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Thomas Greer - A Brief History of the Western World Study Guide

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STUDY QUESTIONS FOR THE GREER TEXT

CHAPTER ONE: THE BIRTH OF CIVILIZATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

1. Identify some of the social and intellectual consequences of the Agricultural Revolution.
2. What developments were made by the Sumerians in the following areas: agriculture, government, writing, law, religion, mathematics, science, and engineering? Identify some attributes of the Code of Hammurapi [Hammurabi]. What contributions were made by some of the neighboring states after the fall of the Kassites?
3. How did the Egyptian civilization differ from the Mesopotamian? Characterize and distinguish the three kingdoms of Egypt. What was the Egyptian idea of kingship? How did Egyptian religion resemble or differ from the Mesopotamian? How the Egyptians compare with the Mesopotamians in the following areas: writing, mathematics, the calendar, and medicine.
4. How did the Assyrians build and govern their empire? What was the fatal weakness of the empire? How did they pursue a policy of terror and what were the consequences?
5. How did the Persian king Cyrus differ from the Assyrians in building and governing his empire? Describe the nature of the Persian monarchy and its historical influence. Identify some Persian contributions in the following: religion, language, and commerce.

TERMINOLOGY

priesthood	cuneiform	stylus
classes	shekel	mina
talent	months	arch
vault	dome	ziggurat
alphabet	pharaoh	vizier
Sphinx	hieroglyphics	papyrus
pyramids	post-and-lintel method	cosmopolitan
Great King	satrap	Zoroastrianism

CHAPTER TWO: THE GREEK BEGINNINGS OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

1. What were the origins of the Greeks? What were their native characteristics? What were the sources of Greek civilization? How did geography affect its character?
2. What was the origin of the city-state? What were its social, religious, and political characteristics?
3. How were the Spartan and Assyrian (ch. 1) systems similar? How was Sparta governed? What classes filled the following occupations: military, farming, business? How was life among the ruling class?
4. How did the Athenians differ from the Spartans? What were the two turning points in the life of Athens? Why did Darius and Xerxes invade Greece? What did the Greeks believe made them victorious? What were the stages in the development of Athenian democracy? How did the Athenians govern themselves? What role was played by slavery? What was the status of women?
5. What were some of the common features of Greek religion? Who were the chief gods and goddesses? How were religious rites celebrated? What were the mystery cults?
6. How did Greek philosophy originate? Who were some of the pioneers of rational thought? Who were the Sophists and what did they teach? What was the Socratic method? What was Socrates' theory of knowledge (epistemology)? What was Plato's "doctrine of Ideas?" How did Plato believe society should be governed? What were some of the leading ideas of Aristotle?
7. Identify the chief epic and lyric poets of the Greek tradition. What were the origins of tragedy and comedy? Who were the three greatest tragedians and their characteristic themes? What were the themes of the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides?
8. What purpose was served by Greek architecture and sculpture? What values did they express?
9. What causes contributed to the decline of the Greek city-states. How did Athens provoke the Peloponnesian War? What contributed to the disillusionment that followed? How did Alexander seek to unify East and West in a universal empire? Identify some of the characteristics of the Hellenistic period which followed?

TERMINOLOGY

Minoan	Mycenae an	infanticide
colony	Pan-Hellenic games	acropolis
sovereign	helot	hoplite
laconic	marathon	barbarians
polytheism	anthropomorphism	Moirai
omens	oracles	hedonists
dialogue	Ideas or Forms	philosopher-kings
orchestra	Dionysos	Delian League
	metropolis	

CHAPTER THREE: THE ROMAN TRIUMPH AND FALL

1. What physical advantages contributed to the rise of Rome as a world power? What contributions did the Etruscans and Greeks make to Roman civilization? Why did the Romans create a plural executive? Identify some of the steps by which the plebeians acquired political power. What was the role of the Senate in Roman politics?
2. How was the Roman army organized? How did the Romans treat conquered peoples and administer their affairs? What advantages did Roman rule offer them? How were the provinces governed?
3. What social changes contributed to the fall of the Roman republic? Which social classes grew to great size, and why? What changes account for moral decay and the decline in patriotism? How were the allies treated? How did politics at the top degenerate? Why did the policies of the Gracchi lead to the destruction of the republic?
4. How did Julius Caesar clinch personal sway over Rome? What signs of pride led to his fall? How did Augustus disguise the change from a republic to an empire? What were his goals as the first emperor? How did he consolidate his power over Rome? Over the provinces?
5. What was the flaw in the Augustan settlement? How were the empire's cities governed? What did the Pax Romana mean in practical effect? Identify the chief characteristics of Roman religion and family life. What were the four "high old virtues" of the Roman republic?
6. Identify the chief characteristics of Roman literature and philosophy. What were the chief characteristics (similarities and differences) of Epicureanism and Stoicism?
7. What was the guiding purpose of Roman law? What two bodies of law were merged by 212 A.D.? What consequences followed from the idea of natural law? From the codification of Roman law? Identify the chief forms, purposes, and monuments of Roman architecture.
8. What factors contributed to the decline and fall of the Roman empire? Identify Diocletian's reforms and their effects? How did his idea of a sacred monarchy influence subsequent history? How did imperial religious policy change under Constantine and his successors?
9. How did the Germanic invaders conquer the empire? How did they contribute to a further breakdown of central authority? What role was played by the Church in the transition?

consul	republic	patricians	plebeians
clients	tribunes	praetors	pontiffs
centuries	provinces	latifundia	proletariat
pontifex maximus	princeps	imperator	census
genius	municipium	senate	numina
paterfamilias	virtus	pietas	gravitas
simplicitas		justitia	jus civile
jus gentium		jus naturale	Corpus Juris Civilis
Code		Novels	Institutes
arch		vault	dome
basilica		apse	podium
Pantheon		rotunda	augusti
prefecture		hierarchy	dominus

CHAPTER FOUR: A CONQUERING NEW FAITH: CHRISTIANITY

1. What is the connection between Christianity and Judaism? Identify two key differences. What does the author believe about the role played by monotheism and the belief in sin?
2. Who was Zoroaster? What role was played by dualism in Persian religion? How did the mystery religions and Greek philosophical thought affect early Christianity?
3. How does the author view the life and teachings of Jesus? Does he indicate a personal belief that the Biblical account is accurate? What seems to be his viewpoint?
4. Identify some factors that made it easier for Paul and the Apostles to spread the Gospel? What were some of the charges against the Christians that Romans used to justify the persecutions?
5. How did the offices of bishop and pope originate? What is the canon? How did heresies like Gnosticism and Donatism differ from orthodox Christianity? What were the issues at the Council of Nicaea and how were they resolved?
6. What role did Theodosius play in giving worldly power to the Church? How did distinguish between the "Earthly City" and the "Heavenly City?" How did he explain the sack of Rome by the Visigoths?
7. What is asceticism? How was the ascetic ideal reflected differently by the hermit monks and the regulated monastic communities? How did the Rule of Benedict regularize monastic life?

TERMINOLOGY

Judaism	Zion	monotheism
Torah	Zoroaster	Mithraism
Pentecost	Pax Romana	faith
pagani (pagans)	ordination	hierarchy
episcopal	presbyterian	excommunication
diocese	metropolitan	conciliar theory
monarchical theory	papa (pope)	Vulgate
canon	Gnosticism	monasticism
Donatism	creed	subordinationism
Diaspora	charity	Manicheism
ascetic	hermit monks	Benedictine Rule
	secular clergy	

CHAPTER FIVE: THE CREATION OF EUROPE

1. What characteristics were generally shared by the Germanic barbarians who overran the Roman Empire? What was the comitatus (the original "posse")? How did Clovis establish the Kingdom of the Franks?
2. Identify three of Justinian's accomplishments. Did he succeed in his ambition to reconquer the West? Identify three cultural contributions of the Byzantines.
3. Who was Muhammad and how he originate Islam? What factors account for the rapid spread of the new religion? What are the "five pillars of faith?" Identify three Islamic contributions to the West.
4. What role did Charles Martel play in the defense of Christendom against the Saracens and the development of feudalism? What were some results of the alliance between Pepin and Pope Stephen II? What were the Donation of Pepin and the Donation of Constantine?
5. How did Charlemagne build up his empire? Identify three of the marches or military zones that helped consolidate Christian rule in Europe. Why did Pope Leo III crown Charlemagne as emperor? What three elements of medieval civilization were thereby joined?
6. Why did Charlemagne's empire disintegrate? Identify three of the invading barbarian groups that threatened Christendom. What two rulers in the East and west helped revive central authority?
7. What was the character of the feudal compact? What were the respective duties of lords and vassals? How did the manorial system operate? How were manors divided up in order to enhance self-sufficiency?
8. How did medieval towns get started? How were they governed? Who were the bourgeoisie? How were the guilds operated?

TERMINOLOGY

comitatus	mayor of the palace	Corpus Juris Civilis
Hagia Sophia	Cyrillic alphabet	islam
muslim	Hegira	jihad (holy war)
caliphate	Sharia	polygamy
Ramadan	Koran	Omar Khayyam
Carolingian dynasty	chevaliers	march or mark
county	duke	feudalism
sovereign	fief	custom
ordeal	relief	hospitality
ransom	homage	fealty
investiture	primogeniture	manorialism
pilgrimage	bailiffs	serfs
towns and burgs	bourgeoisie	guilds
masters	journeymen	apprentices

CHAPTER SIX: THE FLOWERING OF MEDIEVAL CULTURE

1. Identify the seven sacraments of the Catholic tradition. Which sacraments were thought to be indelible?
2. Identify two "cults" which reflected popular religious feelings. What sort of relics became objects of veneration?
3. What were the monastery at Cluny and its priories organized? How did the Cistercians and the Franciscan friars differ from the Cluniac Benedictines? How did Francis and Dominic differ?
4. What reforms did Hildebrand introduce? How did they affect papal elections and strengthen papal authority? Identify three ways the pope's disciplinary powers might be exercised. What was the Inquisition and what did it have to do with the Albigensian heresy?
5. How did Gregory VII assert the Church's authority over the state? What tactics did Gregory use to bring Henry IV into submission? How did Innocent III treat John? Why did Boniface VIII fail in his conflict with Philip the Fair?
6. Identify five attributes each of the Romanesque and Gothic styles. How did the two styles differ?
7. How did the medieval university get its start? How was it organized? Identify the seven liberal arts. How did degrees originate? What was the first college and why was it built?
8. What was scholasticism and who were its major representatives? What was the methodology of Aquinas? How did modern languages develop from Latin and the vernaculars? Identify three types of medieval literature. What were the two great literary works of the era?
9. Why was the First Crusade organized? What were the objectives of Pope Urban II? What was the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem? Who was Saladin? What went wrong with the Fourth Crusade and why? What was the Latin Empire of Constantinople? Who finally won the Crusades?
10. Why were medieval Jews persecuted? What was the basis of the medieval synthesis?

TERMINOLOGY

Eucharist	breviary	canonization
veneration	monastery	priories
friars	College of Cardinals	celibacy
legates	curia	dispensations
indulgences	excommunication	interdiction
deposition	Inquisition	canon law
investiture	bull	clerics (clerks, clergy)
masters	apprentices	trivium
quadrivium	deduction	induction
Goliardic poetry	vernacular	troubadors
fabliaux	allegory	Spanish March
	ghetto	

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE TRANSFORMATION AND EXPANSION OF EUROPE

1. What were some of the forces that helped dissolve the medieval synthesis? What were some of the factors that shook up Europe in the fourteenth century (Tercento)?
2. How did modern capitalism and banking originate? Why did partnership and the family firm begin to replace the guild? How did the Fugger family acquire wealth and influence? How did the development of a money economy change the social structure? With what consequences?
3. Why did Europe turn to overseas expansion around 1500? What nations encouraged exploration and why? Identify five mariners and their most famous discoveries.
4. How did the Portuguese arrival in India affect international trade? How and by whom were the Aztecs and Incas conquered? What were the consequences of the overseas expansion for the conquered people as well as for Europe?
5. Where did modern absolutism and modern diplomacy get their start? Identify the five major powers of Italy. How did the Sforzas and Medicis govern their respective city-states? How were the other three city-states governed?
6. How did the political theory of Machiavelli reflect the politics of Italy's age of despots? Who did Machiavelli's theory differ from Aquinas's? Identify five Machiavellian doctrines that seem to express the dominant view today?
7. What event stimulated French nationalism? How did the French people react to Joan of Arc? How was the power of the French monarchy consolidated under Charles VII and Louis XI? What accounts for the Gallican Church? How did absolutism affect Christendom in practice? Why was absolutism less secure in England than in France?
8. What accounts for the eclipse of the Holy Roman Empire? When did it finally end? What family dominated it after 1438? What were the family holdings of Emperor Charles V, who was also the Spanish king?

TERMINOLOGY

Jacquerie	Black Death	reinvestment
partnership	entrepreneur	the Hanse
bill of credit	philanthropy	serfs
free tenants	fixed and movable assets	astrolabe
cartography	northwest passage	encomiendas
mestizos	sovereign	condottieri
castello	doge	secularization
cavalry	longbow	gunpowder
taille	electors	Golden Bull
	dynasty	