

# The Indus Empires



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# Economics

## Mauryan/Gupta

The Gupta empire has a very strong economy. The Gupta empire balanced out the Caste System by taxing the farmers heavily, but exempting them from military service.

Meanwhile, the artisans were tax exempt but had to serve in the military. This allowed for a relatively fair system that benefited the economy.

## Harappan

The Harappan economy was heavily agricultural and boosted by trade. This economy was also an instance of the seals that Indus civilizations were known to use. Its economy wasn't as strong as the Gupta's, but was successful nonetheless.

## Aryan

The Aryan economy was mainly cattle-based, and most agriculture involved clearing forests. They used gold coins as currency. The barter system was also prominent. Very few people were skilled workers.

# Geography

## Mauryan & Gupta

The monsoon season had a strong effect on Mauryan Empire. Tons of rainfall most often lead to flooding. In the winter however it was the complete opposite there was a lack of rainfall. This made maintaining a surplus food incredibly difficult. The Empire's location still worked for them. India being a subcontinent, the empire was surrounded by water which made trade over sea thrived. The Gupta empire expanded farther up India. The Gupta Empire was protected by the Himalayan and Hindu Kush mountains. The people were better adapted to the monsoon pattern and because of this they had better agriculture and therefore a better economy.

## Harappan

This civilization was set in the fertile and beneficial Indus river valley. It was surrounded by fertile land all around. The lands were constantly replenished by the Sarasvati River during flood season. This of course helped maintain a surplus of food for the civilization, but that was not the only advantage for being next to the Sarasvati River. Their position helped them to expand and maintain a trade system spread to the wide plains and stopping at the end of the Hindu Kush Mountains.

## Aryan

The Aryan civilization was perfectly set by the river with flooding to make farming easy for them. With so many rivers flowing through the civilization all the land is very fertile. This civilization much like the other two was placed in the Indus valley. These 3 civilizations all being in the valley near major rivers gave them the benefit of having a surplus of food which helped them trade which made for better economy.

# Indus Art

The tradition of painting in India goes back to ancient times. Murals, Buddhist palm leaf manuscripts and miniature Indian painting. Records have been found that in ancient Indian periods, art has been used to decorate doors. The mosaics you see in ancient temples and architecture are mainly designed by the romans, but partly influenced by the Indians. Art was not everywhere because it was symbolized as royalty and power. Mosaics were held in political and religious sites. Art in India stretched further than paintings, art in India was displayed on clothes and weapons too. Indian architecture is heavily influenced by Chinese architecture except for the fact that there are more dome buildings in India.



Smee, Sebastian. "Peacock in the Desert' Offers a Rare Look at Indian Art and a Royal Court." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 18 May 2018, [www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/peacock-in-the-desert-offers-a-rare-look-at-indian-art-and-a-royal-court/2018/05/17/6a1e4ee4-58ca-11e8-b656-a5f8c2a9295d\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/peacock-in-the-desert-offers-a-rare-look-at-indian-art-and-a-royal-court/2018/05/17/6a1e4ee4-58ca-11e8-b656-a5f8c2a9295d_story.html).

# Religion

## **Mauryan/Gupta**

During this age, both Hinduism and Buddhism were very prevalent. However, since the leaders were Hindu, almost all Buddhists were driven out of the empire. The ones that did stay moved into the Ajanta Caves, where Buddhist artifacts have been found showing they lived in the caves nearly 400 years.

## **Harappan**

They worshipped the mother goddess Shakti and the god Shiva. Evidence has also been found that they practiced animal and sun worship as well.

## **Aryan**

The Aryans practiced the Vedic religion, and preserved it very well. They followed the teachings of the four Vedic texts. They worshipped several gods, but not all the same gods. They believed some gods kept them healthy, while others made them successful in battle.

# Politics

Early Indus River Valley civilization was based on a Theocracy, with the people aiming to please the gods. Every time something bad happened (e.g. a natural disaster) the citizens would believe that the gods were angry with what they had done, and the people and government would change their ways to appease the gods. The concept of Theocracy was well liked among the people, as they believed that everything was “God’s Plan”. Those who were in a higher social class would be allowed a law making position, and a say in day to day matters.

# Political symbols



These symbols, the elephant tiger, and buffalo, demonstrated what class someone was in. They were required by law to stamp all goods with their respective symbol in order to identify what class provided which goods. This government regulation give buyers a peace of mind and boosted the economy. The elephant meant you were wealthy, the tiger meant you were less economically fortunate, and the buffalo was something in the middle.

# Social Structure

**Brahmins-** They were the most respected and prominent people. Kings listened to them for advice. These were the people who engaged in talking and praying to the gods.

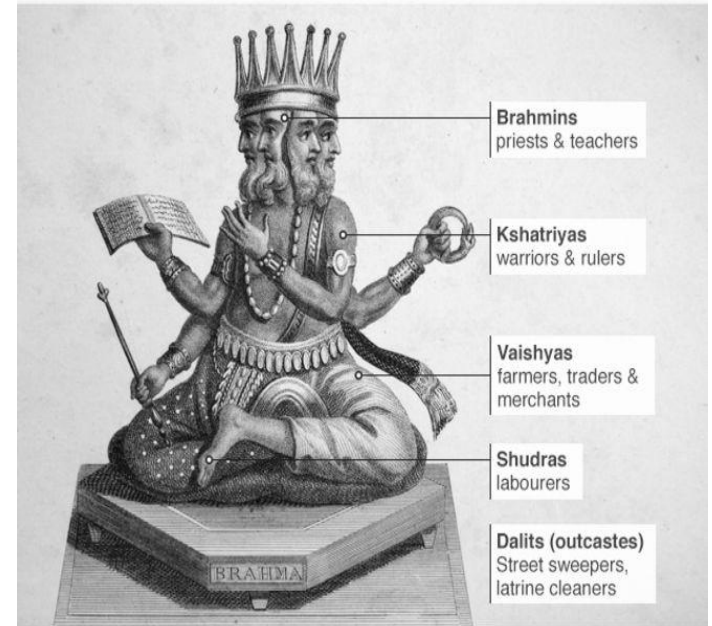
**Kshatriyas-** These people were categorized as warriors. They were also kings. All of these people belonged to the royal family. They were considered brave, and powerful.

**Vaishyas-** These were the common people. They did work such as productive labor and farming and some were traders. They had some rights of their own

**Shudras-** These people were essentially servants. They lived out on the street and ate the leftovers thrown outside. They were of service of anyone above their class.

**Dalits-** These people were not considered part of the society. They dealt with disposing remains of humans or cattle and were also washers and did other jobs that dealt with urine, feces etc.

Brahma and the origins of caste

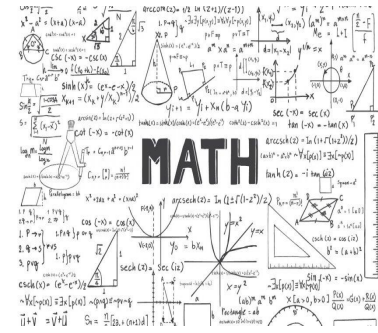
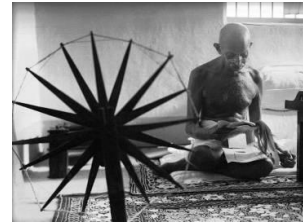


Source: Alamy



# Intellectual Achievements

1. Math including zero, decimals, square roots, algebra, number system 1-9
2. Sewing needles
3. Civil engineering
4. Planned urban townships with sewer systems
5. The game of checkers
6. The spinning wheel for clothes
7. Diamonds used in jewelry, bangle bracelets
8. Folk dances,
9. A Flushable toilet
10. High quality steel
11. Cures for multiple diseases



# Artifacts



<https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/images/ic/1280xn/p02ng4hq.jpg>

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/world-history/world-history-beginnings/ancient-india/a/the-indus-river-valley-civilizations>

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