**River Valley Civilizations**

*Stearns, et al. World Civilizations, p. 18-28*

* Accomplishments of civilizations: writing, formal law codes, city planning, architecture, trade, money
* Middle East as leader in civilized technology
	+ Metal working, agriculture, village structure
* Tigris/Euphrates River Valley: Mesopotamia
	+ 4000 BCE, bronze and copper, the wheel, pottery
	+ 3500 BCE: Sumerians develop cuneiform (wedge-shaped writing using a stylus on clay tablet), 2000 symbols>>>300
		- Scribes master skill
	+ Accomplishments of Sumerians
		- Statues, painted frescoes
		- Science: astronomy defines calendar and provides astrological forecasts used in politics and religion
		- Mathematics: units of 10, 60, 360 still used today in circles/hours
	+ Religious ritual
		- Each city has patron god
		- Shrines of gods
		- Ziggurats
			* Professional priests
		- Multiple deities (polytheism), animism (gods in nature)
			* Gods control aspects of nature, unpredictable (as nature was unpredictable)
			* Prayers and offerings to prevent floods
			* Gods’ creation of the earth from water, divine punishment of humans through flooding (influenced Genesis flood?)
		- Belief of afterlife, punishment (early concept of Hell)
	+ Politics
		- City-State
			* Ruled by king claiming divine authority
			* Carefully-defined boundaries
		- Government regulated religion and enforce duties
		- Provided court system in interests of justice
		- Kings originally military leaders during war
		- Kings and nobility controlled land worked by slaves
			* Slaves Prisoners of War
			* Could earn money to purchase freedom
	+ Sumerian technology
		- Wheeled carts, fertilizer, silver as exchange for goods
	+ Mesopotamia difficult to defend (no natural boundaries)
		- Fall to Akkadians, Babylonians
		- Hammurabi rules Mesopotamia as a Babylonian
			* Code of law “to promote the welfare of the people, I, Hammurabi, the devout, god-fearing prince, cause justice to prevail in the land by destroying the wicked and the evil, that the strong might not oppress the weak.”
			* Established rules of procedure for courts of law and regulated property rights and duties of family members, setting harsh punishment for crimes
		- Invasion of hunting/herding groups
			* Indo-Europeans, 2100 BCE
			* Semitic peoples, language dominates region, 1200-900 BCE
		- After 900 BCE, Assyrians and Persians invade
* Egyptian Civilization
	+ 3000 BCE around Nile River Valley
	+ Instead of separate city-states like Mesopotamia, unified government under Pharaoh
	+ Economy was fully government-directed, independent business class
		- Necessary due to complexity of Nile irrigation?
	+ God-like status for pharaohs
		- Built pyramids as tombs
	+ Culture spreads to Sudan and Kush
	+ Accomplishments
		- Mathematics, art
			* Scenes inside tombs of wealthy and ruling classes depict afterlife
			* Furnishings, servants, animals, food offerings
			* Day divided into 24 hours
* Indian Civilization
	+ Situated along Indus River, 2500 BCE
	+ Several large cities: Harappa, Mohenjo Daro
	+ Houses had running water
	+ Distinctive alphabet (yet to be deciphered)
	+ Infiltration and natural disasters led to demise of culture
* Chinese Civilization
	+ Situated along Huanghe (Yellow) River
	+ Kings hold god-like status due to common ancestor of P’an Ku
		- Organized state existed that regulated irrigation
		- By 2000 BCE, Chinese had advanced technology and elaborate intellectual life
			* Ride horses, skilled in pottery, use of bronze (1000 BCE), iron
			* Writing progressed from scratches on bone and tortoise shell (oracle bones) to ideographic symbols
			* Science: astronomy
	+ Simpler lifestyle
		- Few monuments, simple architecture
			* Homes built of mud
	+ 1500 BCE: Shang Dynasty
		- Invasions decline
* Heritage of River Valley Civilizations
	+ Monuments
		- Egyptian pyramids (wonders of the world)
	+ Technology
		- Wheel, taming of horse, alphabets/writing systems, mathematics (calendars, divisions of time)
	+ Politics
		- Well-organized monarchies, bureaucracies
	+ Most river valleys in decline by 1000 BCE
	+ China
		- Zhou take over after Shang (1000 BCE)
			* Loose coalition of regional lords
	+ Lasting impacts
		- Romans emulate god-like king
		- Strong city-state governments in Middle East
		- Science and mathematics
		- Mesopotamian art, Egyptian architecture influence Greek styles
		- Civilizations in Middle East spread enough to encourage set of smaller cultures capable of surviving after weakening of empires
			* Phoenicians (great Mediterranean traders)
				+ Simplified alphabet (22 characters) around 1300 BCE

Predecessor to Greek/Latin alphabets

* + - * + Improved Egyptian numbering system
			* Jews
				+ First clearly developed monotheistic religion

Single God guided destinies of Jewish people

Priests and prophets emphasized belief of single God

Hebrew Bible (Old Testament)

* + - * + Jewish state with very strict moral code free until domination in 772 BCE, seized by Romans in 63 BCE
				+ Judaism

Basis/origin of Islam and Christianity

God (Yaweh) had special compact with Jews (“Chosen People”)

No premium on conversion

Jews seen as minority

God as less humanlike, more abstract

God has more power, rational than traditional pagan gods

Orderly and just

Individuals knew what to expect if they obeyed Gods rules

Judaism as way of life, not just rituals

* Trade helps to spread cultural values and ideas
	+ Phoenicians trade with Britain in 1000 BCE, spreading ideas about metalworking
	+ Chinese silk reaches Egypt
	+ Rise of civilization leads to reduced local autonomy, kings and priests spread trade contacts/cultural forms, war to gain new territory
* Early civilizations and the world
	+ Mesopotamia: flat, few natural barriers to repel invasion; consider expanding; traders travel throughout the world
	+ Egypt: more self-contained (desert, mountains, Mediterranean); trade along Nile and south with Kush, Sudan, Ethiopia, Crete, Mesopotamia
	+ China: Less contacts with outside world; contact would shape Japan, Korea, Vietnam; manufacture of silk influences international trade; engineering develops irrigation
	+ India (Harappan): quick decline; traded widely with Mesopotamia; extremely vulnerable to natural disasters (monsoons)

*Strayer et al, Ways of the World, p. 84-113*

* Civilization
	+ Possible due to immense productivity of agricultural revolution
	+ Concentration of people into sizable cities (tens of thousands) controlled by states led by leaders who used force to compel obedience
	+ Inequality emerges
		- Due to differences in economic function, skill, wealth, status
	+ Cultural products
		- Pyramids, temples, palaces, sculptures, written literature, complex calendars, class, slavery, patriarchy, large-scale warfare
	+ Civilizations gradually absorbed, overran, displaced people practicing other ways of living
	+ Civilizations emerge between 3500-3000 BCE
	+ Six major civilizations
		- Sumer (the civilization/empire) located in S. Mesopotamia (the region)
			* Cradle of civilization in the Middle East
			* Introduced earliest written language used to record the goods received by temples
		- Egypt
			* Unified territorial state where cities were less prominent (more unified)
		- Peru (3000-1800 BCE)
			* Very little rain, many rivers carrying snowmelt from Andes Mountains
			* App. 25 urban centers in area known as Norte Chico
			* Earthen platform mounds
				+ 60’ tall x 500’ long
			* Public ceremonial structures, stone building with residential apartments
			* Smaller cities than Mesopotamia
			* Less economic specialization
				+ Fishing industry (anchovies/sardines)

Exchanged for cotton (used in fishing nets) and food (squash, beans, guava) grown by inland peoples

* + - * + Did not depend on grain-based agriculture
				+ Did not develop pottery, writing; few pieces of art

5000 year old quipu (series of knotted cords, used in accounting)

A “form” of writing? This may qualify Peruvians as “civilized”

* + - * Lacked walls/fortifications, little evidence of warfare
		- Indian Subcontinent/Indus Valley Civilization
			* Along Indus and Saraswati River Valleys (Pakistan)
			* 2000 BCE
			* Elaborately planned cities
			* Standardized weights, measures, architectural styles (size of bricks)
			* Irrigated agriculture
			* Written language (indecipherable)
			* No palaces, temples, elaborate graves, kings, warrior classes
				+ Little indication of political hierarchy or centralized state!
			* Specialization, coordination, complexity
			* Small republics ruled by priests
			* Environmental impacts
				+ Irrigation increased amount of salt in soil, lowering crop yields
				+ Mud bricks dried in ovens required tons of wood for fuel, leading to deforestation and soil erosion
				+ Leads to abandonment of cities by 1700 BCE
			* Religious ceremony
				+ Ceremonial bathing, ritual burning (seti), yoga, bulls/elephants as symbols, clothing/jewelry
		- China
			* App. 2200 BCE
			* Centralized state beginning in Xia dynasty (2200-1766 BCE)
				+ Wu organizes flood control projects that “mastered waters and made them flow in great channels”
			* Shang (1766-1122 BCE) and Zhou (1122-256 BCE) enlarged Chinese state, erected lavish tombs, buried thousands of human sacrificial victims to accompany them into afterlife
			* Under Zhou, political ideology featured ruler known as Son of Heaven
				+ Intermediary between heaven and earth ruled by Mandate of Heaven as long as he governed with benevolence and maintained social harmony among his people
			* Early Chinese writing
				+ Oracle bones, intended to preduct future, assist rulers in task of governing
		- Olmecs
			* 1200 BCE
			* Coast of Mexico along Gulf of Mexico (Veracruz)
			* Based on agricultural economy of maize, beans, squash
			* Competing chiefdoms
			* Cities become ceremonial centers filled with decorated temples, altars, pyramids, tombs of rulers
				+ 17 colossal basalt heads (20 tons or more)
			* Creation of first written language in Americas? (900 BCE)
			* Mound building, artistic styles, urban planning game playing with rubber ball, ritual sacrifice, bloodletting
* Origins
	+ Civilizations had roots in agricultural revolution
		- Only an agricultural technology allowed human communities to produce enough surplus to support populations and specialized or elite minorities that did not themselves produce food
		- All of the First Civilizations emerged from competing chiefdoms where social ranking/economic specialization had already developed
			* Not all agricultural societies/chiefdoms developed into civilizations, something else was involved
				+ What could the “something else” be?

Need to organize large-scale irrigation projects as stimulus for earliest civilizations

More complex water control systems appeared long after states and civilizations had already been established

Powerful states were useful in protecting privileges of favored groups

Warfare and trade

Growing density of population, producing more congested and competitive societies, especially in areas where rich agricultural land was limited (either by geography or powerful competing societies)

Provided incentives for innovations (irrigation or plows to produce more food) because opportunities for territorial expansion were not available

Circumscribed environments with dense populations generated intense competition among rival groups

Repeated warfare

Advantage: strong, highly organized state

Losers could not flee to new land, absorbed into winner’s society as lower class

Leaders/winners become elite with enlarged base of land, subordinated workers, powerful state (civilization)

* + - Agricultural innovations
			* Irrigation, drainage, terracing, flood control
			* Pottery enhanced productivity of farming (why?)
			* Animal-drawn plows and metalworking increase productivity of farming (why)
			* Ritual sacrifice accompanied growth of civilization, rulers serving as high priests or divine beings
* Urban Revolution
	+ Cities
		- All major civilizations had them
		- Political/administrative capitals
		- Centers for production of culture (art, architecture, literature, ritual, ceremony)
		- Market places
		- House manufacturing activity
		- Impersonal society
		- Relationships of class and occupation as important as kinship and village loyalty (specialization and inequality)
	+ Specific cities
		- Uruk (Mesopotamia) in 2000-3000 BCE
			* Walls 20+ feet tall
			* Population around 50,000
			* Ziggurat at city center topped by temple
			* Other temples throughout used for ceremony and food distribution
			* Craftspeople (masons, copper workers, weavers) and bureaucrats
		- Mohenjo Daro (IRV) in 2000-3000 BCE
			* Population of 40,000
			* Large, richly built houses of 2-3 stories with indoor plumbing, luxurious bathrooms, private wells
			* Streets laid in grid pattern with underground sewage
			* Workers live in standardized two-room houses
			* Public buildings (public baths)
			* Citadel surrounded by brick wall 45’ high
		- Teotihuacan (Olmecs) in 1000-2000 BCE
			* 200,000 people
			* Broad avenues, dozens of temples, two huge pyramids, stone carvings, bright frescoes
			* Small apartments for ordinary, palatial homes for wealthy
			* 350 workshops for specialized workers
			* Multiple compounds surrounded by wall and housing individual lineages
			* Special neighborhood for Mayan merchants
* Hierarchies of Class
	+ Vast inequalities in wealth, status, and power
	+ Wealth increases as ingenuity and technology increase
	+ Social hierarchy is intensified with the creation of cities
		- Why???
			* Egalitarian values of earlier cultures were displaced
	+ Inequality and hierarchy eventually became regarded as normal and natural
	+ Upper classes=great wealth in land/salaries, avoid physical labor, finest of everything, occupied top positions in political, military, religious life
		- Distinguished by clothing, houses, manner of burial
			* Chinese: special clothing, banners, chariots, weapons, ornaments
				+ Graded according to officials’ precise location in hierarchy
	+ Mesopotamia: punishments from Hammurabi’s Code based on social status
	+ Free commoners=majority of population, including artisans, lower-level officials, soldiers/police, servants, farmers
		- Farming surplus production supported upper class through taxes, rents, required labor, tribute payments
		- Commoners resented forced extractions and positions of upper classes
		- Chinese: commoners rented/worked land from royal/aristocratic landowners who exploited
	+ Slaves=bottom of hierarchy
		- Female slaves: large-scale semi-industrial weaving
		- Males: maintained irrigation canals, constructed temples/ziggurats, domestic servants
		- Derived from prisoners of war, criminals, debtors
		- Available for sale and/or ritual sacrifice
		- Egypt/IRV had much less than Mesopotamia (highly militarized)
		- Children of slaves could become free
		- ***NOT ASSOCIATED WITH BLACKNESS OR AFRICA***
* Hierarchies of Gender
	+ Gender equality generally found in cultures that focused on early horticulture (usage of hoe or digging stick)
		- Why???
			* Women involved in agricultural labor which generated most of the food supply
			* Women also engaged in activities “compatible with their roles as mothers”: weaving, spinning, pottery making
			* These activities gave women respect and gender equality with men
		- Gender equality reflected through figurines, masks, signs, symbols, myths that feature women/female as prominent figure and themes (birth, growth, death, regeneration)
	+ Patriarchy: male-controlled society
		- ***What was it about civilization that seemed to generate patriarchy???***
			* New and more intensive form of agriculture, usage of animal-drawn plows and keeping/milking of large herds of animals
			* Heavier work/labor
			* Work is less compatible with childbearing of women
				+ More food=women more often pregnant, needing to take care of children instead of heavy labor
		- *However*, patriarchy will develop in regions untouched by plow agriculture. ***So what is going on???***
			* Growth of social complexity in civilizations as economic, religious, political specialists become more prominent
				+ Men less important in the household, more available to assume powerful/prestigious “specialist” roles in the community

Able to shape values/practices of societies in ways that benefitted themselves, hindered women

* + - * Warfare
				+ Large-scale military conflict with professionally led armies
				+ Women were first prisoners of war before men

Why?

* + - * + Military services restricted to men, enhanced power and prestige of male warrior class
			* Commerce
				+ Private property and trade
				+ Buying and selling associated with commerce applied to male rights over women, as female slaves, concubines, wives exchanged among men
				+ ***Why was trade a male-dominated profession??***

Women had to stay at home to raise children

* + - ***How did Mesopotamian and Egyptian patriarchy differ from each other?***
			* Mesopotamia: written codified laws enforced patriarchal life that allowed women paternalistic protection, insisting submission to unquestioned authority of men
				+ Regulation of female sexuality

Woman caught sleeping with another man would be drowned at husband’s discretion

Man could enjoy sexual relation with female servants, not another man’s wife

Divorce unheard of for women, easy for man

Rape was serious offence, but victimized party was woman’s husband or father, not violated woman

* + - * + Division of categories of women

Respectable women

Still dependent on husbands

Under protection and sexual control of one man

Required to be veiled outside home (Why???)

Nonrespectable women

Slaves and prostitutes

Forbidden to wear veils

Subject to severe punishment if presumed to cover their heads

Who set up these rules? Why???

* + - * + Ceremony

Goddesses relegated to home

Replaced by dominant male deities

Power of creation and fertility, viewed as patrons of wisdom/learning

Culmination: Jewish Yahweh, alone undertakes creation without female goddess

* + - * Egypt allowed women greater opportunities
				+ Women legal equals to men

Able to own property and slaves, administer and sell land, make own wills, sign marriage contracts, initiate divorce

* + - * + Royal women held political power, acted as regents to young sons

Hatsepsut, female pharaoh

Still portrayed in statuary as a man (male clothing, false beard of pharaoh)

* + - * + Marriages arranged by parents, but some evidence of love
* Rise of the State
	+ States organized around particular cities or larger territories led by kings who employed numerous ranked officials, controlled society, defended state from external enemies
	+ In order to coordinate and regulate the community in cities or densely populated areas, authority was needed
		- Someone was needed to organize irrigation, adjudicate conflicts, defend city or territory
			* State solves these problems
			* Required voluntary support from population
	+ State power benefitted some over others
		- Power protected privileges of upper classes
		- Required farmers to give up portion of produce to support city dwellers
		- Demanded work on large public projects (pyramids, fortifications)
		- When necessary, able to use force to coerce compliance
	+ Force not always necessary
		- Generation of ideas suggesting that state authority, class, gender inequalities were normal, natural, god-ordained
		- Kingship associated with gods
			* Chinese: Son of Heaven alone can perform rituals/sacrifices to keep cosmos in balance
			* Mesopotamia: kings are stewards/patrons of cities’ gods
			* Egypt: pharaohs held divine qualities, claimed to embody all major gods of Egypt, supernatural power ensured regular flooding of Nile and defeat of enemies
	+ Deities used to maintain order by kings
		- Hammurabi: law inspired by god Marduk, to “bring about the rule of righteousness in the land, to destroy the wicked and evil-doers; so that the strong should not harm the weak.”
			* Was Hammurabi a “good guy” who cared about the “weak”? Why/how do you know?
		- Urukagina (later Mesopotamian ruler): authority from city’s patron god for reforms aimed at ending corruption and tyranny of previous ruler
		- China during Zhou dynasty: Mandate of Heaven (rulers removed due to bad behavior)
	+ Writing and Accounting
		- Seen as a gift from the gods, sometimes as magical or supernatural
		- Literacy defined elite status, conveyed enormous prestige to those who possessed it
		- Provided a means for some commoners to join the “circle of the literate”
		- Writing as propaganda celebrating “great deeds of the king”
		- Writing as accounting function
			* Who paid taxes, owed what to the temple, how much workers had earned
			* Strengthened bureaucracy
		- Calendars indicated when rituals should be performed
		- Gave weight and specificity to orders, regulations, laws
			* Hammurabi’s Code made clear fundamental distinctions divided men and women, separated slaves, commoners, people of higher rank
		- Gave rise to literature and philosophy, astronomy and mathematics, history
			* Can lead to problems
				+ China’s Qin Shihuangdi (221-210 BCE) buried 460 scholars alive and burned books when they tried to unite China’s states “against him”
	+ Grandeur of Kings
		- Lavish lifestyle of elites, impressive rituals, imposing structures
		- Royals/government officials and families lived in luxurious palaces, dressed in splendid clothing, wore loveliest jewelry, endless servants
		- Elaborate burials (pyramids), high status funerals, human sacrifice (servants for the afterlife)
		- Palaces, temples, ziggurats, pyramids, statues
			* Olmec heads (represent specific rulers?)
* Comparing Mesopotamia and Egypt
	+ Common features across “first civilizations”
		- Productive agricultural technology, city living, immense class inequalities, patriarchy, emerging power of states
	+ Features of civilizations change over time
	+ Civilizations did not exist in isolation
		- Networks of interactions with near and distant neighbors
	+ Environment and culture
		- Both civilizations located in river valleys and depended on them to sustain agriculture in otherwise arid lands
		- Rivers are radically different
			* Nile: rose predictably each year to bring silt (soil) that nurtured agriculture
			* Tigris/Euphrates: rose annually but unpredictably and fitfully, breaking man’s dikes and submerging his crops
		- Physical environment
			* Egypt: surrounded by mountains, cataracts, Mediterranean, deserts (natural barriers)
			* Mesopotamia: dry, arid, but otherwise flat (prone to invasion)
		- ***Does physical environment shape the human cultures that develop within it?***
			* Mesopotamia: outlook on life viewed humankind as caught in inherently disorderly world, subject to whims of capricious and quarreling gods, facing death without hope for pleasant afterlife
				+ “I have prayed to the gods and sacrificed, but who can understand the gods in heaven? Who knows what they plan for us? Who has ever been able to understand a god’s conduct?”
				+ ***How might this be a result of the environment???***
			* Egypt: cheerful and hopeful outlook on the world, rebirth of the sun daily and river annually (with the floods)
				+ Life will prevail over death, so pyramids and elaborate tombs must be constructed (afterlife)

Only rewarded if they followed proper procedures and lived morally upright life

Weigh feather to man’s heart

* + - How did Mesopotamia and Egypt impact the environment?
			* Sumer: Deforestation, soil erosion decrease crop yields 65% between 2400-1700 BCE, salinization of soil caused by intensive irrigation
				+ Wheat is replaced by barley, more tolerant of salty conditions
				+ Deforestation means less natural resources, more prone to invasion, civilization moves more north
			* Egypt: less intrusive irrigation using the natural flow of the Nile, emphasis on wheat production, depended on regular flow and flooding of Nile
				+ Causes sustainable agricultural system, lasting thousands of years
				+ When drought occurred, it was unexpected, led to severe famine and uprisings
	+ Cities and States
		- Mesopotamia
			* Organized into 12+ city states
				+ Controlled by king, claiming to represent city’s patron deity, controlled affairs of walled city and surrounding rural area
				+ 80% of population lived in city-states
				+ Frequent warfare among city-states caused people living in rural areas to flee to walled cities for protection
				+ No overarching authority caused rivalry over land and water to lead to violent conflict
			* Combined with conflict and environmental devastation, Sumer was vulnerable to outside forces (Akkadians, 2350-2000 BCE; Babylonians, 1900-1500 BCE; Assyrians, 900-612 BCE)
				+ Invaders combined city states to larger territorial states or empires that encompassed most/all of Mesopotamia

Unity, but imposed from outside

* + - Egypt
			* Began app. 3100 BCE as merger of earlier states/chiefdoms
			* Maintained unity/independence
			* Wind patterns makes it easy to sail south along Nile (current flows south>>north)
				+ Facilitates communication, exchange, unity, stability
			* Cities less important individually
				+ Capitals, market centers, burial sites give Egypt urban presence
			* Most live in agricultural villages along river rather than cities
				+ Fortification not required as Egypt is safe and geographically isolated
			* Pharaoh
				+ Power diminishes in 2400 BCE

Local officials and nobles who had own land could pass position onto sons and gained more authority

Changes in weather=Nile’s failure to flood properly (2200 BCE)=authority of pharaoh discredited

* + Interaction and Exchange (Cultural Diffusion)
		- ***In what ways were Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations shaped by their interactions with near and distant neighbors?***
		- Mesopotamia and Egypt interacted frequently with each other and their neighbors
		- Civilizations were embedded in larger networks of commerce, culture, and power
		- Agriculture drew upon wheat and barley
			* Reached Egypt from Mesopotamia
				+ Gourds, watermelon, donkeys, cattle from Sudan to Egypt
		- Pyramids and writing system of Egypt derived from Mesopotamian ziggurats and cuneiform?
		- Divine kingship from Sudan?
			* Small-scale agricultural communities viewed rulers as sacred and buried them with servants and officials
				+ Sound familiar (Egypt)?
		- Egypt takes things from other civilizations and creates something distinct and unique
		- Long-distance trade
			* Mesopotamia
				+ Sumerian merchants established seaborne contact with IRV (2300 BCE)
				+ Trade routes connect Sumer with Anatolia, Egypt, Iran, Afghanistan
				+ “In those days the dwellings of Agade were filled with gold, its bright-shining houses were filled with silver, into its granaries were brought copper, tin, slabs of lapis lazuli, its silos bulged at the sides…its quay where the boats docked were all bustle…” (all came from far away)
			* Egypt
				+ Trade extended into the Mediterranean, Middle East, Africa (Nubia, Punt)
		- With trade went cultural influence (cultural diffusion)
			* Hebrews
				+ Migrated from Mesopotamia to Palestine and Egypt
				+ Held “eye for an eye” laws of Mesopotamia, flood story
				+ However, held awareness of merciful, single deity, Yahweh, demanded ethical life
			* Phoenicians
				+ Influenced by Mesopotamia
				+ Adopted fertility goddess, Ishtar and renamed Astarte
				+ Adapted Sumerian cuneiform to easier alphabetic system

Basis for Greek/Latin writing

* + - * Indo-European peoples
				+ Adopted Sumerian deities, bronze metallurgy, the wheel
			* Nubia
				+ Subject to periodic military intervention/political control by Egypt
				+ Nubian archers recruited for service as mercenaries in Egyptian armies

Married Egyptian women, buried in Egyptian style

* + - * + Building of Egyptian style pyramids, worship of Egyptian gods/goddesses, usage of Egyptian hieroglyphics
				+ Still remains distinct civilization

Adopts own alphabetic script

Retains own gods

Developed ironworking industry

* + - * Minoans
				+ Emerges on island of Crete, 2500 BCE
				+ Greek culture inspired by Egyptian and Mesopotamian precedents?

Why would this be controversial??

Afro-Asian origins

* + - * Mesopotamia and Egypt
				+ Domesticated horses
				+ Chariots, wheeled carts pulled by horses
				+ New armor, bows, daggers, swords
				+ New methods of spinning, weaving
				+ New instruments
				+ Olive, pomegranate trees
		- Spread of empire
			* Egypt becomes imperial by 1500 BCE
				+ Spans Africa and Asia
				+ Eventually includes Babylonians and Assyrians
* ***Are the first civilizations truly “civilized”???***
	+ Civilization has an implication of superiority
		- Suggests higher refined behavior, higher form of society, unreservedly positive
		- Opposite of civilized is barbarian, savage
			* Understood as an insult implying inferiority
			* People who are civilized view those outside their civilization as uncivilized (hence inferior)
		- Civilizations have inspiring art, profound reflections on meaning of life, more technology, increased control over nature, writing
		- However, massive inequality, state oppression, slavery, warfare, subordination of women, epidemic disease, discontent, rebellion, escape
	+ Civilization evokes solidity, civilizations represent distinct, widely shared identities with clear boundaries that mark off from other units
		- Unlikely that people of the “first civilizations” felt united or part of shared culture
			* Rather local identities instead of empirical or state identities
	+ In terms of this course, regard civilization in this way: purely descriptive term, designating particular type of society with cities and states, does not imply any judgment or assessment, any sense of superiority or inferiority, using to define broad cultural patterns in particular geographic regions even though many people living in regions have been more aware of differences and conflicts than commonalities