

CHAPTER 1—THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST: THE FIRST CIVILIZATIONS

ESSAY

1. What parts of the transition from hunting and gathering to a settled, agricultural society would have improved most people's lives, and what parts of the transition would have decreased the quality of life?
ANS:
2. Try to define the differences between the terms "society" and "civilization."
ANS:
3. Some scholars refer to Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations as "hydraulic" cultures. Check the definition of "hydraulic," and write an essay justifying the application of this term to these cultures.
ANS:
4. Compare and contrast the role of women and families in Mesopotamian and Egyptian societies.
ANS:
5. In the modern Western world, we often draw a distinction between religion and secular society. Would this distinction have made sense to the peoples of ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt?
ANS:
6. Discuss some of the similarities and the differences between the religions and religious practices of the Mesopotamian region with those of Egyptian civilization.
ANS:
7. The Code of Hammurabi was one of the first of all ancient legal codes. In what ways was it "modern"? How was it different from modern day Western legal codes? What do you believe constituted "justice" for the inhabitants of Mesopotamian city-states?
ANS:
8. Discuss the possible reasons why Mesopotamia saw so many different civilizations, from the Sumerians to the Persians, while civilization in the Nile Valley remained essentially unchanged for three millennium.
ANS:
9. Why begin the history of Western Civilization with a study of ancient societies in Mesopotamia and Egypt?
ANS:
10. What were the causes and the consequences of the migration of Indo-European speakers into the Near East during the second millennium B.C.?
ANS:
11. Which society presented in Chapter 1 would you have preferred to live in, and why?
ANS:

IDENTIFICATIONS

1. Hominids
ANS:
2. Australopithecine
ANS:
3. *Homo erectus*
ANS:
4. Neanderthals
ANS:

5. *Homo sapiens sapiens*
ANS:
6. Paleolithic Age
ANS:
7. cave paintings at Chauvet
ANS:
8. Neolithic Revolution
ANS:
9. Çatal Huyuk
ANS:
10. Southwest Asia
ANS:
11. Mesopotamia
ANS:
12. Indus and Yellow Rivers
ANS:
13. Sumerians
ANS:
14. Tigris and Euphrates Rivers
ANS:
15. Agricultural Revolution
ANS:
16. Eridu, Ur, Uruk, and Lagash
ANS:
17. Sargon of Akkad
ANS:
18. Naram-Sin of Akkad
ANS:
19. Code of Hammurabi
ANS:
20. ziggurat
ANS:
21. cuneiform
ANS:
22. epic of *Enuma elish*
ANS:
23. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*
ANS:
24. "The Gift of the Nile"
ANS:
25. Menes
ANS:
26. Upper and Lower Egypt
ANS:

27. Old Kingdom
ANS:
28. the pyramids
ANS:
29. Middle Kingdom
ANS:
30. polytheism
ANS:
31. Isis
ANS:
32. Osiris
ANS:
33. Seth
ANS:
34. Amon-Re
ANS:
35. hieroglyphs
ANS:
36. Hyksos
ANS:
37. New Kingdom
ANS:
38. Ahmose I
ANS:
39. Amenhotep III
ANS:
40. Akhenaten
ANS:
41. Tutankhamun
ANS:
42. Hatshepsut
ANS:
43. Ramesses II
ANS:
44. Sea Peoples
ANS:
45. Megaliths
ANS:
46. Stonehenge
ANS:
47. Indo-Europeans
ANS:
48. Hittites
ANS:

49. Suppiluliumas I

ANS:

50. bronze and iron

ANS:

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Hominids split off from the great apes around six million years ago in
- Europe
 - Asia
 - Africa
 - South America
 - North America

ANS: C

REF:

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2. *The first modern Homo sapiens*
- first appeared in Africa between 200,000 and 150,000 years ago.
 - was a skilled hunter who had mastered the bow and arrow.
 - lived mostly in small groups near the sea.
 - mastered the art of making bronze tools and weapons.
 - appeared in Europe about one million years ago.

ANS: A

REF:

p. 2

MSC:

*new

3. The cave in southern France, discovered in 1994 and that contains three hundred paintings of animals, is known as the ____ cave.
- Lascaux
 - Chauvet
 - Andalusia
 - Pyrenees
 - Poitiers

ANS: B

REF:

p. 3-4

4. All of the following are believed to be developments of the Paleolithic Age except
- the utilization of tools.
 - origins of religious and decorative art.
 - a social system with rough equality between the sexes.
 - the controlled use of fire.
 - the regular production of food through agriculture.

ANS: E

REF:

p. 2-4

5. In ancient civilizations, bronze would replace copper because
- bronze was harder and more durable.
 - it was prettier and therefore made prettier jewelry.
 - bronze took less time to smelt.
 - bronze ore was easier to find.
 - copper tools and weapons became too soft because of the hot weather of the Middle East.

ANS: A

REF:

p. 5

6. The early Neolithic era saw
- a slow transition from hunting and gathering to an agricultural society.
 - the appearance of cities and urban life.
 - the domestication of the horse in ancient Egypt.
 - the smelting of iron.
 - all of the above

ANS: A REF: p. 4-5

7. The term "civilization" refers to human societies which, amongst other features,
- have an urban focus and a distinct religious structure.
 - have art and music.
 - support themselves mainly by trading and manufacturing.
 - have learned to live in peace with their neighbors.
 - have given up religion and adopted rational thinking.

ANS: A REF: p. 5

8. One of the oldest known agricultural villages, located in Palestine, was
- Canaan.
 - Ur.
 - Byblos.
 - Jerusalem.
 - Jericho.

ANS: E REF: p. 4

9. The ancient city of Catal Huyuk was
- a farming community located in Greece.
 - a Neolithic walled community sustained by food surpluses.
 - a large city with an elaborate water and sewer system.
 - an autocracy in which ruling religious elders exercise all political power.
 - the capitol of Egypt during the Old Kingdom.

ANS: B REF: p. 4-5

10. In agrarian societies, an economic surplus is food which is
- not wanted or needed.
 - used to support a non-laboring elite.
 - used to supplement the diets of hard-working farmers.
 - used to feed a growing population of farmers.
 - used to feed foreign prisoners taken in war.

ANS: B REF: p. 6

11. The Sumerians
- defeated the Hittites in 2600 B.C.
 - were plagued by incessant warfare between their many city-states.
 - had a complicated religion with a sophisticated belief in life after death.
 - were warriors who instituted totalitarian government.
 - built dams and irrigation canals along the Indus River.

ANS: B REF: p. 9

12. The Sumerian government
- came to view kings as agents of their gods.
 - saw the various city-states erect different types of governments.
 - was a theocracy in which the priest ruled.
 - was a type of aristocracy where nobles were appointed by an assembly.
 - was controlled by the merchant and artisan class.

ANS: A REF: p. 8

13. Sumerian kings derived their authority from
- the will of the people.
 - the parliamentary councils of the city-states.
 - success in athletic tournaments.
 - the gods.

e. their military victories over the "barbarians".

ANS: D REF: p. 8

14. Mesopotamia is located in the valley of the
- Indus River
 - Danube River
 - Tigris and Euphrates rivers
 - Nile River
 - Po River

ANS: C REF: p. 7

15. The basic unit of early Mesopotamian civilization was the
- city-state.
 - village.
 - county.
 - land one man could plough in a day.
 - empire.

ANS: A REF: p. 8

16. The physical environment of the Mesopotamians generally led to
- an optimistic outlook emphasizing the secular life.
 - a pessimistic outlook and loathing of religion.
 - a pessimistic outlook with an emphasis on satisfying their angry gods.
 - an optimistic outlook with a belief in providing for benevolent gods.
 - profound apathy and lack of any material accomplishments.

ANS: C REF: p. 12-13

17. Mesopotamian religion was
- monotheistic.
 - very simple with few rules and tenets.
 - severely critical of cultures that practiced divination.
 - one in which no one god reigned supreme and deities were closely related to cities.
 - abstract and metaphorical.

ANS: D REF: p. 12

18. The written script of Sumer is known as
- cuneiform.
 - alphabetic.
 - phonogram.
 - hieroglyphs.
 - Cyrillic.

ANS: A REF: p. 13

19. *The Epic of Gilgamesh* teaches that
- the gods are benevolent and care greatly for their people.
 - a wish fulfilled is not always a good thing.
 - human life is difficult and immortality is only for the gods.
 - a periodic flood is necessary to cleanse the world.
 - immortality is guaranteed for the believing worshippers.

ANS: C REF: p. 14-15

20. The ruler of Akkad, who established the first empire in Sumer ca. 2340 B.C. was
- Cyrus.
 - Naram-Sin.
 - Hammurabi.

- d. Uruk.
- e. Sargon.

ANS: E REF: p. 9

21. Gilgamesh was
- a. a thick barley porridge eaten by peasants.
 - b. the hero of a Sumerian epic poem.
 - c. the Sumerian god of storms.
 - d. the dwelling-place of the Sumerian gods.
 - e. the first ruler to unite Mesopotamia.

ANS: B REF: p. 14

22. Punishments for crimes under the Code of Hammurabi
- a. were more severe for the lower classes.
 - b. did not apply to domestic family concerns.
 - c. stressed reform rather than retribution.
 - d. were not for the upper class at all.
 - e. stressed the importance of confession and forgiveness.

ANS: A REF: p. 9-12

23. Which of the following statements best applies to the status of women in Mesopotamian society?
- a. Women exclusively controlled offices in the priesthood.
 - b. Divorce laws applied equally to men and women.
 - c. Punishments for adultery were light compared to those for men.
 - d. Woman had political but no religious rights.
 - e. The woman's role was to be in the home and subservient to her husband.

ANS: E REF: p. 11-12

24. Unlike the rivers in Mesopotamia, the Nile River
- a. never rises or falls, but flows steadily year-round.
 - b. frequently goes dry, leaving the land barren.
 - c. is subject to violent, unpredictable floods.
 - d. floods predictably at the same time every year.
 - e. was a dry shell for ten months of the year.

ANS: D REF: p. 16

25. The focal points and sources of life for the ancient Egyptians were the
- a. Nile River and the pharaohs.
 - b. herd animals and the temples.
 - c. Nile River and the military.
 - d. pharaoh and the stars.
 - e. pyramids and the sphinx.

ANS: A REF: p. 17-18

26. In comparison to Mesopotamian society, Egyptian society was
- a. more urban.
 - b. less dependent on rivers.
 - c. more rural.
 - d. without food surpluses.
 - e. more literate.

ANS: C REF: p. 16

27. Ancient Egyptian history is divided into ____ major periods.
- a. two
 - b. three

- c. four
- d. six
- e. eight

ANS: B REF: p. 17

28. According to Egyptian theology, the pharaoh derived his authority from
- a. democratic elections.
 - b. the assent of local governors.
 - c. the fact that he was perceived as a divine instrument of order and harmony.
 - d. hereditary descent.
 - e. military conquest.

ANS: C REF: p. 18

29. The term *Ma'at* expresses the Egyptian belief in
- a. the inevitability of human suffering and sorrow.
 - b. steady progress toward a better future.
 - c. the redemption promised to those who believe in the gods.
 - d. truth, justice, and order in the universe.
 - e. unremitting chaos.

ANS: D REF: p. 18

30. Egypt's Old Kingdom ended for all of the following except
- a. foreign invasion.
 - b. a drought caused by low levels of the Nile.
 - c. a decline in rainfall.
 - d. economic troubles.
 - e. decline of centralized authority.

ANS: A REF: p. 19 MSC: *new

31. For administrative purposes in the Old Kingdom, Egypt was
- a. divided into provinces called nomes and governed by nomarchs.
 - b. totally ruled by the pharaoh in all facets of government.
 - c. divided into military districts directly responsible to an army commander.
 - d. a parliamentary government with representatives from each district.
 - e. ruled by hereditary governors.

ANS: A REF: p. 19

32. The Hyksos
- a. were a Semitic-speaking people who infiltrated Egypt in the seventeenth century B.C.
 - b. were Indo-European peoples who were recruited into the Egyptian military.
 - c. were priests/astronomers in Egypt during the Old Kingdom.
 - d. fought and defeated the Egyptians in the ninth century B.C.
 - e. expelled the Jews from Egypt.

ANS: A REF: p. 23

33. The economy of ancient Egypt relied most heavily on
- a. foreign trade.
 - b. artisans and craftsmen.
 - c. slavery.
 - d. agriculture.
 - e. copper mining.

ANS: D REF: p. 20

34. Which of the following Egyptian gods was most closely associated with the mummification of the dead?

- a. Horus
- b. Re
- c. Osiris
- d. Isis
- e. Aten

ANS: C REF: p. 21

35. Originally the Osiris cult was reserved for
- a. the wealthy who could afford preservation of the body.
 - b. priests who knew religious secrets.
 - c. the poor who lived by the Nile.
 - d. the pharaohs alone.
 - e. all free men but no slaves nor serfs.

ANS: A REF: p. 22

36. The Egyptian Pyramids were
- a. built during the period of the New Kingdom.
 - b. part of a large spiritual complex near Alexandria.
 - c. conceived and built as tombs for a city of the dead.
 - d. all dedicated to the god Aten.
 - e. the final resting places of the pharaohs of the New Kingdom

ANS: C REF: p. 22-23

37. Which of the following is not true of Egyptian art?
- a. It was largely individually expressive, illustrated by many identifiable artists.
 - b. It was primarily functional and not intended to add beauty.
 - c. It was highly stylized.
 - d. It followed strict formulas governing form and presentation.
 - e. It often glorified the pharaohs.

ANS: A REF: p. 23

38. Amenhotep IV is best known for
- a. the temporary installation of the god of the sun disk in Egyptian culture.
 - b. expelling the Hyksos and leading Egypt along an imperialistic path.
 - c. increasing the power of the Amon-Re priesthood.
 - d. combating the invasion of the Sea Peoples.
 - e. establishing the worship of Osiris.

ANS: A REF: p. 23-24

39. Which of the following is not true of Egyptian social life?
- a. Women had many equal legal rights with men.
 - b. Marriages were based on love and personal attraction.
 - c. The upper classes devoted much time to entertainment.
 - d. The wife's primary role in the family was to produce children.
 - e. Polygamy was the rule.

ANS: B REF: p. 26-27

40. In general, during the imperialistic New Kingdom, Egyptian government changed by
- a. a gradual lessening in the power of pharaohs over their neighbors.
 - b. a decrease in the size of the royal bureaucracy.
 - c. the growing poverty and powerlessness of priesthoods.
 - d. the growing weakness of army commanders.
 - e. the increasing influence of the peasant class.

ANS: A REF: p. 26

41. In the thirteenth century the Egyptians were driven out of Palestine and back to their original frontiers by the
- Sumerians.
 - "Sea Peoples"
 - Babylonians
 - Hyksos.
 - Assyrians.

ANS: B REF: p. 26

42. Akhenaten is best known for his unsuccessful attempt to reform Egypt's
- military.
 - borders.
 - marriage customs.
 - religion.
 - currency.

ANS: D REF: p. 23-25

43. One of the few female pharaohs was
- Ramses.
 - Hatshepsut.
 - Menes.
 - Amenhotep.
 - Isis.

ANS: B REF: p. 26

44. In the first century B.C., Egypt became a province of
- Rome.
 - Persia.
 - Babylonia.
 - Mohenjo-Daro.
 - Greece.

ANS: A REF: p. 26

45. The Hittites
- were an Indo-European speaking peoples.
 - a Semitic speaking peoples.
 - defeated and destroyed by the Egyptians.
 - made iron weapons of war.
 - a and d

ANS: E REF: p. 30

46. The Hittites played an important role in the history of the Middle East because they
- defeated the Egyptians, thus ending Egypt's New Kingdom.
 - were conquered by the Assyrians, paving the way for the Assyrian Empire.
 - invented the alphabet.
 - drove the Sea Peoples back into the sea.
 - transmitted Mesopotamian culture to the west, especially to the Mycenaean Greeks.

ANS: E REF: p. 30

47. Growing appreciation of astronomy among European peoples after 4000 B.C. is best seen in
- cuneiform star charts.
 - wall paintings of galaxies.
 - megalithic observatories.
 - epic poems about the cosmos.
 - use of the astrolabe.

ANS: C REF: p. 18-29

48. The most famous of the megalithic constructions of Europe is
- Avebury.
 - Woodhenge.
 - Stonehenge.
 - Lascaux.
 - Altamira.

ANS: C REF: p. 29

49. The original Indo-Europeans possibly came from
- Mesopotamia.
 - the steppe region north of the Black Sea.
 - the Indus Valley.
 - the Aegean basin.
 - India.

ANS: B REF: p. 30

50. Which of the following is not an Indo-European language?
- Sanskrit
 - Babylonian
 - German
 - Latin
 - Greek.

ANS: B REF: p. 30

TRUE/FALSE

- The first hominid to leave Africa and move into Europe and Asia was *Homo sapiens*.
ANS: F REF: p. 2
- The word "Paleolithic" means "old stone."
ANS: T REF: p. 3
- The most prominent structure in a Sumerian city was a temple called a ziggurat.
ANS: T REF: p. 8
- Evidence indicates that the Sumerians were not the first peoples in ancient Mesopotamia inasmuch as a number of Sumerian agricultural and craft terms are not Sumerian in origin.
ANS: T REF: p. 7-8 MSC: *new
- The earliest of the Mesopotamian empires was founded by Gilgamesh.
ANS: F REF: p. 9
- The great literary epic of the ancient Sumerians was known as the *Book of the Dead*.
ANS: F REF: p. 14
- Hieroglyphics means "mystery."
ANS: F REF: p. 23
- The word "theocracy" means "rule by the strongest."
ANS: F REF: p. 8
- Like the peoples of Mesopotamia, the Egyptians had a very negative attitude toward daily life.
ANS: F REF: p. 26
- Persian is not a Semitic but an Indo-European language.
ANS: T REF: p. 30