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Aryavart (India) and Its Scriptures: On the Origin of Spiritual Thought

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1. **Ancient World Civilizations**
   a) Until recently, thought to have preceded Indian civilizations: Egypt, Assyria, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, Byzantia, China

2. **Aryavart (10,500 BCE – 400 BCE)**
   a) Indigenous peoples or immigrants from Caucasus mountains in Central Asia (Uzbekistan)?
   b) Natural calamity and Southward descent of Aryans?
   c) Aryan nomadic tribes become pastoral settlers in Gangetic plains?

3. **Contemporary View of Ancient Indian Civilization**

Ancient Indian Civilizations*		
Date range	***Phase***	***Era***
7000 - 5500 BC	Mehrgarh I (aceramic Neolithic)	Early Food Producing Era
5500-3300	Mehrgarh II-VI (ceramic Neolithic)	Regionalization Era 5500-2600
3300-2600	**Early Harappan**	
3300-2800	Harappan 1 (Ravi Phase)	
2800-2600	Harappan 2 (Kot Diji Phase, Nausharo I, Mehrgarh VII)	
2600-1900	**Mature Harappan (Indus Valley Civilization)**	Integration Era
2600-2450	Harappan 3A (Nausharo II)	
2450-2200	Harappan 3B	
2200-1900	Harappan 3C	
1900-1300	**Late Harappan (Cemetery H); Ochre Coloured Pottery**	Localization Era
1900-1700	Harappan 4	
1700-1300	Harappan 5	
1300-300	Painted Gray Ware, Northern Black Polished Ware (Iron Age)	Indo-Gangetic Tradition Alexander the Great

*Wikipedia entry on Indus Valley Civilization

4. Vedic Life, Language, Literature (2000 BCE – 325 BCE)

a) Social Structure: Occupational Division of Society

i. Brahman: Learning and teaching
ii. Kshatriya: Martial arts and protection
iii. Vaishya: Production, distribution, commerce and trade
iv. Shudra: Muscle power, blue-collar occupations

b) Family Structure (assumed life span of one hundred years)

i. Bramacharya (abstinence): (1 – 25yrs.) Birth, childhood, studies and graduation
ii. Grihastha: (25 – 50yrs.) Householder, marriage, private & public life
iii. Vanaprastha: (50 – 75yrs.) Woodland retreat, reflection, writing and teaching
iv. Sanyasta: (75 – 100yrs.) Renunciation and release

c) Social Goals

i. Artha – economics and material wealth.
ii. Kama – desire, love, lust, procreation and pleasure.
iii. Dharma – duties, religious beliefs and rites, family, community and state, self and supreme.
iv. Moksha – liberation from the regenerative cycle of birth to death.

d) Language (Sanskrit)

i. Root Indo-European language
ii. Most complex phonetics, root syllables
iii. Oldest and most complex grammar: full case and tense system
iv. Codification of grammar: Panini's Ashtadhyayi and Patanjali' Bhashyam
v. My opinion: most beautiful

e) Literature: Scriptural and Secular

i. Vedas: Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva
ii. Each Veda is associated with four forms of literature:
    - Samhita: main text
    - Brahmanas: rituals
    - Aranyakas: commentaries
    - Upanishads: mysteries; metaphysics
iii. Each Samhita has six sections (Shadang):
    - Shiksha – learning phonetics
    - Chhanda – meters
    - Nirukta – etymology
    - Vyakarana – grammar
    - Jyotisha – astronomy and astrology
    - Kalpa – rites and rituals

iv. Upvedas (subsidiary Vedas)
    - Ayur
    - Dhanur
    - Gandharva
    - Artha

v. Shaddarshana: Six classical or orthodox schools of Vedic thought
    - Purva Mimansa: Jaimini
    - Uttara Mimansa: Vyasa
    - Sankhya: Kapil
    - Yoga: Patanjali
    - Nyaya: Guatam
    - Vaisheshika: Kanaada

vi. Six neoclassical or heterodox schools thought
    - Bauddha: Gautam Siddhartha
    - Jainism: Mahavir
    - Charvaka: Brihaspati
    - Shaiva
    - Shakta
    - Tantra

vii. Epics
    - Ramayana (Valmiki)
    - Mahabharata (Vyas)

viii. Puranas (histories, legends, local lore)
    - 19 principle; 19 subsidiary

ix. Spiritual Poetry
    - Ganga Laheri: Jagannath
    - Geet Govinda: Jayadeva

x. Biographies
    - Kadambari: Bana
    - Charitam: Harsha