

SOLUTIONS MANUAL



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THE HERITAGE OF

World Civilizations



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CHAPTER 2 – FOUR GREAT REVOLUTIONS IN THOUGHT AND RELIGION

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

- Why do you think so many revolutionary philosophical and religious ideas emerged at about the same time in many different regions? Do these ideas share any fundamental concerns?
- Why is this period in Eurasian history sometimes referred to as the “axial age”?

CHAPTER 2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Comparing the Four Great Revolutions

- Identify and understand the main points of comparison and contrast between Chinese, Indian, Near Eastern, and Mediterranean philosophy and religion

A-Head 2: Philosophy in China

- Understand the causes and contextual background of the Chinese philosophical revolutions
- Identify the key features of Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism

Religion in India

- Recognize the origins and foundations of classical Indian religious thought
- Identify the key features and messages of the Vedic texts, the Jain tradition, and the Buddhist worldview, and recognize their shared origins and heritage

The Religion of the Israelites

- Understand the origins and causes behind the development of ethical monotheism by the Hebrew peoples
- Explain and understand the significance of the monotheistic revolution in world history

Greek Philosophy

- Understand the emergence and origins of Greek philosophical thought
- Identify and recognize key aspects of the thought of prominent Greek philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle
- Recognize and understand the significance of the development of Greek philosophy in subsequent world history

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter surveys the four religious and philosophical revolutions that have shaped the subsequent history of the world and demonstrates how the societies in India, China, the Near East and Greece attempted to define humankind’s relationship with the cosmos.

The four religious and philosophical movements contained many common elements. They developed in the four most advanced cultures of the ancient world. Each movement also rose from a crisis or major change in a given area, such as the appearance of iron or the outside influence of invading forces. After 300 B.C.E. there was seldom any new introduction of religious or philosophical thought, and alteration to the existing systems was a process of evolu-

tion and diffusion of central concepts and ideas. Christianity spread to northern and eastern Europe, the Americas, and parts of Asia; Buddhism to central, southeastern, and eastern Asia; Confucianism spread to Korea, Vietnam and Japan; Islam to Africa, southeastern Europe, and southern, central, and southeastern Asia. Perhaps one reason for the endurance of the major cultures was the formulation of universal questions regarding the human condition. What are human beings? What is our relation to the universe? How should we relate to others?

China developed concepts around the 100 schools' ideals with Confucian, Daoist and Legalist thought being the most pronounced. A unique characteristic of Chinese thought was its view of the cosmos as a single, continuous sphere, rather than a dualism (prevalent in the West) that distinguishes between the world and a supernatural otherworld. The Chinese emperor regulated and harmonized the cosmological forces of Heaven and Earth through the power of his virtue. Therefore, intellectual divisions that occurred in other societies were not as pronounced in China. Confucius (551–449 B.C.E.) regarded himself as a transmitter, not as an innovator and looked to the early Chou society as the ideal. He stressed the harmony that moved from the individual family member to the state as the ideal existence and that the well-being of a society depended on the morality of its members. All ethics became a part of nature and a portion of the cosmos. Good men would then govern for the benefit of society and the common people. The king was regarded as a sage and held a preeminent position, possessing an almost mystical virtue and power. The chapter then details the ideas of two other important Confucian philosophers, Mencius and Xunzi. Daoism, dating from the fourth century B.C.E., offered a refuge from the social responsibilities of Confucian thought. The Dao (or Way) functioned on the cosmic level rather than on the human scale of events. The best life was to return to humankind's original simplicity or to "learn to be without learning." Two additional assumptions summarize the Taoist thought pattern: (1) that any action pushed to the extreme will create an opposite extreme; (2) that too much government, even good government, can become oppressive. Legalism was the last great school of Chinese thought in the third century B.C.E. The Legalists were anxious to end the wars that plagued China during this time period and believed a unified country with a strong state that established laws to bring about punishment and pain would result in a properly balanced society. The laws should have incentives for loyalty and bravery in battle, for obedience, diligence, and frugality in everyday life. Human laws were thus placed above divine ethics which had been modeled in Heaven.

The Hindu faith is centered in India and developed over centuries toward a recognizable form by perhaps about 200 C.E. It is difficult to speak of a set "Hindu" religion and culture because such usage lumps together an immense diversity of social, racial, linguistic and religious groups. It is totally inaccurate to think of Hindu as a term for any single or uniform religious community. The Upanishadic sages developed the concept of existence as a ceaseless cycle (Samsara), a never ending alternation between life and death; this became the basic assumption of all Indian thought and religious life. This concept can be compared only superficially to our idea of "transmigration" of souls. Because of the fundamental impermanence of everything in existence, the good as well as evil is temporary. The flux of existence knows only movement, change, endless cause and effect far transcending a human life span or even a world eon. To understand this process, meditation becomes the most important tenet of the belief in order to develop the inner awareness of the realities of life. This awareness can be achieved through *karma* (work or action) in that every action will have its inevitable results. Good deeds will bring good results on earth and in the afterlife. The "ordinary norm" is followed by more individuals to achieve a better life at rebirth. The "extraordinary norm" is a

release from action and involves an ascetic discipline or *Moksha* as the ideal. The Jain tradition was developed by Mahavira (540–468 B.C.E.) and is an attempt to escape from the material world and its accumulations of *karma*. In the Jain view there is no end to existence, only cycles of generation and degeneration. The solution was to eliminate evil thoughts and actions, practice asceticism and the meditative discipline of yoga and thus gain enlightenment from karma. Buddha (566–486 B.C.E.) established his faith on Hindu and Jain concepts, but altered them and developed a “Middle Path” between asceticism and sensual indulgence. The core of the faith is in the four noble truths: all life is suffering, the source of suffering is desire, the cessation of desire is the way to end suffering, and the path to this end is eightfold: right understanding, thought, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness and concentration. The key idea to the faith is that everything is causally linked within the universe.

The text continues with an account of Hebrew history from its origins in Mesopotamia to the destruction of the Judaic state under the Romans in 132 C.E. The *Old Testament* is the written record of the Jewish experience, and the monotheistic tenets contained therein formed the basis for Christianity and Islam and influenced the ethical and legal systems of the West. The monotheistic revolution (a belief in one God as the creator of the universe and involved in human history) may have begun with Abraham or Moses, but its basic form developed from the division of the Israelite kingdom into two parts in 922 B.C.E. The activity of the prophets influenced the crucial events in Israelite history to the first millennium B.C.E. Two major focal points are important in the evolution of the faith. First was the significance of history in the divine plan. The second concept, or set of ideas, centered on the nature of Yahweh. God was the ideal of justice and goodness and demanded justice and goodness from his followers; thus he was a moral God. For the first time, we find a nation defined, not primarily by dynastic, linguistic or geographical considerations, but above all by shared religious faith and practice.

Greek ideas had much in common with the ideas of previous cultures, yet as early as the sixth century B.C.E. Ionian Greeks raised questions and suggested answers about nature that produced an intellectual revolution. The chapter details the ideas of Thales, Xenophanes, Protagoras, Hippocrates, Anaximenes, Anaximander, Heraclitus and Zeno. Political and moral philosophy was developed particularly in the fifth century B.C.E. by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Their discussion is based, to a great extent, upon the different social and political relationships experienced in various Greek *polis* or city-states. The attempt to understand the position of humankind in the universe and on earth created a climate of inquiry which became the foundation of Western intellectual thought. The blending of Judaic and Greek ideas brought about an expansive discussion of the relation of individuals to the cosmic order.

KEY POINTS AND VITAL CONCEPTS

1. **Religious Thought:** Hinduism, Daoism, Buddhism, Jainism and Judaism became the bases for other religious movements throughout the world. Issues such as the search for the better life, the contemplation of death and the nature of afterlife, and the ceaseless cycle of existence, created an ongoing debate regarding the nature of humankind and its place in the universe. Each major religious and philosophical movement created in turn its own rebellion. Hinduism established the environment for Jainism, Buddhism and the Sikhs. Judaism was the seedbed of Christianity and eventually of Islam. Chinese reaction to Confucianism developed into the Daoist and Legalist branches which offered alternatives to Confucian ideals. All religions of the world were forced to defend their basic concepts thereby creat-

ing a more dynamic intellectual interchange in world history. The major religious and philosophical issues that divided movements have remained to the present time. Very few new concepts have challenged or resolved many of the fundamental differences of opinion.

2. **The Monotheistic Revolution:** The Hebrew state did not establish a vast empire or contribute an advanced political philosophy. In fact, the fate of this small nation would be of little interest were it not for its unique religious achievement. It developed a tradition of faith that amounted to a revolution in ways of thinking about the human condition, the meaning of life and history, and the nature of the divine. The Hebrews contributed a uniquely moralistic understanding of human life based on an uncompromising monotheism. For the first time, we find a nation defined above all by shared religious faith and practice rather than by dynastic, linguistic, or geographical considerations.
3. **Greek Philosophical Contributions:** Although Greek civilization accepted a rather amoral paganism, this was juxtaposed from the sixth century B.C.E. with a devotion to rational inquiry. Thales of Miletus and other monists asked the fundamental question, "What is the primary substance in the world?" For Thales the basic element was water; for Anaximenes, it was air. These ideas were formulated with a rational scientific spirit devoid of magical or mythical elements. Democritus in the fifth century B.C.E. originated the theory that the world is entirely material, made up of atoms in a void, moving through space without external guidance. This view later influenced Galileo and other scientists. Moreover, this sense of rational inquiry extended outside the realm of philosophic and scientific speculation to include "scientific history." Herodotus and Thucydides sought verifiable evidence with little or no place for the gods or supernatural forces. The quest for truth involved political and moral tenets as well. Socrates believed in the laws of the *polis*, Plato despised democracy and advocated a state ruled by philosopher kings, and Aristotle believed that the state should be governed by the more moderate elements of society who were in tune with the "Doctrine of the Mean." The Greeks opened the discussion of most of the issues that remain major concerns in the modern world: "What is the nature of the universe and can it be controlled?" Are there divine powers, and if so, what is humanity's relationship with them? Are law and justice human, divine or both? What is the place in human society of freedom, obedience, and reverence? These and other problems were confronted and intensified by the Greeks.

PRIMARY SOURCE: DOCUMENTS IN WORLD HISTORY DVD-ROM

Text Sources

- Vardhamana Mahariva, selections from *Akaranga-sutra*, "Jain Doctrines and Practices of Nonviolence."
- The Nyaya School, "Explanation of the Sutra"
- Siddhartha Gautama: "Identity and Non-identity"
- Selections from the *Rig Veda*
- Plato, *The Republic*, "The Philosopher-King"
- Plato, *The Republic*, "On Shadows and Realities in Education"
- Liu An, excerpt from *Huan Nan Tzu*

- Legalism: selections from the writings of Han Fei
- Laozi, from *Tao Te Ching*, “The Unvarying Way”
- Excerpt from the *Upanishads*
- Confucius, selections from the *Analects*
- Confucian political philosophy: an excerpt from *Mencius*
- Buddhism: excerpts from the *Dhammapada*
- Aristotle, excerpts from *Physics* and *Posterior Analytics*
- The Book of Job and Jewish Literature

Visual Sources

- Vardzia monastery complex, Georgia
- Torah scroll: the Washington Megillah
- The opening words of Genesis
- The Lotus Sutra
- The Book of Adam
- Sutra of 1000 Buddhas
- Nine Hindu planets
- Hindu Gods
- Elephanta Water Cave, India
- Daoist scroll
- Confucius
- Jain cosmographical map

INTERNET RESOURCES

- **Ancient China:** <http://www.ancientchina.co.uk/menu.html> provides timelines and further discussion and images for Shang and Zhou dynasty China.
- **Ancient Religions and Philosophies:** <http://www.iep.utm.edu/> The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy provides reliable articles on major and minor philosophers and religious leaders.
- **Eurasian Religions:** <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/eastasia/eastasiasbook.html> provides an immense number of key primary sources for Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, Jainism, and the Christian, Jewish, and Islamic religions.
- **Eurasian Religions:** <http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/religion/> is a very user-friendly site with introductory material on Animism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism.
- **India:** <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/india/indiasbook.html> has a section on the Vedic age that provides links to substantial translations of the Vedas and the Upanishads, as well as other helpful texts.

PRENTICE HALL ATLAS OF WORLD HISTORY, SECOND EDITION

Suggested Maps

- Religions of the World after 400 C.E.

SUGGESTED FILMS

- *Thai Images of Buddha*. Teaching Films Custodians. 14 min.
- *World of the Heike Monogatari*. Gakken Film Company, Tokyo. 22 min.
- *Chinese History No. 3: China: Hundred Schools to One*. Teaching Films Custodians. 27 min.
- *Death of Socrates*. Columbia Broadcasting System. 27 min.
- *Glory that Remains No. 5: Sermons in Stone India*. British Broadcasting Corporation. 30 min.
- *Greece: The Golden Age*. National Broadcasting Company. 29 min.
- *Greece: The Inner World*. Modern Talking Picture Service. 60 min.
- *Land of the Book*. Ray Garner Productions. 28 min.
- *Origin of Mathematics*. University Film Library Holder. 11 min.
- *Search for Ulysses*. University Film Library Holder. 50 min.
- *Synagogue and the Passover: Two Thousand Years Ago*. 21 min.
- *Temple of Apollo at Bassae*. University Film Library Holder. 16 min.
- *Classical Greek Philosophy* (50 minutes). FHS.
- *Ancient India* (50 minutes). Kultur.