**Chapter Summary.** After the long period of disruption following Harappa’s fall—around 1500 B.C.E.—a new civilization arose in India. India became the third great center of classical civilization. The basis for Indian civilization after 1500 b.c.e. was laid by Aryan invaders who ended Harappan civilization. By 500 b.c.e., states ruled by kings claiming divine descent controlled much of the Ganges Plains. Its settlement resulted in the clearing of forest lands and contributed to broad climatic changes. Rigid social castes developed, with brahmans emerging as dominant because of their literary and religious functions. Discontented with empty rituals, ascetic holy men offered new religious ideas. One of these thinkers, now known as the **Buddha,** founded one of the great world religions—a religion that provided a powerful challenge to the brahmans and many of the ancient Vedic beliefs and practices.

1. What conclusions can be drawn from evidence at Ajanta and Ellora in central India about the nature of religion and society in classical India?

2. What nomadic group moved into India following the fall of the river valley civilization at Harappa?

3. What famous religious figure challenged older Indian religious beliefs? With whom did he conflict?

**the framework for indian history: geography and a formative period**

4. What two dynasties/empires were formed during this period of India’s history?

5. Why was China able to avoid influences from the Middle East and Mediterranean region when India was not?

6. What famous conqueror invaded India from the Mediterranean world and what culture did he spread?

7. What problem(s) does India’s diverse separate regions and topography cause for India’s unity?

8. Who originally developed the Vedas? In what language?

9. What was the basic topic of the Vedas?

10. The Aryans also developed and imposed social classes, or varnas, on India’s population. What was this social system called?

There were five basic varnas (social classes). Use the social class pyramid below to diagram and rank each of the varnas DURING THE EPIC AGE and after. You MUST include the Indian name of each varna along with its meaning. (ex. Sudras = ordinary laborers, Vaisyas = traders and farmers, etc.)

11. What determined which caste you belonged to?

12. Was it possible to move between castes? Why or why not?

13. Why do Greeks, the Scandinavians (e.g. the Vikings), and the Aryans have such similar gods? (Ex. All three have a god of thunder: Zeus, Thor,& Indra respectively)

14. The religious beliefs of the Aryans developed into what dominant religion in India to this day?

**patterns in classical india**

15. What famous southeastern European invaded India in 327 BCE and what state did he establish there?

16. What Indian dynasty was founded following the invasion mentioned above?

17. What similarity with China, particularly Han China, did this dynasty share?

18. Ashoka and Kanishka, both Indian rulers, converted to Buddhism yet one helped spread Buddhism in and beyond India while the other diminished Buddhism inside India. Identify and explain each ruler’s impact on the Buddhist faith.

19. Your text states that the Guptas “had perhaps greater impact” than the Mauryan rulers. How do you think the authors came to that conclusion? (HINT: time could be a factor, 90 years of Mauryan rule compared to 185 years of Gupta rule but there is another reason that might help explain why the Guptas ruled longer.)

20. What ended the Gupta empire?

**political institutions**

21. List the methods of political control used by the Guptas. How did political institutions in India compare with those found in classical China?

22. What was the impact of so many differing regional languages on any Indian political structure?

23. What was the most important and effective system that organized and governed the people of India’s daily lives?

24. What evidence can you see that merchants in India enjoyed a greater social status than merchants in China? (Remember Confucianism: despite their possible wealth, Chinese merchants were seen something like parasites as they focused on selfish moneymaking and not on learning or political service which helps Chinese society as a whole.)

**religion and culture**

25. What two major world religions developed in India?

26. Which of those two dominates India today?

27. Describe the relationship of those two religions toward other religions. Is this common? How do you account for this difference?

28. How is Hinduism different from all other world religions?

29. What do Hindus refer to their own religion as?

30. Define “reincarnation” and then give one reason why most Hindus do not eat meat. (another reason is that killing an animal is violent, something religious Hindus do not agree with)

31. Identify the basic obligations of life according to dharma.

32. How does Hinduism provide hope to people in the lowest castes?

33. What key aspect of Hinduism did Buddha reject and why might Buddhism appeal more to those in the lowest levels of Indian society and less so to those in the highest?

34. Why are priests not very important to Buddhists? (HINT: how do you achieve nirvana?)

35. Despite its origins in India, Buddhism enjoys a small following there today. However it does dominate in other regions to the east of India. Identify those areas and explain WHY Buddhism spread outside India.

36. How has Indian literature influenced Western literature?

37. What connection exists between University of Texas, Harvard, Rice University, etc. to Nalanda?

38. Identify classical Indian achievements in science.

Great Britain’s Edward Jenner is credited with developing the world’s first effective vaccination against smallpox in 1796. In the mid-1800s Great Britain made smallpox vaccinations mandatory for all British citizens. By 1977 smallpox as a human killing disease had been wiped out. Prior to this, huge numbers of people around the world suffered agonizing deaths each year. However, smallpox inoculations existed in India as early as 550 CE and perhaps as early as 1500 BCE. **Why do you think this knowledge didn’t spread?** Keep in mind that smallpox still existed in India even after inoculations were discovered there.

39. Why do we refer to our numbering system in the West as the “Arabic” system if it was created in India?

**economy and Society**

40. How did castes impact economic life?

41. How did castes impact social life?

42. What was the purpose behind arranged marriages?

43. How was the patriarchal family slightly different in India than in China?

44. What key technology were the Indians the best at?

45. What material was first manufactured in India that much later became a key staple of the American South?

46. How did Indian merchants compare to Chinese and Mediterranean merchants.

47. What did Tamil traders get from the Middle East and the Roman Empire?

**Indian Influence**

48. What body of water was key to Indian trade?

49. What other body of water was a key trading linkage during this period?

50. How did India influence Southeast Asia?

51. How did India influence China?

**THINKING HISTORICALLY: inequality as the social norm**

52. How do most modern Westerners believe a person’s place in society should be determined?

53. How were Europeans of the medieval period (roughly 500 CE to 1450 CE) more like classical Indians (and rural Indians today) than modern Europeans and other Westerners? (HINT: Lord, Baron, Earl, Duke, peasants, serfs)

54. Where could you find people in the classical period more like modern Westerners in their views of equality? (But modern females wouldn’t like it.)

55. What usually backed up views of inequality in classical societies?

56. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the classical view of inequality and the modern view of equality of opportunity?

**china and IndiA Compared**

57. How were China and India different? (NOTE: if you failed to completely fill in your double bubble earlier this is a good place to find missing info. 2nd NOTE: “Otherworldly” means “supernatural”, “imaginative”, “magical”, “paranormal” or “spiritual”)

58. How were China and India similar?

**Visualizing the past: the pattern of trade in the ancient eurasian world**

59. What Chinese products were in demand by the elite of Rome?

60. What products were shipped from East Africa?

61. What is the first product you see listed as shipping from the islands of Southeast Asia?

How many “zones” is the map divided into?

**NOTE: All of the above products and their origins are important for the course. Get familiar with them. They’ll pop up later.**

**Global Connections: India and the wider World**

62. Your text states that classical India was more open to outside influence than any other. Using the map on the opposite page, explain why this is true. (NOTE: India was also often invaded from the northwest by nomads from Central Asia.)

63. While the Indian Ocean was the primary trading route for Indian merchants, a famous road existed to the north some also used. What was it?