

# Classical Civilizations

## Transition from Ancient to Classical World 500BCE - 600 CE

- ✘ Persians
- ✘ Dualism
- ✘ Roman-Greco society and cultural characteristics
- ✘ Role of the individual in society
- ✘ Philosophical development
- ✘ Stages of development of empires
  - characteristics of an empire
  - Conrad Demorast Model
- ✘ Urbanization
- ✘ Han China
- ✘ Gupta India

Objectives Classical Civilizations  
Formation of Empires and their interaction (500 BCE – 600CE)

1. Understand the historical development and the economic basis of the Persian Empire
2. Discuss the religious and political justifications for kingship and the mechanisms that the Persians developed for successful administration of their extensive and diverse empire.
3. Outline the major political developments, social and gender structures, arts, and sciences, in the classical civilizations:
  - a. China (Zhou, Qin, and Han), India, the Mediterranean, and Mesoamerica.
4. Understand the geographical, economic, and technological bases and the social structure of Archaic and classical Greek civilization.
5. Analyze the causes of the political evolution that led to the polis and democracy.
6. Identify the Greek approaches to science and philosophy.
7. Determine the effects of the Macedonian Alexander (the Great) in the spread of Greek influence throughout the Anatolian peninsula to South Asia and Northern Africa.
8. Understand the causes and effects of the struggle between Persia and Greece.
9. Analyze the significance and both the short- and long-term influence of Persian and Greek culture in the Mediterranean and western Asian worlds.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. Describe the development of Christianity and to explain how it became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire.
13. Understand the institution of emperorship and the respective roles of the gentry, the small landholders, peasants, and nomads in the history of Han China.
14. Compare the development of traditions and institutions in major civilizations, for example, Indian, Chinese, and Greek/Roman.
15. Discuss the historical forces that led to the complex society of ancient India.
16. Describe the development and distinctive features of Indian religion, as well as the influence of Indian religion on South Asian culture.
17. Compare the caste system to other systems of social inequality devised by early and classical civilizations, including slavery.
18. Understand the process that led to the creation of the Mauryan and Gupta Empires.
19. Understand the importance of location, trade, and Indian cultural influence on the rise and fall of Southeast Asian maritime states.
20. Analyze the development of an empire including the elements that contribute to the initial formation and character, the strengths that lead to its classical nature, and the conditions present in its decline.
21. Analyze the collapse of the empires/states of the late classical period (200 – 600 CE/AD), including Han China, the western portion of the Roman Empire, and Gupta India.
22. Identify and discuss the role of nomadic invaders in the development of the classical empires.
23. Discuss the specific types of urbanization that developed during the classical era.
24. Describe the major trading patterns within and among classical civilizations, including contacts with adjacent regions.
  - a. Describe interregional trading systems, for example, the Silk Roads.
  - b. Describe interregional networks by 600 CE/AD, including trade and the spread of religions.
25. Compare societies that include cities with pastoral and nomadic societies.
26. Analyze the role of technologies in the growth of large state structures.
27. Compare the distinctive philosophies that develop in the Mediterranean region, and south and east Asia.

## Classical Civilizations

acropolis	Cyrillic alphabet	Macedon	reincarnation
Aenid	Cyrus the Great	Macedonia	Republic
Aeschylus	Damascus	Madrasas	Rome
Agora	Delian League	maji	Romulus Augstulus
Alaric	Demeter	Mahayana	Sabines
Alexander of Macedon	Democracy	Mani	Sahara desert
Alexander the Great	Diocletian	Manichaeism	saints
Alexandria	Dionysus	Manzikert	Salamis
Algebra	direct democracy	Marathon	Satrapies/satrap
Anatolia	Diviners	Marius	Savior
Animism	Doric, Ionic, Corinthian	Mark Anthony	Scholar-gentry (Han)
Antigonid empire	Draco	Masada	Sicily
Antigonids	Edict of Milan	Maurya dynasty:	Silk Roads
Antigonus	Epicureans	Mecca	Sima Qian
Antioch	Epidemic diseases	Meroe	<u>Scipio Africanus</u>
Apollo	equites	metics	Socrates
Arabia	Essenes	Mithraism	Solon
Arabian Sea	Etruscans	Monsoons	Sophocles
Aristocracy	Euripides	Moscow	Sparta
Aristophanes	Evans, Sir Arthur	Muhammad	Spartacus
Aristotle	Excommunication	Muslim	St. Augustine
Arthashastra	Gaius Gracchus	Nestorians	St. Basil
Ashoka	Griots	Nestorius	St. Basil of Caesarea
Athens	Goths	Niani	St. Simeon Stylite
Attica	Guerrilla tactics	Nubia	Stateless societies
Attila the Hun	Gupta dynasty	Odovacer	Stoicism/Stoics
Augustine	Gurus	Odyssy	Struggle of the Orders
Augustus Caesar (Octavian)	Hadrian (Hadrian's Wall)	Oligarchy	Sub-Saharan Africa
Axum	Hannibal	Otavian (Augustus)	Sui
Baghdad	Hellenism	Olympic games	Sulla
Bantu	Hellenistic culture	Oracle of Delphi	Tang
Barracks emperors	helots	Pandemic	Tetrarchs
Bedouins	Herodotus	Patricians	Thebes
Belisarius	Hijra	Paterfamilias	Themopolea
Benedict of Nursia	Hoplite	Peter	Tiberius Gracchus
Berenice	Iberian Peninsula	Paul of Tarsus	transmigration
bodhisattvas	Ibn Rushd	Pax Romana	Trajan
Bubonic plague	Iliad and Odyssey	Pax Sinica	Trans-Saharan trade
Caravanserais	Infanticide	Peloponnesian War	Tribune
Carthage	Ionian	Pericles	Tribute
Carthaginians	Jesus of Nazareth	Persia	Trinity
Caspian Sea	Jizya	Persian Gulf	Twelve Tables
Champa rice	Judaism	Persian Wars	Tyre
Chandragupta Maurya	Julius Caesar	Phalnx	Ulama
Chang'an	Justinian	Philip II	untouchables
Christianity	Kalidasa	Philip of Macedon	Virgil
Cicero	Kamasutra	Plato	Wu di (Martial Emperor)
Clesithenes	karma	Plebeians	Xenophobia/Xenophobic
Cleopatra	Kautilya	polis	Yathrib (Medina)
Constantine	Khadija	Pompey	Yellow Turbans
Constantinople	Kinship groups	pope	Zealots
Consul	Knossos	Ptolemaic empire	Zeus
Corinth	Kongo	Ptolemies	Zhang Qian
Corinthia	Latifundia	Ptolemy	Zimbabwe
Corpus juris civilis	Latium	Punic Wars	Zarathustra
Council of Chalcedon	Legions	Punjab	Zoroastrianism
Council of Nicaea	Lingua franca	Quran	
Crassus	Livy	Rajput	
	Lycurgus	Rama	

## Classical Civilizations – Greeks, Persians, Romans, Han China, Gupta India

### Persians and Greeks transition from Ancient to Classical World

- I. Ancient Iran, 1000–30 B.C.E.
  - A. Geography and Resources
    1. Iran's location, bounded by mountains, deserts, and the Persian Gulf, left it open to attack from Central Asian nomads. The fundamental topographical features included high mountains on the edges, salt deserts in the interior, and a sloping plateau crossed by mountain streams.
    2. Iran had limited natural resources. Water was 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 twenty 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 this 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 Aegean World, 2000—1100 B.C.E.
  - A. Minoan 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. Mycenaean Greece
    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 contact and trade.
6. 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 and then replaced by Mycenaeans.
7. 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 in the siege of Troy.

#### C. The Fall of Late Bronze Age Civilizations

1. Destruction of Old Centers of Civilization in the Middle East
2. Unknown invaders destroyed the Hittite kingdom. Syria likewise fell to invasions.
3. The Egyptians battled invasions from the sea in the north and lost control of Nubia in the south.
4. 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.
5. 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 relied 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.

### III. The Rise of the Greeks, 1000–500 B.C.E.

#### 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.

### IV. The Struggle of Persia and Greece, 526–323 B.C.E.

#### 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, 480–323 B.C.E.
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 support 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 created 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 dialogues 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 both 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.

## V. 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, 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.
6. 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.
7. 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 gymnasiums 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.
8. Hellenization included intermarriage between Greeks and non-Greeks, the spread of the Greek language and lifestyle, and a synthesis of indigenous and Greek culture.

## VI. 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, 753–31 B.C.E.

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* of 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 single 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.
3. In the next stages of expansion, Rome first defeated Carthage to gain control over the western Mediterranean and Sicily, Sardinia, and Spain (264–202 B.C.E.). Next, between 200 and 30 B.C.E., Rome defeated the Hellenistic kingdoms to take over the lands of the Eastern Mediterranean. Between 59 and 51 B.C.E., Gaius Julius Caesar conquered the Celts of Gaul.
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. 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, and Carthage) had 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 C.E.) 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 C.E.) formally ended the persecution of Christians 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.

#### VII. 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, 221 – 201 B.C.E.
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 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 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 whom 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.

### VIII. 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 overrun 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.

### IX. Foundations of Indian Civilization, 1500 B.C.E.–300 C.E.

#### 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 sub-regions 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

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 were 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, prayers, and 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 rituals, 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 Brahmins 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.
3. Siddhartha Gautama founded Buddhism. His title, “Buddha,” means “Enlightened One.” 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, fertility rituals, 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.
- X. Imperial Expansion and Collapse, 324 B.C.E.–650 C.E.
  - A. The Mauryan Empire, 324 B.C.E.–184 B.C.E.
    - 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, 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, 320–550 C.E.
    - 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 into 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 C.E the Gupta empire collapsed under the financial burden of defense against the Huns. Harsha (r. 606–647 C.E), 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.