

Chapter 5—Society and Inequality in Eurasia/North Africa, 500 B.C.E. –500 C.E.

Seeking the Main Point

To what extent were the massive inequalities of second-wave civilizations generally accepted, and in what ways were they resisted or challenged?

Download and save this document so you can return to it as you take notes and for studying. As you read the chapter, fill in the chart below to remind you of instances where inequality was accepted and where it was resisted or challenged. If you copy and paste from the text, make sure to put quotation marks around the copied material; however, if you can think of a way to put it into your own words, you should do so.

	Accepted	Resisted/Challenged
Society and the State in China	•	•
An Elite of Officials	•	•
The Landlord Class	•	•
Peasants	•	•
Merchants	•	•
Class and Caste in India	•	•
Caste as Varna	•	•
Caste as Jati	•	•
The Functions of Caste	•	•
Slavery: The Case of the Roman Empire	•	•
Slavery and Civilization	•	•
The Making of Roman Slavery	•	•
Resistance and Rebellion	•	•
Comparing Patriarchies	•	•
A Changing Patriarchy: The Case of China	•	•
Contrasting Patriarchies in Athens and Sparta	•	•
Reflections: Arguing with Solomon and the Buddha	•	•

After you have read the chapter, use your notes to compose an essay that answers this question:

How can one best account for the relative stability of second-wave civilizations despite the massive social inequalities inherent in these societies?

Be sure to include an opening, introductory paragraph in which you state your thesis. Then use the body of your essay to provide evidence from the chapter to support that thesis. When thinking about how to organize this essay, you might want to consider what second-wave societies shared and what was distinctive to specific societies. You might also consider what specific challenges or outright resistance to the social order can reveal about stability in these societies. End by writing a clear conclusion to your essay.