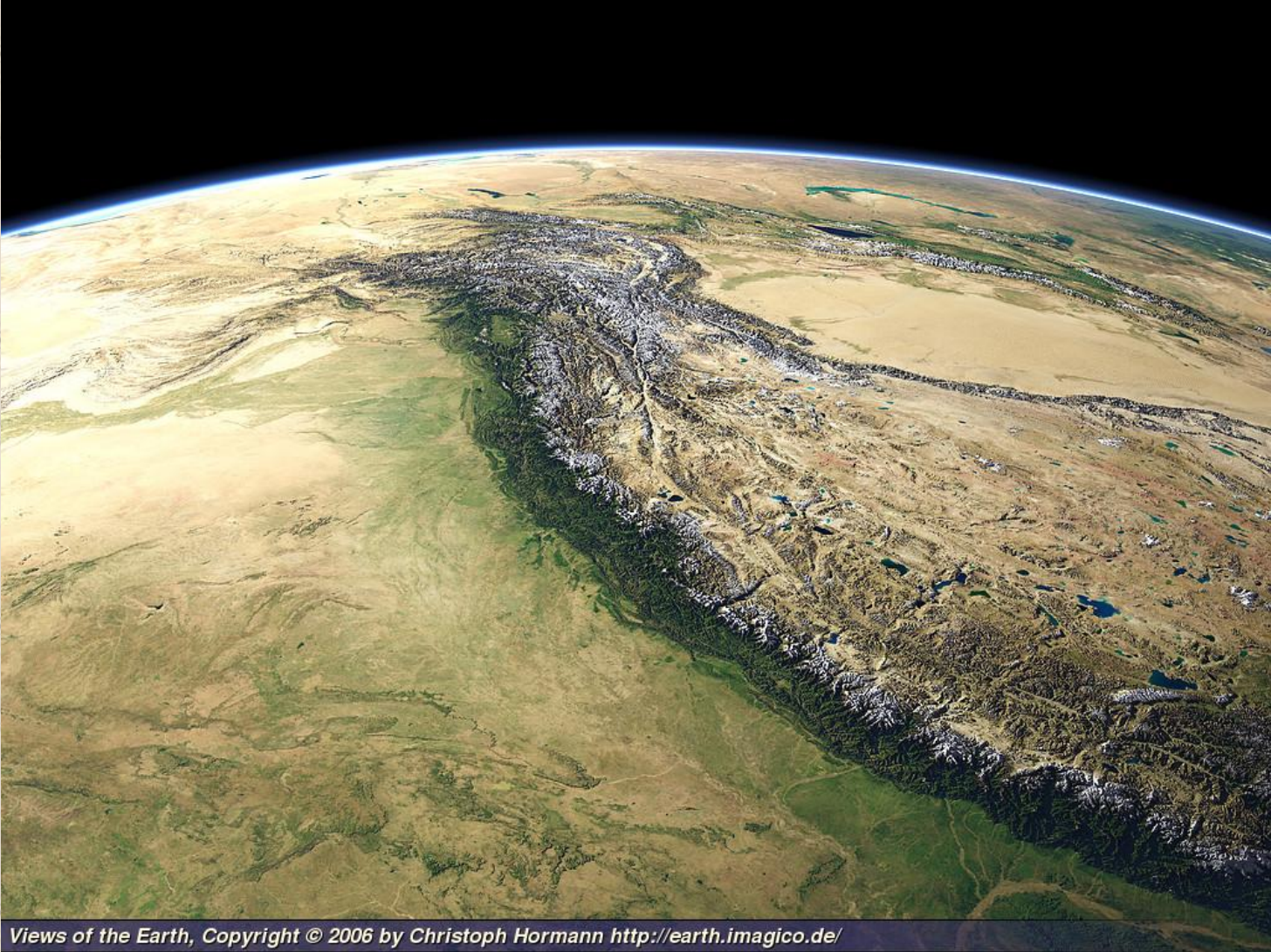


# Caste System

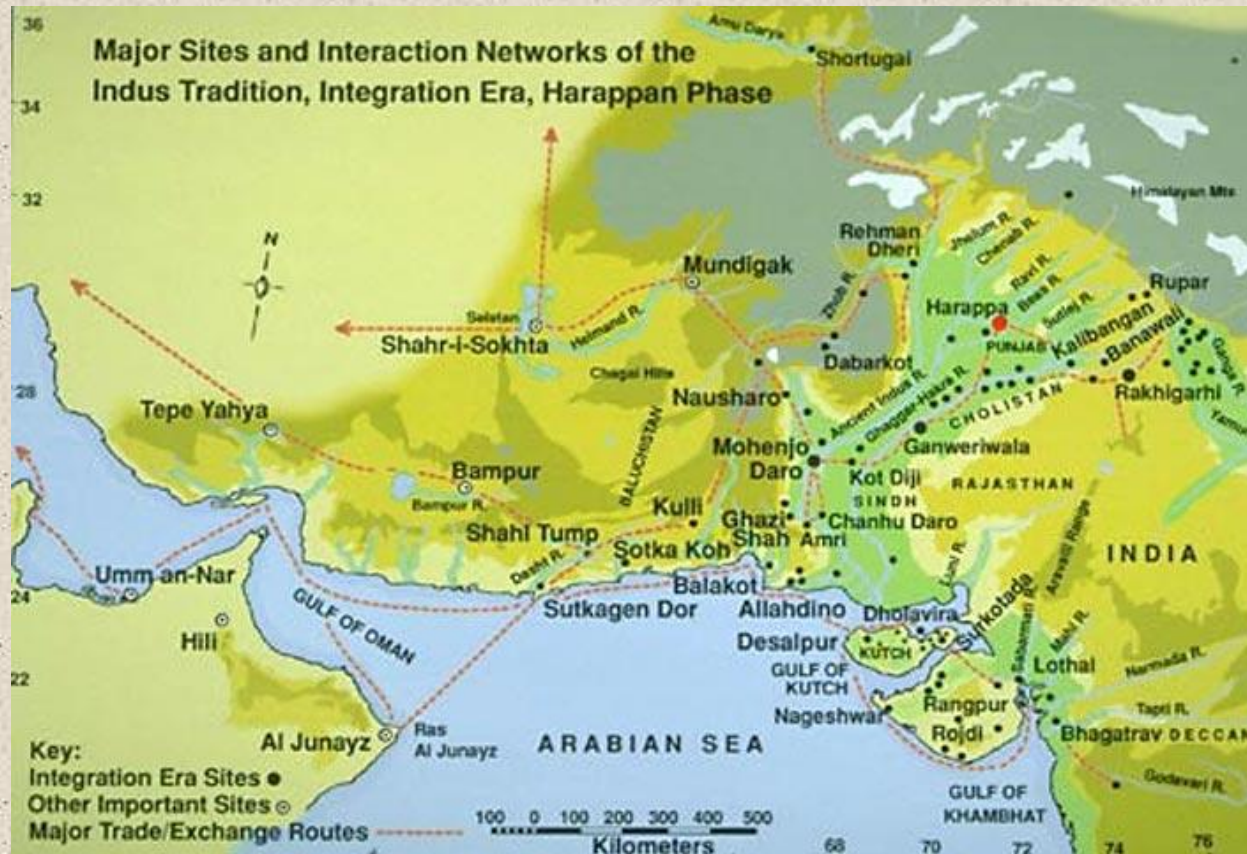


Views of the Earth, Copyright © 2006 by Christoph Hormann <http://earth.imagico.de/>

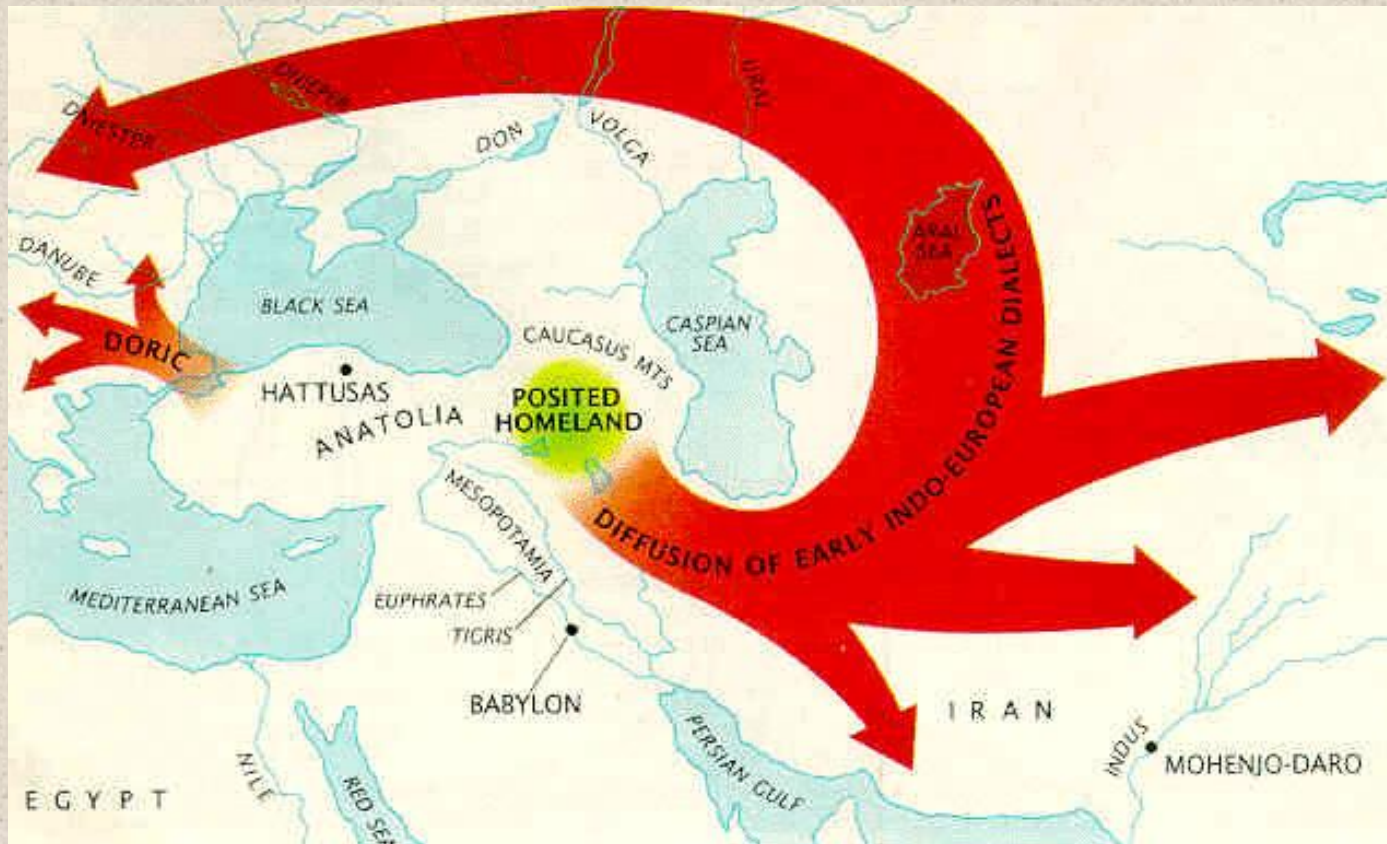
# Caste System



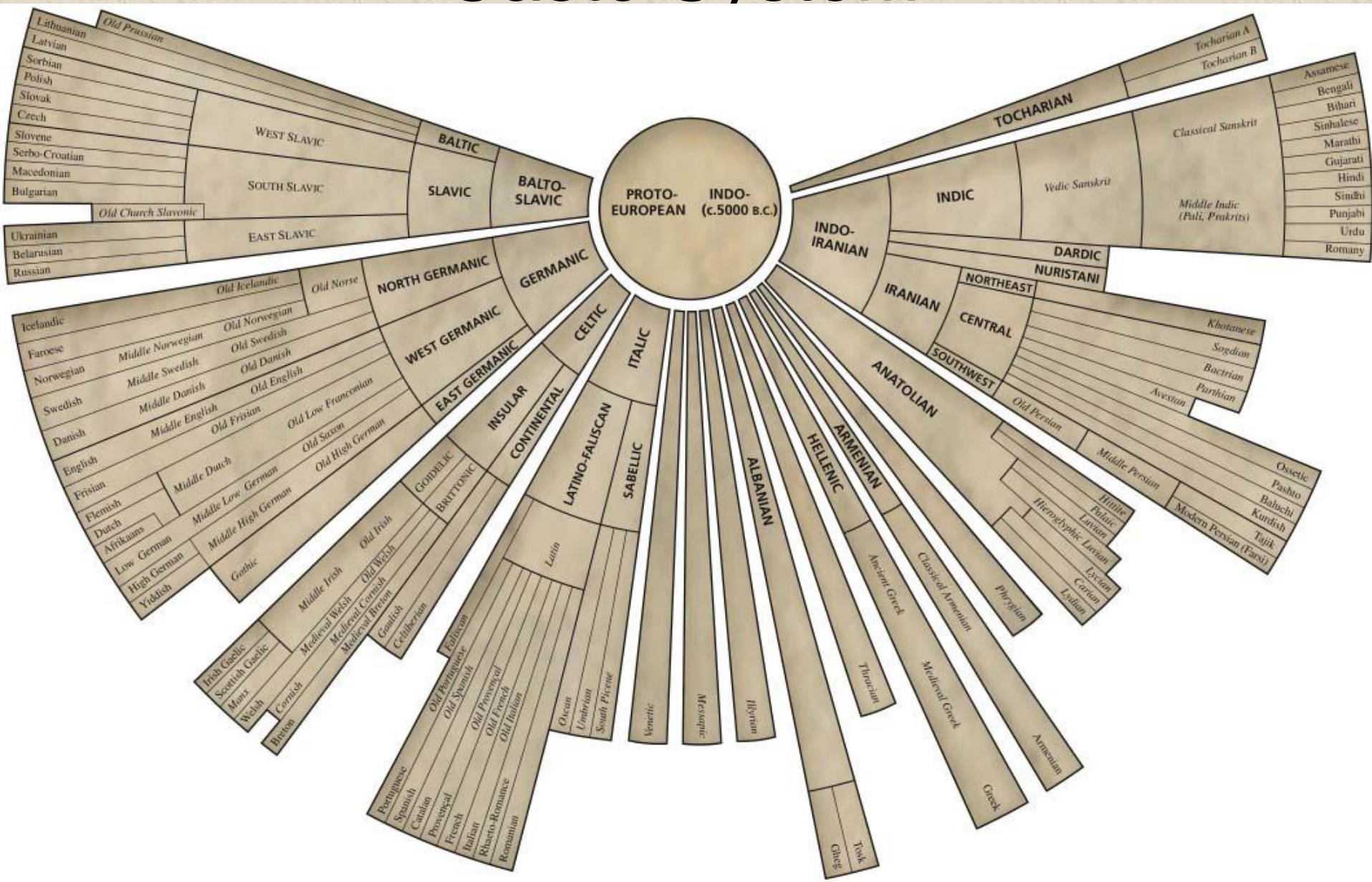
# Caste System



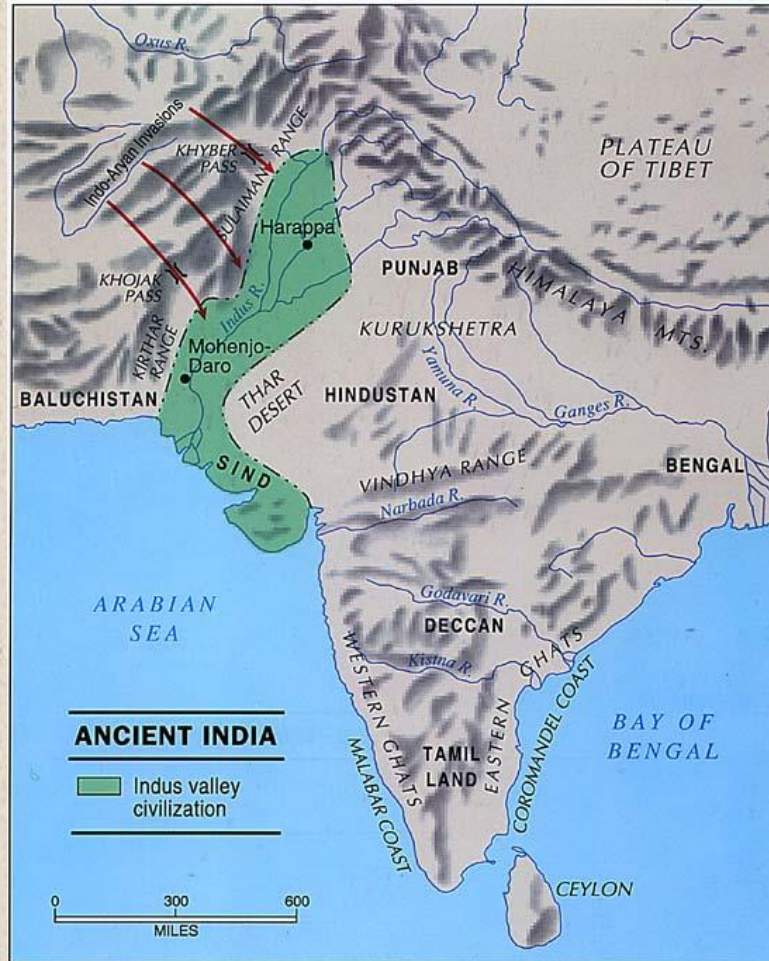
# Caste System



# Caste System

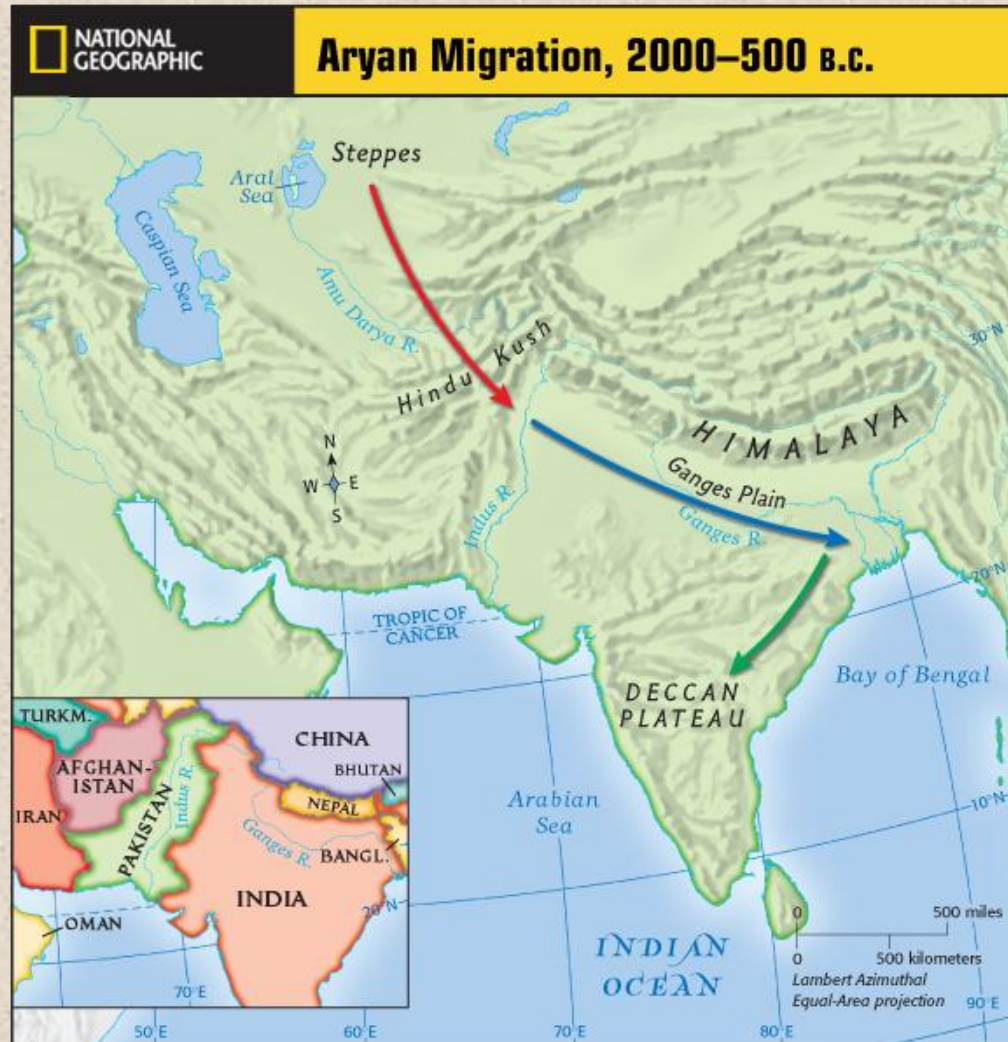


# Caste System



Ancient India

# Caste System



# Caste System

Aryan society was organized into groups by division of labor

1. Rajanaya/Kshatria – warriors
2. Brahmin – priests
3. Vaishya – farmers and craftsmen



# Caste System

After the invasion, defeated locals were included in the lowest division of professions:

1. Brahamin – priests
2. Kshatria - warriors
3. Vaishya – landlords and businessmen
4. **Shudra – peasants and craftsmen**

# Caste System

## Aryan Scriptures

### Scruti

Primary Scriptures of Hinduism

Rig Veda

Yajur Veda

Sama Veda

Atharva Veda

Bhagavad Gita

Part of the epic - Mahabharata

### Smriti

Secondary Scriptures of Hinduism  
Each Veda consists of four parts:

**The Samhitas** – Mantras or Hymns

**The Brahmanas** – Explanations to the hymns and their rituals

**The Aranyakas** – Interpretations to the rituals

**The Upanishads** – Essence of the Vedas

# Caste System

## Aryan Scriptures

### Scruti

Primary Scriptures of Hinduism

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Part of the epic - Mahabharata

### Smriti

Secondary Scriptures of Hinduism

Dharma Shastras

Nibhandas

Puranas

The Epics

Agamas or Tantras

Darshanas

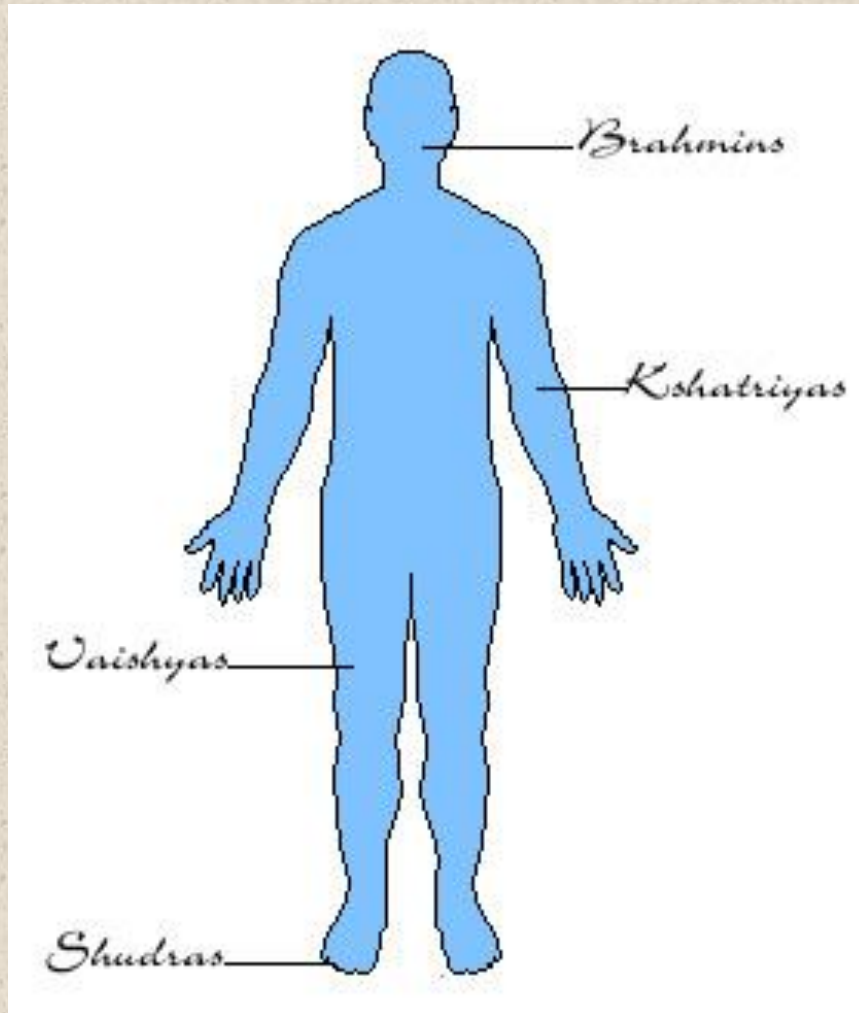
Vedangas, Upa Vedas

# Caste System

श्रीगणेशायनमः॥ ॐ ३ ॥ अग्निः इति पुरः र्हितं यज्ञस्य देवं क्रुतिर्जे  
 ॥ होतारं रत्नः धातमं॥ अग्निः पूर्वभिः॥ क्रुपिभिः॥ उर्यः॥ कर्तनः॥ उत॥ सः॥ देवा  
 नः॥ आ॥ इह॥ वसति॥ अग्निना॥ रथिः॥ अश्वत् पोष्यः॥ एव॥ द्विः॥ द्विः॥ वसति  
 वीरवत्तमं॥ अग्नेयं॥ यज्ञं॥ अश्वत् विवृतः॥ परिः॥ अति॥ सः॥ इत्॥ देवेषु॥ ग  
 ष्तिः॥ अग्निः॥ होता॥ कविः॥ ऋतुः॥ सत्यः॥ चित्रश्रवः॥ तमः॥ देवः॥ देवो॥ आ॥ गम्  
 तः॥ १॥ यत्वा॥ अंगः॥ हापुषः॥ तं॥ अर्कः॥ अइ॥ कुरिष्यति॥ तवः॥ इत्॥ तवः॥ ससं॥ अग्नि  
 रः॥ उपा॥ त्वा॥ अग्निः॥ द्विः॥ द्विः॥ दीपा॥ इस्वः॥ धिया॥ वर्यः॥ नमः॥ मरुतः॥ आ॥ इमं॥ सि  
 राजतं॥ अश्वराणां॥ गोपां॥ ऋतस्य॥ दी॥ द्विः॥ वर्धमानं॥ से॥ हमे॥ सः॥ नः॥ पिता॥ इवा  
 सुनवे॥ अग्ने॥ सु॥ उपा॥ यनः॥ भव॥ सर्वस्वानः॥ सुस्तये॥ २॥ गायो॥ इति॥ आ॥ याहिः

इति॥ इमे॥ सोमाः॥ अरं॥ कृता॥ तेषां॥ पाहि॥ श्रुषिः॥ हवः॥ गायो॥ इति॥ उवे॥ मिः॥ जरते  
 तां॥ अर्कः॥ जग्तरारः॥ सुतः॥ सोमाः॥ अहः॥ अदः॥ गायो॥ इति॥ तवः॥ प्रः॥ च्चती॥ जेनी  
 जिगान्ति॥ हापुषः॥ उरु॥ ची॥ सोमः॥ पीतये॥ इ॥ इवा॥ युरति॥ इमे॥ सुताः॥ उपा॥ प्रयः॥ अग्निः  
 आ॥ गतं॥ इ॥ देवः॥ वां॥ उवा॥ ति॥ हि॥ गायो॥ इति॥ इ॥ इ॥ च॥ वेतथः॥ सुतानां॥ गजिनीव  
 स्त॥ इति॥ गजिनीव॥ वस्त्॥ तोः॥ आ॥ यातं॥ उपा॥ इयत्॥ ३॥ गायो॥ इति॥ इ॥ इ॥ च॥ सुनवः  
 ॥ आ॥ यातं॥ उपा॥ अग्निः॥ अकृतं॥ मसु॥ इत्या॥ धिया॥ नरा॥ मित्रं॥ कुवे॥ पूतं॥ इ॥ इ॥  
 वरुणं॥ च॥ मित्रा॥ देसं॥ धिया॥ छृ॥ तानीं॥ सा॥ धेता॥ ऋतेन॥ मित्रा॥ वरुणो॥ ऋतु॥ व  
 धो॥ ऋतु॥ मृ॥ शा॥ ऋतु॥ वृ॥ हते॥ आ॥ शा॥ धे॥ इति॥ ऋवी॥ इति॥ नः॥ मित्रा॥ वरुणा॥ उ  
 वि॥ जा॥ तो॥ उरु॥ इ॥ स्या॥ दसं॥ इ॥ या॥ ते॥ इति॥ अप॥ सं॥ ४॥ अश्विना॥ यज्जरीः॥ इ॥ इ॥

# Caste System



"When they divided Purusa, how many ways did they apportion him? What was his mouth? What were his arms? What were his thighs, his feet declared to be? His mouth was the Brahmin [caste], his arms were the Rajanaya [Kshatriya caste], his thighs the Vaishya [caste]; from his feet the Shudra [caste] was born."

--*Rig Veda* concerning the origin of the members of the Caste System

# Caste System

Different kinds of labor duties were allowed different classes of people based on their aptitude and ability:

1. **Mouth** – Brahmins were in charge of spiritual and intellectual matters
2. **Arms** – political management and military defense were given to the Kshatriyas
3. **Thighs** – supplying food and managing business activities were entrusted to the Vaisyas
4. **Feet** – menial service work was completed by the Shudras

# Caste System

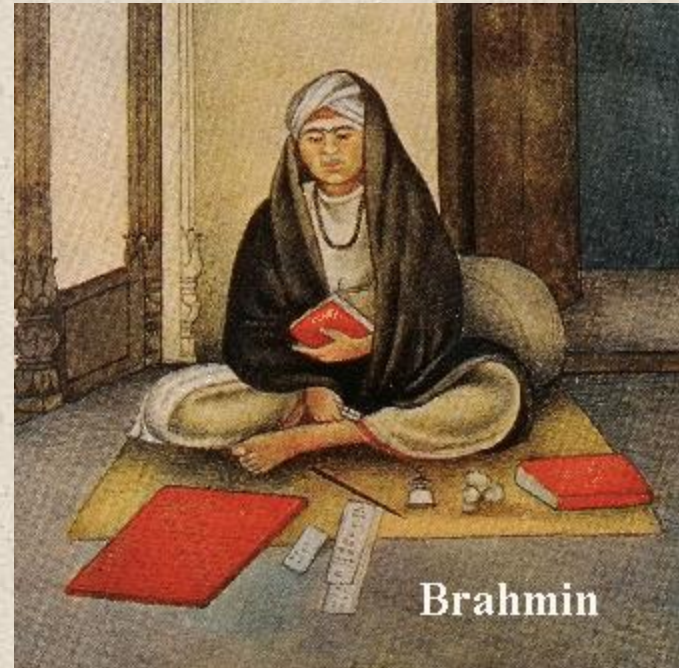
**Varna** literally means "color".

- Refers to the different class qualities (*guna*) that each of the four profession groups have in their hearts and minds.
- Four different qualities of human beings - white, red, yellow, black.

# Caste System

## **White** (*sattva* = truthful)

- Represents the qualities of purity, love, faith, and detachment
- Seek true knowledge
- Exists in individuals with a spiritual temperament
- Those that belong to this color, belong to the Brahmin class

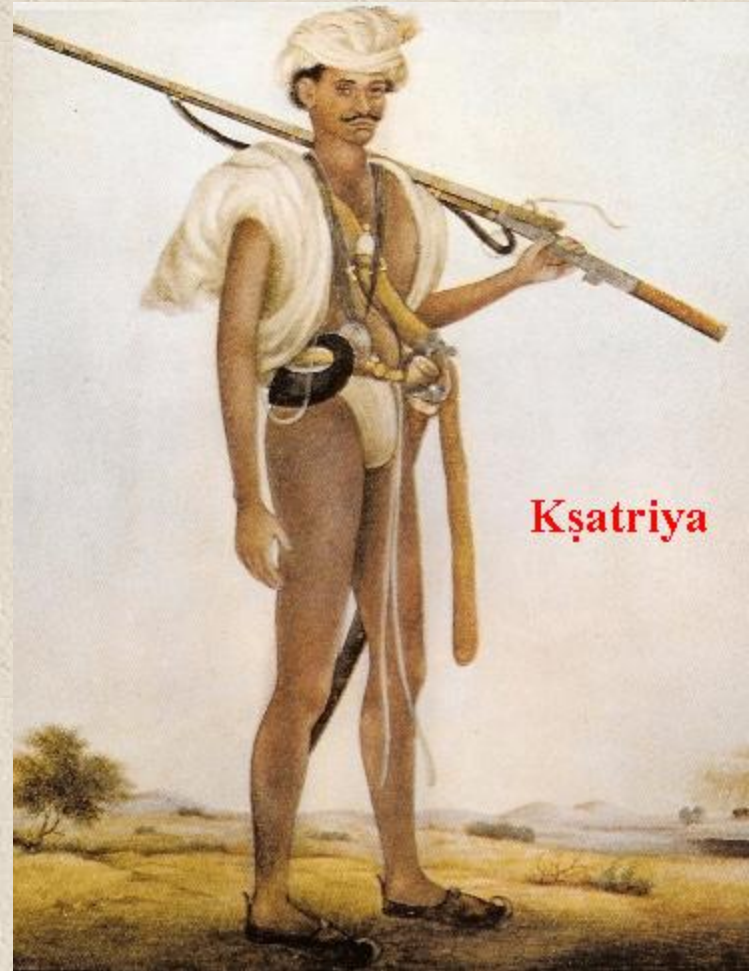




# Caste System

## **Red** (*rajas* = energetic)

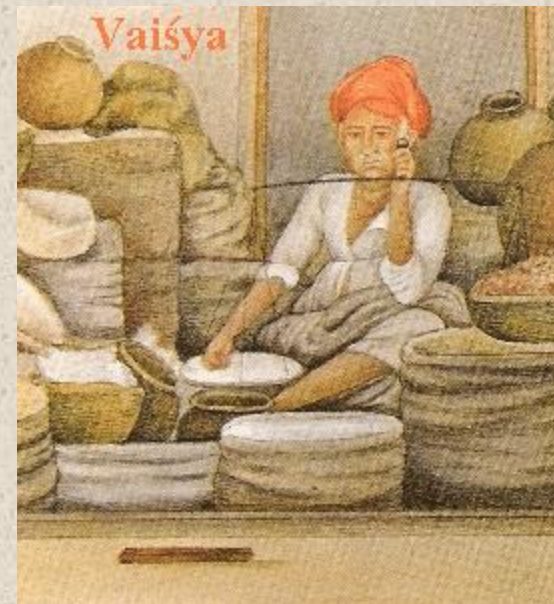
- Represents the qualities of action, will, aggression, and energy
- Seek honor, power, and status
- Exists in people with military and political temperaments
- Those that belong to this color belong to the Kshatriya class



# Caste System

**Yellow** (*rajas* = energetic)

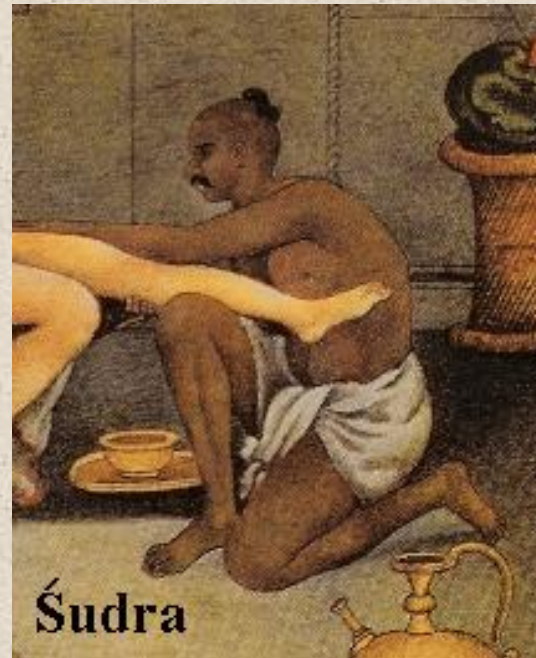
- Represents the same qualities as the red color
- Instead, those with this quality seek communication, interchange, trade, and business
- Exists in individuals with a commercial temperament
- They make up the Vaishya class



# Caste System

**Black** (tamas = slow to move or act, solid)

- Represents qualities of ignorance, sluggishness, and dullness
- Dependent on the rest of the world for motivation and seek nothing
- Exists in those with a submissive disposition
- Make up the Shudra class



# Caste System

Each caste grouping was subdivided into hundreds of categories:

Aravttokkalu Brahmins  
Audichya Brahmins  
Babburkamme Smartha Brahmins  
Bhumihar Brahmins  
Daivajna Brahmins  
Deshastha Brahmins  
Dhima Brahmins  
Gaur Brahmins  
Gouda Saraswat Brahmins  
Gurukkal or Shivacharya Brahmins  
Havyaka Brahmins  
Hebbar Iyengars  
Hoysala Karnataka Brahmins  
Iyers  
Kandavara Brahmins  
Kanyakubj Brahmins  
Karhada or Karade Brahmins  
Kashmiri Saraswats or Kashmiri  
Pundits  
Kayastha Brahmins

Khajuria or Dogra Brahmins of Jammu  
Khandelwal Brahmins  
Konkanastha or Chitpavan Brahmins  
Konkani Saraswat Brahmins  
Kota Brahmins  
Koteshwara Brahmins  
Kudaldeshkar Brahmins  
Madras Iyengars  
Madhwa Brahmins  
Maithili Brahmins  
Mandyam Iyengars  
Modh Brahmins  
Mohyal Brahmins  
Muluknadu Brahmins  
Nagar Brahmins  
Namboothiri Brahmins  
Niyogi Brahmins  
Padia Brahmins  
Punjabi Saraswat Brahmins  
Rajapur Saraswat Brahmins

Sakaldwipi Brahmins  
Sanketi Brahmins  
Sarypari Brahmins of Eastern Uttar  
Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh  
Sirinadu Smartha Brahmins  
Smartha Brahmins  
Sthanika Brahmins  
Shrimali Brahmins  
Shivalli Brahmins  
Saklapuri Brahmins  
Thenkalai Iyengars  
Tuluva Brahmins  
Vadagalai Iyengars  
Vadama Brahmins  
Vaidiki Brahmins  
Vaishnava Brahmins

# Caste System

## dharma

A code of conduct for each caste's members, spelling out their rights and duties which they were required to perform to contribute to society

### **Ten Essential Rules for the Observance of Dharma**

patience,  
honesty,  
reason,  
absence of anger

forgiveness,  
sanctity,  
truthfulness

piety or self control,  
control of senses,  
knowledge or learning,

Manu further writes, "Non-violence, truth, non-coveting, purity of body and mind, control of senses are the essence of dharma".

# Caste System

## dharma

That person is called a **Brahmin** who is

- sanctified by rites
- pure in behavior
- studying the Vedas
- devoted to the six well-known acts (washings every morning and evening, silent recitation of mantras, pouring rites on the sacrificial fire, worshipping the deities, doing the duties of hospitality to guests, and offering food to the Viswedevas)
- properly observing all pious acts
- never eats food without having offered it first to gods and guests
- filled with reverence for his teacher
- always devoted to vows and truth
- a vegetarian diet

# Caste System

## dharma

That person is called a **Kshatriya** who is

- engaged in the profession of battle
- studying the Vedas
- giving gifts to Brahmins
- taking wealth from those he protects
- consuming meat and alcohol

# Caste System

## dharma

That person is called a **Vaishya** who is

- earning fame from keeping cattle
- employed in agriculture and the means of acquiring wealth
- pure in behaviour
- studying the Vedas

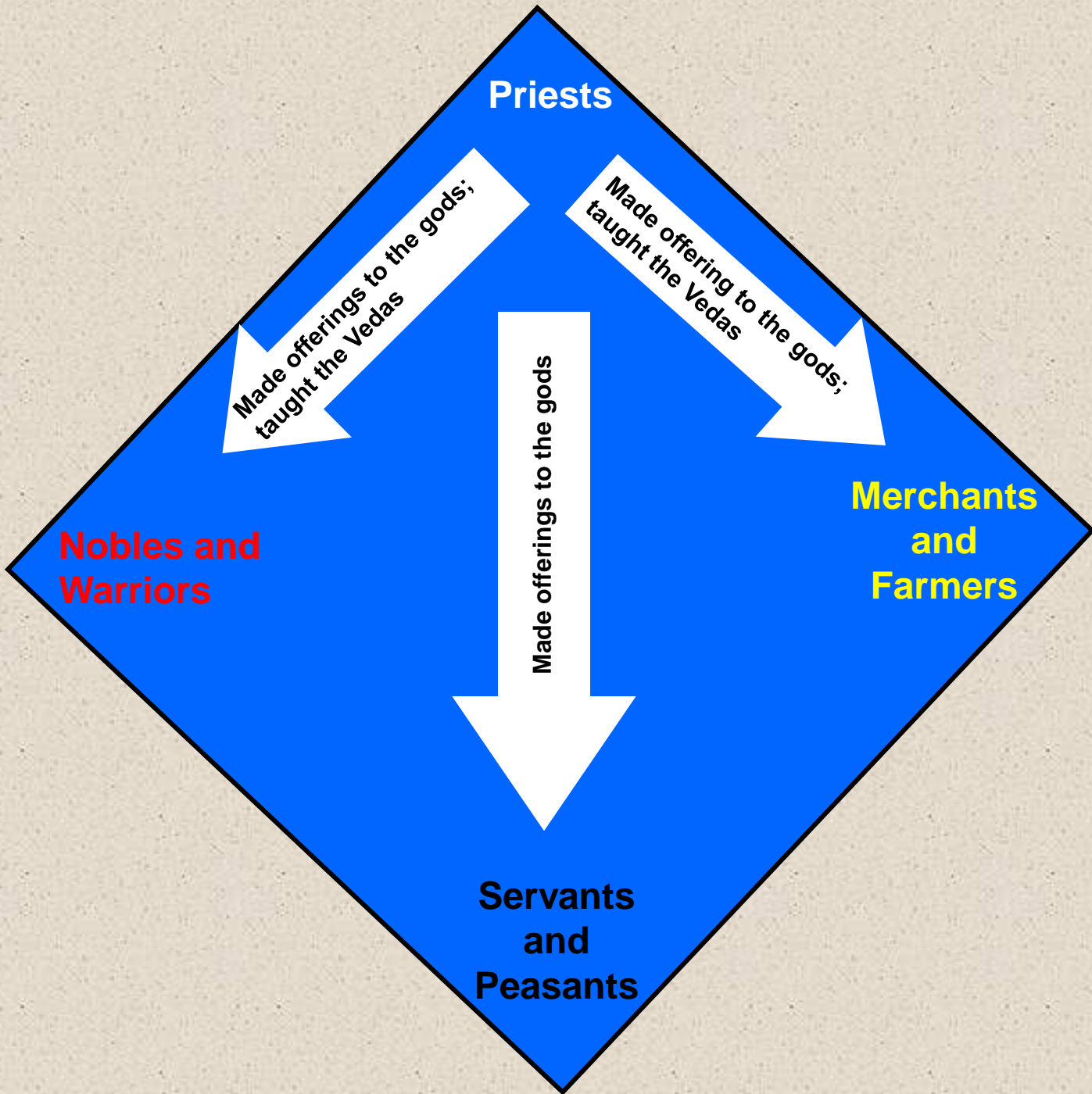


# Caste System

## dharmā

That person is called a **Shudra** who is

- eating every kind of food
- engaged in doing every kind of work
- impure in behavior
- not studying the Vedas
- engaged in conduct that is unclean



**Priests**

Made offerings to the gods;  
taught the Vedas

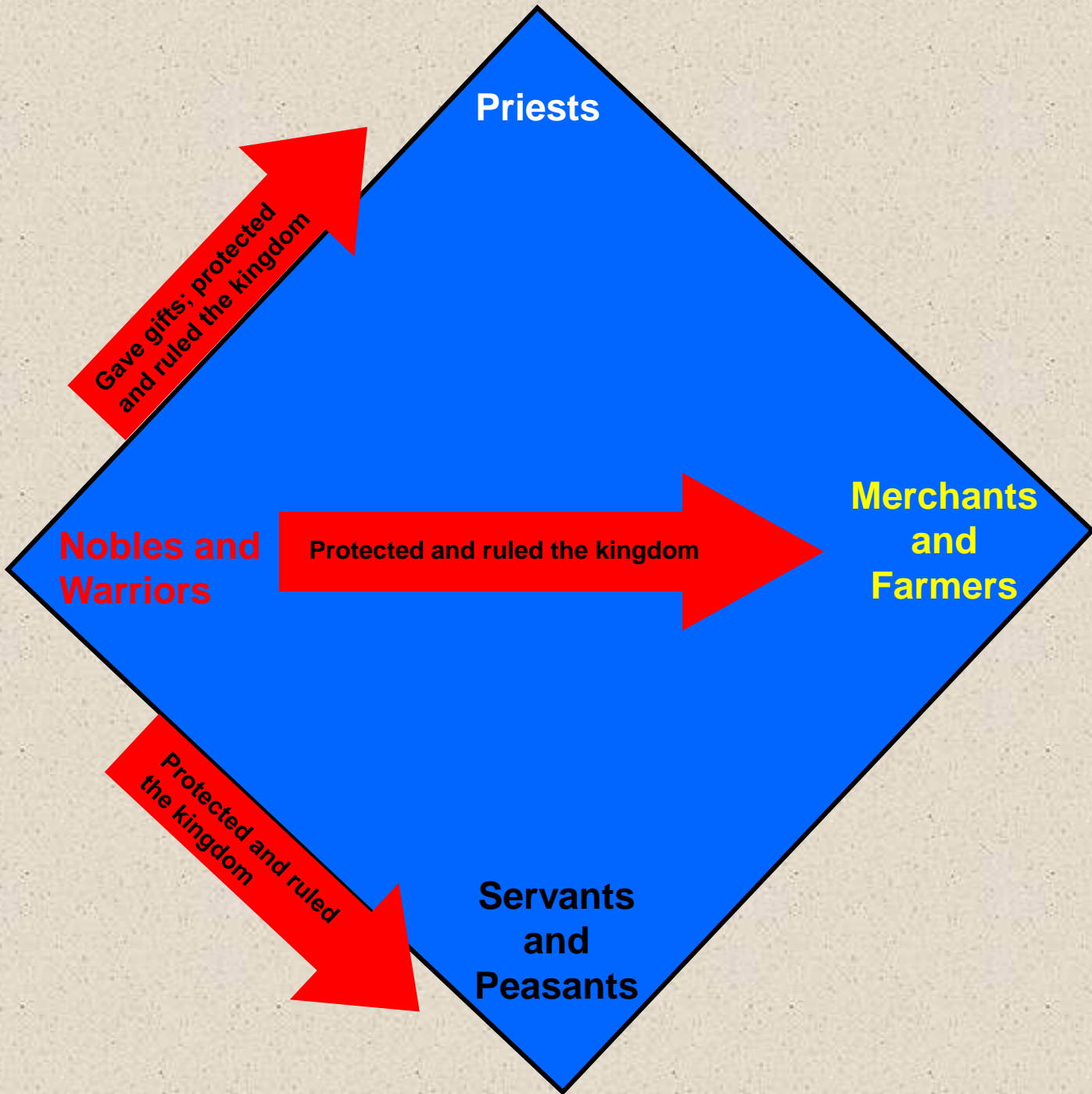
Made offering to the gods;  
taught the Vedas

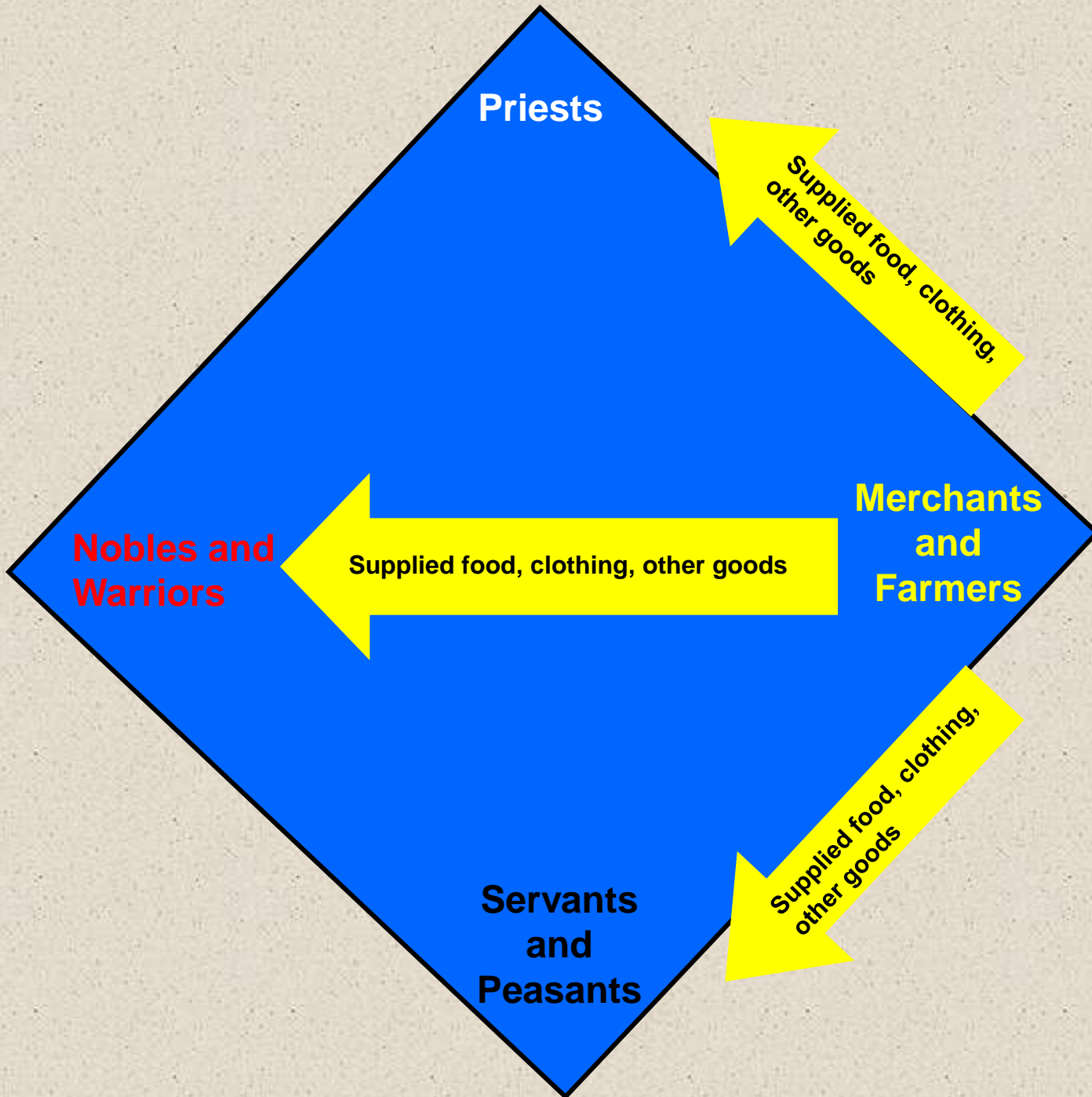
**Nobles and  
Warriors**

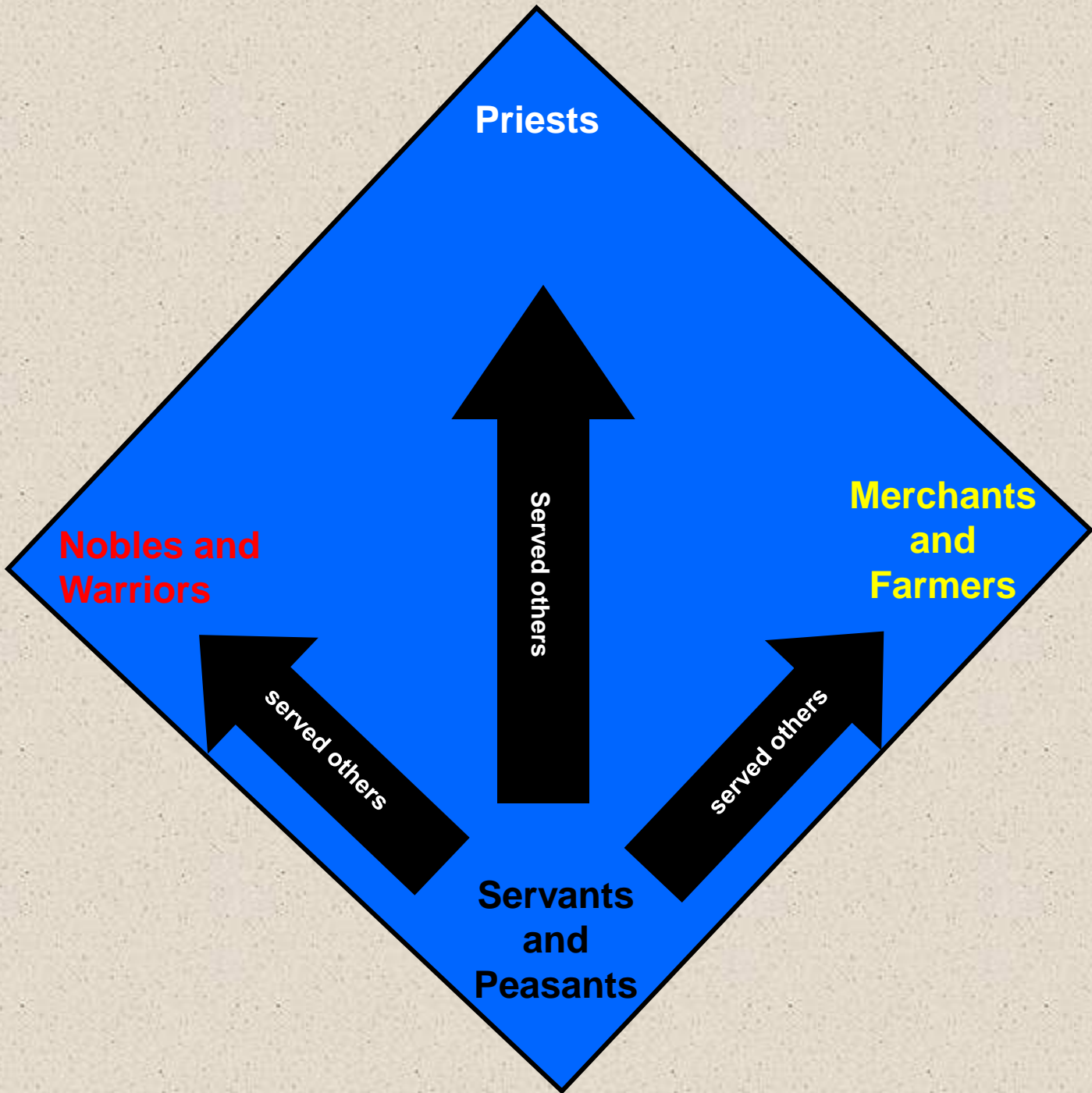
**Merchants  
and  
Farmers**

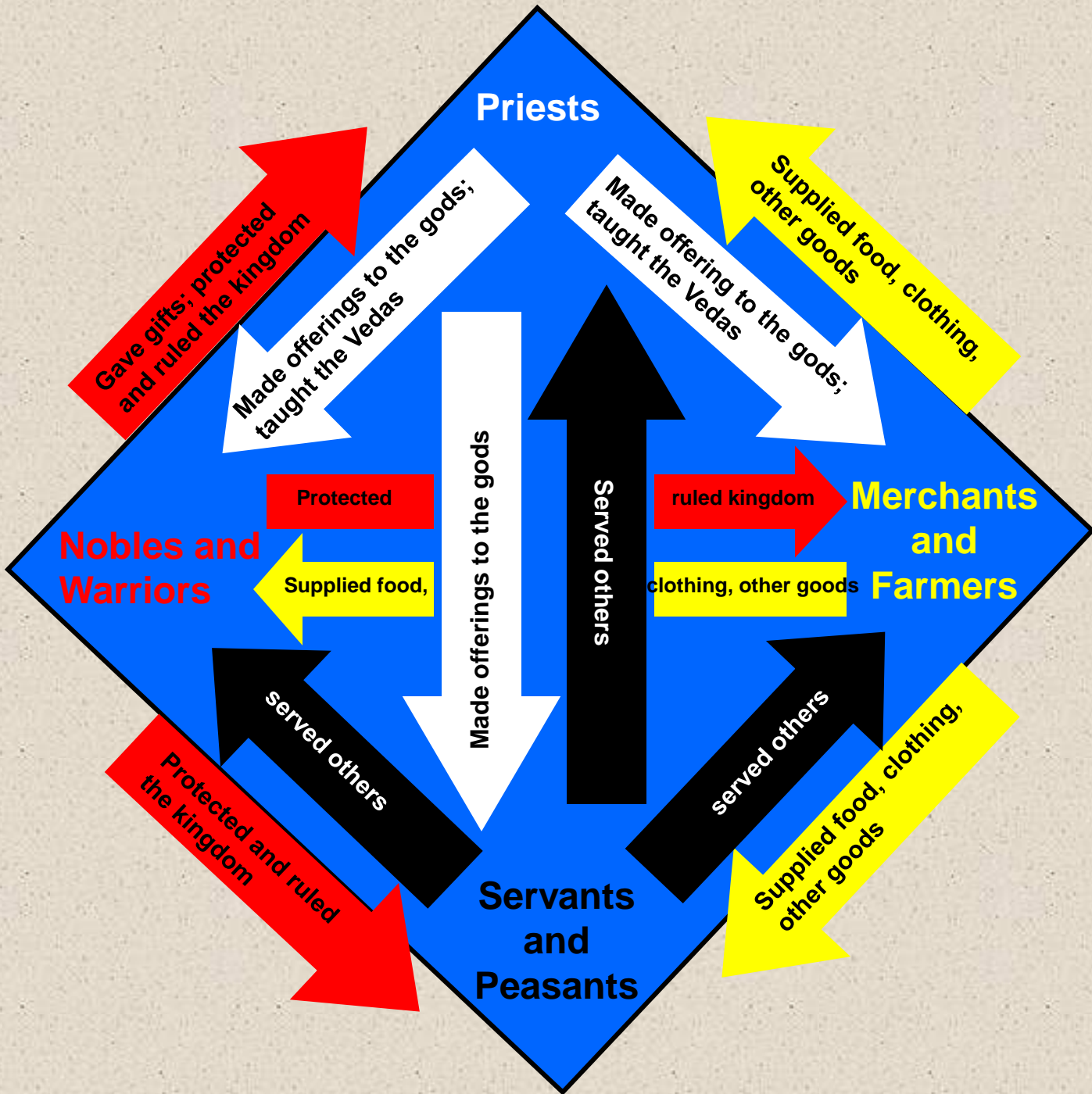
Made offerings to the gods

**Servants  
and  
Peasants**







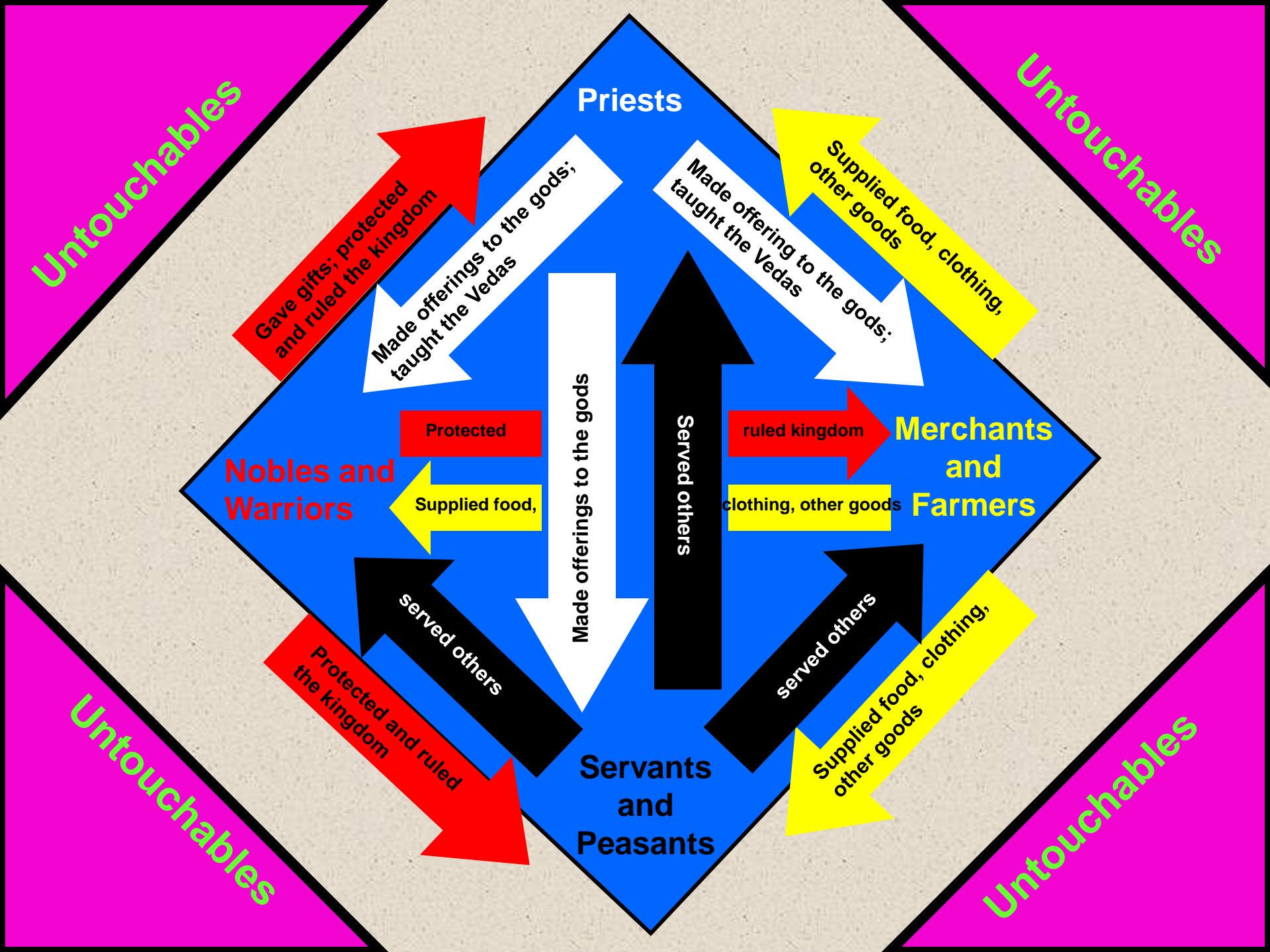


# Caste System

People who did not live by the rights and duties (dharma) of their caste were  
out of caste

## **1. Outcastes**

## **2. Untouchables**





# Caste System

## **Untouchables**

- polluting people
- their dwellings were at a distance from the settlements
- were not allowed to touch people from the four Varnas
- were not allowed to enter houses of the higher Varnas
- were not allowed to enter the temples
- were not allowed to use the same wells used by the Varnas
- were compelled to sit at a distance from the four Varnas
- even contact with their shadow was seen as polluting
- deal with the bodies of dead animals or unclaimed dead humans
- tanning leather, from dead animals, and manufacturing leather goods
- clean up human and animal waste

# Caste System

## **Caste System Analysis:**

- **Stable, traditional organization of Indian society**
- **Caste discrimination**
- **Untouchables**
- **Lack of upward social and economic movement through generations**
- **Caste violence**
- **Human nature**
- **Combined with religion to form Hinduism**