

A Brief History of the World

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Author's note: Thank you for viewing a sample of my book, ***A Brief History of the World***. This sample contains the sections from my book about ancient India, the Franks, and the Crusades. If you like these sections, please consider ordering a copy of my book at iUniverse.com's bookstore. The book is very well researched with over 180 sources of information. It could come in handy for school projects on history, or it can simply be read and enjoyed by the average history lover. The book isn't too bulky, so you can carry it around. Purchasing my book will also help me maintain my website and encourage more updates.

India

It was the Persians who named the region around the Indus and Ganges rivers "India". The early Indus civilization was composed of hundreds of cities, most of which were discovered in the early 1900's. The beginnings of the Indus civilization are thought to have been around 2500 BC. India, of the five or six cradles of civilization, was the largest in area. Many argue that the Indus civilization started at a time when Mesopotamia transformed from villages to cities.

Inscribed on pots and seals are many legends of the Indus. There were priests, statues and many ceremonies conducted by the Indus. Two major cities of the Indus were Mohenjo and Harappa. Bricks of houses and figurines were also found in the excavations. A hierarchy of social status appeared. The public drank from large tanks of water, and there were drains for private houses. They relied on agriculture, irrigation, rice, sheep, cattle and pigs for food. Cats, dogs, camel, horses and elephants were all domesticated. Crafts were produced for local and foreign markets. The army relied on archers as the other weapons were not of great quality. The civilization ended around 1700 BC. It was mostly likely ended by the Aryan invasion (see below), or it could have been due to social collapse. The population was already in decline in the major cities before the Aryan invasion.

A tribe of people called the Aryans came from eastern Iran. They were nomads who likely used chariots. They left many religious records. By 1500 BC, Aryan speech dominated the area. There still weren't any historical documents left by these people. The exact path of the Aryans is uncertain; they might have crossed to the north of the Caucasus Mts. and swung south or crossed north of the Caspian Sea and turned south. The Hittites had evidence of an Aryan dynasty in the nearby kingdom of Mitanni. The first Aryan capital in India was Indraprastha. These Aryans first introduced horses and cattle to India. Eventually, the invaders and the Indus became one culture and lived together. It has been suggested that the Aryan "invasion" was a peaceful migration, and that the Indus towns fell for social and economical reasons. Nonetheless the Indus civilization fell during this time.

The Indo-Aryan and Proto-Indoaryan territory once stretched into west Asia, but religious revolution by Zoroaster in Persia destroyed belief in Indo-Aryan gods. The earliest Indian document was the *Rig Veda*. It didn't refer to an Aryan migration; this showed that the later Aryans no longer knew about their ancestors. The *Rig Veda* did describe battles between the Dasyu and the Indians. The Dasyu were from the same area as the Aryans.

The Vedic period (1500 BC-600 BC) saw the worship of Agni, the god of fire, as well as the worship of Soma, who represented the Drink of Immortality. Indra, the god of rain and

fertility, the warrior, slayer of demons and the user of the thunderbolt, was also a major god. In Hinduism, Agni became a metaphor of the bearded, pompous priest and was no longer a god. Soma became the moon, the storage place of the Drink of Immortality, waning when the Drink was drunk. Indra became a trickster. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva were the most important gods. Brahma was the creator of all. Vishnu was the sun god who propped up the sun and sustained all. Shiva was the god who caused and cured illnesses, and shot men and animals with arrows. He was the god of destruction. The gods were mostly worshiped one at a time. The law that sustained the universe was known as *Rita*.

Books such as the *Brahmanas* spoke about the legends and gave instructions to worship. The *Upanishads* discussed the nature of the cosmos. Yoga was introduced; it involved the use of breathing and fasting to go into a mystic trance. Two major texts of India include the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. The latter was about the story of King Rama, whose wife, Sita, was carried off by demons to Sri Lanka. Rama won her back in an epic adventure. The author was Valmiki, who is regarded as India's first poet. Rama was an immortal prince and not a god, but in later books, he was described as an incarnation of Vishnu. The *Mahabharata* was very long; about 200,000 lines in length. It was an encyclopedia of Hinduism. It was also a story of a rivalry between the Kauravas and Pandavas families of princes, and the story ended in a battle in which all was destroyed. The *Mahabharata* also included many legends and tales. Another book, the *Puranas*, talked about legends of kings, as well as lunar and solar dynasties. The creation and destruction of the universe were described.

The Hindus believed that time was a loop. There was no afterlife, but there was rebirth and reincarnation. Legends included many animals, such as the tale where animals that looked like fish saved humanity, the fact that turtles held up the earth and the story of the boar that rescued the earth from the demons. Vishnu also appeared in many stories as incarnations of a dwarf that cheated the demons out of the universe. Buddha appeared in Hindu stories as a man who corrupted the demons by his false teachings of Buddhism in order to help the Hindu gods beat the demons. Shiva's myths were of violence, death and sex. He killed demons, but was a ruthless god of destruction.

One of the contributions that the Hindus made to the entire world was the number system, which was later used by the Arabs and eventually misnamed "Arabic" numbers.

In 326 BC, Alexander the Great crossed the Hindu Kush at the Hydaspes River. He defeated King Porus and temporarily took the Punjab and the Sind as part of his enormous empire. By 317 BC, 6 years after Alexander's death, all the Greek troops have left India. Alexander's brief occupation made little impact. Areas in modern Pakistan were split into small kingdoms. In the Ganges basin, the ruler was one of the Nanda dynasty who was vastly unpopular. A man of the Mauryas named Chandragupta overthrew the Nanda dynasty (322 BC?) and he took the throne at Patalipura. He reigned for 24 years, but the dates are uncertain.

Around this time, a man named Chanakya wrote a book called the *Arthashastra* about Indian politics. The Greek historian Megasthenes wrote a book about India that was often referred to by other Greek writers of that time.

The kingdom of Magadha became a bureaucracy. A large part of northern India became a single kingdom. Smaller kingdoms disappeared and provinces controlled by the Mauryans replaced them. Agriculture, industry and trade were encouraged. By the end of Chandragupta's reign, he came into conflict with Seleucus Nicator (356-281 BC), who was a general of

Alexander. Seleucus was forced to recognize Candragupta as ruler of India, Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan. Candragupta was said to have changed bedrooms every night for fear of assassination. There was a great famine at the end of his reign.

Candragupta was succeeded by his son Bindusara around 300 BC. He held together the empire and perhaps extended it northward. In 270 BC, Bindusara died and was succeeded by his son Asoka. Asoka (270-233 BC) put down a revolt in Kalinga. He was said to have began his reign as a ruthless tyrant, but changed after the revolt. Asoka became a Buddhist and made favourable reforms. He left many documents and inscriptions. He promoted welfare and appointed “inspectors of morality”, who made regular trips to make sure reforms were carried out. However, Asoka became overly interested in the Buddhist community and later ignored state affairs. His reign greatly expanded the Buddhist religion. Asoka's empire included all of India except the southern tip and Pakistan. At his death in 232 BC, the empire began to collapse. Missionaries were sent out to Egypt, Libya, Epirus and Greece. Sri Lanka was converted by Makinda, the son of Asoka.

After Persia collapsed, Iranian refugees brought stone architecture to India. The Mauryas were replaced around 186 BC by the Sunyas after a revolt. Many provinces had already broken away, including the province of Bactria. In the second century BC, Euthydemus of Bactria crossed the Hindu Kush and occupied parts of the Kabul valley. Once, the Greco-Bactrian armies went as far as the India capital of Pataliputra. The Sunya kings drove them out of the Ganges, but the Punjab, Pakistan and Kabul valley were still occupied by the Bactrians. This area broke up into small Greek kingdoms. The Scythians often attacked these Greek kingdoms, as did the Parthians.

Pusyamitra Sunya was the first of the Sunyan kings. He changed the many systems to pre-Buddhist times. He disliked Buddhists, but despite that Buddhism continued to grow in popularity. The Greeks gave way to the Scythians, who became the new occupants of the Punjab.

The Sunyas lost the throne to the Kanvas. The Scythians grew as a major threat. When China was unified in 221 BC, Chinese nomadic tribes began to move westward. The Hsiung Nu (Huns) and the Yueh-chi fought for central Asia, but the Yueh-chi were defeated in 165 BC and migrated westward. Their presence drove the Scythians to attack Iran and India. The Yueh-chi collected tribute from Bactria by 129 BC. The people split into five tribes, but Kujula Kadphises of the Kusana tribe conquered the others and they became the Kushans. The Kushans went as far as the Indus River. Kujula's successor was Wima Kadphises, who held the Punjab. The 3rd ruler was Kanisha, who occupied a large area from central Asia to the Ganges.

The Scythians in Gujarat and Malura became independent. In the 3rd century AD, Iran became under the control of the Sasanids. The Kushans of the Punjab and of Afghanistan became vassals of the Sasanids. There was a period of invasions and raids along the borders by ruthless barbarians. In southern India, the Satavakama kingdom was in power. In the 4th century, Chandra Gupta I (320-335) established a new dynasty. At his death, he held territory from the Ganges to Bengal. His son Samudra Gupta (335-376) went south, looted the area and received tribute from the Pallavas, the southern dynasty. His son Chandra Gupta II was the very powerful. He conquered the Sakas and controlled the Vakatakas of central India.

Kumara Gupta I (414-454) had a mostly peaceful reign, but there was decline in foreign trade at his death. The White Huns had Bactria since the 4th century AD, and in 450, these Huns attacked Gupta. Kumara Gupta's son, Skanda Gupta (454-467) ascended during the Hunnish

invasion and was able to beat back the invaders. At his death, there were many succession disputes, then Budha Gupta (475-495) succeeded. The Huns were occupied by the Sasanids, but now the warlord Toramama and his son Mihirakula raided western India. Emperor Narcesinha Gupta beat Mihirakula. The local kings began to rise in power and the Hunnish invasions overwhelmed the Gupta Empire. Harsavardhana of Kanawj (606-647) had northern India for a while as the ruler of a new empire, but his empire collapsed after his death. Harsavardhana was the last Hindu king of India. After his death, his empire plunged into extended periods of anarchy and unrest. The Indian empire split into small states. The south gained more power as dynasties appeared and trade developed.

In 711, Muhammad ibn Qasim arrived in India and settled there. In 997, Mahmud of Ghazni, who ruled the kingdom of Khurasan, became a power in Afghanistan. Mahmud was a Muslim ruler and Islam's influence was felt in India as Muslims gained more power. Mahmud campaigned in India and made the Punjab his vassal. Mohammed of Ghor was another great Muslim ruler who conquered much of India and spread Islam to those he conquered. Muslim influence spread and a later Muslim migration led to the formation of the Delhi Sultanate in 1206. The Sultanate lasted for a long time and occupied mostly north-east India. A man named Kutbudin, who was a former slave, started the Slave Dynasty after seizing power. The Mongols soon entered on the scene and India was in great unrest when the Mongols arrived. The Tughlak dynasty of India was destroyed by the Mongols, who later withdrew after collecting loot.

In 1526, Baber founded the Mongol Mogul dynasty by defeating the Lodi dynasty. A great deal of India fell under their control. Akbar was a great sovereign of the Moguls. He took Bengal, Kashmir and Sind during his reign. Akbar gave the Hindus more rights and power, but the Muslims disliked this and saw him as a traitor. Shah Jahan (1628-58) built the Taj Mahal (killing many workers in the process), which was a tomb for him and his favourite wife. Though he was a great ruler, he was overthrown by his son Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb was a hated ruler who constantly waged wars, while winning few of these wars. In 1707, his reign ended in his exile. The Mogul Empire continued to exist, but was greatly weakened. The British and other Europeans flooded into India and subjugated it. India was under British control and was no longer an independent empire.

The Franks

The Franks were one of the first barbarian post-Roman countries to dominate the west. They made coins, but failed to establish a new tax system. The Franks were the only western kingdom that still had some Roman traditions. All free Frankish males were trained to fight. Armour was the warrior's responsibility. Only loot and booty were given to warriors, so there was no salary.

Clovis I was the founder of the Merovingian empire of the Franks. He defeated the Alamanni, the Burgundians and the Visigoths of Aquitaine. Clovis converted to Christianity in 496. At his death, his empire was split amongst his four sons. Clotaine I eventually became the sole king of the Franks. The Frankish king Dagobert (623-39) encouraged trade. His empire extended from France to the Low Countries to western Germany. Dagobert was the son of Chlothar II, who united the kingdom in 613. Dagobert's advisors were Arnulf and Pippin (Pepin),

whose families later started the Carolingian dynasty. Dagobert became the King of the Franks in 629, when his father died. He sent a force to Bohemia against the Wends, a Slavic tribe. The Wends were led by Samo, a former Frankish merchant. Dagobert was victorious, but the Slavs raided the Franks in the west, and the Saxons later joined them. In 635, Dagobert's army defeated King Basques of Brittany. Dagobert died in 638 and his minor sons Sigibert and Clovis took over. Dagobert was the last great Merovingian king. Dagobert had organized churches and made law codes. He was buried in the Church of St. Denis.

The area around Paris was called Neustria, and it was the centre of power in the Frankish empire. The Neustrians spoke Latin and proto-French, the Austrasian Franks of eastern France, western Germany and the Netherlands spoke German and Frankish.

The Merovingian empire soon fell into disorder and was rarely united. The Carolingians came from Austrasia and were descendants of Dagobert's advisors Pippin and Arnulf. Pippin's grandson Pippin II united Neustria and Austrasia after the Battle of Tertry in 687. The Germans previously under Frankish rule were more independent.

Pippin II's son Charles Martel gave the name to the Carolingian dynasty. He reunited northern Gaul and saw victory in 732 over the Arabs at Poitiers, where he drove them back. Martel campaigned in Burgundy and Provence. In the 750's, the Arabs of Septimania and the Goths became part of the empire. Martel also fought with Duke Eudo of Aquitaine.

Pippin III the Short succeeded Charles Martel. The church wanted to restore clerical life and eliminate pagan practices. Pippin III sent the last Merovingian king, Childeric III, to a monastery and became king. Pippin III became King Pippin I. Pope Stephen II asked for help against the Lombards. Pippin helped the Pope by defeating the Lombards. Pippin was also able to conquer Aquitaine during his rule.

Pippin's son was Charlemagne (772-814) or Charles the Great (lat. Carolus Magnus). Charles was born in 742. He was a tall, strong and healthy person who enjoyed exercise and hunting. He knew Latin, Frankish and some Greek. After his brother Carloman died in 771, Charles had the entire Frankish empire. Charlemagne defeated the Aquitanians and made his son Louis the King of Aquitaine. He added Saxony to the empire and destroyed the Avars in Hungary. He was victorious against many Slavic tribes. Charles campaigned in 773-774 against Desiderius of the Lombards at the request of Pope Hadrian. In 799 Leo II fled to Charlemagne after an ambush. Charlemagne went to Rome where he was crowned emperor of the newly formed Romano-Germanic Empire (Holy Roman Empire) on Christmas Day of 800, in St. Peter's church. In 806, Charles wrote his will and divided the empire amongst his sons. However, in the end he decided to let his son Louis the Pious ascend alone.

The annual Church councils decided to restore canon law to the Church. Schools were established, and the clergy made textbooks to teach Latin. The churches were also to give sermons in local languages, and Latin was even reformed.

Charlemagne died in 814, and his son Louis the Pious ascended. Charles' nephew Bernard became the King of Italy. In 816, the Rule of St. Benedict of Nursia became the rule by which monks everywhere must abide.

Louis exiled his advisors, but he died in 817, and his son Lothar succeeded. Louis's other sons Louis and Pippin would become kings within the empire. Bernard of Italy then revolted, but the revolt was put down. Lothar was in the middle of ascension problems. Louis called his brothers together in 822. In 823, Charles the Bald was born and Louis wanted this son to have a

share in the inheritance. Then civil war broke out after the death of Louis. The Treaty of Verdun was signed in 843, which dictated that the empire of Charlemagne was to be split up. Lothar I, Louis the German and Charles the Bald held the three parts of the empire. Charles had West Francia, Louis had Germany, and Lothar was the emperor.

The German kings rose in power as the Frankish kingdom fragmented. The Frankish empire remained until 987, when nobles installed Hugh Capet on the throne and ended the Frankish Carolingian dynasty.

The Crusades

The first Crusade was started by Christians. Muslims controlled Jerusalem since the 7th century. Pilgrimage of Christians was banned by Caliph al-Hakim (996-1021), who persecuted Christians. Byzantium was in trouble, and Emperor Alexius I appealed to Pope Urban II for help. The Church dictated that being a crusader would allow sins to be forgiven and debts to be forgotten. Rome wanted to unite the East and the West. In November 1095, the Pope declared war at the Council of Clermont. Raymond IV, Count of Toulouse accepted the Cross that symbolized the vows of the crusaders. Peter the Hermit, Pope Urban and various lords convinced many to join up.

The First Crusade (1096-99) started with a long march to Constantinople. Alexius I demanded that the crusaders swear an oath to return all the land they conquered to the Byzantines. About 100,000 people joined the crusade. They laid siege to Nicaea in 1097 and won a victory over the Turks at Dorylaeum under the well-executed command of Bohemund I. Then they marched to Antioch and captured it after a seven month siege in June of 1098. The city of Edessa was also seized by the crusaders. The Crusaders expected Emperor Alexius to march with them, but he didn't, so they said that their oath was void. The Crusaders kept Antioch and Edessa. On July 15, 1099, the army of 20,000 took Jerusalem and massacred everyone. Godfrey of Bouillon became "Baron and Defender of the Holy Sepulcher". A victory over the Egyptians at Ascalon ended the First Crusade. Pope Urban died in July 1099.

The Muslims took Edessa again in 1144 and sparked the Second Crusade. Bernard of Clairvaux was appointed by Pope Eugenius III to take the spiritual leadership. The Church allowed pillaging during the Crusade to increase interest. Conrad III of Germany and Louis VII of France led an army of 140,000. The Turks nearly annihilated the Germans and the Crusaders were again defeated in 1148 at Damascus. The Crusade was abandoned in 1149.

Syrian ruler Nur-ed-Din took Damascus and expanded his rule into Egypt. A lieutenant of Nur-ed-Din named Saladin emerged as a prominent figure. Saladin was the son of a Kurdish officer. He became the Vizier of Egypt in March of 1169 at age 31. He was a polite man, very chivalrous, and was also a good general. Saladin destroyed his Egyptian opposition. Nur-ed-Din became worried about Saladin's power. In 1171, Saladin sieged the Castle of Montréal, and Nur-ed-Din destroyed the Franks. In 1174, Nur-ed-Din died, and the Muslims in Syria were fragmented. In 1176, Saladin married the widow of Nur-ed-Din. In 1177, he defeated Baldwin IV at Jordan valley, and a truce was signed in 1180. Saladin took Syria to reunited the Muslims. The fortress of Kerk was sieged, and so was Tiberias. The Christians were crushed by Saladin at the Battle of Hattin, Jerusalem fell and the True Cross was captured.

Saladin took Jerusalem in 1187, and the Third Crusade (1189-92) began. Frederick I Barbarossa of the Holy Roman Empire set off on May 11, 1189 with 100,000 well equipped men. On May 18, 1190 Frederick defeated the Turks. Then Barbarossa died, possibly from drowning. The crusade of the Germans was therefore abandoned. Philip II Augustus and Richard I the Lion Hearted went on their own expedition. Richard's temper led to him attacking Messina in Sicily when he was journeying to the Holy Land. The expedition reached the Holy Land in 1191. The French under Philip Augustus sieged Acre. Richard took over the command, and Saladin could not budge the besiegers of Acre. Philip left the Crusade and went home, so Richard became the commander of all the Crusaders. Richard massacred some Muslim prisoners, because Saladin did not release the prisoners Richard wanted. Richard met Saladin's army about 100km from Acre. The knights charged impatiently, but still managed to win. Richard knew that he could not take Jerusalem. On August 4th, Saladin forced a battle outside Jaffa. Saladin failed to defeat the Christians, but showed great respect to Richard. When Richard's horse was killed, Saladin gave Richard two horses. Richard and Saladin signed a truce in October of 1192. While returning to England, Richard was captured in Vienna and ransomed. In March of 1199, Richard was hit by a crossbow bolt and on April 11, he died. Saladin died at Damascus in March 1193 at age 54.

Byzantium experienced succession problems after the death of Manuel, and eventually Alexius II Comnenus (1180-3) succeeded, but didn't last long as emperor. The Angelus family came to power in 1185.

The Fourth crusade (1202-4) never reached the Holy Land, instead, it attacked Constantinople. It was led by Enrico Dandolo of Venice and Count Baldwin of Flanders. They pillaged Constantinople in 1204 and started the Latin Empire. Constantinople was eventually recaptured. The Fifth Crusade (1228-9) led by King Andrew of Hungary left in 1217 and took Damietta in Egypt. Frederick II of the Holy Roman Empire took Jerusalem in 1228. Jerusalem was lost again in 1244, so Louis IX of France led a short Crusade, which ended with his capture and ransom after defeat at the hands of the Egyptians. Louis died in another crusade in Tunis in 1270, which was dubbed the Seventh Crusade.

The Ayyubid dynasty in Cairo, formed by Saladin, closed in on the Christians. Mongol attacks greatly weakened the Muslims. The Ayyubid dynasty was replaced by the mamelukes after a mutiny. Muslims were not supposed to fight each other, so mamelukes, who were slaves trained as warriors, solved that problem. However, the mamelukes became powerful and overthrew their masters. The Mongols took Baghdad and Damascus, but suffered a rare defeat at Ain Jalut at the hands of the mamelukes. General Baybars of the mamelukes took Christian towns one by one. In 1265, he took Caesarea, Haifa and Arsuf. In 1268, he sacked Antioch. In 1271, the famous Krek des Chevaliers fell to the Muslims. Baybars' successor Kalavim took Tripoli in 1289 and Acre in 1291.

Spain was the only area where the Christians defeated the Muslims. In 1212, the Christians defeated the Muslims at the Battle of Toledo. King Ferdinand III of Castile (1217-57) reunified Castile and Leon in 1230 and took Cordoba in 1236. Murcia, Jaen and Seville all fell to Ferdinand. James I of Aragon (1213-76) took Majorca in 1229 and the region of Valencia in 1245. Only Granada was still Muslim.

The Crusades generally failed to achieve anything for the Christians. They managed to bring only short-lived victories. The Fourth Crusade nearly destroyed Byzantium, and the Turks

continued to rise in power. Muslim holds on the Holy land were shaken, but eventually became stronger than ever. The Crusades did bring about the loss of thousands of lives at the hands of thirst, starvation, the heat and the perils of the sea.