Chapter I

Introduction

Background of Ancient Cultures of Japan and India

Introduction

Japan started its own historic era in the sixth century A.D. when Buddhism was introduced formally by Paekche, a kingdom in south-western Korea. Since then Japanese culture has been formed largely by the assimilation of foreign cultures mostly through Korea and China. Even under the significant influence of the Chinese civilization as neighbour, the root of Japanese culture could be traced back to ancient India in its major elements not only in religious and philosophical background but also in social and cultural fields of Japanese way of life. Out of Indian origins, Buddhism gave the largest impact of influence, amalgamating non-Buddhist Indian and other foreign elements for a long way and period of propagation through West Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, China and Korea. Hence, it will be worthwhile to look over the formation of the two civilizations of India and Japan both in moral and material cultures more comparatively, systematically and comprehensively. Buddhist studies are apparently informative but not dependable alone. Rather, more attention should be paid to comparative aspects, such as indigenous origin versus foreign origin through root-finding, interchange, diffusion, propagation, assimilation and acculturation; and succession versus change through evolution, integration and amalgamation, maturity in custom and tradition. Accordingly, efforts are made to find out the traces of ancient Indian influences on Japanese culture directly or indirectly by way of comparative analysis through ecological environments, historical movements, intermediate regions, urbanization, Buddhism, and architectures and fine arts. Finally, it is pursued to
conclude in overview the types of the two civilizations. Major data are used from secondary sources, in association with primary sources, by relevant methods in history, archaeology, anthropology, mythology, folklore, etc.

**Ecological Environments and Their Influences on Human Way of Life**

The biological approach of cultural zone to understand geographical and meteorological backgrounds which decide human way of life in a respective region is necessary for fruitful discussion among several theories. Special attention is paid to the large influence of the western region for both the civilizations, i.e. China directly or indirectly through Korea upon Japan and West Asia upon India. Discussion starts from the definition and relationship between culture and civilization, followed by the theories on civilization model in conjunction with ecological background both with natural and human factors, e.g. climate, agriculture, religion and ethos, material culture, regional units or zones, and interchange. Then the ecological environments are outlined with special emphasis on the nearness to the Korean Peninsula and mainland China and the influence of Asian monsoon in Japan; and the eco-zoning models and the agricultural pattern by monsoon in India. Finally the cultural characteristics are discussed with special emphasis on the influence of China, the concept of “East Asian World”, the roots of culture and the regional elements in Japan; and the eco-cultural zones, Indianization and the similarity to Japanese culture in India.

**Culture and Civilization**

Culture is the way of life of a particular society or group of people with integrated pattern of idea, belief, knowledge, custom, tradition and behaviour, being transmitted to
succeeding generations. Culture thus consists of language, rituals, ceremonies, symbols, taboos, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, art, dress, music, and literature.\textsuperscript{1} Etymologically culture comes from ‘cultivating soul’, which extends various meanings like human education and mental refinement.

On the other hand, civilization is the highly developed human society with structured division of labour. In anthropology, civilization is defined as an advanced socio-political stage of cultural evolution under a centralized government like a state supported by the taxation of surplus production.\textsuperscript{2} Etymologically civilization shares the same root with ‘city’, ‘civil’ and ‘citizen’. It becomes prosperous in the urbanized society by trade and commerce with the surplus production and accumulated wealth on top of agricultural and pastoral life style. It tends to be universal, not attached to a peculiar race or region, and always holds the possibility to be replaced by another new universal existence, whereas culture inclines to be characteristic to a peculiar human or racial group. Yet, culture harmonizes with civilization in each era and transforms the shape to adapt itself more suitably to the movement of new era.

S. Itō defines civilization as “hardware” to sustain human way of life, i.e. a collective unit of institutions, organizations and systems to maintain a society. On the contrary, culture is regarded as “software” to drive civilization, being formed closely with ethos, idea pattern or valuation. “Cultural Deprivation” is caused during the transformation and intercourse of civilization, i.e. the transformed civilization system deprives the original culture within civilization to be operated by other new culture. For instance, Buddhism did not nullify any local religion and social tradition in propagated areas but amalgamated them within. In other words, Buddhism had been easily transformed into other areas by depriving a peculiar and exclusive culture. This viewpoint can be utilized more effectively for the comparative analysis of foreign
culture versus indigenous culture through competition, conflict, unification and
compromise.  

S. Izumi figures out the cultural propagation by an interesting simile that culture
has a similarity to “bacteria”. He emphasizes the cultural contrasts, e.g. material culture
versus the meaning of value, the diversification of culture versus the uniformity of
culture and foreign culture versus indigenous culture. He exemplifies the penetration of
great continental civilizations of India and China towards peripheral areas. Namely,
their influences were strongly dominant over Korea, Indo-China and Indonesia, but less
dominant over Japan and the Philippines, where the sea worked as the force to isolation
besides effective traffic route. The Interchange Sphere of Bay of Bengal is an opposite
case through which Southeast Asia was Indianized in ancient times. 

S. A. Husain expresses ideologically that culture is an ultimate values possessed by
a particular society as expressed in feelings, attitudes, manners and forms given to
material objects. Civilization is the stage where people begin to live in large habitations
called cities, which represent a higher level of material life. But the material life has a
cultural content only when it serves as a means for ultimate moral value. Where the
religion reveals a real meaning and purpose of life, it becomes a very soul of culture. 

Taking above definitions into account, it may be concluded that the word
civilization is used as a collective form of cultures in a wider scale at the stage of
urbanization rather than culture used as an individual element, throughout its
transformation caused by interchange, propagation, and assimilation with other cultures.

**Civilization Model**

A.J. Toynbee deepens a comparative study of world civilizations in twenty societies
through historical changes with his own defined words. For instance, in ancient India,
major epochs were the Maurya and Gupta Empires as “World States”, Hinduism as “World Religion” which drove away Buddhism, Hellenic society as “Parent Society”, Hunas’ invasion from the Steppes as “Racial Movement”, and the rise and fall of post-Gupta dynasties as “Blank period”. On the other hand, the major epochs in Chinese society as “Parent Society” were the Ch’in and Han Empires as “World States”, the Mahāyāna as “World Religion”, the invasion of nomadic tribes like Huns, Hsienpei and Nuchen as “Racial Movement”, Age of Warring States (403 - 221 B.C) as “Upheaval Period” when Confucianism and Taoism arose. The cradle of the Far East civilization was grown between the Huan Ho and the Yangtze valleys, and extended towards Southeast Asia, Korea and Japan. The Japanese civilization is one branch of the Far East civilization. In the origin of civilization, the concept of “Challenge and Response” is suggested that the creation is a result of encounter and origination by reciprocal action. For instance, in the Indian civilization, the shift from the Indus Plain to the Gaṅgā Plain caused the environmental challenge against dense forests which resulted in the rise of the Hindu civilization.

K. Matsumoto categorizes civilizations in the world into three models by symbolizing the most popular and common material in nature as well as human way of life in each zone, i.e. “Civilization of Sand”, “Civilization of Stone” and “Civilization of Mud”. “Civilization of Mud” stands in the mild but humid climatic areas of East and Southeast Asia, where people share such a common view of the world that the mud is the original source to have created life by awful power far beyond human recognition or in other words human being was born also from mud. Ethnologically this area covers up East India, Śrī Lankā, Southeast Asia, southern China, Formosa and Japan.

T. Umesao searches for the law of human history based on “Ecological Historical View”, which may clarify the variation of human way of life through the concept of
“Succession” among communities. He divides Eurasia into two areas, just imaging such a shape of continent as horizontally longer oval. Namely, one area covers up Japan or Western Europe, being located in the eastern or western edge of oval shape. Other area is all remained in Eurasia. Through a historical progress, the former area has succeeded in reaching a highly modernized civilization. It has been favoured by a genial climate in the temperate zone with adequate rain fall and highly productive soil and forest. The succession in society has been progressed in order and expanded by the internal force created within communities, i.e. the Feudalism, the Civil Revolution and the highly developed Capitalism in advance of the latter area. This kind of movement is named “Autogenic Succession”. On the other hand, the latter area flourished ancient civilizations where the rise and fall of numerous monarchies were repeated through destruction and conquest. In early modern times, four great empires emerged, yet they were mostly obliged to encounter with the former colonialism. Their histories were moved by external forces, or under “Allogenic Succession”.10

Geographically it should be marked the existence of vast dry zone across Eurasia obliquely from north-east to south-west, from which destructive nomadic tribes like Huns and Mongols invaded ancient civilizations. The civilized zone is divided into four large worlds of human community, i.e. the Indian world, the Chinese world, the Russian world and the Mediterranean-Islamic world. Each world was structured by a great empire and peripheral countries. As a geographical model, it is located in the centre of the dry zone inclusive of deserts and Steppes, outside the quasi-dry zone like Savanna, and further outside the wet and humid forest zone. Southeast Asia belongs to the last zone across boundaries with the Indian world, the Chinese world and Japan through sealane. Their boundary lines can be drawn obliquely in parallel.

H. Matsuda proposes three types of climatic area being referred to as the basis of
Asian mosaic history, i.e. “Wet Asia”, “Semi-wet Asia” and “Dry Asia”. “Wet Asia”, or “Monsoon Asia”, covers East, Southeast and South Asia. The area has provided the most suitable condition for agriculture, particularly for rice crop. At the same time, the habitants in coasts and islands tended towards overseas activities, being backed up by the inland agriculture and the southern oceanic maritime life style. “Semi-wet Asia” includes North Asia and Siberia under chilly climate and vast forest of Taiga. People lived the hunting life. “Dry Asia”, or “Desert Asia”, covers Central Asia and West Asia. People lived the nomadic life besides the oasis agriculture in a small scale. He admires Yuan Chwang (or Hsuan Tsang), a Chinese pilgrim who visited India in the seventh century A.D., for his foresighted view of human geography in Asia. His description of “Four Lords” (or sovereigns) in Si Yu Ki (A.D. 646) can fit India for “Elephant-Lord”, Persia for “Lord of Precious Substance”, nomadic tribes for “Horse-Lord” and China for “Man-Lord” respectively. According to Yuan Chwang, the Four Lords divide Jambudvipa to rule over lands and people. In the south is “Elephant-Lord” whose territory has a hot moist climate and the people are energetic, absorbed in study and magical arts, and live at houses of several storeys in towns. In the west is “Lord of Precious Substances” whose territory is rich in pearls of sea and the people are rude and greedy, living in towns as traders. In the north is “Horse-Lord” whose country is very cold, yielding horses, and the people are wild and fierce, living in felt tents as migratory herdsmen. In the East is “Man-Lord” whose territory has a pleasant climate and the people are well at all good manners in social virtues, being attached to the soil. Hence, human beings differ in their nature more or less according to local climatic conditions. By overlapping Four Lords on the three climatic lands, four zones can be formulated both under geographic and socio-economic conditions, i.e. the eastern agrarian world under the cultural influence of China, the southern agrarian world under the main
stream of Indian culture, the western oasis world under the dominance of Persian and Islamic cultures, and the northern nomadic world of desert and the Steppes laid between forest Asia and agrarian Asia. Yuan Chwang seems not to have been aware of the hunting life in “Semi-wet Asia” and the maritime life in “Wet Asia”. If aware, he would have named them “Marten-Lord” and “Spice-Lord” individually. The fur route had been available since early times, linking China to the classical world of the Mediterranean. However, the route was under the control of nomadic tribes so that “Marten-Lord” just remained to stand a subordinate position as original producer of furs. The importance of “Spice-Lord” or “Maritime Asia” lies in the historical background that its emergence and activities stimulated to unite “Wet Asia” between “Elephant-Lord” (India) and “Man-Lord” (China), which were interlinked by inland route through “Dry Asia”.

K. Takatani suggests the concept of “World Unit” in association with multiple civilizations. The “World Unit” is defined mentally as one area where people share common outlook on the world, and structurally as one geographical sphere united by socio-cultural and ecological dynamics. It is aimed to know what this whole world is composed of and eventually to understand the clear outlook on the world. Typical “World Unit” available in Eurasia can count twenty-four units, e.g. Persia, Afghanistan, India, Turkistan, Tibet, Mongol, China, Thai Delta, Hilly Land of Indo-China, Java, Japan, Indian Ocean Sea World, Southeast Asian Sea World and East Asian Sea World. Analytically Eurasia can be divided into five ecological zones, i.e. deserts, the Steppes, plains, forests and seas. The Sea World should be paid particular attentions to, since sea is the area to connect different worlds and to open out to the borderless. For instance, the Indian Ocean Sea World covers the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Trade in the Indian Ocean appeared around the Christian era and exploded maritime activities in accordance with the expansion of Islamic commerce to demand luxurious items. The
East Asian Sea World includes the East China Sea, the South China Sea and the Sea of Japan. Major maritime activities in ancient times were performed through the tributary trade system, where the feudatory states offered to the Chinese emperor the tributes and in return the authoritative gifts were granted by the Chinese court to them. The Southeast Asian Sea World covers its coastal area but excludes Thai, Vietnam and Java as an independent world separately. Being different from the other two sea worlds based on maritime trade through Sea Silk Route, Southeast Asian Sea World was clothed in thick tropical forests and functioned primarily as sea for local life, mixing up plural human activities, e.g. slash-and-burn cultivation, sago taro washing, coconut growing, fishing and neighboring trade.\textsuperscript{13} “World Unit” can be categorized into three models, i.e. “Ecological Adaptation Model”, “Network Model” and “Great Civilization Model”. The typical examples of “Ecological Adaptation Model” are Java World Unit and the Hilly Land of Indo-China. The “Network Model” includes mostly “World Units” emerged in sea coasts, deserts and the Steppes. The “Great Civilization Model” can be applied for India and China World Units. Commonly shared by the numerous people who live different lives in different ecological environment is one ideology, i.e. Hinduism in India and Confucianism in China. Independent and land-principled is “Great Civilization Model” or the world of peasants, whereas dependent and human-principled is “Network Model”, or the world of merchants moving across regions to open cosmopolitan and borderless world with universal value. The “Ecological Adaptation Model” is self-supportive and less influential. Those various models of “World Unit” have supplemented each other to formulate the global world as a whole.\textsuperscript{14} (Map 1)

**Ecological Environment of Japan**

From the eastern end of Eurasia across the Sea of Japan, the Yellow Sea or the East
China Sea, large and small islands stretch for about 4,000 kilometers from north-east to south-west, i.e. the Kuril Islands, the Japanese Islands and the Ryūkyū Islands. The Japanese archipelago consists of four main islands, i.e. Hokkaidō (north), Honshū (central), Shikoku (west) and Kyūshū (south-west) together with the Ryūkyū Islands and about 3,600 peripheral small islands. It is located in the north latitude from 45.5 to 24 degree. The archipelago was formed just to the present condition presumably about ten and few thousand years ago from the end of the Pleistocene to the beginning of the Holocene, when the Jōmon culture already emerged. Though a total land area is 370,000 square kilometers only, yet steep mountains occupy about seventy percent of total land area. Swift rivers run to carve complicated valleys that have formed small alluvial plains. Major plains spread on the Pacific side, e.g. the Kantō Plain with Edo (modern Tokyo), the Nōbi Plain with Nagoya, and the Kinai Basin with Nara, Kyoto and Naniwa (modern Osaka). They contain large centres of population with historical importance.

Shores are washed by the Okhotsk Current (Oyashio), a cold ocean stream from the Arctic, and the Black Current (Kuroshio), a warm ocean stream from the tropics. Mingling cold and warm ocean currents on the Pacific coast provides one of major fishing grounds in the world. This has led Japanese to grow as one of the leading seafaring races of Asia. Seashores become intricate with 27,000 kilometres of total coastal lines to provide suitable locations for port.

Climatically, the archipelago is temperate and rainy within the Asian monsoon zone. The seasonal climate change is clear with four seasons, a rainy season lying between spring and summer. However, between the continental cold pressure from Siberia and the marine tropical pressure from the South Pacific Ocean, it becomes chilly in winter and hot yet humid in summer. The Asian monsoon area stretches from Siberia in the north to India in the south-west to cover up rice crop zone of south
China, Southeast Asia and India. It features seasonal winds, i.e. the summer wind blowing from southern tropical seas to bring heavy rainfall, and the winter wind blowing from north Asian continent to bring heavy snowfall. This seasonal climatic change is the most favorable to wet-rice cultivation. Dominated by agrarian economy, the national wealth is commonly land which had been the basis of administrating society. As a result, the “Monsoon Asia” is said historically to have kept the conservatism in human way of life, which could be shared partly by Japanese society. The climatic difference caused by monsoon and geographical division by mountains have formed two zones in parallel in Honshū, i.e. Omote Nihon (Outer Japan) facing to the Pacific Ocean and Ura Nihon (Inner Japan) facing to the Sea of Japan. These zones have created minor differences in life style of social custom, habit, dress, speech and even nature of inhabitants.22 (Map 2)

Japan has a very close relation to the eastern shore of Asian continent across three straits, i.e. the La Perouse Strait between Hokkaidō and Sakhalin Island on the north, the Tsushima Strait between Kyūshū and the Korean Peninsula on the west, and the Taiwan Strait between mainland China and Formosa to Ryūkyū Islands on the south. The Tsushima Strait was the most important in ancient times since the main stream of Eurasian cultures flowed into Japan mostly through the Korean Peninsula by the way of political, economic and human interactions.23 Since main culture and population have been centred on an opposite side from the continent, i.e. Omote Nihon, Japan has been independent from the continent without any experience of invasion in history.24

The varied natural beauty in mountains, forests, lakes, rivers, inland sea spotted with small islands and hot springs through volcanic chain, though shaken sometimes by earthquakes, is one of basic motivations to have developed the highly aesthetic sense of Japanese.25 Rich vegetation and forest trees but poor building stones have caused the
very nature of Japanese art like the techniques of sculpture and painting conditioned by 
available materials at hand.\textsuperscript{26}

In conclusion, the ecological environment of Japan has helped to determine the 
course of history and the nature of culture. The division of many districts by islands and 
mountains promoted particularism and feudalism in ancient Japan. Yet the insular 
character of Japan with a certain compactness of islands tended toward intense national 
consciousness, pride and unity.\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{Characteristics of Japanese Culture}

The Japanese culture had owed greatly to the influence of the two continental 
civilizations, i.e. Chinese and Indian civilizations, directly or indirectly. Culturally 
Japan was a child of the Chinese civilization, but Japanese was not merely a race of 
borrower and imitator.\textsuperscript{28} Without Indian influence, Japanese culture would not be what 
it is today. Indian thought and culture had been introduced along with Buddhism.\textsuperscript{29} On 
the other hand, the most characteristic features of the Japanese civilization were 
developed in comparative seclusion, which favoured the continuity of tradition and 
survival of original elements in life style.\textsuperscript{30}

T. Nishijima proposes the concept of “East Asian World” that the historical area of 
East Asia, centring in China together with Japan, Korea and Vietnam, progressed by 
sharing several common characteristics, i.e. the literature written in Chinese characters, 
the Confucianism as political philosophy, the \textit{Ritsu-ryo} system as a core of political 
institution for penal and administrative law, and the Buddhist scriptures translated in 
Chinese words.\textsuperscript{31} Yet Japanese difference among Asian countries is to be taken into 
account from indigenous culture and society under a peculiar ecological background. 
Then its cultural dynamics in history can be properly traced through various
interchanges not only with China but also with India and other regions.

The root of Japanese culture has been one of the most controversial issues in history. T. Kobayashi points out that the Palaeolithic culture, the Jōmon culture, the Ryūkyū culture and the Okhotsk culture related with the Ainu culture, all contributed to Japanese culture piled in the bottom layer. S. Nishijima analyzes from anthropological, ethnological and linguistic points of view, e.g. the origin of agriculture, the relationship among east Asian and south islands languages, the origin of Japanese race in relation to east Asian races, Ainu, Ryūkyū and others. M. Ueda emphasizes the importance of sea route through Kuroshio, Oyashio, etc. and the role of immigrants from the Korean Peninsula and mainland China. N. Egami categorizes Japanese race into three types, i.e. the hunter-fishers originated from Siberia as the oldest ethnic group since the Jōmon period, the peasants having sailed from central and south China since the Yayoi period, and the horse-riding nomad race having invaded from north-east Asia through Korea in the middle Kofun period. Anthropologically the direct ancestor of Japanese race was proto-Mongoloid originated from the southern part of East Asia in the late Palaeolithic age. The Jōmon people had a similarity to southern proto-Mongoloid. The immigrants from the continent started to mix up with aboriginal Jōmon people in the late Jōmon period and impressed physical and cultural influences in the Yayoi period. Finally they spread over the country after the formation of the central state in Yamato. Hayato in Kyūshū and Emishi in Tōhoku were possibly aboriginal groups from Jōmon people. As their direct descendants, modern Ryūkyū and Ainu people have kept deeply the original traits of Jōmon people.

T. Sasaki develops the theory of “Forest Culture of Shinny Leaves”, originally proposed by S. Nakao. In the Himalayan foot-hills at heights of 1,500 to 2,500 metres, there is the forest area mainly occupied by ever-green oaks, so-called “East Asian
“Crescent”. It extends over east-central Assam, east Bhutan, northern mountains of Indo-China, Yunnan highlands, the southern side of Yangtze River (Hunan area) and south-western Japan under the Warmer Temperate Zone. Many races are living there to share common cultural elements of life style, e.g. the method to get rid of harshness of wild taros and nuts, the tea drinking custom by processing tea leaves, the reeling silk off cocoons, the method to make lacquered ware with the sap of lacquer tree, the growing and utilizing citrus fruits and beefsteak plant, and the brewing wine with yeast. As the most remarkable feature, people’s livings have been maintained by slash-and-burn cultivation to grow a large volume of cereals as well as taros. Furthermore, out of cereals and rice, new sticky species were developed to spread such a peculiar food as sticky cake widely throughout this area.\textsuperscript{36} Ethnographically various common elements in mythology and ceremony are found, e.g. the myth of metamorphosis from dead body, the flood myth of surviving brother and sister to marry as ancestors of humankind, the exchanging ceremony of group songs between boys and girls, and the idea of afterlife for the soul to fly over to the top of mountain and beyond. The “Forest Culture of Shinny Leaves” together with slash-and-burn cultivation was possibly introduced at the end of the Jōmon period prior to wet-rice agriculture and formed a part of bottom-layer of Japanese culture.\textsuperscript{37} Linguistically Japanese language is said to have been based on Tibeto-Burman, while Tamil was likely propagated with the forest culture.\textsuperscript{38}

By and large, throughout the assimilation process of foreign cultures, it is important to pay attention to human interchange as well as material exchange, route of formation as well as root of origin, and originality and heterogenesis as well as commonness and universality.\textsuperscript{39}
Ecological Environment of India

India lies mostly in the tropical and sub-tropical zones besides northern highland and western desert in its subcontinent extending between north latitudes 37.6 and 84 degree at a distance over 3,200 kilometers and east longitudes 97.2 and 687 degree at a distance about 3,000 kilometers. The subcontinent consists of three major physical divisions, i.e. Great mountains, Great plains, Great plateau of the peninsula. Great mountains consist mainly of Karakoram and Himālayan ranges. The northern mountains often became barriers but the north-west of subcontinent kept continuous communication with West and Central Asia across several passes like Khyber, Gomal and Bolan. Great plains consist of two river alluvium plains, i.e. Indus and Ganga-Brahmaputra. The fertility of two flood plains attracted agriculture and its surplus of production led to grow urban cultures. Great plateau consists of two distinct parts, i.e. the Mālwā Plateau and the Deccan Plateau. The Deccan Plateau naturally became the linking bridge between North India and the peninsula. The peninsula, with its extensive coasts before the hills of Eastern and Western Ghāts, inevitably has kept a brilliant record of maritime activities. The monsoon wind is a dominant feature to accelerate sailing boats. Across the Arabian Sea the south-west monsoon blows from June to September and the lesser north-east monsoon moves from December to February. The Indian Ocean is divided by the peninsula into two arcs, i.e. the western arc between the Arabian Sea and Konkan-Malabār Coasts, and the eastern arc between the Bay of Bengal and Coromandel Coast. East-coast traders took the initiative in establishing trade with Southeast Asia and south China. The maritime contacts began between the Indus civilization and Mesopotamia and later the trade with the Roman Empire through the Red Sea also flourished.

The subcontinent is divided into three major vegetation belts, i.e. tropical rain
forests, tropical deciduous forests and thorn forests. Agriculture is also dominated by the monsoon climate. In the north-west, wheat and barley are the prime food crops. In the drier peninsula, a variety of millets are cultivated. Wet-rice cultivation has provided the main crop in wider areas of middle Ganga Plain, East India, broader valleys of the peninsula and coastal areas. There are two agricultural seasons under monsoon cycle, i.e. the kharif starting in June with monsoon and harvesting rice, millets, maize, jute and cotton in autumn, and the rabi starting in autumn after rains and harvesting wheat, gram, barley, linseeds and mustard soon after spring. The conservation and sharing available water is a very important factor in agrarian society. Various methods of irrigating fields had been developed in respective regions, i.e. channel, well, Persian wheel, tank, canal, anicut and underground conduit. In drier areas cattle-breeding has been also an important domestic production. Consequently the life in the subcontinent largely depends on the monsoon, which has helped to build up the character of Indian people. The extreme climate beyond human efforts is said to have led Indian character tended towards fatalism and quietism, and sometimes the extreme attitude either by asceticism or luxury rather than ‘Middle Way’.

Characteristics of Indian Culture

T. Umesao combines both Indian and Mediterranean-Islamic worlds as “Middle World”, being located between the East and the West independently.

H. Matsuda analyses about the expansion of Indian culture. As the typical “Agriculture Asia”, India took the same historical steps of agriculture as China, starting from oasis-farming, developing into alluvium plain-farming and finally reaching wet-rice cultivation. The Indus civilization was supported by the oasis life common in “Dry Asia”. The life of the Vedic people was supported mainly by the plough farming
of barley around the Punjâb Plain in the centre. Around the first millennium B.C. when
the Vedic people primarily moved eastwards into the Gaṅgâ Plain, their life style was
shifted from “Dry India” to “Wet India” by rice agriculture. The Indian subcontinent
can be drawn as a shape of rhombus with two northern sides of Himâlayan and
Sulaiman Ranges and the southern part of Deccan Plateau projecting to the Indian
Ocean. In other words, this vertically longer rhombus seems to be composed with two
triangles north and south. The north triangle is Indus-Gaṅgâ Plains and the south
triangle is Deccan Plateau. Furthermore the plains consist of two different kinds of
triangle, i.e. the western half for the dry Indus Plain cultivating barley fields, so-called
“India of Barley”, and the eastern half for the wet Gaṅgâ Plain cultivating rice fields,
so-called “India of Rice”. The Indus Plain is also regarded as the intermediate zone
between India and Iran, as verified by many tribes having invaded the subcontinent
across the Khyber Pass. The peninsula consists of vast Deccan Plateau and bordering
coastal areas. The Deccan Plateau is a dry area continued from the Indus Plain,
so-called “India of Cotton”. Throughout ancient times, the southern dynasties in the
Deccan had kept on struggling with the northern dynasties in the Hindustan, e.g. the
Sâtâvâhanas, the Câlukyas and the Râstrakûtas. The Tamil, extreme south of the
peninsula, had kept on refining its own ethnical and cultural brilliances. Though their
source of life was based on rice cultivation, people rather tended to progress by
maritime activities. Accordingly the Tamil can be regarded as a part of “Maritime Asia”
together with Śrî Lankâ, Southeast Asia and south China. The “Maritime Asia” formed
Sea Silk Route by connecting the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea and the southern sea
through the mediation of Southeast Asia to prosper the East and West trade. 50

India had projected a large diversification of life style or culture by various ethnic
groups, yet had kept the unification as a single world strongly under the significant idea
of Hinduism. Any kind of map for geographic, ecological, linguistic, architectural, dress and ornamental, and dietary categorizations can be drawn, but they insist on different border lines. India is often said to be ‘chaos’ or ‘mosaic’ world, yet has been united by the ultimate force of ‘Indianization’ to overcome ecological and cultural diversifications. The ‘Indianization’ means the penetration of Hinduism. The Hinduism is based on the establishment of caste, *Varṇa* and *Jāti*, through which one can be entitled to become an Indian. This firm socio-religious system may have contributed to sustain India as the world of stability.

K. Matusmoto emphasizes the basic similarity between India and Japan which share the common ideas and cultures based on “Civilization of Mud”, e.g. the myth on world creation that the god did not create the world but the world existed from the beginning, where gods and goddesses performed procreations to give the birth of deities and lands. One can imagine the worshipping of the Sun God or Goddess, Sūrya in the *Rgveda* and Amaterasu in the *Kojiki* (Records of Ancient Matters). Just as women possess the power of childbirth, the nature is worshipped as the power of creation. All over “Monsoon Asia”, the water festival is celebrated for thanksgiving to aqua god or dragon god. The Kālī Temple in Kolkata, for instance, allocates an entrance gate, which has a similar shape to the gate (*torii*) of Shintō shrine in Japan. Watatsumi-jinja in Tsushima Island and Itsukushima-jinja in Hiroshima display five gates, out of which three are placed inside sea. This may conserve the legend that Japanese race would have sailed from southern islands across sea. There are numerous Shintō shrines called Konpira-miya (or Kotohira-jinja) over southern Japan, which stand on the side of seashore or water front of river. The god worshipped at the shrines is originated from Kumbhīra, a holy vehicle of river goddess Gaṅgā in a form of crocodile. The Shintō gods of water or mud promise the fertility of land with maximum usages to Japanese
people who believe in gods of nature giving favours.  

Outline of Ancient Cultural Histories of Japan and India

The definition of periodization is discussed in conjunction with the Three Age Systems, though originally designed for the Western World. Also the periodization of cultural history is examined in different manners from general or political history. Emphasis is made on regional varieties, Eurasian synchronism and Chinese interaction, not always progressed in similar steps to the Western World. Further, revolutionary epochs are taken up for comparison. Finally, each chronological outline is viewed in line with cultural continuance.

Periodization

The issue of periodization is just like drowning in a vast ocean of facts without any foothold. The division of history into periods may be just a necessary hypothesis on tool of analysis. The history of archaeological periodization started from C. Thomsen’s classical theory of Three Age System, i.e. the Stone Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. The Stone Age is further divided into three stages, i.e. the Palaeolithic Age, the Mesolithic Age and the Neolithic Age. The periodization along with the economic development of society is also common, i.e. hunter-fisher-gatherer society, pastoral nomadic society, cattle breeding and agricultural society, and urban society. The development of society matches with the progress of political ruling system, i.e. chiefdom, oligarchy, kingdom and empire. It was V.G. Childe who linked the two methods of periodization by material and society with the theory of “Neolithic Revolution”, which concludes that the cattle breeding and/or agriculture may have
started in the Neolithic Age on top of the invention of polished stone tool and pottery making. However, as his theory was based on regional researches in Europe and West Asia, recent excavations in other peripheral areas have revealed unmatching cases with his definition of the Neolithic Age. For instance, the Jōmon culture possessed polished stone tool and pottery yet undeveloped cattle breeding and agriculture. The Jōmon people may have reached horticulture or slash-and-burn cultivation to the utmost level, besides the very latest stage when some reference materials of rice cultivation have been unearthed.

Most importantly, the discussion for periodization here is not for general or political history but for cultural history. Moreover, the periodization of cultural history will not be sufficient enough if it merely touched each field of cultural elements, e.g. religion, philosophy, literature, architecture and fine arts. The cultural history is required to examine the relationship between the culture and its adherents, to understand the culture as a product of each period, to consider the foreign influence through interchange of cultures, and finally to grasp the characteristics of each era as well as the consistent cultural traditions of relevant ethnic groups. Culture can be viewed from three basic aspects, i.e. the work force to create culture by individual and social activities, the cultural products, and the work force to enjoy culture as individual and social response.

In the general periodization of world history, two basic theories have been taken into consideration. The one is the linear progress based on Western history, which has gone through the Oriental civilization, the Graeco-Roman civilization, the Medieval Christian civilization, the Modern West European civilization and the Globalization of West European civilization. The other is the multiple zones of civilization as suggested by A.J. Toynbee. It is also effective for further clarification of characteristic
periodization to bear in mind the five revolutionary epochs in world history on the one hand, i.e. the evolution and birth of Homo sapiens, the agricultural revolution ("Neolithic Revolution"), the urban revolution, the spiritual revolution (Renaissance) and the scientific revolution; and the characteristics of civilizations on the other hand, i.e. "Major Civilization", "Peripheral Civilization" and "Interchange Sphere of Civilizations". Through the intercourse among civilizations, special attention is made to the contradictory aspects of cultural element, i.e. continuity versus change, and indigenous originality versus foreign influence through competition, collision, acculturation, amalgamation and assimilation. The invasion, migration or any other movements of the nomadic horse-riding races from central and north Asia may have been the important and strong impetus to synchronize the epochs for change in ancient India and Japan.

The Pre-historic Age, the Proto-historic Age, and the Historic Age are also a common method of periodization. The former two ages can be revealed mostly by archaeological methods and the last age can be formulated both through literary sources and archaeological remains. However, the transitional period between the Pre-historic Age (or the Proto-historic Age) and the Historic Age has often become controversial as some assumptions have been added with the references supported by some kinds of mythology which appear in ancient hymns, epics and chronicles, e.g. \textit{Rgveda}, \textit{Mahabharata}, \textit{Ramayana}, and \textit{Pur\=nas}; \textit{Kojiki} and \textit{Nihongi} (or \textit{Nihon-shoki}, Chronicles of Japan).

The utmost uniqueness in the Japanese history lies in a line of \textit{Ten-n\=o} unbroken for ages eternal. Ultimately under the dignity of \textit{Ten-n\=o} with religious, cultural and social background, Japanese have been united into one race, irrespective of the change of political powers form time to time. Naturally the geographical location of archipelago
split from the continent by sea has contributed to the unification of Japan as well as its isolation.

On the contrary, the Indian history had been moved by the rise and fall of numerous dynasties, i.e. the repetition of imperial unity or integration, foreign invasion or conquest, and disruption or disintegration. These historical movements in India largely owe the topographical contents of subcontinent, more than ten times wider than Japan, being directly influenced by the movements of surrounding areas, particularly West and Central Asia. Consequently, from time to time and region by region the political borders changed and renewed, as W.M. Dey grasps the historic-geographical zones by measuring the frequency of major border lines changed in sequence of political history. This caused certain gaps of cultural influences between the core area, primarily in North India, and the peripheral area, and sometimes led the rivalry between the North and the South, i.e. the Ganges Plain, the Deccan Plateau and the peninsula. Such regional division from the central zone created the diversification of rich cultures of India.

Japan had kept its regional differences just slightly among three areas, i.e. the northern area mainly of Hokkaido where the second-Jomon and brushed pattern pottery cultures continued even after the Yayoi culture; the central area of Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu where the central state became established and extended its influence to northern and southern islands in the course of time; and lastly the area of southern islands mainly of Okinawa (Ryukyu) Islands where the shell mound culture continued even after the Yayoi culture.

The ancient cultural history of Japan may have faced four epochs, i.e. the introduction of rice crop and bronze and iron implements in the Yayoi period in the fourth century B.C., the cultural change of Kofun (ancient tomb) where the arms and
weapons peculiar to nomadic horse-riding races were buried as funerary appendages in the middle Kofun period in the fifth century A.D., the introduction of Buddhism from Korea in the Asuka period in the sixth century A.D., and lastly the penetration of esoteric Buddhism through the interchange among Indian and Japanese priests in China during the Heian period in the ninth century A.D. Particularly the cultural change from Jōmon to Yayoi culture has raised the controversy about the continuance of an indigenous Jōmon culture to the cultural tradition of Japan thereafter.

Also the ancient cultural history of India seems to have encountered four epochs, i.e. the transformation of the Harappan-Vedic civilization in the second millennium B.C., the second urbanization in the sixth century B.C. with the emergence of Buddhism and Jainism, the penetration of the Hellenism in Gandhāra at the beginning of Christian era, and lastly the prosperity of the Golden Age under the Gupta Empire from the fourth century A.D. Both Jōmon and Harappan cultures stand in quite an important position to root back the indigenous cultural elements as the bottom layers of the two civilizations up to the present.

Eurasian Intercourse

The Japanese civilization has been formed through the interactions among the “Interchange Spheres of Civilizations”, i.e. the Sea of Japan, the East China Sea, the South China Sea, etc. In comparative study, due considerations to the contemporary histories among neighboring areas are quite essential. The dynastic chronologies in respective areas are listed as below.\textsuperscript{57}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Region} & \textbf{Chronology} \\
\hline
\textbf{West Asia} & \\
Media & 625 - 550 B.C. \\
Achaemenian Persia & 559 - 330 B.C. \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}
Macedonia (Alexandar’s Invasion) 334 - 323
Seleucid Syria 305 - 64
Bactria c. 250 - 139
Parthia 250 B.C. - A.D. 226
Sassanian Persia A.D. 226 - 642
Califate 571 - 1070

Central and North Asia

Scythian Culture the 7th century B.C.
Scytho-Siberian Culture the 4th century
Huns the 3rd century
Disruption of Huns to North and South A.D. 48
Westwards by Northern Huns the 2nd century
Hsienpi c. 93 - c. 319
Turkut (Eastern Turkut) 552 - 744
T’u-fan (Tibet) c. 629 to end of the 9th century
P’o-hai 698 - 926
Uighurs 744 - c. 848
Cipitan (Liao) c. 907 - 1125

China

Yin c. 1400 - 1027 B.C.
Chou c. 1027 - 256
Age of Spring and Autumn 770 - 403
Age of Warring States 403 - 221
Ch’in 221 - 210
Former Han 202 B.C. - A.D. 8
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Later Han</td>
<td>A.D. 25 - 220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Three Kingdoms (Wei, Wu and Shuhan)</td>
<td>222 - 263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of 6 Dynasties • 5 Nomads and 16 Kingdoms</td>
<td>265 - 589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern and Southern Courts (Northern Wei, Sung, Liang, etc)</td>
<td>420 - 589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sui</td>
<td>589 - 618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T’ang</td>
<td>618 - 907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of 5 Dynasties and 10 Kingdoms</td>
<td>907 - 960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Sung</td>
<td>960 - 1126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Korea**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buyō</td>
<td>the 1st century B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koguryō</td>
<td>c. 37 B.C. – A.D. 668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Three Hans (Ma-Han, Byôn-Han and Jin-Han)</td>
<td>the 3rd century A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Three Kingdoms (Koguryō, Paekche and Silla)</td>
<td>343 - 675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified Silla</td>
<td>675 - 935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kŏryŏ</td>
<td>918 - 1391</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accordingly, the dominant political powers in West Asia, China and India contemporary with relevant periods of ancient Japan are briefed as below.

The Jōmon period (up to c. 400 B.C): Achaemenian Persia, Chou and Magadha

The Yayoi period (up to c. A.D. 300): Sassanian Persia; Ch’in, Han and the Three Kingdoms; the Mauryas, the Sātavāhanas and the Kuśāṇas

The Kofun and Asuka periods (up to A.D. 645): Sassanian Persia, Califate; Northern Wei, Sui and T’ang; the Guptas, the Cālukyas and Harṣa

The Hakuhō and Nara periods (up to A.D. 794): Califate; T’ang; the Cālukyas, Harṣa, the Pallavas, the Pratihāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas

The Heian period (up to A.D. 1185): Califate; T’ang and Sung; the Pallavas, the
Origin of Japanese Culture

Since Buddhism has been widely and deeply penetrated into Japanese life and culture, no Japanese history can be rightly understood without Buddhist influence overall. However, it may be also the facts that various non-Buddhist elements flowed into Japan from every possible direction of region, some prior to and others contemporary with the introduction of Buddhism individually or jointly.

Ethnologically Japanese includes three types of racial characters. Namely, the hunter-fishers, originated from the forest and riverine area of Siberia as the oldest racial type, widely spread over the archipelago in the Jōmon period. The peasants, originated from central China and Southeast Asia, were engaged in wet-rice agriculture from the Yayoi period under the stable social structure based on kinship and landownershio, keeping mutual cooperation, peaceful order and cultural traditions. Lastly the nomadic horse-riders, originated from north-eastern Asia, landed in the archipelago in the middle Kofun period, with such aggressive characters as realist, utilitarian, liberalist and cosmopolitan.

In relation to Japanese root, the area in the vicinity of Bhutan and Sikkim holds quite a similar life style to Japanese, i.e. tea drinking habit, fermented soya beans also popular around Nagāland, northern Burma, Yunnan, Laos and Thailand; dry fish, rice-wine, roasted and powdered wheat, bamboo used for dwelling, food, tool and amulet, etc. In this context, India can share its origin partially with Japan through the cultural stream from the East.

The rice cultivation in the Jōmon period is one of the recent hot issues in Japanese archaeology. The stamped mark of rice hull has been discovered from a pot sherd...
unearthed at Minami-mizote in Okayama Prefecture, western Japan, which indicates the availability of rice crop in the latter half of the late Jōmon period about 3,500 years ago. There has been found the evidence of cultivation of barnyard grass, calabash, sesame in the early Jōmon period, which leads at least the incubation for crop by selecting several species among wild plants.

The Neolithic Age was originally defined as the age of polished stone tools in Europe, and later reinforced by the theory “Neolithic Revolution” that the Neolithic culture started at the beginning of agriculture and/or cattle breeding. However, in Japan the polished stone tools have been uncovered from the late Palaeolithic sites between c. 32,000 and 24,000 years ago. Furthermore a pot sherd has been unearthed at Odaira-Yamamoto, Aomori Prefecture, north-eastern Japan, dated to c. 16,500 years ago. As the oldest pottery in the world, this indicates the availability of pottery during the Palaeolithic Age. Thus the re-definition is suggestive that the Neolithic culture is more comprehensively to be the culture resulted from human countermeasure against the climate change from the Pleistocene to the Pleiocene and the Jōmon culture is one of East Asian versions of Neolithic cultures.61 Advanced from the Palaeolithic Age to the Jōmon period, the domiciliation created the secondary environment around settlements where a new flora called ‘copse’ was grown with various useful plants. For instance, timbers of chestnut have been excavated from Jōmon sites as a major material both for building and fuel uses. The Wood Circle, where big trees close to one meter in diameter were placed in circle with a large scale of piled earth, has been discovered during the Jōmon period.62

In the Yayoi period, the agriculture of wet-rice (*Japonica* of Temperate Zone) may have been most likely propagated from the Chang Hang-Hangze Hu Basin in central China through south-western Korea around the fifth century B.C. As refugees to avoid
warring conflicts, the inhabitants around the above basin may have landed on south-western Korea and pressured Korean people to migrate to Japan with the technique and tools for wet-rice cultivation.\textsuperscript{63}

The Yayoi culture was succeeded by the Kofun (ancient tomb) culture. During the middle Kofun period, presumably the horse-riding race originated from Northeast Asia, invaded northern Kyūshū, moved eastwards to Kinai in central Japan, subjugated local inhabitants and established the Yamato Dynasty, with a stronghold of the Imna in southern Korea. This hypothesis has been raised by N. Egami after his collective analyses of historical patterns both of agrarian races and nomadic horse-riding races all over Eurasia. This dynamic theory, so-called “Horse-riding race’s conquest of Japan”, has remained critical because of such a basic question that cultural change was not always accompanied by the migration or invasion of ethnical group but usually could be achieved by the introduction of information and materials from a certain number of visitors like monks, scholars and merchants. However, the pollen analysis at Oze-ga-hara, a mountainous wetland far north of Tokyo, indicates the colder temperature between A.D. c. 240 and 730. This climate change may have pressurized the nomadic races in northern Eurasia to move southwards, to invade China and to affect the increase of immigrants into the Japanese archipelago.\textsuperscript{64}

**Periodization of Cultural History of Japan**

The ancient Japanese civilization can be divided into three stages, i.e. the first stage as the cradle of civilization in pre-historic age, the second stage as the preparatory period of civilization in the emergence of the Yamato Dynasty, and the third stage as the formative period of civilization from Fujiwara-kyō, the first planned capital, onwards.\textsuperscript{65}

The social progress can be a broad basis for cultural periodization, i.e. the primitive
society for the Jōmon culture, the early ancient society for the Yayoi and the Kofun cultures, the *Ritsu-ryo* society for the Asuka, Hakuhō, Nara and early Heian cultures, and the aristocratic society for the late Heian culture. Accordingly, each period is subdivided as below.

**The Pre-Jōmon Culture** (the Palaeolithic Age)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Approximate Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Palaeolithic</td>
<td>c. 130,000 B.P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Palaeolithic</td>
<td>c. 35,000 B.P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Palaeolithic</td>
<td>c. 12,000 B.P.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Blade cutting technique developed under the influence of Korea and south China)

**Microlithic Culture**

(Originated from Siberia and north-eastern China)

**The Jōmon Culture**

(Neolithic culture with pottery and polished stone tools, but hunting, fishing, gathering and later horticulture)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Approximate Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dawn Stage</td>
<td>c. 10000 - 7500 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earliest Stage</td>
<td>- 4200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Stage</td>
<td>- 3500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Stage</td>
<td>- 2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Stage</td>
<td>- 1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latest Stage</td>
<td>- 400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Yayoi Culture**

(Agrarian culture by rice as staple food with bronze and iron implements)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Approximate Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Stage (the first half; started in western Japan)</td>
<td>c. 400 - 200 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Stage (the latter half)</td>
<td>- 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Stage (the first half)</td>
<td>(to the beginning of Christian era)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Middle Stage (the latter half) - A.D. 100
Late Stage (the first half) - 200
Late Stage (the latter half; continued in eastern Japan at latest) - A.D. 300

The Kofun Culture

Early Stage A.D. c. 300 - 400

(Zenpō-kōen-fun, keyhole-shaped tomb, flourished together with
 Zenpō-kahō-fun, square tomb both on front and rear sides)

Middle Stage - 500
(Mass of tombs declined as Zenpō-kōen-fun limited to large size and
the middle and small sizes to scallop, round and square types)

Late Stage - 650
(Zenpō-kōen-fun gradually faded away and replaced with round type, and
the collective small tomb areas expanded)

The Asuka Culture 538 (or 552) - 645
(Following the official introduction of Buddhism from Korea,
the intensive introduction of Chinese culture started)

The Hakuhō Culture - 710
(Following the Taika Reform, Chinese-style state by Ritsu-ryō system
under formation)

The Nara (Tempyō) Culture - 794
(Following the shift of new capital to Heijō-kyō in Nara, the centralized
state established under the great influence of T’ang culture)

The Early Heian Culture (Kōnin-Jōgan Culture) - 897
(Following the shift of new capital to Heian-kyō in Kyoto,
aristocratic culture under progress)
The Late Heian Culture (Fujiwara Culture) - A.D. 1185

(Aristocratic culture matured to create the national culture under the regental control of Fujiwara clan)

Two methods are taken up for periodization, i.e. till the Kofun culture based on archaeological chronology mostly in pre-historic period, and from the Asuka culture onwards based on the regnal years of emperors or empresses in historic period. The late stage of Kofun culture and the Asuka culture are overlapped as the Kofun tradition continued till the Asuka culture.

Chronology of Cultural History of Japan

Below listed is the chronological outline of ancient cultural history of Japan mostly with definite datings from the Christian era, adding political, economic and social epochs.  

- c. 400 B.C. Introduction of rice cultivation and bronze and iron implements 
- A.D. 57 King of Wo sent envoy to the Later Han. 
- 239 Himiko, Queen of Yamatai state, sent envoy to the Northern Wei. 
- 285 The Analects of Confucius and Thousand Character Classic introduced from Paekche. 
- c. 350 Unification of major Japan by the Yamato Dynasty. 
- 413 - 478 Five kings of Wo (Yamato) sent envoys to China. 
- 538 Official introduction of Buddhism by Paekche (or in 552). 
- 588 Hōkō-ji (Asuka-dera) started building in Asuka as the first Buddhist temple in Japan (completed in 596). 
- 593 Shitenno-ji built in Naniwa (modern Osaka). 
- 593 - 622 Regency by Prince Shōtoku. 
- 607 Envoy sent to Sui, Hōryū-ji built, north-west of Asuka.
630 Envoy sent to T’ang

645 Great Reform of Taika, Imperial edict promulgated to prosper Buddhism

694 New capital of Fujiwara-kyō, north of Asuka

701 Taihō Ritsu-ryō promulgated

708 Japanese coin, Wadō-kaichin, minted

(the first local coin, Fuhon-sen, minted in the late seventh century A.D)

710 New capital of Heijō-kyō (Nara), north of Fujiwara-kyō

712 Kojiki (Record of Ancient Matters) completed

720 Nihonki (Chronicles of Japan) completed

727 P’o-hai envoy reached Japan.

736 Bodhisena, Indian priest, arrived via China.

741 Construction of provincial Buddhist temples (Kokubun-ji) ordered

752 The consecration ceremony of Vairocana Buddha of Tōdai-ji in Nara solemnized by Bodhisena

756 Shōsō-in constructed to store imperial treasures, etc.

759 Man’yō-shū (anthology of poems by phonetic use of Chinese characters) compiled

770 Hyakuman-tō (Millions of miniature stūpas) allotted (Dhārani sūtra contained in the stūpa as the oldest extant printing in the world)

794 New capital of Heian-kyō (Kyoto), far north of Nara

797 Shoku-Nihongi (the Second Chronicles of Japan) completed,
followed by Nihon-kōki (in 840) and Shoku-Nihon-kōki (in 869)

805 Saichō returned from China to start Tendai (Tien-tai) sect of esoteric Buddhism in Enryaku-ji of Mt. Hiei, north of Kyoto.

806 Kūkai returned from China to start Shingon sect of esoteric Buddhism at
Kongō-buji of Mt. Kōya, far south of Osaka, and Tō-ji, Kyoto.

Ennin began Amida (Amitābha) worship at Mt. Hiei.

Plan to send envoy to T’ang cancelled

Kokin-waka-shū (Collection of Early and Modern Times) compiled as the first imperial anthology of poems in Japanese syllabary

Last P’o-hai embassy (ceasing of official relations with the continent)

Tosa-Nikki (Tosa Journal) composed by Ki-no-Tsurayuki as travel journal in Japanese syllabary

Kōya started Nenbutsu sect, chanting the Buddha to pray for rebirth in paradise.

Fujiwara-no-Saneyori appointed Kanpaku (regent for adult emperor), the beginning of full regency period till 1068

Printed edition of Tripitaka brought from China

Nairan (private inspection for emperor) received by Fujiwara-no-Michinaga, the peak of Fujiwara power till his death in 1028

c. 1002 Makura-no-sōshi (Pillow Book) completed by Sei-Shōnagon, the prose of noble life written by lady writer

c. 1020 Genji-monogatari (Tale of Genji) by Murasaki-Shikibu, the masterpiece of Japanese romance written by woman novelist

The first year of Mappō (latter days of the Law), after two thousand years from Śākyamuni’s nirvāṇa counted doctrinally

Regent Fujiwara-no-Yorimichi converted his villa into Buddhist temple, Byōdō-in, to construct Hō-ō-dō (Phoenix Hall).

1060’s Ō-kagami (Great Mirror, a history of Fujiwara clan), Konjaku-monogatari-shū (Collection of Tales of Now and Past, from India, China and Japan)
Emperor Shirakawa abdicated and opened the senior retired emperor’s office. From there he dominated the court till his death in A.D. 1129 (*Insei administration*).

**1090’s**  *Genji-monogatari Emaki* (Picture Scroll of the Tale of Genji)

**1126** Golden Hall of Chūson-ji in Hiraizumi, north-eastern Japan, dedicated

**1140** *Shigi-san Engi Emaki Chōjū-giga-no-maki* (Picture Scroll of the Volume of Caricature with Birds and Animals in the History of Mt. Shigi, north-west of Asuka)

**1167** Taira-no-Kiyomori appointed Chancellor (*Dajō-daijin*), the first warrior to become senior noble (*kugyō*), the scrolls of Buddhist *sūtras* offered by him to Itsukushima-jinja in Hiroshima, western Japan (*Heike-nōkyō*).

**1175** Hōnen preached the Pure Land teaching, leading to the formation of the first sect of popular Buddhism, Jōdo (Pure Land) Sect.

**1192** Minamoto-no Yoritomo started Bakufu (administrative headquarters) of warrior government in Kamakura, eastern Japan - the beginning of Medieval Age.

**Origin of Indian Culture**

Certain proto-Indian elements have been revealed both from archaeologcal and ethnological researches for the origin of the Indian civilization. In the course of periods, various cultures have been diffused and accumulated in the peripheral areas. The Austro-Asian tribal culture from north-east has been closely associated with tribal cultures like Santāls, Mundās and Oraons in central India. The folk paintings decorated on house floors and walls, village gods, ceremonies related to the dead and ancestors remind some Japanese customs of *Karasu-yobawari* to call out crows to invite soul of...
the dead and Segaki Kanchō (abhiseka) to pacify starving devils by erecting stone or wooden pillars for prayer. The ancient traditions may have been still preserved in the native tribal culture like “timeless and ageless” terracotta figurines of Mother Goddess and stone and metal divine images.69

The Harappan culture may have contained various proto-Indian cultural elements to be succeeded by the Hindu culture. The Harappan remains indicate the cultural continuation even up to the present as shown below.

1. Faith and ritual: the Great Bath with advanced drainage system for water ablutions at Mohenjo-daro, the brick-lined sacrificial pit and fire altars at Kālībangan; the Pipal pattern painted at potteries as well as at seal impressions for tree worship, the female terracotta figurines as Mother Goddess for fertility cult, the terracotta figurines in Yogic āsanas at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, the Svastika motif drawn on seals and copper plates as the symbol of fortune, other motifs or patterns like endless-knot motif, intersecting circle, circle and wavy line, fish-scale, hatched triangle, checker-board and circle-and-dot drawn on copper plates and potteries as symbol of protection; in association with Śiva cult and female deity with plants coming out from vagina, the bull engraved in seals for the sacred vehicle of Śiva, the terracotta cake at Kālībangan engraving a horned deity and an animal pulled by a man with a rope, conical linga-like stone, linga-and-yoni shaped stone, perforated stone, the copper plate at Mohenjo-daro drawing the image with horn and tail holding a bow in hand, the terracotta tablet at Harappa depicting Śiva-like seated figure and a person aiming to kill a buffalo probably for sacrifice, the seal impression at Mohenjo-daro depicting an ithyphallic seated figure surrounded by animals as the lord of beasts (Paśupati) for Śiva with directional deities, other seal impression at Mohenjo-daro depicting a horned deity sitting in the centre of twin pipal branches, a kneeling devotee, an
animal for sacrifice and seven horned figures in association with the tree worship by
sacrifice and the seven Mother Goddesses (Saptamātrikā) popular in south India, and
one more seal impression at Mohenjo-daro depicting a deity on a pipal tree being
with a tiger looking back with a similarity to the Yakṣī engraved with bass-relief on
the east gate of Sānchī stūpa No. 1.

2. Constructions: the ‘English bond’ method of brick construction, and the flooring by
hard-baked clay nodules scattered with charcoals and clay cooking ovens (*tandūr*)
both at Kālībangan.

3. Agriculture and transport: the ploughed field with crisscross pattern of furrows at
Kālībangan, a terracotta model of plough at Banāwalī, a terracotta model of bullock-
cart at Kālībangan, a seal impression at Mohenjo-daro depicting a boat of cabin.

4. Costume and ornament: the terracotta female figurines at Nausharo and Mehrgarh
with a red colour painting to the central parting line of hair with a similarity to the
vermilion applied even today by married Hindu women at the same location
(*māṅga*), a gold hollow cone at Mohenjo-daro used even now on woman’s head in
Rājasthān and Haryana (*chauk*), silver or gold disc-beads perforated along diameter at
Kunal and Lothal for necklaces, spiral bangles at Kunal and worn by ‘Dancing Girl’
at Mohenjo-daro, and an ivory comb with teeth on both sides at Mohenjo-daro.

5. Daily life and amusement: a copper three-in-one toiletry gadget at Harappā,
a terracotta model of three-legged circular *pātā* for rolling bread at Alamgirpur,
a terracotta feeding cup with a shape of cow head at Kālībangan, a terracotta model of
writing tablet (*takhtīs*) at Mohenjo-daro, terracotta gamesmen at Lothal, and
terracotta cubic dices with 1 - 6 blind holes on respective faces at Mahenjo-daro.

6. Folk tale: the motifs painted on potteries at Lothal with a similarity to the tales of
Pañchatantra, the Thirsty Crow and the Cunning Fox.
Even the discipline of Hindu life for non-killing and non-violence can be assumed from the data that very few weapons have been uncovered from Harappan sites. Thus, the Harappan culture can be regarded as the prototype of the Hindu culture.\textsuperscript{70}

**Periodization of Cultural History of India**

The periodization seems not to be well-established in the cultural history of India. However, some hints may be obtained from general or political history.

S.A. Husain divides the cultural progress in association with philosophy or religion, i.e. the fountainhead in the Indus Valley Culture (3250 - 2000 B.C), the two streams by the Dravidian Culture and the Vedic Culture (2000 - 1000 B.C), the first confluence by the Vedic Hindu Culture (1000 - 600 B.C), the great epics by the philosophies of Buddhism and Jainism (600 - 200 B.C), the second confluence by the Purānic Hindu Culture (A.D. 200 - 700), and the new winds and currents by Islam in the south, Advaita, Bhakti and Rājput Culture (A.D. 700 - 1000).\textsuperscript{71}

R. Thapar suggests the general periodization through social progress, i.e. the hunter-gatherers, pastoralists and early farmers, the first urbanization in Indus Plain and north-west India, the megalithic settlements in the peninsula, the chiefships and kingships (1200 - 600 B.C), the second urbanization and state formation in Gangā Plain (c. 600 - 400 B.C), the Mauryan state (c. 400 - 200 B.C), the rise of mercantile community and cross-cultural contacts (c. 200 B.C. - A.D. 300), the creation of Sanskritic cultures (c. A.D. 300 - 700), and the distributive political economies and regional cultures (c. A.D. 700 - 1300).\textsuperscript{72}

A.L. Basham points out the usefulness of general periodization also for cultural history, i.e. the Pre-historic period (c. 3000 - 1550 B.C), the Proto-historic Vedic period (c. 1500 - 500 B.C), the Buddhist period (c. 563 - 325 B.C), the Mauryan period (c. 322 -
183 B.C.), the Age of invasions (c. 190 B.C. - A.D. 388), the Gupta period (A.D. 320 - 647) and the medieval dynasties of North India (A.D. 712 onwards) and of the peninsula (c. A.D. 300 onwards).73

R. Grouset classifies the artistic history, i.e. the origin of Indian civilization, the Vedic India, the legend of the Buddha, the earliest Buddhist art, the Greek Buddhist art, Gupta art and the religious revolution by Hinduism and the Hindu art.74

The History and Culture of the Indian People, edited by R.C. Majumdar, presents a fine model for periodization, covering up periods and regions all round, i.e. the Vedic Age (the pre-historic age), the Age of Imperial Unity (Magadha, the Maurya Empire, the Kuśāñas, the Sātavāhanas, etc), the Classical Age (the Gupta Empire, the Cālukyas, etc), and the Age of Imperial Kanauj (the Rāstrakūṭa Empire, the Pratihāra Empire, the Pālas, etc). At the same time, each age describes relevant fields of language and literature, political theory and administrative system, law and legal institutions, religion and philosophy, art, social conditions, education and economic life.75

The Indian history holds the regional complexity, being fluctuated through periods, and this causes the difficulty to define a linear periodization like Japanese history. In order to break through this minute and intricate periodization, M.A. Konishi draws the dynastic time table in ancient India broadly under five regional divisions of West, North, East, Central and South, based on the original idea by A.J. Raikal. The West region covers the Indus Plain, Rājasthān and Gujārāt. The North region covers Mālwā, Bundelkhand and the upper and middle Gaṅgā Plains. The East region covers the lower Gaṅgā Plain and Orissā. The Central region covers Mahārāṣṭra and Deccan. And the South region covers Āṇdhra, Kārnātaka, Tamil Nādu and Kēralā.76

The pre-historic and proto-historic periodizations have been archaeologically divided under the Three Age System rather linearly, though in fact with regional
variations, as listed below.77

The Stone Age

- Lower Palaeolithic culture c. half-a-million to 50,000 B.P.
- Middle Palaeolithic culture c. 40,000 - 17000 B.P.
- Upper Palaeolithic culture c. 16,000 - 9000 B.P.
- Mesolithic culture c. 10000 B.C. onwards
- Neolithic culture c. 7000 B.C. onwards

The Copper and Bronze Age

- Early Harappan culture c. 3500 - 2800 B.C.
- Mature Harappan culture c. 2700 - 2100 B.C.
- Late Harappan culture c. 2000 - 1300 B.C.
- Copper Hoards culture the second millennium B.C.
- Ochre-coloured Ware (OCW) culture c. 2600 - 1200 B.C.
- Black-and-Red Ware (BRW) culture the last part of the second millennium B.C.
- Chalcolithic regional cultures the first millennium B.C.

The Iron Age

- Painted Grey Ware (PGW) culture c. 900 - 500 B.C.
- Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) culture c. 600 - 100 B.C.
- Megalithic culture in Deccan and South India c. 1000 B.C. - A.D. 100

Early Historic Age

A. Uesugi attempts to subdivide the chronology in North India into eight periods in five areas by types of earthenwares, i.e. the upper Gaṅgā Plain, the upper-middle Gaṅgā Plain, the middle Gaṅgā Plain, the lower-middle Gaṅgā Plain and the southern skirt of Himālayas, by Bara culture, Copper Hoards and OCW, BRW and Black Slipped Ware, PGW, NBPW and Red Ware.78
Replacing the Āryan invasion theory, the argument whether the Harappan culture overlapped the Ṛgvedic culture has become a recent hot issue. For instance, B.B. Lal opines that the Ṛgvedic people spread over GaṅgāYamunā Doab and Indus Plain prior to 2000 B.C., carrying the Indus-Sarasvatī civilization with cultural continuance up to the present.79 M.K. Dhavalikar attempts to identify the Late Harappans as the Ṛgvedic Āryans.80 Some scholars suggest that the Indus civilization or the Sindhu-Sarasvatī civilization is same as the Vedic civilization.81 However, D.K. Chakrabarti cautions about the date of Ṛgveda just on a general consensus level and illogical mixing comparative philology with archaeology.82 Yet, the concept of Āryans may be still effective as a classification of Indo-European linguistic group. On the other hand, the cultural continuity from the Indus civilization onwards is most likely evidenced by various artifacts uncovered so far. However, one should avoid examining the chronology based on the literary sources without established date yet with archaeological artifacts as supporting evidence. Anyway, at present there are two opposite theories about the continuance of the Harappan culture, i.e. the one as pre-Vedic or non-Vedic and the other as a part of the Vedic civilization. Accordingly, it may be an appropriate way for the cultural periodization to describe the Harappan culture as the Vedic-Harappan culture in parallel until the archaeological evidences will synchronize more closely with the literary sources in the future.

In conclusion, the below listed is a tentative idea of periodization for the ancient cultural history of India on the basis of the Three Age System.

**The Pre-Historic Period**

*During the Stone Age:* —

Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic cultures c. 500,000 B.P. onwards

*At the beginning of the Copper and Bronze Age:* —
Early Vedic-Harappan culture  
c. 3500 - 2800 B.C.

The Proto-Historic Period

Mature Harappan culture (under the first urbanization)  
c. 2700 - 2100 B.C.

Late Harappan culture, Copper Hoards, OCW, BRW, etc.  
c. 2000 - 1000 B.C.

At the beginning of the Iron Age: —

Cultures of PGW, NBPW, etc. in North India  
c. 1000 B.C. onwards

Megalithic culture in Deccan and South India  
c. 1000 B.C. onwards

The Historic Period

Early historic culture
(under the state formation and the second urbanization)  
c. 800 - 400 B.C.

Mauryan culture  
c. 400 - 200 B.C.

Hellenic culture  
c. 200 B.C. - A.D. 300

Gupta culture  
A.D. c. 300 - 700

Early medieval culture  
A.D. c. 700 onwards

Chronology of Cultural History of India

The below listed is the selected chronology of the ancient cultural history of India mostly in the historic periods, adding political, economic and social epochs.\(^{83}\)

(c. = circa, C. = century)

4\(^{th}\) - 3\(^{rd}\) millennium B.C.  The Vedic-Harappan cultures flourished.

8\(^{th}\) C.  Urbanization in the Gangā Plain

580  Birth of Kapila, founder of Sāṅkhya system

c. 566 - 486  Gautama Buddha (Śākyamuni) (or 463 – 383, etc.)

c. 540 - 468  Mahāvīra

5\(^{th}\) C.  \textit{Sulvasūtras} set out the knowledge of measurement and geometry.
Panini systematized the rules governing Sanskrit to compose *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.  

c. 477  The first Buddhist council in Rājagṛha  

c. 400  *Tripiṭaka* was composed.  

c. 377  The second Buddhist council in Vaiśāli  

350  *Arthatāstra* of Kauṭilya in original form  

3rd C.  Sārnath *stūpa* in original form, First Ajantā caves, *Bhakti* in early form,  
Independent development of astronomy and medicine,  
Indian numerals found in the inscriptions of Aśoka  

244  The third Buddhist council in Pāṭaliputra  

c. 200 B.C. - A.D. 250  Developing trade with Roman Empire  

c. 200  Bhāgavatism (Krṣṇa cult) emerged.  

c. 200  *Caityas* and *vihāras* began to be built in north-western Deccan.  

2nd C.  *Mahābhāṣya* of Patanjali, *Brahma-sūtra* of Bādarāyana compiled,  
Āpastamba’s writings on practical geometry or the construction of  
altars, Discovery of zero, Invention of steel making  

c. 100  Basic framework of *Manu-smṛti* formulated  

c. 50 B.C. - A.D. 50  Peak of trade with Roman Empire (e.g., in Arikamedu)  

1st C.  Final composition of *Rāmāyaṇa*  
A.D. c. 10  Karle rock-cut temple  

27 - 28  Indian missions sent to Roman Emperor Augustus  
to 50  Railing and gates elaborated Sāncḥī *stūpa* No.1,  
*Jātaka* and *Bhagavad-gītā* compiled  

50  Tamil Literary Arts Academy in Madura  

1st C.  Buddhists practised idol worship (panel image of the Buddha),  
Discovery of monsoon

- 42 -
1st - 5th C. Period of Ajantā paintings

C. 100 Ivory plaques of Bagram, Afghānistān

C. 100 - 200 Manu-smṛti in final form

110 - 120 Indian missions sent to Roman Emperor Trajan

150 The fourth Buddhist council in Kāśmir - the beginning of the Mahāyāna

150 - 200 Aśvaghoṣa and Māṭṛceta, Buddhist theologians under the Kuśāṇas,

Great Stūpa of Kaṇiṣṭha

Early C. Mathurā school of art flourished, Trade between South India and Roman Empire, especially Egypt, prospered.

2nd C. Trade between North-West India and the eastern part of Roman Empire flourished under the Kuśāṇas, Suśruta and Caraka on medical treatment

2nd - 3rd C. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa most prospered under the Ikūṣvākus,

Gandhāra and Āṇdhra Buddhist arts flourished.

c.180 - 240 Nāgārjuna, Mahāyānan philosopher

3rd C. Kāmasūtra of Vatsyāyana, Increasing trade indicated by numerous Roman and Śatavāhana coins in Deccan

3rd - 4th C. Kuśāṇa coins, inscriptions and terracottas found in central Asia,

Kuśāṇa palace excavated at Toprak-Kala in Khorezm

300 - 600 Sangam literatures completed

310 - 390 Maitreya and Asaṅga, Mahāyānan philosophers

399 - 414 Fa-hien, Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, visited India.

4th C. Golden Age of Sanskrit literature, Sanskrit became the official language in the peninsula, Mahābhārata finally compiled, Iron pillar set up at Mehrauli in Delhi, Mahābodhi temple of Bodh Gayā, Mahā-chaitya stūpa of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa

- 43 -
c. 400  
Hindu stone temple in Sānchī, Šākuntalā of Kālidāsa,  
Āyurveda composed  

400 - 440  
Foundation of Buddhist structural complex in Nālandā  

448  
A Gupta inscription from Allāhābād district suggests the knowledge of  
decimal system.  

450- 500  
Āryabhatiya of Āryabhata and Brihatsaṁhitā of Varāhamihara,  
astronomer-mathematicians  

5th C.  
Formation of Hinduism  

510  
The first inscriptional evidence of satī  

550  
The Eastern Roman Empire learnt from Chinese the art of growing silk  
which adversely affected Indian trade.  

6th C.  
Origin and spread of Tāntrism open to both women and Śūdras,  
Bhartṛhari, lyricist of erotic poetry  

c. 600  
Last Ajantā painting, Bhakti movement in south India  

600 - 900  
Decline of trade suggested by the absence of gold coins  

629 - 645  
Yuan Chwang (Hsuan Tsang), Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, visited India.  

640 - 690  
Gaudapāda, Vedānta philosopher  

650  
Harṣacharita of Bānabhatta  

650 - 675  
Hindu literatures and arts flourished.  

670  
Māmallapuram rock-cut temples  

673 - 685  
I-tsing, Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, visited India via southern sea route.  

675 - 700  
Development of Vedānta philosophy  

7th C.  
Every region began to have its own script.  

Bhakti cult spread throughout the country.  

7th - 8th C.  
In sculpture and temple architecture, every region came to evolve its
own style.
c. 700 Amaru, lyricist of erotic poetry
725 - 750 Restart of rock-cut in Ellora caves
c. 770 Padmasambhava entered in T’u-fan - the beginning of Tibetan Buddhism.
c. 775 Kailâśa rock-cut temple in Ellora
800 - 825 Esoteric Buddhism and its arts flourished under the Pālas.
9th C. Śāṅkara wrote a commentary on Brahma-sūtra.
925 - 950 Karpūramaṇjarī (drama) of Rājaśekhara, Abhinavagupta, prosodist-philosopher of Śaiva cult
c. 950 - 1050 Khajurāho temples
c. 1000 Cola temple in Tanjore
1030 Albîrûnî in India, the writer of Tahqīq-i-Hind
1031 Jain temple at Mt. Abū
c. 1075 Rāmānuja, a Vaiśnava philosopher
1148 Kalhana wrote the Rājatarangini
1150 Bhāskarāchārya, mathematician and writer of Lilavatī
1192 Prthvirāja Cāhamāna was defeated by Muhammad of Ghūrī at the second battle of Tarāin.

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