



COMBINED  
VOLUME

TWELFTH  
EDITION

# THE WESTERN HERITAGE

Donald Kagan | Steven Ozment | Frank M. Turner  
with Gregory F. Viggiano



# The Western Heritage

Combined Volume

Twelfth Edition

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History 360 ATHENIAN ACROPOLIS  
History 360 AMPHITHEATER AND TEMPLE COMPLEX AT DELPHI  
History 360 ROMAN AQUEDUCTS AT SEGOVIA, SPAIN  
History 360 HADRIAN'S WALL  
History 360 ROMAN COLOSSEUM  
History 360 HAGIA SOPHIA  
History 360 MOSQUE-CATHEDRAL OF CÓRDOBA  
History 360 VIKING SHIP *HUGIN*  
History 360 CHARTRES CATHEDRAL  
History 360 CRUSADER CASTLE (Krak des Chevalier, Syria)  
History 360 VENICE (Maritime Power and Wealth)  
History 360 PISA CATHEDRAL, BAPTISTERY, AND TOWER  
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History 360 PALACE OF VERSAILLES  
History 360 EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY VIENNA  
History 360 MASSON MILL TEXTILE FACTORY  
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History 360 AUSCHWITZ  
History 360 PRAGUE SPRING, WENCESLAS SQUARE  
History 360 REUNIFICATION OF BERLIN  
History 360 RED SQUARE  
History 360 CALAIS "JUNGLE"  
History 360 CHERNOBYL  
History 360 BREXIT VOTE

## Artifacts as Evidence

Artifacts as Evidence FLOOD TABLET  
Artifacts as Evidence MINOAN BULL-LEAPER

Artifacts as Evidence COIN WITH HEAD OF ALEXANDER  
Artifacts as Evidence BASSE YUTZ FLAGON  
Artifacts as Evidence HINTON ST. MARY MOSAIC  
Artifacts as Evidence LOTHAIR CRYSTAL  
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Artifacts as Evidence THE HENEAGE JEWEL  
Artifacts as Evidence CHINESE FIGURINE OF LOUIS XIV  
Artifacts as Evidence *NOVA REPERTA* (NEW INVENTIONS OF MODERN TIMES)  
Artifacts as Evidence EARLY VICTORIAN TEA SET  
Artifacts as Evidence AKAN DRUM  
Artifacts as Evidence NO STAMP ACT TEAPOT  
Artifacts as Evidence BUST OF HANS SLOANE  
Artifacts as Evidence REVOLUTIONARY PLAYING CARDS  
Artifacts as Evidence BUST OF JOHN WESLEY  
Artifacts as Evidence HENRY "ORATOR" HUNT BEAKER  
Artifacts as Evidence FREED SLAVE FIGURINE  
Artifacts as Evidence SLAVE SHIP MANIFEST (from Schooner *Lafayette*)  
Artifacts as Evidence MINIATURE BUGLE  
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Artifacts as Evidence APPLE II PERSONAL COMPUTER

# Preface

The years since the publication of the eleventh edition of *The Western Heritage* have produced significant changes that present new and serious challenges to the West and the rest of the world. The most striking of these changes is in the economy. In 2008, a serious financial crisis produced a deep recession that diminished the widespread economic growth and prosperity of the West and much of the world and threatened to produce the political instability that usually accompanies economic upheaval. By 2012, the European Union, long an economic powerhouse, felt the threat to its currency and the solvency of its weaker members. The United States also suffered a severe setback, and the recovery from its recession was the slowest in decades. After a decade of slow growth and mixed results from attempts at fiscal austerity and loose monetary policy, the global economy appears to be returning to expansion.

In the realms of international relations and politics, the United States and its European friends and allies pursued mixed policies. The war in Iraq, which some had thought lost, took a turn in 2008 when the Americans changed their approach by introducing a sharply increased military force, popularly called “the surge,” and a new counter-insurgency strategy. It was so successful that the western allies chose to withdraw their combat troops and leave the remaining fighting to the new Iraqi government. With fewer troops and a less clear commitment, the Americans undertook a similar “surge” in Afghanistan. The effort met with considerable success, but the prospect of continued fighting and diminishing support by the engaged Western powers left the future of their efforts to clear the region of terrorist bases uncertain. The reduced commitment of American forces led to the rise of new waves of threats from terrorism in the form of militant organizations such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and in protracted war in Syria.

New challenges arose in still another area involving important Western interests: North Africa and the Middle East. Insurrections against well-established autocracies in Libya and Egypt drew support in different degrees from members of NATO. Both nations succeeded in removing dictatorial rulers, but the character of the new regimes and their relationship with the West remains uncertain. The war in Syria and the migration crisis it has fueled add to these difficulties.

The authors of this volume continue to believe that the heritage of Western civilization remains a major point of departure for understanding and defining the challenges of our time. The spread of its interests and influence throughout the world has made the West a crucial part of the world’s economy and a major player on the international scene. This book aims to introduce its readers to the Western heritage so that they may be better-informed and more culturally sensitive citizens of the increasingly troubled and challenging global age.

Since *The Western Heritage* first appeared, we have sought to provide our readers with a work that does justice to the richness and variety of Western civilization and its many complexities. We hope that such an understanding of the West will foster lively debate about its character, values, institutions, and global influence. Indeed, we believe such a critical outlook on their own culture has characterized the peoples of the West since the dawn of history. Through such debates we define ourselves and

the values of our culture. Consequently, we welcome the debate and hope that *The Western Heritage* can help foster an informed discussion through its history of the West’s strengths and weaknesses and the controversies surrounding Western history.

We also believe that any course addressing the experience of the West must also look beyond its historical European borders. Students reading this book come from a wide variety of cultures and experiences. They live in a world of highly interconnected economies and instant communication between cultures. In this emerging multicultural society, it seems both appropriate and necessary to recognize how Western civilization has interacted with other cultures throughout its history, both influencing and being influenced by them. For this reason, there is a chapter that focuses on the nineteenth-century European age of imperialism. Further examples of Western interaction with other parts of the world, such as with Islam, appear throughout the text. To further highlight the theme of cultural interaction, *The Western Heritage* includes a series of comparative essays, “The West and the World,” which fall at the end of every part.

## What Is the Western Heritage?

This book invites students and instructors to explore the Western heritage. What is that heritage? The Western heritage emerges from an evolved and evolving story of human actions and interactions, peaceful and violent, that arose in the eastern Mediterranean, then spread across the western Mediterranean into northern Europe, and eventually to the American continents, and in their broadest impact, to the peoples of Africa and Asia as well.

The Western heritage as a distinct portion of world history descends from the ancient Greeks. They saw their own political life based on open discussion of law and policy as different from that of Mesopotamia, Persia, and Egypt, where kings ruled without regard to public opinion. The Greeks invented the concept of citizenship, defining it as engagement in some form of self-government. Furthermore, through their literature and philosophy, the Greeks established the conviction that became characteristic of the West, that reason can shape and analyze physical nature, politics, and morality.

The city of Rome, spreading its authority through military conquest across the Mediterranean world, embraced Greek literature and philosophy. Through their conquests and imposition of their law, the Romans created the Western world as a vast empire stretching from Egypt and Syria in the east to Britain in the west. Although the Roman Republic, governed by a senate and popular political institutions, gave way after civil wars to the autocratic rule of the Roman Empire, the idea of a free republic of engaged citizens governed by public law and constitutional arrangements limiting political authority survived centuries of arbitrary rule by emperors. As in the rest of the world, the Greeks, the Romans, and virtually all other ancient peoples excluded women and slaves from political life and tolerated considerable social inequality.

In the early fourth century c.e., the emperor Constantine reorganized the Roman Empire in two fundamental ways that reshaped the West. First, he moved the imperial capital from Rome to Constantinople (Istanbul), establishing separate emperors in the east and west. Thereafter, large portions of the Western

empire became subject to the rulers of Germanic tribes. In the confusion of these times, most of the texts embodying ancient philosophy, literature, and history became lost in the West, and for centuries Western Europeans were intellectually severed from that ancient heritage, which would later be recovered in a series of renaissances, or cultural rebirths, beginning in the eighth century.

Constantine's second fateful major reshaping of the West was his recognition of Christianity as the official religion of the empire. Christianity had grown out of the ancient monotheistic religion of the Hebrew people living in ancient Palestine. With the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth and the spread of his teachings by the Apostle Paul, Christianity had established itself as one of many religions in the empire. Because Christianity was monotheistic, Constantine's official embrace of it led to the eradication of pagan polytheism. Thereafter, the West became more or less coterminous with Latin Christianity, or that portion of the Christian church acknowledging the Bishop of Rome as its head.

As the emperors' rule broke down, bishops became the effective political rulers in many parts of Western Europe. But the Christian church in the West never governed without negotiation or conflict with secular rulers, and religious law never replaced secular law. Nor could secular rulers govern if they ignored the influence of the church. Hence from the fourth century C.E. to the present day, rival claims to political and moral authority between ecclesiastical and political officials have characterized the West.

In the seventh century the Christian West faced a new challenge from the rise of Islam. This new monotheistic religion originating in the teachings of the prophet Muhammad arose on the Arabian Peninsula and spread through rapid conquests across North Africa and eventually into Spain, turning the Mediterranean into what one historian has termed "a Muslim lake." Between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, Christians attempted to reclaim the Holy Land from Muslim control in church-inspired military Crusades that still resonate negatively in the Islamic world.

It was, however, in the Muslim world that most of the texts of ancient Greek and Latin learning survived and were studied, while intellectual life languished in the West. Commencing in the twelfth century, knowledge of those texts began to work its way back into Western Europe. By the fourteenth century, European thinkers redefined themselves and their intellectual ambitions by recovering the literature and science from the ancient world, reuniting Europe with its Greco-Roman past.

From the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries, a new European political system slowly arose, based on centralized monarchies characterized by large armies, navies, and bureaucracies loyal to the monarch, and by the capacity to raise revenues. Whatever the personal ambitions of individual rulers, for the most part these monarchies recognized both the political role of local or national assemblies drawn from the propertied elites and the binding power of constitutional law on themselves. Also, in each of these monarchies, church officials and church law played important roles in public life. The monarchies, their military, and their expanding commercial economies became the basis for the extension of European and Western influence around the globe.

In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, two transforming events occurred. The first was the European discovery and conquest of the American continents, thus opening the Americas to Western institutions, religion, and economic exploitation. Over time, the labor shortages of the Americas led to the forced migration of millions of Africans as slaves to the New World. By the mid-seventeenth century, the West consequently embraced the entire transatlantic world and its multiracial societies.

Second, shortly after the American encounter, a religious schism erupted within Latin Christianity. Reformers rejecting both many medieval Christian doctrines as unbiblical and the primacy

of the pope in Rome established Protestant churches across much of northern Europe. As a consequence, for almost two centuries religious warfare between Protestants and Roman Catholics overwhelmed the continent as monarchies chose to defend one side or the other. This religious turmoil meant that the Europeans who conquered and settled the Americas carried with them particularly energized religious convictions, with Roman Catholics dominating Latin America, and English Protestants most of North America.

By the late eighteenth century, the idea of the West denoted a culture increasingly dominated by two new forces. First, science arising from a new understanding of nature achieved during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries persuaded growing numbers of the educated elite that human beings can rationally master nature for ever-expanding productive purposes improving the health and well-being of humankind. From this era to the present, the West has been associated with advances in technology, medicine, and scientific research. Second, during the eighteenth century, a drive for economic improvement that vastly increased agricultural production and then industrial manufacturing transformed economic life, especially in Western Europe and later the United States. Both of these economic developments went hand in hand with urbanization and the movement of the industrial economy into cities where the new urban populations experienced major social dislocation.

During these decades, certain West European elites came to regard advances in agricultural and manufacturing economies that were based on science and tied to commercial expansion as "civilized" in contrast to cultures that lacked those characteristics. From these ideas emerged the concept of "Western Civilization" defined to suggest that peoples dwelling outside Europe or inside Europe east of the Elbe River were less than civilized. Whereas Europeans had once defined themselves against the rest of the world as free citizens and then later as Christians, they now defined themselves as "civilized." Europeans would carry this self-assured superiority into their nineteenth- and early twentieth-century encounters with the peoples of Asia, Africa, and the Pacific.

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, political revolution erupted across the transatlantic world. The British colonies of North America revolted. Then revolution occurred in France and spread across much of Europe. From 1791 through 1830, the Wars of Independence liberated Latin America from its European conquerors. These revolutions created bold new modes of political life, rooting the legitimacy of the state in some form of popular government and generally written constitutions. Thereafter, despite the presence of authoritarian governments on the European continent, the idea of the West, now including the new republics of the United States and Latin America, became associated with liberal democratic governments.

Furthermore, during the nineteenth century, most major European states came to identify themselves in terms of nationality—language, history, and ethnicity—rather than loyalty to a monarch. Nationalism eventually inflamed popular opinion and unloosed unprecedented political ambition by European governments.

These ambitions led to imperialism and the creation of new overseas European empires in the late nineteenth century. For the peoples living in European-administered Asian and African colonies, the idea and reality of the West embodied foreign domination and often disadvantageous involvement in a world economy. When in 1945 the close of World War II led to a sharp decline in European imperial authority, colonial peoples around the globe challenged that authority and gained independence. These former colonial peoples, however, often still suspected the West of seeking to control them. Hence, anticolonialism, like colonialism before it, redefined definitions of the West far from its borders.

Late nineteenth-century nationalism and imperialism also unleashed with World War I in 1914 unprecedented military

hostilities among European nations that spread around the globe, followed a quarter-century later by an even greater world war. As one result of World War I, revolution occurred in Russia with the establishment of the Communist Soviet Union. During the interwar years a Fascist Party seized power in Italy and a Nazi Party took control of Germany. In response to these new authoritarian regimes, West European powers and the United States identified themselves with liberal democratic constitutionalism, individual freedom, commercial capitalism, science and learning freely pursued, and religious liberty, all of which they defined as the Western heritage. During the Cold War, conceived of as an East versus West, democratic versus Communist struggle that concluded with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Western powers led by the United States continued to embrace those values in conscious opposition to the Soviet government, which since 1945 had also dominated much of Eastern Europe.

Since 1991 the West has again become redefined in the minds of many people as a world political and economic order dominated by the United States. Europe clearly remains the West, but political leadership has moved to North America. That American domination and recent American foreign policy have led throughout the West and elsewhere to much criticism of the United States.

Such self-criticism itself embodies one of the most important and persistent parts of the Western heritage. From the Hebrew prophets and Socrates to the critics of European imperialism, American foreign policy, social inequality, and environmental devastation, voices in the West have again and again been raised to criticize often in the most strident manner the policies of Western governments and the thought, values, social conditions, and inequalities of Western societies.

Consequently, we study the Western heritage not because the subject always or even primarily presents an admirable picture, but because the study of the Western heritage, like the study of all history, calls us to an integrity of research, observation, and analysis that clarifies our minds and challenges our moral sensibilities. The challenge of history is the challenge of thinking, and it is to that challenge that this book invites its readers.

## Content Highlights

In this edition, as in past editions, our goal has been to present Western civilization fairly, accurately, and in a way that does justice to this great, diverse legacy of human enterprise. History has many facets, no single one of which can alone account for the others. Any attempt to tell the story of the West from a single overarching perspective, no matter how timely, is bound to neglect or suppress some important parts of this story. Like all other authors of introductory texts, we have had to make choices, but we have attempted to provide the broadest possible introduction to Western civilization.

### Goals of the Text

Our primary goal has been to present a strong, clear, narrative account of the central developments in Western history. We have also sought to call attention to certain critical themes:

- The capacity of Western civilization, from the time of the Greeks to the present, to transform itself through self-criticism.
- The development in the West of political freedom, constitutional government, and concern for the rule of law and individual rights.
- The shifting relations among religion, society, and the state.
- The development of science and technology and their

expanding impact on Western thought, social institutions, and everyday life.

- The major religious and intellectual currents that have shaped Western culture.

We believe that these themes have been fundamental in Western civilization, shaping the past and exerting a continuing influence on the present.

### Flexible Presentation

*The Western Heritage* is designed to accommodate a variety of approaches to a course in Western civilization, allowing instructors to stress what is most important to them. Some instructors will ask students to read all the chapters. Others will select from among them to reinforce assigned readings and lectures. We believe the “Compare and Connect” documents, as well as the “Encountering the Past,” and “A Closer Look” features may also be adopted selectively by instructors for purposes of classroom presentation and debate and as the basis for short written assignments.

### Integrated Social, Cultural, and Political History

*The Western Heritage* provides one of the richest accounts of the social history of the West available today, with strong coverage of family life, the changing roles of women, and the place of the family in relation to broader economic, political, and social developments. This coverage reflects the explosive growth in social historical research in the past half-century, which has enriched virtually all areas of historical study.

We have also been told repeatedly by instructors that no matter what their own historical specialization, they believe that a political narrative gives students an effective tool to begin to understand the past. Consequently, we have sought to integrate such a strong political narrative with our treatment of the social, cultural, and intellectual factors in Western history.

We also believe that religious faith and religious institutions have been fundamental to the development of the West. No other survey text presents so full an account of the religious and intellectual development of the West. People may be political and social beings, but they are also reasoning and spiritual beings. What they think and believe are among the most important things we can know about them. Their ideas about God, society, law, gender, human nature, and the physical world have changed over the centuries and continue to change. We cannot fully grasp our own approach to the world without understanding the religious and intellectual currents of the past and how they have influenced our thoughts and conceptual categories. We seek to recognize the impact of religion in the expansion of the West, including the settlement of the Americas in the sixteenth century and the role of missionaries in nineteenth-century Western imperialism.

### Clarity and Accessibility

Good narrative history requires clear, vigorous prose. As with earlier editions, we have paid careful attention to our writing, subjecting every paragraph to critical scrutiny. Our goal has been to make the history of the West accessible to students without compromising vocabulary or conceptual level. We hope this effort will benefit both instructors and students.

### A Note on Dates and Transliterations

This edition of *The Western Heritage* continues the practice of using B.C.E. (before the common era) and C.E. (common era) instead of B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (*anno Domini*, in the year of our Lord) to designate dates. We also follow the most accurate currently accepted English transliterations of Arabic words. For example, today *Koran* has been replaced by the more

accurate *Qur'an*; similarly *Muhammad* is preferable to *Mohammed* and *Muslim* to *Moslem*.

## New to This Edition

Here are just some of the changes, updates, and refinements that can be found throughout this new edition of *The Western Heritage*.

### Improved Structure

To improve narrative structure and accessibility, chapters have been divided, wherever pertinent, into shorter subsections. Each new subsection carries its own heading, designed to reach readers and draw them in, in addition to aiding them in the skimming and scanning of pages for relevant information and insights. Explicit attention, also, has been paid to shortening passages for clarity.

### New Illustrations

Images of historical figures, events, objects, sites, and period art and architecture can be as striking and informative as the ideas they represent. Over a third of the more than 400 images in *The Western Heritage* are new to this edition.

### New Key Terms

To encourage and facilitate comprehension and review, each chapter now ends with an expanded list of key terms and definitions.

### New Content

Every opportunity to provide additional context for shifts in the evolving story of human actions and interactions within the larger history of Western civilization has been energetically pursued. For example, in Chapter 29, the section on the resurgence of Russia under Putin has been expanded to include the invasions of Crimea and Ukraine. New content about the rise of ISIS, as well as the Arab Spring protests, has been added. In Chapter 30, the section on the papacy since the death of John Paul II has been updated with relevant details. New material on recent developments in the European Union, including the migration crisis and Brexit, and on changes marking the start of the Trump presidency has been written. Also new to this edition is an exploration of the future of renewable energy.

In particular, new content has been written for many of our popular “Compare and Connect” and “Encountering the Past” sidebars—all in the service of good storytelling—to make them even more responsive to students’ interests:

*Chapter 2*—Encountering the Past: Marriage in Ancient Athens

*Chapter 4*—Compare and Connect: Why Did Rome Win the Punic Wars?

*Chapter 5*—Encountering the Past: The Roman Love of Bathing

*Chapter 6*—Encountering the Past: Medieval Cooking

*Chapter 7*—Compare and Connect: Anti-Jewish Violence and the First Crusade

*Chapter 8*—Compare and Connect: What Do Kings Have to Do with Universities?

*Chapter 9*—Compare and Connect: Peasant Revolts in England and France

*Chapter 11*—Compare and Connect: Can Anyone Understand the Word of God?

*Chapter 11*—Encountering the Past: Pictures, Preachers, and Songs

*Chapter 13*—Compare and Connect: The World Turned Upside Down

*Chapter 14*—Encountering the Past: The Science of Healthy Eating

*Chapter 15*—Encountering the Past: Brewing Becomes a Man’s Profession

*Chapter 18*—Compare and Connect: What Did the National Assembly Accomplish?

*Chapter 18*—Encountering the Past: “La Marseillaise”

*Chapter 21*—Compare and Connect: From Republic to Empire, Again

*Chapter 21*—Encountering the Past: Opera and Italian Nationalism

*Chapter 24*—Compare and Connect: Charles Darwin’s Christian Critics

*Chapter 25*—Encountering the Past: Hiram Maxim and the Maxim Gun

*Chapter 26*—Compare and Connect: War Poets on the Western Front

*Chapter 29*—Encountering the Past: Blood in the Water

### Streamlined Timelines

The histories of key events, publications, dates, campaigns, and dynasties rendered as timelines in *The Western Heritage* have been judiciously edited to cover only the essentials.

## Revel™ for *The Western Heritage*

Revel is an interactive learning environment that deeply engages students and prepares them for class. Media and assessment integrated directly within the authors’ narrative lets students read, explore interactive content, and practice in one continuous learning path. Thanks to the dynamic reading experience in Revel, students come to class prepared to discuss, apply, and learn from instructors and from each other.

### Learn more about Revel

[www.pearson.com/revel](http://www.pearson.com/revel)

In Revel, *The Western Heritage* expresses many of the forms that make digital publishing dynamic, interactive, and better than print.

### History 360 Experiences

Embedded History 360 experiences allow students to learn about history through the exploration of historical sites, including Stonehenge, the pyramids at Giza, the Athenian Acropolis, Hadrian’s Wall, the Colosseum in Rome, Hagia Sophia, the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba, Chartres Cathedral, the Sistine Chapel, the Globe Theatre, Isaac Newton’s Woolsthorpe Manor, the Palace of Versailles, nineteenth-century Paris, Auschwitz, Red Square, Chernobyl, and the Calais refugee camp. Each immersive experience combines 360-degree photographs and videos with sound, images, and text to help bring the past to life.

### Artifacts as Evidence Videos

Created in partnership with the British Museum, the Imperial War Museums, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, these videos focus on a wide range of unique artifacts that explain and illuminate the Western heritage.

### Interactive Maps

Custom-built interactive maps and diagrams, with clickable layers, panning and zooming, rollover annotations, storytelling progressions, and related functionality provide students with multiple ways of engaging with visual content.

### Source Collections

An end-of-chapter source collection includes a selection of primary source documents relevant to chapter content. Each document includes header notes, questions, and audio. Students can highlight and make notes on the documents.

### Integrated Writing Opportunities

To help students reason more logically and write more clearly, each chapter of *The Western Heritage* offers varieties of writing prompts to elicit opinions and feedback, confirm knowledge and understanding, engage in historical analysis, and produce evidence-based arguments.

- *Journal Prompts*—Interspersed throughout chapters, journal prompts are designed to obtain free-form responses from students on topics that address each chapter’s focus questions as well as each “Compare and Connect” excerpted primary source, each “Closer Look” historical artifact, and each “Encountering the Past” themed essay.
- *Shared Writing Prompts*—Found at the close of every chapter, shared writing prompts encourage students to consider multiple sides of issues by sharing their own views and responding to each other’s viewpoints in a structured discussion-board-type environment that encourages critical thinking and collaboration.
- *Essay Prompts*—Focused on major themes in *The Western Heritage*, essay prompts appear in Pearson’s Writing Space and can be assigned and graded by instructors.

### Integrated Assessments

Multiple-choice quizzes appear at the end of every major section, allowing instructors and students to track progress and get immediate feedback as they progress through chapters. At the end of every chapter, lengthier quizzes measure the extent to which students have achieved desired learning outcomes.

### Tools for Review

Every chapter includes an array of useful tools that allow students to check understanding and consolidate knowledge.

- *The Chapter in Perspective*—Chapter summaries encapsulate key chapter content, not only to aid review but also to articulate what historians perceive as essential to the study of the period.
- *Learn the Key Terms*—From Act of Supremacy to Zionism, more than 600 key terms central to the study of Western civilization allow students to engage with the lexicon of history.
- *Browse the Media Galleries*—Images and videos from the chapter, arranged together in one end-of-chapter carousel, form extensive digital collections of the photographic and videographic content in *The Western Heritage*. Each gallery reinforces comprehension and serves as an all-in-one

reminder of the people, events, topics, and policies visually documented within the chapter.

### Revel Combo Card

The Revel Combo Card provides an all-in-one access code and loose-leaf print reference (delivered by mail).

## Ancillary Instructional Materials

Make more time for your students with instructor resources that offer effective learning assessments and classroom engagement. Pearson’s partnership with educators does not end with the delivery of course materials; Pearson is there with you on the first day of class and beyond. A dedicated team of local Pearson representatives will work with you to not only choose course materials but also integrate them into your class and assess their effectiveness. Our goal is your goal—to improve instruction with each semester.

Pearson is pleased to offer the following resources to qualified adopters of *The Western Heritage*. Several of these supplements are available to instantly download on the Instructor Resource Center (IRC); please visit the IRC at [www.pearsonhighered.com/irc](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/irc) to register for access.

### Test Bank

Evaluate learning at every level. Reviewed for clarity and accuracy, the Test Bank measures this book’s learning objectives with multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions. The large pool of multiple-choice questions for each chapter includes factual, conceptual, and analytical questions, so that instructors may assess students on basic information as well as critical thinking. You can easily customize the assessment to work in any major learning management system and to match what is covered in your course.

### Pearson MyTest

This powerful assessment generation program includes all of the questions in the Test Bank. Quizzes and exams can be easily authored and saved online and then printed for classroom use, giving you ultimate flexibility to manage assessments anytime and anywhere. To learn more, visit [www.pearsonhighered.com/mytest](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/mytest).

### Instructor’s Resource Manual

Create a comprehensive roadmap for teaching classroom, online, or hybrid courses. Designed for new and experienced instructors, the Instructor’s Manual includes *An Introduction to Revel* section that walks users through the Revel product using screen shots that identify and explain the numerous Revel features, chapter summaries, learning objectives, discussion questions, lecture topics, Revel assessment questions, and information on audiovisual resources that can be used in developing and preparing lecture presentations.

### PowerPoint Presentation

Make lectures more enriching for students. The PowerPoint presentation includes a full lecture outline, photos, and figures from the book. All PowerPoints are ADA compliant.



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# Chapter 1

## The Birth of Civilization



**THE PHARAOH TUTANKHAMUN (r. 1336–1327 B.C.E.)** With his “ka” (life force) in attendance, the Pharaoh Tutankhamun embraces Osiris, god of the Afterlife. This wall painting is from Tutankhamun’s tomb, which was discovered in the 1920s. “King Tut” died at the age of eighteen.

SOURCE: François Guenet/Art Resource, NY



### Contents and Focus Questions

#### 1.1 Early Humans and Their Culture

*How did life in the Neolithic Age differ from the Paleolithic?*

#### 1.2 Early Civilizations to ca. 1000 B.C.E.

*Why did the first cities develop?*

#### 1.3 Ancient Near Eastern Empires

*What were the great empires of the ancient Near East?*

#### 1.4 The Persian Empire

*What were the Persian rulers’ attitudes toward the cultures they ruled?*

#### 1.5 Palestine

*How was Hebrew monotheism different from Mesopotamian and Egyptian polytheism?*

#### 1.6 General Outlook of Mideastern Cultures

*How did the worldview of the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Hebrews compare with that of the emerging culture of the Greeks?*

#### 1.7 Toward the Greeks and Western Thought

*Why was Greek rationalism such an important break with earlier intellectual traditions?*

## The Chapter in Brief

HISTORY, IN ITS TWO SENSES—as the events of the past that make up the human experience on earth and as the written record of those events—is a subject of both interest and importance. We naturally want to know how we came to be who we are, and how the world we live in came to be what it is. But beyond its intrinsic interest, history provides crucial insight into present human behavior. To understand who we are now, we need to know the record of the past and to try to understand the people and forces that shaped it.

For hundreds of thousands of years after the human species emerged, people lived by hunting, fishing, and collecting wild plants. Only some 10,000 years ago did they learn to cultivate plants, herd animals, and make airtight pottery for storage. These discoveries transformed people from gatherers to producers and allowed them to grow in number and to lead a settled life. About 5,000 years ago humans learned how to control the waters of great river valleys, making possible much richer harvests and supporting a further increase in population. The peoples of these river valley societies created the earliest civilizations. They invented writing, which, among other things, enabled them to keep inventories of food and other resources. They discovered the secret of smelting metal to make tools and weapons of bronze far superior to the stone implements of earlier times. They came together in towns and cities, where industry and commerce flourished. Complex religions took form, and social divisions increased. Kings—considered to be representatives of the gods or to be themselves divine—emerged as rulers, assisted by priests and defended by well-organized armies.

The first of these civilizations appeared among the Sumerians before 3500 B.C.E. in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley we call Mesopotamia. From the Sumerians to the Assyrians and Babylonians, a series of peoples ruled Mesopotamia, each shaping and passing along its distinctive culture, before the region fell under the control of great foreign empires. A second early civilization emerged in the Nile Valley around 3100 B.C.E. Egyptian civilization developed a remarkably continuous pattern, in part because Egypt was largely protected from invasion by the formidable deserts surrounding the valley. The essential character of Egyptian civilization changed little for nearly 3,000 years. Influences from other areas, however, especially Nubia to the south, Syria-Palestine to the northeast, and the Aegean to the north, may be seen during many periods of Egyptian history.

By the fourteenth century B.C.E., several powerful empires had arisen and were vying for dominance in regions that included Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor. Northern warrior peoples, such as the Hittites who dominated Asia Minor, conquered and ruled peoples in various areas.

For two centuries, the Hittite and Egyptian empires struggled with each other for control of Syria-Palestine. By about 1200 B.C.E., however, both these empires had collapsed. Beginning about 850 B.C.E., the Assyrians arose in northern Mesopotamia and ultimately established a mighty new empire, even invading Egypt in the early seventh century B.C.E. The Assyrians were dominant until the late seventh century B.C.E., when they fell to a combination of enemies. Their vast empire was overtaken by the Babylonians, but these people, too, would soon become only a small, though important, part of the enormous empire of Persia.

Among all these great empires nestled a people called the Israelites, who maintained a small, independent kingdom in the region between Egypt and Syria for several centuries. This kingdom ultimately fell to the Assyrians and later remained subject to other conquerors. The Israelites possessed little worldly power or wealth, but they created a powerful religion, Judaism, the first certain and lasting worship of a single god in a world of polytheism. Judaism was the seedbed of two other religions that have played a mighty role in the history of the world: Christianity and Islam. The great empires have collapsed, forgotten for millennia until the tools of archaeologists uncovered their remains, but the religion of the Israelites, itself and through its offshoots, has endured as a powerful force.

## 1.1 Early Humans and Their Culture

### How did life in the Neolithic Age differ from the Paleolithic?

Scientists estimate that creatures very much like humans appeared perhaps three to five million years ago, probably in Africa. Some one to two million years ago, erect and tool-using early humans spread throughout much of Africa, Europe, and Asia. Our own species, *Homo sapiens*, meaning “wise man,” probably emerged some 200,000 years ago, and the earliest remains of fully modern humans date to about 90,000 years ago.

Humans, unlike other animals, are cultural beings. **Culture** may be defined as the ways of living built up by a group and passed on from one generation to another. It includes behavior such as courtship or childrearing practices; material things such as tools, clothing, and shelter; and ideas, institutions, and beliefs. Language, apparently a uniquely human trait, lies behind our ability to create ideas and institutions and to transmit culture from one generation to another. Our flexible and dexterous hands enable us to hold and make tools and so to create the material artifacts of culture. Because culture is learned and not inherited, it permits rapid adaptation to changing conditions,

making possible the spread of humanity to almost all the lands of the globe.

### 1.1.1 The Paleolithic Age

Anthropologists designate early human cultures by their tools. The earliest period—the **Paleolithic Age** (from Greek, “old stone”)—dates from the first use of stone tools some one million years ago to about 10000 B.C.E. During this immensely long period, people were hunters, fishers, and gatherers, but not producers, of food. They learned to make and use increasingly sophisticated tools of stone and perishable materials like wood; they learned to make and control fire; and they acquired language and the ability to use it to pass on what they had learned.

These early humans, dependent on nature for food and vulnerable to wild beasts and natural disasters, may have developed responses to a world rooted in fear of the unknown—of the uncertainties of human life or the overpowering forces of nature. Religious and magical beliefs and practices may have emerged in an effort to propitiate or coerce the superhuman forces thought to animate or direct the natural world. Evidence of religious faith and practice, as well as of magic, goes as far back as archaeology can take us. Fear or awe, exaltation, gratitude, and empathy with the natural world must all have figured into the cave art and into the ritual practices, such as burial, that we find at Paleolithic sites around the globe. The sense that there is more to the world than meets the eye—in other words, the religious response to the world—seems to be as old as humankind.



**PALEOLITHIC CAVE PAINTING** Cave paintings discovered in Lascaux in southwestern France in 1940 suggest that early humans had developed beliefs and practices that helped them to understand and control their world. In this Paleolithic painting, a bird-headed man, an arrow at his feet, is surrounded by a bison, a small bird, and the partial outline of another animal.

SOURCE: Glasshouse Images/Alamy Stock Photo

The style of life and the level of technology of the Paleolithic period could support only a sparsely settled society. If hunters were too numerous, game would not suffice. In Paleolithic times, people were subject to the same natural and ecological constraints that today maintain a balance between wolves and deer in Alaska.

Evidence from Paleolithic art and from modern hunter-gatherer societies suggests that human life in the Paleolithic Age was probably characterized by a division of labor by sex. Men engaged in hunting, fishing, making tools and weapons, and fighting against other families, clans, and tribes. Women, less mobile because of childbearing, gathered nuts, berries, and wild grains, wove baskets, and made clothing. Women gathering food probably discovered how to plant and care for seeds. This knowledge eventually made possible the development of agriculture and animal husbandry.

### 1.1.2 The Neolithic Age

Only a few Paleolithic societies made the initial shift from hunting and gathering to agriculture. Some 10,000 years ago parts of what we now call the Near East began to change from a nomadic hunter-gatherer culture to a more settled agricultural one. Because the shift to agriculture coincided with advances in stone tool technology, this period is called the **Neolithic Age** (from Greek, “new stone,” the later period in the Stone Age). Productive animals, such as sheep and goats, and food crops, such as wheat and barley, were first domesticated in the mountain foothills.

Once domestication had taken place, people could move to new areas, such as the river valleys of the Near East. The invention of pottery during the Neolithic Age enabled people to store surplus foods and liquids and to transport them, as well as to cook agricultural products. The invention of the wheel and its use for making pottery made it possible to create bowls and plates more efficiently. Cloth was made from flax and wool. Crops required constant care from planting to harvest, so Neolithic farmers built permanent dwellings. Houses in a Neolithic village were normally all the same size and were built on the same plan, suggesting that most Neolithic villagers had about the same level of wealth and social status. Neolithic villages tended to be self-sufficient.

Two larger Neolithic settlements do not fit this village pattern. One was found at Çatal Höyük, in a fertile agricultural region about 150 miles south of Ankara, the capital of present-day Turkey. This was a large town covering more than fifteen acres, with a population probably well over 6,000 people. The site of Jericho, an oasis around a spring near the Dead Sea, was occupied as early as 12,000 B.C.E. Around 8000 B.C.E., a town of eight to ten acres grew up, surrounded by a massive stone wall with at least one tower against the inner face. The inhabitants of Neolithic Jericho had a mixed agricultural, herding, and hunting economy and may have traded salt. They had no pottery but plastered the skulls of their dead to make realistic memorial portraits of them. Over time, in the regions where agriculture and animal husbandry appeared, the number of human beings grew at an unprecedented rate. One reason for this is that farmers usually had larger families than hunters. When animals and plants were domesticated and brought to the river valleys, the relationship between human beings and nature was changed forever. People had learned to control nature, a vital prerequisite for the emergence of civilization. But farmers had to work harder and longer than hunters did, and they had to stay in one place. Herders, in contrast, often moved from place to place in search of pasture and water, returning to their villages in the spring. Some scholars refer to the dramatic changes in subsistence, settlement, technology, and population of this time as the *Neolithic Revolution*. The earliest Neolithic societies appeared in the Mideast about 8000 B.C.E., in China about 4000 B.C.E., and in India about 3600 B.C.E. Neolithic agriculture was based on wheat and barley in the Mideast, on millet and rice in China, and on corn in Mesoamerica, several millennia later.

### 1.1.3 The Bronze Age and the Birth of Civilization

Neolithic agricultural villages and herding cultures gradually replaced Paleolithic culture in much of the world. Then another major shift occurred, first in the plains along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in the region the Greeks and Romans called **Mesopotamia** (modern Iraq), later in the Nile River valley in Egypt, and somewhat later in India and the Yellow River basin in China. This shift was associated initially with the growth of towns alongside villages, creating a hierarchy of larger and smaller settlements in the same region. Some towns then grew into much larger urban centers and often drew populations to them, so that nearby villages and towns declined. The urban centers, or cities, usually had monumental buildings, such as temples and fortifications. These were vastly larger than individual houses and could be built only by the sustained effort of hundreds and even thousands of people over many years. Elaborate representational artwork appeared, sometimes made of rare and imported materials. New technologies,

such as smelting and the manufacture of metal tools and weapons, were characteristic of urban life. Commodities, like pottery and textiles that had been made in individual houses in villages, were mass produced in cities. Cities were characterized by social stratification; that is, the grouping of people into classes based on factors such as control of resources; family, religious or political authority; and personal wealth. The development of wheeled vehicles helped promote long-distance trade. The earliest writing is also associated with the growth of cities. Writing, like representational art, was a powerful means of communicating over space and time and was probably invented to deal with urban problems of management and record keeping.

These attributes—urbanism; technological, industrial, and social change; long-distance trade; and new methods of symbolic communication—are defining characteristics of the form of human culture called **civilization**. At about the time the earliest civilizations were emerging, someone discovered how to combine tin and copper to make a stronger and more useful material—bronze. Archaeologists coined the term **Bronze Age** to refer to this period.

## 1.2 Early Civilizations to ca. 1000 B.C.E.

### Why did the first cities develop?

By 4000 B.C.E., people had settled in large numbers in the river-watered lowlands of Mesopotamia and Egypt. By about 3000 B.C.E., when the invention of writing gave birth to history, urban life and the organization of society into centralized states were well established in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in Mesopotamia and of the Nile River in Egypt.

Much of the population of cities consists of people who do not grow their own food, so urban life is possible only where farmers and stockbreeders can be made to produce a substantial surplus beyond their own needs. Also, a process has to be in place so this surplus can be collected and redeployed to sustain city dwellers. Efficient farming of plains alongside rivers, moreover, requires intelligent management of water resources for irrigation. In Mesopotamia, irrigation was essential because, in the south (later Babylonia), there was not enough rainfall to sustain crops. Furthermore, the rivers, fed by melting snows in Armenia, rose to flood the fields in the spring, about the time for harvest, when water was not needed. When water was needed for the autumn planting, less was available. This meant that people had to build dikes to keep the rivers from flooding the fields in the spring and had to devise a means to store water for use in the autumn. The Mesopotamians became skilled at that activity early on. In Egypt, however, the Nile River flooded

at the right moment for cultivation, so irrigation was simply a matter of directing the water to the fields. In Mesopotamia, villages, towns, and cities tended to be strung along natural watercourses and, eventually, man-made canal systems. Thus, control of water could be important in warfare because an enemy could cut off water upstream of a city to force it to submit. Since the Mesopotamian plain was flat, branches of the rivers often changed their courses, and people would have to abandon their cities and move to new locations. Large-scale irrigation appeared only long after urban civilization had already developed, so major waterworks were a *consequence* of urbanism, not a cause of it.

## 1.2.1 Mesopotamian Civilization

The first civilization appears to have arisen in Mesopotamia. The region is divided into two ecological zones, roughly north and south of modern Baghdad. In the south (Babylonia), irrigation is vital; in the north (later Assyria), agriculture is possible with rainfall and wells. The south

has high yields from irrigated lands, whereas the north has lower yields, but much more land under cultivation, so it can produce more than the south. The oldest Mesopotamian cities seem to have been founded by a people called the Sumerians during the fourth millennium B.C.E. in the land of Sumer, which is the southern half of Babylonia. By 3000 B.C.E., the Sumerian city of Uruk was the largest city in the world. (See Map 1–1.)

From about 2800 to 2370 B.C.E., in what is called the Early Dynastic period, several Sumerian city-states, independent political units consisting of a major city and its surrounding territory, existed in southern Mesopotamia, arranged in north–south lines along the major watercourses. Among these cities were Uruk, Ur, Nippur, Shuruppak, and Lagash. Some of the city-states formed leagues among themselves that apparently had both political and religious significance. Quarrels over water and agricultural land led to incessant warfare, and in time, stronger towns and leagues conquered weaker ones and expanded to form kingdoms ruling several city-states.

Map 1–1 THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST



There were two ancient river valley civilizations. Egypt was united into a single state, and Mesopotamia was long divided into a number of city-states.

## KEY EVENTS IN MESOPOTAMIAN HISTORY

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| ca. 3500 B.C.E.      | Development of Sumerian cities, especially Uruk         |
| ca. 2800–2370 B.C.E. | Early Dynastic period of Sumerian city-states           |
| ca. 2370 B.C.E.      | Sargon establishes Akkadian dynasty and Akkadian Empire |
| ca. 2125–2027 B.C.E. | Third Dynasty of Ur                                     |
| ca. 2000–1800 B.C.E. | Establishment of Amorites in Mesopotamia                |
| ca. 1792–1750 B.C.E. | Reign of Hammurabi                                      |

Peoples who, unlike the Sumerians, mostly spoke Semitic languages (that is, languages in the same family as Arabic and Hebrew) occupied northern Mesopotamia and Syria. The Sumerian language is not related to any language known today. Many of these Semitic peoples absorbed aspects of Sumerian culture, especially writing. In northern Babylonia, the Mesopotamians believed that the large city of Kish had the first kings in history. Far east of this territory, not far from modern Baghdad, a people known as the Akkadians established their own kingdom at a capital city called Akkade under their first king, Sargon, who had been a servant of the king of Kish.

The Akkadians conquered all the Sumerian city-states and invaded southwestern Iran and northern Syria. This was the first empire in history, with a heartland, provinces, and an absolute ruler. It included numerous peoples, cities, languages, and cultures, as well as different ecological zones, under one rule. Sargon's name became legendary as the first great conqueror of history. His grandson, **Naram-Sin**, ruled from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea, with a standardized administration, unheard-of wealth and power, and a grand style that to later Mesopotamians was a high point of their history. Naram-Sin even declared himself a god and had temples built to himself, something no Sumerian ruler had ever done. External attack and internal weakness eventually destroyed the Akkadian Empire, but several smaller states flourished independently, notably Lagash in Sumer, under its ruler Gudea.

About 2125 B.C.E., the Sumerian city of Ur rose to dominance, and the rulers of the **Third Dynasty of Ur** established an empire built on the foundation of the Akkadian Empire, but far smaller. In this period, Sumerian culture and literature flourished. Epic poems were composed, glorifying the deeds of the ancestors of the kings of Ur. A highly centralized administration kept detailed records of agriculture, animal husbandry, commerce, and other matters. After little more than a century of prominence, however, the kingdom of Ur disintegrated in the face of famine and invasion. From the east, the Elamites attacked the city of Ur and captured the king. From the north and west, a Semitic-speaking people, the Amorites, invaded Mesopotamia in large numbers, settling around the Sumerian cities and eventually founding their own dynasties in some of them, such as at Uruk, Babylon, Isin, and Larsa.

The fall of the Third Dynasty of Ur put an end to Sumerian rule, and the Sumerians gradually disappeared as an identifiable group. The Sumerian language survived only

in writing as the learned language of Babylonia taught in schools and used by priests and scholars. So great was the respect for the Sumerian language that seventeen centuries after the fall of Ur, when Alexander the Great arrived in Babylon in 331 B.C.E., Sumerian was still used as a scholarly and religious language there.

For some time after the fall of Ur, there was relative peace in Babylonia under the Amorite kings of Isin, who used the Sumerian language at their court and considered themselves the successors of the kings of Ur. Eventually, another Amorite dynasty at the city of Larsa contested control of Babylonia, and a period of warfare began, consisting mostly of attacks on strategic points on waterways. A powerful new dynasty at Babylon defeated Isin, Larsa, and other rivals and dominated Mesopotamia for nearly 300 years. Its high point was the reign of its most famous king, **Hammurabi** (r. ca. 1792–1750 B.C.E.), best known today for the collection



**VICTORY STELE OF NARAM-SIN, KING OF AKKAD** This carved stone slab, or stele, commemorates the Akkadian king Naram-Sin's campaign against the Lullubi (c. 2230 B.C.E.), a people living in the northern Zagros Mountains, along the eastern frontier of Mesopotamia. Kings set up monuments like this one in the courtyards of temples to record their deeds. They were also left in remote corners of the empire to warn distant peoples of the death and enslavement awaiting the king's enemies.

SOURCE: Louvre, Paris, France/Bridgeman Images

of laws that bears his name. Hammurabi destroyed the great city of Mari on the Euphrates and created a kingdom embracing most of Mesopotamia.

Collections of laws existed as early as the Third Dynasty of Ur, and Hammurabi's owed much to earlier models and different legal traditions. His collection of laws, now referred to as the Code of Hammurabi, revealed a society divided by class. There were nobles, commoners, and slaves, and the law did not treat all of them equally. In general, punishments were harsh, based literally on the principle of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," whereas Sumerian law often levied fines instead of bodily mutilation or death. Disputes over property and other complaints were heard first by local city assemblies of leading citizens and heads of families. Professional judges heard cases for a fee and held court near the city gate. In Mesopotamian trials, witnesses and written evidence had to be produced and a written verdict issued. False testimony was punishable by death. Sometimes the contesting parties would submit to an oath before the gods, based on the theory that no one would risk swearing a false oath. In cases where evidence or oath could not establish the truth, the contesting parties might take an ordeal, such as being thrown into the river for the god to decide who was telling the truth. Cases of capital punishment could be appealed to the king. Hammurabi was closely involved with the details of his kingdom, and his surviving letters often deal with minor local disputes.

About 1600 B.C.E., the Babylonian kingdom fell apart under the impact of invasions from the north by the Hittites, Hurrians, and Kassites, all non-Mesopotamian peoples.

**1.2.1.1 GOVERNMENT** From the earliest historical records, it is clear the Sumerians were ruled by monarchs in some form. The type of rule varied at different times and places. In later Assyria, for example, the king served as chief priest; in Babylonia, the priesthood was separate from royalty. Royal princesses were sometimes appointed as priestesses of important gods. One of the most famous of these was Enheduanna, daughter of Sargon of Akkad. She is the first author in history whose writings can be identified with a real person. Although she was an Akkadian, she wrote complicated, passionate, and intensely personal poetry in the Sumerian language, in which she tells of important historical events that she experienced. In one passage, she compares the agony of writing a poem to giving birth.

The government and the temples cultivated large areas of land to support their staffs and retinue. Laborers of low social status who were given rations of raw foods and other commodities to sustain them and their families did some of the work on this land. Citizens leased some land for a share of the crop and a cash payment. The government and temples owned large herds of sheep, goats, cattle, and donkeys. The Sumerian city-states exported wool and textiles to buy metals, such as copper, that were not available in Mesopotamia. Families and private individuals often owned their own farmland or houses in the cities, which they bought and sold as they liked.

**1.2.1.2 WRITING AND MATHEMATICS** Government, business, and scholarship required a good system of writing. The Sumerians invented the writing system now known as **cuneiform** (from the Latin *cuneus*, "wedge") because of the wedge-shaped marks made by writing on clay tablets with a cut reed stylus. The Sumerian writing system used several thousand characters, some of which stood for words and some for sounds. Some characters stood for many different sounds or words, and some sounds could be written using a choice of many different characters. The result was a writing system that was difficult to learn. Sumerian students were fond of complaining about their unfair teachers, how hard their schoolwork was, and their too-short vacations. Sumerian and Babylonian schools emphasized language and literature, accounting, legal practice, and mathematics, especially geometry, along with memorization of much abstract knowledge that had no relevance to everyday life. The ability to read and write was restricted to an elite who could afford to go to school. Success in school, however, and factors such as good family connections, meant a literate Sumerian could find employment as a clerk, surveyor, teacher, diplomat, or administrator.

The Sumerians also began the development of mathematics. The earliest Sumerian records suggest that before 3000 B.C.E. people had not yet thought of the concept of "number" independently of counting specific things. Therefore, the earliest writing used different numerals for counting different things, and the numerals had no independent value. (The same sign could be ten or eighteen, for example, depending on what was counted.) Once an independent concept of number was established, mathematics developed rapidly. The Sumerian system was based on the number sixty ("sexagesimal"), rather than the number ten ("decimal"), the system in general use today. Sumerian counting survives in the modern sixty-minute hour and the circle of 360 degrees. By the time of Hammurabi, the Mesopotamians were expert in many types of mathematics, including mathematical astronomy. The calendar the Mesopotamians used had twelve lunar months of thirty days each. To keep the calendar synched with the solar year and the seasons, the Mesopotamians occasionally introduced a thirteenth month.

**1.2.1.3 RELIGION** The Sumerians and their successors worshiped many gods and goddesses. Most of the gods were identified with some natural phenomenon such as the sky, fresh water, or storms. They were visualized in human form, with human needs and weaknesses, but they differed from humans in their greater power, sublime position in the universe, and immortality. The Mesopotamians believed humans were created to serve the gods and to relieve the gods of the necessity of providing for themselves. The gods were considered universal, but also residing in specific places—usually one important god or goddess in each city. Mesopotamian temples were run like great households where the gods were fed lavish meals, entertained with music, and honored with devotion and ritual. There



were gardens for their pleasure and bedrooms to retire to at night. The images of the gods were dressed and adorned with the finest materials. Theologians organized the gods into families and generations. Human social institutions like kingship, or crafts like carpentry, were associated with specific gods, so the boundaries between human and divine society were not always clearly drawn. Because the great gods were visualized as human rulers, remote from the common people and their concerns, the Mesopotamians imagined another, more personal, intercessor god to look after a person, rather like a guardian spirit. The public festivals of the gods were important holidays, with parades, ceremonies, and special foods. People wore their best clothes and celebrated their city and its gods. The Mesopotamians were religiously tolerant and readily accepted the possibility that different people might have different gods.

The Mesopotamians had a vague and gloomy picture of the afterworld. The winged spirits of the dead were recognizable as individuals. They were confined to a dusty, dark netherworld, doomed to perpetual hunger and thirst unless someone offered them food and drink. Some spirits escaped to haunt human beings. There was no preferential

treatment in the afterlife for those who had led religious or virtuous lives—everyone was equally miserable.

Mesopotamian families often had ceremonies to remember and honor their dead. People were usually buried together with goods such as pottery and ornaments. In the Early Dynastic period, certain kings were buried with a large retinue of attendants, including soldiers and musicians, who apparently took poison during the funeral ceremony and were buried where they fell. But this practice soon disappeared. Children were sometimes buried under the floors of houses. Some families used burial vaults; others, large cemeteries. No tombstones or inscriptions identified the deceased. Mesopotamian religion focused on problems of this world and how to lead a good life before dying.

The ancient Mesopotamians also put much thought and effort into discovering signs that they believed would indicate future events, interpreting the meaning of these signs, and taking steps to avert evil. Mesopotamians believed in divination the way many people today put their trust in science. (See the “Encountering the Past” sidebar, which follows below, on divination in ancient Mesopotamia.)

## Encountering the Past

### Divination in Ancient Mesopotamia

**DIVINATION ATTEMPTS TO** foretell the future using magic or occult practices. One of the earliest divination methods the Mesopotamians used involved the sacrifice of sheep and goats. Seers examined the entrails of the sacrificed animals for deformations



#### **MESOPOTAMIAN CLAY HUMBABA DEMON MASK**

In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the oldest surviving work of literature in the world, the grimacing demon Humbaba (also spelled Huwawa) guards a forest of cedars. This clay mask of Humbaba comes from the city of Sippar in southern Iraq and dates from around 1800–1600 B.C.E.

SOURCE: [www.BibleLandPictures.com/](http://www.BibleLandPictures.com/) Alamy Stock Photo

that could foretell the future. Clay tablets recorded particular deformations and the historical events they had foretold. The search for omens in the innards of sacrificial animals was especially important to Mesopotamian kings, who always performed that ceremony before undertaking important affairs of state.

But animal sacrifice was expensive. Most Mesopotamians, therefore, used other devices for divination. They burned incense and examined the shape of the smoke that arose. They poured oil into water and studied the resulting patterns for signs. They found omens in how people answered questions or in what they overheard strangers say. They collected clay tablets—their books—that described people’s appearance and what it might tell them about the future.

The heavens were another source of omens. Astrologers recorded and interpreted the movements of the stars, planets, comets, and other heavenly bodies. Mesopotamia’s great progress in astronomy derived in large part from this practice. The study of dreams and of unusual births, both human and animal, was also important. Troubled dreams and strange offspring had frightening implications for human affairs.

These practices all derived from the belief that the gods sent omens to warn human beings. Once the omens had been interpreted, Mesopotamians sought to avert danger with magic and prayers.

### Questions

1. How did Mesopotamians try to predict the future, and what did they attempt to do about what they learned?
2. How would Mesopotamians explain their great interest in omens?

Religion played a large part in the literature and art of Mesopotamia. Epic poems told of the deeds of the gods, such as how the world was created and organized, of a great flood the gods sent to wipe out humanity, and

of the hero-king Gilgamesh, who tried to escape death by going on a fantastic journey to find the sole survivor of a great flood. (See the “Compare and Connect” sidebar on two ancient stories of great floods.) Religious architecture

## Compare and Connect

### The Great Flood

STORIES OF A GREAT deluge appeared in many cultures at various times in the ancient world. In the Mesopotamian world, the earliest known story of a great flood sent by the gods to destroy mankind appeared in the Sumerian civilization. Later the story was included in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* in a Semitic language. The great flood of Noah’s time appears in the book of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible.



**THE FLOOD TABLET (TABLET XI)** The Flood Tablet, the eleventh tablet in a series that relates the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, describes the meeting of Gilgamesh and Utnapishtim who, along with his wife, survived a great flood that destroyed the rest of humankind.

SOURCE: The Trustees of the British Museum/ Art Resource, NY

### Before Reading

- In the Babylonian story of the flood, notice how Enlil sends the deluge to destroy mankind.
- In the story of the flood from Genesis, think about why God makes a covenant with Noah.

### Questions

1. In what ways is the story from the *Epic of Gilgamesh* similar to the story of Noah in the Hebrew Bible?
2. How is the account of a great flood in the story of Noah different from that in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*?
3. What is the significance of the similarities and differences between the two accounts?

### I. THE BABYLONIAN STORY OF THE FLOOD

*The passage that follows is part of the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh. An earlier independent Babylonian Story of the Flood suggested that the gods sent a flood because there were too many people on the earth. A version of this story was later combined with the Epic of Gilgamesh, a legendary king who became terrified of death when his best friend and companion died. After many adventures, Gilgamesh crossed the distant ocean and the “waters of death” to ask Utnapishtim, who, with his wife, was the only survivor of the great flood, the secret of eternal life. In response, Utnapishtim narrated the story of the great flood to show that his own immortality derived from a onetime event in the past, so Gilgamesh could not share his destiny.*