

# THE CULTURE OF ANCIENT INDIA

## Culture Studies, 2022



# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- Indus Valley civilization
- Over 5000 years ago
- The Indus River
- The territory of modern India and Pakistan
- Major religions
- Metal works, tool making, their own form of writing.
- Trade of food, tools and crafts
- Peaceful social structure
- Invasion of the Aryans



# EARLY DEVELOPMENT

- Sometime between 2000 and 1500 BC
- Procreation of Aryans with indigenous society
- Hybrid civilizations called the Vedic Civilizations
- Introduction of casts
- New social system
- Social rankings and roles based on where the chiefs and priests ranked people

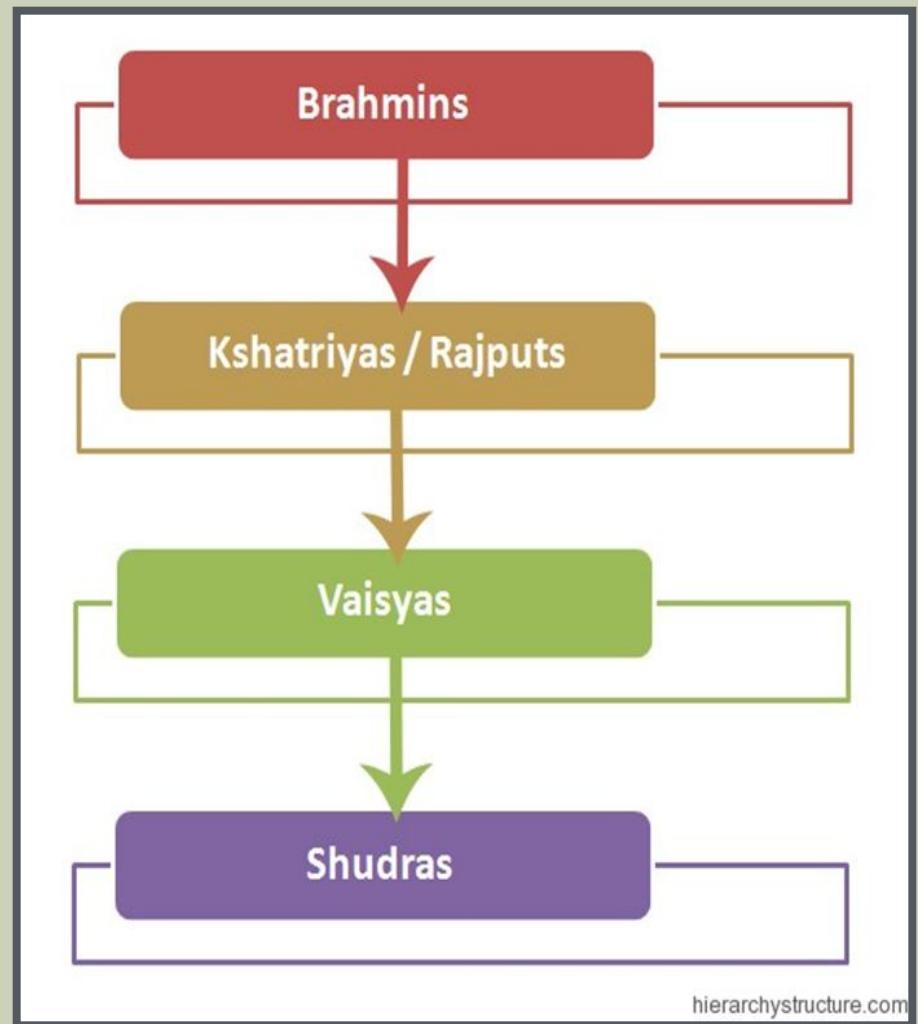


# SOCIETY STRATIFICATION

- Based on purity, not power

## **Brahmins**

- Engaged in attaining the highest spiritual knowledge
- Adhered to different branches of Vedas, the holy books of India
- A difficult path of discipline of body, mind, and intellect



# SOCIETY STRATIFICATION (CONT.)

## **Kshatriyas / Rajputs**

- Warriors
- Normally belonged to royal families
- A matter respect and proud
- Bravery - the perfect word to describe these people.
- Possessed special rights and powers in the society
- The governing body of the society and protection of the society was their duty





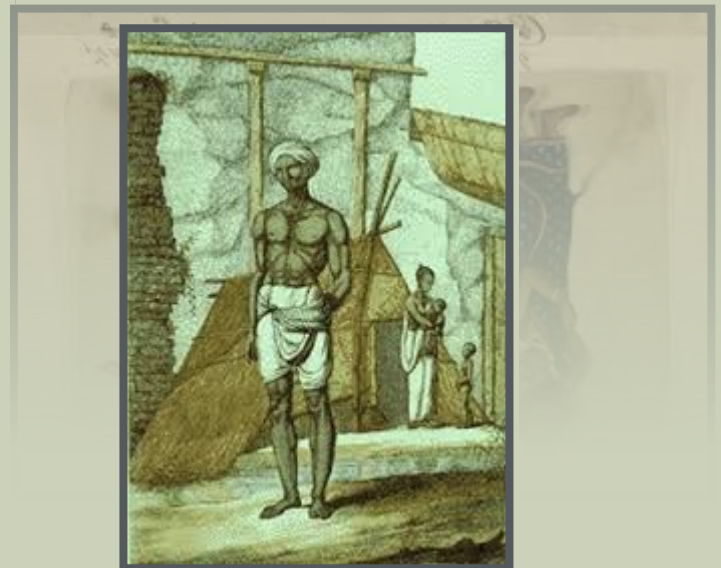
# SOCIETY STRATIFICATION (CONT.)

## Vaisyas

- Reared cattle and performed the productive labor, pastoral tasks, trade and agriculture
- The class of common people
- Had little rights of their own

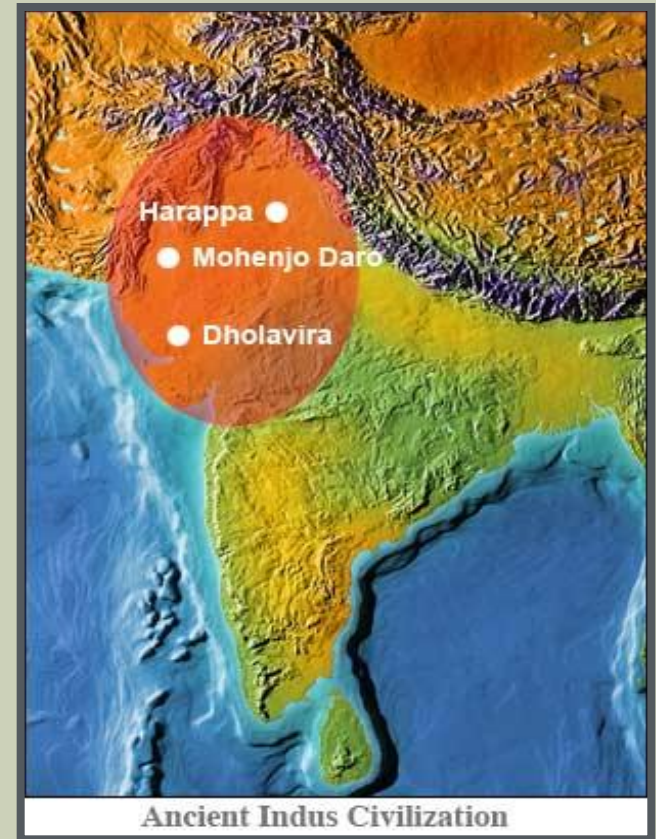
## Shudras –

- The lowest class of the ancient Indian social hierarchy
- Eating anything with them or talking to these people was prohibited to people of other classes
- Servants to the other three classes
- Almost no rights and power of their own



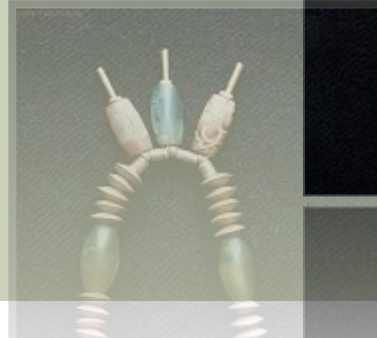
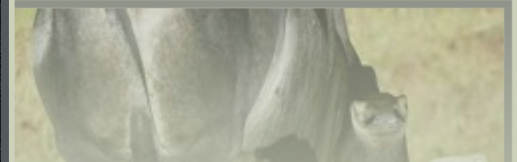
# DAILY LIFE

- Vedic Period 1500-1000 BC
- Epics Period 1000 - 500 BC
- Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, two busy cities of about 35,000 people each
- Houses - one or two stories high, made of baked brick, with flat roofs, and were just about identical.
- Built around a courtyard
- Windows overlooking the courtyard
- No windows in the outside walls .
- Private drinking well and its own private bathroom
- Sewers located under the streets
- Drained into nearby rivers and streams



# CLOTHING AND FOOD

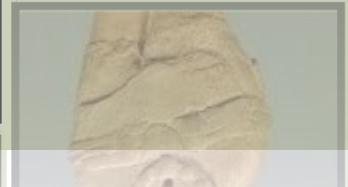
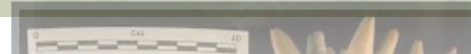
- Colorful robes
- Jewelry of gold and precious stone
- Lipstick
- Warm tasty wheat bread served with barley or rice
- Grew barley, peas, melons, wheat, and dates
- Large central storage building for grain
- Raised cotton and kept herds of sheep, pigs, zebras, and water buffalo





# ENTERTAINMENT, ART AND TRANSPORTATION

- A bronze statue of a dancer
- Remains of a large central pool, with steps leading down at both ends
- Toys - small carts, whistles shaped like birds, toy monkeys which could slide down a string
- Pottery, weaving, and metal working
- Small statues of female gods
- Camels, oxen and elephants to travel over land
- Carts with wooden wheels
- One-mast ships
- Seals



# AGE OF EMPIRES

## 500 BC- 647 AD

- The Gupta Empire (320 AD - about 500 AD)
- Golden Age of ancient India
- Villages protected from bandits and raids with local military squads
- One squad - one elephant, one chariot, three armored cavalymen and five foot soldiers
- Religious freedom
- Free medical care, including simple surgery
- Criminals were never put to death, but fined for their crimes



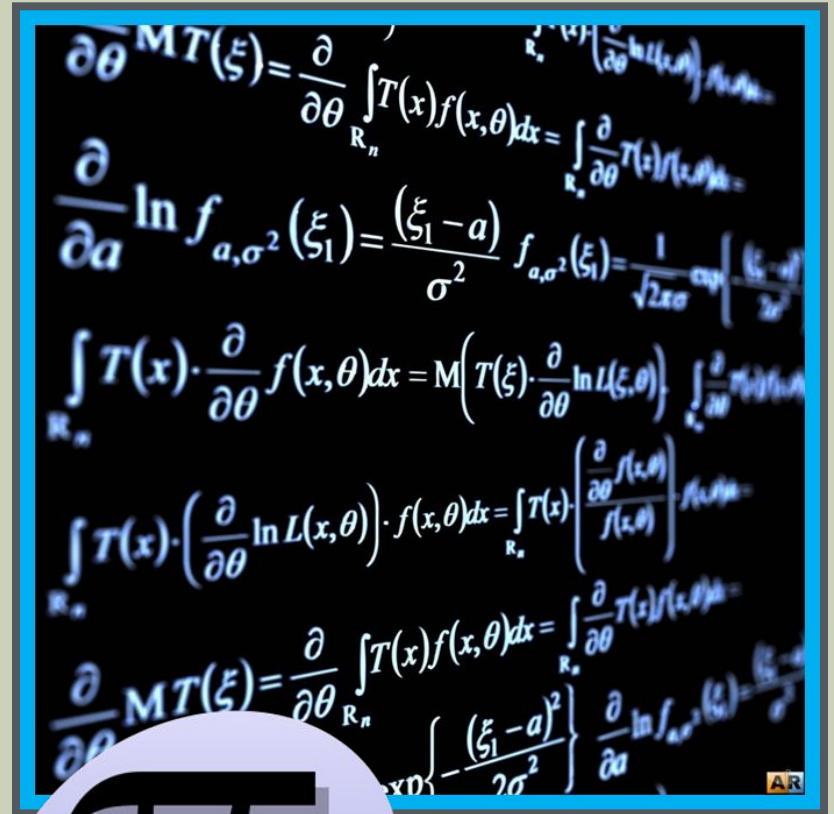
# THE GUPTA EMPIRE

- Few of the common people were educated
- Many universities
- Students from China
- No restrictions on the movement of the people
- Guest houses for travellers
- Regular salaries for government officials and soldiers
- People worked on roads and other public works and were paid for their work
- People are free to choose their occupation
- Homes - mostly one room huts made of wood or bamboo, with thatched roofs
- Larger homes - several rooms and balconies



# SCHOOL AND SCIENCE

- Older kids, who went to school, lived there
- Did everything themselves - washed their clothes, cooked their food
- Studied math, science, engineering, literature, art, music and religion.
- Believed the earth was a sphere, and rotated around the sun
- Figured out that the solar year had 365.358 days
- The number system we use today - 9 digits, the zero, and the decimal
- The value of “Pi” – 6<sup>th</sup> cent.
- Quadratic equations – 11<sup>th</sup> cent.



The image shows a blackboard with several mathematical equations written in white chalk. The equations involve partial derivatives, integrals, and probability density functions. A large, stylized Pi symbol ( $\pi$ ) is overlaid in the foreground, partially obscuring the bottom of the equations. The equations include:

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} M T(\xi) = \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \int_{R_n} T(x) f(x, \theta) dx = \int_{R_n} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} T(x) f(x, \theta) dx$$
$$\frac{\partial}{\partial a} \ln f_{a, \sigma^2}(\xi_1) = \frac{(\xi_1 - a)}{\sigma^2} f_{a, \sigma^2}(\xi_1) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma^2}} \exp\left\{-\frac{(\xi_1 - a)^2}{2\sigma^2}\right\} \frac{\partial}{\partial a} \ln f_{a, \sigma^2}(\xi_1) = -\frac{(\xi_1 - a)}{\sigma^2}$$
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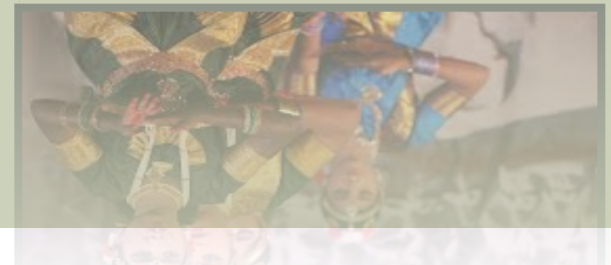
# FAVORITE PASTIME

- Invented chess, polo, board games and playing cards
- Practiced martial arts, wrestling, and fencing.
- Hunting - a favorite pastime of the nobility



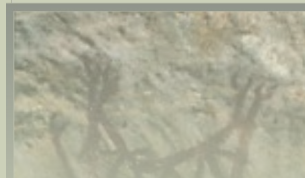
# MUSIC AND DANCE

- Accompanied by instruments to provide bass and rhythm
- Flute, violin and tambourine are of Indian origin
- Elaborate costumes, jewelry and make-up
- Performed in temples or royal courts
- Enacted scenes out of daily life like wild animals hunting for food
- Required to correctly recite, the Vedas
- Transmitted through memory and learnt through hearing



# PAINTINGS

- Primitive cave or rock paintings
- Animals in hunting scenes
- Human figures with bows and arrows, and swords and shields
- Natural minerals in various shades of red and orange
- Mural paintings





# ARCHITECTURE

- Cave-temples with exteriors decorated with relief sculpture and a single carved doorway
- Ritual sculptures such as Shiva
- Scenes from mythology
- Madhya Pradesh (401 CE)
- Ajanta caves (2<sup>nd</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> cent)
- A row of 29 rock-cut caves
- The earliest and finest examples of Indian wall-painting - scenes from the life of Buddha
- A columned shrine in typical Gupta style with flat cushion-topped column capitals
- Facade with columned porch and large, almost semi-circular aperture above.
- Rich carvings and relief panels





# GREAT PHYSICIANS

- The first school of medicine – 2500 years ago
- Surgery
- Anesthesia
- The art of yoga



# A COLLECTION OF FACTS

- Chess
- Snakes and ladders
- The oldest university
- The oldest still inhabited city
- The fig tree – the symbol of immortality
- Marigold flowers – the symbol of happiness and fortune
- Cow – a sacred animal

