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Chapter 4
First Age of Empires, 1570 B.C.–200 B.C.

The first large empires develop in Africa and Asia between 1570 B.C. and 200 B.C.

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Section 1: The Egyptian and Nubian Empires
Section 2: The Assyrian Empires
Section 3: The Persian Empire
Section 4: The Unification of China

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Section 1: The Egyptian and Nubian Empires

Two empires along the Nile, Egypt and Nubia, forge commercial, cultural, and political connections.

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Section 1: The Egyptian and Nubian Empires

Nomadic Invaders Rule Egypt

Invaders

- About 1640 B.C., Asian warriors, the **Hyksos**, use chariots to conquer Egypt

Hebrews Migrate to Egypt

- Hebrews move to Egypt from Canaan around 1650 B.C.
- Egyptians resent the presence of Hebrews and Hyksos in Egypt

Expulsion and Slavery

- Egyptians drive out the hated Hyksos
- Hebrews lose protection of Hyksos; are enslaved

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The New Kingdom of Egypt

Technological Changes

- About 1570 to 1075 B.C. pharaohs create **New Kingdom**, a powerful empire
- Army uses bronze weapons and chariots to conquer other lands

Hatshepsut's Prosperous Rule

- **Hatshepsut**—pharaoh whose reign most noted for her trade expeditions, not war

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Continued The New Kingdom of Egypt

Thutmose the Empire Builder

- **Thutmose III**, Hatshepsut's stepson, expands Egypt's empire
- Invades Palestine, Syria, and **Nubia**—region around the upper Nile River
- Egypt most powerful and wealthy during reign of New Kingdom pharaohs

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Continued The New Kingdom of Egypt

The Egyptians and the Hittites

- Around 1285 B.C. Egyptians battle the Hittites in Palestine
- Egypt's pharaoh, **Ramses II**, and the Hittite king sign a peace treaty

An Age of Builders

- New Kingdom pharaohs built great palaces, magnificent temples
- Valley of the Kings near Thebes is home to royal tombs
- Ramses II builds impressive temples with enormous statues of himself

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The Empire Declines

Invasions by Land and Sea

- "Sea Peoples" (possibly Philistines) cause great destruction in Egypt
- Libyan raids on villages and Palestine rebellions weaken empire

Egypt's Empire Fades

- Weakened empire breaks into smaller kingdoms
- From around 950 to 730 B.C. Libyan pharaohs rule Egypt, erect cities

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The Kushites Conquer the Nile Region

Egypt and Kush

- From 2000 to 1000 B.C., Egypt dominates kingdom of **Kush** in Nubia

The People of Nubia

- Live south of Egypt near division of Blue Nile and White Nile

- Nile River is a great trade route for goods and ideas
- Nubians link Egypt and Mediterranean to African interior through trade

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Continued **The Kushites Conquer the Nile Region**

The Interaction of Egypt and Nubia

- Egyptian culture influences Nubia and beyond to southern Africa
- About 1200 B.C., Nubia gains independence but keeps Egyptian culture

Piankhi Captures the Egyptian Throne

- In 751 B.C., Kushite king **Piankhi** conquers Egypt, ousts Libyans
- Assyrians overcome Kushites and take Egypt

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The Golden Age of Meroë

Meroë

- Kushites settle in **Meroë**; join in trade with Africa, Arabia, India

The Wealth of Kush

- Meroë becomes important center for iron weapons and tools
- Iron products transported to Red Sea, exchanged for luxury goods

The Decline of Meroë

- Meroë thrives from about 250 B.C. to A.D. 150, then declines
- Aksum, 400 miles southeast, dominates North African trade
- Has port on Red Sea, defeats Meroë in A.D. 350

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Section 2: The Assyrian Empire

Assyria develops a military machine and establishes a well-organized administration.

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Section 2: The Assyrian Empire

A Mighty Military Machine

Assyria

- **Assyria** uses military might to acquire empire across Southwest Asia

The Rise of a Warrior People

- After invasions in Mesopotamia, Assyrians develop warlike behavior
- Assyrian king **Sennacherib** brutally destroys enemies

Military Organization and Conquest

- Glorified armies wear metal armor, copper helmets, leather protection
- Use iron weapons, engineering skill, and brute force to conquer cities
- Kill, enslave, or banish captive peoples to distant lands

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The Empire Expands

Kings of Assyria

- Defeat Syria, Palestine, Babylonia between 850 and 650 B.C.

Assyrian Rule

- Creates central authority over local governors of dependent regions
- Collects taxes and tribute from conquered lands

Assyrian Culture

- Rulers build great cities, including capital at **Nineveh**
- Carved sculptures of military campaigns and the lion hunt
- King **Ashurbanipal** builds library of 20,000 tablets; *Epic of Gilgamesh*

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The Empire Crumbles

Early Warnings

- Empire spread thin, cruelty earns many enemies, Ashurbanipal dies

Decline and Fall

- Army of **Medes** and **Chaldeans** destroys Nineveh (612 B.C.); library survives

Rebirth of Babylon Under the Chaldeans

- Chaldeans make Babylon capital of own empire
- King **Nebuchadnezzar** builds legendary hanging gardens of Babylon
- Builds tall ziggurats; astronomers make discoveries about solar system
- Chaldean Empire falls to Persians; they adopt Assyrian inventions

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Section 3: The Persian Empire

By governing with tolerance and wisdom, the Persians establish a well-ordered empire that lasts for 200 years.

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Section 3: The Persian Empire

The Rise of Persia

The Persian Homeland

- Persia (ancient Iran) has fertile land and minerals
- Medes and Persians rise to power there

Cyrus the Great Finds an Empire

- Starting in 550 B.C., Persian king **Cyrus** conquers neighboring lands
- Governs with tolerance toward conquered peoples
- Honors local customs, including religious ones
- Allows Jews to return to Israel and rebuild temple of Jerusalem

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Persian Rule

Cambyses and Darius

- Cyrus's son, **Cambyses**, conquers Egypt but rules unwisely
- **Darius** seizes control, establishes stability; expands empire to India

Provinces and Satraps

- Darius divides empire into 20 areas of local administration
- Appoints **satraps**—governors—to rule each area
- Builds **Royal Road** to make communication within empire easier
- Issues coins that can be used throughout empire

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The Persian Legacy

Zoroaster

- Persian thinker called **Zoroaster** develops new religion

Zoroaster's Teachings

- Life is a battleground between good and evil
- One god will judge us by how well we fight for good
- Zoroastrianism influenced Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Political Order

- Through tolerance and good government, Persians bring political order
- Preserve earlier cultures, find new ways to live and rule

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Section 4: The Unification of China

The social disorder of the warring states contributes to the development of three Chinese ethical systems.

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Section 4: The Unification of China

Confucius and the Social Order

Zhou Dynasty

- Lasted 1027 to 256 B.C.; ancient values decline near end of dynasty

Confucius Urges Harmony

- End of Zhou Dynasty is time of disorder
- Scholar **Confucius** wants to restore order, harmony, good government
- Stresses developing good relationships, including family
- Promotes **filial piety**—respect for parents and ancestors
- Hopes to reform society by promoting good government

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Continued Confucius and the Social Order

Confucian Ideas About Government

- Thinks education can transform people
- Teachings become foundation for **bureaucracy**, a trained civil service
- Confucianism is an ethical system of right and wrong, not a religion
- Chinese government and social order is based on Confucianism

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Other Ethical Systems

Daoists Seek Harmony

- Laozi teaches that people should follow the natural order of life
- Believes that universal force called Dao guides all things
- **Daoism** philosophy is to understand nature and be free of desire
- Daoists influence sciences of alchemy, astronomy, medicine

Legalists Urge Harsh Rule

- **Legalism** emphasizes the use of law to restore order; stifles criticism
- Teaches that obedience should be rewarded, disobedience punished

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Continued Other Ethical Systems

***I Ching* and Yin and Yang**

- ***I Ching*** (*The Book of Changes*) offers good advice, common sense
- Concept of yin and yang—two powers represent rhythm of universe
- Yin: cold, dark, soft, mysterious; yang: warm, bright, hard, clear
- *I Ching* and **yin and yang** explain how people fit into the world

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The Qin Dynasty Unifies China

The Qin Dynasty

- **Qin Dynasty** replaces Zhou Dynasty in third century B.C.

A New Emperor Takes Control

- Emperor **Shi Huangdi** unifies China, ends fighting, conquers new lands
- Creates 36 administrative districts controlled by Qin officials
- With Legalist prime minister, murders Confucian scholars, burns books
- Establishes an **autocracy**, a government with unlimited power

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Continued The Qin Dynasty Unifies China

A Program of Centralization

- Shi Huangdi builds highways, irrigation projects; increases trade
- Sets standards for writing, law, currency, and weights and measures
- Harsh rule includes high taxes and repressive government

Great Wall of China

- Emperor forces peasants to build Great Wall to keep out invaders

The Fall of the Qin

- Shi Huangdi's son loses throne to rebel leader; Han Dynasty begins