

CHAPTER

3

SECTION 3

Note Taking Study Guide

POWERFUL EMPIRES OF INDIA

Focus Question: In what ways did Maurya and Gupta rulers achieve peace and order for ancient India?

As you read this section in your textbook, complete the following timeline to sequence the important events in the Maurya and Gupta periods.

321 B.C.

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Section Summary

POWERFUL EMPIRES OF INDIA

READING CHECK

Who founded the first Indian empire?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does the word *status* mean in the underlined sentence?

What context clues to its meaning can you find in surrounding sentences? For example, the last sentence says there were more restrictions on women. Use this and other context clues to help you figure out the meaning of *status*.

READING SKILL

Recognize Sequence Did nomadic people from Central Asia overrun Gupta India before or after the decline of the Maurya empire?

Chandragupta Maurya founded the first Indian empire in 321 B.C. The Maurya empire's capital had schools, libraries, and palaces. The government built roads and harbors, collected taxes, and managed businesses. A secret police force reported on crime and **dissent**, or ideas opposed to those of the government.

Chandragupta's grandson, **Asoka**, continued to expand the empire. Asoka began ruling in 268 B.C. He became a Buddhist and ruled by moral example. He sent **missionaries** to spread Buddhism throughout Asia. To help his people, Asoka built hospitals and roads. However, the empire declined after his death and ended around 185 B.C.

Rival princes then held power for about 500 years. Each kingdom had its own government and capital. Dravidians in the Deccan spoke different languages and had different traditions from peoples of the Aryan north.

The Gupta dynasty united India from A.D. 320 to about 540. During this time, India enjoyed a period of great cultural achievement called a **golden age**. Prosperity contributed to a flowering of the arts and learning. Universities attracted students from many parts of Asia. Advances in mathematics included the system of numerals that we use today, the concept of zero, and the **decimal system**. Villages had more power than they had under the Mauryas. Eventually, nomadic people from Central Asia overran Gupta India.

For most Indians, everyday life revolved around the rules and duties associated with caste, family, and village. Villages produced most of the food and goods they needed. People regularly interacted with others from nearby villages while attending weddings, visiting relatives, or going to markets. Parents, children, and their offspring shared a common dwelling as a **joint family**. The father or oldest male served as head of the household. Children were trained to do the duties of their caste. Arranging good marriages was important and some families provided a **dowry**, or payment to the bridegroom. Women had had a higher status in early Aryan society than they did now. Over time, Hindu law placed greater restrictions on them.

Review Questions

1. How did Buddhism influence Asoka's rule?

2. What were some of the advances of the Gupta dynasty?
