Chapter 4

Classical Civilizations in the Mediterranean and Middle East
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I. The Persian Empire: A New Perspective in the Middle East
II. Patterns of Greek and Roman History
III. Greek and Roman Political Institutions
IV. Religion and Culture
V. Economy and Society in the Mediterranean
VI. Toward the Fall of Rome
### Classical Civilizations in the Mediterranean and Middle East

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1200 B.C.E.</th>
<th>600 B.C.E.</th>
<th>400 B.C.E.</th>
<th>200 B.C.E.</th>
<th>1 C.E.</th>
<th>200 C.E.</th>
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<tr>
<td>1122–770 Former or western Zhou kingdom</td>
<td>551–c. 233 Period of the &quot;hundred philosophers&quot; (including Confucius, Laozi, Mencius, Xunzi, the Legalists)</td>
<td>c. 400–320 Era of Xunzi</td>
<td>200 B.C.E.–9 C.E. Former Han dynasty; development of the horse collar, stern-post rudder, and watermill</td>
<td>23–220 Later Han dynasty; invention of paper and the compass</td>
<td>2nd century Development of porcelain</td>
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<td>770–403 Later or eastern Zhou kingdom</td>
<td>403–222 Warring States period</td>
<td>221–207 Qin dynasty</td>
<td>141–87 Reign of Han Wudi</td>
<td>9–23 Interregnum of Wang Mang</td>
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The Persian Empire: A New Perspective in the Middle East

Cyrus the Great, 550 B.C.E.
- Persian Empire
- Political Styles
  - Tolerance for other cultures
  - Authoritarianism
  - Infrastructure, especially roads
  - Bureaucracy
The Persian Empire: A New Perspective in the Middle East

Zoroastrianism
  – Zoroaster (c. 630-550 B.C.E.)
  – Individual salvation
  – Monotheism
  – Magi, priests
  – Great influence
The Persian Empire: A New Perspective in the Middle East

Later Persian Empire

– Dominated Middle East
  ▪ Conquests into Africa and Indian subcontinent
– Conquered by Alexander the Great
Patterns of Greek and Roman History

Stages in Greek Development

– City-States, 800-600 B.C.E.
  ▪ Common culture
  ▪ Some periods of unity, cooperation

– Domination of Sparta and Athens, 500-449 B.C.E.
  ▪ High point of Greek culture

– Fifth Century B.C.E.
  ▪ Pericles, dominates Athenian politics
  ▪ Peloponnesian Wars (431-404 B.C.E.)
Patterns of Greek and Roman History

The Hellenistic Period

– Philip II of Macedon
  ▪ Defeats Greeks, 338 B.C.E

– Alexander the Great
  ▪ Extends empire

– Period of merging of cultures
Patterns of Greek and Roman History

Rome

– Roman Republic from 509 B.C.E.
  ▪ Military emphasis
  ▪ Punic Wars, against Carthage (264-146 B.C.E.)

– Empire
  ▪ Julius Caesar victory over rivals, 45 B.C.E.
  ▪ Augustus Caesar, rules from 27 B.C.E.
  ▪ Empire strong to about 180 C.E.
  ▪ Renewed vigor under Diocletian, Constantine
Alexander’s Empire and the Hellenistic World, c. 323 B.C.E.
Greek and Roman Political Institutions

Greece – The Polis

– Athens - direct democracy – the assembly
  ▪ Lottery for positions
  ▪ Citizen body a minority of the population

– Most city states were oligarchies
  ▪ Aristocratic assemblies
  ▪ Sparta
Greek and Roman Political Institutions

Rome

– Balance
– Senate – dominated by aristocrats
– Consuls
– Dictator
Political Theory in Ancient Greece and Rome

- Duties of citizens, political ethics, oratory
- Participation stressed
- Comparison of the merits of different forms
- Romans developed law code
  - Twelve Tables, by 450 B.C.E.
  - Law comes to take the place of fathers
  - Spread of code to empire, and citizenship
Greek and Roman Political Institutions

Roles of Government

– Public works
  ▪ Help to unite empire
– Maintaining law courts, police power
– Official religion
Religious Values

- Religion largely concerned with the here and now
- Mystery religions offered a more spiritual approach
- Division between elite and popular belief
Religion and Culture

Philosophy

– Provided a system of ethical behavior
– Aristotle, Cicero
  • Stressed balance
– Stoics stress inner life
Science and Philosophy

– Socrates – encouraged questioning
– Speculation on the physical world
  ▪ Theories about the universe, the nature of matter
– Mathematics, especially geometry
– Hellenistic period
  ▪ More empirical work in physics
  ▪ Euclid, Galen
Religion and Culture

The Arts

– Drama: comedy and tragedy
  ▪ Balance between virtue and emotions
  ▪ Sophocles *Oedipus the King*
– Epics, the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*
– Architecture
– Roman engineering
Economy and Society in the Mediterranean

Agriculture and Trade

- Constant trend to market farming
  - Led to trade
  - Grain from Egypt

- Merchants
  - Officially, legally respected
  - Not socially esteemed
Economy and Society in the Mediterranean

Slavery

– From conquest
– Becomes a motive for expansion
– Technological innovation in farming lacking
  - Unfavorable trade balance with eastern Asia
Economy and Society in the Mediterranean

Family

– Patriarchal

– Women have economic role
  ▪ Some women active in commerce
  ▪ Women could own property
A Complex Legacy

What Survived?

– Enduring ideas
– No polities
– Direct and indirect
  ▪ Consciously imitated, revived
  ▪ Mingled with Middle Eastern legacy
Global Connections: Persia, Greece, Rome, and the World

• Persia
  – Maintained contact between East and West

• Greece
  – Traders, expansionist
  – Alexander the Great
    ▪ New contacts between Mediterranean, Persia, India

• Rome
  – Variety of contacts