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## UNIT 1 THE ANCIENT WORLD 1

### Issue 1. Was an Aryan Invasion Responsible for the Demise of the Indus Valley Civilization? 2

**YES:** Stanley Wolpert, from *India* (University of California Press, 1991) 4

**NO:** Romila Thapar, from *Early India: From the Origins to A.D. 1300* (University of California Press, 2004) 10

Historian Stanley Wolpert states that the Aryan invasion of the Indus Valley did occur and played a role in the demise of the latter's civilization. Historian Romila Thapar argues that multiple factors were responsible for the demise of the Indus Valley Civilization and asserts that the Aryan penetration into India was migratory rather than belligerent, resulting in a fusion of the two cultures.

### Issue 2. Was Sumerian Civilization Exclusively Male Dominated? 24

**YES:** Chester G. Starr, from *A History of the Ancient World* (Oxford University Press, 1965) 26

**NO:** Samuel Noah Kramer, from "Poets and Psalmists: Goddesses and Theologians: Literary, Religious, and Anthropological Aspects of the Legacy of Sumer," in Denise Schmandt-Besserat, ed., *The Legacy of Sumer: Invited Lectures on the Middle East at the University of Texas at Austin* (Undena Publications, 1976) 33

Historian Chester G. Starr finds Sumerian society to be male dominated, from the gods to human priests and kings, and he barely acknowledges the status of women in either the heavenly or the earthly realm. Museum curator Samuel Noah Kramer relies on much of the same data as Starr, but finds powerful goddesses and earthly women to have played prominent roles in both cosmic and everyday Sumerian life.

### Issue 3. Were the Spartans Fighting for a Compromised View of Freedom at Thermopylae? 42

**YES:** Paul Cartledge, from "To Die For?" *History Today* (August 2002) 44

**NO:** Byron Farwell, from "The Spartan Way," *World and I* (March 1999) 50

Cambridge University Professor of Greek History Paul Cartledge argues that the Spartan notion of freedom was predicated on their enslavement

of an underclass of Helots, thus creating a compromised view of freedom. Military historian Byron Farwell finds a more complicated relationship between the Spartiates who enjoyed full citizenship and the Helots who fought beside them at Thermopylae.

#### **Issue 4. Does Alexander the Great Deserve His Historical Reputation? 55**

**YES:** N. G. L. Hammond, from *The Genius of Alexander the Great* (University of North Carolina Press, 1997) 57

**NO:** Ian Worthington, from "How 'Great' Was Alexander?" *The Ancient History Bulletin* (April–June 1999) 63

Professor emeritus of Greek N. G. L. Hammond states that research has proven that Alexander the Great is deserving of his esteemed historical reputation. Classic historian Ian Worthington counters that Alexander's actions were self-serving and eventually weakened his Macedonian homeland; therefore, he does not merit the historical reputation he has been given.

#### **Issue 5. Did Christianity Liberate Women? 72**

**YES:** Karen L. King, from "Women in Ancient Christianity: The New Discoveries," A Report from *FRONTLINE* (April 6, 1998) 74

**NO:** Lisa Bellan-Boyer, from "Conspicuous in Their Absence: Women in Early Christianity," *Cross Currents* (Spring 2003) 81

Professor of New Testament Studies and the History of Ancient Christianity Karen L. King presents evidence from biblical and other recently discovered ancient texts to illuminate women's active participation in early Christianity—as disciples, apostles, prophets, preachers, and teachers. Art historian Lisa Bellan-Boyer uses mimetic theory to explain why women's richly diverse roles were severely circumscribed in the name of unity and in order to make the new religion of Christianity acceptable in the Greco-Roman world.

#### **Issue 6. Were Internal Factors Responsible for the Fall of the Roman Empire? 90**

**YES:** Adrian Goldsworthy, from *How Rome Fell: Death of a Superpower* (Yale University Press, 2009) 92

**NO:** Peter Heather, from "The Huns and the End of the Roman Empire in Western Europe," *The English Historical Review* (February 1995) 101

Historian Adrian Goldsworthy states that internal military and political conditions were responsible for the fall of the Roman Empire. Professor of history Peter Heather claims that the invasion of the Huns forced other barbarians to use tribal unity as a survival technique and to seek safety within the confines of the Roman Empire, thus permitting the invasion of the Huns to bring about the fall of the Roman Empire.

## **UNIT 2 THE MEDIEVAL/RENAISSANCE WORLDS 111**

#### **Issue 7. Did the Byzantine Empire Benefit from the Rule of Justinian and Theodora? 112**

**YES:** **Paolo Cesaretti**, from *Theodora: Empress of Byzantium* (Transworld Publishers, 2002) 114

**NO:** **Procopius**, from *Secret History*, trans. by Richard Atwater (P. Covici, 1927; Covici Friede, 1927; University of Michigan Press, 1961) 123

Professor of Byzantine studies, Paolo Cesaretti, presents a balanced view of the accomplishments of Justinian and Theodora in the Byzantine Empire of the sixth century. Procopius, a contemporary of the Byzantine rulers, offers a “secret history” of their personal and administrative failings.

## **Issue 8. Did Environmental Factors Cause the Collapse of Maya Civilization? 132**

**YES:** **David Drew**, from *The Lost Chronicles of the Maya Kings* (University of California Press, 1999) 134

**NO:** **Payson D. Sheets**, from “Warfare in Ancient Mesoamerica: A Summary View,” in M. Kathryn Brown and Travis W. Stanton, eds., *Ancient Mesoamerican Warfare* (AltaMira Press, 2003) 139

Writer and documentary presenter David Drew emphasizes environmental factors and their effects on Maya civilization as primarily responsible for its collapse. Anthropology professor Payson Sheets stresses military expansion as a potential cause of the Maya Collapse.

## **Issue 9. Could the Crusades Be Considered a Christian Holy War? 149**

**YES:** **Arthur Jones**, from “Memories of Crusades Live on in Today’s War,” *National Catholic Reporter* (October 26, 2001) 151

**NO:** **Jonathan Phillips**, from “Who Were the First Crusaders?” *History Today* (March 1997) 159

Editor-at-large Arthur Jones presents a case for calling the Crusades a Christian holy war and finds resonances of that long-ago conflict in today’s Muslim-Christian conflicts. Lecturer in medieval history Jonathan Phillips finds motivations for the Crusades in religious fervor, the desire for wealth, and a family history of pilgrimage, not in holy war.

## **Issue 10. Does the Modern University Have Its Roots in the Islamic World? 167**

**YES:** **Mehdi Nakosteen**, from *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education: A.D. 800–1350* (University of Colorado Press, 1964) 169

**NO:** **Walter Rüegg**, from “The University as a European Institution,” in Hilde De Ridder-Symoens, ed., *A History of the University in Europe, volume I* (Cambridge University Press, 1992) 177

Professor of history and philosophy of education Mehdi Nakosteen traces the roots of the modern university to the Golden Age of Islamic culture (750–1150 C.E.). He maintains that Muslim scholars assimilated the best of classical scholarship and developed both the experimental method and the university system, which they passed on to the West before declining. Emeritus professor of sociology Walter Rüegg calls the university “the

European institution *par excellence*,” citing its origin as a community of teachers and taught, accorded certain rights that included the granting of degrees, and as a creation of medieval Europe—the Europe of papal Christianity.

### Issue 11. Did Women Benefit from the Renaissance? 185

**YES:** Margaret L. King, from *Women of the Renaissance* (University of Chicago Press, 1991) 187

**NO:** Joan Kelly-Gadol, from “Did Women Have a Renaissance?” in Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard, eds., *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 2d ed. (Houghton Mifflin, 1987) 194

Historian Margaret L. King surveys Renaissance women in domestic, religious, and learned settings and finds reflected in their lives a new consciousness of themselves as women, as intelligent seekers of a new way of being in the world. Historian Joan Kelly-Gadol discovered in her work as a Renaissance scholar that well-born women seemed to have enjoyed greater advantages during the Middle Ages and experienced a relative loss of position and power during the Renaissance.

### Issue 12. Did China’s Worldview Cause the Abrupt End of Its Voyages of Exploration? 201

**YES:** Nicholas D. Kristof, from “1492: The Prequel,” *The New York Times Magazine* (June 6, 1999) 203

**NO:** Bruce Swanson, from *Eighth Voyage of the Dragon: A History of China’s Quest for Seapower* (Naval Institute Press, 1982) 208

Journalist Nicholas D. Kristof states that China’s worldview, shaped by centuries of philosophical and cultural conditioning, was responsible for its decision to cease its maritime ventures during the Ming dynasty. Naval historian Bruce Swanson acknowledges that China’s worldview played a role in its decision to cease its maritime programs, but maintains that there were other, more practical considerations that were responsible for that decision.

## UNIT 3 THE PREMODERN WORLD 221

### Issue 13. Did Christopher Columbus’s Voyages Have a Positive Effect on World History? 222

**YES:** Robert Royal, from “Columbus and the Beginning of the New World,” *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life* (May 1999) 224

**NO:** Gabriel Garcia Marquez, from “For a Country Within Reach of the Children,” *Americas* (November/December 1997) 233

Robert Royal states although there were negatives that emanated from Columbus’s New World discoveries, they continue to “remind us of the glorious and ultimately providential destiny on the ongoing global journey that began in the fifteenth century.” Nobel laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez argues that Columbus’s voyages had a negative effect on the Americas, much of which is still felt today.

## Issue 14. Was Gender a Major Issue in Queen Elizabeth I of England's Reign? 240

**YES:** Retha Warnicke, from "Elizabeth I: Gender, Religion and Politics," *History Review* (September 2007) 242

**NO:** Susan Doran, from "Elizabeth I: Gender, Power & Politics," *History Today* (May 2003) 249

Professor and author Retha Warnicke states that gender was a major issue in Elizabeth I's reign. Lecturer and author Susan Doran argues that Elizabeth I's gender had less impact on her reign than is generally assumed.

## Issue 15. Did Martin Luther's Reforms Improve the Lives of European Christians? 257

**YES:** Robert Kolb, from *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, Hero: Images of the Reformer, 1520–1620* (Baker Books, 1999) 259

**NO:** Hans Küng, from *Great Christian Thinkers*, trans. John Bowden (Continuum, 1996) 266

Religion and history professor Robert Kolb contends that Martin Luther was seen as a prophetic teacher and hero whose life brought hope, divine blessing, and needed correctives to the Christian church. Theologian and professor emeritus of theology Hans Küng views Martin Luther as the inaugurator of a paradigm shift and as the unwitting creator of both bloody religious wars and an unhealthy subservience by ordinary Christians to local rulers in worldly matters.

## Issue 16. Were the Witch Hunts in Premodern Europe Misogynistic? 274

**YES:** Anne Llewellyn Barstow, from "On Studying Witchcraft as Women's History: A Historiography of the European Witch Persecutions," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* (Fall 1988) 276

**NO:** Robin Briggs, from "Women as Victims? Witches, Judges and the Community," *French History* (1991) 285

History professor Anne Llewellyn Barstow claims that the European witch hunt movement made women its primary victims and was used as an attempt to control their lives and behavior. History professor Robin Briggs states that although women were the witch hunt's main victims, gender was not the only determining factor in this sociocultural movement.

## Issue 17. Was the Scientific Revolution Revolutionary? 296

**YES:** Edward Grant, from "When Did Modern Science Begin?" *American Scholar* (Winter 1997) 298

**NO:** Steven Shapin, from *The Scientific Revolution* (University of Chicago Press, 1996) 306

Distinguished professor emeritus of history and philosophy of science Edward Grant argues that there was a revolution in science that took place in the seventeenth century; however, it might have been delayed by

centuries if several key developments between 1175 and 1500 had not paved the way for it. Professor of sociology and historian of science Steven Shapin questions the idea of a Scientific Revolution, suggesting greater continuity with the past and rejecting a single time/space event we might call a Scientific Revolution.

**Issue 18. Did the British Enlightenment Pave the Way for the Modern World? 314**

**YES: Roy Porter**, from "Matrix of Modernity," *History Today* (April 2001) 316

**NO: John Robertson**, from "The Enlightenment," *History Review* (September 1997) 325

Professor of social history, Roy Porter, contends in his Royal Historical Society Gresham Lecture that British thinkers of the eighteenth century were influential in the Enlightenment. John Robertson, a university lecturer in modern history, finding greater geographic diversity and intellectual complexity, argues that the Enlightenment conversations that shaped modern thought did not occur in the eighteenth-century England where political liberty and intellectual freedom were already in place.

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