Western Civilizations

VOLUME ONE

21E

JOSHUA COLE • CAROL SYMES

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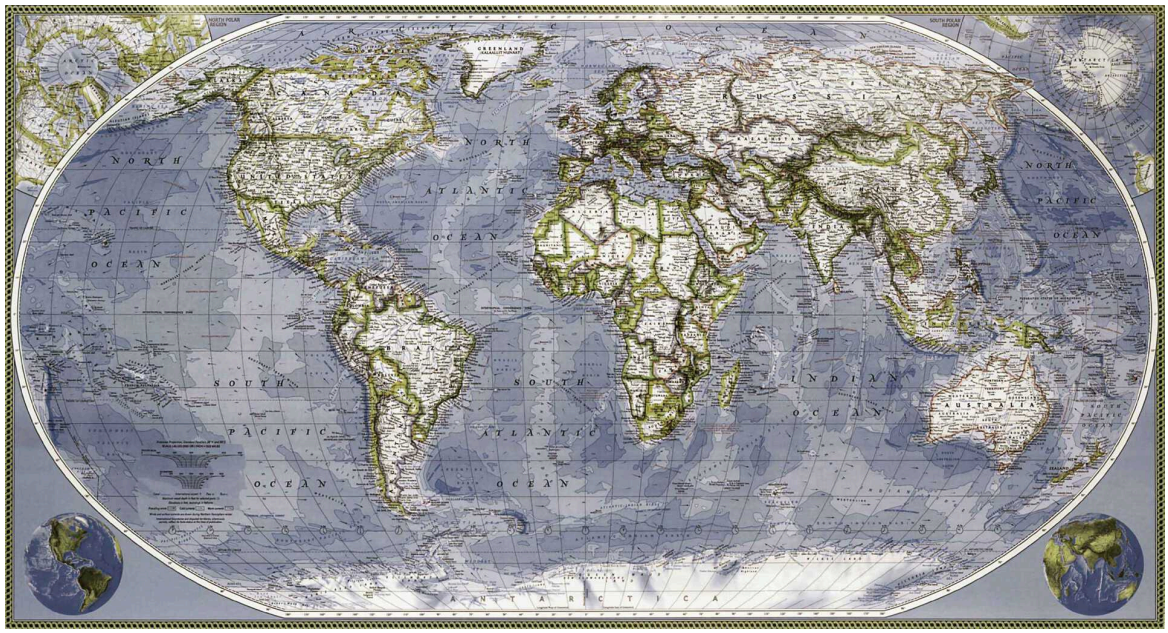
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Western Civilizations

Their History & Their Culture

TWENTY-FIRST EDITION

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Preface

This Twenty-First Edition of *Western Civilizations* is a landmark in a long and continuing journey. Since its original publication in 1941, this book has been assiduously updated by succeeding generations of historians who have kept it at the forefront of the field in both scholarship and pedagogical innovation. Our newest edition carries this legacy forward, further honing the tools we have developed to empower students—our own and yours—to engage effectively with the themes, sources, and challenges of history. It presents a clear and concise narrative of events that unfolded over many thousands of years, supplemented by a compelling selection of primary sources and striking images. At the same time, it features a unified program of pedagogical elements that guide students from understanding core content to reading and analyzing historical sources and, finally, to developing a sophisticated sense of the ways that historians reconstruct the past on the basis of those sources. This framework, and a brand-new set of activities built around select sources from each chapter, helps students to read and interpret historical evidence on their own, encouraging them to become active participants in the learning process and helping them to think historically.

The wide chronological and geographical scope of this book offers an unusual opportunity to trace historical trends across several interrelated regions—western Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe—whose cultural diversity has been constantly reinvigorated and renewed. Our increasing awareness that no region's history can be isolated from global processes and connections has merely heightened the need for a richly contextualized and broad-based history such as that represented in *Western Civilizations*. In this edition, we have added an attention to the changing meanings of ethnicity and race in human societies. This focus adds a further dimension to our already rich treatment of human mobility. The study of human mobility—and the corresponding evolution of ideas about human differences—have emerged as a vital field of study in recent years. Today's students are deeply interested and invested in the relationship between globalization and population movements, and the ways that this mobility is related to social conflict, environmental changes, and contemporary disagreements about race, ethnicity, and national identity. It is important that students be able to put these contemporary discussions in historical context and to see their own concerns and aspirations reflected in the historical curriculum.

As in previous editions, we have continued to balance the coverage of political, social, economic, and cultural phenomena with extensive treatment of gender, race, sexuality, daily life, material culture, art, science, and popular culture. Our history is also attentive to the latest developments in historical scholarship. The title of this book asserts that there is no single and enduring "Western civilization" whose inevitable march to domination can be traced chapter by chapter through time. This older paradigm, strongly associated with the curriculum of early twentieth-century American colleges

and universities, no longer conforms to what we know about the human past. It was also overly reliant on the nationalist histories of only a few countries, notably England, France, and Germany. In this book, we therefore pay much closer attention to central and eastern Europe, as well as to Europeans' near neighbors in Asia, Africa, and the Atlantic world, with a particular focus on European and Muslim relations throughout the Mediterranean and Middle East. No history of Western civilizations can be coherent if it leaves out the intense conflicts, extraordinary ruptures, and dynamic changes that took place within and across all of these territories. Indeed, smoothing out the rough edges of the past does students no favors. Even an introductory text such as this one should present the past as it appears to the historians who study it: as a complex panorama of human effort, filled with possibility and achievement but also fraught with discord, uncertainty, accident, and tragedy.

Pedagogical Features

In our continuing effort to promote the active study of history, this book is designed to reinforce your course objectives by helping your students to master core content while challenging them to think critically about the past. In previous editions, we augmented the traditional strengths of *Western Civilizations* by introducing several exciting new features. These have since been refined in accordance with feedback from student readers and teachers of the book. The most important and revolutionary feature is the pedagogical structure that supports each chapter. As we know from long experience, many students in introductory survey courses find the sheer quantity of information overwhelming, and so we have provided guidance to help them navigate through the material and to read in meaningful ways.

At the outset of each chapter, the ***Before You Read This Chapter*** feature offers three preliminary windows into the material to be covered: *Story Lines*, *Chronology*, and *Core Objectives*. Following the *Story Lines* allows the student to become familiar with the primary narrative threads that tie the chapter's elements together, while the *Chronology* grounds these *Story Lines* in the period under study. The *Core Objectives* alert the student to the primary teaching points in the chapter. The student is then reminded of these teaching points upon completing the chapter, in the ***After You Read This Chapter*** section, which revisits the material in three ways. The first, *Reviewing the Objectives*, asks the reader to reconsider the core objectives by answering a pointed question about each one. The second, *People, Ideas, and Events in Context*, summarizes some of the particulars that students should retain from their reading, through questions that allow them to relate individual terms to the major objectives and story lines. Finally, *Thinking About Connections* allows for more open-ended reflection on the significance of the chapter's main themes, drawing students' attention to issues that connect it to previous chapters and to their own historical present. Together, these pedagogical features serve to enhance the student's learning experience by breaking down the process of reading and analysis into manageable tasks.

A second package of pedagogical features is designed to capture students' interest and to compel them to think about what is at stake in the construction and use of historical narratives. Each chapter opens with a vignette that showcases a particular person or event representative of the era as a whole. Within each chapter, an expanded program of illustrations and maps are enhanced by the addition of *Questions for Analysis* that urge the reader to explore the historical contexts and significance of these images in a more analytical way. The historical value of visual artifacts is further emphasized in another feature: ***Interpreting Visual Evidence.*** This section provides a provocative departure point for analytical discussions about the key issues raised by visual sources, which students often find more approachable than texts. Once this conversation has begun, students can further develop their skills with the ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** feature, which offers close readings of primary texts accompanied by thought-provoking interpretive questions. The diversity of Western civilizations is also illuminated through a look at ***Competing Viewpoints*** in each chapter, in which specific debates are presented through paired primary source texts. In the new Norton Illumine Ebook, the ***Competing Viewpoints*** features have been transformed into engaging interactive activities that marry audio, pop-ups providing definitions and analysis of sources, and clickable assessments graded on completion. These interactive activities are paired with two new Check Your Understanding questions with rich answer-specific feedback at the end of each chapter section that motivate students and give them opportunities to practice their learning. The bibliographical *Further Readings*, located at the end of the book, has also been brought up to date.

Another recent addition is the ***Past and Present*** feature. Designed to help students connect events unfolding in the past with the breaking news of our own time, it pairs one episode from each chapter with a phenomenon that resonates more immediately with our students. To bring this new feature to life for students, we have also created a series of **Past and Present Videos**, in which we analyze and elaborate on these connections. There are a number of illuminating discussions, including "Spectator Sports," which compares the Roman gladiatorial games with NFL football; "The Reputation of Richard III," which shows how modern forensics were recently used to identify the remains of this medieval English king; "The Persistence of Monarchies in a Democratic Age," which explains the origins and evolution of our ongoing fascination with royals such as Louis XIV and Princess Diana; and "The Internet and the Enlightenment Public Sphere," which compares the kinds of public networks that helped spread Enlightenment ideas to the way the Internet spreads political ideas to support movements such as the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street. Through this feature, we want to encourage students to recognize the continuing relevance of seemingly distant historical moments, but we also want to encourage historically minded habits that will be useful for a lifetime. If students learn to see the connections between their world and the past, they will be better able to place unfolding developments and debates in a more informed and complex historical context.

A Tour of Chapters and the Newest Revisions

Our previous edition of *Western Civilizations* updated and reorganized the presentation of material on central and eastern Europe in order to provide a richer account of Europe's diverse political and social histories. We also developed a theme on environmental history in both volumes, with special attention to the ways that human society has been shaped by—and affected—the physical world. For this Twenty-First Edition we paid particular attention to the ways that evolving notions of "race" and other forms of human difference have intersected with the rise of Western concepts of democracy, liberalism, and equal citizenship.

In this Twenty-First Edition:

Chapter 1 takes account of recent scholarship challenging the traditional narrative of civilizational development as a straight line from settlements to urban centers. Though changes in the climate allowed for increased sedentary food production and regional trade, these practices did not entirely replace hunting and foraging or temporary settlements, as previously thought. In keeping with the new theme of this volume, which traces emerging ideas of human difference, this chapter explains how some early societies resisted developments in managed food production to avoid accumulating wealth or establishing the hierarchical structures characteristic of many civilizations. Attention to new research on the role of ritual architecture in early settlements, such as Gobekli Tepe in Turkey, is enhanced by a new image of the site. A new ***Competing Viewpoints*** feature examines how forms of inequality and unfree labor emerged in early societies, featuring excerpts from Exodus and an inscription from the Sumerian city of Lagash. A new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** excerpt is taken from a ritual incantation performed at the entombment ceremony of an Egyptian pharaoh.

Chapter 2 has been updated with rich new research that adds nuance to our understanding of the various peoples who came to prominence during the Bronze Age, including the Hyksos and Phoenicians. A new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** feature includes an excerpt from the Hebrew book of Samuel that depicts Samuel's ambivalence about choosing a human king to rule over the Israelites. A new section, "Climate Change and Civilizational Collapse," considers new research indicating that the fall of the Neo-Assyrian Empire can be partially attributed to a decades-long drought induced by climate change and over-farming. A new *Thinking About Connections* question asks students to consider how climatic changes have contributed to the success or failure of early civilizations.

Chapter 3 explores how Hellenic group identity was formed to exclude "barbarians": foreigners whom the Greeks considered to be culturally inferior. The *Story Lines* have been revised to reflect this focus, and a new section, "Hellenic Expansion and Identity," discusses the development of *ethnos*, or the Hellenic idea of group identity. A new ***Interpreting Visual Evidence*** feature reveals how recent discoveries add nuance to

our own notions of Hellenic identity, by demonstrating that classical Greek sculptures and buildings were brilliantly painted at the time of their creation: not starkly white, as once believed. The section titled "The Daily Life of Athens: Men, Women, and Slaves" includes a revised discussion of the role of slavery in ancient civilizations, emphasizing how any person could become enslaved, most often by warfare or poverty. A new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** elaborates on this dynamic through an excerpt from Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War, in which the consequences of Athenian hubris lead to the enslavement of surviving prisoners of war. A new *Thinking About Connections* question invites students to consider how modern anachronisms and assumptions have made it challenging to look for evidence of "race thinking" in pre-modern societies.

Chapter 4 continues with the investigation of slavery in antiquity through a new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** excerpt in which Aristotle justifies the subjugation of humans by arguing that some people are naturally "free," namely Greek men, while others are not. The ***Competing Viewpoints*** feature includes a revised selection from Plato's *Republic* to better highlight Plato's argument about the participation of women in Hellenic society. Chapter 5 has been generally revised to underscore the presence of slavery in Roman society and the roles that enslaved individuals played in everyday life.

In Chapter 6, new scholarship has informed the treatment of the Roman Empire's gradual Christianization and the persistence of traditional (pagan) religions and practices. A new section on the narrowing pathway to Roman citizenship helps to explain the tensions between new waves of migrants and the imperial government, as well as the Goth's remarkable transition from refugees to rulers. A new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** feature highlights an excerpt from the *Getica*, a history of the Gothic tribes that describes the career of Theodoric, who ruled the Eastern Gothic Kingdom of Italy. This excerpt further contributes to the theme of "difference" by revealing how Theodoric was able to rule successfully by maintaining and blending both Gothic and Roman cultural and identities. A new *Thinking About Connections* question prompts students to consider why women were excluded from leadership roles in the Christian Church.

The *Story Lines*, *Core Objectives,* and *Chronology* of Chapter 7 have been revised to account for new evidence on the effects of the Justinianic Plague, based on advances in ancient DNA research and archaeological evidence that have revealed the devastating effects of this first (semi-global) pandemic. A new map fully depicting the Arab world's relationships with the Roman Empire's heirs helps to demonstrate the complex political and cultural dynamics undergirding Islam's expansion, while a new section on the emergence of Islam more accurately captures the circumstances that enabled the proliferation of this new religion, including the varying levels of religious tolerance among neighboring civilizations. A brand-new discussion of the Iconoclast Controversy now emphasizes the role of wealthy monasteries in Byzantine society, as

well considering how both Rabbinic Judaism and Islam affected Christian religious practices during this era.

Chapters 8 and 9 continue to elaborate on the many cultural, political, and economic changes of the Middle Ages, as the focus of the book shifts to northern and western Europe for the first time. Chapter 8 includes a new map of Paris that demonstrates how medieval cities were constructed and evolved over time, and how religious and urban life were intertwined. Chapter 9 includes a more extended discussion of developments in the Islamic world, considering how elite women were afforded opportunities and freedoms there as well as in Christian Europe and Byzantium.

Chapter 10 includes several new primary sources that offer insights on the ways that various forms of "difference" were understood in medieval Europe. A new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** features a remarkable verse romance that complicates conventional understandings of premodern gender roles. A new ***Competing Viewpoints*** compares two documents describing antisemitic attacks on Jewish communities and the responses of Christian officials to those attacks. New research on the origins and spread of the Black Death has been included, since evidence now indicates that the plague had begun devastating communities in Asia by the end of the twelfth century.

In Chapter 11, a new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** highlights the ways that women often defied the narrow roles assigned to them: a scathing letter from the duchess of Ferrara to her husband, critiquing his poor military leadership and questioning his fitness for office. A new section titled "Later Medieval Ideas of Religious and Physical Difference" engages in a nuanced discussion of how, over time, European Christians came to associate certain physical characteristics with Jews and Muslims. A new ***Competing Viewpoints*** includes two excerpts that reflect very different views on interreligious marriages and the meanings attached to dark skin. Finally, a *Thinking About Connections* question prompts students to consider how ideas about race were constructed before the modern era.

Chapter 12 has been revised to better capture the forced conversion or expulsion of Muslims from Iberia that accompanied the "reconquest" of Christian Spain. The discussion of encounters between European conquistadors and the Indigenous peoples of the Americas takes account of recent scholarship and clarifies what we know about the new arrivals' reliance on native interpreters like La Malinche, without whom Cortes would have been unable to challenge the Aztec empire. In Chapter 13, a revised discussion of the Christian reformers who preceded Martin Luther helps to contextualize the shifting landscape of a divided Christian Europe during the sixteenth century. A new *Thinking About Connections* question prompts students to consider whether a revolutionary break within the Roman Church was inevitable.

In Chapter 14, key sections have been revised to emphasize the destructive consequences of European colonial projects in the Americas, including emergence of a new, racially based idea of slavery in the Atlantic World. A new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** reveals how the ruler of Ethiopia responded to the growing traffic in enslaved

Africans by outlawing the capture or sale of his Christian subjects. Chapter 15 elaborates on the kidnap and sale of African men and women into slavery, noting that racial justifications for slavery came in later years. A careful discussion of the Code noir has been added, which examines how rules for enslaved people in the French colonies contributed to the emergence of modern ideas about racial difference. The description of John Locke's critique of absolutism has been revised to emphasize that the values in his seminal work *Two Treatises* clashed with his complicated views on hereditary slavery.

Chapter 16 has been revised to account for the emergence of scientific theories about human races. A new section titled "From Geology to Geography and the Human Sciences" draws connections from the study of geology to the study of human populations, citing François Bernier, whose work categorizing humans by physical traits was an early example of what would become a general consensus about the existence of distinct human races. The section also draws connections to the trade in enslaved people and the implications of racial categories on the expansion of slavery in the Americas. A new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** includes an excerpt from Bernier's work where he puts forth his theory of different "races" or "species" of human. A new *Thinking About Connections* question asks students to consider the role of science and progress for natural philosophers and its implication for the future.

We have revised Chapter 17 to focus on the divergence between Enlightenment ideals and the treatment of enslaved African peoples. The chapter emphasizes that while Enlightenment thinkers shared the conviction that equality should not extend to enslaved Africans in the Americas, these enslaved peoples created their own communities and cultures and rebelled frequently against the hierarchical systems that maintained their oppression. A new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** demonstrates how Enlightenment-era thinkers began to consider the division of humans into species. This chapter also includes a more in-depth discussion of slavery in the United States at the time of the Revolution. Chapter 18 explores these ideas further with a newly detailed discussion of the Haitian revolution and its radical application of Enlightenment ideals to enslaved populations. A new ***Competing Viewpoints*** provides insight into the dynamics of this revolution through the words of a group of enslaved men and a French Catholic priest advocating on behalf of the free people of color in Haiti.

Chapter 19's revisions focus on how industrialization and new technologies allowed for the further proliferation and profitability of slavery. Chapter 20 maintains its focus on the spread of nationalism, with a new emphasis on who was routinely excluded from the nationalist imagination. Threaded throughout the chapter is a new discussion of how racial hierarchy excluded enslaved Africans from citizenship and other "inalienable" rights. A new ***Competing Viewpoints*** engages with the question of how racial thinking influenced debate about the origins of social hierarchies in English culture.

Chapter 21 continues with concerns brought up in Chapter 20 regarding the exclusion of minority groups from national identity. Special attention is paid in this chapter to the

deportation of Native Americans from their lands as the United States expanded westward, accompanied by a new map that shows the deported groups. The discussion of the American Civil War has been revised to include a depiction of Reconstruction and the implementation of so-called "Black codes." A new ***Competing Viewpoints*** includes an excerpt from Frederick Douglass and an excerpt from an Italian nationalist, both invoking slavery as a lens to view national identity and freedom. A new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** criticizes earlier writers who purported human populations could be divided into distinct races.

Chapter 22 defines, with greater specificity, kinds of imperialism and colonialism, and the resistance of colonized peoples, including indigenous peoples, enslaved peoples, and settlers themselves. Greater detail has been added to the discussion of the dynamics of settlers in Africa and the colonized population, including the genocide of the Herero and Nama peoples in present-day Namibia. A more nuanced discussion of Darwin's work has also been added and clarifies Darwin's stance on the delineation of human "races." A new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** engages with the work of Arthur de Gobineau, whose work popularized a view of history where the major turning points could be explained by the relationships between "strong" and "weak" races. A new *Thinking About Connections* question prompts students to consider how beliefs about race influenced the support of European colonialism in the nineteenth century.

In Chapter 23, we continue to examine how the idea of race emerged with a new ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** featuring work from Madison Grant, an American who embraced scientific definitions of race. The section on Social Darwinism has been revised to emphasize how the concept deviates from Darwin's original theories. A new *Thinking About Connections* question asks students to consider how scientific racism continues to resonate in the present. Chapter 24 has been revised to discuss how non-Turkish minorities came to be persecuted as nationalism grew, with particular focus on the American genocide.

Chapter 25 includes revisions to the section on Hitler's economic plan for Nazi Germany, accompanied by a new image showing Nazi propaganda promising economic recovery. The section on Nazi Racism has been revised to connect the threads of conversation in earlier chapters about the long tradition of European racism with Hitler's own ideas of racial hierarchy and antisemitism. More details have been added to the sections on Jim Crow laws in the American South, the origins of the Great Depression, and the developments in physics that led to the development of the atomic bomb. Chapter 26 emphasizes the role of the French colonies in Africa as the roots of resistance against the Vichy government.

Chapter 27 has been revised with greater focus on the precarious position of the former European colonies after decolonization, including their vulnerability to extractive industries and the wealth inequality among Europeans and the diverse African populations. A new *Thinking About Connections* question asks students to consider the role of the United States and Europe in eastern European affairs during the Cold War and today. Revisions to Chapter 28 expand on the condition of Europe's colonies

after decolonization with particular focus on the legacy of colonial racism. A new ***Competing Viewpoints*** feature compares an article from German magazine *Der Spiegel* and bell hooks, who both invoked race in discussions of American popular music's social resonance in the second half of the 20th century, albeit in very different ways.

Chapter 29 brings both volumes to a close in a wide-ranging discussion that connects current events in Europe and the world to the deeper past. The *Core Objectives, Story Lines*, and *Chronology* have been updated to account for major world events including Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, and Russia's war in Ukraine. This final chapter discusses the economic and political turbulence of the first decades of the twenty-first century—the threat of terrorism, the global financial crisis of 2008, and the rise of populist political parties in Europe that challenge the goal of European integration—as an indication that the global order that emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War is now being transformed into something else whose contours remain as yet unclear. Political polarization and a weakening of democratic institutions in the United States has aggravated this uncertainty, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 threatens to upend it altogether. The conclusion invites students to place these very contemporary debates within the context of Europe's broader history, allowing them to connect what they have learned from the past to the world in which they themselves live.

Media Resources for Instructors and Students

History becomes an immersive experience for students using Norton's digital resources with *Western Civilizations*. The comprehensive ancillary package includes tools for teaching and learning that reinforce the *Core Objectives* from the narrative while building on the history skills introduced in the pedagogy throughout the book. This Twenty-First Edition features a groundbreaking suite of resources, including a Norton Illumine Ebook that shines light on student learning through engaging and motivational features that illuminate core concepts for students in a supportive, low-stakes environment; InQuizitive, Norton's award-winning formative adaptive system; and an extensive library of History Skills Tutorials to guide students in analysis and interpretation. Norton is unique in partnering exclusively with subject matter experts who teach the course to author these and other resources listed here. As a result, instructors have all the course materials they need to successfully manage their Western Civilizations course, whether they are teaching face-to-face, online, or in a hybrid setting.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Norton Illumine Ebook Norton's high-quality content shines brighter through engaging and motivational features that illuminate core concepts for all students in a supportive, accessible, and low-stakes environment. Embedded interactives engage students with applications and explorations of important course content and Check Your Understanding questions with rich feedback motivate students and build confidence in their learning. The active reading experience also includes the ability to highlight, take notes, search, read offline, and more. Instructors can promote student accountability by adding their own content and notes and through easy-to-use assignment tools in their LMS. Norton Ebooks can be viewed on—and synced among—all computers and mobile devices. Norton Ebooks are born accessible, which means we keep all learners in mind during the entire production process. The assignable *Western Civilizations* Norton Illumine Ebook includes the following enhanced features:

- **NEW** Check Your Understanding questions with rich answer-specific feedback that motivates students and builds confidence in their learning. Multiple-choice questions with rich answer-specific feedback appear at the end of each chapter section and provide students the opportunity to test their understanding of important material immediately after they first encounter it within the reading.
- **NEW** Competing Viewpoints interactives transform the popular primary source document feature in each chapter into an engaging integrative activity, including embedded interactive questions and feedback. One interactive in each chapter

includes an embedded audio reading of each document excerpt to help students engage with sources that may seem dense and unfamiliar, as well as embedded, pop-up annotations to provide reading support to students and help them better understand the trickier elements of the source excerpt. Interactive questions about each passage with rich answer-specific feedback prompt students to think critically about each primary source.
- Embedded author videos with the textbook authors give students a closer look at each chapter's essential developments, difficult concepts, and primary source documents. All videos are available with transcripts and closed captioning.
- Tool-tip key term definitions.
- Expandable images and maps.

InQuizitive is a groundbreaking, formative, and adaptive learning tool that improves student understanding of the core objectives in each chapter. Students receive personalized quiz questions on the topics with which they need the most help. Questions range from vocabulary and concepts to interactive maps and primary sources that challenge students to begin developing the skills necessary to do the work of a historian. Engaging, gamelike elements motivate students as they learn. As a result, students come to class better prepared to participate in discussions and activities.

History Skills Tutorials combine video and interactive assessments to teach students how to analyze sources. Three overview tutorials provide start-of-the-semester introductions to "Analyzing Primary Sources," "Analyzing Images," and "Analyzing Maps." Developed by Stacey Davis (Evergreen State), a library of tutorials for each chapter asks students to interpret a document, image, or map from their reading—with guided questions and explanatory author videos—and then relate that source to a key chapter theme. These tutorials give students the opportunity to practice and hone their critical analysis skills every week of the semester, and because each tutorial builds from a source, image, or map in each chapter, students can get the most from their textbooks.

Additional content on the Digital Landing Page (DLP) includes author videos and an Online Reader.

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES

Resources for your LMS

Easily add high-quality Norton digital resources to your online, hybrid, or lecture course. Get started building your course with our easy-to-use coursepack files; all activities can be accessed right within your existing learning management system, and many components are customizable.

- **NEW** Norton Illumine Ebook is an engaging and motivational digital version of the textbook that supports instructors and students by bringing learning to light.
- **InQuizitive** is Norton's award-winning, easy-to-use adaptive learning tool that personalizes the learning experience for students and helps them master—and retain—key learning objectives.
- **History Skills Tutorials** are interactive, online modules that provide practice and a framework for analyzing primary source documents, images, and maps.
- **Author Videos** on both *Core Objectives* and *Past and Present* feature topics from the reading.
- **Online Reader** offers hundreds of additional Primary Sources and supplemental Media Analysis Worksheets.
- **Flashcards** for each chapter, which can be flipped, printed, or downloaded, align key terms and events with brief descriptions and definitions.
- **Chapter Outlines** provide students with an opportunity to see at a glance what will be covered in the chapter.

Other instructor resources

- **Instructor's Manual** is designed to help instructors prepare lectures and exams and contains detailed chapter outlines, general discussion questions, document discussion questions, lecture objectives, interdisciplinary discussion topics, and recommended reading and film lists.
- **Test Bank** contains more than 2,000 multiple-choice, true/false, and essay questions. This edition of the Test Bank has been completely revised for content and accuracy. All test questions are now aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy for greater ease of assessment.
- **Lecture PowerPoint Slides** are ready-made presentations that provide comprehensive outlines of each chapter, as well as discussion prompts to encourage student comprehension and engagement. They can easily be customized to meet your presentation needs.
- **Graphic content** includes all of the art from the book available in JPEG and PowerPoint format for instructor use. Alt-text is provided for each item.

Acknowledgments

Our first experience as members of the *Western Civilizations* authorial team, working on the Seventeenth Edition, was a challenging and rewarding one. In our second edition, we were able to implement a number of useful and engaging changes to the content and structure of the book to make it even more compelling and student-friendly. In these and all subsequent editions, as we work to incorporate ongoing scholarship and engage with emerging historical questions, the third and this fourth edition, we continue to be very grateful for the expert assistance and support of the Norton team, especially that of our editor, Justin Cahill, and senior associate editor, Anna Olcott. Linda Feldman, our fabulous project editor, has driven the book beautifully through the manuscript process. Meanwhile, Mike Cullen and Julie Tesser did an excellent job of finding and securing many of the exact images we specified. Sean Mintus has efficiently marched us through the production process, masterfully orchestrating the many permutations of this text, both print and electronic. The wonderful Betsy Twitchell has been tirelessly developing the book's fantastic digital media, particularly in developing, with Julia Gossard (Utah State University), the exciting new interactive feature and Check Your Understanding questions in the Norton Illumine Ebook. Hillary Roegelein, Kate Brayton, and Jennifer Jussell have ably managed many other electronic ancillary materials. Finally, we want to thank Sarah England Bartley and social science specialists Julie Sindel, Alison Hodges, Susan Hood, and Carrie Polvino for spearheading the marketing and sales campaign for the revision.

We are also indebted to the numerous expert readers who commented on various chapters, offering important corrections and suggestions, thereby strengthening the book as a whole. We are thankful to our families for their patience and advice, and to our students, whose questions and comments over the years have been essential to the framing of this book. And we extend a special thanks to, and hope to hear from, all the teachers and students whom we might never meet: their engagement with this book will frame new understandings of our shared past and its bearing on our future.

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Western Civilizations

Their History & Their Culture

1

Early Civilizations

The battle is a chaotic flood of bodies, all drawn at a smaller scale than the pharaoh is. Other Egyptian warriors and trained lions attack the enemies, who are drawn darker.

Before You Read This Chapter

STORY LINES

- To study the earliest civilizations, historians interpret evidence from a diverse array of sources, many of them environmental, visual, and archaeological.
- All civilizations emerge as the result of complex historical processes specific to a time and place, yet share certain defining features.
- Prominent individuals can achieve power through the use of force, but maintaining power requires legitimacy.
- Those individuals wielding power in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt responded in different ways to the challenge of establishing legitimacy.

CHRONOLOGY

11,000 B.C.E.Neolithic Revolution begins

7500–5700 B.C.E.Çatalhöyük flourishes

6800–3000 B.C.E.Jericho flourishes

4300–2900 B.C.E.The rise of Uruk in Sumer

c. 3200 B.C.E.Development of writing

c. 3100 B.C.E.King Narmer unites Upper and Lower Egypt

2900–2500 B.C.E.Early Dynastic Period in Sumer

c. 2700 B.C.E.Reign of Gilgamesh

c. 2686–2160 B.C.E.Old Kingdom of Egypt

c. 2650 B.C.E.Imhotep engineers the Step Pyramid for King Djoser

c. 2350 B.C.E.Sargon of Akkad consolidates power in Sumer

2160–2055 B.C.E.First Intermediate Period in Egypt

2100–2000 B.C.E.Ziggurat of Ur constructed

2055–c. 1650 B.C.E.Middle Kingdom of Egypt

c. 1792–1750 B.C.E.Reign of Hammurabi

CORE OBJECTIVES

- **UNDERSTAND** the challenges involved in studying the distant past and the crucial importance of interdisciplinary methods and unconventional sources.
- **DEFINE** the key characteristics of any civilization.
- **IDENTIFY** the factors that shaped the earliest cities.
- **EXPLAIN** Hammurabi's tools for governing the cities of his empire.
- **DESCRIBE** the main differences between the Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations.

There was a time, the story goes, when all the peoples of the earth shared a common language and could accomplish great things. They developed new technologies and aspired to build a city with a tower reaching to the sky. But their god was troubled by

this, so he destroyed their civilization by making it impossible for them to understand each other's speech.

We know this as the story of Babel and its ill-fated tower. It was a legend that probably circulated among peoples of the ancient world for thousands of years. It then became part of the Hebrew book we call by its Greek name, Genesis: "the beginning." This story lets us glimpse some of the conditions in which early civilizations arose, and it also singles out the challenges that make it hard to study them. We no longer speak the same languages as those ancient peoples, just as we no longer have direct access to their experiences or beliefs.

Such foundational stories are usually called *myths*, and they are an early form of history. For the people who told them, these tales helped to make sense of the present by explaining the past. The story of Babel conveyed the message that human beings are powerful when they share a common goal, and what enables that interaction is civilization. To the peoples of the ancient world, the benefits of civilization—stability, government, art, writing, technology—were usually products of sedentary city life. The very word *civilization* derives from the Latin word *civis*, "city." Cities, however, became possible only as a result of innovations that began around the end of the last Ice Age, about 13,000 years ago, and that came to fruition some 8,000 years later. The history of civilization is therefore a short one. Within the study of humanity, which reaches back to the genus *Homo* in Africa some 1.7 million years ago, it is merely a blip on the radar screen. Even within the history of *Homo sapiens*, the species to which we all belong, and which evolved about 40,000 years ago, civilization is a very recent development.

The study of the earliest civilizations is both fascinating and difficult. Historians still do not understand why some of the first known cities should have developed in the region between the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers, in what is now Iraq. Once developed, however, the basic patterns of urban life quickly spread and proliferated. A network of trading connections linked early cities and other, more seasonal settlements, but intense competition for resources made alliances fragile and warfare frequent. Then, around the middle of the second millennium B.C.E. (that is, "Before the Common Era," equivalent to the Christian dating system B.C., "Before Christ"), rulers of these independent cities started to make broader claims to power over their citizens and other states. How this happened—and how we know that it happened—is the subject of Chapter 1.

BEFORE CIVILIZATION

More than 9,000 years ago, a settlement began to develop at Çatalhöyük (*CHUH-tal-hih-yik*) in Anatolia, in what is now south-central Turkey. Over the next 2,000 years, it grew to cover an area of thirty-three acres, within which some 8,000 inhabitants lived in more than 2,000 separate houses. If this seems small, consider that Çatalhöyük's population density was actually twice that of today's most densely populated city: Mumbai, India. It was so tightly packed that there were hardly any streets. Instead, each house was built immediately next to its neighbor and generally on top of a previous house. People entered their houses by walking across their neighbors' rooftops and climbing down ladders into their own living spaces.

The people of Çatalhöyük developed a highly organized society. They wove woolen cloth; they made kiln-fired pottery; they painted elaborate hunting scenes on the plaster-covered walls of their houses; they made weapons and tools from razor-sharp obsidian imported from the nearby Cappadocian mountains. They honored their ancestors with religious rites and buried their dead beneath the floors of their houses. As agriculturalists, they grew grains, peas, and lentils, and tended herds of domesticated sheep and goats. But they also hunted and foraged for food, and their society was egalitarian: both features common to the nomadic societies that existed at the same time. That is, both men and women did the same kinds of work, and there is no evidence of pronounced socioeconomic hierarchies. But despite their relatively diverse food supply, their life spans were very short. Men died, on average, at the age of thirty-four. Women, who bore the additional risks of childbirth, died around age thirty.

The basic features of life in Çatalhöyük are common to many societies that developed into, and alongside, early cities. But how, when, and why did such settlements emerge? And how do we have access to information about this remote past? The era before the appearance of written records, which begin to proliferate around 3200 B.C.E., is of far greater duration than the subsequent eras we are able to document—and no less important. But it requires special ingenuity to identify, collect, and interpret the evidence of the very distant past. In fact, historians have only just begun to explore the ways that climatology, neuroscience, and evolutionary biology can further illuminate this period, augmenting the older findings of paleontology, archaeology, and historical anthropology. The following summary of our knowledge, indeed, has been radically revised in recent years and may change still more.

Societies of the Stone Age

Primates with human characteristics originated in Africa 4 to 5 million years ago, and toolmaking hominids—our distant ancestors—evolved approximately 2 million years ago. Because these early people made most of their tools out of stone, all human

cultures flourishing before the fourth millennium B.C.E. (that is, the thousand years ending in 3000 B.C.E.) are designated as belonging to the Stone Age. This vast expanse of time is divided into the Paleolithic ("Old Stone") and the Neolithic ("New Stone") Eras, with the break between them falling around 11,000 B.C.E.

Long before modern humans made their appearance, recognizable human activities had already begun to leave traces on the landscape. Early humans in Africa were kindling and controlling fire, and using it to make tools, 164,000 years ago. The Neanderthals, a hominid species that flourished even earlier—about 200,000 years ago—made jewelry, painted on the walls of caves, and buried their dead in distinctive graves with meaningful objects such as horns (blown to make music) and, in one case, flowers. Scientists have recently discovered that Neanderthals were also capable of speech and that they began interbreeding with *Homo sapiens* around 60,000 years ago. How and why Neanderthals became extinct, around 40,000 years ago, is still a matter of intense debate.

CAVE PAINTINGS FROM LASCAUX. These paintings, which date to between 15,000 and 10,000 B.C.E., show several of the different species of animals that were hunted by people of the Ice Age. The largest animal depicted here, a species of long-horned cattle known as the *aurochs*, is now extinct.

Archaeology has shown that, about this time, the human societies that had long flourished in Africa began to migrate into the rest of the Afro-Eurasian landmass. This suggests a population explosion stemming from the fact that people were better nourished as a result of new technologies, especially the management of fire. In many

places, the subspecies *Homo sapiens sapiens* began to produce finely crafted and more-effective tools such as fishhooks, arrowheads, and sewing needles made from wood, antler, and bone.

The most astonishing evidence of these developments was produced by such tools were cave paintings like those at Lascaux and Chauvet (France)—some of which may be 30,000 years old. These amazing scenes were purposefully painted in recesses where acoustic resonance is greatest, and were probably intended to be experienced as part of multimedia musical ceremonies. (Flutes made from bone and ivory, dating to around 33,000 B.C.E., were found in a cave in southern Germany in 2008.) This is further evidence for the development of language and other sophisticated forms of communication.

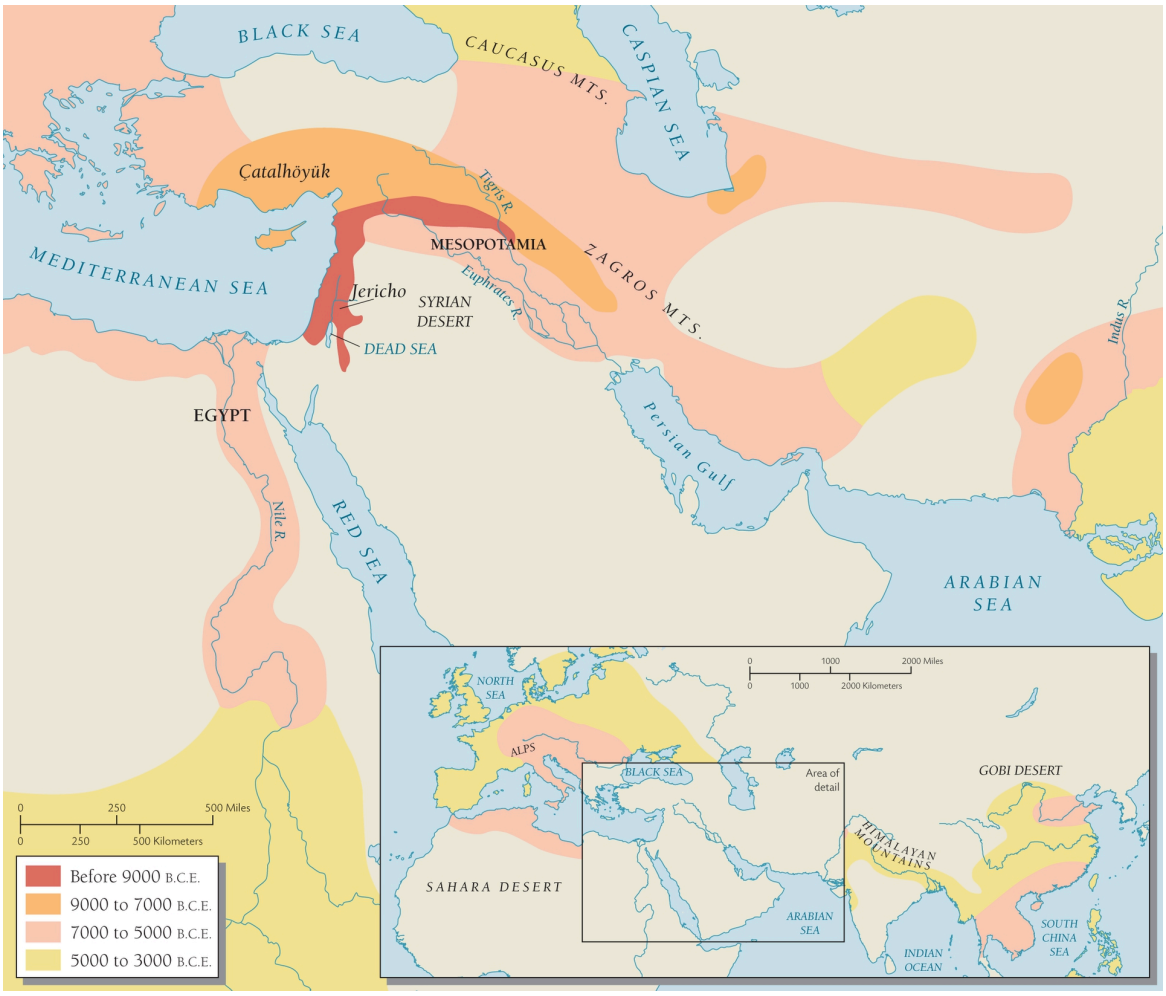
Despite these extraordinary changes, the basic patterns of human life altered slowly during this era. Many human societies were bands composed of a few dozen people who moved incessantly, or at least seasonally, in search of food. As a result, most such groups left no continuous archaeological record. Yet we can discern some of the social, economic, and political structures that make such subsistence societies different from those usually called “civilizations.” They had no domesticated pack animals to transport goods, so they could have no significant material possessions aside from basic tools. And because they could not accumulate goods over time, the distinctions of rank and status created by disparities in wealth could not develop. Hierarchical structures were therefore uncommon. When conflicts arose among members of a group, or resources became scarce, the solution probably was to divide and separate. Although it was once assumed that men did the hunting of game and women the gathering of other foodstuffs, these gendered presumptions do not reflect the complex realities of such societies, then or now.

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF CIVILIZATION

What changes or decisions led some societies to settle permanently and build longer-lasting cities? Around 11,000 B.C.E., evident developments brought about by climate change led to the growth of more managed food production, which in turn fostered settlements that could trade with each other—both locally and over long distances. As a result, it became possible for some communities and individuals, to accumulate and store wealth. This process, however, was often resisted or halted by groups that preferred to avoid hierarchical systems based on patriarchy or wealth. Surprising new research has revealed that this Neolithic Revolution was not embraced or advanced by all communities in the same ways, or at the same times.

The Neolithic Revolution: Humans in a New Environment

The artists who executed the cave paintings at places such as Lascaux and Chauvet were conditioned to survive in harsh climatic conditions. According to recent research, during the Last Glacial Maximum—when sheets of ice still covered much of northern Eurasia and North America—the average daily temperature was about 46° F (7.8° C). By 11,000 B.C.E., just before the decisive warming of the climate, temperatures in the Mediterranean basin averaged about 60° F (16° C) in the summer and about 30° F (–1° C) in the winter. Compare today's temperatures: in the city of Marseilles, not far from Lascaux, they now average about 86° F (30° C) in summer and 52° F (11° C) in winter. This means that cold-loving animals like reindeer, elk, wild boar, bison, and mountain goats abounded in regions now famous for their beaches and vineyards. But as the glaciers receded northward, these species retreated with them, all the way to Scandinavia. Some humans also migrated north with the game, while other groups crossed the Beringia Land Bridge (now the Bering Strait) from northern Asia to North America and began the population of the Western Hemisphere.



Before 9000 B.C.E., agricultural development was present in areas of the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea near Syria, Jericho, the Dead Sea, and eastward into a region of Mesopotamia between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Between 9000 and 7000 B.C.E., agriculture developed along the northern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, northern Mesopotamia, near the Indian River, and in small pockets south of the Caspian Sea. Between 7000 and 5000 B.C.E., agriculture began to develop widely to include most of Persia, Egypt along the Nile River, Southern Asia near the South Chinese Sea, Western Europe near the Alps, and Northern Africa. From 5000 to 3000 B.C.E., agriculture developed even further into the remaining areas of Western Europe, areas in India along the Ganges River, and Central China along the Yangtze and Yellow Rivers.

THE GROWTH OF AGRICULTURE. Examine the chronology of agriculture's development in this region. ***▪ What areas began cultivating crops first, and why? ▪ In what period did agriculture spread the most rapidly, and why? ▪ How might rivers have played a crucial role in the spread of farming technologies?***

Within a few thousand years after the end of the Ice Age, some societies—from North Africa to East Asia to South America—began to transition from subsistence food gathering to sustained food production. The warmer, wetter climate now allowed wild grains to flourish, greatly increasing the food supply and making settlements in these regions attractive. People increasingly domesticated livestock and cultivated plants. And yet, as recent research has revealed, most such farming was occasional or seasonal, taking advantage of retreating spring floods that left nutrients in the soil making it easier to cultivate. Such innovations did not, in many places, replace other sources of food, but they could be combined with hunting, foraging, and herding, as local conditions allowed.

This means that a long-held idea of civilizational development as a steady and uninterrupted march from settlement to urbanization has been proven wrong in just the past few years. Stable settlements sometimes grew into cities, but this process could take several thousand years. Still, it deserves to be called "revolutionary" because it would fundamentally alter patterns of existence that were millions of years old. It also marks a revolution in humans' impact on their environment, so much so that some scholars have argued that the Neolithic Age was the beginning of a new epoch in the history of our planet: the Anthropocene (from the Greek word for "human," *anthropos*). During this epoch—our epoch—slow-moving geological and natural climatological fluctuations came to be overtaken by intensive, large-scale human efforts to alter the earth's ecosystems. We will be paying close attention to this process and its intensification throughout the following chapters.

The revolutionary changes of this period thus produced new surpluses of food for the people of some communities, but they could also produce new social and gender inequalities. For example, well-nourished women in sedentary communities could bear more children than could women in hunter-gatherer groups, and so the women of some societies became increasingly sequestered from their male counterparts, who in turn gave up an equal role in childcare. Meanwhile, rapid increases in population could be countered by the rapid spread of infectious diseases. Early cities brought humans, animals, plants, and bacteria from many habitats into close companionship. The result was a rise in zoonotic diseases transmittable from animals to humans.

Eventually, increased fertility and birthrates could outweigh these factors, and in some places, human populations began to far exceed the wild food supply. They therefore had to increase the food-growing capacity of the land and to devise ways of preserving and storing food between harvests. Some peoples had learned to harvest and store wild grain as early as 11,500 B.C.E.; eventually they discovered that they could use this seed to produce even more grain the following year. Once humans began deliberate cultivation, they could support larger populations and also compensate for disasters (such as flooding) that might inhibit natural reseeding.

The cycle could then continue: intensified seeding and storage provided humans with the stable and predictable surpluses needed to support more domestic animals. This brought a host of additional benefits. It not only guaranteed a more reliable supply of

meat, milk, leather, wool, bone, and horn but it provided animal power to pull carts and plows and to power mills. However, it also resulted in a pattern of environmental engineering that produced devastating and unsustainable effects. In 2015, for example, a team of scientists calculated that the number of trees on earth has diminished by over 50 percent since the Neolithic Revolution began. The planet we inhabit now had already been fundamentally altered by human activities, even before the acceleration of anthropogenic (human-caused) climate change in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Seasonal Settlements and Walled Cities

The accelerating changes of this epoch are exemplified by towns such as Çatalhöyük, where farming was balanced with hunting and foraging. Thousands of new settlements grew up between 7500 and 3500 B.C.E. Some of them were seasonal, and yet marked by the construction of monumental, ritual architecture—for example, Göbekli Tepe, in modern Turkey, which dates from about 9000 B.C.E. (Stonehenge in Britain is another, later, example.) Other settlements can be classified as cities because they were centers of administration and commerce with a relatively large population, often protected by walls. One of these was Jericho, in the territory lying between modern Israel and Jordan. Jericho first emerged as a seasonal, grain-producing settlement; but by 6800 B.C.E. its inhabitants were undertaking a spectacular building program to protect their stored surplus of food. Many new dwellings were placed on stone foundations, and a massive stone wall was constructed around the western edge of the settlement. It included a circular tower whose excavated remains still reach to a height of thirty feet: a powerful expression of its builders' wealth, technical prowess, and political ambitions.

Tall stone pillars, laid at a specified distance from each other, provide support to each of the circular structures. Large and tall stone pillars are at the center.

GÖBEKLI TEPE: AN EARLY NEOLITHIC RITUAL SITE. Older than Stonehenge by at least 5,000 years, the massive stone pillars that still rise in southeastern Anatolia (Turkey) are the remains of multiple circular structures built on a rocky hilltop far from sources of water or any known settlement. It is thought to have been a sacred site and meeting place for nomadic peoples.

This wall and its tower served a growing and now permanent population: Jericho eventually covered at least eight acres and supported 3,000 people, so it was even more densely settled than Çatalhöyük. It was sustained by the intensive cultivation of recently domesticated strains of wheat and barley grown by farmers who were skilled irrigation engineers. Jericho's inhabitants also produced some of the earliest-known pottery, which enabled them to store grain, wine, and oils more effectively.

Pottery revolutionized cooking. For the first time, it was possible to produce nourishing stews and porridges, as well as fermented beverages such as beer. Pottery production was not only vital to ancient civilizations—it is vital to those who study them—for, as the techniques for making pottery spread throughout Eurasia, identifiable regional styles also developed. By studying the different varieties, archaeologists can construct a reasonably accurate chronology and trace the movements of goods and people.

New Economies and Societies

Jericho and Çatalhöyük illustrate the impact that stored agricultural surpluses have on human relations. In these settled societies, significant differences began to arise in the amount of wealth individuals could stockpile for themselves and their heirs. Dependence on agriculture also made it more difficult for individuals to split off from the community when disputes and inequities arose. The result was the emergence of a much more stratified society, with increased opportunities for a few powerful people to become dominant.

In some places, the emerging reliance on agriculture also meant a new dependence on the land and the weather, which led to bourgeoning speculations about the natural and supernatural forces governing the land's fertility. Some forces were believed to require special services and gifts, and the regular practice of ritual and sacrifice could sometimes elevate a priestly caste of individuals or families who seemed able to communicate with these forces. Such spiritual leadership was often allied to more worldly forms of power, including the capacity to lead war bands, enforce labor, exact tribute, and resolve disputes. Through their command of a community's spiritual, military, economic, and political structures, certain clans could establish themselves as a ruling class.

Trade was another important element in the development of early settlements. In the lands of the eastern and southern Mediterranean world, local trading networks were already well established around 9000 B.C.E., and by 5000 B.C.E. long-distance routes linked settlements throughout the region. Exotic goods and luxury items were the most frequent objects of exchange, including marine shells and semiprecious stones such as turquoise and lapis lazuli. Long-distance trade accelerated the exchange of ideas and information, and further increased social stratification: because status was enhanced by access to high-prestige goods, local elites sought to monopolize trade by organizing and controlling the production of commodities within their own communities and by regulating their export. Certain people could now devote at least a portion of their labor to pursuits beyond agriculture: making pottery or cloth, manufacturing weapons or tools, building houses and fortifications, or facilitating trade. The elites who fostered and exploited the labor of others eventually became specialized themselves, as full-time speculators and organizers, with the leisure and resources to engage in intellectual, artistic, and political pursuits. The building blocks of civilization had been laid.

Glossary

Neolithic Revolution
: The "New" Stone Age, which began around 11,000 B.C.E., saw new technological and social developments, including managed food production, the beginnings of permanent settlements, and the rapid intensification of trade.

Anthropocene

A term coined by geographers, geologists, and climate scientists to describe the era when human activities began to reshape earth's environment. Although some scholars contend that this epoch dates only as far back as the Industrial Revolution of the mid-nineteenth century, others date it from the Neolithic Revolution and the emergence of the earliest civilizations.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN MESOPOTAMIA

The Greeks called it Mesopotamia, the “Land between Rivers.” This land received about ten inches (25 cm) of rainfall per year. Its soils are sandy, and summer temperatures regularly exceeded 110° F (43° C). The two rivers supplying water—the Tigris and the Euphrates—were noted for their violence and unpredictability. Both were prone to flooding, and the Tigris was likely to jump its banks and change its course from year to year. It was in this challenging environment that the first urban society, the civilization of Sumer, flourished.

Early Ubaid Cities

The earliest cities of Mesopotamia were founded by the Ubaid peoples, so called because of their settlement at al-Ubaid (now in Iraq), around 5900 B.C.E. During this era, the headwaters of the Persian Gulf extended at least 100 miles farther inland than they do today, so some Ubaid settlements bordered on fertile marshlands, which enabled them to develop irrigation systems. Although these began as relatively simple channels and collection pools, Ubaid farmers quickly learned to build extensive canal systems, and to line pools with stone. They also constructed dikes and levees to control the seasonal flooding of the rivers and to direct the excess water into irrigation canals. Despite the hostile environment, Ubaid communities were soon producing surpluses sufficient to support specialists in construction, weaving, pottery making, metalwork, and trade: the typical occupations of a Neolithic society.

THE WHITE TEMPLE AT URUK, C. 3400 B.C.E. This temple may have been dedicated to the sky god, An, or designed to provide all the region's gods with a mountaintop home in a part of the world known for its level plains.

Yet there is also evidence of something distinctive in Ubaid culture: central structures that served religious, economic, and administrative functions. These are not found in Çatalhöyük or Jericho, or in other cities developing in this same era, such as Taljanky, in what is now Ukraine. Perhaps these structures began as shrines, or as ritual monuments like those at Göbekli Tepe and Stonehenge. They then became impressive temples that also served as storehouses, built of dried mud brick—like the bricks described in the story of the Tower of Babel that opens this chapter. (Unlike the plentiful stone used at Jericho, the scarcity of stone in Mesopotamia meant that builders had to be more resourceful.) From these structures a new political and priestly class emerged that acted as managers of the community's wealth and the complex irrigation systems that would make the civilizations of this region possible.

The Growth of Uruk, 4300–2900 B.C.E.

After about 4300 B.C.E., some Ubaid settlements developed into larger, more prosperous, and more organized communities that were also more stratified and unequal. The most famous of these, Uruk, is considered the first city-state of Sumer, the urbanized southern region of Mesopotamia. It seems to have owed its rapid growth to its importance as a religious center, exemplified by the White Temple, built between

3500 and 3300 B.C.E. This massive, sloping platform looms nearly forty feet above the surrounding flatlands, and its four corners are oriented toward the cardinal points of the compass. Atop the platform stands the temple itself, dressed in brick and originally painted a brilliant white. Such temples were eventually constructed in every Sumerian city, reflecting the central role that the ruling caste played in urban life.

By 3100 B.C.E. Uruk encompassed some six square kilometers (2.3 square miles), enclosing a population of 40,000 people within its massive brick walls. Rulers relied on enforced or enslaved labor to achieve a tenfold increase in grain production. According to recent anthropological research, rulers of early cities who wished to control the population and the food supply preferred the cultivation of cereal crops whose harvest could be closely overseen and whose grains could be precisely measured and taxed. This was one reason why many contemporary societies actively *resisted* the domination of agriculture and the rulers that managed it, understanding that intensive, monoculture farming was too demanding, wasteful, and subject to domination by predatory elites.

The Development of Writing in Sumer

Around 4000 B.C.E., the ruling elites of Sumerian cities were already using clay tokens to keep inventories of their accumulated wealth and, perhaps, to keep track of the labor force that produced it. Within a few centuries, they developed the practice of placing tokens inside hollow clay balls and inscribing, on the outside of each ball, the shapes of all the tokens it contained. By 3300 B.C.E., scribes had replaced these balls with flat clay tablets on which they incised symbols representing the tokens. These tablets made keeping the tokens themselves unnecessary, and they could also be archived for future reference or sent to other settlements as receipts or requests for goods.

Writing thus evolved as a practical recording technology to support economic pursuits, including the control of the urban population and the growth of long-distance trade. And because it existed to represent real things, its system of symbols—called pictograms—was also realistic: each pictogram resembled the thing it represented. Over time, however, a pictogram might be used not only to symbolize a physical object but also to evoke an idea associated with that object. For example, the symbol for a bowl of food, a *ninda*, might be used to express something more abstract, such as “nourishment” or “sustenance.” Pictograms also came to be associated with particular spoken sounds, or *phonemes*. Thus when a Sumerian scribe needed to employ the sound *ninda*, even as part of another word or a name, he would use the symbol for a bowl of food to represent that phoneme. Later, special marks were added to the symbol so that a reader could tell whether the writer meant it to represent the object itself, or an abstract concept, or a sound used in a context that might have nothing to do with food.

By 3100 B.C.E., Sumerian scribes also developed a specialized tool suited to the task of writing, a durable stylus made of reed. Because this stylus leaves an impression shaped like a wedge (in Latin, *cuneus*), this script is called cuneiform (*kyoo-NAY-i-*

form). With it, cuneiform symbols could be impressed more quickly into clay. But because the new stylus was not suited to drawing pictograms that accurately represented things, the symbols became even more abstract; eventually they barely resembled the original pictograms at all. Meanwhile, symbols were invented for every possible phonetic combination in the Sumerian language, reducing the number of necessary pictograms from about 1,200 to 600. Whereas the earliest pictograms could have been written and read by anyone, writing and reading now became specialized, powerful skills accessible only to a small and influential minority taught in designated scribal schools.

Despite the complicated nature of the script, cuneiform proved remarkably durable. For over 2,000 years it remained the principal writing system of antiquity, even in societies that did not speak the Sumerian language. Documents using the script were still being produced as late as the first century C.E. ("Common Era," equivalent to the traditional Christian practice of designating dates by A.D., for *Anno Domini*, "in the year of the Lord"). By about 2500 B.C.E., Sumerians were using writing for a wide variety of economic, religious, political, and artistic purposes. Tens of thousands of clay tablets still survive, which makes it possible for us to know a great deal more about the Sumerians than we do about any other human society before this time. We can better understand the social structures that shaped their lives, their attitudes toward their gods, and their changing political circumstances.

CUNEIFORM WRITING. The image on the left shows a Sumerian clay tablet from about 3000 B.C.E. Here, standardized pictures are beginning to represent concepts as well as things: notice the symbol *ninda* ("bowl of food") at the top. On the right is a clay tablet of accounts, also from Sumer, but dating from about 2350 B.C.E. It reveals the evolution of cuneiform into more abstract forms over many centuries. ▪ ***Why would such abstract pictograms have been easier to reproduce quickly than the earlier, more realistic images?***

Glossary

Mesopotamia
: The “land between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers,” where the civilization of Sumer, the first urban society, flourished.

cuneiform
: An early writing system that began to develop in Mesopotamia during the fourth millennium B.C.E. By 3100 B.C.E., its distinctive markings were impressed on clay tablets using a wedge-shaped stylus.

Sumerians
: The ancient inhabitants of southern Mesopotamia (modern Iraq and Kuwait) whose sophisticated civilization emerged around 4000 B.C.E.

THE CIVILIZATION OF SUMER

The great centers of Sumerian civilization—the cities of Uruk, Ur, Lagash, Eridu, and Kish—shared a common culture and language. But they also competed for natural resources, especially water, and sources of labor: rivalries that could lead to warfare and the raiding of smaller settlements. Access to arable land and trade routes were frequently at stake, and gradations of status and power within cities became increasingly marked.

In these societies, much of the economic production passed through great temple warehouses, where ruling elites gathered and redistributed the city's produce. During the third millennium, these great temples also began to control the production of textiles, employing thousands of enslaved people, mostly women and children. Temple elites began to play a key role in long-distance trade as both buyers and sellers of goods. Each Sumerian city therefore had its own gods and an aristocracy from which priests were drawn.

As much as half of the remaining population may have consisted of farming families who farmed only enough land to sustain themselves. The rest were dependents of the temple who worked as artisans or as agricultural laborers; many were enslaved (see ***Competing Viewpoints*** on page 12). Many were prisoners of war from other Sumerian city-states whose bondage was limited to three years, after which time an enslaved worker had to be released. But foreigners could be held indefinitely and were the property of their owners. They could be beaten, branded, bought, and sold like any other form of merchandise. In the pre-modern world, any person could potentially be enslaved for a variety of causes. It was not until the beginning of the modern era that slavery became closely linked to new ideas about race (see Chapter 14).

Competing Viewpoints

Inscribing Rule, Retribution, and Rights

> *The development of sedentary societies and early cities could lead to new forms of inequality, domination, and disagreement. The two accounts below testify to the ways that these stresses were handled by the elites of two different peoples. The first is an excerpt from a lengthy inscription added to a statue erected at the behest of Gudea, a powerful* lugal *of the Sumerian city of Lagash, around 2150 B.C.E. It describes Gudea's efforts to purify the city and build a new temple to his god, Ningirsu, and the effects of this initiative on the city's people. (Note that words in parentheses have to be inferred by scholars skilled in reading such inscriptions.) The second is from the Hebrew book of*

Exodus*, and describes the new laws that were written down to govern the sale of enslaved people and to facilitate the settling of scores in a society transitioning between nomadic and sedentary lifestyles.*

Gudea's New Temple

On the day when Ningirsu looked at his city with favor (and) called Gudea to be the faithful shepherd in the land, when he (Ningirsu) took him by the hand from the midst of the human multitude (lit. 216,000 men); (then) he sanctified the city, cleansed it with fire, established the brick mold, (and) selected the brick by extispicy [divination through the study of animal entrails].

The impure man who is frightening, the man inflamed with venereal disease, (and) the woman in (her impure) birth period went out of the city. No woman lifted a work basket, (but only) the cultic functionaries (or best warriors) built for him. He built the temple of Ningirsu in a pure place like Eridu. Whip did not crack, lash did not strike, (and) no mother struck her son (child). The governor, inspector, overseer, (and) foreman who stood over the work, the striking instrument in their hand(s) was (like) soft combed wool. In the city cemetery no hoe was used, no corpse was brought there, no cult singer brought his harp there, no one intoned lamentation music (and) no (hired female) mourner wailed a lament. Within the boundaries of Lagash no one who had a legal complaint brought a(nother) man to the tribunal, (and) no debt collector entered a(nother) man's house.

. . . A ruler had never built a temple fashioned in this manner for Ningirsu, (but) he (Gudea) surely did built it. He inscribed the (or "his") name (on the temple), made the long enduring important things (of the temple) shine in (their) splendor, and acted faithfully on the spoken word of Ningirsu.

He brought a diorite stone from the land of Magan (and) shaped it into this stone statue. "I built his temple for my king; life is my reward" he named it for him (Ningirsu) and brought it into the Eninnu [the temple] for him. (Then) Gudea gave (the following) command to the statue: "O Statue, when you speak to my king (say this): 'On the day when I built for him the Eninnu, his beloved temple, I remitted debts and washed all hands (of such obligations). For seven days no grain was ground, the slave girl was equal with her mistress, (and) the slave stood at his master's side. The unclean person in my city laid down (only) outside; I turned all evil back from their houses. I paid close attention to the laws of Nanshe and Ningirsu: the orphan was not given over to the wealthy man; the widow was not given over to the powerful man; (and) in the house with no (male) heir its daughter became its heir.' " He installed the statue with this command.

Source: "Late Third Millennium BCE Sumerian Texts," Richard Averbeck et al., trans., in *The Ancient Near East: Historical Sources in Translation*, ed. Mark W. Chavalas (Malden, MA: 2006), pp. 47–49.

The Book of Exodus

Now these are the ordinances which you shall set before them. When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing. If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's and he shall go out alone. But if the slave plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' then his master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for life.

When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. If she does not please her master, who has designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed; he shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt faithlessly with her. If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights. And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money.

Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him treacherously, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.

Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death.

Whoever steals a man, whether he sells him or is found in possession of him, shall be put to death.

Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death.

When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but keeps his bed, then if the man rises again and walks abroad with his staff, he that struck him shall be clear; only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall have him thoroughly healed.

When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod and the slave dies under his hand, he shall be punished. But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be punished; for the slave is his money.

When men strive together, and hurt a woman with child, so that there is a miscarriage, and yet no harm follows, the one who hurt her shall be fined, according as the woman's husband shall lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free for the eye's sake. If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free for the tooth's sake.

Source: Exodus 21:1–27, *Revised Standard Version of the Bible* (Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America: 1971), https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+21&version=RSV.

Questions for Analysis

1. What are the similarities and differences between these two societies, based on these accounts?
2. Which groups of people are excluded from Gudea's project, and which appear to benefit from it?
3. Carefully examine the ordinances set down in Exodus. What is the role of gender differences in this community?

The Fertile Crescent covered areas from Canaan, Lebanon, and northern Syria into Assyria, Akkad, Sumer, and Babylonia. Nineveh and Assur were on the northern Tigris River while Mari was on the northern Euphrates. Akkad was between the Tigris and Euphrates at the point where they run closest to each other, and Kish and Babylon were just south of that on the Euphrates. Further south, Lagash is between the rivers, and Uruk, Ubaid, and Ur are on the Euphrates. Eridu is located below these three cities, just outside of the Fertile Crescent in Chaldea.

THE FERTILE CRESCENT. Notice the proximity of Sumerian cities to rivers; consider the vital role played by the Tigris and the Euphrates in shaping the Mesopotamian civilizations. ***▪ How many Sumerian cities can you identify on the map? ▪ Why might Sumerian cities have been clustered so closely together? ▪ What challenges and opportunities did this present?***

Sumerian Kingship and Its Limits

Around 2900 B.C.E., competition for resources in Sumer intensified, and warfare among cities became more frequent. As a result, a new type of military leadership began to emerge. Historians call this era the Early Dynastic Period because it was dominated by powerful dynasties—families who held and handed down power—each headed by a warlord known as a *lugal*, a "big man." Unlike the ruling elites of the earlier, "Uruk Period," lugals did not represent themselves as humble servants of a city's god. Rather, they believed that success in battle had earned them the right to exploit the city's wealth for their own glory.

The most striking expression of this development is the Epic of Gilgamesh, a series of stories recited over many generations and eventually written down on cuneiform tablets: the first literary monument in world history. It recounts the exploits of a lugal named Gilgamesh, who probably lived in Uruk sometime around 2700 B.C.E. Gilgamesh earns his legendary reputation through military conquest and personal heroism, particularly in campaigns against nonurban societies. But he becomes so powerful that he ignores his own society's code of conduct. We hear at the start of the epic that his people complain about him because he keeps their sons away at war and shows no respect for the nobles, carousing with their wives and compromising their daughters; he also disrespects the priesthood and commits acts of sacrilege. So the people of Uruk pray to the gods for retribution, and the gods fashion a wild man named Enkidu to challenge Gilgamesh.

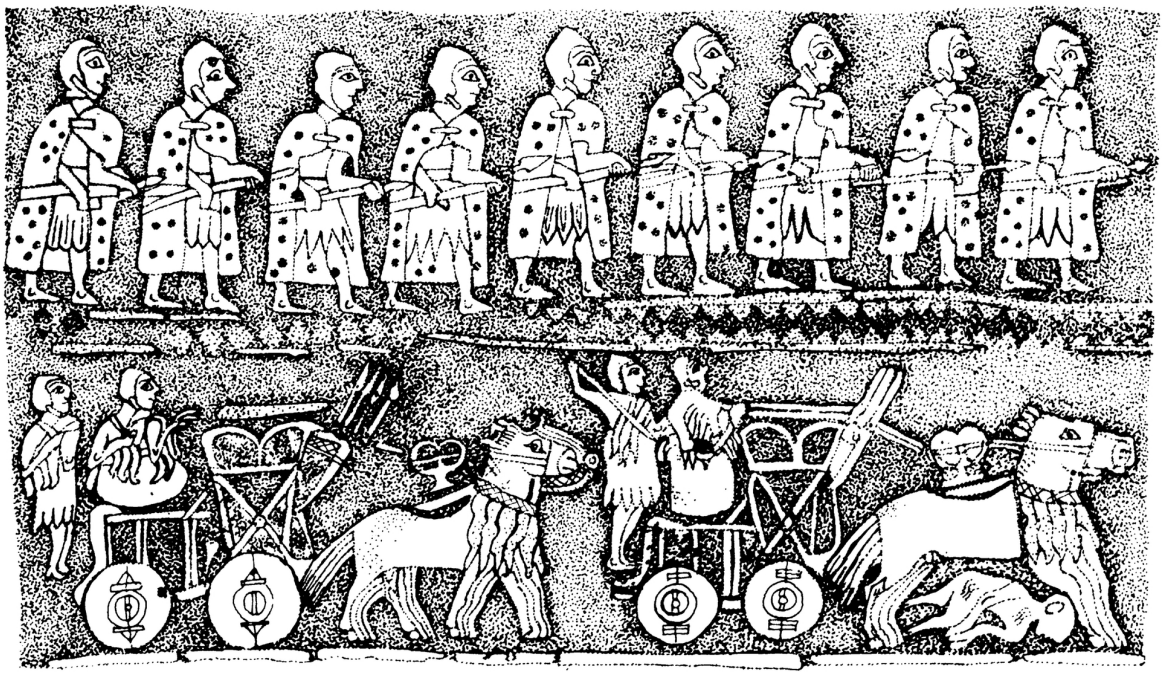
The confrontation between Gilgamesh and Enkidu reveals the core values of Sumerian society. Gilgamesh is a creature of the city; Enkidu is his uncivilized Other, like the hunter-gatherers who still subsisted in unclaimed wilderness lands between and around cities. But then Enkidu has a sexual encounter with a beguiling woman: his

urban initiation civilizes him, and this allows him to befriend the lord of Uruk. Together they have many adventures. But Enkidu is eventually killed by the goddess Inanna, who punishes the friends for mocking her powers. Gilgamesh, distraught with grief, searches for a magical medicinal plant that will revive his friend. He finds it at the bottom of a deep pool, only to have it stolen from him by a water snake. In the end, he is forced to confront the futility of all human effort. He becomes "The One Who Looked into the Depths," the name by which his story was known to Sumerians. The larger message seems to be that not even civilization can shield humans from the forces of nature and the inevitability of death.

Sumerian Hierarchies

During the Uruk Period, Sumerians had identified their gods with the capricious forces of the natural world. During the Early Dynastic Period, however, many societies came to imagine their gods as resembling the lugals who now lorded over their cities. From either perspective, Sumerians imagined their gods and their rulers as capricious and controlling, and humans as existing merely to provide them with food, clothing, and luxuries. This was, indeed, why the gods had created people in the first place. There was thus a reciprocal relationship: gods and lugals depended on their human servants to honor and sustain them; and in return, they occasionally bestowed gifts and favors on humans.

Some lugals therefore claimed to be the gods' representatives on earth, reigning as kings with special responsibilities and special privileges. They were thus set apart from all other men, including priests. But kings were also obliged to honor the gods through offerings, sacrifices, festivals, and massive building projects. Kings who neglected these duties, or who exalted themselves at the expense of the gods, were likely to bring disaster on themselves and their people or be actively resisted by citizen assemblies or popular rebellions. And even kings could not evade death, when the human body returned to clay and the soul crossed into the underworld, a place of silent darkness.



SUMERIAN WAR CHARIOTS. The earliest-known representation of the wheel, dating from about 2600 B.C.E., shows how wheels were fashioned from slabs of wood. (For a later Mesopotamian wheel with spokes, see the illustration on page 43.)

Sumerian Science and Technology

The Sumerians' worldview was colored by their adversarial relationship with their capricious surroundings. Because neither their gods nor their environment was trustworthy, Sumerians cultivated a high degree of self-reliance and ingenuity. These qualities made them the most technologically innovative people of the ancient world.

For example, despite the fact that their land had no mineral deposits, the Sumerians became skilled metallurgists. By 6000 B.C.E., a number of cultures throughout Eurasia had learned how to produce weapons and tools from copper. Mesopotamia itself has no copper, but by the Uruk Period (4300–2900 B.C.E.), trade routes were bringing raw copper ore into Sumer, where it was processed into weapons and tools. Shortly before 3000 B.C.E., perhaps starting in eastern Anatolia (now Turkey), people also discovered that copper could be alloyed with arsenic (or later, tin) to produce bronze. Bronze is almost as malleable as copper, and it pours more easily into molds; when cooled, it also maintains its rigidity and shape better than copper. For almost 2,000 years, until about 1200 B.C.E. and the development of techniques for smelting iron (see Chapter 2), bronze was the strongest metal known—the most useful and, in war, the deadliest. Like the ancient Greeks, we call this period the Bronze Age.

Along with writing and the making of bronze, the invention of the wheel was a fundamental technological achievement of this era. The Sumerians were using potter's wheels by the middle of the fourth millennium B.C.E. and could produce high-quality clay vessels in greater quantity than ever before. By around 3200 B.C.E., the Sumerians were also using two- and four-wheeled chariots and carts drawn by donkeys. (Horses were unknown in Mesopotamia until sometime between 2000 and 1700 B.C.E.) Chariots were another new and deadly military technology, giving warriors a tremendous advantage over armies on foot: the earliest depiction of their use, dating from 2600 B.C.E., shows one trampling an enemy. At the same time, wheeled carts dramatically increased the productivity of the Sumerian workforce.

The use of the wheel in pottery making may have suggested its use for vehicles, but such a connection is not inevitable. The ancient Egyptians, too, were using the potter's wheel by at least 2700 B.C.E., but they did not use the wheel for transport until a millennium later, when they learned the technique from Mesopotamia. In the Western Hemisphere, wheeled vehicles were unknown until the sixteenth century C.E., although the Incas had a sophisticated system of roads and probably used iron rollers to move huge blocks of stone for use in building projects. These two points of comparison help to explain why the wheel was probably invented by nomadic peoples living on the steppes of what is now Russia. By contrast, sedentary civilizations that can rely on the manpower of thousands, or that can transport heavy cargo by water, do not feel the same necessity for invention.

The Sumerians can also be credited with innovations that made the most of their scarce resources. An example is the seed drill, in use for two millennia before it was depicted on a stone tablet of the seventh century B.C.E. It is striking that this technology was unknown to any other Western civilization until the sixteenth century C.E., when Europeans adopted it from China; it would not be in general use until the nineteenth century of our era.

Timekeeping, Trade, and Travel

Other impressive Sumerian inventions derived from the study of mathematics. In order to construct their elaborate irrigation systems, the Sumerians had developed sophisticated measuring and surveying techniques as well as the art of mapmaking. Agricultural needs may also lie behind the lunar calendar they invented, which consisted of twelve months, six lasting 30 days and six lasting 29 days. Since this produced a year of only 354 days, the Sumerians eventually began to add a month to their calendars every few years in order to predict the recurrence of the seasons with sufficient accuracy.

The Sumerian practice of dividing time has lasted to the present day, not only in our notions of the 30-day month (which corresponds approximately with the phases of the moon) but also in our division of the hour into sixty minutes, each comprising sixty seconds. Mathematics also contributed to Sumerian architecture, enabling them to

build domes and arches thousands of years before the Romans would adopt and spread these architectural forms throughout the West.

Sumerian technology depended not only on ingenuity but also on the spread of information and raw materials through trade. Because their homeland was almost completely devoid of many natural resources, Sumerian pioneers traced routes up and down the rivers and into the hinterlands of Mesopotamia, following the tributaries of the Tigris and the Euphrates. They blazed trails across the deserts toward the west, where they interacted with and influenced the Egyptians. By sea, they traded with the peoples of the Persian Gulf and, directly or indirectly, with the civilizations of the Indus Valley (modern Pakistan and India). And, along with merchandise, they carried ideas: stories, art, the use of writing, and the whole cultural complex that arose from their way of life. The elements of civilization, which had fused in their urban crucible, would thus come together in many other places throughout the world.

In the top scene, a person stands in a counting pose while a bull walks behind. In the bottom scene, a seed drill is attached to a plow. The seed drill looks like a funnel attached to a tube that leads down to the ground just behind the plow blade. Also pictured are a palm tree with fruits, a square with circles at each corner, and a cone covered in a diamond pattern, which may represent a large palm tree.

A SUMERIAN PLOW WITH A SEED DRILL. Seed drills control the distribution of seed and ensure that it falls directly into the furrow made by the plow. By contrast, the method of sowing seed practiced elsewhere in the world—and as late as the nineteenth century in Europe and the Americas—was to broadcast the seed by throwing it out in handfuls. Sumerian-style plows were developed during the third millennium B.C.E. and were still being used in the seventh century B.C.E., when this black stone tablet was engraved. ▪ ***Think of what you have learned about the peoples of Sumer and their environment. Why would they have developed this technology?***

Glossary

Gilgamesh
: Sumerian ruler of the city of Uruk around 2700 B.C.E., Gilgamesh became the hero of one of the world's oldest epics, which circulated orally for nearly a millennium before being written down.

: The Sumerian term for king or ruler.

: The primary deity of the Sumerians.

: Suggests that Gudea rules with divine authority, serving as a tool of the gods to enact their will on earth.

: The act of divination, usually involving the inspection of animal entrails.

: Mesopotamians like Gudea believed that a purification ritual had to occur for every new temple. Gudea went so far as to ban all "impure" peoples from the city during the creation of this temple.

: During this period, no legal squabbling took place and no collections on debt were allowed to occur in order to create peace and harmony among the people.

: A very hard and dark stone—not available in Sumer and had to be imported.

: During this period, Gudea felt it was necessary to have a period of respite for the enslaved people and laborers and made them temporarily equal to their masters.

: Demonstrates how piously and carefully Gudea followed the laws of the gods.

: This passage reveals how ancient society understood slave ownership. The master, not the enslaved parents, held ownership of children. This would become a precedent followed in the early modern period, as well.

: In ancient society, children, especially daughters, were sometimes sold as future wives in order to settle a debt for the child's father.

: If the master to whom the girl is sold does not wish to make her his wife, her father can buy her back.

Establishing a law for premeditated murder.
Demonstrates the importance of respecting elders and society.
Becomes disabled.
The punishment will be equal to the crime.
Demonstrates the basic rights of all human beings, regardless of enslavement status.

THE FIRST EMPIRES?

Sumerian inscriptions and other writings suggest that competition among Mesopotamian cities reached a new level around 2500 B.C.E., as ambitious lugals vied to magnify themselves and their kingdoms. But much of this written evidence is misleading, telling us more about these rulers' mastery of rhetoric and writing than their actual control over their own citizen populations. Still, archaeological evidence from Ur showcases the extraordinary wealth of the city's ruling families during this period, so they certainly had a degree of real economic and political power. The dazzling armor and jewelry uncovered by many other excavations also reveal a shift in Sumerian ideas about the afterlife, since they presuppose a belief that one could enjoy such goods in perpetuity.

Yet no Sumerian lugal was likely to be able to impose centralized rule on his city, much less to control the settlements that he conquered. As a result, Sumer remained a collection of interdependent but mutually suspicious and vulnerable states whose rulers were unable to forge any lasting structures of authority. This would ultimately make the people of Sumer vulnerable to a new style of rulership imposed on them from the north, in the person of Sargon the Akkadian.

Around the hairline of the helmet are small holes, and the center of the carved metal ear is open to allow sound into the ear of the wearer.

OBJECTS FROM THE ROYAL TOMBS AT UR. On the left is a helmet made from an alloy of gold and silver. Its cloth lining would have been attached through the holes visible around the edges of the helmet. On the right is a queen's headdress made of gold leaf, lapis lazuli, and carnelian.

Nearest the forehead is a layer of overlapping circles, then slightly further up overlapping these are a row of leaves, then another row of leaves, then a row of differently shaped leaves, and a small semicircle of flowers made of semiprecious stones. At the back of the headdress is an upright comb with prongs whose each end carries an eight-petaled flower.

Sargon and the Akkadian Realm, 2350–2160 B.C.E.

The Akkadians were the predominant people of central Mesopotamia. Their Sumerian neighbors to the south had greatly influenced them, and they had adopted cuneiform script along with many other elements of Sumerian culture. Yet the Akkadians preserved their own Semitic language, which was part of the linguistic family that includes Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic, Ethiopic, and Assyrian. Sumerians tended to regard the Akkadians as uncivilized, but they feared the ruler whom the Akkadians called "great king": Sargon. Indeed, Sargon's inscriptions suggest that he was able to subject the cities of Sumer to his authority.

The success of his efforts could not have matched these claims, but Sargon appears to have consolidated certain powers at his capital city, Akkad, by around 2350 B.C.E. He also appears to have installed Akkadian-speaking governors in the cities under his control, where they would collect tribute and work to impose his will. Sargon was thus attempting to knit the independent cities of Mesopotamia into a larger political unit—what we now call an empire, a word derived from the Latin *imperium*, "command." This would have enabled him to manage and exploit the network of trade routes crisscrossing the region and to extend his influence from Ethiopia to India.

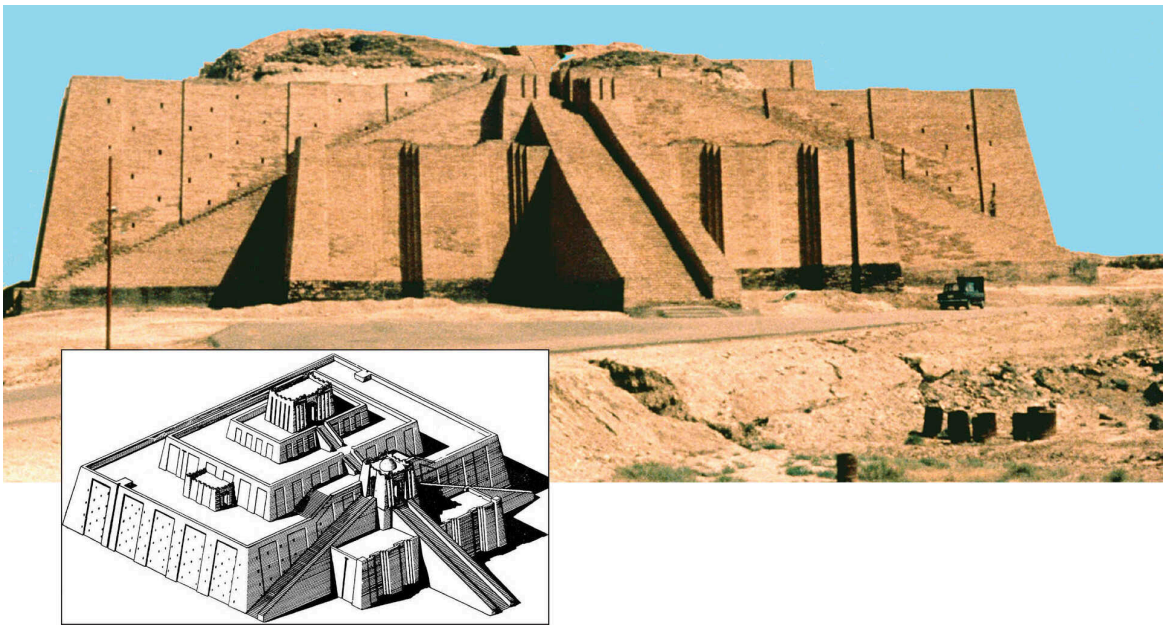
Although Sargon's imperialism was probably aspirational rather than actual, it does seem to have had an effect on Sumerian religion and culture. Sargon attempted to merge the Akkadian and Sumerian divinities, so that, for example, the Akkadian fertility goddess Ishtar became identified with the Sumerian goddess Inanna. He also tried to lessen the rivalry of Sumerian cities by appointing a single Akkadian high priest or priestess, often a member of his own family, to preside over several temples. His own daughter Enheduanna (*en-he-doo-AH-nah*) was high priestess of both Uruk and Ur, and her hymns in honor of Ishtar/Inanna are the earliest surviving works by a named author in world history.

The precedent that Enheduanna and her father established would continue even after the Sargonid dynasty finally fell: for several centuries thereafter, the kings of Sumer continued to appoint their daughters as high priestesses of Ur and Uruk. And by about 2200 B.C.E., most people in central and southern Mesopotamia would have been able to converse in the language of either the Sumerians or the Akkadians. Indeed, the two civilizations became virtually indistinguishable except for these different languages.

The Dynasty of Ur and the Amorites, 2100–1800 B.C.E.

After the death of Sargon's son and heir, Naram-Sin, Akkadian rule in the region dissolved. Around 2100 B.C.E., however, a new dynasty came to power in Ur under a king called Ur-Nammu and his son Shulgi. Ur-Nammu was responsible for the construction of the great ziggurat at Ur, which originally rose seventy feet (over 21 m) above the surrounding plain, and for many other architectural marvels. Shulgi continued his father's work, raiding the lands up to the Zagros Mountains northeast of Ur and demanding massive tribute payments from them; one collection site accounted for 350,000 sheep per year. Shulgi then built state-run textile-production facilities to process the wool. He also promulgated a code of law, calling for fair weights and measures, the protection of widows and orphans, and limitations on the death penalty for crimes.

While there was no mechanism for actually enforcing this code, Shulgi's commercial expansion of his realm and his patronage of art and literature established a pattern that influenced other rulers in the region for centuries to come. It also influenced newcomers known as the Amorites, a Semitic people (like the Akkadians) who (unlike the Akkadians) had largely been nomads and warriors. But now, some Amorite leaders began to gain control of the ancient cities of Mesopotamia.



The central staircase approaches from the northeast, with a side staircase approaching from the northwest and another from the southeast. All steps converge in the first portal, from which one can proceed up to the second, third, and fourth platforms through a northeast-facing staircase.

THE ZIGGURAT OF UR. Built around 2100 B.C.E., this great temple is the best-preserved structure of its kind. It is located at Nasiriyah, in what is now Iraq. Archaeological investigations (see diagram) reveal that its central shrine, the most

sacred part of the temple, was reached by climbing four sets of stairs and passing through a massive portal.

The Empire of Hammurabi

A rich archive of tablets found at the city of Mari (which eventually fell under his rule) testifies to his talents for the clever manipulation of his more powerful adversaries: for Hammurabi used writing itself as a weapon. He did not try to confront his mightier neighbors head on. Rather, through letters and embassies, double-dealing and cunning, he induced his stronger counterparts to fight each other. While other rulers exhausted their resources in costly wars, Hammurabi fanned their mutual hatred and skillfully portrayed himself as a friend and ally to all sides. Meanwhile, he quietly strengthened his kingdom, built up his army, and, when the time was right, fell on his depleted neighbors. By such policies, he transformed his small state into what historians call the Old Babylonian Empire.

Under Hammurabi's rule, Mesopotamia achieved a new degree of political integration that reached from the Persian Gulf into Assyria. The southern half of the region, formerly Sumer and Akkad, would henceforth be known as Babylonia. To help unify these territories, Hammurabi introduced another innovation, promoting the worship of the little-known patron god of Babylon, Marduk, and making him the ruler-god of his entire empire. Although he also paid homage to the ancient gods of Sumer and Akkad, Hammurabi made it clear that all his subjects now owed allegiance to Marduk.

The idea that political power derives from divine approval was nothing new, but Hammurabi's genius was to use Marduk's divine supremacy over all other gods to legitimize his own claim to rule, in Marduk's name, because he was king of Marduk's home city. Hammurabi thus became the first known ruler to launch wars of aggression justified in the name of his primary god. This set a precedent for colonial expansion that would become a characteristic feature of Western civilizations, which lies behind nearly all imperial ventures down to the present day.

Yet Hammurabi did not rely solely on religion to forge a kind of empire. Building on the precedents of past rulers, he also issued a collection of laws, copies of which were inscribed on stone and set up in public places throughout his realm. The example that survives is an eight-foot-tall *stele* (*STEH-leh*) made of gleaming black basalt, erected in the central marketplace of Babylon. The upper portion shows Hammurabi consulting with Shamash, the god of justice. The phallic form on which the laws were inscribed would have been immediately recognizable as a potent symbol of Hammurabi's authority, obvious even to those who could not read the laws themselves. (It still makes a strong impression on visitors to the Louvre museum in Paris.)

Hammurabi's decision to represent himself as a lawgiver was symbolically important—even if, like previous rulers, he had no effective mechanism for policing his state or

enforcing these laws. By collecting and codifying legal precedents, Hammurabi declared himself to be (as he stated in the code's preamble) "the shepherd of the people, the capable king"—not a lugal ruling through fear and caprice. This was setting a new standard of kingship and expressing a new vision of empire as a union of peoples subject to the same laws.

Law and Society in Hammurabi's Code

The Code of Hammurabi reveals a great deal about the structure and values of Babylonian society (see ***Analyzing Primary Sources*** on page 20). The organization of its 282 pronouncements offers insight into the kinds of litigation that Hammurabi and his officials regularly handled and also suggests the relative importance of these cases. It begins with legislation against false testimony (fraud or lying under oath) and theft, followed by laws regulating business deals; laws regulating the use of public resources, especially water; laws relating to taverns and brothels, most of which appear to have been run by women; laws relating to debt and slavery; many laws dealing with marriage, inheritance, divorce, and widows' rights; and, finally, laws punishing murder, violent assault, and even medical malpractice. What emerges is a fascinating picture of a complex urban society that required more-formal legislation than the accumulated customs of previous generations.

Most of these laws appear to be aimed at free commoners, who made up the bulk of the population. Above them was an aristocratic class, tied to the king's court and active in its bureaucracy, which controlled a great deal of the community's wealth; these were the palace officials, temple priests, high-ranking military officers, and rich merchants. Indeed, even legally free individuals were probably dependents of the palace or the temple in some way, or leased land from the estates of the powerful. They included laborers and artisans, small-scale merchants and farmers, and the minor political and religious officials.

Analyzing Primary Sources

The Code of Hammurabi

> *The laws of Hammurabi, published on the authority of this powerful king and set up in central places throughout the Old Babylonian Empire, were influenced both by the needs of an urban society and by older ideas of justice and punishment common among Semitic peoples. In its entirety, the code comprises 282 laws, beginning and ending with statements of Hammurabi's devotion to the gods, his peacekeeping mission, and his sense of his duties as king. The following excerpts are numbered so as to show the order in which these provisions appear on the stele that publicizes them.*

When the god Marduk commanded me to provide just ways for the people of the land in order to attain appropriate behavior, I established truth and justice as the declaration of the land. I enhanced the well-being of the people.

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1. If a man accuses another man and charges him with homicide but cannot bring proof against him, his accuser shall be killed.
2. If a man charges another man with practicing witchcraft but cannot bring proof against him, he who is charged with witchcraft shall go to the divine River Ordeal, he shall indeed submit to the divine River Ordeal; if the divine River Ordeal should overwhelm him, his accuser shall take full legal possession of his estate; if the divine River Ordeal should clear that man and should he survive, he who made the charge of witchcraft against him shall be killed; he who submitted to the divine River Ordeal shall take full legal possession of his accuser's estate.

   If a man comes forward to give false testimony in a case but cannot bring evidence for his accusation, if that case involves a capital offense, that man shall be killed.

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1. If a man steals valuables belonging to the god or to the palace, that man shall be killed, and also he who received the stolen goods from him shall be killed.
2. If a man should purchase silver, gold, a slave, a slave woman, an ox, a sheep, a donkey, or anything else whatsoever, from a son of a man or from a slave of a man without witnesses or a contract—or if he accepts the goods for safekeeping—that man is a thief, he shall be killed.
3. If a man steals an ox, a sheep, a donkey, a pig, or a boat—if it belongs either to the god or to the palace, he shall give thirtyfold; if it belongs to a commoner, he shall replace it tenfold; if the thief does not have anything to give, he shall be killed.

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1. If a man should enable a palace slave, a palace slave woman, a commoner's slave, or a commoner's slave woman to leave through the main city-gate, he shall be killed.

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1. If a man neglects to reinforce the embankment of the irrigation canal of his field and then a breach opens and allows the water to carry away the common irrigated area, the man in whose embankment the breach opened shall replace the grain whose loss he caused.

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1. If a merchant gives a trading agent grain, wool, oil, or any other commodity for local transactions, the trading agent shall collect a sealed receipt for each payment in silver that he gives to the merchant.

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1. If a man marries a wife but does not draw up a formal contract for her, she is not a wife.
2. If a man's wife should be seized lying with another male, they shall bind them and throw them into the water; if the wife's master allows his wife to live, then the king shall allow his subject [i.e., the other male] to live.

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1. If a woman repudiates her husband, and declares, "You will not have marital relations with me"—her circumstances shall be investigated by the authorities of her city quarter, and if she is circumspect and without fault, but her husband is wayward and disparages her greatly, that woman will not be subject to any penalty; she shall take her dowry and she shall depart for her father's house.

Source: Martha T. Roth, ed., *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor* (Atlanta: 1995), pp. 76–135 (excerpted).