

This first chapter of *Traditions and Encounters* sets the stage for the drama of world history by tracing the development of humans from their earliest appearance on earth through the rise of important early civilizations and the development of key institutions and cultural practices. This chapter addresses the physical evolution and migration of the species, the revolutionary transformation from hunting and gathering to sedentary agriculture, the rise of enormously influential complex societies in Mesopotamia along the fertile river valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates, and the subsequent impact that Mesopotamian societies would have on other cultures in the region. As a result of this dramatic transformation

- An unprecedented population explosion occurred due to the increase in the food supply.
- Humans established permanent settlement in villages and, later, in cities.
- Social classes emerged as the result of labor specialization and the accumulation of wealth. The desire for the more sophisticated goods produced by specialists also helped to stimulate trade with other societies, and greatly expanding intercultural contact.
- Early societies in Mesopotamia developed governmental institutions to provide order and stability and to resolve disputes. These institutions evolved into hereditary kingships and, at times, into empires when states sought to expand their dominion to neighboring lands.
- Mesopotamian societies also developed important cultural traditions including increasingly elaborate religions and a system of writing that would endure for thousands of years.

1. The Transition to Agriculture

A. The Paleolithic Era

1. *Homo Sapiens*; Evolved As Early As 200,000 Years Ago

- a. Brain with large frontal regions for conscious and reflective thought
- b. Spread throughout Eurasia beginning > 100,000 years ago,
- c. Ice age land bridges enabled them to populate other continents
- d. The natural environment
 - (1) *Homo sapiens* used knives, spears, bows, and arrows
 - (2) Brought tremendous pressure on other species
- e. Probably little/no gender preference in hunter-gatherer society

What is the evidence that explains the earliest history of humans and the planet?

How is this evidence interpreted?

Where did humans first appear on Earth, and what were the characteristics of their society, technology, economy, and culture?

How did the earliest humans' society help them procure enough supplies to survive?

B. The Neolithic Era ~12,000-6,000 years ago

1. Neolithic era; new stone age; refined tools and agriculture
 - a. Neolithic women began systematic cultivation of plants
 - b. Neolithic men began to domesticate animals
2. The Early Spread of Agriculture ~ 9000 BCE
 - a. Agriculture emerged independently in several parts of the world
 - b. Merchants, migrants, and travelers spread food knowledge
 - c. Agriculture meant *more* work than hunting/gathering but steady, large supply of food
3. The Development of Social Distinctions
 - a. Agriculture created a (first ever) semi-permanent surplus of food, which led to
 - b. Specialization of labor, (in the first towns) and ...
 - c. Social distinctions, due to private land ownership
4. Çatal Hüyük, 5,000 people
 - a. far more complex social structure than any paleolithic band of hunter-gatherers
 - b. Prehistoric craft industries: pottery, metallurgy, and textiles

Why did the Neolithic Revolution start (at all)?

Where on the Earth did the Neolithic Revolution first transform human populations? (Plural answer)

What were the long-term demographic, social, political, and economic effects of the Neolithic Revolution?

What technological innovations are associated with the growth of agriculture?

2. The Quest for Order

A. Mesopotamia: "The Land between the Rivers"

1. Migrants to the area increase--especially Semites (Akkadian, Aramaic, Hebrew, Phoenician)
 - a. Sumer (in south) becomes population center
2. 1st cities emerge, 4000 BCE
 - a. Between 3200 and 2350 BCE, they evolve into city-states (control of surrounding region)
 - b. Governments sponsor building projects and irrigation
 - c. Attacks by others led to wall building and military development
 - d. Kingships evolve w/ cooperation of noble families

Where did the earliest civilizations develop, and why did they develop in those locations?

What is a "state?" Who ruled the early states, and which segments of society usually supported the ruler?

B. The Course of Empire

1. Sargon of Akkad (2370-2315 BCE) often considered “the” first emperor in world history.
 - a. Seizes trade routes and natural resources
 - b. Gradually empire weakens and collapses about 2000 BCE
2. Hammurabi (1792-1750 BCE)
 - a. Centralizes the bureaucracy and regulates taxation
 - b. Hammurabi’s Code: law of retribution and importance of social status
3. Assyrians (northern Mesopotamia), about 1300-612 BCE
 - a. Powerful army: professional officers (merit), chariots, archers, iron weapons
 - b. Unpopular rule leads to rebellions; ends 612 BCE
4. New Babylonian empire, 600-550 BCE
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar (605-562 BCE)
 - b. Hanging gardens of palace shows wealth and luxury

Why were some early states able to expand and conquering neighboring states?

What methods did rulers use to unify their populations?

3. The Formation of a Complex Society and Sophisticated Cultural Traditions

A. Economic Specialization and Trade

1. Bronze (made from copper and tin); used in weapons and later agricultural tools, beginning about 4000 BCE
2. Iron, cheaper and more widely available; used in weapons and tools, replaces bronze by 1000 BCE
3. Wheel (beginning about 3500 BCE) helped trade; carts can carry more goods further
4. Shipbuilding: maritime trade increases in all directions; network develops, trading w/ Indus (Pakistan/India) by 2300 BCE

Describe earliest humans’ technology & tools.

B. The Emergence of a Stratified Patriarchal Society

1. Social classes
 - a. Cities: more opportunities to accumulate wealth
 - b. Kings and nobles are highest class
 - c. Priests and priestesses rule temple communities with large incomes and staff
 - d. Free commoners (peasants), dependent clients (no property); pay taxes and labor on building projects
 - e. Slaves (POWs, criminals, debt servitude): domestic servants
2. Patriarchy
 - a. Hammurabi’s Code: men are head of the household
 - b. Women get fewer rights after 2000 BCE; by 1500 BCE are wearing veils

What were the social effects of the increased food supply caused by increase of agriculture?

C. The Development of Written Cultural Traditions

1. Cuneiform, Mesopotamian writing style, becomes standard
 - a. Reed stylus (wedge-shaped) pressed in clay then baked
 - b. Mostly commercial and tax documents
2. Education: vocational to be scribe or government official
3. Literature: astronomy, mathematics, abstract (religious and literary like *Epic of Gilgamesh*)

What forms of writing developed in ancient civilizations?

What was the relationship between literature and culture?

4. **The Broader Influence of Mesopotamian Society**A. Hebrews, Israelites, and Jews

1. Early Hebrews are pastoral nomads between Mesopotamia and Egypt (2nd millennium BCE)
 - a. Settle in some cities
 - b. Abraham leads group to Palestine 1850 BCE
 - c. Descendants borrow law of retribution and flood story from Mesopotamia
2. Some migrate to Egypt in 18th century BCE then back to Palestine with Moses
 - a. Twelve tribes become Israelites
 - b. Mesopotamian-style monarchs with Jerusalem as capital
 - c. David (1000-970 BCE.) then Solomon (970-930 BCE)
3. Moses (c. 1400 BCE) and monotheism
 - a. Ten Commandments: moral and ethical standards for followers
 - b. Compilation of teachings into Torah (1000-400 BCE)
4. Assyrians conquer
 - a. Conquer Israel in north and Judah in south and destroy Jerusalem
 - b. Deportees return to Judea; become known as Jews (586 BCE) build distinct Jewish community in Judea with strong group identity

What pre-600 BCE religions strongly influenced later eras?

B. The Phoenicians

1. 1st settlers about 3000 BCE; develop into kingdoms of independent city-states
2. Little agriculture; live on trade and communications networks
 - a. Overland trade to Mesopotamia; influence on culture
 - b. Sea trade most important; get raw materials, trade for manufactured goods
3. Have early alphabetical script (1500 BCE)

What forms of writing developed in ancient civilizations?

5. The Indo-European Migrations

A. Indo-European Origins

1. Linguists discover similarities between many languages; they must be related
2. Originate in steppes of central Asia; pastoral people; 4500-2500 BCE
3. Domesticate horses; learn to ride; use horses with carts, then chariots

How did pastoral societies resemble or differ from early agricultural societies?

B. Indo-European Expansion and Its Effects

1. Indo-European society breaks up about 3000 BCE; peoples gradually migrate
2. Hittites settle in central Anatolia about 2000 BCE
 - a. Build powerful kingdoms, conquer Babylonian empire 1595 BCE, and dissolve by about 1200 BCE
 - b. Technology: light horse-drawn chariots (spokes) and iron metallurgy
3. Some migrate into central Asia by 2000 BCE
4. Other migrations: Greece, Italy, central Europe, western Europe, Britain
 - a. All pastoral agriculturalists
 - b. All speak related languages and worship similar deities
5. Later wave(s) of migrations to Iran and India ("Aryan")

Where did pastoralism persist even after the Neolithic Revolution?