

# Ancient India and China

## THE BIG PICTURE

Like Mesopotamia and Egypt, India and China were each home to an early river valley civilization. The people of India and China developed their own governments, languages, customs, and social structures as well as religions and philosophies that still shape life in Asia.

## Theme BELIEF SYSTEMS

Belief systems had a profound impact on the lives of people in ancient India and China. The teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism as well as the philosophies of Confucianism and Daoism shaped the way people lived, acted, and thought in those two regions.



## TIME LINE

### CHAPTER EVENTS

**c. 2500 BC**  
The Indus Valley civilization develops.

**c. 1766 BC**  
The Shang dynasty begins in China.

**c. 1500 BC**  
The Aryans gain power in India.

### WORLD EVENTS

**c. 2330 BC**  
Sargon I builds his empire in Mesopotamia.

**1792 BC**  
Hammurabi becomes king of Babylon.

**c. 1500 BC**  
Hatshepsut becomes Egypt's pharaoh.



## History's Impact video program

Watch the video to understand the impact of Hinduism as a world religion.



## Reading like a Historian

The Ganges River of north-eastern India is considered a sacred site by the followers of Hinduism, an ancient religion that developed in India. Hindus from all over the world gather in towns along the Ganges, such as Haridwar, shown here, to celebrate and bathe in the river's sacred waters.

**Analyzing Visuals** What evidence in this photo suggests that people have gathered to celebrate? See **Skills Handbook**, p. H26

**c. 483 BC**

The Buddha dies.

**256 BC**

The Zhou dynasty ends.

**750 BC**

**753 BC**

The city of Rome is established.

**500 BC**

**323 BC**

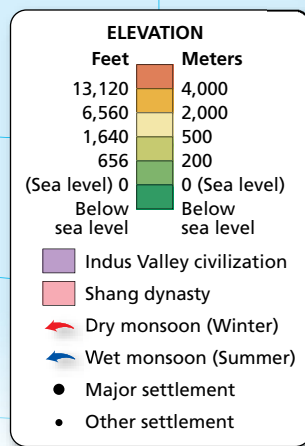
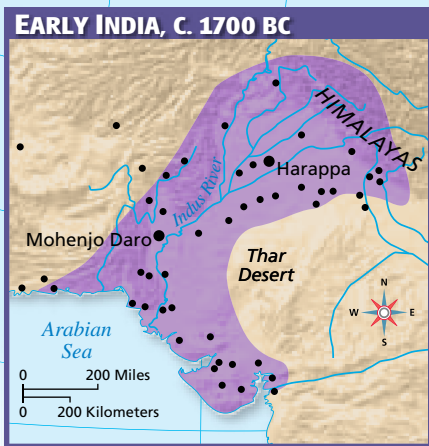
Alexander the Great dies.

# GEOGRAPHY Starting Points



Interactive

## EASTERN ASIA



**Starting Points** Like the valleys of the Tigris, Euphrates, and Nile rivers, the valleys of the Indus and the Huang He in eastern Asia supported the growth of complex civilization. These civilizations shared some characteristics that made the growth of civilizations possible, but their locations and other geographic features also led to unique developments.

- 1. Draw Conclusions** What geographic features may have allowed civilizations to develop in ancient India and China?
- 2. Predict** What geographic features do you think could have influenced the development of the Indus and Huang He civilizations?



### Listen to History

Go online to listen to an explanation of the starting points for this chapter.

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Keyword: SHL AIC

# Early India

## BEFORE YOU READ

### MAIN IDEA

Early civilization arose in the Indus River Valley, flourished, and then mysteriously died out. Later India's Vedic civilization developed a culture based on old and new beliefs.

### READING FOCUS

1. How did India's geography affect the development of civilization there?
2. What were the defining features of the Indus Valley Civilization?
3. What do we know about life in India's Vedic period?

### KEY TERMS

subcontinent  
monsoons  
citadel  
Vedas  
rajās  
varnas  
castes

### TAKING NOTES

As you read, take notes about India's earliest civilizations.

Indus Valley	Vedic Period
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## DECIPHERING AN ANCIENT CIVILIZATION

◀ More than 3,000 samples of Indus script have been found, including many seals that depict realistic animals alongside the writing.

### THE INSIDE STORY

**What do all these characters mean?**

In the 1920s an archaeologist working in northwest India discovered a remarkable set of ruins, all that remained of a huge ancient city. His discovery was the first clue modern archaeologists had about the advanced civilization of the Indus River Valley that flourished thousands of years ago.

Since that original discovery, archaeologists have learned a great deal about the Indus civilization. Among the artifacts they have found are small seals like the ones above that contain what appears to be writing. Despite the best efforts of the archaeologists and linguists, however, no one has yet been able to decipher even one word from any of the seals.

Part of the challenge of deciphering the script is that linguists know of no related languages from which they can start their studies. In fact, no one knows even the first thing about the Indus language, though linguists have various theories. Some believe that the characters found in Indus writings are part of an alphabet, like that of the Phoenicians. Others believe that each character represents an object or an idea, like characters in Sumerian and Egyptian writing. Even among scholars who agree that characters represent objects, there is much disagreement. One symbol on the elephant tile above, for example, has been variously identified as a fish, a twist of rope, and a noble title. Until such disputes can be resolved, there is little chance that the language can be translated. ■

## India's Geography

The Indus River, home of one of the ancient world's great river valley civilizations, flows across the northwest edge of the Indian subcontinent. A **subcontinent** is a large landmass that is part of a continent. As its name implies, most of the Indian subcontinent is occupied by the country of India.

The Indian subcontinent includes three major geographic zones. In the far north are the Himalaya and Hindu Kush mountain systems, which separate India from the rest of Asia. In the south is the Deccan Plateau, a high plateau that receives less rain than other parts of the subcontinent. Between the mountains and the plateau are the Northern Plains, where society first developed in India. Flood deposits from three rivers—the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra—enrich the soil of the plains, making it very fertile.

Heavy rains also add to the fertility of the Northern Plains. Much of this rain is brought to India by seasonal winds called **monsoons**.

During the summer months, monsoon winds from the southwest bring warm air and heavy rains from the Indian Ocean. Most of India's annual rainfall occurs at this time. In the winter, northeast monsoons blow cool, dry air from Central Asia, resulting in drier months.

The people of India's first civilizations depended upon the monsoons to bring the water that their crops needed. Monsoon rains flooded rivers, which then deposited fertile silt in which farmers could grow their crops. But with the abundance of rainfall came the threat of devastation. If the monsoon rains were too heavy, crops, homes, and lives could be lost. In contrast, if the rains came too late or did not last long enough, people could not grow crops and famine became a danger.

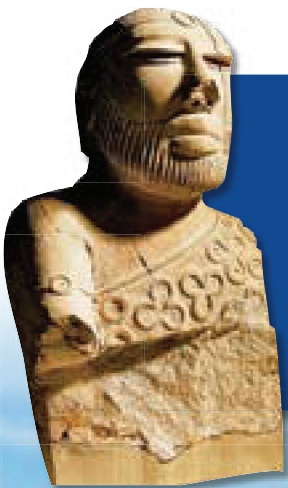
**READING CHECK Describe** What problems could monsoons cause for early Indians?

## Indus Valley Civilization

People have lived in the northern parts of the Indian subcontinent for thousands of years. At first, people lived as hunter-gatherers, but slowly people began to settle down in farming communities. In time, these communities gave rise to India's first civilization, which developed in the valley of the Indus River. Historians generally date the beginnings of this civilization to about 2500 BC, when people there first developed a system of writing.

**Cities and Settlements** The first ruins of the Indus Valley civilization found by archaeologists were the remains of two large cities. Harappa, named after a nearby modern city, and Mohenjo Daro, which means “mound of the dead,” were both discovered in the 1920s. In fact, the civilization is sometimes called Harappan after the first ruins found. Since then, several large cities have been uncovered, as have hundreds of smaller towns and villages. Much of what we know about Indus society has come from studying their remains.

Indus settlements were well planned and carefully laid out. Streets ran in a grid pattern, north-south and east-west, with major avenues that were twice as wide as minor streets. People drew water from community wells or smaller wells dug in the courtyards of their homes, and public drainage systems carried away waste-



### Indus Valley Discoveries

The ruins of Mohenjo Daro were among the first remains archaeologists uncovered of the Indus Valley civilization. Within the ruins, they found hundreds of artifacts, including this statue, that can help us learn more about life in the ancient city.



# Reading like a Historian

## Harappan Trade

**Evaluating Historical Interpretation** When a historian writes about the past, he or she must interpret the sources available to draw conclusions. As a reader, it is important to evaluate the writer's interpretation to determine whether or not it is valid. As you read, think about

- who wrote the document and what his or her credentials, or qualifications, might be.
- when the document was written and whether new evidence has been found that might affect the interpretation.
- whether the author is biased.

**Skills  
FOCUS**

### READING LIKE A HISTORIAN

- 1. Author** What do the author's credentials suggest about the validity of his interpretation?
- 2. Date** This passage was written in the 1950s when archaeologists had only been working in the Indus Valley for 30 years. Why might interpretations of the civilization have changed since then?
- 3. Bias** Does the author's interpretation of the past seem biased?

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H32

water. In the largest cities, a walled, elevated **citadel**, or fortress, enclosed buildings such as granaries, warehouses, and meeting halls. Homes, workshops, and shrines were built outside the citadel. Such planning and uniformity among cities suggests that a central authority held power over the civilization.

**Economy** Historians believe the economy of the Indus civilization focused on agriculture and trade. Most people probably farmed and herded livestock. In cities, however, many people specialized in crafts such as pottery, metalwork, and jewelry. Example of all these crafts have been found in Harappan cities.

The Indus traded the goods they produced not only with people of nearby communities but with distant civilizations as well. Traders from the Indus Valley brought goods to locations as distant as Central Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, and Mesopotamia.

Though their culture extended nearly to the mouth of the Indus the people of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro seem to have cared little for the sea. Only two representations of ships have been found among their remains, and these are of small river vessels. But whether by sea or land, the products of the Indus reached Mesopotamia, for a number of typical Indus seals and a few other objects from the Indus Valley have been found in Sumer at levels dating between about 2300 and 2000 BC. Evidence of Sumerian exports to India is very scant and uncertain, and we must assume that they were mainly precious metals and raw materials.

—A. L. Basham,  
*The Wonder That Was India*, 1954

The interpretation of the past in this passage is based largely on the fact that archaeological evidence does not exist.

A. L. Basham, the author of this text, was a professor of Indian history at a large, prestigious university.

**Society** Unfortunately, archaeologists and historians have not been able to learn many details about Indus society. Although the people of the Indus Valley had a writing system, historians are not yet able to read it. The inability to read what people wrote makes it difficult to learn about society and daily life.

Based on material evidence, some scholars believe that Indus civilization was a single society rather than a collection of independent city-states. As you have already read, cities and towns throughout the Indus Valley were remarkably similar. In addition, the people of the Indus Valley apparently shared common tool designs and a standard set of weights and measures. These factors all suggest a single authority in control, though it is not yet possible to know for sure.

**Decline** The Indus Valley civilization thrived from about 2500 BC to 2000 BC. After that time, the civilization began to decline. For example, the city of Mohenjo Daro was abandoned.

## ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

**assume** believe to be true

No one knows what led to the decline of the Indus civilization, or even if there was a single cause. Evidence from Mohenjo Daro suggests that the city suffered repeated flooding, which may indicate environmental reasons. Ancient records mention a river, the Sarasvati, that once flowed through the Indus Valley but later disappeared. The disappearance of that river could have had devastating effects on agriculture and sped the decline. Some historians also argue that invasion and disease helped end the civilization, though others argue that the available evidence does not support either conclusion. In truth, we may never know just why the Indus civilization disappeared.

**READING CHECK Analyze** Why do historians know relatively little about Indus society?

## The Vedic Period

Sometime after 2000 BC, a new people took control of India. Historians often refer to this group as the Aryans, from a Sanskrit word meaning “noble.” Eventually, the Aryans ruled over most of India, except for the far south.

Historians are not sure exactly when the Aryans arrived in India or where they came from originally. Some historians assume they moved from the area between the Caspian and Black seas, based on perceived linguistic ties to Indo-European languages spoken in that area. Others disagree, arguing that the Aryans developed in northern India itself and did not move into the area.

Little archaeological evidence remains to document the early Aryan period in India. Most of what we know comes from sacred writings called the **Vedas** (VAY-duhs), which include many details about Aryan history and society. As a result, this period in Indian history is often called the Vedic period.

**Vedic Society** According to the Vedas, people settled in villages much smaller than the cities of the Indus Valley. Later, groups of villages banded together under regional leaders known as **rajās** (RAH-juhzh). According to the Vedas, the raja was primarily a war leader who was responsible for protecting the people. In return for this protection, he received payments of food or money.

## COUNTERPOINTS

# Two Sources on Indian Society

*Many historians today believe that the Aryans moved to India from an original homeland, most likely in Central Asia. Their argument is based largely on linguistic ties between the Aryans and people of that region, ties that they say can be seen in Vedic writings.*

“Sometime during the second millennium . . . Aryan-speaking peoples invaded the Land of the Seven Rivers, the Punjab and its neighboring region. It has long been accepted that the tradition of this invasion is reflected in the older hymns of the Rigveda, the composition of which is attributed to the second half of the millennium.”

**Sir Mortimer Wheeler**  
—*The Indus Civilization*, 1968

*Other historians believe that the Aryans developed within India and gradually rose to power. They point out that, had the Aryans come from another land, that land would certainly be mentioned in their writings. Debate over the issue has lasted for decades.*

“Neither in the Code (of Manu) nor, I believe, in the Vedas, nor in any other book that is certainly older than the code, is there any allusion [reference] to a prior residence or to a knowledge of more than the name of any country out of India. Even mythology goes no further than the Himalayan chain, in which is fixed the habitation of the gods.”

**Mountstuart Elphinstone**  
—*History of India*, 1841

**Skills Focus**

## INVESTIGATING HISTORY

**Identify Supporting Details** What evidence is used to support each theory of the Aryans' origins?



## THE VARNAS

During the Vedic period, Indian society was divided into four *varnas*, or classes. Members of each *varna* played specific roles in society.

**Brahmins** were the highest ranking *varna*, and the smallest numerically. Brahmins were Vedic society's priests and teachers.

**Kshatriyas** (ksha-TREE-uhs) were warriors and rulers.

**Vaisiyas** (vYSH-yuhs) were the common people of Vedic society—traders, farmers, herders, and so on.

**Sudras** were servants who waited upon members of the other *varnas*.

**Social Structure** According to the oldest of the Vedas, the *Rigveda*, Vedic society was divided into four social classes called **varnas**. Each *varna* played a particular role in society, as described in the chart to the right. These roles are alluded to in a passage of the *Rigveda* that describes the creation of humans. According to this passage, people of the four *varnas* were created from the body of a single being:

**HISTORY'S VOICES**  
“The Brahmin was his mouth, of both his arms was the Rajanya [Kshatriya] made. His thighs became the Vaisya, from his feet the Sudra was produced.”  
—*Rigveda*, 10.90

The part of the body from which each *varna* was created was tied to its duties. For example, brahmins came from the mouth, the source of speech and wisdom, and thus were priests.

Over centuries, the four *varnas* of the Vedic period were divided into hundreds of smaller divisions called **castes**. Membership in a caste determined what jobs one could hold and whom one could marry. A social hierarchy developed in which some castes had more privileges than others, though the order of castes could and did change frequently. Not everyone in society belonged to a caste, though. A group commonly referred to as the untouchables had none of the protections of caste law and could perform only jobs that other castes did not, such as handling dead animals.

**Vedic Religion** Because the *Vedas* consist mostly of hymns in praise, we know a great deal about the religion of the Vedic period. For example, we know that people prayed to many aspects of a single eternal spirit, one such aspect being Indra, who ruled over heaven.

The *Vedas* described how people worshipped the gods through fire sacrifices and the chanting of sacred hymns. In the sacrifices, priests offered food and drink by placing them on a roaring fire. Over time, the rituals surrounding Vedic religion grew more complex. Priests claimed that order in the universe could only be maintained through the religious rituals that they performed. As a result, the brahmin *varna* gained more influence in society.

**READING CHECK Summarize** How was Vedic society organized?

## SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

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Online Quiz  
Keyword: SHL AIC HP

### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- a. Define** What are **monsoons**, and how do they affect life on the Indian subcontinent?

**b. Explain** Why did Indian civilization begin in the Northern Plains?

**c. Elaborate** How might the geography of India have helped protect the Indus Valley civilization?
- a. Describe** What were two characteristics of cities built in the Indus River Valley?

**b. Identify Cause and Effect** Why do many historians think that a single central authority ruled in the Indus Valley?

**c. Make Judgments** Do you think it is important that historians learn to read Indus writing? Why or why not?
- a. Identify** What were the **varnas**?

**b. Explain** Why did priests gain influence within Vedic society?

**c. Predict** How do you think the development of the **caste** system affected India's social structure after the Vedic period?

### Critical Thinking

- Analyze** Review your notes from this section and identify the main source of our knowledge about each of India's two earliest civilizations. Then identify one aspect of each society about which we know little and explain why it remains a mystery.

	Source	Unknown	Reason Unknown
Indus Valley			
Vedic Period			

### FOCUS ON WRITING

- Describe** Write a brief description of India's geography, explaining how its physical features and climate affected the development of civilization on the subcontinent.



## BEFORE YOU READ

## MAIN IDEA

The religion of Hinduism developed and evolved over a long time in India, giving rise to a variety of beliefs and practices and to other religions, including Jainism.

## READING FOCUS

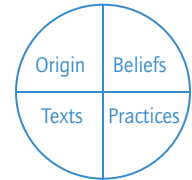
1. What basic teachings do most Hindus share?
2. What are the sacred texts and religious practices of Hinduism?
3. What are the teachings of Jainism?

## KEY TERMS

Hinduism  
reincarnation  
karma  
*moksha*  
dharma  
yoga  
Jainism  
*ahimsa*

## TAKING NOTES

Use two diagrams like the one below to take notes about Hinduism and Jainism.



Rama and Sita, by an artist of the Pahari school, c. 1740

◀ In the *Ramayana*, the prince Rama endures great hardships to rescue his wife Sita.

## THE INSIDE STORY

**What would Rama do to save his wife?** For centuries, readers have considered Rama and Sita, the main characters of the sacred Hindu epic the *Ramayana*, a model of an ideal couple. In the *Ramayana*, both Rama and Sita are willing to face great hardships to remain loyal to each other.

Early in the *Ramayana*, the young prince Rama renounces his claim to his father's throne and becomes an exile from the kingdom at the demand of his father's wife. Facing a potentially difficult and dangerous life in the wilderness, Rama begs his wife Sita to remain in the city where she will be safe. However, Sita does not want to live without Rama, and she follows him into the forest to share his exile.

Their happiness is shattered, though, when Sita is kidnapped by the demon king Ravana. Distraught, Rama immediately sets out to find and rescue his beloved. Joined by powerful allies, Rama builds a mighty army with which he challenges the powerful Ravana. In the end, the prince kills the demon and, at long last, is reunited with Sita.

Rama and Sita are widely admired for their total devotion to each other. In addition, both are praised for their devotion to their duties and obligations. Rama, for example, does not complain when he is ordered to give up his claim to the throne, because he sees it as his duty. Likewise Sita considers it her duty to accompany him into exile. Fulfilling one's duties, or dharma, as Rama and Sita did is a central teaching of Hinduism, one of the world's major religions. ■

## Basic Teachings of Hinduism

One of the world's oldest religions, **Hinduism** is practiced by most people in India today. Because it is so old, however, its origins are difficult to trace. Unlike other major religions, Hinduism has no founder. It evolved over thousands of years and was influenced by the cultures and traditions of many peoples.

Largely because it was influenced by so many cultures, the practice of Hinduism varies widely. Practices differ from place to place and even from person to person. However, a few fundamental teachings are shared by nearly all Hindus.

**Brahman** Among the most basic tenets of Hinduism is the belief in Brahman, the eternal being that created and preserves the world. Hindus believe that everything in the world is simply an aspect of Brahman.

Because Brahman is all-encompassing, literally including all of creation, many Hindus do not believe that the human mind is capable of understanding it. That is because people themselves are aspects of Brahman. Hindus also believe that each person has an *atman*, or soul, that is an aspect of Brahman. A person's *atman* shapes his or her personality and cannot be destroyed, even by death.

Most Hindus believe that various manifestations of Brahman called *devas* (DAY-vuhs) are active in the world, helping to maintain order in nature. For example, Ganesha is considered the lord of wisdom, while Lakshmi grants wealth. Like many teachings of Hinduism, people's views of the *devas* vary widely. For example, many Hindus recognize three *devas*—Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Siva the Destroyer—as particularly influential. Some believe in thousands of *devas*, while others worship only one, usually Vishnu or Siva, as the true manifestation of Brahman.

**Rebirth and Salvation** Hindus believe that the universe and everyone in it are part of a continual pattern of birth, death, and rebirth. After death, they believe that the *atman* will be released from the body and later reborn in another, a process called **reincarnation**, or *samsara*. The nature of the person's new life will be shaped by his or her **karma**, the sum effect of his or her deeds and actions during life.

## Hindu Beliefs

Hinduism teaches that everything in the world is a power of Brahman, the single great universal being. Most Hindus believe that various aspects of Brahman, called *devas*, are active in the world, helping to keep order in nature. Three of the *devas*, together called the Trimurti, have been particularly influential in the development of Hinduism. **How do the ways in which the devas are depicted in art reflect their powers and roles in the world?**



### ◀ Brahma

Brahma the Creator is often depicted with four heads, representing the four *Vedas*.



### ▶ Vishnu

Vishnu the Preserver holds in each of his four arms one of his symbols.



### ◀ Siva

Siva the Destroyer is often represented dancing upon the back of a demon, surrounded by a ring of fire.

### BASIC HINDU BELIEFS

<b>Dharma</b>	A person's spiritual duties and obligations, which he or she must follow to achieve liberation
<b>Karma</b>	The sum effect of a person's actions, both good and bad, which helps shape future experiences
<b>Moksha</b>	Liberation; release from the cycle of reincarnation, and joining with the atman
<b>Samsara</b>	Reincarnation; the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth a person follows before achieving liberation

## SACRED TEXTS

## Bhagavad Gita

**About the Reading** One of Hinduism's most sacred texts, the *Bhagavad Gita* was written as a dialogue between a warrior named Arjuna and Krishna, an avatar, or human form, of Vishnu. In this passage, Krishna, as a divine being, advises Arjuna about how to obtain *moksha* and eternal happiness.

## AS YOU READ

**Note how Krishna says one can achieve *moksha*.**



An illustrated page from the *Bhagavad Gita* created in the 1700s or 1800s ►

People who have behaved well will have good karma and can be reincarnated to a better station in the next life. Conversely, those who have bad karma will have a lower station.

For Hindus, the ultimate goal of human existence is *moksha*, escape from the cycle of rebirth. When a person achieves *moksha*, the *atman* leaves the world and reunites fully with Brahman. During their lives, Hindus work toward achieving *moksha* because it releases a person from worldly cares and the difficulties of life on Earth.

The way to achieve *moksha* is to fulfill one's *dharma*, or set of spiritual duties and obligations. Individuals' dharmas vary based on their class and their station in life. Fulfilling one's dharma allows a person to create good karma, to avoid suffering, and, eventually, to break free from the cycle of rebirth.

**READING CHECK Analyze** What is *moksha*, and how is it central to Hindu teachings?

## Sacred Texts and Practices

As you have read, Hinduism has grown and evolved over centuries. Much of the religion's evolution stemmed from a number of sacred writings that have been produced during that time. These texts influenced not only what people believed about Hinduism, but how they practiced the religion in their own lives.

**Sacred Texts** The teachings and practices of Hinduism are based upon not one but many sacred texts. Most of these texts can be sorted into one of three categories:

- the *Vedas*
- later writings inspired by the *Vedas*
- sacred epics

The *Vedas*, sacred hymns of praise, were among the earliest sacred texts of Hinduism. The name *Veda* means “knowledge” in Sanskrit, an ancient Indian language used for many sacred texts. Hindus consider the *Vedas* to contain eternal knowledge not written by humans but revealed to them by Brahman. The written *Vedas*, parts of which date back more than 3,000 years, are considered the core of Hinduism even today.

As time passed, sacred texts that built upon the *Vedas* appeared in India. Some, such as the *Upanishads*, were also believed to have been

revealed to rather than written by people. The *Upanishads* are philosophical reflections on the *Vedas*, dealing with such questions as the nature of the world and the meaning of life.

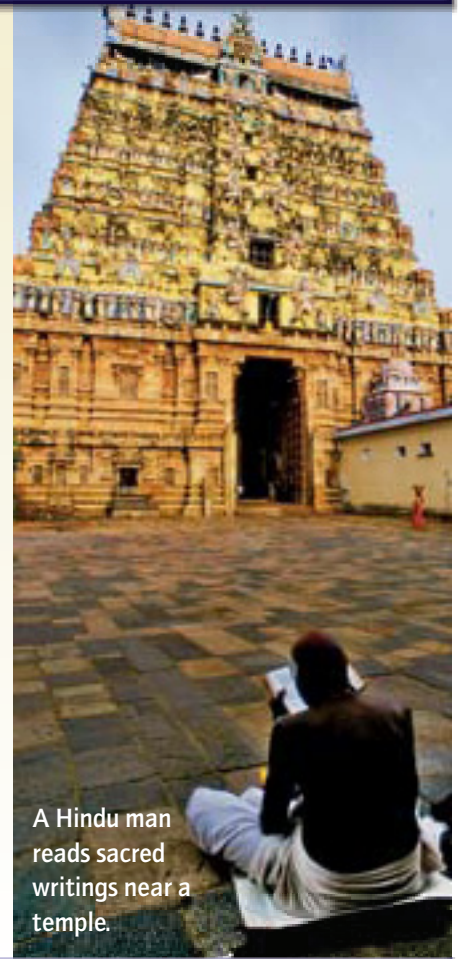
Other sacred texts were based on themes found in the *Vedas* but composed by sages. Among them were two sacred epic poems, the *Ramayana* (rah-MAH-yuh-nuh) and the *Mahabharata* (muh-HAH-BAH-ruh-tuh). Each of these epics tells a story but at the same time reflects on what it means to live according to Vedic teachings. The *Ramayana* tells of the relationship between Rama—the *deva* Vishnu in human form—and his wife Sita. For centuries, Rama and Sita have been seen as a model for Hindu couples to follow, both for their devotion to each other and their willingness to obey their dharma. The *Mahabharata* tells of a war between two families who want to control part of the Ganges River Valley. As it tells the story, the epic also teaches about dharma and proper behavior for rulers, warriors, and others.

That devotee of mine, who hates no being, who is friendly and compassionate, who is free from egoism, and from (the idea that this or that is) mine, to whom happiness and misery are alike, who is forgiving, contented, constantly devoted, self-restrained, and firm in his determinations, and whose mind and understanding are devoted to me, he is dear to me. He through whom the world is not agitated, and who is not agitated by the world, who is free from joy and anger and fear and agitation, he too is dear to me. That devotee of mine, who is unconcerned, pure, assiduous, impartial, free from distress, who abandons all actions (for fruit), he is dear to me. He who is full of devotion to me, who feels no joy and no aversion, who does not grieve and does not desire, who abandons (both

what is) agreeable and (what is) disagreeable, he is dear to me. He who is alike to friend and foe, as also in honour and dishonour, who is alike in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, who is free from attachments, to whom praise and blame are alike, who is taciturn, and contented with anything whatever (that comes), who is homeless, and of a steady mind, and full of devotion, that man is dear to me. But those devotees who, imbued with faith, and (regarding) me as their highest (goal), resort to this holy (means for attaining) immortality, as stated, they are extremely dear to me.

—*Bhagavad Gita*

**Summarize** What qualities does Krishna say will help a person achieve eternal happiness when he or she dies?



A Hindu man reads sacred writings near a temple.

Included within the *Mahabharata* is a passage that many people consider the most sacred of all Hindu texts, the *Bhagavad Gita*. The *Gita*, as it is sometimes called, was written as a dialogue between the warrior Arjuna and Krishna, again Vishnu in human form. Their conversation addresses in great detail many aspects of Hindu belief and philosophy.

**Hindu Religious Practices** Because Hindu beliefs vary so widely, religious practices vary as well. Worship can take place anywhere—in large elaborate temples, in small village shrines, or at home. At temples, priests or other spiritual leaders might recite or read portions of the *Vedas* to worshippers. Sometimes an image of a *deva* is carried out of the temple and brought before the people. At home, individual worshippers might offer food, drink, or gifts to a *deva*. He or she might say special prayers, or meditate, or silently reflect upon the world and its nature.

To help them meditate, some Hindus also practice a series of integrated physical and mental exercises called **yoga**. The purpose of yoga is to teach people how to focus their bodies and minds, which will aid their meditation and help them attain *moksha*.

At some point during their lives, many Hindus desire to make a pilgrimage, or religious journey, to a holy location. Among the places considered sacred by many Hindus is the Ganges River, which is thought to flow from the feet of Vishnu and over the head of Siva. Through this contact with two *devas*, the river's waters become holy. As a result, many Hindus believe that bathing in the Ganges will purify them and remove some of their bad karma. Huge festivals held in towns along the Ganges each year attract millions of Hindu pilgrims from around the world.

**READING CHECK** **Categorize** What types of sacred texts help shape Hindu beliefs?

#### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

**integrated**  
blended together or combined

## Beliefs of Jainism

This Jain statue from the 1800s represents a soul that has been freed from the body and achieved *moksha*.



## Jainism

Around 500 BC, a group of Hindus broke away from the religion and founded a new religion called **Jainism** (JYN-iz-uhm). Led by a teacher named Mahavira, the Jains thought that most Hindus of the time put too much emphasis on ritual. The Jains thought this ritual was unnecessary, because people could achieve *moksha* by giving up all worldly things and carefully controlling their actions.

Central to Jain teaching was the idea of **ahimsa**, or nonviolence. *Ahimsa* was not a new idea. In fact, most Hindus also practiced *ahimsa*, though not to the same extent as the Jains did. Jains carefully avoid harming any living creature, from people to insects. As a result, Jains are usually vegetarians, refusing to eat meat from any animal.

In addition to renouncing violence, Jains promise to tell only the truth and to avoid stealing. They strive to eliminate greed, anger, prejudice, and gossip from their lives. Any of these things, they believe, can prevent a person from achieving *moksha*.

The most devout of Jains give up all of their possessions and become monks or nuns. They live outdoors, seeking shelter only during the rainy season. Monks and nuns cover their mouths with masks and sweep the ground before them as they walk. In this way they avoid accidentally killing insects by inhaling them or by stepping on them.

Most Jains are not monks or nuns. However, their pledge to uphold the principles of *ahimsa* leads many Jains to careers that do not involve the harming of animals. Jainism calls upon those who are not monks to periodically fast, especially during festivals and on holy days, and to limit their worldly possessions.

**READING CHECK Find the Main Idea** What are the major principles of Jainism?

## SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

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Online Quiz

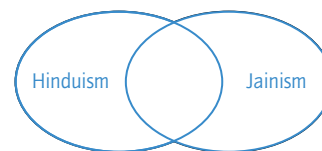
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### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- Define** In Hindu teaching, what are *moksha* and *karma*? How are these two ideas related to **reincarnation**?
  - Explain** What is the nature of Brahman in Hindu belief?
  - Elaborate** Why would a Hindu consider it important to follow his or her **dharma**?
- Describe** What role does **yoga** play in Hindu religious practice?
  - Analyze** What spiritual lessons do the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* teach?
  - Elaborate** How does the name *Veda* signify the importance of the *Vedas* to **Hinduism**?
- Define** What is *ahimsa*? How do the principles of *ahimsa* shape life for Jains?
  - Compare and Contrast** What is one way in which life is similar for Jains who are monks and those who are not? What is one way in which life is different?

### Critical Thinking

- Compare and Contrast** Draw a Venn diagram like the one below. In the left circle, list teachings that are unique to Hinduism. In the right circle, list three teachings that are unique to Jainism. Where the two circles overlap, list one teaching that the two religions share.



### FOCUS ON WRITING

- Exposition** Write a short paragraph explaining one of the major teachings of Hinduism. Your explanation should define the teaching and explain its role in Hindu teaching.

## SECTION

## 3

## Buddhism

## BEFORE YOU READ

## MAIN IDEA

Buddhism, which teaches people that they can escape the suffering of the world through the Buddha's teachings, developed in India and spread to other parts of Asia and the world.

## READING FOCUS

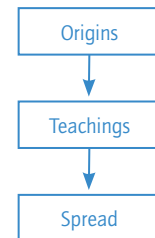
1. How did the early life of the Buddha lead to the beginnings of Buddhism?
2. What are the major teachings of Buddhism?
3. What areas were affected by the spread of Buddhism?

## KEY TERMS AND PEOPLE

Buddhism  
Buddha  
Four Noble Truths  
Eightfold Path  
nirvana  
Middle Way

## TAKING NOTES

Use a graphic organizer like this one to take notes on the history of Buddhism.



## THE INSIDE STORY

*Why would a prince abandon his old life and his chance to be a king?* According to Buddhist tradition,

young prince Siddhartha Gautama led a very sheltered life. On the day he was born, a seer predicted that the young prince would grow up to be either a mighty king or a great religious leader. His father the king, wanting Gautama to follow him as king, kept him isolated from all the hardships of the world. He was given three different palaces to live in, luxurious furnishings, and dutiful servants to attend to his every need.

When he was 29, Gautama asked to be taken out of the palace on a chariot ride. As he rode, he saw an old man among the crowd in the street. Never having seen the signs of old age, Gautama asked his servants what it meant. He was surprised to learn that everyone—even he himself—would eventually grow old. On later trips outside the palace, Gautama saw a sick man and a corpse being carried to its funeral. The idea of old age, sickness, and death profoundly affected him. Gautama had never known any sort of suffering and was shocked to learn that people had to endure it.

On a fourth chariot ride outside his palace, Gautama observed a holy man seeking enlightenment. This man had given up all of life's comforts in order to find a way to overcome old age, disease, and death. Gautama immediately decided to follow the man's example. He asked his father for permission to leave the palace, but his father did not want him to go. Gautama left anyway, sneaking out in the night in what became known as the Great Departure, and became a monk. After years of meditation, Gautama found a path to enlightenment and became known as the Buddha, the founder of Buddhism. ■

## The Great DEPARTURE



▲ In this painting of the Great Departure, spirits hold the hooves of Gautama's horse so he will not awaken anyone as he flees his father's palace.

Detail of a mural at Wat Ratchasitaram, Thailand, 1800s

## The Life of the Buddha

In addition to Hinduism, another of the world's major religions developed in ancient India. That religion was **Buddhism**. Unlike Hinduism, which evolved over thousands of years, Buddhism can be traced back to the teachings of a single founder, Siddhartha Gautama, also called the **Buddha**.

**Early Life** Much of what is known about the life of the Buddha comes from accounts told in Buddhist literature, some of which were written centuries after his death. According to these sources, Gautama was born in the 500s BC. He was a prince of a small kingdom in the very northern part of the Indian subcontinent in what is now Nepal.

The sources say that Gautama lived a very sheltered life free of any hardship or suffering. As a result, he was unaware that hardship existed in the world until he was almost 30. When Gautama realized that people grew old, got sick, and died, his life was changed. He resolved to find a way to overcome age and sickness, to keep people from having to suffer. As the first step toward finding this new path, he gave up his possessions and left his palace.

**The Buddha's Enlightenment** Tradition says Gautama sought enlightenment, or spiritual understanding, for six years. He began his search by living in the forest and begging for food. He studied with teachers called gurus and with monks who denied themselves food, drink, and other necessities. After a time, he decided that neither the gurus nor the monks could teach him the way to enlightenment.

Left alone with no teacher and no companions, Gautama sat under a tree, determined not to arise until he found the way to end human suffering. Stories say that he meditated all night, his resolve tested by violent storms and earthly temptations. When dawn broke, Gautama had been transformed. He had found enlightenment and became known from then on as the Buddha, or Enlightened One. The spot where the Buddha is believed to have sat in meditation is called Bodh Gaya. Later, a Buddhist temple was built there. It is one of Buddhism's most sacred places.

**READING CHECK Explain** How did Siddhartha Gautama become the Buddha?

## The Teachings of Buddhism

After he achieved enlightenment, the Buddha remained at Bodh Gaya for seven weeks, deep in meditation. Then he set out to spread what he had learned to other people. His lessons became the basic teachings of Buddhism.

**Buddhist Beliefs** Among the ideas that the Buddha is said to have learned while meditating are four central truths. Together, these are called the **Four Noble Truths**:

- Suffering is a part of human life. No one can escape from suffering while alive.
- Suffering comes from people's desires for pleasure and material goods.
- Overcoming these desires during life eventually brings suffering to an end.
- Desires can be overcome by following the **Eightfold Path**.

### World Religions

#### SACRED TEXTS

## Dhammapada

**About the Reading** Many of the sacred texts of Buddhism record the words of the Buddha. Among them is the *Dhammapada*, which is believed to include the answers to questions asked of the Buddha on various occasions. The *Dhammapada* is particularly sacred to Theravada Buddhists, but Mahayana Buddhists read it as well.

**AS YOU READ Note the qualities the Buddha says a person should have.**

Buddhist scroll painted in Japan in the 1100s ►



The Eightfold Path is a series of steps that Buddhists believe leads to enlightenment and salvation. It includes the following:

- Right view, or accepting the reality of the Four Noble Truths
- Right attitude, or striving for moderation in all things
- Right speech, or avoiding lies, boasts, and hurtful words
- Right action, or treating others fairly
- Right livelihood, or avoiding jobs that could bring harm to others
- Right effort, or constantly trying to improve oneself
- Right mindfulness, or remaining aware of the world around one, and
- Right concentration, or ignoring temptation and discomfort while meditating

The Buddha taught that those who followed the Eightfold Path could attain **nirvana**, a state of perfect peace in which the soul would be free from suffering forever. Those who do not attain nirvana will be reborn to live through the cycle of suffering again.

The basic teachings of the Eightfold Path can also be expressed as the **Middle Way**. In its simplest form, the Middle Way advises people to live in moderation, avoiding the extremes of either comfort or discomfort in the search for nirvana:

#### HISTORY'S VOICES

“There are two extremes . . . which he who has given up the world ought to avoid. What are these two extremes? A life given to pleasures, devoted to pleasures and lusts: this is degrading, sensual, vulgar, ignoble, and profitless; and a life given to mortifications: this is painful, ignoble, and profitless.”

—The Buddha, Sermon at Benares, c. 528 BC

#### READING SKILLS

**Connecting** How does the Buddhist teaching of reincarnation compare to the Hindu teaching you read about in the previous section?

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage.

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him.

“He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me,”—in those who harbour such thoughts hatred will never cease.

“He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me,”—in those who do not harbour such thoughts hatred will cease.

For hatred does not cease by

hatred at any time: hatred ceases by love, this is an old rule.

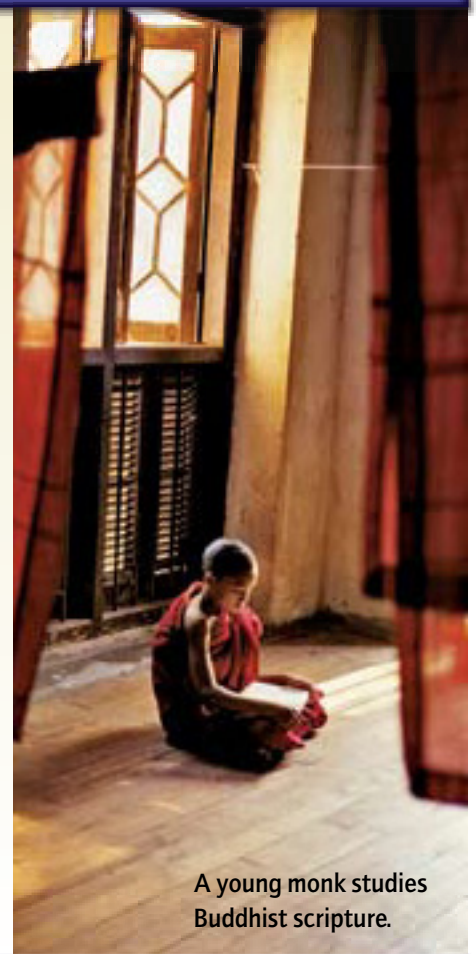
The world does not know that we all must come to an end here;—but those who know it, their quarrels cease at once.

He who lives looking for pleasures only, his senses uncontrolled, immoderate in his food, idle, and weak, Māra (the tempter) will certainly overthrow him, as the wind throws down a weak tree.

He who lives without looking for pleasures, his senses well controlled, moderate in his food, faithful and strong, him Māra will certainly not overthrow, any more than the wind throws down a rocky mountain.

—Dhammapada

**Analyze** What qualities does the Buddha say a person should try to master to find enlightenment?



A young monk studies Buddhist scripture.

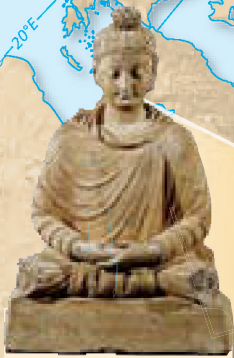


Interactive

## SPREAD OF BUDDHISM



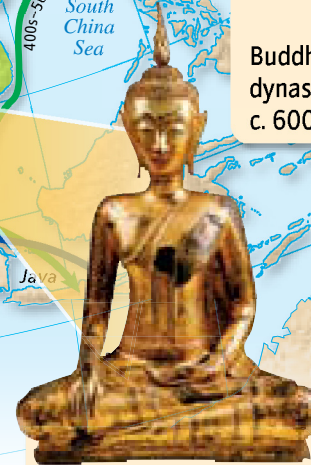
0 500 1,000 Miles  
0 500 1,000 Kilometers  
Two-point equidistant projection



Buddha from Afghanistan, c. 300



Buddha from Sui dynasty China, c. 600



Buddha from Khmer Thailand, c. 1400

- Early spread of Buddhism
- Spread of Mahayana
- Spread of Theravada
- Mahayana Buddhism today
- Theravada Buddhism today
- Tibetan Buddhism today

### GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

### INTERPRETING MAPS

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Interactive Map

Keyword: SHL AIC

- Regions** In what part of Asia is Mahayana Buddhism most common today?
- Movement** When was Buddhism introduced into Japan?

**Divisions of Buddhism** After the Buddha's death, differing opinions arose concerning the correct teachings and practices of Buddhism. Eventually, three main traditions formed—Theravada, Mahayana, and Tibetan Buddhism. Each sect believed that its teachings and practices most closely followed the way of the Buddha.

Theravada, meaning the Way of the Elders, is the oldest of the Buddhist traditions. It is based on the oldest known Buddhist writings. These writings are collectively called the Pali Canon, because they were written in the Pali language. Theravada teaches that the best way to attain nirvana is to become a monk or a nun and spend all of one's time in meditation. Through this meditation, each person must find his or her own path to enlightenment. As a result, Theravada is very much an individual religion. Those who do not become monks or nuns should support those who do, providing them with food and caring for temples.

In contrast, Mahayana teaches that people can help each other find enlightenment. This tradition incorporates teachings from texts that were written after the Buddha's lifetime. According to these teachings, it is not necessary to be a monk or a nun to reach nirvana. Anyone can do it, with some help. That help is provided by bodhisattvas, people who have found enlightenment but have not yet passed on to nirvana. Instead, they have remained on Earth to help others find their way. Because of their wisdom and compassion, bodhisattvas are worshipped by some Mahayana Buddhists.

The third Buddhist tradition, Tibetan Buddhism, shares many teachings with Mahayana. In addition to these teachings, however, Tibetan Buddhists believe that they can use special techniques to harness spiritual energy and achieve nirvana in a single lifetime.

**READING CHECK Summarize** What are the fundamental teachings of Buddhism?

## The Spread of Buddhism

Unlike Hinduism, which largely remained an Indian religion, Buddhism spread into other parts of the world. Today, more than 350 million people are Buddhists, most of them concentrated in Asia, but relatively few people in India are Buddhists today.

**Buddhism in India** Throughout the Buddha's life, the Buddhist community in India grew. After his death, the Buddha's followers spread his teachings, though they were not written down until the first century BC. Once they had been recorded, Buddhist writings helped to preserve and spread the teachings of the Buddha throughout India.

Buddhism reached its peak in India in the 200s BC during the reign of the emperor Ashoka, whom you will read more about in a later chapter. During Ashoka's rule as emperor, he became a Buddhist and helped spread Buddhism into all parts of India. Ashoka also encouraged missionaries to carry the Buddha's message to lands outside of India.

**Buddhism Beyond India** One of the lands to which Ashoka sent missionaries was Sri Lanka, the large island off India's southern coast. He also sent missionaries north to lands along the Himalayas and east into the lands of Southeast Asia. There, Buddhism took a firm hold in the kingdoms that eventually became Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. It also spread into the islands of Indonesia.

In addition to missionary work, trade helped to spread Buddhism beyond India. Merchants traveling routes from India to Central Asia introduced Buddhist teachings into that region in the 200s BC, about the same time that Ashoka was sending out missionaries.

Historians also believe that traders from both Central Asia and Southeast Asia took Buddhist teachings into China. In China, Buddhism slowly spread and blended with native Chinese philosophies.

From China, Buddhism eventually diffused into Korea and Japan. It was first introduced to Korea during the AD 300s, and Korean travelers then took the religion to Japan about 200 years later. By this time, Buddhism had become the leading religion in all of East and Southeast Asia.

As Buddhism encountered other religious traditions outside of India it continued to change and develop. Because of this blending, various smaller traditions developed within Theravada and Mahayana. For example, a branch of Mahayana known as Zen that emphasized self-discipline and meditation developed in China and spread to Japan. Buddhism today is a very diverse religion with a wide range of adherents and practices.

**READING CHECK** **Sequence** How did Buddhism spread through Asia?

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

**diverse** made up of many elements, varied

## SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

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Online Quiz

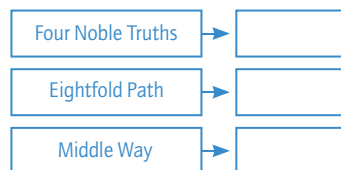
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### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- Describe** What was the early life of the Buddha like?
  - Explain** According to Buddhist texts, what happened to change the Buddha's outlook on life?
  - Elaborate** Why do you think many Buddhists consider Bodhi Gaya to be a sacred place?
- Define** What is the **Middle Way**? How do Buddhists believe it will help them attain **nirvana**?
  - Contrast** What are the three major traditions of **Buddhism**, and how do they differ?
  - Elaborate** How are the **Four Noble Truths** and the **Eightfold Path** linked together in the teachings of Buddhism?
- Identify** Into what regions did Buddhism spread as it was carried out of India?
  - Identify Cause and Effect** What was the end result of Ashoka's conversion to Buddhism?
  - Extend** Why did Buddhism grow and change as it spread out of India into other parts of Asia?

### Critical Thinking

- Analyze** Draw a graphic organizer like the one below. Using your notes, explain what each of the teachings listed in the left column is and how Buddhists believe each one will help them attain nirvana.



### FOCUS ON WRITING

- Narration** Write a short biographical sketch of the Buddha. In your sketch, describe his early life, the changes that occurred when he was an adult, and his basic teachings. As you write, be sure to make the order of events clear.

# China's First Dynasties

## BEFORE YOU READ

### MAIN IDEA

China's river valley civilizations built the foundations of a long-shared Chinese culture. The achievements of the Shang and Zhou dynasties can be felt to this day.

### READING FOCUS

1. How did China's geography affect its early civilization?
2. What were the achievements of the Shang dynasty?
3. How did China change during the Zhou dynasty?
4. What new philosophies were introduced in China?

### KEY TERMS

loess  
court  
oracle bones  
Mandate of Heaven  
dynastic cycle  
Confucianism  
Daoism

## FATHER OF THE EMPERORS

The legendary emperor Fu Xi is said to have introduced civilization to China.

### THE INSIDE STORY

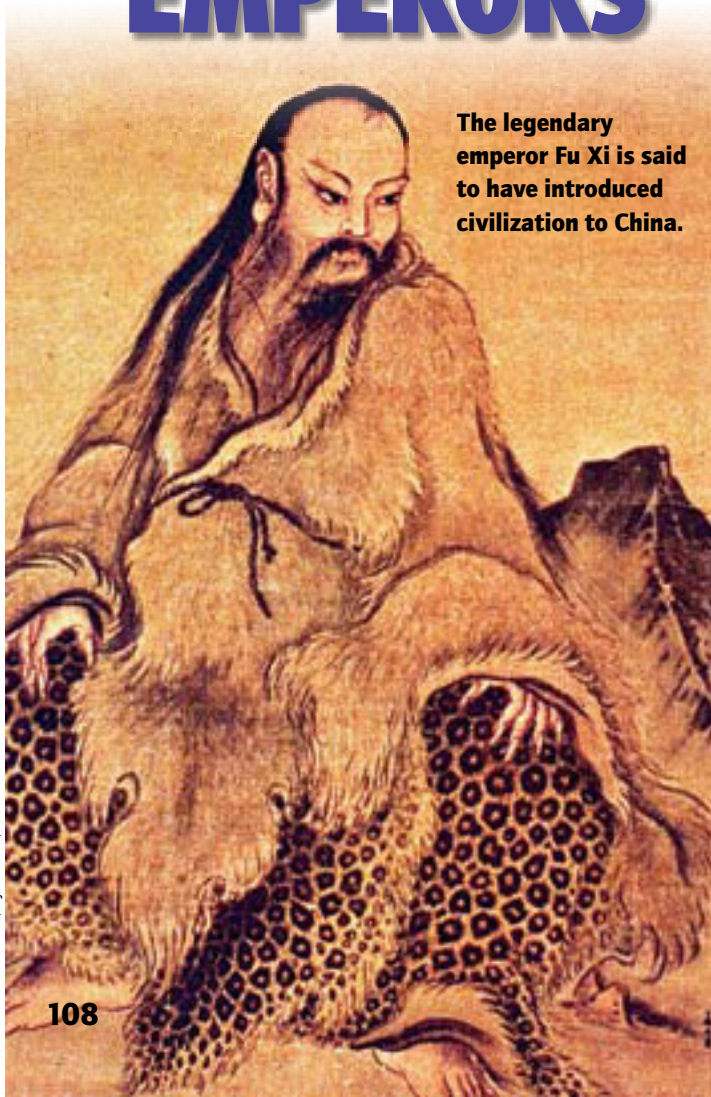
#### *Who was China's first emperor?*

The answer to that question is shrouded in mystery. Whoever he may have been, China's first emperor lived so long ago that historians have not been able to learn anything about him. Ancient legends passed down through the centuries in China, however, tell of a great ruler named Fu Xi who brought civilization to the earliest people of the region.

According to these legends, Fu Xi lived in the 2800s BC. Part god and part man, he found the people of China living as barbarians and worked to bring civilization to the land. He taught people how to cook and to catch fish with nets as well as how to domesticate animals. Fu Xi is also credited with creating the I Ching, a system of predicting the future, and laying the foundation for China's writing system. For these deeds, ancient legends describe Fu Xi as a great hero and one of China's greatest emperors. ■

### China's Geography

The development of civilization in early China was aided greatly by certain geographic features. Long rivers, fertile soils, temperate climates, and isolated valleys all contributed to the growth and development of early China.



**Rivers, Soil, and Climates** Like the civilizations of the Fertile Crescent, Egypt, and India, China's first civilizations developed in river valleys. Two major rivers supplied water for China's earliest civilizations: the Chang Jiang, also called the Yangzi, and the Huang He, or Yellow River. Both rivers flow east from the Plateau of Tibet to the Yellow Sea.

Annual floods along the Chang Jiang and the Huang He deposited rich soil on the rivers' flood plains. The valley of the Huang He was particularly fertile, due in large part to the type of soil that the river picked up. Called **loess** (LES), it was a fine dusty soil that had been carried into China by desert winds.

Although most of eastern China was covered with fertile soils, some regions were better suited for growing certain crops than others. Southern China along the Chang Jiang is warm and receives plenty of rainfall, which made it an excellent region for growing rice. Further north along the Huang He, the climate was cooler and drier. That region was suitable for grains such as wheat and millet.

**Isolation** The combination of rivers for irrigation and fertile soils for planting allowed the Chinese to thrive. In addition, China's relative isolation helped early civilization there develop and grow. Much of China is covered with mountains, hills, and desert. These features protected China from invasion. For example, the Himalayas—the world's tallest mountains—separate southern China from India and the rest of southern Asia. The Gobi, a vast desert, discouraged anyone from reaching China from the west.

**Beginnings of Civilization** Based on archaeological discoveries, historians believe that Chinese civilization began in the Huang He valley, where people started growing crops about 9,000 years ago. According to legend, the earliest Chinese were ruled by a dynasty known as the Xia (SHYAH). However, historians have not been able to find any evidence—either written or archaeological—that the Xia dynasty actually existed. As a result, most historians date the beginning of early Chinese civilization to the rise of the Shang dynasty.

**READING CHECK Summarize** What geographic features influenced life in early China?

## Shang China

China's Shang dynasty was the first for which we have any historical evidence. The Shang are perhaps best known for their skill in making bronze objects, such as this tool.



## The Shang Dynasty

According to ancient Chinese records, the Shang dynasty formed around 1766 BC, although many archaeologists believe it actually began somewhat later than that. Centered on the Huang He valley, Shang China created many institutions that carried over into later Chinese cultures.

**Government and Society** During the Shang period, China was ruled by a strong monarchy. At their capital city of Anyang, Shang kings were surrounded by a **court**, or gathering of wealthy nobles, who performed rituals intended to strengthen the kingdom and keep it safe.

To help keep order in China, the king appointed governors to rule distant parts of the kingdom. In addition, the king had at his disposal a large army. Besides fighting opponents from outside China, the army was responsible for preventing rebellions.

Shang China was largely an agricultural society. Most people spent their time in the fields tending to crops. From time to time, farmers were called upon to fight in the army or to work alongside slaves on building projects such as tombs, palaces, or walls.

In contrast to the majority of people in China, the Shang ruling elite had free time to spend in pursuit of leisure activities such as hunting for sport. Wealthy members of the elite also enjoyed collecting expensive objects made of bronze or jade.

### READING SKILLS

**Connecting** What connections can you see between the development of civilization in China and elsewhere?

**Beliefs** Much of what historians know about the Shang comes from studying royal tombs. From this study, they have drawn conclusions about Shang religious beliefs. For example, most Shang tombs contained valuable items made of bronze and jade. In addition, each tomb held the remains of hundreds of sacrificed prisoners of war who were buried with the ruler. From this, historians have concluded that the Shang believed in an afterlife in which a ruler would still need his riches and servants.

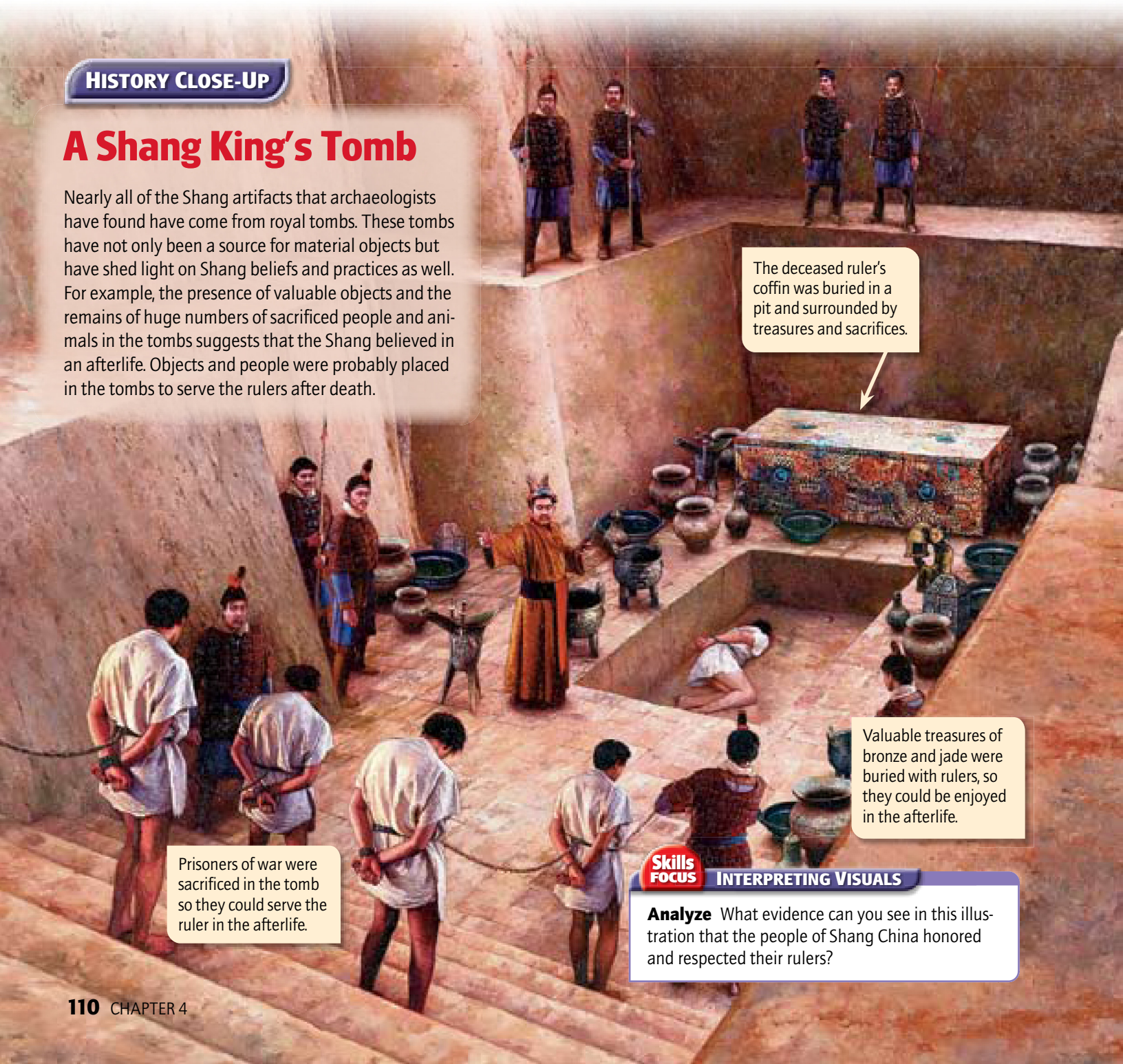
Shang religion centered on the idea of ancestor worship. The Shang offered gifts to their deceased ancestors in order to keep them happy and fulfilled in the afterlife. For example, they prepared ritual meals with their ancestors in mind. The family actually ate the food, but the steam from the food was believed to nourish the ancestors' spirits.

As part of their worship, the Shang often asked their ancestors for advice. They sought this advice through the use of **oracle bones**,

## HISTORY CLOSE-UP

### A Shang King's Tomb

Nearly all of the Shang artifacts that archaeologists have found have come from royal tombs. These tombs have not only been a source for material objects but have shed light on Shang beliefs and practices as well. For example, the presence of valuable objects and the remains of huge numbers of sacrificed people and animals in the tombs suggests that the Shang believed in an afterlife. Objects and people were probably placed in the tombs to serve the rulers after death.



The deceased ruler's coffin was buried in a pit and surrounded by treasures and sacrifices.

Valuable treasures of bronze and jade were buried with rulers, so they could be enjoyed in the afterlife.

Prisoners of war were sacrificed in the tomb so they could serve the ruler in the afterlife.

**Skills FOCUS**

**INTERPRETING VISUALS**

**Analyze** What evidence can you see in this illustration that the people of Shang China honored and respected their rulers?

inscribed bits of animal bone or turtle shell. First, the living person would ask a question of an ancestor. Then, a hot piece of metal was applied to the oracle bone, resulting in cracks on the bone's surface. Specially trained priests then interpreted the meaning of the cracks to learn the answer.

**Shang Achievements** The development of Chinese writing was closely tied to the use of oracle bones. The earliest examples we have of Chinese writing are the questions asked of oracle bones, actually written on the bones themselves. These early Shang texts used picture symbols to represent objects or ideas.

In addition to writing, Shang religion also led to great advances in working with bronze. Artists created highly decorative bronze vessels and objects, many of which were used in religious rituals. These bronzes are among the best known artifacts of the Shang dynasty.

The Shang made many other advances as well. They were able to build huge, stable structures such as tombs. In addition, Shang astronomers created a precise calendar based on the cycles of the moon. There is also evidence that the Shang may have created one of the world's first systems of money.

**Decline of the Shang** The Shang ruled China for more than 600 years, until about 1100 BC. In the end, however, ruling China's growing population proved to be too much for the Shang. Armies from a nearby tribe called the Zhou (JOH) invaded and established a new ruling dynasty.

**READING CHECK Summarize** How did religion influence other aspects of Shang culture?

## The Zhou Dynasty

After taking over from the Shang around 1100 BC, the Zhou held China for several centuries. Historians often divide the Zhou dynasty into two periods. During the first period, called the Western Zhou, kings ruled from Xian (SHEE-AHN). This was generally a peaceful period, during which the Zhou made many cultural achievements. Later, however, conflict arose in China. In response, the kings moved east to Luoyang, marking the start of the Eastern Zhou period.



**Government** When the Zhou conquered the Shang, their leaders worried that the Chinese people would not accept them. To gain acceptance for their rule, the Zhou introduced the idea that they ruled by the **Mandate of Heaven**. This principle stated that the gods would support a just ruler, but they would not allow anyone corrupt to hold power. The reason the Shang were overthrown, the Zhou explained, was because they had lost the gods' favor:

### HISTORY'S VOICES

“We do not presume to know and say that the lords of [Shang] received Heaven's mandate for so-and-so many years; we do not know and say that it could not have been prolonged. It was that they did not reverently attend to their virtue and so they prematurely threw away their mandate.”

—Duke of Zhou, quoted in *Sources of Chinese Tradition*

Later Chinese rulers used the Mandate of Heaven to explain the **dynastic cycle**, the rise and fall of dynasties in China. Any dynasty that lost power, they claimed, had obviously become corrupt, and it was the will of the gods that it be overthrown. Historians still use the cycle of dynasties to organize their studies of early Chinese history.

**Zhou Achievements** Before the Zhou dynasty, metalwork in China was done almost exclusively in bronze. The Zhou learned how to use iron, which became the backbone of their economy. Iron was strong and could be cast more cheaply and quickly than bronze. Iron weapons also helped strengthen the Zhou army, as did new weapons such as the catapult and the creation of China's first cavalry.

Under the Zhou, China's population grew. Farmers learned new techniques that increased the size of their harvests, thereby creating food surpluses. As the population grew, so too did cities. The growth of cities led to the building of roads and canals, allowing better transportation and communication throughout China. In addition, the Zhou introduced coins to China and began the use of chopsticks, which are still used as eating implements in China today.

**Decline of the Zhou** As you have already read, conflict arose during the latter part of the Zhou dynasty. Clan leaders within China rose up against the king. As time passed, more and more local leaders turned against the Zhou, further weakening their rule.

The result of these rebellions was a time known as the Warring States Period. From 403 BC until 221 BC, a number of small states headed by nobles fought each other for land and power. Although the Zhou were still nominally in charge of China, their power was almost nonexistent by the mid-200s BC. Eventually, a new dynasty, the Qin, arose to bring an end to the Warring States Period and the Zhou dynasty.

**READING CHECK Analyze** How did China change under the Zhou?

## New Philosophies

The conflicts of the late Zhou period led many Chinese thinkers to question the nature of society and of people's roles in it. The effort to make sense of the chaos led to the creation of many new Chinese philosophies, or ways of looking at the world. Of the many philosophies that were created during the late Zhou period, two became particularly influential in later Chinese history. These new philosophies were **Confucianism** and **Daoism** (DOW-iz-uhm).

### THE IMPACT TODAY

Both Confucianism and Daoism are still influential in the countries of East Asia.

## FACES OF HISTORY

### Chinese Philosophers

#### CONFUCIUS

551–479 BC



Known in Chinese as Kongfuzi or Master Kong, the man known in the West as Confucius was born to a poor but noble family. From a young age, he was an eager student, constantly asking questions in order to learn more. As an adult, he became a teacher, the first in China to try to make education available to all children, regardless of their social class. He viewed education as the only way to improve oneself.

As he grew older, Confucius held several positions in local government. He also attracted followers to his teachings. By the time he died, Confucius had more than 3,000 followers.

#### LAOZI

500s BC



Little is known of the life of Laozi, the recorded author of the *Dao De Jing*, the major work of Daoist philosophy. According to one ancient historian who lived four centuries after Laozi is said to have died, Laozi had served as the official historian for a powerful noble. The same historian recorded that Laozi once met Confucius, who was younger than Laozi and quite pleased to meet the older philosopher.

Some historians believe that the *Dao De Ching* was not written by a single person but by several writers over a long period. Nonetheless, Daoists continue to honor the memory of Laozi as its creator.

**Compare** What similarities can you see in the lives of Confucius and Laozi? How were the two different?

**Confucianism** Confucianism is based on the teachings of a scholar named Kongfuzi, better known in the West as Confucius. Born around 550 BC, Confucius believed that people should treat one another humanely. They should express love and respect for others by practicing traditional manners and rituals, which included the honoring of one's ancestors.

Confucius believed that this love and respect had disappeared during his lifetime and that its disappearance was responsible for the violence in society. He believed that by restoring a respect for tradition, society would once again become stable and orderly. His thoughts on how to improve society were later collected in a book called the *Analects*.

In the *Analects*, Confucius states that a ruler should treat his subjects fairly. In turn, subjects should reward their ruler with respect and loyalty. In addition, people need to respect the members of their family. Children must respect their parents and elder relatives, and parents have to care for their children with love and kindness. In addition, he writes, it is the duty of all educated people to devote themselves to public service.

Confucius's ideas were influential in Chinese history for centuries. For example, he wrote that a ruler should be advised by qualified, well-informed people, which led China's emperors to select their advisors based on merit rather than birth. In time, Confucian ideals spread to other parts of Asia as well, including Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

**Daoism** Unlike Confucianism, which focuses on improving society, Daoism encourages people to retreat from the laws of society and yield to the laws of nature. At the heart of Daoism is the concept of the *dao*, or the way. According to Daoist teachings, the *dao* is the limitless force that is part of all creation. Through the *dao*, all things in nature are connected. By finding one's place in nature, it is possible for a person to achieve harmony with the universe.

Daoism embraced an ancient Chinese concept, the notion of yin and yang. Yin and yang represent the balancing aspect of nature: male and female, dark and light, hot and cold. Neither yin nor yang can exist without the other, so it is important that the two remain balanced. When balanced, yin and yang represent the perfect harmony of nature.

The exact origins of Daoism are unclear, but many Daoist teachings are attributed to a philosopher named Laozi (LOW-dzuh). He was among the first people in China to write about Daoist beliefs, which he did in a book called the *Dao De Jing*. This influential book includes a number of short sayings that summarize Daoist thought. The teachings of the *Dao De Jing* became so popular in China that some people began to worship Laozi as a god.

Though it eventually proved less influential than Confucianism in Chinese history, Daoism did play a major role in later dynasties. The idea of balance, for example, has been a key concept in China for centuries, largely as a result of Daoist teaching. Daoist philosophy has also led many of its followers to work for the preservation and protection of the natural environment.

**READING CHECK Contrast** What is one difference between Confucianism and Daoism?

## SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

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Online Quiz

Keyword: SHL AIC HP

### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- Identify** On what rivers did Chinese civilization develop? Why?
  - Predict** How might Chinese civilization have developed differently if China had not been so isolated?
- Describe** What advances did the Shang dynasty make in China?
  - Explain** What was the purpose of **oracle bones**?
  - Develop** How have Shang burial sites improved historians' understanding of early Chinese culture?
- Define** What is the **dynastic cycle**?
  - Interpret** According to the **Mandate of Heaven**, what made it possible for a government to be overthrown?
  - Evaluate** Do you think the Zhou rulers were good for China? Why or why not?
- Describe** What role does balance play in Daoist teachings?
  - Summarize** What did Confucius think was the key to a happy society?

### Critical Thinking

- Rate** Draw a graphic organizer like the one at right. Use your notes to identify the most significant achievement of each dynasty. Then write a sentence explaining why you think that achievement was so significant.

Early Dynasties of China	
Shang	Zhou

### FOCUS ON WRITING

- Exposition** Write two paragraphs comparing and contrasting China under the Shang and Zhou dynasties. In your first paragraph, explain how the two were similar. In your second, tell how they were different.



# Changing Views of Early China

**Historical Context** The four documents that follow illustrate how historians' views of early Chinese civilization have changed over time based on new evidence.

**Task** Study the selections and answer the questions that follow. After you have studied all the documents, you will be asked to write an essay explaining how archaeology has changed our views of China. You will need to use evidence from these selections and from Chapter 4 to support the position you take in your essay.

## DOCUMENT 1

### From Legend to History

For hundreds of years, historians of ancient China assumed that the Shang dynasty was legendary. They had found no material evidence that the Shang had ever ruled, and so they concluded that the dynasty had been invented by later Chinese historians. However, major discoveries in the 1920s changed that view, as historians Edwin Reischauer and John Fairbank noted in their 1958 book *East Asia: The Great Tradition*.

For a while, modern skepticism relegated even the Shang dynasty to the realm of pure fancy. Then, in the late 1920s, all this was reversed. For some time, so-called “dragon bones,” some with writing incised on them, had been appearing on the Peking [Beijing] market, usually to be ground up for medicinal purposes. These were traced to the vicinity of the modern city of Anyang . . . traditionally said to be the site of the Shang capital during the latter part of the dynasty. Now from deep in the ground of this capital emerged inscribed bones on which were found the names of practically all of the traditional Shang rulers. Study revealed that these were clearly Shang remains, dating approximately from 1400 to 1100 BC.

## DOCUMENT 2

### The Truth of the Xia

Ancient Chinese records list a dynasty that ruled China before the Shang called the Xia. Most historians still consider the Xia to be a legendary dynasty, as Reischauer and Fairbank did when they wrote the passage in Document 1. However, based on more recent research, Fairbank has revised his earlier ideas. In *China: A New History*, he states that the Xia may in fact have existed after all.

In 1959 excavations at Erlitou (in the city of Yanshi not far from Luoyang and just south of the Yellow River) uncovered another site with large palaces that seems likely to have been a capital of the Xia dynasty. The Erlitou culture was widespread in the region of northwest Henan and southern Shanxi. It was a direct successor to the Longshan Black Pottery culture and preceded the early Shang, with radiocarbon dates of ca. 2100 to 1800 BC. With this all-but-final identification, the Xia and Shang components of the legendary Three Dynasties have taken tangible form. What do they tell us about China's origins?

## DOCUMENT 3

### Another Major Find

According to early records, both the Shang and the Xia ruled eastern China. As a result, that area has long been considered the birthplace of Chinese culture. Historians assumed that civilization gradually spread westward from the valleys of the Huang He and the Yangzi into the Asian interior. However, a recent find has challenged that theory. The bronze figure shown here was made during the time of the Shang dynasty, but it looks very different from anything made by the Shang. It was found outside of the area ruled by the Shang, at Sanxingdui.



## DOCUMENT 4

### The Meaning of Sanxingdui

The discovery at Sanxingdui created great excitement among archaeologists. This single discovery had changed much of what people assumed about China's history, as writer Peter Hessler noted in an article he wrote for *National Geographic* magazine.

That summer a remarkable new culture came to light. Two pits contained hundreds of artifacts: elephant tusks, cowrie shells, and objects of jade, gold, and bronze. The pits, which had been buried around 1200 BC, were roughly contemporary to [Shang rulers] Wu Ding and Lady Hao.

But Sanxingdui and Anyang are nearly 700 miles apart, and many Sanxingdui bronzes are unlike anything else ever discovered in China. There's a unique emphasis on the human form—the pits included more than 50 heads, 20 masks, and one enormous eight-and-a-half-foot-tall statue of a man. The heads are narrow and elongated, dominated by enormous eyes . . . "Even the diehards who believed in the diffusion model have given up in the face of Sanxingdui," said [archaeologist Robert] Bagley. "Nobody is claiming that this stuff comes from Anyang."

### Skills Focus

## READING LIKE A HISTORIAN

### DOCUMENT 1

- Identify** What evidence convinced historians that the Shang dynasty was real and not legendary?
- Elaborate** Why might historians have been unwilling to believe that the Shang existed without evidence?

### DOCUMENT 2

- Compare** How did Fairbank's view of early China change between the publication of Document 1 and Document 2? Why?
- Draw Conclusions** How could the evidence described in this document change our view of the Xia dynasty?

### DOCUMENT 3

- Describe** Where is Sanxingdui located in relation to the Shang dynasty territory?
- Interpret** Why is Sanxingdui's location significant?

### DOCUMENT 4

- Explain** How does Hessler say that the bronzes from Sanxingdui are different from those found elsewhere?
- Analyze** How might the discovery of the Sanxingdui bronzes change historians' view of early China?

### DOCUMENT-BASED ESSAY QUESTION

As archaeologists uncover new evidence, our view of the past must be reshaped. Using the documents above and information from the chapter, form a thesis that explains how a single piece of new evidence can completely change our ideas about history. Then write a short essay to support your position.

See **Skills Handbook**, pp. H19, H30

## VISUAL STUDY GUIDE

## Two River Valley Civilizations

## India

**Indus Valley**

- Urban civilization characterized by large cities, such as Harappa and Mohenjo Daro
- Uniformity of city planning and cultural elements suggests presence of a central authority.
- Traded manufactured goods with people of Central Asia, Arabia, and Mesopotamia
- Writing system never translated

**Vedic Period**

- Historians unsure where Aryan people came from
- Communities led by rajas
- Society divided into four *varnas* and hundreds of smaller castes
- Religious beliefs outlined in the *Vedas*

## China

**Shang Dynasty**

- Developed in the valley of the Huang He with capital at Anyang
- Ruled by emperors
- Religion centered on ancestor worship
- Skilled at working with bronze
- Developed China's first writing system and a lunar calendar

**Zhou Dynasty**

- Took power from Shang, claiming authority under the Mandate of Heaven
- Learned to work iron, strengthened army
- Confucianism and Daoism helped shape patterns of Chinese thought.

## Two Religions

## Hinduism

- Brahman, the eternal spirit, created and preserved the world. Manifestations of Brahman called *devas* are active in the world.
- Each person has an *atman*, or soul. The ultimate goal of existence is *moksha*, the reunification of the *atman* with Brahman.
- The likelihood of achieving *moksha* is determined by one's dharma and karma.

## Buddhism

- Suffering is unavoidable for people while they are alive. The only way to escape suffering is to attain enlightenment and nirvana.
- The way to find enlightenment is to follow a life of moderation as set forth in the Eightfold Path and the Middle Way.
- The various branches of Buddhism teach different paths to reaching enlightenment.

## Review Key Terms and People

For each term or name below, write a sentence explaining its significance to ancient India or China or to the religions of Hinduism or Buddhism.

1. reincarnation
2. dynastic cycle
3. nirvana
4. monsoons

5. karma
6. Vedas
7. Four Noble Truths
8. *moksha*

9. *varnas*
10. Confucianism
11. Eightfold Path
12. Daoism



## Comprehension and Critical Thinking

### SECTION 1 (pp. 93–97)

- 13. a. Describe** How did rivers and monsoons affect early civilizations in India?
- b. Explain** What evidence makes historians think the Indus Valley civilization was advanced?
- c. Elaborate** How did Indian social structures change during the Vedic period?

### SECTION 2 (pp. 98–102)

- 14. a. Identify** According to Hinduism, what is Brahman?
- b. Explain** Why do Hindu religious practices vary so widely?
- c. Extend** According to Hindu teachings, why are most people reincarnated after they die?

### SECTION 3 (pp. 103–107)

- 15. a. Recall** According to Buddhist tradition, what did the Buddha realize when he attained enlightenment?
- b. Summarize** What is the purpose of living by the Eightfold Path?
- c. Elaborate** Why did different Buddhist traditions develop after the Buddha's death?

### SECTION 4 (pp. 108–113)

- 16. a. Identify** What two major philosophies developed in China during the Zhou dynasty?
- b. Explain** How did oracle bones help historians learn more about ancient China?
- c. Extend** How did Chinese rulers use the idea of the Mandate of Heaven to justify rebellions?

## Using the Internet

- 17.** The cities of the Indus Valley civilization were highly advanced and featured many conveniences not found in other ancient cities. Large cities such as Harappa and Mohenjo Daro were particularly advanced, demonstrating superior planning abilities on the part of their builders. Enter the activity keyword and research more about life in these ancient cities. Then create a newspaper page that describes the advantages of living in such an advanced city.

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Practice Online

Keyword: SHL AIC

## Reading Skills

**Connecting** Read the text below and then answer the questions that follow.

“The Huang He is the second longest river in China. The name Huang He means “Yellow River.” That name stems from the yellowish color of the silt that the river picks up as it flows across China. However, the Huang He is also known by another name, China’s Sorrow, because of the frequent floods on the river. These floods can be terribly destructive, drowning crops and people and burying entire villages in silt.”

- 18.** How does this passage connect to what you already knew about the Huang He?
- 19.** What connections can you draw between floods on the Huang He and early Chinese civilization?

## Evaluating Historical Interpretation

**Reading Like a Historian** The passage below is a historian’s view of one interpretation of Indian history held by earlier historians. Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

“The primitiveness of early Aryan society was much exaggerated by some 19th-century Indologists, who thought they found in the highly formalized and rigidly controlled style of the *Rig Veda* the first outpourings of the human spirit . . . In fact, by the time that even the earliest hymns were composed the Aryans were not savages, but were on the fringes of civilization. Their military technique was in advance of that of the Middle East, their priestly schools had raised the tribal sacrifice to a fine art, and their poetry was elaborate and formalized.”

—A. L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, 1954

- 20. Analyze** What earlier interpretation of Indian history does Basham say was false?
- 21. Interpret** How does Basham interpret the Aryan period? What evidence does he base this on?

## WRITING ABOUT HISTORY

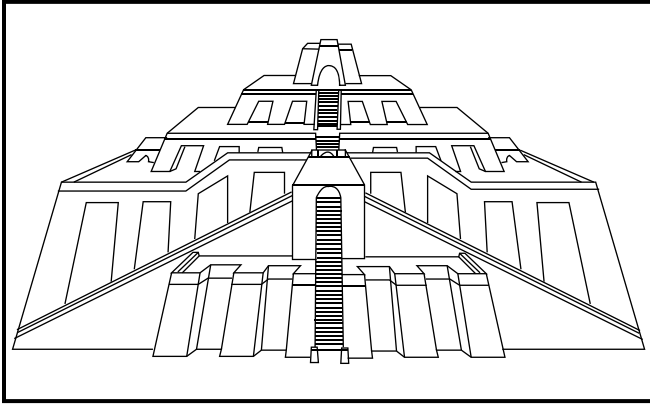
**Exposition: Comparing and Contrasting** *India and China were the sites of two of the world’s oldest civilizations. Those civilizations shared some common characteristics but were in other ways very different.*

- 22. Assignment** Write an essay in which you compare and contrast the civilizations of ancient India and China. Use information from this chapter and from other research as needed to provide specific similarities and differences between them.

# Standardized Test Practice

**Directions** Write your answer for each statement or question on a separate answer sheet. Choose the letter of the word or expression that best completes the statement or answers the question.

**1** The type of building shown in the drawing below is



- A an Egyptian pyramid.
- B a ziggurat.
- C an Egyptian step pyramid.
- D a Hindu temple.

**2** The agricultural revolution led to

- A slower population growth.
- B better health.
- C frequent moving.
- D population growth.

**3** The practice of agriculture meant that

- A people had more free time.
- B not everyone had to produce food so there could be a division of labor.
- C everyone farmed so there was no division of labor.
- D people enjoyed equal status.

**4** Hinduism is one of the world's oldest religions and

- A was founded by Vishnu.
- B had no single founder.
- C teaches that the goal of salvation is to achieve reincarnation.
- D is very uniform all across India.

**5** Hammurabi's Code is important because

- A Hammurabi united all of Mesopotamia.
- B it was written down and displayed for all to see.
- C it dealt with everyone in the empire equally.
- D it was a system based on the number 60.

**6** The Phoenicians were important because

- A they sailed to the British Isles to obtain goods.
- B they wrote the *Epic of Gilgamesh*.
- C they perfected ironworking techniques.
- D they invented an alphabet.

**7** Many scholars think Judaism

- A is the world's first monotheistic religion.
- B was founded by King Solomon after the Diaspora.
- C has a long history that is recorded in the Book of the Patriarchs.
- D began as a response to the Babylonian Captivity.

**8** What were some of Darius I's important accomplishments?

- A He founded a religion based on dualism.
- B He built a permanent army and defeated the Greeks.
- C He strengthened the economy, minted Persia's first coins, and built roads linking all parts of the empire.
- D He conquered Persepolis.

**9** What is characteristic of Paleolithic peoples?

- A They stayed in one place and made very crude stone tools.
- B They were hunter-gatherers who moved from place to place.
- C They adapted to only one type of environment and lived in caves.
- D They were too busy getting food to engage in artistic activities.

**10** Why is the Nile so important to Egypt?

- A The Sahara was difficult to cross.
- B The river created a delta with fertile soil.
- C It is the longest river in the world.
- D Its floods were infrequent and unpredictable.

**11** The Egyptians developed the mummification process in order to

- A fulfill their gods' needs and bring prosperity to Egypt.
- B provide dead pharaohs with people to serve them.
- C avoid the need for burials.
- D keep the ka, or personality, from shriveling and vanishing.

**12** The Rosetta Stone was important because it enabled scholars to

- A translate hieroglyphics.
- B learn how Egyptians developed papyrus scrolls.
- C understand how mummies were used.
- D discover the importance of the Egyptian god Osiris.

**13** What was the most important factor in the growth of a wealthy civilization in Nubia?

- A good farmland provided by the Nile.
- B advancements in the arts and sciences.
- C a location that was a center for trade.
- D the Nubians' expertise in archery.

**14** Most of what we know about Aryan history in India comes from

- A archaeological clues and evidence.
- B oral stories passed down from generation to generation.
- C records from traders who visited their lands.
- D sacred writings called Vedas.

**15** The belief that the soul is released from the body at death and reborn in another body is known as

- A karma.
- B moksha.
- C reincarnation.
- D the belief that anger can prevent salvation.

**16** The Buddha taught that those who live by the Eightfold Path can attain nirvana, or

- A pleasures and material goods.
- B life after death.
- C a state of perfect peace.
- D reincarnation.

**17** The earliest examples of Chinese writing occurred

- A during the Zhou dynasty.
- B under the leadership of Confucius.
- C during the Warring States Period.
- D during the Shang dynasty.

**18** Read the following quotation. Who is most likely to have written it?

---

*"In serving his parents a filial son renders utmost respect to them while at home; he supports them with joy; he gives them tender care in sickness; he grieves at their death; he sacrifices to them with solemnity. If he has measured up to these five, then he is truly capable of serving his parents."*

---

- A Laozi.
- B Confucius.
- C Hammurabi.
- D the Buddha.

### REVIEWING THE UNIT

**Constructed Response** While the belief systems of early civilizations varied widely, they helped shape the societies where they arose. Recall what you have learned about the belief systems that developed in the ancient civilizations of the Near East, the Nile Valley, India, and China. Choose three belief systems that developed in those civilizations. Write an essay in which you summarize the most important beliefs of each religion and explain how those beliefs shaped the civilization in which they developed.

# Themes & Global Connections

THEME

## GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT

### How did the geography and environment of various river valleys around the world make the rise of different civilizations possible?

Early civilizations arose in river valleys that had similarities in their geography and environment. The geography of those valleys provided water and fertile soil. The environment provided plants and animals that could be domesticated.

## GEOGRAPHICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RIVER VALLEY CIVILIZATIONS

### Reliable Source of Water

The rivers provided the water necessary for agriculture in regions without adequate rainfall. The Nile's flooding was predictable. Sometimes the Tigris and Euphrates, the Indus, and the Huang He did not have enough water, and sometimes disastrous floods struck. Building irrigations systems helped tame the rivers and provided the right amount of water to the fields.

### Fertile Soil

Year after year, early peoples planted the same crops, depleting the soil of necessary nutrients. However, the annual flooding of the rivers replenished the soil by adding a new layer of silt to the fields.

### Plants Suitable for Cultivation

Native grasses in the Near East and China were suitable for domestication. Once domesticated, these cereal grasses were adaptable to other areas such as the Nile valley.

### Animals Suitable for Domestication

The ancestors of domesticated sheep, goats, pigs, and cattle are native to the Fertile Crescent. Also domesticated were native cattle in Egypt, pigs in Harappa, and pigs and silkworms in China.

THEME

## MIGRATION AND DIFFUSION

### How did migration and diffusion affect early civilizations?

When people migrate, or move from one place to another, they bring with them their beliefs, ways of life, and even domesticated plants and animals. In this way the diffusion, or spread, of ideas or things from one place to another takes place.

Consider the diffusion of writing. The advantages of writing were obvious, and writing diffused rapidly. The peoples who invaded Mesopotamia adopted cuneiform to their own languages, and it remained in use until the first century AD. Canaanite scribes used Egyptian hieratic and demotic scripts to represent the sound of the initial letter of Canaanite words. The Phoenicians used this system as the basis for their alphabet. A true alphabet, its individual symbols represented sounds rather than syllables or ideas. The Greeks adopted and changed the Phoenician alphabet to suit their language. The Romans adapted the Greek alphabet, and Roman scripts form the basis of most European scripts today.



**THEME**

**BELIEF SYSTEMS**

**What were the belief systems of early civilizations like?**

Belief systems associated with the river valley civilizations all concerned themselves with the need to control nature and secure a successful harvest. The ruler played a central role in both government and religion. In time, belief systems became more complex. Scholars think the Jews began the first monotheistic religion. Zoroaster founded another monotheistic religion and emphasized the concept of dualism. Three religions—Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism—began in India and are still practiced today. China was influenced by the philosophical ideas of Confucius and Laozi.

<b>BELIEF SYSTEMS</b>	
<b>CIVILIZATION/ PEOPLE</b>	<b>BELIEF SYSTEMS</b>
<b>Mesopotamia</b>	People worship many gods.
<b>Egypt</b>	People worship many gods and emphasize the afterlife.
<b>Canaan/Israel</b>	The ancient Hebrews create Judaism.
<b>Persia</b>	Zoroaster founds Zoroastrianism; concept of Dualism.
<b>India</b>	Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism begin here.
<b>China</b>	The ruler needs the Mandate of Heaven and ancestors are venerated; the philosophies of Confucius and Laozi become important.

**Skills FOCUS**

**UNDERSTANDING THEMES**

Choose one of the civilizations discussed in the unit to look at more closely. Use your textbook and other resources to answer the following questions and to complete the chart. How did geography and environment shape that civilization? How might migration and diffusion have influenced its development? What were the unique characteristics of the civilization's belief systems and have they had a lasting influence?

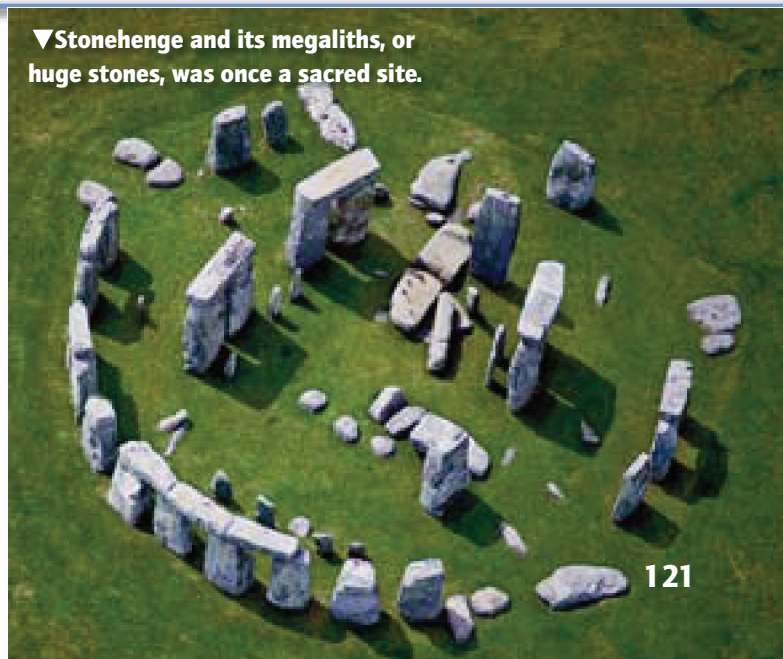
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Contributions</b>
Geography and environment	
Migration and diffusion	
Belief systems	

**Global Connections**

River valley civilizations were not the only ancient places with impressive sites such as the pyramids in Egypt. Stonehenge in England and New Grange in Ireland are two examples of prehistoric sites in Europe.

**Making Connections** Choose one of these sites or another ancient site and research what is known about how and why it was built. Prepare a presentation to explain what the site can tell us about the people who built it and their geography and environment, how migration and diffusion might have influenced the monument, and what the monument reveals about the belief systems of the people who built it.

▼ Stonehenge and its megaliths, or huge stones, was once a sacred site.





## CHAPTER

### 1

## The Beginnings of Civilization

### Prehistory–1000 BC

**MAIN IDEA** Early humans spread from Africa to other parts of the world. All people survived by hunting and gathering until some people began to practice agriculture about the end of the last ice age.

**SECTION 1** As scientists have made more discoveries, they have traced human origins to more than 3 million years ago. As early humans migrated into new areas, they adapted to new environments.

**SECTION 2** The development of agriculture was a turning point in human history. It dramatically changed the way in which many people lived.

**SECTION 3** Located along major rivers, the first farming villages gave rise to the first civilizations. These river valley civilizations shared some characteristics.

## CHAPTER

### 2

## The Ancient Near East

### 4000 BC–550 BC

**MAIN IDEA** The world's first civilizations developed in the Ancient Near East. The people of these civilizations not only formed empires but also developed writing and artistic as well as religious traditions.

**SECTION 1** The first-known civilization arose in Mesopotamia, and for thousands of years it influenced civilizations that arose in the area. Sargon I created a permanent army and formed the world's first empire.

**SECTION 2** Indo-European tribes invaded and conquered the Fertile Crescent peoples, bringing change to the region. The Phoenicians built a wealthy trading society and developed an alphabet.

**SECTION 3** The religion of the ancient Hebrews was Judaism. Believed to be the first monotheistic religion, Judaism has been an important influence on Western civilization.

**SECTION 4** The Persian Empire, one of the largest and best-governed of the ancient empires, was also known for its cultural achievements.

## CHAPTER

### 3

## Nile Civilization

### 5000 BC–AD 300

**MAIN IDEA** Ancient Egypt was one of the world's earliest civilizations. It developed a unique writing system and culture. To the south, in Nubia, other civilizations grew and made cultural advances of their own.

**SECTION 1** Egypt was a remarkably stable and long-lasting civilization, in part because of its geography.

**SECTION 2** Discoveries about ancient Egyptian burial practices and the translation of the writing system have added to our knowledge of ancient Egypt.

**SECTION 3** Kush was another advanced civilization that developed along the Nile.

## CHAPTER

### 4

## Ancient India and China

### 2500 BC–250 BC

**MAIN IDEA** India and China each developed early river valley civilizations with lasting traditions.

**SECTION 1** The Harappan civilization arose in the Indus River valley. Later civilizations developed based on old and new beliefs.

**SECTION 2** Over the centuries, Hinduism developed in India, giving rise to a rich variety of beliefs and practices.

**SECTION 3** According to tradition, a young Indian prince learned the path to enlightenment and founded Buddhism.

**SECTION 4** China's river valley civilizations laid the foundations of Chinese culture. Important Chinese philosophies, Confucianism and Daoism, developed.

## Thinking like a Historian

### Summary and Extension Activity

The first civilizations developed in river valleys in different parts of the world. Create a chart, graphic organizer, or annotated map that compares and contrasts the achievements of the different river valley civilizations. Cover the following topics:

- A. Social organization and form of government
- B. Writing and technological and scientific achievements
- C. Artistic achievements