Colin Morris-Moncada

Coyote Student ID: 006279659

ANTH 140: World Civilizations I

Instructor: Dr. Schulz

Activity #1

China used tactics such as farming, writing, and religion to develop their culture and master their surroundings.

Like many civilizations at the time, ancient China settled near rivers or sources of water for food subsistence. The Yellow River and Yangzi River proved to be important in China’s history. Villages elevated their buildings above the flood plain, digging ditches or building palisades to keep the water from intruding into their building. This is crucial because when seasonal rain comes it erodes the loess soil. If houses were built level with the soil, they would lose their foundation in the newly formed gullies. Chinese civilization near the rivers evolved and the development of wet rice farming emerged, which could grow despite the high level of rainfall that destroyed other crops such as millet. If this technique did not ensue many people would have starved since other crops were drained by the rain. China to this day uses wet rice farming in rural villages and is a big industry for other cities since population is constantly rising.

Starting from the ancient Shang dynasty and into the Zhou dynasty, the Chinese language was developed. Chinese emphasis on the importance of education and history prompted the invention of the extremely complex language. Logographs are used in the Chinese language, which are symbols with no picture equivalent that can relate words or phrases. A change from simple pictographs to complex logographs allowed Chinese culture “to brew” and infused a Chinese way of life into many individuals. By 1250 B.C.E., the number of logographs had grown significantly, meaning the stories and history of the Chinese is one of the most preserved civilizations from its time. “The production and maintenance of written records gave officials influence through their knowledge of past events and precedents” (Adler & Pouwels 2018 56). Documenting the war strategies and actions of previous rulers would give future Chinese rulers an advantage in defending invaders. Also, the ability of rulers to learn from past mistakes and keep China flourishing for centuries.