

First Half Notes

Week 1: Introduction

<https://virl.kanopy.com/video/earliest-history-indian-subcontinent>

India is as large as America.

But also have a population more than America and Europe combined.

60 to 70 thousand years ago, people moved to subcontinent and settle accordingly.

Which result in dozens of different languages.

India has many cultures with rich bodies of literature.

India was a part of subcontinent before and later split and come to its current situation.

The movement of tectonic plates creates the India long mountain range Himalayan mountains.

The mountains part of Himalayas in India known a Hindu Kush.

Hindu Kush means death of Hindus.

Most of the rivers run from west to east. Only Narmada river runs from east to west.

India has a distinct weather which is quite different from other continents.

<https://virl.kanopy.com/video/indus-valley-civilization>

After 700 years, the Indian civilization declined and dissipated.

But the people and culture spread across Indian civilization.

There are many artifacts about the Indian civilization people remains.

There is still some question regarding them such as where the Indus valley people originally came from?

The earliest people came to South Asia are known as “Adivasi”.

Indus civilization grew wheat and barley but not rice.

Archeologist found well organised cities with surrounding walls and sustained houses.

The house and buildings were made of fire baked bricks.

There was no war and weapons in the civilization.

Indus writing has not been deciphered yet.

And many found over 400 symbols in the languages to find patterns.

There were many animals such as bulls, tigers, elephants, and goats etc.

Week 2: History wars

<https://www.npr.org/2019/04/23/714108344/india-is-changing-some-cities-names-and-muslims-fear-their-heritage-is-being-era>

PM Narendra Modi changed the name of Allahabad to Prayagraj.

Prayagraj refers to a Hindu pilgrimage.

The name Allahabad was related to Muslim ruler, Mughal emperor Akbar.

And a BJP (Bhartiya Janata Party) worker says that the government corrected the mistake by Akbar.

Although the university and high court still have the name of Allahabad.

Everything else is getting the name Prayagraj.

The BJP have renamed many towns, cities, street, etc.

They are not only changing names but, in some way, they are trying to remove the Muslim names and giving them Hindu names.

Although the Muslim are the 2nd largest population in the country after the Hindu's.

The man behind the name change of the Allahabad city is Yogi Adityanath.

He is a firebrand Hindu priest and chief minister of India's most populous state Uttar Pradesh.

He is also a prominent member of Modi's ruling party.

He is not only a priest but also an anti-religion person.

He has been seen many times in the rally speaking against the minority groups such as Muslims.

He did not believe that the Muslims are part of India.

He believes that Muslims are invaders in India.

And Indian history can't be recognised by the Invaders.

Many historians of the country are against the actions of the government.

Because these actions are not good for the unity and peace of the nations and can lead to riots in the nations between religions.

<https://thediplomat.com/2016/08/when-history-gets-political-indias-grand-aryan-debate-and-the-indus-valley-civilization/>

Mentioned in the ancient Hindu scriptures, many modern Hindus have come to believe that Sanskrit is indigenous to India.

Modern scholars believe that the Sanskrit and some of the aryaans originated outside of India.

They later migrate with their horses and were not the natives of the subcontinent.

But the Nationalist are against this theory.

They believe that the western world created this theory to discredit the antiquity of Indian civilization.

If the Hindu nationalists are right and most of them are not historians in any meaningful sense.

However, there are various other questioned about India's demographic, religion and ethnic origins.

Genetic and agricultural evidence reveal that there has been no major break in south Asia for thousand of years.

The genetic difference between north and south Indians are minor.

Yet, nobody knows what language was spoken in the indus valley civilization.

It was not Sanskrit.

However, there is a strong evidence that the Sanskrit did enter India during the process of the IVC collapse.

As the IVC did not have the horse which originated in central Asia.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/opinion/india-elections-modi-history.html>

The BJP in 2014 led to renewed efforts to rewrite the Indian history.

The efforts begun when the BJP first governed India between 1999 and 2004.

Under Mr. Modi the attempts to change history have taken many more forms.

Such as deleting chapters from schoolbooks that contradicts their ideology.

They have peddled myths and stereotypes through pliant media and networks.

Rss the parent body of BJP is teaching the new ideology in their schools.

Rss and its affiliates are trying to make India into a Hindu religious state.

To make India a Hindu country priority is given to Hindu people.

Hindutva ideologues insist on a single uniform culture of the aryan, ancestral to the Hindu as having prevailed in the subcontinent.

The most dangerous aspect of the implanting of the Hindutva is that the peace between the various religious groups are in danger.

Which can also lead to riots in the country.

My thoughts:

From the name of the topic History wars I thought that it would be more likely about the wars occurred in India. But when I started reading the topic, I found that the topic was fully opposite to my thinking and I also found this topic to be very interesting. And after reading the topic properly then I get the true meaning of the heading history wars.

The heading of the topic describes the situation that is going on in India. While reading the topic I feel myself to be very attached to the topic because I am also a citizen of India, I grew up there. On the other hand, I also feel very sad because of the things that are going on in India. How some ideologists are interfering with the history of India. How they are changing the History to make India a Hindu country. I think that steps taken by the government in altering history should be taken back because they are putting my lives in danger.

Week 3: Rivers of India.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-39488527>

In Hinduism Ganga is revered as a goddess who purifies a person of all sins.

The river is known as Ganga Mata which means Ganga mother and is also worshipped.

River is also famous for its Ganga Aarti.

Where thousands offer lit lamps in every evening in the Kumbh Mela.

Kumbh Mela is a pilgrimage of over 100 million people.

The organisers of the Ganga Aarti use the occasion to raise awareness about the action that pollute the river.

Recently the high court in India declared the river a person.

Which provides some fundamental rules and rights to river.

Court makes these statements to stop the pollution of the ganga river.

However, there are still some aspects that are not cleared yet.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-aad46fca-734a-45f9-8721-61404cc12a39>

Ganga is one of the greatest rivers on Earth, but it is dying.

It begins from Himalayan peaks and end up in Bay of Bengal.

Although it is also a sewer that carries the waste of 450 million people who lives in its catchment.

The Indian Prime Minister Modi promised two year ago to clean up the Ganga river.

Cleaning the ganga is not only the problem.

Another problem is controlling what is taken out from the river.

The river is a crucial source of water for a vast area.

Its basin covers more than one million sq km.

And is home to more than 40% of India's population.

Most of the Delhi water comes to city in two canals from Ganges.

Farmers also use the water from Ganges to nourish their soil to grow crops.

A special minister is arranged to full fill the order of Pm Modi to clean ganges.

But the project and the minister is running slow.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-aad46fca-734a-45f9-8721-61404cc12a39>

Sarasvati is a defied river mentioned in the Rig Veda.

As a physical river it is described as a small river ending in a terminal lake.

The river is also linked to the goddess Sarasvati.

And it is used to believe that the river is mighty flooded.

The Sarasvati river was revered and considered important for Hindus because of multiple mention of the river in the rig veda.

Rig veda indicated that the Sarasvati had lot its main sources of water supply.

Acc. To Mahabharata Sarasvati was dried up to a desert.

A committee was formed by the government to research about the Sarasvati river.

Rss claimed that if Sarasvati rivers evidence are found we are able to explain the golden Hindu era.

Before the invasions of Muslims and Christians.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/evidence-of-river-saraswatis-existence-found/article30306789.ece>

Researchers from physical research laboratory and Indian institute of Bombay have analysed sand from 3 meters below surface of Ghaggar.

They found that it was indeed a perennial river fed by glacial rivers in the past.

Presence of this type of sand itself indicates towards the existence of a powerful river in the past.

The team studied the strontium neodymium isotopic ratios.

They measured the ages of the mica sample in the sand by dating method.

They also claim that the river that used to flow in the area was not a monsoon river.

My Thoughts:

When I was child, I used to read the names of these rivers in my books. Although I have knowledge about the famous rivers of India such as Ganga, Yamuna, etc. but I have no knowledge about the Sarasvati river. Before this topic I was only familiar

With the name of the river but don't know the history of the river. I found it very interesting how a single river is so important that it was mentioned many times in the Rig Veda.

Week 4: Mahabharat

<https://virl.kanopy.com/video/epic-history-mahabharata>

The Mahabharata is one of the world most complex text.

In terms of its multilayer structure.

Mahabharata is arranged in 18 major books 100 minor books plus an appendix.

Vyasa is epically credited author pf the Mahabharata.

Lord Ganesha was one wrote the Mahabharata when Vyasa dictated it.

Mahabharata is rich evidence of warfare in ancient Indian.

Mahabharata provide all the details of the every single event occurred in that time.

Although some historians believe that the Mahabharata is not an original text.

My thoughts:

Mahabharata is one of the most popular tales in India. I have also heard a lot about Mahabharata. But I learned many interesting things from this topic and from the book illustrated Mahabharata. I learned several facts that I do not know before like Lord Ganesha was the one who wrote down the Mahabharat when it was dictated by Vyasa. Because he was only capable of writing at that speed by which Vyasa dictated it.

Week 5: Ramayana

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rama>

Rama or Ram also known as Ramachandra, is a major deity of Hinduism.

Rama is the seventh character or avatar of god Vishnu, and one of most popular incarnations along with Krishna, Parshurama and Gautama Buddha.

Rama was born in Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh. He was born to Kaushalya and Dasharatha who were the ruler of the kingdom.

Rama was married to Sita.

Valmiki in Ramayana described Rama as a charming, dark complexion person, and had long arms.

Rama's story had inspirational influence across the South Asia.

His life stories and states Goldman have inspired "painting, films, puppet shows, TV serials, novels and plays.

Rama inspired movement has championed social reforms, accepting members without discriminating anyone by gender, class, caste or religion.

Temples dedicated to Rama found all over India and where Indian community is resident.

The oldest temple is called the Rajiva locana temple near the Mahandi river in Rajpur (Chhattisgarh).

<https://www.hakaimagazine.com/news/god-or-geology-genesis-rams-bridge/>

Indian epic poem, the “Ramayana” is also a heart stopping thriller.

Ram and Sita wedded heroes exiled from their royal kingdom forced to live as hermits.

A 10 headed demon king, Ravana attack Sita with a golden deer and take her away to Sri Lanka.

Ram needs to find a way to cross the 50km of ocean between India and Sri Lanka.

Ram, an avatar of god Vishnu, call the army of monkeys to help him to build a bridge.

A submerged 50km chain of limestone shoals known as Ram Setu or Ram’s bridge.

Dayanath Tripathi, former chairman of Indian Council of Historical Research said, “it is a very sensitive matter, because the area is associated with millions of Hindus”.

In 2005, the Sethusamudram Shipping Canal Project proposed to open a shipping lane through the Ram’s bridge for cargo ships to pass.

Plan did not get enough support among Hindu’s groups and national government has to reject the project.

“There is no evidence from an archaeological point of view (that it’s man made)” says Tripathi.

In 2013, the project was scrapped for several reasons: ecosystem, tsunami risk. The dispute on Ram’s bridge was placed on hold until now.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-42219773>

Hindu nationalists demolished babri mosque.

Mosque is believed to be standing on ground of birthplace of god Rama.

BJP spearheaded six-year campaign to replace the mosque with a temple.

A crowd of around 150,000 had assembled to defend the mosque against police.

Zoya Hasan who is political scientist had called the Demolition of the mosque “the most blatant act of law in modern law”.

The BBC’s correspondent Ram Dutt Tripathi was sanguine in Ayodhya, the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Hindu nationalists arguing on the presence of mosque as they believed that Rama’s birthplace was emotional issue.

“Killed the hen which laid the golden egg” said by Ram Dutt to Hindu nationalists.

In different parts of India, a lot of riots occurred between Hindu and Muslim and blood was shed.

Around 900 people was killed by the police during the riots in Mumbai.

BJP hoped that Hindu's voted in their favour after the demolition of mosque.

But they did not succeed to make government in elections held in 1993 in Uttar Pradesh.

My thoughts:

I was familiar with the story of the Ramayana, but I still learned about a lot of things that I was not know before. For example, the sita was not original daughter of the king Janaka but she was the goddess of earth and found by the king while he was working in the field. Sita was also known as bhumi devi as.