

Period 1: Technological and Environmental Transformation – Paleolithic Era to c.600 BCE

Period 1 Highlights

Paleolithic Humans, Neolithic Era, agricultural civilizations, pastoralism, persistence of hunting-foraging, early state formation, record keeping, social stratification, specialized labor, growth of complex religions

Key Concepts and Focus Questions (adapted from work by Bill Strickland)

Key Concept 1.1 Big Geography and the Peopling of the Earth

- Where did humans first appear on Earth, and what were their society, technology, and culture?

Archeological evidence indicates that during the Paleolithic Era, hunting-foraging bands of humans gradually migrated from their origin in East Africa to Eurasia, Australia and the Americas, adapting their technology and cultures to new climate regions.

- Describe earliest humans' technology & tools

Humans used fire in new ways: to aid hunting and foraging, to protect against predators and to adapt to cold environments. Humans developed a wider range of tools specially adapted to different environments from tropics to tundra.

- What were the earliest humans' religious beliefs and practices?

Polytheistic religions and Intentional burial, particularly with grave goods may be one of the earliest detectable forms of religious practice since, it may signify a concern for the dead that transcends daily life.

- How did the earliest humans' society help them procure enough supplies to survive?

Economic structures focused on small kinship groups of hunting/foraging bands that could make what they needed to survive. However, not all groups were self-sufficient; they exchanged people, ideas and goods.

- What type of researcher/academic field studies Paleolithic people? What methods do they use?

Paleolithic Archaeologist. Archeology is the best way to study, cave paintings, tools used, bones, jewelry/pottery found.

Key Concept 1.2 The Neolithic Revolution and Early Agricultural Societies

•What were the long-term demographic, social, political, and economic effects of the Neolithic Revolution?

In response to warming climates at the end of the last Ice Age from about 10,000 years ago, some groups adapted to the environment in new ways while others remained hunter/foragers. Settled agriculture appeared in several different parts of the world. The switch to agriculture created a more reliable, but not necessarily more diversified, food supply.

Agriculturalists also had a massive impact on the environment, through intensive cultivation of selected plants to the exclusion of others, through the construction of irrigation systems and through the use of domesticated animals for food and for labor. Populations increased; family groups gave way to village and later urban life with all its complexity.

Patriarchy and forced labor systems developed giving elite men concentrated power over most of the other people in their societies

•How did the Neolithic Revolution affect human societies economically & socially?

Due to agriculture people could now farm instead of hunting and gathering. This allowed people to settle down and live in one place. This led to settlements and the development of group living. Since people after the Neolithic revolution began living in tighter more complex social situations this also led to better and more complicated forms of communication. The Neolithic revolution also eventually led to the development of governments because now that people were living in settlements they started dividing the work. They needed people to hunt, farm, cook, and do other things, and since not everyone could do the same thing they needed reorganization to decide who would do what. This led to higher forms of organizations and ultimately to forms of government. Also with the discovery of agriculture people began to have food surpluses, this led to population growth and trade. It led to trade because people would now trade the extra food that they grew. Lastly the Neolithic revolution led to the switch from a matriarchal system to a more patriarchal system. In hunting and gathering times women were though higher of then men because they hunted and gathered just like the men did, and on top of that they also gave birth or created life. After the Neolithic revolution there was no longer a need for the women to hunt and gather. A family could live off of the males work in the farm, because they then only needed one person to feed the family women fell into more homemaker roles and began to lose importance. Oh, and agriculture also led to recreational activity because less time was needed to get the necessary amount of food, so families had free time, and they needed stuff to do.

•Why did the Neolithic Revolution start (at all)?

Possibly as a response to climatic change, permanent agricultural villages emerged first in the lands of the eastern Mediterranean. Agriculture emerged at different times in Mesopotamia, the Nile River valley and sub-Saharan Africa, the Indus River valley, the Yellow River or Huang He valley, Papua-New Guinea, Mesoamerica and the Andes.

•What various crops & animals were developed or domesticated during the Neolithic Revolution?

Different crops or animals were domesticated in the various core regions, depending on available local flora and fauna.

•What labor adjustments did humans make in order to facilitate the Neolithic Revolution?

Agricultural communities had to work cooperatively to clear land and to create the water control systems needed for crop production

•What were the environmental effects of the Neolithic Revolution?

These agricultural practices drastically impacted environmental diversity. Pastoralists also affected the environment by grazing large numbers of animals on fragile grasslands, leading to erosion when over-grazed.

•What effects did pastoralism & agriculture have on the food supply?

Pastoralism and agriculture led to more reliable and abundant food supplies which increased population.

•What were the social effects of the increased food supply caused by increase of agriculture?

Surpluses of food and other goods led to specialization of labor, including new classes of artisans and warriors, and the development of elites.

•What new labor patterns developed in agricultural societies?

Patriarchy and forced labor systems developed giving elite men concentrated power over most of the other people in their societies.

•What is pastoralism and where did it exist in Neolithic times? What contributions did pastoral people make?

Pastoralism emerged in parts of Africa and Eurasia. Pastoral peoples domesticated animals and led their herds around grazing ranges. Like agriculturalists, pastoralists tended to be more socially stratified than were hunter-foragers. Because pastoralists were mobile, they rarely accumulated large amounts of material possessions, which would have been a hindrance when changing grazing areas. Pastoralists' mobility allowed them to become an important conduit for technological change as they interacted with settled populations.

•How did the following each improve trade, agriculture, and/or transportation in Neolithic times?

pottery : used to store food	wheels and wheeled vehicles: used for transport of trade and agriculture
plows: used for agriculture	metallurgy: used for agriculture, trade, and transportation. (knives, wheels)
woven textiles: used for clothing and trade	

Key Concept 1.3 The Development and Interactions of Early Agricultural, Pastoral, and Urban Societies

•What is a 'civilization,' and what are the defining characteristics of a civilization?

From about 5,000 years ago, urban societies developed, laying the foundations for the first civilizations. The term civilization is normally used to designate large societies with cities and powerful states. While there were many differences between civilizations, they also shared important features. They all produced agricultural surpluses that permitted significant specialization of labor. All civilizations contained cities and generated complex institutions, such as political bureaucracies, including armies and religious hierarchies. They also featured clearly stratified social hierarchies and organized long distance trading relationships. Economic exchanges intensified within and between civilizations, as well as with nomadic pastoralists

•How did civilizations develop and grow more complex before 600 BCE?

As populations grew, competition for surplus resources, especially food, led to greater social stratification, specialization of labor, increased trade, more complex systems of government and religion, and the development of record keeping. As civilizations expanded, they had to balance their need for more resources with environmental constraints such as the danger of undermining soil fertility. Finally, the accumulation of wealth in settled communities spurred warfare between communities and/or with pastoralists; this violence drove the development of new technologies of war and urban defense

•Locate the following on the attached map:

- A. Mesopotamia in the Tigris and Euphrates River valleys
- B. Egypt in the Nile River valley
- C. Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa in the Indus River valley
- D. The Shang in the Yellow River or Huang He valley
- E. The Olmecs in Mesoamerica
- F. Chavín in Andean South America.

•What role did pastoral civilizations play vis a vis empires?

Pastoralists were often the developers and disseminators of new weapons (such as compound bows or iron weapons) and modes of transportation (such as chariots or horseback riding) that transformed warfare in agrarian civilizations

•What methods did rulers use to unify their populations?

Rulers were able to unify their states through law, language, literature, religion, myths and monumental art

•What architectural forms did early civilizations produce?

Early civilizations developed monumental architecture and urban planning (such as ziggurats, pyramids, temples, defensive walls, streets and roads or sewage and water systems).

•What forms of writing developed in ancient civilizations?

Systems of record keeping (such as cuneiform, hieroglyphs, pictographs, alphabets or quipu) arose independently in all early civilizations and subsequently were diffused.

•What was the relationship between literature and culture?

States developed legal codes, including the Code of Hammurabi, that reflected existing hierarchies and facilitated the rule of governments over people.

•What pre-600 BCE religions strongly influenced later eras?

New religious beliefs developed in this period continued to have strong influences in later periods, including the Vedic religion, Hebrew monotheism and Zoroastrianism.

•How did social and gender identities develop pre-600 BCE?

Social and gender hierarchies intensified as states expanded and cities multiplied.

•Describe trade patterns between Egypt and Nubia; do the same for trade between Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley.

Earliest trade between Egypt and Nubia was a private and largely unorganized affair. Mainly Egypt → Nubia

Long-distance trade between Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley was limited almost exclusively to luxury goods like spices, textiles and precious metals.

•In what major ways did the civilizations of Ancient Egypt differ from Mesopotamia?

Some of these differences are their religion, agriculture, writing skills, and inventions as well as their ways of life. The major cause of the differences they had was the location of the area where they lived in.

Practice Multiple Choice

1. Which of the following occurred as a result of the development of agriculture in societies that previously relied on hunting and gathering?

- a) conditions for women improved
- b) the incidence of disease declined
- c) polytheism disappeared
- d) environmental degradation lessened
- e) **population density increased**

2. What do the Nile, Tigris, Euphrates, Indus, and Yellow Rivers have in common?

- (a) all are located in the Fertile Crescent
- (b) all were located within the earliest Chinese empires
- (c) all overflow their banks with predictable regularity
- (d) all had civilizations that were linked by one common religion
- (e) **all were sites of Neolithic sedentary settlements**

3. Which of the following is the BEST example of the process known as *cultural diffusion*?

- a) Judaism originates in the Middle East
- b) The emperor Asoka takes the throne from his father
- c) **Egyptians learn how to make and use chariots after being conquered by chariot-riding Hyksos**
- d) Hammurabi chooses his best scribes to carve his code into stone tablets
- e) A Chinese merchant makes a year-long journey from Asia to the Middle East to exchange his goods

4. Which is NOT true of Paleolithic Hunting-Foraging societies?

- a) they lived in small bands and often practiced infanticide to keep it that way
- b) typical hunting-foraging societies placed more importance on women as contributors than did Agricultural societies
- c) hunting-foraging societies migrated out of Africa and spread all over the globe in a process that took tens of thousands of years during the Paleolithic era
- d) **hunting-foraging societies were heavily stratified with many social levels**
- e) hunting-foraging societies still exist today in a few of the earth's regions



5. The above image from an early Mesopotamian society shows what central activity?
- a) **music**
 - b) agriculture
 - c) an execution
 - d) cooking
 - e) warfare
6. Researchers believe that *homo sapiens* first evolved in _____ and then spread out from there.
- a) Asia
 - b) Europe
 - c) **Africa**
 - d) South America
 - e) North America

Outline Map for Review/Labeling:

