

The Gupta Empire

“After 500 years of invasion and turmoil, a strong leader again arose in the northern state of Magadha. His name was Chandra Gupta, but he was no relation to India’s first emperor, Chandragupta Maurya. India’s second empire, the Gupta Empire, oversaw a great flowering of Indian civilization, especially Hindu culture.

The first Gupta emperor came to power not through battle but by marrying a daughter of an influential royal family. After his marriage, Chandra Gupta I took the title ‘Great King of Kings’ in A.D. 320. His empire included Magadha and the area north of it, with his power base along the Ganges River. His son, Samudra Gupta, became king in A.D. 335. Although a lover of the arts, Samudra had a warlike side. He expanded the empire through 40 years of conquest.

The Gupta era is the first period for which historians have much information about daily life in India. Most Indians lived in small villages. The majority were farmers, who walked daily from their homes to outlying fields. Craftspeople and merchants clustered in specific districts in the towns. They had shops on the street level and lived in the rooms above.”

~ *World History*

Identify and explain the following terms:

Chandra Gupta

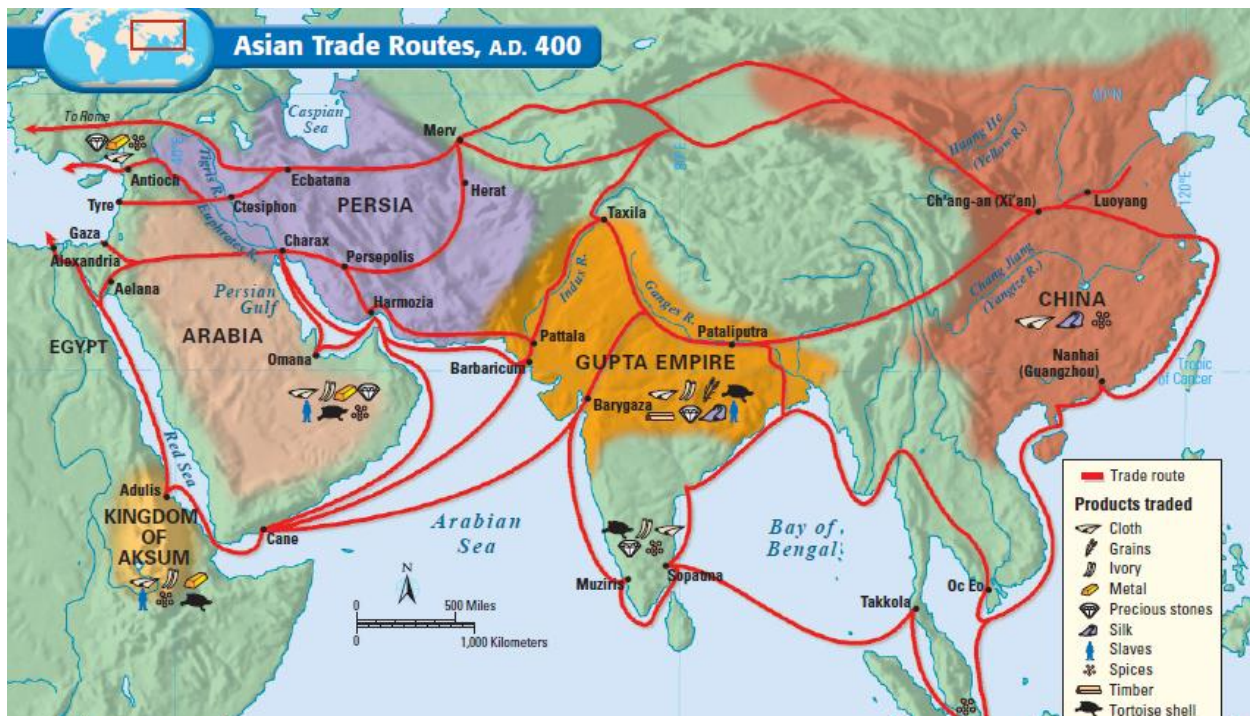
Gupta Empire

Samudra Gupta

Daily Life in India during the Gupta Empire

- What were the accomplishments of Chandragupta Maurya?

- How did Chandragupta Maurya govern his empire?



- Identify trading partners of the Gupta Empire and the goods traded.

Patriarchal	Height of Empire	Math and Science
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most Indian families were patriarchal, headed by the eldest male - Parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and children all worked together to raise their crops - Because drought was common, farmers often had to irrigate their crops - There was a tax on water, and every month, people had to give a day's worth of labor to maintain wells, irrigation ditches, reservoirs, and dams - As in Mauryan times, farmers owed a large part of their earnings to the king - Southern India followed a different cultural pattern - Some Tamil groups were matriarchal, headed by the mother rather than the father - Property, and sometimes the throne, was passed through the female line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - While village life followed unchanging traditional patterns, the royal court of the third Gupta emperor was a place of excitement and growth - Indians revered Chandra Gupta II for his heroic qualities - He defeated the Shakas – enemies to the west – and added to his empire - This allowed the Guptas to engage in profitable trade in the Mediterranean - Chandra Gupta II also strengthened his empire through peaceful means by negotiating diplomatic and marriage alliances <p data-bbox="605 1144 1019 1213">He ruled from A.D. 375 to 415</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the reign of the first three Guptas, India experienced a golden age, a time of peace, prosperity and great achievements - After Chandra Gupta II died, new invaders threatened northern India - These fierce fighters, called the Hunas, were related to the Huns - Over the next 100 years, the Gupta Empire broke into small kingdoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the Gupta Empire (A.D. 320 to about 500), knowledge of astronomy increased further - Almost 1,000 years before Columbus, Indian astronomers proved that the earth was round by observing a lunar eclipse - During the eclipse, the earth's shadow fell across the face of the moon - The astronomers noted that the earth's shadow was curved, indicating that the earth itself was round - Indian mathematics was among the most advanced in the world - Modern numerals, the zero, and the decimal system were invented in India. - Around A.D. 500, an Indian named Aryabhata calculated the value of pi (π) to four decimal places - He also calculated the length of the solar year as 365.3586805 days - Hindu physicians performed surgery – including plastic surgery – and possibly gave injections

Identify and explain the following terms:

Patriarchal

Matriarchal

Chandra Gupta II

Golden Age

Advances in Math and Science during the Gupta Empire

Trade and the Indian Subcontinent

“Groups who invaded India after Mauryan rule ended helped to expand India’s trade to new regions. For example, Central Asian nomads told Indians about a vast network of caravan routes known as Silk Roads. These routes were called the Silk Roads because traders used them to bring silk from China to western Asia and then on to Rome.

Once Indians learned of the Silk Roads, they realized that they could make great profits by acting as middlemen. Middlemen are go-betweens in business transactions. For example, Indian traders would buy Chinese goods and sell them to traders traveling to Rome. To aid their role as middlemen, Indians built trading stations along the Silk Roads. They were located at oases, which are fertile spots in desert areas.

Sea trade also increased. Traders used coastal routes around the rim of the Arabian Sea and up the Persian Gulf to bring goods from India to Rome. In addition, traders from southern India would sail to Southeast Asia to collect spices. They brought the spices back to India and sold them to merchants from Rome. Archaeologists have found hoards of Roman gold coins in southern India. Records show that some Romans were upset about the amount of gold their countrymen spent on Indian luxuries. They believed that to foster a healthy economy, a state must collect gold rather than spend it.” ~ *World History*

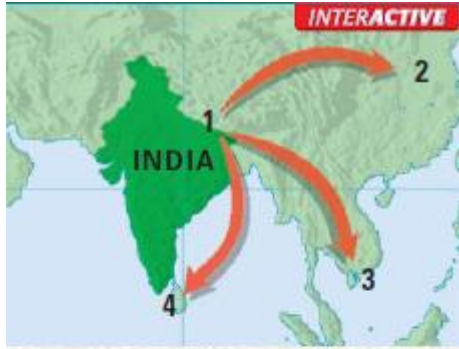
- Describe the trading network known as the Silk Roads.**

- How did Indian traders act as middlemen?**

- What have archaeologists found in southern India?**

- Why were some Romans upset with India?**

- What did Romans believe a healthy economy should foster?**



The Spread of Buddhism

Buddhism became a missionary religion during Asoka's reign. From his capital city (1), Asoka sent out Buddhist missionaries. After Indians began trading along the Silk Roads, Buddhist monks traveled the roads and converted people along the way.

Buddhist monks from India established their first monastery in China (2) in A.D. 65, and many Chinese became Buddhists. From China, Buddhism reached Korea in the fourth century and Japan in the sixth century.

Today, Buddhism is a major religion in East and Southeast Asia. The Theravada school is strong in Myanmar, Cambodia (3), Sri Lanka (4), and Thailand. The Mahayana school is strong in Japan and Korea.

- When did Buddhism become a missionary religion?

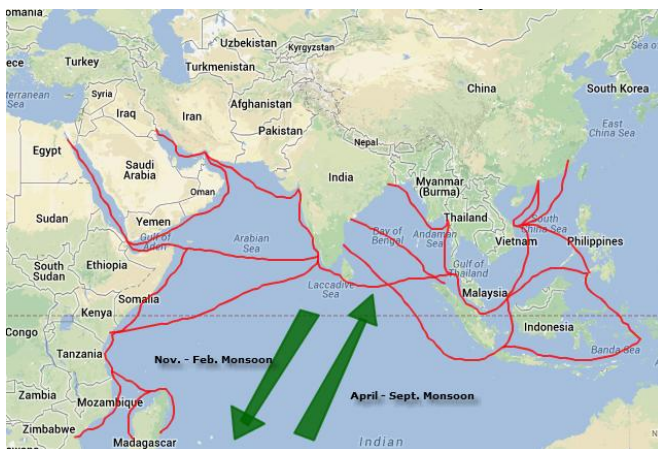
- What did Asoka do that encouraged the spread of Buddhism?

- How did the Silk Roads help spread Buddhism?

- When did Buddhist monks from India establish their first monastery in China?

- How did Buddhism reach Korea and how did Buddhism reach Japan?

- Where is Buddhism a major religion today: the Theravada school and the Mahayana school?



- What are monsoons?

- How did monsoons help navigators in the Indian Ocean?