

## CHAPTER 3

### *Classical Civilization: India*

#### CHAPTER SUMMARY

**The Framework for Indian History: Geography and a Formative Period.** Important reasons for India's distinctive path lie in geography and early historical experience. India's topography shaped a number of vital features of its civilization. The vast Indian subcontinent is partially separated from the rest of Asia (and particularly from east Asia) by northern mountain ranges. Mountain passes linked India to civilizations in the Middle East. Though it was not as isolated as China, the subcontinent was nevertheless set apart within Asia. The most important agricultural regions are along the two great rivers, the Ganges and the Indus. During its formative period, called the Vedic and Epic ages, the Aryans (Indo-Europeans), originally from central Asia, impressed their own stamp on Indian culture. During these ages, the caste system, Sanskrit, and various belief systems were introduced.

**Patterns in Classical India.** By 600 B.C.E., India had passed through its formative stage. Indian development during its classical era did not take on the structure of rising and falling dynasties, as in China. Patterns in Indian history were irregular and often consisted of invasions through the subcontinent's northwestern mountain passes. As a result, classical India alternated between widespread empires and a network of smaller kingdoms. Even during the rule of the smaller kingdoms, both economic and cultural life advanced. The Maurya and Gupta dynasties were the most successful in India, run entirely by Indians and not by outside rulers. The greatest of the Mauryan emperors was **Ashoka (269-232 B.C.E.)**. The Guptas did not produce as dynamic a leader as Ashoka, but they did provide classical India with its greatest period of stability.

**Political Institutions.** Classical India did not develop the solid political and cultural institutions the Chinese experienced, nor the high level of political interest of Greece and Rome. Its greatest features, still observable today, were political diversity and regionalism. The Guptas, for example, did not require a single language for all of their subjects. The development of a rigid caste system lies at the heart of this characteristic. In its own way, the caste system promoted tolerance, allowing widely different social classes to live next to each other, separated by social strictures. Loyalty to caste superseded loyalty to any overall ruler. Religion, particularly Hinduism, was the only uniting influence in Indian culture.

**Religion and Culture.** Two major religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, marked classical India. Hinduism, the religion of India's majority, is unique among world religions in that no central figure is credited for developing it. Hinduism encouraged both worldly and mystical pursuits and was highly adaptable to varying groups. Buddhism was founded on the teachings of an Indian prince, Gautama, later called Buddha, or "enlightened one." Buddha accepted many Hindu beliefs but rejected its priests and the caste system it supported. Buddhism spread through missionaries into Sri Lanka, China, Korea, and Japan. Classical India also produced important work in science and mathematics. The Gupta-supported university at Nalanda taught religion, medicine, and architecture, as well as other disciplines. Indian scientists, borrowing ideas from

Greek learning provided by Alexander the Great, made important discoveries. Still more important were the mathematical advancements, including the concept of zero, “Arabic” numerals, and the decimal system. Indian artists created shrines to Buddha called stupas and painted in lively colors.

**Economy and Society.** India developed extensive trade both within the subcontinent and on the ocean to its south. The caste system described many key features of Indian society and its economy. The rights of women became increasingly limited as Indian civilization developed; however, male dominance over women was usually greater in theory than in practice. The economy in this era was extremely vigorous, especially in trade, surpassing that in China and the Mediterranean world. Merchants traded from the Roman Empire to Indonesia to China.

**In Depth: Inequality as the Social Norm.** The Indian caste system, like the Egyptian division between noble and commoner and the Greco-Roman division between free and slave, rests on the assumption that humans are inherently unequal. All classical social systems (with the partial exception of Athens’ democracy) played down the importance of the individual and emphasized obligations to family, group, and government. This runs counter to modern Western notions about equality. Classical China and Greece probably came closest to modern views about individuality, but in both civilizations, it was largely expected that rulers should come from society’s elites. In nearly all societies throughout most of human history, few challenged the “natural order” of social hierarchy and fewer still proposed alternatives.

**Indian Influence.** Because of its extensive trading network, Indian cultural influence spread widely, especially in southeast Asia. Buddhism was a leading cultural export. Indian merchants often married into royal families in other areas. Political dominance of outside peoples was not a characteristic of Indian governments.

**China and India.** China and India offer important contrasts in politics and society, yet they resembled each other in that both built stable structures over large areas and used culture to justify social inequality. The restraint of Chinese art contrasted with the more dynamic style of India. The latter developed a primary religion, Hinduism, while the former opted for separate religious and philosophical systems. Chinese technological advancements stressed practicality, while Indians ventured into mathematics for its own sake. Indian merchants played a greater societal role than their Chinese counterparts. Both, however, relied on large peasant classes in agrarian settings; both accepted political power based on land ownership.

**Global Connections: India and the Wider World.** No classical civilization was more open to outside influences than India. None was more central to cross-cultural exchanges in the common era. Important innovations in mathematics and science came from classical India. Buddhism is one of the few truly world religions. Indian influence was especially important in southeast Asia. Placed between the great empires and trading networks of the Mediterranean and of China, India was ideally situated for its culture to influence both East and West.

## KEY TERMS

**Alexander the Great:** Greek invader who provided important contacts between India and Hellenistic culture.

**Aryans:** During the Vedic and Epic ages these Indo-European migrants developed the region's first epic stories, later written down in Sanskrit. Their rigid ideas about social order influenced India's caste system.

**Maurya dynasty:** First dynasty to unify much of the subcontinent. Borrowed political examples from Persia and Alexander.

**Ashoka:** Greatest Mauryan ruler. Gained all but the southern tip of India through conquest. Converted to and greatly promoted Buddhism.

**Gupta:** Empire began in 320 C.E. and provided two centuries of political stability. Overturned in 535 C.E. by invading Huns.

**Caste system:** Social relationship developed on a large scale uniquely in India. Five major castes regulated social status and work roles. Grew more complex over time into a multitude of subcastes. Governed society more than any political body.

**Untouchables:** Lowest caste. It was widely held that any member of a higher caste who touched these people would be defiled. Held the most menial jobs but were not slaves.

**Hinduism:** The religion of India's majority, developing at first in the Vedic and Epic ages. Hinduism has no single founder or central holy figure, unlike all other major religions.

**Sanskrit:** The first literary language of India, introduced by the Aryans. Under the Guptas, it became the language of educated people but never became the universal language of India. Was the language of the Vedas, the sacred books of early India.

**Upanishads:** The Epic Age saw the creation of these poems with mystical themes. From these, the Hindu ideas of divine forces informing the universe developed.

**Dharma:** A Hindu concept that was a guide to living in this world and at the same time pursuing spiritual goals. However, it was less prescriptive than other world religions' codes. Hindu avoidance of a fixed moral rule is why it allowed for more diversity than most religions.

**Vishnu and Shiva:** Two important gods in the enormous Hindu pantheon. Vishnu was the preserver and Shiva, the destroyer.

**Buddhism:** The Indian prince Gautama became the Buddha, or "enlightened one," when he questioned the poverty and misery he saw. Generally seen as a reform movement out of Hinduism. Buddhism had its greatest effect outside of India, especially in southeast Asia.

**Panchatantra**: A collection of stories produced during the Gupta era, including “Sinbad the Sailor” and “Jack the Giant Killer.” Best-known Indian stories around the world.

**Tamils**: Southern Indians who traded cotton, silks, and many other materials with the Middle East and with Rome. Reflected the strong merchant spirit in classical India.

**Buddha**: (563 – 483 B.C.E.) Creator of a major Indian and Asian religion; born in the 6th century B.C.E. as son of a local ruler among Aryan tribes located near Himalayas; became an ascetic; found enlightenment could be achieved only by abandoning desires for all earthly things.

**Himalayas**: Mountain system of south-central Asia which divides India from Asia, leaving India to develop in relative cultural isolation.

**Vedas**: Meaning hymns to the gods; four ancient books of Aryan religious traditions in which can be found the origins of Hinduism.

***Mahabharata and Ramayana***: Aryan epic poems composed in Sanskrit which include myths, legends, philosophy, and moral stories.

**Varnas**: Aryan social classes.

**Jati**: Subgroups of castes, each with distinctive occupations and tied to their social stations by birth.

**Indra**: Aryan god of thunder and strength.

**Chandragupta Maurya**: (322 – 298 B.C.E.) Ruler of a small Ganges Valley state who defeated the Greeks in the area and made himself king in 322 B.C.E. He then created and enlarged the Mauryan Empire.

**Kushans**: Invaders of India c. 100 B.C.E. who were gradually absorbed into Indian culture and became the Kshatriya caste.

**Kautilya**: Chief minister of Chandragupta Maurya who wrote the book *Arthashastra*, which gave advice on how to gain power and use it through whatever means as long as the ruler pleases his subjects.

**Gurus**: Hindu mystics who gathered disciples around themselves.

**Brahma**: Hindu idea that a basic holy essence formed part of everything in the world.

**Reincarnation**: Hindu idea in which souls do not die when bodies do but pass into other beings, either human or animal. Where the soul goes depends on how good a life that person has led.

**Yoga**: Hindu practice of meditation and self-discipline which has the goal to free the mind to concentrate on the divine spirit.

**Bhagavad Gita:** Hindu sacred hymn which details the story of Arjuna, a warrior, who struggles with the decision of whether to go to battle against his own family.

**Nirvana:** Buddhist idea which literally means a world beyond existence itself. It is the ultimate goal of the reincarnation cycle.

**Kamasutra:** A manual of the “laws of love” written in the 4th century C.E., which discusses relationships between men and women.

**Stupas:** Spherical shrines to Buddha.

## LESSON SUGGESTIONS

<b>Leader Analysis</b>	Ashoka
<b>Change Analysis</b>	Impact of Aryan Invasion
<b>Societal Comparison</b>	Classical India and Classical China
<b>Inner/Outer Circle</b>	Inequality as the Social Norm

## LECTURE SUGGESTIONS

**Trace the patterns of early Indian history.** India’s great diversity within and among religions, peoples, and political forms had its roots in Aryan dominance. Tight levels of social control, introduced by the Aryans, contributed to the development of the caste system. In addition, India’s geographic position between the other great societies of the East and West encouraged trade and other forms of cultural mixing.

**Assess the influence of Indian culture on the rest of the world.** In many ways, the Indian region was the most active link among several cultures. Buddhism became a bigger influence outside of India than inside. Indian artistic and architectural styles affected southeast Asia as well. Indian stories like “Sinbad the Sailor” were passed on to Arabs and then Europeans. Probably the most universal effect was the introduction of “Arabic” numerals, today the world’s standard form of expressing mathematics.

## CLASS DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

**Trace the development of the caste system.**

As new social groups had been added to the tribal social order of early Aryan invaders, the patterns of social stratification entered into a religiously sanctioned hierarchy of social groups based partially on occupation and how polluting the occupation was.

### **Compare Buddhism and Hinduism.**

Buddhism rejected the brahmin-dominated caste system and the idea that the Vedas were divinely inspired teachings that should be accepted as the ultimate authority. Buddhism also believed in introspection and self-mastery as opposed to ritual, which was the very heart of Hindu dominance. Buddhism was inclusive of everyone, even women, in the teachings of how to reach nirvana.

### **What features of Indian and Chinese geography help explain each area's social patterns?**

As settlements spread from the Indus region and Himalayan foothills to the plains of the Ganges River system, republics and religious skeptics gave way to kings and powerful brahmins who dominated the caste system.

### **Compare the caste system with the organization of Chinese and Greek society.**

Both Chinese and Greek society had social stratifications. However, they differed from the caste system in how the class decisions were made as well as how many and how strictly they were enforced. The caste system was a more rigid form of the organizations of Chinese and Greek society.

### **Compare the political implications of Hinduism and Confucianism.**

Confucius stressed that the welfare of the people should be the concern of the emperor. In return, the people should be respectful of the status. In Hinduism, the caste system rules with brahmins on the top.

### **Compare the family structures of India and China.**

In India, the higher class could afford to house extended families like those in China. Indian families that were poor could only afford to house the immediate, or nuclear, family.

### **Trace the development of Ashoka's leadership approach.**

His original approach to ruling was to conquer and enlarge his empire. But after he witnessed the horrible sufferings in Orissa, he converted to Buddhism and began to serve his people and promote their welfare.

**MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one alternative that best completes the statement or answers the question.**

1. All of the following defined the Vedic and Epic ages in India EXCEPT
  - A) the development of Sanskrit.
  - B) an early form of a caste system.
  - C) consistently high levels of agricultural output.
  - D) creation of literary epics.
  - E) the rise of Buddhism.
  
2. The first ruler of the Maurya dynasty was
  - A) Ashoka.
  - B) Alexander the Great.
  - C) Chandragupta.
  - D) Kanishka.
  - E) Gautama.
  
3. The Maurya dynasty differed from the Gupta dynasty in that
  - A) it was imposed by Aryan conquerors.
  - B) it ruled a larger territory.
  - C) it had a greater effect later in Indian history.
  - D) it attacked Buddhist beliefs.
  - E) it refused to develop a strong army.
  
4. Classical India's political climate was characterized most by
  - A) a politically astute population.
  - B) an array of regional political cultures.
  - C) well-elaborated political theory.
  - D) a highly-centralized government.
  - E) democratic institutions.
  
5. The Indian caste system influenced the Indian governmental system by
  - A) enforcing rules about social behavior.
  - B) serving as a guide for legal judgments.
  - C) unifying the subcontinent under a single government.
  - D) creating a widespread interest in constitutional issues.
  - E) promoting a belief in individual rights.

6. Hinduism was defined by all of the following EXCEPT
- A) it was the religion of India's majority.
  - B) it lacked a central deity.
  - C) it tolerated increasing wealth.
  - D) it held a belief in reincarnation.
  - E) it excluded all other religions.
7. Buddhism differs from Hinduism by not believing in
- A) a caste system.
  - B) holy leaders.
  - C) nirvana.
  - D) the importance of moral obligations.
  - E) using missionaries.
8. Indian trading networks expanded to include all of the following EXCEPT
- A) southeast Asia.
  - B) the Middle East.
  - C) China.
  - D) Sri Lanka.
  - E) Russia.
9. In contrast to China, India
- A) had more direct contact with other societies and civilizations.
  - B) demonstrated a restrained artistic style.
  - C) lacked regional diversity.
  - D) had a more flexible social order.
  - E) was more secular in outlook.
10. In contrast to those in China, the values developed in classical India
- A) promoted considerable equality between men and women.
  - B) led to the evolution and prominence of several distinct religions.
  - C) urged that children not be required to work.
  - D) discouraged scientific research.
  - E) encouraged greater emotional spontaneity.



**SHORT ANSWER. Write the word or phrase that best completes each statement or answers the question.**

1. The vast Indian subcontinent is partially separated from the rest of Asia by northern mountain ranges, most notably the Himalayas.
2. During the Vedic and Epic ages, the Aryan (Indo-European) conquerors impressed their stamp on Indian society.
3. Early literary epics developed by the Aryans were passed on orally and written down in the language called Sanskrit.
4. The Indian emperor Ashoka was the best-known Mauryan leader.
5. The dynasty that followed the Maurya, the Gupta, featured a long era of political stability.
6. The priestly caste, or brahmins, stood at the top of India's caste system.
7. Unlike other major world religions, Hinduism had no single founder or central holy figure.
8. The Hindu ethical code, or Dharma, was far less detailed than the ethical codes of other major religions.
9. These southern Indians, the Tamils, were active in trading networks all over Asia.
10. Toward the end of the Epic Age, Gautama Buddha built on the foundation of Hinduism to create another major world religion.

**TRUE/FALSE. Write "T" if the statement is true and "F" if the statement is false.**

1. Classical Indian civilization represented a clear break from earlier Indian history. F
2. The Epic Age saw the creation of the Upanishads, a distinctly secular literature. F
3. In 322 B.C.E. Ashoka seized power and became the first leader of the Maurya dynasty. F
4. The Maurya dynasty controlled more territory than the Gupta dynasty. T
5. Classical Indian civilization was defined by its centralized state administration. F

6. Sanskrit never gained popularity among India's educated elite. T
7. Indian social structure was characterized by its rigidity and lack of interaction across T several classes.
8. Classical Indian civilization was able to accommodate a number of religious belief T systems.
9. India's religious traditions ruled out the emergence of other forms of cultural production. F
10. Classical India was similar to classical China in that it remained relatively isolated in its F development.

## ANSWER KEY

### Multiple Choice

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. E  |
| 2. C | 7. A  |
| 3. B | 8. E  |
| 4. B | 9. A  |
| 5. A | 10. E |

### Short Answer

1. Answer: Himalayas
2. Answer: Aryan (Indo-European)
3. Answer: Sanskrit
4. Answer: Ashoka
5. Answer: Gupta
6. Answer: brahmins
7. Answer: Hinduism
8. Answer: Dharma
9. Answer: Tamils
10. Answer: Gautama Buddha

### True/False

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T  |
| 2. F | 7. T  |
| 3. F | 8. T  |
| 4. T | 9. F  |
| 5. F | 10. F |

## CHAPTER 3

### TIMELINE

*Insert the following events into the timeline. This should help you to compare important historical events chronologically.*

fall of Gupta Empire  
reign of Ashoka  
beginning of Gupta Empire 319 C.E.

birth of the Buddha 563 B.C.E.  
beginning of Maurya Empire  
Alexander the Great's invasion of India

\_\_\_\_\_ c. 563 B.C.E.

\_\_\_\_\_ 327-325 B.C.E.

\_\_\_\_\_ 322 B.C.E.

\_\_\_\_\_ 269-232 B.C.E.

\_\_\_\_\_ 319 C.E.

\_\_\_\_\_ 535 C.E.

### TERMS, PEOPLE, EVENTS

*The following terms, people, and events are important to your understanding of the chapter. On a separate sheet of paper, define each one.*

untouchables  
*Ramayana*  
*Arthashastra*  
gurus  
dharma  
Upanishads  
mandala  
*Kamasutra*  
karma  
*Mahabharata*  
stupas

Mauryas  
Kushanas  
Tamil  
reincarnation  
nirvana  
Guptas  
Sanskrit  
Skanda Gupta  
Buddha  
Chandragupta Maurya  
Ashoka

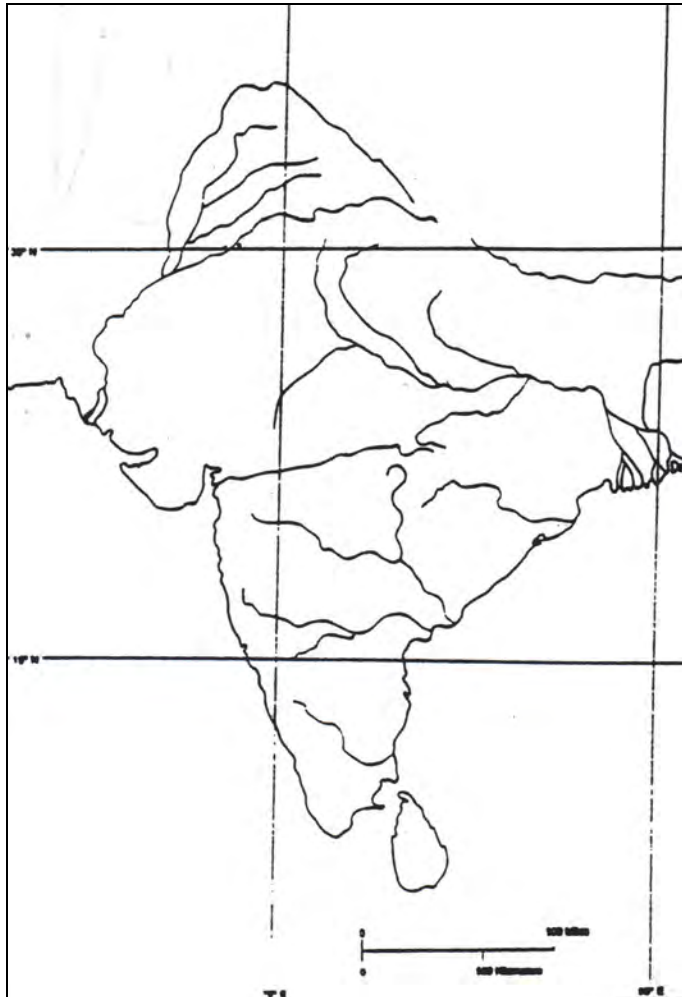
Kautilya  
Himalayas  
vedas  
varnas  
jati  
Indra  
brahma  
yoga

## MAP EXERCISE

*The following exercise is intended to clarify the geophysical environment and the spatial relationships among the important objects and places mentioned in the chapter. Locate the following places on the map.*

Indus River  
boundaries of Maurya Empire  
Pataliputra

Ganges River  
boundaries of Gupta Empire  
Sri Lanka



To what extent was classical India's economy defined by its geographic features?

AP World History - Stearns  
Chapter 3 – Classical Civilization: India

I. Introduction – difference vs. China

- a. China focus on politics/related philosophies vs. India focus on religion/social structure
- b. Less cohesive political structure
- c. Both were agricultural societies, localist flavor, male ownership, patriarchal, trade

II. The Framework for Indian History: Geography and a Formative Period

- a. Closer to other civilizations
  1. Influenced by Middle East/Mediterranean
  2. Persian Empires spilled over/Alexander also
  3. . Forced to react and adapt
- b. Topography
  1. Passes through Himalayas linked India
  2. Somewhat set apart
  3. Political unity difficult – greater diversity than middle kingdom
- c. River civilizations – Indus and Ganges
- d. Mountainous north – herding society
- e. Separate regions contributed to:
  1. economic diversity
  2. racial differences
  3. language differences
- f. Unstable, monsoon climate – but helped with agriculture
  1. Harvest two crops in a year, help support large population
- g. Formative period – Vedic and Epic ages – Aryan migrants – hunting and herding peoples
  1. Knowledge passed down through epics written in Sanskrit – Vedas
    - a. Mahabharata
    - b. Ramayana
    - c. Upanishads
  2. Aryans settled, made tight-knit villages
    - a. Families patriarchal, connected across generation
    - b. Aryans created social classes
      - a. Warrior/governing – Kshatriyas
      - b. Priests – Brahmins
      - c. Traders/farmers – Vaisyas
      - d. Common laborers – Sudras
      - e. Untouchables – refuse, transporting dead bodies, other lovely jobs
    - c. Social groups became hereditary
      1. Can't marry between castes – punishable by death
      2. Broken into smaller subgroups
    - d. Aryans brought polytheistic religion – similar to Greek myth, Scandinavians
      - a. One of few polytheistic religions to survive
        1. Hymns/sacrifice
    - e. Upanishads – epic poems
      - a. Sacred animals – monkeys/cattle
      - b. Rituals and sacrifice
      - c. Brahmin class enforced rituals
      - d. Unifying divine force, seek union with this force

III. Patterns in Classical India – end of 600 BCE – formative phase

- A. 16 major states existed – some monarchies, some republics – dominated by warriors/priests
- B. Eras often created as reaction to invaders
- C. Mauryan Dynasty – Chandragupta Mauryan 322BCE – unified subcontinent
  - a. maintained large armies
  - b. developed bureaucracy
  - c. highly autocratic – rely on ruler’s power
  - d. style of govt
    - i. autocratic – based on ruler’s personal/military power
  - e. Ashoka – grandson – lavish lifestyle
    - i. influenced by nature/spiritualism
    - ii. but...bloodthirsty methods of expansion
    - iii. converted to Buddhism – think Constantine
      - 1. spread Buddhism throughout empire, honored Hinduism – precedent
    - iv. improved trade/ road network
  - f. Kushans – outside invaders – converted to Buddhism
    - i. but...bad for Buddhism – connected to outsiders
- D. Guptas – 320 CE
  - a. no powerful individual rulers, but greater impact
  - b. negotiate w/ local princes
    - i. expanded influence w/out fighting – diff. than above
  - c. two generations of political stability – think Pax Romana
- E. Shifted between empires and network of smaller kingdoms

#### IV. Political Institutions

- A. Regionalism – diversity
  - a. Autocratic kings once in awhile, but also aristocratic assemblies
- B. How did they maintain power?
  - a. Mauryan – military power
  - b. Gupta
    - i. negotiation
    - ii. appointed by gods
    - iii. allowed local rulers to have autonomy – think Rome
      - 1. no single language imposed – promoted Sanskrit, but...
    - iv. Golden Age
      - 1. spread laws
      - 2. supported university, arts, literature
- C. However...not an elaborate political culture
  - a. little political theory, not like Greeks
  - b. Kautilya – how to maintain power – like Legalism in China
  - c. political service not valued as important
  - d. Buddhist leaders not interested in political affairs
- D. Why the limitations?
  - a. local governments
  - b. caste system already regulated life – social behavior – political laws unnecessary
    - i. subcastes, hereditary – can’t marry outside
      - 1. but...marry below, or lower job and you could lose caste
      - 2. rarely move up in caste – did well economically
    - ii. most rigid social structure of all classic civilizations
      - 1. method of conquerors and conquered to live together in peace
      - 2. not necessary to totally blend cultures
      - 3. promoted tolerance

4. slavery avoided – untouchables not owned
- E. Qualities of civilization based on cultural values
- a. Hindu/Buddhism clearest cement
  - b. remarkable ability to survive
  - c. means so many different things to so many different people
  - d. can evolve
  - e. Indian children can indulge imaginations
    - i. imaginative links with higher power
  - f. clear continuity though rarely under one political power

## V. Religion and Culture

### A. Hinduism – origins in Vedic and Epic ages

- a. Rig-Veda – Creation hymn
- b. Different – no single founder – no central holy figure
  1. Grew gradually, sometimes in reaction to other religions – Buddhism/Islam
- c. Religious approaches
  1. Ritualistic ceremonies performed by brahmins
  2. mysticism – unite humans w/ divine
  3. encouraged political and economic goals (artha) and worldly pleasures (karma)
  4. fluidity – adaptable – tolerant – many suitable paths of worship – Christianity?
- d. Brahmanism – Brahman leadership elaborate – called by scholars – dharma by Hindus
  1. gods of nature altered – represent abstract
    - a. Varuna – god of the sky to guardian of right and wrong
  2. Epic poems – gentle/generous behavior
- e. Upanishads – shallowness of worldly concerns – wealth/health
- f. each person’s soul part of universe
- g. religion of rituals vs. religion of mystics
  1. mystics – gurus and Brahmas agreed to
    - a. existence of divine essence – several gods – try to seek union w/ this soul
      1. Vishnu – preserved/ Shiva – destroyer
      2. takes many lifetimes – reincarnation
      3. where soul goes depends on reincarnation
- h. options for good life
  1. meditation/self-discipline – yoga
  2. others wanted rituals – cremation, prayers, sacred cows, refrain from beef
  3. some believed in lesser nature gods
  4. symbolic sacrifices might assist in reincarnation
- e. life obligations
  1. serve family
  2. earn money
  3. serve in army when necessary
- f. Bhagavad Gita – classic hymn – OK to kill family, duty, plus they’re reincarnated
- g. but...doesn’t have strict ethical codes – aka Ten Commandments
- h. Why did it spread?
  1. satisfying rules of conduct for life
  2. incorporated previous religion
  3. caste system – better time in future life

### B. Buddhism – 563 BCE – Siddhartha Gautama – Buddha – enlightened one

- a. searched for truth, found it, accepted many elements of Hinduism, but..
  1. disagreed with caste system
  2. all worldly desires hurt you



- 3. if you destroy self, can reach nirvana – self-control – regulate life
  - 4. denied importance of rituals/priests
  - b. spread by group of monks – prayer/charity/piety helped spread message
    - 1. Brahman opposition strong
  - c. Hinduism still attractive due to mysticism
  - C. Literature
    - a. Political theory sparse, but wrote about human life
    - b. “laws of love” – Kamasutra – male/female relationships
    - c. Recorded epics – lively stories
    - d. Romantic adventure – separated/returned – romantic/adventure
  - D. Science
    - a. Supported university – astronomy and medicine
      - 1. Religion prevented dissection
      - 2. Bone setting, plastic surgery, sterilization – reached West much later
  - D. Mathematics – imported through Arabs – but Indian
    - a. Concept of zero – decimal system
    - b. negative numbers
    - c. square roots
    - d. pi
  - E. Art – lively, but much perished
    - a. Stupas – spherical shrines to Buddha
    - b. Not realistic like Greeks, but stylized
    - c. Appreciation of nature
    - d. Joy of life themes + celebrate religion
  - F. Tone – not rational like West, or concentration on Politics like China
- VI. Economy and Society
- A. Caste system
    - 1. Different punishments for different crimes – Brahman killed servant – same as dog
    - 2. Villagers rarely had contact with higher caste
  - B. Family life based on hierarchy
    - 1. wife worship husband as god
    - 2. women lost power as male power expanded – common of agricultural societies
    - 3. question – could woman advance spiritually if not reincarnated as man?
    - 4. Arranged marriages – solid economic links
    - 5. Emphasis on loving relations/sexual pleasure
    - 6. children indulged and then expected to work hard
    - 7. clever-strong willed women as goddesses
  - C. Economy
    - 1. Chemistry, strongest steel – better than West until recently
    - 2. Textiles – cotton cloth, calico, cashmere
    - 3. Emphasis on trade far greater than in China
      - a. Tamil traders – cotton, silks, dyes, drugs, gold, ivory
    - 4. Most people lived subsistence lives

In Depth: Inequality as the Social Norm

## VII. Indian Influence

- A. Indian Ocean – most active linkage point among cultures
  - 1. No civilization to compete w/ India – but not empire builders
- B. Effect on other areas

1. married into royal families
  2. temples and Indian art constructed
  3. Buddhism spread throughout – Hinduism to upper class Indonesian families
  4. Affect China > Buddhism and art
- C. Started after Aryan invasions, but classical period lasted longer than China/Rome
1. Foundation of religion, art, literary tradition, social & family network

## VIII. China and India – borrowed from each other, but didn't change

### A. India vs. China - Differences

1. Art – lively vs. restrained
2. primary religion vs. separate religions/philosophies to fit needs
  - a. Religion more otherworldly vs. practical findings
3. Emphasis on caste vs. political structure
4. Different emotional reactions vs. restrained behavior
5. Expanded cultural influence through trade vs. new territory/emissaries
6. Land ownership consistent vs. trying to get more land/take over power

### B. India vs. China – Similarities

1. large peasant class
2. close-knit villages
3. mutual cooperation
4. cities/merchants took on secondary role
  - a. but...more sea trade in India
5. owners of land had power, could tax
6. patriarchy

## IX. Global Connections

A. no civilization more open to others

B. None more central to cultural exchanges

C. New civilizations

1. Trade influence grew
2. Religion, epics, art, architecture led to new civilizations – Angkor Wat/Majapahit

D. Trading network

1. Coveted cotton textiles and bronze statues
2. Epic literature

Chapter

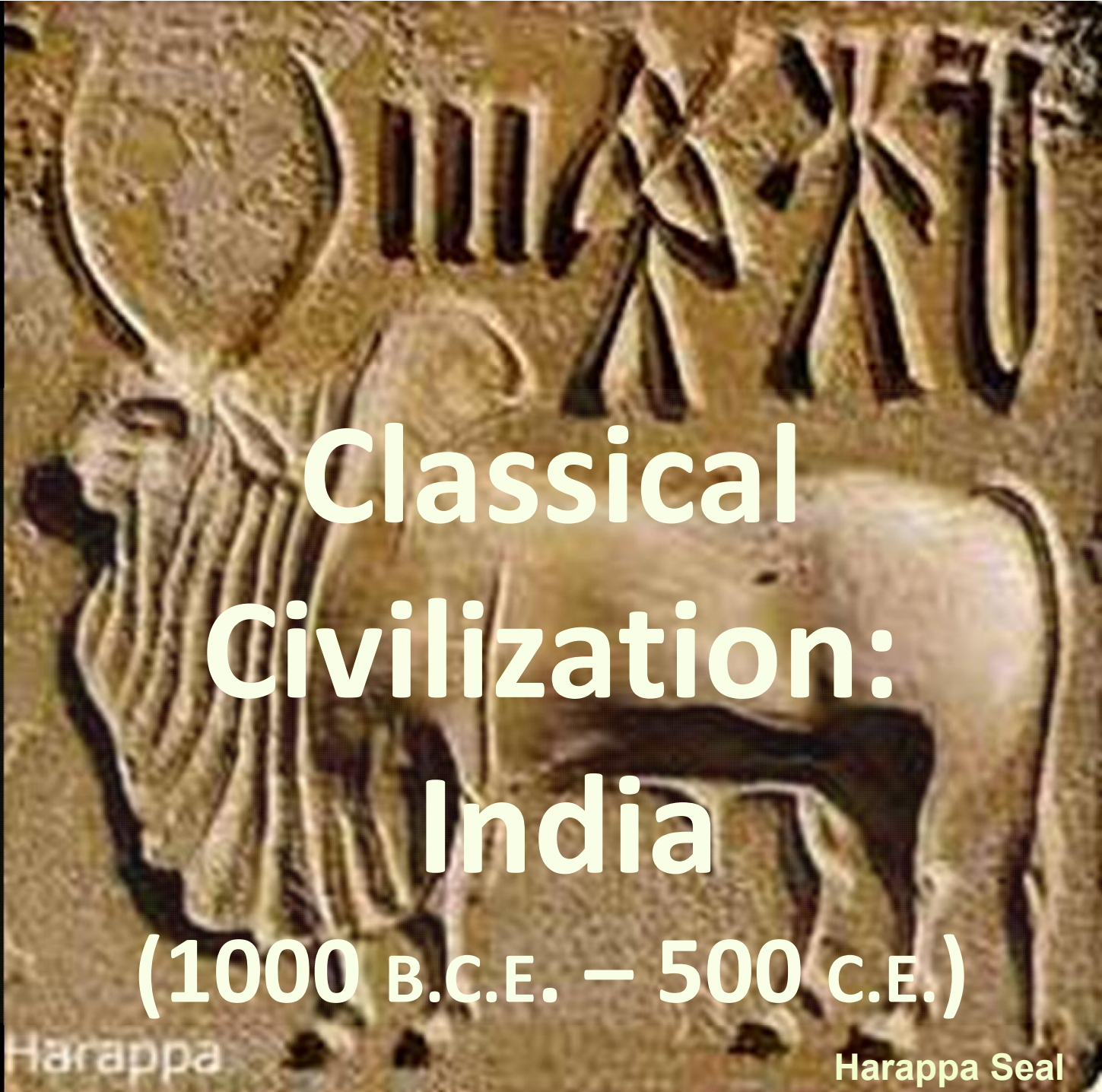
3

# Classical Civilization: India

(1000 B.C.E. – 500 C.E.)

Harappa

Harappa Seal





Section  
3  
Warmup

# Visual Primary Source Documents 1 - 2

**Document 1**



**Document 2**

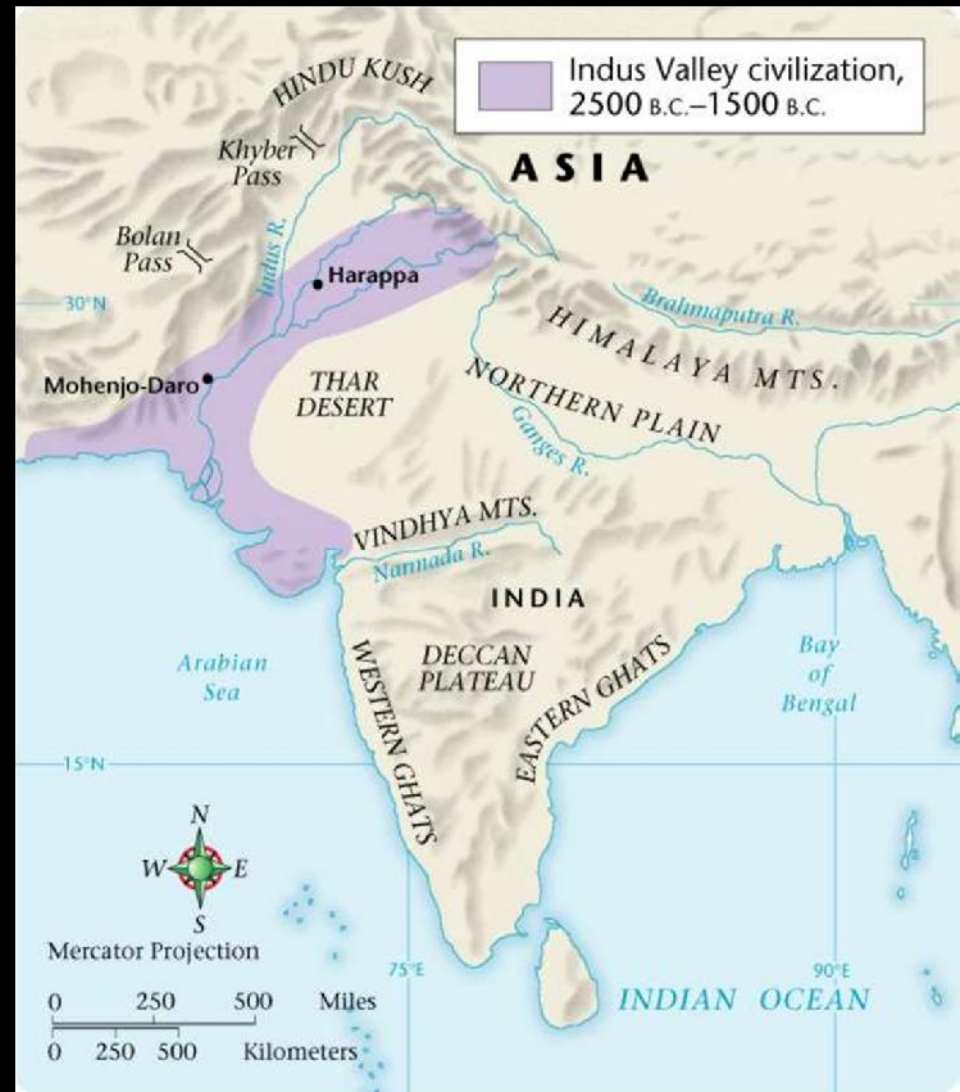
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## Section

## 2

# Geography of the Indian Subcontinent

- The Indus Valley is located on the **subcontinent** of India.
- The mountains in the north limited contact with other lands and helped India to develop a distinct culture.
- Steep passes through the Hindu Kush allowed for occasional migrations and invasions.
- The subcontinent is divided into three major zones: northern plain, Deccan, and coastal plains.
- The rivers of India, particularly the Ganges, are considered sacred.
- The **monsoon**, or seasonal wind, is a defining feature of Indian life.





# Indus Valley Civilizations

- India's first civilization emerged in the Indus River valley.
- Its two main cities, **Mohenjo-Daro** and **Harappa**, were carefully planned with roads laid out on a grid pattern, large storage bins, and massive hilltop fortress or temple.



Indus River

# Indus Valley Civilizations (Cont.)

- The earliest Indian civilization flourished for about 1,000 years, then vanished without a trace. Archaeologists have only recently begun to uncover evidence of these early people.
- The civilizations of the Indus River Valley included the following characteristics:

- Well-organized government
- Modern plumbing and sewer system
- Carefully planned cities
- Most people were farmers
- First people to cultivate cotton
- Covered largest area of any civilization until the rise of Persia 1,000 years later
- Traded with distant lands, including Sumer
- Polytheistic; honored mother goddess; worship of sacred animals influenced the later **veneration** of cattle



# Archeological Site at Harappa



Photos copyright J.M. Kenoyer/  
[www.harappa.com](http://www.harappa.com)



# Archeological Site at Mohenjo-Daro



# Decline and Disappearance of Indus Valley Civilization

No one knows for certain why the cities were abandoned and forgotten. Scholars have proposed a number of theories:

- Too many trees were cut down.
- A devastating earthquake destroyed the region.
- A volcanic eruption caused the Indus to flood the city.
- Aryan invaders overran the region.

# Kingdoms of the Ganges

- Aryan warriors invaded India and developed a new civilization based on **castes**, and developing **Hinduism** and **Buddhism**.
- They called themselves the “noble ones” or the “superior ones.”
- They were a hostile nomadic people from the Euro-Asian steppes.



# Aryan Civilization

The Aryans destroyed and looted the civilization of the Indus Valley and built a new Indian civilization, which reflected the following characteristics:

Nomadic  
warriors

Built no cities and left no  
statues

Felt superior to the people  
they conquered

Polytheistic

Religious teachings from  
the Vedas

People born into **castes**, or  
social groups, which they could  
not change

# Aryan Civilization

Expansion led to change in Aryan civilization because they:

- mingled with the people they conquered;
- gave up their nomadic ways and settled into villages to farm and breed cattle;
- learned such skills as iron-making and developed crafts of their own;
- fought to control trade and territory;
- moved toward the idea of a single spiritual power;
- some **rajās**, or tribal chiefs, became hereditary rulers;
- developed the written language of **Sanskrit**.



## Religious and Epic Literature

The Vedas and two great epic poems, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, tell us about Aryan life and values.

- The *Vedas* are the primary sacred texts of Hinduism.
- The *Mahabharata* celebrates battle and reflects important Indian beliefs about the immortality of the soul.
- The *Ramayana* celebrates a daring and adventurous hero and portrays the ideal woman as loyal and obedient to her husband.

Section  
3  
Warmup

# Visual Primary Source Documents 3 - 4



**Document 3**



**Document 4**

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## Section

3

# Indian Dynasties

- Under the **Maurya** and **Gupta** dynasties, India developed into a center of trade and had contacts with civilizations in Africa, the Middle East, Central and Southeast Asia.
- The **caste system**, the village, and the family influenced many aspects of Indian life.

**Brahmans** = priests

**Kshatriya** = warriors, nobles

**Vaishya** = craftspeople &  
merchants

**Shudra** = servants

Tigawa Temple,  
example of Gupta  
Architecture





# Empires of India



# The Maurya Empire

The Mauryan empire was founded by Chandragupta Maurya.

Maurya rulers created a strong central government. These rulers:

- supervised the building of roads and harbors.
- collected taxes and managed state-owned factories.
- created royal courts.
- created a secret police force to report on corruption, crime, and dissent, or opposing ideas.
- trained warriors to guard the royal palace.

# Chandragupta Maurya





# Asoka



Chakravatin or possibly **Asoka**

- **Asoka** (272 – 232) kept careful records of his edicts, making him the king for which the most is known.
- He began an aggressive campaign to conquer the rest of the subcontinent.
- Asoka became so troubled by massive bloodshed of his conquests, that he converted to Buddhism.
- The spread of Buddhism under Asoka greatly influenced the religious history of Asia.
- It also produced the first written literature in India.

# Kingdoms of the Deccan

- People were Dravidians with different languages and traditions.
- Each kingdom had its own capital and magnificent temples.
- Rulers improved harbors to support overseas trade.
- Merchants traded with the Roman Empire and China.
- Women enjoyed high status and economic power.
- Deccan writers left a rich and diverse literature.
- Rulers were tolerant of all religions and foreign settlers.

# The Gupta Empire



Chandragupta II

- The last of the Mauryan kings was assassinated in 184 B.C.
- India again became a collection of unfederated kingdoms.
- Chandragupta I (320-335) revived the empire in the north.
- He revived many of Asoka's principals of government.
- Later, his grandson, Chandragupta II (376-415) extended the kingdom to an empire.

# Golden Age of the Guptas

Under the Guptas, India enjoyed a period of great cultural achievement.

LEARNING	MEDICINE	MATHEMATICS
Scholars taught many subjects at Hindu and Buddhist schools.	Doctors treated illnesses with herbs, performed surgery, set broken bones, and vaccinated against smallpox.	Mathematicians invented system of numbers we use today and developed decimal system and concept of zero.
ARCHITECTURE	CARVING & PAINTING	LITERATURE
Builders designed magnificent stone temples and dome-shaped shrines called <b>stupas</b> .	Artists painted <b>murals</b> , or wall paintings and created carvings telling the story of the life of the Buddha.	Writers collected and recorded fables and folk tales. Kalidasa wrote classical plays.

Section

1  
Warm-  
up

# *Buddha's Travels Written Source Document 1*

## **From *The Gospel of Buddha***

*“Destroy illusions and the contact with things will cease to beget misconception. Destroy misconception and you do away with thirst. Destroy thirst and you will be free of all morbid cleaving. Remove the cleaving and you destroy the selfishness of selfhood.”*

- Translations of Buddhist texts use English words that may not always make the meanings clear. For instance, what do you think the phrase “contact with things” means here?
- What is meant by “thirst” and “morbid cleaving,” and why would destroying “misconception” do away with them?
- Why do you think Buddha regards “selfhood” as “selfish”?



# The Caste System and Daily Life

- Caste rules governed every aspect of life—where people lived, what they ate, how they dressed, and what work they did.
- Life for the lowest ranking caste, the “Untouchables,” was harsh and restricted.
- People knew that they could not change their status in this life. However, they believed that they could reach a higher state in a future life by fulfilling the duties of their present caste.
- Each caste had its own leaders and its own occupation, and caste members cooperated to help one another.

# Family Life

- The ideal was the **joint family**, in which extended family all lived under one roof.
- The family was patriarchal. The father or oldest male had absolute authority.
- Family wishes came before individual wishes.
- Early on, children learned family duties, such as obedience of caste rules. This was called **filial piety**.
- Parents had a duty to arrange good marriages for their children, based on caste and family interests.
- The status and freedom of women decreased over time. A woman's duties were to marry, obey her husband, and raise children.
- **Suttee** was the practice in which wives of prominent men who died, would throw themselves into the funeral pyre. If they failed to kill themselves, they would be scorned.

# Village Life

<b>ECONOMICS</b>	<b>POLITICS</b>
<p data-bbox="289 477 1010 670">Villages were self-sufficient, producing most of the food and goods needed.</p> <p data-bbox="289 751 989 878">Sometimes villagers traded at regional markets.</p>	<p data-bbox="1129 477 1766 737">Each village ran its own affairs facing little interference as long as it paid its share of taxes.</p> <p data-bbox="1129 850 1745 971">A village headman and council made decisions.</p>

# The Fall of the Gupta Empire, 550 C.E.

- The Gupta Empire was invaded by the White Huns in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.
- They held them off, but at a tremendous cost, which weakened the state.
- Taxes were insufficient to pay for adequate military defense.
- Land divisions increased the power of provincial officials.
- The empire finally fell to the Huns by the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

# Indian Religious Beliefs



**Vishnu**, a major Hindu god, the preserver of the universe.

Hinduism grew out of many varied beliefs of different peoples who settled in India. It has many gods and goddesses and many forms of worship. Despite this diversity, all Hindus share certain basic beliefs:

- All the universe is part of the unchanging, all-powerful spiritual force called **brahman**.
- The ultimate goal of existence is to achieve **moksha**, or union with brahman.
- To achieve moksha, people must free themselves from selfish desires.
- One must obey the law of **karma**.
- **Reincarnation** allows people to continue working toward moksha through several lifetimes.

# Indian Religious Beliefs (cont.)



Prince Siddhartha Gautama

- **Siddhartha Gautama**, a religious reformer, sought spiritual enlightenment.
- His teachings gave rise to a new religion, **Buddhism**, that spread through Southeast and East Asia.



# The Teachings of Buddha

## The Four Noble Truths:

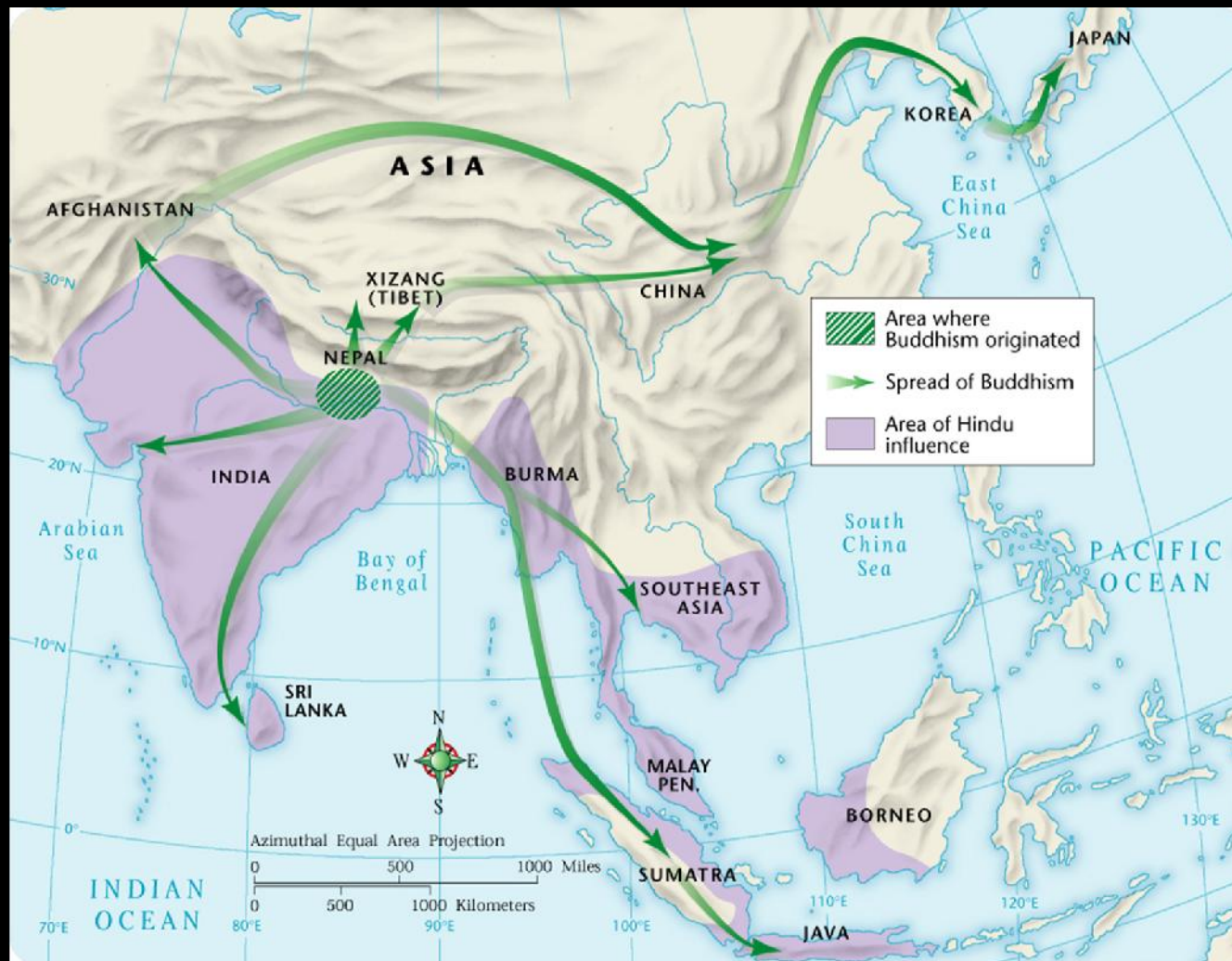
1. Life is full of suffering.
2. The only cure for suffering is to follow the Eightfold Path, a middle road between a life devoted to pleasure and a life of harsh self-denial.
3. It is important to live a moral life.
4. Enlightenment is achieved through meditation.

The ultimate goal is **nirvana**, union with the universe and release from the cycle of rebirth.



Buddhist artwork, Ajanta Caves

# The Spread of Buddhism



Followers accompanied the Buddha as he preached across Northern India.

Some Buddhists set up monasteries and convents that grew into centers of learning.

Missionaries and traders spread Buddhism across India to many parts of Asia



Section

2

Warm-  
up

## *Buddha's Travels Written Source Document 2*

### **From *The Pure Land Sutra***

*“Good men and good women of pure faith who hear Amitayus Buddha’s name of inconceivable merits and also learn of the pure Buddha-land of Utmost Bliss should all receive [the teaching] in faith, arouse aspiration, practice the method as prescribed, and attain birth in that Buddhaland.”*

- According to the Pure Land Sutra, what exactly must one do to be reborn in the “Buddha-land of Utmost Bliss”?
- Some see Pure Land Buddhism as less demanding than other, earlier forms of Buddhism. How does this passage support or fail to support that view?