

South Asian Empire

A. Maurya

- i. 321-185 BCE
- ii. Chandragupta Maurya was the founder
- iii. Conquered northwest India
- iv. Strong central government
- v. Army: chariots, infantry and elephants

B. Asoka

- i. grandson of Chandragupta
- ii. Harsh ruler
- iii. Converted to Buddhism
- iv. Became peaceful
- v. Created public works
- vi. Rejected the caste system
- vii. Built stupas which are shrines to the Buddha
- viii. Created the Edicts of Asoka on stone pillars
- ix. describe the wide expansion of Buddhism
- x. Women gain some privileges
- xi. 232 dies
- xii. Weak rulers follow
- xiii. 185 BCE the empire crumbles

C. End of Buddhism

1. Monks lose focus
2. Brahmins take over and focus on Hinduism
3. Buddha becomes a Hindu god
4. By the Third century, Buddha declines
5. Moves to Asia, takes the Mahayana form

D. Gupta Empire

- i. 240 CE the Gupta begin a 300 year period of peace and prosperity
- ii. Gov't was decentralized (distribute powers among several local authorities)
- iii. Hinduism is major religion and followed a strict caste system
- iv. Women lost status (Sati, outcasts if they remarry)
- v. Creative golden age
- vi. Math: creation of Pi (3.14), numbers, and the concept of zero
- vii. Science, astronomy and philosophy
- viii. Hospitals, medicine and surgery
- ix. Traded with Rome (coins)

E. Decline

- i. 550 CE Huns invade through the Himalayas
- ii. Internal power struggles
- iii. Broke into local governments similar to Rome and Han