

[Hindu Timeline Introduction](#)

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A History of India and Hindu Dharma

Much of what India and Hinduism are today can be understood by examining their origins and history. Here is a humble chronology that tells the story of the sages, kings, outside invaders and inside reformers who contributed to the world's oldest living civilization and largest modern-day democracy. Remarkably, Hindu India has been home to one-fourth of the human race since the dawn of recorded time. Its story, summarized here, is crucial to human history.

The emphasis on spirituality in India's thought and history is unparalleled in human experience. The king in his court, the sage on his hill and the farmer in one of Bharat's 700,000 villages each pursues his dharma with a common ultimate purpose: spiritual enlightenment. This perspective is the source of Hinduism's resilience in the face of competing faiths and conquering armies. No other nation has faced so many invaders and endured. These invasions have brought the races of the world to a subcontinent one-third the size of the United States. There are many feats of which the ancient Hindus could be proud, such as the invention of the decimal system of numbers, philosophy, linguistics, surgery, city planning and statecraft. And most useful to us in this particular timeline: their skill in astronomy.

Dates in Hindu history after Buddha are subject to little dispute, while dates before Buddha have been decided as much by current opinion and politics as by scientific evidence. An overwhelming tendency of Western scholarship has been to deny the great antiquity of Hinduism.

Indian scholar S.B. Roy points out that the commonly accepted chronology of German linguist Max Muller (1823-1900) is based solely "on the ghost story of Kathasaritasagara." Historian Klaus K. Klostermaier agrees: "The chronology

provided by Max Muller and accepted uncritically by most Western scholars is based on very shaky ground indeed." While making crucial historical contributions in bringing India's wisdom to the West, Muller admitted his covert intention to undermine Hinduism. In a letter to his wife in 1886 he wrote: "The translation of the Veda will hereafter tell to a great extent on the fate of India and on the growth of millions of souls in that country. It is the root of their religion, and to show them what the root is, I feel sure, is the only way of uprooting all that has sprung from it during the last 3,000 years."

Contemporary researchers, such as Dr. B.G. Siddharth of B.M. Birla Science Centre, Dr. S.B. Roy, Professor Subhash Kak, Dr. N.R. Waradpande, Bhagwan Singh and Dr. David Frawley, Vedacharya, have developed a more accurate picture of ancient India, assembling new chronologies based on a highly reliable method: dating scriptural references by their relationship to the known precession of the equinoxes. Earth's axis of rotation "wobbles," causing constellations, as viewed from Earth, to drift at a constant rate and along a predictable course over a 25,000-year cycle. For example, a Rig Vedic verse observing winter solstice at Aries can be correlated to around 6500 bce. Frawley states, "Precessional changes are the hallmark of Hindu astronomy. We cannot ignore them in ancient texts just because they give us dates too early for our conventional view of human history." Besides astronomical references from scripture, there is much to support their dates, such as carbon-14 dating, the discovery of Indus-Sarasvati Valley cities and the recent locating of the Sarasvati River, a prominent landmark of Vedic writings.

Much of the dating in this timeline prior to 600 bce derives from the work of Dr. S.B. Roy (Chronological Framework of Indian Protohistory-The Lower Limit, published in The Journal of the Baroda Oriental Institute, March-June 1983) and that of David Frawley Ph.D. (Gods, Sages and Kings). For technical enhancements to the timeline we depended on Prof. Shiva G. Bajpai PhD., Director of Asian Studies at California State University, who co-authored "A Historical Atlas of South Asia" with Prof. Joseph E. Schwartzberg and Dr. Raj B. Mathur.

Max Muller is the primary evangelist of another, more invidious, dogma imposed on Hindu history: the "Aryan invasion" theory. Originally a Vedic term meaning "noble," then applied to the parent-language of Greek, Sanskrit, Latin and German, the term Aryan soon referred to those who spoke it, a supposed race of light-skinned Aryans. The idea of a parent race caught the imagination of 18th and 19th century European Christian scholars, who hypothesized elaborate Aryan migrations from Central Asia, west to Europe, south to India (ca 1500 bce) and east

to China-conquering local primitive peoples and founding the world's great civilizations. This theory states that the Vedas, the heart and core of Sanatana Dharma, were brought to India by these outsiders and not composed in India.

Although lacking supporting scientific evidence, this theory, and the alleged Aryan-Dravidian racial split, was accepted and promulgated as fact for three main reasons. It provided a convenient precedent for Christian British subjugation of India. It reconciled ancient Indian civilization and religious scripture with the 4000 bce Biblical date of Creation. It created division and conflict between the peoples of India, making them vulnerable to conversion by Christian missionaries.

Scholars today of both East and West believe the Rig Veda people who called themselves Aryan were indigenous to India, and there never was an Aryan invasion. The languages of India have been shown to share common ancestry in ancient Sanskrit and Tamil. Even these two apparently unrelated languages, according to current "super-family" research, have a common origin: an ancient language dubbed Nostratic.

Rewriting History

TAKING SIDES:

The Old Model

Credits India's culture to foreign invaders. Hypothesis, first proposed by German Max Muller (1823-1900), is still accepted in most historical textbooks. Supporters: Sir William Jones, Thomas Young, Joseph de Goubinau, Dwight Witney, Sir Mortimer Wheeler, A.L. Basham.

The New Model

Offers astrological and archeological evidence to discredit invasion theory, pushes Indian history back several thousand years. Supporters: B.G. Tilak, P.C.

Sengupta, S.B. Roy, Pargiter, Jagat Pati Joshi, Dikshit, K.N. Shastri, Sri Aurobindo, Hermann Jacobi, S.R. Rao, Dayananda Saraswati, Subash Kak, David Frawley, B.G. Sidharth, and others.

WHAT IS CLAIMED?

The Old Model

Conquering legions of blue-eyed, white "Aryans" from Eastern Russia invaded North India on horseback around 1500bce and ultimately displaced most of India's unsophisticated Dravidian tribals. They brought civilization and the refined Sanskrit language into India, built the expansive Indus Valley complex, wrote the Vedas and other sacred texts. The Sarasvati River, prominent in the Vedas, is mythical, or lies outside of India somewhere. Claims no astronomical references are found in the Rig Veda.

The New Model

There was no invasion at all. India's native peoples founded the Indus/Sarasvati River civilization, developed Sanskrit and wrote all her ancient texts. European dates are all wrong. Rig Veda verses belie the old chronology (VI.51.14-15 mentions the winter solstice occurs when the sun rises in Revati nakshatra, only possible at 6,000bce, long before the alleged invasion.) Carbon dating confirms horses in Gujarat at 2,400bce, contradicting old model claim Aryans must have brought them. NASA satellite photos prove Sarasvati River basin is real, not a myth. Fire altars excavated at Kali Bangan in Rajasthan support existence of Rig Veda culture at 2,700 bce. Kunal, a new site in Haryana, shows use of writing and silver craft in pre-Harappan India, 6-7,000bce.

WHAT IT MEANS?

The Old Model

India's native peoples were primitive and her foundational culture and religion were imported. All the good stuff came from Eastern Europe, of course, and the rest is a vestige of conquered dark-skinned aboriginals. The Vedas are, at most, 3,500 years old.

The New Model

India's history goes back much farther than anyone knew, perhaps 10,000 years. India need not be indebted to others for her rich and ancient traditions. The Vedic texts, thought to be part mythology, are being vindicated by scientific evidence to be the world's oldest factual account of human experience.