

Chapter 2

THE RISE OF CIVILIZATION

The Art of the Ancient Near East

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. The Ziggurat at Ur can best be described as a:

- a. Sumerian burial ground
- b. fortified city-state
- c. palace for Naram-Sin
- d. Sumerian temple base

Answer: **d**

2. Ishtar Gate, with its relief decorations of a dragon, lion and bull, comes from the city of:

- a. Lagash
- b. Persepolis
- c. Ur
- d. Babylon

Answer: **d**

3. Bull-headed capitals would most likely be found in

- a. Lascaux
- b. Jericho
- c. Persia
- d. Israel

Answer: **c**

4. The new concept of godlike sovereignty can be described by the representations of _____, the king who appeared as a god in Mesopotamian Akkadian art.

- a. Urnanshe
- b. Naram-Sin
- c. Eannatum
- d. Gilgamesh

Answer: **b**

5. Use of glazed brickwork is most characteristic of the city of _____.

- a. Lascaux
- b. Stonehenge
- c. Babylon
- d. Jericho

Answer: **c**

6. The stylistic conventions of rigidly frontal symmetry, abnormally large eyes, and tightly clasped hands are most characteristic of the early art of _____.

- a. Jericho
- b. Çatal Hüyük
- c. Sumer
- d. Babylon

Answer: **c**

7. The White Temple, Uruk is oriented to the _____.

- a. Orion constellation
- b. Cardinal points of the compass
- c. Persian Gulf
- d. North

Answer: **b**

8. A predominant theme or themes found in the narrative reliefs of the Assyrians was or were:

- a. the sun disk, Aton
- b. war and hunting
- c. scenes of the afterlife
- d. animal fables

Answer: **b**

9. Persian relief figure sculpture can be distinguished from earlier Mesopotamian styles by:

- a. the bulging muscles
- b. use of extremely large eyes
- c. a preference for nudity
- d. forms are more rounded

Answer: **d**

10. Which of the following best describes the *Standard of Ur*?

- a. early example of an official account of the rulers of Sumer
- b. early example of an official account of import goods
- c. early example of mythological narrative
- d. early example of historical narrative

Answer: **d**

11. In ancient Mesopotamia the hierarchy of scale was a convention, which indicated:

- a. order of importance
- b. order of the gods
- c. the first families
- d. the power of money

Answer: **a**

12. The open-eyed stares of the votive statues of ancient Sumer are thought to represent:

- a. portraits of specific people
- b. eternal wakefulness and duty
- c. vigilance against demons
- d. the priestly class

Answer **b**

13. The Mesopotamian king who codified the law and prescribed penalties for infractions was _____.
- a. Urnanshe
 - b. Innana
 - c. Naram-Sin
 - d. Hammurabi

Answer **d**

14. What Anatolian people constructed two huge lions that adorn the gateway to the citadel of Boghazköy?
- a. Elamites
 - b. Hittites
 - c. Susans
 - d. Kassites

Answer: **b**

15. The rock-cut relief at Bishapur depicts:
- a. the Sun-god Innana
 - b. the coronation of Shapur II
 - c. a dying lioness
 - d. triumph of Shapur I over Valerian

Answer: **d**

16. Historical narrative relief can be found at the Assyrian palace of _____ at Nimrud.
- a. Gudea
 - b. Sargon IV
 - c. Marduk I
 - d. Ashurnasirpal II

Answer: **d**

17. Alexander the Great razed Persepolis in 330 BCE. What prior event suggests that this was an act of revenge?
- a. destruction of Assyrian city of Nimrud
 - b. birth of the Sasanian dynasty
 - c. Persian sack of the Athenian Acropolis
 - d. Persian sack of Sparta

Answer: **c**

18. What epic poem recounts the exploits of a legendary king of Uruk and slayer of the monster Huwawa?
- a. *Iliad and Odyssey*

- b. *Epic of Gilgamesh*
- c. *Epic of Nimrud*
- d. *Tale of Homer*

Answer: **b**

19. The Victory stele of Eannatum (*Stele of the Vultures*) is an extraordinary monument because it provides information about warfare techniques and insight into the special nature of the ruler. Which statement provides the most valid justification for this assertion?
- a. these descriptions are found in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*
 - b. excavated tablets with these descriptions are found in Nimrud
 - c. words and pictures are combined
 - d. the inclusion of vultures, which are special avatars of the ruler

Answer: **c**

20. The statement, “measuring rods and coiled rope,” which connotes the ruler’s capacity to build social order and render judgments, is best depicted on the _____.
- a. Stele of Hammurabi
 - b. *Standard of Ur*
 - c. Victory Stele of Naram-Sin
 - d. Victory stele of Eannatum (*Stele of the Vultures*)

Answer: **a**

21. One of the suggested purposes of Assyrian narrative relief is to:
- a. show the horror of war
 - b. show the joy of the hunt
 - c. glorify the gods
 - d. glorify the king

Answer: **d**

22. In Assyrian relief, such as *Assyrian archers pursuing enemies*, the artists combine different viewpoints in the same frame and other adjustments for clarity. Which of the following phrases best describes the artists’ primary goal?
- a. artistic license
 - b. legible retelling of a decisive moment in king’s deeds
 - c. following technical codes as established by the Sasanians
 - d. following technical codes as established by the Elamites

Answer: **b**

23. The Elamite statue of Queen Napir-Asu shows its Mesopotamian heritage. Which phrase supports this assertion?
- a. square volume and strict frontality
 - b. strict true profile and slim silhouette
 - c. cylindrical volume and strict frontality
 - d. optical profile and full silhouette

Answer: **c**

24. The Elamite statue of Queen Napir-Asu represents the ideal queen; in addition there is an allusion to fertility, as it relates to being queen. Which motif supports this allusion?

- a. hands crossed over the belly
- b. upright posture
- c. patterned gown
- d. inscription on queen's skirt

Answer: **a**

25. The Sumerians may have been the first to use pictures to tell coherent stories. What argument makes this a valid assertion?

- a. narrative presented with haphazard figures
- b. narrative presented in registers or bands
- c. narrative presented in squares or boxes
- d. narrative presented with same-size figures

Answer: **b**

26. Which of the following works of art was created first?

- a. *Standard of Ur*
- b. Victory stele of Eannatum (*Stele of the Vultures*)
- c. Worshippers from the Square Temple at Eshnunna
- d. *Warka Vase*

Answer: **d**

27. What is diorite?

- a. rare and costly dark stone
- b. type of clay
- c. tar-like substance
- d. thin rock found only in Ur

Answer: **a**

28. The monumental gateway to the citadel of Persepolis is a reference to _____.

- a. the harmony of the peoples of the Assyrian empire
- b. the harmony of the peoples of the Sasanian empire
- c. the harmony of the peoples of the Persian empire
- d. the harmony of the peoples of the Elamite empire

Answer: **c**

SHORT ANSWER

29. What is the significance of *cuneiform*?

Answer: marked the beginning of writing, as historians strictly define it and led to more, sophisticated, complex grammatical constructions.

30. Explain the importance of cylinder seals.

Answer: prized possessions indicating status and served as devices to identify ownership and prevent unauthorized use as well as a “signature”.

31. What is a *lamassu* and where was it placed?

Answer: A winged man-headed bull as a guardian at the gate of the palace.

32. What is an *iwan*?

Answer: a brick audience hall covered by a barrel vault.

33. How did the destruction of Persepolis change the balance of power within the Ancient Near East?

Answer: symbolized the destruction of imperial Persian power and its end as a significant political power in the Mediterranean and Near Eastern worlds. The focus of power now rested in the hands of Alexander the Great and later Imperial Rome. In the 3rd century CE, a new dynasty rose and challenged Rome for supremacy of the area, the Sasanians.

34. What is the most importance archaeological source of knowledge regarding Persian architecture?

Answer: Persepolis

35. Discuss the focus of Sumerian city planning.

Answer: reflected the importance of religion in daily life; the city’s nucleus was the temple that also served as the administrative and economic center for the city, thus representing both religious and secular functionalities.

36. Why was the concept of the city-state an important innovation?

Answer: the community rather than the family assumes the function of defense. Other activities such as manufacturing or trade or administration become institutionalized thus gaining a unique and permanent identity.

37. What do the reliefs of the palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh depict?

Answer: the glory and power of the king as the triumphant ruler.

38. The Elamite Empire was strong enough to plunder Babylon and carry off the stele of Naram-Sin and Hammurabi, then re-erect them in their capital city of Susa. Why is this event significant?

Answer: It demonstrated their political and military superiority as the leading power during this time.

39. How does the *lamassu* provide a conceptual picture and all of its important parts?

Answer: it presents a front view of the animal at rest and a side view of it in motion, thus showing the creature with all its important parts.

40. What is the purpose of a *votive* figure?

Answer: It offers constant prayers to the gods on behalf of the donor

41. Describe an architectural feature used at Persepolis that seems to have been uniquely Persian.

Answer: capitals with the foreparts of lions or bulls

42. How do the reliefs on the Palace of Darius at Persepolis reflect the purpose of the building?

Answer: The relief of subject nations bringing tribute to the Persian ruler and the complex palace ceremonials echoed the purpose of the great palace which was intended to symbolize Persian power.

43. What was the importance of the Code of Hammurabi?

Answer: He developed a codified series of laws that brought unity to the conflicting and often unwritten laws of Mesopotamia and probably influenced the Law of Moses, which had such a profound effect on Western civilization.

44. Describe three stylistic conventions found in Sumerian sculpture.

Answer: Sumerian relief sculpture uses the convention of showing figures in profile with shoulders full frontal, and the poses are regularized and repeated. An oval shape is used for full round sculpture; eyes are large, and hands are often clasped.

45. Why is the Hittite Lion Gate at Boghazköy significant?

Answer: It demonstrates a theme that was echoed throughout the Ancient Near East. The gate presents the idea of protection; the lions protect the city.

SAMPLE ESSAY QUESTIONS

46. Discuss the change in political power initiated by the Akkadians and its effect on their art. Use examples to support your essay.

Answer: pages 16-27

47. Describe the changing political map of the Ancient Near East. How did this political climate initiate change in the creative processes of three distinct groups (your choice)? How did the political climate disseminate the artistic motifs from group to group? How did your selected groups adapt these conventions to fit their respective aesthetic needs? Use examples to support your essay.

Answer: See text of chapter.

48. Discuss the development of Assyrian historical narrative relief. How did it differ from their neighbors? Use examples to support your essay.

Answer: pages 20-21, 22-24, 26, and 32-35.

49. Compare and contrast temple architecture and palace architecture. How do these structures define their respective groups? Use two distinct cultural groups and specific examples to support your essay.

Answer: See text of chapter.

50. Discuss the impact Sumerian culture had on Mesopotamia. What were their contributions to the development of society and art? How did their culture influence contemporaneous and later groups? Use specific examples to develop your essay.

Answer: See text of chapter.

51. Discuss the changes that have occurred in art from the Neolithic Period (**Chapter 1**) to the art of the ancient Near East. Use examples to support your essay.

Answer: Chapter 1 pages 10-14; See text of chapter 2.

52. Discuss the social and economic changes that took place in the Ancient Near East. How did these changes impact the art? Use specific examples to support your essay.

Answer: See text of chapter.

53. Describe the religion practiced by Sumer and how it affected their art. Use examples to support your essay.

Answer: pages 18-25.

54. Discuss the development of relief sculpture in the Ancient Near East. Focus on three groups. Consider changes in the proportions of the figures, the depiction of details, and the position of head and shoulders in relation to the body. Cite specific works to illustrate your argument.

Answer: See text of chapter.

55. Describe the differences between Assyrian relief sculpture and Achaemenid relief sculpture. Consider the function of the relief and how it reflected the group. Use examples to support your essay.

Answer: pages 31-32 and 33-34.

SLIDE IDENTIFICATION

Select the response that relates best to the image on the screen.

56. (Figure 2–2)
a. Uruk
b. Ur
c. Babylon
d. Lagash

Answer: **a**

57. (Figure 2–6)
a. Hammurabi
b. Ashurbanipal
c. Eshnunna
d. Gudea

Answer: **c**

58. (Figure 2–6)
a. deities
b. court of Gudea
c. council of Ur
d. votive figures

Answer: **d**

59. (Figure 2–17)
a. Victory Stele of Naram-Sin
b. Stele of Hammurabi
c. Victory Stele of Eannatum
d. Stele of Ashurbanipal

Answer: **b**

60. (Figure 2–16)
- a. Gudea
 - b. Urnanshe
 - c. Eannatum
 - d. Sargon the Great

Answer: **a**

61. (Figure 2–26)
- a. apadana
 - b. plaza
 - c. sanctuary
 - d. royal bedchamber

Answer: **a**

62. (Figure 2–28)
- a. Triumph of Ashurbanipal over Cyrus
 - b. Triumph of Xerxes over Alexander the Great
 - c. Triumph of Titus over Shapur I
 - d. Triumph of Shapur I over Valerian

Answer: **d**

63. (Figure 2–7)
- a. Victory Stele of Naram-Sin
 - b. Stele of Hammurabi
 - c. Victory Stele of Eannatum (Stele of the Vultures)
 - d. Stele of Gudea

Answer: **c**

64. (Figure 2–11)
- a. signet ring
 - b. bracelet
 - c. cylinder seal
 - d. stele

Answer: **c**

65. (Figure 2–8)
- a. Standard of Cyrus
 - b. Standard of Hammurabi
 - c. Standard of Ur
 - d. Standard of Nimrud

Answer: **c**

66. (Figure 2–15)
- a. Sumerian
 - b. Akkadian
 - c. Babylonian
 - d. Assyrian

Answer: **a**

67. (Figure 2–13)
- a. Naram-Sin of Akkad
 - b. Hammurabi of Babylon
 - c. Gudea of Lagash
 - d. Napir-Asu of Susa

Answer: **a**

68. (Figure 2–20)
- a. Persepolis
 - b. Dur Sharrukin (modern Khorsabad)
 - c. Babylon
 - d. Akkad

Answer: **b**

69. (Figure 2–22)
- a. Assyrian
 - b. Persian
 - c. Sumerian
 - d. Neo-Babylonian

Answer: **a**

70. (Figure 2–27)
- a. Babylonian
 - b. Sasanian
 - c. Akkadian
 - d. Sumerian

Answer: **b**

71. (Figure 2–10)
- a. Standard of Ur
 - b. cylinder seal
 - c. lamassu
 - d. sound box

Answer: **d**

72. (Figure 2–4)
- a. Uruk
 - b. Sasanian
 - c. Assyrian
 - d. Babylonian

Answer: **a**

73. (Figure 2–21)
- a. Hittite
 - b. Achaemenid
 - c. Assyrian
 - d. Sasanian

Answer: **c**

74. (Figure 2-24)
- a. Ur
 - b. Babylon
 - c. Persepolis
 - d. Assyria

Answer: **b**

SLIDE QUESTIONS

75. The Head of an Akkadian ruler (Figure 2-12) represents
- a. a deity
 - b. an official and ruler
 - c. the work of Persepolis
 - d. a royal figure from Sumer

Answer: **b**

76. Statuettes of worshipers (Figure 2-6) represent
- a. rulers and duty
 - b. deep commitment to religion and service
 - c. the work of Uruk
 - d. the canon of Assyrian sculptural tradition

Answer: **b**

77. Statue of Queen Napir-Asu (Figure 2-19)
- a. represents ideal queen and serves as a votive figure
 - b. represents ideal goddess and serves as an idol
 - c. represents the work of the Sasanian Empire
 - d. represents the work of Sumer

Answer: **a**

78. Assyrian archers pursuing enemies (Figure 2-22) and Ashurbanipal hunting lions (Figure 2-23)
- a. represents the work of the Assyrian and Achaemenid Empires
 - b. sculptors have shown the optical view of both events
 - c. sculptors have shown the conceptual view of both events
 - d. represents the work of the Elamite Empire

Answer: **c**

79. Victory stele of Naram-Sin (Figure 2-13) and Triumph of Shapur I over Valerian (Figure 2-28)
- a. both represent a military victory
 - b. both represent deep religious commitment of both civilizations
 - c. both represent mythological heroes
 - d. both exhibit influences from Ancient Greece

Answer: **a**

80. Soundbox of the lyre from tomb 789 (Figure 2-10)

- a. represents the coat-of-arms of Naram-sin
- b. can be found on the Standard of Ur
- c. represents the coat-of-arms of Eannatum
- d. represents heraldic composition and burlesquing a regal feast

Answer: **d**

81. Stele with law code of Hammurabi (figure 2-17) represents

- a. the gods granting the right to rule
- b. the coronation of the ruler
- c. the work of Sumer and Babylon
- d. the gods granting the right to codify the law

Answer: **a**

82. Statuettes of worshipers (Figure 2-6) and Seated Gudea holding temple plan (Figure 2-16)

- a. both represent the continuing tradition of depictions of royalty
- b. both represent the deep commitment to religion and the gods
- c. both represent the work of Sumer and Akkad
- d. both represent the Assyrian tradition of royal depictions

Answer: **b**

83. Persepolis (royal audience hall) (figure2-25) and Palace of Shapur I, Ctesiphon (Figure 2-27).

- a. both represent the splendor of the Achaemenid Empire
- b. both represent the influences of the Greeks
- c. each palace complex defines its period
- d. each represents the influences of Parthian construction techniques

Answer: **c**

84. Victory stele of Eannatum (*Stele of the Vultures*) (Figure 2-7) and Victory stele of Naram-Sin (Figure 2-13)

- a. Victory stele of Naram-Sin shows daring innovation by breaking with the compositional formula of story telling via horizontal registers
- b. Victory stele of Eannatum (*Stele of the Vultures*) represents the Assyrian tradition of war relief
- c. each work represents Sumer and Elamite workshops
- d. each work represents Achaemenid and Sasanian workshops

Answer: **a**