World History

Patterns of Civilization

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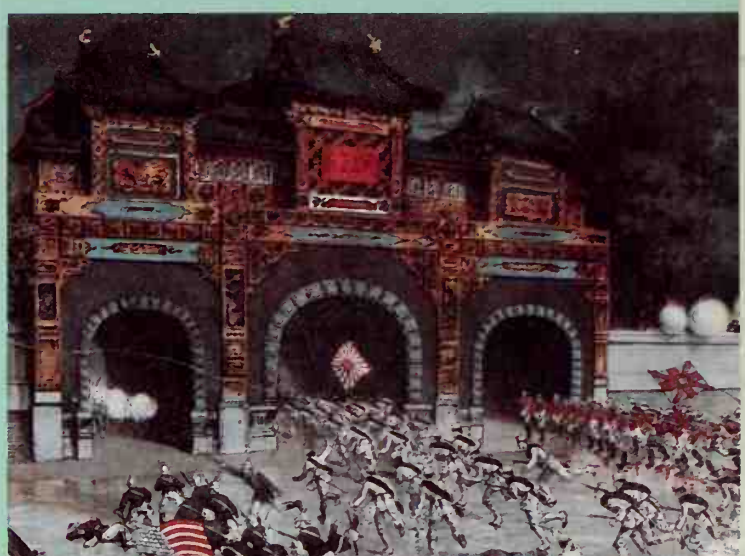

Unit Ten

The World Today 648

Special Features

Skill Lessons

Maps

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To the Student

Through a study of world history, you will become familiar with the varied experiences of people throughout history as well as with the common patterns of civilization. You will learn about the political, social, and economic developments that have created the world as you know it. As you study the past, you will begin to better understand the challenges of the present and the major issues of the future.

Many features have been included in this book to assist you during your course of study:

1. **Unit Overview.** Each unit begins with a brief overview identifying major themes you will read about in the unit.
2. **Chapter Outline.** Each chapter begins with an outline of the contents to give you an overview of the chapter.
3. **Chapter Introduction.** The chapter introduction opens with a story or an excerpt from a primary source that tells you about a person or an event from the time period covered in the chapter. The introduction also provides you with a setting for the material in the chapter.
4. **Important Terms.** Historical terms and vocabulary words are italicized and clearly defined the first time they appear in the text. You will be asked to define each term in a section review. Important historical terms also appear in a glossary at the end of the book.
5. **Maps, Graphs, Charts.** Numerous maps, graphs, and charts appear throughout the book to help you understand major historical developments and events. Their clarity makes them useful reinforcements of the narrative. Captions provide background information and relate the maps, graphs, and charts to what you are reading.
6. **Illustrations.** The text contains many paintings, photographs, cartoons, and posters to enliven the study of each historical period. The captions contain useful information about the illustrations and the people and events pictured.
7. **Special Features.** Boxed features give you a close look at people and events in world history. They include biographies and descriptions of events, as well as selections from diaries, literature, and other contemporary sources.
8. **Skill Lessons.** Special boxed lessons help you understand and practice important skills, such as reading maps and graphs, using visual evidence and statistics, and analyzing conflicting sources.
9. **Section Reviews.** Each section ends with a set of review questions to test your understanding of what you have read. They include locating places on maps, identifying people and events, and defining vocabulary terms.
10. **In Perspective.** The chapter summary, called In Perspective, reviews the developments you read about in the chapter and puts them in perspective.
11. **Time Line.** A time line appears at the end of each chapter. By highlighting major events and developments, it will help you understand how events discussed in the chapter are related in time.
12. **End-of-Chapter Materials.** Four sets of questions end each chapter. The questions called Recalling Facts help you remember basic facts from the chapter. The Chapter Checkup questions help you review the content of the chapter. The questions called For Further Thought ask you to consider historical issues, offer your interpretation of them, and relate past issues to the present. In Developing Basic Skills, you will learn and practice such basic skills as classifying, comparing, map and graph reading, placing events in time, researching, and analyzing source material.
13. **Reference Section.** At the back of the book, you will find a special section of reference material to be used throughout the course. The reference section includes maps, a chronology, a pronunciation key, a glossary, and a list of suggested readings for each chapter.
14. **Index.** An index at the end of the book helps you find references to important people, places, and events discussed in the book.

Unit One

Beginnings of Ancient Civilization

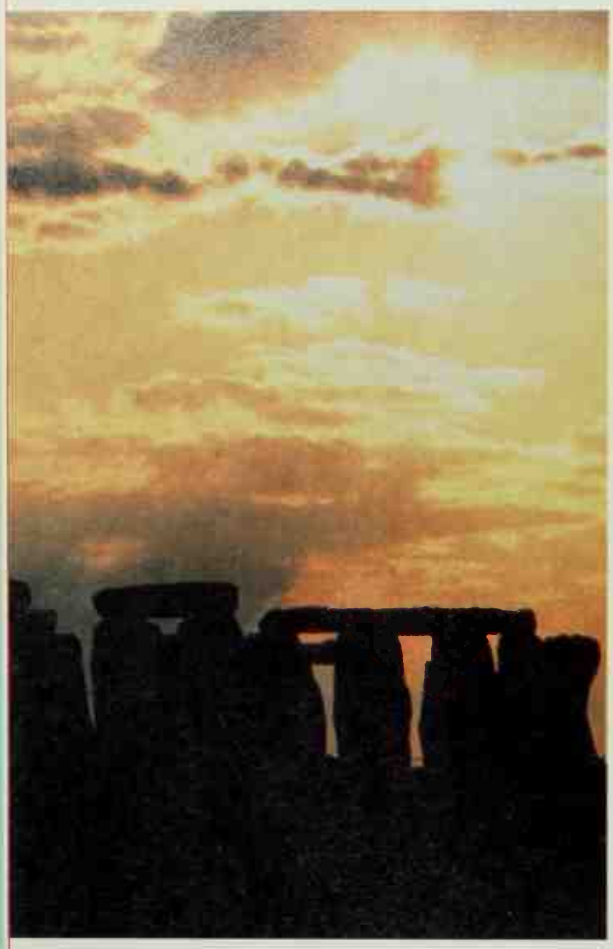
Unit Overview Ancient civilizations come to life in the art that has survived through the ages. The wheeled carriage at left was probably used in religious ceremonies. It symbolizes the creative spirit that spurred early civilizations to new achievements. The robed figure with its birdlike head may represent a powerful god. It commands a team of marsh birds that stand ready to set the carriage in motion.

When an artist fashioned this small clay carriage, almost 4,000 years ago, civilization was on the verge of rapid breakthroughs. In widely scattered parts of the world, people were developing the complex political, social, and economic systems that formed the foundations of civilization. Later peoples built on these early foundations.

As you will read in this unit, the earliest centers of civilization were in the fertile river valleys of northeastern Africa, the Middle East, northwestern India, and northern China. The civilizations that arose in each of these regions had certain basic features in common, but the patterns of civilization in each region varied enormously. World history records the rich variety of civilizations that have emerged, each with its own distinctive character.

1 Foundations of Civilization

(Prehistory–3000 B.C.)



Stonehenge in southern England.

Chapter Outline

Before dawn, crowds gather at Stonehenge, an ancient monument in southern England. The sky brightens early on June 21, the longest day of the year. All eyes are fixed on the huge, heel-shaped stone beyond the great circle of stones. At dawn, the sun sweeps above the horizon. Its warm light shines directly above the heel stone and slices through an archway of stones.

The crowd of visitors is filled with awe. Like others before them, they are fascinated by the stone monument. For centuries, people have wondered who designed this massive circle of stones. When was Stonehenge built? How were the enormous blocks raised into position? Most important, what purpose did Stonehenge serve?

Scholars have offered some answers to questions about Stonehenge. They have learned, for example, that early inhabitants of England started to build Stonehenge about 3,800 years ago. Experts have discovered that the 82 enormous stones of Stonehenge were quarried from a mountain in Wales about 240 miles (386 kilometers) away. The stones were probably loaded on barges, shipped by water, and then hauled on sleds over log rollers to Stonehenge.

Yet many questions about the purpose of Stonehenge remain unanswered. Was it a temple, a palace, or a fort defended by warrior kings? Or was it, as one astronomer has suggested, an ancient calendar used to predict eclipses and other heavenly events?

Stonehenge is one of the many puzzles left by ancient peoples. Tantalizing clues about the distant past are uncovered all the time in different parts of the

world. Some evidence, like that at Stonehenge, is on a grand scale. Other evidence includes only fragments of stone, pottery, or bone.

By studying the evidence, scholars have begun to answer questions about ancient peoples. For example, they have discovered that over thousands of years people have made significant advances in knowledge and skills. As you will read, these advances helped build the foundations for civilization.

1 Discovering Prehistory

Historians use many sources to learn about the past. Among the most important sources are written records such as inscriptions, letters, diaries, and newspapers. But written records have existed for only 5,000 or 6,000 years. There are no written records from earlier times.

Scholars use the term *prehistory* to describe the long period before writing was invented. To learn about prehistory, they use unwritten records such as buildings, pottery, and bone. Historians and scientists work together to unravel the mysteries of prehistoric people.

The Study of Prehistory

Evidence from prehistory is of special interest to *archaeologists*, scientists who find and analyze objects left by early people. These objects, called *artifacts*, include anything shaped by human beings, such as tools, pottery, and weapons. Archaeology is a branch of anthropology. *Anthropologists* use artifacts and bone fragments to study the physical characteristics of people and the ways people organize societies.

Other scientists are also interested in prehistory. For example, geologists often find *fossils*, evidence of plant or animal life preserved in rock. Fossils show the types of plants and animals that existed at a particular time.

Like detectives, archaeologists piece together what they and other scientists discover to form a picture of the past. As new evidence is uncovered, this picture changes.

Uncovering Archaeological Evidence

Archaeologists have a three-part task in their search for evidence about early people. First, they must find a site, or area, where they think early people lived. Second, they excavate, or dig, at the site to uncover artifacts. Third, they analyze the artifacts they find and draw conclusions about the people who made them.

Although some important sites have been found by accident, more often archaeologists choose places where they think people would have lived. For example, they might pick a location because it would have provided water and protection from wild animals. Once a site is located, archaeologists begin to dig carefully. Even the smallest fragment of a piece of pottery can be important. The exact location of every find is noted. Then the objects are cleaned and marked for identification.

A major step in the analysis of artifacts is estimating their ages, or dating them. Scientists have developed several methods for dating an object. The carbon-14 method* can be used to date organic matter—that is, anything that was once alive, such as wood and hair. A second method of dating objects is called amino acid racemization (ras eh mih ZAY shuhn). Some scientists prefer this method since it can be used to date items that are up to one million years old. The carbon 14 method can be used to date only

* When a living organism dies the radiocarbon atoms in its cells begin to disintegrate, or decay. By measuring the rate of decay, scientists can estimate how long the organism has been dead.

The skeleton of this fish was buried thousands of years ago. By studying fossils and the rocks surrounding them, scientists have developed theories about the climate in which prehistoric plants and animals lived.

items that are up to 40,000 years old. Finally, the potassium argon method is used to calculate the age of volcanic rock and thereby the age of any objects preserved in the rock.

Unanswered Questions

Archaeologists have made impressive advances over the past 30 years. New methods of dating artifacts, aerial photography to find likely sites, and computer analysis of bone fragments are just a few of the techniques that are revealing new evidence about prehistory. But new discoveries can raise as many questions as they answer.

Many questions remain unanswered because so little evidence about prehistoric people has survived. Over thousands of years, much evidence has been destroyed by natural elements. Excavations often produce only tiny bone fragments or a few tools. Scientists must then speculate about the lives of the people who lived on the site. With such limited evidence, interpretations can vary.

Some evidence about prehistory has also been destroyed by human settlement. Yet much remains. Even today, construction workers discover artifacts. For example, ancient ruins were uncovered in Mexico City during the construction of subways. In a race with time, archaeologists have been able to preserve some valuable remains. As you will read later, the discoveries of archaeologists, combined with written records, have helped answer many questions about the first ancient civilizations.

SECTION REVIEW

1. Define: prehistory, archaeologist, artifact, anthropologist, fossil.
2. What evidence do anthropologists use to expand knowledge of the past?
3. What are the three parts of the archaeologist's task?
4. What three methods are used to estimate the age of an artifact?
5. What is the main reason many questions about prehistoric people remain unanswered?

2 Stone Age Peoples

In their search for prehistoric artifacts, archaeologists have uncovered many stone axes and arrow tips. As a result, scholars use the term "Stone Age" to describe the prehistoric period of time when people used simple stone tools. The term also describes a way of life in which people rely on such stone tools.

The Stone Age is often divided into the Old Stone Age, or Paleolithic (PAY lee uh LIHTH ihk) Age, and the New Stone Age, or Neolithic (NEE uh LIHTH ihk) Age. The Paleolithic Age may have begun as early as 500,000 B.C.* It lasted to about 10,000 B.C. The Neolithic Age lasted from about 10,000 B.C. to about 3500 B.C.

* Civilizations influenced by Christianity date historical events from the birth of Christ. B.C. stands for dates before the birth of Christ. A.D. stands for "anno domini," a Latin phrase meaning "in the year of Our Lord." A.D. is used for dates after the birth of Christ. For B.C. dates, the higher number is always the earlier date.

The Old Stone Age

Archaeologists have found remains and artifacts of Paleolithic people in many parts of the world, including East Africa, China, Southeast Asia, Europe, the Middle East,* and the Americas. Based on their findings, scientists have begun to construct a picture of life in the Old Stone Age.

Paleolithic people lived by fishing, hunting, and gathering plants that grew wild. They were *nomads*, people who moved in search of food. For example, they would follow herds of animals such as the woolly mammoth. Or if wild berries and nuts became scarce in an area, they would migrate to another area where food was plentiful.

A simple social structure developed during the Old Stone Age. Groups of related families joined to form small hunting bands numbering about 30 people. They built no permanent shelters. Instead, they camped in caves or slept under lean-tos made of branches and grasses. While some people hunted, others stayed near the camp to gather wild food and care for the young.

There is evidence that during the Old Stone Age people developed spoken languages and learned how to control fire. With spoken language, hunters could organize hunts of large animals. Fire provided light and warmth, protection against wild animals, and heat for cooking food.

Paleolithic people made simple tools such as hand axes and choppers. The earliest tools were pieces of flint, a hard stone, chipped to produce a sharp cutting edge. Later, people made stone and bone tools for more specialized uses. These tools included needles, skin scrapers, harpoons, fishhooks, arrowheads, and spear points.

Some scholars suggest that during the Old Stone Age people developed basic religious beliefs. For example, they think that cave paintings made by prehistoric hunters had a religious meaning. (See page 23.) Perhaps the hunters believed that drawing the animals would help them in the hunt.

* The Middle East has also been called the Near East. When Europeans began visiting China and Japan in large numbers, they referred to those Asian countries as the Far East. The lands between Europe and the Far East then became known as the Near East.

Changes in the Environment

The date often used to indicate the end of the Old Stone Age, about 10,000 B.C., also marks the end of the last ice age. Scientists think the earth has experienced four ice ages over millions of years. During the last ice age, thick sheets of ice, called *glaciers*, spread out from the polar regions. In North America, glaciers stretched as far south as present-day Kentucky. Glaciers also covered much of northern Europe and parts of Asia.

According to scientific theory, much of the world's water was frozen during the last ice age. As a result, ocean levels dropped, and land areas today covered with water were exposed. A land bridge may have connected North America and Asia where the Bering Sea is today. Some scientists think that about 25,000 years ago people from Asia followed herds of wild animals across the land bridge into North America. When the glaciers melted, the level of the ocean rose. The land bridge disappeared, and the people in North America were cut off from Asia.

Stone Age peoples developed a variety of flint tools, which they used for cutting, chopping, and scraping the hides of animals. Gradually, they became more skillful at making tools. For example, the stone implement on the left has a well-shaped handle.

Cave Paintings: Using Visual Evidence

Like detectives, historians examine many different kinds of evidence for clues to the past. One valuable source of information is visual evidence, including paintings, statues, drawings, and photographs. Prehistoric people left no written records, but they did leave visual evidence in the form of colorful pictures sketched on cave walls.

Pictures and paintings are useful because they often show how people saw themselves, how they dressed, what games they played, or what events they thought were important. However, visual evidence presents only what the artist or photographer wants you to see. In order to make the best use of visual evidence, you must study each piece carefully.

The following steps will help you use visual evidence effectively. Study the picture on page 23 and then follow these steps.

1. **Identify the subject of the painting.** Sometimes when you look at a picture two or three times you see details you did not notice at first glance. Answer the following questions about the picture: (a) What figures are shown in the cave painting? (b) What do you think is happening in the painting? Explain.
2. **Evaluate the visual evidence to decide if it is a reliable source.** A picture does not always tell the full story. An artist may have painted it with a specific purpose and left out some details. You have to decide whether the picture is a reliable source of information. Answer the following questions about the cave painting: (a) What objects or figures are most prominent in the cave painting? What does this tell you about the artist's purpose in painting this picture? (b) Do you think the artist portrayed everything exactly as it was? Explain. (c) Does this painting give you a complete idea of the everyday life of prehistoric people? Explain. (d) Does the picture indicate that prehistoric people were skilled hunters? Explain.
3. **Study the visual evidence to learn about a particular people, event, or development.** Use the cave painting and your reading to answer the following questions: (a) About when was this picture painted? Where was it found? (b) What example or examples of the technology of prehistoric peoples can you find? (c) Using this painting as evidence, draw three conclusions about prehistoric people.

The end of the last ice age caused dramatic changes in local climates around the world. Deserts appeared where lush plants had grown, and warm weather brought new plants to life in formerly frigid areas. The new climate patterns contributed to a change in the way people lived—a change so profound that scholars often call it a revolution. This revolution marked the beginning of the Neolithic Age.

The New Stone Age

Between 10,000 B.C. and 3500 B.C., people in many parts of the world gradually stopped hunting and gathering food and became farmers. They domesticated, or tamed, wild animals such as dogs, sheep, and goats and began to grow grain and vegetables for food.

In the New Stone Age, agriculture developed in many places. Anthropologists have generally concluded that it began first in the Middle East. People grew crops that were suited to the local soil and climate. In the Middle East and Africa, for example, they grew wheat, barley, and oats. They grew rice and root crops such as yams in Asia. Beans, squash, and maize, or corn, were grown in Central and South America.

The agricultural revolution, or the change from hunting and gathering food to growing food, had a far-reaching effect on the way people lived. Since people no longer had to move in search of food, they formed permanent settlements, or villages. They built houses, and property became important. Even so, not everyone abandoned the nomadic way of life. Some people remained

In 1940, at Lascaux (la SKOH) in southern France, four boys were on their way home from school when their dog disappeared down a hole. The boys followed the dog into a large underground cave. Later, they returned to the cave with lights. On the ceiling and walls of the cave, they saw colorful paintings like the ones above. Archaeologists identified the paintings as the work of Stone Age hunters living sometime between 15,000 B.C. and 10,000 B.C.

hunters and gatherers. Others established a stable way of life as herders of sheep, cattle, or goats.

In farming villages, people had to cooperate in new ways. The heads of each family probably met to make decisions about planting and harvesting. As villages grew, a chieftain and a council of elders assumed the task of making decisions. Increasingly, people relied on these leaders to settle disputes over such issues as land ownership. This issue had not come up among nomadic people, who did not own land.

According to archaeologists, Neolithic farmers believed that spirits, or gods, controlled the forces of nature. Since floods and droughts meant starvation or death, farmers took care to keep the spirits happy.

Technology of the New Stone Age

The growth of a farming economy led to the development of new *technology*, that is, tools and skills people use to meet their basic needs. To turn over the soil, people fashioned sturdy hoes from granite, a hard stone that could be sharpened. They also invented weaving. When they learned to make cloth from wool and flax, Neolithic people no longer had to slaughter their animals for the hides. They made baskets for storing grain, nets for fishing, and fire-hardened pottery for cooking.

Toward the end of the New Stone Age, several more developments greatly changed the way some people lived. For example, farmers began to use animals such as the ox to pull plows instead of pulling the plows themselves. As a result, farmers could plow more land and reap larger harvests, which supported a growing population.

Other important developments included the invention of the wheel and the sail and the use of metal. Wheeled carts gradually replaced wooden sleds, making land transportation easier. The invention of the potter's wheel meant that people could make better pots and other vessels. The sail improved transportation on water and made longer voyages possible. In addition, people in the

late Neolithic Age began to use metal as well as stone for tools and weapons. They first used copper. Eventually they discovered that copper combined with tin formed a harder metal, called *bronze*.

By 3000 B.C., each of these inventions was being used in some part of the world. However, they were not invented everywhere at the same time. Most appeared first in the Middle East. Some were not used in other places for thousands of years. The people of Central America, for example, used the wheel on toys but did not use wheels on carts until after the arrival of Europeans in the 1500s A.D. People used the inventions of the late Neolithic Age to build more complex societies called civilizations.

SECTION REVIEW

1. Identify: Paleolithic Age, Neolithic Age, agricultural revolution.
2. Define: nomad, glacier, technology, bronze.
3. Why was learning to control fire important for Paleolithic people?
4. List two ways in which the agricultural revolution affected the way people lived.
5. What metals did late Neolithic people begin to use?

The Tasaday: A Stone Age People Today

In 1967, a startling discovery was made in the dense tropical forest of Mindanao, in the Philippine Islands. A local hunter came across a small band of people who had never been in contact with the outside world. These people, called the Tasaday, numbered only 24 men, women, and children. They were living as their ancestors had for thousands of years.

When anthropologists learned of the discovery, they were eager to study the Tasaday as a living example of Stone Age people. Several anthropologists went to Mindanao. They found that the Tasaday were food gatherers who depended on the forest for food and clothing. They lived in natural limestone caves in the mountainside.

Each morning, the men and women would go out to gather enough food for the day. They used tools made out of bamboo, stone, and vines to dig wild yam roots or cut bananas. They also collected berries and flowers. The Tasaday twisted orchid leaves into cone-shaped cups, which they then filled with crabs, tadpoles, frogs, and small fish caught by hand. They wore clothing made of vines and orchid leaves.

The Tasaday knew how to control fire, an important discovery for Stone Age people. They used fire to cook food and to keep warm during damp and chilly nights. The Tasaday did not have a written language or any system of telling time or counting. Their spoken language revealed something of their way of life. For example, they had no words for anger or war.

The Tasaday told anthropologists that the band had lived in the same caves for a very long time, perhaps 1,000 years. They believed that one of their ancestors had had a dream promising good health to those who stayed in the caves and illness to those who left. Most of their religious beliefs were based on that dream.

The Tasaday thought their discovery by the outside world had been predicted by their ancestor's dream. The ancestor spoke of a "Bringer of Good Fortune" who would show the Tasaday the way out of darkness. The Philippine government has made the forest where the Tasaday live a protected area so the Tasaday can continue to live in peace.

3 Emergence of Civilization

In different parts of the world, simple farming settlements grew into large cities by the end of the Neolithic Age, about 3500 B.C. This development, known as the urban revolution, marked the beginning of civilization. In fact, the word "civilization" comes from the Latin root "civitas," meaning city.

The development of cities was only one characteristic of early civilizations. Other characteristics included complex religions and governments, specialized skills and occupations, social classes, and methods of recordkeeping.

Growth of Cities

The earliest cities appeared in four great river valleys. Cities may have emerged as early as 6000 B.C. in the valley of the Tigris (TĪ grihs) and Euphrates (yoo FRAY teez) rivers in western Asia. Other cities developed in the valleys of the Nile River in North Africa, the Indus River in South Asia, and the Yellow River in East Asia.* (See the map on page 27.)

Conditions in the river valleys favored the development of cities. For example, fertile soil in the valleys made it possible for farmers to produce a surplus of food. When the rivers flooded, the water left deposits of *silt*, a soil rich in minerals, which made the land especially fertile. Flood waters also brought needed moisture to the land, and people used river water for irrigation during dry periods. In addition, the rivers contained plentiful fish and attracted animals, two additional sources of food. Finally, the rivers served as transportation arteries, which allowed people to trade for goods they did not have.

With food surpluses, the populations of farming settlements increased, and villages grew into cities. The populations of the earliest cities ranged from several thousand to half a million residents. City dwellers undertook major projects such as clearing new farm land and building vast irrigation systems as well as constructing temples, palaces, and walls for defense. Because such projects required organization and leadership, they contributed to the development of governments.

Government and Religion

In the early cities, government and religion were closely related. Like the people of the New Stone Age, city dwellers were *polytheistic*—that is, they worshipped many gods. They believed that gods and goddesses controlled the forces of nature. It was, therefore, important to them to win the gods' favor in order to prevent disasters. Priests developed elaborate rituals to try to influence the gods. Because the priests were the only ones who knew how to perform these rituals, they gained enormous power.

Priests probably headed the government as priest-kings. The form of government in which priests serve as kings is called a *theocracy*. Gradually, successful military leaders began to replace the priest-kings as rulers. Scholars theorize that these leaders emerged as a result of warfare between cities over scarce resources.

Military rulers had clear responsibilities. They shared the priests' task of keeping the gods friendly, and they were responsible for defending their cities against enemies. They acted as judges, made laws, and appointed officials to keep order. They also supervised building and irrigation projects.

To support the temple and pay for vast construction projects, city dwellers had to contribute a portion of their labor or their harvest to the government. This payment represents the earliest system of taxation by government.

* Early cities were not limited to river valleys. As you will read in Chapter 14, cities also grew in the highlands of the Americas.

The Economy and Society

The innovations in technology of the late Neolithic Age were important to city dwellers. Bronze came into such widespread use for vessels, tools, and weapons that historians have often called the period of early civilization the "Bronze Age." Important social and economic changes also occurred during the Bronze Age.

Specialized skills and occupations. The new technology often required special skills. As a result, specialized occupations gradually developed. Skilled workers called *artisans* hammered out plows, scythes, helmets, and swords. Jewelers shaped precious metals into charms and necklaces. Sculptors, potters, painters, priests, and government officials acquired specialized skills and knowledge.

The food surplus, an important characteristic of early civilizations, also contributed to the development of occupations. Because of the surplus, some people did not have to farm. Rather, they could trade products or labor for the food they needed. For example, a potter might trade a clay cooking vessel to a farmer for grain. The system of exchanging one set of goods or services for another is called a *barter economy*.

In early civilizations, people spent much of their time planting, cultivating, and harvesting grain crops. Once harvested, grains such as wheat and barley had to be ground by hand. This statue shows a slave using a stone board and roller to crush the kernels of grain into flour.

Social classes. As a city grew, a more complex social structure emerged. The social structure defined a person's place in society. At the top of the structure was the priest-king or king. Below the priest-king or king was a class of priests and nobles. Nobles generally based their power and wealth on owning large amounts of land. Being a noble was hereditary—that is, the children of nobles were also nobles.

In some cities, government officials and wealthy merchants formed the class below the nobility. Artisans and small traders ranked next, followed by the largest class, made up of peasant farmers and workers. At the bottom of the social structure were slaves. Slaves were men, women, and children who had been taken captive in war or who were enslaved to pay their debts.

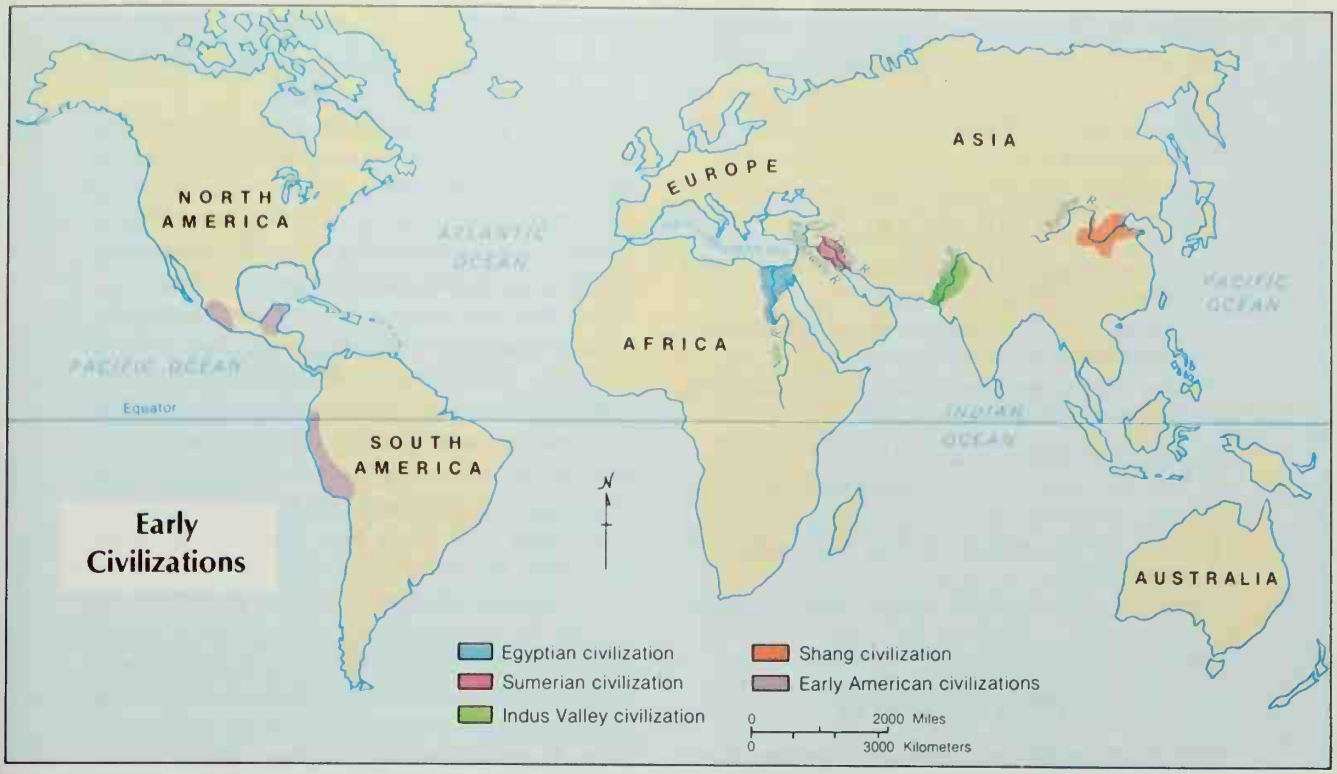
In early civilizations, people generally could not move from one social class to another. Children usually learned a trade from their parents and so tended to stay in the same occupation.

Recordkeeping

Some historians consider recordkeeping one of the most important characteristics of civilization. The Inca of South America kept detailed records on pieces of knotted string called quipus (KEE pooz). Most ancient peoples, however, developed writing in order to keep accurate records.

Priests were probably the first to start making the marks or drawing the pictures that eventually evolved into systems of writing. They needed precise information about how and when to perform ceremonies.

Temples became the schools of ancient civilizations. Priests taught only a select few the secrets of writing. A young man who mastered the difficult task of learning to read and write was called a *scribe*. Scribes worked



■ *Most early civilizations began in river valleys, as this map shows. In the Americas, however, the first civilizations developed in Mexico and Peru in the highlands.*

in the king's service, in the temples, or in the homes of wealthy merchants. Rulers depended on scribes to keep track of taxes, property deeds, treaties, and marriage documents. Merchants needed copies of business contracts and records of debts.

Writing was more than recordkeeping, however. It became the means of passing the wisdom and learning of one generation on to the next.

Contacts Among Early Civilizations

Although the first river valley civilizations appear to have developed independently, they did have some contact with one another. Trade, warfare, and migration helped spread ideas and products from one city to another and from one civilization to another. For example, city dwellers along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers traded with people in other parts of the Middle East for timber, metal, and stone.

Warfare sometimes destroyed elements of a civilization, but it also helped spread ideas. When a highly civilized people conquered a region, the conquered people often absorbed ideas from the conquerors. In addition, migrating people adopted the more advanced skills of people they encountered.

In early civilizations, people absorbed or adapted only those ideas that seemed to suit their own way of life. From this process, distinct patterns of culture developed that were passed on to future generations. *Culture* is the customs, ideas, and ways of life of a group of people.

As you will read, ancient civilizations of the Middle East, Asia, and Africa developed traditions that still influence large parts of the world. The ancient civilizations of the

Middle East and the Mediterranean region greatly influenced western civilization in Europe and the Americas. In addition, the early civilizations of the Americas helped shape later cultures.

SECTION REVIEW

1. Locate: Tigris River, Euphrates River, Nile River, Indus River, Yellow River.
2. Define: silt, polytheistic, theocracy, artisan, barter economy, scribe, culture.
3. Why were farmers in river valleys able to produce a surplus of food?
4. Why were priests powerful in early cities?
5. List the major social classes that existed in early civilizations.
6. Why did the people of early civilizations develop writing?

IN PERSPECTIVE

Scientists and historians work together to explore the mysteries of prehistory. They have uncovered thousands of artifacts at ancient sites all over the world. Archaeologists have developed sophisticated techniques for analyzing and dating their finds. However, many questions about prehistoric peoples remain unanswered.

During the Paleolithic Age, people were nomadic, moving in small bands in search of food. Over thousands of years, they made important advances by learning to use language and control fire and by inventing stone and bone tools. About 10,000 B.C., when the last ice age ended, revolutionary changes ushered in the Neolithic Age.

The agricultural revolution radically changed the way people lived. As people learned to raise crops, some formed permanent farming communities. In Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas, people developed new tools and skills. The use of the plow, the wheel, the sail, and metals altered food production and transportation.

In the late Neolithic Age, farmers began producing food surpluses that could support large populations. Some farming communities grew into cities. The urban revolution helped give rise to the first ancient civilizations. Favorable geographical conditions encouraged the growth of civilizations in the Nile, Tigris-Euphrates, Indus, and Yellow river valleys.