



Hinduism & Buddhism

Ms. Sheets

AP World History

University High School

Hinduism



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Origins

- Originates in India from literature, traditions, and class system of Aryan invaders
 - *Vedas*: oldest Hindu scriptures, directly revealed
 - *Upanishads*: truths of *moksha*
 - *Bhagavad Gita*: Hindu epic
- Developed gradually; took on a variety of forms and gods particular to regions

The Basics

- Everything is part of a divine essence called *Brahma*.
- Goal: achieve union with *Brahma* (through reincarnation.)
 - The soul no longer experiences worldly suffering.
- After living many good lives, the soul is united with *Brahma*; this is called moksha [salvation]
 - For most, it is distant and not to be attained in this lifetime.
- Samsara: “wheel of rebirth,” slow process through which soul is reincarnated from one life form to another.



Polytheism



Lakshmi

- Over 330 million gods and goddesses.
- Hindus can freely worship whichever gods and goddesses they like.
- Main divinities:
Brahma (creator);
Vishnu (preserver);
Lakshmi (wealth and prosperity);
Shiva (destroyer);
Parvati (divine mother)

Karma

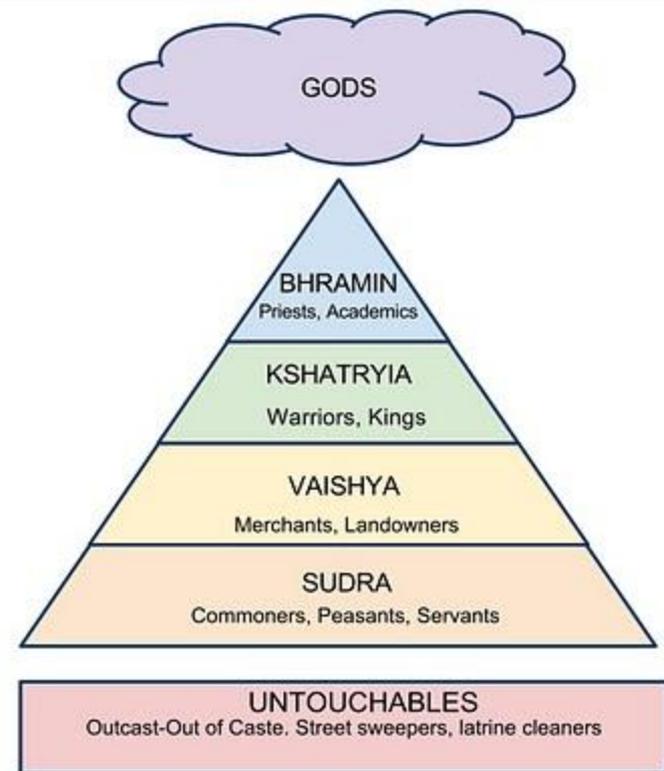
- Moral law of cause and effect; logical system of justice.
- In Hinduism, a person's good or evil deeds in his personal life is that person's *karma*. Those who die with good *karma* may be reincarnated into a higher caste, whereas those with evil *karma* might descend to a lower caste or become an animal.

Dharma

- Moral law which serves as a guide to actions in this world.
- For every activity, there is a way of acting that conforms to *dharma*.
- Hindus can consult sacred scripture, generational tradition, or sage advice from elders to ensure they follow *dharma*.

Hinduism and the Caste System

- Hindu religion reinforced the Indian caste system, offering hope for an improved lifestyle in the next life, especially for members of a lower caste.
- Those of the upper castes were encouraged by the prospect of achieving *moksha* soon.





Daily Devotion

- Household rituals: maintain shrines to deities.
- Holy places: pilgrimage to holy sites.
- Cow veneration: Aryan customs dictate that cows represent life. Therefore, cattle are sacred and Hindus are forbidden from consuming beef.



Hindu Practices

- Sati: traditional practice of a recently widowed woman burning herself upon her husband's funeral pyre; outlawed in 1829, but still occurs occasionally.
- Yoga: physical and psychological techniques for spiritual advancement.

Hinduism Today

- Vast majority live in Nepal and India
- World's third largest religion, behind Christianity (1) and Islam (2).
- Almost 1 billion people practice Hinduism.
- Hinduism still continues to be highly tolerant of other religions.



Buddhism



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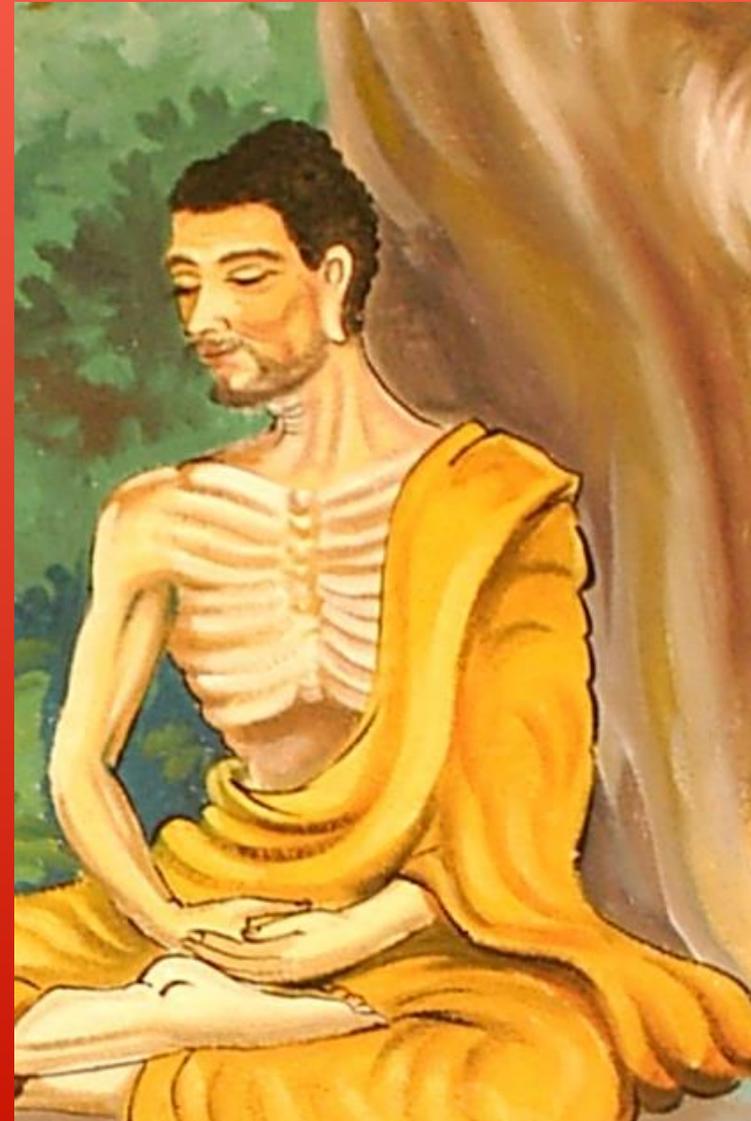
Siddhartha Gautama

- Born an Indian prince.
- Raised in luxury and protected from outside world.
- Left palace and sees the “Four Passing Sights.”
 - Old Age, Sickness, Sorrow and Death.
- “The Great Going Forth”:
Searches for the truth about human existence
- Spent 6 years practicing asceticism, but is no closer to attaining knowledge or wisdom.



Gautama, cont...

- Meditates and does not stop until he achieved enlightenment.
 - The First Watch: Saw his own previous lifetimes as a continuous journey of suffering.
 - The Second Watch: Acquired the “divine eye” with which he was able to see all deaths and rebirths of living things.
 - The Third Watch: Gautama discovered the Four Noble Truths.



Four Noble Truths



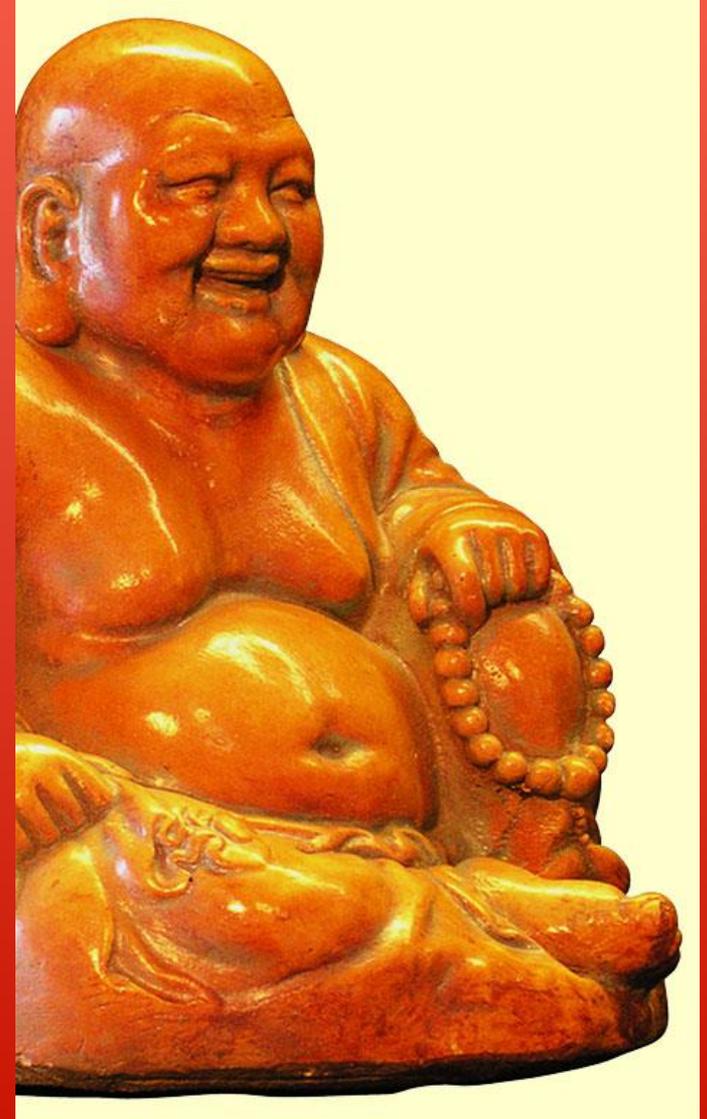
1. To live is to suffer.
2. To suffer is caused by desire.
3. Suffering can be brought to an end.
4. The solution is the Noble Eightfold Path.

Noble Eightfold Path

1. Right Belief: learn Buddha's teachings.
2. Right Thought: abandon evil attitudes; nurture good attitudes.
3. Right Speech: Avoid gossip, lying, and abusive talk.
4. Right Conduct: obey Five Precepts.
5. Right Livelihood: Abstain from occupations that harm.
6. Right Effort: Maintain mental alertness to control the senses.
7. Right Mindfulness: pay careful attention and be conscious.
8. Right Meditation: reach a point of perfect tranquility (*nirvana*).

Five Precepts

- Buddhist moral standards that maintain Buddhists abstain from:
 1. Taking the life of any human being.
 2. Taking anything that is not given.
 3. Sexual misconduct and other forms of overindulgence.
 4. Bad speech.
 5. Taking intoxicants.

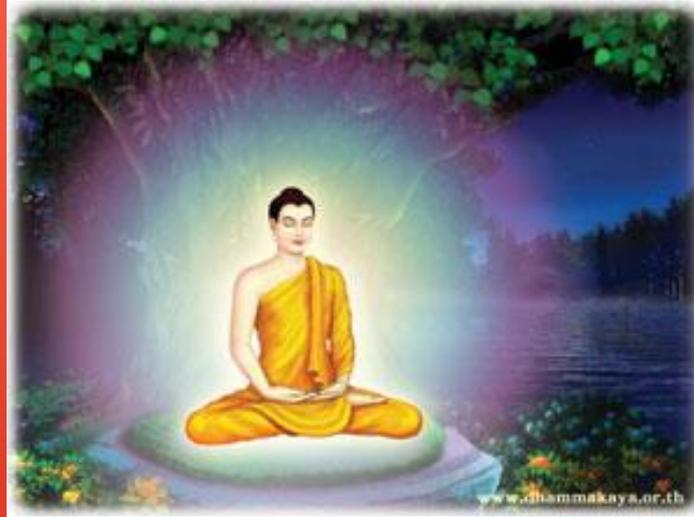


Buddha

- By discovering the Four Noble Truths, Gautama attained enlightenment and won salvation.
- Gautama became the Buddha, the Enlightened/ Awakened One.
- In 483 BCE, he died at the age of eighty, passing forever into *nirvana*.
- *Tripitaka* is book of Buddha's saying, collected by Buddhist monks



Important Terms



- *Nirvana*: the goal of Buddhism; the extinction of desire and any sense of individual selfhood, resulting in liberation from *samsara* (the wheel of rebirth)
- *Karma*: generally has the same meaning as the Hindu version; moral law of cause and effect.

Divisions in Buddhism

- **Theravada**

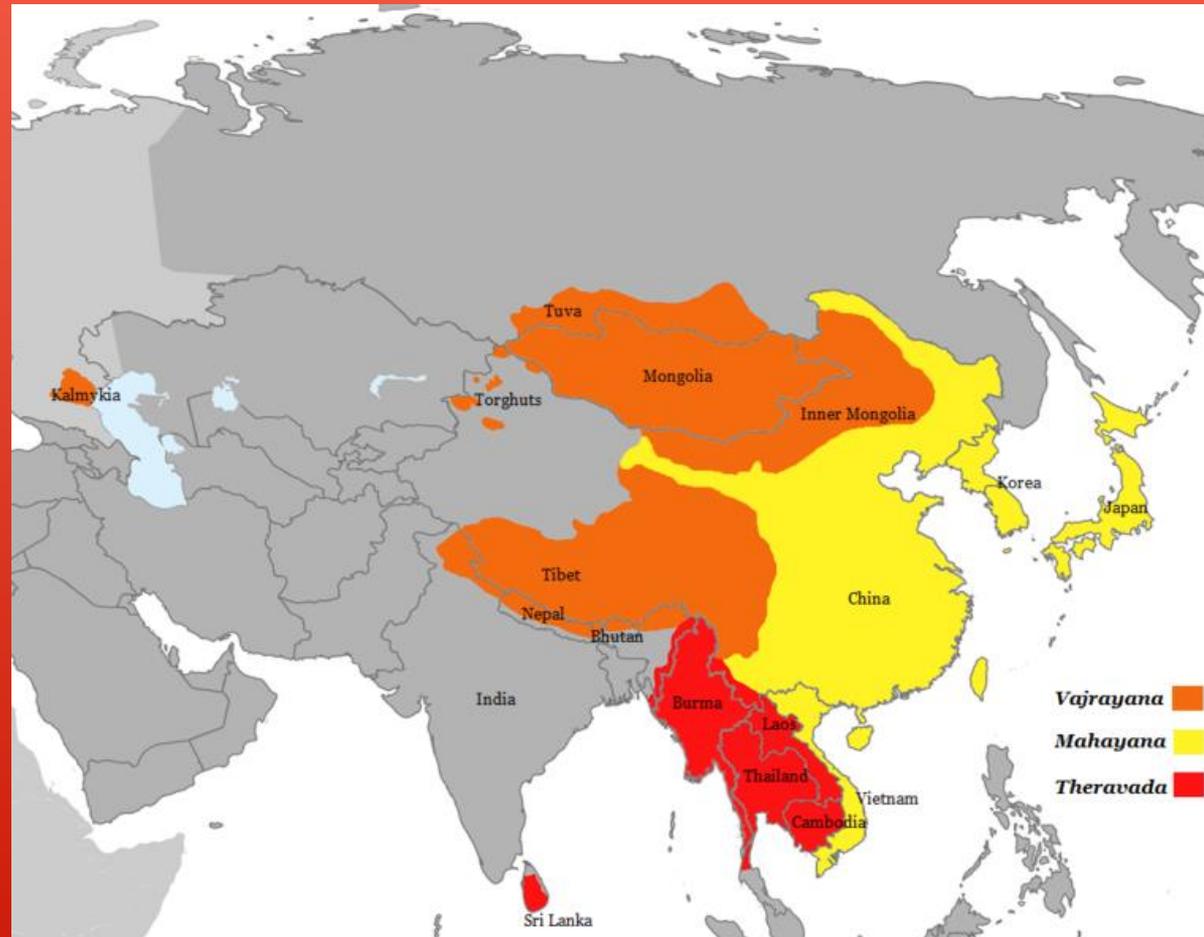
- Oldest strain of Buddhism; closest to original teachings

- **Mahayana**

- Eastern Buddhism; Emphasis on Buddha as a savior; possibility that all living beings can be liberated from suffering

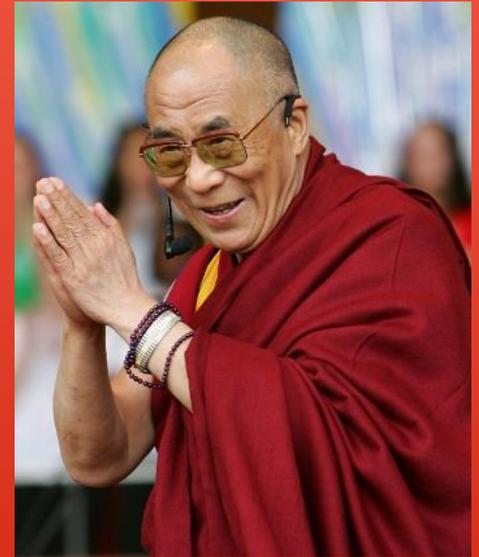
- **Vajrayana**

- Rituals, meditations and magical energies; Dalai Lama



The Dalai Lama

- Spiritual leader of the Vajrayana Buddhists.
- Chosen through a line of rebirth, as opposed to a line of succession.
- Believed to be the reincarnation of the Buddha of Compassion, who has chosen to continually reincarnate to serve his people, rather than pass to *nirvana*.



Hinduism and Buddhism

	Buddhism (563 BCE)	Hinduism (3000 BCE)
Founder	Buddha	Not credited
Scriptures	Tripitaka (text of teachings of Buddha, collected by monks)	Vedas, Upanishad, Gita
Deity	Celestial beings; Mahayana Buddhists believe Buddha is	30,000 gods
Life after death	Until one has attained Nirvana, he will be reborn over and over again	A constant cycle of reincarnation until enlightenment is reached
Branches	Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana	Myriad
Society	No castes	Castes
Conversion	Heavily stressed	Not discussed in scriptures