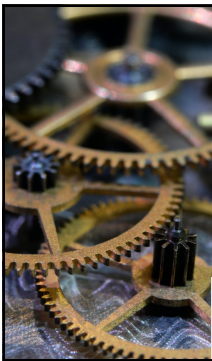




Mesopotamia

Civilizations of the Ancient World | Meeting #3

1



Upcoming Dates

- Monday, October 5
Gilgamesh Essay due
- Sunday, September 13
Responses for Week 3 Due

2

Four things today

- The Stone Age
- The City State
- The Epic of Gilgamesh
- Sumer

3



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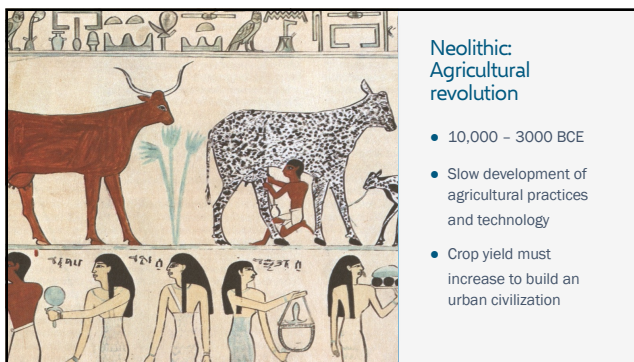
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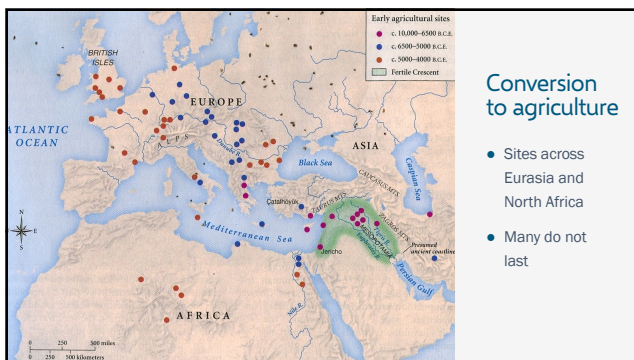
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Catalhöyük, 7500–5700 BCE

Neolithic sites

- Homes clustered together in a "proto-city"
- No planning, centralized rule, or specialized labor
- Inhabitants farm surrounding lands by day and then return

10



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The city-state

- Economically independent
 - Urban center—skilled labor and manufacturing
 - Surrounding farmlands—part of central market and identity
- Politically autonomous
- Monumental building
- Patron deity

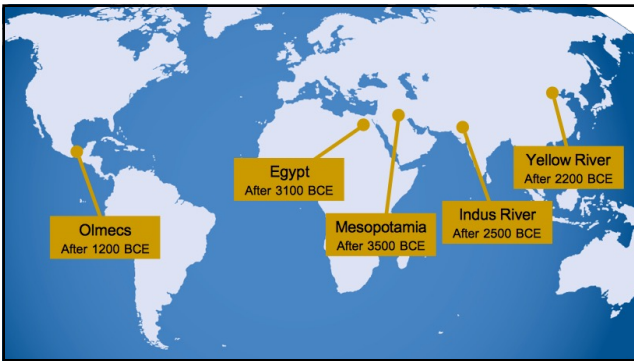
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City-state culture

- Shared...
 - Culture
 - Heritage
 - Language
 - Religion
- Rivalry for limited resources



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Civilization as social revolution

- Complex social structures
 - Division of labor
 - Class
 - Forms of government
 - Citizen and noncitizen
- The responsibilities of the citizen
 - The individual is subordinated to the community
- The responsibilities of gender
 - Male: public/present; Female: private/future

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Forms of government

- Democracy δῆμος 'people' + κράτος 'power'
- Republic RES PUBLICA 'public matters'
- Oligarchy ὀλίγος 'few' + ἄρχων 'leader'
- Autocracy αὐτός 'self' + κράτος 'power'
 - Tyranny τύραννος 'lord and master'
 - Monarchy μόνος 'alone' + ἄρχων 'leader'
 - Dynasty δυνάμει 'to be able, strong enough'
- Theocracy θεός 'deity' + κράτος 'power'

- Citizen CIVITAS 'city-dweller'
- Constitution CONSTITUO 'settled, agreed upon'
- Empire IMPERIUM 'power to command, compel'

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Priest-Kings and God-Kings

PRIEST-KINGS

Most city states (Sumer, Babylon)

Gods

Priest king acts on behalf of the people to interact with gods

Mortals

GOD-KINGS

Egypt

Gods

God-king acts on behalf of the people to interact with the people

Mortals

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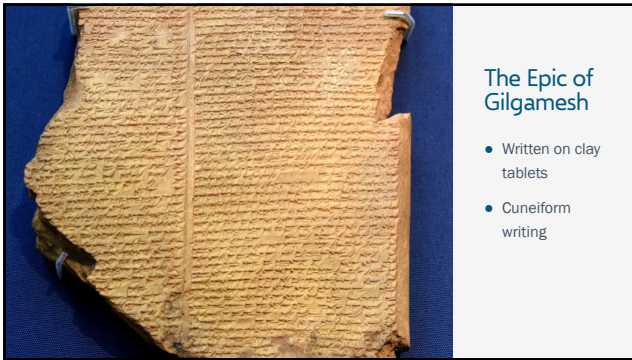
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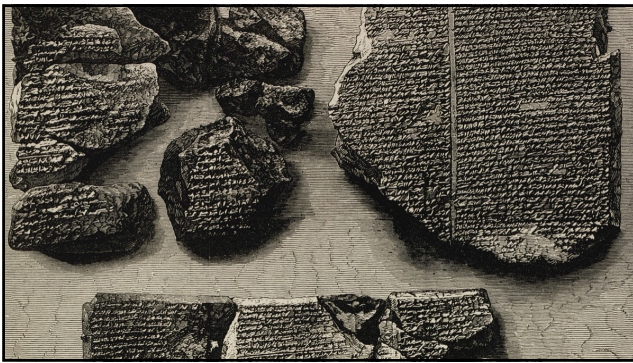
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Ways of looking at the Epic

- Gilgamesh as a priest-king
- Gilgamesh as a hero
- Gilgamesh as a mortal
- Gilgamesh as a man



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Characters

- | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| • Gilgamesh | king of Úruk | • Shámash | sun-god |
| • Ninsun | his divine mother | • Humbába | forest guardian |
| • Enkidu | his friend | • Íshtar | great goddess |
| • Shámhat | a prostitute in Úruk | • Úta-napishti | survivor of the Flood |

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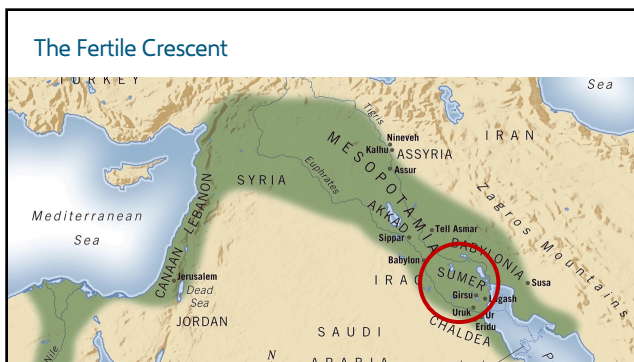
Tablet 1

- Gilgamesh as king
- The creation of Enkidu
- Shamhat and Enkidu
- Gilgamesh and Ninsun

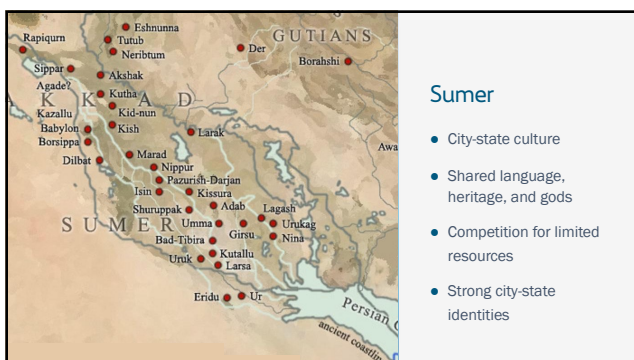
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Rivalry for resources leads to warfare



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Ziggurat

- Massive temple at the heart of a Sumerian city-state
- Sacred home of the patron god
- Visible focus of city-state identity

35

The Deluge

- Massive flood destroys cities of Sumer
- Lone survivor separated from humanity
- Sumerian gods are sometimes nurturing, sometimes destructive
- Death is universal



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Life and afterlife

- Sumerian afterlife is a place of impotence
- Gods cannot be trusted
- The living must act
- Build to create a strong and enduring future

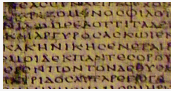
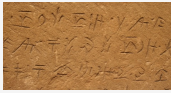
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Writing

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Forms of writing

PICTOGRAPHS	SYLLABARIES	ALPHABETS
Each character represents a word or a concept	Each character represents a syllable (consonant + vowel)	Each character represents a sound
 Cuneiform	 Linear B	 Greek
 Hieroglyphs	 Archaic-Cypriot	 Latin

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Cuneiform



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Hieroglyphs

- Roughly contemporary with cuneiform
- Used for formal writing and records

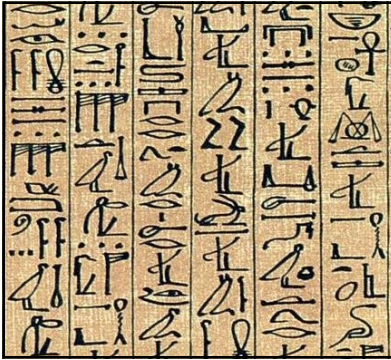
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Hieroglyphs:
cartouche

- Within a cartouche, the first syllable is sounded out to make proper names

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From stone to papyrus

- Papyrus is made from woven reeds
- Fluidity of ink version leads to a more informal script
- Still difficult to learn

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The phonetic alphabet

- Bronze Age scripts are pictographic or syllabic
- Many characters with a high learning curve
- No phonetic scripts until the Iron Age

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