Chinese Background

Buddhism Spreads into China
Buddhism Spreads to China
Silk Road

- Travelers went overland from Northwest India
- Through modern Pakistan and Afghanistan
- Through Hindu Kush Mountains
- Arrived in Kashgar in modern Xinjiang
- Southern route through Khotan
- Northern route through Turfan, etc.
Dunhuang

- Oasis town in modern Gansu Province
- Important Buddhist Center
- Many caves and grottoes for monks’ residences
- Center for Buddhist Art and Sculpture
Dunhuang
Dunhuang
Dunhuang
Dunhuang
Confucianism

• Dominant Politico-Religious system in China
• Emperor is at the apex of the system
• Emperor known as “Son of Heaven”
• Said to rule with the “Mandate of Heaven”
Confucianism

- Class of political administrators to assist Emperor
- Trained in ritual and proper conduct
- Constituted the ruling elite with a hold on power, prestige, education, culture
Taoism

- The Tao = “The Way”
- Most important figures are Lao Tzu (ca. 5th cent BCE) and Chuang Tzu (ca. 300 BCE)
- Most important text known as *Tao te ching* (The Way and its Power)
Taoism

- Taoism is a sort of “nature mysticism”
- Taoists express joy and amazement over nature
- They seek to identify with this nature, which they call “Tao”
Taoism

• In Confucianism, the *tao* refers to proper moral, social conduct

• In Taoism, the *tao* refers to the law of the universe

• To Taoists, the *tao* brings all things into existence and governs them.
Dhyāna/Ch’an/Zen

• Focused on meditation (dhyāna) as the essence of Buddhist practice
• Dhyāna (Ch’an) refers to practices aimed at calming the mind
• Practices include breath control and concentration
• Continuous practice said to lead to higher states of consciousness
Bodhidharma

- From India
- Lived ca. 5th-6th centuries CE
- Generally credited with founding the Ch’an School
- Arrived in China 520 CE
Bodhidharma

- Known as the 1st Patriarch of Ch’an
- Taught Lankavatara-Sutra and “Buddha-Nature”
Bodhidharma

- Practiced “Wall Meditation”
- Associated with martial arts at Shaolin
- Associated with bringing tea to China