

EARLY CIVILIZATIONS



FIGURE 1-1 The four ancient river valley civilizations.

I. End of Stone Age

- Bronze Age – began about 6,000 years ago
 - Coincided with emergence of permanent settlements
 - Metallurgy brought about the end of the Stone Age – huge technological leap that will help speed up further innovation
 - Ability to stay in one place allowed for specialization – focus on a particular line of work/study
 - Time of earliest civilizations



Copper ore, used to make bronze.

II. Civilization

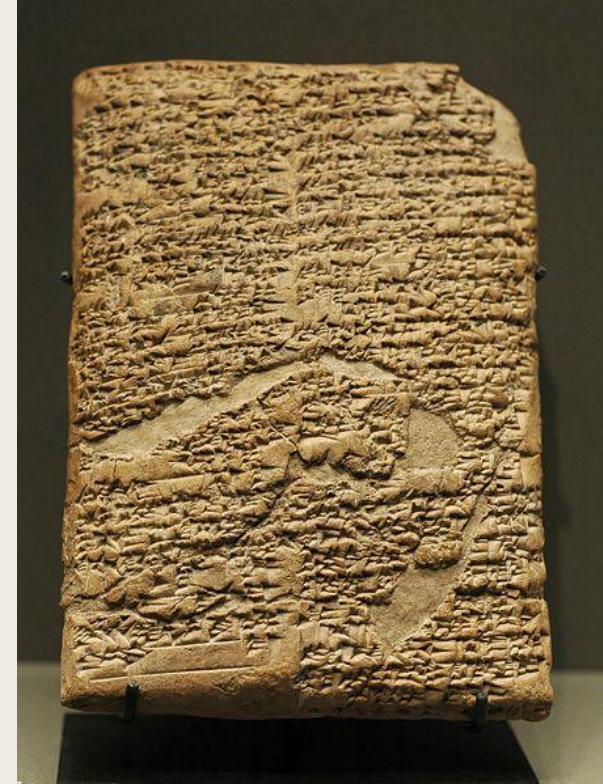
- Permanent settlements, such as Catal Huyuk in Turkey, led to emergence of civilization
 - **Four characteristics of a civilization:**
 - **Agriculture** (leads to food surpluses)
 - **Political organization** (other formal long-lasting institutions)
 - **Specialization** (non-farming elites, merchant and manufacturing groups, other workers)
 - **Writing** (communication, record keeping, establishment of law and order)
 - Ex. Cuneiform: first known system of writing

III. Tigris-Euphrates Rivers

- Located in modern day Iraq
 - Often called Mesopotamia (“land between the rivers”)
- Earliest known example of human civilization
- Began 4000 - 3500 B.C.E.

- Complex religious beliefs
 - Sumerians erected shrines and massive monuments/towers, called ziggurats, to honor gods
 - Some ideas (gods’ creation of earth, floods) can be found in various proto-religions
 - Government became more complex – from tribal chiefs to divine kings

- Highly organized
 - Relied on city-states – small, autonomous urban centers, surrounded by farmland
 - Social stratification became more pronounced– kings, noble class, priests controlled most land
 - farmers, artisans, and merchants became lower and middle classes
 - Developed a regulated system of laws and courts
 - Babylonian leader, Hammurabi, set early code of law in stone
 - Called the Code of Hammurabi



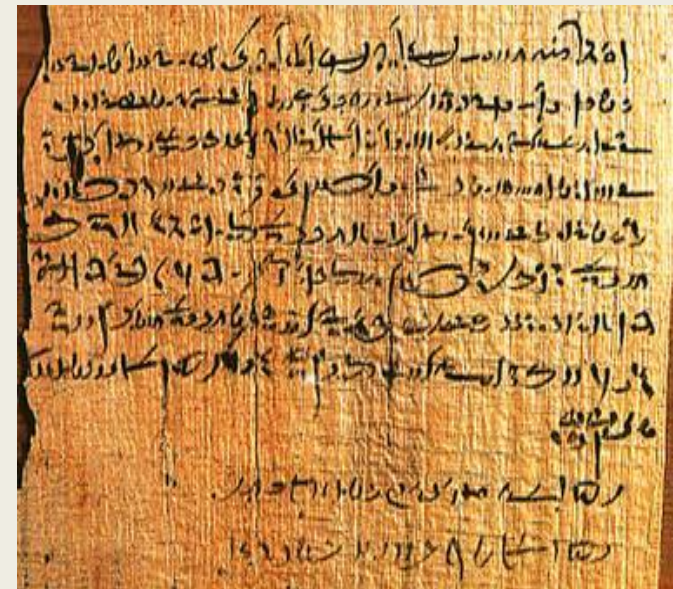
IV. Nile River



- In northern Africa, modern day Egypt
- Began around 3000 B.C.E.
- Ruled by pharaoh (god-king)
 - Considered to be directly descended from the gods
- Complex religious and political rituals
 - Polytheistic
 - Theocracy – ruled through laws based on religious beliefs/through religious leaders
- Development of writing
 - Hieroglyphics – comes from Greek words meaning “sacred carving”
 - More complex than cuneiform
 - Used papyrus reeds to make a paper-like writing surface

V. Indus River

- In modern day Pakistan, near India
- Began around 2500 B.C.E.
- Known for advanced cities
 - Sophisticated city planning (grid-like patterns), running water
- Harappa, Mohenjo Daro
- Limited trade with Mesopotamia, but developed independently
- Developed system of writing, never translated



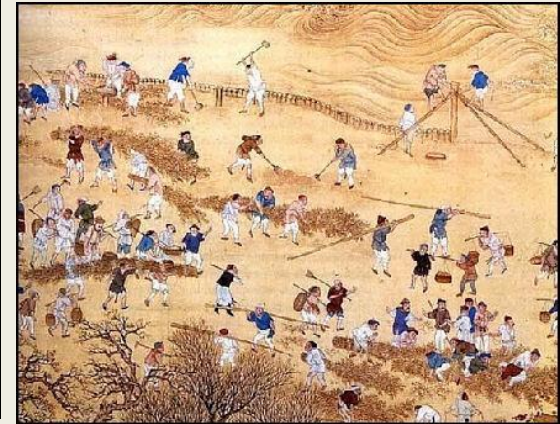
V. Ctd.

- Thought to be a theocracy, religion precursor to Hinduism
- Environment and invasions a factor in disappearance
 - Monsoons, floods
 - Nomadic invaders took over, abandoned cities



VI. Huanghe (Yellow River)

- Located in northern half of China
- Began about 2000 B.C.E.
- Developed independently due to geography
 - *desert, mountains, ocean*
- Developed sophisticated irrigations systems to control Y.R.
- Early pioneers in science and weapon/tool-making
 - *Early iron users*



VI. Ctd.

- Early religious beliefs based on spirits, centered around respect for elders
- Social classes helped organize and govern society
 - *Established system of feudalism – nobles owned all the land that peasants worked*
 - *Gave way to the dynasty system*

