WORLD HISTORY

THE ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS OF INDIA
The Ancient World

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1IILTq43rb
g&feature=youtu.be

- Indus Valley Civilization
Geography of the Indian Subcontinent / Cultural Diversity

- India is a large landmass that is part of a content called a Subcontinent and includes three major geographic regions.
- Includes today’s countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sir Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan.
- It has three major rivers: Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra.
- Heavy rains add to its fertility with seasonal winds called Monsoon bringing rain.
- Mountain ranges include:
  - Himalayas and Hindu Kush.
Cities of the Indus Valley

- Taxila
- Harappā
- Rūpar
- Kalibangan
- Mohenjo-Daro
- Lothal

Arabian Sea
Bay of Bengal
Indus Valley Civilization

- Earliest civilization a mystery/emerging in Pakistan about 2500 BC
- This civilization flourished for about ___ years then **vanished** without a trace
- We know little about this large civilization
Welled Planned Cities

- Two main cities of Harappa & Mohenjo-Daro may have been twin capitals
- The most striking feature was it was so well planned
- Houses even had modern plumbing with baths, drains and water chutes that led into sewers
- They had a well organized government
- Powerful leaders, perhaps priest-kings and tens of thousands of city dwellers
Ruins of the Indus Valley
Ruins of Mohenjo-Daro
Farming and Trade

• Most people are farmers and they grew a wide variety of crops

• Some people were merchants/traders with ships carrying things like cotton, cloth, grain, copper etc.

• Contact with Sumer may have stimulated them to develop their own system of writing
Religious Beliefs

• Polytheistic
• Mother earth goddess
• They showed *veneration* or special regard for cattle
Decline and Disappearance

- In 1750 BC we see a decline in the quality of life in this region…Why?
  1. damage to local environment
  2. volcanic eruption
  3. earthquake
  4. invaders
The Aryan Civilization

- **Aryans** (term meaning noble) were among many Indo-Europeans (refers to a related family of languages in Europe and Asia) to migrate here seeking water and pastures.
- Most of what we know comes from the **Vedas**.
- The Vedas are a collection of **prayers, hymns, and other religious teachings**.
- Aryan priests memorized and recited the **Vedas** for a 1,000 years before they were **written down**.
- Aryan warriors were nomadic herders who valued **cattle** and even when they settled into farming wealth was still measured in **cows and bulls**.
Aryan Society

- **Divided people by occupation / Three basic groups were**
  - 1. The Brahmins or *priests*
  - 2. Kshatriyas or *warriors*
  - 3. Vaisyas or *herders, farmers, merchants*
- As their power grew *priests* claimed that they alone could conduct the ceremonies needed to win favor from the gods
- Aryans felt superior to the Dravidians
- A later social division was added the
- 4. Sudras who were *Dravidians*
  - Later class divisions reflected the social and economic roles more than *ethnic* differences between Aryans and not Aryans
- As these changes occurred they gave rise to a more complex system of *castes* or social groups into which people are born and which they cannot change
Ancient Indian Caste System

- **BRAHMINS**
  - priests
- **KSHATRIYAS**
  - warriors
- **VAISYAS**
  - herders, farmers, merchants, craftspeople
- **SUDRAS**
  - farm workers, servants, laborers

Source: *Guide to the Essentials of World History*, Prentice Hall, 1999 (adapted)
ARYAN RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

- Polytheistic worshiping gods and goddesses that embodied natural forces such as sky, sun, storm, and fire
- The chief god was Indra, the god of war
- Honored animals were monkeys and snakes
- Sacrifices of food and drink were offered
- Over time some began believing in a single god called brahman that resided in all things
Expansion & Change

• Aryan tribes were led by chiefs called **rajahs**

• They were the most skilled war leaders and elected by an assembly of warriors

• He ruled with the advice of a **council** of elders
From Nomads to Farmers

- Aryans mingled with the people they conquered
- They gradually gave up their nomadic ways and settled into farming
- By 500 BC a new Indian civilization emerged consisting of many rival kingdoms
- Because of the blending of the cultures the people shared a common culture rooted with both Aryan and Dravidian traditions
- Their written language was called Sanskrit
- Epic Literature: Aryans preserved a strong oral tradition, memorizing and reciting hymns and epic poems
बाल पठति. बाला लिखति.

स चलति. सा खेलति.

राम शाम च वदतः. तौ वदतः.
THE BELIEFS OF HINDUISM

- Hinduism, which claims about 800,000 million practitioners worldwide, is unique among humanity’s major religions in that it cannot be traced to any specific individual or historical event.
- Scholars believe that Hinduism arose about 3,5000 years ago out of interactions between Aryans and Indus Valley people.
- Hindu means Indian.
- Because Hinduism arose from no single person or institution, it is seen as having existed forever.
Many Gods – or One?

- Key feature: all the universe is part of the unchanging, all powerful spiritual force called Brahman.
- Because brahman is too complex and powerful a concept for most to understand they worship a variety of gods that give concrete form to brahman.
- Most important gods are:
  1. Brahma: The Creator
  2. Vishnu: The Destroyer
  3. Shiva: The Destroyer
- Each represents aspects of Brahman each god may take on many forms & has its own family.
Brahma and Shiva
Sacred Texts

• Over several Thousand years Hindu teachings have been recorded in sacred texts such as the Vedas and Upanishads
The Goal of Life

- To Hindus, every person has an essential self or **atman** which is another name for **brahman**
- The ultimate goal of existence is to achieve Moksha or union with Brahman
- To do this one must free themselves from **selfish desires** that separate them from brahma.
- Usually it takes many life times to achieve **Moksha**
- The Hindus believe in **reincarnation** or the rebirth of the soul in another bodily form which allows people to continue working toward moksha through several lifetimes
Reincarnation

Around and around it goes, like Shiva, the cosmic dancer.
KARMA AND DHARMA

• In each existence Hindus believe a person can come closer to achieving moksha by obeying the law of **Karma** which refers to all actions of a person's life that affect their fate in the next life.

• All existences is ranked.

• **Humans** come closest to the Brahman **animals, plants and objects like rocks**

• If you live a virtuous life you can be reborn at a higher existence but if you do evil then you will acquire **bad karma** and be reborn into suffering.

• Hinduism stresses the importance of **Dharma** or ones religious and moral **duties** and they vary according to class, occupation, gender or age. By obeying ones dharma a person acquires merit for the next life.

• To Hindus, all people and things are aspects of Brahman and should therefore be respected. And try to follow a path of **ahimsa** or **nonviolence**.
OPPOSITION TO THE BRAHMINS

• A new religion called **Janism** grew out of Hindu traditions
• It rejected the idea that Brahmin priests alone could perform certain **scared rites**
• It’s teachings emphasized meditation, self denial and extreme form of **ahimsa** (avoidance of killing any living thing)

• Crash Course Hinduism:  
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tpVZrsvK-k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tpVZrsvK-k)
Gautama Buddha: The Enlightened One

- **Siddhartha Gautama** founder of Buddhism

**Early Life**
- He was born about 566 BC to a high cast family.
- A prophet predicted he would become a wandering **holy man**
- To prevent this, his father kept him in the palace walls surrounded by comfort and luxury. Gautama would marry and have a son and enjoyed a happy life until
The Search

- One day Gautama rode outside the palace walls and for the first time saw a sick person, an old person & a dead person.
- For the first time he became aware of human suffering.
- Disturbed, he left the palace forever.
- He set out to discover the realm of life where there is neither suffering nor death.
- He wondered for years, seeking answers, fasting and meditating.
- One day under a tree determined to stay until he understood the mystery of life.
- After 48 days Gautama rose and was now the Buddha or The Enlightened One.
A man asked Lord Buddha “I want happiness.”
Lord Buddha said first remove “I” that’s ego.
Then remove “Want” that’s desire.
See now you are left with only “Happiness”
Buddha Statues
The Four Noble Truths

The Four Noble Truths Stand at the heart of Buddhism

1. All life is full of **suffering** and **sorrow**
2. The cause of suffering is the desire for that are illusions and negative deeds and mindsets such as hatred and desire _
3. The only cure for suffering is to overcome desire
4. The way to overcome desire is to follow **the Eightfold Path**

You must **understand the Four Noble Truths** and follow the Eight Fold Path along with living a moral life, avoiding evil words and actions

Through meditation a person may achieve “enlightenment”

One’s final goal is **Nirvana** or union with the universe and release from the cycle of rebirth
The Eight Fold Path

- Control your thoughts.
- Resist evil.
- Practice meditation.
- Free your mind of evil.
- Say nothing to hurt others.
- Work for the good of others.
- Know the truth.
- Respect life.

Teachings of Siddhartha Gautama

The Eightfold Path

Source: The Human Experience, Glencoe
Buddhism & Hinduism
Shared Traditions

• **Similarities:**
  - Both grew out of the traditions as Hinduism
  - Both stressed non violence
  - Both accepted the laws of Karma, dharma and the cycle of rebirth

• **Differences:**
  - Buddhism rejected priests, formal rituals and the many gods of Hinduism. Buddha urged each person to seek enlightenment through meditation
  - Buddhism rejects the caste system offering hope of nirvana to all
Sacred Texts / Spread of Buddhism

- After Buddha's death his followers collected his teachings into a sacred text called the **Tripitaka or The Three Baskets of Wisdom**

- Buddha attracted many disciples who set up monasteries to study meditation and centers of learning


- Keith Hughes: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGUwKscC0tw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGUwKscC0tw)
Two Sects

- **Theravada Buddhism**: closely followed the Buddha’s original teachings, see Buddha as a teacher. It required a life devoted to hard spiritual work with only the most dedicated able to maybe reach Nirvana.

- **Mahayana sect**: made Buddhism easier for ordinary people to follow. They pictured him and other holy beings as gods. People turned to these gods for solving daily problems and achieving salvation.

- The afterlife as a filled with many heavens and hells.
Decline of India

• Buddhism took hold across India but slowly **declined in India**

• Hinduism eventually absorbed some **Buddhist** ideas and made room for **Buddha** as another Hindu god

• Creating a mandala 2:30: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYVcjFhpsHc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYVcjFhpsHc)
The Maurya Empire / Chandragupta

- Chandragupta first gained power in the **Ganges Valley**
- He then conquered northern India
- The dynasty maintained order through a well-organized bureaucracy building roads and harbors and collected taxes and manage factories
- Chandragupta's rule was effective but **harsh** with secret police who reported crimes and **dissent** any differing or opposing ideas
- Had specially trained **women** to guard his palace
Asoka

• The most honored Maurya emperor was Chandragupta's grandson Asoka
• After a bloody war, horrified by the slaughter, over 100,000 dead, he turned his back on further conquests and converted to Buddhism and rejected violence and resolved to rule by moral example
• He became a vegetarian and sent out missionaries or people sent on a religious mission to spread Buddhism
• His rule brought peace and prosperity to the land and helped to unite the diverse people of the empire
GOLDEN AGE OF THE GUPTAS

• The most powerful Indian state was the *Gupta Dynasty* who united much of India.

• They organized strong central *government* that promoted *peace and prosperity*.

• They ruled from *320 AC to 550 AD*.

• This was considered the *Golden Age* or period of great cultural achievements and was a time of peace and prosperity.
Advances in Learning

• Students were educated in religious schools but learning was not limited to religion.

• Advances mathematics with devising a simple system of writing numbers we still use today called Arabic Numerals because it was Arabs who carried them from India to the Middle East and Europe.

• Originated the concept of Zero and developed the decimal system with numbers based on 10.

• They performed simple surgeries and vaccinating people against smallpox.
Arabic Numerals

1 ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ٠
Architecture / Paintings at Ajanta

- They built magnificent stone temples
- Buddhists built splendid Stupas or large dome shaped shrines that housed the sacred remains of the Buddha or other holy people

- The cave temples at Ajanta were painted with murals or wall paintings recalling Buddhist stories and legends
Ajanta Caves
Complex Caste System

- Society was divided into four occupational classes with Non-Aryan's considered outcasts and held the lowest jobs.

- Many additional castes and sub-castes evolved as invaders were absorbed into the society.

- By modern times there were hundreds of major castes and thousands of sub-castes.
Complex Rules

- Castes were closely linked to the Hindu beliefs with people in different castes were different *species of beings*
- The high caste *brahmin* were purer and closer to moksha
- To ensure purity there were rules to govern every aspect of life and one may **not marry** outside ones caste **or eating** with other outside the caste
- The lowest rank was the *Untouchables* who were restricted the impure jobs and were forced to live apart from everyone else
Effects / Family Life

- Despite inequalities the caste ensured a stable social order.
- People knew they could not change their status in life but could reach a higher state in a future life by fulfilling the duties of their present caste.
Structure

- The idea family was **the joint family** in which parents, children, **grandparents**, uncles and their kids share a common dwelling, this usually happen only in wealthy families.
- In poor families were seldom large since they died early.
- Families were **patriarchal** meaning the father or oldest male in the family headed the household.
- His power was limited by **sacred laws** and tradition and usually consulted his wife or others.
- Property belonged to the **whole family**.
Children and Parents

- Children learn from their family about their *caste* and obeying caste rules
- Family interests come before individual interests
- Parents have the important duty of arranging good *marriage* for their children
- Custom says a brides family should provide a Dowry or payment to the bridegroom and finance the wedding
- After marriage the daughter leaves and becomes part of the *husbands* family
Videos

• Keith Hughes Indus River Civ. 10:25:  
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zulZTaK9u3M

• Keith Hughes Buddhism 10 min:  
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYKdEnEqfQQ

• Keith Hughes Hinduism 9 min:  
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGV6M4wQ8Os