

The influence on western civilization

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Civilization is a state of human society that has a high level of intellectual, social, and cultural development. Civilization was not developed in this civilization, or the previous century, but hundreds of years ago by the philosophies of Socrates, Aristotle and Plato. These philosophers lived and established concepts that greatly affected Western Civilization in the years 469 - 399 BC.

Socrates was the first person who went against the beliefs of the times. He was mostly concerned with ethics. His beliefs are important to ethics today because he thought a person should act morally whether or not they were advanced by any situation in life. His ideas and philosophies were a threat to the government of the times and he was sentenced to death. Socrates stated " the unexamined life is not worthy to be lived by a man" (2). He thought that human thinking should achieve the knowledge and independence of thought to understand different world views. Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato all held the philosophy that learning is truth.

Plato and Aristotle had to meet the criticisms of their times because they were aiming at a knowledge that was reserved for the gods. They replied to their critics that they were " lovers of wisdom"(2).

Plato and Socrates were friends and Socrates's execution greatly influenced Plato's philosophies. He based his theories on the belief that moral virtues are universal and absolute. He was the first to believe that we had a spirit and a body and the two were separate. Plato is the basic source for much of the philosophy of Christianity in the Western World.

Aristotle was a student of Plato. Aristotle liked to teach and give lectures. He believed in common sense and self-control. He felt strongly that man should use their minds and think about what was best for the larger number of people affected by any event. He thought that our minds were our greatest asset and people could do anything. Aristotle outlined many of the ethics that we now use in the Western World.

Plato founded the first university call the Academy. The art of examining statements, establishing soundness in reasoning and political theory and logic were taught. Plato and Aristotle greatly influenced the Western Civilization through their universities, the Academy and Lyceum.

Western Civilization has grown from the writings and theories of Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato. These men set humans on a course that has now become a modern and mostly civilized world. Socrates gave the world a new view on ethics in life. Plato's main belief was that moral virtues are absolute. Aristotle contributed to the belief in common sense and that our minds are our greatest asset. Each of these philosophers had a huge impact on World Civilization in their own unique way but each of their ideas and theories has lasted long after their original philosophies appeared in their time.