduism, centring on great deities Vishnu Siva and the Goddess; completion of *Mahabharata*, which now includes key Bhakti text *Bhagvad Gita*; inception of *Puranas*; composition of Bharata's treatise on drama and dance (*Natyasastra*) and of moral-legal text *Laws of Manu*; saint Lakulisa influences religion of Siva

Art CE

c.50
Completion of decoration of Great Stupa, Sanchi
50-70
Caitya at Karle
c. 78
First Buddha images in Gandhara and Mathura; rise of Jaina and Hindu images
c.100
Anthropomorphic *linga* from Gudimallam, earliest dated image of *linga*

150
Rudradaman, of Saka (Scythian) origin, rules western India

150
Saka king Rudradaman's inscription at Junagarh shows first use of Classical Sanskrit

200CE

319–20

Gupta empire founded by Candragupta I

335

Samudragupta brings under his sway the whole of north India and extends hegemony in south

375–415

Candragupta II completes hegemony by conquering Saka kingdom on west coast

c.400–500

Golden Age of ancient India, centring on Gupta empire; multi-talented Samudragupta combines military prowess with intellectual and cultural accomplishments; Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Faxian visits Gupta empire, praises peace and prosperity; great poet and dramatist Kalidasa at Candragupta II's court; playwright Visakhadatta flourishes; Vatsyayana's *Kamasutra*; pillar of pure iron (now in Meherauli, Delhi), technical feat associated with Candragupta (?); birth of astronomers, Aryabhatta and Varahamihira—latter goes on to write first treatise on Hindu temple architecture and sculpture; great Buddhist monastic university founded at Nalanda in Bihar

200

Great Stupa at Amaravati completed

c. 400

Creation of Gupta icons of Buddha; completion of Buddhist narrative paintings at Ajanta and Bagh; first Hindu temples, structural and excavated, emerge

c. 500

Huna (Hun) conquest of north-west India and decline of Gupta empire

600–30 Mahendravarman I, Pallava ruler of South India

c.600 Tantric cults infiltrate major religions

c.415 Varaha image of Vishnu at Udaigiri

c. 500 Temple to Vishnu at Deogarh

c.500–760

Ellora and Elephanta produce finest examples of narrative sculpture to Siva

c. 600 Emergence of rock-cut shrine in south India

c. 600–740

Calukya temples at Aiholi, Badami, and Pattadakal

606–47 Harsha, king of Kanauj, last imperial power

History CE**Culture CE****Art CE**

608 CE

- 608–42 Founding of Early Western Calukya dynasty in Deccan under Pulakesin II
- c.620 Defeat of Harsha by Pulakesin II

630–44 Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Xuanzang in India, describes society and culture; poet Bilhana composes *Caurapancasika*

- 642 Defeat of Pulakesin II by Pallavas
- c. 650 Rise of regional hegemonies following break-up of Harsha's territory

c. 650–700
Dravida temples developed, Mamallapuram and Kanchipuram

c. 700–900
Buddhism spreads to Nepal and Tibet; Tamil saint Manikkavacakar and Sankara, great south Indian philosopher; Abhinavagupta composes aesthetic treatise in Kashmir; aestheticians Anandavardhana and Vamana; dramatist Bhavabhuti

- 710–1027
Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty in north-central India
- 712 Arab occupation of Sind
- 740 Calukyas defeat Pallavas

- c. 757 Rastrakutas defeat Calukyas
- c. 760–1142
Buddhist Pala dynasty in Bengal
- c. 800 Candela kingdom of Bundelkhand founded

c. 750 Surya temple, Martand

760 Kailasanatha temple, Ellora

- c. 907 Parantaka I founder of Cola dynasty in south India

c.900– Rise of vernacular literature in India; Saiva lyrics in Kannada by Dasimayya, Basavanna, Allama, and Mahadeviyakka

954 Laksmana temple, Khajuraho

- 985–1014
Rajaraja I establishes Cola empire reaching up to Sri Lanka

995–1010
Rajarajesvara (present Brhadisvara) temple, Tanjavur

History CE**Culture CE****Art CE**

997 CE

997–1030

Mahmud of Ghazni raids north-west India

1192 Muhammad Ghuri defeats Prithviraja Chauhan at Tarain

1206 Delhi Sultanate founded by Qutb ud-din Aybak

1211–27 Sultan Iltutmish of Delhi

1296–1316 Sultan Ala ud-Din Khalji of Delhi

1325–51 Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq of Delhi

1336 Vijayanagara Empire founded in south

1345 Bahamani Sultanate founded in south

1030 Arab encyclopedist Albiruni leaves account of India

c. 1050 Ramanuja, mystic philosopher of south India

1077 Embassy of Cola merchants to China

c.1100 Kalhana writes historical classic *Rajatarangini* in Kashmir; Jayadeva writes poem on divine love, *Gita Govinda*, in Bengalc.1250 Sarangadeva writes text on music, *Sangitaratnakara*

1253–1325 Amir Khusraw, Indo-Turkish poet

1293 Marco Polo visits south India

c.1300 Maulana Daud's *Candayana*

c.1330 Barni, historian and political theorist; Ibn Batuta's visit to India

c.1000 Rajarani temple, Bhuvaneswar; Vatakunnathan temple, Trichur, Kerala

1017–29

Kandariya Mahadeva temple, Khajuraho

c.1050 Surya temple, Modhera

c.1100 Lingaraja temple, Bhuvaneswar

1117 Hoysala Cenna Kesava temple, Belur

c.1150 Vimala Vasahi Jain temple, Dilwara, Mount Abu

c. 1200 Siva Nataraja temple, Cidambaram

1206 Quwwat ul-Islam mosque and Qutb Minar, Delhi

c.1238 Surya temple, Konarak

c.1300 Victory Gateway (Alai Darwaza), Delhi; decorations of Mallitamma, Hoysala sculptor

c.1325 City of Tughlaqabad; tomb of Ghiyas ud-Din Tughlaq

1350 CE

1357 Sultan Firuz shah of Delhi

1414–1526

Sayyid and Lodi sultans of Delhi

1498 Vasco da Gama in south India

1509 Rana Sanga of Mewar, Rajasthan

1509–30 Krsnadevaraya, greatest ruler of Vijayanagara

1510 Goa, capital of Portuguese colony

1526 Babur's defeat of Delhi sultan at battle of Panipat; founding of Mughal empire

1530–56 Humayun

1540–55 Sher Shah defeats Humayun and becomes sultan of Delhi

c.1350 Lalla, female poet of Kashmir

1440–1518

Kabir preaches anti-caste synthesis of Bhakti and Sufi ideas

1459–1539

Nanak, Bhakti saint and founder of Sikh religion

c.1480–1564

Purandaradasa, poet saint of Karnataka

1486–1533

Sri Chaitanya, Vaisnava Bhakti saint of Bengal

c.1500 Blind Surdas writes his poems

c.1532–1623

Tulasidas composes *Ramacaritamanasa*, Hindi version of *Ramayana*

c.1550 Mirabai, female mystic poet of Rajasthan

c.1360 Firuz Tughlaq's three-tiered pyramid surmounted with Asokan pillar and his tomb

1367 Jami Masjid, Gulbarga

c.1394 Atala Masjid, Jaunpur

c.1500 Man Singh palace fortress, Gwalior; royal multi-storey platform, Vijayanagara; Jain texts, *Nima't Nama*, *Caurapancasika*, *Laur Chanda* illustrated

1516 Sid Sayyid Mosque, Ahmedabad

1530–40

Sher Shah's mausoleum, Sasaram

History CE**Culture CE****Art CE**

1555 CE

1556–1605

Akbar the Great

1580 First Jesuit mission to Akbar's court

1586–1627

Ibrahim Adil II shah of Bijapur

1600 East India Company granted charter

1605–27

Jahangir

1555–1617

Kesav Das's *Rasikapriya*

c.1556–1605

At Akbar's court: Abu'l Fazl and Badauni, leading historians; Tansen, composer and founder of north Indian classical music; Raja Birbal, humorist

1578 Meeting of Akbar and Jesuits

1582 Din-i-Ilahi, Akbar's syncretic religion, promulgated

c.1600 Tukaram, Maharashtra mystic poet

c.1556 Mughal painting workshop founded; emergence of masters Daswanth (d. 1584) and Basawan, leading artists of Akbar's reign

c.1560 Tomb for Humayun, Akbar's first architecture

c.1562 *Hamza Nama* painting project commenced

1565–71

Red fort and Akbar's other fortresses built

c.1570 Building of Fatehpur-Sikri

c.1580 *Razm Nama* painting project commencedc.1584 *Akbar Nama* history painting records Akbar's reign

c.1590–1605

Artist Farrukh Husain (Beg), Persian painter at Ibrahim Adil Shah's court in Bijapur

c.1600 Sahibdin, painter of Mewar, produces major versions of Hindu epics; Catholic churches, Goa

c.1601 Aqa Riza, Persian painter working for Jahangir

c.1605 Akbar's tomb, Sikandra; tomb of Itimad ud-Daulah, which uses *pietra dura* decoration; creation of gardens, culminating in Kashmir; Abu'l Hasan, Mansur, Manohar, Daulat, Padarath, Bishn Das, Govardhan, Balchand, Bichitr, Bishndas, Payag, Nadira, and Sahifa Banu, prominent painters at Jahangir's court

1623–59

Minaksi-Sundaresvara temple, Madurai

History CE**Culture CE****Art CE**

1627 CE

1628–58

Shah Jahan

1658–1707 Aurangzeb**1678–95**

Kirpal Pal of Basohli Hill State

c.1700 Sawai Jaisingh II of Jaipur**1748–57**

Sawant Singh of Kishangarh, Rajasthan

1757

Battle of Plassey and founding of British East India Company Raj in Bengal

1775–1823

Sansar Chand of Kangra Hill State

c.1718–75

Ramprasad, mystic poet of Bengal

c.1760–1847

Tyagaraja, composer of south India

1772–1833

Rammohun Roy, first Indian modernist thinker, inspires Latin American nationalists and becomes friend of Jeremy Bentham

1784

Asiatick Society of Bengal, first Orientalist institution, founded in Calcutta

1799–1803

Abu Taleb leaves lively account of visit to West

c.1627 Abd al-Karim, Makramat Khan, Hamid Mastar Ahmad, leading architects of Shah Jahan; Moti Masjid, Agra, and addition to forts**c.1631** Taj Mahal built as memorial to Shah Jahan's wife**1648** Shahjahanabad (Red Fort), Delhi, completed; Friday Mosque, Delhi**c.1650** Ranganatha temple, Srirangam; corridor of temple, Rameswaram**1650** Sahibdin of Mewar**1680–1740**

Pandit Seu, painter and founder of family of painters

c.1710–78

Nainsukh, son of Seu and most important Pahari painter

1727

Symmetrically planned city of Jaipur

c.1750 Nihal Chand, painter**c.1751** Krishna Chandra Temple, Kalna, Bengal**c. 1757–1850**

Company School of painting

1799–1802

Building of Government House, Calcutta

1809 CE

History CE

1825–1907

Pioneer nationalist,
Dadabhai Naoroji, MP

1857 Uprising led by Sepoys
brings down East India
Company

Culture CE

1809–31

H. L. V. Derozio,
university teacher,
inspirer of radical Young
Bengal movement

1820–91

Iswar Chandra
Bidyasagar, great
educator and social
reformer of Bengal

1828 Founding of Brahma
Samaj by Rammohun
Roy

1835 Raj introduces English
system of education,
which replaces
traditional learning

1836–86

Saint Sri Ramakrishna,
influential in revival of
Hinduism

1840–70

Kali Prasanna Sinha,
satirist, essayist, and
editor/ co-translator of
Mahabharata into
Bengali

1842–1901

M. G. Ranade, pioneer
Maharashtran reformer

1857 Novelist Bankin Chandra
Chatterjee (1838–
1892) writes song on
motherland, *Bande
Mataram*, which
becomes national
anthem

1859 Michael Madhusudan
Datta (1824–73) writes
Bengali epic poem,
Meghnadbadhkavya

1860 Dinabandhu Mitra
(1830–73) writes
controversial play *Nil
Darpan*, highlighting
white indigo planters'
oppression of Bengali
peasants

1873–1938

Muhammad Iqbal,
India's greatest Muslim
poet-philosopher and
inspirer of idea of
Pakistan

Art CE

c.1851 Foundation of art
schools in Madras,
Bombay, and Calcutta

c.1870 Academic art flourishes,
led by Ravi Varma
(1846–1906)

1875 CE

History CE

1877 Queen Victoria declared Empress of India

1885 Indian National Congress founded

1885–1905 Early Congress dominated by moderate G. K. Gokhale (1866–1915) and extremist B. G. Tilak 'Father of Indian Unrest' (1856–1920)

1905 Partition of Bengal and Swadeshi agitation; first nationalist movement

1906 Muslim League founded

1909 Muslims granted separate electorate by Raj

1911 Transfer of capital from Calcutta to Delhi

Culture CE

1875 Leading Muslim nationalist Syed Ahmad Khan (1817–98) founds Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College, which combines western knowledge with Islamic education; Hindu nationalist Dayananda Saraswati (1824–1883) founds Arya Samaj

c.1880 Harish Chandra (1850–85), Hindi poet, dramatist, and Hindu nationalist

1893 Ramakrishna's disciple Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902), founder of Ramakrishna Mission, triumphs at World Congress of Religions in Chicago

1899 Indian film industry founded

1900 Jagadish Chandra Bose (1859–1937), scientist, Fellow of Royal Society, and member of Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, presents paper at International Congress of Physicists, Paris

c.1905 Subramania Bharati (1882–1921), Tamil poet and nationalist, active

1906 Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950), influential Hindu nationalist, edits revolutionary periodical *Bande Mataram* from Calcutta

Art CE

1878–87 Victoria Terminus railway station, Bombay

c.1905 Nationalist Bengal School of painting, led by Abanindranath Tagore (1871–1951)

c.1911–32 Building of New Delhi

History CE**Culture CE****Art CE**

1912 CE

1914–18

World War I; use of Indian troops in Middle East

1919 Massacre of unarmed gathering at Amritsar by government troops**1920–4**

Khilafat movement seeks to unite Indian Muslims in Pan-Islamic agitation

1921 Mahatma Gandhi's nationwide Non-Cooperation movement**1930** Gandhi's nationwide Civil Disobedience movement and Salt March**1935** Congress ministries formed in provinces**1939** World War II; Raj enters India in conflict without consulting Congress, whose leaders resign en masse

- 1912** Sarat Chandra Chatterjee (1876–1938), Bengali novelist and social critic, publishes first stories
- 1913** Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), India's greatest poet, awarded Nobel prize for book of poems *Gitanjali*, first non-European to receive it—a world figure during his lifetime; Dadasaheb Phalke (1870–1944) releases first major Indian feature film, *Harishchandra*

1922 Kazi Nazrul Islam (1898–1976), great Bengali revolutionary poet and composer, publishes journal, *Dhumketu* (comet)**c. 1930**

Faiz Ahmad Faiz (1912–?), Urdu poet

1930 C. V. Raman (1888–1970) wins Nobel prize for physics**1934** T. S. Pillai (1914–), Malayalam novelist and short-story writer, publishes first story**1935** R. K. Narayan (1906–) publishes first novel in English**1936** Prem Chand (1880–1936), Hindi novelist and short-story writer, sees publication of best-known novel, *Godan*, shortly before his death**1921** Victoria Memorial, Calcutta, completed**1922** Exhibition of Bauhaus artists in Calcutta; Cubist experiments of Gaganendranath Tagore (1868–1938)**1930** Europe-wide exhibition of expressionist works of poet Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941); Amrita Sher-Gil (1913–1941) returns to India from Paris, creating a sensation with her life and work

History CE**Culture CE****Art CE**

1940 CE

- 1940** Mohammad Ali Jinnah demands sovereign state of Pakistan
- 1941** Subhash Chandra Bose (1897–1945), nationalist revolutionary, joins Japan with his Indian National Army, aiming to liberate India from outside
- 1942** Quit India movement launched by Gandhi
- 1943** Great 'man-made' famine of Bengal
- 1945–7** Progressive breakdown of law and order and mutiny of armed services, as Labour government prepares to grant India independence; communal riots, partition of India, and creation of modern states of India and Pakistan
- 1947** Jawaharlal Nehru first prime minister of India; Liaquat Ali Khan first prime minister of Pakistan
- 1948** Gandhi assassinated; Muhammad Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan, dies
- 1950** India becomes republic within Commonwealth
- 1951** Congress wins elections; Nehru inaugurates Five Year Plans
- 1956** Pakistan becomes Islamic republic
- 1962** India's disastrous war with China
- 1966–77** Indira Gandhi's first period as prime minister
- c.1967** Maoist Naxalite movement emerges in eastern India

c.1940 Jamini Roy (1887–1974) acclaimed as foremost primitivist

1947 S. H. Manto (1912–55), Urdu short-story writer

1948 Exhibition of Bombay Progressives led by M. F. Husain (1915–)

c.1950 Zainul Abedin (1918–76), leading artist of East Pakistan (later Bangladesh), lays foundations of art in that country

c. 1951 Le Corbusier builds Chandigarh

1953 *Do Bigha Zamin* by Bimal Roy (1912–66) honoured at Cannes Film Festival

1955 *Pather Panchali*, by great film director Satyajit Ray (1921–92), released

1961 Sadequain (1930–87) prize-winner at Paris Biennale

History CE

Culture CE

Art CE

1970 CE

- 1972 East Pakistan declares independence and renames itself Bangladesh
- 1980 End of Congress dominance in India

c.1970 New pictorialism of Baroda

c.1980 Meera Mukherjee (1923–98) increasingly recognized as major sculptor, giving a boost to women's contribution to modern art

