Chapter 3
Early Civilizations in India and China (2500 B.C.–256 B.C.)

China was the most isolated of the civilizations studied thus far.
Long distances and physical barriers separated China from Egypt, the Middle East, and India.
Isolation contributed to the Chinese belief that China was the center of the earth and the only civilization.
As in Egypt and Mesopotamia, Chinese civilization began in a river valley, the Huang He.

The Dynastic Cycle in China

The dynastic cycle refers to the rise and fall of dynasties.

Shang Dynasty
(1600 B.C.–1027 B.C.)

Gained control of corner of northern China along Huang He.
Drove off nomads from northern steppes and deserts.
Held complex religious beliefs.
Developed written language used by all Chinese people.

Zhou Dynasty
(1027 B.C.–256 B.C.)

Overthrew the Shang.
Promoted idea of Mandate of Heaven.
Set up feudal state.
Economy and commerce grew.
Population increased.

World History: Connection to Today
The Chinese made progress in many areas during the Shang and Zhou periods.

- Discovered how to make silk thread. Silk became China’s most valuable export. Trade route to the Middle East became known as Silk Road.
- Made the first books from wood or bamboo.
- Studied the movement of planets and recorded eclipses of the sun.
- Developed accurate calendar with 365 1/4 days.
- Made remarkable achievements in the art of bronzemaking.

Cultural Achievements

• What were the major teachings of Confucius?
• How did Legalism and Daoism differ in their views on government?
• Why did many Chinese people accept Buddhist ideas?

Chapter 4
Empires of India and China
(600 B.C.–A.D. 550)

Teachings of Confucius

Confucius developed a philosophy, or system of ideas, that was concerned with world goals, especially how to ensure social order and good government. His ideas included:

- Harmony results when people accept their place in society.
- Everyone has duties and responsibilities. Filial piety, or respect for parents, is the most important duty.
- A ruler has the responsibility to provide good government. In return, the people would be respectful and loyal subjects.
- Government leaders and officials should be well educated.
Chapter 4, Section 4

Legalism versus Daoism

Legalism and Daoism promoted very different views of government.

**LEGALISM**
- The only way to achieve order is to pass strict laws and impose harsh punishments on lawbreakers.
- The ruler alone possesses power.

**DAOISM**
- Government is unnatural and is the cause of many problems.
- The best government is the one that governs the least.

Legalism and Daoism promoted very different views of government.

Legalists believed that:
- a) the best government is the one that governs the least.
- b) order is achieved through harsh laws and punishments.
- c) power should be shared among the people.
- d) government is the cause of many problems.

Which of the following was not a reason that Buddhism appealed to many Chinese?
- a) It presented the Buddha as a merciful god.
- b) It offered an easy path to salvation.
- c) It offered hope of eternal happiness.
- d) It offered everyone a chance to achieve salvation.

Buddhism in China

Buddhism became popular among the Chinese, especially in times of crisis. It was appealing because it

- promised an escape from suffering.
- offered hope of eternal happiness.
- presented Buddha as a compassionate, merciful god.
- taught that anyone could gain salvation through prayer, good works, and devotion.

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Chapter 4, Section 2

Strong Rulers Unite China

- How did Shi Huangdi unite China?
- How did Han rulers strengthen the economy and government of China?
- Why is the Han period considered a golden age of Chinese civilization?

How did Shi Huangdi unite China?

He replaced feudal states with military districts governed by loyal officials.
He sent spies to report on local officials.
He forced noble families to live in his capital so he could monitor them.
He jailed, tortured, and killed those who opposed his rule.
He had all books of philosophy and literature burned.
He standardized weights and measures.
He created uniformity in Chinese writing.
He strengthened the transportation system.
He ordered the building of the Great Wall.

Though his methods were brutal, Shi Huangdi ushered in China’s classical age.

This period is called a classical civilization because it set patterns in government, philosophy, religion, science, and the arts that served as the framework for later cultures.

Han rulers strengthened the economy and government of China.

ECONOMY

- They improved canals and roads.
- They set up granaries across the empire.
- They reorganized finances.
- They imposed a government monopoly on iron and salt.
- They opened up the Silk Road, a trade route linking China and the West.

GOVERNMENT

- They made Confucianism the official belief of the state.
- They relied on well-educated scholars to run the government.
- They used a civil service exam to find the most qualified officials.
The Han Golden Age

Han China made such tremendous advances in so many fields, that the Chinese later called themselves “the people of Han.”

**SCIENCE**
- Wrote texts on chemistry, zoology, and botany.
- Measured movements of stars and planets.
- Invented seismograph to measure earthquakes.

**MEDICINE**
- Diagnosed diseases.
- Used herbal remedies and other drugs for treatments.
- Developed anesthetics.
- Explored uses of acupuncture.

**TECHNOLOGY**
- Made paper out of wood pulp.
- Pioneer advanced methods of shipbuilding.
- Invented the rudder, fishing nets, wheelbarrows, and suspension bridges.

**THE ARTS**
- Built grand temples and palaces.
- Produced jade and ivory carvings and ceramic figures.
- Improved bronzeworking and silkmaking techniques.

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**THE ARTS**

Why did Han emperors institute the civil service exam?
- To find the most qualified officials.
- To give special privileges to the sons of nobles.
- To give peasants a chance to serve their government.
- To discourage applicants from civil service jobs.

Why did the Chinese call themselves the “people of Han”?
- They were all related by blood to the Han emperor.
- They all came from one region of China.
- China made so many advances during the Han period.
- During that period, the Chinese did not use last names.

Want to connect to the World History link for this section? Click Here.