

History 101: World Civilizations Reader  
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Primary sources are records created during a historical period. Typical primary sources include legal codes, speeches, sacred scriptures, letters, interviews, diaries, administrative records, poetry, plays, and autobiographies. Because of their connection to a specific time and place, primary sources offer an important perspective on the past. All of the documents in this reader are primary sources. For each, I have provided a short introduction as well as several questions to consider at the end of the document.

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## 0. How to read a primary source

When interpreting anything created at a time and place different from your own, you must ask good questions of it. A movie created during the 1980s, for instance, should undergo the same scrutiny as a legal code written 3,000 years ago. Here are questions historians routinely ask of primary sources.

1. How do the ideas and values in the source differ from the ideas and values of our time? How might the difference between our values and the values of the author influence the way we understand the text?
2. Who created the source? What is the background of the author - high status, low status, ruling group, subject group?
3. What portions of the text might we find objectionable, but which contemporaries might have found acceptable? In other words, what preconceptions do we, as readers living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, bring to the source?
4. Why was the source created, what is its purpose, and who (if anyone) was supposed to see it?
5. Is the author making an argument? If so, what is it? What is the text trying to do?
6. Different sources have different formats and expectations. Court records and political speeches are different than private letters or memoirs. Keep that bit of context in mind.

Some of the sources in this sourcebook are challenging because they contain hard to pronounce names or references to unknown person, places, or things. Try not to let the unfamiliar time and place of the text discourage you.

## 1. The Code of Hammurabi (Mesopotamia, 18th Century BCE)

The Code of Hammurabi is the world's oldest legal code. Named for the sixth king of the Babylonian Empire located in modern day Iraq, Hammurabi wanted a single set of written laws to govern criminal and civil matters in his expanding state. The laws reveal a great deal about Mesopotamia's economy, society, and degree of social stratification.

(Translated by L. W. King (1915), edited by Paul Briens)

15: If any one take a male or female slave of the court, or a male or female slave of a freed man, outside the city gates [to escape], he shall be put to death.

16: If any one receive into his house a runaway male or female slave of the court, or of a freedman, and does not bring it out at the public proclamation of the [police], the master of the house shall be put to death.

53: If any one be too lazy to keep his dam in proper condition, and does not so keep it; if then the dam break and all the fields be flooded, then shall he in whose dam the break occurred be sold for money, and the money shall replace the grain which he has caused to be ruined.

54: If he be not able to replace the grain, then he and his possessions shall be divided among the farmers whose corn he has flooded.

108: If a woman wine-seller does not accept grain according to gross weight in payment of drink, but takes money, and the price of the drink is less than that of the corn, she shall be convicted and thrown into the water.

109: If conspirators meet in the house of a woman wine-seller, and these conspirators are not captured and delivered to the court, the wine-seller shall be put to death.

110: If a "sister of a god"[nun] open a tavern, or enter a tavern to drink, then shall this woman be burned to death.

129: If a man's wife be surprised [having intercourse] with another man, both shall be tied and thrown into the water, but the husband may pardon his wife and the king his slaves.

130: If a man violate the wife (betrothed or child-wife) of another man, who has never known a man, and still lives in her father's house, and sleep with her and be surprised [caught], this man shall be put to death, but the wife is blameless.

131: If a man bring a charge against his wife, but she is not surprised with another man, she must take an oath and then may return to her house.

132: If the "finger is pointed" at a man's wife about another man, but she is not caught sleeping with the other man, she shall jump into the river for the sake of her husband.

138: If a man wishes to separate from his wife who has borne him no children, he shall give her the amount of her purchase money and the dowry which she brought from her father's house, and let her go.

141: If a man's wife, who lives in his house, wishes to leave it, plunges into debt [to go into business], tries to ruin her house, neglects her husband, and is judicially convicted: if her husband offer her release, she may go on her way, and he gives her nothing as a gift of release. If her husband does not wish to release her, and if he take another wife, she shall remain as servant in her husband's house.

142: If a woman quarrel with her husband, and say: "You are not congenial to me," the reasons for her prejudice must be presented. If she is guiltless, and there is no fault on her part, but he leaves and neglects her, then no guilt attaches to this woman, she shall take her dowry and go back to her father's house.

143: If she is not innocent, but leaves her husband, and ruins her house, neglecting her husband, this woman shall be cast into the water.

195: If a son strikes his father, his hands shall be cut off.

196: If a nobleman put out the eye of another nobleman, his eye shall be put out.

197: If he break another nobleman's bone, his bone shall be broken.

198: If he put out the eye of a commoner, or break the bone of a commoner, he shall pay one silver mina.

199: If he put out the eye of a man's slave, or break the bone of a man's slave, he shall pay one-half of its value.

200: If a man knock out the teeth of his equal, his teeth shall be knocked out.

201: If he knock out the teeth of a commoner, he shall pay one-third of a silver mina.

In future time, through all coming generations, let the king, who may be in the land, observe the words of righteousness which I have written on my monument; let him not alter the law of the land which I have given, the edicts which I have enacted; my monument let him not mar. If such a ruler have wisdom, and be able to keep his land in order, he shall observe the words which I have written in this inscription; the rule, statute, and law of the land which I have given; the decisions which I have made will this inscription show him; let him rule his subjects accordingly, speak justice to them, give right decisions, root out the miscreants and criminals from this land, and grant prosperity to his subjects.

Questions for Analysis:

What does Hammurabi's code tell about ancient Babylonian society? What are some of the main concerns of the code? What advantages does a written code have over oral tradition?

## 2. The Book of the Dead (ca. 16<sup>th</sup> Century BCE)

The Book of the Dead is a collection of spells and prayers that the Egyptians believed contributed to well-being in the afterlife. The book has often been found in Egyptian tombs. This excerpt is a prayer meant to prepare the deceased for the judgment of the gods. This chant gives us a glimpse of Egyptian ethics and religious beliefs. Recall that Maat is the Egyptian concept of order, balance, truth, morality, and justice.

Source: E.A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Dead* (London: 1898), 191-192

In truth I have come to thee, and I have brought Maat (right and truth) to thee,  
And I have destroyed wickedness for thee.

I have not done evil to mankind.

I have not oppressed the members of my family.

I have not wrought evil in the place of right and truth.

I have had no knowledge of worthless men. I have not wrought evil.

I have not made to be the first [consideration] of each day that excessive labour should be performed for me.

I have not brought forward my name for [exaltation] to honours.

I have not ill-treated servants.

I have not thought scorn of God.

I have not defrauded the oppressed one of his property.

I have not done that which is an abomination unto the gods.

I have not caused harm to be done to the servant by his chief.

I have not caused pain.

I have made no man to suffer hunger.

I have made no one to weep.  
I have done no murder.  
I have not given the order for murder to be done for me.  
I have not inflicted pain upon mankind.  
I have not defrauded the temples of their oblations.  
I have not stolen the cakes of the gods.  
I have not carried off the cakes offered to the khus.  
I have not committed fornication.  
I have not polluted myself in the holy places of the god of my city  
I have not diminished from the bushel.  
I have not encroached upon the fields of others.  
I have not added to the weights of the scales [to cheat the seller].  
I have not mis-read the pointer of the scales [to cheat the buyer].  
I have not carried away the milk from the mouths of children.  
I have not driven away the cattle which were upon their pastures.  
I have not snared the "feathered fowl of the preserves of the gods.  
I have not caught "fish [with bait made of] fish of their kind.  
I have not turned "back the water at the time when it should flow.  
I have not cut a cutting in a canal of running water.  
I have not "extinguished a fire (or light) when it should burn.  
I have not "violated the times I [of offering] the chosen meat-offerings.  
I "have not driven off the cattle from the property of the gods.  
I have not repulsed God in his manifestations.  
I am pure.  
I am pure.  
I am pure.  
I am pure.

#### Questions for Analysis:

From this reading it is clear the Egyptians had a strong sense of right and wrong. How do the ethical concerns of ancient Egyptians resemble our own? How are they different? For instance, what can you infer about Egyptian society from chants like 'I have not stolen the cakes of the gods' or 'I have not misread the pointer o the scales'?

### **3. The Mandate of Heaven, Selection from the Shu Jing (China, 6th Century BCE)**

The Mandate of Heaven is an explanation for the success and failure of monarchs and states. Beginning in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese sages reasoned that when a ruling dynasty got overthrown, it had lost the moral right to rule bestowed by Heaven. For this source, you should understand heaven to mean a cosmic all-pervading power. The Shu Jing is a collection of documents, not a person. It dates from the sixth century, prior to the life of Confucius. According to Chinese tradition, the first royal dynasty was the Xia.

Alfred J. Andrea and James H. Overfield, *The Human Record: Sources of Global History, Vol 1*, 2d. ed., (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994), pp. 25-27)

[When] the former kings of Xia cultivated earnestly their virtue, and then there were no calamities from Heaven. The spirits of the hills and rivers alike were all in tranquility; and the birds and beasts, the fishes and tortoises, all enjoyed their existence according to their nature. But their descendant did not follow their example, and great Heaven sent down calamities, employing the agency of our ruler- who was in possession of its favoring appointment. The attack on Xia may be traced to the orgies in Ming Tiao... Our king of Shang brilliantly displayed his sagely prowess; for oppression he substituted his generous gentleness; and the millions of the people gave him their hearts. Now your Majesty is entering on the inheritance of his virtue; -- all depends on how you commence your reign. To set up love, it is for you to love your relations; to set up respect, it is for you to respect your elders. The commencement is in the family and the state....

The former king began with careful attention to the bonds that hold men together. He listened to their request, and did not seek to resist it; he conformed to the wisdom of the ancients; occupying the highest position, he displayed intelligence; occupying an inferior position, he displayed his loyalty; he allowed the good qualities of the men whom he employed and did not seek that they should have every talent....

He extensively sought out wise men, who should be helpful to you, his descendant and heir. He laid down the punishments for officers, and warned those who were in authority, saying, 'If you dare to have constant dancing in your palaces, and drunken singing in your chambers, -- that is called the fashion of sorcerers; if you dare to see your hearts on wealth and women, and abandon yourselves to wandering about or to the chase, -- that is called the fashion of extravagance; if you dare to despise sage words, to resist the loyal and upright, to put far from you the aged and virtuous, and to seek the company of...youths, -- that is called the fashion of disorder. Now if a high noble or officer be addicted to one of these three fashions with their ten evil ways, his family will surely come to ruin; if the prince of a country be so addicted, his state will surely come to ruin. The minister who does not try to correct such vices in the sovereign shall be punished with branding.'...

Do you, who now succeed to the throne, revere these warnings in your person? Think of them! -- sacred counsels of vast importance, admirable words forcibly set forth! The ways of Heaven are not invariable: -- on the good-doer it sends down all blessings, and on the evil-doer it sends down all miseries. Do you but be virtuous, be it in small things or in large, and the myriad regions will have cause for rejoicing. If you not be virtuous, be it in large things or in small, it will bring the ruin of your ancestral temple."

Questions for Analysis:

How does a Chinese monarch keep the Mandate of Heaven? What demonstrates that the Mandate of Heaven has been lost? Does this idea resemble the way people think today?

#### **4. Sun-Tzu: The Art of War (China, ca. 500 BCE)**

Sun-Tzu lived during the Zhou dynasty and is considered one of the most influential military theorists of all time. His dissertation on the nature of war is marked by an extremely realistic assessment of warfare and its relation to geography, psychology, tactics and other factors that come to play in warfare. Today, many business schools as well as military academies require their students to read the Art of War.

Source: *Sun Tzu on the Art of War* (Lionel Giles, trans.)

##### LAYING PLANS

The art of war is of vital importance to the State. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.

The art of war, then, is governed by five constant factors, to be taken into account in one's deliberations, when seeking to determine the conditions obtaining in the field. These are: The Moral Law; Heaven; Earth; The Commander; Method and discipline.

The Moral Law causes the people to be in complete accord with their ruler, so that they will follow him regardless of their lives, undismayed by any danger.

Heaven signifies night and day, cold and heat, times and seasons.

Earth comprises distances, great and small; danger and security; open ground and narrow passes; the chances of life and death.

The Commander stands for the virtues of wisdom, sincerely, benevolence, courage and strictness.

By method and discipline are to be understood the marshaling of the army in its proper subdivisions, the graduations of rank among the officers, the maintenance of roads by which supplies may reach the army, and the control of military expenditure.

These five heads should be familiar to every general; he who knows them will be victorious; he who knows them not will fail.

Therefore, in your deliberations, when seeking to determine the military conditions, let them be made the basis of a comparison, in this wise:--

Which of the two sovereigns is imbued with the Moral law? Which of the two generals has most ability? With whom lie the advantages derived from Heaven and Earth? On which side is discipline most rigorously enforced? Which army is stronger? On which side are officers and men more highly trained? In which army is there the greater constancy both in reward and punishment?

By means of these seven considerations I can forecast victory or defeat...But remember: While heeding the profit of my counsel, avail yourself also of any helpful circumstances over and beyond the ordinary rules and modify your plans accordingly.

All warfare is based on deception. Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near.

Hold out baits to entice the enemy. Feign disorder, and crush him. If he is secure at all points, be prepared for him. If he is in superior strength, evade him. If your opponent is of choleric temper, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant. If he is taking his ease, give him no rest. If his forces are united, separate them. Attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected.

## WAGING WAR

When you engage in actual fighting, if victory is long in coming, then men's weapons will grow dull and their ardor will be damped. If you lay siege to a town, you will exhaust your strength. Again, if the campaign is protracted, the resources of the State will not be equal to the strain. Now, when your weapons are dulled, your ardor damped, your strength exhausted and your treasure spent, other chieftains will spring up to take advantage of your extremity. Then no man, however wise, will be able to avert the consequences that must ensue.

Thus, though we have heard of stupid haste in war, cleverness has never been seen associated with long delays. There is no instance of a country having benefited from prolonged warfare. It is only one who is thoroughly acquainted with the evils of war that can thoroughly understand the profitable way of carrying it on.

The skillful soldier does not raise a second levy, neither are his supply-wagons loaded more than twice. Bring war material with you from home, but forage on the enemy. Thus the army will have food enough for its needs. Poverty of the State exchequer causes an army to be maintained by contributions from a distance. Contributing to maintain an army at a distance causes the people to be impoverished.

In war, then, let your great object be victory, not lengthy campaigns. Thus it may be known that the leader of armies is the arbiter of the people's fate, the man on whom it depends whether the nation shall be in peace or in peril.

## ATTACK BY STRATAGEM

In the practical art of war, the best thing of all is to take the enemy's country whole and intact; to shatter and destroy it is not so good. So, too, it is better to recapture an army entire than to destroy it, to capture a regiment, a detachment or a company entire than to destroy them.

Hence to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting. Thus the highest form of generalship is to balk the enemy's plans; the next best is to prevent the junction of the enemy's forces; the next in order is to attack the enemy's army in the field; and the worst policy of all is to besiege walled cities.

It is the rule in war, if our forces are ten to the enemy's one, to surround him; if five to one, to attack him; if twice as numerous, to divide our army into two. If equally matched, we can offer battle; if slightly inferior in numbers, we can avoid the enemy; if quite unequal in every way, we can flee from him. Hence, though an obstinate fight may be made by a small force, in the end it must be captured by the larger force.

Thus we may know that there are five essentials for victory: He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight. He will win who knows how to handle both superior and inferior forces. He will win whose army is animated by the same spirit throughout all its ranks. He will win who, prepared himself, waits to take the enemy unprepared. He will win who has military capacity and is not interfered with by the sovereign.

Hence the saying: If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

## TACTICAL DISPOSITIONS

The good fighters of old first put themselves beyond the possibility of defeat, and then waited for an opportunity of defeating the enemy.

To secure ourselves against defeat lies in our own hands, but the opportunity of defeating the enemy is provided by the enemy himself. Thus the good fighter is able to secure himself against defeat, but cannot make certain of defeating the enemy. Hence the saying: One may know how to conquer without being able to do it.

Security against defeat implies defensive tactics; ability to defeat the enemy means taking the offensive. Standing on the defensive indicates insufficient strength; attacking, a superabundance of strength.

The general who is skilled in defense hides in the most secret recesses of the earth; he who is skilled in attack flashes forth from the topmost heights of heaven. Thus on the one hand we have ability to protect ourselves; on the other, a victory that is complete.

To see victory only when it is within the ken of the common herd is not the acme of excellence. Neither is it the acme of excellence if you fight and conquer and the whole Empire says, "Well done!"

What the ancients called a clever fighter is one who not only wins, but excels in winning with ease. Hence his victories bring him neither reputation for wisdom nor credit for courage. He wins his battles by making no mistakes. Making no mistakes is what establishes the certainty of victory, for it means conquering an enemy that is already defeated.

Hence the skillful fighter puts himself into a position which makes defeat impossible, and does not miss the moment for defeating the enemy. Thus it is that in war the victorious strategist only seeks battle after the victory has been won, whereas he who is destined to defeat first fights and afterwards looks for victory.

Questions for Analysis:

What is the best type of victory in war according to Sun-Tzu? What does *The Art of War* tell us about Chinese society and its values?

## 5. Confucius: Analects (China, 5th C. BCE)

Confucius was a moral philosopher from China. The disciples of Confucius compiled his teachings in a book of Analects (sayings) and may have expanded on them. Through these sayings, Confucius gives his ideas about virtue or positive character traits. A central concept for Confucius is filial piety, or the lifelong respect and obedience children owe to parents, wives to husbands, sisters to brothers, and younger siblings to older siblings. Filial piety and the rituals associated with it are supposed to make virtuous families and rulers. The ideas of Confucius about morality, government, education, and social relations have had a tremendous impact on East Asian civilization.

(Translated by James Legge (1887), revised by Michael Neville)

### ON FILIAL PIETY

Mang I asked what filial piety is. The Master said, "It is being obedient." Soon after, as Fan Chi was driving him, the Master told him "Mang asked me what filial piety is, and I answer him 'being obedient.'" Fan Chi asked, "What exactly did you mean?" The Master replied, "That parents, when alive, should be served according to ritual; that, when dead, they should be buried according to ritual; and that they should be sacrificed to according to ritual."

Ziyou asked what filial piety is. The Master said, "The filial piety of now-a-days means providing nourishment for one's parents. But dogs and horses likewise are able to do something along that line for their own kind. Without reverence, what is there to distinguish the one support given from the other?"

### ON GOODNESS

The Master said, "A youth, when at home, should behave well toward his parents, and when abroad, respectfully to his elders. He should be earnest and truthful. He should overflow in love to all, and cultivate the friendship of the good. When he has time and opportunity, after doing those things, he should study the polite arts."

The Master said, "With coarse rice to eat, with water to drink, and my bended arm for a pillow, I still have joy in the midst of these things. Riches and honors acquired by unrighteousness are to me as a floating cloud."

Zhonggong asked about perfect virtue. The Master said, "When abroad, behave to everyone as if you were receiving an important guest; treat people as if you were assisting at a great sacrifice; do not do to others as you would not wish done to yourself. Thereby you will let no murmuring rise against you in the country, and none in the family. . . ."

### ON THE GENTLEMAN

Why is ritual supposed to be important? What happens to otherwise virtuous traits without such ritual?

The Master said, "Riches and honors are what men desire; but if they cannot be obtained in the proper way, they should be let go. Poverty and meanness are what men dislike; but if they cannot be avoided in the proper way, they should not be avoided. If a gentleman abandons virtue, how can he fulfill the requirements of his title? A gentleman not, even for the space of a single meal, acts contrary to virtue. Even in moments of haste, and in times of danger, he clings to virtue."

The Master said, "A gentleman, well studied in literature, and abiding by the rules of ritual, will not go very wrong."

"When gentlemen perform well all their duties to their relations, the people are inspired to virtue. When they remain true to their old friends, the people are preserved from irresponsible behavior."

The Master said, "A gentleman points out the admirable qualities of men and does not point out their bad qualities. A petty man does just the opposite."

The Master said, "A gentleman is distressed by his lack of ability, but he is not distressed by men's not knowing him."

The Master said, "What the gentleman demands is something of himself. What the petty man demands is something of others."

A gentleman does not wear a deep purple or a puce color, nor in his at-home clothes does he wear red. In warm weather, he wears a single-layered garment, either of coarse or fine texture, but when going out he wears it over another garment. He wears lambskin with a garment of black, fawn with white, and fox with yellow. His fur dressing gown should be long, but with the right sleeve short. His night clothes must be half again as long as his body. When staying at home, he wears thick furs of the fox or the badger. So long as he is not in mourning, he wears all the trimmings of his girdle. . . . He does not wear lamb's fur or a black cap when making a visit of condolence. And on the first day of the month he must put on his court robes and present himself at court.

#### ON EDUCATION

The Master said, "Anyone learning without thought is lost; anyone thinking but not learning is in peril."

The Master said, "Yu, shall I teach you what knowledge is? When you know a thing, to realize that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it: this is knowledge." The Master said, [I have been] "a transmitter and not a maker, believing in and loving the ancients. . ."

When the Master went to Wei, Ran Yu acted as driver of his carriage. The Master observed, "How numerous the people are!" Ran Yu asked, "When they are more numerous, what more shall be done for them?" "Enrich them," was the reply. "And when they have been enriched, what more shall be done?" The Master said, "Instruct them."

#### ON GOVERNMENT

The Master said, "To rule a country of a thousand chariots requires reverent attention to business, sincerity, economy in expenditures, and love for men, as well as the employment of the people only in the right seasons."

The Master said, "If the people are governed by laws and punishment is used to maintain order, they will try to avoid the punishment but have no sense of shame. If they are governed by virtue and rules of propriety [ritual] are used to maintain order, they will have a sense of shame and will become good as well."

Ji Kang Zi asked Confucius about government, saying, "What do you say to killing those who are unprincipled [i.e., the immoral] for the good of those who are principled?" Confucius replied, "Sir, in carrying on your government, why should you use killing at all? Let your obvious desires be for what is good, and the people will be good. The relation between superiors and inferiors is like that between the wind and the grass: the grass is bound to bend when the wind blows across it."

Zigong asked about government. The Master said, "The requisites of government are that there be sufficient food, sufficient military equipment, and the confidence of the people in their ruler." Zigong said, "If one had to dispense with one of those three, which should be given up first?" "The military equipment," said the Master. Zigong again asked, "If one had to dispense with one of the two remaining, which should be given up?" The Master answered, "Give up the food. From of old, death has always been the lot of men; but if the people have no faith in their rulers, they cannot stand."

#### ON RELIGION

Someone asked the meaning of the great sacrifice. The Master said, "I do not know. Anyone who knew its meaning would find it as easy to govern the kingdom as to look on this," and he pointed to the palm of his hand.

Zilu asked about serving the ghosts of the dead. The Master said, "Until you are able to serve men, how can you serve their ghosts?" When Zilu ventured to ask about death, the answer was: "While you do not know life, how can you [hope to] know about death?"

Questions for Analysis:

According to Confucius, why are rituals so important? Do you agree with him? What is the Confucian view of religion?

## **6. Xunzi: Human Nature is Bad (China, ca. 275 B.C.E.)**

Xunzi was a Chinese philosopher who lived during a period of intense political disorder. He believed that human beings were inherently evil in opposition to the philosophy of Confucius and Mencius who both believed that man was essentially good. For Xunzi, it was only through conscious ethical activity that man could rectify his natural tendency towards immorality.

Source: Patricia Ebrey, *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 2d ed. (New York: Free Press, 1993)

### **HUMAN NATURE IS BAD**

Human nature is bad. Good is a human product. Human nature is such that people are born with a love of profit. If they follow these inclinations, they will struggle and snatch from each other, and inclinations to defer or yield will die. They are born with fears and hatreds. If they follow them, they will become violent and tendencies toward good faith will die. They are born with sensory desires for pleasing sounds and sights. If they indulge them, the disorder of sexual license will result and ritual and moral principles will be lost. In other words, if people accord with human nature and follow their desires, they inevitably end up struggling, snatching, violating norms, and acting with violent abandon. Consequently, only after men are transformed by teachers and by ritual and moral principles do they defer, conform to culture, and abide in good order. Viewed this way, it is obvious that human nature is bad and good is a human product.

A warped piece of wood must be steamed and forced before it is made straight; a metal blade must be put to the whetstone before it becomes sharp. Since the nature of people is bad, to become corrected they must be taught by teachers and to be orderly they must acquire ritual and moral principles. When people lack teachers, their tendencies are not corrected; when they do not have ritual and moral principles, then their lawlessness is not controlled. In antiquity the sage kings recognized that men's nature is bad and that their tendencies were not being corrected and their lawlessness controlled. Consequently, they created rituals and moral principles and instituted laws and limitations to give shape to people's feelings while correcting them, to transform people's emotional nature while guiding it. Thus all became orderly and conformed to the Way. Those people today who are transformed by teachers, accumulate learning, and follow ritual and moral principles are gentlemen. Those who indulge their instincts, act impulsively, and violate ritual and moral principles are inferior people. Seen from this perspective, it is obvious that human nature is bad, and good is a human product.

Mencius said that people's capacity to learn is evidence that their nature is good. I disagree. His statement shows he does not know what human nature is and has not pondered the distinction between what is human nature and what is created by man. Human nature is what Heaven supplies. It cannot be learned or worked at. Ritual and moral principles were produced by the sages; they are things people can master by study and effort. Human nature refers to what is in people but which they cannot study or work at achieving. Human products refers to what people acquire through study and effort.

Now it is human nature to want to eat to one's fill when hungry, to want to warm up when cold, to want to rest when tired. These all are a part of people's emotional nature. When a man is hungry and yet on seeing an elder lets him eat first it is because he knows he should yield. When he is tired but does not dare rest, it is because he knows it is his turn. When a son yields to his father, or a younger brother yields to his elder brother, or when a son takes on the work for his father or a younger brother for his elder brother, their actions go against their natures and run counter to their feelings. And yet these are the way of the filial son and the principles of ritual and morality. Thus, if people followed their feelings and nature, they would not defer or yield, for deferring and yielding run counter to their emotional nature. Viewed from this perspective, it is obvious that man's nature is bad and good is a human product...

...Similarly, a man may have a fine temperament and a discriminating mind, but he must first seek a wise teacher to study under and good friends to associate with. If he studies with a wise teacher, what he hears will concern the way of Yao, Shun, Yi, and Tang. If he finds good friends to associate with, what he observes will be loyalty, good faith, respect, and deference. Each day he will come closer to humanity and morality without realizing it, all because of their influence. But if he lives with bad people, what he will hear will be deceit and lies and what he will observe will be wild, undisciplined,

greedy behavior Without knowing it, he will end up a criminal, all because of their indifference. It has been said, "If you do not know the man, observe his friends. If you do not know lord, look at his attendants." Influence affects everyone.

Questions for Analysis:

Do you agree with Xunzi's views on human nature? Why or why not?

## **7. The Buddha: Sermons and Teachings (India, 6th century BCE)**

Siddhartha Gautama (566-483 BCE) was the son of the king in a small South Asian state who enjoyed a life of luxury until he began a search for enlightenment. Siddhartha wanted to understand the nature of reality and the meaning of human suffering. At the time, most people on similar spiritual journeys engaged in lives of austere asceticism. That is to say, they renounced their worldly possessions, fasted for long periods, abstained from alcohol and sex, and spent long periods in silent reflection. Siddhartha joined different ascetic sects, but he was spiritually unsatisfied until achieving an enlightened state after a period of meditation. Buddha literally means "an enlightened one". Siddhartha set out to teach the truths he had realized and preached a "middle path" between worldliness and asceticism. His teachings are also heavily focused on how to achieve release from human suffering. His teachings and method for obtaining enlightenment swept throughout Asia, becoming the foundation for one of the world's universal religions – open to anyone like Christianity or Islam. The Sermon at Benares is reproduced here. Bhikkhu refers to an acetic or a person who denies themselves worldly pleasures. Tathagata is a person who has found the truth. The Buddha uses it to refer to himself.

*The Gospel of Buddha*, Compiled from Ancient Records by Paul Carus, Chicago and London, 1917.

### **THE SERMON AT BENARES**

On seeing their old teacher approach, the five bhikkhus agreed among themselves not to salute him, nor to address him as a master, but by his name only. "For," so they said, "he has broken his vow and has abandoned holiness. He is no bhikkhu but Gautama, and Gautama has become a man who lives in abundance and indulges in the pleasures of worldliness."

But when the Blessed One approached in a dignified manner, they involuntarily rose from their seats and greeted him in spite of their resolution. Still they called him by his name and addressed him as "friend Gautama."

When they had thus received the Blessed One, he said: "Do not call the Tathagata by his name nor address him as 'friend,' for he is the Buddha, the Holy One. The Buddha looks with a kind heart equally on all living beings, and they therefore call him 'Father.' To disrespect a father is wrong; to despise him, is wicked.

"The Tathagata," the Buddha continued, "does not seek salvation in austerities, but neither does he for that reason indulge in worldly pleasures, nor live in abundance. The Tathagata has found the middle path.

"There are two extremes, O bhikkhus, which the man who has given up the world ought not to follow—the habitual practice, on the one hand, of self-indulgence which is unworthy, vain and fit only for the worldly-minded and the habitual practice, on the other hand, of self-mortification, which is painful, useless and unprofitable.

"Neither abstinence from fish or flesh, nor going naked, nor shaving the head, nor wearing matted hair, nor dressing in a rough garment, nor covering oneself with dirt, nor sacrificing to Agni, will cleanse a man who is not free from delusions.

"Reading the Vedas, making offerings to priests, or sacrifices to the gods, self-mortification by heat or cold, and many such penances performed for the sake of immortality, these do not cleanse the man who is not free from delusions.

"Anger, drunkenness, obstinacy, bigotry, deception, envy, self-praise, disparaging others, superciliousness and evil intentions constitute uncleanness; not verily the eating of flesh. "

A middle path, O bhikkhus, avoiding the two extremes, has been discovered by the Tathagata—a path which opens the eyes, and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana!

"What is that middle path, O bhikkhus, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathagata - that path which opens the eyes, and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana?"

"Let me teach you, O bhikkhus, the middle path, which keeps aloof from both extremes. By suffering, the emaciated devotee produces confusion and sickly thoughts in his mind. Mortification is not conducive even to worldly knowledge; how much less to a triumph over the senses!"

"He who fills his lamp with water will not dispel the darkness, and he who tries to light a fire with rotten wood will fail. And how can anyone be free from self by leading a wretched life, if he does not succeed in quenching the fires of lust, if he still hankers after either worldly or heavenly pleasures. But he in whom self has become extinct is free from lust: he will desire neither worldly nor heavenly pleasures, and the satisfaction of his natural wants will not defile him. However, let him be moderate, let him eat and drink according to the needs of the body."

"Sensuality is enervating: the "self-indulgent" man is a slave to pleasure to his passions, and pleasure-seeking is degrading and vulgar."

"But to satisfy the necessities of life is not evil. To keep the body in good health is a duty for otherwise we shall not be able to trim the lamp of wisdom, and keep our mind strong and clear. Water surrounds the lotus-flower, but does not wet its petals."

"This is the middle path, O bhikkhus, that keeps aloof from both extremes."

And the Blessed One spoke kindly to his disciples, pitying them for their errors, and pointing out the uselessness of their endeavors, and the ice of ill-will that chilled their hearts melted away under the gentle warmth of the Master's persuasion.

Now the Blessed One set the wheel of the most excellent law rolling, and he began to preach to the five bhikkhus, opening to them the gate of immortality, and showing them the bliss of Nirvana.

The Buddha said:

"The spokes of the wheel are the rules of pure conduct: justice is the uniformity of their length, wisdom is the tire; modesty and thoughtfulness are the hub in which the immovable axle of truth is fixed."

"He who recognizes the existence of suffering, its cause, its remedy, and its cessation has fathomed the four noble truths. He will walk in the right path."

"Right views will be the torch to light his way. Right aspirations will be his guide. Right speech will be his dwelling-place on the road. His gait will be straight, for it is right behavior. His refreshments will be the right way of earning his livelihood. Right efforts will be his steps right thoughts his breath; and right contemplation will give him the peace that follows in his footprints."

"Now, this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning suffering:

"Birth is attended with pain, decay is painful, disease is painful, death is painful. Union with the unpleasant is painful, painful is separation from the pleasant, and any craving that is unsatisfied, that too is painful. In brief, bodily conditions which spring from attachment are painful."

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning suffering."

"Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the origin of suffering:

"Verily, it is that craving which causes the renewal of existence, accompanied by sensual delight, seeking satisfaction now here, now there, the craving for the gratification of the passions, the craving for a future life, and the craving for happiness in this life.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the origin of suffering-

"Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of suffering:

"Verily, it is the destruction, in which no passion remains, of this very thirst; it is the laying aside of, the being free from, the dwelling no longer upon this thirst.

"This then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of suffering-

"Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the way which leads to the destruction of sorrow. Verily! it is this noble eightfold path: that is to say:

"Right views; right aspirations; right speech; right behavior; right livelihood, right effort; right thoughts; and right contemplation.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of sorrow. "By the practice of loving kindness I have attained liberation of heart, and thus I am assured that I shall never return in renewed births. I have even now attained Nirvana."

And when the Blessed One had thus set the royal chariot wheel of truth rolling onward, a rapture thrilled through all the universes. The devas [divine beings] left their heavenly abodes to listen to the sweetness of the truth; the saints that had parted from this life crowded around the great teacher to receive the glad tidings; even the animals of the earth felt the bliss that rested upon the words of the Tagathata: and all the creatures of the host of sentient beings, gods, men, and beasts, hearing the message of deliverance, received and understood it in their own language.

And when the doctrine was propounded, the venerable Kondanna, the oldest one among the five bhikkhus, discerned the truth with his mental eye, and he said: "Truly, O Buddha, our Lord, thou hast found the truth!" Then the other bhikkhus too, joined him and exclaimed: "Truly, thou art the Buddha, thou has found the truth. "

And the devas and saints and all the good spirits of the departed generations that had listened to the sermon of the Tathagata, joyfully received the doctrine and shouted: "Truly, the blessed One has founded the kingdom of righteousness. The Blessed One has moved the earth; he has set the wheel of Truth rolling, which by no one in the universe, be he god or man, can ever be turned back. The kingdom of Truth will be preached upon earth; it will spread; and righteousness, goodwill, and peace will reign among mankind."

Questions for Analysis:

What can you infer about ascetics the Buddha preaches to? What have they been doing to attain enlightenment? According to the Buddha what is the correct path to enlightenment?

## **8. Plato: The Republic (Greece, ca. 327 BCE)**

Plato was a philosopher from Athens Greece who studied under Socrates. Plato wrote down Socrates' teachings and founded his own school of philosophy and politics called the Academy. A founding father of the Western philosophical tradition, Plato's teaching style is marked by questions and answers in the form of a dialogue, a technique he learned from Socrates (it is now called Socratic reasoning). The following selection is a dialogue between Plato and Glaucon about the proper education of women in the Athenian republic.

Translated by Benjamin Jowett

I suppose that I must retrace my steps and say what I perhaps ought to have said before in the proper place. The part of the men has been played out, and now properly enough comes the turn of the women. Of them I will proceed to speak, and the more readily since I am invited by you.

For men born and educated like our citizens, the only way, in my opinion, of arriving at a right conclusion about the possession and use of women and children is to follow the path on which we originally started, when we said that the men were to be the guardians and watchdogs of the herd.

True.

Let us further suppose the birth and education of our women to be subject to similar or nearly similar regulations; then we shall see whether the result accords with our design.

What do you mean?

What I mean may be put into the form of a question, I said: Are dogs divided into hes and shes, or do they both share equally in hunting and in keeping watch and in the other duties of dogs? or do we entrust to the males the entire and exclusive care of the flocks, while we leave the females at home, under the idea that the bearing and suckling their puppies is labor enough for them?

No, he said, they share alike; the only difference between them is that the males are stronger and the females weaker.

But can you use different animals for the same purpose, unless they are bred and fed in the same way?

You cannot.

Then, if women are to have the same duties as men, they must have the same nurture and education?

Yes.

The education which was assigned to the men was music and gymnastic.

Yes.

Then women must be taught music and gymnastic and also the art of war, which they must practice like the men?

That is the inference, I suppose.

I should rather expect, I said, that several of our proposals, if they are carried out, being unusual, may appear ridiculous.

No doubt of it.

Yes, and the most ridiculous thing of all will be the sight of women naked in the palaestra, exercising with the men, especially when they are no longer young; they certainly will not be a vision of beauty, any more than the enthusiastic old men who in spite of wrinkles and ugliness continue to frequent the gymnasia.

Yes, indeed, he said: according to present notions the proposal would be thought ridiculous.

But then, I said, as we have determined to speak our minds, we must not fear the jests of the wits which will be directed against this sort of innovation; how they will talk of women's attainments both in music and gymnastic, and above all about their wearing armor and riding upon horseback!

Very true, he replied.

Yet having begun we must go forward to the rough places of the law; at the same time begging of these gentlemen for once in their life to be serious. Not long ago, as we shall remind them, the Hellenes were of the opinion, which is still generally received among the barbarians, that the sight of a naked man was ridiculous and improper; and when first the Cretans and then the Lacedaemonians introduced the custom, the wits of that day might equally have ridiculed the innovation.

No doubt.

But when experience showed that to let all things be uncovered was far better than to cover them up, and the ludicrous effect to the outward eye vanished before the better principle which reason asserted, then the man was perceived to be a fool who directs the shafts of his ridicule at any other sight but that of folly and vice, or seriously inclines to weigh the beautiful by any other standard but that of the good.

Very true, he replied.

First, then, whether the question is to be put in jest or in earnest, let us come to an understanding about the nature of woman: Is she capable of sharing either wholly or partially in the actions of men, or not at all? And is the art of war one of those arts in which she can or can not share? That will be the best way of commencing the enquiry, and will probably lead to the fairest conclusion.

That will be much the best way.

Shall we take the other side first and begin by arguing against ourselves; in this manner the adversary's position will not be undefended.

Why not? he said.

Then let us put a speech into the mouths of our opponents. They will say: 'Socrates and Glaucon, no adversary need convict you, for you yourselves, at the first foundation of the State, admitted the principle that everybody was to do the one work suited to his own nature.' And certainly, if I am not mistaken, such an admission was made by us. 'And do not the natures of men and women differ very much indeed?' And we shall reply: Of course they do. Then we shall be asked, 'Whether the tasks assigned to men and to women should not be different, and such as are agreeable to their different natures?' Certainly they should. 'But if so, have you not fallen into a serious inconsistency in saying that men and women, whose natures are so entirely different, ought to perform the same actions?'--What defense will you make for us, my good Sir, against any one who offers these objections?

That is not an easy question to answer when asked suddenly; and I shall and I do beg of you to draw out the case on our side.

These are the objections, Glaucon, and there are many others of a like kind, which I foresaw long ago; they made me afraid and reluctant to take in hand any law about the possession and nurture of women and children.

By Zeus, he said, the problem to be solved is anything but easy.

Why yes, I said, but the fact is that when a man is out of his depth, whether he has fallen into a little swimming bath or into mid ocean, he has to swim all the same.

Very true.

And must not we swim and try to reach the shore: we will hope that Arion's dolphin or some other miraculous help may save us?

I suppose so, he said.

Well then, let us see if any way of escape can be found. We acknowledged-- did we not? that different natures ought to have different pursuits, and that men's and women's natures are different. And now what are we saying? --that different natures ought to have the same pursuits,--this is the inconsistency which is charged upon us.

Precisely.

Verily, Glaucon, I said, glorious is the power of the art of contradiction!

Why do you say so?

Because I think that many a man falls into the practice against his will. When he thinks that he is reasoning he is really disputing, just because he cannot define and divide, and so know that of which he is speaking; and he will pursue a merely verbal opposition in the spirit of contention and not of fair discussion.

Yes, he replied, such is very often the case; but what has that to do with us and our argument?

A great deal; for there is certainly a danger of our getting unintentionally into a verbal opposition.

In what way?

Why we valiantly and pugnaciously insist upon the verbal truth, that different natures ought to have different pursuits, but we never considered at all what was the meaning of sameness or difference of nature, or why we distinguished them when we assigned different pursuits to different natures and the same to the same natures.

Why, no, he said, that was never considered by us.

I said: Suppose that by way of illustration we were to ask the question whether there is not an opposition in nature between bald men and hairy men; and if this is admitted by us, then, if bald men are cobblers, we should forbid the hairy men to be cobblers, and conversely?

That would be a jest, he said.

Yes, I said, a jest; and why? because we never meant when we constructed the State, that the opposition of natures should extend to every difference, but only to those differences which affected the pursuit in which the individual is engaged; we should have argued, for example, that a physician and one who is in mind a physician may be said to have the same nature.

True.

Whereas the physician and the carpenter have different natures?

Certainly.

And if, I said, the male and female sex appear to differ in their fitness for any art or pursuit, we should say that such pursuit or art ought to be assigned to one or the other of them; but if the difference consists only in women bearing and men begetting children, this does not amount to a proof that a woman differs from a man in respect of the sort of education she should receive; and we shall therefore continue to maintain that our guardians and their wives ought to have the same pursuits.

Very true, he said.

Next, we shall ask our opponent how, in reference to any of the pursuits or arts of civic life, the nature of a woman differs from that of a man?

That will be quite fair.

And perhaps he, like yourself, will reply that to give a sufficient answer on the instant is not easy; but after a little reflection there is no difficulty.

Yes, perhaps.

Suppose then that we invite him to accompany us in the argument, and then we may hope to show him that there is nothing peculiar in the constitution of women which would affect them in the administration of the State.

By all means.

Let us say to him: Come now, and we will ask you a question:--when you spoke of a nature gifted or not gifted in any respect, did you mean to say that one man will acquire a thing easily, another with difficulty; a little learning will lead the one to discover a great deal; whereas the other, after much study and application, no sooner learns than he forgets; or again, did you mean, that the one has a body which is a good servant to his mind, while the body of the other is a hindrance to him?--would not these be the sort of differences which distinguish the man gifted by nature from the one who is ungifted?

No one will deny that.

And can you mention any pursuit of mankind in which the male sex has not all these gifts and qualities in a higher degree than the female? Need I waste time in speaking of the art of weaving, and the management of pancakes and preserves, in which womankind does really appear to be great, and in which for her to be beaten by a man is of all things the most absurd?

You are quite right, he replied, in maintaining the general inferiority of the female sex: although many women are in many things superior to many men, yet on the whole what you say is true.

And if so, my friend, I said, there is no special faculty of administration in a state which a woman has because she is a woman, or which a man has by virtue of his sex, but the gifts of nature are alike diffused in both; all the pursuits of men are the pursuits of women also, but in all of them a woman is inferior to a man.

Very true.

Then are we to impose all our enactments on men and none of them on women?

That will never do.

One woman has a gift of healing, another not; one is a musician, and another has no music in her nature?

Very true.

And one woman has a turn for gymnastic and military exercises, and another is unwarlike and hates gymnastics?

Certainly.

And one woman is a philosopher, and another is an enemy of philosophy; one has spirit, and another is without spirit?

That is also true.

Then one woman will have the temper of a guardian, and another not. Was not the selection of the male guardians determined by differences of this sort?

Yes.

Men and women alike possess the qualities which make a guardian; they differ only in their comparative strength or weakness.

Obviously.

And those women who have such qualities are to be selected as the companions and colleagues of men who have similar qualities and whom they resemble in capacity and in character?

Very true.

And ought not the same natures to have the same pursuits?

They ought.

Then, as we were saying before, there is nothing unnatural in assigning music and gymnastic to the wives of the guardians--to that point we come round again.

Certainly not.

The law which we then enacted was agreeable to nature, and therefore not an impossibility or mere aspiration; and the contrary practice, which prevails at present, is in reality a violation of nature.

That appears to be true.

We had to consider, first, whether our proposals were possible, and secondly whether they were the most beneficial?

Yes.

And the possibility has been acknowledged?

Yes.

The very great benefit has next to be established?

Quite so.

You will admit that the same education which makes a man a good guardian will make a woman a good guardian; for their original nature is the same?

Yes.

I should like to ask you a question.

What is it?

Would you say that all men are equal in excellence, or is one man better than another?

The latter.

And in the commonwealth which we were founding do you conceive the guardians who have been brought up on our model system to be more perfect men, or the cobblers whose education has been cobbling?

What a ridiculous question!

You have answered me, I replied: Well, and may we not further say that our guardians are the best of our citizens?

By far the best.

And will not their wives be the best women?

Yes, by far the best.

And can there be anything better for the interests of the State than that the men and women of a State should be as good as possible?

There can be nothing better.

And this is what the arts of music and gymnastic, when present in such manner as we have described, will accomplish?

Certainly.

Then we have made an enactment not only possible but in the highest degree beneficial to the State?

True.

Then let the wives of our guardians strip, for their virtue will be their robe, and let them share in the toils of war and the defense of their country; only in the distribution of labors the lighter are to be assigned to the women, who are the weaker natures, but in other respects their duties are to be the same. And as for the man who laughs at naked women exercising their bodies from the best of motives, in his laughter he is plucking "A fruit of unripe wisdom," and he himself is ignorant of what he is laughing at, or what he is about; for that is, and ever will be, the best of saying, That the useful is the noble and the hurtful is the base.

Questions for Analysis:

According to Plato, why should the state educate women? What evidence does he provide to support his position?

## **9. Aristophanes: *Lysistrata* (Greece, 411 BCE)**

*Lysistrata* was a comedy written by Athenian playwright Aristophanes. It was performed during the destructive Peloponnesian War (431–404) between the Athenian Empire and Sparta's Peloponnesian league (Peloponnesus, Thrace, and Boetia are regions in Greece). The play's heroine, Lysistrata, persuades women from across Greece to withhold sex from their husbands and lovers until all the men agree to stop fighting. In other words, they organized a sex-strike. The comedy ends with Greek men calling for an immediate cessation of the war. Aristophanes' comedy was a critique of the war being fought and a playful exploration of the battle between the sexes. Aristophanes' prose demonstrates amusing wordplay, double entendre, and many overt sexual references.

Anonymous translation from *Aristophanes: the Eleven Comedies*, published by the Athenian Society, London, 1912.

SCENE: At the base of the Orchestra are two buildings, the house of Lysistrata and the entrance to the Acropolis; a winding and narrow path leads up to the latter. Between the two buildings is the opening of the Cave of Pan. Lysistrata is pacing up and down in front of her house.

Lysistrata: Ah! if only they had been invited to a Bacchic revelling, or a feast of Pan or Aphrodite or Genetyllis, why! the streets would have been impassable for the thronging tambourines! Now there's never a woman here-ah! except my neighbour Cleonice, whom I see approaching yonder.... Good day, Cleonice.

Cleonice: Good day, Lysistrata; but pray, why this dark, forbidding face, my dear? Believe me, you don't look a bit pretty with those black lowering brows.

Lysistrata: Oh, Cleonice, my heart is on fire; I blush for our sex. Men will have it we are tricky and sly....

Cleonice: And they are quite right, upon my word!

Lysistrata: Yet, look you, when the women are summoned to meet for a matter of the greatest importance, they lie in bed instead of coming.

Cleonice: Oh! they will come, my dear; but it's not easy, you know, for women to leave the house. One is busy pottering about her husband; another is getting the servant up; a third is putting her child asleep or washing the brat or feeding it.

Lysistrata: But I tell you, the business that calls them here is far and away more urgent.

Cleonice: And why do you summon us, dear Lysistrata? What is it all about?

Lysistrata: About a big thing.

Cleonice (*taking this in a different sense; with great interest*): And is it thick too?

Lysistrata: Yes, very thick.

Cleonice: And we are not all on the spot! Imagine!

Lysistrata (*wearily*): Oh! if it were what you suppose, there would be never an absentee. No, no, it concerns a thing I have turned about and about this way and that so many sleepless nights.

Cleonice (*still unable to be serious*): It must be something mighty fine and subtle for you to have turned it about so!

Lysistrata: So fine, it means just this, Greece saved by the women!

Cleonice: By the women! Why, its salvation hangs on a poor thread then!

Lysistrata: Our country's fortunes depend on us-it is with us to undo utterly the Peloponnesians.

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Myrrhine: Are we late, Lysistrata? Tell us, pray; what, not a word?

Lysistrata: I cannot say much for you, Myrrhine! you have not bestirred yourself overmuch for an affair of such urgency.

Myrrhine: I could not find my girdle in the dark. However, if the matter is so pressing, here we are; so speak.

Cleonice: No, let's wait a moment more, till the women of Boeotia arrive and those from the Peloponnese.

Lysistrata: Yes, that is best.... Ah! here comes Lampito. (*Lampito, a husky Spartan damsel, enters with three others, two from Boeotia and one from Corinth.*) Good day, Lampito, dear friend from Lacedaemon. How well and handsome you look! what a rosy complexion! and how strong you seem; why, you could strangle a bull surely!

Lampito: Yes, indeed, I really think I could. It's because I do gymnastics and practise the bottom-kicking dance.

Cleonice (*opening Lampito's robe and baring her bosom*): And what superb breasts!

Lampito: La! you are feeling me as if I were a beast for sacrifice.

Lysistrata: And this young woman, where is she from?

Lampito: She is a noble lady from Boeotia.

Lysistrata: Ah! my pretty Boeotian friend, you are as blooming as a garden.

Cleonice (*making another inspection*): Yes, on my word! and her "garden" is so thoroughly weeded too!

Lysistrata (*pointing to the Corinthian*): And who is this?

Lampito: 'Tis an honest woman, by my faith! she comes from Corinth.

Cleonice: Oh! honest, no doubt then-as honesty goes at Corinth.

Lampito: But who has called together this council of women, pray?

Lysistrata: I have.

Lampito: Well then, tell us what you want of us.

Cleonice: Yes, please tell us! What is this very important business you wish to inform us about?

Lysistrata: I will tell you. But first answer me one question.

Cleonice: Anything you wish.

Lysistrata: Don't you feel sad and sorry because the fathers of your children are far away from you with the army? For I'll wager there is not one of you whose husband is not abroad at this moment.

Cleonice: Mine has been the last five months in Thrace-looking after Eucrates.

Myrrhine: It's seven long months since mine left for Pylos.

Lampito: As for mine, if he ever does return from service, he's no sooner home than he takes down his shield again and flies back to the wars.

Lysistrata: And not so much as the shadow of a lover! Since the day the Milesians betrayed us, I have never once seen an eight-inch gadget even, to be a leathern consolation to us poor widows.... Now tell me, if I have discovered a means of ending the war, will you all second me?

Cleonice: Yes verily, by all the goddesses, I swear I will, though I have to put my gown in pawn, and drink the money the same day.

Myrrhine: And so will I, though I must be split in two like a flat-fish, and have half myself removed.

Lampito: And I too; why to secure peace, I would climb to the top of Mount Taygetus.

Lysistrata: Then I will out with it at last, my mighty secret! Oh! sister women, if we would compel our husbands to make peace, we must refrain...

Cleonice: Refrain from what? tell us, tell us!

Lysistrata: But will you do it?

Myrrhine: We will, we will, though we should die of it.

Lysistrata: We must refrain from the male altogether.... Nay, why do you turn your backs on me? Where are you going? So, you bite your lips, and shake your heads, eh? Why these pale, sad looks? why these tears? Come, will you do it-yes or no? Do you hesitate?

Cleonice: I will not do it, let the war go on.

Myrrhine: Nor will I; let the war go on.

Lysistrata (*to Myrrhine*): And you say this, my pretty flat-fish, who declared just now they might split you in two?

Cleonice: Anything, anything but that! Bid me go through the fire, if you will,-but to rob us of the sweetest thing in all the world, Lysistrata darling!

Lysistrata (*to Myrrhine*): And you?

Myrrhine: Yes, I agree with the others; I too would sooner go through the fire.

Lysistrata: Oh, wanton, vicious sex! the poets have done well to make tragedies upon us; we are good for nothing then but love and lewdness! But you, my dear, you from hardy Sparta, if you join me, all may yet be well; help me, second me, I beg you.

Lampito: 'Tis a hard thing, by the two goddesses it is! for a woman to sleep alone without ever a strong male in her bed. But there, peace must come first.

Lysistrata: Oh, my darling, my dearest, best friend, you are the only one deserving the name of woman!

Cleonice: But if-which the gods forbid-we do refrain altogether from what you say, should we get peace any sooner?

Lysistrata: Of course we should, by the goddesses twain! We need only sit indoors with painted cheeks, and meet our mates lightly clad in transparent gowns of Amorgos silk, and perfectly depilated; they will get their tools up and be wild to lie with us. That will be the time to refuse, and they will hasten to make peace, I am convinced of that!

Lampito: Yes, just as Menelaus, when he saw Helen's naked bosom, threw away his sword, they say.

Cleonice: But, oh dear, suppose our husbands go away and leave us.

Lysistrata: Then, as Pherecrates says, we must "flay a skinned dog," that's all.

Cleonice: Fiddlesticks! these proverbs are all idle talk.... But if our husbands drag us by main force into the bedchamber?

Lysistrata: Hold on to the door posts.

Cleonice: But if they beat us?

Lysistrata: Then yield to their wishes, but with a bad grace; there is no pleasure in it for them, when they do it by force. Besides, there are a thousand ways of tormenting them. Never fear, they'll soon tire of the game; there's no satisfaction for a man, unless the woman shares it.

Cleonice: Very well, if you must have it so, we agree.

Lampito: For ourselves, no doubt we shall persuade our husbands to conclude a fair and honest peace; but there is the Athenian populace, how are we to cure these folk of their warlike frenzy?

Lysistrata: Have no fear; we undertake to make our own people listen to reason.

Lampito: That's impossible, so long as they have their trusty ships and the vast treasures stored in the temple of Athene.

Lysistrata: Ah! but we have seen to that; this very day the Acropolis will be in our hands. That is the task assigned to the older women; while we are here in council, they are going, under pretence of offering sacrifice, to seize the citadel.

Lampito: Well said indeed! everything is going for the best.

Lysistrata: Come, quick, Lampito, and let us bind ourselves by an inviolable oath.

Lampito: Recite the terms; we will swear to them.

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Cleonice: Now, my dears, let me swear first, if you please.

Lysistrata: No, by Aphrodite, unless it's decided by lot. But come, then, Lampito, and all of you, put your hands to the bowl; and do you, Cleonice, repeat for all the rest the solemn terms I am going to recite. Then you must all swear, and pledge yourselves by the same promises,-I will have naught to do whether with lover or husband...

Cleonice (*faintly*): I will have naught to do whether with lover or husband...

Lysistrata: Albeit he come to me with an erection...

Cleonice (*her voice quavering*): Albeit he come to me with an erection... (*in despair*) Oh!

Lysistrata, I cannot bear it!

Lysistrata (*ignoring this outburst*): I will live at home unbullied...

Cleonice: I will live at home unbullied...

Lysistrata: Beautifully dressed and wearing a saffron-coloured gown

Cleonice: Beautifully dressed and wearing a saffron-coloured gown...

Lysistrata: To the end I may inspire my husband with the most ardent longings.

Cleonice: To the end I may inspire my husband with the most ardent longings.

Lysistrata: Never will I give myself voluntarily...

Cleonice: Never will I give myself voluntarily...

Lysistrata: And if he has me by force...

Cleonice: And if he has me by force...

Lysistrata: I will be cold as ice, and never stir a limb...

Cleonice: I will be cold as ice, and never stir a limb...

Lysistrata: I will neither extend my Persian slippers toward the ceiling...

Cleonice: I will neither extend my Persian slippers toward the ceiling...

Lysistrata: Nor will I crouch like the carven lions on a knife-handle.

Cleonice: Nor will I crouch like the carven lions on a knife-handle.

Lysistrata: And if I keep my oath, may I be suffered to drink of this wine.

Cleonice (*more courageously*): And if I keep my oath, may I be suffered to drink of this wine.

Lysistrata: But if I break it, let my bowl be filled with water.

Cleonice: But if I break it, let my bowl be filled with water.

Lysistrata: Will you all take this oath?

All: We do.

Question for Analysis:

Greeks lived in dozens of city-states across the Mediterranean. How do the excerpts from *Lysistrata* illustrate features of the Greek civilization? *Lysistrata* feels both modern and ancient. How so?

## 10. Josephus on the Roman Army, 70 CE

Flavius Josephus was a Jewish historian who wrote *The War of the Jews* or *The History of the Destruction of Jerusalem*. As a military commander himself, he witnessed Roman military operations in his homeland during the 60s CE and subsequently recorded the history of the war. In this passage he reflects on the organization of Rome's standing army that controlled the entire Mediterranean.

Translated by William Whiston

1. As soon as they have marched into an enemy's land, they do not begin to fight till they have walled their camp about; nor is the fence they raise rashly made, or uneven; nor do they all abide in it, nor do those that are in it take their places at random; but if it happens that the ground is uneven, it is first leveled: their camp is also four-square by measure, and carpenters are ready, in great numbers, with their tools, to erect their buildings for them.

2. As for what is within the camp, it is set apart for tents, but the outward circumference hath the resemblance to a wall, and is adorned with towers at equal distances, where between the towers stand the engines for throwing arrows and darts, and for slinging stones, and where they lay all other engines that can annoy the enemy, all ready for their several operations. They also erect four gates, one at every side of the circumference, and those large enough for the entrance of the beasts, and wide enough for making excursions, if occasion should require. They divide the camp within into streets, very conveniently, and place the tents of the commanders in the middle; but in the very midst of all is the general's own tent, in the nature of a temple, insomuch, that it appears to be a city built on the sudden, with its market-place, and place for handicraft trades, and with seats for the officers superior and inferior, where, if any differences arise, their causes are heard and determined...

3. When they have thus secured themselves, they live together by companies, with quietness and decency, as are all their other affairs managed with good order and security. Each company hath also their wood, and their corn, and their water brought them, when they stand in need of them; for they neither sup nor dine as they please themselves singly, but all

together. Their times also for sleeping, and watching, and rising are notified beforehand by the sound of trumpets, nor is anything done without such a signal; and in the morning the soldiery go everyone to their centurions, and these centurions to their tribunes, to salute them; with whom all the superior officers go to the general of the whole army, who then gives them of course the watchword and other orders, to be by them carried to all that are under their command; which is also observed when they go to fight, and thereby they turn themselves about on the sudden, when there is occasion for making sallies, as they come back when they are recalled in crowds also.

4. Now when they are to go out of their camp, the trumpet gives a sound, at which time nobody lies still, but at the first intimation they take down their tents, and all is made ready for their going out; then do the trumpets sound again, to order them to get ready for the march; then do they lay their baggage suddenly upon their mules, and other beasts of burden, and stand, as at the place of starting, ready to march; when also they set fire to their camp, and this they do because it will be easy for them to erect another camp, and that it may not ever be of use to their enemies...

5. When, after this, they are gone out of their camp, they all march without noise, and in a decent manner, and everyone keeps his own rank, as if they were going to war. The footmen are armed with breastplates and head-pieces, and have swords on each side; but the sword which is upon their left side is much longer than the other, for that on the right side is not longer than a span...

6. This is the manner of the marching and resting of the Romans, as also these are the several sorts of weapons they use. But when they are to fight, they leave nothing without forecast, nor to be done off-hand, but counsel is ever first taken before any work is begun, and what hath been there resolved upon is put in execution presently; for which reason they seldom commit any errors; and if they have been mistaken at any time, they easily correct those mistakes...

7. Now they so manage their preparatory exercises of their weapons, that not the bodies of the soldiers only, but their souls may also become stronger: they are moreover hardened for war by fear; for their laws inflict capital punishments, not only for soldiers running away from the ranks, but for slothfulness and inactivity, though it be but in a lesser degree; as are their generals more severe than their laws, for they prevent any imputation of cruelty toward those under condemnation, by the great rewards they bestow on the valiant soldiers; and the readiness of obeying their commanders is so great, that it is very ornamental in peace; but when they come to a battle, the whole army is but one body, so well coupled together are their ranks, so sudden are their turnings about, so sharp their hearing as to what orders are given them, so quick their sight of the ensigns, and so nimble are their hands when they set to work; whereby it comes to pass that what they do is done quickly, and what they suffer they bear with the greatest patience...

8. This account I have given the reader, not so much with the intention of commending the Romans, as of comforting those that have been conquered by them, and for the deterring others from attempting innovations under their government. This discourse of the Roman military conduct may also perhaps be of use to such of the curious as are ignorant of it, and yet have a mind to know it. I return now from this digression.

Questions for Analysis:

What is it, besides, raw fighting ability that gives Roman armies the edge over rival states? What does this source tell us about the Roman culture?

### **11. Tacitus: Germania (Roman Empire, 98 CE)**

Germany, which was never conquered by Roman legions and retained its independence, was a land of fascination for the Romans who only ever managed to secure a border with Germany along the Rhine River. Tacitus, a Roman historian, wrote a description of its people and though Romans considered the German tribes uncivilized and barbaric you will detect Tacitus's admiration for many of their customs and habits.

Translation by W. J. Brodribb

THE INHABITANTS

The Germans themselves I should regard as aboriginal, and not mixed at all with other races through immigration or intercourse. For, in former times it was not by land but on shipboard that those who sought to emigrate would arrive; and the boundless and, so to speak, hostile ocean beyond us, is seldom entered by a sail from our world. And, beside the perils of rough and unknown seas, who would leave Asia, or Africa for Italy for Germany, with its wild country, its inclement skies, its sullen manners and aspect, unless indeed it were his home?

#### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

For my own part, I agree with those who think that the tribes of Germany are free from all taint of intermarriages with foreign nations, and that they appear as a distinct, unmixed race, like none but themselves. Hence, too, the same physical peculiarities throughout so vast a population. All have fierce blue eyes, red hair, huge frames, fit only for a sudden exertion. They are less able to bear laborious work. Heat and thirst they cannot in the least endure; to cold and hunger their climate and their soil inure them.

#### CLIMATE AND SOIL, PRECIOUS METALS

Their country, though somewhat various in appearance, yet generally either bristles with forests or reeks with swamps; it is more rainy on the side of Gaul, bleaker on that of Noricum and Pannonia. It is productive of grain, but unfavorable to fruit-bearing trees; it is rich in flocks and herds, but these are for the most part undersized, and even the cattle have not their usual beauty or noble head. It is number that is chiefly valued; they are in fact the most highly prized, indeed the only riches of the people. Silver and gold the gods have refused to them, whether in kindness or in anger I cannot say. I would not, however, affirm that no vein of German soil produces gold or silver, for who has ever made a search? They care but little to possess or use them. You may see among them vessels of silver, which have been presented to their envoys and chieftains, held as cheap as those of the clay. The border population, however, value gold and silver for their commercial utility, and are familiar with, and show preference for, some of our coins. The tribes of the interior use the simpler and more ancient practice of the barter of commodities. They like the old and well known money, coins milled, or showing a two-horse chariot. They likewise prefer silver to gold, not from any special liking, but because a large number of silver pieces is more convenient for use among dealers in cheap and common articles.

#### GOVERNMENT, INFLUENCE OF WOMEN

They choose their kings by birth, their generals for merit. These kings have not unlimited or arbitrary power, and the generals do more by example than by authority. If they are energetic, if they are conspicuous, if they fight in the front, they lead because they are admired. But to reprimand, to imprison, even to flog, is permitted to the priests alone, and that not as a punishment, or at the general's bidding, but, as it were, by the mandate of the god whom they believe to inspire the warrior. They also carry with them into battle certain figures and images taken from their sacred groves. And what most stimulates their courage is, that their squadrons or battalions, instead of being formed by chance or by a fortuitous gathering, are composed of families and clans. Close by them, too, are those dearest to them, so that they hear the shrieks of women, the cries of infants. They are to every man the most sacred witnesses of his bravery—they are his most generous applauders. The soldier brings his wounds to mother and wife, who shrink not from counting or even demanding them and who administer food and encouragement to the combatants.

Tradition says that armies already wavering and giving way have been rallied by women who, with earnest entreaties and bosoms laid bare, have vividly represented the horrors of captivity, which the Germans fear with such extreme dread on behalf of their women, that the strongest tie by which a state can be bound is the being required to give, among the number of hostages, maidens of noble birth. They even believe that the sex has a certain sanctity and prescience, and they do not despise their counsels, or make light of their answers. In Vespasian's days we saw Veleda, long regarded by many as a divinity. In former times, too, they venerated Aurinia, and many other women, but not with servile flatteries, or with sham deification.

#### DEITIES

Mercury is the deity whom they chiefly worship, and on certain days they deem it right to sacrifice to him even with

human victims. Hercules and Mars they appease with more lawful offerings. Some of the Suevi also sacrifice to Isis. Of the occasion and origin of this foreign rite I have discovered nothing, but that the image, which is fashioned like a light galley, indicates an imported worship. The Germans, however, do not consider it consistent with the grandeur of celestial beings to confine the gods within walls, or to liken them to the form of any human countenance. They consecrate woods and groves, and they apply the names of deities to the abstraction which they see only in spiritual worship.

## AUGURIES AND METHOD OF DIVINATION

Augury and divination by lot no people practice more diligently. The use of the lots is simple. A little bough is lopped off a fruit-bearing tree, and cut into small pieces; these are distinguished by certain marks, and thrown carelessly and at random over a white garment. In public questions the priest of the particular state, in private the father of the family, invokes the gods, and, with his eyes toward heaven, takes up each piece three times, and finds in them a meaning according to the mark previously impressed on them. If they prove unfavorable, there is no further consultation that day about the matter; if they sanction it, the confirmation of augury is still required. For they are also familiar with the practice of consulting the notes and flight of birds.....

They have also another method of observing auspices, by which they seek to learn the result of an important war. Having taken, by whatever means, a prisoner from the tribe with whom they are at war, they pit him against a picked man of their own tribe, each combatant using the weapons of their country. The victory of the one or the other is accepted as an indication of the issue.

## COUNCILS

About minor matters the chiefs deliberate, about the more important the whole tribe. Yet even when the final decision rests with the people, the affair is always thoroughly discussed by the chiefs. They assemble, except in the case of a sudden emergency, on certain fixed days, either at new or at full moon; for this they consider the most auspicious season for the transaction of business. Instead of reckoning by days as we do, they reckon by nights, and in this manner fix both their ordinary and their legal appointments. Night they regard as bringing on day. Their freedom has this disadvantage, that they do not meet simultaneously or as they are bidden, but two or three days are wasted in the delays of assembling. When the multitude think proper, they sit down armed. Silence is proclaimed by the priests, who have on these occasions the right of keeping order. Then the king or the chief, according to age, birth, distinction in war, or eloquence, is heard, more because he has influence to persuade than because he has power to command. If his sentiments displease them, they reject them with murmurs; if they are satisfied, they brandish their spears. The most complimentary form of assent is to express approbation with their spears.

## PUNISHMENTS, ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

In their councils an accusation may be preferred or a capital crime prosecuted. Penalties are distinguished according to the offence. Traitors and deserters are hanged on trees; the coward, the unwarlike, the man stained with abominable vices, is plunged into the mire of the morass with a hurdle put over him. This distinction in punishment means that crime, they think, ought, in being punished, to be exposed, while infamy ought to be buried out of sight- Lighter offences, too, have penalties proportioned to them; he who is convicted, is fined in a certain number of horses or of cattle. Half of the fine is paid to the king or to the state, half to the person whose wrongs are avenged and to his relatives. In these same councils they also elect the chief magistrates, who administer law in the cantons and the towns. Each of these has a hundred associates chosen from the people, who support him with their advice and influence.

## WARLIKE ARDOR OF THE PEOPLE

When they go into battle, it is a disgrace for the chief to be surpassed in valor, a disgrace for his followers not to equal the valor of the chief. And it is an infamy and a reproach for life to have survived the chief, and returned from the field. To defend, to protect him, to ascribe one's own brave deeds to his renown, is the height of loyalty. The chief fights for victory; his vassals fight for their chief. If their native state sinks into the sloth of prolonged peace and repose, many of its noble youths voluntarily seek those tribes which are waging some war, both because inaction is odious to their race, and

because they win renown more readily in the midst of peril, and cannot maintain a numerous following except by violence and war. Indeed, men look to the liberality of their chief for their war-horse and their bloodstained and victorious lance. Feasts and entertainments, which, though inelegant, are plentifully furnished, are their only pay. The means of this bounty come from war and rapine. Nor are they as easily persuaded to plough the earth and to wait for the year's produce as to challenge an enemy and earn the honor of wounds. Nay, they actually think it tame and stupid to acquire by the sweat of toil what they might win by their blood.

#### HABITS IN TIME OF PEACE

Whenever they are not fighting, they pass much of their time in the chase, and still more in idleness, giving themselves up to sleep and to feasting, the bravest and the most warlike doing nothing, and surrendering the management of the household, of the home, and of the land, to the women, the old men, and all the weakest members of the family. They themselves lie buried in sloth, a strange combination in their nature that the same men should be so fond of idleness, so averse to peace. It is the custom of the states to bestow by voluntary and individual contribution on the chiefs a present of cattle or of grain, which, while accepted as a compliment, supplies their wants. They are particularly delighted by gifts from neighboring tribes, which are sent not only by individuals but also by the state, such as choice steeds, heavy armor, trappings, and neck-chains. We have now taught them to accept money also.

#### ARRANGEMENT OF THEIR TOWNS, SUBTERRANEAN DWELLINGS

It is well known that the nations of Germany have not cities, and that they do not even tolerate closely contiguous dwellings. They live scattered and apart, just as a spring, a meadow, or a wood has attracted them. Their village they do not arrange in our fashion, with the buildings connected and joined together, but every person surrounds his dwelling with an open space, either as a precaution against the disasters of fire, or because they do not know how to build. No use is made by them of stone or tile; they employ timber for all purposes, rude masses without ornament or attractiveness. Some parts of their buildings they stain more carefully with a clay so clear and bright that it resembles painting, or a colored design. They are wont also to dig out subterranean caves, and pile on them great heaps of dung shelter from winter and as a receptacle for the year's produce, for by such places they mitigate the rigor of the cold. And should an enemy approach, he lays waste the open country, while what is hidden and buried is either not known to exist, or escapes him from the very fact that it has to be searched for.

#### DRESS

They all wrap themselves in a cloak which is fastened with a clasp, or, if this is not forthcoming, with a thorn, leaving the rest of their persons bare. They pass whole days on the hearth by the fire. The wealthiest are distinguished by a dress which is not flowing like that of the Sarmatae and Parthi, but is tight, and exhibits each limb. They also wear the skins of wild beasts; the tribes on the Rhine and Danube in a careless fashion, those of the interior with more elegance, as not obtaining other clothing by commerce. These select certain animals, the hides of which they strip off and vary them with the spotted skins of beasts, the produce of the outer ocean, and of seas unknown to us. The women have the same dress as the men except that they generally wrap themselves in linen garments, which they embroider with purple, and do not lengthen out the upper part of their clothing into sleeves. The upper and lower arm is thus bare, and the nearest part of the bosom is also exposed.

#### MARRIAGE LAWS

Their marriage code, however, is strict, and indeed no part of their manners is more praiseworthy. Almost alone among barbarians they are content with one wife, except a very few among them, and these not from sensuality, but because their noble birth procures for them many offers of alliance. The wife does not bring a dowry to the husband, but the husband to the wife. The parents and relatives are present, and pass judgment neither on the marriage-gifts, gifts not meant to suit a woman's taste, nor such as a bride would deck herself with, but oxen, a caparisoned steed, a shield, a lance, and a sword. With these presents the wife is espoused, and she herself in her turn brings her husband a gift of arms. This they count their strongest bond of union, these their sacred mysteries, these their gods of marriage. Lest the woman should think herself to stand apart from aspirations after noble deeds and from the perils of war, she is reminded by the ceremony

which inaugurates marriage that she is her husband's partner in toil and danger, destined to suffer and to dare with him alike both in war. The yoked oxen, the harnessed steed, the gift of arms proclaim this fact. She must live and die with the feeling that she is receiving what she must hand down to her children neither tarnished nor depreciated, what future daughters-in-law may receive, and may be so passed on to her grandchildren.

## THEIR CHILDREN, LAWS OF SUCCESSION

In every household the children, naked and filthy, grow up with those stout frames and limbs which we so much admire. Every mother suckles her own offspring and never entrusts it to servants and nurses. The master is not distinguished from the slave by being brought up with greater delicacy. Both live amid the same flocks and lie on the same ground till the freeborn are distinguished by age and recognized by merit. The young men marry late, and their vigor is thus unimpaired. Nor are the maidens hurried into marriage; the same age and a similar stature is required; well-matched and vigorous they wed, and the offspring reproduce the strength of the parents. Sister's sons are held in as much esteem by their uncles as by their fathers; indeed, some regard the relation as even more sacred and binding, and prefer it in receiving hostages, thinking thus to secure a stronger hold on the affections and a wider bond for the family. But every man's children are his heirs and successors, and there are no wills. Should there be no issue, the next in succession to the property are brothers and his uncles on either side. The more relatives he has the more numerous his connections, the more honored is his old age; nor are there any advantages in childlessness.

No nation indulges more profusely in entertainments and hospitality. To exclude any human being from their roof is thought impious; every German, according to his means, receives his guest with a well-furnished table.

## HABITS OF LIFE

On waking from sleep, which they generally prolong for a late hour of the day, they take a bath, most often of warm water, which suits a country where winter is the longest of the seasons. After their bath they take their meal, each having a separate seat and table of his own. Then they go armed to business, or no less often to their festal meetings. To pass an entire day and night in drinking disgraces no one. Their quarrels, as might be expected with intoxicated people, are seldom fought out with mere abuse, but commonly with wounds and bloodshed.

## FOOD

A liquor for drinking is made of barley or other grain, and fermented into a certain resemblance to wine. The dwellers on the river-bank also buy wine. Their food is of a simple kind, consisting of wild fruit, fresh game, and curdled milk. They satisfy their hunger without elaborate preparation and without delicacies. In quenching their thirst they are equally moderate. If you indulge their love of drinking by supplying them with as much as they desire, they will be overcome by their own vices as easily as by the arms of an enemy.

## SPORTS, PASSION FOR GAMBLING

One and the same kind of spectacle is always exhibited at every gathering. Naked youths who practice the sport bound in the dance amid swords and lances that threaten their lives. Experience gives them skill and skill again gives grace; profit or pay are out of the question; however reckless their pastime, its reward is the pleasure of the spectators. Strangely enough they make games of hazard a serious occupation even when sober, and so venturesome are they about gaining or losing, that, when every other resource has failed, on the last and final throw they stake the freedom of their own persons. The loser goes into voluntary slavery; though the younger and stronger, he suffers himself to be bound and sold. Such is their stubborn persistency in a bad practice; they themselves call it honor. Slaves of this kind the owners part with in the way of commerce, and also to relieve themselves from the scandal of such a victory.

## SLAVERY

The other slaves are not employed after our manner with distinct domestic duties assigned to them, but each one has the

management of a house and home of his own. The master requires from the slave a certain quantity of grain, of cattle, and of clothing, as he would from a tenant, and this is the limit of subjection. All other household functions are discharged by the wife and children. To strike a slave or to punish him with bonds or with hard labour is a rare occurrence. They often kill them, not in enforcing strict discipline, but on the impulse of passion, as they would an enemy, only it is done with impunity. The freedmen do not rank much above slaves, and are seldom of any weight in the family, never in the state with the exception of those tribes which are ruled by kings. There indeed they rise above the freeborn and the noble; elsewhere the inferiority of the freedman marks the freedom of the state.

## OCCUPATION OF LAND TILLAGE

Land proportioned to the number of inhabitants is occupied by the whole community in turn, and afterwards divided among them according to rank. A wide expanse of plains makes the partition easy. They till fresh fields every year, and they have still more land than enough; with the richness and extent of their soil, they do not laboriously exert themselves in planting orchards, enclosing meadows and watering gardens. Corn is the only produce required from the earth; hence even the year itself is not divided by them into as many seasons as with us. Winter, spring, and summer have both a meaning and a name; the name and blessings of autumn are alike unknown.

## FUNERAL RITES

In their funerals there is no pomp; they simply observe the custom of burning the bodies of illustrious men with certain kinds of wood. They do not heap garments or spices on the funeral pile. The arms of the dead man and in some cases his horse are consigned to the fire. A turf mound forms the tomb. Monuments with their lofty elaborate splendor they reject as oppressive to the dead. Tears and lamentations they soon dismiss; grief and sorrow but slowly. It is thought becoming for women to bewail, for men to remember, the dead.

### Questions for Analysis:

In what way is the lifestyle of German people most different from that of a civilized people? What does Tacitus admire about the German people and what things does he find exotic or inappropriate?

## 12. Perpetua: Christian Martyr (202 or 203 CE)

Because Christians refused to worship Roman gods or Roman emperors, they faced sporadic persecution from Roman emperors until 311 CE. This excerpt is from the prison diary of Perpetua, a famous Christian martyr who was put to death in 202 or 203 by the Roman governor of Carthage. This excerpt from her diary begins with her father trying to convince Perpetua, who was married and nursing a child, to renounce her Christian identity.

Translation by Herbert Musurillo and taken from *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, 1972.

...While we were still under arrest my father out of love for me was trying to persuade me and shake my resolution. 'Father,' said I, 'do you see this vase here, for example, or waterpot or whatever?'

'Yes, I do', said he.

And I told him: 'Could it be called by any other name than what it is?'

And he said: 'No.'

'Well, so too I cannot be called anything other than what I am, a Christian.'

At this my father was so angered by the word 'Christian' that he moved towards me as though he would pluck my eyes out. But he left it at that and departed, vanquished along with his diabolical arguments.

For a few days afterwards I gave thanks to the Lord that I was separated from my father, and I was comforted by his absence. During these few days I was baptized, and I was inspired by the Spirit not to ask for any other favour after the water but simply the perseverance of the flesh. A few days later we were lodged in the prison; and I was terrified, as I had

never before been in such a dark hole. What a difficult time it was! With the crowd the heat was stifling; then there was the extortion of the soldiers; and to crown all, I was tortured with worry for my baby there.

Then Tertius and Pomponius, those blessed deacons who tried to take care of us, bribed the soldiers to allow us to go to a better part of the prison to refresh ourselves for a few hours. Everyone then left that dungeon and shifted for himself. I nursed my baby, who was faint from hunger. In my anxiety I spoke to my mother about the child, I tried to comfort my brother, and I gave the child in their charge. I was in pain because I saw them suffering out of pity for me. These were the trials I had to endure for many days. Then I got permission for my baby to stay with me in prison. At once I recovered my health, relieved as I was of my worry and anxiety over the child. My prison had suddenly become a palace, so that I wanted to be there rather than anywhere else.

Then my brother said to me: 'Dear sister, you are greatly privileged; surely you might ask for a vision to discover whether you are to be condemned or freed.'

Faithfully I promised that I would, for I knew that I could speak with the Lord, whose great blessings I had come to experience. And so I said: 'I shall tell you tomorrow.' Then I made my request and this was the vision I had. I saw a ladder of tremendous height made of bronze, reaching all the way to the heavens, but it was so narrow that only one person could climb up at a time. To the sides of the ladder were attached all sorts of metal weapons: there were swords, spears, hooks, daggers, and spikes; so that if anyone tried to climb up carelessly or without paying attention, he would be mangled and his flesh would adhere to the weapons.

At the foot of the ladder lay a dragon of enormous size, and it would attack those who tried to climb up and try to terrify them from doing so. And Saturus was the first to go up, he who was later to give himself up of his own accord. He had been the builder of our strength, although he was not present when we were arrested. And he arrived at the top of the staircase and he looked back and said to me: 'Perpetua, I am waiting for you. But take care; do not let the dragon bite you.'

'He will not harm me,' I said, 'in the name of Christ Jesus.'

Slowly, as though he were afraid of me, the dragon stuck his head out from underneath the ladder. Then, using it as my first step, I trod on his head and went up.

Then I saw an immense garden, and in it a gray-haired man sat in shepherd's garb; tall he was, and milking sheep. And standing around him were many thousands of people clad in white garments. He raised his head, looked at me, and said: 'I am glad you have come, my child.'

He called me over to him and gave me, as it were, a mouthful Of the milk he was drawing; and I took it into my cupped hands and consumed it. And all those who stood around said: 'Amen!' At the sound of this word I came to, with the taste of something sweet still in my mouth. I at once told this to my brother, and we realized that we would have to suffer, and that from now on we would no longer have any hope in this life.

A few days later there was a rumour that we were going to be given a hearing. My father also arrived from the city, worn with worry, and he came to see me with the idea of persuading me.

'Daughter,' he said, 'have pity on my grey head--have pity on me your father, if I deserve to be called your father, if I have favoured you above all your brothers, if I have raised you to reach this prime of your life. Do not abandon me to be the reproach of men. Think of your brothers, think of your mother and your aunt, think of your child, who will not be able to live once you are gone. Give up your pride! You will destroy all of us! None of us will ever be able to speak freely again if anything happens to you.'

This was the way my father spoke out of love for me, kissing my hands and throwing himself down before me. With tears in his eyes he no longer addressed me as his daughter but as a woman. I was sorry for my father's sake, because he alone of all my kin would be unhappy to see me suffer.

I tried to comfort him saying: 'It will all happen in the prisoner's dock as God wills; for you may be sure that we are not left to ourselves but are all in his power.'

And he left me in great sorrow.

One day while we were eating breakfast we were suddenly hurried off for a hearing. We arrived at the forum, and straight away the story went about the neighbourhood near the forum and a huge crowd gathered. We walked up to the prisoner's dock. All the others when questioned admitted their guilt. Then, when it came my turn, my father appeared with my son, dragged me from the step, and said: 'Perform the sacrifice--have pity on your baby!'

Hilarius the governor, who had received his judicial powers as the successor of the late proconsul Minucius Timinianus, said to me: 'Have pity on your father's grey head; have pity on your infant son. Offer the sacrifice for the welfare of the emperors.'

'I will not', I retorted.

'Are you a Christian?' said Hilarius.

And I said: 'Yes, I am.'

When my father persisted in trying to dissuade me, Hilarius ordered him to be thrown to the ground and beaten with a rod. I felt sorry for father, just as if I myself had been beaten. I felt sorry for his pathetic old age.

Then Hilarius passed sentence on all of us: we were condemned to the beasts, and we returned to prison in high spirits. But my baby had got used to being nursed at the breast and to staying with me in prison. So I sent the deacon Pomponius straight away to my father to ask for the baby. But father refused to give him over. But as God willed, the baby had no further desire for the breast, nor did I suffer any inflammation; and so I was relieved of any anxiety for my child and of any discomfort in my breasts....

Questions for Analysis:

Some early Christians renounced their faith after Roman authorities threatened them. Perpetua did not. What does her diary reveal about the history of Christianity in the third century?

### **13. The Theodosian Code (Roman Empire, 438 Century C.E.)**

In the centuries after Jesus of Nazareth's death, his followers did not agree among themselves about important points of theology such as how to understand the nature of Christ's divinity and humanity. Over time, what became orthodox Christianity developed as a result of Church Councils convoked to settle theological debates. Until 311 CE, Christians faced sporadic persecution by Roman emperors, many who considered the new faith dangerous. Yet, shortly after Constantine I, Emperor Theodosius (379-395), declared Christianity the empire's official religion. In other words, Christianity went from being persecuted and illegal to the Roman Empire's exclusive faith in less than one hundred years. The second document is a group of selections from the *Codex Theodosianus*, completed in 438. It officially banned all other religions in the Roman Empire except Christianity.

Oliver J. Thatcher, ed., *The Library of Original Sources*, Milwaukee, 1907.

C. Th. XV.xii.1: Bloody spectacles are not suitable for civil ease and domestic quiet. Wherefore since we have proscribed gladiators, those who have been accustomed to be sentenced to such work as punishment for their crimes, you should cause to serve in the mines, so that they may be punished without shedding their blood. Constantine Augustus.

C. Th. XVI.v.1: It is necessary that the privileges which are bestowed for the cultivation of religion should be given only to followers of the Catholic faith. We desire that heretics and schismatics be not only kept from these privileges, but be subjected to various fines. Constantine Augustus.

C. Th. XVI.x.4: It is decreed that in all places and all cities the temples should be closed at once, and after a general warning, the opportunity of sinning be taken from the wicked. We decree also that we shall cease from making sacrifices. And if anyone has committed such a crime, let him be stricken with the avenging sword. And we decree that the property

of the one executed shall be claimed by the city, and that rulers of the provinces be punished in the same way, if they neglect to punish such crimes. Constantine and Constans Augusti.

C. Th. XVI.vii.1: The ability and right of making wills shall be taken from those who turn from Christians to pagans, and the testament of such are one, if he made any, shall be abrogated after his death. Gratian, Valentinian, and Valens Augusti.

C.Th. XI.vii.13: Let the course of all law suits and all business cease on Sunday, which our fathers have rightly called the Lord's day, and let no one try to collect either a public or a private debt; and let there be no hearing of disputes by any judges either those required to serve by law or those voluntarily chosen by disputants. And he is to be held not only infamous but sacrilegious who has turned away from the service and observance of holy religion on that day. Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius Augusti.

C.Th. XV.v.1: On the Lord's day, which is the first day of the week, on Christmas, and on the days of Epiphany, Easter, and Pentecost, inasmuch as then the [white] garments [of Christians] symbolizing the light of heavenly cleansing bear witness to the new light of holy baptism, at the time also of the suffering of the apostles, the example for all Christians, the pleasures of the theaters and games are to be kept from the people in all cities, and all the thoughts of Christians and believers are to be occupied with the worship of God. And if any are kept from that worship through the madness of Jewish impiety or the error and insanity of foolish paganism, let them know that there is one time for prayer and another for pleasure. And lest anyone should think he is compelled by the honor due to our person, as if by the greater necessity of his imperial office, or that unless he attempted to hold the games in contempt of the religious prohibition, he might offend our serenity in showing less than the usual devotion toward us; let no one doubt that our clemency is revered in the highest degree by humankind when the worship of the whole world is paid to the might and goodness of God. Theodosius Augustus and Caesar Valentinian.

C. Th.XVI.i.2: We desire that all the people under the rule of our clemency should live by that religion which divine Peter the apostle is said to have given to the Romans, and which it is evident that Pope Damasus and Peter, bishop of Alexandria, a man of apostolic sanctity, followed; that is that we should believe in the one deity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with equal majesty and in the Holy Trinity according to the apostolic teaching and the authority of the gospel. Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius Augusti.

C. Th. XVI.v.iii: Whenever there is found a meeting of a mob of Manichaeans, let the leaders be punished with a heavy fine and let those who attended be known as infamous and dishonored, and be shut out from association with men, and let the house and the dwellings where the profane doctrine was taught be seized by the officers of the city. Valentinian and Valens Augusti.

Questions for Analysis:

The Theodosian Code banned all other religions in the Roman Empire. What provisions of the Code ensure compliance with the decree that Christianity is the Empire's only religion?

#### **14. Muhammad: Selections from the Quran (Arabian Peninsula, 7<sup>th</sup> Century C.E.)**

Muslims believe that God – Allah – revealed himself to the Prophet Muhammad between 610 and 632 CE. Eventually scribes recorded Muhammad's words and compiled them into a book with 114 chapters known as the Koran or Qur'an, which literally means 'the recitation'. Because it was expressed in poetic prose, the book loses the beauty of its oral expression when translated into English. Nonetheless, the following selections take up a number of Islamic teachings including a singular conception of God, the importance of charity and fasting, and the relationship between Muslims and Christians.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Qur'an: a Guide and Mercy*

## ALLAH IS THE GOD OF ADAM AND MOSES

Chapter 2, verse 35 We said: “O Adam! You and your wife dwell in the Garden; and eat of the bountiful things therein as (where and when) you will, but do not approach this tree, or you run into harm and transgression.” 36. Then did Satan make them slip from the (Garden), and get them out of the state (of felicity) in which they had been...

40 O Children of Israel! Call to mind the (special) favor which I bestowed upon you, and fulfilled your Covenant with Me as I fulfill My Covenant with you, and fear none but Me...

49 And remember, We delivered you from the people of Pharaoh: they set you hard tasks and punishments, slaughtered your sons and let your women-folk live; therein was a tremendous trial from the Lord...

53 And remember We gave Moses the Scripture and the Criterion (between right and wrong): there was a chance for you to be guided aright. 54 And remember Moses said to his people: “O my people! You have indeed wronged yourselves by your worship of the calf.

## FASTING AND RAMADAN

183 O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, even as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may ward off (evil); 184 (Fast) a certain number of days; and (for) him who is sick among you, or on a journey, (the same) number of other days; and for those who can afford it there is a ransom: the feeding of a man in need – but whoso does good of his own accord, it is better for him: and that you fast is better for you if you did but know.

## WARFARE

190 Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loves not aggressors. 191 And slay them wherever you find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you (there), then slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers.

192 But if they desist, then lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. 193 And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is for Allah. But if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against wrong-doers. 194 The forbidden month for the forbidden month, and [all] forbidden things . . . [are under the law of] retaliation. And one who attacks you, attack him in like manner as he attacked you. Observe your duty to Allah, and know that Allah is with those who ward off (evil).

## PRAISE TO ALLAH

255 Allah! There is no God save Him, the Alive, the Eternal. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. Unto Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Who is he that intercedes with Him save by His leave? He knows that which is in front of them and that which is behind them, while they encompass nothing of His knowledge save what He wills. His throne includes the heavens and the earth, and He is never weary of preserving them. He is the Sublime, the Tremendous.

## NO COMPULSION IN RELIGION

256 There is no compulsion in religion. The right direction is henceforth distinct from error. And he who rejects false deities and believes in Allah has grasped a firm handhold which will never break. Allah is Hearer, Knower. 257 Allah is the Protecting Guardian of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into light. As for those who disbelieve, their patrons are false deities. They bring them out of light into darkness. Such are rightful owners of the Fire. They will abide therein.

258 Bethink you of him who had an argument with Abraham about his Lord because Allah had given him the kingdom; how, when Abraham said: My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death, he answered: I give life and cause death. Abraham said: Lo! Allah causes the sun to rise in the East, so do you cause it to come up from the West. Thus was the disbeliever abashed. And Allah guides not wrongdoing folk.

## ALMS TO THE POOR

263 A kind word with forgiveness is better than almsgiving followed by injury. Allah is Absolute, but [Mild]. 264 O you who believe! Render not vain your almsgiving by reproach and injury, like him who spends his wealth only to be seen of men and believes not in Allah and the Last Day...

271 If you publish your almsgiving, it is well; but if you hide it and give it to the poor, it will be better for you, and will atone for some of your ill deeds. Allah is Informed of what you do. 272 The guiding of them is not your duty (O Muhammad), but Allah guides whom He will. And whatsoever good thing you spend, it is for yourselves, when you spend not save in search of Allah's Countenance; and whatsoever good thing you spend, it will be repaid to you in full, and you will not be wronged.

## DIETY REGULATIONS

Chapter 6, verse 145 Say "I do not find in the Message received by me by inspiration any (meat) forbidden to be eaten by one who wishes to eat it, unless it be dead meat, or blood poured forth, or the flesh of swine – for it is an abomination – or, what is imous, (meat) on which a name has been invoked, other than God's." But (even so), if a person is forced by necessity, without willful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits – your Lord s Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

146 For those who followed the Jewish Law, We forbade every (animals with undivided hoof, and We forbade them the fat of the ox and the sheep, except what adheres to their backs or their entrails, or is mixed up with a bone: this in recompense for their willful disobedience: for We are true (in Our ordinances).

## CONVERTING ARAB TRIBES

Chapter 9, verse 101 Certain of the desert Arabs round about you are Hypocrites, as well as (desert Arabs) among the Medina folk: they are obstinate in hypocrisy: you do not know them: We know them: twice shall We punish them: and in addition they shall be sent to a grievous penalty. 102 Others have acknowledged their wrong-doings: they have mixed an act that was good with another that was evil. Perhaps God will turn to them (in mercy): for God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

## THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Chapter 19, verse 16 And make mention of Mary in the Scripture, when she had withdrawn from her people to a chamber looking East, 17 And had chosen seclusion from them. Then We sent unto her Our Spirit, and it assumed for her the likeness of a perfect man. 18 She said: Lo! I seek refuge in the Beneficent One from you, if you art God-fearing. 19 He said: I am only a messenger of your Lord, that I may bestow on you a faultless son. 20 She said: How can I have a son when no mortal has touched me, neither have I been unchaste?

21 He said: So (it will be). Your Lord says: It is easy for Me. And (it will be) that We may make of him a revelation for mankind and a mercy from Us, and it is a thing ordained. 22 And she conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a far place. 23 And the pangs of childbirth drove her unto the trunk of the palm tree. She said: O, would that I had died [before] this and had become a thing [unnoticed], forgotten! 24 Then (one) cried unto her from below her, saying: Grieve not! Your Lord has placed a rivulet beneath you, 25 And [if you] shake the trunk of the palm tree toward you, you will cause ripe dates to fall upon you.

35 It befits not (the Majesty of) Allah that He should take unto Himself a son. Glory be to Him! When He decrees a thing, He says unto it only: Be! and it is. 36 And lo! Allah is my Lord and your Lord. So serve Him. That is the right path. 37 The sects among them [the Christians] differ: But woe unto the disbelievers . . . [on that] awful Day [of Judgment]. 38 See and hear them on the Day they come unto Us! Yet the evil-doers are today in error manifest. 39 And warn them of the Day of anguish when the case has been decided. Now they are in a state of carelessness, and they believe not. 40 Lo! We, only We, inherit the earth and all who are thereon, and unto Us they are returned.

## AGAIN, ALLAH HAS NO SON

88 And they [the Christians] say: The Beneficent has taken unto Himself a son. 89 Assuredly you utter a disastrous thing [and abominable assertion] 90 Whereby almost the heavens are torn, and the earth is split asunder, and the mountains fall in ruins, 91 That you ascribe unto the Beneficent a son, 92 When it is not meet for (the Majesty of) the Beneficent that He should choose a son.

Questions for Analysis:

What are the similarities and differences between Islam and Christianity? For instance, how does the Muslim view of Jesus agree with the Christian view, what are the differences? The Quran explicitly commands Muslims to fast and give alms to the poor. How does this compare to the Christian tradition?

### 15. Pope Urban's Speech at the Council of Clermont (1095 CE)

In 1094 or 1095, Alexios I Komnenos, the Byzantine emperor asked Pope Urban II for help fighting the Muslim Seljuq Turks, who had taken nearly all of Asia Minor from him. At the council of Clermont Urban addressed a great crowd and urged all to go to the aid of the Greeks and to recover Palestine from the rule of the Muslims. This is one account of Pope Urban's speech by a man named Fulcher of Chartres who heard Pope Urban speak.

Source: *A Source Book for Medieval History*, (New York: Scribners, 1905), 513-17

O sons of God, you have promised more firmly than ever to keep the peace among yourselves and to preserve the rights of the church, there remains still an important work for you to do. Freshly quickened by the divine correction, you must apply the strength of your righteousness to another matter which concerns you as well as God. For your brethren who live in the east are in urgent need of your help, and you must hasten to give them the aid which has often been promised them. For, as the most of you have heard, the Turks and Arabs have attacked them and have conquered the territory of Romania [the Greek empire] as far west as the shore of the Mediterranean and the Hellespont, which is called the Arm of St. George. They have occupied more and more of the lands of those Christians, and have overcome them in seven battles. They have killed and captured many, and have destroyed the churches and devastated the empire. If you permit them to continue thus for awhile with impurity, the faithful of God will be much more widely attacked by them. On this account I, or rather the Lord, beseech you as Christ's heralds to publish this everywhere and to persuade all people of whatever rank, foot-soldiers and knights, poor and rich, to carry aid promptly to those Christians and to destroy that vile race from the lands of our friends. I say this to those who are present, it meant also for those who are absent. Moreover, Christ commands it.

All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins. This I grant them through the power of God with which I am invested. O what a disgrace if such a despised and base race, which worships demons, should conquer a people which has the faith of omnipotent God and is made glorious with the name of Christ! With what reproaches will the Lord overwhelm us if you do not aid those who, with us, profess the Christian religion! Let those who have been accustomed unjustly to wage private warfare against the faithful now go against the infidels and end with victory this war which should have been begun long ago. Let those who for a long time, have been robbers, now become knights. Let those who have been fighting against their brothers and relatives now fight in a proper way against the barbarians. Let those who have been serving as mercenaries for small pay now obtain the eternal reward. Let those who have been wearing themselves out in both body and soul now work for a double honor. Behold! on this side will be the sorrowful and poor, on that, the rich; on this side, the enemies of the Lord, on that, his friends. Let those who go not put off the journey, but rent their lands and collect money for their expenses; and as soon as winter is over and spring comes, let hem eagerly set out on the way with God as their guide.

Questions for Analysis:

How does Pope Urban try to recruit people for a Christian Crusade to reclaim Palestine? What does he promise crusaders?

## 16. The Magna Carta (1215 CE)

The idea of a constitution, a written document that outlines the rights of people in a political community, is quite old. In 1215, the most powerful people in England (barons, bishops, and merchants) forced King John to sign a document, the Magna Carta (Great Charter) acknowledging their rights to secure property and fair trial. In other words, the king could not deprive these people of their possessions or put them in jail without due process of law. The Magna Carta limited the power of the English monarchy by clearly separating the functions of government, which was a strategy to limit the authoritarian and arbitrary actions by King John. Very few people enjoyed the rights of freemen in 1215, but the charter is exceptionally significant as a first attempt to limit the powers of the monarchy and separate them from the power of the legislature where laws are made and the judiciary where laws are reviewed. With respect to religious matters, the Magna Carta wanted to prevent the king from pressuring the English Church to appoint certain clergy. Today, a written constitution laying out the functions of government and rules of the system, is found everywhere in the world.

Translation from the Latin of the Magna Carta of England, 1215, prepared by Xavier Hildegarde, November 2001.

1. In the first place we have conceded to God, and by this our present charter confirmed for us and our heirs for ever that the English church shall be free, and shall have her rights entire, and her liberties inviolate; and we wish that it be thus observed. This is apparent from the fact that we, of our pure and unconstrained will, did grant the freedom of elections, which is reckoned most important and very essential to the English church, and did by our charter confirm and did obtain the ratification of the same from our lord, Pope Innocent III., before the quarrel arose between us and our barons. This freedom we will observe, and our will is that it be observed in good faith by our heirs forever.

We have also granted to all freemen of our kingdom, for us and our heirs forever, all the underwritten liberties, to be had and held by them and their heirs, of us and our heirs forever.

2. If any of our earls or barons, or others holding of us in chief by military service shall have died, and at the time of his death his heir shall be of full age and owe relief he shall have his inheritance on payment of the ancient relief, namely the heir or heirs of an earl, 100 pounds for a whole earl's barony; the heir or heirs of a baron, 100 pounds for a whole barony; the heir or heirs of a knight, 100 shillings at most for a whole knight's fee; and whoever owes less let him give less, according to the ancient custom of fiefs.

3. If, however, the heir of any of the aforesaid has been under age and in wardship, let him have his inheritance without relief and without fine when he comes of age.

28. No constable or other royal bailiff shall take corn or other provisions from any man without an immediate cash payment, unless the seller permits postponement of this.

38. In future, no bailiff shall place a man on trial upon his own unsupported words, without credible witnesses being produced to support his word.

39. No freeman shall be arrested or imprisoned or disseised (put in possession of) or outlawed or exiled or in any other way harmed. Nor will we [the king] proceed against him, or send others to do so, except according to the lawful sentence of his peers and according to the Common Law.

40. To no one will we sell, to no one will we refuse or delay, right or justice.

All merchants may leave or enter England in safety and security. They may stay and travel throughout England by road or by water, free from all illegal tolls, in order to buy and sell according to the ancient and rightful customs. This is except, in time of war, those merchants who are from the land at war with us. And if such merchants are found in our land at the beginning of the war, they shall be detained, without injury to their bodies or goods, until information is received by us (or by our chief justiciar) about in what way are treated our merchants, thence found in the land at war with us. If our men are safe there, the others shall be safe in our land.

It shall be lawful in future for any one, keeping loyalty to the Crown, to leave our kingdom and to return safely and securely, by land and by water. This is except in time of war, when men may go, only in the public interest, for some short

period. (This excludes, always, those imprisoned or outlawed in accordance with the law of the realm, natives of any country at war with us, and merchants, who shall be treated as previously stated).

52. If, without the lawful judgement of his peers, a man has been dispossessed of his lands, castles, franchises or his rights, or had them removed by us, we will at once restore these to him. If a dispute arises over this, the dispute shall be decided by the judgement of the twenty-five barons referred to below in the clause for securing the peace. Moreover, in all cases where possessions have been disseised or removed from anyone without the lawful judgement of his peers, by our father King Henry or our brother King Richard, and which are retained by us (or which are held by others under our warranty), we will have the usual respite period allowed to crusaders, unless a lawsuit has been started or we had ordered an enquiry before we took the cross [as a Crusader]. However, as soon as we return from our expedition, or if by chance we abandon it, we shall immediately grant full justice.

63. Thus, we wish and we firmly ordain that the English church shall be free, and that men in our kingdom shall have and keep all these previously determined liberties, rights, and concessions, well and in peace, freely and quietly, in their fullness and integrity, for themselves and their heirs, from us and our heirs, in all things and all places for ever, as is previously described here.

An oath has been sworn, on the one hand by us and on the other by the barons, that all the aforesaid provisions shall be observed in good faith and without evil intent.

Given under our hand—the above-named and many others being witnesses—in the meadow which is called Runnymede, between Windsor and Staines, on the fifteenth day of June, in the seventeenth year of our reign.

[That is 1215—the new regnal year began on 28 May.]

Question for Discussion:

How is the Magna Carta similar to and different from the United States Constitution? Which provisions guarantee rights to liberty and property?

## **17. Friar Giovanni DiPlano Carpini: The Mongols Whom We Call the Tartars (1252)**

In 1245 Mongol armies appeared poised to conquer all of Europe having already conquered Russia and killed some 100,000 knights and soldiers in Poland and Hungary. Put simply, European armies could not defeat the Mongols. In the face of this threat, Pope Innocent IV sent Friar Giovanni DiPlano del Carpini to collect information about their customs, intentions, and tactics. This excerpt is from the chapter in Carpini's book, *Ystoria Mongolarum*, titled 'How to Fight the Tartars and what to Expect'. It offers a major insight into how the Mongols waged war so effectively.

(Translation by Erik Hildinger)

### **CHAPTER EIGHT**

Now that we have described the lands which obey the Tartars, we must set out how to wage war against them, which, it would seem, is best described in this way: first we shall tell what the Tartars intend, second the arms and organization of forces, third, how to respond to their cunning in battle, fourth, the fortification of their camps and cities, and fifth, what should be done with captives.

The Tartars mean to conquer the entire world if they can, as we have already said. This is why their emperor heads his letters thus: "The Power of God, the Emperor of all Men". And so, as it is said, they do not make peace with anyone unless they submit. Therefore, because except for Christendom, there is no land in the world which they not taken, they are preparing to fight us. Everyone should know that we lived at the Tartar court where there had been convened a solemn counsel at which it has been decided for many years (we were there when they elected Cuyuc emperor in our presence, who is called Khan in their language) which aforesaid Cuyuc Khan raised his standard, along with those of all his princes, against the Church of God and the Roman Empire, and against all the states of Christendom and the people of the west,

unless they do what he has ordered of the Lord Pope and the great men and the whole population of the western Christians.

But we should not do this, it seems to us, because of the great and intolerable servitude (such as has not until now been heard of until now) that we saw with our own eyes, to which the Tartars reduce all of their subject peoples, and because the Tartars are a faithless and people cannot trust in their words at all, because whatever they promise they do not observe, when they see chance favor them. The Tartars are dishonest in all their acts and promises; they intend to supplant all the princes, nobles, soldiers and honest men in the world as said above), and they do this by trick and artifice against their subjects, then also because it is not fitting that Christians should submit to the Tartars because of their abominations, and because the worship of God will be reduced to nothing and their souls perish and their bodies be afflicted in an unbelievable number of ways. At first the Tartars are mild but later they sting and injure like scorpions; and also because they are few in number and weaker in body than the Christian people.

The soldiers and commanders of the army were assigned in this council. Of every ten men they sent along three with his slaves from every land within their power. We were told that one army is to enter through Hungary, and the second through Poland. What is more, they come to fight constantly for eighteen years. That is the time allotted to the campaign. Last March when we passed through Russia we found the army summoned from all the Tartars. Furthermore they will advance in three or four years as far as Comania. From Comania they will attack the lands listed above: we do not know yet whether they will come roughly after the third winter, whether to expect them at that time, or if they will more likely come suddenly.

This is all certain and true unless God, by his grace, puts an obstacle in their path, as he did when they came into Hungary and Poland. They had meant to fight thirty years, but their emperor was poisoned and so they suspended the war until now. Now, however, because a new emperor has been installed, the Tartars have begun to prepare for war. You should know that the emperor said with his own mouth that he wished to send an army into Livonia and Prussia. And because he intends to overthrow the whole world or reduce it to servitude, and because slavery is intolerable to our people, as we said above, we must fight them.

If one province does not wish to cooperate with another, the Tartars will choose to attack that land, and they will use the men whom they capture to fight against another country, and those men will be in the forefront. If they fight badly they will be killed by the Tartars, while if they fight well the Tartars will hold them with promises and praise and indeed, if they do not flee from them, the Tartars will promise to make them great lords. Afterwards, though, when the Tartars are certain that they will not run away, they will make unhappy slaves of them; and as for the women, to those whom they wish to keep as servants and concubines they will do the same thing. Thus with the men of defeated provinces they will destroy the next country, nor will another province be able to resist them by itself, just as we have seen, unless God wishes to defend them, because, as said above, men are gathered for war from their entire empire. Therefore if the Christians wish to save themselves, their country, and Christianity, they must gather in one body the kings, princes, barons and rectors of the lands and send men to fight the Tartars under a single plan, and before this they should begin to strip the land because after the Tartars are seen in the countryside no one will be able to help to another, because these men will, in companies, seek out and kill men everywhere. And if they close themselves in fortresses, the Tartars place three or four thousand men or more around the fortress or city who besiege it. And they nonetheless will spread through the land killing men....

They [Christian armies] should organize their battle groups as the Tartars do, by commanders of thousands, and hundreds, by captains of ten and generals of the army. These generals should not enter the battle, just as Tartar generals do not, but should watch and command the army. They should establish the rule that the men advance to battle at the same time or otherwise, as they are positioned. And whoever abandons his fellow to advance to the battle or to the fighting, or whoever flees unless all retire, should be severely punished; because then part of the Tartar soldiers follow the fugitives and kill them with arrows and part of the Tartars remain with those who fight, and so confuse and kill those staying and fleeing. And likewise whoever loots before the enemy army is beaten should be punished the most, for among the Tartars these men are killed without mercy. The battleground should be chosen, if possible, where there is a flat field, so they may see in all directions. And they should have, if possible, a great wood at the back or on the side, because then the Tartars cannot enter between themselves and the wood. Nor should they advance in a single body, but instead they should make up many battle groups divided from each other, but not too far apart. And they should set up a battle line against those who attack first which charges them; and if the Tartars feign flight they must not chase them very far unless they can see

well enough lest the Tartars draw them into ambushes as they are accustomed to do. And the other battle groups must be prepared to help that group if there is a chance.

Above all, they must have scouts everywhere who see when other Tartar squadrons come back from the right and left; and they must always send a squadron against the squadron that attacks them. The Tartars always try to surround their enemies, so they must be very careful lest this happen to them because an army is easily defeated this way. The squadrons, however, must be careful of this: not to chase a long way after them because of the traps the Tartars commonly prepare; indeed the Tartars fight more by trickery than strength. The leaders of the army must always be prepared to send help, if necessary, to those in the battle, and therefore they should stay a short distance behind them so their horses do not become tired because we do not have a great number of them. But the Tartar does not mount for three or four days afterwards the horse he has ridden for one day; so they do not ride tired horses because of the great number they have. And if the Tartars retreat, our men should still not pursue and in turn become separated, because the Tartars only pretend to do this so the army will be divided and afterwards they freely attack and destroy the whole country. They must beware and not squander their supplies and so be known to be reduced to poverty and give the Tartars a means to kill them and others and destroy the whole country and because of their squandering allow the name of God to be blasphemed. They must act diligently so that if it happens that some soldiers leave, others take their place.

Our leaders should also mind the army day and night lest the Tartars overcome them quickly and suddenly, because the Tartars, like devils, study many methods of attack. Therefore they must be prepared both night and day nor should they give in to pillage, or sit too long at table and be discovered unprepared, because the Tartars always watch to find a way to attack. Indeed, the men of a country that expects the Tartars or fears that they will come upon them should have secret caches in which to put grain and other things for two reasons: naturally so the Tartars cannot get it and so, God willing, they can find it later. People fleeing the countryside should burn fodder and straw or hide it well, so that the Tartars' horses find less to eat....

Fortresses and cities [without excellent geographic positions] should be carefully surrounded with deep walled fosses and well built walls, and they should have enough arrows and stones and slingshot. They should be most careful not to allow the Tartars to bring up their catapults, but should drive them away with their own machines. And if it happens through some trick or scheme the Tartars do set up their catapults they should destroy them with their own if they can. They should fight back with crossbows and slings and catapults so the Tartars do not approach the city. They should prepare for other things as stated above. As for fortresses and cities which are situated by rivers, they must carefully see to it that they are not submerged. But it must be known that the Tartars prize it when men lock themselves in towns and fortresses rather than fight in the field. Indeed they say that these men are little pigs closed in a pen around whom they place guards, as stated above.

If Tartars are thrown from their horses in battle they must be captured at once because when they are on the ground they shoot well and injure and kill horses and men. And if they are caught they should be kept in order to have through them something like a perpetual peace, or else great sums shall be given for them because they value each other so. Therefore when they are captured, if they are taken alive, a strict guard must be kept lest they escape...

Question for Analysis:

List some of the things Friar Carpini says Christian armies must do to avoid Mongol conquest? What does the reading reveal about European society during the 13<sup>th</sup> century?

## **18. Popol Vuh, Mesoamerican Creation Epic (Central America, no date)**

*The Popol Vuh* records the history and mythology of the Quiché Indians who inhabit modern day Guatemala. Around 1550, it was written down using the Roman alphabet. This excerpt of the *Popol Vuh* recounts the Quiché creation story and reveals beliefs in Mesoamerica before the sixteenth century Spanish Conquest.

Translation by Delia Goetz and Sylvanus G. Morley

## CHAPTER I

This is the account of how all was in suspense, all calm, in silence; all motionless, still, and the expanse of the sky was empty.

This is the first account, the first narrative. There was neither man, nor animal, birds, fishes, crabs, trees, stones, caves, ravines, grasses, nor forests; there was only the sky.

The surface of the earth had not appeared. There was only the calm sea and the great expanse of the sky.

There was nothing brought together, nothing which could make a noise, nor anything which might move, or tremble, or could make noise in the sky.

There was nothing standing; only the calm water, the placid sea, alone and tranquil. Nothing existed.

There was only immobility and silence in the darkness, in the night. Only the Creator, the Maker, Tepeu, Gucumatz, the Forefathers, were in the water surrounded with light. They were hidden under green and blue feathers, and were therefore called Gucumatz. By nature they were great sages and great thinkers. In this manner the sky existed and also the heart Heaven, which is the name of God and thus He is called.

Then came the word. Tepeu and Gucumatz came together in the darkness, in the night, and Tepeu and Gucumatz talked together. They talked then, discussing and deliberating; they agreed, they united their words and their thoughts.

Then while they meditated, it became clear to them that when dawn would break, man must appear. Then they planned the creation, and the growth of the trees and the thickets and the birth of life and the creation of man. Thus it was arranged in the darkness and in the night by the Heart of Heaven who is called Huracán.

Then Tepeu and Gucumatz came together; then they conferred about life and light, what they would do so that there would be light and dawn, who it would be who would provide food and sustenance.

Thus let it be done! Let the emptiness be filled! Let the water recede and make a void, let the earth appear and become solid; let it be done. Thus they spoke. Let there be light, let there be dawn in the sky and on the earth! There shall be neither glory nor grandeur in our creation and formation until the human being is made, man is formed. So they spoke.

Then the earth was created by them. So it was, in truth, that they created the earth. Earth! they said, and instantly it was made.

Like the mist, like a cloud, and like a cloud of dust was the creation, when the mountains appeared from the water; and instantly the mountains grew.

Only by a miracle, only by magic art were the mountains and valleys formed; and instantly the groves of cypresses and pines put forth shoots together on the surface of the earth.

And thus Gucumatz was filled with joy, and exclaimed: "Your coming has been fruitful, Heart of Heaven; and you, Huracán, and you, Chipi-Caculhá, Raxa-Caculhá!" "Our work, our creation shall be finished," they answered.

First the earth was formed, the mountains and the valleys; the currents of water were divided, the rivulets were running freely between the hills, and the water was separated when the high mountains appeared.

Thus was the earth created, when it was formed by the Heart of Heaven, the Heart of Earth, as they are called who first made it fruitful, when the sky was in suspense, and the earth was submerged in the water.

So it was that they made perfect the work, when they did it after thinking and meditating upon it.

## CHAPTER II

Then they made the small wild animals, the guardians of the woods, the spirits of the mountains, the deer, the birds, pumas, jaguars, serpents, snakes, vipers, guardians of the thickets.

And the Forefathers asked: "Shall there be only silence and calm under the trees, under the vines? It is well that hereafter there be someone to guard them."

So they said when they meditated and talked. Promptly the deer and the birds were created. Immediately they gave homes to the deer and the birds. "You, deer, shall sleep in the fields by the river bank and in the ravines. Here you shall be amongst the thicket, amongst the pasture; in the woods you shall multiply, you shall walk on four feet and they will support you. Thus be it done!" So it was they spoke.

Then they also assigned homes to the birds big and small. "You shall live in the trees and in the vines. There you shall make your nests; there you shall multiply; there you shall increase in the branches of the trees and in the vines." Thus the deer and the birds were told; they did their duty at once, and all sought their homes and their nests.

And the creation of all the four-footed animals and the birds being finished, they were told by the Creator and the Maker and the Forefathers: "Speak, cry, warble, call, speak each one according to your variety, each, according to your kind." So was it said to the deer, the birds, pumas, jaguars, and serpents.

"Speak, then, our names, praise us, your mother, your father. Invoke then, Huracán, Chipi-Caculhá, Raxa-Caculhá, the Heart of Heaven, the Heart of Earth, the Creator, the Maker, the Forefathers; speak, invoke us, adore us," they were told.

But they could not make them speak like men; they only hissed and screamed and cackled; they were unable to make words, and each screamed in a different way.

When the Creator and the Maker saw that it was impossible for them to talk to each other, they said: "It is impossible for them to say our names, the names of us, their Creators and Makers. This is not well," said the Forefathers to each other.

Then they said to them: "Because it has not been possible for you to talk, you shall be changed. We have changed our minds: Your food, your pasture, your homes, and your nests you shall have; they shall be the ravines and the woods, because it has not been possible for you to adore us or invoke us. There shall be those who adore us, we shall make other [beings] who shall be obedient. Accept your destiny: your flesh shall be torn to pieces. So shall it be. This shall be your lot." So they said, when they made known their will to the large and small animals which are on the face of the earth.

They wished to give them another trial; they wished to make another attempt; they wished to make [all living things] adore them.

But they could not understand each other's speech; they could succeed in nothing, and could do nothing. For this reason they were sacrificed, and the animals which were on earth were condemned to be killed and eaten.

For this reason another attempt had to be made to create and make men by the Creator, the Maker, and the Forefathers.

"Let us try again! Already dawn draws near: Let us make him who shall nourish and sustain us! What shall we do to be invoked, in order to be remembered on earth? We have already tried with our first creations, our first creatures; but we could not make them praise and venerate us. So, then, let us try to make obedient, respectful beings who will nourish and sustain us." Thus they spoke.

Then was the creation and the formation. Of earth, of mud, they made [man's] flesh. But they saw that it was not good. It melted away, it was soft, did not move, had no strength, it fell down, it was limp, it could not move its head, its face fell to

one side, its sight was blurred, it could not look behind. At first it spoke, but had no mind. Quickly it soaked in the water and could not stand.

And the Creator and the Maker said: "Let us try again because our creatures will not be able to walk nor multiply. Let us consider this," they said.

Then they broke up and destroyed their work and their creation. And they said: "What shall we do to perfect it, in order that our worshipers, our invokers, will be successful?"

Thus they spoke when they conferred again: "Let us say again to Xpiyacoc, Xmucané, Hunahpú-Vuch, Hunahpú-Utiú: 'Cast your lot again. Try to create again.'" In this manner the Creator and the Maker spoke to Xpiyacoc and Xmucané.

Then they spoke to those soothsayers, the Grandmother of the day, the Grandmother of the Dawn, as they were called by the Creator and the Maker, and whose names were Xpiyacoc and Xmucané.

And said Huracán, Tepeu, and Gucumatz when they spoke to the soothsayer, to the Maker, who are the diviners: "You must work together and find the means so that man, whom we shall make, man, whom we are going to make, will nourish and sustain us, invoke and remember us."

"Enter, then, into council, grandmother, grandfather, our grandmother, our grandfather, Xpiyacoc, Xmucané, make light, make dawn, have us invoked, have us adored, have us remembered by created man, by made man, by mortal man. Thus be it done.

"Let your nature be known, Hunahpú-Vuch, Hunahpú-Utiú, twice mother, twice father, Nim-Ac, Nima-Tziís, the master of emeralds, the worker in jewels, the sculptor, the carver, the maker of beautiful plates, the maker of green gourds, the master of resin, the master Toltecat,\* grandmother of the sun, grandmother of dawn, as you will be called by our works and our creatures.

"Cast the lot with your grains of corn and the tzité. Do it thus, and we shall know if we are to make, or carve his mouth and eyes out of wood." Thus the diviners were told.

They went down at once to make their divination, and cast their lots with the corn and the tzité. "Fate! Creature!" said an old woman and an old man. And this old man was the one who cast the lots with Tzité, the one called Xpiyacoc. And the old woman was the diviner, the maker, called Chiracán Xmucané.

Beginning the divination, they said: "Get together, grasp each other! Speak, that we may hear." They said, "Say if it is well that the wood be got together and that it be carved by the Creator and the Maker, and if this [man of wood] is he who must nourish and sustain us when there is light when it is day!

"Thou, corn; thou, tzité; thou, fate; thou, creature; get together, take each other," they said to the corn, to the tzité, to fate, to the creature. "Come to sacrifice here, Heart of Heaven; do not punish Tepeu and Gucumatz!"

Then they talked and spoke the truth: "Your figures of wood shall come out well; they shall speak and talk on earth."

"So may it be," they answered when they spoke.

And instantly the figures were made of wood. They looked like men, talked like men, and populated the surface of the earth.

They existed and multiplied; they had daughters, they had sons, these wooden figures; but they did not have souls, nor minds, they did not remember their Creator, their Maker; they walked on all fours, aimlessly.

They no longer remembered the Heart of Heaven and therefore they fell out of favor. It was merely a trial, an attempt at man. At first they spoke, but their face was without expression; their feet and hands had no strength; they had no blood, nor substance, nor moisture, nor flesh; their cheeks were dry, their feet and hands were dry, and their flesh was yellow.

Therefore, they no longer thought of their Creator nor their Maker, nor of those who made them and cared for them.

These were the first men who existed in great numbers on the face of the earth.

### CHAPTER III

Immediately the wooden figures were annihilated, destroyed, broken up, and killed.

A flood was brought about by the Heart of Heaven; a great flood was formed which fell on the heads of the wooden creatures.

Of tzité, the flesh of man was made, but when woman was fashioned by the Creator and the Maker, her flesh was made of rushes. These were the materials the Creator and the Maker wanted to use in making them.

But those that they had made, that they had created, did not think, did not speak with their Creator, their Maker. And for this reason they were killed, they were deluged. A heavy resin fell from the sky. The one called Xecotcovach came and gouged out their eyes; Camalotz came and cut off their heads; Cotzbalam came and devoured their flesh. Tucumbalam came, too, and broke and mangled their bones and their nerves, and ground and crumbled their bones.

This was to punish them because they had not thought of their mother, nor their father, the Heart of Heaven, called Huracán. And for this reason the face of the earth was darkened and a black rain began to fall, by day and by night.

Then came the small animals and the large animals, and sticks and stones struck their faces. And all began to speak: their earthen jars, their griddles, their plates, their pots, their grinding stones, all rose up and struck their faces.

"You have done us much harm; you ate us, and now we shall kill you," said their dogs and birds of the barnyard.

And the grinding stones said: "We were tormented by you; every day, every day, at night, at dawn, all the time our faces went holi, holi, huqui, huqui, because of you. This was the tribute we paid you. But now that you are no longer men, you shall feel our strength. We shall grind and tear your flesh to pieces," said their grinding stones.

And then their dogs spoke and said: "Why did you give us nothing to eat? You scarcely looked at us, but you chased us and threw us out. You always had a stick ready to strike us while you were eating.

"Thus it was that you treated us. You did not speak to us. Perhaps we shall not kill you now; but why did you not look ahead, why did you not think about yourselves? Now we shall destroy you, now you shall feel the teeth of our mouths; we shall devour you," said the dogs, and then, they destroyed their faces.

And at the same time, their griddles and pots spoke: "Pain and suffering you have caused us. Our mouths and our faces were blackened with soot; we were always put on the fire and you burned us as though we felt no pain. Now you shall feel it, we shall burn you," said their pots, and they all destroyed their [the wooden men's] faces. The stones of the hearth, which were heaped together, hurled themselves straight from the fire against their heads causing them pain.

The desperate ones [the men of wood] ran as quickly as they could; they wanted to climb to the tops of the houses, and the houses fell down and threw them to the ground; they wanted to climb to the treetops, and the trees cast them far away; they wanted to enter the caverns, and the caverns repelled them.

So was the ruin of the men who had been created and formed, the men made to be destroyed and annihilated; the mouths and faces of all of them were mangled.

And it is said that their descendants are the monkeys which now live in the forests; these are all that remain of them because their flesh was made only of wood by the Creator and the Maker.

And therefore the monkey looks like man, and is an example of a generation of men which were created and made but were only wooden figures.

Questions for Analysis:

What do the Quiché gods want from human beings? Why do the Quiché gods destroy their initial creations?

## **19. Bernabé Cobo: History of the Inca Empire (1653 CE)**

Bernabé Cobo was a Jesuit missionary who traveled to Peru after the Spanish Conquest, learned Quechua – the language of the Indians in Peru - and worked to convert the peoples of the former Inca Empire to Christianity. Over his lifetime, Cobo gathered prodigious information about the nature of the pre-Colombian Empire. Although written by a Spaniard, Cobo's history tells us a great deal about the customs of native people before the Spanish arrived. For this piece, it is important to know that *inca* literally means king, *curacas* are nobles, *caciques* are local magistrates, *mita* is a type of labor draft, and *mitimaes* are outsiders sent to newly conquered provinces in order to diffuse Incan culture, laws, and customs and prevent rebellion against the Empire.

Translated and edited by Roland Hamilton, *History of the Inca Empire: An Account of the Indians' Customs and Their Origin, Together with a Treatise on Inca Legends, History, and Social Institutions*, University of Texas Press, 1983

### **OF THE LAWS AND PUNISHMENTS WITH WHICH THE INCAS GOVERNED THEIR KINGDOM**

Since the Indians lacked writing, they had no written laws, but the ones that their kings had established were preserved by tradition, use, and observance. I will record here the most important laws that were most prominent in their memories.

Where the Inca was present, he alone was the judge, and before him all offenses committed were tried; and where he was not present, his governors and *caciques* administered justice. They were selected to serve as judges according to the nature of the case.

When someone committed an offense that was deserving of punishment, he was apprehended and put in jail, he was taken out of jail and brought before the Inca or the presiding judge and *curaca*. During the trial, witnesses were brought out and confronted the accused. Each one told what he knew about the case against the accused, and in this way they convinced the judge. After the case was heard, without other proceedings, time limit, or delay, the Inca or judge pronounced the sentence and ordered that the delinquent be punished in accordance with his guilt.

He that killed another in order to rob him received the death penalty, and before it was executed, the guilty person was tortured in jail to increase the punishment, and after being tortured, he was killed. He that killed by treachery was put to death publicly and insultingly, even though he was a nobleman and the dead man was of much lesser station.

He that killed by casting spells received the death penalty. This punishment was executed with much publicity, bringing together the people of the surrounding towns so that they would be present at the execution, and likewise all of his household and family were killed because it was presumed that they all knew that craft.

If someone was killed in a quarrel, first it was determined who caused it; if the dead man did, the killer was given a light punishment at the discretion of the Inca; if the one who caused the fight was the slayer, he received the death penalty, or at the very best, he was exiled to the provinces of the Andes, a sick and unhealthy land for the Indians of the sierra; there he would serve for his whole life, as on the galleys, in the Inca's *chacaras coca*.

The *cacique* that killed one of his subjects without permission from the Inca was punished in public by being given certain blows on the back with a stone (this was called stone punishment, and it was a great insult). It was done even though the

Indian may have been guilty of some act of disobedience against the cacique in question. If after the cacique was reprehended and punished, he repeated the same offense, he died for it; and if this punishment was not executed, due to pleas and intercessions, the Inca took the offender's *cacicazgo* away from him and give to another.

The husband that killed his wife for adultery was set free without punishment, but if he killed her due to anger and passion, he received the death penalty if he was an ordinary man, but if he was an important gentleman who commanded respect, he did not die, but he was given another punishment. The woman that killed her husband received the death penalty, and it was executed in this way: she was hung up by the feet in some public place, and she was left like this until she died, without anyone daring to take her down.

The pregnant woman that took potions in order to kill her baby received the death penalty, and the same punishment was given to the person that gave her the potions or maliciously made her abort by striking her or some other mistreatment. He that forced a single woman was given the stone punishment for the first time, and the second time, the death penalty.

He that forcibly corrupted some maiden received the death penalty if she was a noble woman, and if she was not, the first time, he was given a certain torture that was used, and the second time, he died. He that committed adultery with another man's wife who was not of the nobility was tortured, but if she was of the nobility, he received the death penalty and she died also.

In certain cases marriage was prohibited, and fornication in the cases in which marriage was prohibited was punishable with the death penalty, and this punishment was executed without remission, if the guilty party was not a noble, because a noble got only a public reprimand.

He that robbed without reason, besides paying for the stolen item, if he had the resources, was exiled to the Andes, nor would he dare to return without the Inca's permission. He that stole things to eat from necessity was reprimanded and given no other punishment than being warned to work and that if he did it again he would be punished by being struck on the back with a stone in public.

He that stole some fruit from the fields or orchards by necessity while traveling was killed for it if the property belonged to the Inca; if the property belonged to someone else, the man was pardoned. He that stole the water with which the *chacaras* were irrigated and brought it to his *characas* before it was his turn was punished with an arbitrary penalty.

He that maimed another in a quarrel to such an extent that the injured party could not do ordinary work was obliged to support the injured party from his own property, apart from the punishment that was given to him for the offense, and if he had no property, the Inca fed the injured party from his property, and the delinquent was given a greater punishment.

He that maliciously burned a bridge received the death penalty, and it was executed without fail. The Indian that was disobedient to his *cacique* for the first time was given the punishment that the Inca deemed appropriate: the second time he did it, he was given the stone punishment, and the third time, death.

He that changed the dress and insignia of the province where he was born committed a great offense against the Inca, against his nation, and against the province whose dress he adopted, and thus he was accused by all of them and punished with rigor.

He that removed the stone boundary markers or entered into the land or property of another was given the stone punishment for the first time, and the second time, he received the death penalty. He that hunted without permission on any land where trespassing was prohibited was castigated by being struck on the back with a stone and tortured.

If someone's livestock damaged someone else's livestock damaged someone else's property, the owner of the property could take as much of the livestock as the damage was worth, and they had established how many feet of maize equaled a certain unit of measurement, by which they assigned a specific penalty that was paid in proportion to the amount of damage done....

## HOW THE INCAS ADMINISTERED NEWLY CONQUERED LANDS

Although it was very extensive and composed of many and very different nations, the entire empire of the Incas was a single republic, governed by the same laws, privileges, and customs, and it was observant of the same religion, rites, and ceremonies; however, before being brought under Inca rule, the several nations had their own common law and a different way of living and governing themselves. This union and uniformity was maintained everywhere; and it must be understood that what we say here that the Incas introduced into the nations that they subjugated was the same type of government that they maintained at the Inca court and where they ruled before.

The first thing that these kings did when they won a province was to take out of it six or seven thousand families (more or less, according to what seemed fitting to them, judging by the number and disposition of the people they found) and send them to other parts of the quiet and peaceful provinces, distributing them throughout a number of towns; and in exchange for them they put the same number of other people, who were made to leave the places where the first were settled, or from wherever the Incas wished, and among them were many *orejones* of noble blood. These individuals who settled in new lands were called *mitimaes*, which is the same as to say ‘newcomers’ or ‘outsiders’ in contrast to the natives; this name referred to the new vassals as well as to the old ones who were exchanged for them...

Care was taken in this transmigration that those who were transferred, the recently conquered as well as the others, did not move to just any land, in a haphazard way, but to the place that were of the same climate and qualities or very similar to those they were leaving and in which they were raised. Therefore, those who were native to cold lands were taken to cold lands and those from hot lands to cold lands, so that in this way they would not regret moving from their natural home so much as they would be healthier in the new lands, without falling ill from the change..

The people who were relieved from obedience to their former caciques, and they were ordered to submit to the rule of the caciques of the lands where they were placed; and there it was ordered that both types of *mitimaes* be given places to build homes and lands in which to prepare their *chacaras* and plant their crops, and they were to remain there as perpetual residents of the towns where they were placed; and they were to follow the practices and way of life of the local people, except that they retained the dress, emblems, and symbols of the people from their nation or province...

The Inca introduced this change of residence in order to keep his dominion quiet and safe. The city of Cuzco, capital of the kingdom where the Inca had his court and residence, was far away from the most remote provinces in which there were many nations of barbaric and warlike people; therefore, the Inca felt that he could not maintain peace and obedience in any other way, and since this was the main reason why this measure was taken, the Inca ordered that the majority of the *mitimaes* who were made to go to recently subjugated towns settle in the provincial capitals so that they could serve as a garrison and presidio – not for a salary or for a limited time; rather, the *mitimaes* and their descendants would remain perpetually. And, as would be the case with warriors, they were given some privileges so they would appear to be more noble, and the Inca commanded that they always be very obedient and do whatever their captains and governors might order. With this skillful plan, as long as these *mitimaes* were loyal to the governors, if the natives rebelled, soon they would be reduced to obeying the Inca, and if the *mitimaes* made a disturbance and started an uprising, they would be repressed and punished by the natives; and thus, by means of this resolution to make the majority of their people reestablish themselves by shifting some to the places of others, the king kept his states secure from rebellion.

Moreover, trade and commerce between provinces was more frequent and all the land better supplied with what was needed. Furthermore, with this transfer of their vassals from one place to another, the Incas aimed to achieve throughout their kingdom similarity and uniformity in matters pertaining to religion and political government, and they expected all of the nations of the kingdom to learn the language of Cuzco, which in this way came to be the general language of all Peru.

With this shuffling of domiciles, the newly conquered, who were transferred within the kingdom, learned all this in a short time and without suffering or compulsion, and the old vassals who settled as *mitimaes* in the newly pacified areas taught the natives; great care was taken in this and the natives were compelled to learn, for the Incas obliged everyone to accept their language, laws, and religion, along with all of the opinions related to these matters that were established in Cuzco. The Incas eliminated, either completely or partially, the practices and rites that the conquered people had before Inca ways were imposed.

In order to introduce and establish these things more effectively, beside the aforementioned conversion of the people, upon conquering a province, the Incas had the people’s main idol taken away and placed in Cuzco with the same services

and cult that it had used to have in the province of its origin, and the natives were obliged to take care of all this, exactly as had been done when the aforementioned idol or *guaca* was in their province. For that reason Indians from all the provinces of the Kingdom resided in Cuzco. These Indians were occupied in the care and ministry of their idols, and there they learned the practices and customs of the courtiers. Since they took turns by their *mitas* and assigned time for service, after returning to their own province they maintained the practices they had seen and learned in the court, and they taught all this to their people.

In the process of moving the *mitimaes*, no thought was given to the distance that there was from their lands to where they were ordered to go, even though it was very great. On the contrary, not infrequently, it happened that they were transplanted from one end of the kingdom to the other....

Mainly, the Inca took two things into consideration when moving his subjects. The first one was (as has been stated) that they not go to a climate that was contrary to their nature, and the other, that all the provinces of his empire be well populated and well supplied with food and everything necessary for human life. For this reason, he put people from elsewhere in the sparsely populated areas, and from the places that had more people than could be comfortably supported, the Inca took colonies to settle in the less populous ones.....

Questions for Analysis:

Compare and contrast the laws of the Inca Empire to Hammurabi's Code? What do the Inca's laws tell us about Andean society in 1500 CE? What things did Inca rulers do to ensure the people they conquered would not rebel?

## 20. Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa (1325-1354 CE)

Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Battuta was a Berber and Islamic scholar from Morocco who set out to make the *Hajj* or Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca in 1325 CE. Rather than return home after reaching Mecca, Ibn Battuta visited nearly every part of the Islamic world (Dar-al-Islam) including West Africa, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and parts of China. His observations are particularly valuable because he provides descriptions of various places in the Arab world, Sub Saharan Africa, and other parts of Asia. Like the Italian traveler Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta visited India and China. In these excerpts Ibn Battuta visits Mecca, Baghdad, several cities along the East African coast, Constantinople, and the Empire of Mali in West Africa. It is worth noting that the Ottoman Turks were in the process of displacing Byzantine Greeks in Asia Minor and Ibn Battuta visited Constantinople approximately 100 years before it would fall to Turkish forces. For this reading recall that *qadis* are religious judges and *madrasas* are religious schools.

Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354*, tr. and ed. H. A. R. Gibb (London: Broadway House, 1929)

### THE PIOUS KINDNESS OF THE PEOPLE OF MECCA

The inhabitants of Mecca are distinguished by many excellent and noble activities and qualities, by their beneficence to the humble and weak, and by their kindness to strangers. When any of them makes a feast, he begins by giving food to the religious devotees who are poor and without resources, inviting them first with kindness and delicacy. The majority of these unfortunates are to be found by the public bakehouses, and when anyone has his bread baked and takes it away to his house, they follow him and he gives each one of them some share of it, sending away none disappointed. Even if he has but a single loaf, he gives away a third or a half of it, cheerfully and without any grudgingness.

Another good habit of theirs is this. The orphan children sit in the bazaar, each with two baskets, one large and one small. When one of the townspeople comes to the bazaar and buys cereals, meat and vegetables, he hands them to one of these boys, who puts the cereals in one basket and the meat and vegetables in the other and takes them to the man's house, so that his meal may be prepared. Meanwhile the man goes about his devotions and his business. There is no instance of any of the boys having ever abused their trust in this matter, and they are given a fixed fee of a few coppers.

### IBN BATTUTA DESCRIBES THE CITY OF BAGHDAD

Thence we traveled to Baghdad, the Abode of Peace and Capital of Islam. Here there are two bridges like that at Hilla on which the people promenade night and day, both men and women. The town has eleven cathedral mosques, eight on the right bank and three on the left, together with very many other mosques and madrasas, only the latter are all in ruins.

The baths at Baghdad are numerous and excellently constructed, most of them being painted with pitch, which has the appearance of black marble. This pitch is brought from a spring between Kufa and Basra, from which it flows continually. It gathers at the sides of the spring like clay and is shoveled up and brought to Baghdad. Each establishment has a large number of private bathrooms, every one of which has also a wash-basin in the corner, with two taps supplying hot and cold water. Every bather is given three towels, one to wear round his waist when he goes in, another to wear round his waist when he comes out, and the third to dry himself with. In no town other than Baghdad have I seen all this elaborate arrangement, though some other towns approach it in this respect.

The western part of Baghdad was the earliest to be built, but it is now for the most part in ruins. In spite of that there remain in it still thirteen quarters, each like a city in itself and possessing two or three baths. The hospital (maristan) is a vast ruined edifice, of which only vestiges remain.

The eastern part has an abundance of bazaars, the largest of which is called the Tuesday bazaar. On this side there are no fruit trees, but all the fruit is brought from the western side, where there are orchards and gardens.

#### THE TOWN OF MOGADISHU IN SOMALIA

On leaving Zayla we sailed for fifteen days and came to Maqdasha [Mogadishu], which is an enormous town. Its inhabitants are merchants and have many camels, of which they slaughter hundreds every day [for food]. When a vessel reaches the port, it is met by sumbuqs, which are small boats, in each of which are a number of young men, each carrying a covered dish containing food. He presents this to one of the merchants on the ship saying "This is my guest," and all the others do the same. Each merchant on disembarking goes only to the house of the young man who is his host, except those who have made frequent journeys to the town and know its people well; these live where they please. The host then sells his goods for him and buys for him, and if anyone buys anything from him at too low a price, or sells to him in the absence of his host, the sale is regarded by them as invalid. This practice is of great advantage to them.

We stayed there [in Mogadishu] three days, food being brought to us three times a day, and on the fourth, a Friday, the qadi and one of the wazirs brought me a set of garments. We then went to the mosque and prayed behind the [sultan's] screen. When the Shaykh came out I greeted him and he bade me welcome. He put on his sandals, ordering the qadi and myself to do the same, and set out for his palace on foot. All the other people walked barefooted. Over his head were carried four canopies of colored silk, each surmounted by a golden bird. After the palace ceremonies were over, all those present saluted and retired.

#### IBN BATTUTA SAILS TO MOMBASSA

I embarked at Maqdashaw [Mogadishu] for the Sawahil [Swahili] country, with the object of visiting the town of Kulwa [Kilwa, Quiloa] in the land of the Zanj.

We came to Mambasa [Mombasa], a large island two days' journey by sea from the Sawihil country. It possesses no territory on the mainland. They have fruit trees on the island, but no cereals, which have to be brought to them from the Sawahil. Their food consists chiefly of bananas and fish. The inhabitants are pious, honorable, and upright, and they have well-built wooden mosques.

#### TURKISH HORSES

The horses in this country are very numerous and the price of them is negligible. A good one costs about a dinar of our money. The livelihood of the people depends on them, and they are as numerous as sheep in our country, or even more so. A single Turk will possess thousands of horses. They are exported to India in droves of six thousand or so, each merchant possessing one or two hundred of them or less or more. For each fifty they hire a keeper, who looks after their pasturage. He rides on one of them, carrying a long stick with a rope attached to it, and when he wishes to catch any horse he gets

opposite it on the horse which he is riding, throws the rope over its neck and draws it towards him, mounts it and sets the other free to pasture

On reaching Sind [in India] the horses are fed with forage, because the vegetation of Sind will not take the place of barley, and the greater part of them die or are stolen. The owners pay a duty of seven silver dinars on entering Sind and a further duty at Multan. Formerly they were taxed a quarter of the value of their imports, but Sultan Muhammad abolished this tax and ordered that Muslim merchants should pay the legal tithes and infidel merchants a tenth. Nevertheless the merchants make a handsome profit, for the least that a horse fetches [in India] is a hundred dinars (that is twenty-five dinars in Moroccan money) and it often sells for twice or three times that amount. A good horse sells for five hundred or more. The Indians do not buy them as racehorses, for in battle they wear coats of mail and cover their horses with armour; what they prize in a horse is its strength and length of pace. Their racehorses are brought from Yemen, Oman and Firs, and they cost from a thousand to four thousand dinars each.

#### PROCESSION REACHES CONSTANTINOPLE

We encamped at a distance of ten miles from Constantinople, and on the following day the population, men, women and children, came out riding or on foot, in their richest apparel. At dawn the drums, trumpets and fifes were sounded; the troops mounted, and the Emperor with his wife, the mother of this khatun, came out, accompanied by the high officials of state and the courtiers. Over the king's head there was a canopy, carried by a number of horsemen and men on foot, who had in their hands long staves, each surmounted by something resembling a ball of leather, with which they hoisted the canopy. In the centre of this canopy was a sort of pavilion which was supported by horsemen [carrying] staves. When the Emperor approached, the troops became entangled with one another and there was much dust. I was unable to make my way amongst them, so I kept with the khatun's baggage and party, fearing for my life. I was told that when the princess approached her parents she dismounted and kissed the ground before them, and then kissed the two hoofs of their horses, the principal members of her party doing the same.

Our entry into Constantinople the Great was made about noon or a little later, and they rang their bells until the very skies shook with the mingling of their sounds. When we reached the first gate of the king's palace we found there about a hundred men, with an officer on a platform, and I heard them saying "Sarakinu, Sarakinu," ["Saracen, Saracen"] which means Muslims. They would not let us enter, and when those who were with the khatun said that we belonged to their party, they answered "They cannot enter except by permission," so we stayed at the gate. One of the khatun's party sent a messenger to tell her of this while she was still with her father. She told him about us and he gave orders that we should enter, and assigned us a house near the khatun's house. He wrote also on our behalf an order that we should not be abused wheresoever we went in the city, and this order was proclaimed in the bazaars.

We stayed indoors three days, receiving from the khatun gifts of flour, bread, sheep, chickens, butter, fruit, fish, money and beds, and on the fourth day we had audience of the sultan.

#### IBN BATTUTA DESCRIBES CHINA

The land of China is of vast extent, and abounding in produce, fruits, grain, gold and silver. In this respect there is no country in the world that can rival it... In the land of China there is abundant sugar-cane, equal, nay superior, in quality to that of Egypt, as well as grapes and plums. I used to think that the 'Othmani plums of Damascus had no equal, until I saw the plums in China. It has wonderful melons too, like those of Khwarizm and Isfahan. All the fruits which we have in our country are to be found there, either much the same or of better quality. Wheat is very abundant in China, indeed better wheat I have never seen, and the same may be said of their lentils and chick-peas.

The Chinese use neither [gold] dinars nor [silver] dirhams in their commerce. All the gold and silver that comes into their country is cast by them into ingots, as we have described. Their buying and selling is carried on exclusively by means of pieces of paper, each of the size of the palm of the hand, and stamped with the sultan's seal. Twenty-five of these pieces of paper are called a balisht, which takes the place of the dinar. When these notes become torn by handling, one takes them to an office corresponding to our mint, and receives their equivalent in new notes on delivering up the old ones. This transaction is made without charge and involves no expense, for those who have the duty of making the notes receive regular salaries from the sultan.

The Chinese themselves are infidels, who worship idols and burn their dead like the Hindus. The king of China is a Tatar, one of the descendants of Tinkiz [Chingiz] Khan. In every Chinese city there is a quarter for Muslims in which they live by themselves, and in which they have mosques both for the Friday services and for other religious purposes. The Muslims are honoured and respected. The Chinese infidels eat the flesh of swine and dogs, and sell it in their markets.

The Chinese are of all peoples the most skillful in the arts and possessed of the greatest mastery of them. This characteristic of theirs is well known, and has frequently been described at length in the works of various writers. In regard to portraiture there is none, whether Greek or any other, who can match them in precision, for in this art they show a marvelous talent. I myself saw an extraordinary example of this gift of theirs, I never returned to any of their cities after I had visited it a time without finding my portrait and the portraits of my companions drawn on the walls and on sheets of paper exhibited in the bazaars. When I visited the sultan's city I passed with my companions through the painters' bazaar on my way to the sultan's palace. We were dressed after the 'Iraqi fashion. On returning from the palace in the evening, I passed through the same bazaar, and saw my portrait and those of my companions drawn on a sheet of paper which they had affixed to the wall. Each of us set to examining the other's portrait [and found that] the likeness was perfect in every respect. I was told that the sultan had ordered them to do this, and that they had come to the palace while we were there and had been observing us and drawing our portraits without our noticing it. This is a custom of theirs, I mean making portraits of all who pass through their country. In fact they have brought this to such perfection that if a Granger commits any offence that obliges him to flee from China, they send his portrait far and wide. A search is then made for him and wheresoever the [person bearing a] resemblance to that portrait is found he is arrested.

China is the safest and best regulated of countries for a traveller. A man may go by himself a nine months\* journey, carrying with him large sums of money, without any fear on that account. The system by which they ensure his safety is as follows. At every post-station in their country they have a hostelry controlled by an officer, who is stationed there with a company of horsemen and foot soldiers. After sunset or later in the evening the officer visits the hostelry with his clerk, registers the names of all travellers laying there for the night, seals up the list, and locks them into the hostelry. After sunrise he returns with his clerk, calls each person by name, and writes a detailed description of them on the list. He then sends a man with them to conduct them to the next post-station and bring back a clearance certificate from the controller there to the effect that all these persons have arrived at that station.

#### THE PEOPLE OF MALI

The negroes possess some admirable qualities. They are seldom unjust, and have a greater abhorrence of injustice than any other people. Their sultan shows no mercy to anyone who is guilty of the least act of it. There is complete security in their country. Neither traveller nor inhabitant in it has anything to fear from robbers or men of violence. They do not confiscate the property of any white man who dies in their country, even if it be uncounted wealth. On the contrary, they give it into the charge of some trustworthy person among the whites, until the rightful heir takes possession of it. They are careful to observe the hours of prayer, and assiduous in attending them in congregations, and in bringing up their children to them.

#### THEIR PIETY

On Fridays, if a man does not go early to the mosque, he cannot find a corner to pray in, on account of the crowd. It is a custom of theirs to send each man his boy [to the mosque] with his prayer-mat; the boy spreads it out for his master in a place befitting him [and remains on it] until he comes to the mosque. Their prayer-mats are made of the leaves of a tree resembling a date-palm, but without fruit.

Another of their good qualities is their habit of wearing clean white garments on Fridays. Even if a man has nothing but an old worn shirt, he washes it and cleans it, and wears it to the Friday service. Yet another is their zeal for learning the Koran by heart. They put their children in chains if they show any backwardness in memorizing it, and they are not set free until they have it by heart. I visited the qadi in his house on the day of the festival. His children were chained up, so I said to him, "Will you not let them loose?" He replied, "I shall not do so until they learn the Koran by heart."

Questions for Analysis:

What are some of the things Ibn Battuta comments on when reaches a new city and what does it reveal about his own culture? Similarly, what things are normal for Ibn Battuta that offend us?

## 21. Christopher Columbus: Journal Extracts, 1492 CE

Christopher Columbus' travel logs document a pivotal moment in world history. On the one hand, Columbus represents the vitality of Renaissance Europe and its daring sailors who created the trade routes, which connected the entire globe. On the other hand, Europeans came as imperialists, convinced of their right to impose Christianity and rule. Their voyages also unintentionally introduced diseases that killed millions of native peoples. Columbus begins the journal by addressing the monarchs who financed his voyage and who have recently expelled the last Spanish rulers from the Iberian Peninsula. Columbus, who calls himself the Admiral, sails first to the Canary Islands, which are located off the coast of West Africa in modern day Mauritania before he heads due west, not realizing the Americas lie ahead. Columbus' journal provides a sense of the dangerous, unknown aspects of the voyage as well as how Columbus manages his crew and his first impression of the people living somewhere in the Bahamas. With respect to nautical terminology, nautical leagues are roughly equivalent to 3.5 miles. Caravels are fast, maneuverable ships designed in Portugal. Reckoning refers to the distance Columbus believes he has traveled based on his last fixed point, velocity, and drift.

Source: Edward Gaylord Bourne, editor, *The Voyages of Columbus and of John Cabot*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

BECAUSE, O most Christian, and very high, very excellent, and puissant Princes, King and Queen of the Spains and of the islands of the Sea, our Lords, in this present year of 1492, after your Highnesses had given an end to the war with the Moors who reigned in Europe, and had finished it in the very great city of Granada, where in this present year, on the second day of the month of January, by force of arms, I saw the royal banners of your Highnesses placed on the towers of Alfambra, which is the fortress of that city, and I saw the Moorish King come forth from the gates of the city and kiss the royal hands of your Highnesses, and of the Prince my Lord, and presently in that same month, acting on the information that I had given to your Highnesses touching the lands of India, and respecting a Prince who is called Gran Can, which means in our language King of Kings, how he and his ancestors had sent to Rome many times to ask for learned men of our holy faith to teach him, and how the Holy Father had never complied, insomuch that many people believing in idolatries were lost by receiving doctrine of perdition: YOUR HIGHNESSES, as Catholic Christians and Princes who love the holy Christian faith, and the propagation of it, and who are enemies to the sect of Mahoma [Muhammad] and to all idolatries and heresies, resolved to send me, Cristóbal Colon [Christopher Columbus], to the said parts of India to see the said princes, and the cities and lands, and their disposition, with a view that they might be converted to our holy faith; and ordered that I should not go by land to the eastward, as had been customary, but that I should go by way of the west, whither up to this day, we do not know for certain that any one has gone.

I left the city of Granada on the 12th day of May, in the same year of 1492, being Saturday, and came to the town of Palos, which is a seaport; where I equipped three vessels well suited for such service; and departed from that port, well supplied with provisions and with many sailors, on the 3d day of August of the same year, being Friday, half an hour before sunrise, taking the route to the islands of Canaria, belonging to your Highnesses, which are in the said Ocean Sea, that I might thence take my departure for navigating until I should arrive at the Indies, and give the letters of your Highnesses to those princes, so as to comply with my orders. As part of my duty I thought it well to write an account of all the voyage very punctually, noting from day to day all that I should do and see, and that should happen, as will be seen further on. Also, Lords Princes, I resolved to describe each night what passed in the day, and to note each day how I navigated at night. I propose to construct a new chart for navigating, on which I shall delineate all the sea and lands of the Ocean in their proper positions under their bearings; and further, I propose to prepare a book, and to put down all as it were in a picture, by latitude from the equator, and western longitude. Above all, I shall have accomplished much, for I shall forget sleep, and shall work at the business of navigation, that so the service may be performed; all which will entail great labor.

*Friday, 3rd of August*

We departed on Friday, the 3d of August, in the year 1492, from the bar of Saltes, at 8 o'clock, and proceeded with a strong sea breeze until sunset, towards the south, for 60 miles, equal to 15 leagues; afterwards S.W. and W.S.W., which was the course for the Canaries.

*Tuesday, 7th of August*

The rudder of the *Pinta* was shipped and secured, and they proceeded on a course for the island of Lanzarote, one of the Canaries. They made, during the day and night, 25 leagues.

*Wednesday, 8th of August*

Opinions respecting their position varied among the pilots of the three caravels; but that of the Admiral proved to be nearer the truth. He wished to go to Gran Canaria, to leave the caravel *Pinta*, because she was disabled by the faulty hanging of her rudder, and was making water. He intended to obtain another there if one could be found. They could not reach the place that day.

*Thursday, 9th of August*

The Admiral was not able to reach Gomera until the night of Sunday, while Martin Alonso remained on that coast of Gran Canaria by order of the Admiral, because his vessel could not be navigated. Afterwards the Admiral took her to Canaria, and they repaired the *Pinta* very thoroughly through the pains and labor of the Admiral, of Martin Alonso, and of the rest. Finally they came to Gomera. They saw a great fire issue from the mountain of the island of Tenerife, which is of great height. They rigged the *Pinta* with square sails, for she was lateen rigged; and the Admiral reached Gomera on Sunday, the 2nd of September, with the *Pinta* repaired.

*Sunday, 9th of September*

This day the Admiral made 19 leagues, and he arranged to reckon less than the number run, because if the voyage was of long duration, the people would not be so terrified and disheartened. In the night he made 120 miles, at the rate of 12 miles an hour, which are 30 leagues. The sailors steered badly, letting the ship fall off to N.E., and even more, respecting which the Admiral complained many times.

*Monday, 10th of September*

In this day and night he made 60 leagues, at the rate of 10 miles an hour, which are 21/2 leagues; but he only counted 48 leagues, that the people might not be alarmed if the voyage should be long.

*Wednesday, 12th of September*

That day, steering their course, they made 33 leagues during the day and night, counting less.

*Friday, 14th of September*

That day they navigated, on their westerly course, day and night, 20 leagues, counting a little less. Here those of the caravel *Niña* reported that they had seen a tern and a boatswain bird, and these birds never go more than 25 leagues from the land.

*Sunday, 16th of September*

That day and night they steered their course west, making 39 leagues, but the Admiral only counted 36. There were some clouds and small rain. The Admiral says that on that day, and ever afterwards, they met with very temperate breezes, so that there was great pleasure in enjoying the mornings, nothing being wanted but the song of nightingales. He says that the weather was like April in Andalusia. Here they began to see many tufts of grass which were very green, and appeared to have been quite recently torn from the land. From this they judged that they were near some island, but[97] not the main land, according to the Admiral, "because," as he says, "I make the main land to be more distant."

*Monday, 17th of September*

They proceeded on their west course, and made over 50 leagues in the day and night, but the Admiral only counted 47. They were aided by the current. They saw much very fine grass and herbs from rocks, which came from the west. They, therefore, considered that they were near land. The pilots observed the north point, and found that the needles turned a full point to the west of north. So the mariners were alarmed and dejected, and did not give their reason. But the Admiral knew, and ordered that the north should be again observed at dawn. They then found that the needles were true. The cause was that the star makes the movement, and not the needles. At dawn, on that Monday, they saw much more weed appearing, like herbs from rivers, in which they found a live crab, which the Admiral kept. He says that these crabs are certain signs of land. The sea-water was found to be less salt than it had been since leaving the Canaries. The breezes were always soft. Every one was pleased, and the best sailors went ahead to sight the first land. They saw many tunny-fish, and the crew of the *Niña* killed one. The Admiral here says that these signs of land came from the west, "in which direction I trust in that high God in whose hands are all victories that very soon we shall sight land." In that morning he says that a white bird was seen which has not the habit of sleeping on the sea, called *rabo de junco* (boatswain-bird).

*Wednesday, 19th of September*

The Admiral continued on his course, and during the day and night he made but 25 leagues because it was calm. He counted 22. This day, at 10 o'clock, a booby came to the ship, and in the afternoon another arrived, these birds not generally going more than 20 leagues from the land. There was also some drizzling rain without wind, which is a sure sign of land. The Admiral did not wish to cause delay by beating to windward to ascertain whether land was near, but he considered it certain that there were islands both to the north and south of his position, (as indeed there were, and he was passing through the middle of them). For his desire was to press onwards to the Indies, the weather being fine. For on his return, God willing, he could see all. These are his own words. Here the pilots found their positions. He of the *Niña* made the Canaries 440 leagues distant, the *Pinta* 420. The pilot of the Admiral's ship made the distance exactly 400 leagues.

*Friday, 21st September*

Most of the day it was calm, and later there was a little wind. During the day and night they did not make good more than 13 leagues. At dawn they saw so much weed that the sea appeared to be covered with it, and it came from the west. A booby was seen. The sea was very smooth, like a river, and the air the best in the world. They saw a whale, which is a sign that they were near land, because they always keep near the shore.

*Saturday, 22nd of September*

They shaped a course W.N.W. more or less, her head turning from one to the other point, and made 30 leagues. Scarcely any weed was seen. They saw some sandpipers and another bird. Here the Admiral says: "This contrary wind was very necessary for me, because my people were much excited at the thought that in these seas no wind ever blew in the direction of Spain." Part of the day there was no weed, and later it was very thick.

*Monday, 24th of September*

The Admiral went on his west course all day and night, making 14 leagues. He counted 12. A booby came to the ship, and many sandpipers.

*Wednesday, 26th of September*

The Admiral continued on the west course until afternoon. Then he altered course to S.W., until he made out that what had been said to be land was only clouds. Day and night they made 31 leagues, counting 24 for the people. The sea was like a river, the air pleasant and very mild.

*Sunday, 30th of September*

The western course was steered, and during the day and night, owing to calms, only 14 leagues were made, 11 being counted. Four boatswain-birds came to the ship, which is a great sign of land, for so many birds of this kind together is a sign that they are not straying or lost. They also twice saw four boobies. There was much weed. *Note* that the stars which are called *Las Guardias* (the Pointers), when night comes on, are near the western point, and when dawn breaks they are near the N.E. point; so that, during the whole night, they do not appear to move more than three lines or 9 hours, and this on each night. The Admiral says this, and also that at nightfall the needles vary a point westerly, while at dawn they agree

exactly with the star. From this it would appear that the north star has a movement like the other stars, while the needles always point correctly.

*Monday, 1st of October*

Course west, and 25 leagues made good, counted for the crew as 20 leagues. There was a heavy shower of rain. At dawn the Admiral's pilot made the distance from Hierro 578 leagues to the west. The reduced reckoning which the Admiral showed to the crew made it 584 leagues; but the truth which the Admiral observed and kept secret was 707.

*Tuesday, 2nd of October*

Course west, and during the day and night 39 leagues were made good, counted for the crew as 30. The sea always smooth. Many thanks be given to God, says the Admiral, that the weed is coming from east to west, contrary to its usual course. Many fish were seen, and one was killed. A white bird was also seen that appeared to be a gull.

*Friday, 5th of October*

The Admiral steered his course, going 11 miles an hour, and during the day and night they made good 57 leagues, as the wind increased somewhat during the night: 45 were counted. The sea was smooth and quiet. "To God," he says, "be many thanks given, the air being pleasant and temperate, with no weed, many sandpipers, and flying-fish coming on the deck in numbers."

*Saturday, 6th of October*

The Admiral continued his west course, and during day and night they made good 40 leagues, 33 being counted. This night Martin Alonso said that it would be well to steer south of west, and it appeared to the Admiral that Martin Alonso did not say this with respect to the island of Cipango [Japan]. He saw that if an error was made the land would not be reached so quickly, and that consequently it would be better to go at once to the continent and afterwards to the islands.

*Sunday, 7th of October*

The west course was continued; for two hours they went at the rate of 12 miles an hour, and afterwards 8 miles an hour. They made good 23 leagues, counting 18 for the people. This day, at sunrise, the caravel *Niña*, which went ahead, being the best sailer, and pushed forward as much as possible to sight the land first, so as to enjoy the reward which the Sovereigns had promised to whoever should see it first, hoisted a flag at the mast-head and fired a gun, as a signal that she had sighted land, for such was the Admiral's order. He had also ordered that, at sunrise and sunset, all the ships should join him; because those two times are most proper for seeing the greatest distance, the haze clearing away. No land was seen during the afternoon, as reported by the caravel *Niña*, and they passed a great number of birds flying from N. to S.W. This gave rise to the belief that the birds were either going to sleep on land, or were flying from the winter which might be supposed to be near in the land whence they were coming. The Admiral was aware that most of the islands held by the Portuguese were discovered by the flight of birds. For this reason he resolved to give up the west course, and to shape a course W.S.W. for the two following days. He began the new course one hour before sunset. They made good, during the night, about 5 leagues, and 23 in the day, altogether 28 leagues.

*Thursday, 11th of October*

The course was W.S.W., and there was more sea than there had been during the whole of the voyage. They saw sandpipers, and a green reed near the ship. Those of the caravel *Pinta* saw a cane and a pole, and they took up another small pole which appeared to have been worked with iron; also another bit of cane, a land-plant, and a small board. The crew of the caravel *Niña* also saw signs of land, and a small branch covered with berries. Every one breathed afresh and rejoiced at these signs. The run until sunset was 27 leagues.

After sunset the Admiral returned to his original west course, and they went along at the rate of 12 miles an hour. Up to two hours after midnight they had gone 90 miles, equal to 22½ leagues. As the caravel *Pinta* was a better sailer, and went ahead of the Admiral, she found the land, and made the signals ordered by the Admiral. The land was first seen by a sailor named Rodrigo de Triana. But the Admiral, at ten o'clock, being on the castle of the poop, saw a light, though it was so uncertain that he could not affirm it was land. He called Pero Gutierrez, a gentleman of the King's bed-chamber, and said that there seemed to be a light, and that he should look at it. He did so, and saw it. The Admiral said the same to Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, whom the King and Queen had sent with the fleet as inspector, but he could see nothing,

because he was not in a place whence anything could be seen. After the Admiral had spoken he saw the light once or twice, and it was like a wax candle rising and falling. It seemed to few to be an indication of land; but the Admiral made certain that land was close. When they said the *Salve*, which all the sailors were accustomed to sing in their way, the Admiral asked and admonished the men to keep a good look-out on the forecandle, and to watch well for land; and to him who should first cry out that he saw land, he would give a silk doublet, besides the other rewards promised by the Sovereigns, which were 10,000 maravedis to him who should first see it. At two hours after midnight the land was sighted at a distance of two leagues. They shortened sail, and lay by under the mainsail without the bonnets.

[Friday, 12th of October]

The vessels were hove to, waiting for daylight; and on Friday they arrived at a small island of the Lucayos, called in the language of the Indians, Guanahani. Presently they saw naked people. The Admiral went on shore in the armed boat, and Martin Alonso Pinzon, and Vicente Yañez, his brother, who was captain of the *Niña*. The Admiral took the royal standard, and the captains went with two banners of the green cross, which the Admiral took in all the ships as a sign, with an F and a Y and a crown over each letter, one on one side of the cross and the other on the other. Having landed, they saw trees very green, and much water, and fruits of diverse kinds. The Admiral called to the two captains, and to the others who leaped on shore, and to Rodrigo Escovedo, secretary of the whole fleet, and to Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, and said that they should bear faithful testimony that he, in presence of all, had taken, as he now took, possession of the said island for the King and for the Queen his Lords, making the declarations that are required, as is now largely set forth in the testimonies which were then made in writing.

Presently many inhabitants of the island assembled. What follows is in the actual words of the Admiral in his book of the first navigation and discovery of the Indies. "I," he says, "that we might form great friendship, for I knew that they were a people who could be more easily freed and converted to our holy faith by love than by force, gave to some of them red caps, and glass beads to put round their necks, and many other things of little value, which gave them great pleasure, and made them so much our friends that it was a marvel to see. They afterwards came to the ship's boats where we were, swimming and bringing us parrots, cotton threads in skeins, darts, and many other things; and we exchanged them for other things that we gave them, such as glass beads and small bells. In fine, they took all, and gave what they had with good will. It appeared to me to be a race of people very poor in everything. They go as naked as when their mothers bore them, and so do the women, although I did not see more than one young girl. All I saw were youths, none more than thirty years of age. They are very well made, with very handsome bodies, and very good countenances. Their hair is short and coarse, almost like the hairs of a horse's tail. They wear the hairs brought down to the eyebrows, except a few locks behind, which they wear long and never cut. They paint themselves black, and they are the color of the Canarians, neither black nor white. Some paint themselves white, others red, and others of what color they find. Some paint their faces, others the whole body, some only round the eyes, others only on the nose. They neither carry nor know anything of arms, for I showed them swords, and they took them by the blade and cut themselves through ignorance. They have no iron, their darts being wands without iron, some of them having a fish's tooth at the end, and others being pointed in various ways. They are all of fair stature and size, with good faces, and well made. I saw some with marks of wounds on their bodies, and I made signs to ask what it was, and they gave me to understand that people from other adjacent islands came with the intention of seizing them, and that they defended themselves. I believed, and still believe, that they come here from the mainland to take them prisoners. They should be good servants and intelligent, for I observed that they quickly took in what was said to them, and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, as it appeared to me that they had no religion. I, our Lord being pleased, will take hence, at the time of my departure, six natives for your Highnesses, that they may learn to speak. I saw no beast of any kind except parrots, on this island." The above is in the words of the Admiral...

Questions for Analysis:

What signs suggest Columbus is nearing land? What does Columbus want to know about the island inhabitants? What's your impression of Christopher Columbus?