

Lesson

2

MAIN IDEAS

- 1 **Culture** A group of nomadic people moved into India and took over what was left of Harappan civilization.
- 2 **Government** Under Aryan rule, Indian society developed a distinct system of social classes that still affects India today.
- 3 **Belief Systems** Over time, the belief of the Aryans developed into the religion of Hinduism.

TAKING NOTES

Reading Skill: Summarizing

To summarize is to restate a passage in fewer words. After you read Lesson 2, write a paragraph summarizing each of the three main sections. Use a chart like the one below to record your summaries.

The Origins of Hinduism

The Aryans migrated ...

Aryan culture changed India by ...

The main characteristics of Hinduism are ...



Skillbuilder Handbook, page R3



▲ **Shiva** One of the most important gods of Hinduism is Shiva, the destroyer. This statue shows him dancing on the demon of ignorance.

CALIFORNIA STANDARDS

6.5.2 Discuss the significance of the Aryan invasions.

6.5.3 Explain the major beliefs and practices of Brahmanism in India and how they evolved into early Hinduism.

6.5.4 Outline the social structure of the caste system.

6.5.7 Discuss important aesthetic and intellectual traditions (e.g., Sanskrit literature, including the *Bhagavad Gita*; medicine; metallurgy; and mathematics, including Hindu-Arabic numerals and the zero).

The Origins of Hinduism

TERMS & NAMES

Aryan
caste
Brahmanism
Hinduism
reincarnation
karma

Build on What You Know In Chapter 5, you learned how Egypt battled the Hittites. The Hittites belonged to a group of peoples who all spoke dialects of a language called Indo-European. Scholars believe that the Indo-Europeans may have originally come from Central Asia.

Aryans Move Into India

1 ESSENTIAL QUESTION Who were the Aryans?

Most Indo-Europeans were nomads. They lived in family groups or clans and herded cattle, sheep, and goats. They also were warriors who rode horse-driven chariots. They fought with long bows and arrows and with bronze axes.

The Indo-European Migrations Around 2000 B.C., something drove the Indo-Europeans from their homeland. Historians do not know if a drought, a plague, or an invasion made them leave. Different groups moved to different regions. The Hittites went to Southwest Asia. Many other Indo-Europeans settled in parts of Europe.

Hindu Kush This mountain range runs along the northwest border of the Indian subcontinent. The Aryan people crossed these mountains to enter India. ▼



The Aryan Invasions In about 1500 B.C., a group of Indo-Europeans called the **Aryans** (AIR•ee•uhnz) traveled east into India. In contrast to the city-dwelling Harappans, the Aryans were herders. They lived in simple houses. They spoke an Indo-European language called Sanskrit.

Did Aryan warriors in chariots conquer the walled cities and force the Harappans to flee south? For years, history books told that story. But new research suggests a different tale. Two hundred years before the Aryans arrived, the largest Harappan cities lay in ruins. As Lesson 1 explained, this destruction may have been the result of earthquakes and floods.

REVIEW Who were the Aryans, and where did they come from?



Changes to Indian Life

2 ESSENTIAL QUESTION How was Aryan society organized?

The Aryans entered India gradually. They practiced a mysterious religion that appealed to many Dravidians—the people living in India when they arrived. As a result, Aryan religion and language spread. In turn, the Dravidians taught the Aryans about city life. Because of these interactions, India developed a complex, blended culture.

The Caste System Aryan society was organized into classes: warriors, priests, and commoners. As Indian society grew more complex, these classes developed into what was later called the caste system. A **caste** is a social class whose members are identified by their job. Because there are thousands of different jobs, thousands of groups exist. Broadly, those groups are organized into four categories. (See the chart on the next page.)

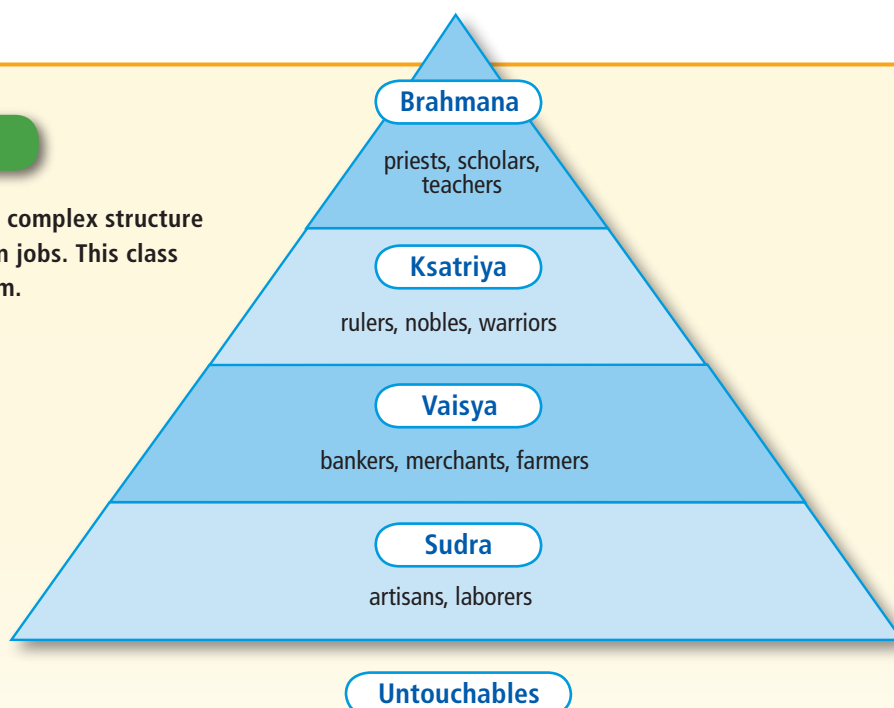
After many centuries, a fifth group came into being that was considered below all other groups. This fifth group is called the untouchables. They had to do the jobs no one else wanted.

The Caste System

Indian society divides itself into a complex structure of social classes based partially on jobs. This class structure is called the caste system.



▲ **Sweeper** This sweeper did not choose his job. In traditional India, jobs were passed down from father to son.



Untouchables were considered outside the system and below it. They did jobs no one else wanted, such as being sweepers and disposers of dead bodies.

Aryan Beliefs and Brahmanism The early religion of the Aryans is now called **Brahmanism**, after the name of the Aryan priests, or Brahmins. The Aryans worshiped many nature gods. The Brahmins made sacrifices to those gods by offering animals to a sacred fire. Over time, the ceremonies became more and more complex. Some lasted for days—or even months. The rituals of the Aryan religion and many hymns to their gods are found in ancient Sanskrit texts called the Vedas.

As time passed, Indians began to question how the world came into being. These questions led to changes in Brahmanism. One change was a belief that one spirit governed the universe.

Later, Indians wrote about their ancient history in such works as the *Mahabharata* (MAH•huh•BAH•ruh•tuh)—an epic poem that retells many legends. The *Bhagavad Gita* (BAH•guh•vahd GEE•tuh) is part of the *Mahabharata*. (See the Primary Source on page 230.)

REVIEW What is the caste system?

Hinduism: The Religion of India

3 ESSENTIAL QUESTION How did the religion of Hinduism develop?

The *Bhagavad Gita* is the most important text of Hinduism.

Hinduism is the modern name for the major religion of India, which grew out of early Brahmanism.

Primary Source

Background: The *Bhagavad Gita* tells the story of a warrior, Prince Arjuna. A great war is about to begin. When he looks at the enemy army, Arjuna sees many friends and relatives. He does not want to fight.

With Arjuna is his chariot driver, Krishna. In reality, Krishna (shown at right) is the god Vishnu in human form. In this excerpt, Krishna tells Arjuna that he must do his duty.

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

What arguments does Krishna use to convince Arjuna that the outcome of the battle is not important?

from the *Bhagavad Gita*

Translated by Ranchor Prime

Do not hesitate in your sacred duty as a warrior.

For a soldier nothing is more sacred than the fight for a just cause. . . .

If you do not take up this just fight, you will fail in your duty and your honor will be lost. . . .

If you die in battle you will enter heaven.

If you win you will enjoy the earth.

Therefore rise and fight with determination.

Fight for the sake of fighting.

Look equally on happiness and distress, gain and loss, victory and defeat.

In this way you will not incur sin.



Many Gods Hindus worship many gods. Although they believe in many gods, Hindus also recognize one supreme God or life force. Hindus consider the other gods to be parts of the one universal God. The three most important of the other gods are Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the protector; and Shiva, the destroyer. (Shiva destroys the world so that it can be created anew.) Shiva's wife, Kali, also has many worshipers.

Many Lives Hindus believe in **reincarnation**, which means that each person has many lives. What a person does in each life determines what he or she will be in the next life, according to a doctrine called **karma**. Good deeds allow a person to be reborn as a higher being. Evil deeds cause a person to be reborn as a lower being, such as an insect. (Hindus believe that animals, like humans, have the supreme life force in them. For that reason, many Hindus are vegetarians. They will not eat animals.)

Reincarnation creates a repeating cycle of birth, life, death, and rebirth. The cycle ends only when a person achieves a mystical union with God. To achieve that, a person must come to realize that his or her soul and God's soul are one.

Vocabulary Strategy

The word *reincarnation* uses the **prefix re-**, which means "again," and the **root carn**, which means "flesh." Therefore, reincarnation means that the soul takes on another body.

Many Paths to God Hindus believe they connect with God by following their own individual path. Part of that path concerns one's job, which is linked to the caste system. Devout Hindus must faithfully carry out their assigned duties in life.

Hindus have a choice of spiritual practices to grow closer to God. Two of these are also popular in Western countries. Meditation is the practice of making the mind calm. Yoga is a complex practice that includes exercise, breathing techniques, and diet.

REVIEW How can Hindus believe in one God and many different gods at the same time?

Lesson Summary

- After Harappan civilization declined, Aryan people brought their culture to India.
- Aryan society developed a class structure that was based on jobs and is called the caste system.
- Hindus worship many gods. They believe in reincarnation and karma.

Why It Matters Now . . .

Hinduism ranks third among world religions in the number of followers (after Christianity and Islam).

2 Lesson Review

Terms & Names

1. Explain the importance of

Aryan	Brahmanism	reincarnation
caste	Hinduism	karma

Using Your Notes

Summarizing Use your completed chart to answer the following question:

2. How did Hinduism grow out of the beliefs of Brahmanism? (6.5.3)

The Origins of Hinduism
The Aryans migrated ...
Aryan culture changed India by ...
The main characteristics of Hinduism are ...



Homework Helper
ClassZone.com

Main Ideas

3. How did the Aryan culture differ from Harappan culture? (6.5.2)
4. What was the social structure of the Aryan caste system? (6.5.4)
5. How does karma relate to reincarnation? (6.5.3)

Critical Thinking

6. **Recognizing Changing Interpretations** What changed the long-held theory that Aryan invaders drove out the Harappan people? (HI 5)
7. **Drawing Conclusions from Sources** What values of a warrior culture does the passage from the *Bhagavad Gita* express? (6.5.7)

Activity

Internet Activity Use the Internet to learn about Hindu customs concerning one of these topics: the Ganges River, cows, funerals, diet. Present your findings to the class in an oral presentation. (6.5.3)

INTERNET KEYWORDS: *Hinduism, Ganges*