

## Chapter 6

# THE INDUS VALLEY BUILDS CITIES

**Ted:** What's our next snapshot in our tour of ancient history?

**Mona:** We've reached the point where civilizations are starting to pop up all over the world. Today we're between 3300 and 1900 BCE on our timeline. Our next stop brings us to the Indian Subcontinent in Asia.

**Ted:** So that means we're right here on our map.

The Indian Subcontinent is this big old piece of land in green. It's cut off from most of Asia by the Himalaya Mountains, home to the tallest mountains in the world.

**Mona:** That's right Ted. And our snapshot starts in the Himalayas, with two rivers.

**Ted:** Let me guess, these two rivers flooded each year leaving behind silt?



**Mona:** Yep, just like we saw in Mesopotamia and Egypt! The two rivers are the Indus River and the Sarasvati River, which has now dried up.

**Ted:** What was this civilization called?

**Mona:** We can't read anything this civilization wrote, so we don't know what they called themselves. Instead we call them the Indus Valley Civilization, after the valley these people lived in. Sometimes they're called the Harappan Civilization, after the first city that was discovered.



*Samples of Indus Valley Script which has not been deciphered.*

**Ted:** Discovered? How was it discovered?

**Mona:** Well, the Indus Valley Civilization disappeared and its cities were forgotten and overgrown with plants. Then in 1856, the British were building a railroad across India. They needed more supplies to build the foundation of the railroad. Some railroad workers discovered there were a bunch of nicely made bricks just laying around. They thought that was pretty convenient and started using them to help build the railroad. But they hadn't just discovered some handy building supplies, they had discovered the remains of one of the world's oldest civilizations!



**Ted:** Wow, you mean, one day I could be out wandering in the forest, and I might find the remains of an ancient civilization?

**Mona:** It's unlikely, but totally possible!

**Ted:** Man, history is cool!

**Mona:** Once archaeologists started looking at the bricks these workers had found, they quickly realized they'd discovered something huge!

**Ted:** How could they tell that by looking at the bricks?



**Mona:** Because all of the bricks were the same size! Even bricks found many miles apart were the same size. Archaeologists knew all these same-sized bricks had to come from an advanced civilization.

After all, making bricks the exact same size over and over doesn't happen on accident. And because of how far apart these bricks were found, they knew this had to be a large civilization, not just a single village.

**Ted:** Since all the bricks were the same size, that means the people must have been working together.

**Mona:** Exactly! When the archaeologists started digging they discovered some amazing cities! The two largest cities are Mohenjodaro and Harappa, but over a thousand Indus Valley settlements have been discovered so far! While many civilizations specialized in building amazing monuments, the Indus Valley people focused on a less flashy, but equally impressive type of building: city building!

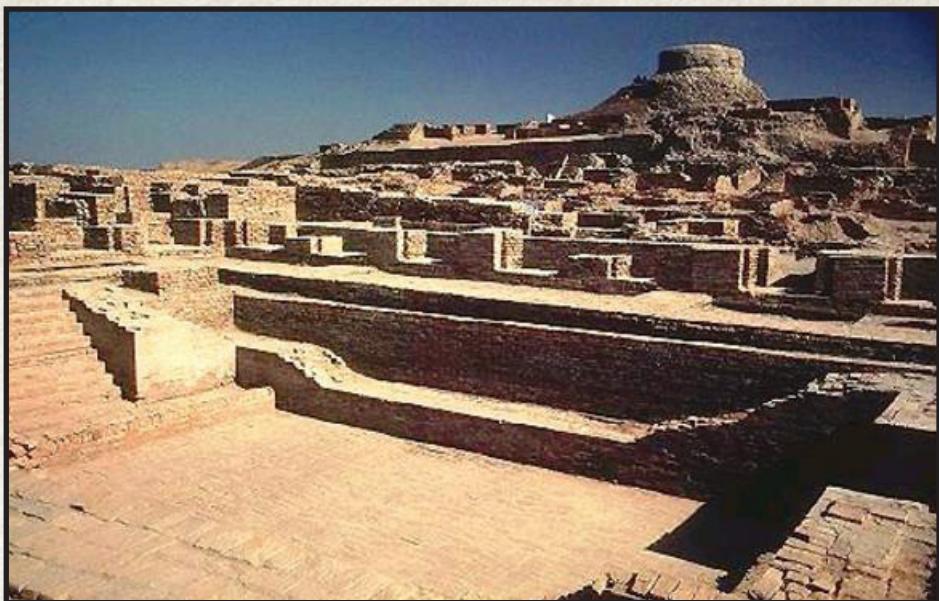
**Ted:** City building doesn't sound very impressive.

**Mona:** You haven't looked at the Indus Valley cities yet. First of all, take a look at the picture of Indus Valley ruins. See how neatly and tightly those bricks are lined up? Even by today's standards, that's some really nice brick work!

**Ted:** Oh I see, that's why having equally sized bricks was so important. They couldn't have lined those bricks up so nicely if the bricks were different sizes.

**Mona:** Yep! The Indus Valley people would carefully plan their cities, instead of just building things wherever they wanted. Part of the city would include houses, while another part would have workshops for craftsmen. The Indus Valley people were expert craftsmen and traders.





*Ruins of the bathhouse in Mohenjodaro.*

**Ted:** Oooo, let me guess. Another part of the city had a big fancy palace for the king.

**Mona:** Nope! Even though we've discovered lots of things about the Indus Valley, we still don't know what kind of government they had. Maybe they had a king who lived in an ordinary house? Or maybe they were ruled by a council? Or maybe they didn't have a government? Whatever type of government they had, they didn't build big fancy buildings for it.

**Ted:** No government?! That's so weird. They must have at least had fancy houses where the rich people lived.

**Mona:** That's another strange thing about the Indus Valley people. Everyone appears to have been equal. There's no evidence that some people had more money and things than other people.

**Ted:** Everyone was equal? That's awesome! But also really weird. Throughout history, humans are almost always divided based on money or skills or some other difference. Does that also mean there was no slavery in the Indus Valley?



**Mona:** Yep! As far as we can tell, there were no slaves. The Indus Valley is really unusual compared to most civilizations! Another strange thing about them is that there is no evidence of war in the Indus Valley.

**Ted:** What, no war?!? That's like the one thing all humans share!

**Mona:** Archaeologists have found weapons in the Indus Valley, but it seems like those weapons were only used for hunting, not for fighting other humans.

**Ted:** Wow, the Indus Valley really was impressive! No slaves, no war, everyone was equal? That's so cool!

**Mona:** The one really impressive type of building we've found in Indus Valley cities is their bathhouses.

**Ted:** Bathhouses? They had a whole building for taking baths?

**Mona:** Yes, they had public baths. Public bathing might seem weird to us, but it is really common in many parts of the world. The Indus Valley built large bathhouses in their cities. Being clean seems to have been really important to them because they didn't just build bathtubs, they also invented flushing toilets!

**Ted:** Flushing toilets?? I thought that was a modern invention!

**Mona:** The toilets in our houses are a modern invention, but the Indus Valley people had their own version thousands of years ago! They also had organized garbage collection.

**Ted:** An Indus Valley city sure seems like a nice place to live!

**Mona:** I agree! Next time, we're going to go back to Egypt and see how their civilization has been developing.

### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Try researching the following topics:

- Discovery of the Indus Valley Civilization
- History of toilets
- Indus Valley trading routes

## Chapter 11

# AUSTRONESIA SETS SAIL

**Mona:** I'm excited because today we're talking about one of the largest and most impressive migrations in human history! And might I say it's just a wee bit mysterious too? Today we're talking about Austronesia!

**Ted:** I've heard of things ending in -nesia before, like Polynesia, but I don't think I've ever heard of Austronesia.

**Mona:** Austronesia is the name of a language family. Everyone speaks a language, like right now I'm speaking English. It might seem like every language is really different. If I listened to someone speaking German, I'd have no idea what they were saying. But if you learn multiple languages, you'll find that some languages have a lot more in common than you might guess. English and German are actually both modern versions of the same language.

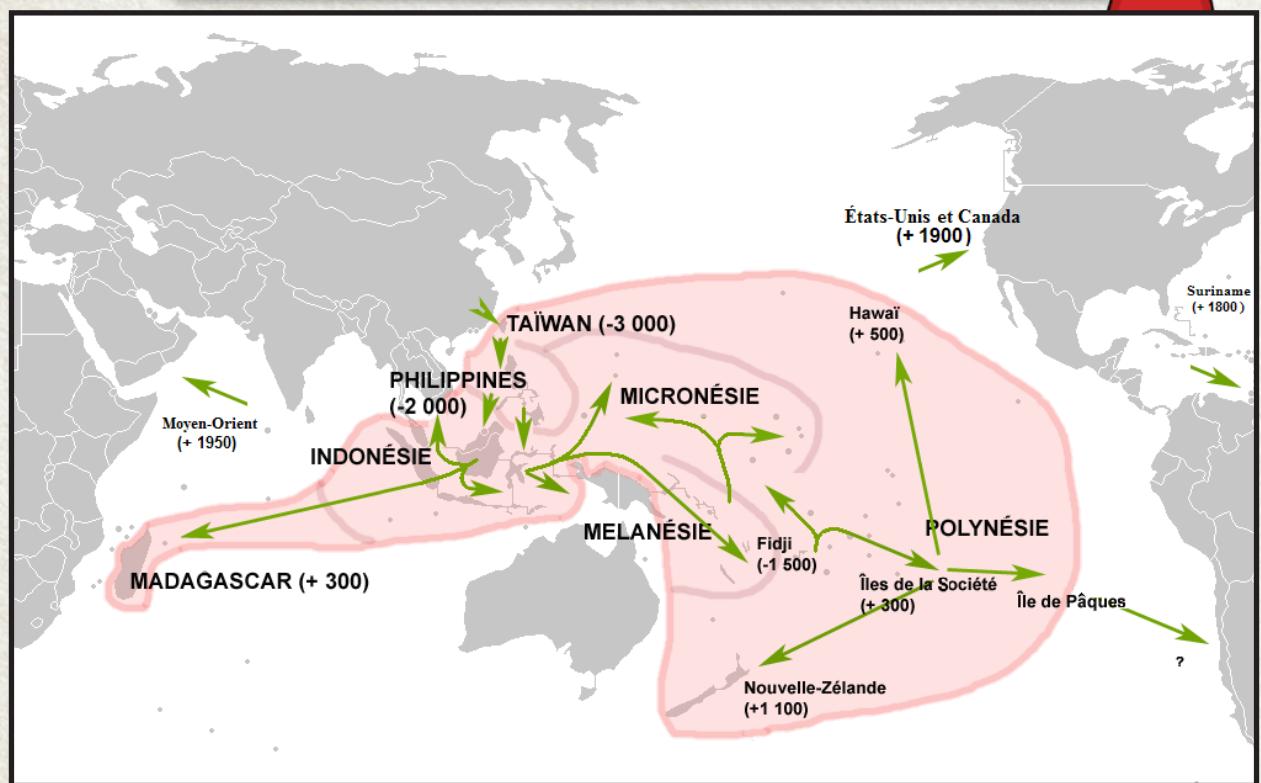
**Ted:** Wait, English and German came from the same place? How?

**Mona:** A group of German speaking people colonized England. Similarities in those languages prove they came from the same place. English and German are both part of the Indo-European language family. Most of the languages in Europe, large parts of the Middle East, and India all came from the same place. So somehow, thousands of years ago, those people were all one people speaking the same language. Over time, as people separated, their languages changed and evolved into the hundreds of Indo-European languages that exist today.

**Ted:** Wow, so we can look at language to see what happened in the past.

**Mona:** Exactly! And that's what we're doing today. Austronesia is a language family spoken by people in Southeast Asia and most of the Pacific Islands, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Micronesia, Polynesia, Hawaii, and New Zealand. It's also spoken in Sri Lanka, Madagascar and the tip of South Africa. It's even spoken in Suriname in South America.

**Ted:** HOLY COW! That's a HUGE area of the world!!! A huge area with A LOT of water!! Like open ocean water. Not calm inland sea water.



Map showing the “Out of Taiwan” expansion model for Austronesia, including modern day migrations.

**Mona:** And that is what makes the Austronesian people so fascinating! How on earth did they get where they got and why did they even try? It's a beautiful mystery.

**Ted:** Please tell me you have some answers.

I had to zoom  
my timeline out  
for today!

Early Migrations

Pyramid of Giza Stonehenge

2500 BCE

Xia China

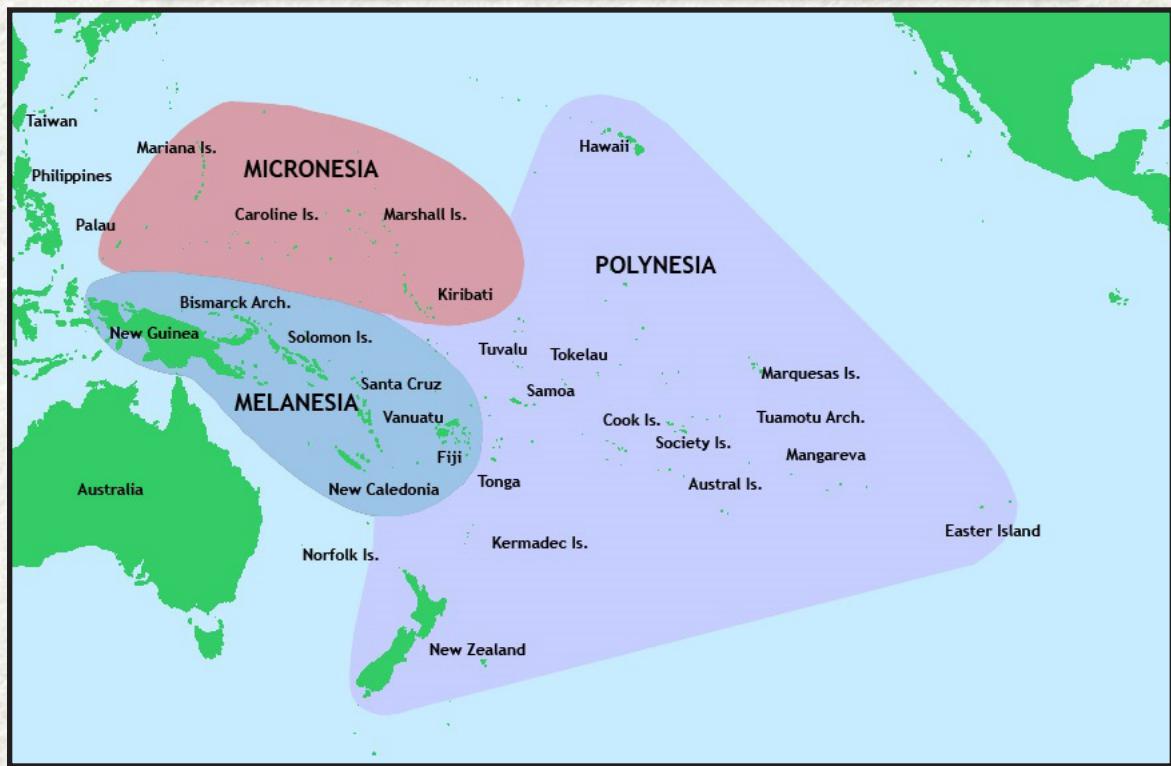
Shang China

Early Migrations

**Mona:** There are two theories for the Austronesian migration.

Theory number one is the “out of Taiwan” theory. Taiwan is an island off the coast of China. The theory is that the Austronesian people originally lived in mainland China, but then moved to Taiwan. Then sometime between 5,000 and 2,500 BCE these people started venturing beyond. They got on boats and started sailing out and discovering new islands! The first place they landed was in the Philippines. They continued to expand out settling on the islands in the Philippines and the surrounding islands. Then they began expanding into Melanesia around 1200 BCE. By 1000 BCE they had expanded all the way into Polynesia. And they kept expanding out! In 300 CE they had settled Easter Island off the coast of South America. By 400 CE they had settled Hawaii. New Zealand was discovered and colonized around 1280 CE.

**Ted:** Wow, that is a long history of expansion and migration! What’s the other theory?



These dates crossed over to  
the CE side of my timeline!

**Mona:** The other theory is the “out of Southeast Asia” model. This theory claims the Austronesians started out in Southeast Asia, not China, and they started expanding out a lot sooner, but more slowly. During the last ice age, Asia was a lot bigger! It included a massive subcontinent called Sundaland. So the Austronesian migration could have begun as early as 15,000 years ago, as they began looking for new homes due to the flooding from the melting ice.

**Ted:** So which theory is right?

**Mona:** Scholars are still debating that. They’re looking at things like language similarities, environmental changes, genetic data, even coconut species to try to crack the mystery of the Austronesian migration.

**Ted:** Wait, did you just say coconuts? What does that have to do with this?

**Mona:** It looks like the Austronesians took coconuts with them as they sailed to new islands.

**Ted:** I thought coconuts could float in salt water and start growing on a new island all on their own. Why do they think people did it?

**Mona:** Because when scientists look at the specific species of coconuts living in different places, it matches the Austronesian settlements. Islands they didn’t settle have different species of coconuts. Based on the coconut evidence, it looks like the Austronesians even sailed all the way to the coast of western South America.

**Ted:** So what did their boats look like that they used to sail across the ocean? I mean, they’d have to be pretty impressive to not sink.



**Mona:** We can't say for sure (because they were made of wood, so we don't have any examples to study) but these are some pictures of traditional boats from some Austronesian speaking people.



JAHN

Above, painting by Henry Byman Martin made in 1846-47 showing a traditional Tahitian sailing canoe.

Right, a traditional canoe of the Motu people who live on Papua New Guinea made at the end of the 1800s. The sail was made by weaving pandanus leaves.



*Above, photograph of Negrito people in the Philippines in a traditional canoe taken in the late 1800s.*



**Ted:** Those don't look like giant boats designed to sail the ocean.

**Mona:** The one thing these boats all have in common is an outrigger. That's the part that's poking out from the boat. The outrigger would help balance the boat in the waves. Depending on the boat, people would sit or lean on the outrigger to help keep the boat balanced.

**Ted:** So with the right balance, even a small boat can sail the open ocean. Cool! Was everyone who lived on these islands Austronesian?

**Mona:** Nope! Many of the islands, like the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Papua New Guinea had been inhabited by humans for tens of thousands of years.

**Ted:** How did those humans get there?

**Mona:** The earth used to look very different. Remember the sub-continent Sundaland? The earliest humans probably walked there.

**Ted:** So what are Austronesians like? Aside from being awesome sailors and adventurers?

**Mona:** There are hundreds of cultures that have developed from the original Austronesian people. So there's not one simple answer. One thing many of these cultures share is tattoos. Many Austronesian people turned their bodies into works of art. Tattoos often told important things about a person, like what their social status was or what things they had accomplished.

*Right, Dayak man in Indonesia with traditional tattoos.*

*Far Right, Tuterei Karewa of the Ngatimaru tribe, North Island, New Zealand with traditional Maori tattoos.*

*The word tattoo comes from the Polynesian word 'tatau' which means 'to write.'*

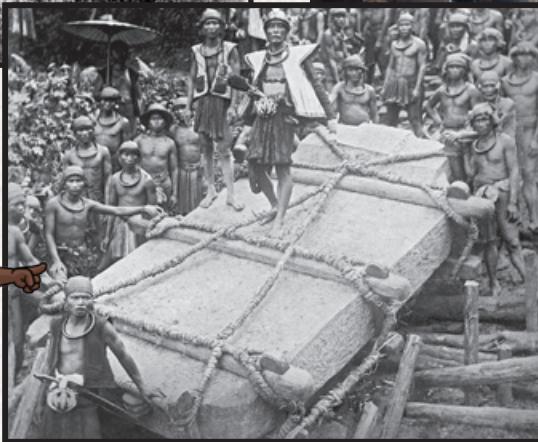


**Ted:** I had no idea that's where tattoos came from!

**Mona:** Another thing we find popping up in a lot of Austronesian cultures is megaliths.

**Ted:** Like Stonehenge?

**Mona:** Yep! The most famous Austronesian megaliths are the moai heads on Easter Island, but that's just one example. Austronesian megaliths haven't been studied nearly as much as European megaliths, so we don't know as much about them, but these megaliths were clearly created by a sophisticated and organized culture.



*Top right, Bada Valley Megalith in Indonesia.*

*Above, Abu Tongariki, the largest collection of Moai heads Easter Island.*

*Left, Nias people constructing megalith in 1915.*

**Ted:** I'd love to know the story behind all those megaliths!

**Mona:** Did you know, megalith building didn't disappear with the ancient world. Here is a picture of an Austronesian tribe about 100 years ago working to build a megalith.

**Ted:** Wow, you're right Mona, sometimes not having all the answers is exciting. I now want to go learn a lot more about the Austronesian people.

**Mona:** Told you mysteries were cool! Next time we'll be talking about a whole different kind of mystery: the beginning of laws!

### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Try researching an Austronesian culture such as Hawaiian, Tongan, Maori, Atayal, Rukai, Javanese, Dayak, Moken, Moro, and so many more!

## Chapter 13

# HATSHEPSUT BUILDS WONDERS

**Ted:** So we're back in Egypt again.

**Mona:** And today, we're going to talk about the Egyptian pharaoh who may have built more wonders than any other pharaoh. Ramses the Great is the only other pharaoh who came close. For today's snapshot we're learning about the pharaoh Queen Hatshepsut.

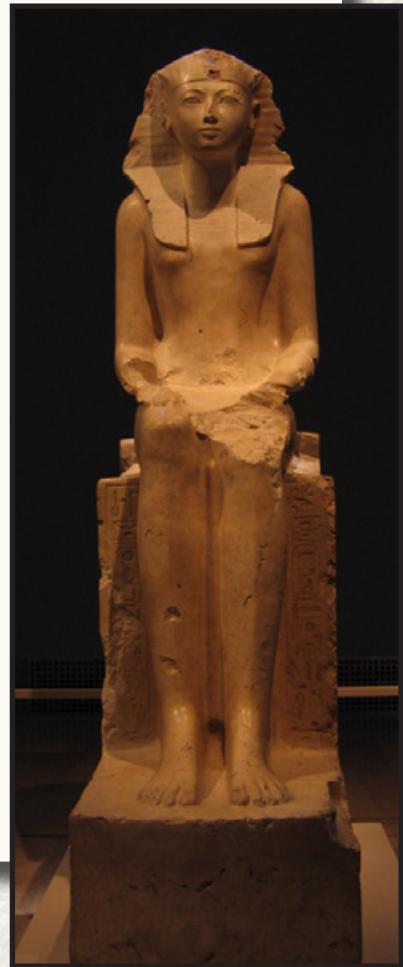
**Ted:** Did Hatshepsut build awesome pyramids like King Khufu?

**Mona:** Nope, pyramids were out of style by the time we get to Hatshepsut. She lived during the 1500s BCE. By then the Egyptians had learned that pyramids were pretty much thief magnets, so they'd started building secret temples to be buried in.

**Ted:** Oooo, secret temples! Sounds cool!

**Mona:** But before we get to that, let's talk about what Egypt looks like right now. Egypt was entering a new period of its history called the New Kingdom. The pharaohs before Hatshepsut had waged wars expanding Egypt's size, but Hatshepsut wasn't interested in fighting wars. She didn't want to make Egypt bigger. She wanted to make it richer.

**Ted:** How do you go about becoming richer?



Statue of Queen Hatshepsut located in the Metropolitan Museum of Art

**Mona:** The fastest way is trade! Give some of what you have a lot of to someone else in exchange for something you don't have. If you find a good trading partner, you both end up richer!

**Ted:** Like if I have gold and you have diamonds, and we trade, we're both better off because now we have more things.

**Mona:** Now that I have both gold and diamonds, I can learn to make new things with them together. The gold and diamond necklace I could make would be worth even more than the gold and diamonds alone.

**Ted:** So trade can create new things, as well as making you richer?

**Mona:** Yep. Egypt had been trading with Mesopotamia and parts of Asia and Europe for a long time. When trade was good, Egypt was rich. So more trade would mean Egypt would be even richer, right?

**Ted:** Sounds good to me!

**Mona:** But before you can trade, you need someone to trade with. So Hatshepsut set out looking for someone new to trade with. Where do you think she went?

**Ted:** Well, if she goes west she'd run into the Sahara Desert, but south looks like a really good option!

**Mona:** That's right, Hatshepsut decided to discover what lay south. There was a lot of Africa they'd never explored! Hatshepsut loaded up five large boats with all sorts of riches. Lots of really fancy things that would make someone want to trade with Egypt. Then she sent those boats up the Nile searching for new kingdoms. It was a risky move! There was no guarantee that the boats would find someone who would trade with them, or that the boats wouldn't sink in unknown waters, or that they wouldn't be attacked and robbed. It was a gamble Hatshepsut was willing to take.

**Ted:** Did it work? Or did they come back empty-handed?

## 2nd Intermediate Period

## New Kingdom

Hammurabi

Shang China

1782 BCE

1570

1479 1458  
Hatshepsut's Reign

**Mona:** It payed off big time! Her boats discovered the Kingdom of Punt on the Horn of Africa, which is this pokey-out part over here. Punt was a wealthy kingdom, and they were more than happy to trade with the Egyptians. Hatshepsut's boats returned from Punt loaded down with all sorts of unknown treasures. They brought back ebony, ivory, gold, frankincense, leopard skins, and monkeys. The boats even had live myrrh trees which were replanted in Egypt. It's the first time in history someone tried to relocate a living plant to a new environment.

**Ted:** Gold, pet monkeys, exotic trees? Sounds pretty awesome!

**Mona:** Hatshepsut sent traders off in other directions too, looking for even more riches. The trade routes Hatshepsut started made Egypt extremely rich and powerful. All those riches fed Hatshepsut's other obsession.

**Ted:** Eating?

**Mona:** No. Building! She built impressive temples and statues all over Egypt. Her most impressive building by far was the temple she built to be buried in. Her temple was three stories tall. Each story was supported by rows and rows



Possible location of Punt and trade routes



The remains of a myrrh tree at Hatshepsut's temple

of columns. The temple was decorated with many statues of Hatshepsut and the gods. Pictures on the walls showed her great accomplishments, like the trading expedition to Punt. The temple also included living plants, like the myrrh trees.

### 3rd Intermediate Period

Migration to Polynesia



*Queen Hatshepsut's mortuary temple in the Valley of the Kings. The use of symmetry and columns makes this temple one of the earliest examples of classical architecture, which later dominates the Greek world.*

**Ted:** Sounds beautiful! Since it was a temple does that mean priests performed ceremonies there?

**Mona:** Yes, the temple is dedicated to the sun god Amun-Ra. The temple is positioned so that on the winter solstice, the sun shines straight through the front door, and onto the back wall of the temple, illuminating a statue of the god Osiris.

**Ted:** Whoa! Cool! That takes some pretty precise building!

**Mona:** Hatshepsut's temple was built in a more out of the way location, so it would be less likely to be robbed. Her temple was off all by itself when she built it. It is such an impressive temple, future pharaoh's wanted to be buried near it, so the place her temple is built is now called the Valley of the Kings because of how many pharaohs are buried there.

**Ted:** So all those other kings were mooching off Hatshepsut's coolness, huh?

**Mona:** Pretty much. Did you know, if you've ever been to a museum to see ancient Egyptian artifacts, you've probably seen something made for Queen Hatshepsut. She built so many statues and monuments, that nearly every museum in the world that has an Egyptian section has something from Queen Hatshepsut.

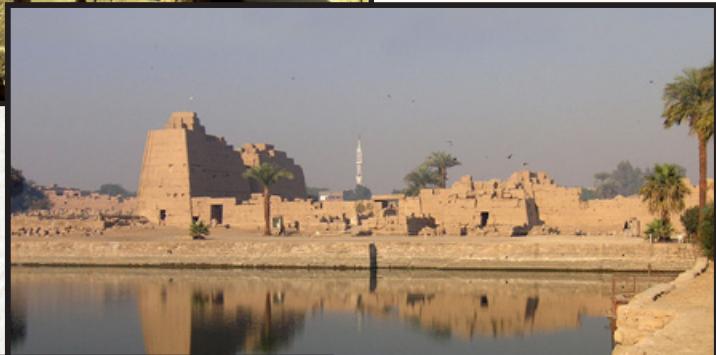


**Ted:** Wow, I'm going to have to pay attention for that the next time I'm at a museum.

**Mona:** And her buildings were so impressive that later pharaohs sometimes tried to put their name on top of hers and pretend they were the ones who built the building.

**Ted:** Hey, that's cheating!

**Mona:** Peace and prosperity let Hatshepsut leave her mark on history. When she died in 1458 BCE she left behind a strong kingdom.



**Ted:** So what's next? Does Egypt just keep living in peace and prosperity?

**Mona:** You know history's not that simple. About 100 years after Hatshepsut, Egypt runs into a pretty big bump in the road.

**Ted:** War?

**Mona:** Something new. It caused Egypt to leave behind its most enduring mystery.

*Above, the ruins of the Temple of Karnak, the largest temple in ancient Egypt.*

The Temple of Karnak was constructed over hundreds of years by many pharaohs. Hatshepsut built many things there, including restoring the Precinct of Mut and building the Red Chapel. The top image shows one of the twin obelisks she built there. They were the tallest obelisks in the ancient world. Left is a damaged statue of Hatshepsut at the Temple of Karnak.



## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Try researching the following topics:

- The Kingdom of Punt
- Temples of the New Kingdom
- Hatshepsut's Life

## Chapter 16

# THE ZHOU MAKE A MANDATE

**Ted:** Mona, you can just sit back and relax today. We're finally getting into my part of history. Generals, armies, wars, battles for succession, yeah, I'm on it.

**Mona:** Well then Ted, who are the Zhou?

**Ted:** The Zhou were a Chinese tribe. They had a similar language and customs as the Shang. They lived west of the Shang Empire. The Zhou were a tributary tribe to the Shang.

**Mona:** What does that mean?

**Ted:** A tributary tribe pays tribute, which is a fancy word for treasure, to a more powerful kingdom. It's basically saying "Here, take our cool stuff and please don't come kill us!".

**Mona:** So it's a way to not get conquered?

**Ted:** Yep, but tributary tribes are pretty much just looking for their chance at complete freedom. That's what the Zhou wanted, except they were also a bit more ambitious, too. They didn't just want to be free from the Shang, they wanted to become the Shang. The Shang did not have a closely united kingdom. There were lots of tributary tribes surrounding them.

**Mona:** So the Zhou started by getting those tribes to side with them instead of the Shang?



**Ted:** Bingo! By surrounding the Shang with enemies instead of allies, the Zhou cut off the Shang's options and shrunk the size of their army. The guy who starting doing all of this was named King Wen. The Shang noticed what Wen was doing, and they were pretty annoyed, so they captured Wen and put him in prison.

**Mona:** That seems like it would stop Wen's plot to overthrow them.

**Ted:** What happened next is very important in the story of Chinese history. They released Wen in exchange for more treasure.

**Mona:** . . . doesn't seem like the smartest choice. . .

**Ted:** Yeah, that choice is going to come back to bite them in more than one way. But for now, King Wen is free and he has a lot of allies surrounding the Shang. King Wen dies before he has the chance to act, but his son King Wu is ready to move. In 1046 BCE he leads his army against the Shang in the Battle of Muye. Now this is one of the cooler stories of military history. King Wu is marching on the Shang capital with 50,000 soldiers. The Shang didn't have their full army present, but they still had over 500,000 soldiers.

**Mona:** I'd just like to say the size of the Shang army has probably been exaggerated by history.



*King Wu of Zhou, painted in the Ming Dynasty.*

**Ted:** Fine, let's just say the Shang had lots of soldiers. But the Shang emperor, King Di Xin, wanted to be doubly sure they would win, so he armed thousands slaves to fight for him as well. Except, the slaves didn't exactly like him and didn't want to fight for him. So when Wu arrives, the slaves just hop on over to his side and start fighting *for* the Zhou.

**Mona:** Ouch. That couldn't have been pretty to watch.

**Ted:** It wasn't. This was a massive hit to the morale of the Shang soldiers. In fact, as the battle began, many Shang soldiers just stood there, pointing their spears down at the ground, to show they didn't want to fight. Some Shang soldiers even switched sides altogether and started fighting for the Zhou.

**Mona:** Well for a battle that should have been an easy win, this sure took a surprising turn.

**Ted:** Wu's soldiers were in high spirits. The battle was clearly going well for them. Di Xin's soldiers were depressed and nervous after so many people switched sides. This difference in attitude played a huge part in the battle. Wu broke through the defensive line of the Shang and Di Xin fled the battlefield. Di Xin ran back to his palace and locked himself inside. Then he committed suicide by burning down his palace around him. Thus the Shang Dynasty ended and the Zhou Dynasty began.

**Mona:** That's a pretty impressive story! King Wu winning a battle against such terrible odds probably made his people think he was an amazing leader.

**Ted:** They thought he was more than just an amazing leader. They thought he was a divine leader.

**Mona:** You mean the Mandate of Heaven?

**Ted:** Yep!

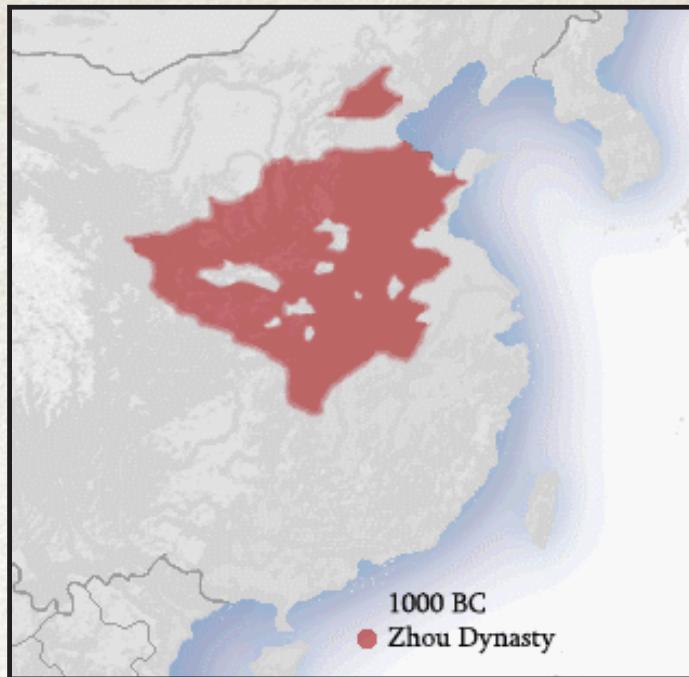


## Shang Dynasty

1600 BCE  
Shang Dynasty Begins

1200 BCE  
Oldest Oracle Bone

1230 BCE  
Emperor Wu Ding



**Mona:** The Mandate of Heaven is the explanation of every dynasty change in Chinese history. It kind of IS Chinese history.

**Ted:** And it all started with King Wu's awesome victory. King Wu and the Zhou Dynasty argued that there was only one true emperor of China at a time. This emperor was called and ordained by heaven itself.

**Mona:** By heaven they meant the natural order of the world.

**Ted:** So the emperor is supposed to be the emperor because it is heaven's will. BUT if the emperor behaves badly or becomes corrupt or doesn't care for his people or is lazy or immoral, then heaven can take away its blessing and give it to someone new. Someone worthy to be the emperor. And that's the logic King Wu used to justify conquering the Shang Dynasty. The only reason King Wu won was because it was heaven's will. Besides, the Battle of Muye had enough unpredictable twists to it, it's pretty easy to see how and why he would claim it was heaven's will he win. I mean, how often does an army not fight back? It was pretty unbelievable.

## Zhou Dynasty

1046  
Battle of Muye

771  
Zhou Capital moved

**Mona:** According to the Mandate of Heaven, the only reason an emperor could be overthrown was because he was no longer a good emperor.

**Ted:** King Wu was more than happy to point out where the Shang Dynasty had failed. First of all, he argued they were greedy and corrupt. Remember how they let King Wen go because they got lots of treasure? Isn't that the perfect example that they only wanted treasure? And all those soldiers who wouldn't fight for the Shang? And the slaves who were more than happy to betray their master? Pretty clear proof the Shang weren't great leaders, huh? If the Shang had been taking care of their people, their people would have been willing to fight for them.

**Mona:** The Zhou Dynasty pointed out all of the ways the Shang had become bad rulers, so it was clear they were the good guys, not invading bad guys.



*Just like the Shang, the Zhou continued to make beautiful pieces of art using bronze and jade. Above, is a bronze tiger walking over a deer. Right, is a jade dragon pendant. Below, is a new type of art developed during this period, lacquer. This is a lacquer coffin decorated with dragons.*



**Ted:** You know, the Mandate of Heaven didn't just apply to someone coming in and conquering the emperor. Terrible events like a famine or natural disaster were also signs that heaven had changed its will, so the people of China would often revolt if something really bad happened, because that was heaven's will.

**Mona:** There are also periods in Chinese history where a non-Chinese army conquers the Emperor and takes over China. Even these outsider Emperors were still seen as the rightful ruler of China because of the Mandate of Heaven.

**Ted:** Pretty much, whatever happened was supposed to happen.

**Mona:** So that is how the Zhou became the new rulers of China and how the Mandate of Heaven got started. Later emperors of China would use the Mandate of Heaven to explain why they were emperor and why the people should follow them. When we come back to China we'll discuss some more important ideas that shaped China's history. But first, we're headed back to Mesopotamia to see the rise of yet another empire.

### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Try researching the following topics:

- Chinese emperors
- Chinese artifacts made of jade, bronze, and lacquer
- Chinese mythology
- Dragons in Chinese culture

## Chapter 26

# ALEXANDER GOES CONQUERING

**Ted:** It's time to talk about one of the greatest generals that's ever lived!

**Mona:** Hold on Ted, let's set up what's going on first.

**Ted:** Alexander is awesome! The end.

**Mona:** Ted! So Greece was made up of a bunch of independent city-states. After the Persian War, Athens and Sparta started fighting each other in a really long war, called the Peloponnesian War. In the end, Sparta won, but the war had been so long and expensive, it wasn't much of a victory. After that, Greece was disunified and struggling to recover from the long, difficult war.

**Ted:** Enter Philip II of Macedon!

**Mona:** Macedonia was a territory in northern Greece. Philip II took advantage of the disunity in Greece. Through alliances and conquest, he conquered most of Greece, but then he was assassinated.



*Mosaic of Alexander the Great in battle. This is part of a large floor mosaic uncovered in Pompeii, Italy.*

*Marble bust of Alexander the Great created in Greece around the first or second century BCE. Unlike most artwork of Alexander, this bust was made close to the time of his life, and may show what he actually looked like.*

**Ted:** That's when his son Alexander took the throne at the age of 20.

**Mona:** Alexander had been well trained to become king. He had spent his life training in fighting, military leadership, and political dealings. Aristotle was his personal tutor while he was a teenager, and Alexander received an excellent education in philosophy. Beginning at the age of 16, Alexander started commanding armies as he helped his father conquer Greece.

**Ted:** But when Philip was assassinated and such a young man was crowned king, many Greek city-states thought it would be easy to rebel and regain their independence.

**Mona:** They had no idea who Alexander was!

**Ted:** Alexander was not some young, untested king. He was a strong military commander! Alexander led his troops down to Greece to put down the rebellions. He quickly moved from city to city reestablishing his control. But once he'd conquered all of Greece, Alexander was nowhere near done. He wanted to rule the world!

**Mona:** Unlike most people who want to rule the world, Alexander actually made some pretty good progress toward that goal.

**Ted:** First he set off for Asia Minor where he conquered a bunch of city-states.

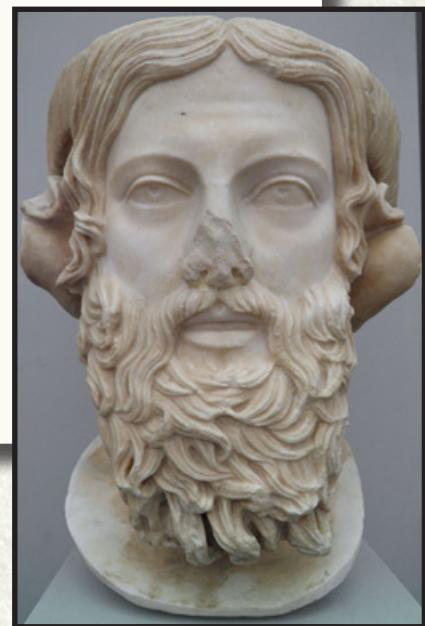


**Mona:** While he was in Asia Minor, he came across the Gordian Knot, a knot so complicated no one could untie it. Legend said whoever undid the Gordian Knot would be king of all Asia. Alexander sliced the knot open with his sword.

**Ted:** I like his thinking. Just get straight to business. No dilly-dallying. And let me tell you, he did not dilly-dally! After conquering Greece and much of Asia Minor, he kept going and conquered Egypt next.

**Mona:** While he was in Egypt he visited the oracle at Siwa Oasis. No one was with Alexander while he talked to the oracle, so we don't know what he really said, but Alexander said the oracle told him he was the son of the god Zeus-Ammon. From that day forward, Alexander called Zeus his father and acted like he was partly divine.

*Right, a bust of the god Zeus-Ammon. This god was created by mixing the Greek god Zeus with the Egyptian god Ammon/Amun. In the bust, you can see the traditional beard of Zeus as well as the ram horns of Ammon.*



**Ted:** I would call him egotistical, but you know, can you blame him for thinking he was so awesome? Up until that point, he had been pretty much invincible. So . . .

**Mona:** He was not actually the son of Zeus. . .

**Ted:** I know, I'm just saying, I understand his delusion. Because up next, are the Persians!

**Mona:** You have to be pretty sure of yourself to take on the largest empire in the world.

776 - First Olympics Games

## Archaic Greece

700 BCE  
Homer

600

Invention of theater  
Thespis 532 BC  
Battle of Sardis 498 BC  
Sack of Athens 480 BC

Battle of Salamis 480 BC

Democracy Invented 507 BC

Battle of Marathon 490 BC

**Ted:** Alexander's military genius is seen in how he directs his troops so well, even when outnumbered by the Persians. Alexander met the Persian king, Darius III, in battle three different times. Each time, based on the number of troops they had, Alexander should have lost. But Alexander was such a good general that he never lost

a battle!! Each time Alexander's troops started winning the battle, King Darius ran away. After the third battle, Alexander took control of Persia, but King Darius was still alive, living in hiding. Alexander was determined to kill Darius so he could become the rightful king of Persia. Alexander chased him all across Asia Minor. Eventually, when Alexander had almost caught him, one of Darius' governors killed him and claimed Darius had made him the new king. However, Alexander claimed Darius had named him the rightful king of Persia. Alexander later killed the governor to ensure he was the only king.



*Darius III of Persia, also from the Pompeii floor mosaic.*

**Mona:** Charming. Why is it you like Alexander so much?

**Ted:** But he's so logical and in control! Plus I think it's awesome how hard he worked to achieve his goal.

**Mona:** His goal of ruling the world?

**Ted:** Yeah, because after conquering Greece, Egypt, and Persia, he still wasn't satisfied! He continued to take his army east, now determined to conquer India. Alexander succeeded in conquering the Indus Valley, but it was difficult. His men were frightened by



## Classical Greece

Peloponnesian War  
431

404

399

Socrates dies

347

Plato

336 Alexander becomes King  
334 Invades Persia  
332 Conquers Egypt  
330 Conquers Persia  
326 Invades India  
323 Alexander dies

## Hellenistic Greece

212

Archimedes



the Indian's fighting skills, particularly their war elephants. After conquering the Indus Valley, Alexander was determined to keep going deeper into India, but Alexander's army revolted against him. His men were tired of constant fighting and travel. They were thousands of miles away from home and all they wanted was to go home to see their families and country.

**Mona:** I don't blame them!

**Ted:** It took persuading, but in the end Alexander agreed to return home. By now, Alexander and his men had been away from home for 12 years.

**Mona:** 12 years to conquer the world. Not bad! But shortly after Alexander returned to the Persian capital of Susa, he died. It's not clear what he died of. It may have been typhoid fever caused by a mosquito bite or it could have been poison.

**Ted:** Whatever killed him, Alexander was only 32 and he didn't have an heir for his massive empire.

**Mona:** Legend says on his deathbed, Alexander said the kingdom should go to "the strongest."

**Ted:** But it turns out none of his men were strong enough to seize control of everything. His kingdom was broken apart into pieces.

**Mona:** The Indus Valley would quickly fall back into Indian control. The Persian territory would be ruled by Alexander's general Seleucus, who founded the Seleucid Empire.

Egypt was ruled by

Alexander's general Ptolemy, who founded the Ptolemaic Dynasty in Egypt. Antigonus controlled Asia Minor. Meanwhile, Greece broke apart into several smaller territories, much like it was before Alexander. Even though Alexander's empire fell to pieces, his influence was immense! He took Greek culture and spread it all over the world.

Greek philosophy was now the most common form of education everywhere Alexander conquered. Greek culture had huge influence as far away as India.

**Ted:** Basically Alexander was awesome.

**Mona:** Alexander single-handedly changed the history of the world. Next time, we'll see how Alexander's influence brought a new empire to India.



Buddha statue made in India, following Alexander's conquest. The statue is made in a Greek style, showing just how far Greek culture had spread.



*Alexander's Empire broken up by general.*

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Try researching the following topics:

- Alexander's mother, Olympia
- Myths about Alexander
- Hellenization, the process of spreading Greek culture
- Ptolemaic Egypt