

### **Textiles in Ancient India**

The use of textiles by the Ancient Indian civilization was very important because it gave people a much more modern way to dress in Ancient times that changed the course of India at the time. Ancient India existed from 2600 BCE and lasted until around 550 CE. During the time textiles were being invented, Ancient India was ruled by empires so they had one overall ruler. A big part of Ancient India was also its religions, Hinduism and Buddhism were the most commonly practiced ones. The place that was formerly Ancient India is now Pakistan, which is right next to modern day India. A lot of other important inventions came from Ancient India like medicine, math, literature, and plumbing.

The development of textiles by the Ancient Indians began around 4000 BC. At the time India was just starting to use agriculture as a resource. Agriculture was brought to Indian civilization by the Indus River civilization. The process of inventing textiles all started with Ancient Indians harvesting cotton. They began to learn that they could sew this cotton into thread, which could be made into fabrics. Sage Gritsmad was known for creating one of the first cloths of Ancient India around 4000 B.C. (Knapp). This was obviously a very significant invention because they all needed comfortable clothing to keep them ready for all kinds of weather. The civilians of Ancient India found that with a wooden bobbin they could turn their cottons into thread. India developed massively from this. An example would be that their participation in trading increased. Another reason is because cotton clothing is something that is

still very common to this day, so imagine how life-changing this was in 4000 BC. (Indian Textiles: Nature and Making) India became known as having the highest quality and most sought-after fabrics by the rest of the world.

The textiles of Ancient India advanced their civilization ahead of the others. Everyone now and in Ancient times wanted fabrics for clothes. This gave India a lead in trading with other countries. This made India a much more powerful civilization because they had something that other countries wanted. Not to mention that India had much easier access to clothes. India's trading was the closest to the Southeast Asia regions (Indian Textiles: Trade and Production). This means that the regions that India traded the most with was Southeast Asia, a big reason for this is because they are very close in proximity. As the fabrics started gaining popularity, they eventually made their way over to Europe. Countries were trading silver and gold for the great cotton textiles of Ancient India. Something that set India's fabrics apart from others was their distinct colors. They used natural things such as minerals and plants to get very pigmented threads, which was India's signature look for their textiles at the time. They also used a layering method to mix colors to get colors such as green. Ancient India was most well-known for their red and purple pigments in fabrics. Their fabrics were also made to make more than just clothing, like tapestries. Having textiles and clothing in Ancient India was a massive advantage. For example, if it was cold outside then they would have something comfortable to put on, unlike a lot of other civilizations at the same time. Of course other civilizations had their own versions of clothing but it wasn't near as comfortable as the Ancient Indians clothing. It gave people a new job as well and something to do with their time, that would in the end benefit them and their whole civilization. There were approximately 120,000 people working in the textile line of work in Ancient India. The invention of textiles didn't really come with many downsides and, in my

opinion, only came with benefits for the entire world. India's inventive fabrics progressed the whole world into the future and for the better.

Cotton fabrics impacted civilizations all over the globe and pushed the world into the future. Trading the textiles forwarded the trading economy. The types of cotton fabrics that Ancient India was making were associated with wealth and power which meant that you had to trade a lot for those types of fabrics (Unraveling History: The Fabric of Civilization Woven Through Shreds of Cloth). Boosting the trade economy is an amazing thing, just like today, if the economy is higher then it all comes full circle and people will be able to make more money. In Ancient times of course it was goods being traded and not money. Textiles (more specifically clothes like dresses/robes) had such great impacts and value to Ancient India. Trading and uniting the whole world was its biggest achievement. The start of globally trading and the trade system really accelerated with the invention of silks and other fabrics. After Ancient Indian textiles were made popular and the business of textile making started to become more wealthy, wealthier people started to want them. This made the weavers of these Ancient Indian cottons start to add silver and gold into their fabrics. Since these businesses were so popular they were able to obtain expensive and rare materials to make textiles. Since Ancient Indian textiles became unique because of their unique and pigmented colors, the people of this civilization started being able to wear these bright colors of clothes more than anywhere else in the world. This made deep colors such red, blue and purple. (Plus) Ancient India's signature clothing to wear for everyday, but mostly for special occasions. This is still true for modern India's traditional clothes that they wear to this day. All of this sums up the point that the textiles of Ancient India really progressed not only India but also the entire world. Having comfortable colored clothes was a really big step into the future in the Ancient world that started with India.

The way that the people of Ancient India and all over the world were able to start dressing more modern was all because of the invention of weaving cotton into textiles in Ancient India. It all just started with simple cotton picking but it led to much bigger advancements that are still relevant to the modern world today. With simple wooden tools people of the Ancient Indian civilization were able to turn this cotton into all kinds of different clothes like pants and shirts. After learning how to do this they were able to learn how to dye these threads with natural dyes and resources found around them. This gave the textiles a very unique look to them that no one else around the ancient world had ever seen before. This, of course, made people surrounding Ancient India want these fabrics and clothes. This led to the trading of textiles. Eventually wealthier civilizations like those in Europe heard about the amazing textiles of Ancient India. Textiles boosted the whole ancient world trading economy because they were so sought after. From trading these silks Ancient India became, as a whole, a wealthier civilization. This is proven in that Ancient India's economy mostly relied on trade, so when they made these cotton textiles and introduced them to other civilizations, their whole economy began to thrive. Civilizations all over the globe benefited from India's invention of textiles. Soon enough, the civilizations surrounding India and across the world were all wearing the bright colors of the ancient textiles of India. Although, at the time silks were something for special occasions or for more wealthy people to wear. Textiles and fabrics were truly a step into the future and there really were not any downsides of the making of this invention for anywhere in the world, especially Ancient India. Now in the present day, cotton is worn to work or school, weaving cotton and dyeing it in Ancient India was really ahead of its time. The textiles that Ancient India invented benefited everyone and is still a very relevant invention to everyone in modern times.

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