

History



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Sources from the Past: Readings in History February The caste system in the Aryan social structure 4. Briefly explain the origins of the caste system.

Include the original Aryan social structure. Define “ caste.” Name the castes that developed in the late Vedic Age. A caste in the Aryan belief system, called ‘ varna’, is part of a hierarchical arrangement of society. Each varna has certain rights and duties. The caste system (varnas) is described in the Rig Veda, which reflects the views of the Brahmin priesthood among the Aryans. The four castes were recognizable around 1000 BCE (). The division was part of the creation process. For example, the highest caste of Brahmins came about from the mouth of the primeval being Purusha. The other castes were the Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. These three castes came about from the Purusha’s arms, thighs and feet respectively. The relative heights of these bodily locations correspond exactly to the relative levels of the four castes in the social hierarchy. There are many other castes in the Aryan social structure as well, but the aforementioned are the main four. Source: Ralph T. Griffith, trans. The Hymns of the Rigveda, 4 vols., 2nd ed. Benares: E. J. Lazarus, 1889–92, 4: 289–93. The ‘ Mandate from Heaven’ and its

significance 5. What is the meaning of the “ Mandate from Heaven?” Why was it significant to the Zhou Dynasty? How did a ruler know he had lost the mandate from heaven? The expression ‘ mandate from heaven’ refers to the legitimacy of the Chinese emperor’s right to rule the throne. Thus, Chinese emperors acquired their office not merely through exercising force but through permission of divine origin. This mandate made the emperor a holder of absolute power though limited by his responsibility towards heaven. A failure to fulfill this responsibility and in enforcing basic morals had the consequence of resulting in a loss of the divine mandate. This would

be indicated for example by the occurrence of abnormal weather conditions, natural catastrophes or celestial irregularities. The concept of a 'mandate from heaven', called 'tianming', was first developed by the Zhou dynasty in order to justify their conquest of the previous Shang dynasty. Furthermore, the divine mandate was significant to them so that they could retain the right to rule and continue to receive blessings. Sources: (1) Wolfram Eberhard. A History of China. Reprinted edition. Plain Label Books. 1967. (2) PSU. Topics in Pre-Modern Chinese History. Ch. 2, Classical China. Penn State University. 16 February 2011. <http://www.east-asian-history.net/textbooks/index.htm>.

The Mayan bloodletting rituals 6. What was the purpose of the Mayan bloodletting rituals? How were captives involved in bloodletting? Blood sacrifices were an important part of the Mayan belief system and lifestyle. Bloodletting rituals were held by kings to mark every stage of life and important events both religious and political. This included births, accessions, and anniversaries. By conducting these rites, they also believed they could traverse cosmic boundaries and contact spirit ancestors and deities through altered states of consciousness. Following success in a battle, blood was also collected from the captives to offer to the gods. Blood from the ear, tongue and penis foreskin was considered to be the most sacred. Thus, blood was also taken from kings and queens because it helped to keep the cosmos in order and divine blood specifically helped to communicate with gods. Source: Lynn V. Foster. Handbook to life in the ancient Maya world. Infobase Publishing. 2002. Pp. 191-194. The Ionian revolt against the Persians 7. Why did the Greeks of Ionia revolt against the Persians? How successful was Darius against the Greeks? Which Greek person finally led the invasion of Persia? The Greeks of Ionia revolted against <https://assignbuster.com/history-essay-samples-33/>

Persia around 500 BCE as the first phase of the confrontation between the two civilizations. Although it is known as the ' Ionian revolt', other Greeks from outside of Ionia also participated. It is not certain whether Persian rule was oppressive at the time following the peaceful reign of Cyrus the Great. The revolt turned out to be a failure but it was as Herodotus described the situation, " the beginning of troubles". The second successor Darius blamed Athens and Eretria for assisting in the revolt and sought revenge, which led to the Marathon campaign. Darius was successful against the Greeks because the excuse helped to expand his empire. However, the tide turned during the later Battle of Marathon. The Greek command during this battle was vested in 10 generals but it was a civil official named Callimachus who decided in favor of attacking. Miltiades then became the commander-in-chief who finally led the invasion of Persia. Source: Britannica Educational Publishing. Ancient Greece: From the Archaic Period to the Death of Alexander the Great. The Rosen Publishing Group. 2010. Pp. 69-72.