

Aim: How did the Gupta Golden Age impact India?

INDIA

The Classical Period

1000 BCE – 600 CE

Aim: How did the Gupta Golden Age impact India?

Do Now: .

1. What is a Golden Age?
2. What would life be like during a Golden Age in a particular place?
3. Do you think that we live in a Golden Age today in the United States? Why or why not?

# Golden Age

- A Golden Age is a period of great peace, prosperity, and happiness in a particular area.
- *Period* = significant length of time
- *Peace* = free from war and violence
- *Prosperity* = overall economic well-being for a society in general; many people in the society feel secure financially
- Happiness = people generally feel good about their lives

# Classical Period

- During the Classical Period (1000 BCE- 600 CE), societies built upon the past and expanded into vast empires
- Large regional civilizations grew in:
  - China
  - India
  - Mediterranean
  - Middle East



## Roman Empire

<http://iml.you.ufl.edu/projects/Spring04/Tyler/Images/RomanEmpire.gif>

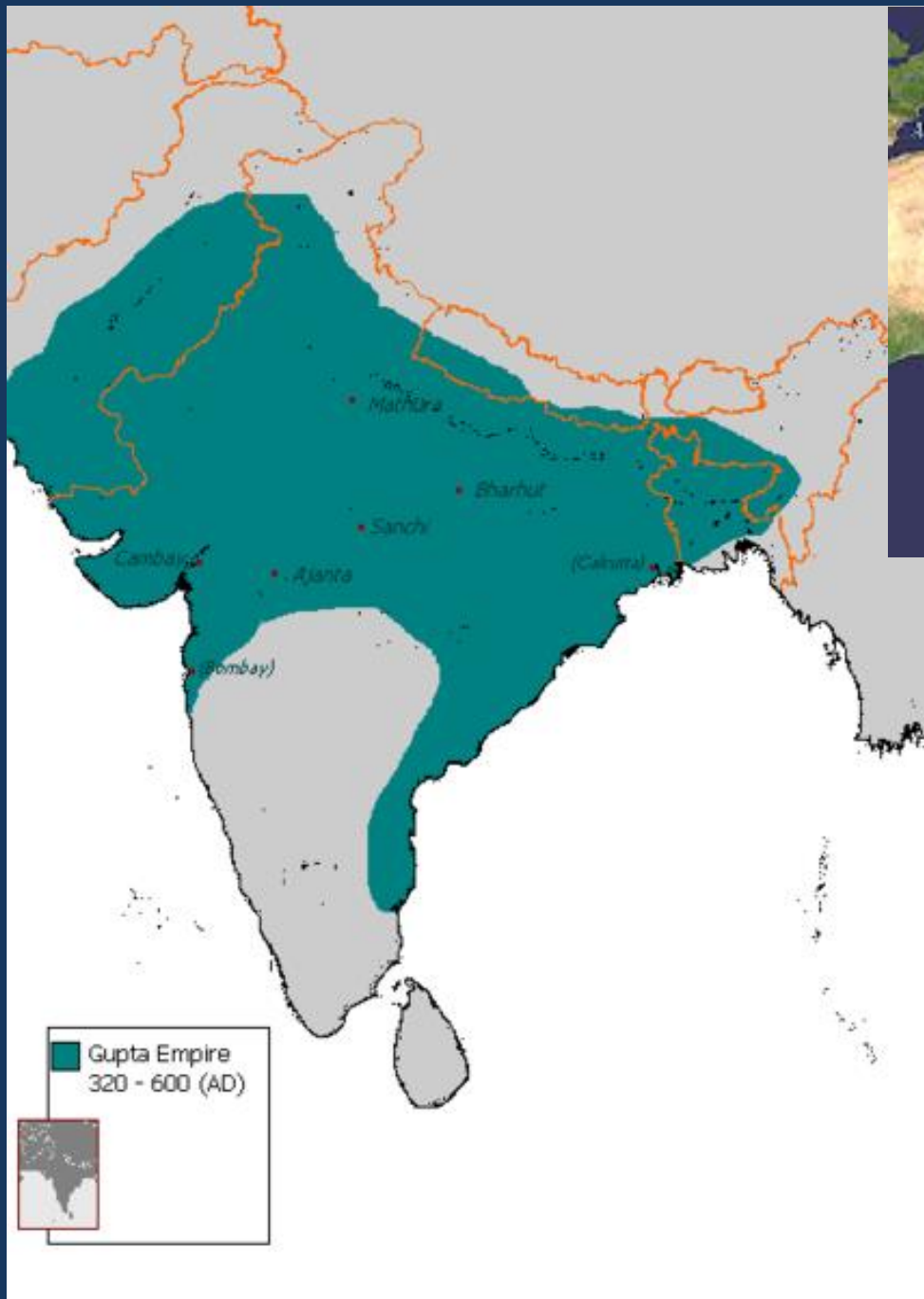
## Gupta Empire

<http://images.encyclopedia.msn.com/brefmedia/aencomed/targets/maps/mhi/T061793A.gif>

## Han Dynasty

<http://www.chinahighlights.com/image/map/ancient/han-dynasty-map2.gif>





Study both maps. The smaller map shows the Silk Routes, both on land and sea.

# Fall Of Indus River Valley Society

- Decline of Indus River Valley civilization
  - Natural disaster and invasion
- 1500 BCE Aryans assume control of the subcontinent
  - Began to alter culture

# Vedic Period

- 1500-1000 BCE known as Vedic Period
  - Named after the Vedas (books of “knowledge”)
- Under Aryans:
  - Sanskrit- most common language
  - Villages took on more organization and regulation
  - Families became more patriarchal
  - Caste system begins
  - Beginnings of Hinduism



# Mauryan Empire (321-185 BCE)

Chandragupta Maurya united India in its first dynasty

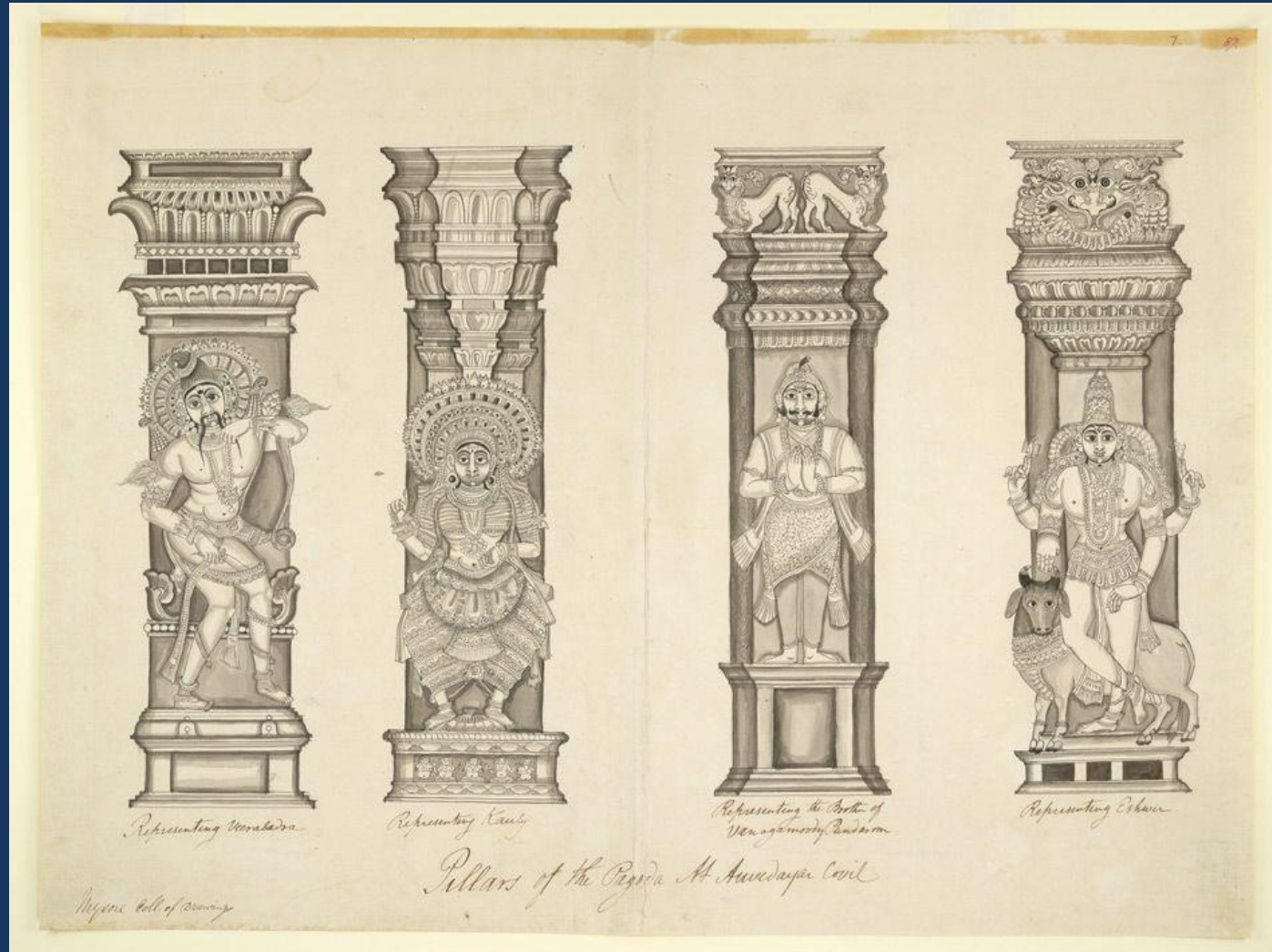
- Created an empire throughout most of the subcontinent

# Ashoka (268 – c. 232 BCE)

- Ashoka continued to expand the empire
  - Use of brutal military campaigns
    - Later, Ashoka converted to Buddhism and promoted nonviolence
  - Helped popularize Buddhism by sponsoring shrines and statues to the Buddha
- Ordered construction projects throughout empire
  - Roads with wells and rest stops for travelers

# Indian Architecture

- All serving religious purposes:
- Pillar



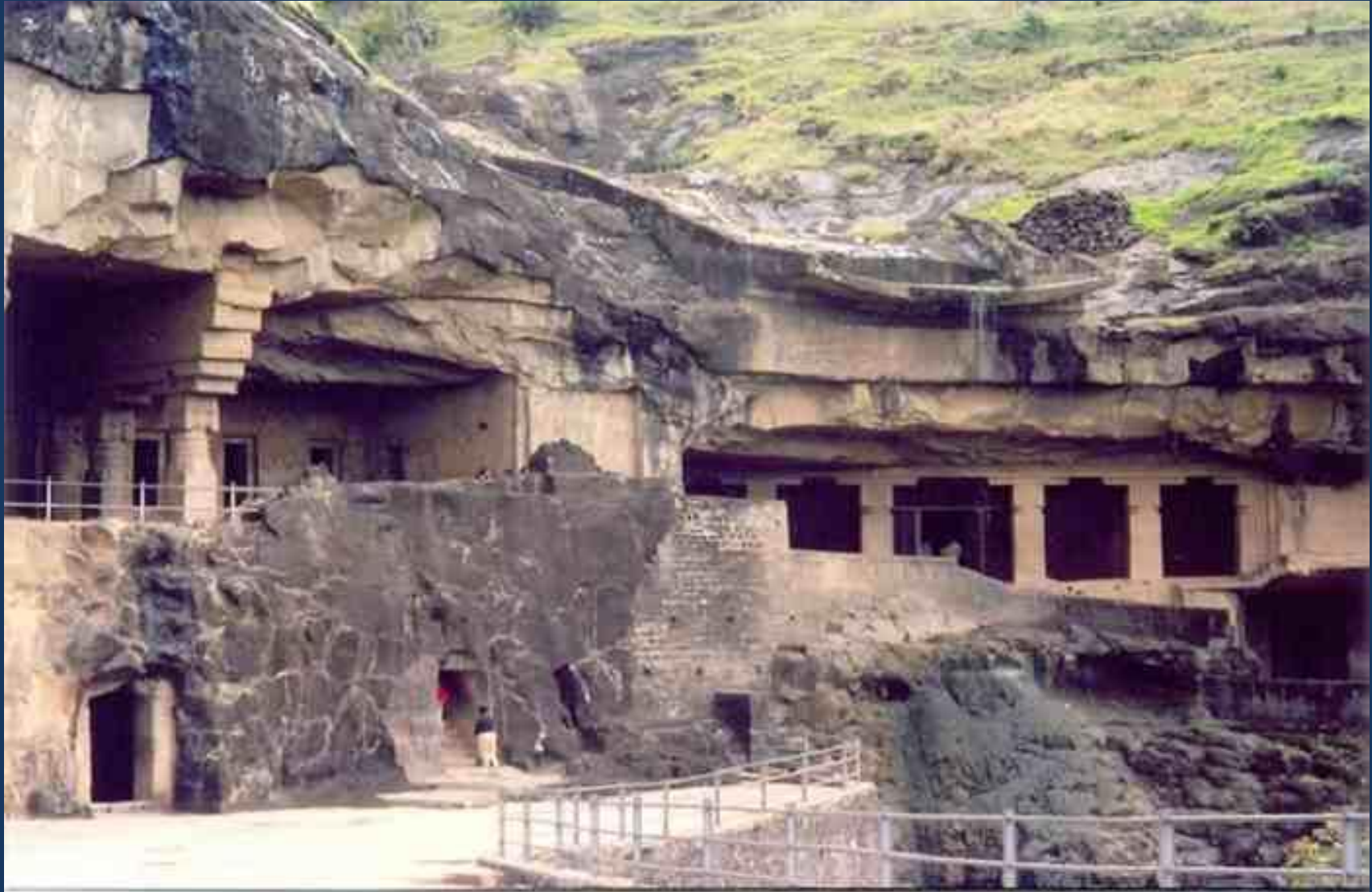
# Stupa





# Rock Chamber

built out of rock cliffs



# Gupta Empire

- 320-550 CE
- Gupta rulers modeled their rule after the Mauryan Empire
  - Taxation, construction projects, emphasis on military
  - Empire was not as large or as bureaucratic as the Mauryan
- India's Golden Age
  - Advances in math, science, art, literature, etc.

# Transition from River Valley Civilizations to Classical Civilizations

- River Valley Civilizations had huge impact on human society and history
  - Development of writing systems
  - Experimentation in religion, government, math, science, astronomy, etc.
  - Development of social stratification systems
  - Complex trade networks started

# Continuities from the Past

- During the Classical Period, some things remained relatively the same as they had in the past
  - Peasant labor retained dominant role in most economies
  - Systems of transportation continued
  - Patriarchy continued
  - Populations continue to increase



# Changes during the Classical Period

- Although some things continued, the Classical Period was characterized by:
  - Empire building, military conquest
  - Use of iron tools and metal coinage
  - New trade links
  - Development of new religions
  - Increase in literacy, elaborate art, literature

# Classical China

# Classical China

- 3 Dynasties during the Classical Period
  - Zhou (approx. 1029- 258 BCE)
  - Qin (approx. 221- 202 BCE)
  - Han (approx. 202 BCE- 220 CE)
    - Note: depending on the source, dates might be slightly altered.

# Zhou Dynasty

- Displaced the Shang Dynasty
  - China's longest lasting dynasty
  - Located in NE China
  - Increased the territory of China
  - Flourished until 700's, then began a slow decline



# Zhou Dynasty: Government

- No strong centralized government
  - Feudal system
    - Govt. dependent upon loyalty from nobles
- Rulers claimed to have a Mandate of Heaven
  - Ruler chosen by gods to rule
  - Gods can take away the mandate if the ruler is unjust or unfit

# Zhou Dynasty: Society and Culture

- The family was the main social unit within Classical China
  - Headed by patriarch
- Zhou rulers attempted to create a greater sense of unity within China
  - Language: Promoted Mandarin Chinese
  - Religion: outlawed human sacrifice
    - However, feudalism made this unity difficult

# Decline of the Zhou Dynasty

- Regional disunity caused Zhou Dynasty to decline
  - Feudal lords began to assume more power, weakening the dynasty
  - Invasion from nomads to north
- China entered the Warring States Period
  - 480-221 BCE
  - Strongmen competed for power
  - Eventually, one man was able to rise up and begin a new dynasty

# The Qin Dynasty

- Qin Dynasty (221-202 BCE)
  - Very short lived
- Qin Shi Huangdi assumed control of China
  - Declared himself as China's first Emperor



<http://www.chinahighlights.com/image/map/ancient/qin-dynasty-map1.gif>



# Qin Dynasty: Government

- Shi Huangdi created a strong centralized govt.
  - Power taken from feudal lords
  - Appointed bureaucrats to help maintain control
  - Brutal and unpopular ruler; placed the state above the people
- Promoted Legalism
  - Authoritarian ruler
  - Use of force, strong military and discipline to maintain order
  - System of rewards and punishments to shape behavior

# Qin Shi Huangdi: China's first Emperor



# Qin Dynasty: Government

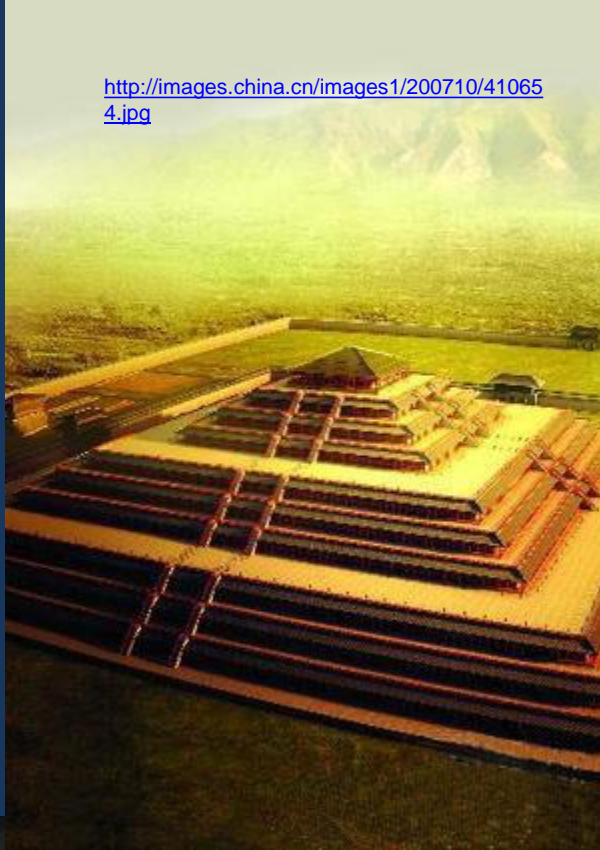
- Expansion into South, new territory
- Held world's first Census
- High taxes to support military and construction projects
- Standardization of coins, weights, measures, roads
- Outlawed slavery
  - Increased free peasantry that could be taxed and conscripted for labor and military
- Construction on what would become the “Great Wall” to north
  - Protection from invasion

# Fall of the Qin Dynasty

- Qin Dynasty was unpopular among the people
  - Tight control and brutal rule
- After death of Shi Huangdi, the Dynasty soon fell
  - Huangdi was buried in an elaborate tomb complete with an army of terracotta soldiers
- Replaced by the Han Dynasty



<http://images.china.cn/images1/200710/410654.jpg>



# Qin Shi Huangdi's Tomb

<http://media.cn/ibiblio.org/chineseart/photo-s/01/0e/es/50/terra-cotta-soldiers.jpg>



<http://www.ibiblio.org/chineseart/contents/ache/img/c02s01i01.jpg>



# Han Dynasty

- Following the death of Huangdi, a power struggle began
  - The dynasty fell
  - Replaced by Han Dynasty (202 BCE- 220 CE)
- Han Dynasty established by Liu Bang
  - Peasant who rose up and assumed rule
- Very important dynasty
  - Most Chinese citizens today refer to themselves as ethnically “Han”





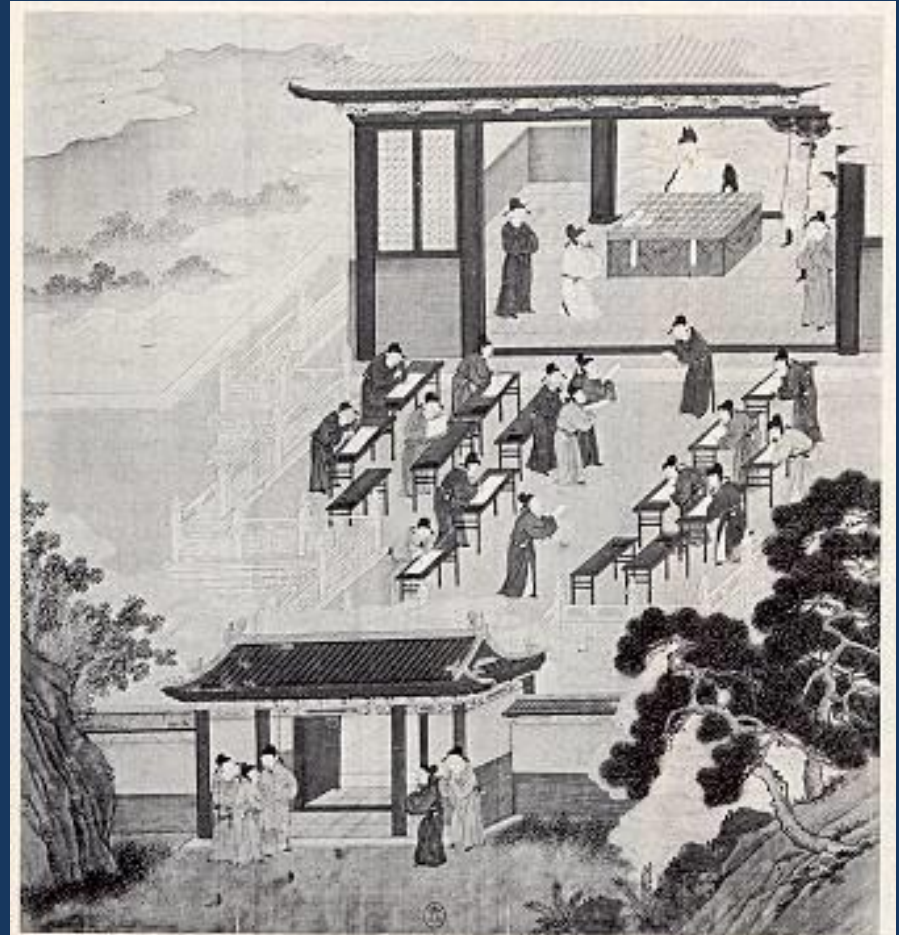
# Han Dynasty: Government

- Continued centralized control started under the Qin
  - Regional bureaucrats to maintain order
  - Increased expansion
- Han rulers promoted peace within their dynasty
  - Moderated Legalism by promoting Confucianism



# Han Dynasty: Government

- Han established civil service exams to promote merit in the government
- Possible for peasants to become part of the ruling class (if they could pass exams)
- Taxation and regulation of the economy



*Chinese officials compose essays on a Confucian text under the Emperor's supervision. (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)*

# Han Dynasty: Society/Culture

- Emperor was center of society
  - Claimed Mandate of Heaven
- Family main social unit
  - Govt. replicated family model
    - patriarchy
- Large peasant class
- Strong influence of Confucianism
  - Daoism also achieved greater popularity

# Basic Characteristics of Classical China

- Government:
  - Qin and Han: centralized govt. & bureaucracy
  - Patriarchal Rule (both in family & govt.)
    - Boys preferred to girls
    - Wealth passed on to sons (primogeniture)
    - Confucianism discouraged women from engaging in public life
      - Little known about their experiences b/c most written sources exclude women
  - Confucian ideas employed in govt.
  - Strict punishments to promote order
  - Taxation and conscription of labor and military
  - Mandate of Heaven

# Basic Characteristics of Classical China

- Society/Culture:
  - 3 social classes (determined by birth)
    - Aristocracy and gentry, educated bureaucrats, laboring masses (peasants)
      - Also had class of “mean” people- those w/o useful skills
    - Punishment dictated by status
  - Agriculture based economy
- Poetry, art, calligraphy, pottery, metallurgy popular in Classical China

# Technology in Classical China

- Construction projects
  - Thousands of miles of roads
- Weaponry: cross bow
- Paper
- Water powered mills
- Iron tools
- 365 day calendar & study of astronomy
- Seismograph
- Medical and anatomical research

# Trade in Classical China

- China's biggest export was Silk
  - Luxury item traded with west
  - Price inflated by middle men
    - Up to 100 times the original price
- Merchants had very little social status
- Trade networks developed to foster trade
  - Indian Ocean Trade
  - Silk Road in Asia

# Decline of Classical China

- Over time, China was weakened by:
  - Nomadic invasions from the north
  - Regional disputes as aristocrats slowly accumulated more power
  - Political and social disunity
- The Han Dynasty fell in 220 CE

# Classical India



# Mauryan Empire

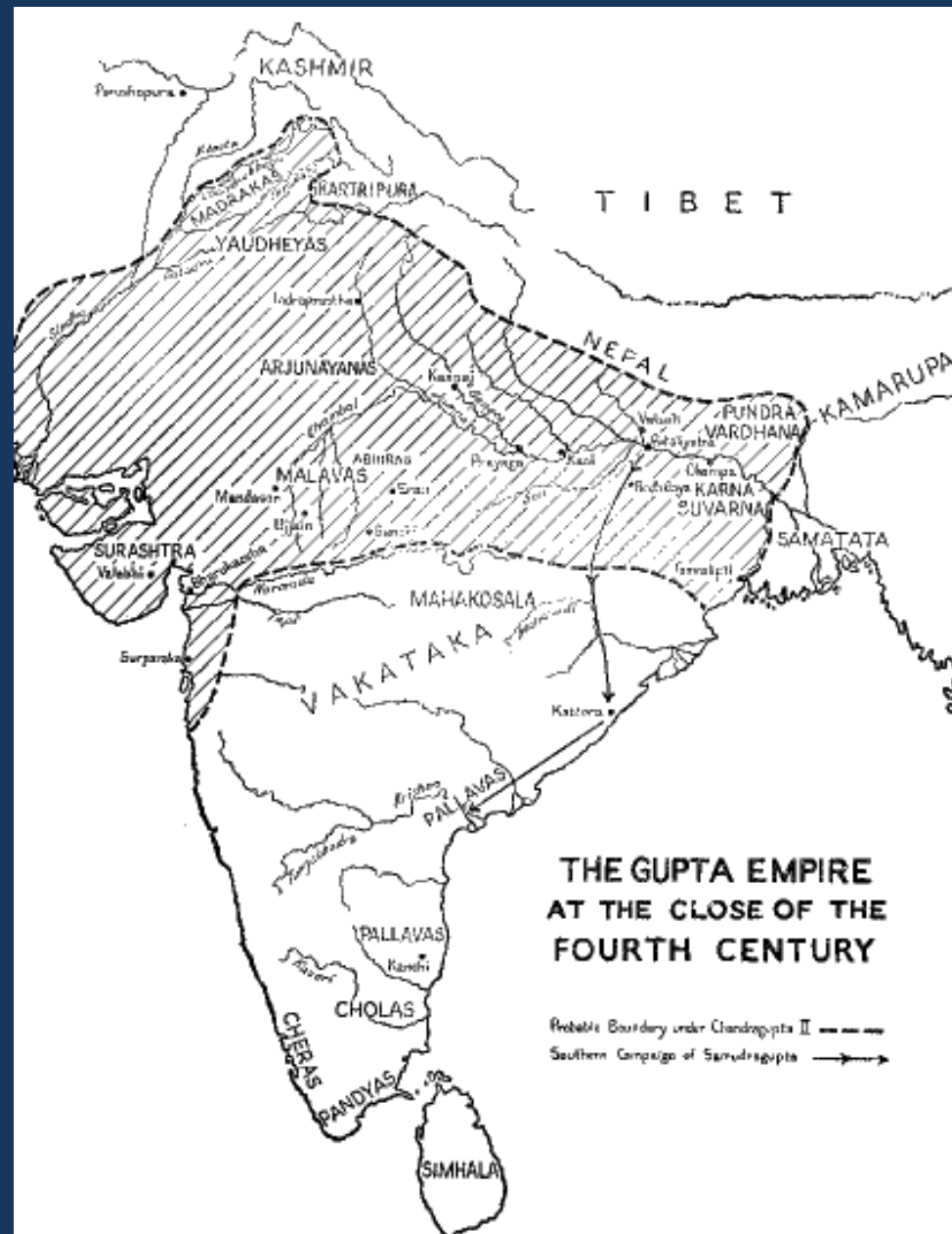
<http://jan.ucc.nyu.edu/~sl6/mauryanEmpire.jpg>



--- Approximate greatest extent of the Mauryan Empire.

# Gupta Empire

[http://www.215.pair.com/sacoins/images/maps/gupta\\_4thc.gif](http://www.215.pair.com/sacoins/images/maps/gupta_4thc.gif)



**THE GUPTA EMPIRE  
AT THE CLOSE OF THE  
FOURTH CENTURY**

Probable Boundary under Chandragupta II ---  
Southern Campaign of Samudragupta →

# Geography

- Indian Subcontinent
- Mountains to north (Himalayas, etc)
- Monsoon: seasonal wind that brings moisture to subcontinent
  - How can this be a good thing and/or bad thing for the people of India???

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# Classical India: Government

- Unlike China, India often did not develop and maintain a strong centralized government
  - Regional kingdoms, decentralized
- 327 BCE: Alexander the Great invaded India to expand his empire
  - In reaction, an Indian soldier began to create a powerbase to oppose the invasion
    - Chandragupta Maurya united India in its first dynasty
      - Known as the Mauryan Dynasty

# Mauryan Empire

- Chandragupta relied upon military for power
  - Created an empire throughout most of the subcontinent
- Chandragupta's grandson was a better known ruler of the empire

# Ashoka

<http://www.indiaparenting.com/stories/pics/ashoka.jpg>



# Ashoka

- Ashoka continued to expand the empire
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# Fall of Mauryan Empire

- Mauryan Empire fell apart soon after the death of Ashoka (232 BCE)
- Invaders from Northwest established a temporary state (Kushan)
- Early 4<sup>th</sup> Century CE a new empire emerged
  - Gupta Empire



# THE GUPTA EMPIRE (400 AD)

# Gupta Empire

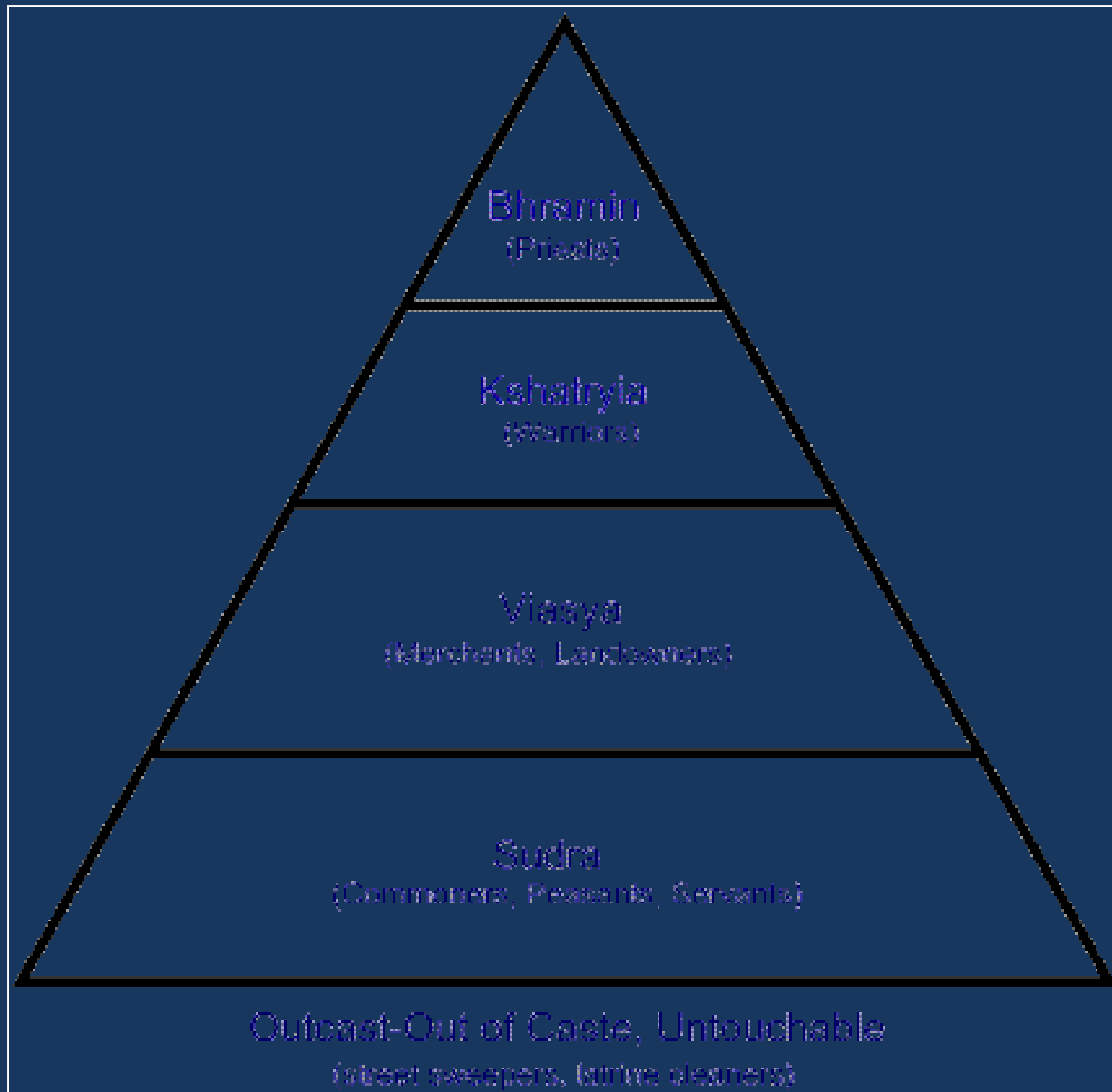
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- India's Golden Age
  - Advances in math, science, art, literature, etc.

# Classical India: Government and Politics

- Regional governments dominated
  - Less emphasis on politics than in China
- Empires were typically short-lived and less bureaucratic than the other classical civilizations
- Religion and the caste system assumed role of maintaining order
  - Caste system became more complex in the classical era
  - Dictated proper behavior for members of society

# Caste System

- Society broken up into castes or *Varnas* (literally means color)
  - Warrior/governing class
  - Priests (*Brahmans*) eventually move to top of social ladder
  - Traders/farmers
  - Common Laborers
  - *Untouchables* (so named b/c of their work)



# Religion and Culture

- Hinduism played largest role in shaping Indian society
- Buddhism rose in popularity during the reign of Ashoka
- Much of the culture of India is directly tied to religion

# Literature in Classical India

- Epic stories
  - *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*
- Love, romance and adventure major themes
- Lively storylines
  - Often involving military exploits and romance
- Even today, love and adventure are popular themes in Indian entertainment



# Science and Math in Classical India

- Guptas sponsored one of the world's first Universities
  - Over 100 lecture halls and 3 libraries, astronomical observatory
  - Studied religion, philosophy, medicine, and architecture
  - Value placed on education

# Advances in Astronomy

- Scholars calculated circumference of the Earth with remarkable accuracy
- Calculated daily rotation of Earth on axis
- Predicted and explained eclipses
- Developed a theory of gravity
- Able to identify 7 planets

# Advances in medicine

- Indians became proficient in
  - Bone setting
  - Experimenting with plastic surgery
  - Inoculations against smallpox
  - Cleanliness and sterilization of wounds

# Advances in Math

- Invented the concept of a zero
- Developed a decimal system
- Negative numbers
- Calculation of square roots
- Calculated value of pi

# Art in Classical India

- Statues and shrines devoted to the Buddha
  - Stupa
- Colorful, elaborate art
  - Shows an appreciation of nature
  - Reveals India's interest in spontaneity and imagination
- Elaborate carvings on buildings, temples, and shrines



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/22816468@N03/2241912292/>



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/sitrajan/531206662/>



[http://www.flickr.com/photos/davy\\_rogers/1615346665/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/davy_rogers/1615346665/)

# Family Structure

- Patriarchy
  - Men dominated family life
  - Women had few rights, but were valued for their beauty and cleverness
  - Arranged marriages
- Love and sexuality valued
- Children were often pampered and indulged

# Economy

- Indians were experts at iron making
- Proficient in textiles: cotton, cashmere
- Merchants enjoyed high social status b/c India was involved in extensive trade
  - Silk, dyes, textiles, gold, ivory
  - Traded with: Mediterranean, Malaysia, Indonesia, China
- Ag based economy
  - Subsistence farming for many