

AS THE WORLD TURNS: BEGINNING OF TIME - 450 CE

China

In East Asia, a civilization developed that would be described as, “a civilization with which no people could ever hope to compare”... China. The first city-states were established along the Yellow and Yangtze River Valleys around 4,000 BCE. These city-states grew into a kingdom around 2100 BCE and an empire by 206 BCE.

Emperor Qin Shi Huang Di, of the Qin Dynasty, had conquered the surrounding warring tribes and gave the land its name: China. He united China by enforcing a common language, currency (money system), and unified laws. The Han Dynasty brought China into its “Golden Age,” and ruled from 206 BCE-220 CE.

The Kings/Emperors of China ruled by the Mandate of Heaven. They believed that China was the blessed land of the gods, existing under the shadow of heaven. The King (and his family) had received the mandate or blessing of heaven to rule. To go against the king was to go against the will of the gods. The mandate was passed through the Emperor's dynasty. A dynasty is when power passes from father to son, or the next eligible member (typically male). However, if the king abused his power, the mandate would be taken from him and given to another family.

During these early years, China saw many great accomplishments. They built the first Great Wall to protect against northern invaders. They began the Silk Road, a land based trade network that stretched from China through India to Rome selling expensive items like silk and porcelain. This spread Chinese culture across the continent while also making China quite wealthy. They created many complex mathematical principles and applied to great engineering feats and astronomical discoveries. They created paper, mirrors, seismographs, and acupuncture. They designed feudalism, a system where land was exchanged for military service or loyalty.

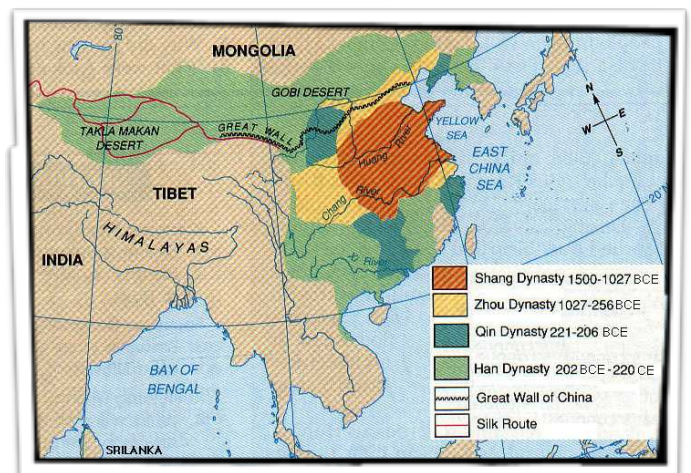
China also produced the great philosopher, Confucius. Around 500 BCE, Confucius promoted ways of having a more organized and functional society. Confucianism promoted a government system where Chinese youths spent their childhood preparing for the state exam. Those who passed the exam were given the title of scholar and were appointed a role in the state bureaucracy. This ensured that the brightest minds ran the government.

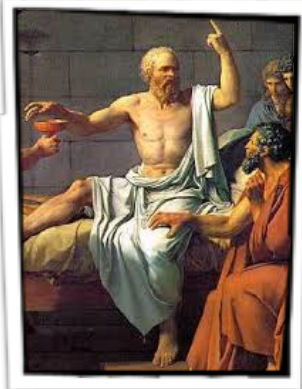
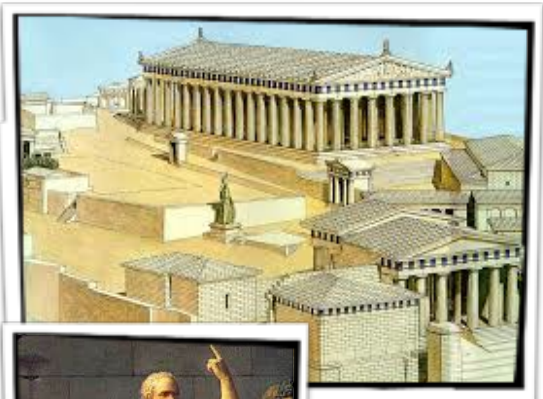
Confucius also believed that relationships were the foundation of a successful society. Thus, Confucius promoted the 5 Key Relationships:

1. Ruler - Subject
2. Father - Son
3. Husband - Wife
4. Older Brother - Younger Brother
5. Friend - Friend

Confucius taught that if people know their appropriate role in each relationship that it would create better lives and a stable empire. He also promoted filial piety, the worship of ancestors (think Mulan and Mushu). If a person acted inappropriately, it would bring dishonor to the family, to both the dead and the living.

In 220 CE, the great Han Dynasty collapsed. The Han Dynasty had led China to great military, economic and cultural achievements. However, weaknesses had developed inside the empire. There was a large gap between the rich and poor, with the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. The Emperor made bad policies that hurt all in China, along with fostering corruption (dishonest actions, misusing money/resources). There were also a series of earthquakes, floods and plagues to strike China. The people decided that the Emperor had lost his “Mandate of Heaven.” War broke out between warlords, dividing the once great empire into warring states.





Europe - Part 1: 10,000 BCE - 323BCE

People arrived in Europe in waves. The first humans migrated in 40,000 BC. The Aryan Migration began around 1700. The Aryans migrated from Central Europe, spreading their unique language and pantheon (collection of gods) east to Spain/Italy and north to England/Norway/Germany.

Greeks

The first official civilization in Europe was the Ancient Greeks in 700s BCE. The Greeks developed into city-states but never into kingdoms. This was because of the mountainous terrain. However, their close proximity to the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas allowed them to trade frequently with the other cities and empires around the

Mediterranean Sea. The Greeks borrowed heavily from other Middle Eastern and Egyptian cultures, before finally developing their own distinct "Greek" culture. Some of the Greek achievements: the Greek Pantheon of Gods, Doric/Ionic/Corinthian style columns with triangle pediment on top, theatrical comedies and tragedies and the olympic games.

The most impactful of the Greek achievements were Democracy and Socratic Philosophy. Around 600 BCE, Athens had a string of corrupt tyrants, or cruel oppressive leaders. The Athenians crafted a model of government that put power in the hands of the people: democracy. Specifically a direct democracy, where every person (well... every male who was a citizen) votes on all the issues, policies and decisions of the government.

In the 400s, the Greeks produced the great philosopher, Socrates. A philosopher is someone who loves knowledge and wisdom. Socrates used questions to pursue truth or solve problem, questioning everything to determine what is truth. The modern scientific method is one of the lasting legacies of Socratic Philosophy. From Socrates students arose the great Philosophers, Plato and Aristotle whose ideas are still shaping our ideas on government and science.

In 499 BCE, the Greek city states went to war against the Persian Empire. The Persians, as was stated above, were the largest empire in the Middle East and had one of the most powerful militaries on the planet. The Greeks were a dysfunctional and divided collection of city-states. Yet, when the Persians invaded, the Greeks were able to ban together to successfully defend their land against the Persians (think of the movie "300"). Nothing unites a divided people like a common enemy.

The Persian Wars were important for a couple reasons. First, it created the idea of "Western Civilizations" vs "Eastern Civilizations"... or an "us" vs "them." This West/East mentality persists to this day. It united the Greek people to create a Athenian Empire. It was also one of the last times that an "Eastern Power" threatened to rule over a Western Power.

The Athenian Empire would not last. The Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE), saw the Greek city states side with either Athens or Sparta. Sparta was the victor, but everyone in Greece was left severely weakened. This opened the door to a power that had been building to the north.



Alexander the Great

After the Peloponnesian War, Macedonia swept in from the north and defeated the Greek city-states. In 335 BCE, Alexander took power and set out to conquer the Persian Empire. By 323 BCE, Alexander had conquered from Greece down to Egypt and East into India, never losing a battle. However, in India his troops demanded to turn back. Alexander died shortly thereafter from a sudden illness.

Alexander's conquest spread Greek language, philosophy, architecture and culture. Greek became the first language to spread across three continents. Greek became the language for trade, academic sharing and for international relations (often times rulers and the rich knew Greek better than their native language).

Alexander's empire did not last past his death. The massive empire split into three sections, each ruled by a different general. However, these kingdoms continued to promote Greek culture throughout the Middle East and into India for centuries to come.



ASSIGNMENT

- 1) Read & Update the Content Matrix
- 2) Fill out this chart with the the strengths/positives and weaknesses/negatives of each region.

Region	Strengths	Weaknesses
China		
Europe		

- 3) Create an impact chart. As you read you are to evaluate each area on the level of impact the people in that region had on the world culturally, militarily, and economically.
 - Rate each area as to how impactful you believe them to be at the Beginning of Time (**B**), at 300 BCE (■) and at 300 CE (▲).
 - Draw arrows to show whether they grew or shrunk in impact and influence.
 - If there is change, ask yourself “What caused them to grow or shrink or stagnate in their influence?” and make note of it on your chart.

How to rate each region:

- Local: Mainly Hunter/Gatherers and Small Villages; people barely impacting those outside of their small circles.
- Regional: Kingdoms, Small Empires.
- Continental: Large empire(s) that span across/impact/consume most of the continent.
- Inter-Continental: Massive empire(s) that span across/impact/consume multiple continents.
- Global: Massive empire(s) that span across/impact/consume most of the world.

Examples

