

Kashi Prasad Jayaswal(Part-1) काशी प्रसाद जायसवाल(भाग-1)

M.A. (HISTORY) SEM-3 PAPER CC:10

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Life and works (जीवन और कार्य)

Kashi Prasad Jayaswal was a nationalist historian. He tried to glorify the ancient past of India through his writings. He was born in the family of a rich merchant of Mirzapur in U.P. in 1881 A.D. After studying at London Mission School at Mirzapur he went to Oxford for higher studies where he completed his M.A. in History. He also qualified for the Bar. On his return to India he longed to become a Lecturer at Calcutta University, but failed to get the appointment due to his participation in the political movement. Ultimately he decided to join the legal profession and joined as an Advocate in the Calcutta High Court in 1911. After sometime he shifted to the Patna High Court.

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But throughout this period the government kept on harassing him for his association with the national movement. Ultimately on the intervention of **Sir Charles Cleveland**, the government adopted a more liberal attitude towards Jayaswal and he withdrew from active politics. Now onwards he devoted himself to the study of ancient heritage. In 1914 A.D. he played an important role in setting up the **Bihar and Orissa Research Society**, a non-official organization for the furtherance of research in Indian history and culture. In 1915 the society brought out **Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research** and Jayaswal worked as its editor for a number of years. He also contributed a number of articles to the journal.

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The most outstanding contribution of Jayaswal to Indian historiography was his work '*Hindu Polity*' originally appeared in the form of a number of articles in Modern Review and Calcutta Weekly Notes and were highly appreciated. He was invited by the Calcutta University to deliver a number of lectures on some aspects of ancient Hindu law and he delivered 12 lectures on *Manu and Yajnavalkya*.

He contributed articles on various fields. Some of his prominent articles, which were published in the

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Journal of the Bihar Research Society were :

Saisunaka and Mauryan Chronology and the Date of Buddha's Nirvana', Empire of Bindusara, Chronological Summary in Puranic Chronicle and Kaliyug era, The Brihadratha Chronology, cir. 1727 B.C. -727 B.C. , Revised Date on the Brahmin empire, Wema Kadphises and Kushana Chronolgy, Contributions to the History of Mithila, On the rule of Pushyamitra Sunga, etc.

But probably the most talked about book of Jayaswal was ***History of India c. 150 A.D. to 350 A.D.*** This period from the fall of the Kushanas to the rise of the imperial Guptas was commonly termed as the Dark Age in Indian History. He tried to disapprove this theory and reconstructed a political history of the

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period with the help of information collected from Puranic literature, inscriptions, coins etc,. He also traced the chronology and history of Nepal from 600 B.C. To 800 A.D. in a long article. In another article he examined the problem of Predecessors of *Chandragupta II Vikramaditya*.

(To be continued)