

Period 2 Key Concepts 600 BCE to 600 CE

Key Concept 2.1. The Development and Codification of Religious and Cultural Traditions	Key Concept 2.2. The Development of States and Empires	Key Concept 2.3. Emergence of Transregional Networks of Communication and Exchange
<p>I. Codifications and further developments of existing religious traditions provided a bond among people and an ethical code to live by. A. The association of monotheism with Judaism further developed with the codification of the Hebrew Scriptures, which also reflected the influence of Mesopotamian cultural and legal traditions. The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Roman empires conquered various Jewish states at different points in time. These conquests contributed to the growth of Jewish diasporic communities around the Mediterranean and Middle East. B. The core beliefs outlined in the Sanskrit scriptures formed the basis of the Vedic religions — later known as Hinduism. These beliefs included the importance of multiple manifestations of Brahma and teachings about reincarnation, and they contributed to the development of the social and political roles of a caste system.</p> <p>II. New belief systems and cultural traditions emerged and spread, often asserting universal truths. A. The core beliefs about desire, suffering, and the search for enlightenment preached by the historic Buddha and collected by his followers in sutras and other scriptures were, in part, a reaction to the Vedic beliefs and rituals dominant in South Asia. Buddhism changed over time as it spread throughout Asia — first through the support of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka, and then through the efforts of missionaries and merchants, and the establishment of educational institutions to promote Buddhism’s core teachings.</p>	<p>I. The number and size of key states and empires grew dramatically as rulers imposed political unity on areas where previously there had been competing states. Key states and empires include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Southwest Asia: Persian empires ◆ East Asia: Qin and Han empires ◆ South Asia: Mauryan and Gupta empires ◆ Mediterranean region: Phoenicia and its colonies, ◆ Greek city-states and colonies, and Hellenistic and Roman empires ◆ Mesoamerica: Teotihuacan, Maya city-states ◆ Andean South America: Moche ◆ North America: from Chaco to Cahokia <i>[NOTE: Students should know the location and names of the key empires and states.]</i> <p>II. Empires and states developed new techniques of imperial administration based, in part, on the success of earlier political forms. A. In order to organize their subjects, in many regions the rulers created administrative institutions, including centralized governments as well as elaborate legal systems and bureaucracies. B. Imperial governments promoted trade and projected military power over larger areas using a variety of techniques, including issuing currencies; diplomacy; developing supply lines; building fortifications, defensive walls, and roads; and drawing new groups of military officers and soldiers from the location populations or conquered populations.</p>	<p>I. Land and water routes became the basis for interregional trade, communication, and exchange networks in the Eastern Hemisphere. A. Many factors, including the climate and location of the routes, the typical trade goods, and the ethnicity of people involved, shaped the distinctive features of a variety of trade routes, including Eurasian Silk Roads, Trans-Saharan caravan routes, Indian Ocean sea lanes, and Mediterranean sea lanes.</p> <p>II. New technologies facilitated long-distance communication and exchange. A. New technologies permitted the use of domesticated pack animals to transport goods across longer routes. B. Innovations in maritime technologies, as well as advanced knowledge of the monsoon winds, stimulated exchanges along maritime routes from East Africa to East Asia.</p> <p>III. Innovations in maritime technologies, as well as advanced knowledge of the monsoon winds, stimulated exchanges along maritime routes from East Africa to East Asia. A. The spread of crops, including rice and cotton from South Asia to the Middle East, encouraged changes in farming and irrigation techniques. B. The spread of disease pathogens diminished urban populations and contributed to the decline of some empires. C. Religious and cultural traditions—including Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism—were transformed as they spread.</p>

<p>B. Confucianism’s core beliefs and writings originated in the writings and lessons of Confucius. They were elaborated by key disciples who sought to promote social harmony by outlining proper rituals and social relationships for all people in China, including rulers. C. In major Daoist writings, the core belief of balance between humans and nature assumed that the Chinese political system would be altered indirectly. Daoism also influenced the development of Chinese culture.</p> <p>D. Christianity, based on core beliefs about the teachings and divinity of Jesus of Nazareth as recorded by his disciples, drew on Judaism and Roman and Hellenistic influences. Despite initial Roman imperial hostility, Christianity spread through the efforts of missionaries and merchants through many parts of Afro– Eurasia, and eventually gained Roman imperial support by the time of Emperor Constantine.</p> <p>E. The core ideas in Greco– Roman philosophy and science emphasized logic, empirical observation, and the nature of political power and hierarchy.</p> <p>F. Art and architecture reflected the values of religions and belief systems.</p> <p>V. Artistic expressions, including literature and drama, architecture, and sculpture, show distinctive cultural developments.</p> <p>A. Literature and drama acquired distinctive forms (such as Greek tragedy or Indian epics) that influenced artistic developments in neighboring regions and in later time periods (such as in Athens, Persia or South Asia).</p> <p>B. Distinctive architectural styles can be seen in Indian, Greek, Mesoamerican and Roman buildings.</p> <p>C. The convergence of Greco-Roman culture and Buddhist beliefs affected the development of unique sculptural developments, as seen in the Gandhara Buddhas, which exemplify a syncretism in which Hellenistic veneration for the body is combined with</p>	<p>III. Unique social and economic dimensions developed in imperial societies in Afro–Eurasia and the Americas.</p> <p>A. Imperial cities served as centers of trade, public performance of religious rituals, and political administration for states and empires.</p> <p>B. The social structures of empires displayed hierarchies that included cultivators, laborers, slaves, artisans, merchants, elites, or caste groups.</p> <p>C. Imperial societies relied on a range of methods to maintain the production of food and provide rewards for the loyalty of the elites.</p> <p>D. Patriarchy continued to shape gender and family relations in all imperial societies of this period.</p> <p>IV. The Roman, Han, Persian, Mauryan, and Gupta empires encountered political, cultural, and administrative difficulties that they could not manage, which eventually led to their decline, collapse, and transformation into successor empires or states.</p> <p>A. Through excessive mobilization of resources, imperial governments generated social tensions and created economic difficulties by concentrating too much wealth in the hands of elites.</p> <p>B. Security issues along their frontiers, including the threat of invasions, challenged imperial authority.</p>	
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