

First Civilization: Sumeria

Mesopotamia and the Fertile
Crescent

Fertile Crescent



Location

- Mesopotamia or “Land between the rivers”
- Tigris and Euphrates Rivers
- Climate: Arid and Dry
- River: Unpredictable flooding

Work Force/ Labor Force

- Well organized
- Controlled water supply by using canals, ditches, reservoirs

Cities

- Plotted landing using geometry, elaborate watering system, network of roads, and fortification was common
- Center of the city were Ziggurats
- City of Ur: 10-50,000 people

Government and Religion

- Run by Kings (Monarchy)
- Kings split the power with the powerful priest
- Kings would create written laws
- Polytheistic religions

Specialized Workers

- Priest
- Warriors
- Scribes
- Artisans
- Farmers/laborers

Achievements

- 1st written language: Cuneiform
- Pottery wheel
- Unit of 60, 360 degree circle
- Invented the sail and the plow
- Discovered how to make Bronze

Decline

- Circa 2000bc crop failure due to soil salinization (salt buildup)
- Conquered by Babylonians

Babylonians

- Took many Sumerian ideas
- Most famous for the 1st written law code
- Law Code of Hammurabi (1792-1750)

Hammurabi's Code

- 282 Articles
- Dealt with business, marriage, adultery, divorce, incest, inheritance, treatment of slaves, personal injury, medical malpractice, and property damage
- Very harsh by Western standards: 1st example of Capital Punishment

Decorated Ostrich Egg c. 2550 bc



Ram in Thicket

c. 2650 bc



Wreath

c. 2650 bc



Dagger

2550 bc



Tumbler

c. 2650 bc



Ziggurat



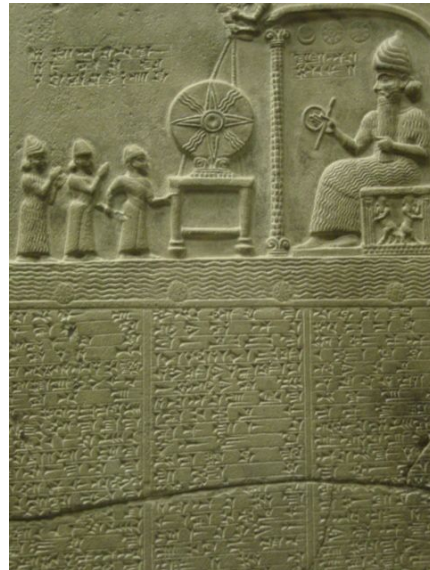
Various statues c. 2500 bc



Various Artifacts



Cuneiform Examples



Sumerian Religious Art

