

As I Enter

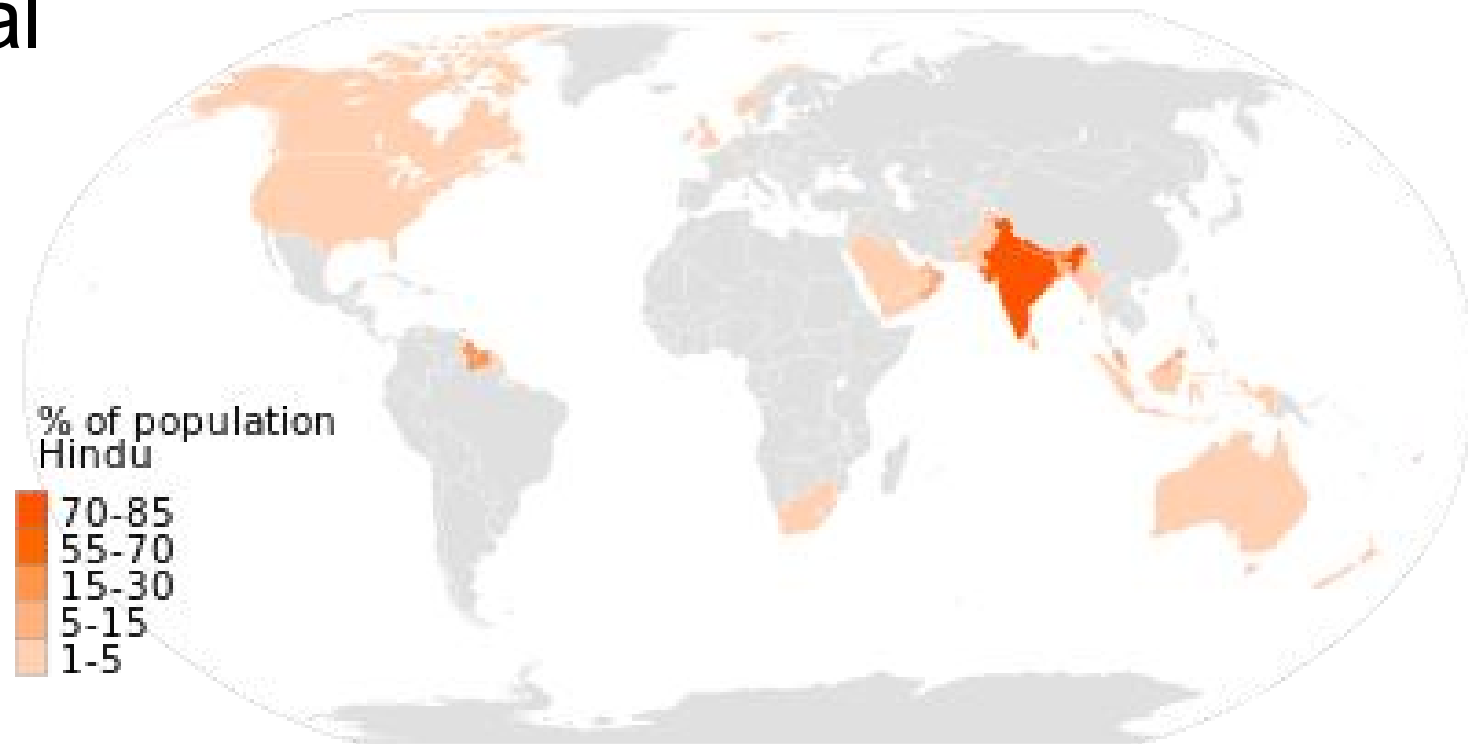
- Think about it:
 - What you know about Hinduism and Buddhism
- Agenda:
 - Notes on Hinduism and Buddhism

Hinduism

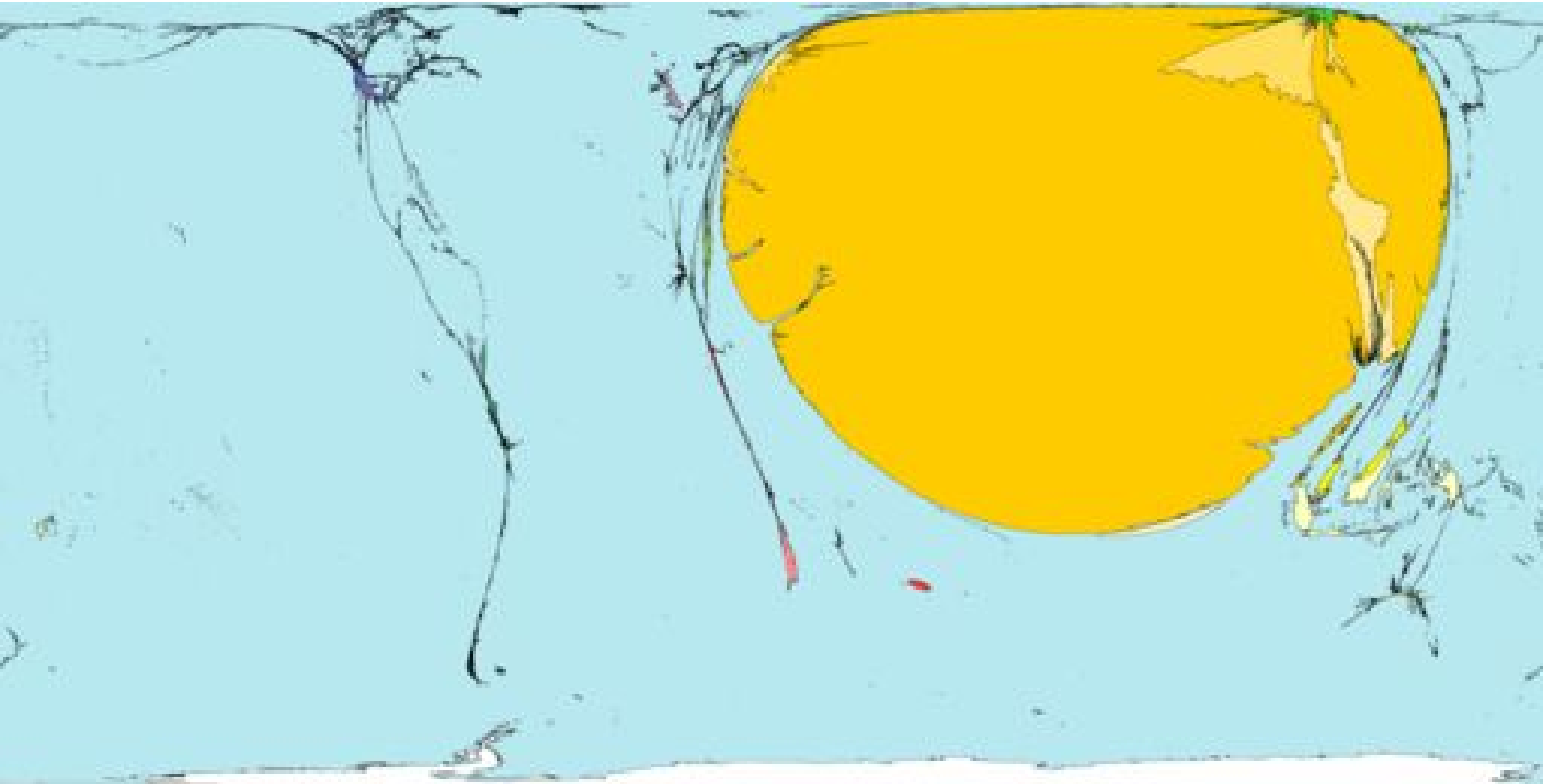


Hinduism

- Statistically, there are over **900 million Hindus** in the world (1 in 7 people)
- Hinduism is mainly practiced in India and Nepal



Hinduism...



What is Hinduism?

- **Monistic** Religion with its origins in the subcontinent of South Asia
- Oldest religion in the region – 2000BCE

- Unclear origin

- Starts with the

- Hindus don't
never heard of

- No central stories
beliefs...individual

EXTREMELY

“In the beginning was nothing, neither heaven nor earth nor space in between. Then non-being became spirit and said, “Let me be!” He warmed himself, and from this was born fire. He warmed himself further, and from this was born light.” –Aryan Story of creation

Key Beliefs

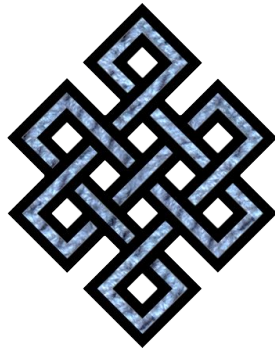
- Truth is eternal
- Brahman is Truth and Reality
- The Vedas (**translation = Wisdom**) are the ultimate authority
- Everyone should strive to achieve Dharma
- Individual Souls are immortal
- The goal of the individual soul is Moksha

What are the Unifying Themes of Hinduism

- **Maya:** Life at the present is meaningless...
- **Reincarnation** will continue until one reaches the idea of universal bliss known as **Nirvana** or Enlightenment
- Destiny is determined through the relationship between **Karma & Dharma**

Hinduism & Dharma

- **Dharma** is the correct and righteous behavior one exhibits (the “right” way to live)
- **Kharma** – ones actions in this life determines the next life
- Dharma, the code of life, can be different for different people of a variety of Social Classes



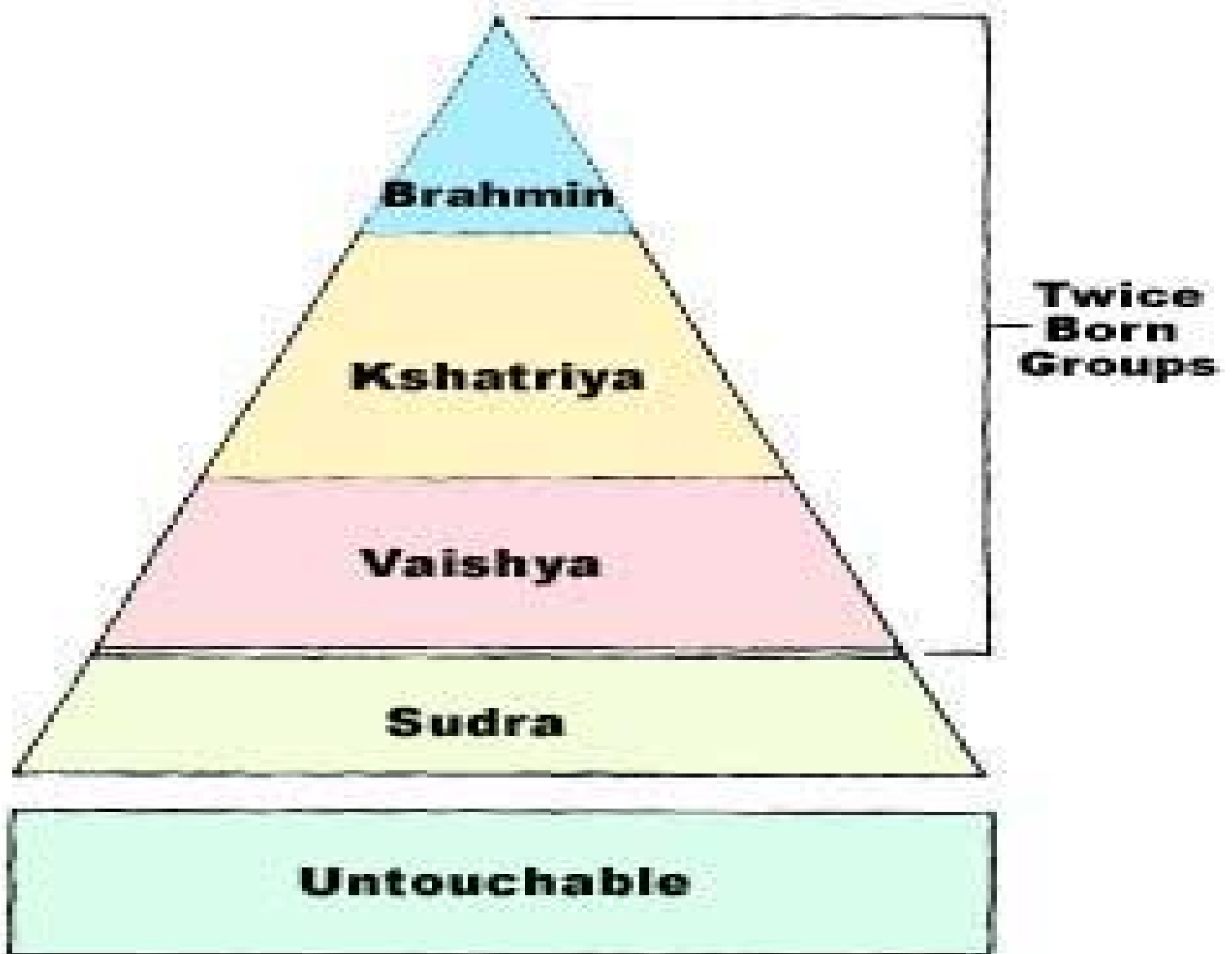
*Fun Fact: Since Hinduism has no founder, anyone who practices **Dharma** can be called a Hindu.*

What is the Caste System

- The ancient **caste system** in South Asia thought the idea of social mobility made no sense. Four categories.
- People were born into strict social positions called **castes** or **varna**, and their children belonged to the same social class. (NO MOBILITY)

What is the lowest part of the Caste System

- There is a fifth major class in Hinduism, but it is considered so low that it doesn't even qualify as a ***varna***. Most people call it the **"untouchable"** class because its members are forbidden to touch anyone who belongs to one of the four ***varnas***. If a Brahmin priest touches an untouchable, he or she must go through a ritual in which the pollution is washed away.

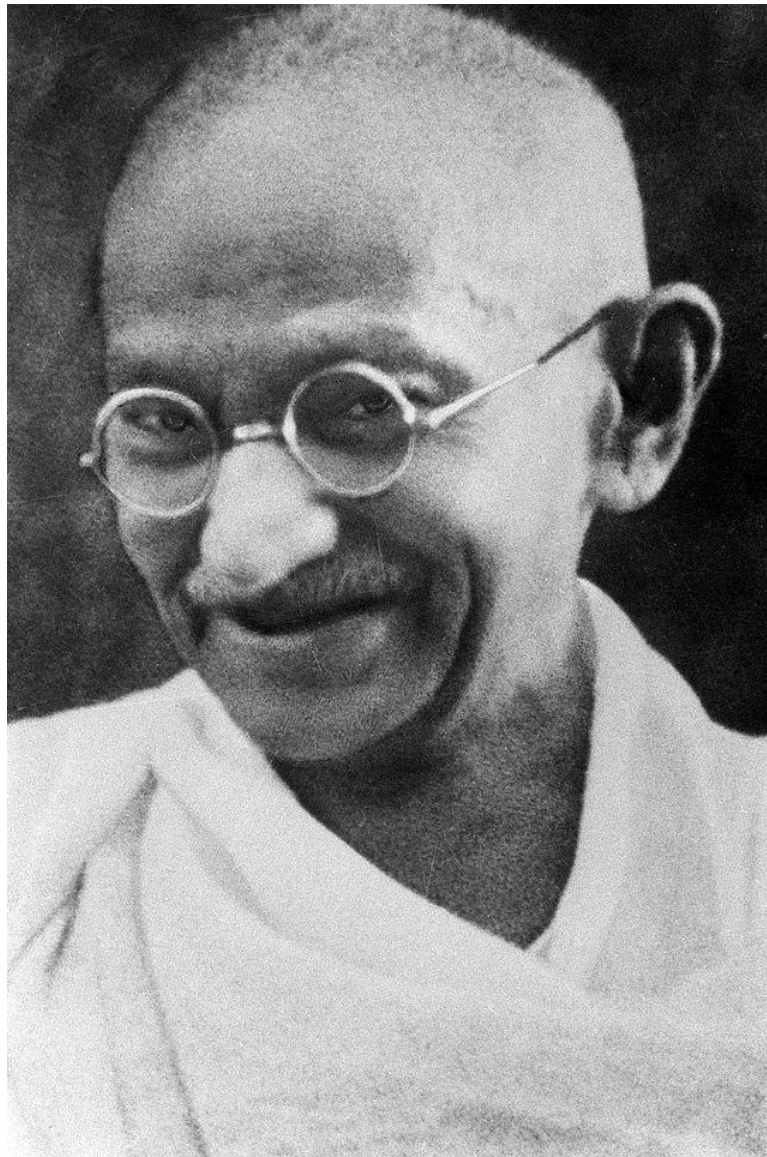


The Caste System

Untouchables in the news.

- Untouchables Face Discrimination
- Untouchable Jobs/

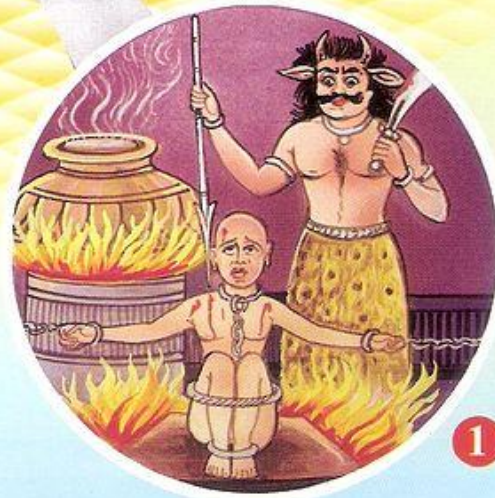
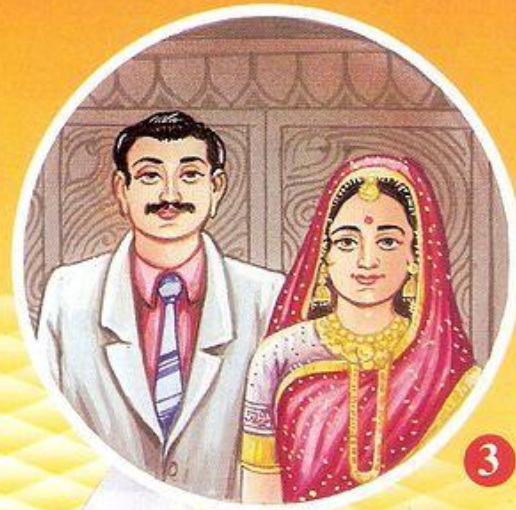




“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”
-Ghandi

Reincarnation

- What will you be reincarnated as in the next life?



Animal and Plant Kingdom

Infernal Kingdom

Nirvana

- How long is the cycle of reincarnation?
- All people are reincarnated until they reach the goal of **Nirvana**.
- **Nirvana** is reached through the interaction between one's **Karma** and **Dharma**
 - The cycle of life
 - Endless...

The Lion King © The Walt Disney Company

Mufasa: Everything you see exists together in a delicate balance.

As king, you need to understand that balance and respect all the creatures, from the crawling ant to the leaping antelope.

Simba: But Dad, don't we eat the antelope?

Mufasa: Yes, Simba, but let me explain. When we die, our bodies become the grass, and the antelope eat the grass. And so, we are all connected in the great circle of life.

Why are animals sacred?

- **Ahimsa** = “to do no harm” toward all living things
- **Vegetarian** – all living things are spiritual
- **Reincarnation** – everything is connected

Sacred Animals and Ahimsa

- Cows are considered sacred to many Hindus – Cows are the reincarnate of Devi Goddess
- Stems from the practical effort to protect milk supply – *gives life to children*



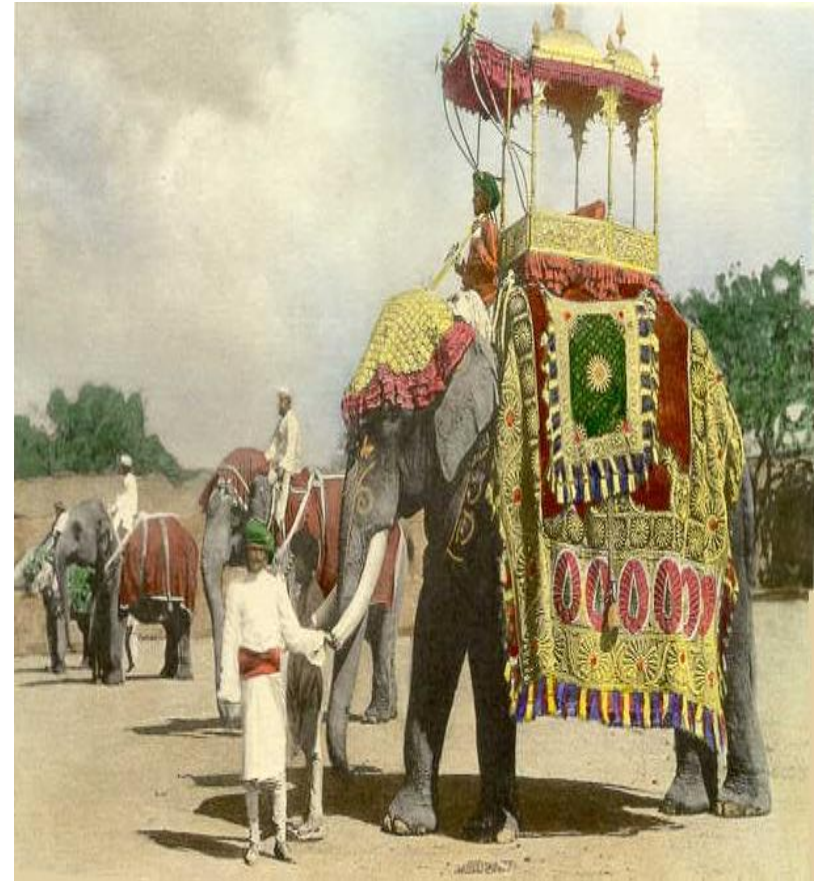
Sacred Animals and Ahimsa

- Karni Mata, a famous mystic of her times, believed to be an incarnation of goddess Durga.
- Rats are considered holy, owing to the belief, that the souls of the devotees of the Mata, are resident in these rats.
- To be bitten is considered good luck!!!



Sacred Animals and Ahimsa

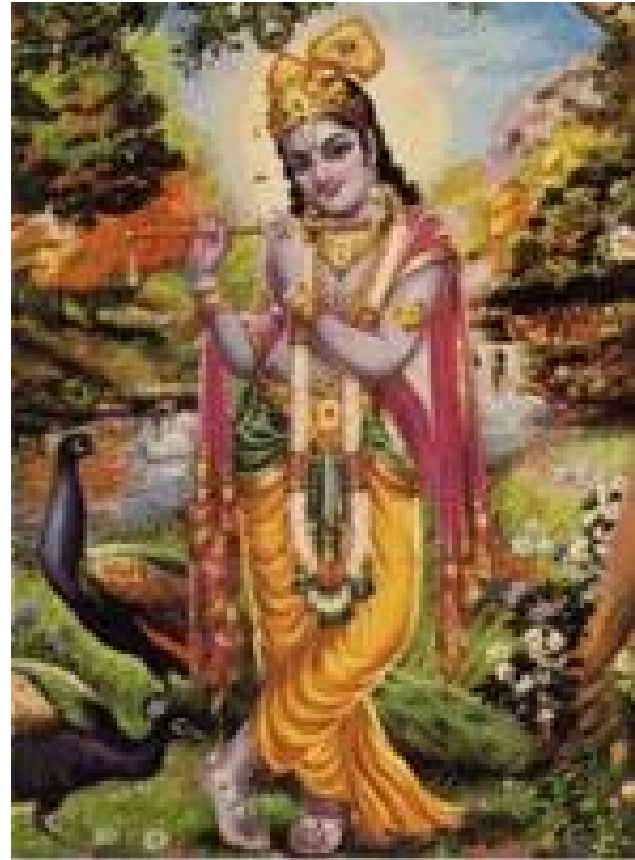
- The majestic quality of this can be traced back to ancient India when owning elephants was a royal habit.
- Kings kept elephants to use in war.
- Elephants were assigned to royal stables to be mounts or kept for purposes of magic.





Hinduism Gods

- There are five
 - based for the worship of **Ganesha, Shakti, Surya, Shiva, and Vishnu.**
- There are also many lesser gods who assist human beings in achieving the ultimate aim of the Hindu faith:
 - Nirvana



Krishna

Hinduism Gods

- **Brahman, the 'impersonal' God and the universal soul, is the Absolute Truth**
 - Brahman has multiple roles:
 - creator, maintainer, destroyer all in one. (This can be viewed as the origin of the trinity Gods namely Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva,



Ganesh

Holy Place: Ganges River

- To purify the soul.
Takes away sins
- Those who wash in this river are thereafter blessed with wealth and fertility.





Hinduism and Marriage...

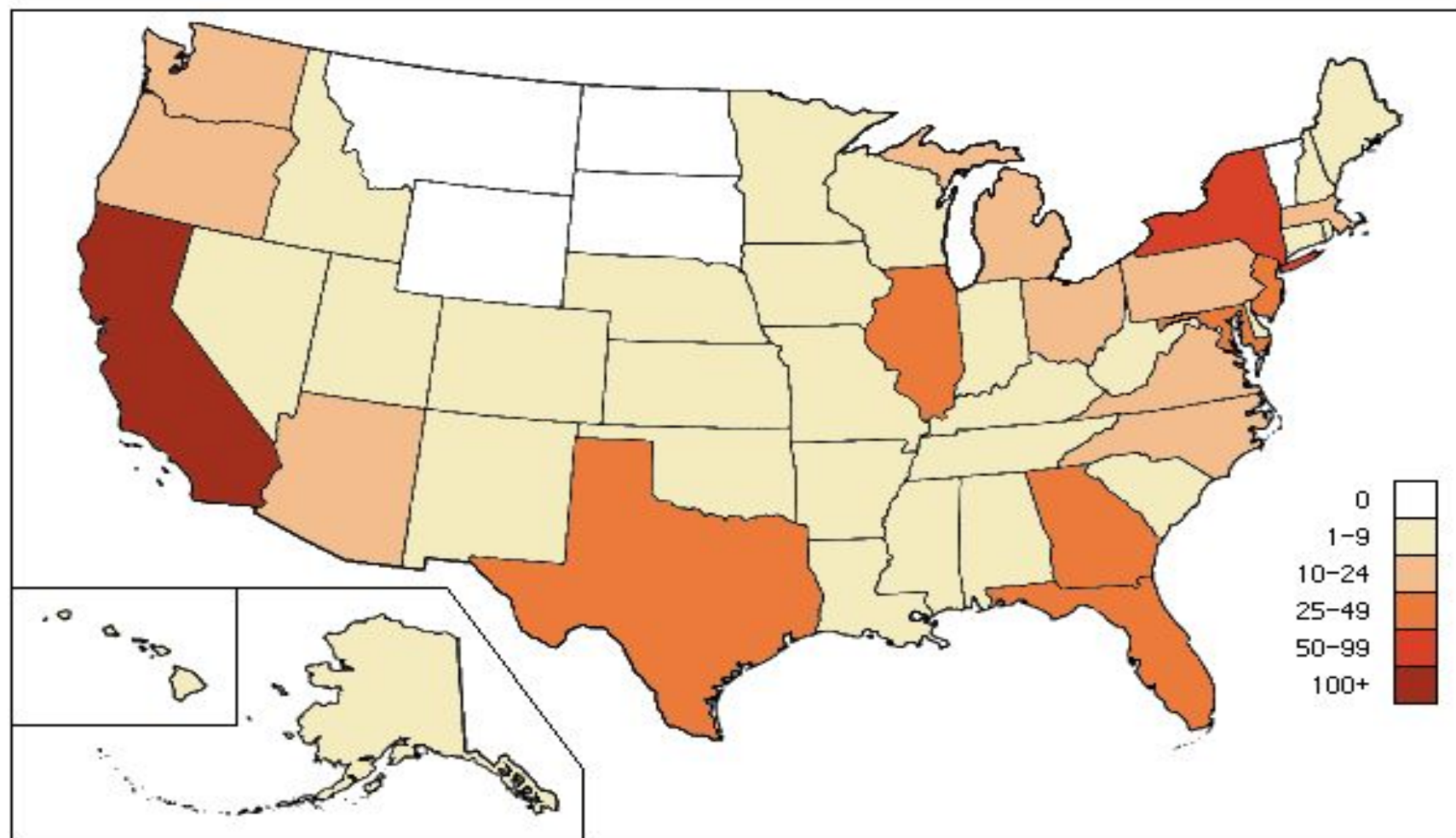
- Arranged Marriages still very common
- Dowries to the Husband
- Bride Burning and Divorce
 - [Roopa's Story](#) – just show first few minutes



“Bride-burning accounts for the death of at least one woman every hour in India. ”

Distribution of Hindu Centers in the U.S.

Research in Progress: 702 Centers, Fall 2004



Source - The Pluralism Project at Harvard University: Directory of Religious Centers
<http://www.pluralism.org/directory>

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