

Western Civilizations Midterm Review

Vocabulary

- civilization
 - advanced society of self-governing people with a developed culture and rule
 - Macedonian Empire
 - Roman Empire
 - Byzantine Empire
 - civilizations were the basis of invention and history - all people live in a civilization, and are thoroughly influenced by it; different cultures think differently and produce different ideas
- monotheism
 - a belief in a single god, that is exclusive: omnipresent, omniscient, and all-powerful
 - Judaism
 - Christianity
 - Islam
 - civilizations, starting from Rome, began to be heavily influenced on religion as some peoples' greatest loyalty and belief, rather than the rulers of their nation or empire; this caused the breakup of Rome and led to the strong support the Byzantines had for their religious leader
- polytheism
 - a belief in multiple, less-powerful deities, usually relating to nature
 - Roman polytheism
 - Greek polytheism
 - Hinduism
 - the common type of religion before Christianity became popular and the largest religion, in the Roman Empire; eventually became paganism
- city-state
 - a Greek city: it was its little nation by itself, self-governing and self-sufficient; however, all of them were linked with the culture of Greece; arranged this way because Greece was an archipelago, and it was difficult to rule over many separate states by themselves
 - Athens
 - Sparta
 - Delphi
 - the Greek city states were the major structure of Greece
- democracy
 - "power to the people"- started with Athenian ideals; people get to vote on their leaders
 - Athens
 - Roman Republic
 - USA
 - democracy was an idea introduced in Athens, and continued to be one of the great modern-day ideas, that many nations are fighting to achieve so that their people have a voice in their government
- covenant
 - the agreement between people and God that if they truly believed in him as the all-powerful deity and their only savior, then he would grant divine favors and grant them deliverance
 - initiated by Abraham with God
 - restated by God to Isaac
 - restated by God to Moses (Ten Commandments)

- the code of ethics and idea that governs Judaism
- sovereignty
 - rule over a state; autonomous states
 - emperors had sovereignty over Roman and Byzantine Empire
 - Rome, Greece, and Byzantium were sovereignties
 - Senate had sovereignty over Roman Empire
 - empires had to be sovereignties, being self-sufficient; in Rome, the emperors took sovereignty over Rome, starting from Julius and Augustus Caesar
- rule of law
 - a law that restricts people from doing something
 - Solon's Constitution in Greece
 - Twelve Tables in Rome
 - *Body of Civil Law* in Byzantium
 - important because all empires have to have laws, so that they keep their citizens in check and keep a steady rule over their people
- egalitarianism
 - a government system in which everyone is equal (legally)
 - Sparta Lycurgan system
 - Athenian democracy
 - Roman Republic laws to protect the plebs
 - a democracy (and republic) are forms of egalitarianism
- philosophy
 - the rational examination of truths and principles of knowledge, being, or conduct
 - Socratic Method
 - Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras
 - Athens had a lot of philosophers
 - philosophers were often criticized for their creative thinking that we credit to them today as brilliant; we still use these ideas today
- monarchy
 - The ruling by sovereign ruler
 - Most of the time a dictatorship
 - Example: Roman empire (emperor)
 - Still present in modern-day world (England)
 - The main form of government followed by democracy
- aristocracy
 - The ruling by the wealthy, usually an oligarchy (the wealthy are the minority)
 - examples: beginning of Athenian government; Roman Republic (before reforms)
 - common in ancient times because the rich often had more power
 - also common in the fiefdoms, because the kings were wealthier than the peasants
 - this was an important method of rule in the ancient world, but most systems evolved to become democracies, because the people wanted a say
- oligarchy
 - the ruling by a few (usually by wealthy or military generals)
 - often an aristocracy, sometimes a military oligarchy
 - examples: rule under the Triumvirates, Sparta
 - another common form of rule, where there is an obvious hierarchy
 - this was a common type of rule in the ancient world, because usually only a few people rule
- citizen

- a member of a civilization, usually a legal inhabitant with special privileges
- usually has some privileges, that people would yearn for
- example: Roman citizenship offered legal and military protection, but they had to pay taxes and supply soldiers
- not being a citizen could have potential risks, such as higher taxes, being annihilated
- being a citizen of a civilization was and still is an important idea; to be an official part of a greater whole is something that people value and would fight over; this idea of citizenship helped with loyalty and patriotism
- republic
 - a form of indirect democracy in which the people elect their representatives; sovereignty rests with representatives rather than directly with the people
 - examples: U.S., Roman Republic
 - people choose representatives to elect and make decisions for them, feel like they would be more educated than themselves (solving Plato's problem with a direct democracy)
 - one of the major types of democracy
 - first developed with Roman Republic, used still today to govern the U.S. and most other democratic countries
- philosopher-king
 - the sole leader (monarch) of a form of government that Plato proposed; would be educated and selected from many candidates for being the most wise; an older man who puts forth the good of the citizens and state before himself
 - Plato came up with it
 - it solved the problem of "mob mentality" (which a Republic also solved, because the people did not directly vote on decisions)
 - Plato used the allegory of the cave to help explain it
 - did not ever come into effect, but shows Plato's ideas about an educated society
- antiquity
 - ancient times and civilizations, usually before the dark ages (including Egypt, Greece, Macedonia, Rome, Byzantium, China, etc.)
- dictator
 - an autocratic leader, usually ruthless, who has complete rule (sovereignty) over the state
 - examples: Julius Caesar, all of the emperors of Rome, pharaohs of Egypt
- BC / AD / BCE / CE
 - relating to time before and after 0AD
 - BC: before Christ (<0)
 - AD: anno domini, in the year of our Lord (0+)
 - BCE: before common era (<0)
 - CE: common era (0+)
- Abrahamic religions
 - Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are the three major ones; founded by Abraham's covenant with God in Judaism (other religions used Jews as model)
- hierarchy
 - ranking people (or other objects) so that every level has power over the level beneath them

Ancient Greece

- polis
 - Greek city-state; organized this way because Greece was archipelago, hard to govern centrally
- direct democracy

- form of democracy in which everyone has a direct say and participation in the government by being able to vote and make decisions by themselves
- theocracy
 - form of government in which God or prophet of God rules (God rules directly or indirectly)
- autocracy
 - form of government with all-powerful ruler
- Athens
 - Greek city-state that invented (direct) democracy, ruled Greece, in conflict with Sparta (and lost rule); great arts and architecture
- Sparta
 - Greek city-state that was very militaristic, used Lycurgan system, practical and effective, eventually winning Athens in a war and taking rule (briefly) over Greece
- Lycurgan system
 - system that ruled Sparta, created by lawmaker Lycurgus; made people equal and practical
- Greek philosophy
 - led by philosophers like Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle; people who tried to find truth logically, and were usually rejected by society; some great schools of philosophy that lasted for a long time
- Socrates
 - Greek philosopher who tutored Plato and was killed for keeping to his beliefs that angered others; came up with the Socratic method of philosophy
- Aristotle
 - Greek philosopher who was the student of Plato and tutored Alexander the Great and focused on the sciences and maths and a method of reasoning
- Plato
 - Greek philosopher who was student of Socrates and tutored Aristotle; came up with ideas of ethics and government; founded an important academy
- Socratic method
 - a method of philosophy through questioning; developed by Socrates and highly unpopular in Greece but praised today
- oracle
 - person who has power to connect to gods; famous one at Delphi (probably intoxicated); had to go through a strict ritual to consult
- rhetoric
 - art of persuasion, either orally or written
- skepticism
 - doubt about the truth of something, often used in philosophy
- “Funeral Oration” (Pericles)
 - speech given by Pericles after first year, to raise spirit of Athenians, praise the dead, and recruit more; important now to show what Athenians thought of themselves
- “Apology” (Plato, Trial of Socrates)
 - Plato’s recording of the trial of Socrates, Socrates’ sarcastic view on others
- Peloponnesian War
 - war between Athens and Sparta for sovereignty over Peloponnesian peninsula, Sparta wins; 3 parts; Sparta wins control over Greece
- “The Republic” (Plato)
 - Plato’s idea of an ideal government, given as Socratic method, with dialogue between Socrates (as himself) and other people, eventually leading to his idea about government

- allegory of the cave
 - Plato's analogy to his idea of a philosopher-king; shows that the philosopher king will enlighten the ignorant people, and be right (shows mob mentality)
- Alexander the Great
 - military leader of Macedonia, who conquers Greece and spreads it to become a huge empire in only 10 years before his death (by malaria); tutored by Aristotle
- Alexandria
 - great city in Egypt founded by Alexander, led Egypt and was main trading and science center for hundreds of years