

India and SE Asia

1500 BCE – 1025 CE

Geography

- Indian “subcontinent”
 - Modern Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka
 - North: mountains, meadows of Hindu Kush/Himalayan Mountains
 - Indus and Ganges River basins
 - Indian Ocean coastal lands
- Monsoon winds
 - June: winds from the south deposit large amounts of rainfall
 - Ships use monsoon winds to aid in speedy travel

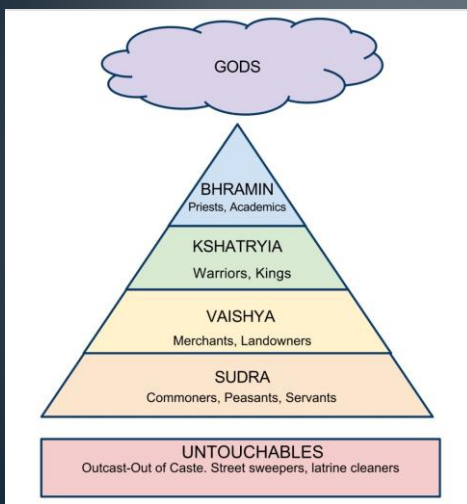


Vedic Age



- 1500-500 BCE
- Vedas: religious texts; main source of information of the time
- 1000 BCE: New peoples migrate into India
 - Aryas: lighter skinned, Indo-European language speakers
 - Settled in the North
 - Dasas: dark skinned, Dravidian language speakers
 - Settled in the South
- New technologies
 - Iron allowed for stronger/harder tools
 - Ability to clear land, plow fields
- Monsoon rains allowed for multiple crops per year
 - Led to increase in food production and ultimately an increase in population

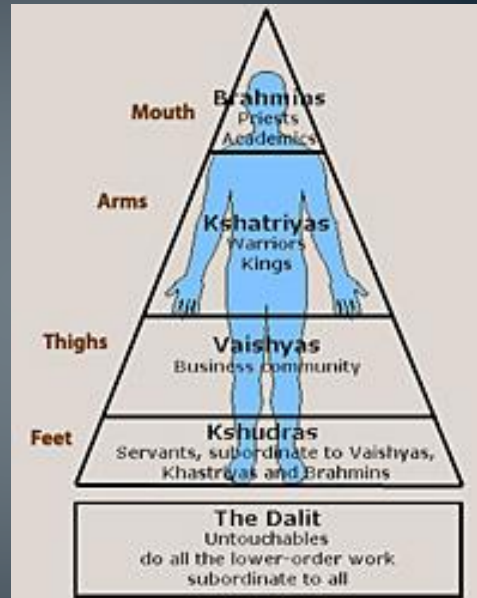
The Caste System



- Varna: “Color” (class)
 - People are born into a varna
- Jati: sub-caste/birth group
 - Each jati has specific duties to perform
 - Interact/marry ONLY within your jati/varna
- Reincarnation
 - Karma: deeds from this life influence your reincarnate life
 - Can be re-born to a higher jati
- “You are where you deserve to be”

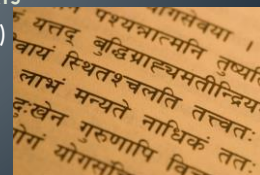
Castes

- Brahmin: priests, scholars
 - Mouth of Purusha
 - Intellect and knowledge
- Kshatriya: warriors, officials
 - Arms of Purusha
- Vaishya: merchants, artisans, landowners
 - Thighs of Purusha
- Shudra: peasants, laborers
 - Feet of Purusha
- Untouchables: excluded from caste system
 - AKA “pariah” or “harijan”
 - Leather tanning, cremations, garbage disposal
 - Touching of dead bodies/animals



Vedic Religion/Sacred Texts

- Male deities
 - Indra: war, thunderbolt
 - Varuna: sky, justice, order
 - Agni: fire, sacrifice
- Brahmin priests = only ones who know prayers/rituals
 - Did not want lower classes to be able to read/write
- Brahmanas: descriptions of rituals
- Rig Veda: 1000 hymns to various deities
- Bhagavad-Gita: The most sacred of Indian texts
 - Dialogue between Krishna (god) and Arjuna (warrior)
 - Krishna allows Arjuna to see with a “divine eye”
- Sanskrit: Aryan upper class language



Opposition to Vedic Religion

- 700 BCE
- Reactions against power of the Brahmin
- Retreat to wilderness
 - Individuals attracted “cult” followings
 - Abandonment of towns and the caste system
- Question the exclusivity of the priestly class
 - Gave alternate paths to salvation
 - Yoga: pursuit of insight to nature through physical and mental discipline
 - Special diets
 - Meditation
 - Moksha: liberation through distancing oneself from worldly desires
- Upanishads
 - 100+ dialogues between teachers and students
 - Questioning of the Vedic religion

Jainism



- Mahavira (540-468 BCE)
 - AKA Jina (the Conqueror)
- Holiness of all life
- Extreme non-violence
 - Masks to prevent inhaling insects
- Asceticism
 - “Severe self-discipline and avoidance of all forms of indulgence, typically for religious reasons”
- Nudity (clothing comes from killing something)
- Eventual starvation

Siddhartha Gautama (563-483 BCE)

- Kshatriya family in the Himalayan mountains
- Abandoned family for life of asceticism
 - 6 years of meditation
 - Determined that asceticism did nothing for a life of spiritual insight
 - Adopted “Middle Path” of moderation
- Gained insight while sitting under a tree on the Ganges River
 - The Buddha (Enlightened One)
 - Four Noble Truths
 - Eightfold Path



The Four Noble Truths



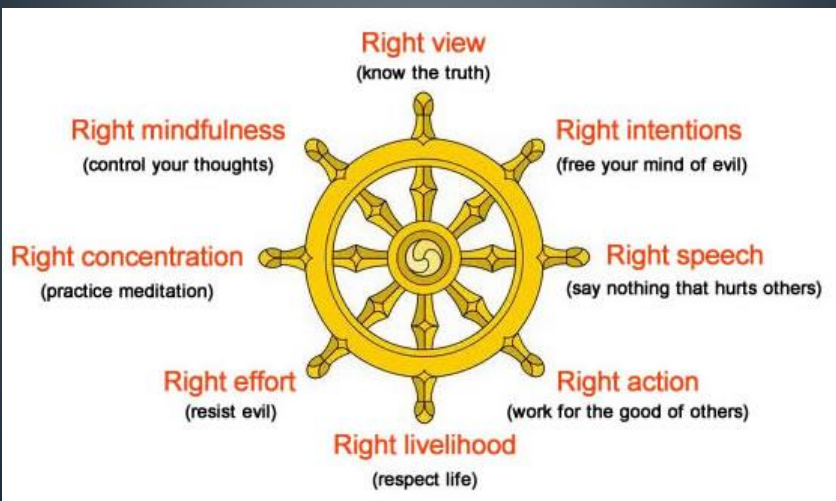
- Life is suffering
- Suffering arises from desire
- The solution to suffering lies in the curbing of those desires
- Desire can be curbed by following the Eightfold Path

Aka “dharma” (law)



Site of the First Sermon where Buddha preached on the Four Noble Truths

The Eightfold Path



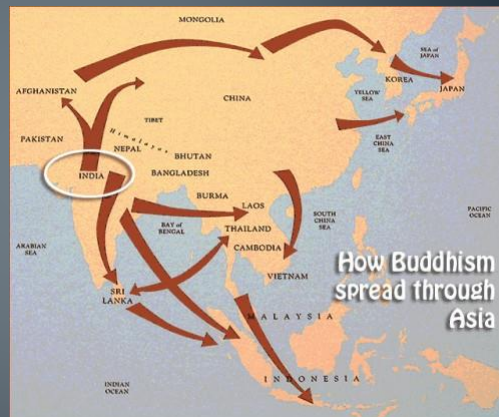
Buddhism

- Emphasis on the individual
 - People are composite beings with out a “soul” that exists in the afterlife
- Denial of the usefulness of gods
- Live in moderation
- Minimize desires in order to end suffering
- Search for spiritual truth through meditation and self discipline
- Nirvana: ultimate reward (“snuffing out the flame”)
 - Release from reincarnation cycles
 - Achievement of tranquility



Spread of Buddhism

- Buddha’s death
 - No instructions for followers— “Be your own lamp”
- India, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia
- Monasteries established
 - Hierarchies of monks and nuns
- Stupas
 - Buddhist temples erected
 - Symbolized the universe
 - Remains of Buddha





The Great Stupa
Built at the birthplace of Ashoka's wife (India)

Transformation of Buddhism

- Buddha began to be worshipped as a god
- Bodhisattvas
 - Men/women who achieve nirvana but choose to be reincarnated in human bodies in order to help others
- Art
 - Early art portrayed symbols rather than the Buddha himself
 - 2nd century CE: statues of Buddha appear
 - Syncretism of Buddhist and Greek styles
- Mahayana Buddhism (Great Vehicle)
 - Embraced "modern" aspects of the religion
- Theraveda Buddhism (Teachings of the Elders)
 - Closest to original teachings





Gandharan Art



Hinduism

- Result of Vedic religion adjusting to Jainism and Buddhism
 - Vedic transformed by 4th century CE
- Includes aspects of Buddhism, fertility rituals, other religions
- Emphasis of individual devotion to a single god
- 330 million gods (?)
 - All gods are manifestations of a single divine force
 - Vishnu: the preserver
 - Appears as avatars (incarnations)
 - Rama (hero)
 - Krishna (cow herd god)
 - Buddha (rival religion)
 - Shiva: creation and destruction
 - Devi: fertility



Hindu Worship

- Gave the people a personal deity with whom they could make divine and direct connections
 - Direct opposition to Theraveda Buddhism
- Temples
 - “plain” and elaborate
- Statues
 - Embodied by gods
- Puja: service to deity
 - Bathing, clothing, feeding statues
- Pilgrimages
 - Temples, shrines, sacred locations
 - Ganges River



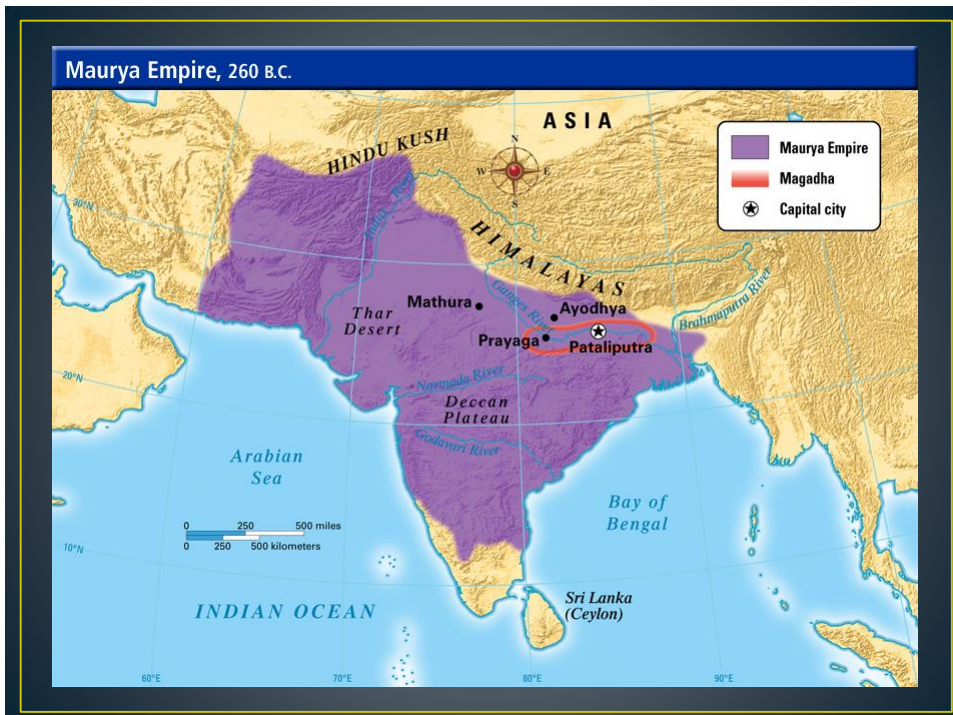
Angkor Wat

- Built as a temple to honor Vishnu in 12th century
- Eventually transformed to Buddhist temple
- Largest religious temple in the world



Mauryan Empire (324 BCE – 184 BCE)

- **India's first centralized empire**
- Chandragupta Maurya
 - 4th Century BCE
 - Control of Magadha
- Kautilya
 - Brahmin advisor to Chandragupta
 - Arthashastra (treatise on government)
 - "My enemy's enemy is my friend"
 - Tax collection
 - Spy "agency"
- Economy
 - 1/4 harvest value tax to gov't
 - Mining, liquor, weapon monopolies
 - Irrigation fees
 - Standard coinage
- Armed Forces
 - Infantry, cavalry, chariot
 - War elephants
- Pataliputra: capital
- Height during/after Ashoka (see next slide)
- Fall of Empire
 - \$\$\$\$ of army/bureaucracy
 - External threats



Ashoka

- Chandragupta's grandson
- Conquest of Kalinga
 - Hundreds of thousands killed
 - Brutality caused Ashoka to convert to Buddhism
 - Nonviolence, morality, moderation , religious toleration
- Pillars of Ashoka
 - 40-50 ft tall / 50 tons
 - Earliest, decipherable Indian writing
 - Edicts of Ashoka for all to see
 - Emphasized morality, nonviolence
 - Reminded people of his ability to punish those who did wrong



Political Fragmentation

- 500 years of foreign rule after fall of Mauryan Empire
 - Greco-Bactrian forces (Alexander the Great)
 - Central Asian groups
 - Kushans
- Flourishing of economy and culture
 - India becomes center for international trade
 - Merchants and artisans become political powers
 - Ramayana and Mahabharata
 - Indian epics
- Science and Technology
 - Herbal remedies
 - Standardization of Sanskrit into administrative language

Gupta Empire (320-550 CE)

- Founded by Chandra Gupta
 - Named after Chandragupta Maurya
- **Smaller in territory size than Mauryan**
- **Not as centralized as Mauryan**
- “Theater state”
 - Full of rituals and ceremonies
- Invention of zero
- Arabic numerals
- **Decline in women's rights**
 - Loss of right to own/inherit property
 - Barred from (some) religious ceremonies
 - Treated like the Shudra
 - Obey father, husband, sons
 - Sati: widow cremation
 - Escape to monasteries
 - Higher social status = more freedom



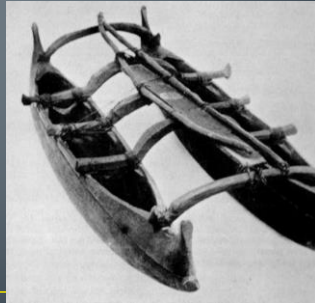
Religion and Fall of the Empire

- Gupta monarchs were Hindu
- Reestablishment of caste system
- Brahmins receive land
 - Taxes go to priests
- Practiced religious tolerance
- Traditional temple style emerges
 - Raised platform and towers
- Trade declines due to failing of Roman Empire
 - Begin trading with Malay Peninsula and Indonesia
 - Silk Roads still dangerous
- Fall of Empire
 - 5th century CE: Invasion of Huns
 - Exhaustion of treasury

Southeast Asia

- 3 zones
 - Indochina
 - Malay Peninsula
 - Pacific Islands
- Modern Day: Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, Philippines
- Malay peoples
 - Migrated from southern China (3000 BCE)
 - Great navigators
 - Eventually settle islands across the Pacific and Indian Oceans

Physical Geography of Southeast Asia



Cultural Transfusion

- SE Asia is located along trade routes
 - Chinese silk
 - SE Asian goods: spices (cinnamon, pepper, cloves, nutmeg), wood, religion
 - Spread of Hinduism/Buddhism
 - Merchants and sailors
 - Sanskrit and governmental structures in Malaysia
 - Maharaja (great king)
- Sea Trade
 - 6th century CE
 - India, Sri Lanka, Strait of Malacca

