

Classical Eastern Civilizations Study Guide

Humanities/Mr. George

INDIA (CHAPTERS 3.1, 7.1, 7.2)

CHINA (CHAPTERS 2.4, 4.4, 7.3)

E Block

Key Concepts:

1. Explain the rise and fall of the Mauryan Empire in India

The Mauryan empire began when Chandragupta Maurya gathered an army, killed king Nanda of Magadha and claimed the throne in 321 B.C. Later, Asoka, Chandragupta's grandson took power and paved way for the rise of the empire. Though at first he participated in many wars, he converted to Buddhism and became very anti-violence. He treated his subjects fairly and humanely, and started building up infrastructure. His death led to a loss of power in the empire and many attacks from invaders followed.

2. Explain the rise and fall of the Gupta Empire in India

The rise of the Gupta Empire started in Magadha with ruler Chandra Gupta. He married the daughter of a royal family and soon after, rose to power. His empire included Magadha and land to the north. His son took over in A.D. 335 and expanded the empire in the duration of 40 years of battle. The Gupta Empire was greatly involved in trade in the Mediterranean and alliances. The falling of this vast empire started with the death of Chandra Gupta II when invaders, called the Hunas, threatened northern India and later resulted in division of the Gupta Empire into much smaller kingdoms overrun by the Hunas and other Central Asian nomads.

3. Describe advancements of Indian culture under the Gupta Empire

A period of great achievement in the art, religious thought, science, astronomy, medicine, and mathematics.

- Astronomy: sailors used the stars to figure their position at sea. Also, they concluded the Earth was round by observing a lunar eclipse and noting the earth's shadow was curved.
- Mathematics: Modern numerals, the zero, the decimal system, and the value of pi for four decimal place originated in India.
- Medicine: They described more than 1,000 diseases and more than 500 medicinal plants. They performed plastic surgery and gave injections.
- Art: Literature and drama popular.
- religious thought: Started the trend toward monotheistic thought. Changed Hinduism due to popularity of Buddhism.

4. How did Hinduism and Buddhism change in order to allow for more popular worship

Hinduism and Buddhism both underwent changes in order to ensure their prevalence in society. Buddhism divided into two different sections, people that can believe that Buddha was a god and people who decided he wasn't a god. The people that believed that he was a god they could give up nirvana and work to save humanity. This changed it from a religion that emphasizes individual discipline to a mass religion that that offered salvation to all and allowed popular worship. Hinduism was also quickly losing its followers as it involved complex sacrifices that only priests could perform, so those who weren't priests lost interest. The religion still worshipped a multitude of gods, but showed a growth towards monotheism because many people believed in a single divine force. The various gods, including Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, all represented smaller parts of a supreme whole that people

devoted themselves to. People felt more connected to the religion as it grew more personal, and therefore Hinduism increased in popularity

5. How did the geography of India and China impact its development?

The geography of China and India provided protection from outside invaders. In China, The oceans, rivers, deserts, mountain ranges, and valleys served as natural barriers. It was difficult for people to cross the Gobi desert or the Himalayan mountains, due to the journeys being very treacherous. When people wished to trade, they had to take the Silk Road, or sail around through the oceans. In India, the eastern and Western Ghats (western mountain range) served as a barrier along the seas, The Himalayan mountains walled off the north of India.

6. Explain the policies/achievements of the following dynasties- Zhou

During the Zhou Dynasty, many policies/achievements arose. Roads and canals were built to stimulate trade and agriculture. Coined money was also introduced, which further improved necessary trade. Another innovation was blast furnaces that produced cast iron. The Zhou used iron to create weapons (dagger-axes and swords), and agricultural tools (knives and spades). Iron tools made farm work more efficient and easy. Some policies the Zhou Dynasty established were feudalism, a system in which nobles and lords granted the use of land that legally belonged to the king.

7. Explain the policies/achievements of the following dynasties- Qin

The ruler of the Qin dynasty, Shi Huangdi, employed Legalist ideas to subdue the warring states and unify his country. The new emperor began his reign by halting the internal battles that had weakened China's strength and turned his attention to defeating invaders and crushing resistance within China to his rule. He later introduced a policy called "strengthening the trunk and weakening the branches" which destroyed the power of rival warlords. Shi Huangdi established an autocracy.

8. Explain the policies/achievements of the following dynasties- Han

The Han Dynasty had a bureaucracy and the government forced taxes on their citizens. The government also required peasants to serve in the military or complete heavy labor every year, which helped advance the dynasty. The Chinese practiced confucianism during the Han Dynasty. The government established monopolies, which had exclusive control over the production and distribution of certain goods, such as salt, iron, coins, and alcohol. Additionally, the Chinese invented paper, a collar harness for horses, and the wheelbarrow during the Han Dynasty. They also improved the plow. The Chinese also established a centralized government and the Han family started to force commanders to report to them. Also during the Han Dynasty, the Chinese established a clearly defined social structure, with emperors at the top and slaves & soldiers at the bottom.

9. How were the Chinese religions/philosophies implemented in government policies?

They used confucianism to fill government posts, it taught them respect, generosity truthfulness, diligence and kindness. Those were the qualities that government officials needed to possess.

10. Explain the significance of the bureaucracy and civil servants established in the Han Dynasty

A bureaucracy is a system where civilians, called civil servants, completed different tasks or jobs. In the Han Dynasty, the bureaucracy included 18 different ranks of civil service jobs, which ultimately organized the empire. This helped the emperor because he had others help him to complete certain tasks.

11. What role did the Silk Roads and trading in general play in the spread of ideas and culture?