Documents

Considering the Evidence: Political Authority in Classical Civilizations

States, empires, and their rulers are surely not the whole story of the human past, although historians have sometimes treated them as though they were. But they are important, because their actions shaped the lives of many millions of people. The city-states of ancient Greece, the Roman Empire, the emerging Chinese empire of the Qin dynasty, and the Indian Empire of the Mauryan dynasty—these were among the impressive political structures of the classical era in Eurasia. Rulers seeking to establish or maintain their authority mobilized a variety of ideas to give legitimacy to their regimes. Reflection on political authority was a central issue in the discourse of educated people all across classical Eurasia. In the documents that follow, four contemporary observers—two rulers and two scholars—describe some of the political institutions and ideas that operated within Mediterranean, Chinese, and Indian civilizations.

Document 4.1

In Praise of Athenian Democracy

The Greeks of Athens generated political ideas that have long been celebrated in the West, although they were exceptional even in the small world of classical Greece. (See pp. 147–50 and Map 4.2, p. 148.) The most well-known expression of praise for Athenian democracy comes from Pericles, the most prominent Athenian leader during the fifth century B.C.E. Sometimes called the "first citizen of Athens," Pericles initiated the grand building projects that still grace the Acropolis and led his city in its military struggles with archrival Sparta. To his critics, he was a populist, manipulating the masses to enhance his own power, and an Athenian imperialist whose aggressive policies ultimately ruined the city. His famous speech in praise of Athens was delivered around 431–430 B.C.E. at the end of the first year of the Peloponnesian War against Sparta. The setting was a public funeral service for Athenian citizens who had died in that conflict. Pericles' oration was recorded by the Greek historian Thucydides, who was probably present at that event.

- How does Pericles describe Athenian democracy?
- Does his argument for democracy derive from fundamental principles, such as human equality, or from the practical benefits that derive from such a system of government?
- What kind of citizens does he believe democracy produces? Keep in mind that not everyone shared this idealized view of Athenian democracy. How might critics have responded to Pericles' arguments?
- Although Pericles praised Athenian military prowess, his city lost the Peloponnesian War. In what ways does this affect your assessment of his arguments?

Pericles

Funeral Oration

431–430 B.C.E.

Our form of government does not enter into rivalry with the institutions of others. We do not copy our neighbors, but are an example to them. It is true that we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few. But while the law secures equal justice to all alike in their private disputes, the claim of excellence is also recognized; and when a citizen is in any way distinguished, he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege, but as the reward of merit. Neither is poverty a bar, but a man may benefit his country whatever be the obscurity of his condition. There is no exclusiveness in our public life, and in our private intercourse we are not suspicious of one another, nor angry with our neighbor if he does what he likes.... While we are thus unconstrained in our private intercourse, a spirit of reverence pervades our public acts; we are prevented from doing wrong by respect for the authorities and for the laws....

And we have not forgotten to provide for our weary spirits many relaxations from toil; we have regular games and sacrifices throughout the year; our homes are beautiful and elegant; and the delight which we daily feel in all these things helps to banish melancholy. Because of the greatness of our city the fruits of the whole earth flow in upon us; so that we enjoy the goods of other countries as freely as of our own.

Then, again, our military training is in many respects superior to that of our adversaries. Our city is thrown open to the world, and we never expel a foreigner or prevent him from seeing or learning anything of which the secret if revealed to an enemy might profit him. We rely not upon management or trickery, but upon our own hearts and hands. And in the matter of education, whereas they from early youth are always undergoing laborious exercises which are to make them brave, we live at ease, and yet are equally ready to face the perils which they face....

For we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness.... To avow poverty with us is no disgrace; the true disgrace is in doing nothing to avoid

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Source: Benjamin Jowett, *Thucydides, translated into English, to which is prefixed an essay on inscriptions and a note on the geography of Thucydides*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), Book 2, para. 37–41.

it. An Athenian citizen does not neglect the state because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a very fair idea of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as a harmless; but as a useless character; and if few of us are originators, we are all sound judges of a policy. The great impediment to action is, in our opinion, not discussion, but the want of that knowledge which is gained by discussion preparatory to action. For we have a peculiar power of thinking before we act and of acting too, whereas other men are courageous from ignorance but hesitate upon reflection. And they are surely to be esteemed the bravest spirits who, having the clearest sense both of the pains and pleasures of life, do not on that account shrink from danger....

To sum up: I say that Athens is the school of Hellas, and that the individual Athenian in his own person seems to have the power of adapting himself to the most varied forms of action with the utmost versatility and grace....

For we have compelled every land and every sea to open a path for our valor, and have everywhere planted eternal memorials of our friendship and of our enmity. Such is the city for whose sake these men nobly fought and died; they could not bear the thought that she might be taken from them; and every one of us who survive should gladly toil on her behalf.

Document 4.2

In Praise of the Roman Empire

By the second century C.E. the Roman Empire, now encompassing the Mediterranean basin and beyond, was in its glory days. With conquest largely completed, the *pax Romana* (Roman peace) generally prevailed and commerce flourished, as did the arts and literature. The empire enjoyed a century (96–180 C.E.) of autocratic but generally benevolent rule. In 155 C.E. a well-known scholar and orator from the city of Smyrna on the west coast of Anatolia (present-day Turkey) arrived for a visit to the imperial capital of Rome. He was Aelius Aristides (ca. 117–181 C.E.), a widely traveled Greek-speaking member of a wealthy landowning family whose members had been granted Roman citizenship several decades earlier. While in Rome, Aristides delivered to the imperial court and in front of the emperor, Antonius, a formal speech of praise and gratitude, known as a panegyric, celebrating the virtues and achievements of the Roman Empire.

- What did Aristides identify as the unique features of the Roman Empire? Which of these features in particular may have given the empire a measure of legitimacy in the eyes of its many subject peoples? What other factors, unmentioned by Aristides, may have contributed to the maintenance of Roman authority?
- What does Aristides mean by referring to the empire as a "common democracy of the world"?
- Why might Aristides, a Greek-speaking resident of a land well outside the Roman heartland, be so enamored of the empire?

- To what extent does Aristides' oration provide evidence for the development of a composite Greco-Roman culture and sensibility within the Roman Empire?
- How does this speech compare, in both style and content, with that of Pericles in Document 4.1?

Aelius Aristides

The Roman Oration

155 C.E.

A certain prose writer said about Asia that one man "rules all as far as is the course of the sun," untruly, since he excluded all Africa and Europe from the sun's rising and setting. [This refers to the Persian Empire.] But now it has turned out to be true that the course of the sun and your possessions are equal.... [N]or do you rule within fixed boundaries, nor does another prescribe the limits of your power....

About the [Mediterranean] sea the continents [Africa, Asia, and Europe] lie... ever supplying you with products from those regions. Here is brought from every land and sea all the crops of the seasons and the produce of each land, river and lake, as well as the arts of the Greeks and barbarians.... So many merchant ships arrive here... that the city is like a factory common to the whole earth. It is possible to see so many cargoes from India and even from [southern] Arabia.... Your farmlands are Egypt, Sicily, and all of [North] Africa which is cultivated. The arrival and departure of ships never stops....

Although your empire is so large and so great, it is much greater in its good order than in its circumference.... [Nor] are satraps° fighting against one another, as if they had no king; nor do some cities side with these and others with those.... But like the enclosure of a courtyard, cleansed of every disturbance, a circle encompasses your empire.... All everywhere are equally subjects....

You are the only ones ever to rule over free men.... [Y]ou govern throughout the whole inhabited world as if in a single city.... You appoint governors... for the protection and care of their subjects, not to be their masters.... And here there is a great and fair equality between weak and powerful, obscure and famous, poor and rich and noble.... To excel the barbarians in wealth and power, while surpassing the Greeks in knowledge and moderation, seems to me to be an important matter....

You have divided into two parts all the men of your empire... and everywhere you have made citizens all those who are the more accomplished, noble, and powerful people, even if they retain their native affinities, while the remainder you have made subjects and the governed. And neither does the sea nor a great expanse of intervening land keep one from being a citizen, nor here are Asia and Europe distinguished. But all lies open to all men.... There has been established a common democracy of the world, under one man, the best ruler and director....

You have divided people into Romans [citizens] and non-Romans [subjects]... [M]any in each city are citizens of yours... and some of them have not even seen this city.... There is no need of garrisons..., but the most important and powerful people in each place guard their countries for you.... Yet no envy walks in your empire.... [T]here has arisen a single harmonious government which has embraced all men.

[Y]ou have established a form of government such as no one else of mankind has done.... Your government is like a mixture of all the constitutions [democracy, aristocracy, monarchy] without the inferior side of each.... Therefore whenever one

°**satraps:** local authorities.

Source: Aelius Aristides, *The Complete Works*, vol. 2, translated by P. Charles A. Behr (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), 73–97.

considers the power of the people and how easily they attain all their wishes and requests, he will believe that it is a democracy.... But when he considers the Senate deliberating and holding office, he will believe there is no more perfect aristocracy than this. But when he has considered the overseer and president of all these [the emperor], he sees in this man the possessor of the most perfect monarchy, free of the evils of the tyrant and greater than the dignity of the king....

And the whole inhabited world, as it were attending a national festival, has laid aside... the carrying of weapons and has turned... to adornments and all kinds of pleasures.... Everything is full of gymnasiums, fountains, gateways, temples, handicrafts, and schools... and a boundless number of games.... Now it possible for both Greek and barbarian... to travel easily wherever he wishes.... [I]t is enough for his safety that he is a Roman or rather one of those under you.

Document 4.3

Governing a Chinese Empire

As the Roman Empire was taking shape in the Mediterranean basin, a powerful Chinese empire emerged in East Asia. More than in the Roman world, the political ideas and practices of classical China drew on the past. The notion of China as a unified state ruled by a single sage/emperor who mediated between heaven and the human realm had an ancient pedigree. After a long period of political fragmentation, known as the era of warring states, such a unified Chinese state took shape once again during the short-lived Qin dynasty (221–206 B.C.E.), led by its formidable ruler Shihuangdi (see pp. 158–60). That state operated under a version of Legalism (see Chapter 5, pp. 192–93), a political philosophy that found expression in the writings of Han Fei (280–233 B.C.E.) and that in large measure guided the practices of Shihuangdi and the Qin dynasty. Han Fei's Legalist thinking was discredited by the brutality and excesses of Shihuangdi's reign, and the Han dynasty that followed was sharply critical of his ideas, favoring instead the "government by morality" approach of Confucianism. Nonetheless, Han Fei's emphasis on the importance of laws and the need to enforce them influenced all succeeding Chinese dynasties.

- Why is Han Fei's approach to governing China referred to as Legalism? According to him, what is required for effective government?
- What are the "two handles"?
- To whom does Han Fei believe his measures should apply?
- What view of human nature underpins Han Fei's argument?

The Writings of Master Han Fei

Third Century B.C.E.

Document not available.

Source: *The Complete Works of Han Fei Tzu*, vol. 1, translated by W. L. Liano (London: Arthur Probsthain, 1939), 40, 45–47.

Document 4.4

Governing an Indian Empire

Among the rulers of the classical era, Ashoka, of India's Mauryan dynasty (reigned 268–232 B.C.E.), surely stands out, both for the personal transformation he experienced and for the benevolent philosophy of government that he subsequently articulated (see pp. 165–67). Ashoka's career as emperor began in a familiar fashion—ruthless consolidation of his own power and vigorous expansion of the state's frontiers. A particularly bloody battle against the state of Kalinga marked a turning point in his reign. Apparently repulsed by the destruction, Ashoka converted to Buddhism and turned his attention to more peaceful and tolerant ways of governing his huge empire. His edicts and advice, inscribed on rocks and pillars throughout his realm, outlined this distinctive approach to imperial governance.

The following document provides samples of instructions from Ashoka, who is referred to as King Piyadasi, or the Beloved of the Gods. The term *dhamma*, used frequently in edicts of Ashoka, refers to the "way" or the "truth" that is embodied in religious teachings.

- How would you describe Ashoka's philosophy of state?
- How might Han Fei have responded to Ashoka's ideas?
- What specific changes did Ashoka make in state policies and practices?
- Can you think of practical reasons why he might have adopted these policies? Did he entirely abandon the use of harsher measures?

Although Ashoka's reputation as an enlightened ruler has persisted to this day, his policies ultimately were not very successful. Shortly after Ashoka's death, the Mauryan Empire broke apart into a more common Indian pattern of competing regional states that rose and fell with some regularity. Of course Shihuangdi's much harsher Legalist policies were also unsuccessful, at least in maintaining his dynasty, which lasted a mere fifteen years.

- How might this outcome affect your assessment of Ashoka?
- What does this suggest about the relationship between political philosophies and the success or longevity of political systems?

ASHOKA

The Rock Edicts

ca. 268–232 B.C.E.

Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, conquered the Kalingas eight years after his coronation. One hundred and fifty thousand were deported, one hundred thousand were killed, and many more died [from other causes]. After the Kalingas had been conquered, Beloved-of-the-Gods came to feel a strong inclination towards the Dhamma, a love for the Dhamma and for instruction in Dhamma. Now Beloved-of-the-Gods feels deep remorse for having conquered the Kalingas....

Now Beloved-of-the-Gods thinks that even those who do wrong should be forgiven where forgiveness is possible.

Even the forest people, who live in Beloved-of-the-Gods' domain, are entreated and reasoned with to act properly. They are told that despite his remorse Beloved-of-the-Gods has the power to punish them if necessary, so that they should be ashamed of their wrong and not be killed. Truly, Beloved-of-the-Gods desires non-injury, restraint, and impartiality to all beings, even where wrong has been done.

Now it is conquest by Dhamma that Beloved-of-the-Gods considers to be the best conquest....

I have had this Dhamma edict written so that my sons and great-grandsons may not consider making new conquests, or that if military conquests are made, that they be done with forbearance and light punishment, or better still, that they consider making conquest by Dhamma only, for that bears fruit in this world and the next. May all their intense devotion be given to this which has a result in this world and the next.

1. Here (in my domain) no living beings are to be slaughtered or offered in sacrifice.... Formerly, in the kitchen of Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, hundreds of thousands of animals were killed every day to make curry. But now with the writing of this Dhamma edict only three creatures, two peacocks and a deer are killed, and the deer not always. And in time, not even these three creatures will be killed.

2.... [E]verywhere has Beloved-of-the-Gods... made provision for two types of medical treatment: medical treatment for humans and medical treatment for animals. Wherever medical herbs suitable for humans or animals are not available, I have had them imported and grown.... Along roads I have had wells dug and trees planted for the benefit of humans and animals.

3. Everywhere in my domain the [royal officers] shall go on inspection tours every five years for the purpose of Dhamma instruction and also to conduct other business. Respect for mother and father is good, generosity to friends, acquaintances, relatives, Brahmans and ascetics is good, not killing living beings is good, moderation in spending and moderation in saving is good.

4. In the past, for many hundreds of years, killing or harming living beings and improper behavior toward relatives, and improper behavior toward Brahmans and ascetics has increased. But now due to Beloved-of-the-Gods' Dhamma practice, the sound of the drum [for announcing the punishment of criminals] has been replaced by the sound of the Dhamma. The sighting of heavenly cars, auspicious elephants, bodies of fire, and other divine sightings has not happened for many hundreds of years. But now because Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, promotes restraint in the killing and harming of living beings, proper behavior towards relatives, Brahmans and ascetics, and respect for mother, father and elders, such sightings have increased.

5. In the past there were no [officers of the Dhamma] but such officers were appointed by me

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Source: *The Edicts of King Ashoka*, translated by Ven S. Dhammika (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1993).

thirteen years after my coronation. Now they work among all religions for the establishment of Dhamma....They work among soldiers, chiefs, Brahmans, householders, the poor, the aged and those devoted to Dhamma—for their welfare and happiness—so that they may be free from harassment. They...work for the proper treatment of prisoners, towards their unfettering....They are occupied everywhere....

7. Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, desires that all religions should reside everywhere, for all of them desire self-control and purity of heart.

8. In the past kings used to go out on pleasure tours during which there was hunting and other entertainment. But ten years after Beloved-of-the-Gods had been coronated, he went on a tour to Sambodhi° and thus instituted Dhamma tours. During these tours, the following things took place: visits and gifts to Brahmans and ascetics, visits and gifts of gold to the aged, visits to people in the countryside, instructing them in Dhamma....

12. Beloved-of-the-Gods, King Piyadasi, honors both ascetics and the householders of all religions, and he honors them with gifts and honors of various kinds....Whoever praises his own religion, due to excessive devotion, and condemns others with the thought "Let me glorify my own religion," only harms his own religion. Therefore contact [between religions] is good. One should listen to and respect the doctrines professed by others.

°**Sambodhi:** the site of the Buddha's enlightenment.

Using the Evidence: Political Authority in Classical Civilizations

1. **Making comparisons:** How would you describe the range of political thinking and practice expressed in these documents? What, if any, common elements do these writings share? Another approach to such a comparison is to take the ideas of one writer and ask how they might be viewed by several of the others. For example, how might Pericles, Aristides, and Han Fei have responded to Ashoka?
2. **Considering variation within civilizations:** You will notice that none of these civilizations practiced a single philosophy of government. Athens was governed very differently from Sparta, the practices of the Roman Empire differed substantially from those of the Republic, Legalism and Confucianism represented alternative approaches to Chinese political life, and Ashoka's ideas broke sharply with prevailing practice of Indian rulers. How can you account for these internal differences? How might you imagine an internal dialogue between each of these writers and their likely domestic critics?
3. **Comparing ancient and modern politics:** What enduring issues of political life do these documents raise? What elements of political thinking and practice during the classical era differ most sharply from those of the modern world of the last century or two? What are the points of similarity?

4. **Distinguishing "power" and "authority":** Some scholars have made a distinction between "power," the ability of rulers to coerce their subjects into some required behavior, and "authority," the ability of those rulers to persuade their subjects to obey voluntarily by convincing them that it is proper, right, or natural to do so. What appeals to "power" and "authority" can you find in these documents? How does the balance between them differ among these documents?
5. **Noticing point of view:** From what position and with what motivation did these writers compose their documents? How did this affect what they had to say?

Visual Sources

Considering the Evidence: Qin Shihuangdi and China's Eternal Empire

In the vast saga of empire building in world history, few rulers have surpassed China's so-called First Emperor, Qin Shihuangdi (reigned 221–210 B.C.E.), in terms of imperial ambition. During his life, Shihuangdi forcefully and violently brought unity to the warring states of China with policies that were as brutal as they were effective (see pp. 158–60). That achievement gained him the respect of many Chinese in the centuries that followed. No less a figure than Mao Zedong, the twentieth-century communist revolutionary, proudly compared himself to the First Emperor. But Shihuangdi was widely hated in his own time and subject to numerous attempts at assassination, while Confucian scholars in the centuries that followed his death were also highly critical of his brutal methods of governing China.

No artistic images of Shihuangdi survive from the time of his reign, but he was the subject of many paintings in later centuries. Visual Source 4.1, dating from the eighteenth century, depicts a famous scene from his reign, when he allegedly ordered the burning of books critical of his policies and the execution of respected Confucian scholars by burying hundreds of them alive.

- What signs of imperial authority are apparent in the painting?
- What impression of the First Emperor does this painting convey? Do you think the artist sought to celebrate or criticize Shihuangdi?
- What accusations against Shihuangdi might arise from the action depicted at the bottom of Visual Source 4.1?

However his reign may have been evaluated, Shihuangdi's conception of the empire he created was grand indeed. It was to be a universal or cosmic empire. In tours throughout his vast realm, he offered sacrifices to the various spirits, bringing them, as well as the rival kingdoms of China, into a state of unity and harmony. One of the inscriptions he left behind suggested the scope of his reign: "He universally promulgated the shining laws, gave warp and woof to all under heaven."[16] Shihuangdi saw himself in the line of ancient sage kings, who had originally given order to the world.

In Shihuangdi's thinking, that empire was not only universal, encompassing the entire world known to him, but also eternal. The emperor vigorously pursued personal immortality, seeking out pills, herbs, and potions

Visual Source 4.1 An Eighteenth-Century Representation of Qin Shihuangdi (Bibliothèque nationale de France/The Art Archive)

believed to convey eternal life and sending expeditions to the mythical Isles of the Immortals, thought to lie off the east coast of China. But the most spectacular expression of the eternal character of his empire lay in a vast tomb complex constructed during his lifetime near the modern city of Xian (see Map 4.5, p. 159).

In early 1974, some Chinese peasants digging a well stumbled across a small corner of that complex, leading to what has become perhaps the most celebrated archeological discovery of the twentieth century. In subsequent and continuing excavations, archeologists have uncovered thousands of life-size ceramic statues of soldiers of various ranks, arrayed for battle and equipped with real weapons. Other statues portrayed officials, acrobats, musicians, wrestlers, horses, bronze chariots, birds, and more—all designed to accompany Shihuangdi into the afterlife.

This amazing discovery, however, was only a very small part of an immense tomb complex covering some fifty-six square kilometers and centered on the still-unexcavated burial mound of Shihuangdi. Begun in 246 B.C.E. and still incomplete when Shihuangdi died in 210 B.C.E., the construction of this gigantic complex was described by the great Chinese historian Sima Qian about a century later:

> As soon as the First Emperor became king of Qin, excavations and building had been started at Mount Li, while after he won the empire, more than 700,000 conscripts from all parts of the country worked there. They dug through three subterranean streams and poured molten copper for the outer coffin, and the tomb was filled with... palaces, pavilions, and offices as well as fine vessels, precious stones, and rarities. Artisans were ordered to fix up crossbows so that any thief breaking in would be shot. All the country's streams, the Yellow River and the Yangtze were reproduced in quicksilver [mercury] and by some mechanical means made to flow into a miniature ocean. The heavenly constellations were above and the regions of the earth below. The candles were made of whale oil to insure the burning for the longest possible time.[17]

Buried with Shihuangdi were many of the workers who had died or were killed during construction as well as sacrificed aristocrats and concubines.

This massive project was no mere monument to a deceased ruler. In a culture that believed the living and the dead formed a single community, Shihuangdi's tomb complex was a parallel society, complete with walls, palaces, cemeteries, demons, spirits, soldiers, administrators, entertainers, calendars, texts, divination records, and the luxurious objects appropriate to royalty. The tomb mound itself was like a mountain, a geographic feature that in Chinese thinking was home to gods, spirits, and immortals. From this mound, Shihuangdi would rule forever over his vast domain, although invisible to the living.

The visual sources that follow provide a small sample of the terra-cotta army that protected that underground world, as it has emerged from the excavations of the past several decades. The largest pit (Visual Source 4.2) is now covered with a canopy and conveys something of the massive size of this undertaking. Located about a mile east of Shihuangdi's burial mound, this ceramic army, replete with horses and chariots, faced the pass in the mountains from which enemies might be expected. Some six thousand terra-cotta figures have been uncovered and painstakingly pieced together in this pit alone.

- How do you suppose Shihuangdi thought about the function of this "army" in the larger context of his tomb complex?
- What kind of organizational effort would be required to produce such a ceramic army?

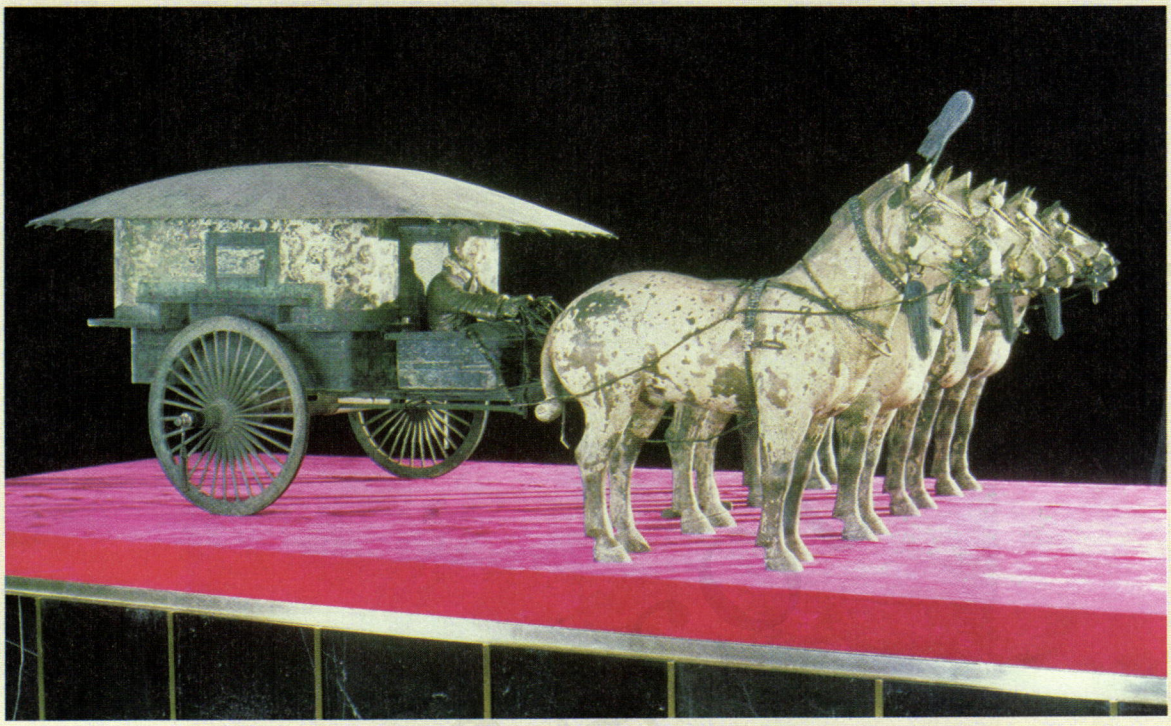
Visual Source 4.2 The Terra-Cotta Army of Shihuangdi (Dennis Cox/China Stock)

Visual Source 4.3 Terra-Cotta Infantry (Keren Su/China Span/Alamy)

Scholars have long been impressed with the apparent individuality of these terra-cotta figures, and some have argued that they were actually modeled on particular living soldiers. More recent research suggests, however, that they were "an early feat of mass production."[18] Well-organized workshops produced a limited variety of face shapes, body parts, hairstyles, and uniforms, which were then assembled in various combinations and slightly reworked to convey an impression of individuality. Visual Source 4.3 shows a group of infantrymen, located at the front of the formation, while Visual Source 4.4 represents a kneeling archer.

- What similarities and differences can you identify between the infantrymen and the archer? Which of them do you imagine had a higher status?
- What impressions do their postures and facial expressions convey?
- What details help to convey a highly realistic image of these figures?

Visual Source 4.4 Terra-Cotta Archer (Art & Archaeology, Inc./Corbis)



Visual Source 4.5 A Bronze Horse-Drawn Chariot (Private Collection/The Bridgeman Art Library)

Among the most delightful finds in Shihuangdi's funerary complex were two exquisitely detailed bronze carriages, each portrayed as half-sized models and pulled by four horses. Coachmen with swords provided protection on both sides. Some seven kilograms of gold and silver served to decorate the carriage and horses, which consisted of more than 3,000 separate pieces. These finds, however, were not part of the terra-cotta army and its military machine. Rather, they were found some distance away, quite close to the actual burial place of the emperor. Visual Source 4.5 shows the larger of the two carriages and features a team of horses, a driver, three windows, and a rear door. The compartment is decorated inside and out with geometric and cloud patterns, while the round roof, perhaps, represents the sun, the sky, or the heavens above.

- Scholars differ as to the precise purpose of this carriage. Perhaps it was intended to allow the emperor to tour his realm in the afterlife much as he had done while alive. Or did it serve a one-time purpose to transport the emperor's soul into the afterlife? What line of reasoning might support either of these interpretations?
- The carriages were found deliberately buried in a wooden coffin and facing west. What significance might you attach to these facts?

Using the Evidence: Qin Shihuangdi and China's Eternal Empire

1. **Describing Shihuangdi:** Based on these visual sources and what you have learned about Shihuangdi's tomb complex, how would you characterize him as a ruler and as a man? In what ways did his reign reflect the views of Han Fei in Document 4.3?
2. **Evaluating Shihuangdi:** What aspects of Shihuangdi's reign might have provoked praise or criticism both during his life and later?
3. **Making comparisons:** In what ways were Shihuangdi's reign and his funerary arrangements unique, and in what respects did they fit into a larger pattern of other early rulers? Consider him in relationship to Egyptian pharaohs, Persian rulers, Alexander the Great, Augustus, or Ashoka.