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Course: HIS113: World Civilization I: OB

Date: 02/28/2023

### **Research and Writing Assignment**

Ashoka was one of the most significant Indian emperors. Indians continue to immortalize him as a great pacifist in the country's history. Historians agree that brutality and cruelty marked his early years of rule. However, in the following years, Ashoka invaded Kalinga in 226 BC and witnessed the destruction and death, which triggered an awakening in his mind (Sanyal, par. 2). Eventually, Ashoka became a pacifist after converting to Buddhism. However, hypothetically, several things could have happened if Ashoka had not converted to Buddhism.

After taking a more non-violent philosophical model, Ashoka played a critical role in expanding Buddhism. For instance, he influenced the growth of the religion by sending monks to different territories and asking them to preach the teachings of Buddha ("The Birth and Spread of Buddhism"). The instructions triggered a wave of conversion that influenced the growth of the religion internationally. As a result, the world would not have experienced this rapid expansion had Ashoka not converted to Buddhism. His power and compassion were critical in changing Buddhism from a local to an international religion. Ashoka influenced the network connections via the monks and emphasized the doctrinal teachings of peace to convert more people. Therefore, the emperor remains a significant figure in the religion's growth.

Besides the international networks via the monks, Ashoka promoted religious doctrines such as dharma, which entails charitable deeds. In addition, Ashoka promoted various socio-religious edits and artifacts such as pillars and rock formations (Patton 134). Therefore, had he

not converted to Buddhism, the practice of this religion would have dwindled due to a lack of leadership and political support.

#### Works Cited

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