CULTURE HEARTHS
&
WORLD RELIGIONS

Steven A. Stofferahn
Department of History

Geography and History of the World Seminar
Indiana State University
July 2007
Culture Hearth:
- heartland
- source area
- innovation center
- place of origin of a major culture
* “civilization incubator”
Culture Hearths

GHW 1.1

Use maps, timelines, and/or other graphic representations to identify the location, distribution, and main events in the development of culture hearths in various regions of the world.
Culture Hearths

GHW 1.1

Primary Culture Hearths of the World

http://www.harpercollege.edu/mhealy/g10ilec/china/chh/hea/chhheaf.htm
Primary Culture Hearths of the World:

- Fertile Crescent (8000 BCE)
- India (7000 BCE)
- Huang Ho (5000 BCE)
- West Africa (2000 BCE)
- Mesoamerica & S. America (8000-3000 BCE)
Culture Hearths

GHW 1.1

EXAMPLE

Fertile Crescent:

- Neolithic Revolution ca. 8000 BCE
- several early settlements: Jericho et al.
- organized societies appear concurrently:

  Mesopotamia: Sumer (3200)
  Unification of Egypt (3100)
India:
- early agricultural sites date from 7000 BCE
- Harappan society arises ca. 3000
  - dependent upon rich floodplains of Indus
  - develop cotton textiles & dyes by 2000
  - impt. trade contacts w/ Fertile Crescent
- Aryan migration into India ca. 1500
Huang Ho  (Yellow River):
- Neolithic Revolution ca. 5000 BCE
- rich soils but floods = need for dikes, dredging
- small societies flourish, 5000-3000 BCE
- emergence of centralizing hereditary monarchies:
  
  Xia (ca. 2200-1750)  &  Shang (ca. 1750-1100)

- major influence of Indo-Europeans: bronze, chariots
- Zhou dynasty (1122-256): classical Chinese civilization
West Africa:
- early Sudanic agricultural influence
- incremental Bantu migrations, 3000-1000 BCE
- spread across central and southern Africa
- enabled by agricultural surpluses & iron
- diffusion: - W. African yams & grains
  - 90 million Bantu-speakers today
Culture Hearths

Mesoamerica & South America:
- migrations to W. hemisphere ca. 13,000 BCE(?)
- early agriculture in Mesoamerica by 7000
  - maize cultivation begins ca. 4000
  - no large domestic animals (hence no wheel)
  - only small villages; no large cities until later
- Olmec rulers (fl. 1200-400) compel building of large ritual centers, drainage projects, & artistic objects (heads)
- Olmec destroy own civilization; Maya inherit later
Culture Hearths

GHW 1.2 STANDARD

Ask and answer geographic and historical questions about the locations and growth of culture hearths. Assess why some of these culture hearths have endured to this day, while others have declined or disappeared.
Culture Hearths

GHW 1.2

Keys to Success:

- geographical integrity
- ecological sustainability
- agricultural surpluses
- internal order
Culture Hearths

GHW 1.2

Egypt: Gift of the Nile (3100-1200 BCE)

- regular flood cycle
- natural frontiers
- Nile-as-highway
- breadbasket
- awe and wonder
  ➔ pharaohs
Culture Hearths

GHW 1.2

EXAMPLE

Egypt: 2\textsuperscript{nd} Pyramid of Giza (Khafra, 2558-2532)
Common Factors of Decline:

- increased contacts with hostile neighbors
- ecological degradation & exhaustion
- over-attractive agricultural hearths (?)
- internal disorder

→ all in evidence in Egypt by 1200 BCE
Analyze agricultural hearths and exchanges of crops among regions. Evaluate the impact of agriculture on the subsequent development of culture hearths in various regions of the world.
Columbian Exchange: **DEFINITION**

the radical s.16-18 global diffusion of:

- people
- animals
- ideas

* plants & food crops
* pathogens
Columbian Exchange: DEMOGRAPHICS

New World: disaster
- smallpox, measles, influenza, et al.
- 90% mortality
- s.16-18: 100 million dead
- adult losses = esp. devastating
Columbian Exchange: SMALLPOX

http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/smallpox-images/smallpox1.htm
Columbian Exchange: DEMOGRAPHICS

Old World: boon

- new crops = population explosion
- s.16-18: growth of 475 million!
- European pol & econ expansion

→ WORLD HEGEMONY
Detect the factors that explain how the local and regional human and physical environments of selected culture hearths were modified over time in terms of such features as urban development and agricultural activities.
Culture Hearths

GHW 1.4

The Reinvention of Ancient Athens
Peisistratus (546-527 BCE)
- popular tyrant of Athens
- land redistribution and 5% income tax
- reshapes Athenian agriculture & economy: OLIVE OIL and CERAMICS
- Athens becomes a major commercial hub
- leads to Athens’ hegemony in the Greek world
Questions

~

Discussion