

# MIDTERM EXAM

## Important! General Instructions

1. Set up a document as if you were writing an essay and write your answers there. Please double-space. Give the exam section and the question number with each answer.
2. Each written answer (apart from the map and multiple choice, of course) should consist of:
  - your assertion in response to the question;
  - brief but specific examples from the semester’s material that support your assertion; and
  - your discussion of what those examples show.
  - Your examples may come from the textbook, *Gilgamesh*, your research, the course videos, and class discussion.
3. Try to make clear where your examples come from (e.g., “In *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, the gods were...”) and from which place and period (“During the Iron Age, the Persians...” or “During the Bronze Age, Minoan palace-cities...”).
4. Do not paste or retype anything from anywhere unless it is:
  - in quotes,
  - very brief,
  - from the course materials or from sources you used and cited for the written assignments,
  - used in the examples part of a short answer or essay only, and
  - its origin clearly indicated.

***All assertions and discussion need to be yours alone.*** Any plagiarism will result in a zero on this exam and possible additional disciplinary action by the College. No bibliography or formal citations are needed, but words, information, and ideas that are not yours must be noted as such, and used only in the examples in the short answers and essays.
5. Please read the instructions for each section before answering. If you have any questions about how the exam works or what you need to do, please email me at [mark.wilson@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:mark.wilson@lehman.cuny.edu).
6. Upload your exam response to BlackBoard as a Word or PDF file ***no later than Wednesday, October 20.***

## A. Identification and Impact

**Instructions:** For each answer, provide both of the following:

- (a) a brief, one-sentence definition of the term or description of the person, including place and period, and
- (b) a detailed, analytical paragraph about its importance or impact *in relation to our course material and discussions*, with examples. (In other words, why is this idea important to this course and to the points we have been making about the civilizations of the ancient world?)

**Note:** Give each response as an assertion, relevant examples supporting your assertion, and your discussion and analysis. No quotes in this section, please.

- ▶ ANSWER ONLY 4
- ▶ LENGTH EACH 60-80 words
- ▶ POINTS EACH 6

Akhenaten

Linear A

Babylonian Captivity

ma'at

chariot

paganism

city-state

priest-king

Cyrus

Sea Peoples

House of Dust

unintentional bias

Answer only 4. More than that will not be read or graded. Each answer should be around 60-80 words.

## B. Short Answer

**Instructions:** Express your opinion, then support your opinion with detailed evidence and examples from readings and discussion. BE SPECIFIC and give examples.

**Note:** Give each response as an assertion, relevant examples supporting your assertion, and your discussion and analysis. Very brief quotes are allowed in the examples part of your answer only, and only if they are necessary, brief, in quotes, and with the origin indicated.

|               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| ▶ ANSWER ONLY | 2             |
| ▶ LENGTH EACH | 180-240 words |
| ▶ POINTS EACH | 11            |

1. **Discuss the nature of the agricultural revolution as a part of the emergence/invention of civilization.** Describe the kinds of important changes the agricultural revolution brought about in human society. How does it make civilization possible? What's the relationship between advances in agriculture and the development of urban civilization? Be specific and give examples.
2. **Discuss the character of Shamhat in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*.** What roles does she play in the story? What conclusions can we draw from the depiction of Shamhat about Sumerian cultural ideas? Be specific and give examples.
3. **Discuss the role of monumental building in the ancient world.** Describe several examples and discuss both the kinds of uses to which they are put and at least three different functions that all monumental building performs. What makes monumental building so important in strengthening early civilization?
4. **Discuss the arrival of the Indo-Europeans in the Mediterranean world and its effects.** How is their society and culture different from the Mediterranean peoples they meet? What information does language give about the origins and culture of the early Indo-Europeans? How do their differences affect their interactions with the native peoples? Be specific and give examples.
5. **Describe the contrasting symbolism of the flood in Sumer and Egypt.** Describe how these different codings of the flood provide insight into how members of these two cultures think differently about government, religion, agriculture, and the meaning of life. Be specific and give examples.  
*Important: If you choose this Short Answer, do not also choose Essay #1.*

Answer only 2. More than that will not be read or graded. Each answer should be around 180-240 words.

## C. Multiple Choice

**Instructions:** Enter the question number and the letter indicating the best response in your exam response.

▶ POINTS EACH 4

1. The Indo-European people living in Anatolia, who were early masters of bronze, were
  - a. The Egyptians
  - b. The Mycenaeans
  - c. The Hittites
  - d. The Babylonians
  
2. The Iron Age Neo-Assyrian Empire was known for all of the following EXCEPT:
  - a. They established a successful empire through tolerance of local customs and careful government by satraps
  - b. They brutally oppressed their subject peoples' customs and religions, in contrast to the later Persian Empire
  - c. They deported the northern Israelites from their lands, then resettled those lands with outsiders
  - d. They were brought down by rebellion of its conquered peoples, including the Chaldeans (Babylonians)
  
3. All of the following describe ways in which the Jewish religion was unusual in the ancient world EXCEPT:
  - a. It assumed there was only one true god, and that all other gods worshiped by others were false gods
  - b. It associated the divine not with places or natural forces, but with a people
  - c. It described a god who didn't care about the deeds and fates of his followers
  - d. It developed many of its most important elements while the Jews were in exile
  
4. The Iron Age people credited with spreading alphabetic writing along their Mediterranean trade routes was the
  - a. Phoenicians
  - b. Philistines
  - c. Hebrews
  - d. Akkadians
  
5. All of the following are true about the Persian Empire EXCEPT:
  - a. At its height, it became the largest, most powerful state in the Mediterranean world
  - b. It was ruled by a domineering assembly of nobles led by a weak and unimportant king
  - c. The Persians' traditional religion was dualist, describing a balance of light and dark
  - d. Its expansion began under Cyrus the Great, who made use of the unifying symbolism of the Great King
  
6. The early forms of Hinduism and Buddhism both had all of the following elements in common EXCEPT:
  - a. An emphasis on the followers' behavior and their role in society more than mortals' relationships with the gods
  - b. A cycle of rebirth (*samsara*)
  - c. The achievement of ultimate enlightenment and understanding bringing escape from this cycle (*nirvana*)
  - d. The quality of one's actions determines one's destiny (*karma*)

## D. Map

**Instructions:** Choose ten of the numbered places and write the number and matching letter from the map in your exam response.

▶ ANSWER ONLY 10

▶ POINTS EACH 1

- |                    |                            |                     |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Aegean Sea      | 9. Hittites                | 17. Minoans         |
| 2. Anatolia        | 10. Indo-European homeland | 18. Nile River      |
| 3. Assyrians       | 11. Jerusalem              | 19. Persians (Pars) |
| 4. Babylon         | 12. Lower Egypt            | 20. Philistines     |
| 5. Black Sea       | 13. Medes                  | 21. Sumer           |
| 6. Canaan          | 14. Mediterranean Sea      | 22. Troy            |
| 7. Carthage        | 15. Memphis                | 23. Tyre            |
| 8. Euphrates River | 16. Mesopotamia            | 24. Upper Egypt     |



Answer only 10. More than that will not be read or graded.

## E. Essay

**Instructions:** Make an argument, then support your opinion with detailed evidence and examples from readings and discussion. BE SPECIFIC and give examples.

**Note:** Make sure to consider social, religious, economic, military, political, and cultural factors in your answers.

Give your response as an assertion, relevant examples supporting your assertion, and your discussion and analysis. Very brief quotes are allowed in the examples part of your answer only, and only if they are necessary, brief, in quotes, and with the origin indicated.

**IMPORTANT: ALL ASSERTIONS MUST BE SUPPORTED BY SPECIFIC EVIDENCE.** Each essay should have at least three concrete examples, which you should describe, then discuss.

|               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| ▶ ANSWER ONLY | 1             |
| ▶ LENGTH EACH | 350-450 words |
| ▶ POINTS EACH | 20            |

1. **How do ancient societies use the gods to define what it means to be mortal?** Discuss three different relationships between the mortal and the divine from the ancient cultures we have explored. What do they have in common, and in what ways do they differ? Where you identify something distinctive about a culture's relationship with the divine, what insights does this give us into that society? What conclusions can you draw about the relation between humans and gods in the ancient world?
2. **Why is it difficult to balance the needs of the individual with those of the community?** Discuss three examples of different relationships between individuals and society from the ancient cultures we have explored. How are their concepts of what it means to be a citizen similar, and in what ways do they differ? Consider the methods used to focus each individual's identity on the whole community instead of family, ancestry, or neighborhood. What conclusions can you draw about the relation between people and their community in the ancient world?
3. **I often say that conquest is easy, but dominion is hard.** What do I mean by that? Discuss three examples of the methods for forming and controlling empires from the ancient cultures we have explored. How are these empires similar, and in what ways do they differ? Compare and contrast the specifics of how your empires approach both conquest and subsequent control of conquered territory. What conclusions can you draw about empire in the ancient world?

Answer only 1. More than that will not be read or graded. Your answer should be around 350-450 words.

## Extra Credit

For extra credit you may answer one or two extra identifications from Section A, **or** one extra short answer from section B.