

Spread of Buddhism & Hinduism

Legend:
 - Important Buddhist site
 - Spread of Buddhism in the 1st century BCE
 - Area of Hindu influence c. 100 BCE
 - Area of Hindu influence c. 500 BCE

Critical-Thinking Question:
 What does this map suggest about the influence of Buddhism in areas that were primarily Hindu around the year 500?

Text:
 Hinduism evolved on the Indian subcontinent over several thousand years and was influenced by numerous cultures. Around 1500 BCE, the Aryans came to India and introduced many of the prevailing Indian culture and religious ideas. Over time, the two cultures merged to what eventually became modern Hinduism. According to Buddhist scriptures, the son of a king, left home to learn about the world. According to Buddhist scriptures, some of his encounters on this journey led him to become an ascetic, renouncing his material wealth and his family. One day, he sat down under a bodhi tree and had a revelation; he remained under the tree for six weeks, meditating. He had attained what Buddhists call "enlightenment," thus becoming the "Buddha" (meaning "enlightened one"). After this, he began to preach and started to attract more and more followers. He was the first. Buddhism didn't stand out from the many Hindu sects in India. With the ascendance of the Mauryan ruler Ashoka, who renounced warfare in favor of Buddhism, it suffered a setback with the collapse of the Mauryan Empire, and by the seventh century, Hinduism had regained much of the ground it lost to Buddhism. Buddhism spread into other parts of Asia through increased trade and the travel of monks. In many places where it spread, it blended with traditional religions; this happened in Japan, which still practices a combination of Buddhism and its traditional Shinto religion. Hinduism remains the dominant religion in India today, but Buddhism is the main religion in most of East and Southeast Asia.

Spread of Islam to 750

Legend:
 - Boundary of Byzantine Empire, 600
 - Muslim lands at death of Muhammad, 632
 - Lands conquered, 632-661
 - Lands conquered, 661-750

Critical-Thinking Question:
 What does this map suggest about the goals of Islamic leaders in the century after Muhammad's death?

Text:
 Islam was founded in the early seventh century by a merchant named Muhammad, who lived from 570 to 632. His business travels exposed him to other religions and ideas, including Christianity and Judaism. After he had a vision of the archangel Gabriel, he came to believe that he had been chosen as a prophet. His religious mission was to persuade people to worship the one "true God"; in Arabic, this was God, or "Allah." In the city of Mecca and began to preach his new religion. Muhammad's teachings were so powerful that he became the holy book of Islam, the Quran. He started to gain followers, and even one who was receptive to what he had to say, converted to Islam. In 622 he fled Mecca for the city of Medina, many mark this as the beginning of the Islamic religion. Muhammad sent missionaries east into Persia and west into the Roman Empire, and more Arabs converted to Islam. Muhammad's followers were often called "Muslims," spreading the faith through conquest. In 610, Muhammad's forces conquered Mecca, an event that was Islam a great deal of prestige. From the seventh century onward, Islamic armies spread further into the Middle East and also into Africa's Mediterranean region. Islamic armies ruled the edges of the declining Sassanid and Byzantine Empires, hastening their eventual fall. By 750, Islam had reached China and India. In 711, Arabs invaded Spain and conquered the entire Iberian Peninsula within seven years. In the next several centuries, Islamic civilization remained dominant in this part of Europe.

Spread of Christianity

Legend:
 - Some Christian influence, A.D. 300
 - Large Christian area, A.D. 600
 - Boundary of Roman Empire, c. A.D. 100

Critical-Thinking Question:
 What geographical features likely hindered the spread of Christianity to 1000 and the spread of the Roman Empire to 395? What geographical factors might have assisted Christianity's spread?

Text:
 Christianity developed in Judea in present-day Israel. The earliest Christians proselytized throughout Asia Minor, Rome, and Greece, which were all parts of the Roman Empire. During its first three centuries, Christianity expanded into pockets of Western Europe and North Africa. As Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire, followers of the new religion encountered a great deal of resistance from the Roman authorities because Christians rejected their allegiance to God rather than the Emperor. Though early converts suffered a great deal of persecution, the religion's popularity continued to increase. Roman emperors eventually began to tolerate, and some even actively invited, Christianity, and many Christians died at the hands of Roman soldiers, becoming martyrs to their religion. Attitudes had changed by the early fourth century. In 313, Emperor Constantine and Licinius issued the Edict of Milan, which mandated tolerance of Christianity. Soon, Christianity became the primary religion in the Roman Empire, although many people continued to practice pre-Christian religions. The Edict of Milan also set off a period of imperial control over the church throughout the western Roman Empire, enabling governmental authorities to have a significant say in church development and Christian doctrine. Fifty years after Constantine's death in 337, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. By 600, most of the Mediterranean region, Western Europe, and England were corresponding to the boundaries of the Roman Empire had come under Christian influence.

Jewish Migrations & Expulsions 1000-1500

Legend:
 - General direction and date of major movements

Critical-Thinking Question:
 What does this map suggest about the level of security a Jewish community might have left in Europe between 1000 and 1500?

Text:
 In 587 BCE, the Babylonians conquered Judah in territory in southern Palestine and sacked the city of Jerusalem. The Jews were exiled from their land and scattered across the Middle East, a process known as "Diaspora." As time went on, Jews moved further and further from their homeland, eventually establishing communities in many parts of Europe. The attitudes of local rulers often determined whether a given Jewish community would gain acceptance or suffer persecution. In general, Christians in medieval Europe wanted to maintain the Jews. Nevertheless, the Jews managed to establish several thriving enclaves and made vital contributions to European economy and society. During the Crusades, Europe's Christian rulers targeted not only Muslims but other Christians as well. Persecution against Jews in Europe grew. In the cities, discrimination against the Jews increased and Jewish populations were often confined to ghettos; other Jews were forced to leave countries. In 1096, King Philip Augustus of France and King Edward I banned the practice of leasing land to Jews, making it difficult for Jewish moneylenders. Anti-Jewish sentiment rose, and Jews were expelled from England. Jewish expulsions also occurred in Spain in the late 15th century. Jews had lived on the Iberian Peninsula since the Roman Empire, but King Ferdinand expelled them along with the Muslims (Moors) as part of a plan to gain complete control of organized religion in Spain.

European Religions in the late 1500s

Legend:
 - Protestant religions
 - Catholicism
 - Muslim minorities

Critical-Thinking Question:
 What does this map suggest about the cohesiveness of the Roman Catholic religion in the Holy Roman Empire?

Text:
 The Roman Catholic Church in the early 1500s was not only a religious institution, but also wielded vast political and economic influence throughout Europe. Challenges to Roman Catholic doctrine and political power began well before the 16th century, as humanist Renaissance values and dissatisfaction with Church hierarchy increased the level of dissent. The Protestant Reformation began when Martin Luther, a theology professor, posted his 95 theses in 1517, protesting (among other things) the Pope's sale of indulgences (pardons for sins committed) rather than being simply to reform the Church rather than completely reject it; otherwise, he had wanted simply to reform the Church rather than completely reject it. In the Holy Roman Empire, the first mass Catholic Christian denomination, the first mass Catholic Christian denomination, emphasized salvation through faith and taught that all people could be in direct communion with God. Lutheranism spread quickly throughout much of northern Europe; critics of Lutheranism also arose: followers of reformer John Calvin spread beyond his home in Switzerland, taking hold primarily in the Netherlands and Scotland. Calvin also was followed in France, who were known as Huguenots. Meanwhile, the English King Henry VIII broke with the Pope and created the Church of England (Anglican), placing it under his authority. Reformers within the Roman Catholic Church responded by leading what became known as the Counter Reformation, which was a Catholicism resurgence in the Roman Empire through much of Europe.

Major Religions c. 1700

Legend:
 - Christianity
 - Islam
 - Buddhism
 - Hinduism
 - Confucianism
 - Daoism
 - Shintoism
 - Jainism
 - Sikhism
 - Zoroastrianism
 - Other religions

Critical-Thinking Question:
 Onto which continents had Islam spread by 1700?

Text:
 The distribution of major religions throughout the world by 1700 resulted in part from trade routes over which people transmitted their cultural and religious values. For example, Islam spread through a combination of conquest and trade in North Africa and central Asia. Arab traders founded Islamic colonies such as Zanzibar in East Africa during the ninth and tenth centuries. Trade routes from the Arabian peninsula spread Islam into northern Africa. Muslims founded the Moroccan city of Marrakech in the early ninth century. Before that, Islam had entered India and Southeast Asia and had been transported both by goods and their faith along the Silk Road through central Asia. Islam also took hold in northern India as a result of Muslim raids from the north. The first Muslim kingdom in India was established around 1200, and Muslims controlled large portions of the subcontinent until the British took over in the mid-19th century. Hinduism remained the predominant religion in southern India, which proved too strong for Muslim conquerors to effectively control. By 1700, Buddhism had spread throughout China, the Korean peninsula, Southeast Asia, and Japan. Many followers of Confucianism and Taoism in China resisted the entry of Buddhism and managed to retain these older traditions. Buddhism spread into Korea and then Japan by way of China, following a logical geographical progression. Christianity remained predominant throughout most of Europe. Jews established colonies in many parts of Europe and the Middle East, also, some Middle Eastern cities such as Cairo had large Jewish populations.

World Religions

Legend:
 - Roman Catholic
 - Eastern Orthodox
 - Eastern Catholic
 - Islam
 - Significant Muslim population
 - Japanese religions (Shinto, Buddhism)
 - Chinese religions (Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism)
 - Hinduism
 - Sikhism
 - Local religions
 - Other religions

Critical-Thinking Questions:
 What does this map suggest about the practice of local religions today?

Text:
 Most people on earth practice one of the major world religions: Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, or Buddhism. The distribution of these religions can be readily mapped, although some countries have a number of religious groups. Christianity is divided into three main subgroups. Protestant denominations are predominant in North America, Western Europe, a small portion of Northern South America, southern Africa, Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. Roman Catholicism is the main religion in Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean, Quebec, southern and central Europe, the Philippines, and parts of central Africa. Eastern Orthodox is present and prominent in eastern Europe, Greece, and the former Soviet states. The distribution of Protestantism and Catholicism outside Europe reflects the pattern of European colonization that occurred in earlier centuries. After the Jews fled Palestine in 587 BCE, they established communities around the world. Significant Jewish populations exist in many parts of North America and parts of the world. Most practitioners in North Africa, East Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The distribution of Islam reflects the Muslim conquest of new lands after the death of Muhammad and the spread of the religion along trade routes. India remains predominantly Hindu. China and Japan practice Buddhism and regional religions. Taoism and Confucianism in China, and Shintoism in Japan. In remote areas of the world, people continue to observe local religions.

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