

Asia  
World's 1<sup>st</sup> Civilization  
Mesopotamia  
Present Day Iraq  
(The Fertile Crescent)

# Mesopotamia



# Mesopotamia

- Mesopotamia means: “land between two rivers”
- Civilization developed between the Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers
- By 3000 B.C. a number of cities are established by the Sumerians



# Role of the Environment

- Rivers supplied basics for survival
  - Food
  - Water
  - Sanitation

# Role of the Environment

- Problems with living near a river valley?
  - Destroyed by frequent floods.
  - Communication amongst the various isolated cities was very difficult

How did they solve these problems?





# City-States

Each city-state had its own written code of law, assembly of citizens, king, and chief god.

- Sumer( Main Region)
- Ur
- Uruk
- Kish
- Babylon



# Invention of Writing

- Result was the development of **cuneiform**:
  - “wedge-shaped”
  - pictographic system





# Cuneiform

	3200 BCE	3000 BCE	2400 BCE	1000 BCE
sag 'head'				
gin 'to walk'				
šu 'hand'				
še 'barley'				
ninda 'bread'				
a 'water'				
ud 'day'				
mušen 'bird'				

# Sumerian Society

- Sumer was different from all other earlier civilizations
  - Advanced cities
  - Specialized workers
  - Complex institutions
  - Record keeping
  - Advanced technology
- Developed city-states
- Food surplus → increased population → expanded trade → expansion of Sumerian society

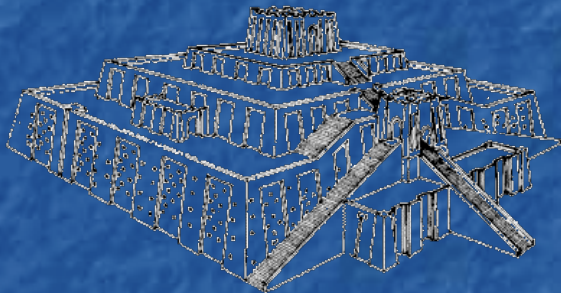


# Sumerian Society

- Polytheistic
- Wrote myths (Epic of Gilgamesh)
- Had social classes
  - Priests and kings were at the top
  - Slaves were at the bottom
- Women probably couldn't attend school but had many other rights
- Advances in mathematics
  - Number system based on 60 (60 seconds=1 minute)

# Sumerian Society

## ZIGGURATS SERVED AS RELIGIOUS TEMPLES



Reconstruction of the Ziggurat at Ur





# Sumerian Inventions

- Wheel
- Potter's wheel (shape containers)
- Levees
- Irrigation
- Number system
- 12 month calendar
- Metal plow
- Sail
- Some of the earliest known maps
- New architecture



# Conquering of Sumer

- The Sumerian city-states eventually fell to foreign invaders (2000s BC)
- The Akkadians:
  - Sargon I (2300-2200 BC) unites all Mesopotamian cities (creates first empire)
  - Under Sargon I
    - Akkadians adopted Sumerian religion
    - Akkadians adopted Sumerian farming



# *Babylonian Empire*



- Amorites (2000-1600 BC)
- Located in modern day Syria
- Conquered many parts of old Sumeria (including Babylon)
- Hammurabi--created a law code with harsh punishments
- Borrowed heavily from Sumerian culture
- After Hammurabi's death Babylon declined

# Hittites

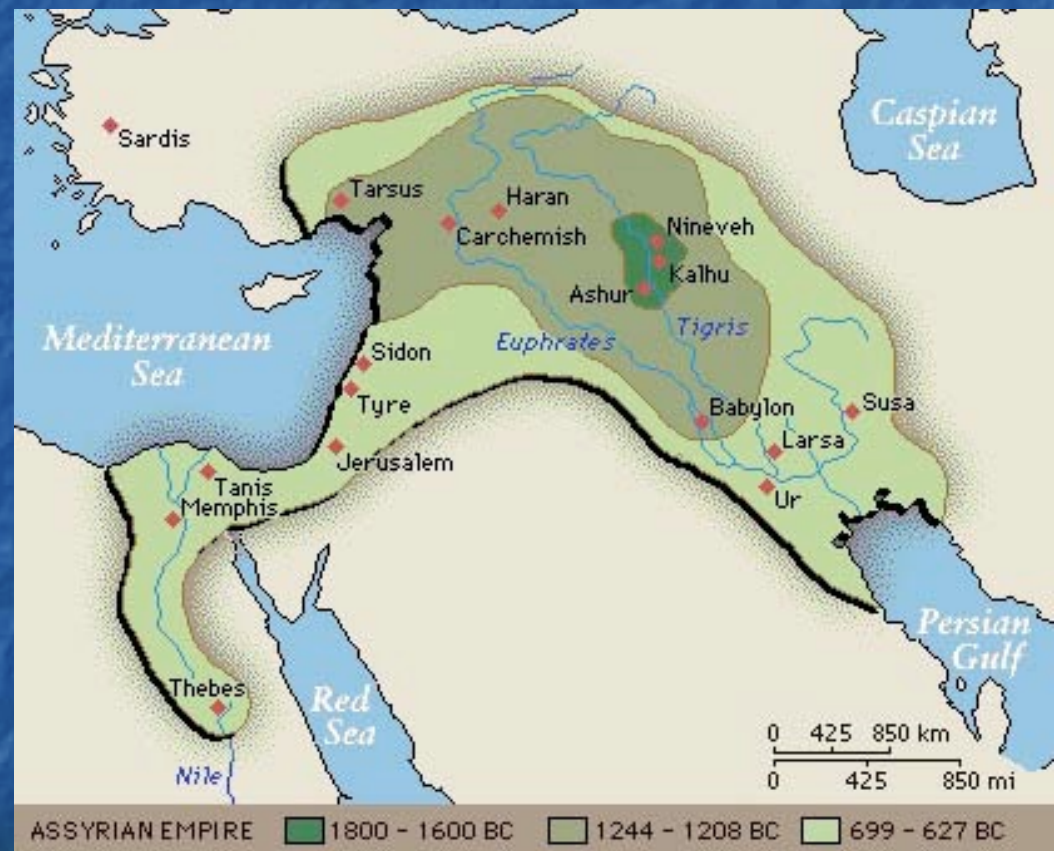
- Began to conquer Asia Minor (2000 BC)
- A strong army with chariots
- Conquered Amorites in 1595 BC)
- Borrowed from Mesopotamian and Egyptian culture
- Had a law code less harsh than Hammurabi's
- Lasted until about 1200 BC





# Assyrians

- Started to gain strength about 900 BC
- Powerful army
- Treated conquered people cruelly
- Large empire with good roads
- Collapsed about 612 BC



# Chaldeans

- Defeated the Assyrians in about 612 BC
- Descended from Hammarabi's Babylonians
- At its height during the rule of Nebuchadnezzar (605-562 BC)
  - Spent a lot of money on Babylon
  - Built Hanging Gardens
- Empire collapsed in 539 BC after being defeated by the Persians





# Gods/Goddesses

- Anu- Main God
- Ki- Goddess of the earth
- Enki- God of Water
- Enlil - Lord of the wind
- Nanna- Moon God
- Utu- Sun
- God Inanna (Ishtar) - she was the goddess of love and war.