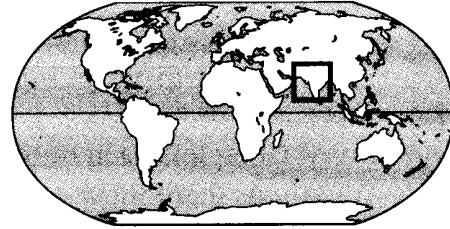


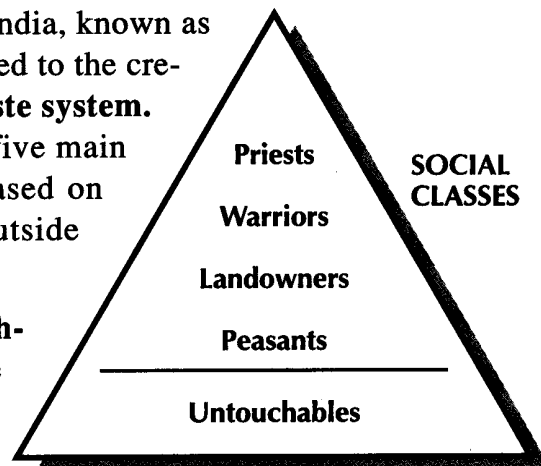
**GLOBAL HISTORY I  
HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS  
DUE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2008**

**I. India’s Classical Age**

About 1500 B.C., a people from Central Asia known as the **Aryans** arrived in India. The Aryans with their iron weapons and horse-drawn chariots, were excellent warriors. After conquering the peoples of the Indus River Valley, the Aryans moved into the Ganges River Valley, pushing the people living there further south.



The Aryans brought their own religion to India, known as **Hinduism**. The Aryan conquest of India also led to the creation of a new social system, known as the **caste system**. Under this system, people were divided into five main social classes. Caste lines were rigid and based on birth. People were not permitted to marry outside their caste.



One group of people were labeled **Untouchables**. Untouchables were considered to be beneath all other social groups. They performed the lowliest tasks in society, such as sweeping the streets and cleaning up animal droppings. Hindus believed that people’s souls were continually reborn. One’s birth in a particular caste was therefore a punishment or reward for deeds in a past life.

**THE MAURYAN EMPIRE**

Around 500 B.C., a new religion emerged in India known as **Buddhism**. Buddhists believed in renouncing worldly desires to find inner peace. Missionaries carried Buddhist ideas throughout Southeast and East Asia. During this same period, a great empire emerged in northern India — the Mauryan empire. Its ruler, **King Asoka** (269 B.C. – 232 B.C.), converted from Hinduism to Buddhism. Asoka was a tolerant ruler who decreed that people of all religions should live peacefully with one another. He improved roads, built hospitals, and sent teachers throughout the empire to encourage education and spread the ideas of Buddhism. After Asoka’s death, the Mauryan empire began to fall apart.

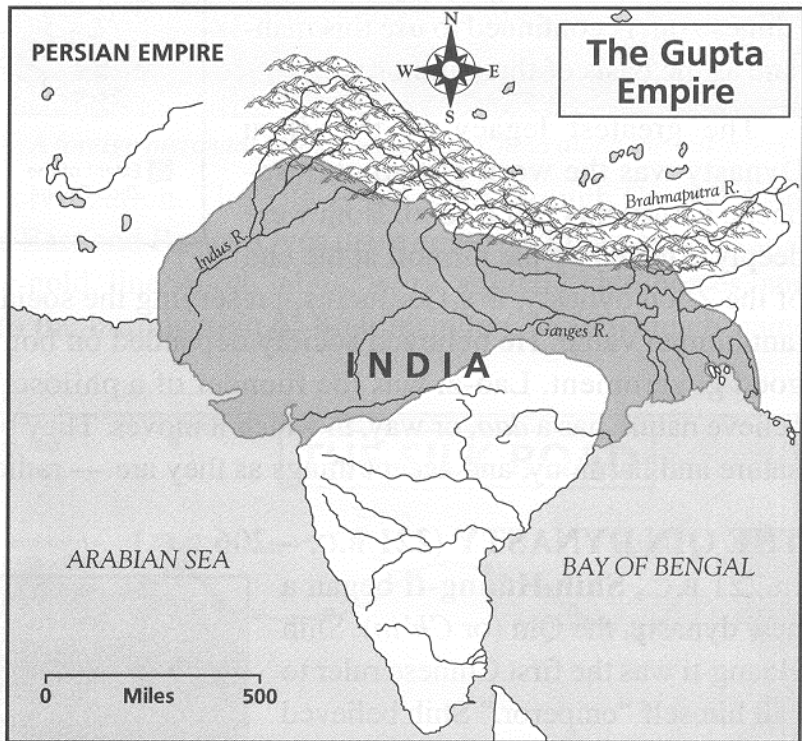


*Asoka died in after thirty-seven years of sovereignty (supreme and independent power). By reading Asoka’s edicts (laws and other regulations) it seems quite clear that the myths about this wise and just monarch (king) are a reality and definitely allow Asoka to be considered one of the greatest monarchs (kings and queens) of the ancient world.*

## THE GUPTA EMPIRE, 320 A.D. – 535 A.D.

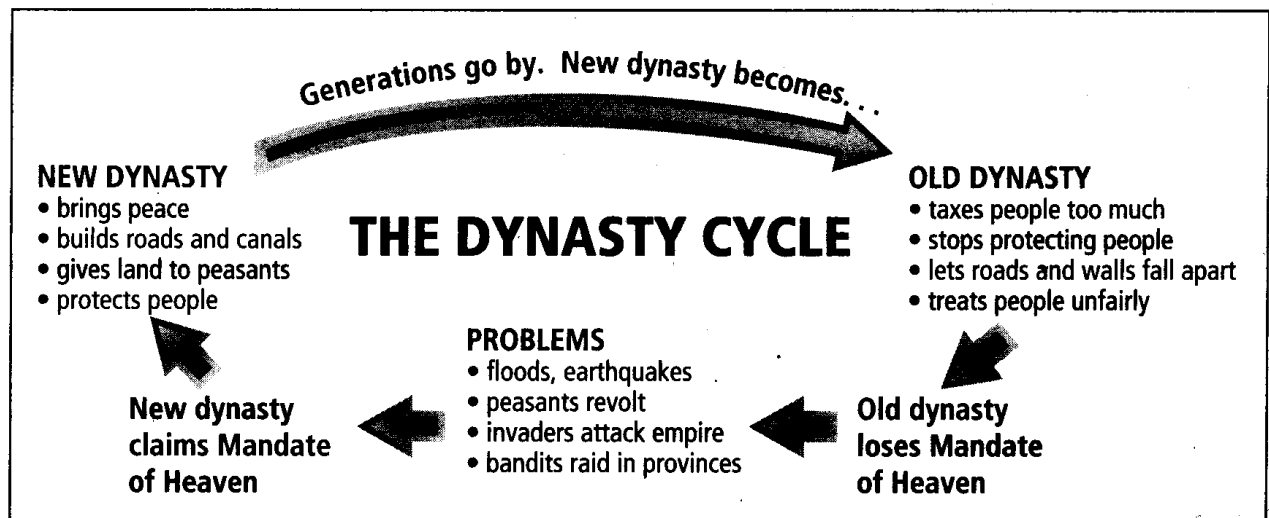
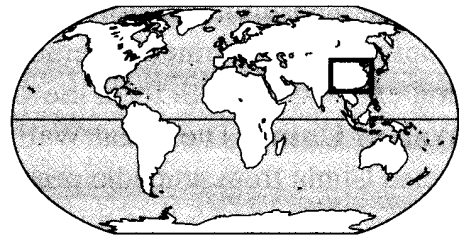
In 320 A.D., a new ruling family, the **Gupta**, emerged in northeastern India and united the territory around the Ganges. The Guptas encouraged peace, prosperity, and trade. Gupta emperors built universities and supported learning, the arts, and literature. Hindu scholars excelled at the sciences. Hindu mathematicians developed the concept of zero, the idea of infinity, and a decimal system. Artists painted colorful murals, while writers composed poems and plays in Sanskrit (*the literary and religious written language of India*).

Because the Guptas were Hindus, the two centuries of Gupta rule are sometimes referred to as the **Golden Age of Hindu Culture**.



## II. China’s Classical Age

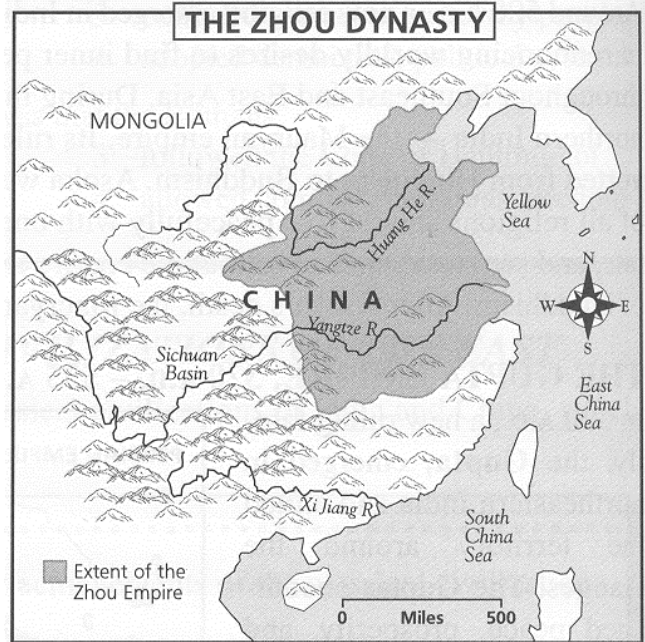
Like the flowering of Greek and Roman culture in the West, China witnessed some of its greatest cultural achievements in this era. Chinese history is generally divided into periods based upon the **dynasty**, or ruling family, that governed China during that time. During the 1,200 years from 1027 B.C. to 220 A.D., China was ruled by three important dynasties: the Zhou, Qin, and Han.



## ZHOU DYNASTY, 1027 B.C. – 221 B.C.

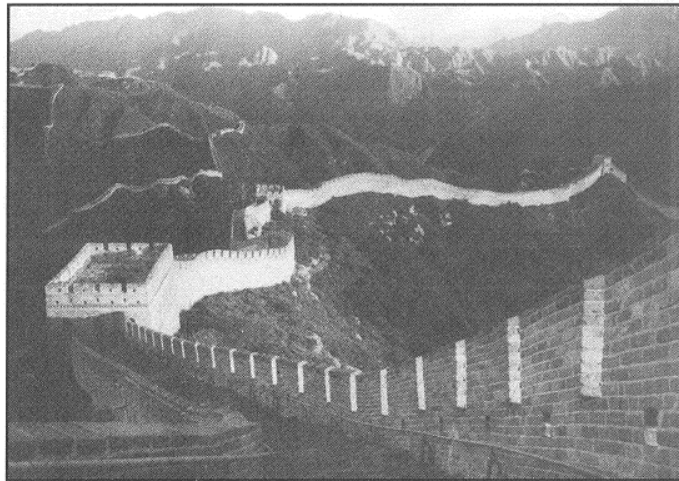
The Shang had united the peoples living around the Huang He and the Yangtze River Valleys. In 1027 B.C., the Shang were conquered, marking the beginning of the Zhou Dynasty. Most ancient Chinese believed that their ruler was chosen to rule by Heaven, and that Heaven would also overthrow a bad ruler. The new Zhou ruler therefore justified his rule as the **Mandate of Heaven**. Later Chinese rulers continued to use this mandate as the basis of their authority.

The greatest legacy of the Zhou Dynasty was the work of two philosophers, **Confucius** and **Lao-zi**. Both were deeply affected by the turmoil at the end of the Zhou dynasty. For Confucius, preserving the social order became the most important human value. He believed society depended on both good family relationships and good government. Lao-zi was the founder of a philosophy known as **Daoism**. Daoists believe nature has a *dao*, or way, in which it moves. They believe that people should respect nature and harmony, and accept things as they are — rather than trying to change them.



## THE QIN DYNASTY (221 B.C. – 206 B.C.)

In 221 B.C., **Shih Huang-ti** began a new dynasty, the Qin (or *Ch'in*). Shih Huang-ti was the first Chinese ruler to call himself "emperor." Shih believed that people were not always good and required a strong ruler to keep control. Shih Huang-ti established a strong central government, built roads, and introduced a uniform system of writing and measurement throughout the empire. He also joined together several existing walls to form the **Great Wall of China**. The Great Wall pro-



*The Great Wall of China*

protected China from nomadic peoples to the northwest. Stretching over 1,500 miles, it stood 22 feet high and 15 feet thick and took thousands of laborers many years to complete. Shih Huang-ti's rule was so harsh that his dynasty came to an end just after his death.

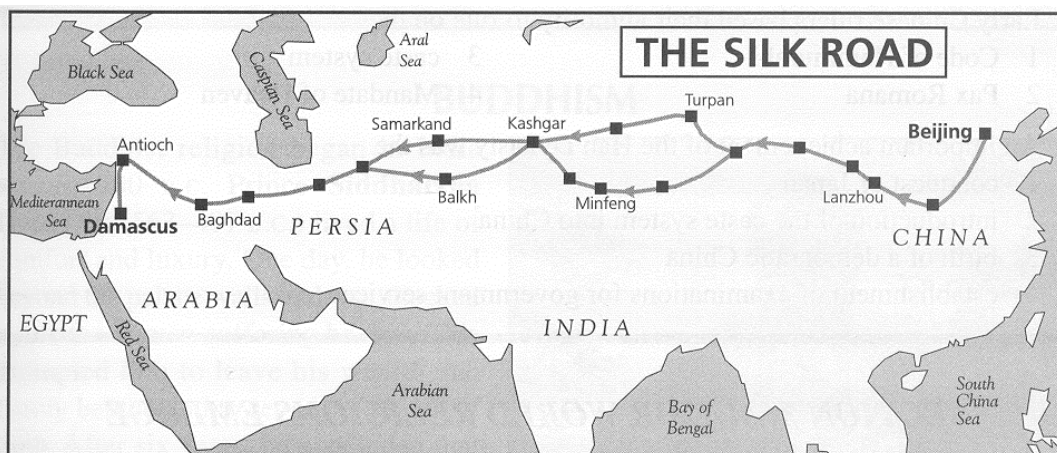
## HAN DYNASTY (206 B.C. – 220 A.D.)

The next dynasty, the Han, kept China unified for over four hundred years. Han emperors established examinations to select candidates for government service. Candidates were tested on Chinese history and Confucian philosophy. Examinations were open to all and viewed as a way for a few talented commoners to improve their social position. During the Han Dynasty, merchants established overland trade routes to other centers of civilization. The **Silk Road** went through Central Asia, connecting China to the Middle East and Rome. Over these routes, China exported silk, iron, and bronze in exchange for gold, linen cloth, glass, ivory, animal hides, horses, and cattle. Contacts with India led to the introduction of Buddhism to China, which became popular during the Han Dynasty.



*A foreign merchant brings goods into China along the Silk Road.*

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### III. Written Assignment – Questions

Using the resources in this handout, copy and answer the following questions on a separate sheet of loose-leaf paper.

1. Who were the Aryans and what religion did they bring to India? Name and describe the social system that they created.
2. What new religion emerged in India around 500 B.C.? What great king converted to it?
3. What religion did the Gupta Empire adopt? What did the Gupta Empire achieve?
4. What dynasty replaced the Shang and how did they justify their rule? Explain.
5. Name and describe the two philosophers that emerged during the Zhou Dynasty.
6. What did the emperor Shih Huang-ti believe about people? What great wonder was created during his rule and what was the cost to the people of this achievement?
7. How long did the Han dynasty last? How did they select people for government service? What major trading route was established during this dynasty?