



What are the humanities?

*And why do we have to study them?*

## Humanities

1. Humans considered as a group; the human race.
2. The condition or quality of being human.
3. The quality of being humane; benevolence.
4. A humane characteristic, attribute, or act.
5. n. pl. humanities
  - a. The languages and literatures of ancient Greece and Rome; the classics.
  - b. Those branches of knowledge, such as philosophy, literature, and art, that are concerned with human thought and culture; the liberal arts.

## Humanities Subjects: The Liberal Arts

- Visual Art
  - Painting, Sculpture, Photography, Film, etc.
- Performance Art
  - Drama/Theater, Dance, Opera, Musicals, etc.
- Religion
- Literature
- Architecture
- History
- Philosophy
- Music
- Language
- Law

## Why study the humanities?

- 1) Cultural Literacy
  - There is a body of knowledge that all educated people share...

## Why study the humanities?

- 2) Great works of art reward study and “speak to” generation after generation.

## Socrates on Education

*The purpose of an education is so that when you go to the theater, it's not one block of stone sitting on another.*

## What do you know?

- Information: Facts.
- Knowledge: Understanding the significance of and relationship between those facts.
- Wisdom: Knowing how to live your life.

Paraphrased from Cicero's *De Officiis*

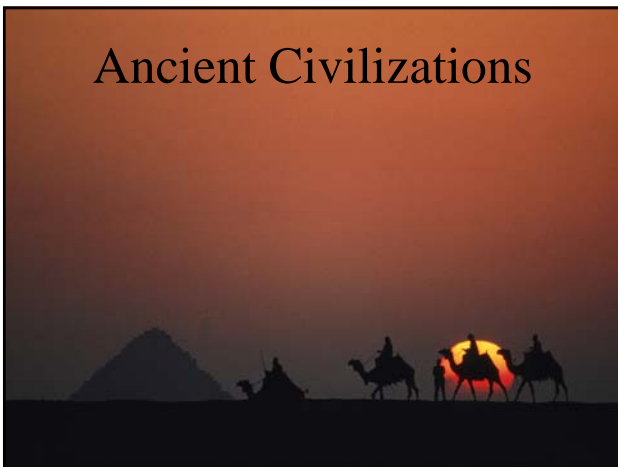
## Worldview

- The overall perspective from which one sees and interprets the world.
- A collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual, a group, or a society.

## TU 110 Topics

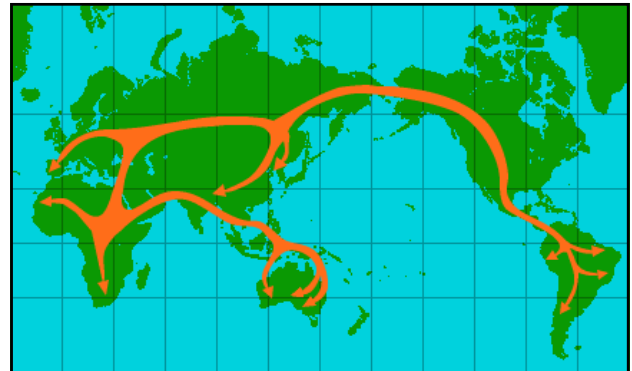
- Ancient Civilizations
- Ancient Greece
- Ancient Rome
- Middle Ages
- The Renaissance
- The Scientific Revolution
- The Enlightenment
- The Industrial Revolution & Romanticism
- Modernism & Existentialism

## Ancient Civilizations



## First Humans

- About 2 million years ago, the genus *Homo* evolved.
- About 200,000 years ago, *Homo sapiens* (humans) evolved from earlier hominids.
- During the Stone Age:
  - They used stone tools, fire, burial rituals
  - At some point during the stone age, they developed speech



DNA and fossil evidence indicates that modern humans originated in east Africa about 200,000 years ago.



The Venus of Hohle Fels, c. 35-40,000 years ago

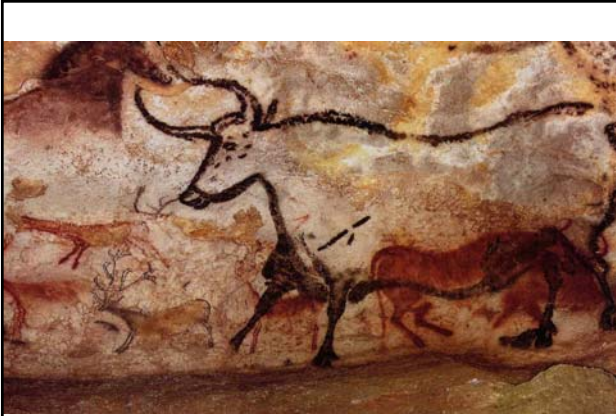
## Evidence of Symbolic Thought

- Symbolic thought is the representation of reality through the use of abstract concepts such as words, gestures, and numbers.
- We don't know when early humans developed this capacity, or when they developed language, but...
- Art is early evidence that humans had begun to think symbolically.

## The Venus of Willendorf

- A.k.a. the Woman of Willendorf
- Found at Willendorf, Austria
- Dates to about 22,000 BCE
- Many similar figurines found elsewhere.
  - Unknown what they represented to their makers, but commonly held to represent fertile women or goddesses.





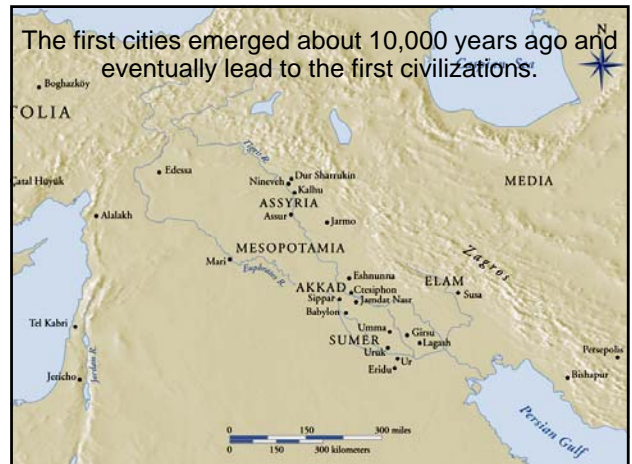
The Great Hall of the Bulls, Lascaux Cave, c. 15,000 BC

## Neolithic – New Stone Age

- Began about 10,000 BC.
- Agrarian Revolution: Hunters and gatherers became farmers and herders.
- More efficient settlements allowed for the specialization of labor.
- First “Cradles of Civilization” in fertile river valleys: Tigris/Euphrates, Nile, Indus.
- The Neolithic ended with the beginning of the Bronze age, about 3000 BC.



The Agrarian Revolution → First Cities



The first cities emerged about 10,000 years ago and eventually lead to the first civilizations.



The “Fertile Crescent”

## Mesopotamian Civilization

- Bronze age: about 3,000 to 1,000 BC.
- Mesopotamia:
  - Sumerians
  - Akkadians
  - Babylonians
  - Assyrians
- Why do we start here?

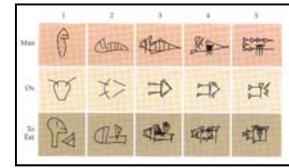


## Cuneiform

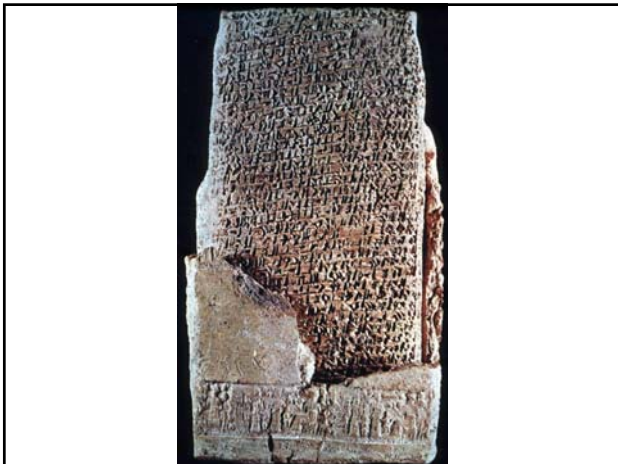


## Cuneiform

- pictograms
- ideograms
- phonograms



cuneiform: The Sumerian writing system, from the Latin word *cuneus*, which means “wedge.”



## *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

*Gilgamesh* is a tale of the adventures and friendship of the Sumerian King Gilgamesh (c. 2700 BC) and his friend Enkidu.

It contains a mythical account of the civilizing process and reflects on mortality as the irreducible element in the human condition.



## Mesopotamian Sculpture



Music



Law



Religion

## Mesopotamian Art

- Increased wealth allowed for an artisan class.
- Homes and temples would be elaborately decorated.

This Sumerian lyre would likely have been played to accompany poets and storytellers.



Stele of Hammurabi  
c. 1750 BC

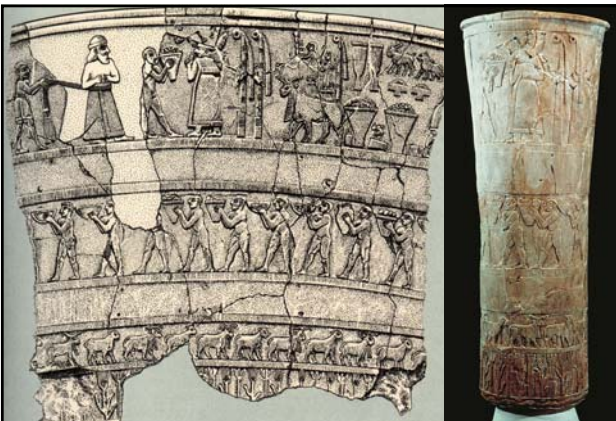


## The Code of Hammurabi

- Hammurabi received the laws from a deity (similarly to Moses in the bible).
- Central theme was justice/fairness.
- Laws based on judicial principle of *lex talionis*, or retaliation: "An eye for an eye."
- Not abstract, it's a long list of rules. Covered all major areas of civil and criminal law.
- Women's rights were restricted.
- Posted in public...

## "Rule of Law" vs. "Rule by Law"

- Rule of law means that no person in a society is above the law.
- Rule by law means that the rulers of a society are above the law.
- Practice questions: Which society would be better run? Which society would be more just? Explain your answers.



The Uruk Vase with the goddess Inanna, c. 3,000 BC.



Enheduana (2285 - 2250 BC), a priestess of Inanna, and daughter of the Akkadian king, Sargon the Great, is regarded by literary and historical scholars as the first poet.

*I am yours! It will always be so!  
May your heart cool off for me  
May your understanding... compassion...  
I have experienced your great punishment*

Religion served as an attempt to systematize knowledge about the natural world.

- Sky gods were male and related to power.
- Earth gods were female and related to fertility.

Mesopotamian Religion was polytheistic and syncretistic.

- Polytheistic: They worshiped many gods.
- Syncretistic: They combined beliefs over time.

Religion was pessimistic and fatalistic without an ethical dimension.

- Gods were supernatural and immortal, but otherwise a lot like humans. Religion sought to appease them.



Marduk

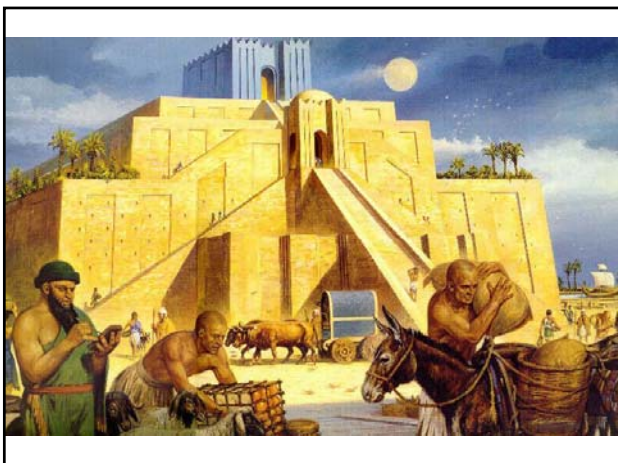


Enki is a god in Sumerian mythology, later known as Ea in Akkadian and Babylonian mythology. He was originally patron god of the Sumerian city of Eridu, but later the influence of his cult spread throughout Mesopotamia and beyond. He was the deity of crafts, mischief, water, intelligence, and creation.

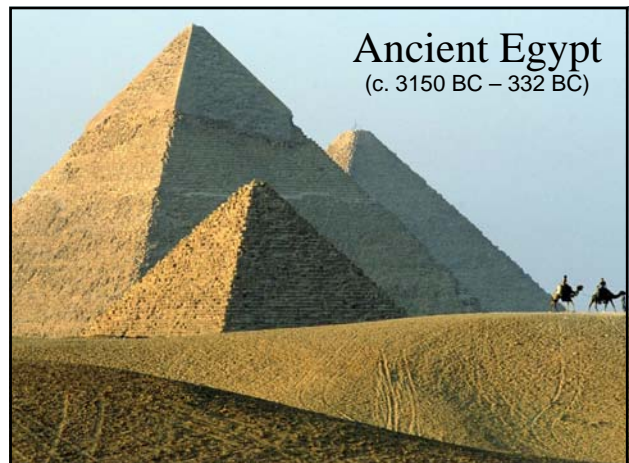
## Mesopotamian Architecture

Great Ziggurat of Ur, dedicated to Sin, the god of the moon, c. 2000 BC.

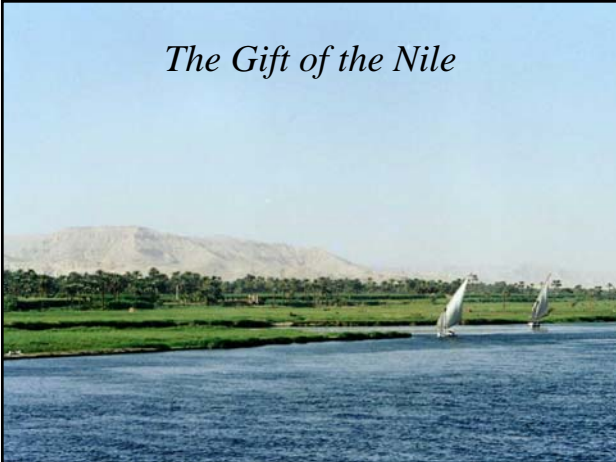
(ziggurat: a terraced brick pyramid)



## Ancient Egypt (c. 3150 BC – 332 BC)



## The Gift of the Nile



## Egyptian Civilization

- Life in Egypt depended on the annual floodings of the Nile.
- Bordered by inhospitable desert on both sides, Egyptian Civilization evolved more independently than Mesopotamian civilization.



## Pharaoh

- The pharaoh was both human and divine.
- As the intermediary between the people and their gods, it was his job to ensure Egypt's prosperity and security.
- The term *pharaoh* comes from *per aa*, meaning the "Great House."

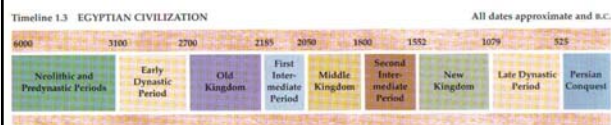


## Egyptian Society

- Kings (Pharaohs) were considered gods on earth.
- Economy supported by farm crops, when the Nile flooded.
- Both the agrarian economy and foreign trade were royal monopolies.
- Hierarchical society with royalty at the top, followed by officials, nobles, and priests, artists and artisans, bulk of the population made of peasants and slaves on the bottom.

## The Old Kingdom

- About 2700-2200 B.C.
- Long period of peace and prosperity.
- Developed the distinctive Egyptian kingship.
- Famous for the royal tombs of the Fourth Dynasty kings, the pyramids.



The (Step) Pyramid of Djoser, c. 2650 B.C.



The Pyramids of Giza. The “Great” Pyramid of Khufu was built first (c. 2560 B.C.) and was the worlds tallest structure for nearly 4000 years.



The Rosetta Stone (created in 196 BC., discovered in 1799) had the same information in three writing systems and provided the key to translate Egyptian hieroglyphics.



## Egyptian Writing

- Hieroglyphics was the formal writing style used on tomb walls and monuments.
- Scribes simplified the script for more everyday uses which could also be written on papyrus.
- Egyptian literature was rich in its variety of genres: prose, prophecies, hymns, folk and fairy tales, and wisdom literature are examples.



## Egyptian Religion

- Egyptian religion was polytheistic.
- Egyptian subjects worshiped the pharaoh, but the pharaoh could worship any of the many Egyptian deities.
- Egyptian religion is notable for its promise of immortality, first only for the kings, but eventually for all. Perhaps this led to a more optimistic outlook of life.



Ra: God of the sun  
 Horus: God of the sky, war, protection.  
 Anubis: God of funeral rites.  
 Osiris: God of the afterlife.  
 Isis: Goddess of motherhood, magic, fertility.



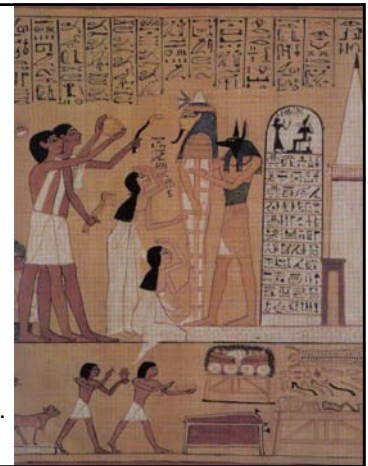
## Ma'at and Osiris

- Ma'at – Goddess/personification of truth and justice.
- Legend has it that Osiris would balance the soul against the feather of Ma'at to determine whether one would return to one's body to enjoy the afterlife.
- This represents the first appearance of an ethical element in religion.



## Egyptian Art

- The same rigid set of rules was used for thousands of years.
- Human subjects always depicted from the side, left leg forward.
- Face in profile, but all arms, legs, fingers, toes shown.





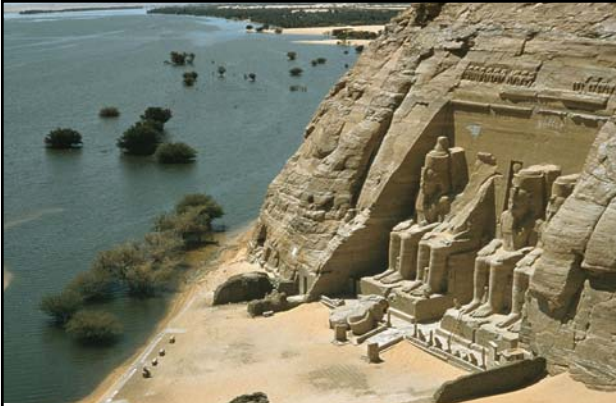
During the brief Amarna Period of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty under Akhenaten, artists had a more freedom to experiment.



Akhenaten with his wife, Nefertiti, and their children. Akhenaten (ruled 1353–1336 BC) is remembered for abandoning traditional Egyptian polytheism and introducing worship of only one god, Aten.

Egyptian Sculpture

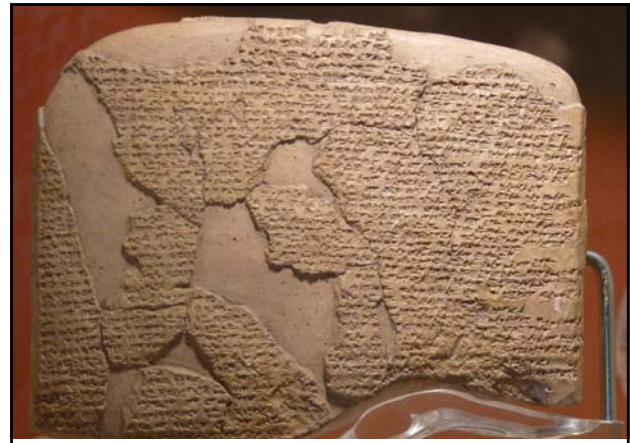
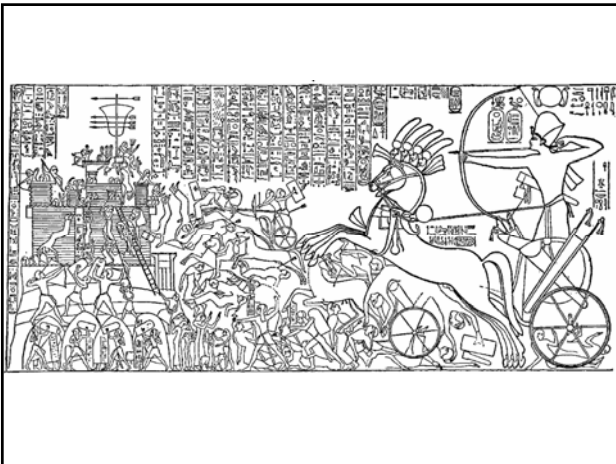




Abu Simbel temple, built by Ramses II who is believed to have ruled Egypt from 1279 BC to 1213 BC.



THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST c. 1200 BC



The Egyptian-Hittite peace treaty was concluded around 1259 BCE



## Early Humanities

- First art: sculpture and cave paintings
  - Evidence of symbolic thought
- Mesopotamia and Egypt, examples of:
  - Writing systems and many genres of literature
  - Art (painting and sculpture)
  - Music
  - Law
  - Religion
  - Architecture