THE DEHLI SULTANATE 1192 - 1526 CE:

Feb. 11th, 2013
(455-528) Successive invasions of Huns; other Central Asian tribes destroy Gupta empire.
HARSH’A KINGDOM C. 640 C.E.
EARLY KINGDOM OF NOTE: HARSHA

- United Northern India 604-646
- Hindu who supported Buddhism
- Warrior turned Humanitarian
  - Built roads
  - Hospitals
  - Temples (Hindu and Buddhist)
  - Wrote three plays
  - Brahmans tried to kill him
- Died without a successor, so Empire crumbled
After the Gupta empire fell in about 550CE India again fragmented into many (Rajputs) local kingdoms. Rival princes battled for control of the northern plain. Would not unite for common cause. Despite power struggles Indian culture flourished. (Hindu and Buddhist) Rulers spent huge sums to build and decorate magnificent temples. Trade networks linked India to the Middle East Southeast Asia and China.
From the 6th century onward, successive waves of invaders made their way into South Asia:

- Huns
- Arabs
- Turks

Although Arabs conquered the Indus Valley in 711 they advanced no farther into the subcontinent.

Then about 1000 CE Muslim Turks and Afghans pushed into India.

At first they were adventurers like Mahmud who pillaged much of the north.
GHAZNI’S EXPANDING EMPIRE
RAIDS!

- Turks from Afghanistan led by Mahmud of Ghazni would raid India to take treasure, but originally not interested in conquering.

- Monasteries (Buddhist and Hindu) were not protected due to lack of organized resistance against foreigners.
ISLAM ARRIVES IN INDIA

• By force—military, Arabs, mid 7th century
• Islam spread along the coast through the trade network, Arab and Persian mariners and merchants, example, Gujarat
• Migration and invasion of Turks, 11th century
• Many Hindu towns surrendered willingly because the Muslims promised lower taxes and greater religious toleration
• Arabs treated Hindus and Buddhists as “People of the Book.” Little effort at conversion was initially made.
• Later sufis play a significant role in India
HINDUISM VS. ISLAM

- Open
- Tolerant
- Inclusive
- Flexible
- Caste System
- Cows
- Images
- Music

- Exclusive
- Egalitarian
- seclusion
- Veiling (covering)
- Pork
- No images
- No music
INDIAN INFLUENCES ON ISLAM

- Hindu mathematicians and astronomers traveled to Baghdad under the Abbasid.
- Medicine, music, Algebra and Geometry were translated into Arabic

- Celestial tools were copied and improved
- Hindu numerals were adopted by Arabs and spread to Europe. (Arabic numerals)
- Hindu style hospitals were copied by Arabs and crusaders
- Some tales in the *Arabian Nights* were copied from Indian literature and the game of chess passed out of India.
DELHI SULTANATE

- Persian commander Muhammad begins conquest of N. India
- Lasts for 300 years and was ruled by Persians, Afghans, Turks
- Sultanate fought constantly with Mongols, Turks and Hindus to control the region. So, power was based on large military machines. Cavalry and war elephants were the core of this machine.
- The struggle between Muslim lords and Hindu dependents greatly limited the actual control exercised by the Sultanate.
- Hindus will make up the majority of the military and the bureaucracy.
- He made Delhi his capital.
- Successors organized a sultanate or land ruled by a sultan.
- The Delhi sultanate which lasted from 1206 to 1526 marked the start of Muslim rule in northern India.
ARAB MILITARY SUCCESS

- Why did the Muslim invaders triumph?
- They won on the battlefield in part because Muslim mounted archers had far greater mobility than Hindu forces who rode slow-moving war elephants.
- Also Hindu princes wasted resources battling one another instead of uniting against a common enemy.
- In some places large numbers of Hindus especially from low castes converted to Islam.
- In the Hindu social system you will recall people were born into castes or social groups from which they could not change
CONVERSION PATTERNS

- Northern India had larger conversions to Islam because of point of entry and Delhi Sultanate.
- Hindus believed Muslims would be absorbed into the “more sophisticated” culture of India as all other invaders had.
- Women status was lessened under both religions, Muslims adopted child marriage, prohibition of remarriage of women and some sati.
- Few conversions were forced because most carriers of Islam were merchants and Sufi mystics.
  - Sufis shared much with Hindu gurus and ascetics
  - Sufis seemed to have magical healing powers
  - Mosques often became centers of political power
  - Sufis organized their followers into militias to protect local areas
  - Sufis welcomed low-caste and outcaste Hindus to Islam (entire sub-castes sometimes converted) Low-caste converts stayed at the bottom of society, explaining why there were relatively few.
  - Most conversions came from Buddhists because of corrupt Buddhist practices.
  - No “head Tax” on believers
  - Muslims lived apart from Hindus
EFFECTS OF MUSLIM RULE

- Muslim rule brought changes to Indian government and society.
- Sultans introduced Muslim traditions of government.
- Many Turks Persians and Arabs migrated to India to serve as soldiers or officials.
- Trade between India and the Muslim world increased.
- During the Mongol raids of the 1200s many scholars and adventurers fled from Baghdad to India bringing Persian and Greek learning.
- The newcomers helped create a brilliant civilization at Delhi where Persian art and architecture flourished.
MUSLIMS AND HINDUS

- At its worst the Muslim conquest of northern India inflicted disaster on Hindus and Buddhists.
- The widespread destruction of Buddhist monasteries contributed to the drastic decline of Buddhism as a major religion in India.
- Others may have converted to escape death.
- In time though relations became more peaceful.
HINDU-MUSLIM DIFFERENCES

- The Muslim advance brought two utterly different religions and cultures face to face.
- Hinduism was an ancient religion that had evolved over thousands of years. Hindus recognized many sacred texts and prayed before statues representing many gods and goddesses.
- Islam by contrast was a newer faith with a single sacred text.
- Muslims were devout monotheists who saw offense to one true god.
- Hindus accepted differences in caste status and honored Brahmans as a priestly caste.
- Muslims taught the equality of all believers before God and had no religious hierarchy.
- Hindus celebrated religious occasions with music and dance a practice that many strict Muslims condemned.
INTERACTIONS

• Eventually the Delhi sultans grew more tolerant of their subject population.
• Some Muslim scholars argued that behind the many Hindu gods and goddesses was a single god.
• Hinduism was thus accepted as a monotheistic religion.
• Although Hindus remained second-class citizens as long as they paid the non-Muslim tax they could practice their religion, sultans even left rajahs or local Hindu rulers in place.
• During the Delhi sultanate a growing number of Hindus converted to Islam.
• Some lower-caste Hindus preferred Islam because it rejected the caste system. Some converts came from higher castes.
• They chose to adopt Islam either because they accepted its beliefs or because they served in the Muslim government.
• Indian merchants were attracted to Islam in part because of the strong trade network across Muslim lands.
CULTURAL BLENDING

- During this period too Indian Muslims absorbed elements of Hindu culture such as marriage customs and caste ideas.
- A new language Urdu evolved as a marriage of Persian Arabic and Hindi.
- Local artisans applied Persian art styles to Indian subjects.
- Indian music and dance reappeared at the courts of the sultan.
- Indian holy man Nanak sought to blends Islamic and Hindu beliefs.
- He preached the unity of God the brotherhood of man the rejection of caste and the futility of idol worship.
- His teachings led to the rise of a new religion Sikhism in northern India.
- The Sikhs later organized into military forces that clashed with the powerful Mughal rulers of India.
NANAK - SIKHISM

• Traveled across India, Tibet, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Middle East
• Among the many philosophical foundations laid by Guru Nanak, his characterization of God, as illustrated by his visit to Mecca, recognizable.
• It forms the opening lines of the 1430 page Sikh holy scripture, Guru Granth Sahib. The translation is –

  • There is but One God, The Supreme Truth; The Ultimate Reality, The Creator, Without fear, Without enemies, Timeless is His image, Without Birth, Self Created, By His grace revealed.
ADAPTING THE CASTE SYSTEM

- Adapted
- More complex and extended geographically
- Merchants and artisans for guilds and sub-caste
- Muslims gained recognition as distinct groups
- Caste system became securely established in south
- Onset of strictly Muslim-Only caste sections.
MODERN ISLAMIC POPULATION - INDIA

BY THE NUMBERS

Muslims in India are less educated, poorer and more often unemployed than Hindus:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hindus</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiteracy</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita</td>
<td>$461*</td>
<td>$109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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- 1989 to present Insurgency leaves more than 30,000 dead
- 1983 More than 500 Muslims massacred and buried in a mass
- 1992 Mosque torn down
- 1987 Communal violence leaves 350 people dead
- 1992 Nearly 1,800 people killed in riots
- 1989 Ethnic strife leaves 1,000 dead, 50,000 displaced

MAP KEY

- Less than 5%
- 5%–10%
- 10%–20%
- 20%–30%
- More than 80%

Sources: Census of India; India Today; Muslimworld.com; TIME Research

TIME Map by Dennis Wong; text by Nick Papadopoulos
In 1398 Tamerlane invaded India. *aka Timur*
He plundered the northern plain and smashed into Delhi.
Thousands of artisans were enslaved to build Tamerlane’s capital at Samarkand.
Delhi an empty shell slowly recovered.
But the sultans no longer controlled a large empire and northern India again fragmented this time into rival Hindu and Muslim states.
He intended to restore and expand the Mongol Empire famously founded over a hundred years before by Ghengis Khan.

All he cared about was conquering people, taking everything they owned, and subjugating them. Isfahan, Iran, surrendered without a fight in view of his massive approaching army in 1387, and he treated them mercifully, until his tax collectors started collecting impossibly high tax revenue, whereupon they were killed in the streets. When Timur heard this, he ordered his army to about-face, march on the city, and kill every single living thing in it, even the rats. Birds were shot out of the sky by his archers.

The people, men, women and children were beheaded, to a total of 70,000 in just over two days of slaughter. He then ordered their heads piled up as 28 giant towers in the grassy hills around the city, each tower consisting of about 1,500 heads.
In 1398, Timur invaded northern India, massacring whole cities of Hindu people in every direction. His only real motive for the invasion was India’s vast gold and gem treasuries. He was opposed in December of that year by Sultan Mehmud, who sent 120 war elephants against him. Timur forced the elephants to panic back into their own lines by stacking wood on the backs of all his camels and setting the camels on fire, then goading them toward the charging elephants. The camels bellowed in agony and the fiery sight did the trick. The elephants turned around and fled.

Timur then entered the capital of Delhi, pillaged it, burned it to the ground, and executed 100,000 innocent civilians in one day, by having them beheaded or speared.

Timur claimed in his memoirs that he wanted to restrain his army from killing all these people, but could not, and besides this, he finally decided that he should not restrain his men, because it was the will of Allah that the residents of Delhi had to die.
QUTB MINARET, DELHI, INDIA
SYNCRETIC RELIGIONS

- Bhakti is a blend of Hinduism and Islam with mysticism similar to Islam but veneration of Hindu gods such as Kali.
- Sikhism, also a blend of Hinduism and Islam, stressed loving devotion to G-D and a brotherhood to all. Originally it tried to bridge the gap between the two faiths, but faced with persecution and the murder of its leaders; Sikhism turned to violent means to defend itself.
VISITORS TO INDIA

- Hiuen-Tsiang (a.k.a. Huen Tsang, 603-664 A.D.) was one of the outstanding Chinese scholars who visited India in search of knowledge. His *Hsi vü chi (Record of Western Lands)* records exact observations in India (630–43) and gives priceless guidance to modern archaeology.

- In 1017 c.e. Alberuni (a.k.a. Al-Biruni) traveled to India to learn about the Hindus, "and to discuss with them questions of religion, science, and literature, and the very basis of their civilization". He remained in India for thirteen years, studying, and exploring.

- Marco Polo in the 1280’s returned to Europe by way of Cathay in India
SOUTHERN INDIA

• Islam only along coast.
• Peaceful conversion
• Islam spreads from here to Maldives, Malacca and Sumatra
  – Women will retain a stronger role in the family and society in general in these areas
• Sufis tolerated other beliefs being incorporated into Islam
CHOLA KINGDOM (9\textsuperscript{TH} – 13\textsuperscript{TH} CENTURY)
Vijayanagar Capital

The Elephant Stables
• Rise of Hindu kingdoms in South India; independent of Muslim rulers until destruction of capital city in 1565.
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE (1336-1646)
One would expect that in medieval times women were almost like domesticated pets caged in the house. Lawmaker Manu's oft-quoted statement that women are not worthy of freedom strengthens this expectation. However, the inscriptions, literary sources and sculptures of the period give an astonishingly different picture of status of women in South India in medieval times.

Dr. Jyotsna Kamat
WOMEN

- According to B.P. Mazumbar, Northern India did not have any women administrators of provinces or kingdoms during this period.
- Southern India had women who administered villages, towns, divisions and heralded social and religious institutions.
  - Jakkiabbe ably administered seventy villages after the premature death of her husband.
  - Mailalladevi, a senior queen of Someshwara-I ruled the important province of Banavasi comprising 12000 villages.
- There were female trustees, priestesses, philanthropists, musicians and scholars in the Jainist Religion.
WOMEN

- All menial tasks like cleaning in temples and private households were undertaken by bondmaids whose position was not high in the society.

- In addition to their household duties, women gave a helping hand to their men in their vocations. The occupation of a nurse (dhatri) was quite common. Women also worked in fields.

- Marriage was compulsory for all the girls except for those who opted for asceticism. Brahman girls were married between ages 8 and 10 from 6th or century onwards up to the modern times.

- Purdah-veiling and seclusion adopted in upper class Hindu families.
• Sati was prevalent among certain classes of women, who either took the vow or deemed it a great honor to die on the funeral pyres of their husbands.
  – Ibn Batuta observed that Sati was considered praiseworthy by the Hindus, without however being obligatory.
  – They were not coerced. The majority of the widows did not undergo Sati.
  – Mahasati stones were erected in memory of brave women who committed Sati and are periodically worshipped. The number of such stones are a few, indicating a small number of such women. There are no instances of remarriage of widows.

• Ibn Batuta also felt that the plight of widows was miserable. A widow was considered an inauspicious person and was prohibited from wearing colorful clothes, ornaments, decorate hair, as is seen from descriptions in literature.

• The women of medieval Deccan were complimentary to men and not competitive in all fields and they together made a complete unit. Women faced hardships bravely, and excelled in the field of charity, exhibiting their sense of social service. They were good housewives, pursued fine arts and when given a chance, shone as good administrators and fought battles.
SUMMARY: POST GUPTA INDIA...

- **Indian Political Instability c. 550 - 1050**
  - costly to rule India as a single empire
  - Without stable gov’t investment and technological progress slow or stop.
  - poor interregional communications also made unification difficult

- **India Economy c. 550 - 1150**
  - Small, local agriculture dominates economy
  - most people were subsistence farmers
  - Few markets to buy or sell products
  - Some coastal trade with Africa and middle east along the coastline
  - Regular local famines causes population migration and decline additional stability
  - The ports of S. India were involved in the Indian Ocean trade, chiefly involving spices, with the Roman Empire to the west and Southeast Asia to the east
SUMMARY: THE BEGINNING OF THE END

- **India Social Life c. 550 - 1150**
  - Caste system led to large gap between rich and poor
  - Caste system limited social change and decreased desire to progress since people couldn’t change caste no matter what
  - Families remained patriarchal and large
  - Women lost rights since the power of central govt and religious central power declined and they were not well protected

- **Indian Religion c. 550 - 1150: THE RISE OF SUFISM in India**
  - Hindu dominates
  - Many Buddhists
  - Jains and Zoroastrians also
  - Sufi Islam begins
    - simple living
    - constant prayer
    - Often wear blue wool (sūf) clothing,
    - Mystical Muslims
SUMMARY: INVASION AND ISLAM

- **The Rise of Islam in India**
  - c. 700 - Traders from Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus
  - c. 800 - Muslim settlers
  - c. 1000 – Turkish Muslim invaders from Turkistan
  - 1150 Turkish Muslim conquerors take India and build Delhi Sultanate
    - excellent trade links with Dar al Islam

- **Islamic Conquerer MAHMUD OF GHAZNI ‘The Idol Breaker’ from Afghanistan (1001 – 1026 CE)**
  - 17 invasions into India
  - destroyed Hindu temples,
  - captured Hindus as slaves, and
  - pillaged the wealth of the Indian cities.

- The Mughal Empire begins..