Chapter 16

India and the Indian Ocean Basin
India after the Fall of The Gupta Dynasty

- Invasion of White Huns from Central Asia beginning 451 CE
- Gupta State collapsed mid-6th c.
- Chaos in northern India
  - Local power struggles
  - Invasions of Turkish nomads, absorbed into Indian society
King Harsha (r. 606-648 CE)

- Temporary restoration of unified rule in north India
- Religiously tolerant
  - Buddhist by faith
- Generous support for poor
- Patron of the arts
  - Wrote three plays
- Assassinated, no successor able to retain control
Introduction of Islam to Northern India

- Arabs conquer Sind (north-west India), 711
- Sind stood at the fringe of the Islamic world
- Heterodox population, but held by Abbasid dynasty to 1258
Merchants and Islam

- Arabic trade with India predates Islam
- Dominated trade between India and the west to 15th century
- Established local communities in India
  - Port city of Cambay
Mahmud of Ghazni

- Leader of the Turks in Afghanistan
- Raids into India, 1001-1027
- Plunders, destroys Hindu and Buddhist temples
  - Often builds mosques atop ruins
The Sultanate of Delhi

- Consolidation of Mahmud’s raiding territory
- Capital: Delhi
- Ruled northern India 1206-1526
- Weak administrative structure
  - Reliance on cooperation of Hindu kings
- 19 out of 35 Sultans assassinated
Hindu Kingdoms of Southern India

Major states of Postclassical India 600-1600 CE

- Chola Kingdom, 850-1267
  - Maritime power
  - Not highly centralized

- Kingdom of Vijayanagar
  - Mid-fourteenth century - 1565
  - Originally supported by Sultanate of Delhi
  - Leaders renounce Islam in 1336
  - Yet maintain relations with Sultanate
Agriculture in the Monsoon World

- Spring/summer: rains, wind from south-west
- Fall/winter: dry season, wind from north-east
- Seasonal irrigation crucial to avoid drought, famine
  - Especially southern India
- Massive construction of reservoirs, canals, tunnels
The trading world of the Indian Ocean basin, 600-1600 CE
Trade and Economic Development in Southern India

- Indian regional economies largely self-sufficient
- Certain products traded throughout subcontinent
  - Iron, copper, salt, pepper
- Southern India profits from political instability in north
Temples and Indian Society

- More than religious centers
- Center of coordination of irrigation, other agricultural work
  - Some Temples had large landholdings
- Education providers
- Banking services
Cross-Cultural Trade in the Indian Ocean Basin

- Trade increases in post-classical period
- Larger ships
  - Dhow, junks
- Improved organization of agricultural efforts
- Establishment of Emporia
  - Cosmopolitan port cities serve as warehouses for trade
- Specialized products developed (cotton, high-carbon steel)
The Kingdom of Axum

- Example of trade-driven development
- Founded in the highlands of northern Ethiopia about 1\textsuperscript{st} c. CE
  - Adopted Christianity
- Displaces Kush as Egyptian link to the south
  - Axum destroys Kushan capital Meroë c. 360 CE
  - Major territorial expansion to late 6\textsuperscript{th} c.
Obelisk at Axum
Challenges to Caste and Society

- Migrations
- Growth of Islam
- Urbanization
- Economic development
  - Development of Jati (subcastes)
  - Similar to worker’s guilds
- Caste system expands from north to south
- Promoted by Temples, educational system
Decline of Buddhism

- Buddhism displaced as Turkish invasions destroy holy sites, temples
- 1196 Muslim forces destroy library of Nalanda
  - Thousands of monks exiled
Development of Hinduism

- Growth of devotional cults
  - Esp. Vishnu, Shiva
- Promise of salvation
- Especially popular in southern India, spreads to north
Devotional Philosophers

- Shankara, Brahmin philosopher of 9th c. CE
  - Devotee of Shiva
  - Synthesized Hindu writings in Platonic form
  - Preferred rigorous logical analysis to emotional devotion

- Ramanuja, Brahmin philosopher 11th-early 12th c.
  - Challenges Shankara’s emphasis on intellect
  - Laid philosophical foundations of contemporary Hinduism
Conversion to Islam

- 25 million converts by 1500 (1/4 of total population)
- Possibilities of social advancement for lower-caste Hindus
  - Rarely achieved: whole castes or jatis convert, social status remains consistent
Sufis

- Personal, emotional, devotional approaches to Islam
- Important missionaries of Islam to India
- Some flexibility regarding local customs
The Bhakti Movement

- Attempt to bring Hinduism and Islam closer together
- 12th c. southern Hindu movement, spread to north
- Guru Kabir (1440-1518)
  - Taught that Shiva, Vishnu, Allah all manifestations of one Deity
  - Largely unsuccessful
Indian Influence in Southeast Asia

- Influence dates from 500 BCE
- Evidence of Indian ideas and traditions
  - Kingship
  - Religions (Hinduism, Buddhism)
  - Literature
- Caste system not as influential
Early States of Southeast Asia

Early states of southeast Asia: Funan and Srivijaya, 100-1025 CE

- Funan
  - Lower Mekong River, 1st-6th c. CE

- Kingdom of Srivijaya
  - Centered in Sumatra, 670-1025 CE

- Kingdom of Angkor
  - Cambodia, 889-1431 CE
  - Magnificent religious city complexes
Later states of Southeast Asia: Angkor, Singosari, and Majapahit, 889 – 1520 CE
Islam in Southeast Asia

- Early populations of Muslim traders
- Increasing popularity with Sufi activity
- Many convert, retain some Hindu or Buddhist traditions
State of Melaka

- Founded late 14th c. CE by rebellious prince of Sumatra
- Dominated maritime trade routes
- Mid-15th c. converts to Islam