

# Buddhism, Aristocracy, and Alien Rulers:

The Age of Division 220-589



# Buddhism, Aristocracy, and Alien Rulers

- **The Three Kingdoms 220-316**
- **Western Jin 265-316**
- **Northern China controlled by alien tribes from the north**

**The result of this social unrest was damaging to Confucianism, but it increased the popularity of Daoism and Buddhism.**

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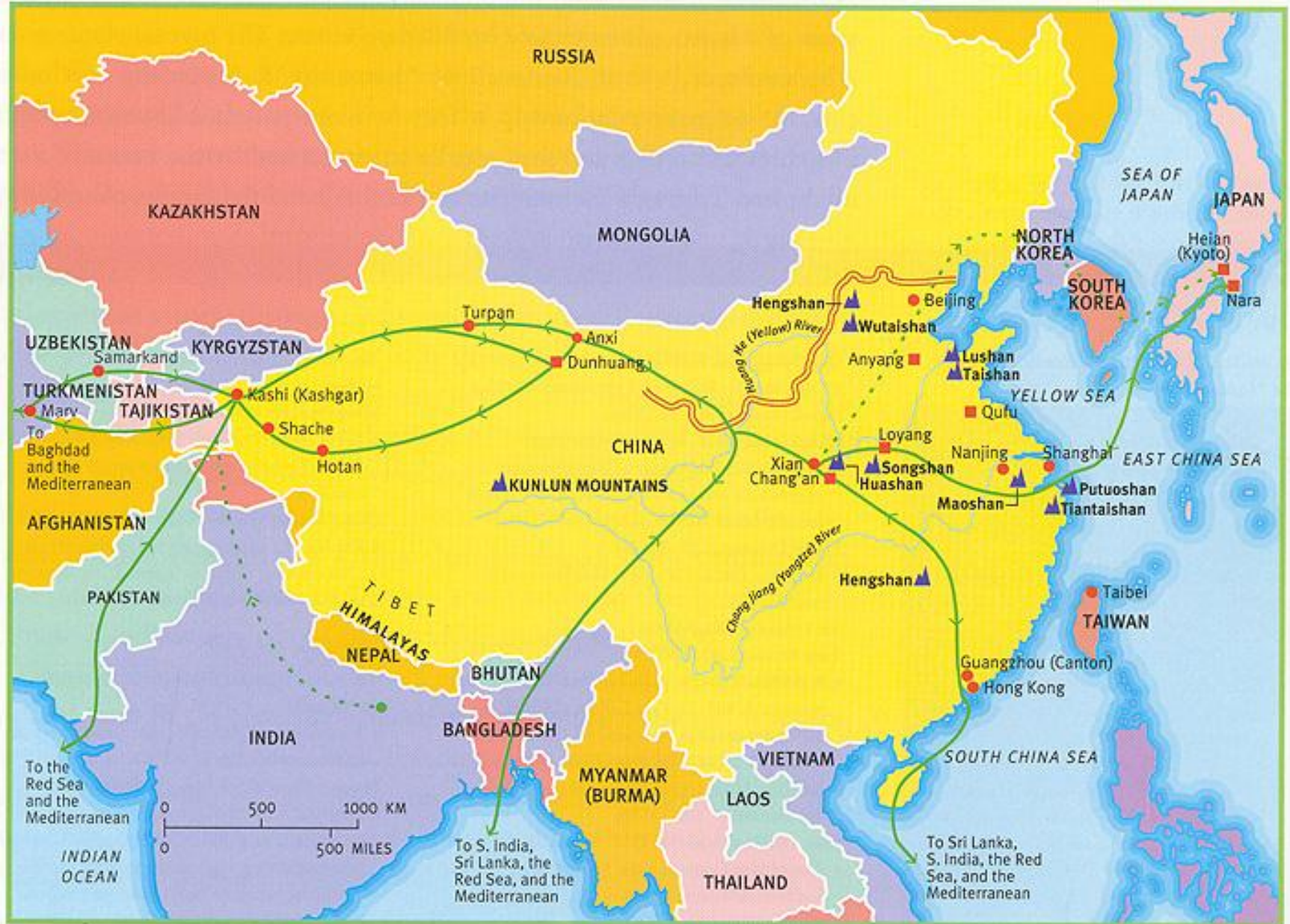


**Seven sages of the Bamboo Grove**

# **Buddhism, Aristocracy, and Alien Rulers**

- **Sixteen Kingdoms (304-439) nearly ruined destroyed the culture of China.**
- **Eventually, China once again came together under Emperor Xiaowen (r. 471-99)**
- **Slavery and serfdom became a way of life in China**

# The Spread of Buddhism



# Buddhism—the middle way

- **Spin-off of Hinduism and rejection also of Jainism**
- **Had a strong missionary zeal in the early centuries**
- **Buddhists can be found throughout all Asia**
- **Lived between 560-480 BCE**
- **Sheltered life to avoid four troubles:**
  - » **Dead body**
  - » **Aged person**
  - » **Diseased person**
  - » **Ascetic monk**
- **Gautama discovered suffering**

# A Buddhist Parable

And Kisa Gotami had an only son, and he died. In her grief she carried the dead child to all her neighbors, asking them for medicine, and the people said: "She has lost her senses. The boy is dead. At length Kisa Gotami met a man who replied to her request: "I cannot give thee medicine for thy child, but I know a physician who can." The girl said: "Pray tell me, sir; who is it?" And the man replied: "Go to Sakyamuni, the Buddha."

Kisa Gotami repaired to the Buddha and cried: "Lord and Master, give me the medicine that will cure my boy." The Buddha answered: "I want a handful of mustard-seed." And when the girl in her joy promised to procure it, the Buddha added: "The mustard-seed must be taken from a house where no one has lost a child, husband, parent, or friend." Poor Kisa Gotami now went from house to house, and the people pitied her and said: "Here is mustard-seed; take it!" But when she asked, "Did a son or daughter, a father or mother, die in your family?" They answered her: "Alas the living are few, but the dead are many. Do not remind us of our deepest grief." And there was no house but some beloved one had died in it.



**Shakyamuni Buddha**





**Birthplace of Buddha**

# Buddha's Pilgrimage

- **Study and asceticism didn't work for Gautama**
- **Meditation yielded Enlightenment (at the age of 35)**
- **Tanha (desire, craving) ties us to the endless cycle**
- **Travels to Banaras—Deer Park and reunited with his five ascetic friends who become his disciples**

# Teachings of Buddha

- **Rejected sexism and caste-ism**
- **Nuns included**
- **Laity obeyed five rules: don't kill, steal, lie, engage in improper sex, use drugs/alcohol**
- **Many parallels with Christ—neither seemed to have intended to start a new religion, both rejected rituals, etc. of other faiths**
- **Karma**
- **Anatman—the soul doesn't exist**
- **Nirvana—extinguishing of craving or tanha**

# Four Noble Truths



1. **There is suffering**
2. **The cause of suffering is craving**
3. **Suffering ends when craving ends**
4. **The path to the cessation of craving is the Noble Eightfold Pathway**

**A present-day parable:**

[http://www.wolverton-mountain.com/articles/buddha\\_was\\_correct\\_about\\_one.htm](http://www.wolverton-mountain.com/articles/buddha_was_correct_about_one.htm)

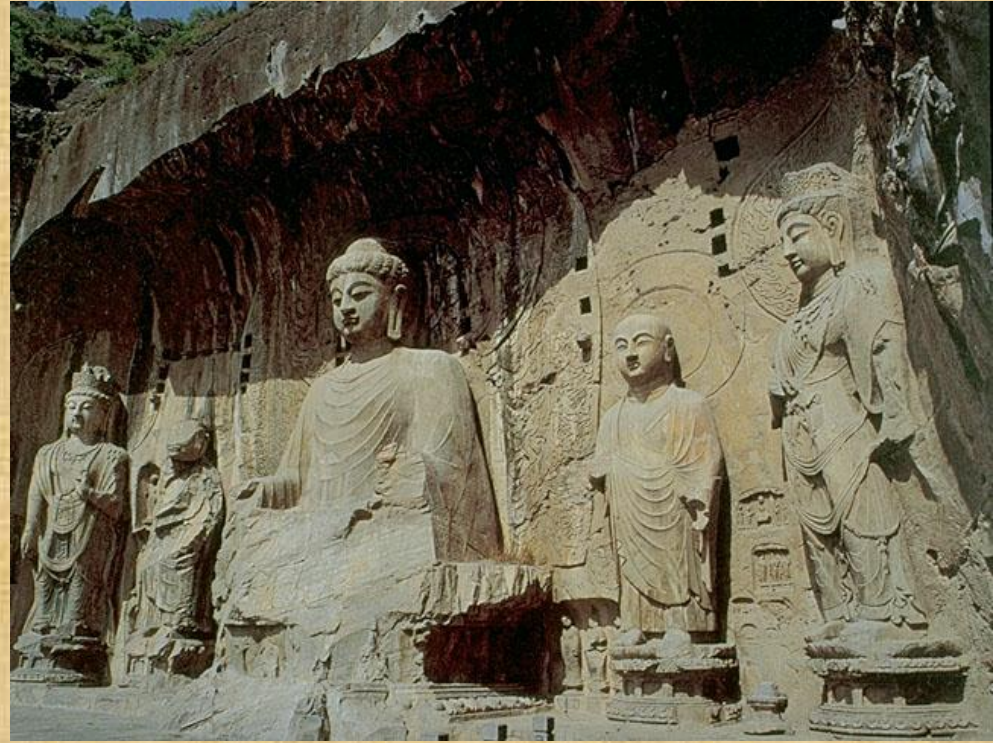
# Eightfold Pathway

1. Right understanding
2. Right intention
3. Right speech
4. Right action
5. Right livelihood
6. Right effort
7. Right mindfulness
8. Right concentration

- The Eightfold Pathway can be divided into three categories:
- **Conduct**-avoid doing harm to others
- **Meditation**-provides a clear view of impermanence
- **Wisdom**-the understanding of suffering and impermanence

# Development of Buddhism

- **Emperor Asoka of India converted to Buddhism**
- **Buddhism flourished in India for awhile**
- **Serendipitously, it was exported throughout Asia**



## **Two major divisions within Buddhism:**

1. **Hinayana (exclusive way and conservative)**
2. **Mahayana (expansive way and liberal)**

# Hinayana

**Theravada Buddhism found in SE Asia, Sri Lanka**

**Conservative and individualistic group**

**Many Buddhas throughout history**

**Relics important**

**Release is found in self-denial and meditation**

**Vicarious monks—support the monks and you do well**

**Part-time monks**

**Wat similar to a church**

# **Mahayana Buddhism**

**Expansive Buddhism—leaves parable (parallels Calvin's baby-talk parable)**

**Buddha's "incarnation"**

**Missionary inclusion similar to Hinduism as B'ism spread, but back in India it was absorbed into the black hole of Hinduism**

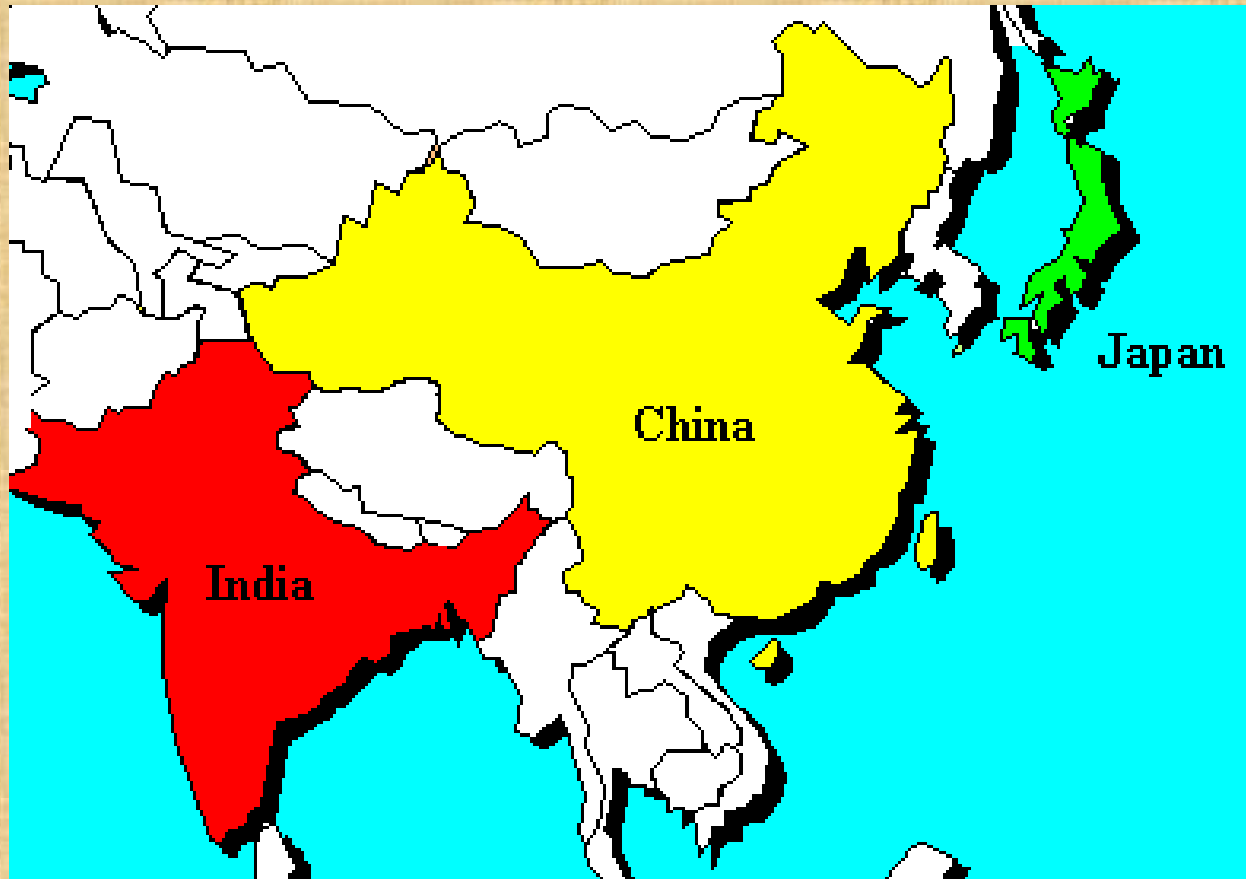


# Mahayana Buddhism



1. **Pure Land Sect**—parallels heaven, followers can marry and go to “church”
2. **Intuitive Sects**—Zen seek insight like bo tree by using koans, caused Boston Tea Party, satori is the flash of enlightenment.
3. **Rationalist**—pragmatists
4. **Sociopolitical Sect**—Nichiren, simple B’ism, patriotic
5. **Tibetan Buddhism**

# Daoism—the way of nature



**Lao-tzu (Old Master) wanted to exit China and was stopped before he got to Tibet. There he was forced to write down his thoughts--*Dao Te Ching*.**

# Daoist concepts

- Dao controls existence
- Life is a great thing (opposite of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism)—lengthen life is desirable via alchemy, etc.
- KIS—Henry David Thoreau of Asia
- Anti-hubris—tallest tree in woods parable (Martha Stewart)
- God is like the Unmoved Mover of Plato

Lao-tzu



# **Buddhism, Aristocracy, and Alien Rulers: Differential Regional Development**

**China was divided north and south by the mid part of the 5<sup>th</sup> century—the Chinese “equivalent” of medieval Europe.**

## **Northern China**

**old-line families, Confucian traditions central to life, elitist, state-builders, tied to outside ideas from Central Asia including Buddhism**

## **Southern China**

**nostalgic refugees p. 103, explored the arts, sought the good life, calligraphy and painting emphasized, Buddhism was translated into traditional Chinese Weltanschauung (worldview)**

**(Perhaps a parallel could be made with America’s division North and South.)**

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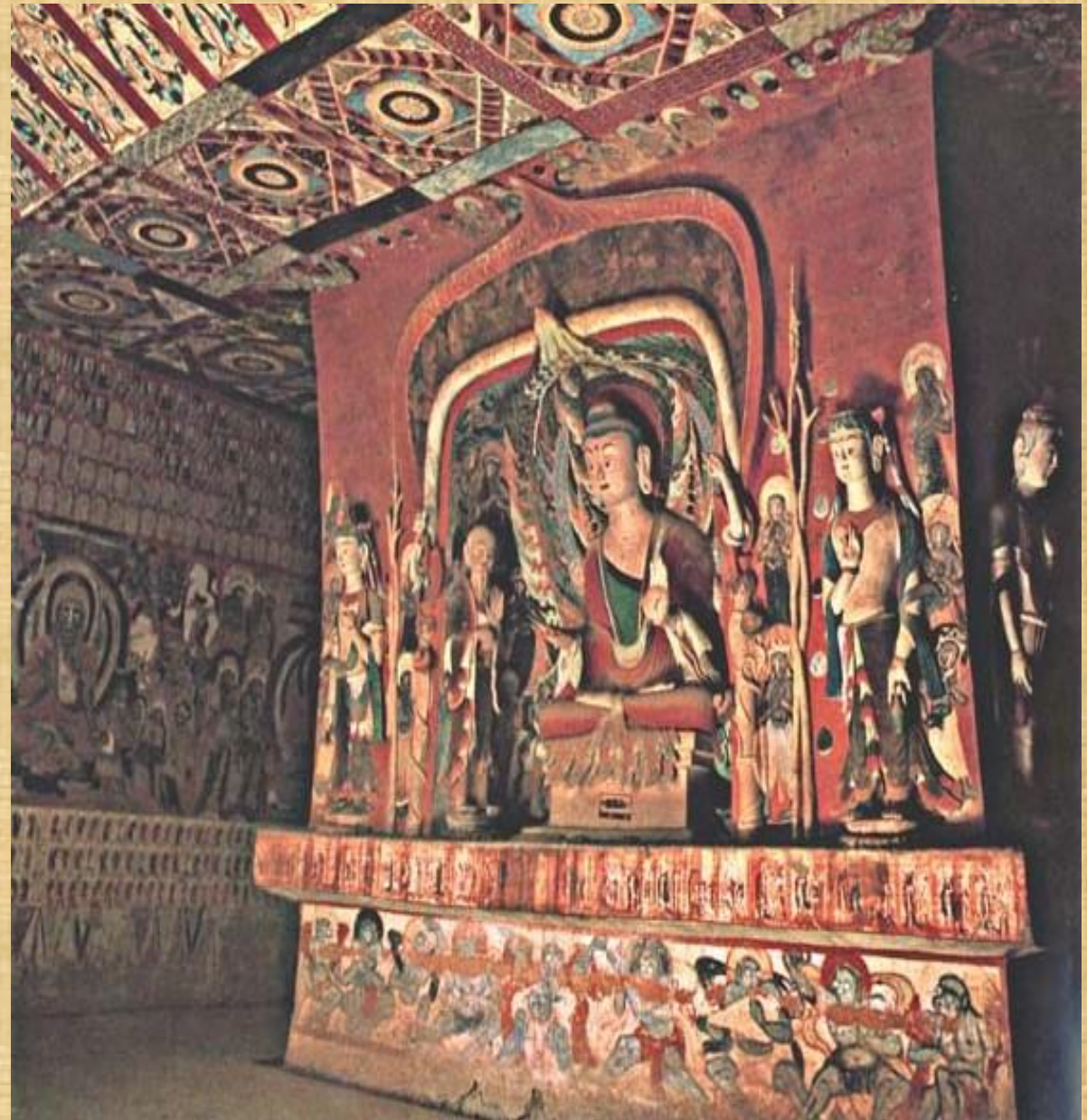
Dunhuang

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Caves of Dunhuang

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**Caves of Dunhuang**

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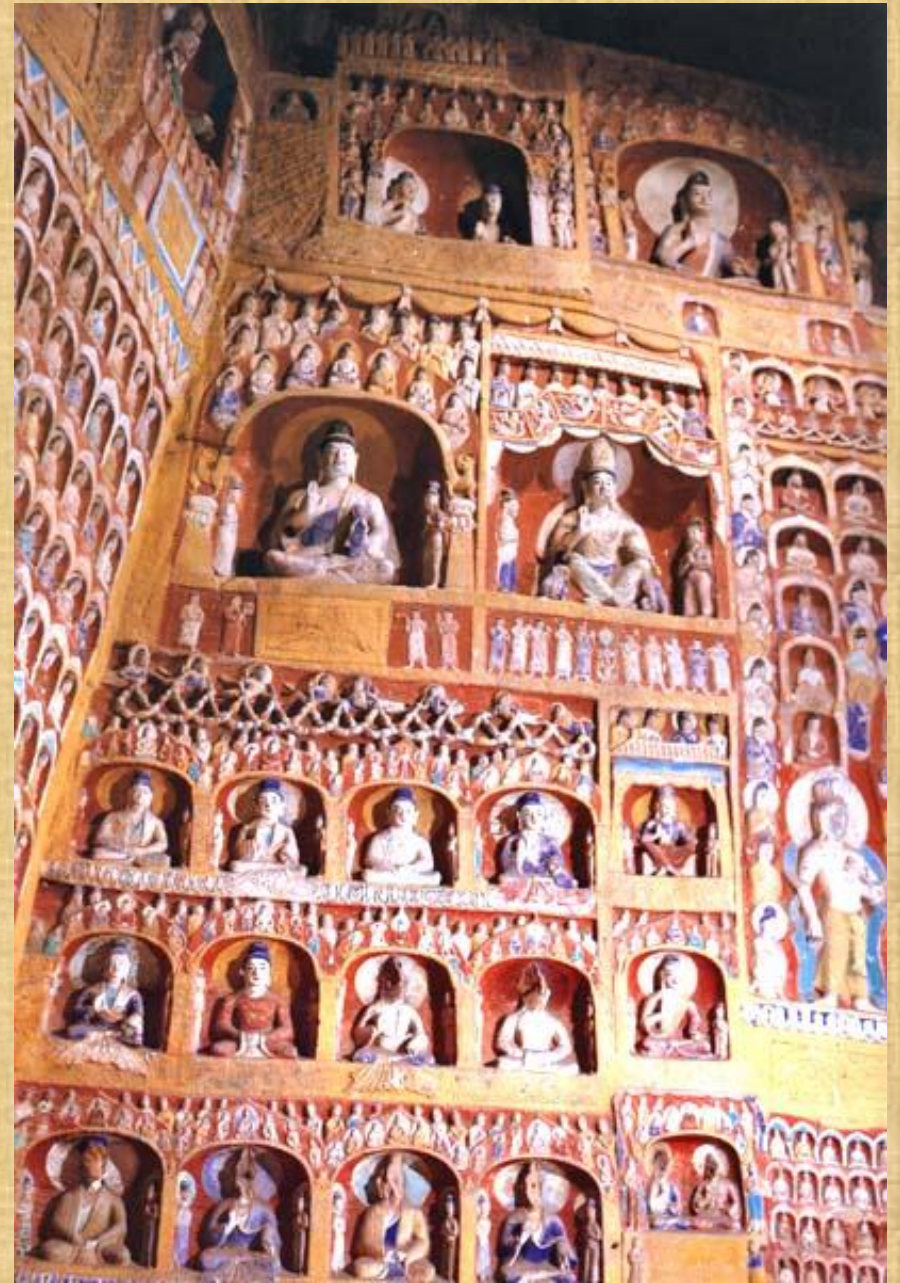
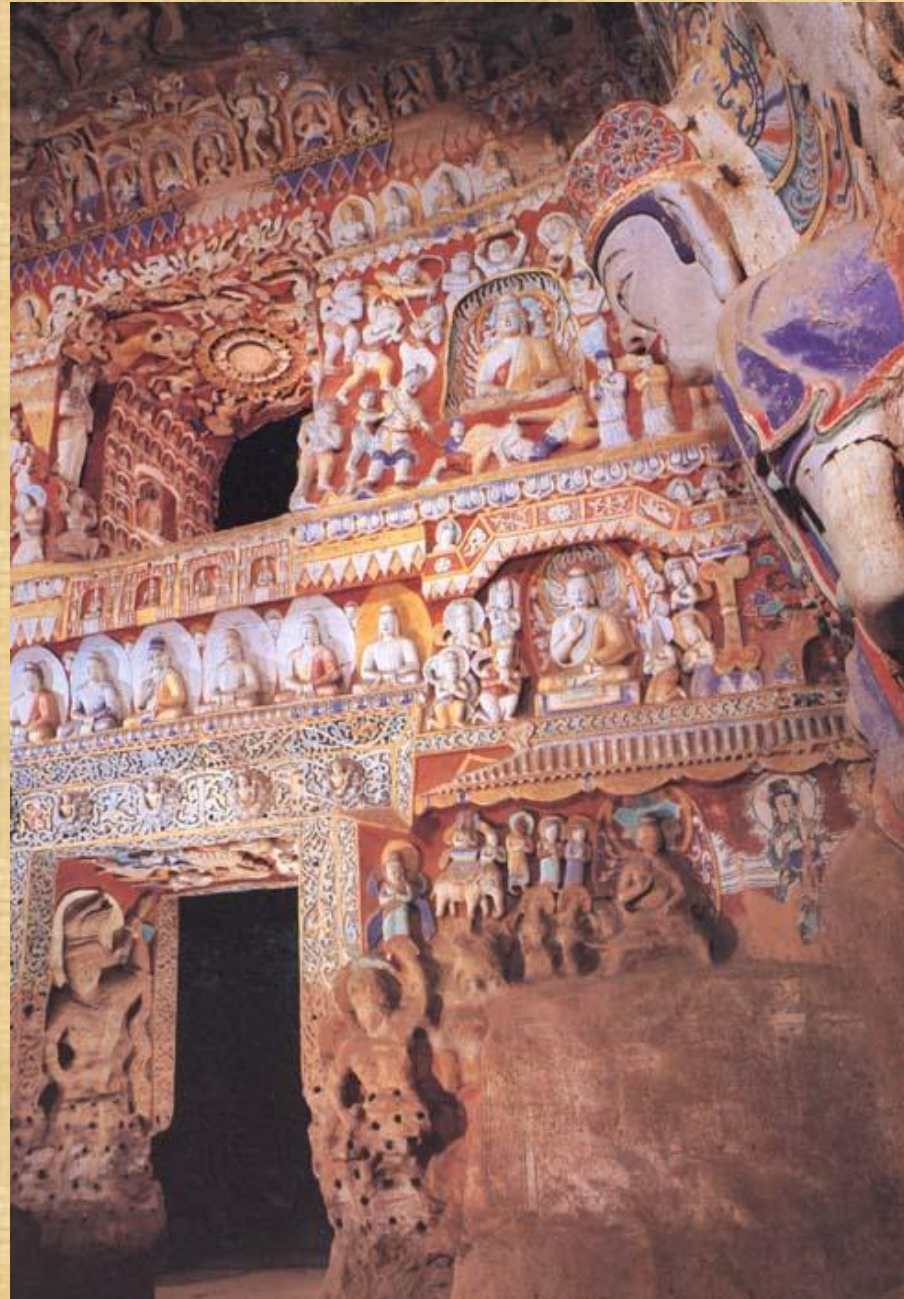
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