CHAPTER 1

NATURE, HUMANITY, AND HISTORY:
THE FIRST FOUR MILLION YEARS

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should:

1. Be able to describe the development and the significance of the relationship between hominids and their changing environment and be able to identify the three distinctive traits of human beings.

2. Be able to describe the ways in which early humans adapted to different environments and be able to differentiate between hunter-gatherer and food-producing economies.

3. Be able to analyze the environmental causes and the environmental effects of the transition from hunter-gatherer to food-producing economies.

4. Be able to describe the relationship between the development of different economies (hunter-gatherer, agricultural, pastoral) and their different social and cultural characteristics.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. African Genesis
   A. Interpreting the evidence
      1. In 1859 Charles Darwin published On the Origin of Species, in which he suggested that species evolve over long periods of time through the process of natural selection. With regard to human beings, Darwin speculated that humans must be “descended from a hairy, tailed quadruped,” and that the process of human evolution must have started in Africa.
      2. Discoveries of hominid skeletal remains in Java (1891) and Beijing (1929) indicated Asian origins for human beings. However, the African origins of human beings were suggested by the discovery of Australopithecus africanus in 1924 and confirmed by the work of the Leakeys in eastern Africa beginning in 1950.
      3. Archaeological evidence and understanding of the evolution of other species has helped the scientists to trace the evolution of human beings over a period of four million years.
   B. Human evolution
      1. The australopithecines and modern humans are hominids, which are members of the primate family. Hominids such as australopithecines were distinguished from other primates by three characteristics: bipedalism, a very large brain, and a larynx located low in the neck.
2. Scientists theorize that these characteristics gave hominids advantages in the struggle for survival during the climatic changes of the Great Ice Age (Pleistocene period). Further climate changes 2 to 3 million years ago are thought to be the cause of the evolution of *Homo habilis*, whose brain was 50% larger than that of the australopithecines.

3. By 1 million years ago *Homo habilis* and all of the australopithecines were extinct. They were replaced first by *Homo erectus* (1.8 million years ago) and then by *Homo sapiens* (400,000 to 100,000 years ago).

C. Migrations from Africa

1. Both *Homo erectus* and *Homo sapiens* migrated from Africa to various parts of Europe and Asia, their migration facilitated by the low sea levels associated with the Ice Age. *Homo sapiens* migrated from Africa during a wet period (40,000 years ago) and crossed the land bridge to the Americas during the last glacial period (32,000–13,000 years ago). The low sea levels associated with this period also allowed *Homo sapiens* to reach Japan and New Guinea/Australia.

2. These migrations were accompanied by very minor physical evolutionary changes such as changes in skin pigmentation. For the most part, however, humans adapted to their new environments not through biological evolution, but through a process of cultural adaptation.

II. History and Culture in the Ice Age

A. Food gathering and stone technology

1. The period known as the Stone Age lasted from two million years ago to four thousand years ago. It is subdivided into the Paleolithic (Old Stone Age—to 10,000 years ago) and the Neolithic (New Stone Age).

2. The Paleolithic age is characterized by the production of stone tools that were used in scavenging meat from dead animals and later in hunting. *Homo sapiens* proved to be particularly good hunters and may have caused or helped to cause the extinction of mastodons and mammoths about 11,000 years ago.

3. The diet of Stone Age people probably consisted more of foraged vegetable foods than of meat. Human use of fire can be traced back to 1 to 1.5 million years ago, but conclusive evidence of cooking (in the form of clay pots) can only be found as far back as 12,500 years ago.

B. Gender divisions and social life

1. The slow maturation rate of human infants and the ability of adult humans to mate at any time of the year are thought to be causes of the development of the two-parent family that is one of the characteristics of the hominids.

2. Researchers believe that in Ice Age society women would have been responsible for gathering, cooking, and child-care, while men would have been responsible for hunting. The hunter-gatherers probably lived in fairly small groups and migrated regularly in order to follow game animals and to take advantage of seasonal variations in the ripening of foraged foods.

C. Hearths and cultural expressions

1. Migrating hunter-gatherer groups lived in camps, using natural shelter when available and building temporary shelters when the climate required it; permanently established fishing communities made more solid structures. Clothing was made of animal skins sewn together with vegetable fiber and rawhide cords.

2. Hunter-gatherers probably had to spend no more than three to five hours a day on getting food, clothing, and shelter. This left them a certain amount of time for cultural activities: gathering, organizing and passing on information, art, and religion.

3. Cave art suggests that Ice Age people had a complex religion. Their burial sites indicate that they may have believed in an afterlife.
III. The Agricultural Revolutions

A. The transition to plant cultivation

1. Agricultural revolutions—the domestication of plants and animals—were a series of changes in food production that occurred independently in various parts of the world. Changes in global climate were probably the cause of these transformations.

2. The first stage of the long process of domestication of plants was semicultivation, in which people would scatter the seeds of desirable food-producing plants in places where they would be likely to grow. The next stage was the use of fire to clear fields and specialized tools to plant and harvest grain.

3. The transition to agriculture is best documented in the Middle East, but the same sort of transition took place independently in other parts of the world, including the eastern Sahara, the Nile Valley, Greece, and Central Europe. Early farmers practiced swidden agriculture, changing fields periodically as the fertility of the soil became depleted.

4. The environments in which agriculture developed dictated the choice of crops. Wheat and barley were suited to the Mediterranean area; sorghum, millet and teff to sub-Saharan Africa; yams to Equatorial West Africa; rice to eastern and southern Asia, and maize, potatoes; quinoa and manioc to various parts of the Americas.

B. Animal domestication and pastoralism

1. Domestication of animals proceeded at the same time as domestication of plants. Human hunters first domesticated dogs; sheep and goats were later domesticated for their meat, milk, and wool.

2. As with plants, domestication of animals occurred independently in various parts of the world, and the animals domesticated were those that suited the local environment. In most parts of the world the domestication of plants went along with the domestication of animals as animals were used for pulling plows and supplied manure for fertilizer.

3. There were two exceptions to the pattern of plant and animal domestication accompanying one another. In the Americas there were no animals suitable for domestication other than llamas, guinea pigs, and some fowl, and so hunting remained the main source of meat, and humans the main source of labor power. In the arid parts of Central Asia and Africa, the environment was not appropriate for settled agriculture, but it could support pastoralists who herded cattle or other animals from one grazing area to another.

C. Agricultural and ecological crisis

1. Most researchers agree that humans made the transition from hunter-gatherer to agricultural or pastoralist economies because the global warming of the Holocene period (beginning 9000 B.C.E.) brought with it environmental changes that reduced the supplies of game and wild food plants. The agricultural revolutions brought about a significant increase in the world’s human population—from 10 million in 5000 B.C.E. to between 50 and 100 million in 1000 B.C.E.

IV. Life in Neolithic Communities

A. Rural population and settlement

1. Food producing is more work than food gathering, and initially it provided a diet that was less nutritious and less healthy than that of the hunter-gatherers. The advantage of food production is that it provides a reliable source of food that can be stored to tide the community over seasonal fluctuations and natural disasters.

2. The ability to produce small surpluses gave food-producing communities an advantage over food-gathering communities. The food producers thus experienced greater population growth over a long period of time and eventually displaced food gatherers in Europe.
3. Early food-producing societies were organized in kinship groups that may have been matrilineal. There is no specific evidence to support the theory of matrilineal or patrilineal descent of the kinship groups of early agricultural societies, nor is there any evidence to support theories that such societies may have been matriarchies.

B. Cultural expressions
1. The early food producers appear to have worshiped ancestral and nature spirits. Their religions centered on sacred groves, springs, and wild animals and included deities such as the Earth Mother and the Sky God. Some of these beliefs may be reflected in ancient Hindu texts.
2. Early food-producing societies used megaliths (big stones) to construct burial chambers, calendar circles, and to aid in astronomical observations.
3. The expansion of food-producing societies may be reflected in the patterns in which the Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, and Afro-Asiatic language groups are dispersed around the Eastern Hemisphere.

C. Early towns and specialists
1. Most people in early food-producing societies lived in villages, but in some places, the environment supported the growth of towns in which one finds more elaborate dwellings, facilities for the storage of surplus food, and communities of specialized craftsmen. The two best-known examples of the remains of Neolithic towns are at Jericho and Çatal Hüyük. Jericho, on the west bank of the Jordan River, was a walled town with mud-brick structures and dates back to 8000 B.C.E.
2. Çatal Hüyük, in central Anatolia, dates to 7000–5000 B.C.E. Çatal Hüyük was a center for the trade in obsidian. Its craftsmen produced pottery, baskets, woolen cloth, beads, and leather and wood products. There is no evidence of a dominant class or centralized political leadership.
3. The art of Çatal Hüyük reflects a continued fascination with hunting, but the remains indicate that agriculture was the mainstay of the economy. The remains also indicate that the people of Çatal Hüyük had a flourishing religion that involved offerings of food. Evidence indicates that the religion may have centered on the worship of a goddess and have been administered by priestesses.
4. The remains at Çatal Hüyük include decorative or ceremonial objects made of copper, lead, silver, and gold. These metals are naturally occurring, soft, and easy to work, but not suitable for tools or weapons, which continued to be made from stone.
5. The presence of towns like Jericho and Çatal Hüyük indicates the emergence of a form of social organization in which food producers had to support non-producing specialists such as priests and craftspeople and their labor had to be mobilized for nonproductive projects such as defensive walls, megalithic structures, and tombs. We do not know whether this labor was free or coerced.

V. Conclusion
A. The early hominids' struggle to survive in the changing environments of the early Ice Age led to the physical evolution of human beings.
B. The early humans then used their physical and mental capabilities to make cultural adaptations that allowed them to live in different natural environments
C. The only hominid to successfully adapt to its environment was *homo sapiens sapiens*; all the other hominid species became extinct.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did the physical and cultural characteristics of hominids change over time, and how do scientists document and explain these changes?

2. How have changes in the environment influenced the physical development of the human species?

3. What is culture? Do environmental conditions and changes in the techniques of production have an effect on culture? If so, how?

4. What effects did the agricultural revolutions have on neolithic societies?

5. What were women’s roles in the first 4 million years of human history? What evidence can we find that might give us some indications of what women’s roles may have been? Does the evidence indicate how women’s roles may have changed over time? How and why might such change have occurred?

LECTURE TOPICS


Sources:


2. The agricultural revolutions.

Sources:

3. Megaliths and their meanings

Sources:


4. Çatal Hüyük: a Neolithic town

Sources:


5. Women in prehistoric times

Sources:


PAPER TOPICS

1. What is the relationship between toolmaking and changes in the physical and cultural characteristics of hominids and early humans?

2. Choose a particular part of the world and research the question of when and how agriculture developed in that area.

3. “There is sufficient evidence to prove the theory that contemporary human beings are the descendants of hairy, tailed quadrupeds from Africa.” Write a paper in which you agree or disagree with this statement.

4. Compare the transition from hunting and gathering to food production in the Eastern and the Western Hemispheres.
INTERNET RESOURCES

The following Internet sites contain written and visual material appropriate for use with this chapter. A more extensive and continually updated list of Internet resources can be found on The Earth and Its Peoples web site. Refer to the preface of this manual for information on how to locate the text homepage.

PaleoArt
http://www.subtlemoon.com/paleo/

Paleolithic painted cave of Lascaux
http://www-sor.inria.fr/~pierre/lascaux/

Neolithic Art
http://www.hermitagemuseum.org/html_Eng/03/hm3_2_2.html

Archaic southern Africa: Rock art
http://www.hp.uab.edu/image_archive/ta/tab.html

Çatal Hüyük
http://www2.hawaii.edu/~edaniel/visuals/Catalhoy.htm
CHAPTER 2
THE FIRST RIVER-VALLEY CIVILIZATIONS, 3500–1500 B.C.E.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should:

1. Be able to define the term “civilization” and understand the relationship between river valley environments, irrigated agriculture, and the emergence of the earliest civilizations.

2. Know the locations and the time periods of Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Indus Valley civilizations.

3. Be able to draw comparisons between the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Indus Valley civilizations.

4. Be able to trace the development of social and political institutions and religious beliefs in river valley civilizations and understand the relationship between these institutions and beliefs and the natural environment.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Mesopotamia
   A. Settled agriculture in an unstable landscape
      1. Mesopotamia is the alluvial plain area alongside and between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The area is a difficult environment for agriculture because there is little rainfall, the rivers flood at the wrong time for grain agriculture, and the rivers change course unpredictably.
      2. Mesopotamia does have a warm climate and good soil. By 4000 B.C.E. farmers were using cattle-pulled plows and a sort of planter to cultivate barley. Just after 3000 B.C.E. they began constructing irrigation canals to bring water to fields farther away from the rivers.
      3. Other crops and natural resources of the area included date palms, vegetables, reeds and fish, and fallow land for grazing goats and sheep. Draft animals included cattle and donkeys and, later (second millennium B.C.E.), camels and horses. The area has no significant wood, stone, or metal resources.
      4. The earliest people of Mesopotamia and the initial creators of Mesopotamian culture were the Sumerians, who were present at least as early as 5000 B.C.E. By 2000 B.C.E. the Sumerians were supplanted by Semitic-speaking peoples who dominated and intermarried with the Sumerians but preserved many elements of Sumerian culture.
B. Cities, kings, and trade
1. Early Mesopotamian society was a society of villages and cities linked together in a system of mutual interdependence. Cities depended on villages to produce surplus food to feed the nonproducing urban elite and craftsmen. In return, the cities provided the villages with military protection, markets, and specialist-produced goods.
2. Together, a city and its agricultural hinterland formed what we call a city-state. The Mesopotamian city-states sometimes fought with each other over resources like water and land; at other times, city-states cooperated with each other in sharing resources. City-states also traded with one another.
3. City-states could mobilize human resources to open new agricultural land and to build and maintain irrigation systems. Construction of irrigation systems required the organization of large numbers of people for labor.
4. Although we know little of the political institutions of Mesopotamian city-states, we do have written and archeological records of two centers of power: temples and palaces. Temples were landholders and their priests controlled considerable wealth. Their religious power predates the secular power of the palaces.
5. Secular leadership developed in the third millennium B.C.E. when “big men” (lugal), who may have originally been leaders of armies, emerged as secular leaders. The lugal ruled from their palaces and tended to take over religious control of institutions. The Epic of Gilgamesh provides an example of the exercise of secular power.
6. Eventually some of the city-states became powerful enough to absorb others and thus create larger territorial states. Two examples of this development are the Akkadian state, founded by Sargon of Akkad around 2350 B.C.E. and the Third Dynasty of Ur (2112–2004 B.C.E.).
7. A third territorial state was that established by Hammurabi and known to historians as the “Old Babylonian Kingdom.” Hammurabi is also known for the Law Code associated with his name, which provides us with a source of information about Old Babylonian law, punishments, and society.
8. The states of Mesopotamia needed resources and obtained them not only by territorial expansion, but also through a flourishing long-distance trade. Merchants were originally employed by temples or palaces; later, in the second millennium B.C.E. private merchants emerged. Trade was carried out through barter.

C. Mesopotamian society
1. Mesopotamia had a stratified society in which kings and priests controlled much of the wealth. The three classes of Mesopotamian society were: (1) the free landowning class; (2) dependent farmers and artisans; (3) slaves. Slavery was not a fundamental part of the economy, and most slaves were prisoners of war.
2. Some scholars believe that the development of agriculture brought about a decline in the status of women as men did the value-producing work of plowing and irrigation. Women had no political role, but they could own property, control their dowry, and engage in trade. The rise of an urban merchant class in the second millennium B.C.E. appears to have been accompanied by greater emphasis on male privilege and an attendant decline in women’s status.

D. Gods, priests, and temples
1. The religion of Mesopotamia was an amalgam of Sumerian and later Semitic beliefs and deities. Mesopotamian deities were anthropomorphic, and each city had its own tutelary gods.
2. Humans were regarded as servants of the gods. In temples, a complex, specialized hereditary priesthood served the gods as a servant serves a master. The temples themselves were walled compounds containing religions and functional buildings.
3. We have little knowledge of the beliefs and religious practices of common people. Evidence indicates a popular belief in magic and in the use of magic to influence the gods.

E. Technology and science

1. Technology is defined as "any specialized knowledge that is used to transform the natural environment and human society." Thus defined, the concept of technology includes not only things like irrigation systems, but also nonmaterial specialized knowledge such as religious lore and ceremony and writing systems.

2. The Mesopotamian writing system (cuneiform) evolved from the use of pictures to represent the sounds of words or parts of words. The writing system was complex, required the use of hundreds of signs, and was a monopoly of the scribes.

3. Cuneiform was developed to write Sumerian, but was later used to write Akkadian and other Semitic and non-Semitic languages. Cuneiform was used to write economic, political, legal, literary, religious, and scientific texts.

4. Other technologies developed by the Mesopotamians included irrigation, transportation technologies (boats, barges, the use of donkeys), bronze metallurgy, brickmaking, engineering, and pottery, including the use of the potters wheel.

5. Military technology employed in Mesopotamia included paid, full-time soldiers, horses, the horse-drawn chariot, the bow and arrow, and siege machinery. Mesopotamians also used numbers (a base-60 system) and made advances in mathematics and astronomy.

II. Egypt

A. The land of Egypt: "gift of the Nile"

1. The land of Egypt is defined by the Nile River, the narrow green strip of arable land on either side of its banks, and the fertile Nile delta area. The rest of the country is barren desert, the unfriendly "Red Land" that contrasted with the "Black Land" which was home to the vast majority of the Egyptian population.

2. Egypt was traditionally divided into two areas: Upper Egypt, along the southern part of the Nile as far south as the First Cataract, and Lower Egypt, the northern delta area. The climate was good for agriculture, but with little or no rainfall, farmers had to depend on the river for irrigation.

3. The Nile floods regularly and at the right time of year, leaving a rich and easily worked deposit of silt. Egyptian agriculture depended upon the floods, and crops could be adversely affected if the floods were too high or not high enough. Generally speaking, however, the floods were regular, and this inspired the Egyptians to view the universe as a regular and orderly place.

4. Egypt's other natural resources included reeds (such as papyrus for writing), wild animals, birds and fish, plentiful building stone and clay, and access to copper and turquoise from the desert and gold from Nubia.

B. Divine kingship

1. Egypt's political organization evolved from a pattern of small states ruled by local kings to the emergence of a large, unified Egyptian state around 3100 B.C.E. Historians organize Egyptian history into a series of thirty dynasties falling into three longer periods: the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms. These three periods were divided by periods of political fragmentation and chaos.

2. Kings known as pharaohs dominated the Egyptian state. The pharaohs were regarded as gods come to earth to ensure the welfare and prosperity of the people. The death of a pharaoh was thought to be the beginning of his journey back to the land of the gods. Funeral rites and proper preservation of the body were therefore of tremendous importance.
3. Early pharaohs were buried in flat-topped rectangular tombs. Stepped pyramid tombs appeared about 2630 B.C.E. and smooth-sided pyramids a bit later.

4. The great pyramid tombs at Giza were constructed between 2550 and 2490 B.C.E. The great pyramids were constructed with stone tools and simple lever, pulley, and roller technology and required substantial inputs of resources and labor.

C. Administration and communication
1. Egypt was administered by a central administration in the capital city through a system of provincial and village bureaucracies. Bureaucrats at the center kept track of land, labor, taxes and people; collected resources from throughout the country; and used them to support the central government institutions (the palace, the bureaucracy, and the army) and to maintain temples and construct monuments.

2. The ancient Egyptians developed two writing systems: hieroglyphics and a cursive script. Egyptians wrote on papyrus and used writing for religious and secular literature as well as for record keeping.

3. Tensions between central and local government are a constant feature of Egyptian political history. At times when the central power was predominant, provincial officials were appointed and promoted by the central government on the basis of merit. When central power was weak, provincial officials tended to become autonomous, made their positions hereditary, and had themselves buried in their own districts rather than near the tombs of their kings.

4. Egypt was more rural than Mesopotamia. It did have cities, but since they have not been excavated, we know little about urban life in Egypt.

5. Egypt regarded all foreigners as enemies, but its desert nomad neighbors posed no serious military threat. Egypt was generally more interested in acquiring resources than in acquiring territory; resources could often be acquired through trade.

6. Egypt traded directly with the Levant and Nubia and indirectly with the land of Punt (probably part of modern Somalia). Items of trade included exports of papyrus, grain, and gold and imports of incense, Nubian gold, Lebanese cedar, and tropical African ivory, ebony, and animals.

D. The people of Egypt
1. Ancient Egypt had a population of about 1 to 1.5 million physically heterogeneous people, some dark-skinned, and some lighter-skinned. The people were divided into several social strata: (1) the king and high-ranking officials; (2) lower-level officials, local leaders and priests, professionals, artisans, well-off farmers; and (3) peasants. The majority of the population was peasants.

2. Peasants lived in villages, cultivated the soil, and were responsible for paying taxes and providing labor service.

3. Slavery existed on a limited scale. Treatment of slaves was generally humane.

4. Paintings indicate that women were subordinate to men and engaged in domestic activities. Egyptian women did have the right to hold, inherit, and will property and retained rights over their own dowry after divorce. They probably had more rights than Mesopotamian women.

E. Belief and knowledge
1. Egyptian religious beliefs were based on a cyclical view of nature. Two of the most significant gods, the sun-god Re and Osiris, who was killed, dismembered, and then restored to life, represented renewal and life after death.

2. The kings who were identified with Re and with Horus, the son of Osiris, served as chief priests. The supreme god of the Egyptian pantheon was generally the god of the city that was serving as the capital.

3. The Egyptians spent a large amount of their wealth in constructing fabulous temples. Temple activities included regular offerings to the gods and great festivals.

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4. We know little about popular religious beliefs. What we do know indicates that the Egyptians generally believed in magic and in an afterlife. Concern with the afterlife inspired Egyptians to mummify the bodies of the dead before entombing them.

5. Tombs were usually built at the edge of the desert to avoid wasting arable land. Tombs contain pictures and samples of food and other necessities and thus are a valuable source of information about daily life in Egypt. The amount and quality of tomb goods and the form of the tombs themselves reflect the social status of the deceased.

6. The ancient Egyptians acquired much advanced knowledge and technology. Knowledge of chemistry and technology was gained in the process of mummification. Other areas of scientific and technological advance included mathematics, astronomy, calendar making, irrigation, engineering and architecture, and transportation technology.

III. The Indus Valley Civilization

A. Natural environment

1. The central part of the Indus Valley area is the Sind region of modern Pakistan. Adjacent related areas included the Hakra River (now dried up), the Punjab, and the Indus delta region.

2. The Indus carries a lot of silt and floods regularly twice a year. Access to river water for irrigation allowed farmers in the Indus Valley and related areas to produce two crops a year despite the region’s sparse rainfall.

B. Material culture

1. The Indus Valley civilization flourished from 2600 to 1900 B.C.E. Knowledge of the civilization is gained from archaeological excavation of the remains of Indus Valley settlements. The two largest and best-known sites are those at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro.

2. We know little of the identity, the origins, or the fate of the people of the Indus Valley, nor do we know what historical circumstances led to the development of a sophisticated urban civilization. Part of the problem is that although they had a writing system, modern scholars are unable to decipher it.

3. The two major urban centers of the Indus Valley were Harappa (3½ miles in circumference, population about 35,000) and Mohenjo-daro (several times larger). Both settlements are surrounded by brick walls, have streets laid out in a grid pattern, and are supplied with covered drainage systems to carry away waste. There are remains of something like a citadel that may have been a center of authority, structures that may have been storehouses for grain, and barracks that may have been for artisans.

4. Both urban centers may have controlled the surrounding farmland. Harappa was located on the frontier between agricultural land and pastoral economies and may have been a nexus of trade in copper, tin, and precious stones from the northwest.

5. The Indus Valley civilization is characterized by a high degree of standardization in city planning, architecture, and even the size of the bricks. Some scholars have sought to explain this uniformity by hypothesizing the existence of an authoritarian central government, while others argue that it may have been a result of extensive trade within the region.

6. The people of the Indus Valley had better access to metal than did the Egyptians and the Mesopotamians. Thus the Indus Valley artisans used metal to create utilitarian goods as well as luxury items.

7. Technological achievements of the Indus Valley civilization included extensive irrigation systems, the potter’s wheel, kiln-baked bricks, a sophisticated bronze metallurgy and a system of writing. The people of the Indus Valley carried out an extensive trade with the northwestern mountain areas, Iran and Afghanistan, and even Mesopotamia.
C. Transformation of the Indus Valley civilization
   1. Scholars formerly believed that the Indus Valley cities were abandoned around 1900 B.C.E. because of an invasion. Further evidence has convinced researchers that the decline of the Indus Valley civilizations was due to a breakdown caused by natural disasters and ecological change.
   2. Ecological changes that probably led to a decline in agricultural production and the eventual collapse of the Indus Valley civilizations include the drying up of the Hakra River, salinization, and erosion. When urban centers collapsed, so did the way of life of the elite; but the peasants probably adapted and survived.

IV. Conclusion
   A. Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Indus Valley all demonstrate the importance of rivers and irrigation systems in the development of urban civilizations.
   B. Differences in the environment produce different cultural, technological, and religious responses.
   C. Egypt and Mesopotamia developed political systems dominated by kings and complex religious hierarchies.
   D. The populations of Egypt and Mesopotamia were ethnically heterogeneous but identified themselves with a common Egyptian or Mesopotamian culture.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did differences in the environment and geographical location affect the development of these three early civilizations?

2. What evidence do you see here of interaction between these civilizations and other peoples (including interaction between the three civilizations themselves)? How important do you think that interaction with other peoples was for the development of these three civilizations?

3. Why might slavery not have been so important in the river-valley civilizations?

4. What factors might explain the rise and decline of civilizations in general? Of particular civilizations?

5. How do the religious beliefs and world-views in Mesopotamia and in Egypt reflect the relationships between the environment and the people of these civilizations?

6. What is the connection between knowledge and power? How did writing play into this relationship?
Chapter 2

LECTURE TOPICS

1. The world of Gilgamesh

Sources:


2. Religion in the ancient world

Sources:


3. The Great Pyramids of Giza

Sources:


4. Indus Valley civilizations

Sources:


5. Trade and trade networks in the early civilizations

Sources:


6. Daily life in river-valley civilizations

Sources:


**PAPER TOPICS**

1. Compare the role of trade in the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and Indus civilizations.

2. Research the development and applications of bronze metallurgy in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Indus Valley.

3. Write a paper expressing and justifying your agreement or disagreement with the following statement: "despite their different environmental conditions, Egypt and Mesopotamia developed very similar institutions of government."

4. What does the study of the Great Pyramids tell us about the Egyptian technology of the time?

5. What were women’s roles in river-valley societies?
INTERNET RESOURCES

The following Internet sites contain written and visual material appropriate for use with this chapter. A more extensive and continually updated list of Internet resources can be found on *The Earth and Its Peoples* web site. Refer to the preface of this manual for information on how to locate the text homepage.

Oriental Institute Museum (University of Chicago--Virtual Museum and Highlights from the Collection)
http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/MUS/OI_Museum.html

Metropolitan Museum of Art Online Collections (Near East)
http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/department.asp?dep=3

Metropolitan Museum of Art Online Collections (Egypt)
http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/department.asp?dep=10

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Explore Ancient Egypt and Collection Highlights)
http://www.mfa.org/egypt

University of Memphis Institute of Egyptian Art and Archaeology
http://www.memst.edu/egypt/main.html

http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ABZU/ABZU.HTML

Egypt and the Ancient Near East for Young People and Teachers
http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/DEPT/RA/ABZU/YOUTH_RESOURCES.HTML

Odyssey in Egypt
http://eurekaproject.com/odyssey/

NOVA Explore Ancient Egypt
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/egypt

Harappa: The Indus Valley and the Raj
http://www.harappa.com/welcome.html

Images from History (H. Brown, University of Connecticut) — for all chapters on the ancient world
http://www.hp.uab.edu/image_archive/index.html

Exploring Ancient World Cultures—for all chapters on the ancient world
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CHAPTER 3

THE LATE BRONZE AGE IN THE EASTERN HEMISPHERE,
2200-500 B.C.E.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should:

1. Be familiar with the development of China’s civilization and its intellectual history in the Shang and the Zhou periods.

2. Understand the role of mutual interaction, warfare, and trade in the historical development of the civilizations of western Asia and northeast Africa.

3. Understand the essential characteristics of the Minoan, Mycenaean, and Nubian civilizations, and appreciate both the influences of the older centers and the distinctive lines of development in these new societies.

4. Be able to analyze change over time in China, the Middle East, Nubia, and Greece in terms of the significance of their varying environments, the roles of bronze, horses, and chariots, and the phenomenon of interdependence.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Early China
   A. Geography and resources
      1. China is divided into two major geographical regions. The steppe, desert, and high plateau west and northwest; and the eastern zone, more suitable for settled agriculture.
      2. The eastern zone is subdivided into two areas, north and south. The northern area includes the Yellow River Valley and has a dry, cold climate; the southern area includes the Yangzi Valley, has plentiful rainfall, and is relatively warm.
      3. China’s natural resources include timber, stone, and metals. The loess soil and cool climate of the north are suitable for growing millet; rice may be cultivated in the warmer and rainier south.
   B. The Shang period
      1. Pre-Shang China was a land of Neolithic communities. Pigs, chickens, and millet were domesticated, silk textiles developed, and bronze metallurgy begun (ca. 2000 B.C.E.)
      2. There are no contemporary documents to confirm the existence of the legendary Xia dynasty. Later documents concerning the Xia may be referring to one of the late Neolithic societies of the Yellow River Valley.
3. The Shang dynasty had its origins in the Yellow River Valley and later expanded to include territory from Mongolia to Gansu and south to the Yangzi Valley. The Shang kings ruled directly over the core area of their kingdom and exercised indirect rule over peripheral areas.

4. Shang kings carried out military campaigns against nomadic enemies and engaged in a far-flung commerce that may even have included some indirect trade with Mesopotamia. The kings worshiped the spirits of male ancestors, practiced divination and sacrifice, and presented themselves as intermediaries between the gods and the human world.

5. Shang technology included the use of bronze for weapons and ceremonial vessels. Other technological advances include the horse-drawn chariot, the use of water buffalo as a draft animal, and extensive civil engineering projects.

6. The Chinese writing system (Chinese characters) developed during the Shang period. The Chinese writing system of today is directly related to the writing of the Shang dynasty. The chief written remains are oracle bones used in divination.

C. The Zhou period

1. The Zhou territory was a dependent state of the Shang. They defeated the Shang in the eleventh century B.C.E. and invented the concept of the “Mandate of Heaven” in order to justify their action. The Zhou dynasty is subdivided into two periods: the Western Zhou and the Eastern Zhou periods.

2. During the Western Zhou period (11th–9th centuries B.C.E.), the Chinese developed a model of government that defined kingship in moral terms. Like the Shang, the Zhou exercised direct control over their core territory and administered the peripheral areas indirectly.

3. The Eastern Zhou period was characterized by a decline in the strength of the central government as regional elites began to rule their territories as independent states, often fighting with each other. The Eastern Zhou period is further sub-divided into two periods: the Spring and Autumn Period (771–481 B.C.E.) and the Warring States Period (480–221 B.C.E.).

4. Technological innovations of the Eastern Zhou include the construction of long walls for defense, iron and steel metallurgy, and horse riding.

5. The Eastern Zhou is particularly known as the era in which influential political philosophies were developed. The most significant of these schools of philosophy were Legalism, Confucianism, and Daoism.

6. Legalism assumes that human nature is essentially wicked and selfish, and that people will only behave if they are ruled by strict laws and harsh punishments. Legalism functioned as the ideological basis of the various independent states as they expanded their bureaucracies, strengthened the power of the state, and issued written codes of law.

7. Confucianism was founded by Confucius and assumes that human nature is essentially good, has a hierarchical view of the universe, society, and the family, and is concerned with establishing the moral foundations of government. Confucius was not influential in his own time, but Confucianism later became the dominant political philosophy of imperial China.

8. Daoism is said to have been founded by Laozi. Daoism assumes that the universe is in constant flux, that there are no absolute moral standards, and that people should take the world as they find it. Daoism developed into a complex system of popular beliefs and magic and offered the Chinese an alternative to Legalism and Confucianism.

9. In society, the Eastern Zhou period saw the development of the three-generation family and the development of the concept of private property, including privately owned land. Women were more firmly subordinated to the patriarchal hierarchy; their subordinate position was justified by the concepts of yin and yang.
II. The Cosmopolitan Middle East
   A. Western Asia
      1. In the southern portion of the Near East, the Kassites ruled Babylonia during this period. Babylonia did not pursue territorial conquest. In the north, the Assyrians had their origins in the northern Tigris area. They were involved in trade in tin and silver.
      2. The Hittites had their capital in Anatolia, used horse-drawn chariots, and had access to important copper, silver, and iron deposits.
   B. New Kingdom Egypt
      1. The New Kingdom period was preceded by the decline of the Middle Kingdom and by the subsequent period of rule by the non-Egyptian Hyksos. A native Egyptian dynasty overthrew the Hyksos to begin the New Kingdom period. This period was characterized by aggressive expansion into Syria-Palestine and into Nubia.
      2. Innovations during the New Kingdom period include Queen Hatshepsut's attempt to open direct trade with Punt and Akhenaten's construction of a new capital at Amarna. Akhenaten also made Aten the supreme deity of Egypt and carried out a controversial reform program.
   C. Commerce and diplomacy
      1. The Syrian-Palestine area was an important crossroads for the trade in metals. For this reason, the Egyptians and the Hittites fought battles and negotiated territorial agreements concerning control over Syria-Palestine.
      2. Access to metals was vital to all bronze-age states, but metals, including copper and tin for bronze, often had to be obtained from faraway places. The demand for metals spurred the development of trade in copper from Anatolia and Cyprus, tin from Afghanistan and Cornwall, silver from Anatolia, and gold from Nubia.
      3. New modes of transportation introduced during this period included horses, chariots, and camels.

III. Nubia
   A. Early cultures and Egyptian domination
      1. Nubia is located in the Nile valley from Aswan south to Khartoum and forms a link between tropical Africa and the Mediterranean world. Nubia's natural resources included gold, semi-precious stones, and copper.
      2. The development of civilization in Nubia was spurred by the need for irrigated agriculture and by its trading relationship with Egypt. Nubian culture and Egyptian culture developed through a process of mutual influence and borrowing.
      3. Early Nubia carried out trade with Old Kingdom Egypt and the northern part was occupied by Egypt during the Middle Kingdom period.
      4. In the southern part of Nubia, the Kingdom of Kush developed by 1750 B.C.E. Kush was noted for its metalworking and its construction.
      5. Egypt invaded Kush during the New Kingdom period. The results of Egyptian occupation included the brutal exploitation of Nubian laborers and the imposition of Egyptian culture on the Nubian people.
   B. The Kingdom of Meroe
      1. A Nubian kingdom arose in the eighth century B.C.E., and for a time the Nubians ruled Egypt as the Twenty-fifth Dynasty (712–660 B.C.E.)
      2. Being driven out of Egypt by the Assyrians, the Nubian kingdom was again based on its capital at Napata from 660 B.C.E. to the fourth century. The Napata period is characterized by continued Egyptian cultural influence, including the use of Egyptian hieroglyphics and pyramids.
3. In the fourth century B.C.E. the kingdom moved its capital to Meroe, which was better located for both agriculture and for trade. Egyptian cultural influence waned during the Meroitic era.

4. The ruling dynasty of Meroe practiced a matrilineal family system, and queens often were influential.

5. The city of Meroe dominated trade routes, used reservoirs to catch rainfall, and became an important center of iron smelting. Meroe declined due to a combination of factors: a shift in trade routes, the rise of the kingdom of Aksum, and the depredations of camel-riding nomads.

IV. The Aegean World

A. The Minoan civilization of Crete

1. Minoan civilization is known through legendary accounts of King Minos, the labyrinth beneath his palace, and the Minotaur. Archaeological evidence for Minoan civilization includes excavated palace sites at Cnossus, Phaistos, and Mallia, and widely distributed remains of Cretan pottery and other artifacts. The evidence suggests that Minoan civilization was influenced by the civilizations of Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia.

2. Minoan civilization was destroyed, probably by Mycenaean Greeks, about 1450 B.C.E.

B. The rise of Mycenaean civilization

1. The Mycenaean Greek people are thought to be descended from a combination of an indigenous population and Indo-European invaders. The civilization developed suddenly around 1600 B.C.E.

2. Although it was first known only through the accounts of the Iliad and the Odyssey, the existence of Mycenaean civilization was proved by the archeological expedition of Heinrich Schliemann in 1876 at Mycenae in southern Greece. Schliemann and other archeologists have discovered shaft graves, gold and silver jewelry, a palace complex, and other artifacts.

3. Later Greek legend explains the development of Mycenaean civilization as being the result of immigration from Phoenicia or liberation of the Greeks from Minoan tyranny. There is no archeological evidence to back up these legendary accounts. The evidence does, however, indicate that Mycenaean civilization was influenced by Minoan civilization and that the Mycenaeans rose to power on profits from trade and piracy.

4. Mycenaean sites share certain common characteristics including hilltop citadels with thick fortification walls that enclosed palaces and administrative buildings. Also typical of Mycenaean civilization were luxury-filled tombs for departed rulers, large houses for the aristocracy, and the use of Linear B writing. Linear B was an early form of Greek that used symbols to represent syllables.

5. The Mycenaean state controlled the economy, organizing grain agriculture and wool production. However, we know little about the Mycenaean political system, religion, society, or particular historical events. The uniformity that is characteristic of the Mycenaean territory may have been due to some sort of political unity, or it may have been the result of extensive contacts and trade.

C. Overseas commerce, settlement, and aggression

1. Evidence for long-distance contact and trade includes wall paintings of ships in Egypt and Thera and excavated remains of the ships themselves. Other evidence includes the widespread dispersal of Cretan and Mycenaean pottery and other goods around the Aegean world and in the Middle East. The evidence indicates that Cretan traders came first, and were later joined by, and then replaced by, Mycenaean.

2. In this trade, Crete and Greece exported wine or olive oil, weapons, craft goods, slaves, and mercenaries. They imported amber, ivory, grain, and metals (gold, copper, and tin).
The fine line between trade and piracy can be seen in the strained relations between the Mycenaeans and the Hittites and the siege of Troy.

V. The Fall of Late Bronze Age Civilization
   A. Destruction of old centers of civilization in the Middle East
      1. Unknown invaders destroyed the Hittite kingdom. Syria likewise fell to invasions.
      2. The Egyptians battled invasions from the sea in the north and lost control of Nubia in the south.
   B. The fall of Mycenaean civilization
      1. Mycenaean civilization fell due to a combination of internal decline and external aggression. Annihilation of the trading routes of the eastern Mediterranean undermined the position of the Mycenaean elite and probably led to internal unrest and collapse.
      2. The collapse of Mycenaean civilization demonstrates the degree to which the civilizations of the Late Bronze Age were interdependent; their prosperity and their very existence relying on the trade networks that linked them and gave them access to natural resources, particularly metals. When this cosmopolitan world collapsed, the Mediterranean and the Middle East entered a "Dark Age"—a period of poverty, isolation, and loss of knowledge.

VI. Conclusion
   A. Bronze metallurgy was vital to the success of all the elite groups that led the late Bronze Age civilizations. Access to copper and tin was of vital importance to the elites of all of these societies. Bronze weapons enabled the elite to dominate the peasant masses; in China bronze ritual vessels and implements played a vital role in their religious ceremonies.
   B. The interdependence of the eastern Mediterranean societies was a source of wealth; but it was also a source of weakness. When the trading networks were disrupted by invasions, all the societies that depended on them collapsed. The exception that proves the rule is Chinese civilization. The Chinese were not a part of the interdependent world of the Mycenaeans, the Hittites, and the Egyptians. Chinese civilization thus survived in spite of the collapse of the political system of the Shang dynasty.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Compare the political system and the political philosophies of China to those of Egypt and Mesopotamia. How does ideology develop in response to political and social crises?

2. How did trade and other peaceful cultural interaction influence the cultural development of the civilizations discussed in this chapter? How important are trade and the influence of other cultures to the development of these various civilizations?

3. How did war and imperial expansion influence the development of the civilizations discussed in this chapter?

4. How did elites in Egypt, the Middle East, and China gain access to and maintain control over essential raw materials? What factors might account for the different strategies adopted by elites in different times and places?
5. Ask students to discuss the problem of sources. What sources do historians use in order to understand the history of the civilizations of the Late Bronze Age? What are the advantages and what are the limitations of the various available sources? How do the available sources and the lack of sources shape our understanding of this period of history?

LECTURE TOPICS

1. Chinese politics, society, and religion in the Shang dynasty

Sources:


2. Confucius in the Era of the Warring States

Sources:


3. The kingdoms of Kush and Meroe

Sources:


4. Rise and fall of Minoan and Mycenaean civilization

Sources:

5. New Kingdom Egypt: Empire and revolution.

Sources:


PAPER TOPICS

1. Examine the significant differences or similarities between the political systems of Egypt and China.

2. Explain and justify your position regarding the following statement: "The technological and cultural innovations of the Hittites had a strong influence on the development of Eastern Mediterranean civilizations."

3. Describe and analyze the political, religious, and cultural significance of the reign of Akhenaten. Are these one man's strange ideas or the product of trends and stresses in late Egyptian civilization?

4. How does the history of Nubia illustrate the importance of geography, environment and environmental change in the development of civilizations?

INTERNET RESOURCES

The following Internet sites contain written and visual material appropriate for use with this chapter. A more extensive and continually updated list of Internet resources can be found on The Earth and Its Peoples web site. Refer to the preface of this manual for information on how to locate the text homepage.

Metropolitan Museum of Art Online Collections (Asian Art)
http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/department.asp?dep=6

Chinese Culture (P. Halsall, Brooklyn College)
http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/index.html

Links for Mesopotamia and Egypt cited in Chapter 2

Pharaohs of the Sun, exhibition on the Amarna Age (Boston Museum of Fine Arts)
http://www.mfa.org/egypt/amarna/index.html

Tell El-Amarna: Capital of the Disk
http://sgwww.epfl.ch/BERGER/Akhenaton/en

Ancient Nubia: Egypt's Rival in Africa (University of Pennsylvania)
http://www.upenn.edu/museum/Exhibits/nubiagallery.html
Ancient Nubia (student project)
http://library.thinkquest.org/22845/introduction/index.shtml

Prehistoric Archaeology of the Aegean (J. Rutter, Dartmouth)
http://tenaya.cs.dartmouth.edu/history/bronze_age/

Aegean Art (J. Lingen, Clarke College)
http://keller.clarke.edu/~jlingen/aegean.htm

Bronze Age Aegean Sites (Lake Forest College)
http://www.lfc.edu/academics/greece/ha.html
CHAPTER 4

NEW CIVILIZATIONS IN THE AMERICAS AND WESTERN EURASIA, 1200–250 B.C.E.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should:

1. Understand and be able to compare the emergence of the Olmec and the Chavin civilizations.

2. Be able to identify the geographical locations and the fundamental characteristics and historical development of the Celts, the Israelite people, and the Phoenicians and understand the role of migrations in the development of these peoples.

3. Be able to compare the structure and the goals and analyze the wider influence of the Assyrian and the Carthaginian empires.

4. Be able to describe and account for the different patterns of development of civilizations in the Western and the Eastern Hemispheres.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. First civilizations of the Americas
   A. Meso-American Olmecs
      1. The Olmec civilization developed in Southeast Mexico, but Olmec influence extended to the pacific coast of Central America and the central plateau of Mexico. The area is marked by geographic and climatic diversity which gave rise to the development of numerous civilizations that shared fundamental cultural characteristics and which exchanged goods between their respective environmental zones.

      2. The Olmec economy was marked by early advances in agriculture that included the domestication of corn, beans, and squash. Agricultural surpluses then supported an emerging urban civilization. Religious and political elites increased agricultural production by organizing labor for irrigation systems and drainage canals and constructed a sophisticated urban society.

      3. The remains of Olmec sites indicate that a relatively small urban elite was able to mobilize large numbers of rural workers to construct artificial platforms for religious purposes and residences for the elite. We have little information about the political system, and no evidence that the Olmecs controlled a large territorial empire.

      4. Olmec religion was polytheistic. Deities blended male and female, animal and human characteristics. Olmec shamans organized religious life, developed an early form of writing, and produced a calendar.
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B. Chavin civilization
1. Chavin civilization developed in the Andean region and included diverse ecological zones including a mountainous core area, the dry coastal plain, and interior jungles. The diverse environmental zones contributed to specialized regional production and interregional trade.
2. The capital of the Chavin culture at Chavin de Huantar in the eastern Andes was located at the intersection of trade routes connecting the coast with mountain valleys and was thus in a position to dominate a large region either through military force or through cultural influence.
3. Fish and mollusks supported the emergence of coastal cities, while the introduction of maize enabled the society to produce an agricultural surplus. Labor was organized on the basis of the reciprocal labor obligations of clan society. Llamas, the only beasts of burden in the Americas, facilitated trade.
4. Chavin technology included the construction of multilevel packed earth platforms topped by small buildings, gold and gold alloy metallurgy, textiles, pottery, and craft products. Chavin culture declined around 200 B.C.E. Reasons for the decline include increased regional warfare and disruption of trade.

II. Celtic Europe
A. The spread of the Celts
1. Starting from around 500 B.C.E. the Indo-European speaking Celts migrated from their homeland in central Europe toward the west (to France, Britain, Ireland, and Spain) and the south (to northern Italy, central Greece, and central Anatolia). The Celts never formed a unified Celtic state.
2. The enemies of the Celts described them as being physically imposing, wearing pants and twisted gold collars, and fighting in the nude.

B. Celtic society
1. There were three basic social divisions: elite warriors, priests (Druuids) and bards, and commoners. The Druids were a highly organized and specialized priestly fraternity that had religious, judiciary, and educational functions.
2. The Celtic economy included a highly productive agriculture, skilled metallurgy, and extensive river and ocean shipping networks.
3. Celtic women’s primary occupations were childbearing and rearing, food production, and crafts. Their social status was inferior to Celtic men, but superior to Middle Eastern, Greek, or Roman women. Marriage was regarded as a partnership, and women could inherit property.

C. Celtic belief and knowledge
1. The Celts worshiped over 400 known deities at natural sites rather than temples. They buried their dead and believed in an afterlife. Celtic heroes and gods were described as passing easily between the natural and the supernatural worlds.
2. Celtic culture declined as the Celts were assimilated, first by the Romans, and then by the Germanic tribes. Celtic culture persisted only in peripheral areas of Europe (Brittany, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland)

III. The Assyrian Empire (Neo-Assyrian Empire—911–612 B.C.E.)
A. Background and location
1. The Assyrian homeland was in northern Mesopotamia. It had more rain and a more temperate climate than Sumer and Akkad, but it was also more exposed to raiders.
2. Assyrian power revived in the ninth century B.C.E. and the Assyrians built an empire, expanding along trade routes westward toward the Mediterranean, north to modern Armenia, east to modern Iran, and south to Babylonia.
B. God and king
1. Assyrian kings were regarded as the center of the universe, chosen by the gods as their surrogates in earth. Kings had secular and religious duties.
2. The secular duties of kings included receiving information, hearing and deciding on complaints, and carrying out diplomacy and military leadership. The religious duties of kings included supervision of the state religion, performance of public and private rituals, and consulting and gaining the approval of the gods.
3. Assyrian kings were celebrated in propaganda that was designed to produce feelings of awe and fear in the hearts of their subjects. Such propaganda included the public display of royal inscriptions relating to conquests and punishments and artistic renderings of the kings as large, muscular, and fierce men.

C. Conquest and control
1. At their peak, the Assyrian armies had half a million troops divided into functionally specialized units. The Assyrian troops used a variety of military technologies including iron weapons, cavalry, couriers, signal fires, and spy networks.
2. Assyrian techniques of conquest included terror tactics and mass deportation of civilian populations. Mass deportation served a dual purpose: to destroy the morale of the enemy and to transfer needed laborers to the core area of the empire.
3. The Assyrians found it difficult to control their vast and diverse territory. Their level of control varied, being more effective at the core and less effective in the peripheral parts of the empire.
4. Within the empire, the duties of Assyrian officials were to collect tribute and taxes, to maintain law and order, to raise and provision troops, and to construct and maintain public works. The central government included high-ranking officials and professionals.
5. The central government exploited the wealth and resources of the empire for the benefit of the center; yet the central government also invested in provincial infrastructure, and so was not entirely parasitic.

D. Assyrian culture and society
1. Assyrian society had three major social strata: free, land-owning citizens; farmers and artisans; and slaves. The Assyrian economy was based on agriculture but also included artisans and merchants.
2. In the realm of knowledge and learning, the Assyrians both preserved the knowledge inherited from older Mesopotamian societies and made original contributions to mathematics and astronomy. The Assyrian Empire maintained libraries that were attached to temples in the cities, such as the Library of Ashurbanipal in Ninevah.

IV. Israel
A. Background and location
1. The Israelite people were nomadic herders and caravan drivers who developed a complex sedentary agricultural civilization. As they did so, their cult of a desert god evolved into an influential monotheistic religion.
2. Israel's location makes it a crossroads for trade. However, the area has few natural resources.

B. Origins, Exodus, and Settlement
1. Sources for the early history of the Israelite people include the Hebrew Bible, which is based in part on oral traditions compiled in the fifth century B.C.E., and archeological excavations.
2. Biblical accounts of the origins of the Israelite people include the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These stories may be a compressed account of the experiences of many generations of nomads. The story of Cain and Abel and the stories of the destruction of
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Sodom and Gomorrah reflect the tensions between the nomadic Israelite people and settled agricultural people.

3. The Biblical account of the Egyptian captivity is not confirmed by Egyptian sources but may be linked to the rise and fall of the Hyksos rulers of Egypt. The period of Israelite slavery according to the Bible corresponds to the period of large-scale construction projects under Sethos I and Ramesses II, while the Biblical account of the exodus may reflect the memories of a migration from Egypt and nomadic life in the Sinai.

4. The cult of Yahweh with its exclusive devotion to one god developed during the period of nomadism in the Sinai.

5. The Biblical account of Israelite settlement in the land of Canaan has it that Joshua led the Israelites into Canaan and destroyed Jericho and other Canaanite cities. The archeological evidence of what probably happened is that the nomadic Israelite tribes settled in the hills of Canaan, where they were joined by other groups and by refugees from a troubled Canaanite society.

C. The rise of the monarchy
1. Wars with the Philistines brought about the need for a strong central government. Saul, the first king, established the Israelite monarchy. David, the second king, completed the transition to monarchy.

2. The Israelite monarchy reached the height of its power in the reign of King Solomon, who forged alliances and sponsored trade. Solomon also expanded the bureaucracy and the army, and built the First Temple in Jerusalem. The temple priesthood sacrificed to Yahweh, received a portion of the agricultural tax, and became very wealthy.

D. Israelite society
1. The wealth and prestige of the temple priesthood was indicative of the increasing gap between the rural and urban, and the wealthy and the poor in Israeli society.

2. Israelite people lived in extended families and practiced arranged marriage. Monogamy was the norm. Men were allowed to have extramarital relations, women were not.

3. In early Israel, women enjoyed relative equality with their husbands in social life, but at the same time, they suffered certain legal disadvantages: women could not inherit property, nor could they initiate divorce. The main occupations of women were bearing and raising children, maintaining the household, and engaging in agriculture or herding. As society became more urbanized, some women began to work outside the home in a variety of occupations.

4. There are some records of women exercising political influence. Examples include the story of Deborah and references to "wise women." However, the status of women declined during the period of monarchy.

E. Fragmentation and dispersal
1. After Solomon, Israel divided into two kingdoms: Israel in the north (capital: Samaria), and Judah in the south (capital: Jerusalem). The two kingdoms were sometimes at peace with each other, and sometimes fought.

2. There were some significant religious developments during the period of fragmentation. The concept of monotheism was sharpened, but at the same time, some Israelites were attracted to the worship of Canaanite gods.

3. Political developments during the period of fragmentation include the Assyrian destruction of the northern kingdom (Israel) in 721 B.C.E. and the fall of the southern kingdom (Judah) to the Babylonian monarch Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B.C.E. Nebuchadnezzar deported a large number of Jewish elites and craftsmen to Babylon. This was the beginning of the Jewish diaspora.
4. During the diaspora, the Jewish people developed institutions to preserve Jewish religion and culture. These developments continued even after some of the Babylonian Jews were permitted to return to Jerusalem. Developments of the diaspora included a stronger commitment to monotheism, strict dietary rules, and veneration of the Sabbath.

V. Phoenicia and the Mediterranean
   A. Phoenician city states
      1. The Phoenicians were the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of Syria, Lebanon, and Israel who were pushed into the strip of land between the mountains and the sea in modern Lebanon by about 1100 B.C.E. There, the Phoenicians established a number of small city-states that were deeply involved in commerce. They also invented the first alphabetical writing system.
      2. The major Phoenician city-states were Byblos (in the second millennium B.C.E.) and Tyre (in the first part of the first millennium B.C.E.).
   B. Expansion into the Mediterranean
      1. Phoenician expansion into the Mediterranean was carried out Tyre, beginning in the ninth century B.C.E. Colonies were established first on Cyprus, then on the North African coast, the south and southeast Spanish coast, Sardinia, Sicily, and Malta.
      2. Phoenician expansion into the Mediterranean was the work of a combination of state and private enterprise. Expansion was a response to the Assyrian invasions of Syria and Palestine, the shortage of agricultural land in Tyre, and opportunities for trade and access to resources.
      3. Expansion brought the Phoenicians into conflict with the Greeks, who were also seeking resources and establishing colonies in the western Mediterranean during this period. Conflict with Greece was most significant in the violent struggle for control of Sicily—a struggle in which the Phoenicians had the upper hand by the mid-third century B.C.E.
   C. Carthage’s commercial empire
      1. The city of Carthage was established on a narrow promontory near modern Tunis about 814 B.C.E. The walled city was governed by two judges selected from upper class families and by a Senate that was dominated by the leading merchant families.
      2. The navy was the most important arm of Carthaginian power. Citizens served as rowers and navigators of the fast, maneuverable warships.
      3. Carthaginian foreign policy and military activity were in the service of trade and were deployed in enforcing a commercial monopoly in the Mediterranean and developing new trading opportunities. Carthaginian merchants were active around the Mediterranean, and traded with sub-Saharan Africa, along the Atlantic coasts of Spain and France, and with Cornwall.
   D. War and religion
      1. The Carthaginians made no attempt to build a territorial empire: their empire was an empire of trade routes and ports. The Carthaginian military was subordinate to the civilian government and consisted of mercenary soldiers commanded by Carthaginian officers.
      2. Carthaginian religion involved the worship of capricious gods that needed to be appeased by sacrifice, including the sacrifice of Carthaginian children. The Greeks and Romans thought that the Carthaginians were a hard, gloomy lot and harsh to their subjects.

VI. Failure and Transformation
   A. Consequences of the Assyrian conquest
      1. The Assyrian conquest brought about the destruction of Israel, deportation of the Jewish population of Israel, and pressure on the kingdom of Judah.
2. The Assyrian conquest put pressure on the Phoenicians; Assyrian threats and Assyrian demands for tribute helped to spur the Phoenicians to establish colonies in the western Mediterranean.

3. The Assyrian conquest also resulted in the invasion and occupation of Egypt and in Assyrian control over Babylonia and western Iran.

B. Weakness of the Assyrian Empire

1. As their empire grew, the resources of the Assyrians became overextended and they had difficulty ruling over a large, ethnically complex territory with subjects and neighbors who had come to hate Assyria.

2. The major sources of resistance to the Assyrian Empire were the Neo-Babylonian dynasty of Babylon and the kingdom of the Medes in Iran. The Assyrian Empire was destroyed when the Medes captured the Assyrian homeland in northern Mesopotamia and eastern Anatolia, and the Neo-Babylonians took over much of the other territory of the Assyrian Empire.

VII. Conclusion

A. Compared to the Western Hemisphere, environmental conditions in the Eastern Hemisphere were favorable for the earlier rise of powerful civilizations. Complex civilizations did develop in the Western Hemisphere, but they developed on a different technological basis. The sequence of the development of technologies appears to be different in the Eastern and the Western Hemispheres—fewer potential domesticates and greater obstacles to the spread of ideas and technologies.

B. Population movements in the first millennium B.C.E. brought significant changes to the civilizations of Europe, North Africa, and West Asia. Diaspora functioned to strengthen and preserve cultural traditions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Compare the development of complex civilizations in the Western Hemisphere with those of the Eastern Hemisphere. What differences do you notice? What factors might account for those differences?

2. Compare the Assyrian and the Phoenician/Carthaginian empires and explain the differences in their institutions, goals, and values.

3. Compare the Celts and the Israelites and explain the differences in their institutions and values.

4. What were the motives behind migrations of peoples in antiquity? Compare the difficulties of moving to a new home in ancient times with the ease of movement today.

LECTURE TOPICS

1. The Olmec and Chavin civilizations

Sources:


2. Women in Celtic and Israelite society

Sources:


3. Everyday life in the Assyrian Empire

Sources:


4. The Hebrew Bible as a source for history

Sources:


5. The Phoenicians and their expansion

Sources:


6. Comparison of Western Asian and Mesoamerican civilizations

Sources:


PAPER TOPICS

1. Compare the roles of women in Celtic and Middle Eastern societies in the Iron Age.
2. Agree or disagree with the following statement: "The Bible is a reasonably accurate source for the history of the Jewish people from the period of the Egyptian captivity to the Babylonian captivity."

3. Research the development and the significance of iron technology in Western Asia and Europe.

4. Research the technologies of shipbuilding and navigation, 1200–250 B.C.E.

INTERNET RESOURCES

The following Internet sites contain written and visual material appropriate for use with this chapter. A more extensive and continually updated list of Internet resources can be found on *The Earth and Its Peoples* web site. Refer to the preface of this manual for information on how to locate the text homepage.

Olmec Art
http://members.aol.com/emdelcamp/olmec.htm

The Olmec

Mesoamerican Sites and Cultures (Minnesota State University, Mankato)
http://kroebner.anthro.mankato.msus.edu/prehistory/latinamerica/meso/mesotable.html

South American Sites and Cultures (Minnesota State University, Mankato)
http://kroebner.anthro.mankato.msus.edu/prehistory/latinamerica/south/satable.html

Chavin de Huantar

Simon James’s Ancient Celts Page
http://www.ares.u-net.com/celtindx.htm

Barbarians on the Greek Periphery? Origins of Celtic Art (C. Witt thesis)
http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~umw8f/Barbarians/outline.html

For Assyria, see many of the Near Eastern links cited in Chapter 2

Israel Antiquities Authority
http://www.israntique.org.il/

Israel’s Archaeological Treasures (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH00wf0

A Bequest Unearthed: Phoenicia
http://phoenicia.org/
CHAPTER 5
GREECE AND IRAN, 1000–30 B.C.E.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should:

1. Understand the historical development and the economic basis of the Persian Empire and be able to discuss the religious and political justifications for kingship and the mechanisms that the Persians developed for successful administration of their extensive and diverse empire.

2. Understand the geographical, economic, and technological bases and the social structure of Archaic and classical Greek civilization and be able to analyze the causes of the political evolution that led to the polis and democracy.

3. Understand the causes and the effects of the struggle between Persia and Greece.

4. Be able to analyze the significance and both the short- and long-term influence of Persian and Greek culture in the Mediterranean and Western Asian worlds.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Ancient Iran
   A. Geography and Resources
      1. Iran’s location, bounded by mountains, deserts, and the Persian Gulf, leaves it open to attack from Central Asian nomads. The fundamental topographical features include high mountains on the edges, salt deserts in the interior, and a sloping plateau crossed by mountain streams.
      2. Iran has limited natural resources. Water is relatively scarce, and Iran’s environment could only support a limited population. Because of the heat, irrigation networks had to use underground tunnels. Construction and maintenance of underground irrigation networks was labor-intensive and advanced under a strong central authority. Iran had mineral resources—copper, tin, iron, gold, and silver—and plentiful timber.

   B. The rise of the Persian Empire
      1. The Median kingdom in northwestern Iran helped to destroy the Assyrian Empire in the late seventh century B.C.E. The Persian Achaemenid dynasty was related to the Median court by marriage, and in 550 B.C.E., Cyrus overthrew the Median king and built a larger Persian empire that included Medes and Persians.
      2. The Persian Empire was built up by a series of three kings: Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius I. Cyrus captured the kingdom of Lydia (546 B.C.E.), thus bringing all of Anatolia under his control, and later took Mesopotamia (539 B.C.E.)
3. Cambyses defeated Egypt and sent expeditions to Nubia and Libya. Under Darius I, the
role of the Medes declined as the Persians asserted greater dominance. Darius extended
the empire east to the Indus valley and west to European Thrace.

C. Imperial organization and ideology
1. From Darius on, the empire was divided into 20 provinces; a satrap who was related or
connected to the royal court administered each province. The position of satrap tended to
become hereditary. Satraps in distant provinces had considerable autonomy.

2. Provinces were required to pay annual tribute. The central government tended to hoard so
much gold and silver that these metals became scarce and more expensive. The provinces
were crossed by a system of well-maintained roads that converged on the capital city of
Susa (in southwestern Iran), and garrisons were installed at key locations.

3. The Persian kings developed a style of kingship in which they were held aloof and
majestic, masters of all their subjects and nobles. Kings owned and administered vast
tracts of “king’s land” in areas around the empire.

4. Kings acted as lawgivers, but allowed each people of the empire to live in accordance
with its own traditions. Kings managed a central administration at the capital of Susa and
also performed ceremonies at Persepolis, in the Persian homeland.

5. The major religion of the Persian Empire was Zoroastrianism: The origins of the religion
are unclear. Tradition ascribes the Gathas (the hymns of Zoroastrianism) to Zoroaster
(Zarathustra), who lived sometime between 1700 and 500 B.C.E. Zoroastrianism posited
the existence of a dualistic universe in which the god of good, Ahuramazda, was locked
in an epic struggle against the god of evil, Angra Mainyu. Zoroastrianism’s dualism may
have had an influence on Judaism and thus on Christianity.

II. The Rise of the Greeks
A. Geography and resources
1. Greece is part of the Mediterranean ecological zone, an area in which all the various
lands have a similar climate, similar seasons, and similar crops. This characteristic of the
Mediterranean zone is highly conducive to migration, transfer of crops and technology,
and trade. The Greek culture area itself included the Greek mainland and islands and the
Western edge of Anatolia.

2. The areas inhabited by the Greeks relied entirely on rainfall, having no water resources
sufficient for irrigation. Limited water and limited, thin arable soil meant that the area
could not support large populations. Greece had few metal resources and little timber, but
it did have plentiful harbors.

B. The emergence of the polis
1. The “Dark Age” that followed the Mycenaean period lasted from 1150–800 B.C.E. The
dark Age ended when contact and trade with the Mediterranean lands was reestablished.
The Phoenicians played an important role and provided an alphabetic writing system.
This began the Archaic period (800–480 B.C.E.)

2. One of the notable features of the Archaic period was explosive population growth.
Possible causes of this population growth include the shift from a pastoral to an
agricultural economy and importation of foods and raw materials. The effects of
population growth included urbanization, specialization, and the development of the
polis.

3) The polis (city-state) was an urban center and its rural territory. Characteristic features of
the polis included an acropolis, an agora, fortified walls, and public buildings. There was
no sharp distinction between urban and rural areas or their inhabitants.

4. There were frequent wars between the various city-states. The Greeks developed a style
of warfare that used hoplites—a close formation of heavily armored infantrymen who
would try to break the enemy’s line of defense. The soldiers were mostly farmer-citizens who served for short periods of time when called.

5. When population growth outstripped available resources, the Greeks sent excess population to colonize other areas in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. Colonization brought the Greeks into closer contact with other peoples.

6. Colonization introduced the Greeks to new ideas, but it also sharpened their sense of Greek identity. One of the most significant new developments of this period was the invention of coins in Lydia in the early sixth century B.C.E.

7. Increasing prosperity and the growth of a middle class in Archaic Greek society led to the emergence in the mid-seventh and sixth centuries B.C.E. of one-man rule by tyrants, who reduced the power of traditional elites. The tyrants were eventually ejected and government developed in one of two directions: oligarchy or democracy.

8. Greek religion involved the worship of anthropomorphic sky gods, many of which represented forces of nature. These gods were worshiped at state ceremonies. Sacrifice was a central part of religious practice and helped to create a sense of community. In addition, Greeks sought advice from oracles such as the oracle of Apollo at Delphi and also revered female fertility deities.

C. New intellectual currents
1. During the Archaic period, Greeks began to develop the concepts of individualism and humanism.

2. The pre-Socratic philosophers of the Archaic period also began to question traditional Greek religion. Instead, they tried to explain rationally why the world was created, what it is made of, and why it changes.

3. In the late sixth century B.C.E. a group of “logographers” in Ionia began to gather information on the various peoples of the Mediterranean, the founding of important cities, and the background of important Greek families. Their method of investigation/research, historia was adopted by Herodotus in his Histories.

4. Herodotus went beyond the simple collection and recording of information to offer explanations as to why the Greeks and the Persians had gone to war. In doing so, Herodotus invented the discipline of “history” in its modern sense.

D. Athens and Sparta
1. Sparta was a polis located in the Peloponnese in southern Greece. In order to assure its supply of food, Sparta took over the more fertile land of Messenia and enslaved the Messenians. Fear of an uprising of their Messenian slaves inspired the Spartans to create a severely ascetic and highly militarized society in which all Spartan males trained for the army and devoted their lives to the needs of the state.

2. Athens had an unusually large hinterland (Attica) that supported a population of about 300,000 in the fifth century B.C.E. Athens went through a period of rule by tyrants in the sixth century B.C.E.

3. In the late sixth and early to mid-fifth centuries B.C.E., Athens ejected the tyrant family and developed a democracy. Pericles completed the transition to democracy in the 460s-450s. The popular organs of government included the Assembly, the Council of 500, and the People’s Courts.

III. The Struggle of Persia and Greece
A. Early encounters
1. In 499 B.C.E. the Greek cities of Anatolia, aided by Eretria and Athens, staged a five-year revolt against Persian rule. This led to the Persian Wars—two Persian attacks on Greece. In the First Persian War, the generals of Darius I captured Eretria and attacked Athens (490 B.C.E.). The attack on Athens was foiled when Athenian forces defeated the Persians at Marathon.
2. In the Second Persian War, Xerxes led a large army and a fleet against the Greeks in 480 B.C.E. Many Greek city-states submitted. In southern Greece, Sparta organized the Hellenic League, an alliance of city-states that defeated the Persians. Then the Greeks, led by Athens and organized in the Delian League (477 B.C.E.), went on the offensive and drove the Persians out of most of the eastern Mediterranean (except Cyprus).

B. The height of Athenian power

1. The Classical period of Greek history (480–323 B.C.E.) was marked by the dominant role of Athens, which subordinated the other states of the Delian League and became an imperial power. Athenian power was based on the Athenian navy.

2. The keys to the strength of the Athenian navy were technological innovation and the use of lower-class men as rowers. The major technological innovation was the development of the trireme—a fast, maneuverable 170-oar boat. The use of lower-class rowers meant further democratization of Athenian society as these men, realizing their importance, demanded the full rights of citizenship.

3. Athens used its power to carry out profitable trade and to extract annual tribute from subject states. The wealth of the empire made it possible for Athens to construct impressive public works, put on grand festivals, and supported development of the arts and sciences.

4. The two most influential philosophers of the Classical period were Socrates and Plato. Socrates turned the focus of philosophy to ethics, probed the precise meaning of words, and used the Socratic method of question and answer. He was tried on charges of corrupting the youth and not believing in the gods of the city and sentenced to death.

5. Socrates’ disciple Plato wrote dialogs exploring concepts such as justice, excellence, and wisdom. Plato taught that the world as we see it is a pale reflection of a higher, ideal reality. Plato’s intellectual activity is representative of the transition from oral to written culture: Plato read and wrote books, and he founded a school, the Academy.

C. Inequality in Classical Greece

1. Athenian democracy was very limited in its scope. Only free adult males participated in Athenian democracy. They accounted for about 10 or 15 percent of the total population. Women, children, slaves, and foreigners did not have the rights of citizens.

2. Slaves were mostly foreign, accounted for one third of the population, and were regarded as property. The average Athenian family owned one or more slaves who were treated like domestic servants. Slaves provided male citizens with the leisure for political activity.

3. The position of women varied in different Greek communities. In Sparta, women were relatively free and outspoken. In Athens, women were more confined and oppressed. Athenian marriages were unequal arranged unions of younger women to older men. The duties of a wife were to produce and raise children (especially sons), to weave cloth, and to cook and clean.

4. Since there were no meaningful relations between men and women, men sought intellectual and emotional companionship with other men. This gave rise to a common pattern of bisexuality in which older men engaged in extended social, intellectual, and sexual relationships with younger men.

D. Failure of the city-state and triumph of the Macedonians

1. Imperial Athens aroused the resentment of other Greek city-states which led (in 431 B.C.E.) to the Peloponnesian war—a conflict between the alliance systems of Athens and Sparta. Sparta, with a navy paid for by the Persians, finally defeated Athens in 404 B.C.E.

2. Sparta’s arrogance then inspired the opposition of the other Greek city-states. This internal conflict among the Greeks gave Persia the opportunity to recover its territory in western Asia, including the Greek communities of the Anatolian coast.
3. As the Greek city-states declined in power, the backward northern Greek kingdom of Macedonia was developing into a great military power. King Philip of Macedonia strengthened his army by equipping his soldiers with longer spears, using cavalry and infantry forces, and developing new siege equipment including catapults.

4. Philip's son and heir Alexander (the Great) invaded Persia in 336 B.C.E. and defeated the forces of the Persian Empire. Alexander, who conquered as far as Pakistan, built his own empire in which he maintained the administrative apparatus of the Persian empire, used Persian officials as well as Greeks and Macedonians, and began to present himself as a successor to the Persian king.

IV. The Hellenistic synthesis

A. The Hellenistic kingdoms

1. After Alexander died, his empire broke up into three kingdoms, each ruled by a Macedonian dynasty. The period of time covered by these kingdoms is called the Hellenistic Age (323–30 B.C.E.).

2. The Seleucid kingdom included the core area of Mesopotamia, Syria, and parts of Anatolia and peripheral possessions including Iran and the Indus valley. The peripheral areas were entirely lost by the second century B.C.E. The Seleucids maintained a Persian-style administrative system and continued Alexander's policy of establishing new Greek-style cities.

3. The Ptolemies ruled Egypt and sometimes Palestine. They took over the highly centralized and well-controlled Egyptian administrative and taxation systems. The Ptolemies made Alexandria their capital and actively encouraged Greek immigration.

4. The Ptolemies did not build other Greek-style cities: the lifestyle and language of the majority of the Egyptian population did not change significantly. Native Egyptians did, however, resent Greek rule and uprisings were increasingly common from the early second century B.C.E.

5. The Antigonids ruled Macedonia and the adjacent parts of Greece. The Spartans, however, as well as new confederations of city-states, resisted Macedonian rule, while Athens remained neutral.

B. Alexandria

1. Alexandria was the greatest city of the Hellenistic age. With a population of nearly half a million, the Mausoleum of Alexander, the Library, and the Museum, Alexandria was a political center, a great center of learning, and a major trading city.

    Alexandria was a Greek city. Its Greek residents enjoyed citizenship and took part in the institutions of government (the Assembly and the Council). Public baths, theatres, and gymnasiuims offered residents all the amenities of Greek life. The city also had a significant Jewish population that dominated two of the five residential districts of the city.

C. Hellenization included intermarriage between Greeks and non-Greeks, the spread of the Greek language and lifestyle, and a synthesis of indigenous and Greek culture.

V. Conclusion

A. The significance of the Persian empire

1. The Persian Empire was the largest that the world had yet seen. It was held together not so much by force as by the ability of the Persian kings to co-opt local elites and incorporate them into a larger imperial structure.

2. The Persians were masters of public relations and successfully represented themselves as benevolent rulers.
B. Changes in western Asia brought about by the Persians
   1. The Persian Empire brought dramatic political changes to western Asia, but the cultural impact of Persia was less significant.
   2. For the Persians, the Greeks were not a very serious threat until the unprecedented offensive launched by Alexander.
C. The cultural impact of the Greeks
   1. For two centuries the Greeks lived with the threat of Persian invasions, and Persia was a major factor in Greek political life.
   2. Alexander's conquests in West Asia had a much deeper and more long-lasting cultural effect than Persian domination had. The Hellenistic kingdoms used Greek soldiers, officers, and administrators and they established Greek-style cities. All this contributed to a strong Hellenistic influence that lasted for a thousand years.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Compare the political systems of the Persian Empire and of Greece. What factors best explain the differences between Persian and Greek political culture?

2. How and why did the government of Greek city-states develop and change from the Archaic through the Classical periods?

3. Why did the Persians and the Greeks come into conflict? What factors might explain the outcome of the Persian Wars and Alexander's conquest of the Persian Empire?

4. Why did Athens and Sparta come into conflict? What factors might explain the outcome of the Peloponnesian War, and what were the consequences of war for the city-states?

5. How would you describe and explain the influence of the Persians and of the Greeks on western Asia and Egypt?

6. What was the relationship between power and artistic and literary culture in the Greek world?

LECTURE TOPICS

1. Africa and Greece: the question of "Black Athena"

   Sources:
2. Naval Power: the key to Athenian success

Sources:


3. Persia’s legacy to Alexander and the Hellenistic kingdoms: administration and kingship in the Persian empire

Sources:


4. Women in Persia and Greece

Sources:


5. What was Hellenism?

Sources:


PAPER TOPICS

1. Explore the possible influences of Zoroastrianism on Judaism and Christianity.

2. Write an essay stating and justifying your position on the following statement: “Alexander’s goals evolved and changed during the course of his conquests.”

3. Compare the political philosophies of Plato and Confucius.

4. Explain how Philip transformed Macedonia from a backwater to the dominant political power in Greece.
Chapter 5

INTERNET RESOURCES

The following Internet sites contain written and visual material appropriate for use with this chapter. A more extensive and continually updated list of Internet resources can be found on The Earth and Its Peoples web site. Refer to the preface of this manual for information on how to locate the text homepage.

Persepolis and Ancient Iran (Oriental Institute-University of Chicago)
http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/MUS/PA/IRAN/PAAI/PAAI_Persepolis.html

Images of Ancient Iran

IranSaga: Persian History and Culture
http://www.artarena.force9.co.uk/iran.htm

Perseus Project: An Evolving Digital Library of Greek Civilization (Tufts University)
http://www.perseus.tufts.edu

The Ancient Greek World (University of Pennsylvania)
http://www.museum.upenn.edu/Greek_World/Intro.html

The Ancient City of Athens (K. Glowacki/N. Klein, Indiana University)
http://www.indiana.edu/~kglowack/athens/

Dr. J's Illustrated Sites of Greece (J. Siegel, Temple University)
http://nimbus.temple.edu/~jisiegel/sites/dr1.htm

Metropolitan Museum of Art Online Collection (Greek and Roman)

Interactive Ancient Mediterranean (Classical Atlas Project/University of North Carolina)
http://iam.classics.unc.edu/index.html

Diotima: Women and Gender in the Ancient World (University of Kentucky)
http://www.uky.edu/ArtsSciences/Classics/gender.html

House of Ptolemy
http://www.houseofptolemy.org/

Alexandria
http://ce.eng.usf.edu/pharos/alexandria/

Classics and Mediterranean Archaeology—Internet Resources (University of Michigan)
http://rome.classics.lsa.umich.edu/welcome.html

The Ancient World Web
http://www.julien.net/ancient/
CHAPTER 6

AN AGE OF EMPIRES: ROME AND HAN CHINA, 753 B.C.E.–330 C.E.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should:

1. Be able to analyze the causes of the rise, the stability, and the decline of the Roman and Han empires in terms of their respective geographical locations, natural resources, economic base, administrative structures, and ideological systems.

2. Understand the political evolution of the Roman state from the Republic to the principate, paying particular attention to how change was related to the growth of empire and questions of land ownership.

3. Be able to describe the development of Christianity and to explain how it became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire.

4. Understand the institution of emperorship and the respective roles of the gentry, the small landholders, peasants, and nomads in the history of Han China.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Rome’s Creation of a Mediterranean Empire, 753 B.C.E.–330 C.E.
   A. Geography and resources
      1. Italy and Sicily are at a crossroads of the Mediterranean and serve as a link between Africa and Europe. Rome is at a crossroads of the Italian peninsula.
      2. Italy’s natural resources included navigable rivers, forests, iron, a mild climate, and enough arable land to support a large population of farmers whose surplus product and labor could be exploited by the Roman state.
   B. A republic of farmers
      1. Rome was inhabited at least as early as 1000 B.C.E. According to legend it was ruled by seven kings between 753 B.C.E. and 507 B.C.E. Kingship was eliminated in 507 B.C.E. when representatives of the senatorial class of large landholders overthrew the last king and established a republic.
      2. The centers of political power were the two consuls and the Senate. In practice, the Senate made laws and governed.
      3. The Roman family consisted of several generations living under the absolute authority of the oldest living male, the paterfamilias.
4. Society was hierarchical. Families and individuals were tied together by patron/client relationships that institutionalized inequality and gave both sides of the relationship reason to cooperate and to support the status quo.

5. Roman women had relatively more freedom than Greek women, but their legal status was still that of a child, subordinate to the paterfamilias or her own or her husband’s family. Eventually procedures evolved which made it possible for some women to become independent after the death of their fathers.

6. Romans worshiped a large number of supernatural spirits as well as major gods such as Jupiter and Mars. Proper performance of ritual ensured that the gods continued to favor the Roman state.

C. Expansion in Italy and the Mediterranean
1. Rome began to expand, at first slowly and then very rapidly in the third and second centuries B.C.E. until it became a huge Mediterranean empire. Possible explanations for this expansion include greed, aggressiveness, the need for consuls to prove themselves as military commanders during their one year in office, and a constant fear of being attacked.

2. During the first stage of expansion, Rome conquered the rest of Italy (by 290 B.C.E.). Rome won the support of the people of Italy by granting them Roman citizenship. As citizens, these people then had to provide soldiers for the military.


4. The Romans used local elite groups to administer and tax the various provinces of their rapidly expanding and far-flung empire. A Roman governor, who served a single one-year term in office, supervised the local administrators. This system was inadequate and prone to corruption.

D. The failure of the republic
1. As Rome expanded, the social and economic bases of the Roman republic in Italy were undermined by change. While men from independent farming families were forced to devote their time to military service, large landowners bought up their land to create great estates called latifundia. This meant both a decline in Rome’s source of soldiers and a decline in food production, as latifundia owners preferred to grow cash crops like grapes rather than staple crops such as wheat.

2. Since slave labor was cheap in an expanding empire, Italian peasants, driven off the land and not employed by the latifundia, drifted into the cities where they formed a fractious unemployed underclass.

3. As the independent farming family that had been the traditional source of soldiers disappeared, Roman commanders built their armies from men from the underclass who tended to give their loyalty, not to the Roman state, but to their commander. This led to generals taking control of politics, to civil wars, and finally to the end of the republican system of government.

4. Julius Caesar’s grandnephew Octavian (also known as Augustus) took power in 31 B.C.E., reorganized the Roman government, and ruled as a military dictator. After Augustus died, several members of his family succeeded him. However, the position of emperor was not necessarily hereditary: in the end, armies chose emperors.

E. An urban empire
1. About 80 percent of the 50 to 60 million people of the Roman Empire were rural farmers, but the empire was administered through and for a network of cities and towns. In this sense, it was an urban empire. Rome had about a million residents, other large cities
(Alexandria, Antioch, Carthage) several hundred thousand each, while many Roman towns had populations of several thousand.

2. In Rome, the upper classes lived in elegant, well-built, well-appointed houses; many aristocrats also owned country villas. The poor lived in dark, dank, fire-prone wooden tenements in squalid slums built in the low-lying parts of the city.

3. Provincial towns imitated Rome both in urban planning and in urban administration. The local elite, who served the interests of Rome, dominated town councils. The local elite also served their communities by using their wealth to construct amenities such as aqueducts, baths, theatres, gardens, temples, and other public works and entertainment projects.

4. Rural life in the Roman empire involved lots of hard work and very little entertainment. Rural people had little contact with representatives of the government. By the early centuries C.E. absentee landlords who lived in the cities owned most rural land, while the land was worked by tenant farmers supervised by hired foremen.

5. Manufacture and trade flourished under the "pax romana." Grain had to be imported to feed the huge city of Rome. Rome and the Italian towns (and later, provincial centers) exported glass, metalwork, pottery, and other manufactures to the provinces. Romans also imported Chinese silk and Indian and Arabian spices.

6. One of the effects of the Roman Empire was Romanization. In the western part of the Empire, the Latin language, Roman clothing, and the Roman lifestyle were adopted by local people. As time passed, Roman emperors gradually extended Roman citizenship to all free male adult inhabitants of the empire.

F. The rise of Christianity

1. Jesus lived in a society marked by resentment against Roman rule, which had inspired the belief that a Messiah would arise to liberate the Jews. When Jesus sought to reform Jewish religious practices, the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem turned him over to the Roman governor for execution.

2. After the execution, Jesus disciples continued to spread his teachings; they also spread their belief that Jesus had been resurrected. At this point, the target of their proselytizing was their fellow Jews.

3. The target of proselytizing changed from Jews to non-Jews in the 40s–70s C.E. First Paul of Tarsus, an Anatolian Jew, discovered that non-Jews (gentiles) were much more receptive to the teachings of Jesus than Jews were. Second, a Jewish revolt in Judaea (66 C.E.) and the subsequent Roman reconquest destroyed the original Jewish Christian community in Jerusalem.

4. Christianity grew slowly for two centuries, developing a hierarchy of priests and bishops, hammering out a commonly accepted theological doctrine, and resisting the persecution of Roman officials. By the late third century, Christians were a sizeable minority in the Roman Empire.

5. The expansion of Christianity in the Roman empire came at a time when Romans were increasingly dissatisfied with their traditional religion. This dissatisfaction inspired Romans to become interested in a variety of "mystery cults" and universal creeds that had their origins in the eastern Mediterranean.

G. Technology and transformation

1. The Romans were expert military and civil engineers. Among their accomplishments were: bridge-building, ballistic weapons, elevated and underground aqueducts, the use of arches and domes, and the invention of concrete.

2. Following Augustus' death, the army was organized primarily for defense. The Rhine-Danube frontier was protected by a string of forts; long walls protected the frontiers of North Africa and Britain. On the eastern frontier, the Romans fought for centuries against the Parthians. Neither side made any significant gains.
3. The state system constructed by Augustus worked well until what historians call Rome's "third-century crisis." The symptoms of this crisis were frequent change of rulers, raids by German tribesmen from across the Rhine-Danube frontier, and the rise of regional power when Rome seemed unable to guarantee security.

4. Rome's economy was undermined by the high cost of defense, debasement of the currency and consequent inflation, a disruption of trade, reversion to a barter economy, disappearance of the municipal aristocracy of the provincial cities, and a movement of population out of the cities and back into the rural areas.

5. The emperor Diocletian (r. 284–305) saved the Roman state by instituting a series of reforms that included price controls and regulations that required certain people to stay in their professions and to train a son to succeed them. Some side effects of these reforms include a flourishing black market and a growing feeling of resentment against the government.

6. Constantine (r. 306–37) converted to Christianity in 337 and patronized the Christian church, thus contributing to the rise of Christianity as the official religion of the empire. Constantine also transferred the capital of the empire from Rome to the eastern city of Byzantium, which he renamed Constantinople.

II. The Origins of Imperial China, 221 B.C.E.–220 C.E.

A. Resources and population
1. China is a large region marked by significant ecological, topographical, biological, and climatic diversity.

2. The two most important resources that supported the imperial Chinese state were agricultural production and labor. Agricultural production in China was intensive and was taxed by the government. The most productive agricultural region was the Yangzi Valley, which began to be linked to the centers of political power (Chang'an and Luoyang) by canals.

3. Both the Qin and the Han governments exploited the labor power of rural China by demanding that peasant families supply men for labor and for service in the military. A periodic census and regularly updated records of land and households enabled officials to collect the proper amount of taxes, labor service, and military service.

4. Throughout antiquity, the Han Chinese people expanded at the expense of other ethnic groups. Han expanded into areas that were suitable for settled agriculture. They did not expand into areas that were suitable only for nomadic economies.

B. Hierarchy, obedience, and belief
1. The family was the basic unity of society. The family was conceived of as an unbroken chain of generations including the ancestors as well as the current generations. Ancestors were thought to take an active interest in the affairs of the current generation, and they were routinely consulted, appeased, and venerated.

2. The teachings of Confucius were a fundamental source of values for family, social, and political organization. Confucius regarded hierarchy as natural and placed absolute authority in the hands of the father. Family members were thought of as part of the group, not as individuals. Confucius also believed that people would properly fulfill their roles if they were correctly instructed and imitated good role models.

3. According to the ideals of the upper classes, women were to cook, take care of household chores, respect their parents-in-law, and obey their husbands. Lower-class women may have been less constrained. Marriages were arranged, and a new wife had to prove herself to her husband and to her mother-in-law through hard work, obedience, devotion, and by bearing sons.

4. Chinese believed in a number of nature spirits to whom they sacrificed. Unusual natural phenomena were regarded as ill omens. The landscape was thought to channel the flow of
evil and good power, and experts in fengshui (geomancy) were employed to identify the most fortunate location and orientation for buildings and graves.

C. The first Chinese empire
1. After the Warring States Period (480–221 B.C.E.), the state of Qin united China. Factors that enabled Qin to accomplish reunification may include: the ability and ruthlessness of the Qin ruler, Shi Huangdi and his prime minister, Li Si; Qin’s location in the Wei valley with its predominantly rural population of independent farming households; and Qin’s experience in mobilizing manpower for irrigation and flood-control projects, which had strengthened the central government.

2. Upon uniting China, the Qin established a strong centralized state on the Legalist model. Shi Huangdi and Li Si suppressed Confucianism, eliminated rival centers of authority, abolished primogeniture and slavery, and constructed a rural economy of free land-owning/tax-paying farmers. They standardized weights and measures, knit the empire together with roads and defended it with a long wall.

3. The oppressive nature of the Qin regime and its exorbitant demands for taxes and labor led to a number of popular rebellions that overthrew the dynasty after the death of Shi Huangdi in 210 B.C.E.

D. The long reign of the Han (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.)
1. Liu Bang, a peasant who defeated all other contestants for control of China, established the Han dynasty. The Han established a political system that drew on both Confucian philosophy and Legalist techniques.

2. After a period of consolidation, the Han went through a period of territorial expansion under Emperor Wu (r. 140–87 B.C.E.). During the Western Han period (202 B.C.E.–8 B.C.E.) the capital was at Chang’an. During the Eastern Han (23–220 C.E.) the capital was at Luoyang.

3. Chang’an was an easily defended walled city with easy access to good arable land. The population in 2 C.E. was 246,000. Other cities and towns imitated the urban planning of Chang’an.

4. The elite of Chang’an lived in lived in elegant multistoried houses arranged on broad, well-planned boulevards. They dressed in fine silks, were connoisseurs of art and literature, and indulged in numerous entertainments. The common people lived in closely packed houses in largely unplanned, winding alleys.

5. The emperor was supreme in the state and in society. He was regarded as the Son of Heaven, the link between heaven and the human world. Emperors were the source of law. But anything that went seriously wrong could be interpreted to mean that the emperor was guilty of misrule and that he was losing the Mandate of Heaven. Emperors lived in seclusion, surrounded by a royal retinue that included wives, family, servants, courtiers, and officials.

6. The central government was run by two chief officials and included a number of functionally specialized ministers. Local officials collected taxes, drafted men for corvée labor and military service, and settled local disputes. Most people had no contact with the central government.

7. Local officials were supplied by a class of moderately wealthy, educated local landowners that historians refer to as the “gentry.” The gentry adopted Confucianism as their ideology and pursued careers in the civil service.

E. Technology and trade
1. In the field of metallurgy, China advanced from bronze to iron by about 500 B.C.E. Rather than make wrought-iron goods (as the Romans did), Chinese ironworkers melted the iron and used molds to make harder and more durable cast-iron and steel tools and weapons.

2. Other technological innovations of the Han period include the crossbow, cavalry, the watermill, and the horse collar. New transportation and communications technology
included a road system, courier systems for carrying government communications, and canals.

3. The Han period also saw significant growth in the size and number of urban areas. Somewhere from 10 to 30 percent of the population of Han China lived in towns.

4. Long-distance commerce was a significant part of the Han economy. The most important export was silk, and the most important export route was the Silk Road through Central Asia. The Chinese government sought to control this route by sending armies and colonists to Central Asia.

F. Decline of the Han Empire

1. The Han Empire’s major security problem was the nomadic tribes on its northern border. Nomadic groups were usually small, but during the Han, the Chinese faced a confederacy of nomads called the Xiongnu. China attempted to deal with the Xiongnu threat by strengthening its defenses (particularly its cavalry) and by making more compliant nomads into “tributaries.”

2. The Han Empire was undermined by a number of factors. First, the expense of defending the northern borders was a tremendous financial burden. Second, nobles and merchants built up large landholdings at the expense of the small farmers. These large landholders were able to resist taxation and became independent of government control. Third, the system of military conscription broke down and the central government had to rely on mercenaries whose loyalty was questionable.

3. These factors compounded by factionalism at court, official corruption, peasant uprisings, and nomadic attacks led to the fall of the dynasty in 220 C.E. China entered a period of political fragmentation that lasted until the late sixth century.

III. Imperial Parallels

A. Similarities

1. The Han and Roman Empires were similar in respect to their family structure and values, their patterns of land tenure, taxation, and administration, and in their empire building and its consequences for the identity of the conquered areas.

2. Both empires faced common problems in terms of defense, and found their domestic economies undermined by their military expenditures.

3. Both empires were overthrown by new peoples who were then deeply influenced by the imperial cultures of Rome and of China.

B. Differences

1. In China, the imperial model was revived and the territory of the Han empire re-unified. The former Roman empire was never again reconstituted.

2. Historians have tried to explain this difference by pointing to differences between China and the Roman world in respect to the concept of the individual, the greater degree of social mobility in Rome than in Han China, and the different political ideologies and religions of the two empires.

IV. Conclusion

A. The Qin and the Han were able to unify China and build an empire rapidly because the basis had already been set in the Zhou and Warring States Periods; Rome constructed its empire slowly and without precedents to draw upon.

B. The Han and the Roman empires maintained and administered large territories and populations by virtue of their ability to organize large professional armies and professional bureaucracies.

C. Both empires provided long periods of peace and prosperity, but they were undermined by the high cost of defense and by the heavy tax burden, which this put on their people.
D. The Han dynasty constructed a political system that would be revived and modified by subsequent dynasties; the Roman empire was never restored.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what ways were the economic foundations of the Roman and the Han empires similar? How do you account for the similarity? How were they different? What were the consequences of the differences?

2. Why did Christianity develop when and as it did? Who would you say is the founder of the Christian religion? Why did it ultimately survive and succeed?

3. How might environmental or geographical factors help to explain the different long-term effects of the Roman and the Han empires? Were they more important than religious and ideological factors?

4. How has the material in this chapter contributed to your understanding of the relationship between technology and the development of governments?

5. Why should the Han have been more successful than the Qin in establishing long-lasting dynastic rule?

6. How did the institutions of imperial government in Han China differ from those established in Rome after Augustus? What might explain the difference?

LECTURE TOPICS

1. Julius Caesar and Augustus

Sources:


2. China in the time of Emperor Wu

Sources:

3. Science and technology in Rome and China

Sources:


4. The development of Christianity

Sources:


5. Why do empires fall? The case of the Han dynasty

Sources:


**PAPER TOPICS**

1. Compare the legal and social status of women in Roman and Chinese civilizations.

2. Write a paper explaining and justifying your position on the following statement: "The Romans did not seek an empire, they backed into it."

3. Research the question of water supply and sewage disposal in Roman cities.

4. Compare the legal system of Rome with the legal system of Qin and/or Han China.
INTERNET RESOURCES

The following Internet sites contain written and visual material appropriate for use with this chapter. A more extensive and continually updated list of Internet resources can be found on The Earth and Its Peoples web site. Refer to the preface of this manual for information on how to locate the text homepage.

Many of the links for the ancient Mediterranean cited in chapter 5

Maecenas—images of the Roman world (L. Curran)
http://wings.buffalo.edu/AandL/Maecenas/general_contents.html

Lacus Curtius: Into the Roman World (B. Thayer)
http://www.ukans.edu/history/index/europe/ancient_rome/E/Roman/home.html

Vroma: A Virtual Community for Teaching and Learning Classics
http://www.vroma.org/

Images from Pompeii (H. Lester, Tulane University)
http://www.tulane.edu/~hughl/lester/text/Western_Architect/Pompeii/Pompeii.html

Trajan’s Rome (Getty Museum)
http://www.artsednet.getty.edu/ArtsEdNet/Resources/Trajan/toc.html

Roman Art and Architecture (K. Andrus-Walck)
http://harpy.uccs.edu/roman/html/

Roman Forum: Exploring an Ancient Marketplace (student site)
http://library.thinkquest.org/11402/

A Visual Tour Through Late Antiquity (S. Muhlberger)
http://www.unipissing.ca/department/history/4505/show.htm

Links for ancient China cited in Chapter 3
CHAPTER 7
INDIA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA, 1500 B.C.E.–1100 C.E.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should:

1. Be able to discuss and to analyze the patterns of political development and state building in India and be aware of the differences between the northern and southern parts of the subcontinent.

2. Know the historical development and the basic tenets of the religions of Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism.

3. Understand the Indian social system and its relationship to religious concepts.

4. Understand the importance of location, trade, and Indian cultural influence on the rise and fall of the states of Funan and Srivijaya.

5. Understand the concept of “theater-state” and the role of resources and ritual in creating social and political bonds.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Foundations of Indian Civilization
   A. The Indian subcontinent
      1. India has three topographical zones: (1) the northern mountainous zone; (2) the Indus and Ganges Basins; and (3) the peninsula. The Vindhya Mountains and the Deccan plateau divide the peninsula from the other two zones.
      2. The peninsula itself includes further topographical subregions including: (1) tropical Kerala coast in the west; (2) Coromandel Coast in the east; (3) flat area of Tamil Nadu in the south; and (4) island of Sri Lanka.
      3. Peninsular India and the Ganges Valley have a subtropical climate and plentiful rainfall. The Indus Valley is dry and agriculture there relies on irrigation. The staple crop of the Ganges Delta is rice; elsewhere, the staple crops are wheat, millet, and barley.
      4. This geographical diversity has made it very difficult for any political power to unify all of India for any great length of time.
   B. The Vedic Age (1500–500 B.C.E.)
      1. After the demise of the Indus Valley civilization, Indo-European warriors migrated into India. They were organized in patriarchal families and kinship groups, and at first, they herded cattle in the northwest. After 1000 B.C.E. some of them began to push into the Ganges Valley, using new iron tools to fell trees and cultivate the land. The oral tradition
of these light-skinned Arya tribes tells of a violent struggle between themselves and the
darker-skinned Dravidian-speaking Dasas, whom they evidently pushed into southern
India.
2. The struggle between Aryas and Dasas led to the development of the system of varna,
meaning “color” but equivalent to “class.” Under this system, people are born into one of
four varna: (1) Brahmin (priests/scholars); (2) Kshatriya (warriors); (3) Vaishya
(merchants); and (4) Shudra (peasant/laborer). A fifth group, Untouchables, was outside
the system and consisted of persons who did demeaning or ritually polluting work such as
work that involved contact with the dead bodies of animals or humans.
3. The four varna were subdivided into hereditary occupational groups called jati (also
known by the Portuguese word caste). Jati were also arranged in order of hierarchy;
complex rules governed the appropriate occupation, duties, and rituals of each jati and
laid forth regulations concerning interaction between people of different jati.
4. The systems of varna and jati were rationalized by belief in reincarnation. According to
this belief, each individual has an immortal spirit (atman) that will be reborn in another
body after death. One’s station in the next life depends on one’s actions (karma) in this
and previous lives.
5. Vedic religion emphasized the worship of male deities through sacrifice. Religious
knowledge and practice was the monopoly of the Brahmin priestly varna who memorized
the rituals, the prayers, and the hymns and may have opposed the introduction of writing
in order to maintain their monopoly in religious knowledge.
6. We do not know much about the status or roles of women in the Vedic period. They
could study lore and participate in ritual, they could own land, and they married in their
middle or late teens.
C. Challenges to the old order: Jainism and Buddhism
1. During the Vedic period, people who reacted against the rigid social hierarchy and
against the religious monopoly of the Brahmans would withdraw into the forests where
they pursued salvation through yoga (spiritual and mental discipline), special diets, or
meditation. Their goal was to achieve moksha—liberation from the cycle of birth, death,
and rebirth. The ideas of these religious dissidents are reflected in the Upanishads.
2. Jainism was founded by Mahavira (540–468 B.C.E.). Jains practiced nonviolence and went
to extremes in their attempts not to kill any living thing. The most extreme went naked
and starved themselves to death. The less extreme devoted themselves to commerce and
banking—occupations that, unlike agriculture, do not require one to kill.
Alienated by both the extremes of a wealthy youth and six years of asceticism,
Siddhartha Gautama set forth his teaching of the “Four Noble Truths” and of the
Eightfold path that would lead the individual to enlightenment. Some of his followers
took vows of celibacy, nonviolence, and poverty.
4. The original form of Buddhism centered on the individual’s attempts to gain
enlightenment through moderate living, self-discipline, and meditation. Their goal was to
achieve nirvana—release from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. According to
Buddhist teaching, all things are composite, including the individual. This stands in
contrast to the Vedic belief in the existence of an eternal soul (atman).
5. After the death of the Buddha, some of his followers organized themselves into
monasteries and nunneries and developed a complex, hierarchical religion, complete with
worship of the Buddha, reverence for bodhisattvas, and artistic representations of the
Buddha. The religion broke into two major schools: Mahayana and Theravada. Mahayana
incorporated the new beliefs, while Theravada followed the original teaching of the
Buddha more closely.
D. The rise of Hinduism
1. Pressure from new religious movements like Jainism and Buddhism led to a reform of the old Vedic religion. As a result of this reform, the foundational elements of Vedic religion incorporated the intense personal religious devotion, the fertility rituals, and the symbolism of the southern Dravidian cultures, and elements of Buddhism. Sacrifice became less important while the role of personal devotion to the gods increased.
2. As a part of the reform, two formerly minor Vedic deities took the places of honor in the Hindu pantheon. These deities were Vishnu, the preserver and Shiva, the destroyer. Also prominent in the new religious tradition was the goddess Devi. These and all the other countless gods and goddesses were understood to be manifestations of a single divine force.
3. Hindu worship centered on temples and shrines and included puja (service to a deity) and pilgrimage. The Ganges River became one of the most popular pilgrimage sites.
4. The religious duties of an individual varied according to gender, social status, and age.
5. The transformation from Vedic religion to Hinduism was so successful that Hinduism became the dominant religion of India. Hinduism appealed to common people's need for personal deities with whom they could have a direct connection. Theravada Buddhism was too austere to have popular appeal, and Mahayana Buddhism was so close to Hinduism that its beliefs could easily be absorbed by the larger religion.

II. Imperial Expansion and Collapse
A. The Mauryan Empire
1. The core of the Mauryan Empire was the kingdom of Magadha, which benefited from its strategic location and plentiful agricultural and iron resources. The Mauryan empire was founded by Chandragupta and expanded by himself and his successors Bindusara and Ashoka until it included almost the entire subcontinent. Tradition has it that a Machiavellian Brahmin, Kautilya, guided Chandragupta.
2. The Mauryan government made its capital at the walled and moated city of Pataliputra. The imperial establishment, including a large army, was supported by a 25 percent tax on the agricultural products of the empire and by state monopolies on mines, shipbuilding, and armaments.
3. The most famous Mauryan emperor is Ashoka (r. 269–232 B.C.E.). Ashoka, shaken by the carnage in a brutal war of expansion in the south, then converted to Buddhism. His Buddhist policies of government are preserved in edicts that were inscribed on rocks and pillars at various points throughout his empire.

B. Commerce and culture in an era of political fragmentation
1. The Mauryan empire collapsed in 184 B.C.E. Northern India fell into a period of political fragmentation that included rule of the northwest by the Shakas (Scythians, 50 B.C.E.–50 C.E.) and the Kushans (50–240 C.E.).
2. Political fragmentation in northern India was accompanied by economic development in which guilds of artisans and merchants played a dominant role.
3. The period of political fragmentation was also characterized by cultural development that included the writing of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The latter includes the famous Bhagavad-Gita, which addresses the contradiction between duty to society and duty to one's own soul. The Bhagavad-Gita suggests that this contradiction can be resolved when one is aware that any form of disciplined action taken without regard for personal benefit is a service to the gods. The period also saw developments in herbal medicine and linguistics.
4. During the period of political fragmentation in the north, central and south India experienced different patterns of development. The Andhra dynasty established an independent state in the Deccan (second century B.C.E. to second century C.E.). In southern
India, divided among three Tamil kingdoms: Cholas, Pandyas, and Cheras, this was a period of great artistic achievement.

C. The Gupta Empire

1. Like the Mauryan Empire, the Gupta Empire began with the kingdom of Magadha. The rulers of the Gupta Empire brought northern and central India under their control, but not the south. Like the Mauryan rulers, the Guptas controlled iron deposits, established state monopolies, and collected a 25 percent agricultural tax. However, they were never as strong as the Mauryan empire.

2. The Guptas used their army to control the core of their empire, but provincial administration was left to governors who often made their posts hereditary and subordinate kingdoms and kinship groups.

3. Because the Gupta did not have sufficient military force, they exercised power as a “theater-state,” redistributing profits and luxury goods from trade and dazzling its dependents with elaborate ceremonies in return for gifts and other favors.

4. We have very little archaeological data and few contemporary accounts from which to learn about the politics, society, and culture of the Gupta period. We know that the court supported mathematics and astronomy and that Gupta mathematicians invented our “Arabic” numerals and the concept of “zero.” We also have the Chinese monk Faxian’s description of his journey through Gupta India.

5. During the Gupta period, women lost the right to inherit and own property and to participate in key rituals, and were treated like the lowest varna (Shudra). They were married very young, and in some places a widow was required to burn herself on her husband’s funeral pyre. Among the few ways to escape this low status was to join a religious community, to be a member of an extremely wealthy family, or to be a courtesan.

6. The Gupta period, while dominated by Hinduism, was characterized by religious toleration and saw the development of the classic form of Hindu temples with exterior courtyard, inner shrine, and wall decorations.

7. Gupta India was linked to the outside world by extensive trade networks. Trade with Southeast and East Asia was particularly flourishing.

8. In 550 the Gupta empire collapsed under the financial burden of defense against the Huns. Harsha (r. 606–647), whose kingdom is described by the Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang, briefly reunited northern India. After Harsha, northern India again fell into political fragmentation.

9. During the Gupta period numerous small kingdoms ruled the Deccan and south India. The most notable of these were the southern warrior kingdoms of the Pallavas and the Cholas.

III. Southeast Asia

A. Geography and resources

1. Southeast Asia has three geographical zones: (1) the Indo-china mainland; (2) the Malay peninsula; and (3) the islands. The area stands between China and India, and has been influenced by both civilizations.

2. Natural resources include fertile agricultural lands, dependable monsoon rains, and several growing seasons a year. This enabled the area to support a large, dense population.

B. Early civilization

1. Early inhabitants of Southeast Asia practiced swidden (slash and burn) agriculture and domesticated important crops and animals, including rice, soybeans, sugar cane, chickens, and pigs.
2. Southeast Asia received waves of migration of Malay peoples from southern China. Malay migrations subsequently continued into the Pacific islands and into the Indian Ocean. Early Malay groups in Southeast Asia lived in small villages, manufactured bronze tools, and were organized in small political units.

3. The first large states in Southeast Asia emerged in the early centuries C.E. in response to the position of Southeast Asia as a crossroads for trade and travel between India and China. Trade brought business; it also brought Hindu/Buddhist culture.

4. The first major state to appear in Southeast Asia was Funan (first through sixth centuries B.C.E.) in the Mekong delta area. Funan thrived due to its domination of the Isthmus of Kra. Funan's decline in the sixth century may be related to the opening of new trade routes that bypassed Funan.

C. The Srivijayan kingdom
1. Srivijaya was located on Sumatra and dominated the new southern trade route through the Strait of Malacca as well as other shipping routes through the area of modern Malaysia and Indonesia.

2. The Srivijayan political system knit together four different ecological zones and their local rulers under the authority of the Srivijayan king. These four zones were: (1) the core area along the Musi River; (2) the upland Sumatran interior; (3) river ports; and (4) the fertile rice lands of central Java.

3. The Srivijayan kings maintained their control over this complex system through a combination of military power, diplomacy, control of trade, and the techniques of the "theater-state." Kings used the splendor of their capital to attract resources and labor. The temporal power of the kings was enhanced by popular belief in their magical powers. Kings were associated with forces of fertility. They also patronized Buddhist monasteries and schools.

4. Indian culture exercised a powerful influence on Srivijayan concepts of kingship and government, while the Hindu and Buddhist religions became the dominant faiths of the region. Srivijayans did not, however, simply imitate India; they borrowed selectively from Indian civilization and adapted what they borrowed to their own culture and needs.

5. Changes in trade routes led to the decline of Srivijaya in the eleventh century. The capital was destroyed in 1025 by the Chola kingdom.

IV. Conclusion
A. Our account of Indian history during this period is dominated by the history of religion because Indians did not regard the particulars of an historical moment, when set against the concepts of enormous sweeps of time, as being of much importance, and thus did not produce the sort of historiographical literature that was produced in the other ancient civilizations.

B. One of the major themes in Indian history is the tension between divisive and unifying forces.

C. India's major contribution to technology was the development of "Arabic" numerals and place-value notation.

D. While northern India dominated Indian social, political, and intellectual life, Hinduism was characterized by an amalgamation of northern and southern religious traditions and an ability to tolerate and assimilate a variety of beliefs, leading to the formation of a common Indian civilization.

E. Indian civilization proved to be adaptable to the needs of Southeast Asian elites.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How have geographical features influenced the political, social, and cultural development of India?
2. What factors made it possible for the Mauryan and Gupta empires to unite substantial parts of the subcontinent?

3. What do the textbook authors mean by "theater-state" and how do they use this concept?

4. What are the origins of the concepts of varna and jati, and why has the varna-jati system of social organization lasted so long? What social needs did they serve, and how are these social functions addressed in our culture?

5. What are the similarities and what are the differences between Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism?

6. What factors might explain Srivijaya's ability to organize a number of ecological zones into a single kingdom?

LECTURE TOPICS

1. The origins and evolution of Buddhism

   Sources:
   

2. Religion and politics: the reign of Ashoka

   Sources:
   

3. Women in ancient India

   Sources:
   

4. Trade and the development of states: Funan and Srivijaya

   Sources:
   

5. Hinduism

Sources:


PAPER TOPICS

1. Why was it more difficult for the Mauryan and Gupta dynasties to build and maintain a large territorial empire in India than it was for the Han Dynasty to do so in China?

2. Write a position paper on the following statement: “Buddhism represented a step forward for the status of women in Indian society.”

3. Research the development of mathematics during the Mauryan and Guptan periods.

4. Research the development and significance of art in the Srivijayan period.

INTERNET RESOURCES

The following Internet sites contain written and visual material appropriate for use with this chapter. A more extensive and continually updated list of Internet resources can be found on The Earth and Its Peoples web site. Refer to the preface of this manual for information on how to locate the text homepage.

Internet Indian History Sourcebook (P. Halsall, Fordham University)
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/india/indiasbook.html

WWW Virtual Library--India
http://webhead.com/WWWVL/India/india2.html

Indonesia: History and Cultural Resources
http://coombs.anu.edu.au/WWWVLPages/IndonPages/Culture.html

Borobodur
http://sgwww.epfl.ch/BERGER/Borobudur/F/