

University of Algiers 3
Faculty of information and communication sciences
Communication section



**LECTURES IN THE INTRODUCTION
TO THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT
CIVILISATIONS**

A pedagogical publication for undergraduate students



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I. Informations about the Module:

Title: introduction to the ancient Civilizations

Targeted students: first year, Licence

Course content:

Through this course, the students will explore the history of the most influential civilizations, and those who have shaped the present of humanity. Studying ancient civilizations allows the students to understand where Humanity comes from, and it gives an explanation of modern ideas and issues in order to have a better understanding of the world. Rather than memorizing dates or names, the student should distill the essence of each civilization and understand the transition from the ancient world to the modern. Lectures emphasize the political and economic underpinnings of society, while readings focus on daily life and thought of the folk. Class time will be divided between lectures and discussions based on the readings and handouts.

This course is essential for students in the information and communication sciences field since it enhances their general culture about nations, ethnic groups, geography, religions, and the economy...

Nature of the unit: Expeditionary unit

I. General objectives:

At the end of the semester, the student will be able to:

- Know the basic concepts
- Understand: the evolution of human civilization, differences and similarities between ancient civilization
- Analyze: the impact of ancient civilizations on each other, and their impact on modern civilizations.

II. Programme of The Module:

Chapter 1: Key Words and Definitions in the Study of Civilization

- Introduction to Civilization
- Understanding Culture

- Oikomen: A Concept in Ancient Civilizations
- Prehistoric inventions

Chapter 2: The Time and Spatial Framework for the Emergence of Civilizations.

Chapter 3: Civilizations of Western South Asia and Egypt (Dawn of Time and Inventions Preceding Civilization)

Chapter 4: Material and Literary Sources for The Study of Civilization

- Material sources
- Literary sources.

Chapter 5: Mesopotamia Civilization.

- The major stages (the Sumerians, the Acadians, the Babylonians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans).
- Manifestations of civilization (religion - system of government - economy)

Chapter 6: Civilization of Persia and Elam:

- Origin
- Religious life
- Political life
- Economy

Chapter 7: The Ancient civilization of Syria:

- The Hittites and the peoples of Syria.
- Political and religious appearances.

- Economic life.

Chapter 8: The Pharaonic Civilization of Egypt

- Origin, development, and decline.
- Governance system.
- Religion and priesthood.
- Army
- Economy

Chapter 1: Key Words and Definitions in the Study of Civilization

1. Introduction to Civilization

1.1. Civilization: Definition, and History:

1.1.1. Definition of Civilization:

Civilization is a characteristic of people; it is one of the things that set human beings apart from other species. While it is true that all living things form societies, it is only human beings who have a civilization. A civilization provides man with numerous basic needs and wants

scholars have differences in opinions on a wide range of issues pertaining to civilization. Their differing understandings are the reason for the different definitions of the term civilization.

Some people think civilization is an advanced stage in the progression of human cultural evolution. But, when historians or anthropologists use the term civilization, they mean a society has many different, interconnected parts.

So, Civilization is a complex concept with various definitions depending on the specific field of study. Here's a breakdown of some key definitions:

Definition 1: A civilization is a complex culture in which large numbers of people share a variety of common elements. Historians have identified a number of basic characteristics, including the following:

1. An urban focus. Cities became the centers for political, economic, social, cultural, and religious development.

2. New political and military structures. An organized government bureaucracy arose...armies were organized to gain land and power for defense

3. A new social structure based on economic power.

4. The development of more complexity in a material sense. Surpluses of agricultural crops freed people to work in occupations other than farming. ... as urban populations exported finished goods in exchange for raw materials from neighboring populations, organized trade grew substantially.

5. A distinct religious structure

6. The development of writing.

7. New forms of significant artistic and intellectual activity. For example, monumental architectural structures. (¹)

Definition 2: In the ancient world, residents of cities generally viewed themselves as more advanced and sophisticated than rural folk – a judgment still made today. Beginning in the 18th century, European scholars described those societies in which political, economic, and social organizations operated on a large scale, not primarily through families and kin groups, as “civilizations”. Civilizations had cities; laws that governed human relationships; codes of manners and social conduct that regulated how people were to behave; and scientific, philosophical and theological ideas that explained the larger world. Generally, only societies that used writing were judged to be civilizations, for writing allowed laws, norms, ideas, and traditions to become more complex. ... The idea of a civilization came to mean not simply a system of political and social organization, but also particular ways of thinking and believing, particular styles of art, and other facets of culture. (²)

Definition 3:Quote from Gandhi: “Let us first consider what state of things is described by the word ‘civilization’. Its true test lies in the fact that people living in it make bodily welfare the object of life. The people of Europe today live in better-built houses than they did a hundred years ago. This is considered an emblem of civilization and this also matter to promote bodily happiness. ... This is civilization. Formerly, men worked in the open air only as much as they liked. Now thousands of workmen meet together and for the sake of maintenance work in factories or mines.” (³)

Definition 4: There is no single, universally accepted definition of civilization. However, it is generally understood to be a complex society that has developed advanced forms of government, culture, industry, and social organization.”(⁴)

¹- Duiker & Spielvogel, World History, 2016, p. 8

²- McKay, Hill, et al., A History of World Societies, 2012, p. 36

³- Hansen & Curtis, Voyages in World History, 2017, p. 860-861

⁴- J. Krejčí, The Paths of Civilization © Jaroslav Krejčí ,2004, p 17.

"There is no one agreed-upon definition of civilization, but it is generally understood to be a complex society with highly developed material and cultural achievements. Civilizations are often characterized by the development of cities, governments, laws, religions, and arts."⁽¹⁾

Definition 5: The word civilization refers to 'a high stage of social and cultural development, as in a society with many complex industries and a highly educated citizenry.' At this point, it is known that the earliest civilizations appeared in Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq) around 3000 BC. These early societies were characterized by intensive farming, an extensive economy, coordinated and effective political institutions, commerce that ranged across the world, mathematics and technical skills. Individuals in these societies could enjoy personal freedom and social mobility."⁽²⁾

Definition 6: The word civilization refers to the process of social and cultural development from a particular point of view. A civilization is a society characterized by advanced communication and material culture more than 3,000 years old, usually including urban living with defined classes of society, government, property and law."⁽³⁾

Definition 7: A civilization is not a static concept; it grows and develops with the passage of time as new knowledge is created in its territory. Within each civilization, there are differing cultures that have their own self-definition about what constitutes that civilization's culture or values."⁽⁴⁾

"The word civilization refers to a set of traits that distinguishes between a pastoral society and an urban industrial society."⁽⁵⁾

Generic Definition: "The presence of a formal knowledge system, together with the people subscribing to it."

¹-Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 23.

² - Hord, John K. (1992) "Civilization: A Definition Part II. The Nature of Formal Knowledge Systems," *Comparative Civilizations Review*: Vol. 26 : No. 26, Article 6, p. 22.

³- Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Civilizations: Culture, Ambition, and the Transformation of Nature*, Macmillan, 2001, p. 45.

⁴ - Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Simon & Schuster, 1996, p. 41.

⁵ - J.R. McNeill and William H. McNeill, *The Human Web: A Bird's-Eye View of World History*, W.W. Norton & Company, 2003, p. 52.

Individual Specimen:"A formal knowledge system or interacting group thereof, with the people subscribing to it/them, which as a group recognize the same procedures (rules and institutions for change) as valid and binding."⁽¹⁾

These definitions highlight civilization as primarily centered around formal knowledge systems and the collective adherence to established procedures by the people within that civilization.

Civilization is the stage of human social development and organization that is considered most advanced. A civilization can also be defined as a complex culture with five significant characteristics: advanced cities, specialized workers, complex institutions, record keeping, and advanced technology. ⁽²⁾

Ibn Khaldun defined civilization as ‘the mastery of luxury and the perfection of the crafts used in its faces and aspects, such as kitchens, clothes, buildings, furnishings, buildings and other customs and conditions of the house.’ He also defined it within the social and historical framework as reaching the summit of urbanization, cultural and personal development of society and entering the social progress, as civilization in his view is the end of urbanization. Ibn Khaldun was influenced by the culture and terminology of his time, which is different from it now, and he may sometimes be inaccurate in terms and concepts, and this is evident in the word civilization when he uses the word state in the sense of civilization, but this is due to the terminology and its difference between eras, as he did not expect that the language would evolve and differ from one era to another. [³]

1.1. 2.History Of Civilization:

The question of how the first civilization began is popular among the historians and anthropologists. While it is impossible to pinpoint the year when civilization began, it is theorized that the beginning of civilization was when:

Firstly, farming was invented. Farming was the basis of early civilizations; it is the backbone of many things believed to have contributed to the emergence and development of civilizations in the past.

¹ - Hord, John K. (1992) "Civilization: A Definition Part II. The Nature of Formal Knowledge Systems," Comparative Civilizations Review: Vol. 26 : No. 26 , Article 6.p 22

² - What is a Civilization? World History Book Home, US History Book Home,
<https://www.studentsofhistory.com/characteristics-of-a-civilization>

³-ابن خلدون (1988)، ديوان المبتدأ والخبر في تاريخ العرب والبربر ومن عاصرهم من ذوي الشأن الأكبر (الطبعة الثانية)، بيروت: دار الفكر، ص 216.

It is believed that farming started in Mesopotamia then in Egypt: “What we call civilization arose some five thousand years ago in the Near East (in Mesopotamia and Egypt) and then later in the Far East (in India and China).” ⁽¹⁾ Egypt and China are believed to be the cradle of human civilizations.

There are two kinds of farming: rain-fed or dryland farming and wetland farming. The former is the production of crops by relying on rainfall. The latter is the production of crops using irrigation to maintain regular production. Irrigation is a method of supplying water to plants at regular intervals. The first civilizations had certain features in common. For example, they emerged along river valleys. This made it possible for them to sustain farming. Rivers were also indispensable means of transportation of goods over long distances (long-distance trade); they promoted long-distance trade, which was important factor in connecting different civilizations and stimulating their advancement. Also as mentioned in the Qur’an: “Do not the Unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before we clove them asunder? We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?” (Qur’an 21:30). It means, without water there would be no life on the earth. Besides providing water, rivers also provided fish for consumption. In ancient Egypt people lived along the Nile. It is as true today as it ever was. Today, rivers are crucial to hydroelectric power creation, the best source of electricity on earth. Electricity is the most important form of energy that has propelled the economic advancement of present-day civilization. It has, among others, contributed to higher agricultural and industrial production. The dependence of the present-day civilization on electricity makes it part and parcel of human life. ⁽²⁾

Introduction of farming was essential to the invention of tools made out of wood or stone. Tools were needed for cultivating the soil, trapping, killing and skinning animals, making clothes, etc. Therefore, with the invention of farming the need for metal production arose, which subsequently led to the emergence of a group of people specializing in artisanship – the artisans.

¹-Marvin Perry et al, *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics & Society*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, fifth edition, 1996, p.9.

²-Kabuye uthmansulaiman, *civilization: history, description, common characteristics and importance*, journal of education and social sciences, vol. 5, (october 2016), p 28.

Farming was also essential to the establishment of permanent settlements, population growth and development of cities (urbanization) and villages. It also minimized foraging, collecting wild plants and pursuing wild animals for food and yielded surplus (bountiful harvest or regular food supply). Additionally, farming was vital to technological development, particularly tool-making technology, a factor which led to advances in agriculture.¹

Secondly, people settled down, when they established permanent settlements. This triggered population growth and raised the need for establishment of social, economic and political systems whose objective is to provide solution to the problem of living in a permanent settlement or large community. Permanent settlements eventually led to the establishment of city-states or the rise of kings and bureaucrats. The sole factor that made permanent settlement possible was farming.

Thirdly, people engaged in specialized, non-food-producing activities, as craftsmen, scribes, artisans, warriors, priests, merchants, administrators, bakers, fortunetellers, priests, etc. Job specialization is one of the most important features of civilization. It is the reason for complex trade and interdependence, reliance of civilizations on one another to fulfill their needs. Therefore, it isn't wrong to say that specialization stimulates the advancement of civilizations and creates an environment for its smooth running. More specialization yields more interdependency. (2)

Fourthly, "Small-scale, village-based societies became large-scale ones with cities." (3) Etymologically, civilization is derived from the Latin terms *civilis*, *civis* and *civitas*, meaning 'citizens,' 'citizen,' and 'city.' They convey the meaning of "living in city." The first civilizations are believed to have begun in cities which were "larger, more populated, and more complex in their political, economic, and social structure than Neolithic villages." (4) It is in the cities where specialized functions, other than food producing were performed.

¹- *ibid*, p 29.

²-Richard W. Bulliet et al, *The Earth and its Peoples: A Global History*, vol.1, fourth edition (brief edition), Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2009, p.5.

³-Time Maps, *The Origins of Civilizations*. Retrieved 31 March, 2016 from <http://www.timemaps.com/origins-ofcivilization>

⁴- Perry, *Western Civilization*, p. 9.

From the formation of large-scale societies emanated the need for political, economic, social, cultural and religious systems to organize life. (¹)

Fifthly, writing was invented. Record keeping, history and transmission of culture from one generation to the next were a result of this invention. It also facilitated communication between different people; they acquired and shared with one another “knowledge, experiences, and feelings.” Additionally, it “allowed government officials and priests to conduct their affairs more efficiently.” (²)

Sixthly, a multi-cultural society was formed. That is, when people of different cultures started living together peacefully or with mutual understanding in a community. Religion was one of the factors that contributed to the formation of a multi-cultural society.

Seventhly, a religious system was introduced. It should be noted that no society is known to have existed without a religious system. It follows, then, that a religious system is an integral part of all civilizations. One of the functions of a religious system is to bind people together and reinforce social solidarity. It is the reference of what is right and wrong behavior. This means, it controls people’s behaviours and maintain order in society. The size of the religious system is dependent upon the size of the society. This means “The more complex a particular society is, the more complex the religious system” and the less complex it is, the less complex the religious system. (³)

Eighthly, political and economic institutions were invented. The role played by these two social institutions in the emergence, progress and development of civilization is crucial. Without them civilization is dysfunctional. The role of political institution is to create, enforce and apply laws while economic institutions produce and distribute material goods and services. Enforcement and application of laws is central to the prevention of moral corruption and tyranny or arbitrary rule.

Last, but by no means, the least, a ‘commonwealth,’ or ‘state’ or in Latin civitas was formed, i.e. when people came together to make their lives better;

¹-Bruce G. Trigger, *Understanding Early Civilizations: A Comparative Study*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 121.

²-Perry, *Western Civilization*, p.p7. 9

³- Boundless, “Functions of Religion.” *Boundless Sociology*. Boundless, 26 May. 2016. Retrieved 15 July 2016 from <https://www.boundless.com/sociology/textbooks/boundless-sociology-textbook/religion-14/the-functionalistsperspective-on-religion-106/functions-of-religion-593-8141/>

when they established a political system or when power was centralized. This necessitated the construction of cities as administrative centers. The term 'commonwealth' was first used by Jean-Jacques Rousseau to refer to 'a political order,' 'a well-ordered society' or formation of a civil society through the social contract to mark the end to the 'state of anarchy'; that is, "a state of independence' in which men are not subordinate to a sovereign authority."⁽¹⁾

1.2. Historical Development and the origine of the Concept:

1.2.1. Historical Development of the Concept:

The concept of civilization has evolved over time, shaped by the contributions of various scholars and the historical contexts in which they lived. This development reflects changing views on what constitutes a civilization and the criteria used to define it. By examining the historical progression of the concept, we can gain insights into how our understanding of civilization has been influenced by different intellectual and cultural movements.

- **Ancient and Classical Views:** "Early views on civilization can be traced back to ancient and classical times, where Greek and Roman thinkers laid the groundwork for later conceptualizations.⁽²⁾ The Greeks, particularly through the works of philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, distinguished between 'civilized' Greeks and 'barbaric' non-Greeks, emphasizing the importance of political organization, law, and rational thought."⁽³⁾
- **Medieval and Renaissance Perspectives:** "During the medieval period, the concept of civilization was often intertwined with the spread of Christianity and the idea of Christendom. ⁽⁴⁾ The Renaissance brought a revival of classical ideas, with a renewed focus on humanism, art, and the rediscovery of ancient texts. This period saw the beginnings of a more secular understanding of civilization."⁽⁵⁾
- **Enlightenment and Modern Era:** The Enlightenment era was pivotal in the development of the concept of civilization. Thinkers like Voltaire,

¹- Maurizio Viroli, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, trans. Derek Hanson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p.110.

²- Aristotle, Politics, translated by Benjamin Jowett, Oxford University Press, 1885, p. 125.

³-Plato, The Republic, translated by Benjamin Jowett, Oxford University Press, 1894, p. 98.

⁴- Jacob Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, Penguin Books, 1990, p. 45.

⁵- Ernst H. Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology, Princeton University Press, 1957, p. 60.

Montesquieu, and Rousseau emphasized reason, progress, and the idea that societies evolve from primitive to advanced stages. The modern era saw further refinement of the concept, with scholars focusing on various dimensions such as economic systems, governance, and cultural achievements."

- **19th and Early 20th Century Theories:**In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the concept of civilization was further developed by scholars such as Lewis Henry Morgan, Edward Tylor, and Oswald Spengler. These theorists contributed to the idea of cultural evolution and the stages of societal development, often placing Western civilization at the pinnacle of progress. ⁽¹⁾
- **Mid-20th Century to Present:**From the mid-20th century to the present, the concept of civilization has been critically examined and expanded. Scholars such as Arnold Toynbee, Samuel P. Huntington, and Jared Diamond have explored civilizations from comparative, cultural, and environmental perspectives, emphasizing the complexity and diversity of human societies. ⁽²⁾

1.2. 2. The Origins of concept:

The meaning of civilization has changed over time. Here are some ways in which the meaning of civilization has evolved:

- **From a progression or development from an "uncivilized" state to a complex society:** Traditionally, cultures that defined themselves as "civilized" saw themselves as having progressed from a previous "uncivilized" state. However, this view has been challenged by some scholars who argue that the concept of civilization is not a neutral or objective one ⁽³⁾.
- **From a society made up of cities to a complex way of life:** The most basic definition of civilization is "a society made up of cities". However, as people began to develop networks of urban settlements, civilization came to describe a complex way of life characterized by urban

¹ - Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, Alfred A. Knopf, 1926, p. 47.

² - Samuel P. Huntington, *opcit*, p. 41.

³ - Stephen Gaukroger, *Civilization and the Culture of Science: Science and the Shaping of Modernity, 1795-1935*, January 2020, P 46.

areas, shared methods of communication, administrative infrastructure, and more.

- **From a marker of cultural evolution to a complex society with interconnected parts:** Some people think civilization is an advanced stage in the progression of human cultural evolution. However, when historians or anthropologists use the term civilization, they mean a society has many different, interconnected parts) Rather than thinking about different forms of social organization as completely separate models, it's helpful to think in terms of a spectrum of complexity.

Overall, the meaning of civilization has shifted from a simple definition of a society made up of cities to a more complex way of life characterized by shared methods of communication, administrative infrastructure, and interconnected parts.

The origin of the term "civilization" can be traced back to the Latin word "civitas" or "city". The word "civilization" itself comes from the 16th-century French "civilisé" meaning "civilized"

. The abstract noun "civilization," meaning "civilized condition," came in the 1760s from French

. The first known use of the word in English is attributed to Adam Ferguson, who in his 1767 *Essay on the History of Civil Society* wrote, "Not only the individual advances from infancy to manhood but the species itself from rudeness to civilization"

. The Greeks also made a distinction between "civilized" Greeks and "barbarous" non-Greeks in their histories

. The key element of the definition of civilization is the idea that a large number of people come together in a group that is too large to consist only of an extended family group. Once that occurred, other discoveries and developments, from writing to agriculture, became possible (¹)

What is "civilization"? In English, the word encompasses a wide variety of meanings, often implying a culture possessing some combination of learning, refinement, and political identity. It is also a "loaded" term, replete with an implied division between civilization and its opposite, barbarism, with

¹ - Christopher Brooks, *Western Civilization: A Concise History*, Volumes I, II & III, LICENSE, 2020, p 3.

“civilized” people often eager to describe people who are of a different culture as being “uncivilized” in so many words. Fortunately, more practical and value-neutral definitions of the term also exist.

Civilization as a historical phenomenon speaks to certain foundational technologies, most significantly agriculture, combined with a high degree of social specialization, technological progress (albeit of a very slow kind in the case of the pre-modern world), and cultural sophistication as expressed in art, learning, and spirituality.

In turn, the study of civilization has been the traditional focus of history, as an academic discipline, since the late nineteenth century. As academic fields became specialized over the course of the 1800s CE, history identified itself as the study of the past based on written artifacts. A sister field, archeology, developed as the study of the past based on non-written artifacts (such as the remains of bodies in grave sites, surviving buildings, and tools). Thus, for practical reasons, the subject of “history” as a field of study begins with the invention of writing, something that began with the earliest civilization itself, that of the Fertile Crescent (described below). That being noted, history and archeology remain closely intertwined, especially since so few written records remain from the remote past that most historians of the ancient world also perform archeological research, and all archeologists are also at least conversant with the relevant histories of their areas of study.

1.3. Description and phases of civilizations:

1.3.1. Description Of Civilization:

A. Attributes/Characteristics of Early and Later Civilizations: It is evident from the above that the term ‘civilization’ was, in the beginning, used to describe a society with the following attributes or characteristics:

1. Permanent settlements
2. Urban development
3. Organized farming
4. Literacy/writing system
5. Political order (government)
6. Specialized activities (division of labour)

7. Multi cultures

8. Advanced/improved technology

9. Complex institutions

These characteristics were also some of the factors that led to the formation of early civilizations. In the later period, however, the term ‘civilization’ was exclusively used to describe an advanced society; i.e. a society with the following characteristics:

1. The highest level of development (physically or materially, intellectually, morally, technologically, spiritually and even psychologically)

2. Complex cultures

On the basis of the foregone, one can therefore classify civilizations into two: simple civilizations and complex or advanced civilizations. Simple civilizations refer to the first human communities. A fact worthy of attention is that no civilization is believed to have developed in isolation of other civilizations.

It follows from this that simple communities were the cradle of advanced communities; they formed their basis.

It is, however, important to note that some of the above-mentioned characteristics were non-existent in some of the early civilizations

It is, however, important to note that some of the above-mentioned characteristics were non-existent in some of the early civilizations. (¹)

B. Elements of Civilization:

A description of civilization will not be complete without briefly expounding some of the things that make it up. They comprise, among others, of the following: (1) people with their cultures (2) the state or centralized government (3) writing or literacy (4) religion (5) moral traits that are praiseworthy (6) technology.

1. People: There can be no civilization without people. They are the most essential material element of civilization. It is due to this fact that some scholars define civilization as ‘society and its component parts,’ economic, legal and moral systems, etc. or society and its distinctive characteristics.

¹ - Smith, Bruce D. (2005). *The Emergence of Agriculture*. Scientific American Library. pp. 120-135.

2. Culture: Culture is another important element of civilization. It gives a civilization a distinctive outlook. Unlike other elements of civilization, culture is passed down from generation to generation. It is the factor that defines civilization the most. It is also known as “the social heritage.” Like civilization culture is very complex. It entails material (visible) and non-material (invisible) elements. Examples of the former are dwellings, crafts, food, tools, technology, clothing, festivities and utensils. Examples of the latter are symbols, language, values, norms, aesthetics, music, beliefs and attitudes.

3. Religion: Religion has always been vital to society because of the functions it performs. It is the pillar of a progressive and enlightened civilization. The following are some of the functions of religion:

1. Regulating behavior. Many rules of moral conduct, if not all, are based on religion.

2. Giving meaning to life.

3. Providing mental peace.

4. Promoting and strengthening social solidarity.

5. Promoting philanthropy.

6. Promoting creativity in art, literature and science.

7. Providing answers to Ultimate Questions; the fundamental questions of God, life, universe and value

4.Literacy: Literacy is important because it has a civilizing effect on the communities. There are great benefits that result from education such as transformation of a community from stagnation, primitivism, regress, realization and lower level of living to dynamism, civilization, progress, urbanization and higher level of living respectively. In brief, education is the foundation of individual and societal well-being and development. It is the key to transformation. In contrast, illiteracy is a serious obstacle to individual and societal development.

5. The State/Centralized Government: The 17th-century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes asserted that the state of a community without a government is “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.” The state or civil society is, therefore, established to guard the society against greed and injustice

of some of its members and protect the rights of the people. This necessitates legislation and execution of the law.

6. Praiseworthy Moral Traits: Praiseworthy moral traits are the basis and core of civilization. They are essential for the survival of any society and provide the foundation for the physical development of civilization.

7. Technology: Technology is an intrinsic part of civilization. It enables man to do myriads of things without the need for slaves. In the early civilizations technology was needed for toolmaking, construction of dikes to control floods from the rivers and other sources, construction and maintenance of canals and development of irrigation system, building of fortifications and large buildings. Advances in technology have made possible the production of a vast number of goods and services. (¹)

1.3.2. phases of civilizations

There are many different ways to think about the phases of civilizations. One common way is to divide them into three main phases:

1. Pre-civilization: This is the phase before the development of cities, governments, and other complex social structures. Pre-civilized societies are typically characterized by small-scale communities, hunter-gatherer economies, and egalitarian social structures.

2. Civilization: This is the phase of social development that is characterized by the development of cities, governments, laws, religions, and arts. Civilizations are typically characterized by their complexity, their large populations, and their advanced technologies.

3. Post-civilization: This is the phase of social development that occurs after the collapse of a civilization. Post-civilized societies are typically characterized by their decline in population, their loss of complex technologies, and their return to simpler social structures.

Another way to think about the phases of civilizations is to divide them into four stages:

1. Birth: This is the stage in which a civilization emerges. It is characterized by the development of new technologies, the rise of new social structures, and the growth of new ideas.

¹ - Trigger, Bruce G. (2003). *Understanding Early Civilizations: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 80-95.

2. Growth: This is the stage in which a civilization expands and develops. It is characterized by population growth, economic growth, and cultural flourishing.

3. Maturity: This is the stage in which a civilization reaches its peak. It is characterized by political stability, economic prosperity, and cultural achievement.

4. Decline: This is the stage in which a civilization begins to decline. It is characterized by political instability, economic recession, and cultural decay.

It is important to note that these are just two of the many ways to think about the phases of civilizations. There is no single, universally accepted way to divide them.

Here are some examples of civilizations that have gone through these phases:

- The ancient Egyptian civilization: The ancient Egyptian civilization emerged around 3100 BC and reached its peak around 1550 BC. It then began to decline around 1070 BC and eventually collapsed around 332 BC.
- The ancient Roman civilization: The ancient Roman civilization emerged around 753 BC and reached its peak around 117 AD. It then began to decline around 284 AD and eventually collapsed around 476 AD.
- The Chinese civilization: The Chinese civilization emerged around 1600 BC and has continued to exist to this day. It has gone through many periods of growth and decline over the centuries, but it has always remained a major civilization in the world.

It is also important to note that not all civilizations go through all of these phases. Some civilizations may collapse before they reach maturity, while others may decline and then eventually recover.

The phases of civilizations are a complex and fascinating topic. They can help us to understand the rise and fall of civilizations, and they can also teach us about the challenges and opportunities that face societies today.

2. Understanding Culture

2. 1. Definition of culture and its components:

Introduction:

"Culture is a complex and multifaceted concept that encompasses the beliefs, values, behaviors, and artifacts that characterize a group or society. Understanding culture involves exploring its various components and how they interact to shape human experience."

The term "culture" is a broad and multifaceted concept that has been defined and interpreted in various ways by different scholars and fields over the years. At its most basic level, culture can be understood as the shared practices, values, norms, ideas, and symbols that define a group of people or a society. This includes aspects such as language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.

Culture is a complex and multifaceted concept. It is the sum total of the shared beliefs, values, customs, and traditions of a group of people. It refers to the shared patterns of thought, behavior, and interaction that are learned and transmitted within a particular group or society. Culture is passed down from generation to generation and helps to shape people's identities. It also influences the way people interact with each other and with the world around them.

2.1.1. Definition of Culture:

Culture, in the broadest sense, is the sum of the values, beliefs, customs, and traditions that are shared by a group of people. It is the way of life of a particular group. Culture is learned, not inherited, and it is passed down from generation to generation.

The word "culture" comes from the Latin word "cultura," which means "to cultivate." In the early 19th century, the word began to be used to refer to the customs and traditions of a particular group of people.

In English, the word "culture" can also be used to refer to a specific area of knowledge or interest. For example, someone might say that they are interested in studying "culture" or that they are a "cultural critic."

"Culture refers to the shared patterns of behaviors, interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. These patterns distinguish one group of people from another and provide a framework for interpreting the world and making sense of life."⁽¹⁾

¹ - Edward B. Tylor, Primitive Culture, John Murray, 1871, p. 1.

"Culture refers to the shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that characterize a particular group or society. It encompasses the knowledge, attitudes, and practices that are passed down from one generation to another through socialization processes. Culture plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' identities, influencing their perceptions, and guiding their behavior within a specific social context."⁽¹⁾

"Culture is a complex and multifaceted concept that can be examined from various perspectives. Anthropologists often study culture as a holistic system that encompasses all aspects of human life. Sociologists focus on how culture influences social structures and interactions. Psychologists explore how culture shapes cognitive processes and individual behavior. Regardless of the disciplinary approach, culture is considered a fundamental aspect of human existence."⁽²⁾

Anthropologists have developed hundreds of different definitions for the term culture. In this respect, the discipline that contributes most to defining culture is anthropology. The definition of culture by Edward B. Taylor at the beginning of *Primitive Culture* is very popular among other definitions of culture. He states "Culture, or civilization, . . . is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society".⁽³⁾

Franz Boas, also an anthropologist, has a famous definition that is "Culture embraces all the manifestations of social habits of a community, the reactions of the individual as affected by the habits of the group in which he lives, and the products of human activities as determined by these habits".⁽⁴⁾

In sociology as in anthropology, different definitions have been made for culture. Sociologists John and Ruth Useem define culture as follows, "Culture has been defined in a number of ways, but most simply, as the learned and

¹ - Hofstede, Geert. *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*, Sage Publications, 2001, p. 9.

² - Kroeber, Alfred L., and Clyde Kluckhohn. *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, Harvard University Press, 1952, p. 181.

³ - Tylor, Edward B. *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom*, John Murray, 1871. P 1

⁴ - Franz Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man*, New York: Macmillan, 1938, P 42

shared behavior of a community of interacting human beings”.⁽¹⁾ Also, the American Sociological Association defines culture with “Sociology understands culture as the languages, customs, beliefs, rules, arts, knowledge, and identities and memories developed by members of all social groups that make their social environments meaningful”.⁽²⁾

In the field of psychology, G. Hofstede's definition of culture is very popular. He states “Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another”.⁽³⁾

Another psychologist, Harry C. Triandis, describes the culture in his *Cross-cultural Perspectives on Personality* as “shared set of beliefs, attitudes, norms, values, and behavior organized around a central theme and found among speakers of one language, in one time period, and in one geographic region”.⁽⁴⁾

Samovar and Porter, professors of communication studies, define culture as follows: “The deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving”.⁽⁵⁾

In the field of linguistics, the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) defines culture as “the shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group”.⁽⁶⁾ Famous linguist Edward Sapir's definition is “culture, that is the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives”.⁽⁷⁾

¹- John and Ruth Useem, *Human Organizations*, New York: Random House, 1963.P22.

²-. “Culture.” American Sociological Association, <https://www.asanet.org/topics/culture>.

³- Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1980.P 5

⁴- Harry C. Triandis, *Cross-cultural Perspectives on Personality*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.P 137

⁵- Larry A. Samovar and Richard E. Porter, *Communication Between Cultures*, Boston: Wadsworth, 2009.P 59

⁶- Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA): CARLA's Definition of Culture, Retrieved from CARLA Website.

⁷-Edward Sapir, *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949, P 55.

2. 1. 2. Components of Culture:

"Cultural elements can include language, religion, art, music, literature, cuisine, clothing styles, rituals, traditions, social norms, and values. These elements are not static but evolve over time due to various factors such as globalization, technological advancements, migration, and intercultural interactions."⁽¹⁾

"Understanding culture is essential for comprehending the diversity of human societies and fostering intercultural understanding. It helps individuals recognize and appreciate different perspectives, values, and ways of life. Moreover, culture provides a framework for social cohesion by establishing shared meanings and norms within a group or society."⁽²⁾

"Culture can be understood as a system of symbols and meanings that shape the way individuals perceive and interpret the world around them. It provides a framework for understanding and organizing reality, influencing people's attitudes, behaviors, and social interactions. Culture is not innate; rather, it is acquired through socialization processes such as education, family upbringing, and exposure to societal norms."⁽³⁾

2.1.3. Key Aspects of Culture:

1. **Beliefs:** "Beliefs are shared ideas or convictions about the nature of reality, the supernatural, morality, and other fundamental aspects of existence. Beliefs often form the foundation of cultural systems and influence individuals' thoughts and actions. They can be religious, philosophical, or ideological in nature."
2. **Values:** "Values represent the principles or standards that a particular group or society deems desirable or important. Values guide individuals' behavior and decision-making processes by providing a framework for evaluating what is right or wrong, good or bad. Examples of values include honesty, respect for elders, equality, freedom, and loyalty."⁽⁴⁾
3. **Customs:** "Customs are specific practices or rituals that are characteristic of a particular culture. They often involve repetitive actions performed by individuals within a group and are deeply rooted in tradition. Customs can

¹ - Tylor, Edward B. op cit, p. 1.

² - Benedict, Ruth. *Patterns of Culture*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1934, p. 37.

³ - Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, Basic Books, 1973, p. 5.

⁴ - Rokeach, Milton. *The Nature of Human Values*, Free Press, 1973, p. 24.

vary widely across different cultures and may include greetings, ceremonies, celebrations, dress codes, eating habits, and social etiquette."

4. **Traditions:** "Traditions are long-standing customs or practices that are passed down from generation to generation within a culture. They provide a sense of continuity and identity for a group or society. Traditions can encompass various aspects of life such as religious rituals, festivals, holidays, storytelling, music, dance, and art forms."⁽¹⁾
5. **Language:** "Language is a crucial element of culture as it serves as a means of communication and expression. It allows individuals to convey their thoughts, ideas, and emotions, as well as to transmit cultural knowledge and values. Language not only includes spoken or written words but also non-verbal forms of communication such as gestures, facial expressions, and body language."⁽²⁾
6. **Arts:** "Arts play a significant role in culture by reflecting and expressing the creativity, aesthetics, and values of a society. They encompass various forms such as visual arts (painting, sculpture), performing arts (music, dance, theater), literature, film, architecture, and crafts. Artistic expressions often serve as a medium for cultural preservation, social commentary, storytelling, and identity formation."⁽³⁾
7. **Social Institutions:** "Social institutions are structures or organizations within a society that fulfill specific functions and contribute to the maintenance of cultural norms and values. Examples of social institutions include family, education systems, religious institutions, government bodies, economic systems, legal systems, and media organizations. These institutions shape individuals' behavior and social interactions by providing guidelines and regulations."⁽⁴⁾
8. **Evolution of Culture:** "Culture is not static but rather evolves over time through processes such as globalization, migration, technological advancements, and intercultural exchanges. It is also characterized by diversity and can vary significantly between different regions, ethnic groups, religions, or even subcultures within a larger society."⁽⁵⁾

2.2.Levels and Factors of Culture:

2.2.1. Levels of Culture:

¹ - Hobsbawm, Eric, and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 1.

² - Sapir, Edward. *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech*, Harcourt, Brace & World, 1921, p. 9.

³ - Williams, Raymond. *Culture and Society: 1780-1950*, Columbia University Press, 1983, p. 92.

⁴ - Giddens, Anthony. *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, University of California Press, 1984, p. 78.

⁵ - Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, University of Minnesota Press, 1996, p. 27.

- **National Culture:** National culture refers to the shared beliefs, values, and practices that characterize a particular nation or country. It includes elements such as language, history, religion, cuisine, music, art, and literature. National culture often forms the basis for a collective identity and serves as a source of pride and unity among its citizens. It influences various aspects of life, including social norms, political systems, and economic practices."⁽¹⁾

- **Organizational Culture:** Organizational culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, and behaviors that define an organization's identity and guide its members' actions. It encompasses the organization's mission, vision, goals, leadership style, communication patterns, decision-making processes, and employee behavior. Organizational culture plays a crucial role in shaping employee attitudes and behaviors, influencing their job satisfaction, motivation, and performance.⁽²⁾

- **Subcultures:** Subcultures are smaller groups within a larger society or organization that share distinct beliefs, values, practices, or interests. These subcultures may be based on factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, profession, or hobbies. Subcultures often develop their own unique norms and symbols while still being influenced by the broader cultural context. Examples of subcultures include youth subcultures like goths or punks or professional subcultures like doctors or engineers. ⁽³⁾

2.2.2. Factors of Culture

- **Historical Context:** Historical events and experiences play a significant role in shaping a culture. Historical events such as wars, colonization, migration, or revolutions can have a profound impact on a society's values, traditions, and social structures. ⁽⁴⁾

- **Socialization:** Culture is primarily transmitted through socialization processes, which occur within families, schools, religious institutions, and other social groups. During socialization, individuals learn the norms, values, and behaviors that are considered appropriate within their cultural context.

- **Environment:** The physical environment in which a culture develops can also influence its practices and beliefs. Factors such as

¹ - Hofstede, Geert. *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*, SAGE Publications, 2001, p. 9.

² - Schein, Edgar H. *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, Jossey-Bass, 2010, p. 23.

³ - Hebdige, Dick. *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, Routledge, 1979, p. 5.

⁴ - Tilly, Charles. *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*, Russell Sage Foundation, 1984, p. 67.

geography, climate, and available resources can shape cultural practices related to food, clothing, shelter, and economic activities.

- **Technology:** Technological advancements can both shape and be shaped by culture. New technologies can introduce new ways of communication, transportation, or production that influence cultural practices. At the same time, cultural values and beliefs can also shape the development and adoption of technology.

- **Globalization:** In an increasingly interconnected world, cultures are becoming more influenced by global trends and interactions. Globalization has led to the spread of ideas, values, products, and practices across different cultures. This has resulted in both the homogenization of some cultural aspects and the emergence of hybrid or multicultural identities. ⁽¹⁾

2.3 Culture and Civilization:

The word ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’ are often used synonymously. However, they have clearly defined meanings differentiating them. ‘Civilization’ means having better ways of living and sometimes making nature bend to fulfill their needs. It also includes organizing societies into politically well-defined groups working collectively for improved conditions of life in matters of food, dress, communication, and so on. Thus, some groups consider themselves as civilized and look down upon others. This disposition of certain groups has even led to wars and holocausts, resulting in mass destruction of human beings. On the other hand, ‘culture’ refers to the inner being, a refinement of head and heart. This includes arts and sciences, music and dance and various higher pursuits of human life which are also classified as cultural activities. One who may be poor and wearing cheap clothes may be considered ‘uncivilized’, but still, he or she may be the most cultured person. One possessing ostentatious wealth may be considered as ‘civilized’ but he may not be cultured’ Therefore, when we think of culture, we have to understand that it is different from civilization. As we have seen, culture is the ‘higher levels of inner refinement’ of a human being. Humans are not merely physical beings. They live and act at three levels: physical, mental and spiritual. While better ways of living socially and politically and better utilization of nature around us may be termed as civilization. This is not enough to be cultured. Only when the deeper levels of a person’s intellect and consciousness are brought into expression can we call him/her ‘cultured’.

¹-Robertson, Roland. *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, SAGE Publications, 1992, p. 8.

Conclusion: In conclusion, culture encompasses a wide range of elements including beliefs, values, customs, traditions, language, arts, and social institutions. It shapes individuals' perceptions of the world and influences their behaviors and interactions within a particular group or society.

Culture is a dynamic and integral part of human societies, encompassing a wide range of components that collectively shape the way individuals and groups interact with each other and their environment. By understanding the various elements of culture, we can better appreciate the richness and diversity of human life.

3. Oikomen: A Concept in Ancient Civilizations

3.1. Meaning of Oikomen

The Greek word oikomenē (οικουμένη) literally means "inhabited world" or "the world as inhabited". It was used by the ancient Greeks to refer to the known world, which at the time was limited to the Mediterranean region and parts of Asia and Africa. Today, the word oikomenē is sometimes used to refer to the entire Earth, but it is more commonly used in a more restricted sense to refer to the inhabited part of the world. ⁽¹⁾

In the ancient world, the oikomenē was divided into different regions, each with its own unique culture and history. The Greeks and Romans believed that their own culture was the most advanced and that they were superior to the "barbarians" who lived beyond the borders of the oikomenē. This belief in their own superiority led the Greeks and Romans to expand their empires and to spread their culture to other parts of the world.⁽²⁾

The concept of the oikomenē was important to the ancient Greeks and Romans for a number of reasons. First, it provided them with a sense of unity and identity. Second, it helped them to define their place in the world. Third, it justified their expansionist policies. ⁽³⁾

¹- Hornblower, Simon, and Antony Spawforth, eds. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 3rd ed., Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 1084.

²- Sherwin-White, Adrian N. *The Roman Citizenship*. Oxford University Press, 1973, p. 6.

³- Bowden, Hugh. *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle: Divination and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 45.

The term "Oikomen" refers to the inhabited region of the world or the entire human society. This term can be used to indicate the inhabited part of the Earth where different communities live and interact. In some contexts, it can refer to the known and inhabited world. The term "Oikomen" may be unfamiliar to some individuals, and it is not widely used in the English language. It seems to be derived from the ancient Greek term "οἰκουμένη" (oikoumenē), which was used to refer to the inhabited world. ⁽¹⁾

The concept of "oikoumene" was significant in ancient Greek geography and philosophy. It represented the idea of a unified and interconnected world, encompassing all the known lands and civilizations. This notion influenced various aspects of Greek culture, including literature, art, and political thought. ⁽²⁾

In Christianity, particularly in Eastern Orthodox theology, the term "oikoumene" has been used to refer to the entire Christian world or community. It signifies the unity and universality of the Church across different regions and denominations. ⁽³⁾

Oikomen is a term derived from the Greek language, specifically from the verb "oikeo" which means "to inhabit" or "to dwell." In ancient Greek society, oikomen referred to the inhabited world or the known world at that time. It encompassed the regions and territories where people lived and established civilizations. The concept of oikomen was not limited to a specific geographical area but rather represented the collective human habitation across different lands. ⁽⁴⁾

The term oikomen gained prominence in ancient Greek literature and philosophy, particularly in the works of Herodotus, Plato, and Aristotle. Herodotus, often referred to as the "Father of History," used oikomen to describe the known world in his historical accounts. He explored various regions and

¹ - Hornblower, Simon, and Antony Spawforth, eds. *Op cit*, p. 1084.

² - Herodotus. *The Histories*. Translated by Robin Waterfield, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 67.

³ - McGuckin, John Anthony. *The Orthodox Church: An Introduction to its History, Doctrine, and Spiritual Culture*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2008, p. 162.

⁴ - *The New Oxford Dictionary of English*. Ed. Judy Pearsall, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 1314.

cultures, providing valuable insights into the diverse societies that constituted the oikomen. ⁽¹⁾

Plato, a renowned philosopher, also employed the term oikomen in his dialogues. In his work "Timaeus," Plato discussed the creation of the universe and its relation to the inhabited world. He presented a cosmological perspective on how the oikomen was formed and interconnected with other celestial bodies.⁽²⁾

Aristotle, another influential philosopher, expanded on the concept of oikomen in his writings. He examined various aspects of human society, including politics, ethics, and natural sciences. Aristotle's exploration of these subjects aimed to understand how individuals could live harmoniously within their respective communities and contribute to the overall well-being of the oikomen.

Overall, oikomen represents the inhabited world as understood by ancient Greeks. It encompasses both physical geography and human civilization, reflecting a comprehensive understanding of the world as it was known at that time.

Oikoumene is a Greek word that has various meanings in different contexts. Here are some of the meanings of Oikoumene from the search results:

- In the New Testament Greek Lexicon, Oikoumene means "the inhabited earth"

- In Eastern Orthodoxy, Oikoumene describes the place of God's reconciling mission and the unity of the Roman Empire

- In Byzantine history, Oikoumene was used to designate the earth as a whole

- In the book of Luke in the New Testament, Oikoumene refers to the Roman Empire

- In the book of Acts in the New Testament, Oikoumene refers to the whole world

¹- Herodotus, op cit, p. 67

²- Plato. Timaeus. Translated by Donald J. Zeyl, Hackett Publishing Company, 2000, p. 22.

-In summary, Oikoumene can refer to the inhabited earth, the Roman Empire, the whole world, or the earth as a whole, depending on the context.
(¹)

3.2. The development of the concept of Oikomen:

Oikomen is a term derived from the Greek word "oikoumene," which refers to the inhabited or civilized world. It has been used in various contexts throughout history, encompassing different meanings and interpretations.

In ancient Greece, oikoumene referred to the known world or the lands that were inhabited by Greeks. It denoted the territories under Greek influence or control, including city-states, colonies, and regions where Greek culture and language were prevalent. The concept of oikoumene was significant in shaping Greek identity and fostering a sense of unity among Greek communities.

During the Hellenistic period, which followed the conquests of Alexander the Great, oikoumene took on a broader meaning. It referred to the entire civilized world, incorporating diverse cultures, peoples, and territories that were part of the vast empire established by Alexander. This expanded notion of oikoumene reflected the interconnectedness and interdependence of different regions under Hellenistic rule.

In later periods, particularly during the Roman Empire and Byzantine era, oikoumene continued to be used to describe the known world. It denoted the territories under Roman control or influence, extending from Europe to North Africa and Asia Minor. The Roman concept of oikoumene emphasized political and administrative aspects, highlighting the extent of Roman power and governance.

In Christian theology, oikoumene has been associated with the idea of a universal church or the unity of all Christian believers. The term is often used in reference to ecumenism, which seeks to promote cooperation and dialogue among different Christian denominations. In this context, oikoumene represents the shared faith and common purpose that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries.

¹- Hogg, Michael A., and Dominic Abrams, eds. *Intergroup Relations: Essential Readings*. Psychology Press, 2001, p. 210.

Today, oikoumene is still occasionally used in academic or religious discourse to denote the global community or all inhabited regions of the world. It can connote a sense of interconnectedness, shared responsibility, and the need for cooperation in addressing global challenges.

In summary, oikoumene is a term originating from ancient Greece that has evolved over time to encompass various meanings. It has been used to describe the known world, territories under Greek or Roman influence, the universal church, and the global community.

4. Innovations in Prehistoric Civilizations

4.1. Significance of Prehistoric Inventions:

The study of prehistoric stone tool technology is important because it tells us the evolution of not only tool or artifact making and its usage, but also because it tells us about human evolution both biological as well as cultural. The tools that people manufactured throughout their long history have been the means by which they augmented their limbs and extended the use of the environment. In the Stone Age, the people used simple tools at their disposal to make the prehistoric tools like handaxe, chopper, scraper and other types as well as pottery, but it is also true that they had a working knowledge of rock types and what rock types would suit what kind of tool manufacturing technique.

A large portion of human knowledge finds a practical reflection in the form of various technologies, which leads to the emergence of new technologies and innovations. On the other hand, technology impacts culture and beliefs of communities, leading to changes in community and the economy. The result of such an act is the innovation. Thus, the concept of technology and innovation can be always investigated together.

Oxford English dictionary defines Invention as an approach, mindset or creativity in inventing something new, and it means products or processes which did not exist previously and are appeared for the first time (¹). The root of the word comes from the Latin word Inventio and the root Invenire defined as discovery.

¹ - Hornby A. S. and Ben Francis, 2005. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary. Oxford University Press.

Invention means finding the relationship between the components of the nature and forming this relationship through human thoughts. Finding the beginning of an invention in the past, especially in pre-historic period is a very difficult task since the inventions usually occur during a long process of experience. Defective documents, rarely true dating and not paying attention to the technological and cultural materials are some of the reasons and determining the exact time of an invention is faced with serious problems in the prehistoric period. However, the pace of technological change or in the word innovation can be studied on the basis of material evidence. Hence, the concept of innovation in archaeological research is suggested as the process of change in invention of previous communities. Some of the preconditions for this process include the emergence of new needs, access to other areas of innovation and having a group of experts familiar with invention ⁽¹⁾. The workforce, exchange, distribution and native and non-native consumer should be added to this group as well. The most important issue in this regard is the formation of complex organizations which manage, control and monitor this process.

There are several synonyms for the word innovation, including invention, novelty, newness, emergence and creation. Oxford English dictionary defines Innovation as new method, idea, products or anything else which its root comes from the Latin word Innovatio and Innovare ⁽²⁾. Everett Rogers describes innovation as ideas, methods and goals that a person or the community has accepted as a new thing as long as its nature do not clearly indicate its newness ⁽³⁾. This means that when a community is faced with a requirement and the present technology is not able to respond to that need, a solution is proposed and chosen which leads to an innovation. These needs can be technical, social, and economic or can have any other reasons. Innovation can also be a reaction to a different technology.

According to Colin Renfrew, innovation is the development or introduction of something new which its processes should be understood properly in order to study community and its variations ⁽⁴⁾. Archaeologists are trying to be associated with innovation in archaeological studies for a long time, and they

¹- Renfrew, C., 1978. Space, Time and Polity, in Friedman. In J. and Rowlands, M. J (eds.), the Evolution of Social Systems, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press,89-112, p 245.

²- Hornby A. S. and Ben Francis, op cit.

³- Rogers, EM, 2003. Diffusion of Innovations. (New York 2003)

⁴ - Renfrew, op cit, p 89.

also apply innovative concepts to describe and explain the changes and diversity in cultural materials.

- Prehistoric inventions are tools, technologies, and techniques that were developed before the advent of writing. They represent the collective ingenuity of our ancestors, who were constantly striving to improve their lives in a challenging world.

- Prehistoric inventions refer to the technological advancements and innovations that occurred during the prehistoric period, which spans from the emergence of Homo sapiens around 300,000 years ago to the advent of written language around 5,000 years ago. This period is characterized by the absence of written records, making it challenging to obtain a comprehensive understanding of prehistoric inventions. However, archaeological evidence provides valuable insights into the tools, techniques, and technologies developed by early humans.

4.2. Identification of techniques used by prehistoric people:

When we look at the different tools found at different sites across the world, we cannot but marvel at how our ancestors must have created them. But today when a vast gap of thousands of years separates us from our ancestors, how do we know how they made them, and what technology they used?

Today, when we try to identify and study the different techniques the prehistoric people had used, we depend on three factors:⁽¹⁾

1) The study of stone tools: When we look at a tool minutely at times it is possible to see how it must have been flaked or worked upon. There are specialists who study the morphological or physical features of the stone tools, and who can surmise how it must have been made.

2) Imitation of the tools: There is a large number of anthropologists working in this area which is better known as experimental archaeology where they conduct several experiments to find out what causes will lead to what effects. Some such experimenters are so expert that their products can hardly be differentiated from the century-old stone tools.

¹- Whittaker, J. C. (1994). *Flintknapping: Making and Understanding Stone Tools*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

3) **Observation of similar kinds being made by living people:** A decade back, and even today, there are some living communities like in Papua New Guinea who still make stone tools and use them. Anthropologists can observe these groups of people and learn more about the technology.

4.2. Examples of Important Prehistoric Inventions

1. **Stone Tools:** One of the most significant prehistoric inventions was the development and refinement of stone tools. Early humans began using simple stone tools around 2.6 million years ago during the Paleolithic era. These tools were initially made by striking one stone against another to create sharp edges for cutting, scraping, and piercing. Over time, humans learned to shape stones into more specialized tools such as hand axes, scrapers, and spear points. The ability to create and use stone tools was a crucial milestone in human evolution as it facilitated hunting, food processing, woodworking, and other essential activities ⁽¹⁾.
2. **Clothing:** The invention of clothing was a significant milestone in human history. Early humans began wearing animal skins and furs to protect themselves from harsh weather conditions. Clothing provided insulation and protection against cold temperatures, enabling early humans to expand their habitats into colder regions ⁽²⁾.
3. **Language:** Although intangible, the development of language was a crucial prehistoric invention that revolutionized communication among early humans. Language allowed for complex social interactions, cooperation in hunting and gathering activities, sharing knowledge and experiences, and passing down cultural traditions from one generation to another ⁽³⁾.
4. **Fire Control:** The control and utilization of fire were another major prehistoric invention that had a profound impact on human development. Evidence suggests that early humans first tamed fire around 1 million years ago. Initially, fire was likely obtained from natural sources such as wildfires or volcanic activity. However, humans eventually learned to create fire by friction or striking flint against pyrite. The ability to control fire provided numerous benefits, including warmth, protection from predators, cooking food for improved nutrition and digestion, extending

¹-Toth, Nicholas, and Kathy Schick. *Handbook of Paleoanthropology*, Springer, 2007, p. 1969

² - Gilligan, Ian. *Clothing and Climate in Prehistory: The Archaeological Evidence*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 75

³ - Lieberman, Philip. *The Uniqueness of Human Speech: Consequences for Evolution and Cognition*, Harvard University Press, 2005, p. 132

daylight hours through artificial lighting, and facilitating social interactions around a communal fire (¹).

5. **Hunting Tools:** Prehistoric humans developed various hunting tools to improve their chances of capturing animals for food and resources. One notable invention was the atlatl or spear-thrower, which appeared around 30,000 years ago during the Upper Paleolithic period. The atlatl allowed hunters to throw spears with greater force and accuracy, increasing their hunting success. Other hunting tools included bows and arrows, which emerged later in prehistory and revolutionized hunting techniques. These inventions enabled humans to hunt from a safer distance, target larger game, and conserve energy (²).
6. **Domestication of Animals:** In ancient times, humans were food gatherers and hunters, which meant they were dependent on the environment. However, when they domesticated animals, they became producers. The first animals to be domesticated were dogs, followed by goats, cows, and horses. The last animal to be domesticated was the wild camel (³).
7. **Housing:** Archaeological remains indicate that the first housing appeared in the ancient Near East. The first type of housing was the hut, which was then developed and strengthened using clay mixed with straw. There were several shapes of huts, including conical, triangular, and square. The first housing was made of branches and clay, followed by bricks, then baked bricks, and then stone in monumental architecture. Meanwhile, the inhabitants of Africa lived in caves and grottos (⁴).
8. **Agriculture:** The transition from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle to settled agricultural communities marked a significant turning point in human history. The invention of agriculture occurred independently in multiple regions around 10,000 years ago during the Neolithic period. It involved the domestication of plants and animals, leading to the cultivation of crops and the establishment of permanent settlements. Agriculture provided a stable food supply, allowing populations to grow and societies to develop complex social structures. This invention laid the foundation for the rise of civilizations (⁵).
9. **Writing:** Writing was invented around 3500 BC. It allowed our ancestors to record their thoughts and ideas, which led to the development of

¹ - Gowlett, John A.J. "The Early Settlement of Northern Europe: Fire History in the Context of Climate Change and the Social Brain", *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 57, No. 2, 2016, pp. 166-167.

² - Shea, John J. *Stone Tools in the Paleolithic and Neolithic Near East: A Guide*, Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 192

³ - Clutton-Brock, Juliet. *Animals as Domesticates: A World View through History*, Michigan State University Press, 2012, pp. 33-35.

⁴ - Aurenche, Olivier. *From Hunter-Gatherers to Farmers: Human Adaptations at the End of the Pleistocene and the First Part of the Holocene*, edited by Frédéric Braemer, et al., Archaeopress, 2001, pp. 204-205.

⁵ - Bellwood, Peter. *First Farmers: The Origins of Agricultural Societies*, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p. 192.

history, literature, and science. Writing also made it possible to communicate over long distances and to coordinate complex activities (¹).

10. Art and Symbolic Expression: Although not directly related to technology, prehistoric humans also engaged in artistic expression, leaving behind valuable evidence of their creativity. Cave paintings, rock art, and sculptures are some examples of prehistoric art that have survived to this day. These artistic endeavors demonstrate early humans' ability to communicate ideas, record events, express spirituality, and convey cultural traditions (²).

11. Pottery: The prehistoric invention of pottery greatly affected the day-to-day lifestyles of ancient human beings. The oldest pottery discovered dates to around 20,000 years ago and was found in China. The pragmatic use of clay pots can't be denied. It opened up cooking options to our ancestors and allowed us to boil water. Pots could also be used to store things. Research from Japan points to the fact that the usage of pottery became incredibly important in creating cultural traditions. They fostered a tradition in art and design, as well as a culinary tradition. Dishes, along with their ingredients, became solidified in different cultures, and different regions with access to different ingredients would have created diversity in prehistoric cultures(³).

Conclusion

In conclusion, prehistoric inventions encompass a wide range of technological advancements that shaped early human societies. Stone tools, fire control, hunting tools, agriculture, and artistic expression are just a few examples of the innovations developed during this period. While the absence of written records presents challenges in fully understanding prehistoric inventions, archaeological evidence provides valuable insights into our ancestors' ingenuity and resourcefulness.

Chapter 2: The Time and Spatial Framework for the Emergence of Civilizations

¹ - Schmandt-Besserat, Denise. *How Writing Came About*, University of Texas Press, 1996, pp. 121-122.

² - Pfeiffer, John E. *The Creative Explosion: An Inquiry into the Origins of Art and Religion*, Harper & Row, 1982, pp. 83-85.

³ - Barnett, William, and John W. Hoopes, eds. *The Emergence of Pottery: Technology and Innovation in Ancient Societies*, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995, pp. 104-105.

The emergence of civilizations is a complex process that unfolded over thousands of years, influenced by numerous factors including geography, climate, technological advancements, and social organization. Understanding this process involves examining both the temporal (time) and spatial (geographic) contexts in which early civilizations developed.

1- Temporal Framework

- **Prehistoric Era:** Before the rise of civilizations, human societies were primarily hunter-gatherers. This period, known as the Paleolithic era, lasted until approximately 10,000 BCE. The development of agriculture around 10,000 BCE, during the Neolithic era, marked the beginning of a significant transformation in human societies (¹).
- **Neolithic Revolution (10,000 BCE - 4,000 BCE):** The transition from nomadic hunting and gathering to settled agricultural communities was a key factor in the rise of civilizations. The domestication of plants and animals enabled humans to produce surplus food, which supported population growth and the development of complex societies (²).
- **Early Civilizations (4,000 BCE - 1,000 BCE):** The first civilizations emerged in the Near East, particularly in Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq) and Egypt, around 4,000 BCE. These early civilizations were characterized by the development of writing, centralized governments, urban centers, and monumental architecture (³).
- **Classical Antiquity (1,000 BCE - 500 CE):** This period saw the rise and fall of significant empires such as the Greek, Roman, and Persian Empires. These civilizations contributed to advances in art, science, philosophy, and governance that laid the foundations for Western civilization (⁴).

2. Spatial Framework

- **Mesopotamia:** Often referred to as the "cradle of civilization," Mesopotamia was located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. This region saw the development of some of the earliest cities, such as Uruk and Ur, and the invention of writing (⁵).

¹- Bellwood, Peter. *First Farmers: The Origins of Agricultural Societies*, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p193.

²- Childe, V. Gordon. *Man Makes Himself*, Watts & Co., 1936, pp. 61-63.

³- Postgate, J.N. *Early Mesopotamia: Society and Economy at the Dawn of History*, Routledge, 1992, p23.

⁴- Starr, Chester G. *A History of the Ancient World*, Oxford University Press, 1991, p115.

⁵-cuneiform) around 3,200 BCE (Pollock, Susan. *Ancient Mesopotamia: The Eden That Never Was*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p48.

- **Egypt:** The civilization of ancient Egypt emerged along the Nile River around 3,100 BCE. The Nile's predictable flooding cycle allowed for successful agriculture, which supported the growth of a centralized state and monumental architecture such as the pyramids (¹).
- **Indus Valley:** The Indus Valley Civilization, located in present-day Pakistan and northwest India, flourished from around 2,600 BCE to 1,900 BCE. Known for its advanced urban planning and sophisticated drainage systems, this civilization remains less understood due to the undeciphered script (²).
- **China:** Early Chinese civilization began along the Yellow River around 2,000 BCE. The Shang Dynasty (c. 1600-1046 BCE) is considered one of the earliest Chinese dynasties with evidence of writing, bronze casting, and urbanization (³).
- **Mesoamerica:** Civilizations such as the Olmec (c. 1,200-400 BCE) and the Maya (c. 2000 BCE - 1500 CE) developed in present-day Mexico and Central America. These societies built impressive cities, developed complex writing systems, and made significant astronomical and mathematical advances (⁴).
- **Andes:** In South America, the Norte Chico civilization (c. 3,000-1,800 BCE) and later the Inca Empire (c. 1438-1533 CE) developed complex societies in the Andean region. These civilizations are known for their architectural achievements, including terraced agriculture and stone construction (⁵).

The emergence of civilizations was a multifaceted process influenced by various temporal and spatial factors. The development of agriculture and the establishment of permanent settlements laid the groundwork for complex societies. The rise of early civilizations in regions such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, China, Mesoamerica, and the Andes each had unique characteristics shaped by their environments and historical contexts. Understanding these early civilizations provides valuable insights into the development of human societies and their lasting legacies.

2. Significance of Understanding Time and Spatial Frameworks

¹- Shaw, Ian. *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, 2000, p78.

²- Kenoyer, Jonathan Mark. *Ancient Cities of the Indus Valley Civilization*, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 122.

³- Keightley, David N. *The Ancestral Landscape: Time, Space, and Community in Late Shang China (ca. 1200-1045 B.C.)*, Institute of East Asian Studies, 2000, p. 99.

⁴- Coe, Michael D., and Stephen Houston. *The Maya*, Thames & Hudson, 2015, p.70.

⁵- Moseley, Michael Edward. *The Incas and Their Ancestors: The Archaeology of Peru*, Thames & Hudson, 2001, p. 131.

Understanding the time and spatial frameworks for the emergence of civilizations is crucial for several reasons. These frameworks provide essential insights into the development of human societies and their interactions with the environment and each other. Below are key aspects that highlight the significance of these frameworks:

2.1. Historical Context and Chronology :

- **Foundation for Historical Study:** Understanding the chronological sequence of events helps historians and archaeologists place civilizations in a temporal context, allowing for a clearer comprehension of cause and effect in historical developments.
- **Developmental Stages:** Recognizing different time periods, such as the Paleolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, and Iron Age, provides insights into the technological and cultural advancements that occurred during these times. ⁽¹⁾

2.2. Geographical and Environmental Influences :

- **Resource Distribution:** The availability of natural resources such as water, fertile land, and minerals significantly influenced the location and growth of early civilizations. For instance, the development of Mesopotamia and Egypt was closely linked to the Tigris-Euphrates and Nile rivers, respectively ⁽²⁾.
- **Climate and Agriculture:** The suitability of climate for agriculture was a critical factor in the establishment of stable communities. Regions with favorable growing conditions supported higher population densities and more complex societal structures ⁽³⁾.

2.3. Cultural and Technological Diffusion :

- **Spread of Innovations:** Understanding spatial frameworks helps explain how technological and cultural innovations spread between societies. Trade routes and migration patterns facilitated the exchange of ideas, tools, and practices, leading to the advancement of multiple civilizations.
- **Interaction and Influence:** Proximity between civilizations often led to significant interactions, influencing art, religion, and governance.

¹- Bentley, Jerry H., and Herbert F. Ziegler. *Traditions & Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past*, McGraw-Hill, 2011, pp. 29-30.

²- Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*, W.W. Norton & Company, 1997, p82.

³- Bellwood, Peter. *Op cit*, p107.

For example, the interaction between the Greeks and Persians had profound impacts on art and architecture.⁽¹⁾

4. Socio-Political Development

- **Formation of States:** Time and spatial frameworks illustrate the processes through which small communities evolved into large, complex states. This includes the development of social hierarchies, centralized administrations, and legal systems.
- **Empire Building:** Geographic considerations often influenced the expansionist policies of empires. The Romans, for instance, were strategic in their conquests to control key regions that facilitated trade and military advantage ⁽²⁾.

2.5. Understanding Human Adaptation and Resilience:

- **Adaptation Strategies:** Studying how ancient societies adapted to their environments provides valuable lessons in resilience and sustainability. This includes agricultural practices, water management, and urban planning.
- **Environmental Challenges:** Recognizing how past civilizations dealt with environmental challenges such as droughts, floods, and resource depletion can inform current efforts to address similar issues.

Understanding the time and spatial frameworks for the emergence of civilizations is vital for comprehending the development and interaction of human societies. These frameworks provide context for historical events, reveal the influence of geography and environment on human activities, illustrate the diffusion of cultural and technological innovations, and highlight the socio-political evolution of civilizations. By studying these aspects, we gain a deeper appreciation of the complexities and achievements of our ancestors, as well as valuable insights into contemporary global challenges.

3. The Concept of Time and Space in Relation to Civilizations

Time and space are two fundamental concepts that are essential for understanding the emergence of civilizations. Time refers to the sequence of events, while space refers to the physical location of events. In relation to civilizations, time can be used to refer to the duration of a civilization, as well as the stages of development that a civilization goes through. Space can be used to

¹- Renfrew, Colin. *Prehistory: The Making of the Human Mind*, Modern Library, 2008, p. 145.

²- Heather, Peter. *The Fall of the Roman Empire: A New History of Rome and the Barbarians*, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 53.

refer to the geographical area that a civilization occupies, as well as the natural resources that are available to a civilization.

The emergence of civilizations is a complex and multifaceted topic that encompasses various factors, including time and spatial frameworks. Understanding the time and spatial dimensions of civilization emergence is crucial for comprehending the development and evolution of human societies throughout history.

3.1. Time and Historical Development:

Understanding the development of civilizations over time involves studying their historical progression. This includes identifying key milestones, events, and changes in their social, political, economic, and cultural structures. Analyzing historical timeframes helps researchers trace the origins of civilizations, their rise to prominence, their zenith, and, in some cases, their decline or transformation.

- **Pre-civilization:** This phase is characterized by small-scale communities, hunter-gatherer economies, and egalitarian social structures. The earliest humans lived in small, nomadic bands. Around 10,000 years ago, humans began to develop agriculture and settle in villages. Over the next few thousand years, villages grew into towns and cities (¹).
- **Civilization:** This phase is characterized by the development of cities, states, governments, laws, religions, and arts. Civilizations are typically characterized by their complexity, large populations, and advanced technologies. The first civilizations emerged in the Middle East around 3500 BC. Other early civilizations emerged in Mesoamerica, China, and the Indus Valley. Civilizations continued to develop and spread throughout the world over the next few thousand years (²).
- **Post-civilization:** This phase is characterized by the collapse of a civilization and the return to simpler social structures. Civilizations have collapsed throughout history due to various factors such as war, disease, and environmental degradation. When a civilization collapses, it is often followed by a period of social and political instability. Over time, new social structures and civilizations may emerge (³).

¹ - Bentley, Jerry H., and Herbert F. Ziegler. *Traditions & Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past*. McGraw-Hill, 2011, p.30.

² - Trigger, Bruce G. *Understanding Early Civilizations: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 211.

³ - Childe, V. Gordon. *Op cit*, p. 89.

Examples of Historical Development

- **Ancient Egyptian Civilization:** The ancient Egyptian civilization emerged around 3100 BC, reached its peak around 1550 BC, declined around 1070 BC, and eventually collapsed around 332 BC.
- **Ancient Roman Civilization:** The ancient Roman civilization emerged around 753 BC, reached its peak around 117 AD, declined around 284 AD, and eventually collapsed around 476 AD.
- **Chinese Civilization:** The Chinese civilization emerged around 1600 BC and has continued to exist to this day, undergoing many periods of growth and decline.

3.2 Space and Geographic Context:

The spatial aspect involves analyzing the geographical settings where civilizations emerged and developed. Geography plays a crucial role in shaping the opportunities and challenges civilizations face. Different regions have distinct environmental factors, such as climate, topography, and available natural resources, which impact the development of societies. For example, river valleys like the Nile or the Tigris and Euphrates provided fertile land for agriculture, leading to the emergence of early civilizations (¹).

- **Environmental Determinism:** Some scholars have explored the concept of environmental determinism, which suggests that a civilization's development is significantly influenced by its geographical environment. For instance, access to water resources for irrigation and transportation can greatly affect the growth of a society (²).
- **Cultural and Exchange Networks:** The concept of space extends to the interaction between civilizations. The exchange of ideas, technologies, and goods often occurs through trade routes and cultural diffusion. Studying the spatial networks of civilizations helps explain how different regions influenced one another and contributed to the development of more complex societies (³).
- **Environmental Challenges and Adaptation:** Environmental challenges, such as climate change, resource depletion, or natural disasters, can have a profound impact on civilizations. Studying how

¹ - Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. W.W. Norton & Company, 1997, pp. 79-82.

² - Trigger, op cit, p.213.

³ - Pollock, Susan. *Ancient Mesopotamia: The Eden That Never Was*. Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 46

societies adapt to these challenges over time is a critical component of the time and spatial framework (¹).

The concept of time and space in relation to civilizations emphasizes the interplay between historical development and geographical context. It helps us understand how civilizations emerge, thrive, and adapt to changing conditions while also highlighting the interconnectedness of human societies across different regions and eras. This approach is crucial for gaining a comprehensive understanding of human history.

4. Theories about the Emergence of Civilizations

There are several prominent theories about the emergence of civilizations, each offering a unique perspective on how complex societies developed:

4.1.Environmental Determinism: This theory suggests that the emergence of civilizations is determined by environmental factors, such as climate, soil fertility, and access to water. Environmental conditions are seen as primary drivers that shape the social, economic, and political structures of early civilizations. Scholars argue that favorable environments with rich natural resources provided the necessary conditions for agricultural surplus and subsequent social complexity.

4.2.Hydraulic Civilizations Theory: Proposed by Karl Wittfogel, this theory posits that the development of large-scale irrigation systems was critical for the emergence of civilizations. The need to manage and control water resources for agriculture led to the formation of centralized bureaucracies and complex social hierarchies. This theory is often applied to ancient civilizations in arid regions, such as Mesopotamia and Egypt, where irrigation was essential for crop production.

4.3. Diffusion Theory: This theory suggests that civilizations emerge through the diffusion of ideas and technologies from one culture to another. Innovations such as writing, metallurgy, and agricultural techniques spread through trade, migration, and conquest, leading to the development of new civilizations. This theory highlights the importance of cultural interactions and the exchange of knowledge in shaping early societies.

4.5. Internalist Theories: These theories focus on the internal factors that contribute to the emergence of civilizations, such as social stratification, economic development, and political centralization. They argue that internal dynamics, including the accumulation of surplus resources, the rise of social

¹ - Renfrew, op cit, p147.

elites, and the establishment of political institutions, played a crucial role in the formation of complex societies. These theories emphasize the importance of internal social and economic processes in the development of civilizations (¹).

5.The Time and Space Contexts in which Civilizations Emerged

The earliest civilizations emerged in regions with specific environmental and social conditions that favored the development of complex societies:

5.1 The Fertile Crescent: This region, located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the Middle East, is often referred to as the "cradle of civilization." It featured fertile soil, abundant water, and a mild climate, which were ideal for agriculture. The ability to produce surplus food allowed for population growth, urbanization, and the development of complex social and political structures (²).

5.2 Mesoamerica: Early civilizations such as the Olmec, Maya, and Aztec emerged in Mesoamerica, a region that includes present-day Mexico and Central America. These civilizations developed advanced agricultural techniques, monumental architecture, and intricate social systems. The diverse environments, from coastal plains to highland plateaus, supported a variety of crops and facilitated trade networks (³).

5.3 China: The early Chinese civilizations emerged along the Yellow and Yangtze rivers. These river valleys provided fertile land for rice and millet cultivation. The development of irrigation systems and flood control measures were crucial for sustaining agriculture. Over time, centralized states and dynastic rule emerged, leading to the formation of a sophisticated bureaucratic society (⁴).

Indus Valley: The Indus Valley civilization, located in present-day Pakistan and northwest India, was characterized by advanced urban planning, standardized weights and measures, and extensive trade networks. The region's fertile plains, supported by the Indus River, enabled agricultural surplus, which in turn supported urban centers like Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro (⁵).

¹- Service, Elman R. *Origins of the State and Civilization: The Process of Cultural Evolution*. Norton, 1975, p. 45.

²- Pollock, op cit, pp. 46-48.

³-Coe, Michael D. *Mexico: From the Olmecs to the Aztecs*. Thames & Hudson, 2002, p. 25.

⁴- Chang, Kwang-chih. *The Archaeology of Ancient China*. Yale University Press, 1986, p. 58.

⁵- Kenoyer, Jonathan Mark. *Ancient Cities of the Indus Valley Civilization*. Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 35.

Chapter 3: Civilizations of Western South Asia and Egypt (Dawn of time And Inventions Preceding Civilization)

Introduction

The study of ancient civilization is concerned with the earliest segments of the much broader subject called ancient history. The span of ancient history began with the invention of writing about 3100 BC and lasted for more than 35 centuries. Humankind existed long before the written word, but writing made the keeping of a historical record possible.

The first ancient societies arose in Mesopotamia and Egypt in the Middle East, in the Indus valley region of what are now Pakistan and India, in the Huang He (Yellow River) valley of China, on the island of Crete in the Aegean Sea, and in Central America. All these civilizations had certain features in common. They built cities and invented forms of writing. They learned to make pottery and use metals. They domesticated animals, and they created fairly complex social structures with class systems.

Apart from written records and carved inscriptions, the knowledge about ancient peoples is derived from the work of archaeologists. Most of the significant archaeological findings have been made in the past 200 years.

The civilizations of Western South Asia and Egypt have rich and ancient histories that date back to the dawn of human civilization. These regions were home to some of the earliest human settlements and witnessed the development of advanced societies and remarkable inventions preceding the establishment of organized civilizations. While it is difficult to pinpoint specific dates for the very beginning of these civilizations, archaeological and historical evidence provides insights into their early developments.

This lecture explores the dawn of civilizations in Western South Asia and Egypt, focusing on the early developments and inventions that paved the way for complex societies. Both regions witnessed significant advancements in agriculture, technology, and social organization that led to the formation of some of the world's earliest civilizations.

1- The Dawn of Time:

1.1. Defining Dawn of Time:

The concept of the "dawn of time" refers to the earliest period in the history of the universe, often associated with the moment of its creation or the beginning of existence itself. This term is deeply rooted in cosmology and philosophical inquiry, aiming to understand the origin and initial conditions of the cosmos.

In scientific terms, the "dawn of time" aligns with the Big Bang theory, which posits that the universe began as a singularity approximately 13.8 billion years ago. This event marked the emergence of space, time, and energy from a dense, hot state, initiating the expansion and evolution of the universe as we know it today (¹).

Philosophically, the notion of the "dawn of time" encompasses broader questions about existence, causality, and the fundamental nature of reality. It invites contemplation on whether time itself had a beginning, whether it could have existed before the Big Bang, and what might have preceded or initiated this foundational event.

Throughout human history, various cultures and civilizations have explored these ideas through creation myths, religious narratives, and philosophical discourse. These narratives often seek to reconcile the mysteries of existence with the human experience of time, consciousness, and our place in the cosmos (²).

In contemporary scientific discourse, the study of the early universe through fields such as cosmology, particle physics, and astronomy continues to deepen our understanding of the "dawn of time." Advances in observational techniques, theoretical frameworks like quantum gravity, and experiments in particle accelerators aim to elucidate the conditions that prevailed at the universe's inception and how these evolved into the complex structures observed today.

By exploring the concept of the "dawn of time," both scientifically and philosophically, we gain insights into the profound questions of origin, existence, and the evolving nature of the cosmos, shaping our understanding of the universe and our place within it.

1.2. Defining Pre-Civilization Periods:

Prehistory, also called the prehistoric period, refers to the period extending back when there was no writing and no engagement with written documentation. The beginning of prehistory is indicated with the origin of the earliest representatives

¹ - Hawking, S. W. (1988). *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*. Bantam Books.

² - Gribbin, J. (1998). *The Birth of Time: How Astronomers Measure the Age of the Universe*. Yale University Press.

of genus *Homo* (comprising the modern humans and the group of their close extinct ancestors – detailed in Unit 2 of this course). This evidence is currently dated between 5-2 million years before present (BP) in Africa, approximately one million years ago in Europe and Asia, an estimated 40,000 years BP in Australia, and even less in America.

The term ‘prehistory’ originated from the phrase *période anti-historique* which was coined by French archaeologist Paul Tournal in 1833 to refer to the period of human history before the emergence of written documents (Grayson, 1983). The French phrase shrank to ‘prehistory’ and was first used in 1851 by Daniel Wilson in his seminal book *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*.¹ The term ‘prehistory’ was initially coined to indicate the period during which humans were the contemporaries of animals now extinct, the remains of which were found by geologists (scientists who study the solid and liquid matter that constitutes the Earth) and paleontologists (scientists who study fossils) in old geological deposits. Prehistory now encompasses the entire span of human cultural evolution before written documentation that extends back at least 2.6 million years. In the absence of written records from this period, artefacts or material remains form the primary source of understanding prehistory. The material remains are available mostly in the form of stone tools, the remains of animals, human fossils, biofacts and cultural landscapes, more on which is detailed in the later Sections of this Unit. It is important to learn here that between prehistory and the earliest recorded history, researchers have identified a transitory period which is termed as protohistory. The term protohistory was coined to denote the period in a culture that occurred immediately before its recorded history begins. Protohistory is also used to indicate the history of a people or of a region in a period during which the people or the region’s inhabitants were still illiterate but were written about in the texts of neighbouring peoples who were more advanced and already literate. For example, in the 4th century BCE, the Celtic tribes were written about by Greek and Latin historians while the tribe was still illiterate (History of Humanity, I: 95). The term ‘protohistoric’ is often also used for populations whose writing has not been understood so far (e.g. the language of the Etruscans, the ancient Italic people and the Harappans)

1.3. The Dawn of Time of Western South Asia and Egypt:

The history of Western South Asia dates back to the Paleolithic era, around 2.6 million years ago. Excavations in the region have unearthed stone tools and

evidence of early human habitation ⁽¹⁾. As time progressed, the Neolithic period saw the emergence of agriculture and domestication of animals, leading to settled communities ⁽²⁾. The Indus Valley Civilization, which thrived around 2500 BCE, is one of the earliest urban societies in the world. Its cities, such as Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, boasted advanced urban planning, drainage systems, and a script that remains undeciphered to this day ⁽³⁾.

In Egypt, the Nile River played a crucial role in shaping early civilizations. The fertile land along its banks allowed for agricultural practices, leading to the rise of settled communities around 6000 BCE ⁽⁴⁾. The Predynastic period witnessed the development of pottery, weaving, and trade networks ⁽⁵⁾. The unification of Upper and Lower Egypt around 3100 BCE marked the beginning of the Pharaonic era, with the construction of monumental structures like the Great Pyramids at Giza ⁽⁶⁾.

2- Geographical and Environmental Factors in Western South Asia and Egypt

Geographical and environmental factors played a crucial role in shaping the early civilizations of Western South Asia and Egypt. These factors influenced their agricultural practices, settlement patterns, trade networks, and overall development.

2.1. Western South Asia: The Indus Valley Civilization

- **Geographical Context:** The Indus Valley Civilization, also known as the Harappan Civilization, thrived around 2600 BCE in the northwestern regions of South Asia, primarily in present-day Pakistan and northwest India. This civilization developed along the Indus River and its tributaries, including the Ghaggar-Hakra River system ⁽⁷⁾.
- **Environmental Factors:** The Indus River provided a consistent water source, crucial for agriculture in an otherwise arid region. The annual flooding of the river deposited nutrient-rich silt onto the surrounding lands, creating fertile soil ideal for cultivating crops like

¹ - Bentley, Jerry H., and Herbert F. Ziegler. *Traditions & Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past*. McGraw-Hill, 2006, pp. 105-110.

² - Scarre, Christopher, ed. *The Human Past: World Prehistory and the Development of Human Societies*. Thames & Hudson, 2005, p152.

³ - Childe, V. Gordon. *Op cit*, p137.

⁴ - Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. W.W. Norton & Company, 1997, p89.

⁵ - Ponting, Clive. *A Green History of the World: The Environment and the Collapse of Great Civilizations*. Penguin Books, 1991, pp. 76-80.

⁶ - Fernandez-Armesto, Felipe. *The World: A History*. Prentice Hall, 2007, p.250.

⁷ - Wright, R. P. (2010). *The Ancient Indus: Urbanism, Economy, and Society*. Cambridge University Press.

wheat, barley, and peas. The river also facilitated trade and transportation, connecting various urban centers within the civilization and with neighboring regions, such as Mesopotamia (¹).

However, environmental challenges such as changing river courses and potential flooding required sophisticated urban planning and water management systems. The Harappan cities, like Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, showcased advanced urban infrastructure, including grid-like street layouts, drainage systems, and standardized brick sizes, reflecting their adaptation to the environmental conditions.

2.2. Egypt: The Ancient Egyptian Civilization

- **Geographical Context:** Ancient Egypt emerged around 3100 BCE along the Nile River, extending from the Nile Delta in the north to Nubia in the south. The Nile River was central to the development of Egyptian civilization, providing a lifeline in an otherwise desert landscape (²).

- **Environmental Factors:** The Nile River's annual inundation was vital for agriculture, depositing a layer of fertile silt along its banks and creating the conditions necessary for growing crops such as wheat, barley, flax, and papyrus. This predictable flooding cycle enabled the Egyptians to develop a stable agricultural system, which supported the growth of their civilization (³).

The Nile also served as a major transportation route, facilitating trade and communication between different parts of Egypt and with other regions. The river's predictable flooding and receding allowed for the development of irrigation systems, further enhancing agricultural productivity (⁴).

The desert surrounding the Nile Valley provided natural protection against invasions, allowing the civilization to flourish with relative security. Additionally, the availability of stone resources from nearby quarries supported the construction of monumental architecture, such as pyramids and temples (⁵).

3. Inventions Preceding Civilization:

¹ - Possehl, G. L. (2002). *The Indus Civilization: A Contemporary Perspective*. AltaMira Press. pp 112-115

² - Butzer, K. W. (1976). *Early Hydraulic Civilization in Egypt: A Study in Cultural Ecology*. University of Chicago Press. p47.

³ - Bard, K. A. (2008). *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*. Blackwell Publishing. p 112.

⁴ - Shaw, I. (2000). *Op cit*. P105.

⁵ - Lehner, M. (1997). *The Complete Pyramids: Solving the Ancient Mysteries*. Thames & Hudson. pp. 91-94

Before the establishment of complex civilizations, both Western South Asia and Egypt witnessed remarkable inventions that laid the groundwork for future advancements. In Western South Asia, the Indus Valley Civilization showcased impressive achievements in urban planning, with grid-like street patterns, public baths, and well-organized houses. They also developed a system of weights and measures, suggesting a sophisticated trade network (Possehl, 2002, p. 140-143). In Egypt, the invention of hieroglyphic writing around 3200 BCE revolutionized communication and record-keeping. The Egyptians also excelled in architecture, constructing monumental structures using advanced engineering techniques. The invention of papyrus, a form of paper made from reeds, allowed for the preservation of written records and facilitated the spread of knowledge.

3.1. The Paleolithic Era in Western South Asia and Egypt

The Paleolithic era, also known as the Old Stone Age, marks the period of human prehistory characterized by the development of the first stone tools and the emergence of early human societies. This era spans from approximately 2.5 million years ago to around 10,000 BCE. In both Western South Asia and Egypt, the Paleolithic era laid the groundwork for the development of later civilizations.

3.1.1. Western South Asia:

- **Early Human Presence:** Western South Asia, particularly in the region that includes present-day India and Pakistan, has yielded significant archaeological evidence of early human habitation. The discovery of stone tools and fossil remains in sites such as the Soan Valley in Pakistan suggests that hominins inhabited this region as early as 2 million years ago (¹). The tools found are predominantly simple stone implements, indicating an early stage of technological development.

- **Paleolithic Cultures:** The Lower Paleolithic period in Western South Asia is characterized by the Acheulean culture, known for its hand axes and cleavers. Sites like Riwat and the Potwar Plateau have provided crucial insights into this era (²). The Middle Paleolithic period saw the emergence of the Mousterian culture, associated with more sophisticated flake tools and the presence of early Homo sapiens. The Upper Paleolithic period, starting around 40,000 BCE, witnessed a significant advancement in tool technology, with the introduction of blade tools and microliths.

¹ - Dennell, R. (2009). *The Palaeolithic Settlement of Asia*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 34- 36.

² - Patnaik, R. (2007). *Indian Prehistory: Paleolithic Culture*. Bharatiya Kala Prakashan, pp. 45-48

- **Environment and Adaptation:** The diverse environments of Western South Asia, ranging from arid regions to river valleys, influenced the lifestyle and survival strategies of Paleolithic communities. Early humans adapted to these environments by developing various subsistence strategies, including hunting and gathering. The Indus River and its tributaries likely provided a reliable source of water and attracted a variety of game, making it a favorable region for early human settlement (¹).

3.1.2. Egypt

- **Early Human Presence:** The Paleolithic era in Egypt is similarly marked by the presence of early hominins and the development of stone tool technology. Archaeological evidence from sites such as Wadi Halfa and the Nile Valley indicates that early humans were present in this region by at least 700,000 years ago (²). The tools from this period are characterized by simple stone implements, similar to those found in other parts of Africa.

- **Paleolithic Cultures:** In Egypt, the Lower Paleolithic period is represented by the Acheulean culture, with notable finds of hand axes and cleavers at sites like Bir Tarfawi and Bir Sahara (³). The Middle Paleolithic period is marked by the Mousterian culture, with evidence of more refined flake tools. By the Upper Paleolithic period, starting around 30,000 BCE, there is evidence of more advanced blade and microlithic technologies.

- **Environment and Adaptation:** The environment of Paleolithic Egypt was significantly different from today. The Sahara was not yet a vast desert, and the region experienced periods of greater humidity, which supported a variety of flora and fauna. Early humans in Egypt adapted to these changing environments by developing strategies for hunting, gathering, and exploiting the resources of the Nile Valley (⁴). The Nile River, with its periodic flooding, provided a rich and stable environment that would later support the development of agricultural societies.

3.2. The Neolithic Revolution: Transition to Agriculture

¹-Kennedy, K. A. R. (2000). *God-Apes and Fossil Men: Paleoanthropology of South Asia*. University of Michigan Press, pp. 51-54.

²-Wendorf, F., & Schild, R. (1992). *The Middle Paleolithic of Nubia*. Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan, pp. 29-32.

³-Vermeersch, P. M. (2002). *Palaeolithic Quarrying Sites in Upper and Middle Egypt*. Leuven University Press, pp. 65-68.

⁴-Hassan, F. A. (1986). *Prehistoric Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization*. Routledge, pp. 89-92.

The Neolithic Revolution marks one of the most significant turning points in human history, characterized by the transition from nomadic hunter-gatherer societies to settled agricultural communities. This transformation, which began around 10,000 BCE, profoundly impacted social, economic, and cultural development in various regions, including Western South Asia and Egypt.

3.2.1. Western South Asia:

- **Domestication of Plants and Early Agriculture:** In Western South Asia, particularly the Indus Valley region, the domestication of plants began with crops such as wheat and barley. Archaeological evidence from sites like Mehrgarh, dating back to around 7000 BCE, shows the early cultivation of these staple crops ⁽¹⁾. The inhabitants of Mehrgarh also cultivated legumes, such as lentils and chickpeas, which provided essential protein sources. The domestication of rice later followed, particularly in the eastern regions of the Indus Valley ⁽²⁾.

In Western South Asia, the Neolithic Revolution is exemplified by the development of agriculture in the Indus Valley region, notably at sites such as Mehrgarh in present-day Pakistan. Evidence from Mehrgarh indicates that as early as 7000 BCE, inhabitants engaged in the cultivation of wheat and barley, ⁽³⁾. This transition facilitated the emergence of permanent settlements and a more stable food supply.

- **Domestication of Animals:** Alongside plant domestication, the domestication of animals played a crucial role in the Neolithic Revolution in Western South Asia. Early farmers domesticated cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs. These animals provided meat, milk, and hides, and they were also used for labor and transportation. The domestication of cattle, in particular, was significant for agricultural activities, as they were used to plow fields and transport goods ⁽⁴⁾.

- **Technological Advancements:** The shift to agriculture was accompanied by significant technological innovations. Early farmers in the Indus Valley developed tools for planting, harvesting, and processing crops, such as sickles and grinding stones. Pottery production also advanced, allowing for improved storage and transportation of surplus food ⁽⁵⁾. These technological changes were crucial for supporting larger populations and more complex societies.

¹- Jarrige, J. F., Meadow, R. H., & Quivron, G. (1995). Mehrgarh: Field Reports 1974-1985 - From Neolithic Times to the Indus Civilization. Department of Culture and Tourism, Government of Sindh, p 15.

²-Fuller, D. Q. (2006). Agricultural Origins and Frontiers in South Asia: A Working Synthesis. *Journal of World Prehistory*, 20(1), 1-86, p 50.

³- Jarrige, J. F , op cit.

⁴-Meadow, R. H. (1993). *The Origins and Spread of Agriculture and Pastoralism in Northwestern South Asia*. In C. Renfrew (Ed.), *The Domestication and Exploitation of Plants and Animals* (pp. 70-73). University of California Press, p 73.

⁵- Possehl, op cit, pp. 45-48

- **Social and Economic Changes:** The establishment of agricultural communities led to the development of social hierarchies and specialized labor. Surplus food production allowed some individuals to engage in activities other than farming, such as crafting, trade, and administration. This specialization contributed to the growth of urban centers, which eventually evolved into the sophisticated cities of the Indus Valley Civilization, such as Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro (¹).

- **Environmental Adaptation:** The Neolithic communities of Western South Asia adeptly adapted to their environment, utilizing the fertile floodplains of the Indus River and its tributaries. They developed irrigation techniques to manage water resources, enhancing agricultural productivity. This environmental adaptation played a crucial role in sustaining agricultural practices and supporting the burgeoning populations of early urban centers (²).

3.2.2.Egypt:

- **Domestication of Plants and Early Agriculture:** In Egypt, the Neolithic Revolution was closely tied to the Nile River, whose annual floods provided fertile soil for agriculture. By around 5500 BCE, Egyptians had begun cultivating wheat and barley, similar to their counterparts in Western South Asia (³). They also domesticated flax, which was used to produce linen, a crucial textile for ancient Egyptian society. The cultivation of papyrus, which grew abundantly along the Nile, became significant for making paper-like materials used in writing.

In Egypt, the Neolithic Revolution took place along the Nile River, where the predictable annual flooding created fertile land conducive to agriculture. By around 5500 BCE, early Egyptians had begun cultivating crops such as wheat, barley, and flax. The domestication of animals, including cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs, further supported agricultural activities (⁴).

- **Domestication of Animals:** Animal domestication in Egypt included cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs. These animals were essential for providing meat, milk, and wool, and they also played roles in agricultural activities. Cattle were particularly valued for their strength and were used to plow fields, contributing to agricultural productivity (⁵).

¹- Wright, op cit, pp. 22-25

²- Fuller, D. Q. (2006). Agricultural Origins and Frontiers in South Asia: A Working Synthesis. *Journal of World Prehistory*, 20(1), 1-86, p 33.

³- Bard, op cit, pp. 24-27

⁴-ibid, pp. 24-27.

⁵- Butzer, op cit, pp. 44-47.

- **Technological Advancements:** Similar to Western South Asia, the transition to agriculture in Egypt was marked by technological advancements. Early Egyptians developed tools such as plows and sickles to aid in farming. They also made significant strides in pottery and basketry, which facilitated the storage and transport of agricultural products ⁽¹⁾. These innovations were instrumental in managing the agricultural surplus.

- **Social and Economic Changes:** The surplus generated by agricultural production in Egypt led to the emergence of complex social structures and economic systems. Specialization of labor became more pronounced, with individuals engaging in crafts, trade, and administrative roles. The accumulation of surplus and the ability to store and distribute food supported the development of social hierarchies and centralized political structures, which laid the foundation for the rise of the pharaonic state ⁽²⁾.

- **Environmental Adaptation:** The early agricultural communities in Egypt demonstrated a keen understanding of their environment. They harnessed the Nile's annual inundation through the development of irrigation systems, which allowed them to control and maximize the use of water for agriculture. This environmental mastery was pivotal in ensuring consistent agricultural yields and supporting population growth ⁽³⁾.

3.3. Innovations in Technology and Tools: Development of Pottery and Metallurgy

The development of pottery and metallurgy were two significant technological advancements that transformed human societies during the Neolithic and early Bronze Ages. These innovations played crucial roles in the daily lives, economic activities, and cultural practices of ancient civilizations in Western South Asia and Egypt.

3.3.1. Western South Asia

- **Pottery:** The advent of pottery in Western South Asia is traced back to the Neolithic period, with evidence of its use at sites like Mehrgarh dating as far back as 7000 BCE. Pottery in the Indus Valley Civilization was characterized by a high degree of craftsmanship, with intricate designs and standardized forms. These ceramic products were used for a variety of purposes, including storage, cooking, and ceremonial activities. The

¹ - Shaw, op cit, pp. 33-36

² - Trigger, op cit, pp. 44-47

³ - Butzer, op cit, pp. 22-25

widespread use of pottery facilitated the storage and transport of surplus food, contributing to the economic stability and growth of early agricultural communities (¹).

- **Metallurgy:** The Indus Valley Civilization also made significant strides in metallurgy. Early metalworking in the region involved the use of copper, which was extracted from local ores and used to make tools, weapons, and ornaments. By around 3000 BCE, metallurgical techniques had advanced to include the production of bronze, an alloy of copper and tin. This development marked the beginning of the Bronze Age in the region. The use of metal tools and weapons provided a technological edge in agriculture, warfare, and craftsmanship, enabling more efficient farming practices, better defense mechanisms, and the creation of sophisticated art and artifacts (²).

3.3.2.Egypt

- **Pottery:** In ancient Egypt, pottery production began in the Predynastic period (c. 5500-3100 BCE). Egyptian pottery was initially simple and utilitarian, but it evolved into more elaborate forms over time. By the time of the Old Kingdom (c. 2686-2181 BCE), pottery had become an integral part of daily life and religious practices. Egyptian pottery was often decorated with symbolic motifs and used in various aspects of life, including food storage, cooking, and burial rituals. The development of pottery allowed for better food storage and resource management, which were essential for sustaining large populations and complex societies (³).

- **Metallurgy:** Metallurgy in Egypt began with the use of copper during the early Predynastic period. By around 3000 BCE, Egyptians were proficient in copper smelting and tool-making. The introduction of bronze around 2000 BCE marked a significant advancement, as bronze tools and weapons were stronger and more durable than their copper counterparts. The development of metallurgy was closely linked to the construction of monumental architecture, such as the pyramids, which required advanced tools and techniques for quarrying, shaping, and transporting massive stone blocks. Additionally, metalworking skills contributed to the creation of intricate jewelry and ceremonial objects, reflecting the high level of craftsmanship and artistic achievement in ancient Egyptian society (⁴).

¹ - Kenoyer, op cit, pp. 76-79.

² - Wright, R. P. (2010). *The Ancient Indus: Urbanism, Economy, and Society*. Cambridge University Press. p. 109.

³ - Shaw, op cit, p. 72.

⁴ - Bard, op cit, p59.

3.4. Trade and Interaction in the Prehistoric Period: Exchange Networks and Trade Routes

3.4.1. Western South Asia (Indus Valley Civilization)

The Indus Valley Civilization, which thrived around 2600 BCE, is noted for its extensive trade networks that significantly contributed to its economic stability and cultural exchange.

Internal Trade:

- **Urban Centers:** Cities like Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro were major hubs of commerce. Goods produced in these urban centers included pottery, textiles, and beads, which were traded within the civilization.
- **Standardization:** The use of standardized weights and measures facilitated trade and ensured consistency in commercial transactions ⁽¹⁾.

External

Trade :

- **Trade with Mesopotamia:** The Indus Valley Civilization engaged in long-distance trade with Mesopotamia. Indus seals and artifacts have been found in Mesopotamian sites, indicating a robust exchange of goods such as cotton textiles, pottery, beads, and various metals.
- **Trade Goods:** Items like lapis lazuli, carnelian beads, and other luxury goods were traded, showcasing the civilization's craftsmanship and access to diverse resources ⁽²⁾.

Trade Routes :

- **Overland Routes:** Trade routes likely included overland paths through the Hindu Kush mountains, connecting the Indus Valley with Central Asia and beyond.
- **Maritime Routes:** Maritime routes across the Arabian Sea facilitated trade with the Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf regions.
- **River Systems:** The Indus River and its tributaries were vital for transporting goods, linking various cities and facilitating trade across the region ⁽¹⁾.

¹ - Kenoyer, op cit, p106.

² - ibid, p. 149.

3.4.2. Egypt

In Egypt, trade and interaction were similarly crucial to the development and sustainability of the civilization, especially due to the geographic and environmental advantages provided by the Nile River.

Internal Trade :

- **The Nile River:** The Nile River was the main artery of internal trade, enabling the transportation of goods such as grain, papyrus, gold, linen, and pottery along its length.
- **Agricultural Surplus:** The fertile floodplains of the Nile supported a surplus of agricultural produce, which could be traded internally and externally (²).

External Trade :

- **Trade with Nubia:** Egypt had significant trade relations with Nubia to the south, exchanging goods such as gold, ebony, ivory, and exotic animals.
- **Trade with the Levant:** The Levant was another crucial trading partner, where Egypt traded goods like gold, linen, and papyrus for cedar wood, oils, and other luxury items (³).

Trade Routes :

- **Overland Routes:** Overland routes connected Egypt to the Mediterranean and Red Sea coasts, facilitating trade with regions in the Near East and Africa.
- **Maritime Routes:** Maritime routes in the Red Sea allowed trade with the land of Punt (believed to be in the Horn of Africa), bringing in goods such as incense, myrrh, and other luxury items.
- **Nile River:** The Nile not only facilitated internal trade but also served as a route for trade expeditions to Nubia and other regions (⁴).

Chapter 4: Material and Literary Sources for the Study of Civilization

¹ - Possehl, op cit, p137.

² - Butzer, op cit, p. 44.

³ - Bard, op cit, p. 115.

⁴ - Butzer, op cit, p. 47.

Introduction:

Understanding the past is crucial for comprehending the present and shaping the future. The study of civilizations relies on various sources that provide insights into the lives, cultures, and developments of ancient societies. In this lesson, we will explore two primary categories of sources: material and literary.

The study of civilization encompasses a wide range of disciplines, including history, anthropology, sociology, archaeology, and literature. To gain a comprehensive understanding of civilization, it is essential to explore both material and literary sources. Material sources provide tangible evidence of past civilizations, such as artifacts, architecture, and tools, while literary sources offer insights into the beliefs, values, and societal structures of different cultures through their written works.

Material and literary sources are essential for the study of civilization. They provide us with a glimpse into the past and allow us to understand the development of human societies.

1. Introduction to the sources for the study of civilisation

One of the most valuable sources in the study of civilisation are ancient monuments and sites. A large amount of concrete information is obtained about the economic activity of people, the emergence of cities, separate buildings, houses of noble and peasant classes, religious construction, craft and economic buildings. City civilisations form cities on the highlands and all other artificialities, on the banks of rivers, on the sea shores, and in the deltas. Settlements are located in different mountain passes, in different areas of agricultural land, or in suitable oases.

The term "civilisation" is derived from the Latin word "civitas" - in the sense of a city. In this regard, all human beings can be categorised as city dwellers. The development of civilisation and its diverse forms, against the background of material and cultural ties and historical circumstances, has directed people to search for and study the largest and most complex issues. The tradition of considering civilisation as an object of scientific research is multi-millennial. In the pre-scientific period, evidence about civilisation in general, and the civilisations of the Ancient East in particular, can be found in a wide range of written and material sources.

Sources that help historians reconstruct the past and understand socioeconomic evolution have been broadly divided into two categories: archaeological sources and literary sources. Literary sources are those that are written. These resources give an idea of the advancement in human society as they exhibit the ability of humans to write and give a broader account of events that occurred then. Literary sources are comparatively newer and belong to a later phase of human evolution when humans started living in a well-organized society. Sources that help historians reconstruct the past and understand socioeconomic evolution have been broadly divided into two categories: archaeological sources and literary sources. Literary sources are those that are written. These resources give an idea of the advancement in human society as they exhibit the ability of humans to write and give a broader account of events that occurred then. Literary sources are comparatively newer and belong to a later phase of human evolution when humans started living in a well-organized society. ⁽¹⁾

Modern scholars of ancient history are notoriously obsessed with evaluating their primary sources critically, and with good reason. Studying ancient history, especially in its earliest periods, is like putting together a puzzle, most of whose pieces are missing, and some pieces from another puzzle have also been added in for good measure. Ancient history requires careful consideration of a wide range of sources, which fall into two broad categories: **material culture**. The job of the historian, then, is to reconstruct the story of the ancient world using these very different sources, and **literary sources** (including both fiction and non-fiction) .

2. Material Sources:

2.1. Significance of Material Sources:

Material sources are the physical remains of civilizations, such as tools, weapons, buildings, and artwork. They can provide us with insights into the everyday lives of people in the past, as well as their technological and artistic achievements.

¹- Literary Sources: Types, Importance, and Limitations for the UGC NET History, from the link: <https://testbook.com/ugc-net-history/literary-sources> Updated on Jun 30, 2023, had seen 15/06/2024 at 23:34.

Material sources include artifacts, buildings, and other physical objects that have been left behind by past civilizations. These sources can provide us with information about the daily lives of people in the past, as well as the technology and culture of their societies. For example, archaeologists have studied the ruins of ancient cities to learn about the architecture, engineering, and social structure of those civilizations.

Material sources for the study of civilization include archaeological artifacts, architectural remains, and other physical remnants of past societies. These sources provide valuable insights into the technological advancements, artistic expressions, and daily lives of ancient civilizations. For example, archaeological excavations have unearthed pottery, jewelry, weapons, and household items that shed light on the material culture of ancient societies. Additionally, the study of architectural remains such as temples, palaces, and city structures offer clues about the urban planning, construction techniques, and religious practices of past civilizations.

Material sources can be used to study a wide range of aspects of civilization, such as:

- **Economy:** Artifacts such as tools and coins can provide information about trade and economic activity.
- **Technology:** The design and construction of buildings and other structures can tell us about the technological capabilities of a civilization.
- **Social organization:** The layout of settlements and the distribution of goods can provide insights into social hierarchy and class structure.
- **Religion:** Religious artifacts and structures can tell us about the religious beliefs and practices of a civilization.
- **Art and culture:** Pottery, jewelry, and other artwork can provide insights into the artistic and cultural achievements of a civilization.

2. 2. Types of material sources: Some examples of material sources include:

2.2.1 Archaeological Discoveries: Archaeological discoveries form the foundation of our understanding of ancient civilizations. These discoveries include the unearthing of sites that provide critical insights into the past through systematic excavation and analysis.

Archaeological discoveries are essential for understanding ancient civilizations, offering a wealth of information through the meticulous excavation and analysis of sites. These discoveries provide critical insights into the cultural, social, and technological aspects of historical societies. Below are some key archaeological discoveries, analyzed for their contributions to the study of ancient civilizations.

Archaeological discoveries refer to the findings made by archaeologists during excavations and surveys that provide insights into past human civilizations. These discoveries can include artifacts, structures, and other material remains that help researchers understand the cultural, social, and technological aspects of ancient societies.

Archaeological discoveries are crucial for reconstructing the history of human civilization. By studying these findings, researchers can piece together the puzzle of how different societies lived, interacted, and evolved over time. These discoveries also shed light on technological advancements, trade networks, religious practices, and artistic expressions of ancient cultures. ⁽¹⁾

Examples of significant archaeological discoveries include the discovery of the ancient city of Pompeii, preserved under volcanic ash, has provided unparalleled insights into Roman life. ⁽²⁾ and the excavation of the Indus Valley Civilization sites, such as Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, revealing a highly advanced urban culture with sophisticated infrastructure. ⁽³⁾

This encompasses a wide range of finds unearthed through archaeological digs. These discoveries offer invaluable clues about the lives of people from the past.

- **Tools and Weapons:** These artifacts provide insights into the technological advancements, hunting practices, and warfare strategies of past civilizations.
- **Pottery and Ceramics:** The styles, decorations, and materials used in pottery can reveal information about trade routes, artistic expression, and even dietary habits.
- **Building Materials:** The types of materials used in construction, such as stone, mudbrick, or wood, can tell us about the available resources, engineering capabilities, and even social structures of a civilization.

¹ - Renfrew, C., & Bahn, P.G. (2016). *Archaeology Essentials: Theories, Methods & Practice*. Thames & Hudson.

² - Beard, M. (2008). *The Fires of Vesuvius: Pompeii Lost and Found*. Harvard University Press.

³ - Possehl, G. L. (2002). *The Indus Civilization: A Contemporary Perspective*. Rowman Altamira.

These archaeological discoveries not only uncover the physical remnants of ancient civilizations but also provide critical insights that help scholars reconstruct and understand the complexities of past societies. Through detailed analysis, each site contributes to a broader understanding of human history and cultural development.

2.2.2. Artifacts and Objects

Artifacts and objects, ranging from everyday utensils to ceremonial items, are crucial for understanding the material culture and technological advancements of ancient societies.

Artifacts and objects are tangible remnants of past civilizations that provide invaluable insights into the daily lives, technological advancements, and cultural practices of ancient societies. These items, ranging from everyday utensils to ceremonial objects, serve as direct links to the people who created and used them.

Artifacts play a crucial role in archaeological research as they help archaeologists piece together the puzzle of ancient societies. These are any portable objects left behind by past societies. They can be anything from jewelry and sculptures to coins and tools. Artifacts can reveal information about trade networks, social hierarchies, religious practices, artistic styles, and technological advancements of ancient cultures. ⁽¹⁾

By studying these objects, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of how people lived in the past and how their societies functioned.

Examples of significant artifacts include the Rosetta Stone, the Venus de Milo statue, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Antikythera Mechanism. Pottery shards from the Minoan civilization provide clues about their artistic expressions and trade networks, and Tools and weapons found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, which highlight the craftsmanship and technological prowess of ancient Egypt. Each of these artifacts has provided valuable insights into different aspects of ancient civilizations and has helped expand our knowledge of human history. By studying these artifacts, archaeologists can learn about:

- **Art and Aesthetics:** Artifacts like sculptures, paintings, and pottery decorations offer a glimpse into the artistic styles and cultural values of a civilization.

¹ - Scarre, C., & Fagan, B.M. (2008). *Ancient Civilizations*. Thames & Hudson.

- **Daily Life:** Objects like combs, mirrors, and cooking utensils provide insights into the everyday routines and domestic activities of people from the past.
- **Religion and Beliefs:** Religious artifacts like statues of deities, ritual objects, and symbols can shed light on the religious beliefs and practices of a civilization.

Artifacts and objects from ancient civilizations serve as essential tools for archaeologists and historians, enabling them to piece together the daily lives, technological advancements, and cultural practices of past societies. Through careful analysis, these items provide a tangible connection to the people and cultures that shaped our history. ⁽¹⁾

2.2.3 Monuments and Structures

Monuments and structures are architectural remains left behind by past civilizations that serve as tangible symbols of their cultural achievements and beliefs. These structures can include temples, palaces, tombs, fortifications, pyramids, bridges, and other architectural marvels built by ancient societies.

Monuments and structures, serve as enduring testaments to the architectural and engineering capabilities of ancient civilizations. They also offer insights into the religious, political, and social frameworks of these societies. Monuments and structures not only showcase the architectural prowess of past civilizations but also provide insights into their religious beliefs, political systems, social organization, and technological capabilities. By studying these structures, researchers can learn about the values and priorities of ancient cultures and how they expressed them through architecture. ⁽²⁾

Famous monuments and structures such as the Great Wall of China, Machu Picchu in Peru, Stonehenge in England, Angkor Wat in Cambodia, the Great Pyramids of Giza, which reflect the religious beliefs, social organization, and technological achievements of ancient Egypt. ⁽³⁾ and the Parthenon in Athens, symbolizing the cultural and political zenith of ancient Greece during the Classical period. ⁽⁴⁾ are examples of architectural wonders that have captivated people for centuries. These structures stand as testaments to the ingenuity and creativity of past civilizations while offering valuable clues about their way of life. Monuments and structures serve multiple purposes:

¹ - Kipfer, B.A., & Trefil, J.S., et al. (2008). *The Dictionary of Artifacts*. Wiley-Blackwell.

² - Renfrew, C., & Bahn, op cit.

³ - Lehner, M. (1997). *The Complete Pyramids: Solving the Ancient Mysteries*. Thames & Hudson.

⁴ - Neils, J. (2005). *The Parthenon: From Antiquity to the Present*. Cambridge University Press.

- **Symbolic Representation:** These structures often reflect the power, wealth, and religious beliefs of a civilization. For example, the grandeur of Egyptian pyramids signifies the Pharaoh's connection to the divine.
- **Engineering Marvels:** Monuments like aqueducts, bridges, and irrigation systems showcase the engineering knowledge and skills of a civilization.
- **Urban Planning:** The layout of cities, including residential areas, public spaces, and defensive structures, reveals information about social organization, economic activities, and daily life within a civilization.

These material sources collectively enable scholars to reconstruct the lifestyles, technological advancements, and societal structures of ancient civilizations, providing a tangible link to our historical heritage.

In addition to the above, the following material sources can be added:

2.2.4. Human Remains: Human remains are a valuable source for studying civilizations as they provide insights into the physical characteristics, health, diet, lifestyle, and cultural practices of past populations. By analyzing skeletal remains, researchers can reconstruct demographic profiles, identify diseases, determine causes of death, and understand burial customs. Anthropological studies of human remains have contributed significantly to our understanding of ancient societies and their ways of life ⁽¹⁾.

2.2.5. Museum Collections: Museum collections play a crucial role in the study of civilization by preserving and showcasing artifacts, artworks, tools, clothing, pottery, and other objects that offer glimpses into the material culture of different civilizations. These collections provide researchers with tangible evidence of past societies' technological advancements, artistic achievements, social structures, religious beliefs, and economic activities. Scholars often rely on museum collections to study and interpret the material remains of ancient civilizations ⁽²⁾.

2.2.6. Archival Records: Archival records are essential sources for studying civilizations as they contain historical documents, manuscripts, inscriptions, administrative records, correspondence, maps, photographs, and other primary sources that shed light on various aspects of past societies. Archives preserve valuable information about political systems, governance structures, economic transactions, social interactions, religious practices, intellectual developments,

¹ - Renfrew & Bahn, op cit.

² - Scarre & Fagan, 2016, op cit.

and cultural traditions. Researchers use archival records to reconstruct historical narratives and analyze the dynamics of civilizations over time (¹).

2.2.7. Physical Geography: Physical geography plays a significant role in the study of civilization by providing insights into the environmental settings in which past societies thrived or declined. Geographical features such as landscapes, climate patterns, natural resources, water sources, topography, and ecological conditions influence human settlement patterns, agricultural practices, trade routes, urban development, and territorial expansion. By examining the physical geography of ancient civilizations, scholars can understand how environmental factors shaped cultural evolution and societal resilience.

2.2.8. Scientific Analysis: Scientific analysis encompasses a wide range of techniques and methods used to study material sources related to civilizations. Archaeological science employs scientific approaches such as radiocarbon dating, DNA analysis, isotopic analysis, chemical composition analysis (e.g., XRF), remote sensing technologies (e.g., LiDAR), microscopy (e.g., SEM), spectroscopy (e.g., FTIR), and other analytical tools to investigate artifacts, ecofacts (e.g., plant remains), architectural structures (e.g., buildings), geological formations (e.g., stratigraphy), and other archaeological materials. Scientific analysis helps researchers date archaeological sites accurately, identify provenance, reconstruct ancient environments, trace trade networks, analyze food production systems, detect cultural exchanges, interpret technological innovations, and address research questions about past civilizations (²).

3. Literary Sources

3.1. Importance and Significance

Literary sources are of immense significance as they give us detailed information about politics, war, and the administration of different empires. They provide us with the idea of trade and commerce, religious practices, scientific progress, cultural development, the social position of women in the past, and how they have evolved with time. The analysis of these sources not only helps us frame an idea of the past but also helps us plan a better future.

Literary sources are crucial for understanding the evolution of human society. They provide a broader account of events and offer insights into the social,

¹ - Trigger et al., 2006, op cit.

² - Trigger et al., 2007, ibid

economic, and religious conditions of ancient civilizations. These sources are particularly important for studying ancient India, where archaeological sources are limited due to the destruction of many historical sites over time.

Literary sources include written texts, such as historical accounts, religious texts, and works of literature. These sources can provide us with information about the beliefs, values, and ideas of people in the past. For example, historians have studied the writings of ancient philosophers to learn about their ideas about politics, ethics, and the nature of reality.

Literary sources play a crucial role in understanding the intellectual and cultural aspects of civilization. Ancient texts, religious scriptures, philosophical treatises, historical chronicles, and literary works provide valuable information about the belief systems, social norms, political structures, and intellectual achievements of different civilizations. For instance, the study of ancient Greek literature offers insights into the philosophical ideas of Plato and Aristotle, while the analysis of religious texts such as the Bible or the Quran provides understanding of the spiritual beliefs and moral codes of various societies.

The use of manuscripts by historians presents them with a number of challenges when it comes to dating literary materials. During those times, there wasn't a typewriter, etc, so scribes manually copied documents. Copying manuscripts is not a simple task.

To gather more information about literary sources, you can go through their types in detail.

3.2. Types of Literary Sources

Literary sources are documents of literature that may be accessed in a book and offers important historical data. Literary sources are categorized depending on the unmodified narrative of the occurrence that actually occurred, although some of which are predicated on the study of those unaltered accounts. In this section, we will discuss all types of literary sources:

3.2.1 Historical Records: Historical records are essential for understanding the chronological and factual aspects of ancient civilizations. These records include official documents, royal decrees, annals, and chronicles that provide detailed accounts of political events, administrative activities, wars, treaties, and significant public works. For example: *The Annals of the Kings of Assyria* provide a continuous record of Assyrian rulers and their military campaigns,

offering valuable insights into the political history and military strategies of the Assyrian Empire (¹).

3.2.2. Religious Texts: Religious texts are crucial for understanding the spiritual beliefs, rituals, and moral values of ancient civilizations. These texts often include hymns, prayers, myths, theological treatises, and religious laws. Examples include:

- The *Rigveda*, one of the oldest known scriptures of the Indo-Aryans, offers insights into the religious practices, cosmology, and social structure of ancient Vedic society (²).
- The *Egyptian Book of the Dead* provides a detailed account of ancient Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife and funerary practices (³).

3.2.3 Literary Works: Literary works, including epic poems, dramas, and prose narratives, reflect the cultural values, artistic expressions, and philosophical ideas of ancient civilizations. These texts often explore themes of heroism, morality, and human nature. Notable examples include:

- Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which are quintessential examples of ancient Greek literature that provide insights into Greek mythology, social customs, and the heroic ideal (⁴).
- The *Epic of Gilgamesh*, one of the oldest known literary works, offering a glimpse into the Sumerian views on friendship, mortality, and the quest for eternal life (⁵).

3.2.4 Legal Documents: Legal documents, including law codes, contracts, and court records, are invaluable for understanding the legal systems, social order, and economic transactions of ancient civilizations. An example is: The *Code of Hammurabi*, one of the most famous ancient legal codes, detailing laws and penalties in Babylonian society and reflecting the values and norms of the time (⁶).

3.2.5 Inscriptions and Epigraphy: Inscriptions, often found on monuments, statues, buildings, and coins, provide concise records of official proclamations, dedications, and commemorations. Epigraphy, the study of these inscriptions,

¹ - Grayson, A. K. (1991). *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC I (1114-859 BC)*. University of Toronto Press. (pp. 23-45).

² - Griffith, R. T. H. (1889). *The Hymns of the Rigveda*. E.J. Lazarus & Co. (pp. 12-34).

³ - Faulkner, R. O. (1972). *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*. University of Texas Press. (pp. 50-89).

⁴ - Lattimore, R. (1951). *The Iliad of Homer*. University of Chicago Press. (pp. 15-65).

⁵ - George, A. (2003). *The Epic of Gilgamesh: The Babylonian Epic Poem and Other Texts in Akkadian and Sumerian*. Penguin Classics. (pp. 25-78).

⁶ - Roth, M. T. (1997). *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Scholars Press. (pp. 82-105).

helps scholars understand the public and political life of ancient civilizations. For example:

- The Rosetta Stone, which was instrumental in deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphs, thereby opening up vast amounts of historical and cultural information about ancient Egypt (¹).

3.2.6 Administrative Records: Administrative records include various bureaucratic documents such as tax records, census data, and government correspondence. These records offer detailed information about the economic activities, population demographics, and administrative organization of ancient societies. An example is:

- The extensive archive of clay tablets from the Mesopotamian city of Ebla, which provides insights into the economic and political organization of an early urban society (²).

3.2.7 Philosophical Works: Philosophical writings from various civilizations offer insights into their intellectual traditions, ethical frameworks, metaphysical beliefs, and approaches to knowledge and wisdom. Examples include:

- Plato's *Republic*, which explores justice, the ideal state, and the role of philosophers in society, offering a window into ancient Greek philosophical thought (³).
- Confucius' *Analects*, a collection of sayings and ideas attributed to the Chinese philosopher, highlighting the ethical and social principles that influenced Chinese culture and governance (⁴).
- The *Bhagavad Gita*, a 700-verse Hindu scripture that is part of the Indian epic Mahabharata, addressing the concepts of duty, righteousness, and the nature of reality (⁵).

3.2.8 Academic Publications: Scholarly books and journal articles authored by historians, archaeologists, anthropologists, sociologists, and other experts offer comprehensive analyses of specific aspects of civilization studies. These publications often present rigorous research findings, theoretical frameworks, and methodological approaches that contribute to the scholarly understanding of civilizations.

¹ - Adkins, L. (2000). *Empires of the Plain: Henry Rawlinson and the Lost Languages of Babylon*. St. Martin's Press. (p120).

² - Pettinato, G. (1991). *Ebla: A New Look at History*. Johns Hopkins University Press. (p70).

³ - Plato. (2000). *The Republic*. Translated by G. M. A. Grube. Hackett Publishing Company. (p78).

⁴ - Confucius. (1997). *The Analects of Confucius*. Translated by D.C. Lau. Penguin Books. (p. 55).

⁵ - Easwaran, E. (2007). *The Bhagavad Gita*. Nilgiri Press. (p. 32).

3.2.9 Oral Traditions: In cultures without a strong written tradition, oral histories and traditions passed down through generations play a crucial role. Folktales, myths, and epic poems provide insights into the cultural identity and worldview of a community. Examples include:

- The *Epic of Sundiata*, an epic poem from the Mali Empire, recounting the life and achievements of Sundiata Keita, the founder of the Mali Empire. It provides a rich source of cultural and historical information ⁽¹⁾.
- The *Popol Vuh*, a foundational text of the K'iche' Maya people, containing mythological and historical narratives that reflect the beliefs and traditions of the ancient Maya ⁽²⁾.
- The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, originally passed down orally before being transcribed, offer profound insights into Greek mythology, heroism, and societal values ⁽³⁾.

Literary sources can be used to study a wide range of aspects of civilization, such as:

- **History:** Chronological accounts of events can be used to reconstruct the history of a civilization.
- **Religion:** Religious texts can be used to study the religious beliefs and practices of a civilization.
- **Culture:** Works of literature can provide insights into the cultural values, norms, and practices of a civilization.
- **Society:** Legal documents and other literary sources can be used to study the social and political systems of a civilization.

4. Using Material and Literary Sources Together:

Material and literary sources can be used together to provide a more complete picture of a civilization. For example, archaeological evidence can be used to confirm or refute information found in written sources. Similarly, literary sources can be used to interpret the meaning of material artifacts.

For example, archaeologists might excavate an ancient settlement and find a number of tools and weapons. They could then use literary sources to identify

¹- Niane, D. T. (1965). *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*. Longman. p 25.

²- Tedlock, D. (1985). *Popol Vuh: The Definitive Edition of the Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life and the Glories of Gods and Kings*. Simon & Schuster. p110.

³- Lattimore, R. (1951). *The Iliad of Homer*. University of Chicago Press. p78.

the types of tools and weapons that were used by the people of that civilization. Similarly, archaeologists might find a religious artifact, such as a statue of a god. They could then use literary sources to learn more about the religious beliefs and practices of the people who created the artifact.

By using material and literary sources together, historians and archaeologists can develop a more comprehensive understanding of past civilizations.

Moreover, material and literary sources often complement each other in providing a comprehensive understanding of civilization. For example, when studying ancient Egypt, examining both the archaeological remains such as pyramids and temples alongside literary sources like hieroglyphic inscriptions and papyrus scrolls can offer a more holistic view of Egyptian society.

Combining material and literary sources provides a comprehensive approach to studying ancient civilizations. This integrated method allows researchers to cross-verify data, enrich contextual understanding, and create a more holistic view of the past. Below are examples illustrating how material and literary sources can be used together effectively.

4.1 Case Study: Ancient Egypt

In studying ancient Egypt, researchers use both material and literary sources to gain a full picture of its civilization.

4.1.1 Material Sources:

- **Artifacts and Monuments:** The discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun, filled with artifacts like chariots, weapons, and jewelry, provides insights into the material culture and daily life of Egyptian royalty (¹).

4.1.2 Literary Sources:

- **Historical Records and Inscriptions:** The *Annals of Thutmose III* inscribed on the walls of the Karnak Temple record military campaigns and victories, offering a historical narrative that aligns with archaeological evidence found at battle sites (²).

By cross-referencing the artifacts from Tutankhamun's tomb with the descriptions of royal life and funerary practices found in texts such as the *Book*

¹- Carter, H., & Mace, A. C. (1923). *The Tomb of Tutankhamun*. Cassell & Company. p. 89.

²- Breasted, J. H. (1906). *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents*. University of Chicago Press. p298.

of the Dead, scholars can better understand the religious and cultural significance of these items (¹).

4.2 Case Study: Ancient Greece

In ancient Greece, material and literary sources together illuminate aspects of daily life, politics, and philosophy.

4.2.1 Material Sources:

- **Pottery and Sculptures:** Greek pottery, such as the black-figure and red-figure vases, depict scenes from mythology and daily life. These artifacts reveal details about Greek society, including clothing, food, and social activities (²).

4.2.2 Literary Sources:

- **Epic Poetry and Dramas:** Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* provide narrative context for the scenes depicted on pottery. The epics describe the customs, values, and heroics of Greek warriors, which are often mirrored in the visual representations on pottery (³).

By analyzing pottery alongside texts such as the *Iliad*, researchers can understand the symbolic meanings and societal importance of depicted scenes, thereby linking literary descriptions with physical evidence.

4.3 Case Study: Indus Valley Civilization

The Indus Valley Civilization's urban planning and writing system are better understood through the combined study of material and literary sources.

4.3.1 Material Sources :

- **Urban Ruins and Artifacts:** Excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro reveal advanced urban planning, including drainage systems, granaries, and standardized brick sizes (⁴).

4.3.2 Literary Sources:

- **Ancient Texts:** While the Indus script remains undeciphered, comparisons with contemporary Mesopotamian texts, such as the trade

¹ - Faulkner, R. O. (1972). *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*. University of Texas Press. p. 120.

² - Boardman, J. (1985). *Greek Art*. Thames & Hudson. p.87.

³ - Lattimore, op cit, p.102.

⁴ - Possehl, op cit, p.160.

records of the Sumerians, suggest interactions between these civilizations. These literary sources provide indirect evidence of trade and cultural exchange (¹).

Combining the archaeological evidence of urban planning with references to trade in Mesopotamian texts helps researchers hypothesize about the economic and administrative systems of the Indus Valley.

4.4 Case Study: Ancient Mesopotamia

Mesopotamian studies benefit significantly from the interplay of material and literary sources.

4.4.1 Material Sources:

- **Artifacts and Architectural Remains:** The ziggurats of Ur and the tablets from the library of Ashurbanipal offer rich physical evidence of Mesopotamian religious practices and knowledge (²).

4.4.2 Literary Sources :

- **Cuneiform Texts:** The *Epic of Gilgamesh* and the *Code of Hammurabi* provide literary context for understanding the societal values, legal systems, and cosmology of Mesopotamia (³).

By comparing the legal stipulations in the *Code of Hammurabi* with archaeological findings such as courtroom artifacts and public buildings, researchers can validate and expand their understanding of Mesopotamian law and order.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, material and literary sources are essential for the study of civilization as they provide valuable evidence and insights into the technological advancements, cultural practices, belief systems, societal structures, and intellectual achievements of past societies.

In the study of civilizations, the combination of material and literary sources allows historians to construct a comprehensive narrative of the past. By critically analyzing artifacts, texts, and cultural expressions, researchers gain a deeper

¹ - Crawford, H. (1991). *Sumer and the Sumerians*. Cambridge University Press. p120.

² - Oppenheim, A. L. (1977). *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization*. University of Chicago Press. p,68

³ - George, op cit, p. 89.

understanding of the diverse facets of human history. The exploration of these sources is an ongoing process, contributing to our evolving comprehension of the complex tapestry of civilizations across time.

Chapter 5: Mesopotamia civilization

Introduction:

Mesopotamia is a land of ancient civilisations situated in the river valley of Tigris – Euphrates in the Iraq of the South Western Asia. This fertile land looked like a crescent

and hence it was known as “The Garden of Eden”. Professor Breasted named it as “fertile crescent”. Due to its fertility, nomadic peoples poured into this region from the various surrounding desert. The most important group of people that inhabited the eastern parts of fertile crescent possessed a Semitic culture. It is believed that

Urbanization began in Mesopotamia around 3500-4000 BC, leading to the establishment of the first cities and complex social organizations. The developments in Mesopotamia influenced the development of other ancient civilizations in Asia Minor and contributed to the formation of civilizations in regions like Anatolia, Iran, and Syria. The urbanization model in Mesopotamia was characterized by a large population, multi-layered social structure, writing systems, monumental structures, and imported goods from distant regions. The political order in Mesopotamia was intertwined with the socio-economic structure, with the king at the head of the religious organization managing the economy of cities. The architecture of Mesopotamian civilization was rational and technical, considering the region's environment and climate.

Mesopotamia as an earliest civilization benefitted from the area's climate and geography to host the beginnings of human civilization. Its history is marked by many important inventions that changed the world, including the concept of time, math, the wheel, sailboats, maps and writing. Mesopotamia is also defined by a changing succession of ruling bodies from different areas and cities that seized control over a period of thousands of years

The word “mesopotamia” is formed from the ancient words “meso,” meaning between or in the middle of, and “potamos,” meaning river. Situated in the fertile valleys between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, the region is now home to modern-day Iraq, Kuwait, Turkey and Syria.

Mesopotamian civilization actually consists of more than one civilization namely the Sumerian, the Acadian, the Babylonian, Assyrian, and Chaldean civilizations.

1. The major stages (the Sumerians, the Acadians, the Babylonians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans).

1.1-The Sumerians (1900-4500BCE)

The Sumerians were an ancient civilization that existed in Mesopotamia, in what is now modern-day Iraq, from approximately 4500BCE to 1900BCE. They are widely regarded as one of the earliest known civilizations in the world and made significant contributions to human history in various fields such as writing, mathematics, astronomy, and urban development.

The Sumers were the settlers of the lowest part of valley of Tigris and Euphrates. The Sumers should have gradually settled over in this region only after 4000 B.C. Excavation about this civilization were made by Paul Emele Botta and Sir Leonard Woolley. The later based on his whole study on clay tablets of the period. Sumerian tradition tells the story of a long period of prosperity and a well-developed, orderly society. There are records of flood that destroy the cities and account of the rebuilding of

the cities. Greatest among them were Ur, Lagash, Umma and Nappur. The Sumerian drained the marshland and developed a powerful political system lasted among 1500

1.1.1 Geographical Location and Timeline:

The Sumerian civilization emerged in the southern region of Mesopotamia, known as Sumer. This area was characterized by its fertile land due to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which provided the necessary resources for agricultural development. The timeline of Sumerian civilization can be divided into several periods, including the Ubaid period (c. 4500–4000 BCE), Uruk period (c. 4000–3100 BCE), Early Dynastic period (c. 2900–2350 BCE), Akkadian period (c. 2334–2218 BCE), and Ur III period (c. 2112–2004 BCE).

1.1.2 political condition and Law:

City state of Sumeria were ruled by a King who was called as Patesti in the Sumerian language. He acted as “the tenant farmer” of the God. His ‘lease’

was renewed each year, during a great festival held in honour of the God. He looked after the duties of collecting offerings, supervising farming workshops, legalising all business transactions, and defending the city. He was not a law giver but administered the law of God. Protection of the rights of individuals gave Sumerians a peaceful environment. There were frequent wars between cities. The chief cause for rivalry was over land and water. Sometimes, a change in the course of the river would lead to open hostilities. There was also the constant threat of invasion from neighboring nomads that necessitated alertness and, in some cases, led to unity among rival cities to repel an invader. ⁽¹⁾

Regarding law, Sumerians had respected and regard for the laws of the land. They had a well-developed code of law which touched all aspects of their life. It was not based on brutality but on reasonability. In Engur and Dungi earned the credit for giving a code of laws to the people, which subsequently became source of inspiration to Hammurabi. The code of laws protected the poor from exploitation. The priests also performed the duty of the judges. ⁽²⁾

1.1.3 Sumerian culture and literature:

Sumerian culture was spread over all Mesopotamia and even came into contact with Crete and Egypt through the conquests of Akkad (2500-2370). The greatest contribution of the Sumerians was their system of writing. They wrote on clay tablets, with a reed, making wedge, shaped marks. This system of writing was known as “cuneiform”. Sumerians took their idea of writing from cylinder seals used originally as personal symbols. The Hittites, the Semites and the Persians adopted this method of writing. The Sumerians devised a lunar Calendar with twelve divisions. They altered the divisions whenever necessary to bring the year into harmony with the seasons. They named each year for some important event a storm, a battle that accrued during the year. The Sumerian system of numerals had 60 as the unit, and the weight measure was the “Mina” which was divided into 60 Shekels. The Sumerians had also made some useful inventions. They were the first to invent wheeled war chariots and also used that on the battle field. The credit of inventing bronze by mixing copper with tin also goes to them. They also put bronze to use for preparing

¹ - Kramer, S. N. (1963). *The Sumerians: Their History, Culture, and Character*. University of Chicago Press. (pp. 54-57).

² - Roth, M. T. (1997). *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Scholars Press. (pp. 12-15).

metals. Another notable contribution of the Sumerians was the potter's wheel.
(¹)

Their literature deals with the adventures of their gods and religious beliefs. The legend of Etana is of great interest. The legend of Adappa indicates how man lost immortality. Another legend tells as how the great God created heaven and earth, after destroying the Goddess of Chaos and Tiamat. Lovelier than this legend is that of Tammuz and Ishtar, the patron deity of Ur. These legends became a cultural heritage of the Sumerians to later civilization especially the Babylonian civilization. The legend of the flood passed into the Christian legend of Noah's Arc and the Deluge. (²)

1.1.4 art and architecture:

Seals cut in stone and beautifully decorated metal work from the greater part of the art of the Sumerians. We know very little about the architecture of the people because of their buildings, made of sun-burnt bricks, could not withstand centuries of exposure. Of the temples, the one at Nippur was somewhat on the order of an Egyptian Pyramid. Temples were considered as homes for the Gods. The homes of the people were unattractive huts, homes of the priests were beautiful but they could not approach the grandeur of Egyptian buildings. Ur was a splendid city, with walls, palaces, and temples. The great Ziggurat temple built in honor of Nannar, the moon-God, was the most notable buildings. (³)

1.1.5 religion:

They worshipped nature and nature Gods. Dreams were considered as revelations from the lower world. Natural phenomenon was regarded as an omen. There were thousands of deities. They were represented in nature objects. The priests practiced Astrology. The priests believed that the movement of heavenly bodies represented the will of Gods and could be used to ascertain their wishes. The God Ishtar, which symbolized fertility was worshipped almost by all. Offering was made to gods to prevail upon them to get sufficient rain fall for the crop and prevention of flood as well. They believed in theory of life after death and there was a practice of burying maids, courtiers and attendants along

¹ - Postgate, J. N. (1992). *Early Mesopotamia: Society and Economy at the Dawn of History*. Routledge. (pp. 75-78).

² - Kramer, op cit, pp. 160-164)

³ - Lloyd, S. (1978). *The Archaeology of Mesopotamia: From the Old Stone Age to the Persian Conquest*. Thames & Hudson. (pp. 48-52).

with the king and queen. To them the next world was a forbidding place, to which both the righteous and the evil descend. They introduced epics. Many of their stories—those of creation, the fall of man, the flood and the tower of Babel—were adopted by the Hebrews and written in the Old Testament of Bible. ⁽¹⁾

1.1.6 economic condition and social life:

Agriculture was their main occupation. The water was available in abundance and with little labor they were able to get bumper crops. Their fields were irrigated by a network of canals. Dams had also been built at rivers. They grow corn, wheat, barley, dates and varieties of vegetables. For harvesting they used sickles of burnt clay. They used donkeys as a means of transport. Many cottage industries were also developed. Most of their tools were made of flint. But copper, iron and tin tools were also known. Weaving and Pottery were also carried on. There were government overseers to supervise the weaving. Sumerians had good trade relations with India and Egypt. This is evident from the available seals. Barter system was the chief medium of exchange. But there was a recognized system of credit. ⁽²⁾

Society was divided between the rich aristocrats and the poor people. The rich lived in palaces with all luxuries whereas the poor lived in houses made of adobe. The middle class included small businessmen, scholars, physicians and priests. There was proper drainage and sewage system. Marriages were regulated by laws. The wife had an exclusive right to the dowry given to her. She enjoyed equal rights on her children and property. But man remained the Lord of the house for all practical purposes. Women were also attached to every temple either as maids or as the concubine to the priests. The work was expected to give many children to her husband and the sterile women were divorced. But the woman of the upper class enjoyed freedom. ⁽³⁾

1.1.7 Contributions and Achievements:

The Sumerians had a well-developed civilization. Their love and taste for the fine arts is reflected by the copper statue of a bull excavated at Tell-el-ubia and that of a silver coin head excavated from the grave of Queen Shabak. The invention of

¹ - Jacobsen, T. (1976). *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion*. Yale University Press. (pp. 150-155).

² - Nissen, H. J. (1988). *The Early History of the Ancient Near East, 9000-2000 B.C.* University of Chicago Press. (pp. 89-93).

³ - Leick, G. (2003). *Mesopotamia: The Invention of the City*. Penguin Books. (pp. 72-76).

bronze and wheeled war chariots is a proof of the advancement the Sumerians had made in civilization.

The Sumerians made significant contributions to human civilization. They are credited with the invention of writing, specifically cuneiform script, which was one of the earliest forms of writing in the world. This innovation allowed for record-keeping, administrative purposes, and the preservation of literature and historical accounts.

In addition to their advancements in writing, the Sumerians also developed a sophisticated system of mathematics. They introduced the concept of a numerical system based on the number 60, which influenced later civilizations and is still evident in modern time measurements (60 seconds in a minute, 60 minutes in an hour).

Furthermore, Sumerians were adept astronomers and developed a lunar calendar based on the cycles of the moon. Their understanding of celestial bodies and their movements contributed to the development of early astronomy.

The Sumerians also excelled in urban development, constructing impressive city-states with monumental architecture such as ziggurats – stepped pyramids that served as religious centers – and intricate irrigation systems to support agriculture. ⁽¹⁾

1.1.8 Decline and Legacy:

The decline of Sumerian civilization is attributed to various factors, including invasions by neighboring peoples such as the Akkadians and Elamites, as well as internal conflicts and environmental challenges.

Despite their eventual decline, the legacy of the Sumerians endured through their contributions to human civilization. Their innovations in writing, mathematics, astronomy, architecture, and governance laid the foundation for future societies in Mesopotamia and beyond. ⁽²⁾

¹ - Kramer, op cit, pp. 183-186

² - Postgate, J. N. (1992). *Early Mesopotamia: Society and Economy at the Dawn of History*. Routledge. (pp. 190-195).

1.2-The Acadians (2300-2100 BCE)

The Acadians were a Semitic-speaking people who lived in the ancient region of Mesopotamia, specifically in the southern part of present-day Iraq. They are known for their significant contributions to the development of early civilization, particularly in the fields of mathematics, astronomy, and literature.

1.2.1 Political Condition and Law:

The Akkadian Empire, established by Sargon of Akkad around 2334 BCE, marked the first time a Mesopotamian ruler extended his control over the entire region. Sargon's administration was highly centralized, with a bureaucratic system that facilitated governance over a vast territory. The Akkadian kings were viewed as divine representatives on Earth, and Sargon himself was often depicted as a god-like figure. This theocratic rule contributed to a stable yet authoritarian regime. The empire-maintained order through a standing army and established a network of provincial governors who reported directly to the king. Frequent conflicts with neighboring regions and internal revolts were common challenges, necessitating constant military vigilance and administrative reforms (¹).

The Akkadians inherited and adapted the legal traditions of the Sumerians, codifying laws that covered a wide range of civil, criminal, and commercial matters. These laws were inscribed on steles and placed in public locations for all to see, ensuring transparency and consistency in legal proceedings. The laws aimed to protect property rights, regulate trade, and maintain social order. Penalties for crimes varied based on the severity of the offense and the social status of the individuals involved. The Akkadian legal system influenced later Mesopotamian codes, including the famous Code of Hammurabi (²).

1.2.2 Akkadian Culture and Literature:

The Akkadian culture was a blend of Sumerian and Semitic traditions, with Akkadian becoming the lingua franca of the region. This cultural synthesis facilitated the spread of ideas and technological innovations. The Akkadians preserved and adapted Sumerian writing, creating an extensive body of literature, including epic poetry and hymns. The empire also saw significant developments in art, with sculptures and steles, such as the Victory Stele of Naram-Sin, depicting historical events and royal achievements. The Akkadian

¹ - Saggs, H. W. F. (1988). *The Greatness That Was Babylon: A Survey of the Ancient Civilization of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley*. Sidgwick & Jackson. (pp. 75-79).

² - Roth, M. T. (1997). *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Scholars Press. (pp. 35-39).

calendar and mathematical systems built on Sumerian foundations but included their own refinements, contributing to the administrative efficiency of the empire ⁽¹⁾.

Akkadian literature includes some of the earliest examples of epic poetry, such as the "Epic of Gilgamesh," which, although rooted in Sumerian mythology, was significantly expanded in the Akkadian period. Royal inscriptions and historical chronicles detailed the achievements of kings and served propagandistic purposes. The "Curse of Agade" is a notable literary work that reflects the empire's complex relationship with the gods and its ultimate downfall. These texts, written in cuneiform, were crucial in preserving the cultural and historical narratives of the Akkadian Empire and influencing subsequent Mesopotamian literature ⁽²⁾.

1.2.3 Art and Architecture:

Akkadian art is renowned for its realism and intricate details, as seen in the famous bronze head of an Akkadian ruler, believed to be Sargon. Architectural advancements included the construction of ziggurats, large palaces, and fortified cities. The Akkadian capital, Agade, was said to be a city of great splendor, although its exact location remains unknown. Public buildings were often decorated with elaborate reliefs and inscriptions that celebrated the king's divine status and military victories. Unfortunately, much of Akkadian architecture has not survived, but existing artifacts reveal a high level of craftsmanship and artistic sophistication ⁽³⁾.

1.2.4 Religion:

Akkadian religion was deeply influenced by Sumerian beliefs but introduced significant changes, including the elevation of the god Marduk. The Akkadian pantheon included gods from various regions, reflecting the empire's diverse population. Kings like Sargon and his successors were often deified, blending political authority with religious significance. Temples played a central role in society, serving as economic, religious, and administrative hubs. The practice of divination and astrology was prevalent, with priests interpreting omens to guide political and military decisions. Religious texts, such as hymns and prayers, were inscribed on clay tablets and used in temple rituals ⁽⁴⁾.

¹- Kuhrt, A. (1995). *The Ancient Near East c. 3000-330 BC*. Routledge. (pp. 63-66).

²- Foster, B. R. (2001). *The Epic of Gilgamesh: A New Translation, Analogues, Criticism*. W. W. Norton & Company. (pp. 45-50).

³- Frankfort, H. (1954). *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*. Penguin Books. (pp. 91-95).

⁴- Jacobsen, op cit, pp. 172-176

1.2.5 Economic Condition and Social Life:

The Akkadian economy was diverse and complex, relying heavily on agriculture, trade, and tribute from conquered regions. Extensive irrigation systems supported agricultural productivity, while trade routes connected the empire to distant regions, including the Indus Valley, Anatolia, and the Persian Gulf. Commodities such as grain, textiles, and precious metals were exchanged, fostering economic interdependence. The Akkadian administration implemented standardized weights and measures to facilitate trade and commerce. However, the economy faced challenges, including frequent conflicts and environmental pressures, which ultimately contributed to the empire's decline (¹).

Akkadian society was hierarchical, with the king at the top, followed by priests, nobles, merchants, and farmers. Social stratification was pronounced, with significant disparities in wealth and status. The urban centers were bustling with economic and cultural activities, while the rural areas were primarily agricultural. Women in Akkadian society had various roles, from priestesses and scribes to merchants and household managers. Laws regulated marriage, property rights, and social conduct, reflecting a structured and organized society. Public works, such as roads and canals, facilitated communication and trade within the empire (²).

1.2.6 Contributions and Achievements:

The Akkadians made several notable contributions to human civilization. They are credited with creating one of the earliest empires in history, demonstrating the feasibility of centralized administration over a vast territory. Their development of the Akkadian language and cuneiform writing facilitated communication and record-keeping across the empire. Akkadian literature, particularly the "Epic of Gilgamesh," has had a lasting impact on world literature. They also made advancements in art, architecture, and military organization, setting standards that influenced subsequent Mesopotamian civilizations (³).

1.2.7 Decline and Legacy:

The decline of the Akkadian Empire began around 2150 BCE due to a combination of factors, including internal strife, invasions by the Gutians, and severe droughts that disrupted agriculture. Despite its decline, the Akkadian

¹- Adams, R. M. (1981). *Heartland of Cities: Surveys of Ancient Settlement and Land Use on the Central Floodplain of the Euphrates*. University of Chicago Press. (pp. 112-116).

²-Leick, G. (2003). *Mesopotamia: The Invention of the City*. Penguin Books. (pp. 80-84).

³- Oppenheim, A. L. (1964). *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization*. University of Chicago Press. (pp. 201-204).

Empire left a lasting legacy. It established the concept of a multi-ethnic empire under a central authority, influenced the development of later Mesopotamian states, and contributed to the cultural and intellectual heritage of the region. The Akkadian language remained a lingua franca in the Near East for centuries, and their administrative and legal innovations continued to be utilized by successor states ⁽¹⁾.

1.3-The Babylonians (1800-1531 BCE)

The Sumerian city states were invaded and conquered by the nomadic Semitic people from Akkad in 2900 B.C. About 2300 B.C. their authority too decayed and the Sumerians got an opportunity to become independent again. After about 100 years, however, another Sumer and under their able ruler Hammurabi, they again conquered both the Sumerians and Akkadians. They made Babylon as their capital and the civilization which they gave the world is known as Babylonian civilization.

The Babylonians were an ancient civilization that existed from 1800 to 1531 BCE in the region of Mesopotamia, which is present-day Iraq. They are known for their contributions to various fields such as mathematics, astronomy, and law. The Babylonians are also famous for their advancements in architecture and urban planning, particularly the construction of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, which is considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

1.3.1 Babylonians under Hammurabi

Hammurabi (2123 – 2081 B.C.) was the greatest king of the Babylon. He united Mesopotamia and established a centralised government. He attained fame more as a ruler and organiser than as a warrior. He governed with an iron hand. He derived his authority from the divine origin. There are two chief sources of information for the study of Hammurabi's rule. ⁽²⁾

1.3.2 The Code of Hammurabi:

The code of laws is the most famous of all the remains of Hammurabi's rule. It is carved in stone shaft in which Hammurabi is depicted as receiving the laws from the Sun-God. He tried to make his subjects believe that the laws were divine. It is clear that Hammurabi did not originate all the laws, for many of

¹- Weiss, H., et al. (1993). "The Genesis and Collapse of Third Millennium North Mesopotamian Civilization." *Science*, 261(5124), 995-1000. p 996.

²- Roux, G. (1992). *Ancient Iraq*. Penguin Books. p. 220.

them appear in old Sumerian records. He simply codified and put them into force. This Code, the oldest known in a complete form, is modern in several respects. Through this code an attempt has been made to reduce the influence of theocracy on the pattern of justice. Hammurabi Code was codified by Hammurabi. This Code contains 285 laws. It covered all the classes of the Society including the highest and the lowest.

The whole code of conduct aimed at deterring the people from committing crimes. Accordingly, punishments awarded were harsh. The Code was arranged under laws dealing with:

- ❖ Personal property
- ❖ Real Estate
- ❖ Trade and Business
- ❖ Injuries and
- ❖ Labour.

As regards criminal law, it was provided that the system of 'eye for eye' should be followed. The people who were well placed and prosperous were given harsher and severe punishments as compared with the low placed people. The laws were enforced and the punishments were executed under the supervision of the state. If a house collapsed and killed the son of a house holder, the builder must suffer the loss of his own son. Death penalties were common. Conviction for adultery meant death for both parties concerned. Women were conferred equality in owning the property, right of divorce and right to bring law suits. They could engage in business and become professional scribes. Justice to the widow and the orphan was assured.⁽¹⁾

The law also regulates prices of necessities and the wages in all professions. Under the law of inheritance, the sons became equal heirs. There were no lawyers in Babylon except priests who could become notaries. The accuser had to bear the consequences, if he failed to prove the guilt. The early judges were priests and these secular courts also had begun to appear. But the King remained the final court of appeal.

1.3.3 Babylonians after Hammurabi

After the death of Hammurabi, Babylonia was conquered by the Kassites about 1700 B.C. The Kassites destroyed much of the Babylonian civilization.

¹ - Bottéro, J. (2001). *Everyday Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Johns Hopkins University Press. pp. 123-125.

Anarchy and Chaos prevailed everywhere. But Kassites were driven out by Nabopolassar. A brief but brilliant revival of Babylonian civilisation was brought about by his son Nebuchadnezzar II (604-562 B.C.) He was the greatest warrior, statesman and builder of all the rulers of Hammurabi. Babylon regained her lost glory and splendour under him. He made it very beautiful, prosperous and magnificent. During his reign the beautiful tower of Babel was constructed with 288 ft. wide base. He also constructed a beautiful palace with Hanging Gardens in the vicinity of this great tower. The Greeks had included this Garden among the seven wonders of the world.¹

1.3.4 Social and Economic Conditions

In equality among the social groups and special privileges to the select were recognised. There were three social groups. The wealthy could exact retaliation in kind for personal injuries and paid heavier fees and fines. The second group had to accept payment for injuries and the third group the slaves, were treated as personal property. Workers of various kinds were guaranteed of their rights. The Craftsmen were to maintain the quality of their work by the law. Agriculture was the chief basis of economic life. Most of the land was filled by tenants or slaves. Nebuchadnezzar was said to have constructed a lake 140 miles in circumference. Wheat, barley, dates and fruits were produced. The Grape and the Olive were cultivated and later introduced into Greece and Rome. Trade was brought under governmental supervision. Business contracts are mentioned in the code. Deeds of settlement, leases and land deeds promissory notes⁽²⁾, interest rate, were all standardized and defined. People carried trade with the Indus and Nile Valley people.

1.3.5 Arts and Architecture:

Art was not that much developed as that of the Egyptians. Architecture was completely disappeared. Only literature furnish information about the temples. The tower temples known as Ziggurats were built in stages, like small artificial mountains. One such pyramidal structure was 650 feet high and built in seven stages. On the top of the tower were a shrine and rooms for the home of the God. The brick walls were covered with rich woven carpets, colored tiles and mosaics, giving the structure beautiful appearance.⁽³⁾

¹ - Oates, op cit, pp. 250-252

² - Saggs, H. W. F. (1988). *The Greatness That Was Babylon*. Sidgwick & Jackson. p. 172.

³ - Crawford, op cit, p. 185.

1.3.6 Literature and Learning:

Learning was respected much by the Babylonians. Men were trained in templeschools for clerical work. Other types of cultural pursuits were also encouraged. They followed Sumerian cuneiform writing with slight improvements but it never reached the alphabet stage. The priests supervised and passed upon the written clay tablets before they were preserved in the temples. Mathematics, Algebra and Geometry were first developed by them. The Babylonians had opened schools where the students were taught arithmetic, business techniques and religion. They had also made considerable progress in astronomy, medicine and movements of the Sun, Moon and other planets. Mathematics worked out tables for multiplication and division and for the halves, quarters, thirds, squares and cubes of the most important numbers. The great epic of Gilgamesh contains several different Babylonian myths. The whole epic, by comparison stands in literature as one of the magnificent portrayals of the struggles of mankind in war, in love and in death. ⁽¹⁾ Some of the descriptions in the epic remind one of Milton's "Paradise Lost". In addition to epics, there was a large amount of writing called Temple Literature.

1.3.7 Religion:

Babylonians were religious minded people. Marduk, God of Babylon was generally recognised as supreme. Ishtar was the goddess of fertility of motherhood and of creative principle everywhere. She had control over reproduction among plants, beasts and human beings, commanded almost universal attention. Tammuz was her husband god of vegetation, who died each year and went to the lower region. Babylonians did not believe in personal immortality. They prayed to them for earthly pleasures and a long life on earth. The art of divination, the ability to foretell the future, was granted to chosen individuals by the Gods. A diviner used sheep's liver, the stars, and the planets to foretell the future. Each temple had a priest. They got heavy amounts in offerings. They rolled in wealth and were the most influential money lenders. Being rich, they exerted considerable influence over the government. ⁽²⁾

1.3.8 Enduring Legacy:

¹ - Foster, B. R. (2001). *The Epic of Gilgamesh: A New Translation, Analogues, Criticism*. W.W. Norton & Company. p. 45.

² - Black, J., & Green, A. (1992). *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia: An Illustrated Dictionary*. University of Texas Press. p. 132.

Despite the eventual decline of the Babylonian civilization due to invasions and conquests by neighboring powers, their legacy endured through their contributions to various fields. The mathematical and astronomical knowledge developed by the Babylonians influenced later civilizations, including the Greeks and Romans. The Code of Hammurabi also served as a model for subsequent legal systems in other ancient societies.

The Babylonian civilisation is just beginning to be fully valuable. It is realized that most of the succeeding civilisations in South Western Asia and Greece owe much to this civilisation. They preserved many legends which present an interesting background for the Hebrew Bible. In literature they developed the epic, psalms, fables and proverbs. The foundation of mathematics, astronomy, archaeology, history, medicine, grammar, lexicography and philosophy were established.

1.4-The Assyrians (911-612 BCE)

The Assyrians were a powerful ancient civilization that existed from 911 to 612 BCE. They were known for their military prowess, advanced administrative systems, and significant cultural contributions. The Assyrian Empire was one of the most dominant forces in the ancient Near East, and their influence extended across Mesopotamia and beyond.

The Assyrians originated in the region of Upper Mesopotamia, an area known for its fertile lands and strategic location. Initially, they were a small city-state in the Tigris River valley. However, through a series of conquests and alliances, they gradually expanded their territory and influence. The rise of the Assyrian Empire can be attributed to their military strategies, which included the use of iron weapons and a highly organized army.

The Assyrians were renowned for their military campaigns and conquests. Under rulers such as Tiglath-Pileser III, Sargon II, and Ashurbanipal, the empire expanded significantly, conquering territories as far as Egypt and Anatolia. The Assyrian army was well-disciplined and utilized advanced siege warfare techniques, allowing them to conquer numerous cities and regions.

1.4.1 Political Condition and Law:

The Assyrian Empire, especially during its peak under rulers like Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 BCE) and Sargon II (722–705 BCE), was known for its

highly efficient and ruthless administration. The Assyrian king held absolute power and was considered both a political and religious leader. The empire was divided into provinces, each overseen by a governor appointed directly by the king. This centralized system ensured loyalty and efficient tax collection. The Assyrians maintained a standing army and pioneered military innovations, such as siege warfare, which helped them expand and consolidate their empire. Regular campaigns and brutal tactics, including mass deportations and public executions, were used to maintain control and deter rebellion ⁽¹⁾.

Regarding the law, the Assyrians had a comprehensive legal system derived from earlier Mesopotamian codes, but it was more severe in its punishments. The laws covered various aspects of daily life, including property rights, trade, marriage, and criminal justice. Assyrian law emphasized retributive justice and deterrence, with penalties ranging from fines and corporal punishment to execution. The king acted as the supreme judge, but local courts and officials handled routine legal matters. Legal texts and court records provide insights into the social and economic life of the Assyrian Empire ⁽²⁾.

1.4.2 Assyrian Culture and Literature:

Assyrian culture was heavily influenced by earlier Mesopotamian civilizations, particularly Sumer and Akkad, but it also developed its unique characteristics. The Assyrians are noted for their contributions to art, especially bas-relief sculptures that adorned palace walls, depicting scenes of warfare, hunting, and divine ceremonies. Their capital cities, like Nineveh and Ashur, became cultural centers with extensive libraries, including the famous Library of Ashurbanipal, which housed a vast collection of cuneiform texts. Assyrian art and culture were instruments of state propaganda, designed to project power and instill fear in both subjects and enemies ⁽³⁾.

Assyrian literature was rich and varied, with a strong emphasis on historical and administrative texts, religious hymns, and epic poetry. The Library of Ashurbanipal is a key source of Assyrian literature, containing thousands of clay tablets inscribed with cuneiform script. This collection includes important works like the "Epic of Gilgamesh," medical texts, and omens. Assyrian annals, which recorded the achievements and campaigns of kings, are crucial historical sources. These texts not only chronicled events but also served as propaganda to glorify the king and justify his conquests ⁽⁴⁾.

¹- Olmstead, A. T. (1923). *History of Assyria*. University of Chicago Press. p. 115.

²- Roth, op cit, pp. 90-93.

³- Saggs, H. W. F. (1984). *The Might That Was Assyria*. Sidgwick & Jackson. p143.

⁴- Parpola, S. (1983). *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal: Part II: Commentary and Appendices*. Eisenbrauns. p 73.

1.4.3 Art and Architecture:

Assyrian art and architecture reflect their imperial ideology and militaristic culture. The palaces of kings like Sennacherib and Ashurbanipal in Nineveh were grand structures decorated with intricate bas-reliefs depicting military victories, religious rituals, and royal hunts. These artworks served to glorify the king and intimidate potential rebels. The Assyrians also constructed massive fortifications and canals to enhance the infrastructure and defense of their cities. The ziggurat of Dur-Sharrukin and the extensive city walls of Nineveh are notable examples of Assyrian architectural achievements ⁽¹⁾.

1.4.4 Religion:

Assyrian religion was a continuation of the Mesopotamian pantheon, with a particular emphasis on Ashur, the national deity. The Assyrian kings often portrayed themselves as the earthly representatives of Ashur, using this divine connection to legitimize their rule and military campaigns. Temples dedicated to various gods were central to Assyrian cities, and the priesthood played a significant role in both religious and political life. Rituals, offerings, and divination were integral to Assyrian religion, with priests interpreting omens and conducting ceremonies to secure divine favor ⁽²⁾.

1.4.5 Economic Condition and Social Life:

The Assyrian economy was diverse, encompassing agriculture, trade, and tribute from conquered territories. The fertile land of the Assyrian heartland supported the cultivation of crops such as barley, wheat, and flax. Extensive irrigation systems enhanced agricultural productivity. Trade routes connected the Assyrian Empire with distant regions, facilitating the exchange of goods like textiles, metals, and spices. The empire's wealth was further augmented by tributes and taxes collected from subjugated peoples. The state played a central role in regulating the economy, including the management of large state-owned estates and workshops ⁽³⁾.

Assyrian society was hierarchically structured, with the king at the apex, followed by the nobility, priests, merchants, artisans, and farmers. Social mobility was limited, but certain individuals could rise through the ranks, especially through military service or administrative competence. Assyrian cities

¹ - Frankfort, op cit, pp. 146-149

² - Grayson, op cit, p. 260.

³ - Oates, J. (1968). *The Rise of the Assyrian Empire*. Oxford University Press. p 135.

were cosmopolitan, with diverse populations resulting from the empire's conquests. Daily life varied greatly between the social classes; the elite lived in luxurious palaces, while commoners resided in simpler homes. Assyrian law was strict, with harsh penalties for crimes, reflecting the society's emphasis on order and discipline (¹).

1.4.6 Contributions and Achievements:

The Assyrians made significant contributions to military science, including the development of siege warfare techniques, the use of iron weapons, and the organization of a professional standing army. They built a vast network of roads to facilitate the movement of troops and trade, which also contributed to the empire's administrative efficiency. Assyrian scholars compiled extensive records and texts in various fields, preserving and expanding the knowledge inherited from earlier cultures. Their artistic achievements, particularly in bas-relief sculpture, set high standards in the depiction of narrative scenes. Additionally, their legal and administrative innovations influenced subsequent empires in the region (²).

1.4.7 Decline and Legacy:

The decline of the Assyrian Empire began in the late 7th century BCE, primarily due to internal strife, overextension of resources, and external pressures from emerging powers such as the Medes and the Babylonians. The fall of Nineveh in 612 BCE marked the end of Assyrian dominance. Despite their fall, the Assyrians left a lasting legacy in the Near East. Their military innovations, administrative practices, and cultural achievements influenced subsequent civilizations, including the Babylonians and Persians. The Assyrian impact on law, governance, and art continued to shape the development of the ancient Near East long after their empire had collapsed (³).

1.5-The Chaldeans (539-626BCE)

The Chaldeans were a Semitic-speaking people who lived in the southern part of Babylonia, an ancient region located in present-day Iraq. They rose to power in the 7th century BCE and established the Neo-Babylonian Empire, which lasted from 626 to 539 BCE. The Chaldeans are known for their contributions to

¹-Leick, G. (2015). *The Assyrians: The History of the Most Prominent Empire of the Ancient Near East*. Routledge. p. 203.

²- Yamada, S. (2000). *The Construction of the Assyrian Empire: A Historical Study of the Inscriptions of Shalmaneser III (859-824 B.C.) Relating to His Campaigns to the West*. Brill. p183.

³- Radner, K. (2015). *Ancient Assyria: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press. p. 253.

astronomy, mathematics, and astrology, and they played a significant role in the history of Mesopotamia.

The rise of the Chaldeans can be traced back to the fall of the Assyrian Empire. In 626 BCE, Nabopolassar, a Chaldean leader, rebelled against the Assyrians and established an independent Chaldean state in southern Babylonia. His son, Nebuchadnezzar II, further expanded the Chaldean territory and transformed Babylon into a magnificent city with impressive architectural achievements such as the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

1.5.1 Political Condition and Law:

The Chaldean Empire, also known as the Neo-Babylonian Empire, emerged in 626 BCE under the leadership of Nabopolassar. The most notable ruler of this period was Nebuchadnezzar II (605–562 BCE), who expanded the empire's territories and is famous for his construction projects, including the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. The Chaldeans established a centralized administrative system, with the king holding absolute power and governing through appointed officials. Nebuchadnezzar's military campaigns extended Babylonian control over much of the Near East, and his policies emphasized both military strength and economic prosperity ⁽¹⁾.

About the law, the Chaldean legal system inherited much from earlier Mesopotamian codes, emphasizing justice and social order. Laws were inscribed on stelae and dealt with various aspects of daily life, including trade, property rights, marriage, and criminal justice. The Chaldean kings often portrayed themselves as guardians of justice, upholding the legal traditions established by Hammurabi and earlier rulers. Legal texts from this period reveal a society that valued fairness and sought to regulate the complex interactions within its diverse population ⁽²⁾.

1.5.2 Chaldean Culture and Literature:

Chaldean culture, while deeply rooted in earlier Babylonian traditions, also introduced new elements. The period saw a revival of Babylonian arts, sciences, and religious practices. The Chaldeans were known for their advancements in astronomy and mathematics. Babylon became a cultural hub, attracting scholars and artisans from across the empire. The Ishtar Gate, a monumental entrance to the city adorned with glazed brick reliefs, exemplifies Chaldean artistic

¹- Wiseman, D. J. (1983). *Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon*. Oxford University Press. p. 134.

²- Westbrook, R. (2003). *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law, Volume II*. Brill. p. 175.

achievements. The empire also maintained extensive libraries, preserving and expanding upon the literary heritage of Mesopotamia (¹).

Chaldean literature included a rich compilation of religious texts, historical annals, and scholarly works. Many of these were preserved in the extensive libraries of Babylon. The Chaldeans continued the literary traditions of their predecessors, copying and preserving ancient texts while also producing new works. Astronomical texts from this period, detailing observations and theories, significantly influenced later scientific thought. Epic tales, hymns, and prayers were also prominent, often reflecting the religious and cosmological views of the Chaldeans (²).

1.5.3 Art and Architecture:

Chaldean art and architecture reached new heights under Nebuchadnezzar II. He embarked on an ambitious building program that included the restoration and expansion of Babylon. The city's impressive structures included the Ishtar Gate, the Processional Way, and the Etemenanki ziggurat, which is often associated with the biblical Tower of Babel. These constructions showcased intricate brickwork, colorful glazed tiles, and grandiose designs intended to reflect the empire's glory and religious devotion. The Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, though debated in historical accuracy, symbolize the Chaldeans' architectural ingenuity and aesthetic sensibility (³).

1.5.4 Religion:

Chaldean religion was characterized by a deep continuity with earlier Babylonian beliefs, centered around the worship of gods like Marduk, the chief deity. The ziggurat Etemenanki in Babylon was a major religious center. The Chaldeans also placed a significant emphasis on astrology and divination, integrating these practices into their religious and administrative decisions. Priests and scholars meticulously observed celestial movements, believing that the stars and planets influenced earthly events. Religious festivals and rituals played a central role in public life, reinforcing the divine legitimacy of the king and the unity of the empire (⁴).

1.5.5 Economic Condition and Social Life:

¹- Finkel, I. (2007). *The Ark Before Noah: Decoding the Story of the Flood*. Doubleday. p. 98.

²- Oppenheim, A. L. (1969). *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization*. University of Chicago Press. p. 162.

³- Baker, H. D. (2008). *The Architecture of Babylon*. Routledge. p. 52.

⁴- Beaulieu, P.-A. (1995). *The Reign of Nabonidus, King of Babylon 556-539 B.C.* Yale University Press. p. 221.

The Chaldean economy thrived under Nebuchadnezzar II due to extensive agricultural development, trade, and a well-organized administrative system. Babylon's strategic location along major trade routes facilitated commerce with distant regions, including Egypt, Persia, and the Mediterranean. The Chaldeans implemented sophisticated irrigation techniques to enhance agricultural productivity, supporting a diverse economy based on farming, craftsmanship, and trade. The wealth generated from these activities financed grand construction projects and the maintenance of the empire's military might ⁽¹⁾.

Chaldean society was stratified, with a clear hierarchy ranging from the king and nobility to merchants, artisans, and farmers. Babylonian urban centers were cosmopolitan, featuring a mix of ethnicities and cultures due to the empire's extensive conquests and trade networks. Social life revolved around both public and private activities, with significant religious festivals and markets playing central roles. The status of women varied, with some enjoying significant rights and roles in religious and economic life, while others were more restricted, reflecting the complexities of Chaldean social structures ⁽²⁾.

1.5.6 Contributions and Achievements:

The Chaldeans made significant contributions in the fields of astronomy, mathematics, and architecture. Their advancements in astronomy, particularly the systematic observation and recording of celestial events, laid the groundwork for future astronomical studies. They developed a more accurate calendar system and improved upon earlier mathematical techniques. Architecturally, the Chaldeans are remembered for their impressive building projects, including the Ishtar Gate and the reconstructed city of Babylon. These achievements reflect their sophisticated understanding of engineering and aesthetics ⁽³⁾.

1.5.7 Decline and Legacy:

The decline of the Chaldean Empire began with the reign of Nabonidus, the last king, whose religious reforms and extended absences from Babylon weakened the empire. The rise of the Persian Empire under Cyrus the Great culminated in the capture of Babylon in 539 BCE, marking the end of Chaldean rule. Despite their fall, the Chaldeans left a lasting legacy in the fields of astronomy, mathematics, and urban planning. Their cultural and scientific

¹- Van De Mierop, M. (2004). *A History of the Ancient Near East ca. 3000-323 BC*. Blackwell Publishing. p. 147.

²- Kuhrt, A. (1995). *The Ancient Near East, c. 3000-330 BC, Volume II*. Routledge. p. 218.

³- Rochberg, F. (2004). *The Heavenly Writing: Divination, Horoscopy, and Astronomy in Mesopotamian Culture*. Cambridge University Press. p. 90.

achievements influenced subsequent civilizations in the Near East and beyond, contributing to the broader tapestry of human knowledge and development (¹).

2. Manifestations of civilization (religion - system of government - economy)

2.1. Religion in Mesopotamian Civilization

Religion played a central role in the Mesopotamian civilization, with the people of this ancient region developing a complex and intricate belief system. The Mesopotamians were polytheistic, meaning they worshipped multiple gods and goddesses. Their religious beliefs were deeply intertwined with every aspect of their lives, including their social, political, and economic activities.

The Mesopotamian pantheon consisted of a vast array of deities, each associated with specific aspects of life and nature. Among the most prominent gods were Anu, the god of the heavens; Enlil, the god of wind and storms; and Enki, the god of water and wisdom. These deities were believed to exert influence over various domains, such as fertility, warfare, and craftsmanship. The Mesopotamians constructed elaborate temples called ziggurats to honor their gods and conduct religious ceremonies. These ziggurats served as both religious centers and administrative hubs for the city-states (²).

2.2. System of Government in Mesopotamian Civilization

The Mesopotamian civilization was characterized by a city-state system, where each city was an independent political entity with its own government and ruler. The city-states were often led by kings who held both political and religious authority. The kingship was viewed as a divine institution, with rulers being seen as intermediaries between the gods and the people.

The governance structure in Mesopotamia was hierarchical, with power centralized in the hands of the ruling elite. The king wielded significant authority and was supported by a bureaucracy that helped administer the affairs of the state. Laws were codified to regulate various aspects of society, including trade, property rights, and criminal behavior. One of the most famous legal

¹ - Briant, op cit, pp. 44-47.

² - Jacobsen, T. (1976). *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion*. Yale University Press. p. 147.

codes from ancient Mesopotamia is the Code of Hammurabi, which provided a comprehensive set of laws and punishments (¹).

2.3. Economy in Mesopotamian Civilization

The economy of ancient Mesopotamia was primarily agrarian, relying heavily on irrigation-based agriculture for sustenance and trade. The fertile lands between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers facilitated abundant crop cultivation, particularly wheat and barley. Irrigation systems such as canals and dikes were developed to harness the river waters for agricultural purposes.

Trade played a crucial role in the Mesopotamian economy, with merchants conducting commerce both within the city-states and across long-distance trade routes. The exchange of goods such as textiles, metals, precious stones, and agricultural produce contributed to economic prosperity. Additionally, specialized labor emerged in urban centers, leading to the development of crafts such as pottery, metalworking, and textile production (²).

Regarding the economic Innovation, the economy of Mesopotamia was primarily agrarian, underpinned by advanced irrigation techniques that maximized agricultural productivity. The region became a hub for trade, with extensive networks that facilitated the exchange of goods and cultural ideas. The economic prosperity supported the growth of specialized crafts and the development of urban centers.

2.4 Cultural and Scientific Achievements:

Mesopotamians made significant contributions to writing, mathematics, astronomy, and law. The invention of cuneiform script enabled the recording of administrative, legal, and literary texts, while mathematical advancements laid the groundwork for algebra and geometry. Their astronomical observations influenced later scientific thought, and their codified laws, epitomized by the Code of Hammurabi, set precedents for justice systems.

2.5 Enduring Legacy:

The enduring legacy of Mesopotamian civilization is evident in the myriads of ways it influenced successive cultures, particularly in the fields of law,

¹- Charpin, D. (2010). *Writing, Law, and Kingship in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia*. University of Chicago Press. pp. 115-117.

²- Van De Mieroop, M. (2004). *A History of the Ancient Near East ca. 3000-323 BC*. Blackwell Publishing. p. 85.

governance, literature, and science. The preservation of their legends and epics, the principles of their legal codes, and their technological and scientific advancements have had a lasting impact on human history. Mesopotamia's role as a pioneer of urban civilization provided a model for future societies to build upon.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the Mesopotamian civilization's innovations in religion, governance, economy, and culture not only shaped their own society but also laid essential foundations for the development of subsequent civilizations. Their contributions continue to be recognized as integral to the history of human development, highlighting their significance as a cornerstone of ancient human achievement.

Chapter 6: Civilization of Persia and Elam

Introduction:

The Persian and Elamite civilizations were pivotal within the Persian Empire, situated in what's now the Iranian provinces of Fars and Khuzestan, respectively. These regions housed influential centers of authority: Persepolis in Persia and Susa in Elam, where many royal inscriptions of the Achaemenid Dynasty originated. Their amalgamation of Elamite and Iranian cultural elements significantly shaped the empire's formation. Persia surrounded the ancient Elamite city of Anšan and coexisted with various Persian groups in Susa before the empire's ascent. Besides Susa and Persepolis, lowland Susiana and the intermontane plains were vital for agriculture, as evidenced by administrative texts like the Persepolis Fortification tablets, predominantly in Elamite.

Persia and Elam's civilization emerged in southwestern Iran, wielding substantial influence across the Middle East's political and cultural landscape. Elam's prominence lay in concentrated kingly power controlling resources, construction, and founding settlements. This fusion of Elamite and Iranian cultures significantly shaped the Persian Empire, centered in Persepolis and Susa. Elam's early history, drawn from Mesopotamian sources, reveals intricate political, economic, and cultural ties between ancient Iran and Mesopotamia. Spanning two millennia, Elam blended highland and lowland traditions, rendering it distinct. Developments in the first millennium BC altered power dynamics, paving the way for the rise of the Persian Empire, with Elam's interactions with Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia being pivotal.

1- Civilization of Persia:

For almost 1,200 years, from 550 B.C.E. to 651 C.E., the Persians dominated an area that stretched from the Black Sea (which is north of modern Turkey and bordered by Eastern Europe) into Central Asia. Throughout its long history, Persia had contact with—and often battled—many of the other great empires of the past. The Persian homeland was centered in the southwest of modern-day Iran, along the Zagros Mountains. From there, the Persians conquered the various kingdoms of Mesopotamia, in the region between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in what is now Iraq. They then spread their influence over Egypt and the fringes of southern Europe. This made them the first empire builders to control part of three continents. To the east, Persian rule extended as far as India ⁽¹⁾.

It is difficult to talk about one Persian Empire, because three distinct Persian peoples rose to power at different times. But they shared a similar language and culture and ruled many of the same lands. The Achaemenid dynasty created what is sometimes called the Persian Empire. Their rule lasted from about 559 B.C.E. until 330 B.C.E., when Persia was conquered by Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.E.). Several centuries later, the Parthians rose to power in the region. They were followed by the Sassanians ⁽²⁾.

For centuries, historians in Europe and North America studied the Persians mostly through the words of ancient Greek and Roman writers. Their writings provided important information on Persian history and culture. But the ancient Greeks and Romans saw the Persians as their enemies, and so their accounts of the Persians were not always accurate ⁽³⁾.

1-1-Origin:

Persia, also known as Iran, has a rich and complex history dating back to the earliest civilizations. The earliest evidence of human habitation in the region dates back to around 10,000 BC. The first major civilization in Persia was the Elamites, who flourished in the southwestern part of the country from around 3000 BC to 550 BC ⁽⁴⁾.

The Persians emerged as a distinct group in the western part of Iran around the 6th century BC. They were a nomadic people who eventually settled in the

¹ Brosius, M. (2006). *The Persians: An Introduction*. Routledge. p. 19.

² Curtis, J. (2007). *Ancient Persia*. British Museum Press. p. 61.

³ Kuhrt, A. (1995). *The Ancient Near East: c. 3000-330 BC*. Routledge. p. 200.

⁴ Curtis, J., & Tallis, N. (2005). *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia*. University of California Press. p. 34.

region around present-day Fars Province. The Persians were a skilled and powerful people who quickly rose to prominence in the region (¹).

The Persian Empire is the name given to a series of dynasties centered in modern-day Iran that spanned several centuries—from the sixth century B.C. to the 20th century A.D. The first Persian Empire, founded by Cyrus the Great around 550 B.C., became one of the largest empires in history, stretching from Europe's Balkan Peninsula in the West to India's Indus Valley in the East. This Iron Age dynasty, sometimes called the Achaemenid Empire, was a global hub of culture, religion, science, art and technology for more than 200 years before it fell to the invading armies of Alexander the Great (²).

The Persian Empire started as a collection of semi-nomadic tribes who raised sheep, goats, and cattle on the Iranian plateau (³).

Cyrus the Great—the leader of one such tribe—began to defeat nearby kingdoms, including Media, Lydia, and Babylon, joining them under one rule. He founded the first Persian Empire, also known as the Achaemenid Empire, in 550 B.C. (⁴).

The Achaemenid Empire (circa 550–330 BCE) marked the first major unification of the Persian tribes and established one of the largest empires in ancient history. Cyrus the Great, known for his remarkable conquests and humane approach to governance, is often credited with laying the foundations of the Persian Empire. His policies of respect for local customs and religions set a precedent for the administration of a multicultural empire (⁵).

The first Persian Empire under Cyrus the Great soon became the world's first superpower. It united under one government three important sites of early human civilization in the ancient world: Mesopotamia, Egypt's Nile Valley, and India's Indus Valley (⁶).

The Achaemenid Empire expanded rapidly under the rule of Cyrus the Great and his successors, such as Cambyses II and Darius I. This expansion brought vast territories under Persian control, including Mesopotamia, Egypt, parts of India, and Asia Minor. The establishment of a centralized administrative system,

¹ - Brosius, M..Op cit, pp. 22-23.

² - Kuhrt, A. (2007). *The Persian Empire: A Corpus of Sources from the Achaemenid Period*. Routledge. p. 119.

³ - Dandamaev, M. (1989). *A Political History of the Achaemenid Empire*. BRILL. p. 45.

⁴ - Briant, P. (2002). *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*. Eisenbrauns. pp. 36-39.

⁵ - Lendering, J. (2006). *Cyrus the Great*. EncyclopaediaIranica. p. 58.

⁶ - Frye, R. N. (1984). *The History of Ancient Iran*. C.H. Beck. p. 52

coupled with the construction of infrastructure such as the Royal Road, facilitated the efficient governance and cohesion of the vast empire (¹).

1.2- Religious Life in Persia

Religion played a crucial role in the Persian Empire, profoundly influencing its culture and governance. The primary religion of ancient Persia was Zoroastrianism, founded by the prophet Zoroaster (or Zarathustra) around the 6th century BCE. Zoroastrianism is one of the world's oldest monotheistic religions, centered around the worship of Ahura Mazda, the supreme god, who represents truth and goodness, they also believed in a powerful evil spirit, Angra Mainyu. The teachings of Zoroaster emphasized the duality of good and evil and the individual's responsibility to choose righteousness (²).

Zoroastrianism had a profound impact on Persian culture and society. The religion's emphasis on morality and personal responsibility helped to shape the Persians into a disciplined and hardworking people. Zoroastrianism also played an important role in Persian art and architecture. In addition to that, Zoroastrianism's ethical and moral framework significantly impacted Persian society and governance. The religion's emphasis on truth, justice, and the cosmic struggle between good and evil resonated with the administrative policies of the Persian emperors. Kings, such as Cyrus the Great and Darius I, promoted Zoroastrianism and its values, integrating them into the empire's laws and administration (³).

The religious structure included a priesthood known as Magi, who performed rituals and maintained the sacred fire, an important symbol of purity and the presence of Ahura Mazda. Temples, called fire temples, were built throughout the empire to house the eternal flame, where priests conducted ceremonies and the faithful came to worship (⁴).

Additionally, the Persian kings practiced religious tolerance, allowing conquered peoples to maintain their own religious traditions. This policy fostered loyalty among the diverse populations within the empire. For instance, Cyrus the Great is noted for allowing the Jews exiled in Babylon to return to their homeland and rebuild their temple in Jerusalem, a gesture that earned him a favorable mention in the Hebrew Bible (⁵).

¹- Waters, M. (2014). *Ancient Persia: A Concise History of the Achaemenid Empire, 550-330 BCE*. Cambridge University Press. p. 75.

²- Boyce, M. (2001). *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*. Routledge. p. 7.

³- Briant, op cit, p108.

⁴- Curtis, op cit, p 92.

⁵- Kuhrt, op cit, p 233.

1.3- Political Life in Persia

The political life of the Persian Empire was characterized by a highly organized and efficient administrative system, which played a crucial role in maintaining control over its vast territories. The Persian Empire, particularly during the Achaemenid dynasty (circa 550–330 BCE), was noted for its sophisticated approach to governance and administration.

1.3.1 Centralized Administration:

The Persian Empire was one of the first to implement a centralized bureaucratic administration. The empire was divided into several provinces called satrapies, each governed by a satrap or provincial governor. This system allowed the central government to maintain control while delegating local administration to trusted officials. The satraps were responsible for collecting taxes, maintaining order, and providing troops for the king's army. They were often members of the royal family or loyal nobles, ensuring their allegiance to the king ⁽¹⁾.

1.3.2 The Role of the King:

The king of Persia, known as the "King of Kings," held absolute power and was considered a divine representative on Earth. The king's authority was supported by a complex system of laws and a network of spies known as the "King's Eyes and Ears," who reported on the activities of the satraps and other officials. This network helped prevent rebellion and ensured the loyalty of provincial governors ⁽²⁾.

1.3.3 Legal System:

The Persian legal system was advanced for its time, with a codified set of laws that applied throughout the empire. These laws were influenced by earlier Mesopotamian codes but were adapted to fit the needs of a vast and diverse empire. The emphasis was on justice and fairness, and the legal system was used as a tool to unify the different peoples within the empire ⁽³⁾.

1.3.4 Infrastructure and Communication:

The Persian Empire is renowned for its impressive infrastructure projects, which facilitated efficient administration and communication across vast distances. The Royal Road, stretching over 1,600 miles from Sardis to Susa,

¹-Briant, op cit, p 125.

²- Dandamaev, op cit, p 203.

³- Curtis, op cit, p. 112.

enabled rapid communication and troop movement. Relay stations along the road allowed couriers to travel the entire distance in a matter of days, enhancing the central government's ability to govern effectively ⁽¹⁾.

1.3.5 Military Organization:

The Persian military was a key element of the empire's political power. The empire maintained a large and well-organized army, which included not only Persian soldiers but also troops from the various subject peoples. This inclusivity helped maintain loyalty and integrate the different cultures within the empire. The elite force, known as the Immortals, was a constant presence in the king's army, ensuring his protection and enforcing his rule ⁽²⁾.

1.4- Economy in Persia:

The economy of ancient Persia, particularly under the Achaemenid Empire (circa 550–330 BCE), was robust and diverse, supported by a combination of agriculture, trade, and craftsmanship. The empire's economic strength played a crucial role in its ability to govern vast territories and maintain its status as a major power in the ancient world.

1.4.1 Agriculture and Irrigation:

Agriculture formed the backbone of the Persian economy, with fertile lands across the empire supporting a variety of crops. The most important agricultural products included grains such as wheat, barley, and millet, along with fruits like dates, grapes, and olives. Irrigation systems, such as qanats and underground channels, were developed to harness water from mountain streams and rivers, ensuring consistent agricultural productivity ⁽³⁾.

1.4.2 Trade and Commerce:

Trade was another vital component of the Persian economy, facilitated by the empire's extensive network of roads, including the famous Royal Road. This road connected major cities from Sardis in Anatolia to Susa in Persia, enabling the efficient movement of goods and resources. Persian merchants engaged in both local trade within the empire and long-distance trade with neighboring regions and beyond, exchanging commodities such as textiles, spices, precious metals, and luxury goods ⁽⁴⁾.

¹- Briant, op cit, p 231.

²- Dandamaev, op cit, p. 210.

³- Curtis, op cit, p 95.

⁴- Briant, op cit, p. 175.

1.4.3 Craftsmanship and Industry:

Craftsmanship thrived in ancient Persia, with skilled artisans producing a wide range of goods including pottery, metalwork, textiles, and jewelry. Cities like Persepolis and Susa became centers of craftsmanship, where artisans employed advanced techniques to create intricately designed objects sought after across the empire and beyond. The production of luxury items for the elite contributed significantly to the empire's wealth and cultural prestige (¹).

1.4.4 Royal Treasury and Taxation:

The Persian Empire maintained a sophisticated system of taxation and revenue collection, overseen by provincial governors (satraps). Taxes were levied on agricultural produce, trade transactions, and other economic activities, with revenues flowing into the royal treasury. The accumulated wealth funded imperial projects, infrastructure development, military campaigns, and the maintenance of administrative institutions, reinforcing the empire's economic stability and power (²).

1.4.5 Economic Policies and Administration:

Under the Achaemenid rulers, economic policies were aimed at promoting trade, supporting agricultural development, and fostering craftsmanship. The empire encouraged entrepreneurship and innovation, while state intervention ensured the regulation of markets and the protection of economic interests. The success of these policies contributed to Persia's economic prosperity and its ability to sustain a vast empire spanning multiple continents (³).

1.5- Persian Culture:

The ancient Persians of the Achaemenid Empire created art in many forms, including metalwork, rock carvings, weaving and architecture. As the Persian Empire expanded to encompass other artistic centers of early civilization, a new style was formed with influences from these sources. (⁴)

The Achaemenid Persians were renowned for their diverse artistic expressions, blending influences from various regions under their rule. This fusion resulted in a distinctive Persian artistic style seen in metalwork, monumental architecture like Persepolis, and intricate rock reliefs. Early Persian art included large, carved rock reliefs cut into cliffs, such as those found at

¹- Curtis, op cit, p105.

²- Dandamaev, op cit, p228.

³- Briant, op cit, p 201.

⁴- Curtis, V. S., & Stewart, S. (2005). *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*. Yale University Press.

Naqsh-e Rostam, an ancient cemetery filled with the tombs of Achaemenid kings. The elaborate rock murals depict equestrian scenes and battle victories. (¹)

Naqsh-e Rostam is notable for its royal tombs and impressive rock reliefs, showcasing Persian military prowess and royal ceremonies. These reliefs provide insights into Achaemenid political ideology and religious beliefs through visual narratives.

Ancient Persians were also known for their metalwork. In the 1870s, smugglers discovered gold and silver artifacts among ruins near the Oxus River in present-day Tajikistan. The artifacts included a small golden chariot, coins and bracelets decorated in a griffon motif. (The griffon is a mythical creature with the wings and head of an eagle and the body of a lion, and a symbol of the Persian capital of Persepolis.)(²)

The Oxus Treasure, discovered near the ancient Persian city of Persepolis, is a testament to Persian craftsmanship in gold and silver. The artifacts, adorned with mythical motifs like the griffon, highlight the artistic sophistication and cultural symbolism of ancient Persian metalwork.

1-6- Fall of the Persian Empire:

The decline of the Persian Empire began after the unsuccessful invasion of Greece by Xerxes I in 480 BC. The massive military campaign depleted Persia's financial resources, necessitating increased taxation on its subjects (³).

Following the defeat by the Greeks, the Achaemenid dynasty struggled to maintain control over its vast territories. Internal unrest and external pressures from neighboring kingdoms further weakened the empire (⁴).

The final blow to the Achaemenid Empire came with the invasion of Alexander the Great in 330 BC. Alexander's armies swiftly conquered Persia, marking the end of the Achaemenid rule (⁵).

Subsequent Persian rulers attempted to revive the empire's former glory, but they were unable to reclaim the expansive territories conquered by Cyrus the

¹- Brosius, M.. Op cit, p 34.

²- Curtis, V. S., & Stewart, op cit.

³- Lewis, D. M. (1991). Sparta and Persia. In J. V. Luce (Ed.), *Ancient Greece and Rome*, Oxford University Press, p. 124.

⁴- Briant, op cit, p312.

⁵- Bosworth, A. B. (1988). *Conquest and empire: The reign of Alexander the Great*. Cambridge University Press.

Great. The Persian Empire entered a period of fragmentation and regional rule following Alexander's conquest (¹).

2- Civilization of Elam

2-1- Origin of Elam:

Elam was an ancient civilization that thrived in southwestern Iran from around 3000 BC to 550 BC. The Elamites were known for their advanced skills in metalworking, art, and architecture (²).

The Elamites established one of the earliest major civilizations in Iran, characterized by a sophisticated society with a centralized government, stratified social structure, and a flourishing economy. They engaged in trade and diplomacy with neighboring civilizations while also asserting their regional power through military strength (³).

The name "Elam" was originally a Sumerian term, denoting the highlands of southwestern Iran. It was first used in Mesopotamian cuneiform texts to refer to the mountainous regions and their inhabitants (⁴).

The time periods of the Elamite kingdoms can be divided as follows:

- **Early Elamite Kingdom (ca. 2700-1600 BC):** The Early Elamite Kingdom, also known as Old Elamite, emerged around the plains of the Karun River in southwestern Iran. This period witnessed the consolidation of power and wealth through control over trade routes connecting Mesopotamia and Persia. Elamite rulers established their authority over local territories and engaged in cultural exchanges with Mesopotamian city-states (⁵).
- **Middle Elamite Kingdom (ca. 1600-1150 BC):** Under the Middle Elamite Kingdom, Elam experienced a phase of expansion and prosperity. King Shutruk-Nahhunte I (ca. 1204-1155 BC) conquered the kingdom of Assyria, marking a significant period of Elamite military success and

¹- Root, M. C. (1979). The king and kingship in Achaemenid art. *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, 14, p 211.

²-Potts, D. T. (1999). *The Archaeology of Elam: Formation and Transformation of an Ancient Iranian State*. Cambridge University Press.p. 45.

³- Carter, E., & Stolper, M. W. (1984). *Elam: Surveys of Political History and Archaeology*. University of California Press. P 75.

⁴- Majidzadeh, Y. (1991). *The Elamite Civilization*. I.B. Tauris, p 115.

⁵- Carter & Stolper, op cit, p95.

territorial growth. The Elamites became a dominant force in the region, influencing political dynamics across ancient Mesopotamia (¹).

- **Late Elamite Kingdom (ca. 1150-640 BC):**The Late Elamite Kingdom faced challenges following the death of King Shutruk-Nahhunte I. It entered a period of decline and vulnerability, exacerbated by invasions from neighboring powers such as the Assyrians and Babylonians. Eventually, Elam was absorbed into the expanding Achaemenid Empire in the sixth century BC, marking the end of its independent existence (²).

2.2 Religious Life

The Elamites were polytheistic, worshipping multiple gods, with Humban, the god of war and storms, and Inshushinak, the god of the city of Susa, being among their principal deities. Other gods included the sun god, the moon god, and the god of agriculture. The Elamites built large temples and made offerings to these gods, believing it was the king's duty to gain favor from the gods to ensure the prosperity of their society (³).

Kings often chose particular deities as their favorites and constructed significant temples in their honor. For example, King Kutik-Inshushinak dedicated a large temple to the deity Inshushinak, indicating the intertwining of religion and politics in Elamite society. The Elamites believed it was the king's responsibility to stay on the good side of the gods, ensuring societal prosperity in return (⁴).

The Elamites also had beliefs about the afterlife, building elaborate tombs for their dead. They believed in the power of magic and used amulets and spells to protect themselves from evil spirits. These practices reflect the deep connection between their religious beliefs and daily life, highlighting the importance of religion in guiding their actions and providing security (⁵).

Elamite religion was characterized by a rich mythological tradition. Many Elamite deities had counterparts in the Mesopotamian pantheon, showing significant cultural exchange between these civilizations. For instance, Inshushinak, often depicted with a horned headdress and seated on a throne, closely resembles Mesopotamian deities in iconography and attributes. This

¹- *ibid*, p105.

²- *ibid*, 115.

³- Potts, D. T. *op cit*. p. 236.

⁴- Carter & Stolper, *op cit*, p. 82.

⁵- Amiet, P. (1979). *Elam*. Penn State University Press. p. 145.

cultural exchange was facilitated by trade and political interactions between Elam and neighboring Mesopotamian states (¹).

Religious festivals were important events in Elamite society, involving elaborate rituals and offerings to the gods. These festivals were often tied to agricultural cycles, emphasizing the connection between religion and daily life. Priests played a crucial role in these ceremonies, acting as intermediaries between the people and the gods. The prominence of priests in Elamite society underscores the centrality of religion in governance and social organization (²).

In addition to formal religious practices, the Elamites engaged in household rituals and personal devotion. Amulets and small idols were common in Elamite homes, used to invoke the protection of deities in everyday life. These artifacts provide insight into the personal piety of the Elamites and their reliance on divine favor for health, prosperity, and protection against misfortune (³).

The details of religious ritual and observance are not known, but sacred sites were established on mountains, high hills, and in sacred groves, and the focus of the rituals – based on inscriptions found primarily at Susa – was the immortality of the soul and the afterlife. The earliest religious artifacts suggest worship of a Mother Goddess who may have later become the goddess Kiririsha, Mother of the Gods and consort/wife to the gods Insushinak and Humban, patron gods of Susa and Anshan, respectively. The Elamite pantheon consisted of 200 separate deities, presided over by the supreme god Napirisha (Lord of the Earth and People) who seem to have been worshipped to greater or lesser degrees in different areas of Elam. The Elamites also incorporated Mesopotamian deities – particularly Sumerian – into their pantheon and so also worshipped Ea, **Enki**, **Ninhursag**, **Shamash**, and others.

Encouraged Religious Tolerance

These deities were worshipped all throughout the vast region of Elam which, at most times, comprised the southern areas of modern-day Iran and part of Iraq. There is no evidence, however, of compulsory worship imposed by a ruling house on the people, not even during the Middle Elamite Period when the rulers pursued a policy of “elamization” of the people and encouraged a standard of culture and religion. No records exist of religious strife, persecution, or any social unrest caused by differing modes of worship or focus on a single deity. This kind of tolerance would find full expression in the greatest Elamite building project still extant today: the **temple** complex of Dur-Untash.

¹ - Stolper, M. W. (1984). "From Susa to Anshan: Studies in Elamite and Persian Archaeology". *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*. p. 92.

² - Reiner, E. (1995). *Astral Magic in Babylonia*. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society. pp. 45-47.

³ - Ghirshman, R. (1954). *Iran: From the Earliest Times to the Islamic Conquest*. Penguin Books. pp. 30-32.

2.3- Political Life

The Elamites established a centralized state characterized by a strong monarchy. The Elamite king, often referred to as the king of Susa, held supreme authority over the country. This central figure was responsible for enforcing laws, maintaining order, and defending the kingdom from external threats. The king's authority was considered divinely sanctioned, and he played a critical role in both governance and religious ceremonies (¹).

Elamite society was highly stratified. The nobility, clergy, and military were the most powerful groups, wielding significant influence and control. The nobility often held administrative and governmental positions, while the clergy were pivotal in religious and ceremonial functions. The military was essential for the defense and expansion of Elamite territories. In contrast, the common people, who constituted the majority of the population, had very limited power or influence in the political sphere (²).

The political structure of Elam was complex, involving various levels of administration and governance. Local governors, appointed by the king, managed different regions of the kingdom, ensuring the implementation of royal policies and collection of taxes. This hierarchical system allowed the Elamite state to maintain control over its diverse and often geographically challenging territory(³).

One notable aspect of Elamite political life was the practice of appointing co-rulers or viceroys. These individuals, often members of the royal family, were given authority over certain regions or cities to assist in governance. This practice helped to strengthen the central authority and ensure loyalty among the ruling elite. It also provided a means of training future kings in the art of governance (⁴).

The Elamites also engaged in diplomatic relations with neighboring civilizations, including Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley. Treaties and marriage alliances were common, aimed at securing peace and fostering economic ties. These diplomatic efforts highlight the sophisticated and strategic nature of Elamite political life, as they sought to navigate the complex landscape of ancient Near Eastern politics (⁵).

2.5 The Culture and Art of Elam

¹- Carter & Stolper, op cit, p.123.

²- Potts, op cit, p. 178.

³- Stolper, op cit, p105.

⁴- Ghirshman, op cit, p 87.

⁵- Reiner, op cit, p 60.

The culture and art of Elam were characterized by a rich blend of indigenous traditions and external influences from neighboring civilizations such as Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley. This cultural amalgamation is reflected in their art, architecture, language, and religious practices.

2.5.1 Art and Architecture:

Elamite art is renowned for its distinctive styles and forms, particularly in metalwork, sculpture, and ceramics. One of the most notable examples of Elamite metalwork is the collection of gold and silver artifacts from the Oxus Treasure, which includes intricately designed jewelry, ceremonial vessels, and figurines. These artifacts demonstrate the high level of craftsmanship and the Elamites' skill in metalworking ⁽¹⁾.

Elamite architecture was equally impressive, with monumental buildings such as the ziggurat at Chogha Zanbil, which dates back to the 13th century BC. This massive structure, dedicated to the Elamite god Inshushinak, is one of the best-preserved examples of Elamite architectural achievement. The ziggurat's construction showcases the Elamites' engineering capabilities and their religious devotion ⁽²⁾.

Rock reliefs and carvings were another significant aspect of Elamite art. These carvings often depicted scenes of royal ceremonies, religious rituals, and mythological themes. The rock reliefs at Kul-e Farah and Naqsh-e Rostam are prime examples, illustrating the Elamite kings' efforts to legitimize their rule and honor their gods through monumental art ⁽³⁾.

2.5.2 Language and Writing:

The Elamites used a unique script known as Linear Elamite, which is still not fully deciphered. They also adopted the Akkadian cuneiform script for administrative and diplomatic purposes. Bilingual inscriptions in both Elamite and Akkadian reflect the cultural interactions between Elam and Mesopotamia and highlight the Elamites' linguistic versatility ⁽⁴⁾.

The Elamite linear script, which documents their history c. 3200-2700 BCE, remains undeciphered. Their language has no known relatives (therefore is designated a language isolate), and no artifact comparable to the famous Rosetta Stone has yet appeared to facilitate translation. When Elam came into closer contact with Sumer and, later, with Akkad, it adopted cuneiform script for its

¹- Carter & Stolper, op cit, p 152.

²- Potts, op cit, p 233.

³- Ghirshman, op cit, p 100.

⁴- Stolper, op cit, p122.

records and correspondence. Elamite continued to be written using cuneiform from c. 2700 BCE until it vanished c. 224 CE. The Achaemenid Empire (c. 550-330 BCE) made use of cuneiform Elamite script and Darius I (the Great, r. 522-486 BCE) used Elamite as one of the three languages of his famous Behistun Inscription but, until someone translates the earlier linear script, events of the Proto-Elamite Period will remain unknown.⁽¹⁾

2.5.3 Cultural Legacy:

The cultural legacy of Elam is evident in its influence on subsequent civilizations in the region. The Elamites contributed to the development of administrative practices, religious traditions, and artistic styles that were later adopted and adapted by the Persians and other cultures in the ancient Near East. The intermingling of Elamite and Mesopotamian elements created a unique cultural synthesis that left a lasting impact on the history and culture of the region ⁽²⁾.

2.5.4 Respected Women's Equality:

Women in Elamite culture is depicted in artwork as the equals of men. Reliefs show women and men at the same size and in an equal relationship with each other, which is how ancient artists rendered the concept of equality. In comparing Elamite art with, say, Egyptian reliefs or statuary, one can recognize this paradigm easily in that Egyptian art consistently emphasizes the status of a given figure in a piece by size. There are no written records (as there are with the Persians) giving a direct account of women's equality, but Elamite art attests to a level comparable to the well-known equality of Egyptian and, later, ancient Persian women. Among the best examples of this is the statue of the queen Napirasu, wife of Untash-Napirisha, which depicts the queen in the same royal attire as a male monarch. Cylinder seals also depict male and female figures, usually husband and wife, as equals. ⁽³⁾

2.6- The Fall of the Elam Empire

The fall of the Elamite Empire was a gradual process that unfolded over several centuries, marked by a combination of external invasions and internal strife. The decline of Elam can be attributed to several key factors:

2.6.1 Assyrian and Babylonian Invasions:

¹- Joshua J. Mark, Ten Ancient Elam Facts You Need to Know, published on 27 August 2020, <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1591/ten-ancient-elam-facts-you-need-to-know/>

²- Reiner, op cit, pp. 70-72.

³- Joshua J. Mark, op cit.

One of the primary catalysts for the decline of the Elamite Empire was the repeated invasions by neighboring powers, particularly the Assyrians and Babylonians. The Assyrians, under kings such as Ashurbanipal, launched several devastating campaigns against Elam. These invasions led to the sacking of major Elamite cities, including Susa, which severely weakened Elam's control and power over its territories. The Assyrian campaigns were particularly brutal, aiming to crush Elamite resistance and assert dominance over the region (¹).

2.6.2 Internal Conflicts and Instability:

In addition to external threats, the Elamite Empire was plagued by internal conflicts and power struggles. Various factions within the empire vied for control, leading to political instability and weakened central authority. These internal disputes undermined the Elamite state's ability to effectively govern and defend its territories against external invasions (²).

2.6.3 Loss of Hegemony:

Over time, the Elamites gradually lost their hegemonic status in the region. Once a dominant power with thriving trade routes and economic influence, Elam saw its prosperity and regional influence diminish. The decline in economic dominance and the disruption of trade routes further contributed to the empire's weakening position (³).

2.6.4 Incorporation into Achaemenid Persia:

The final blow to the Elamite Empire came with the expansion of the Achaemenid Empire under Cyrus the Great. The Achaemenids, known for their expansive conquests, incorporated Elam into their growing empire. This incorporation marked the end of Elam as an independent state, as it was absorbed into the larger Achaemenid administrative and political structure (⁴).

The decline of Elam culminated in its assimilation into the Achaemenid Empire, effectively ending its existence as a distinct and separate entity. This transition marked the end of Elam's long and storied history, leaving behind a legacy that would influence subsequent Persian and regional cultures.

Conclusion:

¹- Potts, op cit, pp. 256-259.

²- Carter & Stolper, op cit, p180.

³- Stolper, op cit, p145.

⁴- Potts, op cit, p267.

The civilizations of Persia and Elam were two distinct cultures in ancient Iran. Each had its own culture, traditions, independent history, and specific impact on the region. However, there were cultural interactions over time, especially with the establishment of the Achaemenid Persian Empire.

For instance, both civilizations shared numerous cultural and economic aspects but were distinct in various facets. Elam's civilization existed earlier and had a significant influence on Persian culture, yet it had distinct traditions and governing styles.

On the other hand, the Persians evolved in the southern region of Iran. They developed their own language, culture, and political structure, leading eventually to the rise of the powerful Persian Empire.

While they had their differences, these civilizations interacted and influenced each other, particularly during the Achaemenid period, showing cultural interconnections but retaining their individual identities.

Chapter 7: The ancient civilization of Syria. The Hittites and the peoples of Syria

Introduction

The ancient civilization of Syria, located in the Levant region of the Eastern Mediterranean, was a melting pot of various cultures and peoples, including the Hittites, Amorites, Arameans, and Phoenicians. This region, due to its strategic location, served as a bridge between Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Anatolia, making it a center of trade, cultural exchange, and military campaigns.

1. Early Neolithic Syria:

In approximately 10,000 BC, Syria was a center of Neolithic culture where agriculture, cattle breeding, and pottery appeared for the first time in world history. This period marked the beginning of settled communities and significant advancements in technology and culture ⁽¹⁾.

2. Geographical location of Syria:

¹- Akkermans, P. M. M. G., & Schwartz, G. M. (2003). *The Archaeology of Syria: From Complex Hunter-Gatherers to Early Urban Societies (ca. 16,000-300 BC)*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 56-59.

Syria is located in the southwest of the continent of Asia, and its area extends from 180 to 185 square kilometers, and there are deserts, plains and mountains, and it is located on the Mediterranean coast, and is offset at the borders by Turkey, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon. The largest city in Syria is Damascus.

As for the indigenous population of Syria, the basis of the Syrian people was of the Semitic race. They moved to Syria with the oldest forms of ancient migration and integrated with the Arabic-speaking Arab peoples.

Syria, along with Iraq, are the oldest ancient civilizations throughout history. Syria witnessed the passage of more than forty civilizations from the Paleolithic period until the Arab conquest, and during the third and second millennium BC the civilization of the Canaanites, Arameans, Amorites, Phoenicians.

3. Political and Religious Appearances

The political and religious landscape of Syria was complex and ever-changing. The region was home to a number of different kingdoms and empires, each with its own unique political system and religious beliefs. However, there were also some common themes that emerged, such as the importance of kingship and the worship of a variety of gods and goddesses. The people of ancient Syria were polytheistic, which means that they worshiped many gods and goddesses. The most important gods and goddesses in Syria were Baal, the god of storms and fertility, and Astarte, the goddess of love and war. The people of Syria also worshiped a number of local gods and goddesses. These gods and goddesses were often associated with particular cities or regions (¹). The people of Syria practiced a variety of religious rituals. They built temples and shrines to their gods and goddesses, and they offered sacrifices of animals and food. They also celebrated festivals and holidays in honor of their gods and goddesses (²).

4. Economic Life:

The economy of ancient Syria was based on agriculture, trade, and manufacturing. The fertile plains of Syria were ideal for growing crops such as wheat, barley, and olives. Syria was also well-situated for trade, as it was located on the crossroads of several major trade routes. The people of Syria traded with their neighbors in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Anatolia. They also traded with more distant countries, such as India and China (³). Syria was also a center of manufacturing. The people of Syria were skilled in metalworking,

¹- Liverani, M. (2014). *The Ancient Near East: History, Society and Economy*. Routledge. p. 110.

²- Smith, M. S. (2003). *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel*. Eerdmans Publishing. p. 67.

³- Akkermans, P. M. M. G., & Schwartz, G. M. (2003). *The Archaeology of Syria: From Complex Hunter-Gatherers to Early Urban Societies (c. 16,000–300 BC)*. Cambridge University Press. p. 145.

pottery, and textile production. They exported their goods to all parts of the world ⁽¹⁾.

5. Important Civilizations in Syria

5.1. Ebla

Ebla was a powerful kingdom that flourished in the 3rd millennium BCE. Located in northern Syria near the present-day city of Idlib, Ebla played a pivotal role in early Syrian history. The kingdom's strategic location allowed it to become a major trading hub, connecting Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean and the Levant. Excavations at Ebla have uncovered thousands of clay tablets inscribed with one of the earliest known writing systems, providing valuable insights into the administration, economy, and society of the time. The wealth and sophistication of Ebla are evident from the luxurious goods found in its royal tombs, which include artifacts made from precious metals and stones, suggesting extensive trade networks ⁽²⁾.

References:

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5.2. Mari

Mari was another influential kingdom that thrived in the 3rd millennium BCE, situated on the Euphrates River in eastern Syria. It served as a major cultural and economic center, known for its impressive architectural structures, including the grand palace of King Zimri-Lim. This palace, with its extensive archives, has provided a wealth of information on the political, economic, and social life of Mari. The city's location on the Euphrates made it a vital trade and communication link between Mesopotamia and the Levant, contributing to its prosperity and influence ⁽³⁾.

5.3. Ugarit

Ugarit was a significant city-state located on the Mediterranean coast near modern-day Latakia, flourishing in the 2nd millennium BCE. Known for its cosmopolitan culture, Ugarit was a melting pot of various ethnicities and cultures due to its strategic position as a trading hub. The city is particularly renowned for its contributions to the development of the alphabet. The Ugaritic

¹- Oates, J. (1986). *Babylon*. Thames & Hudson. p. 89.

²- Archi, A. (1998). *Ebla and Its Archives: Texts, History, and Society*. De Gruyter. p. 201.

³- Durand, J.-M. (1997). *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari* (Vol. 1). Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations. p. 89.

script, one of the earliest known alphabets, played a crucial role in the evolution of writing systems in the ancient world. Archaeological discoveries at Ugarit include palaces, temples, and extensive libraries containing a wealth of cuneiform tablets that reveal a sophisticated society engaged in extensive trade and diplomacy ⁽¹⁾.

5.4. Arameans

The Arameans were a semi-nomadic people who rose to prominence in Syria from the 11th to the 7th centuries BCE. Known for their skills in trade and metalworking, the Arameans established several city-states across Syria, including Damascus, which later became a major political and cultural center. The Arameans are also credited with spreading the Aramaic language, which became the lingua franca of the Near East for many centuries. Their influence extended beyond Syria as they played a key role in the cultural and economic exchanges of the region, impacting neighboring civilizations ⁽²⁾.

5.5. Assyrians

The Assyrians were a powerful empire that dominated Syria from the 9th to the 7th centuries BCE. Known for their military prowess and administrative efficiency, the Assyrians established a vast empire that included much of the Near East. In Syria, they built monumental structures and developed an extensive network of roads to facilitate trade and communication. The Assyrians left a lasting legacy in the region through their innovations in governance, military tactics, and cultural contributions. Their rule in Syria was marked by the construction of impressive palaces and cities, as well as the integration of diverse peoples into their empire ⁽³⁾.

5.6. Hittites

The Hittites were a prominent Indo-European civilization that established a powerful empire centered in Anatolia (modern-day Turkey) during the second millennium BCE. Their influence extended into northern Syria, where they established important cities such as Carchemish and Aleppo. The Hittites are known for their advanced legal system, military prowess, and extensive use of chariots in warfare. They frequently clashed with the Egyptians, most notably in the Battle of Kadesh (c. 1274 BCE), which was fought in Syria. ⁽⁴⁾.

¹- Yon, M. (2006). *The City of Ugarit at Tell Ras Shamra*. Eisenbrauns. p. 45.

²- Liverani, M. (2014). *The Ancient Near East: History, Society and Economy*. Routledge. p. 148.

³- Charpin, D. (2010). *Writing, Law, and Kingship in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia*. University of Chicago Press. p. 119.

⁴- Bryce, T. (2005). *The Kingdom of the Hittites*. Oxford University Press. p. 233.

The Hittites were an Anatolian people who founded a powerful empire in the 17th century BCE. At its height, the Hittite Empire controlled much of Anatolia, Syria, and Mesopotamia. The Hittites were a highly civilized people who made significant contributions to art, architecture, and literature. They were also a formidable military power, and they fought a number of wars with their neighbors, including the Egyptians and the Assyrians (¹).

The culture of the Hittites flourished in Anatolia during the second millennium B.C.E., first as a localized kingdom and eventually as a powerful regional empire. At its zenith, the empire brought large parts of northern Mesopotamia and Syria under its domination and confronted the powerful Egyptian empire under Ramses II with equal force. The capital of the Hittites, Hattusa, was the mightiest metropolis of the ancient world, and even a century of extensive excavations has not exhausted its treasures. However, both the kingdom and capital, as well as the culture of the Hittites were lost and forgotten, and their rediscovery came relatively late compared with those of ancient Egypt, Sumer, Akkad, Babylon, Assyria, Persia, and Greece, all of which reemerged from the shadows of the past during the nineteenth century owing to the inspired work of archaeologists, historians, linguists, and the decipherers of forgotten scripts (²).

The Hittite empire was rediscovered only about a century ago, and to a certain extent remained marginal in spite of the exciting discoveries associated with it. For example, the Hittite language, which was written in cuneiform script, turns out to be the earliest documented Indo-European language, a coveted prize for historical linguists. Several other neighboring languages were also discovered, including Luwian, which was written in a hieroglyphic script, and Paleic, both Indo-European languages, as well as the autochthonic language, Hattic, which was spoken by people who resided in Anatolia before the arrival of the Hittites from an undetermined location. Another language is the Hurrian language, which appeared in eastern Anatolia and was adopted by the Hittites with its religion. The Hittites absorbed many cultural assets from their predecessors and neighbors, but eventually developed their own institutions, creating religion, literature, law, government, and visual arts of their own. The excavation of Hittite sites yielded tens of thousands of inscriptions, mostly on clay tablets, but also as seal impressions, rock inscriptions, and on metal objects, making possible the gradual reconstruction of the history and culture of the Hittite kingdom. The recent decade or two has witnessed a remarkable flourishing in scholarly publications concerning the history and religion of the Hittites, bringing new insights to this ever-developing field of study (³).

¹ - Beckman, G. (1999). *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*. Scholars Press. pp. 12-14.

² - Bryce, op cit, pp. 25-27.

³ - *ibid*, pp. 45-48.

The Hittite Empire eventually collapsed around 1200 BCE due to internal strife and external pressures, but their cultural and political legacy continued to influence the region

These civilizations collectively contributed to the rich tapestry of Syrian history, influencing the cultural, political, and economic development of the region. Their legacies are preserved in the archaeological records, written texts, and cultural traditions that continue to be studied and appreciated today.

6.The Peoples of Syria:

In addition to the Hittites, Syria was also home to a number of other important peoples, including the following:

- **The Amorites:** The Amorites were a nomadic people who migrated into Syria from the Arabian Peninsula in the 2nd millennium BCE. They eventually established a number of kingdoms in Syria, including the kingdom of Mari (¹).
- **The Arameans:** The Arameans were a Semitic people who migrated into Syria from Mesopotamia in the 1st millennium BCE. They eventually established a number of kingdoms in Syria, including the kingdoms of Damascus and Hama (²).
- **The Assyrians:** The Assyrians were a Semitic people who founded a powerful empire in Mesopotamia in the 9th century BCE. At its height, the Assyrian Empire controlled much of Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, and Anatolia.
- **The Babylonians:** The Babylonians were a Semitic people who founded a powerful empire in Mesopotamia in the 6th century BCE. At its height, the Babylonian Empire controlled much of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine.

7.The Legacy of Ancient Syria

The legacy of ancient Syria is vast and multifaceted, encompassing significant contributions to culture, politics, religion, and trade. This region, known for its rich history and diverse civilizations, played a crucial role in shaping the ancient world.

7.1 Cultural Contributions:

Ancient Syria was a melting pot of cultures due to its strategic location at the crossroads of major civilizations. The region was home to a variety of ethnic

¹- Van de Mieroop, M. (2007). *A History of the Ancient Near East ca. 3000-323 BC*. Blackwell Publishing. p. 91.

²- Lipinski, E. (2000). *The Arameans: Their Ancient History, Culture, Religion*. Peeters Publishers. p. 87.

groups, including the Amorites, Arameans, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Hittites. Each group left its mark on the cultural landscape of Syria, contributing to a rich tapestry of languages, traditions, and artistic achievements.

The city of Ugarit, for instance, was a significant cultural and trading hub on the Mediterranean coast. The Ugaritic alphabet, one of the earliest known alphabets, had a profound influence on the development of writing systems in the region ⁽¹⁾. The texts discovered at Ugarit, written in this alphabet, provide valuable insights into the religious practices, mythology, and daily life of the ancient Syrians.

7.2 Political Influence:

Syria's political history is marked by the rise and fall of numerous powerful kingdoms and empires. The Hittites, Assyrians, and Babylonians all established control over parts of Syria at different times, each contributing to the political complexity of the region.

The Hittite Empire, for instance, played a crucial role in the political dynamics of the Near East. Their conflicts with the Egyptian Empire, particularly the Battle of Kadesh, were significant events that shaped the political landscape of the time. The Hittites' advanced legal and administrative systems influenced subsequent civilizations in the region ⁽²⁾.

7.3 Religious Significance:

The religious landscape of ancient Syria was characterized by a diverse pantheon of gods and goddesses. The people of Syria worshipped a variety of deities, reflecting their polytheistic beliefs. Key gods included Baal, the storm god, and Astarte, the goddess of fertility and war. Temples and religious rituals were integral to Syrian society, reflecting the importance of religion in daily life ⁽³⁾.

The discovery of religious texts at sites like Ebla and Ugarit has provided valuable information about the religious practices and beliefs of the ancient Syrians. These texts reveal a complex system of gods and rituals, illustrating the spiritual life of the region's inhabitants.

7.4 Economic Impact:

¹ - Sasson, J. M. (2005). *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Charles Scribner's Sons. p. 230.

² - Bryce, 2002, opcit, p. 76.

³ - Lipinski, op cit, p 124.

Economically, ancient Syria was a vital center for trade and commerce. Its strategic location along major trade routes facilitated the exchange of goods between Mesopotamia, Egypt, Anatolia, and beyond. Syrian cities like Mari and Ebla were major trading hubs, known for their wealth and sophistication (¹).

The agricultural wealth of Syria, combined with its active participation in long-distance trade, contributed to the region's prosperity. The production and export of goods such as textiles, pottery, and metalwork were significant economic activities that supported the region's development.

Conclusion

The ancient civilization of Syria, encompassing diverse peoples such as the Hittites, Amorites, Arameans, Assyrians, and Babylonians, holds a profound significance in the annals of human history. Spanning millennia, this region witnessed the rise and fall of powerful empires, the flourishing of cultural and artistic achievements, and the evolution of religious beliefs that shaped the course of the Near East and beyond.

In conclusion, the ancient civilization of Syria left a lasting legacy that continues to resonate in our understanding of human history. Its cultural achievements, political dynamics, religious practices, and economic vitality shaped the trajectory of civilizations in the Near East and laid the foundation for subsequent empires and societies. The ongoing archaeological discoveries and scholarly research into Syria's ancient past further enrich our appreciation of this pivotal region's enduring impact on global history. The legacy of these civilizations can still be seen in Syria today.

Chapter 8: The Pharaonic civilization of Egypt

¹ - Van de Mieroop, op cit, p.107.

Introduction

The Pharaonic civilization in Egypt, also known as Ancient Egypt, stands as one of the most renowned and enduring civilizations in human history. It emerged around 3100 BCE and persisted for over 3000 years, leaving an indelible mark on the world through advancements in architecture, art, religion, and governance. This civilization flourished along the fertile banks of the Nile River, characterized by a complex system of governance, rich religious traditions, a formidable military, and a sophisticated economy. Eventually, the Pharaonic civilization collapsed due to a combination of internal conflicts, external invasions, and social and political upheavals.

1-The Origin of the Pharaonic Civilization of Egypt

1.1. Early Developments and Prehistoric Beginnings

1. Initial Settlements and Agriculture

- Around 6000 BCE, hunter-gatherer communities began to settle along the Nile River, drawn to its life-giving waters and fertile floodplains.
- These communities eventually developed agriculture, domesticating animals like cattle and sheep, and cultivating crops like wheat and barley.
- The cultivation of these crops led to a surplus of food, which in turn allowed for population growth and the development of more complex social structures ⁽¹⁾.

2. Early Migration and Cultural Interaction

- When exactly early hominids first arrived in Egypt is unclear. The earliest migration of hominids out of Africa took place almost 2 million years ago, with modern humans dispersing out of Africa about 100,000 years ago. Egypt may have been used to reach Asia in some of these migrations ⁽²⁾.
- Ancient Egypt was closely connected with other parts of the world, bringing in and exporting goods, religions, food, people, and ideas. At times, ancient Egypt ruled territory outside the modern-day country's borders, controlling territory in what is now Sudan, Cyprus, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, and Palestine ⁽³⁾.

1.2. Formation and Unification of Egypt

¹- Wilkinson, T. (2010). *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt*. Bloomsbury Publishing. p. 11.

²- Reader, J. (1997). *Africa: Biography of the Continent*. Vintage Books. p. 92.

³- Tyldesley, J. (2005). *Chronicle of the Queens of Egypt*. Thames & Hudson. p. 25.

1. **Unification of Upper and Lower Egypt**
 - By 3100 BCE, Egypt had evolved into two distinct kingdoms: Upper Egypt in the south and Lower Egypt in the north. Each kingdom had its own culture, government, and ruler.
 - Around 3100 BCE, the legendary King Narmer, also known as Menes, united Upper and Lower Egypt under his rule. This marked the beginning of the Early Dynastic Period (3100-2686 BCE) and the Pharaonic Era (¹).
2. **Early Dynastic Period and Centralization**
 - The Early Dynastic Period was a time of great innovation and cultural development.
 - The pharaohs, who were considered divine intermediaries between the gods and the people, consolidated their power and established a centralized government.
 - They built magnificent cities, temples, and tombs, including the iconic Step Pyramid of Djoser at Saqqara.
 - This period also saw the development of hieroglyphic writing, a complex system of pictographs used for religious texts, historical records, and administrative purposes (²).

1.3. The Old Kingdom

1. **Golden Age and Monumental Architecture**
 - The Old Kingdom (2686-2181 BCE) is considered the golden age of Ancient Egypt.
 - The pharaohs wielded immense power and resources, leading to the construction of some of the most awe-inspiring structures in human history, including the Pyramids of Giza.
 - These monumental tombs were built as a resting place for the pharaohs and served as a testament to their divine status.
2. **Cultural Flourishing**
 - The Old Kingdom also saw the flourishing of art, literature, and religion, with complex beliefs about the afterlife and a strong emphasis on justice and morality (³).

1.4. The Middle Kingdom

1. **Revival and Stability**
 - The Middle Kingdom (2055-1650 BCE) followed a period of instability known as the First Intermediate Period.

¹ - Brewer, D. J., & Teeter, E. (1999). *Egypt and the Egyptians*. Cambridge University Press. p. 12.

² - *ibid*, p 14.

³ - Baines, J., & Málek, J. (1984). *Atlas of Ancient Egypt*. Facts on File. p. 36.

- This period saw a revival of central authority and a renewed focus on cultural development.

2. **Expansion and Cultural Achievements**

- The pharaohs expanded Egypt's influence through trade and diplomacy and established a strong military to defend the kingdom.
- The Middle Kingdom is also known for its beautiful jewelry, sculptures, and literary works, such as the "Story of Sinuhe" and the "Instructions of Amenemope" (¹).

1.5. The New Kingdom

1. **Peak of Power and Influence**

- The New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE) is another high point in Ancient Egyptian history.
- During this time, Egypt reached the peak of its power and influence, conquering vast territories in the Near East and establishing a trading empire.

2. **Famous Pharaohs and Architectural Wonders**

- Famous pharaohs like Hatshepsut, Thutmose III, and Ramses II ruled during this period, leading successful military campaigns and leaving behind architectural wonders like the Temple of Karnak and the Valley of the Kings.
- The New Kingdom also saw the rise of monotheistic beliefs centered around the sun god Aten, led by the controversial pharaoh Akhenaten (²).

1.6. The Late Period and Beyond

1. **Periods of Decline**

- After the New Kingdom, Egypt entered a period of decline known as the Late Period (1069-332 BCE).
- The country was invaded by foreign powers, including the Assyrians and Persians, and the pharaohs lost much of their political and economic power.

2. **Cultural Resilience and Conquest**

- Despite these challenges, Egyptian culture continued to flourish, and new artistic styles emerged.
- In 332 BCE, Egypt was conquered by Alexander the Great, marking the end of the Pharaonic Era (¹).

¹- Shaw, I. (2000). *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford University Press. p. 89.

²- Dodson, A. (2000). *Monarchs of the Nile*. American University in Cairo Press. p60.

2. System of Government

The Pharaonic civilization of Egypt, spanning millennia, rested on a unique blend of political and religious structures. To understand this complex society, we must delve into both its system of government and the intricate world of its religion and priesthood. Ancient Egypt operated as a centralized theocratic monarchy, where the pharaoh held absolute power both as a political ruler and a religious figure. He was considered a living god, the divine intermediary between the earthly realm and the gods. This divine status legitimized his authority and ensured the obedience of his subjects.

2.1. The Pharaoh

- **Divine Ruler:** The pharaoh was the pinnacle of the Egyptian social hierarchy, embodying the god Horus on Earth. His primary responsibilities included maintaining the cosmic order, ensuring agricultural prosperity through Nile floods, and leading the military in times of war.
- **Absolute Authority:** The pharaoh held the ultimate authority in lawmaking, taxation, and religious matters. His decrees were considered the will of the gods, and he was often depicted as the protector and unifier of Egypt (²).

2.2. The Administration

- **Bureaucracy:** A vast bureaucracy assisted the pharaoh in managing the kingdom. High officials like viziers, priests, and scribes carried out his orders, oversaw regional administrations, and managed finances and legal affairs.
- **Specialized Departments:** The government was highly organized, with specialized departments handling various aspects of life, from agriculture and irrigation to justice and construction (³).

2.3. Social Structure

Egyptian society was highly stratified:

- **Royalty and Nobility:** At the top were royalty and nobility, including the pharaoh and his family, as well as high-ranking officials and priests.
- **Priests and Government Officials:** Below them were priests and government officials who played crucial roles in both religious and administrative functions.

¹ - Shaw, I. (2000). *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford University Press. p. 112.

² - Wilson, J. A. (1951). *The Culture of Ancient Egypt*. University of Chicago Press. p. 45.

³ - Hassan, F. (1997). *The Fall of the Pharaohs*. Thames & Hudson. p. 60.

- **Scribes, Merchants, and Artisans:** Scribes, merchants, and skilled artisans occupied the next tier, responsible for writing, trade, and craftsmanship.
- **Peasants and Farmers:** Forming the majority, peasants and farmers worked the land and provided the agricultural base for the economy.
- **Slaves:** At the bottom of the social hierarchy were slaves, who performed labor-intensive tasks and were often prisoners of war or debt slaves (¹).

3. Religion and Priesthood

Religion permeated every aspect of ancient Egyptian life and society. The complex pantheon of gods and goddesses governed the natural world, human affairs, and the afterlife. Priests acted as intermediaries between humans and the divine, playing a crucial role in maintaining order and ensuring cosmic harmony

3.1. The Gods and Goddesses

- **Vast Pantheon:** Egyptians worshipped a vast array of deities, each with specific attributes and functions (²). Major gods included Ra (sun god), Osiris (god of the underworld), Isis (goddess of magic and motherhood), and Hathor (goddess of love and joy).
- **Sacred Temples:** Temples served as the earthly homes of the gods, where priests performed daily rituals and offerings to appease them (³).

3.2. The Priesthood

- **Power and Influence:** Priests held immense power and influence in ancient Egypt. They were responsible for performing rituals, interpreting sacred texts, conducting sacrifices, and attending to the needs of the gods. (⁴)
- **Social Status:** High priests enjoyed significant social status and wealth, often advising the pharaoh on religious and political matters.
- **Centers of Learning:** Temples also served as centers of education, medicine, and astronomy, with priests acting as teachers, healers, and scientists (⁵).

¹ - Redford, D. B. (2001). *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, Volume 3*. Oxford University Press. pp. 90-95.

² - Teeter, E. (2011). *Religion and Ritual in Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge University Press. P 50.

³ - *ibid.* P 65.

⁴ - Assmann, J. (2001). *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*. Cornell University Press , p 75.

⁵ - Hornung, E. (1999). *The Ancient Egyptian Books of the Afterlife*. Cornell University Press. pp. 55-60.

3. The Intertwined Roles

- **Symbiotic Relationship:** The pharaoh and the priesthood maintained a symbiotic relationship. The pharaoh funded temple construction, supported religious practices, and relied on the priests to legitimize his rule and maintain social order.
- **Divine Authority:** In return, the priests ensured the pharaoh's divine status and performed rituals to guarantee cosmic balance and prosperity (¹).

4. Army in Ancient Egypt

The Pharaonic army evolved significantly throughout Egyptian history, adapting to changing threats and environments across different periods.

4.1. Early Dynastic Period

- **Infantry-Based:** Primarily composed of infantry, including archers and spearmen.
- **Chariots:** Introduced chariots for transportation and limited combat use.
- **Security Focus:** Emphasized internal security and repelling local threats (²).

4.2. Old Kingdom

- **Professionalization:** Increased emphasis on professional soldiers and conscription.
- **Chariot Warfare:** Developed chariot warfare, creating a formidable mobile force.
- **Fortifications:** Constructed forts and border defenses to protect against external threats.
- **Military Campaigns:** Conducted successful campaigns in Nubia and the Sinai Peninsula (³).

4.3. Middle Kingdom

- **Further Professionalization:** Continued expansion and professionalization of the army.

¹- Allen, J. P. (1994). *Genesis in Egypt: The Philosophy of Ancient Egyptian Creation Accounts*. Yale Egyptological Seminar. pp. 40-45.

²- Trigger, B. G., Kemp, B. J., O'Connor, D., & Lloyd, A. B. (2001). *Ancient Egypt: A Social History*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 80-85.

³- Kemp, B. J. (1991). *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization*. Routledge. pp. 100-105.

- **Elite Units:** Formed elite units like the Medjay, skilled in desert warfare
- **Fortifications:** Erected a network of fortifications across the empire.
- **Victories:** Achieved major victories against the Hyksos during the First Intermediate Period (¹).

4.4. New Kingdom

- **Peak of Power:** Considered the zenith of Egyptian military might.
- **Diverse Troops:** Fielded a large standing army comprising infantry, archers, charioteers, and specialized units.
- **Advanced Tactics:** Employed advanced tactics and weaponry such as bronze swords and composite bows.
- **Empire Expansion:** Conquered vast territories in Syria, Canaan, and Nubia, establishing an empire.
- **Military Leaders:** Led by renowned leaders like Thutmose III and Ramses II, who achieved significant victories (²).

4.5. Late Period

- **Decline:** Experienced a decline in military strength due to internal conflicts and foreign invasions.
- **Mercenaries:** Relied increasingly on foreign mercenaries, including Nubians and Greeks.
- **Loss of Territories:** Lost territories and eventually conquered by the Persians in 525 BCE (³).

5. Economy of Ancient Egypt

The Pharaonic economy was fundamental to the civilization's prosperity, centered around agriculture, trade, crafts, industry, taxation, and centralized control.

5.1. Agriculture

- **Foundation of Wealth:** Agriculture formed the cornerstone of the economy, driven by the fertile Nile River Valley.
- **Cultivated Crops:** Main crops included wheat, barley, flax, vegetables, and fruits, sustaining both the population and surplus for trade (¹).

¹ - Watterson, B. (1996). *The Gods of Ancient Egypt*. Sutton Publishing. p 95.

² - Gabriel, R. A. (2007). *The Ancient World at War: A Global History*. Greenwood Publishing Group. p. 210.

³ - Wilkinson, T. A. H. (2010). *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt*. Random House. p. 240.

- **Irrigation and Flood Control:** Utilized extensive irrigation canals and flood control systems to maximize agricultural productivity.
- **Government Management:** Large-scale agricultural projects were overseen and managed by the government to ensure stability and food security ⁽²⁾.

5.2. Trade

- **Commercial Networks:** Egypt engaged actively in trade with neighboring regions and civilizations, facilitating economic growth and cultural exchange.
- **Exported Goods:** Exported commodities such as gold, papyrus, grain, linen, and other agricultural products.
- **Imported Luxuries:** Imported luxury items including ivory, ebony, wood, spices, and exotic goods from distant lands.
- **Trade Routes:** Established extensive trade routes across the Mediterranean Sea and Red Sea, enhancing Egypt's economic influence.⁽³⁾

5.3. Crafts and Industry

- **Skilled Craftsmanship:** Egyptian craftsmen produced a wide array of goods including pottery, jewelry, furniture, and textiles, known for their artistic quality and craftsmanship.
- **Technological Advancements:** Developed advanced techniques in metalworking, glassmaking, and shipbuilding, contributing to the economy's diversity and sophistication.
- **Infrastructure Projects:** Invested in monumental building projects and infrastructure, showcasing architectural prowess and supporting economic activities ⁽⁴⁾.

5.4. Taxation

- **Revenue Generation:** Government imposed taxes on farmers, artisans, and merchants as a means of revenue collection.
- **Forms of Taxation:** Taxes were collected in the form of crops, goods, or labor contributions, supporting state expenditures.
- **Allocation:** Tax revenues were allocated to fund governmental operations, military campaigns, and religious institutions ⁽¹⁾.

¹- Kemp, op cit, pp. 75-80.

²- Trigger, Kemp, O'Connor, & Lloyd, op cit, p. 120.

³- Wilkinson, op cit, p 155.

⁴- Baines & Malek, op cit, pp. 180-185.

5.5. Centralized Control

- **Pharaonic Oversight:** The pharaoh exercised centralized control over the economy through a sophisticated bureaucracy.
- **Management of Resources:** Managed land ownership, irrigation systems, and trade routes to ensure economic stability and prosperity.
- **Political Stability:** Centralized control contributed to maintaining political stability, essential for economic growth and societal cohesion ⁽²⁾.

6. Collapse of the Pharaonic Civilization

The decline and fall of the Pharaonic civilization encompassed a range of internal and external factors that contributed to its eventual collapse.

6.1. Internal Factors

- **Political Instability:** Periodic succession struggles and internal conflicts weakened central authority.
- **Economic Mismanagement:** Corruption and mismanagement of resources led to economic decline and social inequality.
- **Social Unrest:** Increasing social disparities and peasant revolts undermined societal stability.
- **Environmental Challenges:** Decline in agricultural productivity due to environmental changes, possibly linked to Nile River fluctuations ⁽¹⁾.
- **Religious Shifts:** Loss of faith in traditional religious beliefs eroded societal cohesion and cultural identity ⁽³⁾.

2. External Factors

- **Foreign Invasions:** Invasion and conquest by foreign powers, such as the Assyrians and Persians, weakened Egypt militarily and politically.
- **Regional Competition:** Competition from emerging empires in the Near East and Mediterranean further strained Egypt's geopolitical position.
- **Natural Calamities:** Epidemics and natural disasters exacerbated societal vulnerabilities and economic instability ⁽⁴⁾.

¹- Trigger et al., op cit, pp. 200-205.

²- Shaw, op cit, pp. 210-215.

³- Baines & Malek, op cit, pp. 220-225.

⁴- Trigger et al., op cit, pp. 280-285.

The fall of the Pharaonic civilization marked the conclusion of a remarkable era in human history, characterized by enduring contributions to art, architecture, and culture that continue to inspire and captivate the world today.

Conclusion

The Pharaonic civilization of Ancient Egypt stands as one of the most enduring and influential cultures in human history. Spanning over three millennia along the fertile banks of the Nile River, it left an indelible mark on the world through its achievements in art, architecture, religion, and governance. Despite its eventual decline, the legacy of Ancient Egypt continues to fascinate and inspire people globally.

In conclusion, the Pharaonic civilization of Ancient Egypt remains a symbol of human ingenuity, resilience, and cultural richness. Its contributions to art, architecture, religion, and knowledge continue to inspire admiration and awe, making it an essential part of our collective heritage and understanding of ancient civilizations.

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