Chapter 7: The Empires of Persia

Sections 2 & 3: Imperial Society and Economy and Religions of Salvation in Classical Persian Society

Directions: Read the entirety of the above section, including any additional text selections such as “Eyewitness” or “Sources from the Past” and examine all maps, charts, images, and diagrams. As you read, in the first section below, define the listed World History vocabulary terms, being sure to make connections to the broader topic where appropriate. Also, in the space under that, define simply any other high-level vocabulary words that you do not already know. In the second section below, answer the questions in detail, explaining based on details from the reading. Finally, in the last section, give your feedback on this assignment.

Identifications

Qanat (139-144)

Anatolia (143)

Zarathustra (aka Zoroaster) (146-147)

Zoroastrianism (146-147)

Ahura Mazda (147)

Magi (147)

The Gathas (147)

The Avesta (147)

Angra Mainyu (aka Ahriman) (148)
higher-level vocabulary words

questions

Section 2: Imperial Society and Economy

1. What was the original social structure and make up of the early Persian society, and how did that change as they evolved into a complex centralized empire? (Discuss bureaucracy) (142-143)

2. What kinds of different opportunities were available to free classes in the Persian Empire? (143-144)

3. What were the two main ways that people could become slaves in Ancient Persia? What was life like for an enslaved person, and what kinds of work were they forced to do? (144-145)

4. What happened to much of the agricultural surplus that was produced in the Achaemenid Persian Empire? What does this show about the state of the empire at that time? (145)

5. Why was the development of standardized coins such an improvement to the system of trade? What advantage would these coins have over other ways of representing wealth? Going forward, what further developments were now made possible that could not have been done before? (145)
6. Do you think controlling so many diverse regions under one empire made trade easier or harder? Explain. (145-146)

7. Examine the map on page 143 and compare the locations of the earlier Persian capital of Persepolis and the later capital of Ctesiphon. Why do you think the Parthians and Sasanids decided to make Ctesiphon their capital? What geographic advantages might it have over Persepolis? (143)

8. **REVERBERATIONS**: So this section is really valuable to read, as it goes over some of the major themes of this unit. However, since much of it is general, I think, rather than giving you a specific question, I will just give you some space below to jot down any notes or important points you want to record from reading it. (146-147)

---

**Section 3: Religions of Salvation in Classical Persian Society**

9. In what ways was early Persian religion similar to early Aryan religion? (146-147)

10. What do we know, or what might we know, about Zarathustra and his life? (146-147)

11. What were the core beliefs of Zoroastrianism in regards to God/gods, the end of the world, afterlife, and how people should live? (146-147)

12. All of the following represent the beliefs of Zoroastrianism in summary EXCEPT (148)
   a. Good Words
   b. Good Thoughts
   c. Good Deeds
   d. Good Eats
13. What factors led to the spread of Zoroastrianism? (148)

14. Think back, or look back, to what you learned about the Sasanid Persians in Section 1. Why do you think they put much more emphasis on supporting Zoroastrianism than the Seleucids and Parthians, and even more than the original Achaemenids ever did? (148-149)

15. The text makes the claim that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all derive certain beliefs originally from Zoroastrianism. What evidence do they give to support this theory, and do you think they make a convincing case? What alternative theory could you propose to explain these connections? (149-150)

**Question**

Directions: In the space below, record any questions or confusions you had while reading. Be sure to note at least the page number for the content on which the question is based for future reference.

**Reflect**

What did you like about this homework assignment? What did you dislike?

How long did it take you to complete this assignment?

Do you have any suggestions for ways to further improve textbook homeworks?