

AP World History

- Unit 1 – Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt.

Unit 1 – Early Societies in Southwest Asia and the Indo-European Migrations/Early African Societies and the Bantu Migrations – Foundations (8000 B.C.E. – 600 C.E.)
Chapters 2-3 – Pages 31-89.

- Early Societies in Southwest Asia and the Indo-European Migrations.
- The Stone Age (known to scholars as the Paleolithic era) in human prehistory is the name given to the period between about 2.5 million and 20,000 years ago.
- It begins with the earliest human-like behaviors of crude stone tool manufacture, and ends with fully modern human hunting and gathering societies.
- The Neolithic period or New Stone Age was a period in human history when humans were still using stone tools, but they had started to settle in permanent encampments.
- This transition allowed people to create permanent towns and villages, and it paved the way to a more complex culture.
- In addition to growing crops, these early humans also started domesticating animals to work for them and to serve as sources of food.

Mesopotamia: "The Land between the Rivers"

- Historians do not all agree about the definition of civilization.
- Most accept the view that "a civilization is a culture which has attained a degree of complexity usually characterized by urban life."
- In other words, a civilization is a culture capable of sustaining a substantial number of specialists to cope with the economic, social, political, and religious needs of a populous society.
- Other characteristics usually present in a civilization include:
 - system of writing to keep records
 - monumental architecture in place of simple buildings
 - art that is representative of people and their activities
- As the human population grew rapidly due to increased yield, the administration of cities and states became necessary to handle the political and social affairs of large urban areas.
- All of these characteristics of civilization first appeared in Mesopotamia.
- Mesopotamia (Greek for "between the rivers")
- Around 4000 B.C.E., Mesopotamia developed the earliest urban culture in the region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.
- Elaborate irrigation system from the two river sources allowed the Mesopotamians to develop the arid area.
- Successful farming around the world's earliest city, Sumer, fostered its population growth to approximately 100,000 by 3000 B.C.E.
- Other Semitic groups, such as the Hebrews and Phoenicians, migrated to and settled in the region.

- Homework: Define – Semitic peoples
- Origins/groups
- Eventually, a dozen Sumerian states emerged that worked together but were politically separate.
- Ruled by absolute monarchs, each city-state was engaged in tax collection and governance of its population.
- Primary functions of the state included:
 - building palaces
 - ziggurats (temples)
 - irrigation systems
 - defensive walls
- The largest buildings were ziggurats, pyramid-temples that soared toward the heavens.
- Their sloping sides had terraces, or wide steps, that were sometimes planted with trees and shrubs.
- On top of each ziggurat stood a shrine to the chief god or goddess of the city.
- For example, the Sumerian god Ea, who was supreme at the ancient seaport of Eridu.
- He is "a creature endowed with reason, with a body like that of a fish, with feet below like those of a man, with a fish's tail".
- Sumerian cities were often rectangular in shape, surrounded by high, wide walls.
- Construction projects:
 - Ziggurats
 - Bridges
 - Palaces
- These projects were so elaborate that they required enormous numbers of laborers who had to be drafted by the state.

The Course of Empire

- As Mesopotamian city-states came into conflict with each other, some extended their control over weaker cities and developed into larger states.
- The late period of Mesopotamian city-states was punctuated by frequent warfare.
- Later, other Semitic peoples conquered the Sumerian cities and formed regional empires.
- The primary early Semitic ruler was Sargon of Akkad in the 23rd century B.C.E.
- Conquered Sumer and went on to establish an empire that extended from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea.
- How did Sargon maintain his empire?
 - A –
 - B –
 - C –
 - D –
- Around 2150 B.C.E., Sargon's empire had collapsed.
- Why?
 - A –

- B –
- Results of Sargon’s empire:
- Memory of his deeds were recorded in legends and histories.
- Inspired later conquerors to follow his example.
- The more important later ruler was the Babylonian King Hammurabi who improved administration with an extensive legal code built on previous regional laws.
- The foundation of the code was *lex talionis*, or the law of retribution, with punishments tied closely to offenses.
- So, the loss of an eye between equals demanded the loss of the offender’s eye.
- But the loss of an eye between different classes required more punishment for the lower-class offender and less for the upper-class offender.
- In reality, judges had some latitude to make their own decisions, but it set a strong precedent for the rule of law.
- If a merchant increases interest beyond that set by the king and collects it, that merchant will lose what was lent.
- If that woman has not kept herself chaste but enters another man's house, they shall convict the woman and cast her into the water.
- If he puts out the eye of a free man's slave or breaks the bone of a free man's slave, he shall pay half his price.
- If the slave of a free man strikes the cheek of a free man, they shall cut off his ear.'"
- If a free person helps a slave to escape, the free person will be put to death.
- What can you tell from the Hammurabic code about the social and family structure of Mesopotamia?
- What is the relationship between law and trade?
- Why did agricultural civilizations such as Babylon insist on harsh punishments for crimes?

Economic Specialization and Trade

- One early development in labor specialization occurred when the Mesopotamians learned how to combine tin and copper into bronze.
- By 4000 B.C.E., they had begun to fashion bronze into weapons.
- Later on, they developed bronze farm implements that replaced the wood and stone tools.
- But the expense of the relatively scarce tin and copper required to make bronze gave way to more easily mined and more durable iron.
- With iron technology, the Assyrians were able to conquer the entire region.
- Mesopotamians also devised extremely efficient transportation with the invention of the wheel.
- They improved sailing vessels so much that by 2300 B.C.E. Mesopotamians traded regularly with distant regions of the Indus Valley, Egypt, and Afghanistan.
- Bustling marketplaces drew buyers and sellers from near and far turned the cities into economic centers.
- Sumeria had many surplus products including:
- Corn

- Figs
- Pottery
- Fine wool and woven garments, to offer in exchange for what it most required from other countries.
- Artisans who practiced the same trade, such as weavers or carpenters, lived and worked in the same street.
- These shop-lined streets formed a bazaar, the ancestor of today's shopping mall.

The Emergence of a Stratified Patriarchal Society

- Government:
- Rival cities often battled for control of land and water.
- For protection, people turned to courageous and resourceful war leaders.
- Over time, these war leaders evolved into hereditary rulers.
- In each city-state, the ruler was responsible for maintaining the city walls and the irrigation systems.
- He led armies in war and enforced the laws.
- As government grew more complex, he employed scribes to carry out functions such as collecting taxes and keeping records.
- The ruler also had religious duties.
- He was seen as the chief servant of the gods and led ceremonies designed to please them.
- Continued accumulation of wealth led to more pronounced class distinctions in Mesopotamian cities.
- Royal family members had hereditary status and early monarchs were considered the children of gods.
- The nobility formed around the monarch with priests and priestesses closely connected to them.
- The role of priests was to intercede with the gods on behalf of the people.
- But the large temple complexes also brought in revenue and benefited both farmers and craftsmen attached to the religious lands.
- The lower classes consisted of free commoners and slaves with an intermediary class known as dependent clients who owned no property but were not slaves.
- All three lower classes were drafted into building the large construction projects but also engaged in agriculture.
- The commoners and dependent clients were taxed heavily to support the state and religion.
- Slaves were prisoners of war, indebted individuals, and convicted criminals who generally worked as domestic servants in wealthy households.
- Role of Women:
- In the earliest Sumerian myths, a mother-goddess was the central figure of creation.
- She may have reflected the honored role of mothers in early farming communities.
- An ancient proverb advised, "Pay heed to the word of your mother as though it were the word of a god."
- As large city-states emerged with the warrior leaders at their head, male gods who resembled early kings replaced the older mother-goddess.

- Still, in the early city-states, wives of rulers enjoyed special powers and duties.
- Some supervised palace workshops and ruled for the king when he was absent.
- One woman, Ku-Baba, became ruler herself, rising from the lowly position of tavern owner to establish a ruling family in Kish.
- Over time, as men gained more power and wealth, the status of women changed.
- Because they devoted their time to household duties and raising children, women became more dependent on men for their welfare.
- Mesopotamia became a patriarchal society.
- Men dominated public and home life and, legally, had the ability to sell their wives and children into slavery.
- Other laws also favored men over women.
- Nevertheless, individual women advised kings, managed large estates, and obtained a formal education that enabled them to become scribes.
- Women were also shopkeepers, bakers, and weavers.
- Eventually, men tightened control over women and decreased interactions between women and men outside their families to protect the family fortunes.
- By 1500 B.C.E., married women began to wear veils outside the home.
- Much later, this custom was adopted by Muslims in the region.
- Religion:
- Like most ancient peoples, the Sumerians were polytheistic, worshipping many gods.
- These gods were thought to control every aspect of life, especially the forces of nature.
- Sumerians believed that gods & goddesses behaved like ordinary people.
- They ate, drank, married, and raised families.
- Although the gods favored truth and justice, they were also responsible for violence and suffering.
- To Sumerians, their highest duty was to keep these divine beings happy and thereby ensure the safety of their city-state.
- Each city-state had its own special god or goddess to whom people prayed and offered sacrifices of animals, grain, and wine.
- People celebrated many holy days with ceremonies and processions.
- The most important ceremony occurred at the new year when the king sought and won the favor of Inanna, the life-giving goddess of love.
- The king participated in a symbolic marriage with the goddess.
- This ritual, Sumerians believed, would make the new year fruitful and prosperous.
- Like the Egyptians, the Sumerians believed in an afterlife.
- At death, they believed, a person descended into a grim underworld from which there was no release.
- The gloomy Sumerian view of an afterlife contrasts with the Egyptian vision.
- Possibly differences in geography help account for this contrast.

- The floods of the Tigris and Euphrates were less regular and more destructive than the Nile floods.
- As a result, Sumerians may have developed a more pessimistic view of the world.

The Development of Written Cultural Traditions

- Around 4500 B.C.E., the Mesopotamians began to develop the world's earliest written language for their commercial transactions and tax collection.
- The writing tool of cuneiform was a wedge-shaped stick used to make marks on tablets of wet clay.
- Early symbols were pictographs but later phonetic symbols were added.
- Since cuneiform writing required years of study and education (550 characters), most educated people became scribes or government officials.
- The development of writing enabled the Mesopotamians to transcribe their oral legends like the *Epic of Gilgamesh*.
- The Epic of Gilgamesh is, perhaps, the oldest written story on Earth.
- It was originally written on 12 clay tablets in cuneiform script.
- It is about the adventures of the historical King of Uruk (somewhere between 2750 and 2500 B.C.E.).
- King Gilgamesh of Uruk oppresses his people.
- As punishment, the gods send him a companion, Enkidu, who is his mirror image and becomes his good friend.
- Together, Gilgamesh and Enkidu defy the gods by killing the giant Humbaba, cutting down the sacred cedar forest which he guards, and killing the Bull of Heaven.
- Enkidu has ominous dreams of the destiny of tyrants who become slaves in the House of Death.
- Enkidu finally dies of an illness sent by the gods.
- Horrified by Enkidu's death and the prospect of his own demise, Gilgamesh undertakes a quest for immortality
- This brings him to the house of Utnapishtim, a virtuous man who obeys the gods and was saved by them from the Great Flood.
- Utnapishtim puts Gilgamesh to various tests which he fails and eventually sends him away, assuring him that he cannot escape death.
- A humbled Gilgamesh returns to Uruk and orders his story to be inscribed in stone.
- Epic criticizes:
 - Tyranny
 - Oppression
 - Violence
 - Conquest
 - ambitions of the powerful
- Promotes the values of a simple life of rest and enjoyment of the pleasures of human companionship, love, food, and drink.
- Another idea of the epic is a carpe diem ("seize the day") theme.
- Pro-nature, pro-environmentalist stance of the poem.

- Epic expresses a belief in a divine justice, order, or balance of things requiring punishment in kind for transgressions such as violence, cruelty, pride and the destruction of nature.
- The development of writing enabled the Mesopotamians to devise more sophisticated mathematics and sciences.
- Advanced math
- Astronomy
- Calendar was devised that broke the year into 12 months and hours into sixty minutes each consisting of sixty seconds.
- Used complex math to survey their vast agricultural lands.

The Broader Influence of Mesopotamian Society

- The Mesopotamians influenced many cultures outside their boundaries by the unique quality of their ideas and occasionally by force.
- Other societies adopted components of the Mesopotamian culture but maintained their own traditions as well.
- Hebrews, Israelites, and Jews
- The Hebrews were nomadic pastoralists who lived between Mesopotamia and Egypt but took on more of the cultural attributes of Mesopotamia than Egypt.
- For instance, early Hebrew law was derived from the principles of Hammurabi's code and tribal governance was abandoned for monarchies.
- Among the accomplishments of the Hebrews, the world's first permanent adoption of monotheism in place of polytheism.
- Early Hebrews had recognized the same gods as the Mesopotamians, but after 900 B.C.E., Moses embraced a single god, Yahweh.
- The development of a written Hebrew script allowed the history of the people, its belief system, and its legal code to be recorded in the Torah.
- Twelve tribes become Israelites
- Mesopotamian-style monarchs with Jerusalem as capital
- David (1000-970 B.C.E.) then Solomon (970-930 B.C.E.)
- Conquered by the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians, the Israelites eventually settled in Judea, maintained their monotheistic religion, and became known as Jews.
- Build distinct Jewish community in Judea with strong group identity
- Their religion later influenced both Christianity and Islam.
- The Phoenicians
- Settled in coastal cities along the Mediterranean, the Phoenicians developed a thriving trade network.
- The coastal land, though narrow, was fertile and supported farming.
- Still, the resourceful Phoenicians became best known for manufacturing and trade.
- Overland and maritime trade of timber and high-quality manufactured goods resulted in enormous prosperity for this small group.
- Phoenicians traded with people all around the Mediterranean Sea.
- To promote trade, they set up colonies in North Africa, Sicily, Sardinia, Rhodes, Cyprus and Spain.
- They were particularly well known for a desirable purple dye derived from a shellfish.

- It became the favorite color of royalty.
- They made glass from coastal sand.
- Phoenicians also used papyrus from Egypt to make scrolls, or rolls of paper, for books.
- The words Bible and bibliography come from the Phoenician city of Byblos.
- Eventually, their advanced ship technology allowed them to trade as far away as the British Isles and down to the Gulf of Guinea.
- Like the Hebrews, they adopted Mesopotamian culture, although they remained polytheistic.
- Their primary contributions to world culture was the development of a 22 symbol writing system based on the phonemes where each symbol represented a sound in the Phoenician language.
- As merchants, the Phoenicians needed a simple alphabet to ease the burden of keeping records.
- After further alterations by the Greeks and Romans, this alphabet became the one we use today!

The Indo-European Migrations

- The Mesopotamians developed relationships with diverse groups beyond the Middle East.
- The most significant of these were Indo-Europeans whose migrations across Eurasia profoundly affected world history.
- Indo-Europeans were originally herders from the Russian steppes.
- They domesticated horses about 4000 B.C.E. and once they obtained metallurgy and wheels from the Mesopotamians, they devised carts and chariots.
- With horse power and speed, the Indo-Europeans spread widely across Eurasia.
- They considered themselves superior and called themselves "nobility" or Aryans.
- As the Indo-European population increased, they spread further away from their homelands.
- Intermittent migrations occurred over two thousand years of early history.
- An Indo-European group, the Hittites, spread into the Middle East and conquered regions as far away as Egypt.
- They adopted the cuneiform writing and polytheistic gods of Mesopotamia.
- The Hittites greatly refined iron metallurgy and introduced the war chariot.
- Some also went as far as western China.
- And many went to Europe, invading the British Isles and the Baltic region as well as the more central areas of Europe.
- They depended upon agriculture or herding but did not build large states.
- However, Celts dominated the areas north of the Mediterranean in trade, religion, and agriculture.
- The Indo-Europeans also spread into India.
- The primary legacy of the Indo-Europeans was their language, the ancestor of most European languages and Sanskrit (classical language of India).

Early African Societies and the Bantu Migrations – Chapter 3 – Pages 59-84.

Early Agricultural Society in Africa

- By 10,000 B.C.E., the Sahara had become a grassland with rivers and lakes that sustained Sudanic peoples.
- Within a thousand years they had settled down to grow sorghum, followed by the cultivation of yams, gourds, watermelons, and cotton.
- They took on the domestication of sheep and goats from the Middle East.
- By 500 B.C.E. they had organized themselves into small monarchies with semi-divine kings.
- Their religion reflected the values of an agricultural society.
- Soon after, climatic change made the region hotter and drier so that people were forced to gather around the two remaining bodies of water, Lake Chad and the Nile River.
- When the Nile's annual spring floods receded, a layer of fertile soil was left that sustained agriculture in its valley.
- The lower Nile had a much larger floodplain than the upper Nile so Egyptians were able to take better advantage of the annual flooding than the Nubian people to the south.
- As Sudanic peoples moved north into the region, they brought cattle and donkeys, as well as African crops while the Egyptians borrowed grains like wheat and barley from the Mesopotamians.
- Eventually, irrigation methods improved and the Egyptians were able to expand their farming to higher areas away from the Nile.
- These fields required plowing and systems of dikes.
- By 4000 B.C.E., there were large numbers of Egyptian villages along the Nile.
- Both Egyptians and Nubians began as small bickering kingdoms, not unlike Mesopotamian city-states.
- But around 3100 B.C.E., a minor official named Menes unified Egypt into one large state with a centralized government.
- The Old Kingdom pharaohs were considered gods and deserving of massive tombs, so they built the pyramids to honor their remains.
- The Old Kingdom lasted until 2040 B.C.E. and was followed by the Middle Kingdom.
- Nubian states remained small and decentralized but closely intertwined with the Egyptian state.
- There were five military campaigns to conquer the Nubians.
- Pushed south by the attacks, later Nubian leaders established the strong state of Kush 700 kilometers south of Aswan.
- Interactions between the kingdom of Kush and Egypt became more cordial with trade, diplomatic regions, and Egyptian exploration.
- Nubian mercenaries became common in Egyptian armies and were assimilated into Egyptian society.
- Usually protected by vast deserts and the Mediterranean, Egypt was invaded once by the Hyksos, a Semitic people, at the end of the Middle Kingdom.
- Invented horse-drawn chariots and used them to defeat the Egyptians.
- Eventually, the Egyptians drove them out and formed the New Kingdom in 1550 B.C.E.

- The Egyptian bureaucracy vastly expanded in complexity during this period while the new pharaohs built many temples, palaces, and statues instead of pyramids.
- The New Kingdom reached imperial status when it conquered the coastal regions of the Mediterranean and down through Nubia.
- After the New Kingdom, Egypt began to decline and the Upper Nile fell to Nubian forces in 1100 B.C.E.
- Assyrians from Mesopotamia invaded the northern Nile valley in the seventh century B.C.E., starting a pattern of continual foreign domination.

The Formation of Complex Societies and Sophisticated Cultural Traditions

- Several large cities developed in Egypt that served as political, cultural, and economic centers.
 - Among them Memphis and Thebes were notable for their role in politics.
 - The Egyptians recognized one supreme ruler, the Pharaoh, so unlike Mesopotamia they never developed a noble class.
 - Instead the military and bureaucracy took over high social positions.
 - The society also included an urban middle class as well as peasants and slaves.
 - Nubian society developed similarly.
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- Egyptian women were relegated to lesser roles at home and in public although they had more authority than Mesopotamian women.
 - Nevertheless, some Egyptian women gained power as regents to young rulers and one, Queen Hapshetut, even attained the throne as a co-ruler.
 - But a woman as ruler was so disconcerting for Egyptians that artists depicted her with a beard.
 - Women in Egypt also priestesses and, in some cases, educated scribes.
 - In Nubia, however, there appear to have been many female rulers.
 - Nubia – *kandake* – female regent.
 - The Egyptians were slow to adopt metal tools and weapons, and only did so after the invasion of the Hyksos.
 - Sub-Saharan Africans independently developed techniques of iron mining and metallurgy as early as 900 B.C.E.
 - Most travel in Egypt occurred by boat but long-distance trade routes across land also existed.
 - Later, the Egyptians adopted wheeled vehicles from the Middle East.
 - Thriving trade networks developed to obtain luxury goods from Nubia, the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, and down through the Red Sea to Ethiopia (Punt).
 - Prized Egyptian goods such as cotton, pottery, and wines were traded in Nubia and Ethiopia for African ivory, ebony, animal skins, gold, and slaves.
 - The Egyptians had to import trees from the Middle East because they had few of their own.
 - Egyptian writing, possibly borrowed from the Mesopotamians, appeared in Egypt around 3200 B.C.E.
 - Written on paper-like papyrus sheets and carved into monuments, hieroglyphs were so cumbersome that an abbreviated form existed for everyday records.

- Hieratic script, everyday writing 2600-600 B.C.E.
- Demotic and Coptic scripts adapt Greek writing.
- Scribes live very privileged lives.
- Eventually, the Egyptians adopted the Greek alphabet.
- Early Nubian writing was in hieroglyph form.
- Eventually, Nubian scribes developed an alphabetic script of their own.
- The Egyptians were polytheistic although some deities such as sun gods Amon and Re became more important.
- Cult of Osiris:
 - Brother Seth murders Osiris and scatters his body.
 - Wife Isis gathers him up and gods restore him to life in underworld.
 - Becomes associated with Nile, crops, life/death, immortality.
 - Osiris judges the heart of the dead against the feather of truth.
 - Massive temple complexes that employed hundreds of people supported the worship of specific gods.
- A brief period of monotheism occurred during the reign of Akhenaten in 1473 B.C.E. but that was quickly suppressed by later pharaohs with the guidance of the priesthood.
- Mummification
 - At first only pharaohs are mummified (Old Kingdom).
 - Later ruling classes and wealthy can afford it.
 - Eventually commoners have it too (Middle and New Kingdom).
- Egyptian afterlife – PPT.
- Nubians combine Egyptian religions with their own.

Bantu Migrations and Early Agricultural Societies of Sub-Saharan Africa

- Bantu--language group from west central Africa.
- Live along banks of rivers; use canoes.
- Cultivate yams and oil palms.
- Live in clan-based villages.
- Trade with hunting/gathering forest people.
- Absorb much of the population of hunter/gather/fisher people.
- By 1000 B.C.E. occupy most of Africa south of the equator.
- Features of the Bantu:
 - Use canoes and settle along banks of rivers; spread from there.
 - Agricultural surplus causes them to move inland from rivers.
 - Become involved in trade.
- Bantu rate of migration increases after 1000 B.C.E. due to appearance of iron.
- Today, the language itself has differentiated into more than 500 distinct languages, each representing a different ethnic group.
- Along with language, Bantu methods of agriculture were spread into sub-Saharan Africa, bringing new crops and domesticated animals to wide regions of Africa.
- Most Bantu speakers lived in agricultural communities of several hundred individuals ruled by chiefs.
- Within the society, there were also age sets, groups of individuals about the same age, who wielded considerable political and military power.

- Bantu speakers believed in a creator god but primarily worshipped their ancestors and local spirits.
- It was necessary to keep these deities happy or disaster might occur.
- Bantu religious beliefs were quite flexible so when Bantus encountered different religious beliefs, components were incorporated into the belief system.