People and Ideas on the Move, 2000 B.C.–250 B.C.

Essential Question
How did migration and trade help spread goods and cultural ideas throughout the ancient world?

What You Will Learn
In this chapter you will learn about how migrations and trade led to the foundations of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism.

SECTION 1 The Indo-Europeans
Main Idea Indo-Europeans migrated into Europe, India, and Southwest Asia and interacted with peoples living there.

SECTION 2 Hinduism and Buddhism Develop
Main Idea The beliefs of the Vedic Age developed into Hinduism and Buddhism.

SECTION 3 Seafaring Traders
Main Idea Trading societies extended the development of civilizations beyond the Fertile Crescent.

SECTION 4 The Origins of Judaism
Main Idea The Israelites maintained monotheistic religious beliefs that were unique in the ancient world.

Previewing Themes

INTERACTION WITH ENVIRONMENT Early peoples often migrated from their lands to find new homes that promised a better life. Once they moved, they had to deal with a new environment.

Geography Why did so many of the ancient trade routes cross the seas?

RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL SYSTEMS Three major world religions developed during this time. Hinduism and Buddhism originated in India, while Judaism developed in Southwest Asia.

Geography What routes of communication existed between the Bay of Bengal near India and Phoenicia and Jerusalem in Southwest Asia?

ECONOMICS Traders transported their goods to other parts of the world. Among the early trading peoples were the Phoenicians, who dominated the Mediterranean. Sea traders also traveled between India and Arabia.

Geography How was the Arabian Peninsula well situated to take part in world trade?
King Solomon

The Ancient World, 1500 B.C. – 250 B.C.

1100 B.C.  Phoenicians begin to dominate Mediterranean trade (Carthaginian glass bead)

814 B.C.  Carthage founded as a Phoenician trade center.

586 B.C.  Jerusalem captured by Babylonians.

1000 B.C.  Chavin culture arises in Peru.

500 B.C.  Zapotecs found Monte Albán. (Zapotec jade mask)
Why might you leave your homeland?

When your family, along with many others, decided to leave its homeland, you wondered whether you should go. It was hard to leave the land you love. Yet life there was becoming increasingly difficult. As your community grew larger, grazing for its many animals had become scarce. And lately, there had been rumors of coming invaders.

You have been walking and riding for days. Now you wonder whether you should have stayed. Will you find a new homeland, a better place in which to live? Will you survive the journey? Will you be welcome in a new land?

EXAMINING the ISSUES

• If you had stayed, would you have been able to adapt to changing conditions?

• Will you have to adopt the customs of the people living in a new land? How will you survive there?

As a class, discuss these questions. In your discussion, weigh the advantages and disadvantages of staying in your homeland and of leaving. As you read about migration in this chapter, see how old and new ways of doing things can blend together when groups of people move.
The Indo-Europeans

**MAIN IDEA**

**INTERACTION WITH ENVIRONMENT** Indo-Europeans migrated into Europe, India, and Southwest Asia and interacted with peoples living there.

**WHY IT MATTERS NOW**

Half the people living today speak languages that stem from the original Indo-European languages.

**TERMS & NAMES**

- Indo-Europeans
- steppes
- migration
- Hittites
- Anotolia
- Aryans
- Vedas
- Brahmin
- caste
- Mahabharata

**SETTING THE STAGE** In India and in Mesopotamia, civilizations first developed along lush river valleys. Even as large cities such as Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa declined, agriculture and small urban communities flourished. These wealthy river valleys attracted nomadic tribes. These peoples may have left their own homelands because of warfare or changes in the environment.

**Indo-Europeans Migrate**

The Indo-Europeans were a group of nomadic peoples who may have come from the steppes—dry grasslands that stretched north of the Caucasus (KAW•kuh•suhs). The Caucasus are the mountains between the Black and Caspian seas. These primarily pastoral people herded cattle, sheep, and goats. The Indo-Europeans also tamed horses and rode into battle in light, two-wheeled chariots. They lived in tribes that spoke forms of a language that we call Indo-European.

**The Indo-European Language Family** The languages of the Indo-Europeans were the ancestors of many of the modern languages of Europe, Southwest Asia, and South Asia. English, Spanish, Persian, and Hindi all trace their origins back to different forms of the original Indo-European language.

Historians can tell where Indo-European tribes settled by their languages. Some Slavic speakers moved north and west. Others, who spoke early Celtic, Germanic, and Italic languages, moved west through Europe. Speakers of Greek and Persian went south. The Aryans (AIR•ee•uhnz), who spoke an early form of Sanskrit, located in India.

Notice the similarities of words within the Indo-European family of languages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Family Resemblances</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>English</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new</td>
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<td>six</td>
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</tbody>
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Indo-European Migrations, Starting about 1700 B.C.

The origins and migrations of the Indo-European peoples are controversial topics among scholars. This map presents one view about where the Indo-Europeans came from and how they migrated. However, it is not the only view. In fact, there are many differing views.

**GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps**
1. **Location** Which Indo-European people reached the farthest west?
2. **Movement** Describe the movement of the Indo-Europeans in their earliest migrations.

**An Unexplained Migration** No one knows why these people left their homelands in the steppes. Whatever the reason, Indo-European nomads began to migrate outward in all directions between 1700 and 1200 B.C. These migrations, movements of a people from one region to another, happened in waves over a long period of time.

**The Hittite Empire**

By about 2000 B.C., one group of Indo-European speakers, the Hittites, occupied Anatolia (AN•uh•TOH•lee•uh), also called Asia Minor. Anatolia is a huge peninsula in modern-day Turkey that juts out into the Black and Mediterranean seas. Anatolia is a high, rocky plateau, rich in timber and agriculture. Nearby mountains hold important mineral deposits. Separate Hittite city-states came together to form an empire there in about 1650 B.C. The city of Hattusas (hah•TOO•sahs) was its capital.

The Hittite empire went on to dominate Southwest Asia for 450 years. Hittites occupied Babylon, the chief city in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley, and struggled with Egypt for control of northern Syria. Neither the Hittites nor the Egyptians were able to get the upper hand. So, the two peoples ended their conflicts by signing a peace treaty. They each pledged to help the other fight off future invaders.

**Hittites Adopt and Adapt** The Hittites used their own Indo-European language with one another. However, for international use, they adopted Akkadian, the language of the Babylonians they had conquered. The Hittites borrowed ideas about literature, art, politics, and law from the Mesopotamians. The Hittites thus blended their own traditions with those of other, more advanced peoples.
Chariots and Iron Technology  The Hittites excelled in the technology of war. They conquered an empire against Egyptian opposition—largely through their superior chariots and their iron weapons. The Hittite war chariot was light and easy to maneuver. The chariot had two wheels and a wooden frame covered with leather and was pulled by two or sometimes four horses. The Hittite chariot proved itself a superb fighting machine.

The Hittites used iron in their chariots, and they owed many of their military victories to the skill of their ironworkers. Ancient peoples had long known that iron was stronger than bronze. They also knew that it could hold a sharper edge. However, the process of purifying iron ore and working it into weapons and tools is complex. Around 1500 B.C., the Hittites were the first in Southwest Asia to work with iron and harden it into weapons of war. The raw materials they needed—iron ore and wood to make charcoal—were easily available to them in the mountains of Anatolia. Knowledge of iron technology traveled widely with the Hittites—in both their trade and conquests.

Despite its military might, the powerful Hittite empire fell quite suddenly around the year 1190 B.C. As part of a great wave of invasions, tribes attacked from the north and burned the Hittite capital city.

Aryans Transform India  
Before 2000 B.C., the Hittites began establishing themselves in Anatolia. At the same time, some scholars believe, another Indo-European people, the Aryans, whose homeland was probably somewhere between the Caspian and Aral seas, crossed over the northwest mountain passes into the Indus River Valley of India. Other scholars believe the Aryans originated in India. There is no archaeological evidence to prove either hypothesis.

Though they left almost no archaeological record, their sacred literature, the Vedas (VAY•duhz), left a picture of Aryan life. The Vedas are four collections of prayers, magical spells, and instructions for performing rituals. The most important of the collections is the Rig Veda. The Rig Veda contains 1,028 hymns to Aryan gods. For many years, no written form of the Vedas existed. Instead, elders of one generation passed on this tradition orally to the next generation.

A Caste System Develops  The Aryans fought their enemies, a people they called dasas. The Aryans differed from the dasas in many ways. Aryans were taller, lighter in skin color, and spoke a different language. Unlike the earlier inhabitants of the Indus Valley, the Aryans had not developed a writing system. They were also a pastoral people and counted their wealth in cows. The dasas, on the other hand, were town dwellers who lived in communities protected by walls.

Aryans were organized into four groups based on occupation: 1) Brahmins (priests), 2) warriors, 3) traders and landowners, and 4) peasants or traders. The group that an Aryan belonged to determined his or her role in society.

As the Aryans settled in India, they developed closer contacts with non-Aryans. To regulate those contacts, the Aryans made class restrictions more rigid. Shudras
were laborers who did work that Aryans did not want to do. *Varna*, or skin color, was a distinguishing feature of this system. So the four major groups came to be known as the *varnas*. Later, in the 15th century A.D., explorers from Portugal encountered this social system and called these groups *castes* (kasts).

As time went on, the four basic castes gradually grew more complex—with hundreds of subdivisions. Classical texts state that caste should not be determined by birth. However, over time, some communities developed a system in which people were born into their caste. Their caste membership determined the work they did, whom they could marry, and the people with whom they could eat. Cleanliness and purity became all-important. Those considered the most impure because of their work (butchers, gravediggers, collectors of trash) lived outside the caste structure. They were known as “untouchables,” since even their touch endangered the ritual purity of others.

**Aryan Kingdoms Arise** Over the next few centuries, Aryans extended their settlements east, along the Ganges and Yamuna river valleys. (See map on page 65.) Progress was slow because of difficulties clearing the jungle for farming. This task grew easier when iron came into use in India about 1000 B.C.

When the Aryans first arrived in India, chiefs were elected by the entire tribe. Around 1000 B.C., however, minor kings who wanted to set up territorial kingdoms arose among the Aryans. They struggled with one another for land and power. Out of this strife emerged a major kingdom: Magadha. Under a series of ambitious kings, Magadha began expanding in the sixth century B.C. by taking over surrounding kingdoms. By the second century B.C., Magadha had expanded south to occupy almost all of the Indian subcontinent.

One of the great epics of India, the *Mahabharata* (mah•huh•BAH•ruh•tuh), reflects the struggles that took place in India as the Aryan kings worked to control Indian lands. One part of the *Mahabharata* is the *Bhagavad Gita*. It tells the story of a warrior prince about to go to war. His chariot driver is Krishna, a god in human form.
One of the most famous incidents in Indian literature occurs when Krishna instructs the young warrior on the proper way to live, fight, and die:

**PRIMARY SOURCE**
He who thinks this Self [eternal spirit] to be a slayer, and he who thinks this Self to be slain, are both without discernment; the Soul slays not, neither is it slain. . . . But if you will not wage this lawful battle, then will you fail your own [caste] law and your honor, and incur sin. . . . The people will name you with dishonor; and to a man of fame dishonor is worse than death.

KRISHNA, speaking in the *Bhagavad Gita*

The violence and confusion of the time led many to speculate about the place of the gods and human beings in the world. As a result, religion in India gradually changed. New religions were born, which you will read about in Section 2.
Hinduism and Buddhism Develop

Almost one-fifth of the world’s people today practice one of these two religions.

RESEARCHING THEMES

The beliefs of the Vedic Age developed into Hinduism and Buddhism.

Almost one-fifth of the world’s people today practice one of these two religions.

SETTING THE STAGE

At first, the Aryans and non-Aryans followed their own forms of religion. Then as the two groups intermingled, the gods and forms of their religions also tended to blend together. This blending resulted in the worship of thousands of gods. Different ways of living and different beliefs made life more complex for both groups. This complexity led some people to question the world and their place in it. They even questioned the enormous wealth and power held by the Brahmin priests. Out of this turmoil, new religious ideas arose that have continued to influence millions of people today.

Hinduism Evolves Over Centuries

Hinduism is a collection of religious beliefs that developed slowly over a long period of time. Some aspects of the religion can be traced back to ancient times. In a Hindu marriage today, for example, the bride and groom marry in the presence of the sacred fire as they did centuries ago. The faithful recite daily verses from the Vedas.

From time to time, scholars have tried to organize the many popular cults, gods, and traditions into one grand system of belief. However, Hinduism—unlike religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, or Islam—cannot be traced back to one founder with a single set of ideas.

Origins and Beliefs

Hindus share a common worldview. They see religion as a way of liberating the soul from the illusions, disappointments, and mistakes of everyday existence. Sometime between 750 and 550 B.C., Hindu teachers tried to interpret and explain the hidden meaning of the Vedic hymns. The teachers’ comments were later written down and became known as the Upanishads (oo•PAHN•ih•shahdz).

The Upanishads are written as dialogues, or discussions, between a student and a teacher. In the course of the dialogues, the two explore how a person can achieve liberation from desires and suffering. This is described as moksha (MOHK•shah), a state of perfect understanding of all things. The teacher distinguishes between atman, the individual soul of a living being, and Brahman, the world soul that contains and unites all atmans. Here is how one teacher explains the unifying spirit of Brahman:
When a person understands the relationship between atman and Brahman, that person achieves perfect understanding (moksha) and a release from life in this world. This understanding does not usually come in one lifetime. By the process of **reincarnation** (rebirth), an individual soul or spirit is born again and again until moksha is achieved. A soul’s **karma**—good or bad deeds—follows from one reincarnation to another. Karma influences specific life circumstances, such as the caste one is born into, one’s state of health, wealth or poverty, and so on.

**Hinduism Changes and Develops** Hinduism has gone through many changes over the last 2,500 years. The world soul, Brahman, was sometimes seen as having the personalities of three gods: Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the protector; and Shiva, the destroyer. Vishnu also took on many forms or personalities, for example, as Krishna, the divine cowherder, and as Rama, the perfect king. Over the centuries, Brahma gradually faded into the background, while the many forms of Devi, a great Mother Goddess, grew in importance.

Hindus today are free to choose the deity they worship or to choose none at all. Most, however, follow a family tradition that may go back centuries. They are also free to choose among three different paths for achieving moksha. These are the path of right thinking, the path of right action, or the path of religious devotion.

**Hinduism and Society** Hindu ideas about karma and reincarnation strengthened the caste system. If a person was born as an upper-caste male—a Brahmin, warrior, or merchant—his good fortune was said to come from good karma earned in a former life. However, a person who was born as a female, a laborer, or an untouchable might be getting the results of bad deeds in a former life. With some exceptions, only men of the top three varnas could hope to achieve moksha in their present life. The laws of karma worked with the same certainty as the world’s other natural laws. Good karma brought good fortune and bad karma resulted in bad fortune.

Together, the beliefs of Hinduism and its caste structure dominated every aspect of a person’s life. These beliefs determined what one could eat and the way in which one ate it, personal cleanliness, the people one could associate with, how one dressed, and so on. Today, even in the most ordinary activities of daily life, Hindus turn to their religion for guidance.

**New Religions Arise** The same period of speculation reflected in the Upanishads also led to the rise of two other religions: Jainism (JY•nihz•uhm) and Buddhism. Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, was born about 599 B.C. and died in 527 B.C. Mahavira believed that everything in the universe has a soul and so should not be
Vocabulary

fasted: ate very little.

Siddhartha Gautama

According to Buddhist tradition, Siddhartha Gautama’s mother had dreamt of a beautiful elephant that was bright as silver. When asked to interpret the dream, Brahmin priests declared that the child to be born would either be a great monarch or a Buddha (an enlightened one). Tradition also relates that at Gautama’s birth, he exhibited the signs of a child destined for greatness. There were 32 such signs, including golden-tinged skin, webbed fingers and toes, a knob on the top of his skull, a long tongue, a tuft of hair between his eyebrows, and a thousand-spoked wheel on each foot. Some images of the Buddha display these traits.

Synthesizing

How far might the Jain respect for life extend?

Jain monks carry the doctrine of nonviolence to its logical conclusion. They sweep ants off their path and wear gauze masks over their mouths to avoid breathing in an insect accidentally. In keeping with this nonviolence, followers of Jainism looked for occupations that would not harm any creature. So they have a tradition of working in trade and commerce.

Because of their business activities, Jains today make up one of the wealthiest communities in India. Jains have traditionally preached tolerance of all religions. As a result, they have made few efforts to convert followers of other faiths. Because of this tolerance, Jains have not sent out missionaries. So, almost all of the nearly five million Jains in the world today live in India.

The Buddha Seeks Enlightenment

Buddhism developed out of the same period of religious questioning that shaped modern Hinduism and Jainism. The founder of Buddhism, Siddhartha Gautama (sihd•DAHR•tuh GOW•tuh•muh), was born into a noble family that lived in Kapilavastu, in the foothills of the Himalayas in Nepal. According to Buddhist legend, the baby exhibited the marks of a great man. A prophecy indicated that if the child stayed at home he was destined to become a world ruler. If the child left home, however, he would become a universal spiritual leader. To make sure the boy would be a great king and world ruler, his father isolated him in his palace. Separated from the world, Siddhartha married and had a son.

Siddhartha’s Quest Siddhartha never ceased thinking about the world that lay outside, which he had never seen. When he was 29, he ventured outside the palace four times. First he saw an old man, next a sick man, then a corpse, and finally a wandering holy man who seemed at peace with himself. Siddhartha understood these events to mean that every living thing experiences old age, sickness, and death and that only a religious life offers a refuge from this inevitable suffering. Siddhartha decided to spend his life searching for religious truth and an end to life’s suffering. So, soon after learning of his son’s birth, he left the palace.

Siddhartha wandered through the forests of India for six years seeking enlightenment, or wisdom. He tried many ways of reaching an enlightened state. He first debated with other religious seekers. Then he fasted, eating only six grains of rice a day. Yet none of these methods brought him to the truth, and he continued to suffer. Finally, he sat in meditation under a large fig tree. After 49 days of meditation, he achieved an understanding of the cause of suffering. Siddhartha decided to spend his life searching for religious truth and an end to life’s suffering. So, soon after learning of his son’s birth, he left the palace.

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Origins and Beliefs The Buddha preached his first sermon to five companions who had accompanied him on his wanderings. That first sermon became a landmark in the history of the world’s religions. In it, he laid out the four main ideas that he had come to understand in his enlightenment. He called those ideas the Four Noble Truths:
The Four Noble Truths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noble Truth</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Truth</td>
<td>Life is filled with suffering and sorrow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Truth</td>
<td>The cause of all suffering is people's selfish desire for the temporary pleasures of this world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Truth</td>
<td>The way to end all suffering is to end all desires.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Truth</td>
<td>The way to overcome such desires and attain enlightenment is to follow the Eightfold Path, which is called the Middle Way between desires and self-denial.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Eightfold Path, a guide to behavior, was like a staircase. For the Buddha, those who were seeking enlightenment had to master one step at a time. Most often, this mastery would occur over many lifetimes. Here is how he described the Middle Way and its Eightfold Path:

**Primary Source**
What is the Middle Way? . . . It is the Noble Eightfold Path—Right Views, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration. This is the Middle Way.

*Buddha*, from *Samyutta Nikaya*

By following the Eightfold Path, anyone could reach **nirvana**, the Buddha’s word for release from selfishness and pain.

As in Hinduism, the Buddha accepted the idea of reincarnation. He also accepted a cyclical, or repetitive, view of history, where the world is created and destroyed over and over again. However, the Buddha rejected the many gods of Hinduism. Instead, he taught a way of enlightenment. Like many of his time, the Buddha reacted against the privileges of the Brahmin priests, and thus he rejected the caste system. The final goals of both religions—*moksha* for Hindus and nirvana for Buddhists—are similar. Both involve a perfect state of understanding and a break from the chain of reincarnations.

**Comparing**

In what ways are Buddhism and Hinduism similar?

▼ Buddhist tradition says that just before he died, the Buddha lay on his right side between two trees. This reclining Buddha is made of bronze.
The Religious Community  The five disciples who heard the Buddha’s first sermon were the first monks admitted to the sangha, or Buddhist religious order. At first, the sangha was a community of Buddhist monks and nuns. However, sangha eventually referred to the entire religious community. It included Buddhist laity (those who hadn’t devoted their entire life to religion). The religious community, together with the Buddha and the dharma (Buddhist doctrine or teachings), make up the “Three Jewels” of Buddhism.

Buddhism and Society  Because of his rejection of the caste system, many of the Buddha’s early followers included laborers and craftspeople. He also gained a large following in northeast India, where the Aryans had less influence. The Buddha reluctantly admitted women to religious orders. He feared, however, that women’s presence would distract men from their religious duties.

Monks and nuns took vows (solemn promises) to live a life of poverty, to be nonviolent, and not to marry. They wandered throughout India spreading the Buddha’s teachings. Missionaries carried only a begging bowl to receive daily charity offerings from people. During the rainy season, they retreated to caves high up in the hillsides. Gradually, these seasonal retreats became permanent monasteries—some for men, others for women. One monastery, Nalanda, developed into a great university that also attracted non-Buddhists.

The teachings of the Buddha were written down shortly after his death. Buddhist sacred literature also includes commentaries, rules about monastic life, manuals on how to meditate, and legends about the Buddha’s previous reincarnations (the Jatakas). This sacred literature was first written down in the first century B.C.

Buddhism in India  During the centuries following the Buddha’s death, missionaries were able to spread his faith over large parts of Asia. Buddhist missionaries went to Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia in the third century B.C. Buddhist ideas also traveled along Central Asian trade routes to China. However, Buddhism never gained a significant foothold in India, the country of its origin. Several theories exist about Buddhism’s gradual disappearance in India. One theory states that
Hinduism simply absorbed Buddhism. The two religions constantly influenced each other. Over time, the Buddha came to be identified by Hindus as one of the ten incarnations (reappearances on earth) of the god Vishnu. Hindus, therefore, felt no need to convert to Buddhism.

Nonetheless, despite the small number of Buddhists in India, the region has always been an important place of pilgrimages for Buddhists. Today, as they have for centuries, Buddhist pilgrims flock to visit spots associated with the Buddha’s life. These sites include his birthplace at Kapilavastu, the fig tree near Gaya, and the site of his first sermon near Varanasi. Buddhists also visit the stupas, or sacred mounds, that are said to contain his relics. The pilgrims circle around the sacred object or sanctuary, moving in a clockwise direction. They also lie face down on the ground as a sign of humility and leave flowers. These three actions are important rituals in Buddhist worship.

**Trade and the Spread of Buddhism** As important as missionaries were to the spread of Buddhism, traders played an even more crucial role in this process. Along with their products, traders carried Buddhism beyond India to Sri Lanka. Buddhist religion was also brought southeast along trade routes to Burma, Thailand, and the island of Sumatra. Likewise, Buddhism followed the Central Asian trade routes, called the Silk Roads, all the way to China. From China, Buddhism spread to Korea—and from Korea to Japan. The movement of trade thus succeeded in making Buddhism the most widespread religion of East Asia. Throughout human history, trade has been a powerful force for the spread of ideas. Just as trade spread Buddhism in East Asia, it helped spread cultural influences in another major region of the world: the Mediterranean basin, as you will learn in Section 3.