

## Chapter 1

- 1.) Richard Leakey proposed that, “Humans are unique because they have the capacity to choose what they do.” What is the significance of this statement? When did humans develop the ability to choose? Could you carry this definition over the rise of complex societies?
- 2.) Are there dark sides to the rise of complex societies? In other words, is every aspect of civilization good? Are there still problems today that stretch back to the rise of civilization?
- 3.) Explain the concept and ramifications of the term “civilization.” Bentley and Ziegler, the authors of the text, prefer the term “complex societies” to the word “civilization.” Why would they draw this distinction? How did the activities of prehistoric humans more towards civilization?
- 4.) Trace the development of *Australopithecus*, *Homo erectus*, and *Homo sapiens*. What effect were they having on the world around them?
- 5.) Examine the profound changes brought about by the discovery of agriculture. How did this seemingly simple discovery change the course of human history?
- 6.) Explore the culture of the Paleolithic Age. What does it say about their changing world? In what ways did Paleolithic humans try and make sense of the world?
- 7.) Richard E. Leakey, in the section on page 13, points out that “communication is a vital thread of all animal life.” How does this statement relate to early humans?

## Chapter 2

- 8.) In Hammurabi’s Code of Law dealing with a wife reads, “If she was not careful, but was a gadabout, thus neglecting her house and humiliating her husband, they shall throw her into the water.” What can we learn about the status of women in Babylonia from this passage? What was the life of women like in Mesopotamia?
- 9.) Examine the rise of Mesopotamians. What were the political and cultural foundations of their society? Who were the most important leaders?
- 10.) Examine the history of the Hebrews. Why did they have so much trouble uniting into a powerful political force? How might their wanderings and misfortune display themselves in Judaism?
- 11.) What role did the Indo-Europeans play in history? What were their main contributions?
- 12.) Compare and contrast the religious beliefs of the Mesopotamians, Egyptians, Hebrews and Assyrians. What do the differences tell us about these societies?
- 13.) Examine the map on page 57. Trace the migrations of the Indo-Europeans. How influential were these journeys – and how do they continue to shape the world today?
- 14.) Examine the creation of early methods of writing. How did this innovation influence the lives of the peoples of the ancient world?

## Chapter 3

- 15.) What were the major achievements of the Egyptians? How did they influence later societies?
- 16.) What could the modern reader learn about the relationship between Egypt and Nubia by reading Harkhuf’s account of his journey to Nubia? What did the two societies have in common?
- 17.) Discuss the concept of an afterlife. Why did the Egyptians reach a complex understanding of this concept before the Mesopotamians? Does this mean that the Egyptians were morbid?
- 18.) Compare and contrast the Indo-European and Bantu migrations. How did they influence the areas they visited?

- 19.) Examine the social structure of the Mesopotamians and Egyptians. What were the conditions for women like during this period?
- 20.) Examine the map on p. 65 Identify the main geographic factors that influenced the development of Egypt. Where is the population the densest? Why?
- 21.) Trace the political history of the Egyptians. What were the major contributions, and distinguishing accomplishments, of the Old, Middle and New kingdoms?
- 22.) Explain the importance of the Bantu migration. Why did they migrate and what technological and religious did they spread with their migration?

#### Chapter 4

\*\*\*Note today the term **Aryan** is often associated with racist groups like the Nazis or the Aryan Nation. In a global history perspective Aryans were an Indo-European (originally from what is today southern Russia) group that migrated to India. They eventually fused with the Dravidians the resulting melding of religious beliefs gave birth to a new religion called Hinduism.

- 23.) Compare Hinduism with other religions such as Judaism and Christianity? In what was is Hinduism different?
- 24.) What are the advantages and disadvantages of a social system like the caste system? How does the caste system reflect the values of Indian society?
- 25.) Compare and contrast the Harappan society to its counterparts in Mesopotamia and Egypt in regards to political, religious and social structures.
- 26.) Examine the role of women, and how it changed in ancient India. How does the Law book of Manu (p.101) reflect this transformation?
- 27.) Look at the representation of Indra on p. 103. How important was Indra to the ancient Aryans? What conclusions can you draw from a group that had a god like Indra?
- 28.) Read the *Chandogya Upanishad* on p. 105. What basic tenets of Hinduism are expressed in these analogies?

#### Chapter 5

- 29.) China has been described as a “secular”. Is this a fair assessment? Why or why not?
- 30.) Describe the technological advancements of the Shang and Zhou. Describe their political and social structure.
- 31.) What geographic features kept China relatively isolated? Please summarize the complex and seemingly contradictory relationship between the agrarian Chinese and the nomadic people of the steppes, the area to the north and west of the populated areas of China.