



**Muslim Pilgrims on the Way to Mecca** The most enduring legacies of ancient civilizations lay in their religious or cultural traditions. Islam is among the most recent of those traditions. The pilgrimage to Mecca, known as the *hajj*, has long been a central religious ritual in the Muslim world. It also

reflects the cosmopolitan character of Islam, as pilgrims from all over the vast Islamic realm assemble in the city where the faith was born. This painting, dating to 1237, shows a group of joyful pilgrims, led by a band, on their way to Mecca.

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## CHAPTER

# 1

# Before 1200: Patterns in World History

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#### Interactions and Encounters

#### Reflections: Religion and Historians

In September of 2009, Kong Dejun returned to China from her home in Great Britain. The occasion was a birthday celebration for her ancient ancestor Kong Fuzi, or Confucius, born 2,560 years earlier. Together with some 10,000 other people—descendants, scholars, government officials, and foreign representatives—Kong Dejun attended ceremonies at the Confucian Temple in Qufu, the hometown of China's famous sage. "I was touched to see my ancestor being revered by people from different countries and nations," she said.<sup>1</sup> What made this celebration remarkable was that it took place in a country still ruled by the Communist Party, which had long devoted enormous efforts to discrediting Confucius and his teachings. In the communist outlook, Confucianism was associated with class inequality, patriarchy, feudalism, superstition, and all things old and backward. But the country's ancient teacher and philosopher had apparently outlasted modern communism, for now the Communist Party has claimed Confucius as a national treasure and has established over 300 Confucian Institutes to study his writings. He appears in TV shows and movies, and many anxious parents offer prayers at Confucian temples when their children are taking the national college entrance exams. Buddhism and Daoism (DOW-i'zm) have also experienced something of a revival in China, as thousands of temples, destroyed during the heyday of communism, have been repaired and reopened. Christianity too has grown rapidly since the 1970s. ■

#### « AP Analyzing Evidence

What clues does this image provide about the Islamic practice of pilgrimage?

Here are reminders, in a Chinese context, of the continuing appeal of cultural traditions forged long

ago. Those ancient traditions and the civilizations in which they were born provide a link between the world of 1200–1450 and all that came before it. This chapter seeks to ease us into the stream of world history after 1200 by looking briefly at several major turning points in the human story that preceded it. These include the breakthrough to agriculture, the rise of those distinctive societies called civilizations, the making of the major cultural or religious traditions that accompanied those civilizations, and the broad patterns of interaction among the peoples of the ancient world.

## From the Paleolithic Era to the Age of Agriculture

*Homo sapiens*, human beings essentially similar to ourselves, emerged around 300,000 years ago, almost certainly in Africa. Then somewhere between 100,000 and 60,000 years ago, our species began its long journey out of Africa and into Eurasia, Australia, the Americas, and much later the islands of the Pacific. The last phase of that epic journey came to an end around 1200, when the first humans occupied what is now New Zealand. By then, every major landmass, except Antarctica, had acquired a human presence.

With the exception of those who settled the islands of Pacific Oceania, all of this grand process had been undertaken by people practicing a gathering and hunting way of life and assisted only by stone tools. Thus human history begins with what scholars call the **Paleolithic era** or the Old Stone Age, which represents over 95 percent of the time that humans have occupied the planet. During these many centuries and millennia, humankind sustained itself by foraging: gathering wild foods, scavenging dead animals, hunting live animals, and fishing.

### AP<sup>®</sup> Causation

In what ways did a gathering and hunting economy shape other aspects of Paleolithic societies?

In their long journeys across the earth, Paleolithic people created a multitude of separate and distinct societies, each with its own history, culture, language, identity, stories, and rituals. Their societies were small, organized as bands of perhaps twenty-five to fifty people in which all relationships were intensely personal and normally understood in terms of kinship. Such small-scale societies were seasonally mobile or nomadic, moving frequently and in regular patterns to exploit the resources of wild plants and animals on which they depended. These societies were also highly egalitarian, lacking the many inequalities of class and gender that emerged later with agriculture and urban life. Life expectancy was low, probably less than thirty-five years on average, and population growth was very slow. But cultural creativity was much in evidence, reflected in numerous technological innovations, in sophisticated oral traditions such as the Dreamtime stories of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, and in cave paintings and sculptures found in many places around the world.

What followed was the most fundamental transformation in all of human history, known to us as the Agricultural Revolution, sometimes called the Neolithic or New Stone Age Revolution. Between 12,000 and 4,000 years ago, this momentous process unfolded separately in Asia, Africa, and the Americas alike.



# Cultural Landmarks before 1200

600 B.C.E. 300 B.C.E. 1 C.E. 300 C.E. 600 C.E. 900 C.E. 1200 C.E. 1500 C.E.

## THE EAST ASIAN WORLD: CONFUCIANISM AND DAOISM

6th–5th centuries B.C.E. Life of Confucius

6th–3rd centuries B.C.E. Lives of Laozi and Zhuangzi

ca. 206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.

Han dynasty establishes Confucianism as official state ideology

111 B.C.E.–939 C.E.

Confucianism takes root in Vietnam under Chinese rule

4th–11th centuries C.E.

Confucianism takes root in Korea

7th century C.E.

Shotoku establishes Confucianism in Japan

960–1279 C.E.

Neo-Confucianism flourishes in Song dynasty China

## THE SOUTH ASIAN WORLD: HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM

800–400 B.C.E. Hindu Upanishads compiled

ca. 566–486 B.C.E. Life of Buddha

100–300 C.E. Mahayana Buddhism emerges

100–800 C.E.

Buddhism established in China

ca. 300 C.E. Bhagavad Gita compiled in final form

600–1200 C.E.

Buddhism and Hinduism take root in Southeast Asia

600–1300 C.E.

Bhakti movement takes shape in India

1000 C.E.

Buddhism largely disappears within India

12th century C.E.

Emergence of Zen Buddhism in Japan

## THE MIDDLE EASTERN WORLD

9th–6th centuries B.C.E. Jewish prophets (Isaiah, Amos, Jeremiah)

ca. 4 B.C.E.–29 C.E. Life of Jesus

ca. 6–67 C.E. Life of Saint Paul

4th century C.E.

Christianity established as state religion in Roman Empire, Armenia, and Axum

570–632 C.E. Life of Muhammad

7th century C.E.

Emergence of Sunni/Shia split in Islam

750–900 C.E.

Islam established in Persia

800–1000 C.E.

Beginnings of Sufi Islam

1054 C.E.

Deepening divide between Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christianity

### Contemporary Gathering and Hunting Peoples: The San of Southern Africa

A very small number of gathering and hunting peoples have maintained their ancient way of life into the twenty-first century. Here two young men from the Jul'hoan !Kung San of southern Africa set a trap for small animals in 2009. (robertharding/Alamy)

#### AP Analyzing Evidence

How does this image provide evidence for the gender roles that might have existed in Paleolithic societies?



#### AP Causation

Why did some Paleolithic peoples abandon earlier, more nomadic ways and begin to live a more settled life?

#### AP Causation

What was it about the Agricultural Revolution that made possible these new forms of human society?

It meant the deliberate cultivation of particular plants as well as the taming and breeding of particular animals. Thus a whole new way of life gradually replaced the earlier practices of gathering and hunting in most parts of the world, so that by the early twenty-first century only miniscule groups of people followed that ancient way of living. Although it took place over centuries and millennia, the coming of agriculture represented a genuinely revolutionary transformation of human life all across the planet and provided the foundation for almost everything that followed: growing populations, settled villages, animal-borne diseases, an explosion of technological innovation, horse-drawn chariot warfare, cities, states, empires, civilizations, writing, literature, and much more (see Snapshot: Continental Populations in World History, 400 B.C.E.–2017, page 11).

The resources generated by the Agricultural Revolution opened up vast new possibilities for the construction of human societies, but they led to no single or common outcome. Rather, several distinct kinds of societies emerged early on in the age of agriculture, all of which have endured into modern times.

In areas where farming was difficult or impossible—arctic tundra, certain grasslands, and deserts—some people came to depend far more extensively on their domesticated animals, such as sheep, goats, cattle, horses, camels, or reindeer. Those animals could turn grass or waste products into meat, fiber, hides, and milk; they were useful for transport and warfare; and they could walk to market. People who depended on such animals—known as herders, nomads, or **pastoral societies**—emerged most prominently in Central Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, the Sahara, and parts of eastern and southern Africa. What they had in common was



## SNAPSHOT Continental Populations in World History: 400 B.C.E.–2017

Human numbers matter! This chart shows population variations among the major continental land masses and their changes over long periods of time. (Note: Population figures for such early times are merely estimates and are often controversial among scholars. Percentages do not always total 100 percent due to rounding.)

	Eurasia	Africa	North America	Central/South America	Australia/Oceania	Total World
Area (in square miles and as percentage of world total)						
	21,049,000 (41%)	11,608,000 (22%)	9,365,000 (18%)	6,880,000 (13%)	2,968,000 (6%)	51,870,000
Population (in millions and as percentage of world total)						
400 B.C.E.	127 (83%)	17 (11%)	1 (0.7%)	7 (5%)	1 (0.7%)	153
10 C.E.	213 (85%)	26 (10%)	2 (0.8%)	10 (4%)	1 (0.4%)	252
200 C.E.	215 (84%)	30 (12%)	2 (0.8%)	9 (4%)	1 (0.4%)	257
600 C.E.	167 (80%)	24 (12%)	2 (1%)	14 (7%)	1 (0.5%)	208
1000 C.E.	195 (77%)	39 (15%)	2 (0.8%)	16 (6%)	1 (0.4%)	253
1500	329 (69%)	113 (24%)	4.5 (0.9%)	53 (11%)	3 (0.6%)	477
1750	646 (83%)	104 (13%)	3 (0.4%)	15 (1.9%)	3 (0.4%)	771
2017	5,246 (69.5%)	1,256 (16.6%)	361 (4.8%)	646 (8.6%)	40 (0.5%)	7,549

Source: Population figures through 1750 are taken from Paul Adams et al., *Experiencing World History* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 334; 2017 figures derive from "World Population by Region," Worldometers, <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/#region>. Accessed December 8, 2017.

mobility, for they moved seasonally as they followed the changing patterns of the vegetation that their animals needed to eat. Except for a few small pockets of the Andes where domesticated llamas and alpacas made pastoral life possible, no such societies emerged in the Americas because most animals able to be domesticated simply did not exist in the Western Hemisphere.

The relationship between nomadic herders and their farming neighbors has been one of the enduring themes of Afro-Eurasian history. Frequently, it was a relationship of conflict, as pastoral peoples, unable to produce their own agricultural products, were attracted to the wealth and sophistication of agrarian societies and sought access to their richer grazing lands as well as their food crops and manufactured products. But not all was conflict between pastoral and farming peoples. The more

### AP® Continuity and Change

How does this chart show continuities over time in the distribution of population across the world?

### AP® EXAM TIP

Be able to define and describe the processes of demographic change throughout world history.

### AP® Causation

What impact did animal husbandry have on agricultural societies?

**AP® Comparison**

How did the various kinds of societies that emerged out of the Agricultural Revolution differ from one another?

peaceful exchange of technologies, ideas, products, and people between pastoral and agricultural societies also enriched and changed both sides. In the thirteenth century, this kind of relationship between pastoral and agricultural societies found a dramatic expression in the making of the Mongol Empire, described in Chapter 4.

Another kind of society to emerge from the Agricultural Revolution was that of permanently settled farming villages. They retained much of the social and gender equality of gathering and hunting communities, as they continued to do without kings, chiefs, bureaucrats, or aristocracies. Many village-based agricultural societies flourished well into the modern era in Eurasia, Africa, and the Americas, usually organizing themselves in terms of kinship groups or lineages, which incorporated large numbers of people well beyond the immediate or extended family. Given the frequent oppressiveness of organized political power in human history, agricultural village societies represent an intriguing alternative to the states, kingdoms, and empires so often highlighted in the historical record. They pioneered the human settlement of vast areas; adapted to a variety of environments; maintained a substantial degree of social and gender equality; created numerous cultural, artistic, and religious traditions; and interacted continuously with their neighbors.

In some places, agricultural village societies came to be organized politically as **chiefdoms**, in which inherited positions of power and privilege introduced a more distinct element of inequality, but unlike later kings, chiefs or “big men” could seldom use force to compel the obedience of their subjects. Instead, chiefs relied on their generosity or gift giving, their ritual status, or their personal charisma to persuade their followers. Chiefdoms emerged in all parts of the world, and the more recent ones have been much studied by anthropologists. For example, chiefdoms flourished everywhere in the Pacific islands, which had been colonized by agricultural Polynesian peoples. Chiefs usually derived from a senior lineage, tracing their descent to the first son of an imagined ancestor. With both religious and secular functions, chiefs led important rituals and ceremonies, organized the community for warfare, directed its economic life, and sought to resolve internal conflicts. They collected tribute from commoners in the form of food, manufactured goods, and raw materials. These items in turn were redistributed to warriors, craftsmen, religious specialists, and other subordinates, while chiefs kept enough to maintain their prestigious positions and imposing lifestyle. In North America as well, a remarkable series of chiefdoms emerged in the eastern woodlands, where an extensive array of large earthen mounds testifies to the organizational capacity of these early societies. The largest of these chiefdoms, known as Cahokia, which was located near modern St. Louis, flourished around 1200 C.E.

**AP® Causation**

What was revolutionary about the Agricultural Revolution?

## Civilizations

Far and away the most significant outcome of the Agricultural Revolution was the emergence of those distinctive and more complex societies that we know as civilizations. The earliest civilizations emerged in Mesopotamia (what is now Iraq),



in Egypt, and along the central coast of Peru between 3500 to 3000 B.C.E. At the time, these First Civilizations were small islands of innovation in a sea of people living in much older ways. But over the next 4,000 years, this way of living spread globally, taking hold all across the planet—in India and China; in Western, Central, and Southeast Asia; in various parts of Europe; in the highlands of Ethiopia, along the East African coast, and in the West African interior; in Mesoamerica; and in the Andes Mountains. Over the many centuries of the agricultural era, particular civilizations rose, expanded, changed, and sometimes collapsed and disappeared. But as a style of human life, civilization persisted and became a global phenomenon. By 1200, a considerable majority of humankind lived in one or another of these civilizations (see Map 1.1).

## Defining Civilizations

As historians use the term, “civilization” refers to societies based in cities and governed by states. They were the product of the age of agriculture, for only a highly productive agricultural economy could support a society in which substantial numbers of people did not produce their own food. Thus civilizations marked an enormous change from the small bands of Paleolithic peoples or the villages of farming communities.

Although most people in the First Civilizations remained in rural areas, sizable cities were a central feature. Those cities served as political and administrative capitals; they functioned as cultural hubs, generating works of art, architecture, literature, ritual, and ceremony; they acted as marketplaces for both local and long-distance trade; and they housed major manufacturing enterprises. In the ancient Mesopotamian poem called the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, dating to about 2000 B.C.E., the author describes the city of Uruk:

Come then . . . to ramparted Uruk, / Where fellows are resplendent in holiday clothing, / Where every day is set for celebration, / Where harps and drums are played. And the harlots too, they are fairest of form, / Rich in beauty, full of delights, / Even the great gods are kept from sleeping at night.<sup>2</sup>

Civilizations also generated states, governing structures organized around particular cities or territories that were usually headed by kings, who employed a variety of ranked officials and could use force to compel obedience. The ancient Hebrew prophet Samuel described to his people the “way of the king”:

He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses. . . . He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves. . . . Your male and female servants and the best of your cattle and donkeys he will take for his own use. He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves.<sup>3</sup>

### AP® Contextualization

Why might the Eastern Hemisphere have a larger number of the First Civilizations than the Western Hemisphere?

### AP® EXAM TIP

Knowledge of maps throughout world history is critical. Be sure you know how to read maps and understand what they convey.

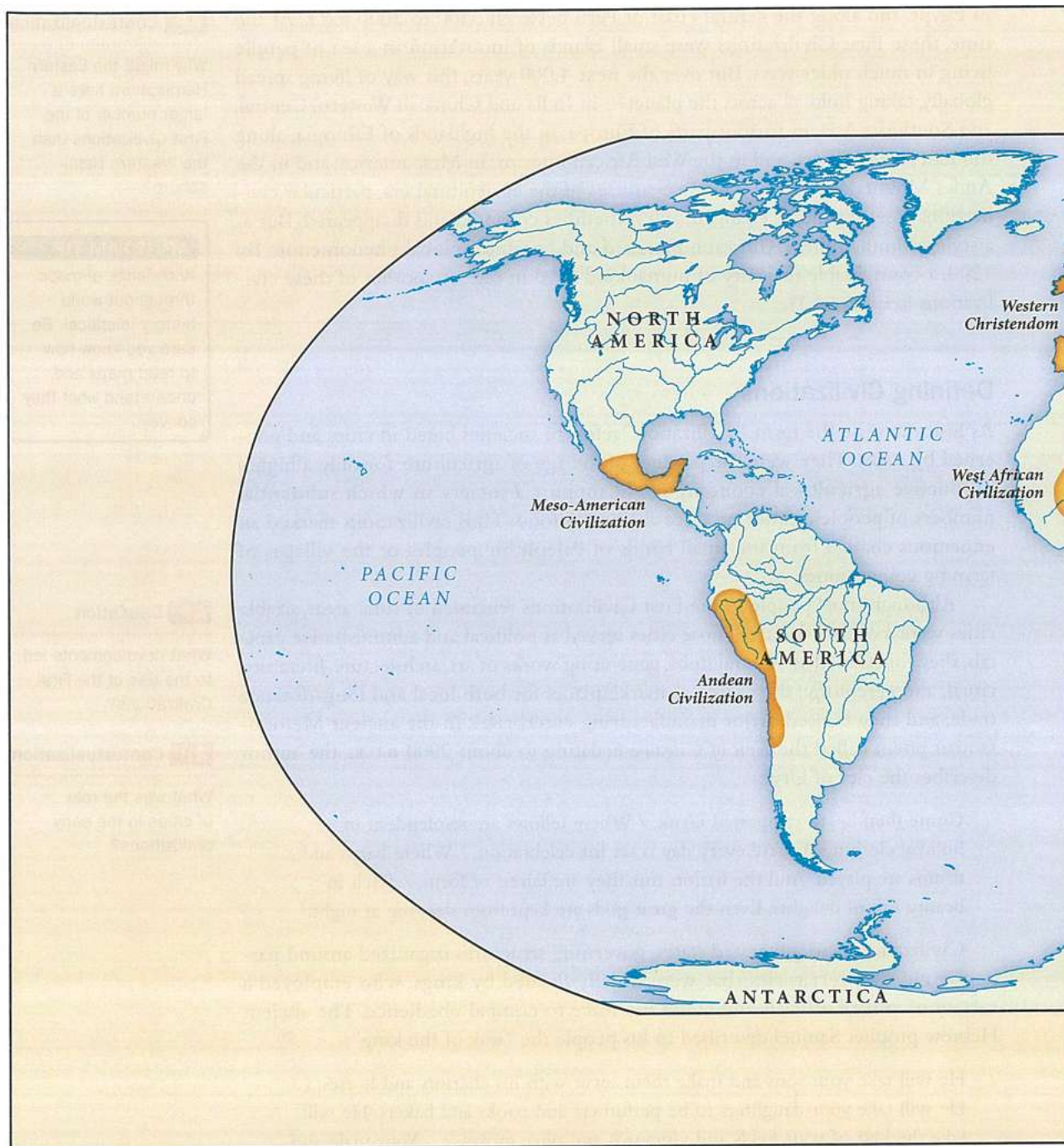
### AP® Causation

What developments led to the rise of the First Civilizations?

### AP® Contextualization

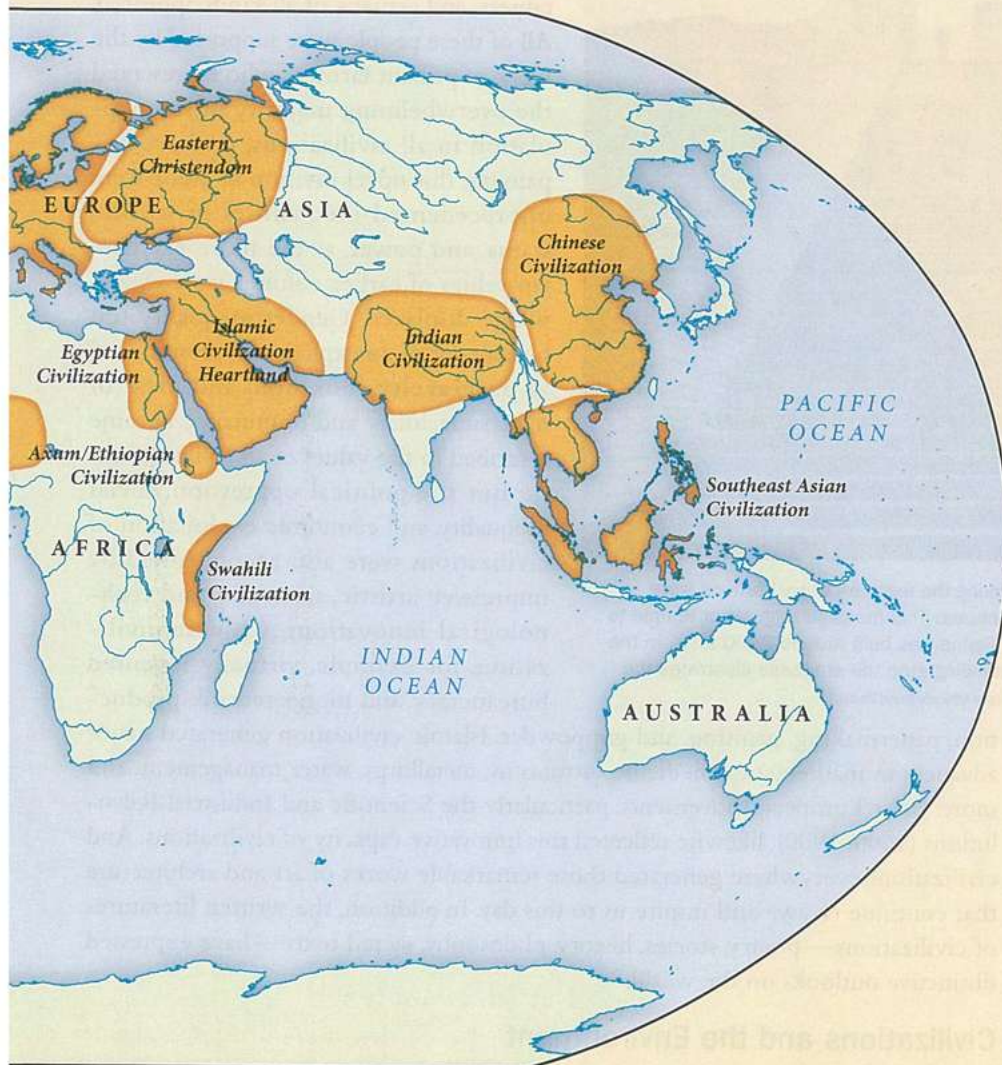
What was the role of cities in the early civilizations?





**Map 1.1 Major World Civilizations, 500–1450**

In the thousand years or so before 1450, growing numbers of people lived in civilizations, while many others continued to dwell in hunting and gathering societies, agricultural village communities, or pastoral societies. This map shows the location of the major civilizations of that era.







**A Mesopotamian Ziggurat** Among the features of civilizations were monumental architectural structures. This massive ziggurat or temple to the Mesopotamian moon god Nanna was built around 2100 B.C.E. in the city of Ur. The solitary figure standing atop the staircase illustrates the size of this huge building. (© Richard Ashworth/Robert Harding)

#### AP® Contextualization

In what way was this ziggurat a means of reinforcing the government's legitimacy?

#### AP® EXAM TIP

Societies' expectations for what men and women are supposed to do or be (that is, "gender roles") are an important theme throughout the course.

Civilizations also developed an altogether new degree of occupational specialization as scholars, merchants, priests, officials, scribes, soldiers, servants, entertainers, and artisans of all kinds appeared. All of these people were supported by the work of peasant farmers, who represented the overwhelming majority of the population in all civilizations. And accompanying this novel division of labor were unprecedented inequalities in wealth, status, and power, as the more egalitarian values of earlier cultures were everywhere displaced. Gender inequality too became far more explicit and pronounced as **patriarchy** took hold and ideas of male superiority and dominance became inscribed in the values of all civilizations.

But the political oppression, social inequality, and economic exploitation of civilizations were also accompanied by impressive artistic, scientific, and technological innovations. Chinese civilization, for example, virtually invented bureaucracy and pioneered silk production,

papermaking, printing, and gunpowder. Islamic civilization generated major advances in mathematics, medicine, astronomy, metallurgy, water management, and more. Later European movements, particularly the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions (1600–1900), likewise reflected this innovative capacity of civilizations. And civilizations everywhere generated those remarkable works of art and architecture that continue to awe and inspire us to this day. In addition, the written literatures of civilizations—poetry, stories, history, philosophy, sacred texts—have expressed distinctive outlooks on the world.

## Civilizations and the Environment

Like all human communities, civilizations have been shaped by the environment in which they developed. It is no accident that many of the early civilizations, such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, Peru, India, and China, grew up in river valleys that offered rich possibilities for productive agriculture. The mountainous terrain of Greece favored the development of rival city-states rather than a single unified empire. The narrow bottleneck of Panama, largely covered by dense rain forests, inhibited contact between the civilizations of Mesoamerica and those of the Andes. And oceans long separated the Afro-Eurasian world from that of the Western Hemisphere.

Civilizations also left an imprint on their environment. The larger populations and intensive agriculture of civilizations had a far more substantial impact on the landscape than Paleolithic, pastoral, or agricultural village societies. By 2000 B.C.E. the rigorous irrigation that supported farming in southern Mesopotamia generated soils that turned white as salt accumulated. As a result, wheat was largely replaced by barley, which is far more tolerant of salty conditions. In many places the growth of civilizations was accompanied by extensive deforestation and soil erosion. Plato declared that the area around Athens had become “a mere relic of the original country. . . . All the rich soil has melted away, leaving a country of skin and bone.”<sup>4</sup> As Chinese civilization expanded southward toward the Yangzi River valley after 200 C.E., that movement of people, accompanied by their intensive agriculture, set in motion a vast environmental transformation marked by the destruction of the old-growth forests that once covered much of the country and the retreat of the elephants that had inhabited those lands. Around 800 C.E., the Chinese official and writer Liu Zongyuan lamented the devastation that followed:

A tumbled confusion of lumber as flames on the hillside crackle  
Not even the last remaining shrubs are safeguarded from destruction  
Where once mountain torrents leapt—nothing but rutted gullies.<sup>5</sup>

Something similar was happening in Europe as its civilization was expanding in the several centuries after 1000. Everywhere trees were felled at tremendous rates to clear agricultural land and to use as fuel or building material. By 1300, the forest cover of Europe had been reduced to about 20 percent of the land area. Far from lamenting this situation, one German abbot declared: “I believe that the forest . . . covers the land to no purpose and hold this to be an unbearable harm.”<sup>6</sup>

As agricultural civilizations spread, farmers everywhere stamped the landscape with a human imprint as they drained swamps, leveled forests, terraced hillsides, and constructed cities, roads, irrigation ditches, and canals. Maya civilization in southern Mexico, for example, has been described as an “almost totally engineered landscape” that supported a flourishing agriculture and a very rapidly increasing and dense population by 750 C.E.<sup>7</sup> But that very success also undermined Maya civilization and contributed to its collapse by 900 C.E. Rapid population growth pushed total Maya numbers to perhaps 5 million or more and soon outstripped available resources, resulting in deforestation and the erosion of hillsides. Under such conditions, climate change in the form of prolonged droughts in the 800s may well have placed an unbearable strain on Maya society. It was not the first case, and would not be the last, in which the demographic and economic pressures from civilizations undermined the ecological foundation on which those civilizations rested.

**AP® EXAM TIP**

The relationship between humans and the environment is a key theme throughout the course.

## Comparing Civilizations

While civilizations shared a number of common features, they also differed from one another in many other ways. The earliest civilizations were geographically quite limited, while many later civilizations—such as the Chinese, Persian, and



**AP<sup>®</sup> Comparison**

In what respects did the various civilizations of the pre-1200 world differ from one another? What common features did they share?

Roman—extended over far larger regions and found political expression in empires that incorporated many culturally different peoples. The Arab Empire that accompanied the rise of Islam in the several centuries after the death of Muhammad in 632 C.E. encompassed much of North Africa, the Middle East, and parts of Spain and western India. Large-scale empires in West Africa, such as Mali and Songhay, as well as the huge Inca Empire in South America, also offered an imperial setting for their civilizations. But other civilizations, such as the Greek in Europe, the Maya in Mesoamerica, and the Swahili in East Africa, organized themselves in highly competitive city-states that made unified empires difficult to achieve.

Civilizations differed as well in how their societies were structured and stratified. Consider the difference between China and India. China gave the highest ranking to an elite bureaucracy of government officials, drawn largely from the landlord class and selected by their performance on a set of examinations. They were supported by a vast mass of peasant farmers who were required to pay taxes to the government and rent to their landlords. Although honored as the hardworking and productive backbone of the country by their social superiors, Chinese peasants were oppressed and exploited, as they were everywhere, and periodically erupted in large-scale rebellions.

India's social organization shared certain broad features with that of China. In both civilizations, birth determined social status for most people; little social mobility was available for the vast majority; sharp distinctions and great inequalities characterized social life; and religious or cultural traditions defined these inequalities as natural, eternal, and ordained by the gods. But India's social system was distinctive. It gave priority to religious status and ritual purity, for the priestly caste known as Brahmins held the highest rank, whereas China elevated political officials to the most prominent of elite positions. The caste system divided Indian society into vast numbers of distinct social groups based on occupation and perceived ritual purity; China had fewer, but broader, categories of society—scholar-gentry, landlords, peasants, and merchants. Finally, India's caste society defined social groups far more rigidly than in China, forbidding members of different castes to marry or eat together. This meant even less opportunity for social mobility than in China, where the examination system offered a route to social promotion to a few among the common people.

At the bottom of the social hierarchy in all civilizations were slaves, or owned people, often debtors or prisoners of war, with few if any rights in the larger society. But the extent of slavery varied considerably. Persian, Chinese, Indian, and West African civilizations certainly practiced slavery, but it was not central to their societies. In Greek and Roman civilizations, however, it was. The Athens of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle was home to some 60,000 slaves, about one-third of the total population. On an even larger scale, slavery was a defining element of Roman society. The Italian heartland of the Roman Empire contained some 2 to 3 million slaves, representing 33 to 40 percent of the population.

Patriarchy, or male dominance, was common to the social life of all civilizations, but it too varied from place to place and changed over time. Generally, patriarchies



**Caste in India** This 1947 photograph from *Life* magazine illustrates the “purity and pollution” thinking that has long been central to the ideology of caste. It shows a high-caste landowner carefully dropping wages wrapped in a leaf into the outstretched hands of his low-caste workers. By avoiding direct physical contact with them, he escapes ritual pollution. (Margaret Bourke-White/The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images)

#### AP<sup>®</sup> Analyzing Evidence

How does this image show the distinctions created between castes?

were lighter and less restrictive for women in the early years of a civilization’s development and during times of upheaval when established patterns of life were disrupted. Chinese patriarchy, for example, loosened somewhat, especially for elite women, when parts of northern China were ruled by pastoral and nomadic peoples, whose women were far less restricted than those of China itself. Even within the small world of ancient Greek city-states, the patriarchy of Athens was far more confining for women than in Sparta, where women competed in sports with men, could divorce with ease, and owned substantial landed estates. Furthermore, elite women both enjoyed privileges and suffered the restrictions of seclusion in the home to a much greater extent than their lower-class counterparts, whose economic circumstances required them to operate in the larger social arena.

Finally, civilizations differed in the range and extent of their influence. Roman civilization dominated the Mediterranean basin for much of the millennium between 500 B.C.E. and 500 C.E. (see Map 1.2), while Chinese civilization has directly shaped the cultural history of much of eastern Asia and indirectly influenced economic life all across Eurasia for much longer. Between roughly 650 and 1450, Islamic civilization represented the most expansive, influential, and pervasive presence throughout the entire Afro-Eurasian world (see Map 2.2 in Chapter 2).





### AP<sup>®</sup> Causation

Based on Map 1.2, what were problems associated with maintaining the Roman Empire?

### Map 1.2 The Roman Empire

At its height in the second century c.e., the Roman Empire incorporated the entire Mediterranean basin, including the less developed region of Western Europe, the heartland of Greek civilization, and the ancient civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia.

Other civilizations had a much more limited range in the premodern era. The civilization of Axum was largely limited to what is now Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Swahili civilization was restricted to the coastal region of eastern Africa. Maya civilization, flourishing between 250 and 900, was a phenomenon of Central America. As a new Western European civilization crystalized after 1000 c.e., it too was a regional civilization with nothing like the reach of Chinese or Islamic civilizations. In the five centuries after 1450, however, Western Europe followed in the tradition of these more expansive civilizations, as it achieved genuinely global power and approached world domination by 1900.