

Period 2 Key Concepts: Organization and Reorganization of Human Societies

c. 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.

Note: If it's in the Key Concepts, then it's fair game for the test. Use this as a guide and framework for studying. Test questions are connected to themes and thinking skills that we use throughout the course.

Key Concept 2.1 Organization & Reorganization of Human Societies	Student Annotations (notes, study questions, diagrams, etc.)
<p>As states and empires increased in size and contacts between regions multiplied, religious and cultural systems were transformed. Religions and belief systems provided a bond among the people and an ethical code to live by. These shared beliefs also influenced and reinforced political, economic, and occupational stratification. Religious and political authority often merged as rulers (some of whom were considered divine) used religion, along with military and legal structures, to justify their rule and ensure its continuation. Religions and belief systems could also generate conflict, partly because beliefs and practices varied greatly within and among societies.</p> <p>I. Codifications and further developments of existing religious traditions provided a bond among people and an ethical code to live by.</p> <p>A. The association of monotheism with Judaism was further developed with the codification of the Hebrew Scriptures, which also reflected the influence of Mesopotamian cultural and legal traditions (i.e. Zoroastrianism). The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Roman empires conquered various Jewish states at different points in time. These conquests contributed to the growth of Jewish <u>diasporic communities</u> around the Mediterranean and Middle East.</p> <p>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 <u>reincarnation</u>, 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.</p> <p>A. The core beliefs about desire, suffering, and the search for <u>enlightenment</u> preached by the historic Buddha and collected by his followers into 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</p>	

the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka, and then through the efforts of missionaries and merchants, and the establishment of educational institutions to promote its core teachings.

- B. Confucianism's core beliefs and writings originated in the writings and lessons of Confucius and were elaborated by key disciples who sought to promote social harmony by outlining proper rituals and social relationships for all people in China, including the rulers.
- C. In the 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. (*Ex. of the influence of Daoism on Chinese culture: medical theories and practices, poetry, metallurgy, architecture*)
- 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.
- E. The core ideas in Greco-Roman philosophy and science emphasized logic, empirical observation, and the nature of political power and hierarchy.
- F. Art and architecture reflected the values of religious belief systems. (*Ex. of art and architecture: Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, and Greco-Roman*)

III. Belief systems generally reinforced existing social structures while also offering new roles and status to some men and women. For example, Confucianism emphasized filial piety, and some Buddhists and Christians practiced a monastic life.

IV. Other religious and cultural traditions, including shamanism, and ancestor veneration persisted.

Key Concept 2.2. The Development of States and Empires	Student Annotations (notes, study questions, diagrams, etc.)
<p>As the early states and empires grew in number, size, and population, they frequently competed for resources and came into conflict with one another. In quest of land, wealth, and security, some empires expanded dramatically. In doing so, they built powerful military machines and administrative institutions that were capable of organizing human activities over long distances, and they created new groups of military and political elites to manage their affairs. As these empires expanded their boundaries, they also faced the need to develop policies and procedures to govern their relationships with ethnically and culturally diverse populations: sometimes to integrate them within an imperial society and sometimes to exclude them. In some cases, these empires became victims of their own successes. By expanding their boundaries too far, they created political, cultural, and administrative difficulties that they could not manage. They also experienced environmental, social, and economic problems when they overexploited their lands and subjects and permitted excessive wealth to be concentrated in the hands of privileged classes.</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 empire include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southwest Asia: Persian Empires (<i>Ex: Achaemenid, Parthian, Sassanid</i>) • East Asia: Qin and Han Empire • South Asia: Maurya 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 American from Chaco to Cahokia <p><i>[Note: Students should know the location and names of the key empires and states.]</i></p> <p>II. Empires and states developed new techniques of imperial administration based, in part, on the success of earlier political forms.</p> <p>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 <u>bureaucracies</u>. (<i>Ex. of new administrative institutions: China, Persia, Rome, South Asia</i>)</p> <p>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</p>	

roads; and drawing new groups of military officers and soldiers from the location populations or conquered populations.

III. Unique social and economic dimensions developed in imperial societies in Afro-Eurasia and the Americas.

- A. Imperial cities served as centers of trade, public performance of religious rituals, and political administration for states and empires. (*Ex: Persepolis, Chang'an, Pataliputra, Athens, Carthage, Rome, Alexandria, Constantinople, Teotihuacan*)
- B. The social structures of empires displayed hierarchies that included cultivators, laborers, slaves, artisans, merchants, elites, or caste groups.
- C. Imperial societies relied on a range of methods to maintain the production of food and provide rewards for the loyalty of the elites. (*Examples of methods: corvee, slavery, rents and tributes, peasant communities, family and household production*)
- D. Patriarchy continued to shape gender and family relations in all imperial societies of this period.

IV. The Roman, Han, Persian, Mauryan, and Gupta empires created political, cultural, and administrative difficulties that they could not manage, which eventually led to their decline, collapse, and transformation into successor empires or states.

- 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.
- B. Security issues along their frontiers, including the threat of invasions, challenged imperial authority. (*Examples of invasion threats: between Han China and the Xiongnu, between Gupta and White Huns, between Romans and their northern and eastern neighbors*)

Key Concept 2.3. Emergence of Interregional Networks of Communication and Exchange	Student Annotations (notes, study questions, diagrams, etc.)
<p>With the organization of large-scale empires, the volume of long-distance trade increased dramatically. Much of this trade resulted from the demand for raw materials and luxury goods. Land and water routes linked many regions of the Eastern Hemisphere. The exchange of people, technology, religious and cultural beliefs, food crops, domesticated animals, and disease pathogens developed alongside the trade in goods across extensive networks of communication and exchange. In the Americas and Oceania localized networks developed.</p> <p>I. Land and water routes became the basis for <u>interregional</u> trade, communication, and exchange networks in the Eastern Hemisphere.</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eurasian Silk Roads • Trans-Saharan caravan routes • Indian Ocean sea lanes • Mediterranean sea lanes <p>II. New technologies facilitated long-distance communication and exchange.</p> <p>A. New technologies permitted the use of domesticated pack animals to transport goods across longer routes.</p> <p>B. Innovations in <u>maritime</u> technologies, as well as advanced knowledge of the <u>monsoon winds</u>, stimulated exchanges along maritime routes from East Africa to East Asia.</p> <p>III. Alongside the trade in goods, the exchange of people, technology, religious and cultural beliefs, food crops, domesticated animals, and disease pathogens developed across far-flung networks of communication and exchange.</p> <p>A. The spread of crops, including rice and cotton from South Asia to the Middle East, encouraged changes in farming and <u>irrigation</u> techniques. <i>(Ex: the qanat system, variety of water wheels like the noria and sakia, improved wells and pumps such as the shaduf)</i></p> <p>B. The spread of disease pathogens diminished urban populations and contributed to the decline of some empires. <i>(Examples: effects of disease on the Roman Empire, effects of disease on Chinese empires)</i></p>	

C. Religious and cultural traditions were transformed as they spread. Examples of transformed religious and cultural traditions:

- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Buddhism