

The Classical Empires

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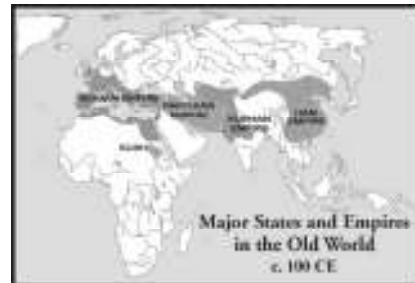
World in 350 BCE



World in 200 BCE



World in 100 CE



Persian Empire



Persian Empire (558-332 BCE)



- ❖ Founded by Cyrus the Great
- ❖ Darius I (521-486 BCE)
 - Balanced central administration & local governors
 - Divided government into 3 districts ran by satraps
 - Built the Royal Road
 - Fought Persian Wars (500-479 BCE)
 - Led to the decline of the Persian Empire

Persian Empire

- ❖ Persian Society
 - Women worked in textile manufacturing
 - Government used slaves to complete public works projects
- ❖ Persian Economy
 - Government coined money
 - Facilitated trade from Greece to India
- ❖ Persian Religion
 - Zoroastrianism



Classical China

- ❖ Zhou Dynasty (1029-258)
 - Mandate of Heaven
 - Feudalism
- ❖ Decline of Zhou Dynasty
 - Confucianism
 - Daoism
 - Legalism
- ❖ Warring States Period
 - Kingdom of Qin began expanding during the 3rd century BCE



Qin Dynasty (221-202 BCE)

- ❖ Used Legalism to restore order
- ❖ Land reforms weakened aristocracy
 - Peasants were given land rights to farm remote territories
- ❖ Centralized bureaucracy
- ❖ Unified China
 - Standardized script, laws, and weights & measures



Qin Shi Huangdi



- ❖ Proclaimed himself "First Emperor" of China
- ❖ Centralized Power
 - Disarmed local militaries
 - Built roads & defensive walls
- ❖ Demanded burning of books
- ❖ Used forced labor to complete public works projects

Terra Cotta Army



Terra Cotta Army



Han Dynasty (202 BCE-220 CE)

- ❖ Founded by Liu Bang
 - Longest dynasty in Chinese History
- ❖ Conquered northern Vietnam, Korea, and Central Asia
 - Tribute System
- ❖ Monopolized iron, salt, and liquor
- ❖ Traded along the Silk Roads



Han Wudi (Wu Ti)

- ❖ Ruled from 141-87 BCE
 - Supported Legalism
- ❖ Two Goals
 - Centralize government
 - Expand the empire
- ❖ Reforms
 - Expanded bureaucracy
 - Started an imperial university
 - Confucian examination system



Mauryan Dynasty

- ❖ Founded by Chandragupta Maurya
 - Arthashastra



Ashoka (268-232 BCE)

- ❖ Conquered most of India
 - Used elephants in warfare
 - Battle of Kalinga
- ❖ Reforms
 - Pillars of Ashoka
 - Centralized bureaucracy
 - Expanded agriculture
 - Built roads to promote trade
- ❖ Promoted the spread of Buddhism
- ❖ Empire declined after Ashoka's death



Gupta Dynasty (320-565 CE)

- ❖ Founded by Chandra Gupta
 - Used alliances, tribute & conquest
- ❖ Gupta Government
 - Coalition of regional kingdoms
 - Policy & administration left to local rulers
- ❖ Eventually destroyed by the White Huns



Ancient Greece

- ❖ Geography prevented political unification
 - Culturally unified
- ❖ City-States
 - Cities offered safety and wealth
 - Different political systems
- ❖ Unified when threatened
 - Persian Wars
- ❖ Wars weaken city-states
 - Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE)



Greek Colonization



Alexander the Great (332-323 BCE)



- ❖ Father, Philip II, conquered most of Greece
- ❖ Built a massive empire
 - Conquered Persia & Egypt
 - Threatened India
- ❖ Empire divided into 3 parts after his death
 - Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt
 - Seleucid Empire in Persia

Hellenistic Empire



Roman Republic (509-44 BCE)

- ❖ Political System
 - Consuls
 - Senate (patricians)
 - Tribunes (plebeians)
- ❖ Military expansion
 - Assimilated conquered peoples
- ❖ Twelve Tables
 - Created a standardized system of laws
 - Established rights for defendants



Expansion of Roman Republic



End of Republic



- ❖ Growing tensions between rich & poor
- ❖ Latifundias
 - Large plantations in conquered lands controlled by aristocrats
- ❖ Julius Caesar
 - Dictator for life in 44 BCE
 - Reforms
 - Sought to relieve tension between the classes
 - Executed by aristocratic conspirators

Roman Empire (31 BCE-476 CE)

- ❖ Established by Augustus
 - Continued military expansion
 - Pax Romana
- ❖ NOT a dynasty
 - Succession often depended upon military strength
- ❖ Tolerated local customs & religions
- ❖ Laws & patriotism held empire together



Maya (300–900 CE)

- ❖ Heirs to Olmec traditions
- ❖ Culturally unified city-states
 - Never form a unified political system
- ❖ Built elaborate religious and commercial centers
 - Tikal & Chichen-Itza
- ❖ Traded luxury products
- ❖ Advanced math & science
 - Zero, solar year, etc.



El Castillo at Chichen-Itza



Mayan Architecture



Mayan Observatory



Mayan Decline

- ❖ Maya city-states were abandoned or destroyed between 800-900 CE
- ❖ Causes for decline include:
 - The disruption of trade after the decline of Teotihuacan in Central Mexico
 - Environmental degradation caused by overpopulation
 - Epidemic disease

