

Cover Letter

District Learning Assignments

World History

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Student and Parent Office Hours: Email and or Cyber High Chat: M-F, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

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Zoom meeting will be set individually as needed

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Directions:

Each packet has an assignment sheet

- Complete assigned work for each class per assignment sheet
- Make sure to put your name and student ID on each page
- Use any available resources
- The Worksheets will be graded
- Score of at least 60% required to earn full credit for each packet

Packets are due 5/8/2020; (will email time and place to drop them off)

The next packet will be picked up at the same time and place as the drop off.

World History

Assignment: April 20-25

Monday:

Read Chapter 1: The Birth of Civilization pp: 10-13

Do Page 19: Activity 1 #1

Tuesday:

Read: World History for a Global Age: "The Land and the People of Sumer" pp: 46-53

Do Page 19: Activity 1 #2

Wednesday:

Read Chapter 1: The Birth of Civilization pp: 14-16

Do Page 19: Activity 1 #3

Thursday:

Read: World History for a Global Age: "The Egyptian Civilization" pp: 54-61

Do Page 19: Activity 1 #4

Friday:

Read Chapter 1: The Birth of Civilization pp: 17-18

Do Page 19: Activity 1 #5

ACTIVITY 1: Power in Ancient River Civilizations

Directions: Using the information from Unit 1, Section 1 in your workbook, answer the following questions.

1. Most historians define civilization by the society's:

2. Agriculture required people to work together to water the crops, which is also known as:

3. The first civilization formed in:

4. This Babylonian ruler was the first to record written laws:

5. The powerful absolute rulers of Egypt were known as the:

6. The ethical system of Hinduism relied on the concept of duty, known as:

7. How did Confucius propose ending China's trouble?

8. The Han Dynasty based this system of rule on Confucius' teachings:

CHAPTER 1: THE BIRTH OF CIVILIZATION

What is Civilization?

Textbooks and dictionaries generally define a **civilization** as a society that has reached a high level of complexity. Usually these societies have urban settlements (cities), economic specialization (when workers perform different jobs), political and social institutions (such as a formal system of government), a written language, and advanced technology.

However, civilization carries another meaning that often makes discussing the topic difficult. Civilization carries a positive meaning, such as when you refer to someone as “acting civilized.”

Societies that lack one or more, or even all of these characteristics still have made important contributions to humanity. And a society, such as Nazi era Germany, may possess all of these characteristics and still commit acts of brutal inhumanity.

Generally, when historians refer to “civilization,” they are using the first definition. Still, it is important to keep in mind the other meaning of civilization and to think about what it truly means to be civilized.

The First Civilizations

The first civilizations formed along the banks of rivers. Rivers bring water for crops. This supply of water helps farmers **irrigate** (bring water to) their crops, producing plentiful food. Because there is enough food if only a few people farm,

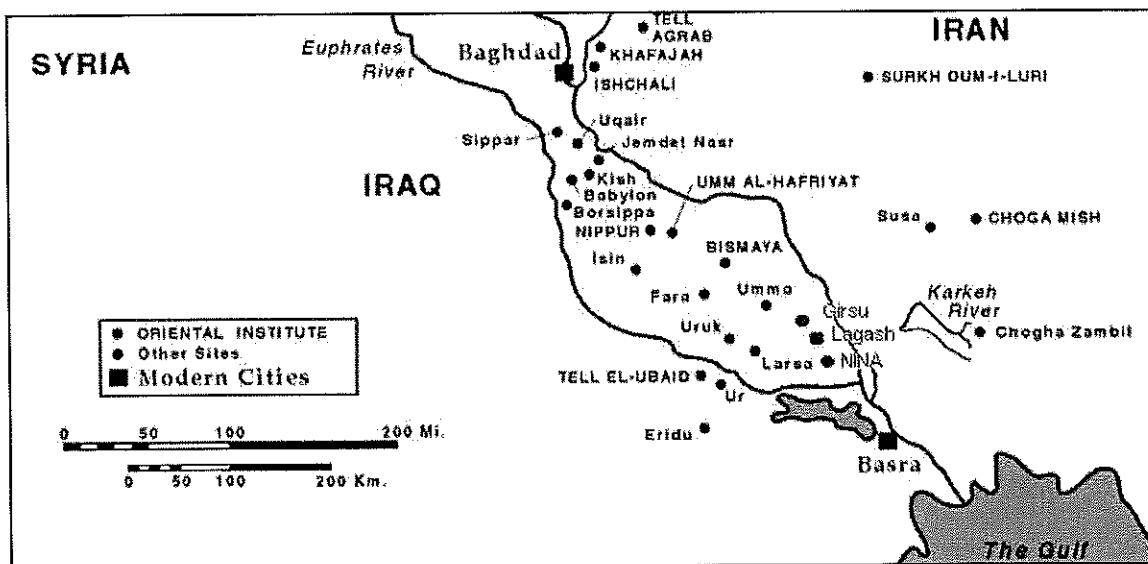
other workers can specialize. These workers provide labor to build and maintain cities and develop technology. Societies develop written language and complex systems to increase, track, and distribute this wealth.

The Fertile Crescent

Most historians consider the cities of **Sumer** (c. 3500 to c. 2000 BCE), in Mesopotamia, to be the first civilizations. **Mesopotamia** literally means “the land between two rivers”: the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Mesopotamia is sometimes referred to as the Fertile Crescent because the soil was so rich.

The Tigris and Euphrates gave life to the people of Sumer, but they were also destructive. To control the power of the rivers, the people of Sumer built canals and irrigation ditches. The need for organizing these building projects that would benefit the whole society gave rise to a system of government and the first written language, called **cuneiform**.

Each city state in Sumer was dedicated to a god, and the god’s chief priest ruled in his name. The center of the city was a stone step pyramid temple, called a ziggurat, which also served as a place to collect and distribute grain. Religion, politics, and economics were very closely tied in ancient Sumer.



A map of part of Mesopotamia including archeological sites and modern cities and country names. *Public domain, Wikipedia.org.*

The Law of the Land

As Sumer grew richer, tribes from other areas wanted to take its wealth for themselves. Akkadians (2334 to c. 2200 BCE), Babylonians (c. 2000 to c. 1600 BCE), and Assyrians (750 to 612 BCE) all invaded Mesopotamia in turn. However, each new round of conquerors adopted and maintained the Sumerian culture.



The top of the stele of Hammurabi's code, showing the King receiving the laws from a god.
Public domain, Wikipedia.org.

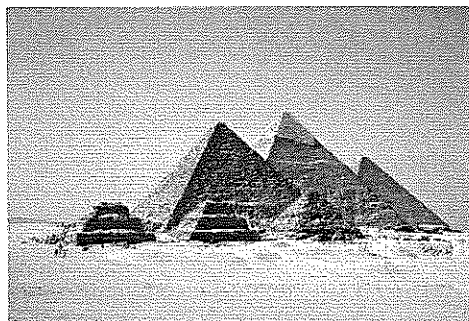
Mesopotamians introduced a number of important political innovations. Under the rule of **Hammurabi**, Babylonian law was recorded onto stone tablets. Writing down the law gave them more power. Rather than arbitrary (random) judgments, people knew they had certain rights and obligations under the law. Rulers were not just those chosen by the gods, or those who were the strongest militarily, but now also those who protected the law and the legal rights of the people.

The Hebrews, who practiced Judaism, probably first came from Mesopotamia. They definitely spent time in Mesopotamia during the rule of the Babylonians. Based on historical sources, scholars believe the Jewish system of justice drew from Mesopotamian law. Jewish beliefs ultimately influenced Christianity and both religions influenced Western ideas about democracy.

Valley of the Pharaohs

In Northern Africa, along the **Nile River**, the ancient civilization of **Egypt** rose to power. The beginning of this civilization could be dated to when the legendary king Menes united the two kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt in 3100 BCE. Egypt remained under Egyptian rule with few interruptions until the invasion of Alexander the Great in 332 BCE. The Nile flooded at predictable times each year, making farming a possibility for the Ancient Egyptians.

Every aspect of Egyptian civilization, from the economy, to religion, to political power, revolved around the Nile. Grain was grown in the rich silt (soil) that the Nile brought to the shores. A type of paper was made from the papyrus reeds that grew along the Nile's banks. The most powerful gods of Egypt were believed to control the flood waters. The rulers were considered descendents of the sun god, Ra. When the rulers died, their bodies took a final journey across the Nile to the pyramids.



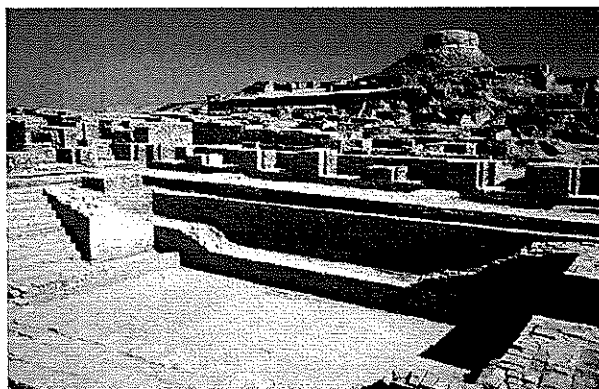
The pharaohs built great monuments, like the pyramids at Giza, to show their great power. *Public domain, Wikipedia.org.*

By 3100 BC, a single **pharaoh** had united Egypt. The pharaoh was considered to be all powerful and his power passed to his heir, a male member of his family. Because Egypt had rich soil, and its geography made it easy to defend from invasion, the kingdom enjoyed relative peace. Each family, or dynasty, would rule for many generations.

A Vanished Civilization in the Indus Valley

Along the **Indus River**, near the present-day border of India and Pakistan, ancient people built well-planned cities based on a grid, with even streets running North-South and East-West. Most people of the Harappa civilization (c. 2500 to c. 2000 BCE), as it is known, seem to have lived comfortably, but there were few displays of great wealth. Perhaps the society was far more egalitarian (where wealth is distributed equally) than most ancient civilizations.

Around 1500 BC, the civilization disappeared. Whether due to famine (lack of food), disease, war, or something



An excavation of the ruins at Mohenjo-daro, an Ancient Indus Valley city. *Public domain, Wikipedia.org.*

Chapter 2

The Land and the People of Sumer

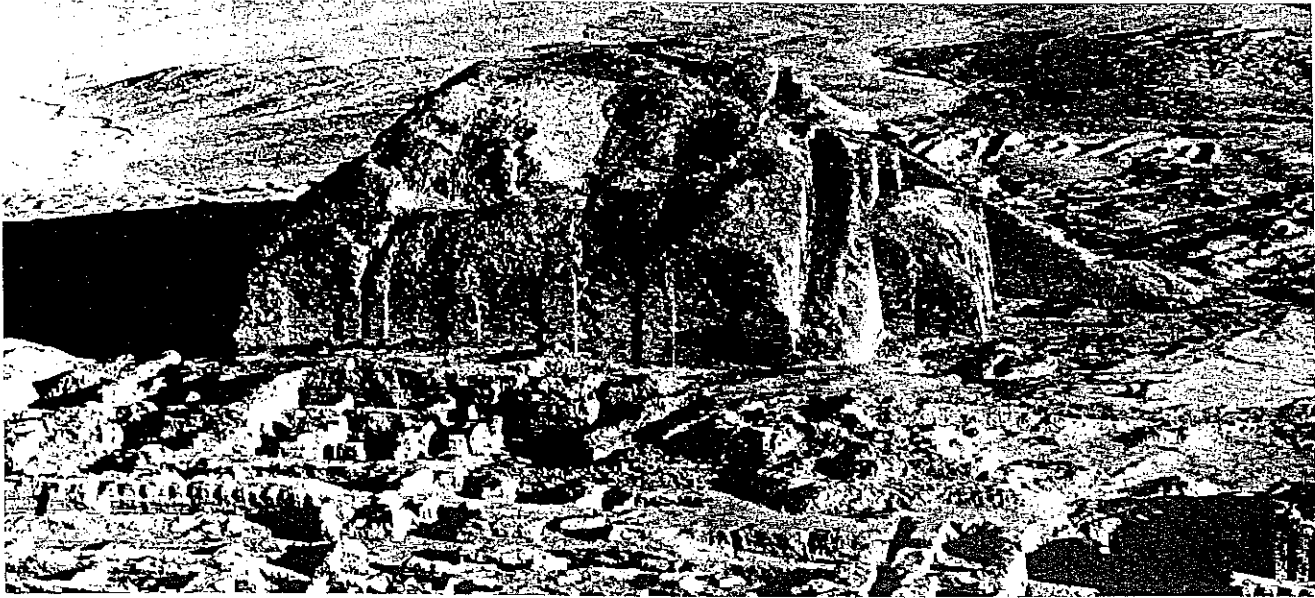
Understanding Global History

Think about the following statements as you read about the land and the people of Sumer.

- 1** People use the environment to achieve economic goals.
- 2** The tools of the social scientist can help unlock secrets of the past.
- 3** Contact among peoples and nations can lead to cultural changes.



This clay tablet shows a Sumerian family.



Archaeologists have uncovered the ruins of Ur in ancient Sumer. The ruins of the ziggurat are at the top of the picture.

The area was given that name because of its **fertile** lands and because of its **crescent** shape.

The people who moved into Sumer settled mostly in the southern part of the valley. This was a flat, dry, lowland region. The Tigris River flooded the valley area nearly every year. As the river overflowed, it carried with it rich soil that helped make the surrounding land fertile. Unfortunately, the flooding also caused much damage.

In order to farm, the people of Sumer had to find a way to control the flow of water. Their solution was to build a flood control system based on canals and **irrigation** ditches. This system turned the dry lands of Sumer into fertile farmlands.

City-State Government

Building canals and irrigation ditches were large projects. They could not be built by people working alone. Teamwork was needed. Leaders had to plan the work and direct the many projects. In time, these leaders formed the basis of the government of Sumer.

The rise of a system of government led to the growth of cities. Here, government officials, merchants, soldiers, and religious leaders lived and worked.

Each city in ancient Sumer and the surrounding land it controlled was called a city-state. Each

city-state had its own government and rules. The most famous city was Ur. Its ruins have told social scientists much about Sumer.

A New Way of Writing

In Sumer, many of the dealings of government officials and merchants were complex. Laws and treaties had to be written down. Merchants had to keep records of business deals. What was needed was some sort of written record. The people of Sumer developed a new style of writing to meet their needs. It is called **cuneiform** (kew-NEE-a-form). Sumerian writers used a sharp tool, called a **cuneus**, to cut wedge-shaped marks on a wet clay tablet. The tablet was then baked until it was hard. Traders and armies helped spread cuneiform writing to other parts of the Fertile Crescent. Over the years, however, the meaning of cuneiform writing was lost. In 1846, a British scientist solved the meaning of the cuneiform marks. By doing so, he helped unlock the mysteries of the Sumerian past.

Other Contributions

The Sumerians achieved great things in many areas. For example,

- They were probably the first people to use the wheel.
- They developed some of the principles of algebra and created a system of numbers based on

Learning New Words and Terms

The following words are used in this chapter. Think about the meaning of each one.

fertile: able to produce much plant growth

crescent: shaped like a quarter moon

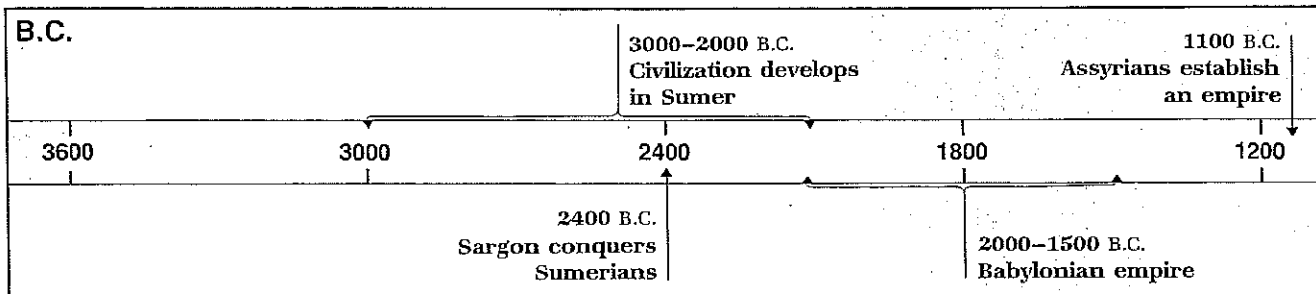
irrigation: system of supplying land with water from ditches or pipes

cuneiform: wedge-shaped writing used in ancient Sumer

arch: curved structure made to bear weight from above

Think As You Read

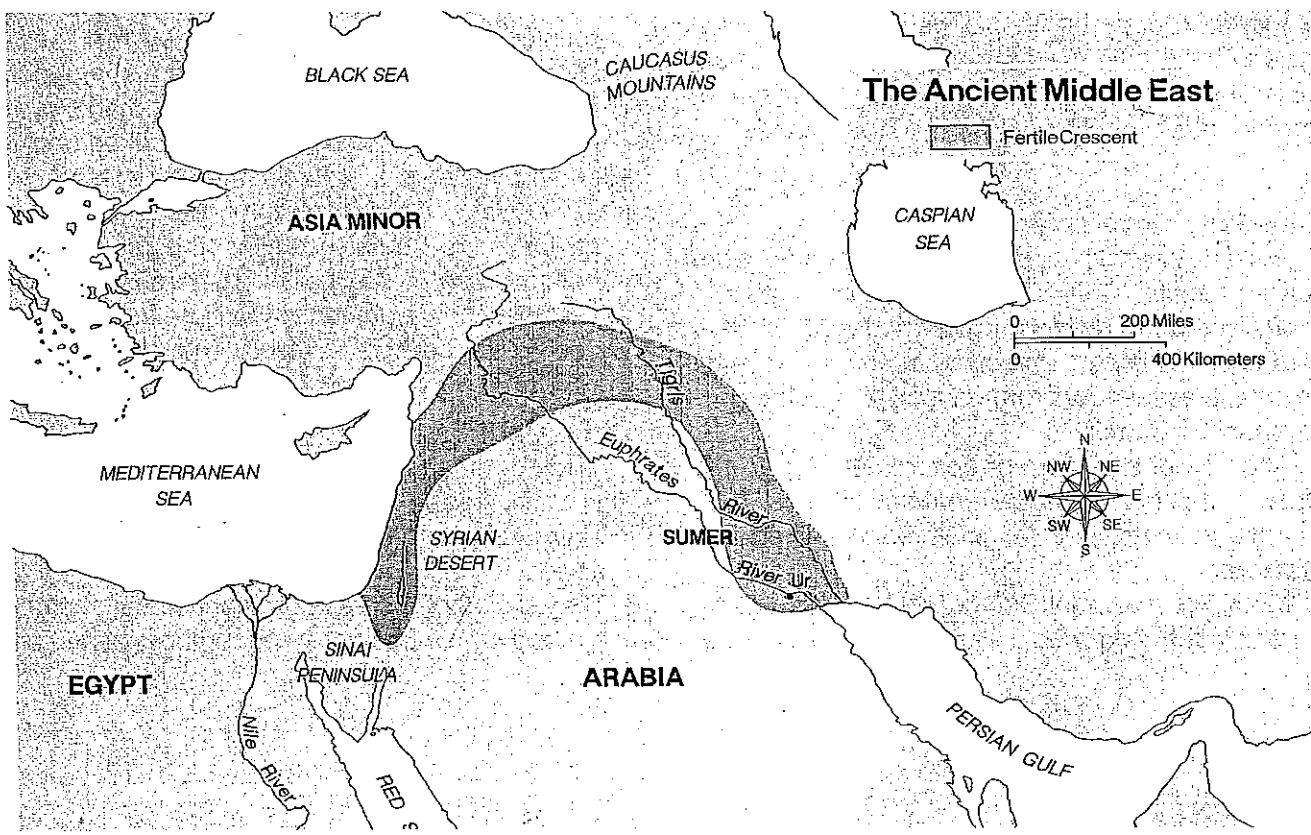
1. Why did people settle in the Tigris-Euphrates area?
2. What was the importance of cuneiform?
3. What were the contributions of the Sumerian civilization?
4. How have the social sciences helped us to better understand the civilization of Sumer?
5. What empires were formed in the Fertile Crescent?



The Land Between the Rivers

Between 3000–2000 B.C., civilization developed in the land of Sumer. Like all other early civilizations, Sumer was located in a river valley. This valley was between the Tigris and Euphrates riv-

ers (see map below). The river valley is part of a larger area sometimes called the Fertile Crescent. The Fertile Crescent begins in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and runs along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea as far as Egypt.



60. This led to such measurements as the 60-second minute and the 60-minute hour.

- In building their homes and temples, the Sumerians used sun-dried clay bricks. They were probably the first people to use the **arch**—a curved structure made to bear weight from above. By combining several arches, builders were able to create curved roofs.
- The Sumerians had a religion based on many gods.
- To honor their gods, the Sumerians built great temples, or ziggurats (ZIG-uh-ratz). The ziggurat was a building with many stories. Each story was a little narrower than the one below it.

The Decline of Sumer

As you have read, the Sumerians developed

cities early in their history. The Sumerian city-states were rarely united under a single government. They frequently fought with one another. As a result, Sumer became weak.

About 2400 B.C., Sargon of Akkad conquered the Sumerians. Akkad was a city to the north of Sumer. For 61 years Sargon ruled over an empire that spread all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. About 90 years after the death of Sargon, the empire fell apart. Later, other empires were formed in the Fertile Crescent. They included the empires of Babylonia and Assyria (uh-SIHR-ee-uh). Some of the nearby peoples and civilizations included the Phoenicians (fuh-NEESH-uhnz) and the Hebrews. These groups borrowed many of the ideas and inventions of the Sumerians.



The Assyrians set up an empire in the Fertile Crescent. They were fierce warriors. This picture shows them in battle. Notice their chariots and other weapons.

Enrichment:

People of the Fertile Crescent

The Sumerians were only one of many groups of people who settled in the Fertile Crescent. Some time after 2000 B.C., the Sumerians were attacked and conquered by a new people. These were the Babylonians.

The Babylonians are best known for the collection of laws they followed. About 1700 B.C. a Babylonian king named Hammurabi (hah-mu-RAH-bee) established an early system of laws. He borrowed many of his ideas from the Sumerians and other neighboring cultures. The Hammurabi Code, or system of laws, touched nearly every aspect of Babylonian life. There were laws dealing with property, marriage, and divorce, as well as a variety of different crimes.

Hammurabi's Code was an important step forward for civilization. It set down the punishments for any violation, or breaking, of the law. Without such a system of laws, each person has to depend upon personal revenge rather than law for justice.

Another group of people lived farther north in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley. They were the Assyrians. Their most famous city was Nineveh (NIHN-uh-vuh). The Assyrians were a powerful, warlike people. In time, they conquered the Babylonians just as the Babylonians had earlier conquered the Sumerians. Each conquest helped spread ideas and inventions.

West of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley were the Hebrews. They lived near the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Once ruled by a single king, the Hebrews later divided into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Like the Babylonians, the Hebrews had their own code of laws. These laws as well as the writings of the Hebrews are collected in the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrews were the first people to practice monotheism, or belief in one God. The Hebrew God

was called Yahweh or Jehovah. Their religion, called Judaism, was unlike any other religion of the time. It demanded righteous, or moral, conduct of its followers. The Hebrews' code of laws, their work of literature, and their religion, have greatly influenced the rest of the world.

Other people who lived in the Fertile Crescent and Mediterranean area developed their own cultures. They included the Hittites in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey), the Phoenicians who lived in present-day Syria, and the Persians who lived in present-day Iran. The Phoenicians were important in carrying ideas to other areas. They traded across the Mediterranean Sea and came into contact with many groups of people. All the peoples of the Fertile Crescent built their cultures upon the ideas of others. In turn, they made important contributions to future civilizations, including our own.



Hammurabi, king of Babylon.

else, we do not know. Although the ancient inhabitants of the Indus Valley created a written language, archeologists have not yet been able to decipher it. So, this is one mystery of history that may be lost to time.

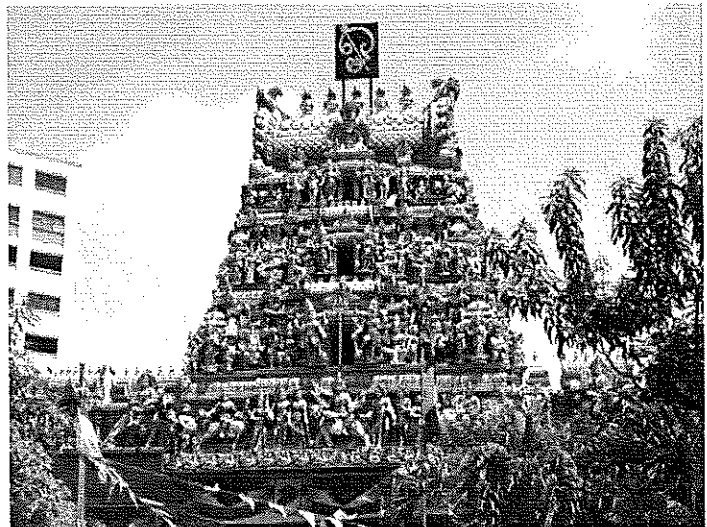
Soon after the fall of the Harappa civilization, invaders known as the **Aryans** came to the Indus Valley. These Aryans conquered the native Dravidian people and established a system of four varnas, or classes, also now called **castes**. The Aryans were a tribe of warriors, so they declared warriors and priests as the most pure. Businessmen and merchants were next, followed by servants and peasants.

Finally, there was a class of people who performed the jobs considered the most “unclean.” These people, sometimes called “untouchables,” were outside of the caste system—literally, “outcasts.”

Hinduism: An Ethical Foundation

Aryan and Dravidian beliefs blended into a belief system called **Hinduism**. Like almost all ancient religions, Hinduism is **polytheistic**, with many gods. However, most Hindu priests believed that the various gods were just reflective of the ultimate reality—a single divine force. The priests recorded their sacred knowledge in the Vedas.

Hindus also believed in **reincarnation** (a continual cycle of rebirth into a new life). A Hindu’s social position in the next life was influenced by how well he performed his duties in the present life. This concept of duty is called **dharma** and the cosmic result, the spiritual positive or negative energy, of a person’s action is **karma**.

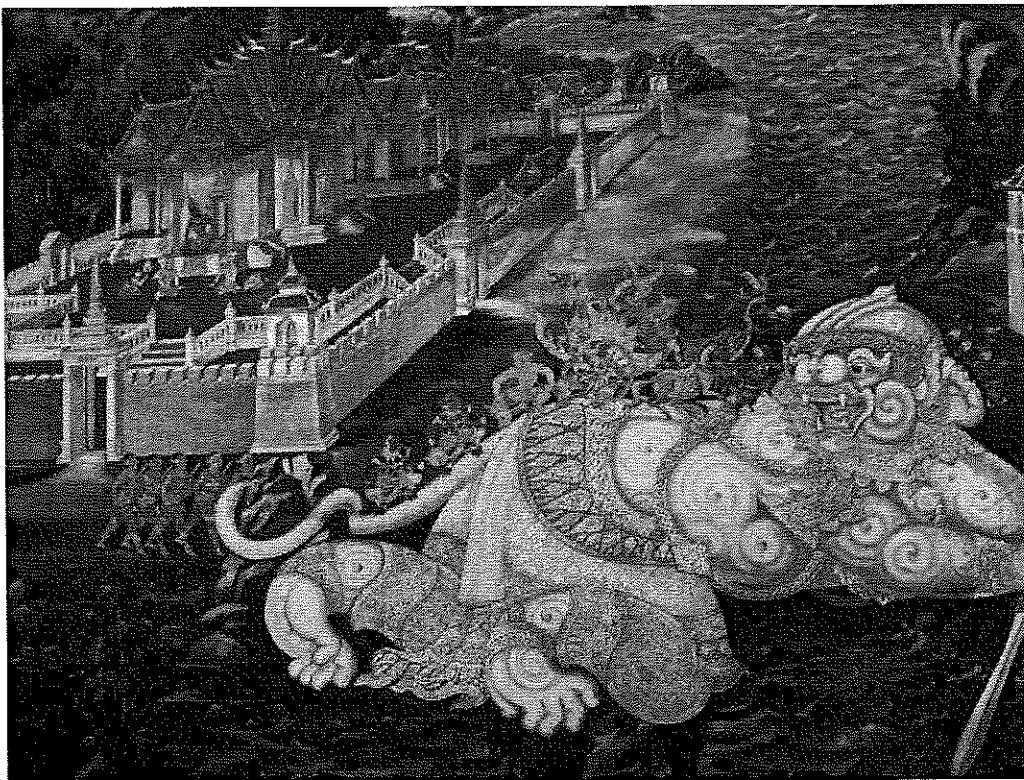


The top of a Hindu temple in Singapore colorfully depicts some of the many gods of the belief system.
Photo by Candace Lindemann.

The caste system and the belief in dharma and karma structured ancient Indian society. Because everyone had the possibility of moving up if they fulfilled their role, the lower classes were less likely to resent their role in life. The beliefs also guide all aspects of life, providing an ethical system that helps Hindus determine right from wrong.

Although the Hindu kingdoms were not united under one ruler, powerful dynasties emerged. During the Gupta dynasty, India enjoyed a Golden Age. Literature, art, and architecture flourished.

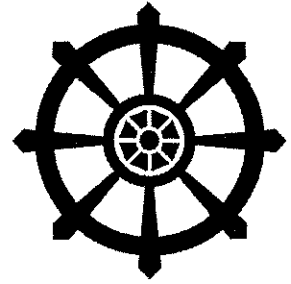
Many firsts came from India, including the number zero and the concept of infinity. Our numerals, which we refer to as Arabic numerals because the Europeans learned about them from contact with the Middle East, were actually originally from India. During the Gupta era, doctors even created vaccinations for smallpox and performed brain surgery.



A scene from the Bangkok Palace frescoes of the *Ramakien*, the Thai version of the *Ramayana*, tells the story of the Hindu King, Rama, and his loyal wife, Sita, who make many sacrifices to fulfill their duty in life. The illustrations show the important roles gods, spirits, and demons play. Photo by Candace Lindemann.

Buddhism: A Path to Enlightenment

Towards the end of the Gupta reign, a prince was born, named Siddhartha Gautama (c. 563 BCE to 483 BCE). The Buddha, or enlightened one, as he later became known, taught that life is suffering. He said that desire keeps us clinging to life. So, to gain release from the suffering, one must conquer desire. To do so, one should follow the middle way, neither giving into desire nor seeking to avoid it through starvation. Buddha provided his disciples (followers) with an “Eightfold Path” to help them along the way: right view (or understanding), right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood (type of work), right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration (meditation).



The Dharma Wheel, an important Buddhist symbol, representing the Eightfold Path. *Public domain, Wikipedia.org.*



Thanks to royal patrons, like Ashoka, and Buddhist missionaries, Buddhism spread throughout Asia. This is a Buddhist temple in Thailand. *Photo by Candace Lindemann.*

Buddhism was so revolutionary to Hindus because it gave each individual responsibility for his or her own enlightenment. No distinction was made between castes and the Buddha seems to have even welcomed women, who generally had very few rights in Hindu society.

After starting, and winning, a very bloody battle, a powerful king, named Ashoka, converted to Buddhism. Approximately two centuries after the death of Siddhartha Gautama, Ashoka spread Buddhism throughout his kingdom with pillars containing his “edicts” or proclamations. Many of Ashoka’s edicts would seem familiar to a modern audience. He called for justice, rights for animals,

Chapter 3

The Egyptian Civilization

Understanding Global History

Think about the following statements as you read about the civilization of Egypt.

- 1 People use the environment to achieve economic goals.
- 2 The tools of the social scientist can help unlock secrets of the past.
- 3 Contact among peoples and nations can lead to cultural changes.
- 4 Present culture is shaped by the past.



This picture shows the fertile banks of the Nile River. The civilization of Egypt grew up along the banks of the Nile.

Learning New Words and Terms

The following words are used in this chapter. Think about the meaning of each one.

isthmus: a narrow strip of land, bordered on both sides by water; an isthmus connects two larger bodies of land

delta: deposit of earth and sand at the mouth of a river

civil wars: wars between groups of people of the same nation

artisan: a person skilled in a craft
scribes: people who keep records and do other kinds of writing

Think As You Read

1. Why was Egypt said to be the "gift of the Nile"?
2. What were the main classes of people in Egypt?
3. What were the contributions of ancient Egypt?

B.C.	6000 B.C. Farm villages in the Nile Delta	3100 B.C. Egypt united	2000-1780 B.C. Middle Kingdom	1550 B.C. Egypt united again
	5500	3500		1500
		2800-2600 B.C. Old Kingdom rulers build pyramids	1720 B.C. Hyksos conquer Egypt	

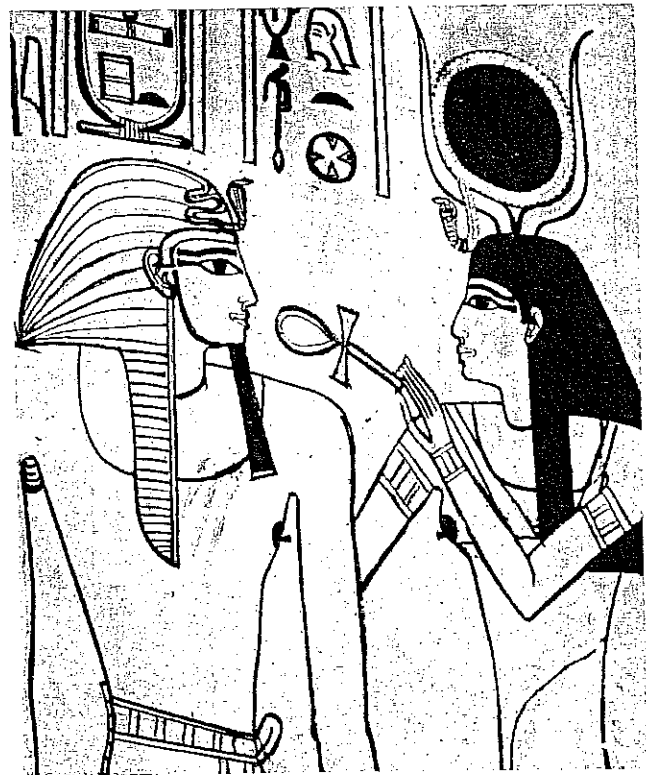
The Gift of the Nile

Ancient Egypt was one of the earliest river civilizations. The land called Egypt extended along the Nile River for about 600 miles (960 kilometers). Most Egyptians lived along the banks of the Nile. Every spring the river overflowed and enriched the land with fertile soil and water. For this reason, Egypt has been called "the gift of the Nile."

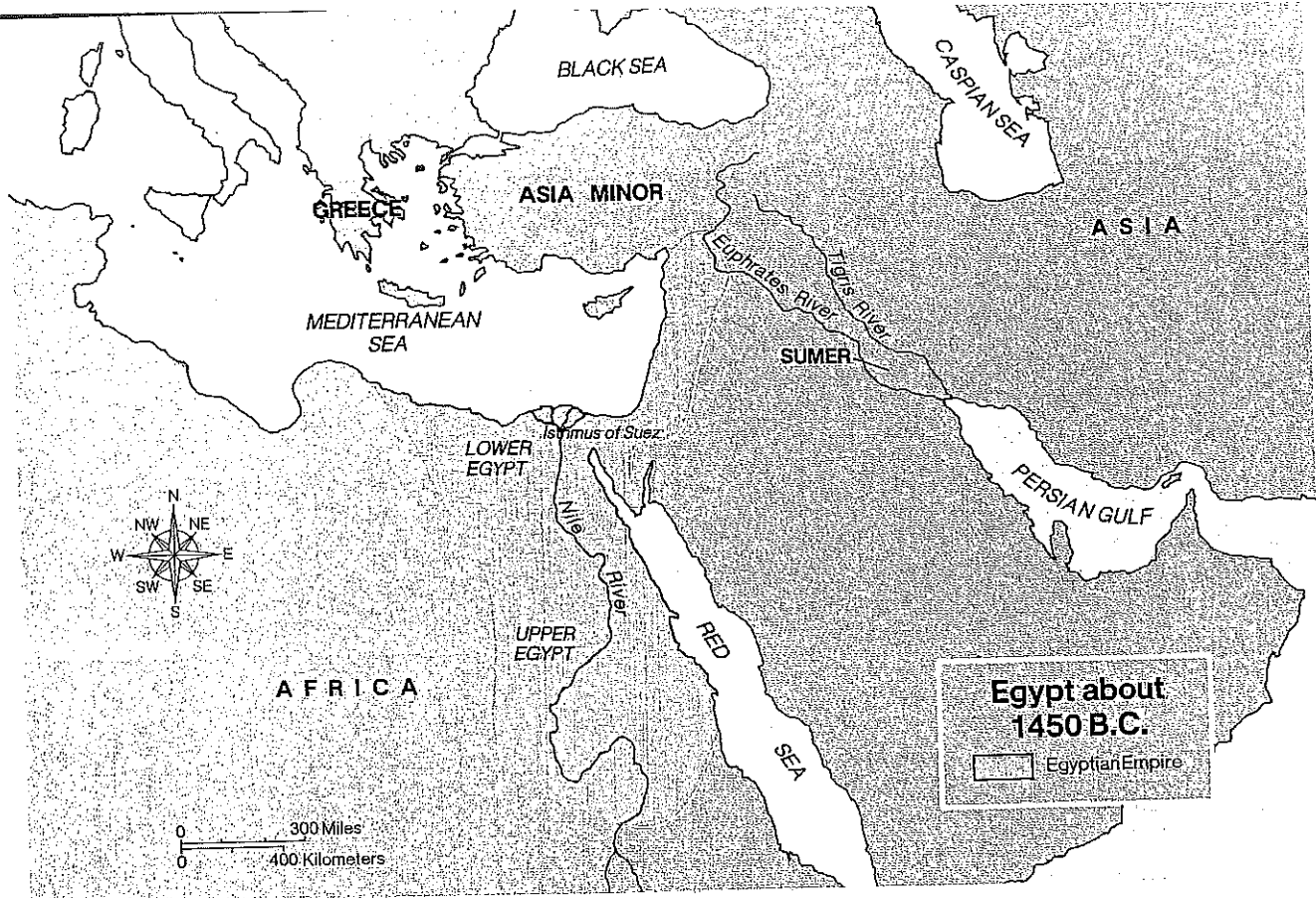
Look at the map on page 56. Notice that Egypt is located in Africa. For hundreds of years the **isthmus** of Suez served as a gateway into Egypt and Africa. It provided a link between Asia and Africa and was a route for many different peoples and ideas from Asia. From Egypt, these Asians then moved into southern and western Africa.

The Egyptian Civilization

The civilization of Egypt began as a group of villages in the Nile **delta** about 6000 B.C. It is called a delta because it is shaped like the Greek letter Δ, delta. By about 3100 B.C., Egypt was united under a ruler, called a pharaoh (FAIR-oh). This period, called the Old Kingdom, was probably the greatest time in Egyptian history. Egypt was wealthy and powerful. And people were called upon to build and create many things. The



Egyptian pharaohs were often shown wearing beards. This was a symbol of their royal power. The other figure shown here is of the god Isis. She was one of the main gods worshipped by the early Egyptians.



first pyramids and the Great Sphinx were built in Egypt during the Old Kingdom.

Civil wars between the pharaohs and a group of nobles eventually led to the end of the Old Kingdom. In about 2000 B.C., another line of pharaohs reunited Egypt. This period, known as the Middle Kingdom, ended in disorder in 1780 B.C. Again, the country was left weak by civil wars. Then, in about 1720, Egypt was conquered by a warlike people known as the Hyksos (HIHK-sohs). The Hyksos warriors were better equipped than the Egyptians. They had horses and chariots. As a result, the Hyksos were able to rule parts of Egypt for about 170 years.

In 1550 B.C., the Egyptians united. They had learned to use horses and chariots from the Hyksos. The Egyptians were able to drive out the Hyksos. These factors gave Egypt the power to create a new empire. This was the New Kingdom. It lasted until about 1085 B.C.

Egyptian Society

The Egyptian pharaoh was an absolute ruler. That is, he had complete and unlimited power over the people he ruled. The pharaohs were religious leaders as well as political leaders. That was one reason they became so powerful.

Next in power to the pharaohs were the priests.

They advised the pharaoh, took care of the temples, and ran the schools.

Egyptian nobles shared power with the pharaoh and the priests. The nobles owned land given to them by the pharaoh. In return, they collected taxes for the pharaoh and served in his armies.

The pharaohs, nobles, and priests were few in number. Most Egyptians were either free people, peasants, or slaves. Free people worked as merchants, **artisans**, or **scribes**. The peasants worked for the nobles in the fields or on the farms. Slaves did the heavy work. They dug the ditches for irrigation systems and hauled the huge stones used for building pyramids.

Most Egyptian women, like most Egyptian men, had few rights. However, in the noble class women had many of the same privileges as men. For example, they could buy and sell goods, own property, and inherit property.

Contributions to Civilization

The people of ancient Egypt contributed much to civilization. They developed

- the kingdom—one of the first systems of organized government. This was different from the city-state government of Sumer. The Egyptians had a central government. The pharaoh divided the kingdom into provinces.

- a system of picture writing, called hieroglyphics (HY-ruh-GLIF-iks). This writing was carved on walls and stone tablets. It was also written on papyrus (puh-PY-rus), a kind of paper made from reeds. Hieroglyphics were used mostly by priests for religious inscriptions or for other formal documents. They tell much of the story of ancient Egypt.
- a new kind of structure called the pyramid. The pyramids required skillful engineering to build.
- beautiful sculpture and vivid paintings.
- a number system based on 10—similar to our decimal system.
- a calendar based upon 365 days.

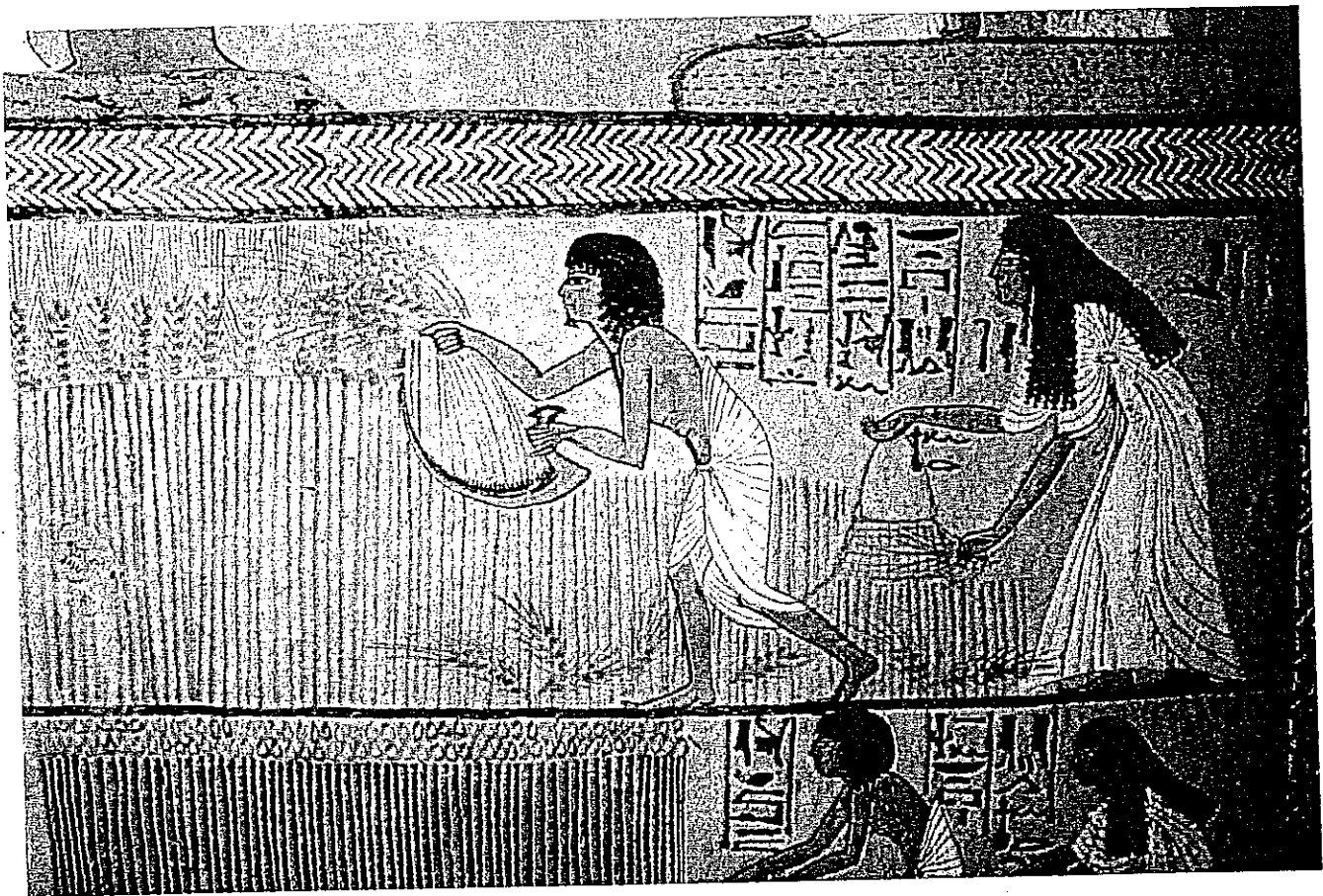
Egyptian Religion

The Egyptians believed in a life after death. The pharaohs prepared for the afterlife while they were still alive. They had great tombs built in which they would be buried when they died.

These tombs are known as pyramids because of their shape. A dead pharaoh was buried in his pyramid together with all the things he might need in the next life. Thus, food, clothing, jewels, and weapons were placed alongside the dead ruler. When the tombs of the pharaohs were uncovered thousands of years later, they provided valuable information about art and life in ancient Egypt.

The Egyptians worshipped many gods. Each god had an animal as its symbol. Sacred animals included the cat, the bull, and the crocodile. The Egyptians also worshipped such natural forces as the sun and the moon. Of the various gods, the sun god was the most important.

Around 1375 B.C., a pharaoh named Akhenaton (ahk-uh-NAH-tun) tried to establish a religion based on one god—Aton, the sun god. But the priests opposed Akhenaton's religion. After his death, they were able to regain power and bring back their religion of many gods.



These Egyptian peasants are shown harvesting crops. Notice the hieroglyphics that are part of the wall painting.

Enrichment:

Progress Through The Rise and Fall of Civilizations

The path from the past to the present seems to be a continuous one. However, progress often comes from discontinuity. That is, it comes from the rise and fall of civilizations, nations, and individuals.

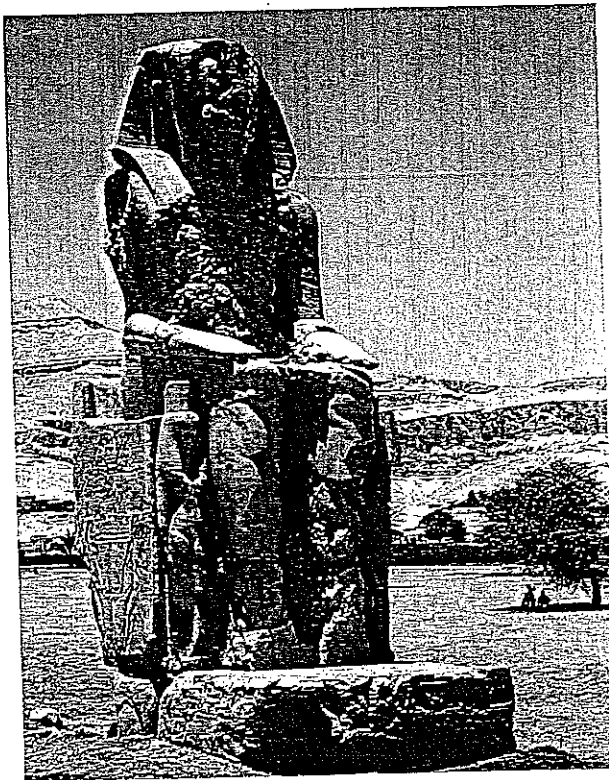
The great civilizations of ancient times are all gone. But their contributions still influence the present. Ancient Egypt and Sumer no longer exist. However, their ideas and inventions are an important part of civilization today.

The British poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley, understood how the greatness of the past can vanish. In a poem written in the early 1800s, he showed how time and events can blot out our memory of the past. The poem tells of the broken remains of a giant statue in a land where an ancient empire once stood.

And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

The study of early civilization often deals more with kings and empires than with ordinary people. But there were millions of men, women, and children living in ancient times. There are no statues or monuments for these people. Yet, what would ancient civilizations have been without them? A modern poet, Bertolt Brecht, put the matter well when he wrote in the early 1900s:

Who built the seven towers of Thebes?
The books are filled with the names of kings.



Statue of an Egyptian pharaoh

Was it kings who hauled the craggy blocks
of stone?...

In the evening when the Chinese wall was
finished

Where did the masons go?

The history of our world does not follow a
smooth, unbroken path. Nor is it only a story of
kings, queens, and empires. It is also the story
of those who carry the heavy stones or dig the
ditches and canals. A global view of history
helps us keep these things in mind.

religious tolerance, and affordable medical treatment. Like Hammurabi in Mesopotamia, Ashoka gave these ideas greater strength by writing them down so all could see them.

An Empire in China

China's first people settled along the Huang He River. The Huang He River is also known as the Yellow River because of the yellow silt, called loess, which helps farmers' crops to grow. Like the Tigris and Euphrates in Mesopotamia, the Yellow River could also be unpredictable, earning the nickname, "The River of Sorrows." To control the river, the ancient Chinese worked together to build dikes and dams.

The Ancient Chinese believed that their leaders ruled with the agreement of the gods, referred to as the "Mandate of Heaven." When the emperors became corrupt, there was trouble in the land, such as floods or revolts. Then, a new family, or dynasty, would come forward and lead. This was known as the **dynastic cycle**.

After one of the earliest dynasties, the Zhou (1046 to 221 BCE) lost control of the kingdom, China fell into chaos. Many lives were lost, crops burned, and dams destroyed during this period of "warring states."

Confucianism: A Philosophy of Government

Wise men offered advice about how rulers should govern to restore peace and prosperity to China. One suggested that rulers use fear and harsh punishments to control the people. Another taught that it was better to leave things in their natural state. The third philosopher, **Confucius** (551 to 479 BCE), was the most influential in Chinese political history.

In his *Analects*, Confucius argued that everyone, from ruler to subject, to father to son, properly belonged in a relationship. The weaker of the two owed respect and "filial piety" (obedience) and the stronger of the two acted with humanity and generosity. According to Confucius, if everyone knew his or her place, there would be an end to the trouble.



The teaching
Confucius. *Daozi*, 685-
758, *Tang Dynasty*

Confucius' advice was ignored in his time, but later dynasties used his ideas to build, grow, and maintain one of the most sophisticated empires of the ancient world. The Chinese explored Asia and beyond, even reaching Africa in later centuries. The Emperor accepted tribute from far flung nations and China grew rich from trade. The Chinese developed paper, currency, the plow, gunpowder, silk cloth, and many other inventions.

Based on Confucius' teachings, the Han Dynasty established a bureaucracy, a huge network of government employees. Civil servants had to pass an extremely competitive exam, and even peasants could rise to this occupation.

Intelligence and hard work allowed some to rise above their birth. The Chinese created an effective way to run their large empire smoothly.