I. Imperial China (221 BCE-220 CE)

Family – basic unit of society
Several generations
Ancestors – active interest in current generation: Consulted, appeased, venerated

Hierarchy: elder male – rulers
Interdependent relationships more important

Women – Status and authority of women depended upon social status
Royal family women – could have some political influence

Women – obedient – recognize mother-in-law’s authority

Chinese Empire: 221-207 BCE

221 BCE – Qin Dynasty unified northern China into first Chinese empire
Defended against barbarians
Severe Legalist methods – suppressed Confucianism
Shi Huangdi – 1st Emperor of China (Prime Minister Li Si)

Shi Huangdi was First Emperor.
1. United China under Legalism.
2. Rewards for merit, punishments for failure.
3. Established a system of weights and measures.
4. Qin Coins.
5. Built many roads and canals.
7. Jailed, tortured, killed opposition.
      --Medical and Agricultural books were saved from book burning.
8. Established autocracy.
   a. Autocracy – government where ruler has unlimited power and uses it in an arbitrary manner.

B. The Great Wall of China.
1. Shi Huangdi used forced labor.
2. Runs east to west in the northern part of China.
3. Designed to keep invaders out.
4. 4,500 miles long.
Qin:
Strong centralized state
Primogeniture – first born – inheritance – eldest son
Strong bureaucracy
Standardized law
Standardized weights and measures
Coinage (Qin Coins)
Writing
Drove out nomads and then built Great Wall – in North
(After Qin attack of Xiongnu Confederacy, nomads united and became threat to Qin and future dynasties)
Oppressive program of compulsive military and labor services

Shi Huangdi died 210 BCE
Monumental tomb
7,000 terracotta clay army soldiers (statues)
Son (Er Shi Huangdi)- weak leader: Qin rule over 206 BCE

Han Dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE)
People lived in east – better farmland

Gaozu (throne name = Liu Bang) – peasant who established the Han Dynasty
Political System: Confucian philosophy and Legalist techniques
Civil Service Exam:
1. Idea was to gain positions by merit.
2. To pass; candidates must study Confucian classics, history, poetry, and Confucian customs.
3. In theory, any man could take the exam, but really only the wealthy could afford to take time off from work to study and take exam.

Retained Qin System mostly
Decreased taxes and government spending
Collected and stored surplus grain for times of shortage
Restored feudal grants (abolished by Qin)

Xiongnu Confederacy clashed with Han troops (inadequate)
Result: Appeasement (annual gifts to Xiongnu)

Emperor Wu (141 – 87 BCE)
5. Imperial university at Xian.
6. Government monopoly on iron and salt.
7. Many military campaigns.
8. Arranged marriages.
Increase power of emperor
Military to fight Xiongnu
   Foundations of Silk Road: Stretched from the Fertile Crescent to China (4,000 miles). New foods came to China. Ex: Figs, Cucumbers, and Walnuts. Chinese sent tons of silk westward.
Government monopolies on high-profit commodities (controversial): paid for military backup
Confucian scholars – officials of government
Exemplary ethical behavior
Technology and Trade
Capital moved to Luoyang

B. Other Achievements:
   1. Paper.
   2. Seismograph.
   3. Fertilizer (farming).
   4. Medical Science.
      a. Acupuncture.
      b. Typhoid Diagnosis.
      c. Anesthetics.
   5. Sun Dial.

Imperial court plagued by weak leadership
Revenues down – because nobles and merchants drove out small farmers and peasants sought tax relief
Factionalism at court, official corruption, peasant uprisings, nomadic attacks
Fall of Han Dynasty – 220 CE
Period of political fragmentation until late 6th Century

Comparative Perspectives:
Similarities between Roman Empire and Han Dynasty:
Fundamental economic activity – agriculture
Revenue from percentage of annual harvest
Reduced old aristocratic families status (decreased landholdings)
Empires eroding when process reversed
Both empires originally homogeneous at its core, then widespread territories of widespread diverse cultures
Conquered people adopted cultural elements of core and vice-versa
Well-trained bureaucracy (huge empire) – local officials
Built roads – military and then later for commerce and culture
Majority of people lived in countryside
Urban centers: Cosmopolitan
Common problems – defense
Military expenditures hurt domestic economies
New people overran both empires, kept some culture of old empires

Slavery existed in both civilizations
-However, slavery was indispensable part of the foundation of Roman Empire economy
Roman Empire – slavery = POW’s, harsh conditions
-slaves – always something to work on

Slavery occurred much less in Ancient China
Slavery not central component of economy
Slavery continued into the Han Dynasty (even though Qin wanted to outlaw it)
 Relatives of criminals could become slaves
Slaves had legal protections provided by contracts stating and limiting what can be demanded of them

Differences:
China : imperial model revised and territory of Han reunified. Roman Empire never again reconstituted
Concept of individual
Greater economic mobility for middle classes in Rome
Make-up and hierarchy of armies
Different political ideologies and religions