

Cuneiform



Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sumerian_26th_c_Adab.jpg

Cuneiform was a system of writing created in Mesopotamia around 3,000 BCE. Scribes used a reed to make “wedge shaped” indentations on a clay tablet. Cuneiform started as way of keeping track of business transactions but was later used to create alphabets for the languages spoken in Ancient Mesopotamia. The Code of Hammurabi (discussed later) was written in cuneiform.

Adapted from “Cuneiform script” New World Encyclopedia. http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Cuneiform_script

Mohenjo-Daro, Indus River Valley Civilization



Source: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2b/Mohenjo-daro.jpg>

Mohenjo-daro was a city in the Indus Valley Civilization built around 2600 B.C.E., located in present day Pakistan. Mohenjo-daro was the largest, most sophisticated city discovered from the Indus River Valley Civilization.

It had a layout based on a grid of streets and at its height the city probably had around 35,000 residents. The buildings of the city, of particularly advanced design, had structures constructed of same-sized sun dried bricks of baked mud and burned wood. The public buildings of those cities also suggest a high degree of social organization.

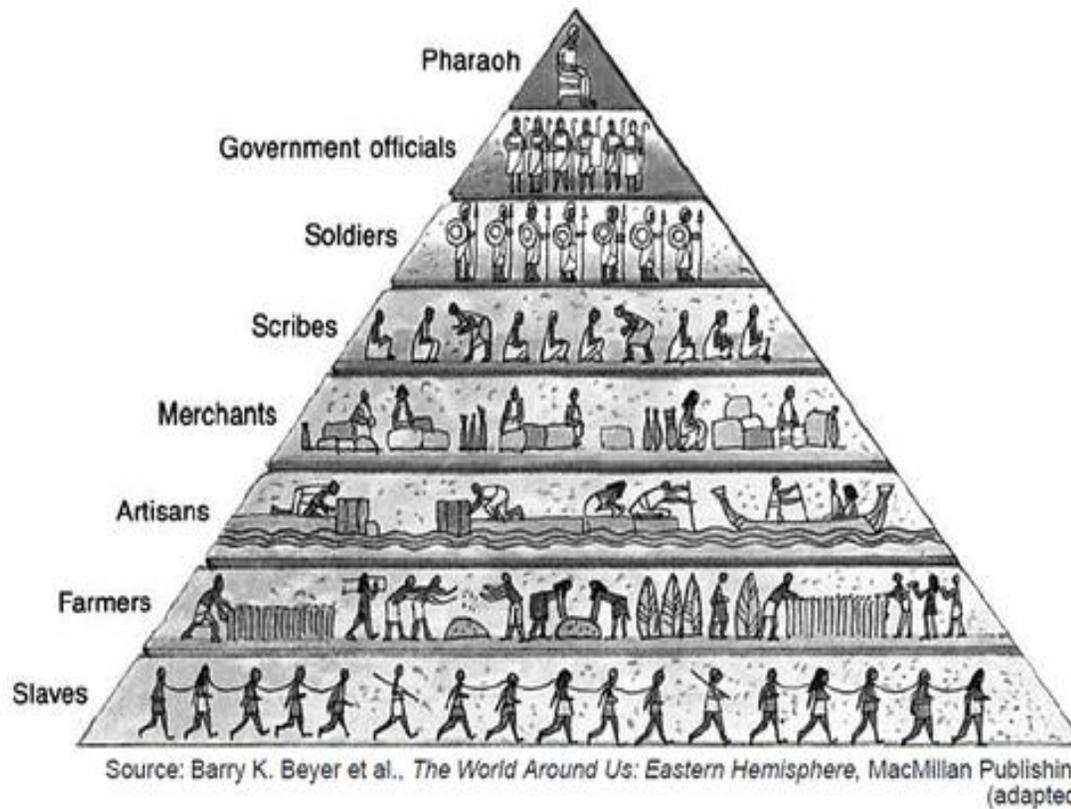
The city included granary ducts to circulate beneath the stored grain to dry it. There was also a great public bath, with steps down to a brick-lined pool in a courtyard. The elaborate bath area had been extremely well built, with a layer of natural tar to keep it from leaking, and in the center stood the pool.

Measuring 12m x 7m, with a depth of 2.4m, the pool had been likely used for religious or spiritual ceremonies.

The city included the world's first urban sanitation systems. Within the city, individual homes or groups of homes obtained water from wells. Some of the houses included rooms that appear to have been set aside for bathing, with wastewater diverted to covered drains, which lined the major streets.

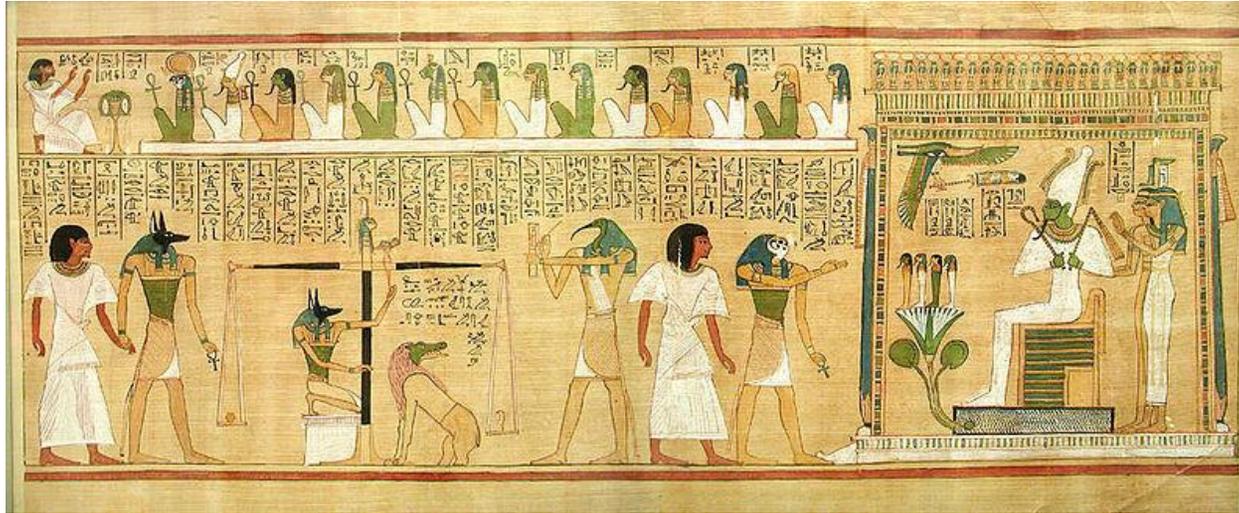
Adapted from "Mohenjo-daro." New World Encyclopedia. <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Mohenjo-daro>

Social Class Hierarchy in Ancient Egypt



Source: <http://apworldhistory2012-2013.weebly.com/uploads/9/9/9/6/9996001/1602424.gif?552>

Egyptian Book of the Dead



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:BD_Hunefer.jpg

The Egyptian Book of the Dead was both a description of the ancient Egyptian idea of the afterlife and a collection of hymns, spells, and instructions to guide the dead through the challenges that Egyptians believed they would meet in the afterlife. Copies of the book were printed on papyrus and placed in the coffins or burial chambers of the deceased, so they could use them in the afterlife.

Source: Adapted from "Egyptian Book of the Death." New World Encyclopedia. http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Egyptian_Book_of_the_Dead

Code of Hammurabi



Top Quarter / Fingernail



Lower Portion / Inscription

The Code of Hammurabi was a set of laws written around 1780 BCE. Hammurabi was the ruler of Babylon, a city-state in Mesopotamia. Hammurabi had his laws inscribed on large stone monuments called **stela** that were placed on public places for all people to see. The code of Hammurabi contained 282 laws, written by scribes on 12 tablets. The Code consists of rules and punishments if those rules are broken. The structure of the code is very specific, with each offense receiving a specified punishment.

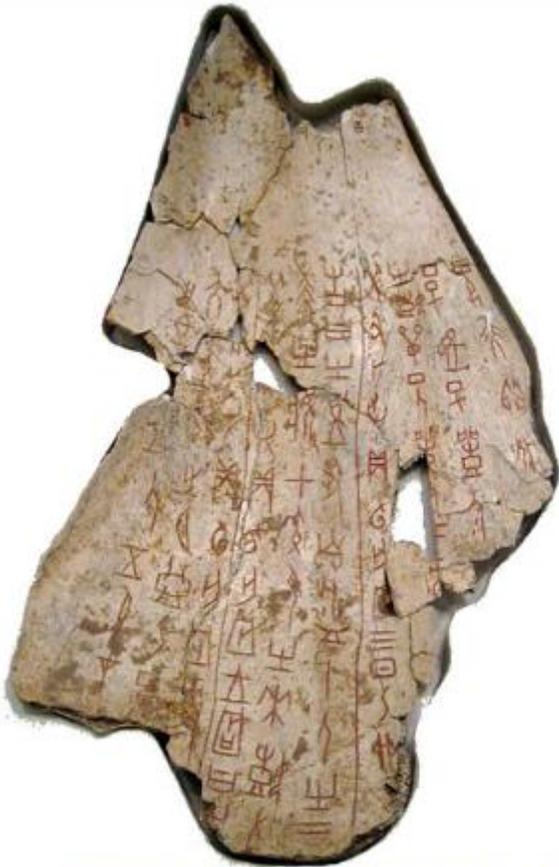
Egyptian Shaduf



Source: James Barter, *The Nile*, Lucent Books from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam, January 2014.

This frieze, or architectural adornment, on an ancient temple portrays Egyptians using *shadufs*, devices that enabled them to transfer water from the Nile to their fields.

Oracle Bones- Shang China



The Shang (ca. 1554-1045/40 BCE) people believed that they could communicate with their ancestors and God, and tell the future by using what they called oracle bones. To do this, oracles (spiritual guides) created holes in tortoise shells or cow bones, then placed a hot rod in the holes. The heat created cracks in the shell or bone. The oracles then interpreted the cracks to find answers to their questions.

Sometimes the predictions were written out on the shell or bone. Oracle bones are some of earliest examples of writing from Ancient China.

Adapted from “Oracle Bone Inscriptions of the Late Shang Dynasty.” Asia for Educators, Columbia University.

http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/oracle_bone_general.pdf

The Egyptian Theocracy

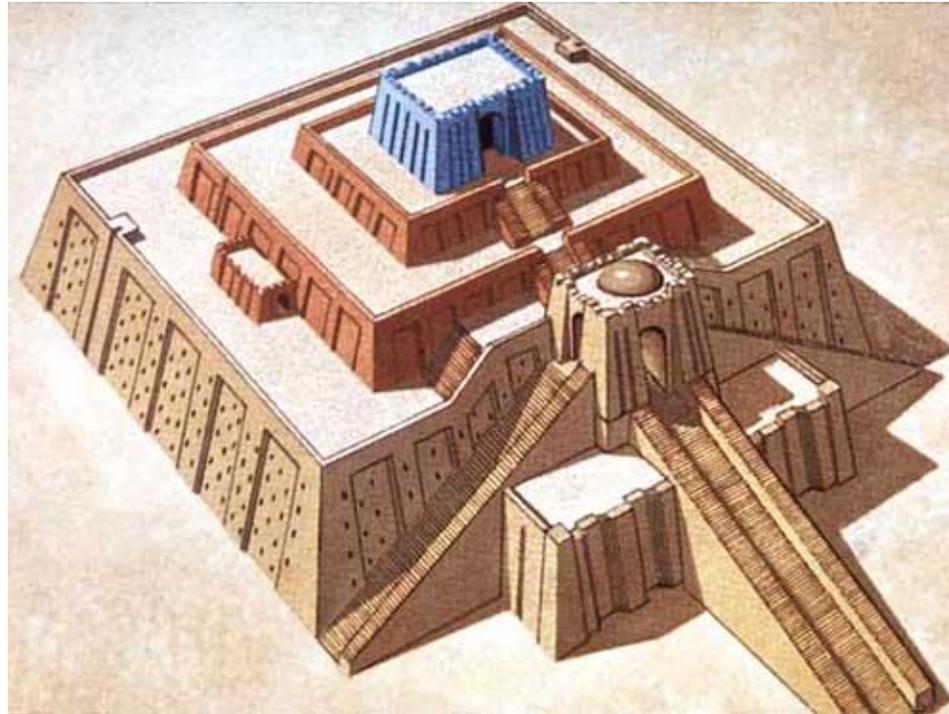
**Egypt was a
theocracy,
where the
pharaoh was
both the
religious and
political leader
of Egypt.**

[Image source: <http://www.pharaonicarts.com/ramses-horus.htm>]



Egypt was a theocracy, a government with a religious figure at its head. For the ancient Egyptians, the *pharaoh* was not only a political leader but also a god. For this reason, great care was taken to prepare their pharaoh for the afterlife. Some kings were even entombed in large structures called pyramids to house the mummified body of the leader along with everything necessary for the afterlife.

Mesopotamian Ziggurats



In the center of each town, was the Ziggurat. The Ziggurat was a temple. The ancient Sumerians believed their gods lived in the sky. In order for the gods to hear better, you needed to get closer to them. Ziggurats were huge, with built in steps. Ziggurats had a wide base that narrowed to a flat top. When the Babylonians took over in the south, and the Assyrians in the north, ziggurats continued to be built and used in the same manner as they were in ancient Sumer.

The Ziggurat was the tallest building in the town. From its top, you could see well into the farmlands that surrounded the city. The largest ziggurat was probably the one built in ancient Babylon. The Assyrians also built ziggurats.

Religious ceremonies were held on top of the Ziggurat. Each day, people would leave offerings to the gods of food, cloth, and wine on the steps of the ziggurat. The priests would collect and use these gifts since they were the representatives of the gods on earth.

(Source: <http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/ziggurats.html>)