CHAPTER 3
MEDITERRANEAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS
Chapter 3

Corresponds to Chapter 4 in Book
Chapter in Short

1. **Persian Empire rises** in the East as **Greek City-States** rise in Med - 800s-400s BCE

2. **Hellenistic Period** - Alexander the Great creates period by uniting Greece and conquering Persia in the 300s BCE

3. Finally **Rome** Expands and comes to power in W Europe - They dominant in the Post-Hellenistic Period in the Med and in Europe - 300s BCE-300s CE
1. Persia - 800-400 BCE
Cyrus the Great, 550 B.C.E.

- Builds world’s largest Empire - **Persia**
- Political Style - Centralized - (China-like)
- Characteristics
  - **Tolerance** for other cultures
  - **Royal Road** - postal service, trade, inns and travel
  - Son **Darius** develops tax system
  - **Xerxes** was Darius’ son!
**THE PERSIAN EMPIRE: A NEW PERSPECTIVE IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

**Zoroastrianism** - Persian Religion - **NOT MUSLIMS!!!!**

- Individual salvation - Battle of Good v. Evil

- Last Judgement - Eternal Fate decided by life choices

- **Important** - Influences on and by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
2. Greeks History

– City-State - (Like India)

– The Polis - Sparta and Athens dominate City-States

- Rivalries - Un-united! **ONLY** cooperation when fighting Persia

- Ex. Peloponnesian Wars 400s BCE - Athens v. Sparta - leaves both weak, exhausted and vulnerable....

- 300s BCE - Enter - Macedonians from North.....
The Hellenistic Period

– **Philip II of Macedon** - begins uniting Sparta, Athens, other City-States

– Son…..**Alexander the Great**….Conquers Persia (Darius III)

– The Hellenistic Period = Greek + Persian Culture

– Introduces West to Persian idea of **ABSOLUTE RULE!**
Roman History

- Roman Republic - 500-44 BCE - **Aristocracy control** - representatives of elite class controlling gov’t

- Roman Empire - 44 BCE-Onward - Absolute Caesar Rule

- As Rome grew hard to control....becomes Empire!
  
  - Roman Focus-Expansion. Why? Greedy aristocracy & needing of enough food for the empire. Feed the Roman Beast!
4. THEIR POLITICS
GREEK AND ROMAN

- Athens - Direct Democracy - Assembly made up of “citizens” drawn randomly to create law and control.

- “Citizens” - 20% of Athenians - No women, no foreigners, no slaves - the rich Aristocracy

- Not in ALL of Greece - Absolute Rule - Sparta

Roman Republic - Ruled by the Senate

- Senate = aristocrats! - upper classes ONLY

- Consuls - Executive Power in 2 people elected by Senate

- Roman Law Code - Twelve Tables - Rule of Law

- Romans - Rule of Law Best.....Chinese - Rule of Men
Temple to Jupiter

Temple to Apollo

Pompeii 79 CE

Preserved Bodies

Home of an Aristocrat
Pompeii in history….
Great Escape City - Vegas? Miami? Weekend getaway for rich aristocracy
Great insight and preservation of ancient society
Mother Nature in harshest moments spares no one.
Great fear in Rome - Which God(s) Apollo, Jupiter, Christian God Wrath
1% - “Fathers” Aristocracy - Politicians & Judges, not allowed to be merchants - beneath them. Mostly marry within class.

Middle/Low Class - Citizens, but not held to importance of Patricians. Some poor farmers, some $ merchants. Could rise within class, but rarely to Patrician.

Freedmen - former slaves, some freedom, more like indentured servant class. Few rights, but some.

Slaves - No rights.
Political Theory of Rome

Rome - laws are basis for decisions v. Confucius - men are basis for decisions

Roman leaders were to look to Roman law to determine to crucify Jesus. Whether leaders wanted to kill him or not, the law was to judge Jesus. Did he break Roman law? Confucius would say you don’t need the law to make decisions, just virtuous men following their own conscious.

Government focus - conquest, control and tax.

Public works Projects - roads, aqueducts. Engineering=Roman Legacy!

Why these projects?

1st - move conquered resources and troops

2nd - promotes trade and commerce

Similar in US today. Interstates initially constructed in Cold War to move troops and tanks. Today....basis of commerce, trade and trips!

Some tolerance of others language, religion, and culture - (recall
Religious Values - valued, but not as important as Indians.

– Romans and Greeks - Nation centered on State Building! Religion secondary.

– Indians - Religion centered. Nation centered around religion.
– Greek and Hellenistic Legacy - **DEMOCRACY/QUESTIONING/MATH/MEDICINE** - Socratic Method, Observe & Deduct, Geometry, Democracy as well

– Roman Legacy - **REPUBLIC, ENGINEERING, LAW CODES**
Agriculture and Trade

- LARGE farms run by landed-aristocrats

- Bad soil for grain - good for grapes and olives - led to trade and need for Roman expansion. Feed the beast!

  - Merchants - not highly regarded akin to China, not India where they were
ECONOMY AND SOCIETY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

**Slavery**

Yes, unlike China

- Rome/Greece - slavery allows you to be lazy when it comes to doing things!
- No slaves in Army!
- over time...so many slaves, fewer Romans

**Family**

- Patriarchal, but more rights than India/China
  - Some women active in commerce
  - Women could own property