

Important Figures from Ancient India and Ancient China

Below is a list of important and notable people from Ancient India and Ancient China. You may choose from this list for your Mandate and Dharma comparison project. You may pick someone who is not on the list, but it must be approved by Dr. Konstantakos.

Ancient India

Chandragupta Maurya (4th century BC)

Founder of the Mauryan Empire. Unified much of northern India and built one of the largest empires in ancient Indian history.

Ashoka (3rd century BC)

Mauryan emperor who first expanded his empire through war, then converted to Buddhism and promoted dharma (moral law and duty).

Gautama Buddha (6th–5th century BC)

Religious teacher and founder of Buddhism. His teachings influenced Asia for thousands of years.

Mahavira (6th century BC)

Major teacher of Jainism. Emphasized nonviolence (ahimsa) and strict ethical living.

Kanishka (2nd century AD)

Kushan emperor who supported Buddhism and ruled over a major trade empire connecting India to Central Asia.

Samudragupta (4th century AD)

Gupta Empire ruler known for military expansion and leadership during a classical golden age of Indian culture.

Kalidasa (4th–5th century AD)

Famous Sanskrit poet and playwright. Considered one of the greatest writers in Indian history.

Aryabhata (5th–6th century AD)

Mathematician and astronomer. Made major contributions to mathematics and early astronomy.

Harsha (7th century AD)

North Indian ruler who reunited much of northern India after the Gupta period.

Ancient China

Confucius (6th–5th century BC)

Philosopher and teacher. His ideas about morality, respect, and government shaped Chinese civilization for over 2,000 years.

Laozi (traditionally 6th century BC)

Associated with Daoism and the Dao De Jing. Taught harmony with the natural order (the Dao).

Mozi (5th century BC)

Philosopher who promoted universal love, merit-based leadership, and practical ethics.

Mencius (4th century BC)

Confucian thinker who argued that human nature is basically good.

Qin Shi Huang (3rd century BC)

First emperor to unify China. Standardized writing, currency, and measurements.

Emperor Gaozu of Han (2nd century BC)

Personal name Liu Bang, was the founder and first emperor of the Han dynasty.

Han Wudi (2nd century BC)

Han dynasty emperor who expanded China's territory and strengthened Confucian government principles.

Cai Lun (2nd century AD)

Government official traditionally credited with improving the process of papermaking.

Wu Zetian (7th–8th century AD)

Only woman in Chinese history to rule as emperor in her own name.

Taizong of Tang (7th century AD)

Tang dynasty emperor who ruled during a time of stability, expansion, and cultural growth.

Xuanzang (7th century AD)

Buddhist monk who traveled from China to India to study and bring back Buddhist texts.