



ments and mathematical techniques for computation. It is generally thought that Chinese astronomy thereafter underwent a steep decline. Nathan Sivin believes that the reason lies at least partly "in increasing rigidity of elite attitudes, so that the educated were less inclined to be curious about techniques and less willing to value science as an appropriate pursuit for a gentleman." The occupation of astronomer became a hereditary office, a practice inconsistent with the advance of the subject. Additionally, "the responsibility for the evolution of astronomy remained centered in the Imperial Court and was largely abandoned to foreign technicians," chiefly the Jesuits, who had introduced Euclid and Copernicus to the astonished Chinese, but who, after the censorship of the latter's book, had a vested interest in disguising and suppressing heliocentric cosmology. Perhaps science was stillborn in Indian, Mayan and Aztec civilizations for the same reason it declined in Ionia, the pervasiveness of the slave economy. A major problem in the contemporary (political) Third World is that the educated classes tend to be the children of the wealthy, with a vested interest in the status quo, and are unaccustomed either to working with their hands or to challenging conventional wisdom. Science has been very slow to take root. Plato and Aristotle were comfortable in a slave society. They offered justifications for oppression. They served tyrants. They taught the alienation of the body from the mind (a natural

Approximate lifetimes of Ionian and other Greek scientists between the seventh century B.C. and the fifth century. The decline of Greek science is indicated by the relatively few individuals shown after the first century B.C.

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