

**A.P. World History: Modern
Summer Assignment
2025-2026**

Welcome to Advanced Placement Modern World History. The primary intent of the AP World History course is to teach the history of the world from a truly global stance rather than from the dominant perspective of Western civilization. In order to achieve a comprehensive understanding of these events, students need both factual knowledge and the ability to critically assess such information. This course helps them on both fronts, teaching the historical facts in the context of how progressive changes - environmental, social, technological, economic, cultural, and political - influenced the various societies they touched, as well as how these groups interacted with each other. While I hope you enjoy learning the world history curriculum, you also must note that it is presented as a college level class and thus will demand rigorous work and effort. The outcome is that you will gain a heightened sense of how history has shaped our world.

In order to accomplish our goals for this course, it is imperative that these assignments are completed over the summer. The assignments below represent material that provides a basic foundation for understanding the history of the world—both time and place. The below assignments are due **by the beginning of the class period on Friday, September 5, 2025**. Partial credit at a maximum score of 50% can be earned for any assignments turned in **by the end of school day on Tuesday, September 16, 2025**. All submitted work must be original and of your own effort. A score of ZERO will be earned for work found to be plagiarized.

If you have questions over the summer, you can always contact Ms. Rifkin at rifkincl@winslow-schools.com. I check my email about once a week.

Assignment #1: Google Classroom

- Join the 2025-26 AP World History Google Classroom. The code is
 - **oqqwlwo3**
- A copy of this summer assignment will be posted in Google Classroom, as well as other relevant information.

Assignment #2: Major Religions/Belief Systems Graphic Organizer

- You will read the excerpt “Civilizations and Cultural Traditions” and fill in the chart, “Major Religions/Belief Systems Graphic Organizer.” Complete sentences are not required.
- There are online resources and videos posted in Google Classroom to help you complete this chart, as well as the textbook excerpt.
- **Grade:** This assignment will be worth 50 points (a major quiz grade)

Assignment #3 is on the next page

Assignment #3: Geography

- Practice learning the locations of these physical and political features. During the week of September 9th, you will be asked to take a geography test where you will need to locate and spell them correctly (alright, I give a bit of leeway on spelling) on a map provided.
- **Grade:** This test will be worth 100 point
- I will post an online review practice in mid-August in Google Classroom.

Continents and Oceans and Regions	Physical Features	States (Nations)	Cities
Continents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Africa o Asia o Europe o N. America o Oceania o S. America Oceans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Atlantic o Pacific o Arctic o Indian o Southern Regions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o North Africa o West Africa o East Africa o Southern Africa o Middle East/ Southwest Asia o East Asia o Central Asia o South Asia o Southeast Asia o Latin America 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Sahara Desert o Gobi Desert o Alps Mountains o Andes Mountains o Himalayans (mountains) o Pyrenees (mountains) o Ural Mountains o Cape of Good Hope o Amazon River o Caribbean Sea o Gulf of Mexico o Huang He (Yellow) River o Mediterranean Sea o Mekong River o Nile River o Persian (Arabian) Gulf o Red Sea o Strait of Magellan o Strait of Malacca o Suez Canal o Yangtze River 	Africa <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Congo o Egypt o Ethiopia o Ghana o Nigeria o Rwanda o Uganda The Americas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Argentina o Brazil o Chile o Haiti o Mexico o Nicaragua o Peru o United States Asia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Cambodia o China o India o Indonesia o Israel o Japan o Pakistan o Türkiye (Turkey) o Vietnam Europe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o United Kingdom o France o Germany o Netherlands o Spain o Portugal o Italy o Russia o Ukraine Oceania <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Australia o New Zealand 	Africa <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Kilwa o Timbuktu The Americas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Lima o Potosi o Tenochtitlan Asia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Beijing o Calicut o Delhi o Karakorum o Malacca o Manila o Samarkand o Tokyo Europe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Florence o London o Moscow Middle East <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Baghdad o Cairo o Constantinople (Istanbul) o Damascus o Jerusalem o Mecca

name: _____

AP World History Summer Assignment

Major Religions / Belief Systems Graphic Organizer

	Hinduism	Buddhism
Founder, Time Period, Place, Key Texts		
Basic Beliefs & Practices		
Expansion/Influence (Where did it spread geographically?)		
Social Impact, Political Impact, Significance	Bhakti Movement	Mahayana vs. Theravada Buddhism: Tibetan Buddhism:

	Confucianism	Judaism
Founder, Time Period, Place, Key Texts		
Basic Beliefs & Practices		
Expansion/Influence <i>(Where did it spread geographically?)</i>		
Social Impact, Political Impact, Significance		

	Christianity	Islam
Founder, Time Period, Place, Key Texts		
Basic Beliefs & Practices		
Expansion/Influence <i>(Where did it spread geographically?)</i>		
Social Impact, Political Impact, Significance		Sufism:

Civilizations and Cultural Traditions

Civilizations also differed in their cultural or religious traditions. These traditions provided a common identity for millions of individuals and for entire civilizations, even as divisions within them generated great social conflicts. Cultural traditions also made the inequalities of civilizations legitimate, providing moral support for established elites and oppressive states. But religion was a doubled-edged sword, for it sometimes stimulated movements that challenged those in power. And religion enabled millions of ordinary people to endure their sufferings, shaping the meanings that they attached to the world they inhabited and providing moral guidance for living a good life or making a good society.

By 1200, the major cultural traditions of the Afro-Eurasian world had been long established. Hinduism and Buddhism; Confucianism and Daoism; Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—all of them had taken shape in the millennium between 600 B.C.E. and 700 C.E. Since they will recur often in the chapters that follow, some attention to their origins and development is appropriate.

South Asian Cultural Traditions: Hinduism

Few cultures were as fundamentally religious as that of India, where sages and philosophers embraced the Divine and all things spiritual with enthusiasm and generated elaborate philosophical visions about the nature of ultimate reality. **Hinduism**, the oldest, largest, and most prominent religious tradition in India, had no historical founder, unlike Islam, Christianity, and another later Indian tradition, Buddhism. Instead it grew up over many centuries as an integral part of Indian civilization. Although it later spread into Southeast Asia, Hinduism was not a missionary religion seeking converts, but was, like Judaism, associated with a particular people and territory.

In fact, “Hinduism” was never a single tradition at all, and the term itself derived from outsiders—Greeks, Muslims, and later the British—who sought to reduce the infinite variety of Indian cultural patterns into a recognizable system. From the inside, however, Hinduism dissolved into a vast diversity of gods, spirits, beliefs, practices, rituals, and philosophies. This endlessly variegated Hinduism served to incorporate into Indian civilization the many diverse peoples who migrated into or invaded the South Asian peninsula over many centuries.

At one level, this emerging Hindu religious tradition was wildly polytheistic, embracing a vast diversity of gods and goddesses, each of whom had various consorts and appeared in a variety of forms. A priestly caste known as Brahmins presided over the sacrifices, offerings, and rituals that these deities required. But at another more philosophical level, Indian thinkers argued for a more unified understanding of reality. This point of view found expression in the **Upanishads** (oo-PAHN-ee-shahds), a collection of sacred texts composed by largely anonymous thinkers between 800 and 400 B.C.E. These texts elaborated the idea of

AP® EXAM TIP

Know the basic teachings of the major Eurasian belief systems, such as reincarnation in Hinduism.

AP® EXAM TIP

Keep in mind the social and political effects of India's caste system, as it will continue to be important later on in the course.

AP® Continuity and Change

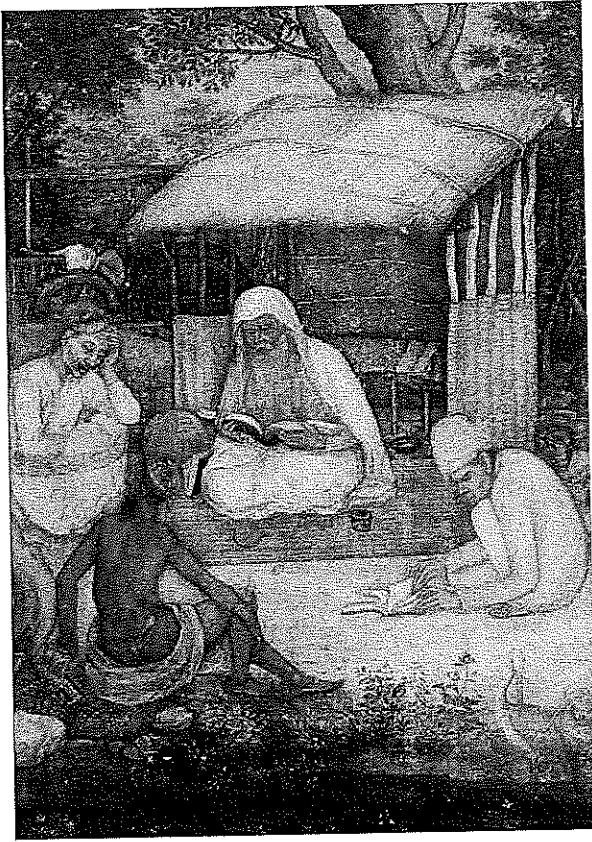
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In what ways did the religious tradition of South Asia change over the centuries?

Brahman, the World Soul, the final and ultimate reality. Beyond the multiplicity of material objects and individual persons and beyond even the various gods themselves lay this primal unitary energy or divine reality infusing all things. This alone was real; the immense diversity of existence that human beings perceived with their senses was but an illusion. One contemporary Hindu monk summarized the essence of the Hindu outlook by saying, “there is no multiplicity.”

The fundamental assertion of this philosophical Hinduism was that the individual human soul, or *atman*, was in fact a part of Brahman. The chief goal of humankind then lay in the effort to achieve union with Brahman, putting an end to our illusory perception of a separate existence. This was *moksha* (MOHK-shuh), or liberation, compared sometimes to a bubble in a glass of water breaking through the surface and becoming one with the surrounding atmosphere.

Achieving this exalted state was held to involve many lifetimes, and the notion of *samsara*, or rebirth or reincarnation, became a central feature of Hindu thinking. Human souls migrated from body to body over many lifetimes, depending on the actions of individuals. This was the law of *karma*. Pure actions, appropriate to one’s station in life, resulted in rebirth in a higher social position or caste. Thus the caste system of distinct and ranked groups, each with its own duties, became a register of spiritual progress.

Various paths to this final release, appropriate to people of different temperaments, were spelled out in Hindu teachings. Some might achieve *moksha* through knowledge or study; others by doing their ordinary work without regard to consequences; still others through passionate devotion to some deity or through extended meditation practice. Such ideas became widely known throughout India—carried by Brahmin priests and wandering ascetics or holy men, who had withdrawn from ordinary life to pursue their spiritual development.



Hindu Ascetics Hinduism called for men in the final stage of life to leave ordinary ways of living and withdraw into the forests to seek spiritual liberation, or *moksha*. Here, in an illustration from an early-thirteenth-century Indian manuscript, a holy man explores a text with three disciples in a secluded rural setting. (Musée des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet, Paris, France/© RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY)

AP® Analyzing Evidence

What evidence can you find in this image to support the importance of asceticism in Hindu religious practices?

South Asian Cultural Traditions: Buddhism

About the same time as philosophical Hinduism was emerging, another movement took shape in South Asia that soon became a distinct and separate religious tradition—Buddhism. Unlike Hinduism, this new faith had a historical founder, **Siddhartha Gautama** (ca. 566–ca. 486 B.C.E.), a prince from a small kingdom in north India or southern Nepal. According to Buddhist tradition, the prince had

enjoyed a sheltered and delightful youth until he encountered human suffering in the form of an old man, a sick person, and a corpse. Shattered by these revelations of aging, illness, and death, Siddhartha determined to find the cause of such sufferings and a remedy for them. And so, at the age of twenty-nine, the young prince left his luxurious life as well as his wife and child, shed his royal jewels, cut off his hair, and set off on a quest for enlightenment that ended with an indescribable experience of spiritual realization. Now he was the Buddha, the man who had awakened. For the next forty years, he taught what he had learned, setting in motion the cultural tradition of Buddhism.

To the Buddha, suffering or sorrow—experiencing life as imperfect, impermanent, and unsatisfactory—was the central and universal feature of human life. This kind of suffering derived from desire or craving for individual fulfillment, from attachment to that which inevitably changes, particularly to the notion of a core self or ego that is uniquely and solidly “me.” He spelled out a cure for this “dis-ease” in his famous “eightfold path,” which emphasized a modest and moral lifestyle, mental concentration practices, including meditation, and wisdom or understanding of reality as it is. Those who followed the Buddhist path most fully could expect to achieve enlightenment, or *nirvana*, an almost indescribable state in which individual identity would be “extinguished” along with all greed, hatred, and delusion. With the pain of unnecessary suffering finally ended, the enlightened person would experience an overwhelming serenity, even in the midst of difficulty, as well as an immense loving-kindness, or compassion, for all beings. It was a simple message, elaborated endlessly and in various forms by those who followed the Buddha.

Much of the Buddha’s teaching reflected the Hindu traditions from which it sprang. The idea that ordinary life is an illusion, the concepts of karma and rebirth, the goal of overcoming the incessant demands of the ego, the practice of meditation, the hope for final release from the cycle of rebirth—all of these Hindu elements found their way into Buddhist teaching. In this respect, Buddhism was a simplified and more accessible version of Hinduism.

Other elements of Buddhist teaching, however, sharply challenged prevailing Hindu thinking. Rejecting the religious authority of the Brahmins, the Buddha ridiculed their rituals and sacrifices as irrelevant to the hard work of dealing with one’s suffering. Nor was he much interested in abstract speculation about the creation of the world or the existence of God, for such questions, he declared, “are not useful in the quest for holiness; they do not lead to peace and to the direct knowledge of *nirvana*.” Individuals had to take responsibility for their own spiritual development with no help from human authorities or supernatural beings. It was a path of intense self-effort, based on personal experience. The Buddha also challenged the inequalities of a Hindu-based caste system, arguing that neither caste position nor gender was a barrier to enlightenment. At least in principle, the possibility of “awakening” was available to all.

As Buddhism spread across the trade routes of Central Asia to China, Japan, and Southeast Asia, differences in understanding soon emerged. An early version of the

AP® Comparison

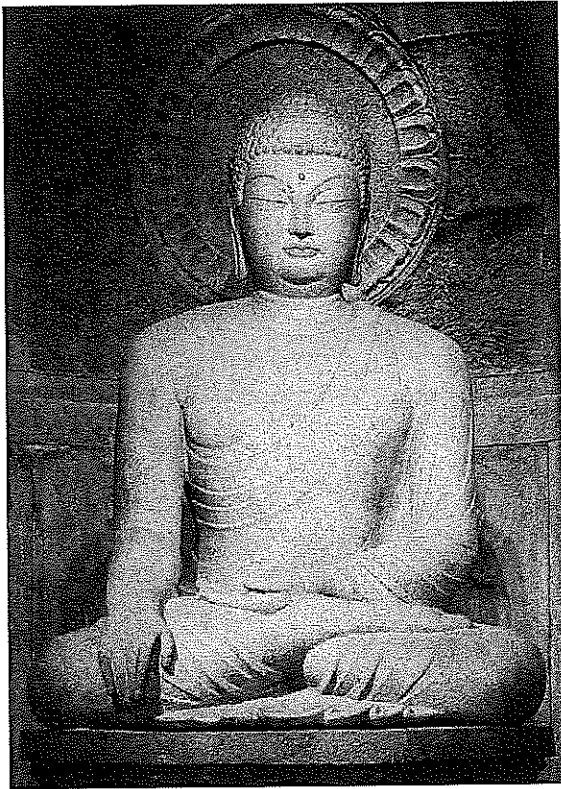
To what extent were Buddhist teachings similar to Hindu beliefs?

AP® EXAM TIP

You should know the basic differences and similarities between Hinduism and Buddhism.

AP® Comparison

What is the difference between the Theravada and Mahayana expressions of Buddhism?



The Buddha's Enlightenment Dating from the late eighth century in Korea, this monumental and beautifully proportioned sculpture portrays the Buddha at the moment of his enlightenment, symbolized by his right hand touching the earth. Seated on a lotus pedestal, this image of the Buddha also shows the *ushnisha*, the raised area at the top of his head, which represents his spiritual attainment, and the dot in the center of his forehead indicating wisdom. (Copyright © Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea, Courtesy of the Academy of Korean Studies, South Korea)

AP® Argument Development

How does this visual representation of the Buddha differ from the description of the prince in the beginning of this section?

AP® EXAM TIP

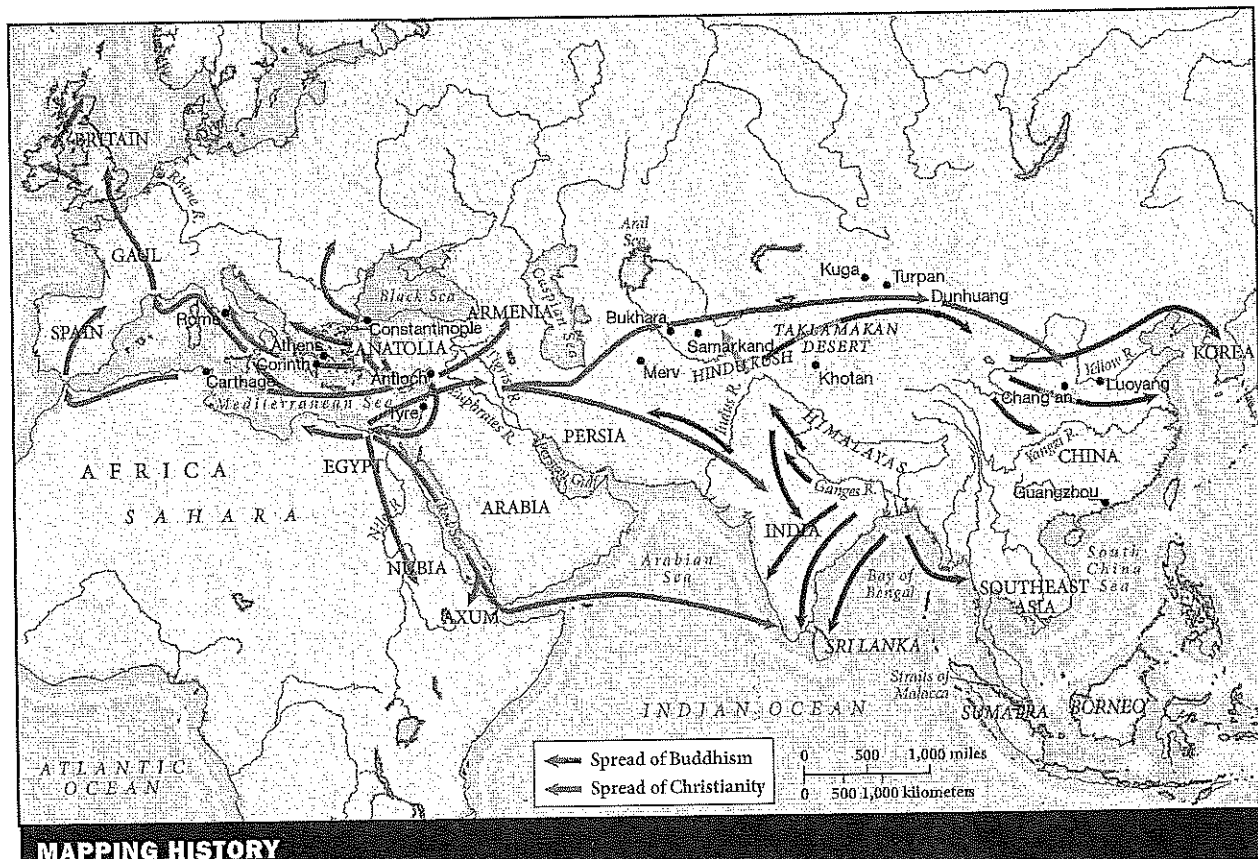
Be able to give examples of factors that attract people to belief systems.

new religion, known as **Theravada Buddhism** (Teaching of the Elders), portrayed the Buddha as an immensely wise teacher and model, but certainly not divine. The gods, though never completely denied, played little role in assisting believers in achieving enlightenment. But as the message of the Buddha gained a mass following and spread across much of Asia, some of its early features—rigorous and time-consuming meditation practice, a focus on monks and nuns withdrawn from ordinary life, the absence of accessible supernatural figures able to provide help and comfort—proved difficult for many converts. And so the religion adapted. A new form of the faith, **Mahayana Buddhism**, developed in the early centuries of the Common Era and offered greater accessibility, a spiritual path available to a much wider range of people beyond the monks and ascetics, who were the core group in early Buddhism.

In most expressions of Mahayana Buddhism, enlightenment (or becoming a Buddha) was available to everyone; it was possible within the context of ordinary life, rather than a monastery; and it might occur within a single lifetime rather than over the course of many lives. While Buddhism had originally put a premium on spiritual wisdom or insight, Mahayana expressions of the faith emphasized compassion—the ability to feel the sorrows of other people as if they were one's own. This compassionate religious ideal found expression in the notion of bodhisattvas, fully enlightened beings who postponed their own final liberation in order to assist a suffering humanity. They were spiritual beings on their way to

“Buddhahood.” Furthermore, the historical Buddha himself became something of a god, and both earlier and future Buddhas were available to offer help. Elaborate descriptions and artistic representations of these supernatural beings, together with various levels of Heavens and Hells, transformed Buddhism into a popular religion of salvation. Furthermore, religious merit, leading to salvation, might now be earned by acts of piety and devotion, such as contributing to the support of a monastery, and that merit might be transferred to others. In many forms and variations, Mahayana Buddhism took root in Central Asia, China, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere. Buddhism thus became the first major tradition to spread widely outside its homeland (see Map 1.3).

In Tibet, a distinctive form of Buddhism began to take shape during the seventh century C.E. This Tibetan Buddhism gave special authority to learned teachers, known as Lamas, and emphasized an awareness of and preparation for death.



Map 1.3 The Spread of Early Buddhism and Christianity

In the five centuries after the birth of Jesus, Christianity found converts from Spain to Northeast Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and India. In the Roman Empire, Axum, and Armenia, the new religion enjoyed state support as well. Subsequently, Christianity took root solidly in Europe and after 1000 C.E. in Russia. Meanwhile, Buddhism was spreading from its South Asian homeland to various parts of Asia, even as it was weakening in India itself.

READING THE MAP: From its start on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, in which direction did Christianity spread the farthest?

MAKING CONNECTIONS: Based on this map, what differences might you notice between the spread of Buddhism and Christianity?

Its many spiritual practices included multiple prostrations, elaborate visualizations, complex meditations, ceremonies associated with numerous heavenly beings both peaceful and violent, and the frequent use of art and music. Incorporating various elements from native Tibetan traditions and from Hinduism, Tibetan Buddhism was expressed in a set of distinctive texts compiled during the fourteenth century. A section of these texts became famous in the West as *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, which vividly describes the various stages of transition from life to death to rebirth.

But by 1200 Buddhism had largely disappeared in India, the land of its birth, even as it was expanding in other parts of Asia. Its decline in India owed something

AP® Causation

How does this map suggest the political, economic, and geographic factors that might account for the relatively rapid spread of Christianity?

AP® Comparison

How did the evolution of cultural traditions in India and China differ from one another?

AP® EXAM TIP

Major belief systems often divided and subdivided across time and place. One example is the development of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism.

AP® EXAM TIP

Be able to provide examples of the expansion and contraction of major religions over time.

AP® Continuity and Change

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How did Hinduism respond to the challenges of Buddhism?

to the mounting wealth of monasteries as the economic interests of leading Buddhist figures separated them from ordinary people. Hostility of the Brahmin priests and competition from Islam after 1000 C.E. also played a role. But the most important reason for the waning of Buddhism in India was the growth during the first millennium C.E. of a new kind of popular Hinduism.

That path took shape in what is known as the **bhakti movement**, which involved devotion to one or another of India's many gods and goddesses. Beginning in south India and moving northward between 600 and 1300 C.E., it featured the intense adoration of and identification with a particular deity through songs, prayers, and rituals. By far the most popular deities were Vishnu, the protector and preserver of creation who was associated with mercy and goodness, and Shiva, a god representing the Divine in its destructive aspect, but many others also had their followers. This form of Hindu expression sometimes pushed against the rigid caste and gender hierarchies of Indian society by inviting all to an adoration of the Divine. Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu as portrayed in the Bhagavad Gita, a famous section of the long Indian epic *Mahabharata*, had declared that "those who take shelter in Me, though they be of lower birth—women, vaishyas [merchants] and shudras [workers]—can attain the supreme destination."

Bhakti practice was more accessible to ordinary people than the elaborate sacrifices of the Brahmins or the philosophical speculations of intellectuals. Through good deeds, simple living, and emotionally fulfilling rituals of devotion, individuals could find salvation without a complex institutional structure, orthodox doctrine, or prescribed meditation practices. Bhakti spirituality also had a rich poetic tradition, which flourished especially in the centuries after 1200. One ninth-century poet illustrated the intense emotional impact of bhakti devotion:

He [God] grabbed me lest I go astray//Wax before an unspent fire, mind melted, body trembled.//I bowed, I wept, danced, and cried aloud//I sang, and I praised him. . . .//I left shame behind, took as an ornament the mockery of local folk.⁸

This proliferation of gods and goddesses, and of their bhakti cults, occasioned very little friction or serious religious conflict. "Hinduism," writes a leading scholar, "is essentially tolerant, and would rather assimilate than rigidly exclude."⁹ This capacity for assimilation extended to an already declining Buddhism, which for many people had become yet another cult worshipping yet another god. The Buddha in fact was incorporated into the Hindu pantheon as the ninth incarnation of Vishnu.

Chinese Cultural Traditions: Confucianism

At the far eastern end of the Eurasian continent, Chinese civilization gave birth to two major cultural traditions that have persisted into the modern era, Confucianism and Daoism. Compared to Hindu, Christian, and Islamic traditions, these

Chinese outlooks were less overtly religious; were expressed in more philosophical, humanistic, or rational terms; and were oriented toward life in this world. They emerged in what the Chinese remember sadly as “the age of warring states” (ca. 500–221 B.C.E.), dreadful centuries of disorder and turmoil. At that time some Chinese thinkers began to consider how order might be restored, how the imagined tranquility of an earlier time could be realized again. From their reflections emerged the classical cultural traditions of Chinese civilization.

One of these traditions was derived from the thinking of Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.), a learned and ambitious aristocrat who believed that he had uncovered a path back to social and political harmony. He attracted a group of followers, who compiled his writings into a short book called *The Analects*, and later scholars elaborated and commented endlessly on his ideas, creating a body of thought known as **Confucianism**. When China was finally reunified by the **Han dynasty**, around 200 B.C.E., those ideas became the official ideology of the Chinese state and remained so into the early twentieth century.

The Confucian answer to the problem of China’s disorder was rooted not in force, law, and punishment, but in the power of moral behavior. For Confucius, human society consisted primarily of unequal relationships: the father and son; husband and wife; the older brother and younger brother; ruler and subject. If the superior party in each of these relationships behaved with sincerity, benevolence, and genuine concern for the other, then the inferior party would be motivated to respond with deference and obedience. Harmony would then prevail. In Confucian thinking, the family became a model for political life, a kind of miniature state. Filial piety, the honoring of one’s ancestors and parents, was both valuable in itself and a training ground for the reverence due to the emperor and state officials.

For Confucius, the key to nurturing these moral qualities was education, particularly an immersion in language, literature, history, philosophy, and ethics, all applied to the practical problems of government. Ritual and ceremonies were also important, for they conveyed the rules of appropriate behavior in the many and varying circumstances of life. For the “superior person,” or “gentleman” in Confucian terms, serious personal reflection and a willingness to strive continuously to perfect his moral character were essential.

Such ideas had a pervasive influence in Chinese life, as Confucianism became almost synonymous with Chinese elite culture. As China’s bureaucracy took shape during and after the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.), Confucianism became the central element of the educational system, which prepared students for the examinations required to gain official positions. Thus generation after generation of China’s male elite was steeped in the ideas and values of Confucianism.

Confucianism also placed great importance on history, for the ideal good society lay in the past. Those ideas also injected a certain democratic element into Chinese elite culture, for the great sage had emphasized that “superior men” and potential government officials were those of outstanding moral character and intellectual achievement, not simply those of aristocratic background. Usually only

AP® Argument Development

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In what ways can Confucianism be defined as a secular or “humanistic” philosophy rather than a supernatural religion?

AP Analyzing
Evidence

How could this image have been used to educate students of Confucianism on filial piety?



Filial Piety The long-enduring social order that Confucius advocated began at home with unquestioning obedience and the utmost respect for parents and other senior members of the family. This Qing dynasty woodcut illustrates the proper filial relationship between father and son in a variety of circumstances. (Private Collection/Roland and Sabrina Michaud/akg-images)

young men from wealthy families could afford the education necessary for passing examinations, but on occasion villagers could find the resources to sponsor one of their bright sons, potentially propelling him into the stratosphere of the Chinese elite while bringing honor and benefit to the village itself.

Confucian ideas were clearly used to legitimate the many inequalities of Chinese society, but they also established certain expectations for the superior parties in China's social hierarchy. Thus emperors should keep taxes low, administer justice, and provide for the material needs of the people. Those who failed to govern by these moral norms forfeited what the Chinese called the Mandate of Heaven, which granted legitimacy to the ruler. Under such conditions, natural disaster, famine, or rebellion followed, leading to political upheaval and a new dynasty. Likewise at the level of the family, husbands should deal kindly with their wives and children, lest they provoke conflict and disharmony.

Finally, Confucianism marked Chinese elite culture by its secular, or nonreligious, character. Confucius did not deny the reality of gods and spirits. In fact, he advised people to participate in family and state rituals "as if the spirits were present," and he believed that the universe had a moral character with which human beings should align themselves. But the thrust of Confucian teaching was distinctly this-worldly and practical, concerned with human relationships, effective government, and social harmony. Members of the Chinese elite generally acknowledged that magic, the gods, and spirits were perhaps necessary for the lower orders of society, but educated people, they argued, would find them of little help in striving for moral improvement and in establishing a harmonious society.

In various forms Chinese Confucianism proved attractive to elites elsewhere in East Asia, such as Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. Those distinct civilizations drew heavily on the culture of their giant and highly prestigious neighbor. When an early Japanese state emerged in the seventh century C.E., its founder, Shotoku, issued the Seventeen Article Constitution, proclaiming the Japanese ruler a Chinese-style emperor and encouraging both Buddhism and Confucianism. In good Confucian fashion, that document emphasized the moral quality of rulers as a foundation for social harmony.

Chinese Cultural Traditions: Daoism

As Confucian thinking became generally known in China, a quite different school of thought also took shape. Known as **Daoism**, it was associated with the legendary figure Laozi, who, according to tradition, was a sixth-century-B.C.E. archivist. He is said to have penned a short poetic volume, the *Daodejing* (DOW-DAY-JIHNG) (*The Way and Its Power*), before vanishing in the wilderness to the west of China on his water buffalo.

In many ways, Daoist thinking ran counter to that of Confucius, who had emphasized the importance of education and earnest striving for moral improvement and good government. The Daoists ridiculed such efforts as artificial and useless, claiming that they generally made things worse. In the face of China's disorder and chaos, Daoists urged withdrawal into the world of nature and encouraged behavior that was spontaneous, individualistic, and natural. The central concept of Daoist thinking is *dao*, an elusive notion that refers to the way of nature, the underlying and unchanging principle that governs all natural phenomena. Whereas Confucius focused on the world of human relationships, the Daoists turned the spotlight on the immense realm of nature and its mysterious unfolding patterns in which the "ten thousand things" appeared, changed, and vanished. "Confucius roams within society," the Chinese have often said. "Laozi wanders beyond."

Applied to human life, Daoism invited people to withdraw from the world of political and social activism, to disengage from the public life so important to Confucius, and to align themselves with the way of nature. It meant simplicity in living, small self-sufficient communities, limited government, and the abandonment of education and active efforts at self-improvement. "Give up learning," declares the *Daodejing*, "and put an end to your troubles."

Despite its various differences with the ideas of Confucianism, the Daoist perspective was widely regarded by elite Chinese as complementing rather than contradicting Confucian values. Such an outlook was facilitated by the ancient Chinese concept of *yin* (female) and *yang* (male), which expressed a belief in the unity or complementarity of opposites. Thus a scholar-official might pursue the Confucian project of "government by goodness" during the day, but upon returning home in the evening or following his retirement, he might well behave in a more Daoist fashion—pursuing the simple life, reading Daoist philosophy, practicing

AP® Comparison

How did the Daoist outlook differ from that of Confucianism?



The Yin Yang Symbol

AP® Contextualization

How does the yin yang symbol reflect Chinese attitudes toward differing philosophies? What does the yin yang symbol tell us about Chinese attitudes toward gender roles?

meditation and breathing exercises in mountain settings, or enjoying painting, poetry, or calligraphy.

Daoism also shaped the culture of ordinary people as it became a part of Chinese popular religion. This kind of Daoism sought to tap the power of the dao for practical uses and came to include magic, fortune-telling, and the search for immortality. Sometimes it also provided an ideology for peasant uprisings, such as the Yellow Turban Rebellion (184–204 C.E.), which imagined a utopian society without the oppression of governments and landlords.

In its many and varied forms, Daoism, like Confucianism, became an enduring element of the Chinese cultural tradition.



China's Cultural Traditions In this idealized painting, attributed to the seventeenth-century Chinese artist Wang Shugu, the Chinese teacher Confucius presents a baby Buddha to the Daoist master Laozi. (The Art Archive/REX/Shutterstock)

AP® Contextualization

What does this idealized painting tell historians about the interaction of belief systems in China?

of the region's smaller and, at the time, less significant peoples—the Hebrews, also known as Jews. Unlike the peoples of ancient Mesopotamia, India, Greece, and elsewhere—all of whom populated the invisible realm with numerous gods and goddesses—Jews found in their God, whose name they were reluctant to pronounce because of its sacredness, a powerful and jealous deity, who demanded their

Middle Eastern Cultural Traditions: Judaism and Christianity

From the Middle Eastern lands of what are now Israel/Palestine and Arabia emerged three religious traditions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—often known as Abrahamic faiths because all of them revered the biblical character called Abraham. Amid the proliferation of gods and spirits that had long characterized religious life throughout the ancient world, Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike affirmed a distinctly monotheistic faith. This idea of a single supreme deity or Divine Presence, the sole source of all life and being, was a radical cultural innovation. It created the possibility of a universal religion, open to all of humankind, but it could also mean an exclusive and intolerant faith.

The earliest of these traditions to emerge was **Judaism**, born among one

exclusive loyalty. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me”—this was the first of the Ten Commandments.

Over time, this God evolved into a lofty, transcendent deity of utter holiness and purity. But the Jews also experienced their God as a divine person, accessible and available to his people, not remote or far away. Furthermore, for some, he was transformed from a god of war, who ordered his people to “utterly destroy” the original inhabitants of the Promised Land, to a god of social justice and compassion for the poor and the marginalized, especially in the passionate pronouncements of Jewish prophets, such as Isaiah, Amos, and Jeremiah. Here was a distinctive conception of the Divine—singular, transcendent, personal, revealed in the natural order, engaged in history, and demanding social justice and moral righteousness above sacrifices and rituals. In terms of world history, the chief significance of Jewish religious thought lay in the foundation it provided for those later and far more widespread Abrahamic faiths of Christianity and Islam.

Christianity began in a distinctly Jewish cultural setting. In the remote province of Judaea, which was incorporated into the Roman Empire in 63 B.C.E., a young Jewish craftsman or builder called **Jesus of Nazareth** (ca. 4 B.C.E.–29 C.E.) began a brief career of teaching and healing before he got in trouble with local authorities and was executed. In one of history’s most unlikely stories, the life and teachings of that obscure man, barely noted in the historical records of the time, became the basis of the world’s most widely practiced religion.

In his short public life, Jesus was a “wisdom teacher,” challenging the conventional values of his time, urging the renunciation of wealth and self-seeking, and emphasizing the supreme importance of love or compassion as the basis for a moral life. In his famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told his followers to “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” Jesus inherited from his Jewish tradition an intense devotion to a single personal deity with whom he was on intimate terms, referring to him as Abba (“father”). And he gained a reputation as a healer and miracle worker. Furthermore, Jesus’ teachings had a sharp social and political edge, as he spoke clearly on behalf of the poor and the oppressed, directly criticized the hypocrisies of the powerful, and deliberately associated with lepers, adulterous women, and tax collectors, all of whom were regarded as “impure.” His teachings galvanized many of his followers into a social movement that so antagonized and threatened both Jewish and Roman authorities that he was crucified as a political rebel.

Jesus had not intended to establish a new religion, but rather to revitalize his Jewish tradition. Nonetheless, Christianity soon emerged as a separate faith. Its transformation from a small Jewish sect to a world religion began with **Saint Paul** (ca. 6–67 C.E.), an early convert whose missionary journeys in the eastern Roman Empire led to the founding of small Christian communities that included non-Jews. The Good News of Jesus, Paul argued, was for everyone, Jews and non-Jews alike.

AP® Exam Tip

You should be able to point out the similarities and differences between the monotheistic religions in this section and the other major belief systems discussed in the chapter.

AP® EXAM TIP

You should know the basic tenets of Judaism and its political and social effects on world history.

AP® Argument Development

What was distinctive about the Jewish religious tradition?

AP® Comparison

How would you compare the teachings of Jesus and the Buddha? In what different ways did the two religions evolve after the deaths of their founders?

AP® EXAM TIP

You should know that Buddhism and Christianity developed out of earlier belief systems, Hinduism and Judaism, respectively.



The Legacy of Axumite Christianity A distinctive form of Christianity in what is now Ethiopia began in the fourth century and endures to this day. This late-fourteenth- or early-fifteenth-century depiction of the ascension of Jesus, with his disciples pointing upwards, illustrates that legacy. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, USA/Rogers Fund, 1998 [1998.66]/Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Image source: Art Resource, NY)

AP® Continuity and Change

.....
In what ways was Christianity transformed in the five centuries following the death of Jesus?

Christian movement was, however, anything but unified. Its immense geographic reach, accompanied by inevitable differences in language, culture, and political regime, ensured that a single focus for Christian belief and practice was difficult to achieve. Eventually, separate church organizations emerged in the eastern and western regions of the Roman Empire as well as in Egypt, Syria, Persia, Armenia, Ethiopia, and southern India, some of which were accompanied by sharp differences in doctrine. The bishop of Rome gradually emerged as the dominant leader, or pope, of the church in the western half of the empire, but his authority was sharply contested in the East. This division contributed to the later split between the Latin, or Roman Catholic, and the Greek, or Eastern Orthodox, branches of Christendom, a division that continues

This inclusive message was one of the attractions of the new faith as it spread very gradually within the Roman Empire during the several centuries after Jesus' death. In the Roman world, the strangest and most offensive feature of the new faith was its exclusive monotheism and its antagonism to all other supernatural powers, particularly the cult of the emperors. Christians' denial of these other gods caused them to be tagged as "atheists" and was one reason behind the empire's intermittent persecution of Christians during the first three centuries of the Common Era (see *Zooming In: Perpetua, Christian Martyr*, page 34). All of that ended with Emperor Constantine's conversion in the early fourth century C.E. and the proclamation of Christianity as the state religion in 380 C.E. About the same time the new faith also gained official status in Armenia, located in the south Caucasus region east of Turkey, and in Axum, an African state in what is now Ethiopia and Eritrea. In fact, during the first six centuries of the Christian era, most followers of Jesus lived in the Middle East and in northern and northeastern Africa, with small communities in India and China as well (see Map 1.3).

As Christianity spread within the Roman Empire and beyond, it developed an elaborate hierarchical organization, with patriarchs, bishops, and priests—all men—replacing the house churches of the early years, in which women played a more prominent part. The emerging

to the present. Thus by 600 or so, the Christian world was not only geographically extensive but also politically and theologically very diverse and highly fragmented.

Middle Eastern Cultural Traditions: Islam

The world historical significance of Islam, the third religion in the Abrahamic family of faiths, has been enormous. It thrust the previously marginal and largely nomadic Arabs into a central role in world history, for it was among them and in their language that the newest of the world's major religions was born during the seventh century C.E. Its emergence was accompanied by the rapid creation of a huge empire that stretched from Spain to India, but the religion of Islam reached beyond that empire, to both East and West Africa, to India, and to Central and Southeast Asia. Within the Arab Empire and beyond it, a new and innovative civilization took shape, drawing on Arab, Persian, Turkic, Greco-Roman, South Asian, and African cultures. It was known as the *Dar al-Islam*, the house or the abode of Islam.

The Arabia from which Islam emerged was a land of pastoral people, herding their sheep and camels, but it also contained some regions of settled agricultural communities and sophisticated commercial cities such as Mecca, which were linked to long-distance trading routes. Arabia was located on the periphery of two established and rival civilizations of that time—the Byzantine Empire, heir to the Roman world, and the Sassanid Empire, heir to the imperial traditions of Persia. Many Jews and Christians lived among the Arabs, and their monotheistic ideas became widely known.

The catalyst for the emergence of Islam was a single individual, **Muhammad Ibn Abdullah** (570–632 C.E.), a trader from Mecca. A highly reflective man who was deeply troubled by the religious corruption and social inequalities of Mecca, he often undertook periods of withdrawal and meditation in the arid mountains outside the city. There, Muhammad had a powerful, overwhelming religious experience that left him convinced, albeit reluctantly, that he was Allah's messenger to the Arabs, commissioned to bring to them a scripture in their own language. According to Muslim tradition, the revelations began in 610 and continued periodically over the next twenty-two years. Those revelations, recorded in the **Quran**, became the sacred scriptures of Islam, which to this day most Muslims regard as the very words of God and the core of their faith.

It was a revolutionary message that Muhammad conveyed. Religiously, it presented Allah, the Arabic word for God, as the sole divine being, the all-powerful Creator, thus challenging the highly polytheistic religion of the Arabs. In its exalted conception of Deity, Muhammad's revelations drew heavily on traditions of Jewish and Christian monotheism. As "the Messenger of God," Muhammad presented himself in the line of earlier prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and many others. He was the last, "the seal of the prophets," bearing God's final revelation to humankind. Islam was socially revolutionary as well. Over and over again the Quran denounced the prevailing social practices of an increasingly prosperous Mecca: the hoarding of wealth, the exploitation of the poor, the charging of high rates

AP® EXAM TIP

You should know the factors that led to divisions within major belief systems.

AP® EXAM TIP

Be ready to provide examples of how power was used to promote religion, and vice versa.

Perpetua, Christian Martyr

“The blood of the martyrs,” declared the Christian writer Tertullian, “is the seed of the church.”

Few of those martyrs, whose stories so inspired the persecuted converts of the early Christian centuries, could match that of Perpetua, a young woman whose prison diary provides a highly personal account of her arrest and trial.¹⁰

Born in 181 C.E. in the North African city of Carthage, Perpetua hailed from an upper-class Roman family and was quite well educated, literate in Latin and probably Greek, and acquainted with Roman philosophical writings. By the time she entered the historical record at age twenty-two, she had given birth to a son, had lost her husband to either death or abandonment, and had recently begun to study Christianity, becoming part of a small but growing group of educated people who were turning toward the new faith. Coinciding with her conversion was a wave of persecutions ordered by the Roman



Perpetua.

emperor Septimus Severus, also of North African descent and a devotee of the Egyptian cult of Isis and Osiris. Severus sought to forbid new conversions rather than punish long-established Christians. In line with this policy, in 203 C.E., the hard-line governor of the region ordered the arrest of Perpetua along with four others—two slaves, one of them a woman named Felicitas who was eight months pregnant, and two free men. Before she was taken to the prison, however, Perpetua decisively confirmed her commitment to Christianity by accepting baptism.

Once in the “dark hole” of the prison, Perpetua was terrified. It was crowded and stiflingly hot, and she was consumed with anxiety for her child. Several fellow Christians managed to bribe the prison guards to permit Perpetua to nurse her baby son. Reunited with her child,

photo: Archbishop's Palace, Ravenna, Italy/Scala/Art Resource, NY

of interest on loans, corrupt business deals, the abuse of women, and the neglect of widows and orphans. Like the Jewish prophets of the Hebrew scriptures, the Quran demanded social justice and laid out a prescription for its implementation.

Finally, Islam was politically revolutionary because the Quran challenged the entire tribal and clan structure of Arab society, which was so prone to war, feuding, and violence. The just and moral society of Islam was the *umma* (OOM-mah), the community of all believers, which replaced tribal, ethnic, or racial identities. In this community, women too had an honored and spiritually equal place. “The believers, men and women, are protectors of one another,” declared the Quran. The *umma*, then, was to be a new and just community, bound by common belief rather than by territory, language, or tribe.

AP® Causation

Explain how Muhammad's profession as a merchant may have influenced the early years of Islam.

Like Jesus, Muhammad was threatening to the established authorities in Mecca, and he was forced to leave. But unlike Jesus, he was in a position to resist, for there was no overwhelming force such as the Roman Empire to contend with. So he gathered an army, and by 630 C.E. he had largely unified Arabia under the banner

she found that “my prison had suddenly become a palace, so that I wanted to be there rather than anywhere else.”

A few days later, Perpetua’s deeply distressed non-Christian father arrived for a visit, hoping to persuade his only daughter to recant her faith and save her life and the family’s honor. It was a heartbreaking encounter. “Daughter,” he said, “have pity on my grey head. . . . Do not abandon me to be the reproach of men. Think of your brothers, think of your mother and your aunt, think of your child, who will not be able to live once you are gone. Give up your pride! You will destroy all of us!” Firm in her faith, Perpetua refused his entreaties, and she reported that “he left me in great sorrow.”

On the day of her trial, with her distraught father in attendance, the governor Hilarianus also begged Perpetua to consider her family and renounce her faith by offering a sacrifice to the emperor. Again she refused and together with her four companions was “condemned to the beasts,” a humiliating form of execution normally reserved for the lower classes. Although she was now permanently separated from her child, she wrote, “We returned to the prison in high spirits.” During her last days in the prison, Perpetua and the others were treated “more humanely” and were allowed to visit with family and friends, as the head of the jail was himself a Christian.

But then, on the birthday of the emperor, this small band of Christians was marched to the amphitheater, “joyfully as though they were going to heaven,” according to an eyewitness account. After the prisoners strenuously and successfully resisted dressing in the robes of pagan priests, the three men were sent into the arena to contend with a boar, a bear, and a leopard. Then it was the turn of the women, Perpetua and the slave Felicitas, who had given birth only two days earlier. When a mad cow failed to kill them, a soldier was sent to finish the work. As he approached Perpetua, he apparently hesitated, but as an eyewitness account put it, “she took the trembling hand of the young gladiator and guided it to her throat.” Appended to her diary was this comment from an unknown observer: “It was as though so great a woman, feared as she was by the unclean spirit, could not be dispatched unless she herself were willing.”

QUESTIONS

How might a historian understand the actions and attitudes of Perpetua toward religion? How would modern-day scholars understand her experiences in the context of the era she lived in?

of Islam. Thus Islam began its history as a new state, while Christianity was at odds with the Roman state for over three centuries.

That state soon became a huge empire as Arab armies took the offensive after Muhammad’s death in 632 C.E. (see Map 1.4). In many places, conversion to Islam soon followed. In Persia, for example, some 80 percent of the population had made a transition to a Muslim religious identity by 900, and Persian culture became highly prestigious and influential within the Islamic world. One of the early rulers of this Arab Empire observed: “The Persians ruled for a thousand years and did not need us Arabs even for a day. We have been ruling them for one or two centuries and cannot do without them for an hour.”¹¹

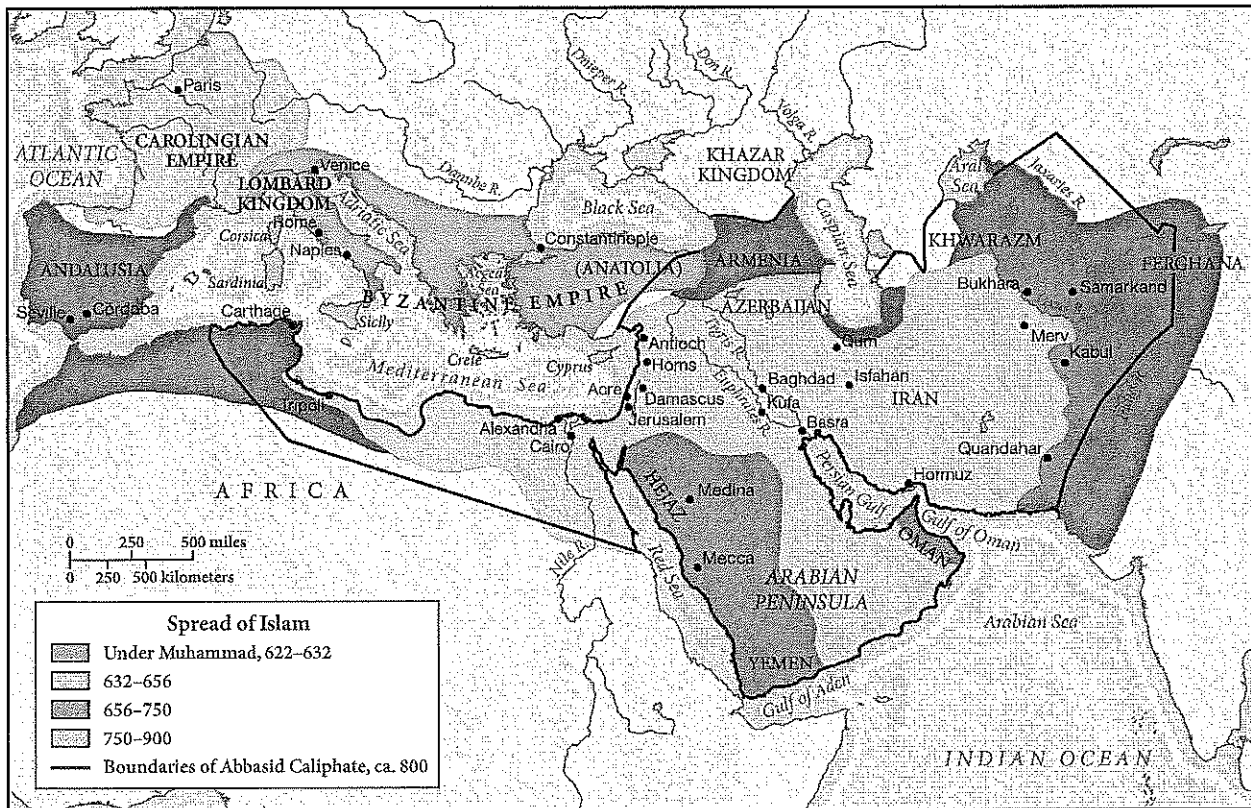
But the idea of a unified Muslim community, so important to Muhammad, proved difficult to realize as conquest and conversion vastly enlarged the Islamic world. Political conflict over who should succeed Muhammad led to civil war and to an enduring division between what became known as the Sunni and Shia branches of Islam. It began as a purely political conflict but acquired over time a deeper significance. For

AP[®] Comparison

How are the teachings of the Quran regarding social justice and the poor similar to the teachings of Buddhism and Christianity?

AP[®] Comparison

Explain the similarities and differences in the spread of Islam and Christianity.

**AP® Causation**

Explain the causes for the rapid spread of Islam depicted in the map.

Map 1.4 The Arab Empire and the Initial Expansion of Islam, 622–900 c.e.

Far more so than with Buddhism or Christianity, the initial spread of Islam was both rapid and extensive. And unlike the other two world religions, Islam quickly gave rise to a huge empire, ruled by Muslim Arabs, that encompassed many of the older civilizations of the region.

much of early Islamic history, Shia Muslims saw themselves as the minority opposition within Islam. They felt that history had taken a wrong turn and that they were “the defenders of the oppressed, the critics and opponents of privilege and power,” while the Sunnis were the advocates of the established order.¹² Other conflicts arose among Arab clans or factions, between Arabs and non-Arabs, and between privileged and wealthy rulers and their less fortunate subjects. After 900 or so, any political unity that Islamic civilization had earlier enjoyed had vanished.

And yet, there was much that bound the Islamic world together, culturally if not politically. The rise of Islam had generated a transcontinental civilization, embracing at least parts of virtually every other civilization in the Afro-Eurasian hemisphere. It was in that sense a “global civilization,” although the Americas, of course, were not involved. The Quran, universal respect for Muhammad, common religious texts, a ritual prayer five times a day, and the required pilgrimage to Mecca—all of this was common to the many peoples of the Islamic world.

No group was more important in the transmission of those beliefs and practices than the **ulama**. These learned scholars served as judges, interpreters, administrators,

AP® EXAM TIP

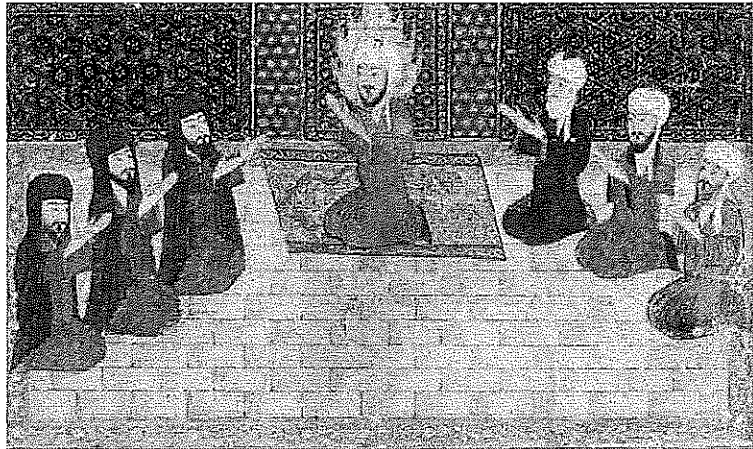
Compare features of leadership in major religions, using the ulama in Islam as one example.

prayer leaders, and reciters of the Quran, but especially as preservers and teachers of the sharia or Islamic law. In their homes, mosques, shrines, and Quranic schools, the ulama passed on the core teachings of the faith. Beginning in the eleventh century, formal colleges called *madrassas* offered more advanced instruction in the Quran and the sayings of Muhammad; grammar and rhetoric; sometimes philosophy, theology, mathematics, and medicine; and, above all else, law. Teaching was informal, mostly oral, and involved much memorization of texts. It was also largely conservative, seeking to preserve an established body of Islamic learning.

The ulama were an “international elite,” and the system of education they created bound together an immense and diverse civilization. Common texts were shared widely across the world of Islam. Students and teachers alike traveled great distances in search of the most learned scholars. From Indonesia to West Africa, educated Muslims inhabited a widely shared tradition.

Paralleling the educational network of the ulama were the emerging religious orders of the Sufis, who had a quite different understanding of Islam, for they viewed the worldly success of Islamic civilization as a distraction and deviation from the purer spirituality of Muhammad’s time. Emerging strongly by 1000, Sufis represented Islam’s mystical dimension, in that they sought a direct and personal experience of the Divine. Through renunciation of the material world, meditation on the words of the Quran, chanting of the names of God, the use of music and dance, and the veneration of Muhammad and various “saints,” adherents of **Sufism** pursued an interior life, seeking to tame the ego and achieve spiritual union with Allah.

This mystical tendency in Islamic practice, which became widely popular by the ninth and tenth centuries, was at times sharply critical of the more scholarly and legalistic practitioners of the sharia. To Sufis, establishment teachings about the law and correct behavior, while useful for daily living, did little to bring the believer into the presence of God. Furthermore, Sufis felt that many of the ulama had been compromised by their association with worldly and corrupt governments. Sufis therefore often charted their own course to God, implicitly challenging the religious authority of the ulama. For many centuries, roughly 1100 to 1800, Sufism was central to mainstream Islam, and many, perhaps most, Muslims affiliated with



Muslims, Jews, and Christians The close relationship of three Middle Eastern monotheistic traditions is illustrated in this fifteenth-century Persian painting, which portrays Muhammad leading Moses, Abraham, Jesus, and other prophets in prayer. The fire surrounding the Prophet's head represents his religious fervor. The painting reflects the Islamic belief that the revelations granted to Muhammad built on and completed those given earlier to Jews and Christians. (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, France/© BnF, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY)

AP Analyzing Evidence

How does this image reflect cross-cultural interactions?

one or another Sufi organization, making use of its spiritual practices. Nonetheless, differences in emphasis about the essential meaning of Islam remained an element of tension and sometimes discord within the Muslim world.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Sufis began to organize in a variety of larger associations, some limited to particular regions and others with chapters throughout the Islamic world. Sufi orders were especially significant in the frontier regions of Islam because they followed conquering armies or traders into Central and Southeast Asia, India, Anatolia, parts of Africa, and elsewhere. Their devotional teachings, modest ways of living, and reputation for supernatural powers gained a hearing for the new faith. Their emphasis on personal experience of the Divine, rather than on the law, allowed the Sufis to accommodate elements of local belief and practice and encouraged the growth of a popular or blended Islam. The veneration of deceased Sufi “saints,” or “friends of God,” particularly at their tombs, created sacred spaces that enabled Islam to take root in many places despite its foreign origins. But that flexibility also often earned Sufi practitioners the enmity of the ulama, who were sharply critical of any deviations from the sharia.

Interactions and Encounters

Long before the globalized world of the twentieth century and well before the voyages of Columbus connected the Eastern and Western hemispheres, interactions across the boundaries of these civilizations and cultural traditions had transformed human societies, for better and for worse. Thus world history is less about what happened within particular civilizations or cultures than about the interactions and encounters among them. Focusing on cross-cultural connections counters a habit of thinking about particular peoples or civilizations as self-contained or isolated communities. To varying degrees, each of them was embedded in a network of relationships with both neighboring and more distant peoples. And broadly speaking, those cross-cultural connections grew more dense and complex over time. Various kinds of interactions and encounters had emerged long before 1200, many of which persisted and accelerated in the centuries that followed.

AP® Causation

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In what ways did cross-cultural interactions drive change in the pre-1200 world?

One setting in which culturally different societies encountered one another was that of empire, for those large states often incorporated a vast range of peoples and provided opportunity for communication and borrowing among them. Empires also served as arenas of exchange, as products, foods, ideas, religions, and disease circulated among the many peoples of imperial states. For example, various non-Roman cultural traditions—such as the cult of the Persian god Mithra or the compassionate Egyptian goddess Isis, and, most extensively, the Jewish-derived religion of Christianity—spread throughout the Roman Empire during the early centuries of the Common Era. In the tenth century and after, a state-sponsored adoption of Christianity occurred in the emerging Russian state, later leading to the eastern spread of Christianity across much of northern Asia in an expanding Russian Empire. An Arab Empire, expanding rapidly in the several centuries after

Geographical Coverage

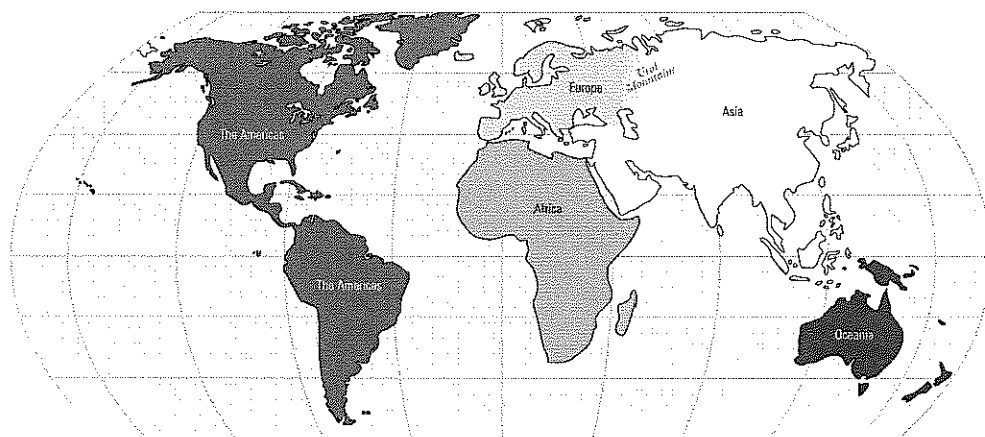
The AP World History: Modern course requires that students learn world history from a global perspective. Balanced coverage of the regions within the course ensures that a single region is not situated at the center of the historical narrative.

Students need basic geographical knowledge in order to understand world history. Geospatial awareness is also essential for students to build an understanding of the cross-cultural contacts, trade routes, migrations, etc., which are important concepts in the AP World History course.

The two maps that follow give students a starting point for identifying regions and their locations relative to other regions and landforms. These maps are a reference point for teachers and students alike. Because geographic naming conventions are not universal, these maps define regions and show the locations and commonly used names of regions that students are likely to encounter on the AP World History Exam.

- **Map 1. AP World History: World Regions—A Big Picture View** identifies five major geographical regions: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania.

AP WORLD HISTORY: WORLD REGIONS—A BIG PICTURE VIEW



- **Map 2. AP World History: World Regions—A Closer Look** identifies various subregions within the five major geographical regions.

AP WORLD HISTORY: WORLD REGIONS—A CLOSER LOOK

