



IDX G9 History H

Study Guide Issue #1

By Isabel Lin and Noah Kim, Edited by Loren

NOTE: This is an official document by Indexademics. Unless otherwise stated, this document may not be accredited to individuals or groups other than the club IDX, nor should this document be distributed, sold, or modified for personal use in any way.

Contents:

1. [The First Humans](#)
2. [The Emergence of Civilization](#)
3. [Civilization in Mesopotamia](#)
4. [Egyptian Civilization: "The Gift of the Nile"](#)
5. [The Roman World Empire](#)

1.1 The First Humans

- **Hominids:** Earliest humanlike species
 - Started in Africa, 3-4 million years ago
 - **Australopithecines:** Southern ape-men
 - Lived in Eastern and Southern Africa
 - First to make simple stone tools
 - Possibly bipedal
 - **Homo Habilis:**
 - 250,000 years ago
 - Encountered other hominids (e.g. the Neanderthals) and interbred
- **Paleolithic age:** people made tools and learned how to harness fire
 - People could differentiate edible foods when hunting and gathering
 - Possibly lived in groups of 20-30 people
 - Both genders were responsible for food, but women bore children and raised them, staying closer to the camps
 - No gender hierarchy yet
 - They made shelter from caves, wood poles, and sticks with animal hide

- The **systematic use of fire** began 500,000 years ago
- Cave paintings of animals that they didn't hunt were found, believed to be for religious and decorative purposes

- **Neolithic Revolution:** Stone Age

- Occurred after the end of the ice age (10,000 BCE)
- Cultivation of crops + domestication of animals
- Not as dependent on rainfall → first **sedentary societies**
 - **Sedentary:** staying in one place; not nomadic

- **Agricultural revolution:**

- Food gathering → food production
 - Regular supplies of crops and animal domestication
- People had control over the environment, and expanded in population

Crops	Location
Wheat and Barley	Middle east → Southern Europe → Central Europe → Mediterranean → Western Asia → Egypt → Africa → India
Root crops (yam)/tubers	Africa
Rice/millet, domestication of pigs and dogs	Northern China
Beans/squash/maize/dogs/fowl	Mexico, Central America

- Oldest Civilizations in the Middle East

- Villages or towns
 - Organized communities stored food, accumulated material goods, and engaged in trade
 - Division of labor: pottery, woven baskets, stone tools, vegetable filters
 - Men assumed **primary responsibility** in the fields/herding animals. Women grinded grain, cared for children, made clothes, household tasks and this led to a **rise in patriarchy**
- Writing and use of metals (e.g. copper, bronze) started 4000-3000 B.C.E
- **Bronze Age** started 3000-1200 BCE, then replaced by iron
- New pattern of human life

1.2 The Emergence of Civilization

- **Civilization:** Complex culture in which large numbers of people share a variety of common elements
 - **Urban focus:** cities became the center of development
 - New political and military structure: developed a bureaucracy
 - Social structure: based on economic power
 - Upper → Middle → Lower (slaves)
 - Complexity in **materialism:** developed luxury items and goods
 - Distinct religious structure: Gods
 - Writing: Records
 - Artistic and Intellectual activity: Architecture
- Civilizations that developed

River Civilizations	Mesopotamia → Tigris and Euphrates
	Valleys of Indus River in India → Himalayas to Arabian Sea
	Northern China → Yellow River
	Egypt → Nile
	Peru (South America) → Supe River Valley, many buildings
Plain Civilizations	Uzbekistan (Central Asia) → Writing, cultivation, their own system of irrigation, bronze tools

1.3 Civilization in Mesopotamia

Geography and Agriculture

- Location: Mesopotamia, literally “land between the rivers” (referring to Tigris and Euphrates)
- Climate: Little rainfall; irregular flooding dependent on snowmelt from mountains
- Soil: Fertile due to silt deposits from river floods
- Human adaptation:
 - Construction of **irrigation canals and drainage ditches** to manage water
 - Required **cooperation and planning**, a hallmark of civilizations
- Impact: Surplus crops → food security → growth of cities and specialized labor
- Conflicts between city-states were likely:
 - Flat plains made city-states vulnerable to attack
 - Rivers were shared resources → disputes over irrigation and farmland
 - Expansion of agriculture increased territorial competition

Sumerian City-States

- Origins: Sumerians (~3000 BCE), origin unclear

- Major city-states: Eridu, Ur, Uruk, Umma, Lagash
- Political structure:
 - Each city controlled surrounding farm → independent city-states
 - Centralized authority centered on king and priestly elite
- Religious buildings:
 - **Ziggurats:** massive stepped towers, temples at top
 - Temples dedicated to city's patron deity
- Government type:
 - **Theocracy:** priests had power; kings were seen as divinely appointed
 - Kings led armies and managed public works (irrigation, infrastructure)
- Social structure
 - **Elites:** kings, royal family, high priests and priestesses
 - **Dependent commoners:** clients working on palace/temple estates
 - **Free commoners:** farmers, merchants, fishers, artisans, scribes (~90% of population)
 - Slaves:
 - Owned by temples, palaces, and wealthy landowners
 - Used in construction, agriculture, textile production, domestic labor
 - Hierarchy affected daily life
 - Class determined legal rights, economic opportunities, and punishments
 - Most Mesopotamians worked in agriculture, but cities had diverse labor for trade and crafts
- Empires and warfare
 - Conflict: constant war over land and water resources among city states

Akkadian Empire (~2340 BCE)

- Leader called Sargon
 - Conquered Sumerian city states, appointed governors
 - Maintained standing arm (5400 soldiers)
 - Legacy: first large dynastic empire in Mesopotamia

Babylonian Empire (~1792 BCE)

- Leader called Hammurabi
 - Conquest strategy: divide opponents → subdue individually
 - Built infrastructure: walls, temples, canals
 - Promoted trade and economic growth
 - Seen as a "shepherd" to his people, ensuring peace and prosperity

- Decline of empires: Weak successors → fragmentation → return to city state conflicts

Code of Hammurabi

- Purpose: enforce justice, portray Hammurabi as a source of law
- Principles:
 - Retribution: "an eye for an eye"
 - Punishments varied by social class
 - Crimes against nobles are more severe than against commoners
- Examples of laws:
 - Family: arranged marriages, dowries, property rights
 - Women: limited rights, but could reclaim dowry or inheritance under certain conditions
 - Children: strict obedience, harsh punishments for offenses
- Code reveals
 - A structured social hierarchy
 - Patriarchal control of family and property
 - A legal system closely tied to religious and moral authority

Religion and Culture

- Worldview: Mesopotamians believed gods controlled every aspect of life
- Polytheism: multiple deities responsible for natural forces and human events
- Major gods:
 - An: sky
 - Enlil: wind
 - Enki: water, earth, inventions
 - Ninhursaga: soil, vegetation, mother goddess
- Human role: perform labor for gods, maintain their favor
- Priestly class:
 - Conducted rituals, sacrifices, and divination
 - Divination: reading animal livers/organs to predict outcomes
- Literature:
 - **Epic of Gilgamesh:** explores mortality, human ambition, relationship with gods
- Religion was central to Mesopotamian life
 - Natural disasters were unpredictable and believed to be caused by Gods
 - Kings relied on priests to maintain legitimacy
 - Rituals aimed to secure divine protection and prosperity

Writing and Sciences

- Cuneiform writing system
 - Developed c. 3000 BCE
 - Evolved from pictographs → stylized signs → phonetic symbols
 - Used for record-keeping, education, literature, law
- Scribal schools
 - Trained professional scribes for temple, government, and business
 - Education mainly for wealthy boys
- Mathematics
 - Base 60 number system, geometry for land measurement and building
- Astronomy
 - Lunar months, solar-year adjustments, charted constellations
- Early writing systems had
 - Pictographs symbolize objects/ideas → abstract meaning
 - Necessary administration, trade, legal records

1.4 Egyptian Civilization: "The Gift of the Nile"

Geography and the Nile River

- The **Nile River** is the longest river in the world, flowing north from central Africa to the Mediterranean
- Annual flooding deposited fertile silt, creating the **Black Land** along the banks, surrounded by deserts called the **Red Land**
- **Delta:** Northern Nile splits into 2 branches forming Lower Egypt; upstream is Upper Egypt
- Nile benefits:
 - Provided fertile soil → abundant harvests → food surpluses
 - Natural transportation → easier travel, trade, and communication
- Geography offered **protection from invasions:**
 - Deserts to east and west
 - Cataracts in the south
 - Mediterranean to the north
 - Unlike Mesopotamia, in the Nile:
 - Flooding was predictable → stable, life-enhancing rather than threatening
 - Society remained more rural with many villages along the Nile
 - Geography created security, stability and a sense of continuity in Egyptian civilization

The Pharaoh and Religion

- Pharaohs were divine rulers and central to both political and spiritual life
- **Hymn to the Nile:** shows Egyptians' gratitude for the river's life giving power
- **Hymn to the Pharaoh:** celebrates kingship as a unifying and protective force
- Pharaoh maintained **Ma'at** the cosmic order of truth, justice and harmony
- Religion was inseparable from daily life
 - Polytheistic with gods linked to the sun, Nile, and natural forces
 - Major gods: Re (sun), Osiris (afterlife), Isis (fertility, resurrection), Horus (royalty)
 - Pharaohs were "Son of Re" and central to rituals
- Afterlife belief:
 - Humans had **ka**, their spiritual body
 - Mummification preserved the body so the **ka** could continue life
 - Tombs contained goods for the afterlife

Periods of Egyptian History

Old Kingdom (c. 2575-2125 BCE)

- Capital: Memphis
- Age of prosperity, pyramids, and monumental architecture
- Pharaoh seen as God-king
- Bureaucracy developed; vizier oversaw provinces (nomes)
- Hierarchical society: (from most to least powerful) pharaoh → nobles/priests → merchants/artisans → peasants/servants
- Achievements
 - Pyramids, including the Great Pyramid of Khufu at Giza
 - Art: formulaic, functional, tied to ritual
 - Writing: hieroglyphics → sacred inscriptions, later simplified scripts on papyrus

Middle Kingdom

- Followed a period of disorder (First Intermediate Period)
- Pharaoh portrayed as a shepherd of the people → public welfare focus
- Nome system reorganized for clearer governance
- Bureaucracy more structured; tax collection and labor obligations formalized
- Culture
 - Osiris cult democratized → afterlife accessible to more people
 - Continued monumental construction and art

New Kingdom (c. 1539-1069 BCE)

- After Hyksos invasion and the Second Intermediate period
- Militaristic, expansionist, professional army
- Pharaohs gained immense wealth, built grand temples
- Known pharaohs: Hatshepsut (trade, temples), Thutmose III (military campaigns), Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten (religious reform, monotheism attempt), Tutankhamun (restored traditional religion), Ramesses II (military, monumental construction)
- Decline due to internal struggles, invasions by **Sea Peoples**, and a gradual loss of empire

Society and Economy

- Economy:
 - Growth based on agriculture
 - Trade along the Nile, Red Sea and internationally (Crete, Syria, Punt, Nubia)
 - Crafts: jewelry, furniture, tools, papyrus, linen, art
- Family life
 - Marriage encouraged early, monogamy was common
 - Women respected, could inherit property and run businesses
 - Marriage was arranged, children especially sons were important

Culture and Achievements

- Architecture: pyramids, temples, tombs
- Art: stylized, formulaic, functional for ritual and afterlife
- Writing: Hieroglyphics, later simplified scripts on papyrus
- Religion: central to life; preserved Ma'at
- Afterlife beliefs: Mummification, ka, Osiris cult

Egyptian Influence

- Nubia/Kush: trade in gold, ivory, ebony, spices, and slaves
- Cultural borrowing: pyramids, hieroglyphs, religious beliefs
- Kushite dynasty ruled Egypt (25th dynasty)

Mediterranean

- Influence trade, expanded Egyptian wealth and knowledge

Continuity and Change

- Nile central to agriculture and transport
- Pharaoh as central ruler and divine figure
- Belief in cosmic order, afterlife, and ritual
- Hierarchical social structure

- Shifts in pharaohs roles (absolute god-king type person → shepherd of people)
- Military and empire expansion during New Kingdom
- Religious experiments (Akhenaten)
- Periods of disorder and foreign invasion

1.5 The Roman World Empire

Early Rome and the Republic

- Founding myths: Romulus & Remus, Aeneas
- **Etruscan** influence: urban planning, engineering

Roman Republic (509–27 BCE)

- Patricians vs. plebeians → Struggle of the Orders
- Offices: consuls, praetors, tribunes of the plebs
- Senate: advisory but powerful
- Conquest of Italy:
 - Roman Confederation granted citizenship or ally status
- **Punic Wars** (264–146 BCE):
 - Rome vs. Carthage → Rome dominates western Mediterranean
 - Hannibal's invasion led to second Punic War
 - Scipio Africanus defeats Carthage
- **Marius**: professional army loyal to generals
- Crisis of the Republic:
 - Grachi brothers created land reform, but were assassinated
 - First Triumvirate (**Julius Caesar**, Pompey, Crassus)
 - Julius Caesar declared himself dictator for life, but was assassinated (44 BCE)

The Roman Empire at Its Height

- **Augustus Caesar** (27 BCE–14 CE):
 - First emperor; Pax Romana Begins
 - Maintained republican façade
- Five Good Emperors (96–180 CE):
 - Trajan, Hadrian – expanded and stabilized empire
 - Romanization: spread of Latin, law, urban culture
- Economy and Society
 - Latifundia (large estates with slave labor)
 - Silk Road used for trade with Han China

- Had **paterfamilias**: male head of household
- Culture
 - Virgil wrote the epic **Aeneid**
 - Roman law: twelve tables, law of nations, natural law
- Architecture: arch, vault, dome, concrete (e.g. Pantheon, Colosseum)
- Daily life:
 - Bread and circuses for entertainment (gladiators, chariot races)
 - Slavery was widespread → led to the **Spartacus revolt** (73–71 BCE)

Crisis and the Late Empire

- Third-century crisis: 27 emperors in 50 years, invasions, plague, inflation
- **Diocletian and Constantine**:
 - **Tetrarchy**, price controls, hereditary occupations
 - **Tetrarchy**: dividing the Roman Empire between 2 emperors
 - Constantinople founded (330 CE)

Fall of the West (476 CE):

- Germanic tribes (Visigoths, Vandals) sacked Rome
- Odoacer deposes Romulus Augustulus

Rise of Christianity

- Jesus of Nazareth: message of love, salvation
- Paul of Tarsus: spread to Gentiles
- Persecution → Edict of Milan (313 CE, Constantine) → official religion (Theodosius, 380 CE)
- Appealed to all classes; offered community, eternal life

Roman vs Han Empires

- Similarities:
 - Large populations (~50–60 million)
 - Road networks, centralized bureaucracy, agrarian base
 - Threatened by nomadic invasions (Xiongnu/Germans)
- Differences:
 - Han Empire had dynastic continuity, Confucian ideology, less social mobility
 - Rome was a republic then empire, greater merchant role, more urbanized
 - Legacy: China reunified; Rome West collapsed permanently