

KROHN CONSERVATORY
**BUTTERFLY
SHOW**  **2009**
BUTTERFLIES OF INDIA

History of India

70,000 - 50,000 BCE • First humans migrate to India

7000 - 5500 BCE • Evidence of agriculture, brick houses, jewelry, pottery

2600 - 1900 BCE • The Indus Valley has written language, complex cities, water systems with baths and household toilets. Painted pottery, bronze and copper tools, terracotta figures and numerous inscribed stamped seals with animal motifs have been uncovered.

1800 BCE • Climate change begins to affect the Indus Valley Civilizations, when rivers dried up due to the change in the water provided by formerly regular monsoons.

2000 - 1500 BCE • Aryans move in from the Northwest and settle. Sanskrit introduced and also a social system which creates castes (strata in the society of Priests, Warriors, Merchants and Serfs. The *Rig Veda*, the oldest literary source which consists of 1,028 hymns, guides priestly activities. In the Vedic culture structure, the ruler has two consultants - a military general and a priest. Vedic rituals honor a reciprocal relationship of man to the gods Mitra, Varuna and Indra, and to the universe.

This involves human and animal sacrifice. The family unit is patriarchal and monogamous with an agricultural economy (cattle, horses for battle, sheep and goats for wool). Boys are instructed at 7, marry at 17; girls are not instructed

1500 - 500 BCE • Iron Age Culture in North India; The Vedas (sacred inspired knowledge) are developed in this time and include early records of astronomy and mathematics, which came out of ritual and temple construction.

563 - 486 BCE • Prince Siddhartha Gautama founds Buddhism. The Buddha (“Enlightened One”) reached enlightenment after a six-year search for a release from suffering. He spent the remaining 45 years of his life preaching values of selflessness, service, awareness, non-attachment, peace, humility and letting go.

518 - 326 BCE • Darius of Persia conquers the Indus Valley, and tribute is paid to the king with precious textiles and local resources.

500 BCE • Jainism is founded by Mahivira, based on the thought that a person can break free from eternal rebirth through the practices of nonviolence, truthfulness, non-stealing, non-possession and chastity. Universities at Taxila and Nalanda are founded.

400 - 100 BCE • *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, core texts of the Hindu culture, are formally composed after long oral tradition. The sixth book of the *Mahabharata* (distinct from the Vedas because it is not divinely

inspired, but is comprised of stories remembered by humans) is the *Bhagavad Gita (Song of the Bountiful Lord)* which considers the four goals of life to be 1) worldly wealth and success, 2) pleasure and desire, 3) righteousness (selfless duty) and knowledge, and 4) liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

326 BC • Alexander the Great sweeps through the North. Greek is spoken in Northern India.

324 - 335 AD • King Chandragupta unites the country in his Mauryan Dynasty, which thrives for 150 years with new sophistication in Hindu art literature and science. The foundations of classical India are laid, with a new spiritual outlook.

269 - 233 BCE • Emperor Ashoka rules, whose organization was greatly influenced by Alexander the Great's state building. His centralized government is supported by effective judicial and espionage services. He converts to Buddhism after his conquests result in more than 250,000 deaths. Buddhism and Jainism are gaining ground in an atmosphere of tolerance and Buddhist ideals. Ashoka encourages his people not to kill, and to attend to *dharma* (righteous behavior including decency, honoring parents and teachers, and protection of the natural world.) Government assumes a more paternalistic tone and is more flexible. Sacrifices are forbidden, pilgrimages to sacred sites replace hunting expeditions.

200 - 100 BCE • Earliest Tamil literature is composed. Trade routes are established between Mediterranean and South India. The Silk Road trade route connects Xi'an, China, with Rome. Precious commodities of silk, metals, gems, dried fruits and manufactured goods pass through northern India. Monks spread Buddhism while accompanying the traders.

185 BC • The last Mauryan emperor is killed, and Indian unity dissolves as rival powers fight. Many bloody takeovers result in subdivision of the subcontinent into small kingdoms.

1 AD • The South suffers bloody turmoil despite widespread Buddhist and Jain populations.

100 AD • Maharajah Kanishka rules a vast empire. The Iranians call him *King of Kings*, the Chinese call him *Son of Heaven*. Indian spice trade with Rome reaches its height. The first Indian Buddhist mission goes to China.

400 AD • Kama Sutra is composed

454 AD • Huns defeated in Northwest India

600 - 700 AD • Islam is introduced to India by Muslim traders.

871 - 907 AD • Cholan Empire established with its notable bronze sculptures.

985 -1030 AD • Rajaraja rules in south, Mahmud of Ghazni rules in north.

1206 -1526 AD • Delhi Sultanate introduces Persian language, literature, culture, law and practical agricultural innovations.

1400 -1500 AD • Sikhism is founded, in effort to unify Muslim and Hindu worshipers. Based on worship of one God and charity, true followers wear turbans and practice "The 5 K's" which include long hair, a wooden comb, a steel bracelet, cotton undergarments, and carrying a small sword.

1498 AD • Portugese explorer Vasco da Gama arrives in Calicut.

1526 - 1858 AD • Mughal Dynasty is founded by Muslim monarch Babur. Books, poetry and gardening are important.

1556 - 1605 AD • Akbar “The Great” succeeds his father and extends the Mughal Empire by massacuring more than 1 million Hindus.

1600 AD • British East India Company is founded.

1627 - 1658 AD • Shah Jahan rules, constructs his wife’s tomb, the Taj Mahal, from 1632 – 54, and Jama Masjid from 1650 – 56. This is the largest mosque in Asia, located in Delhi.

1658 - 1707 AD • Aurangzeb, third son of Shah Jahan, a strict and intolerant Muslim fundamentalist, imprisons his father and rules. Demolition of Hindu temples, persecution of Sikhs, and expansion of the Mughal empire at the expense of peace with southern Hindu warrior clans. His four sons succeed him, battle among themselves for power, and the dynasty ends in a feeble capitulation to the British.

1784 • Asiatic Society founded. William Jones discovers Sanskrit’s relationship to Latin and Greek.

1835 - 1858 • Rani of Jansi (Queen Lakshmi Bai) fights for the liberation of her city, seized by the British because they did not recognize the succession of her adopted son after her husband’s death. She was killed during a British assault, becoming a heroine and martyr who symbolized resistance against British rule.

1857 • First Indian Rebellion: “The Mutiny” of Bengal army soldiers against British commanders who order them to bite off the ends of rifle cartridges greased with pig and cow fat, two substances offensive respectively to the Muslim and Hindu religions.

1858 - 1947 • The British East India Company is taken into England’s authority, and the British Raj begins. Queen Victoria declares herself Empress of India, a country possessing one-fifth of the entire world population.

1885 • The Indian National Congress is established in Bombay: Under urging from retired British civil servant A. O. Hume, graduated students from Calcutta University form a political organization that seeks greater independence and better treatment of Indian peoples by the British.

1906 • Muslim League founded, led by Mohammad Ali Jinnah (the first Governor General of Pakistan in 1947.)

1909 • Mohandas K. Gandhi writes the landmark *Freedom of India (Hind Swaraj)*.

1910 • India has the fourth largest railway system in the world.

1915 • Gandhi - the Mahatma (“Great Soul”) - organizes satyagrahas (non-violent protests including boycotts and strikes) against poverty and unfair taxes.

1919 • Amritsar Massacre: 20,000 peaceful protesters in the Sikh holy city are attacked by British guards. 400 slaughtered and 1500 injured. Gandhi, Jinnah and Nehru unite their populations for the Freedom Movement on the ancient Indian principle of non-violent protest.

1920 - 30 • Gandhi leads the Indian National Congress, which would become India's first ruling party in the 1940's.

1931 • Gandhi leads a 240-mile march to the coast at Dandi to protest British-imposed salt laws. Making salt on the beach, then leading a march on a salt depot, he is arrested. 60,000 – 90,000 Indians are arrested for civil disobedience in the subsequent months.

1940 • An imprisoned Jawaharlal Nehru writes *The Discovery of India*.

1946 • India and Pakistan are divided, prompting a mass migration of Muslims to Pakistan, Hindus and Sikhs to India which included unprecedented communal violence leading to deaths of 500,000 to 1 million people. Disputes continue to this day.

1947 • Indian independence from Britain. Democratic system and constitution develop from 1947 - 50. Nehru is Prime Minister, succeeded by both his daughter Indira Gandhi (1966 -77, 1980 - 84) and grandson Rajiv Gandhi (1984 - 1989).

1948 • Mohandas Gandhi assassinated in New Delhi by a radical Hindu nationalist.

1959 • China invades Tibet, Dalai Lama receives asylum from India.

Today • India, a federal republic, is the world's largest democracy with a diverse population of over one billion people. English is the dominant language for national, political and commercial communication, but Hindi is the national language and primary tongue of 41% of Indians, one of 17 major languages and 844 dialects.

The capital of New Delhi shares power with 28 states and 7 territories. The form of government is Parliamentary, with executive office comprised of a President, Vice President and Council of Ministers led by the Prime Minister. Approximately 200 political parties exist in the country.

Population is growing at a rate of 1.6% annually, with 2.76 children born per woman. Sixty one percent of the people are literate with at least 10 years of education. The dominant religions are Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Jain, Sikh and Islam.

India's diverse economy encompasses traditional village farming, modern agriculture, handicrafts, a wide range of modern industries, and a multitude of services. Services are the major source of economic growth, accounting for more than half of India's output. About three-fifths of the work force is in agriculture. Unemployment rate is 6.8%. The huge and growing population is the fundamental social, economic, and environmental problem.

The movie "Slumdog Millionaire" won eight Oscars in 2009, successfully bringing Bollywood to Hollywood and the world's attention to the slums of Mumbai.