

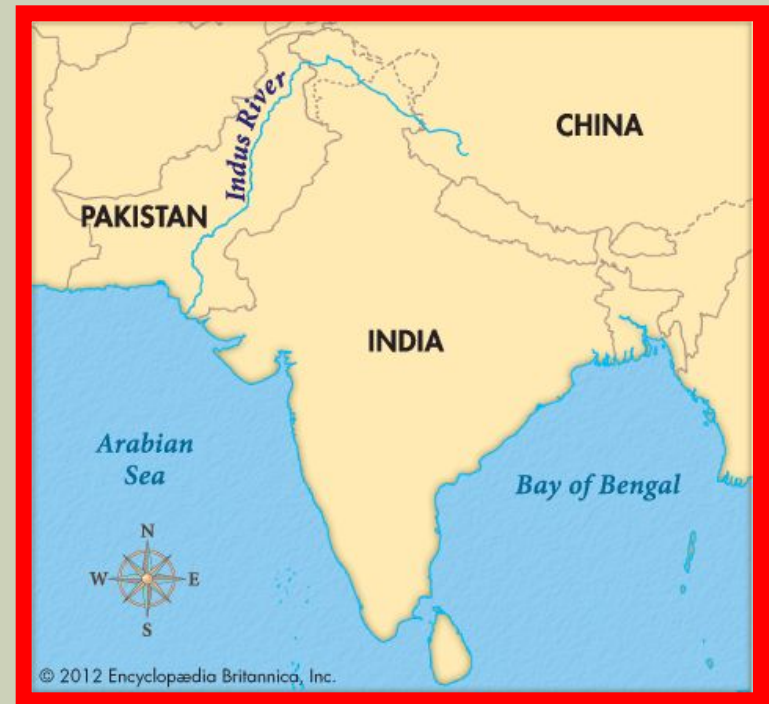
THE CULTURE OF ANCIENT INDIA

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

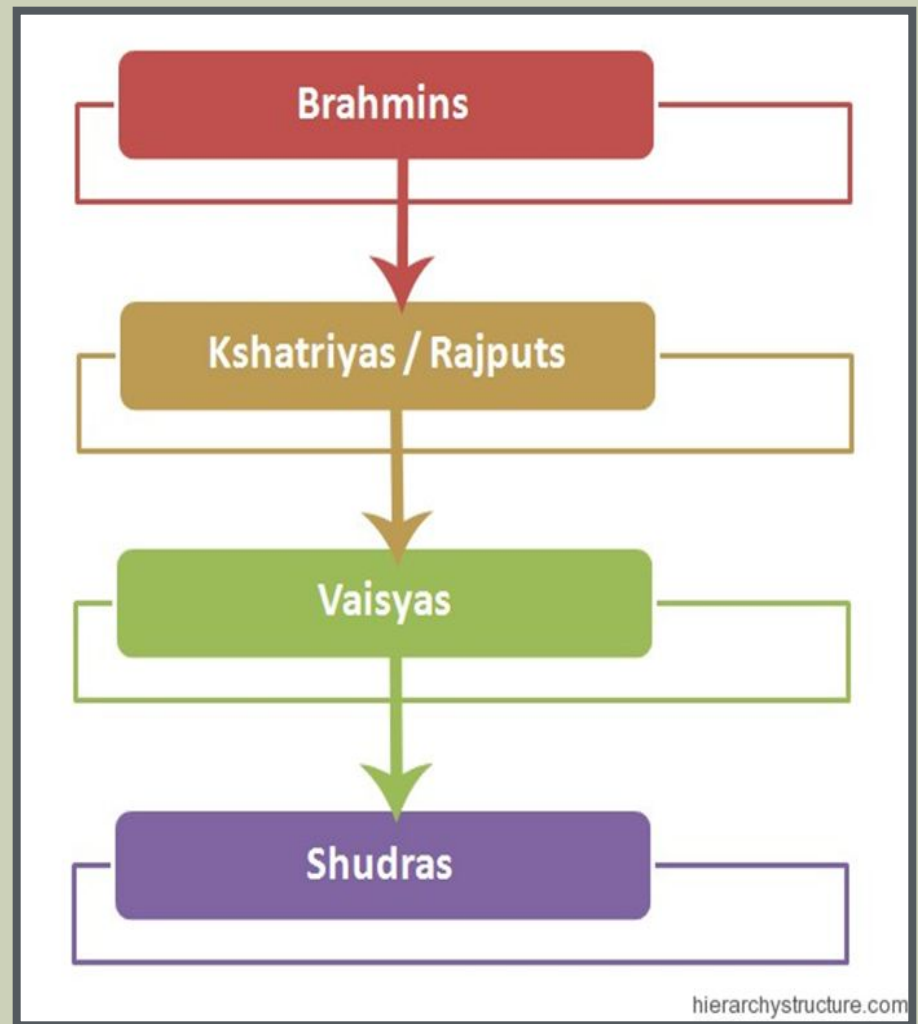


SOCIETY STRATIFICATION

- 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



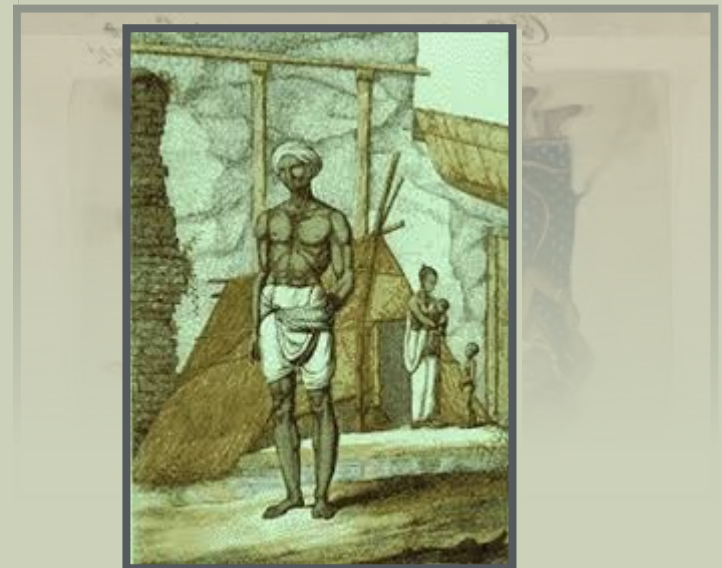
SOCIETY STRATIFICATION (CONT.)

Vaisyas

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

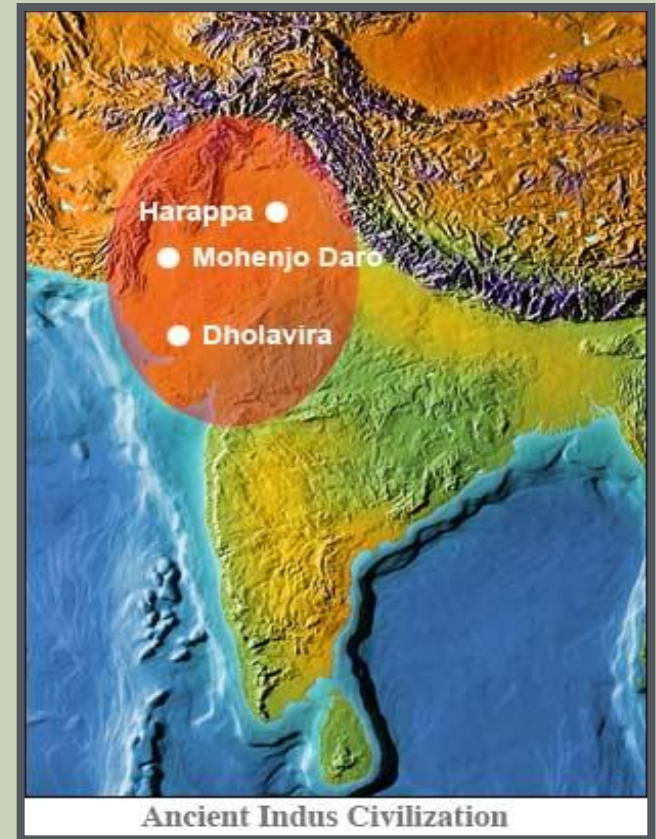
Shudras –

- 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



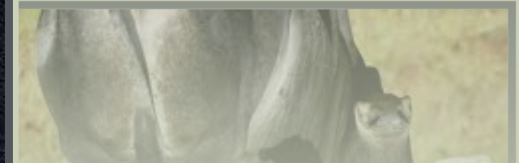
DAILY LIFE

- 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



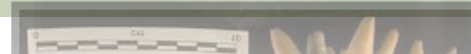
CLOTHING AND FOOD

- 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, zebus, 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



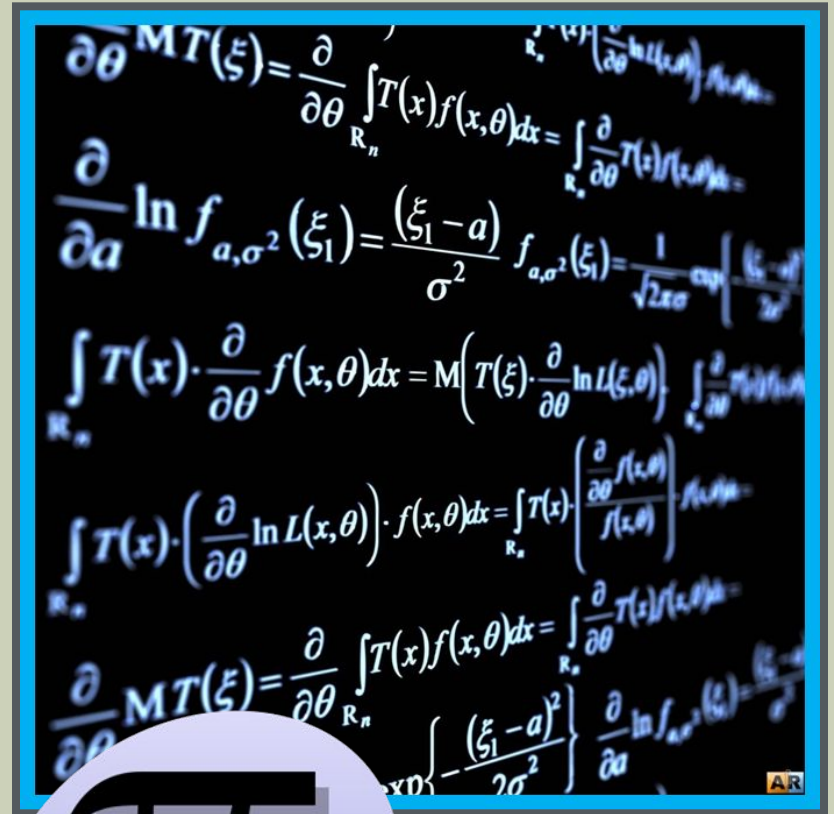
THE GUPTA EMPIRE

- 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” – 6th cent.
- Quadratic equations – 11th cent.



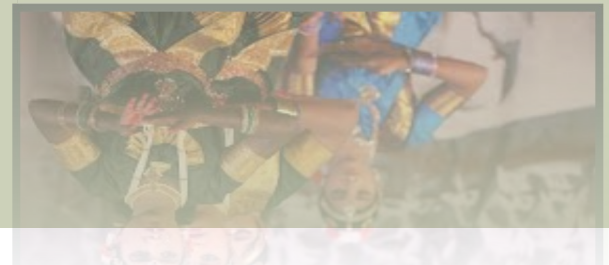
FAVORITE PASTIME

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



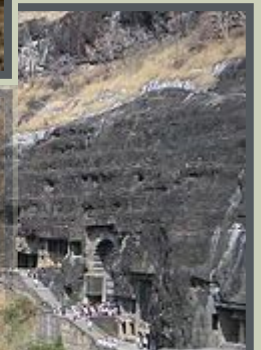
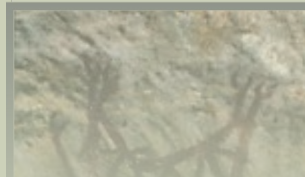
MUSIC AND DANCE

- 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 (2nd - 7th 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

