CHAPTER 1
From the Origins of Agriculture to the First River-Valley Civilizations, 8000–1500 B.C.E.

CHAPTER 2
New Civilizations in the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, 2200–250 B.C.E.

CHAPTER 3
The Mediterranean and Middle East, 2000–500 B.C.E.

Human beings evolved over several million years from primates in Africa. Able to walk upright and possessing large brains, hands with opposable thumbs, and the capacity for speech, early humans used teamwork and created tools to survive in diverse environments. They spread relatively quickly to almost every habitable area of the world, hunting and gathering wild plant products. Around 10,000 years ago some groups began to cultivate plants, domesticate animals, and make pottery vessels for storage. This led to permanent settlements—at first small villages but eventually larger towns as well.

The earliest complex societies arose in the great river valleys of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Pakistan, and northern China. In these arid regions agriculture depended on river water, and centers of political power arose to organize the labor required to dig and maintain irrigation channels. Kings and priests dominated these early societies from the urban centers, helped by administrators, scribes, soldiers, merchants, craftsmen, and others with specialized skills. Surplus food grown in the countryside by a dependent peasantry sustained the activities of these groups.

Certain centers came to dominate broader expanses of territory, seeking access to raw materials, especially metals. This also stimulated long-distance
Babylonian Map of the World, ca. 600 B.C.E.

This map on a clay tablet, with labels written in Akkadian cuneiform, shows a flat, round world with the city of Babylon at the center. Nearby features of the Mesopotamian landscape include the Euphrates River, mountains, marshes, and cities. Beyond the great encircling salt sea are seven islands. Like many ancient peoples, the Babylonians believed that distant lands were home to legendary beasts, strangely formed peoples, and mysterious natural phenomena. (British Museum/HIP/Art Resource, NY)

trade and diplomatic relations between major powers. Artisans made weapons, tools, and ritual objects from bronze. Culture and technology spread to neighboring regions, such as southern China, Nubia, Syria-Palestine, Anatolia, and the Aegean.

In the Western Hemisphere, different geographical circumstances called forth distinctive patterns of technological and cultural response in the early civilizations in southern Mexico and the Andean region of South America.
Assyrian Cylinder Seal  This seventh-century B.C.E. Assyrian cylinder seal depicts Enkidu, at left, helping Gilgamesh, king of Mesopotamian Uruk, slay the Bull of Heaven sent by the goddess Ishtar. (Courtesy. Schøyen Collection)

- How did Mesopotamian civilization emerge, and what technologies promoted its advancement?
- What role did the environment and religion play in the evolution of Egyptian civilization?
- What does the material evidence tell us about the nature of the Indus Valley civilization, and what is the most likely reason for its collapse?
From the Origins of Agriculture to the First River-Valley Civilizations, 8000–1500 B.C.E.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Before Civilization
Mesopotamia
Egypt
The Indus Valley Civilization
Comparative Perspectives

DIVERSITY AND DOMINANCE: Violence and Order in the Babylonian New Year's Festival

ENVIRONMENT AND TECHNOLOGY: Environmental Stress in the Indus Valley

One of the oldest surviving works of literature, the Epic of Gilgamesh, provides a definition of civilization as the people of ancient Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq) understood it. In this epic, whose roots date to before 2000 B.C.E., Gilgamesh, an early king, sends a temple-prostitute to tame Enkidu, a wild man who lives like an animal in the grasslands. Gilgamesh and Enkidu are depicted on the cylinder seal shown here. After using her sexual charms to win Enkidu's trust, the temple-prostitute tells him:

Come with me to the city; to Uruk, to the temple of Anu and the goddess Ishtar . . . to Uruk, where the processions are and music, let us go together through the dancing to the palace hall where Gilgamesh presides.¹

Enkidu (EN-kee-doo) Uruk (oo-rook)
She then clothes Enkidu and teaches him to eat cooked food, drink brewed beer, and bathe and oil his body. By her words and actions she indicates some of the behavior that ancient Mesopotamians associated with civilized life.

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The Epic of Gilgamesh

The tendency of the Mesopotamians, like other peoples throughout history, to equate civilization with their own way of life should serve as a caution for us. What assumptions are hiding behind the frequently made claim that the "first" civilizations, or the first "advanced" or "high" civilizations, arose in western Asia and northeastern Africa sometime before 3000 B.C.E.? Civilization is an ambiguous concept, and the charge that a particular group is "uncivilized" has been used throughout human history to justify many things. Thus, the claim that the first civilizations emerged in Mesopotamia and Egypt sometime before 3000 B.C.E. needs to be carefully explained.

Scholars agree that the following political, social, economic, and technological phenomena are indicators of civilization: (1) cities that served as administrative centers, (2) a political system based on control of a defined territory rather than on kinship connections, (3) a significant number of people engaged in specialized, non-food-producing activities, (4) status distinctions usually linked to the accumulation of substantial wealth by some groups, (5) monumental building, (6) a system for keeping permanent records, (7) long-distance trade, and (8) major advances in science and the arts. The earliest societies in which those features are apparent developed in the floodplains of great rivers in Asia and Africa: the Tigris* and Euphrates* in Iraq, the Indus in Pakistan, the Yellow (Huang He)* in China, and the Nile in Egypt (see Map 1.2 on page 13). The periodic flooding of the rivers brought benefits—deposits of fertile silt and water for agriculture—but also threatened lives and property. To protect themselves and channel these powerful forces of nature, people living near the rivers created new technologies and forms of political and social organization.

In this chapter we describe the origins of domestication among the scattered groups of foragers living at the end of the last Ice Age and the slow development of farming and herding societies. We then trace the rise of complex societies in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Indus River Valley from approximately 3500 to 1500 B.C.E. (China, developing slightly later, is discussed in Chapter 2). The emergence of these civilizations roughly coincides with the origins of writing, allowing us to document aspects of human life not revealed by archaeological evidence alone.

BEFORE CIVILIZATION

Evidence of human artistic creativity first came to light in 1940 near Lascaux in southwestern France with the discovery of a vast underground cavern. The cavern walls were covered with paintings of animals, including many that had been extinct for thousands of years. Similar cave paintings have been found in Spain and elsewhere in southern France.

To even the most skeptical person, these artistic troves reveal rich imaginations and sophisticated skills, qualities also apparent in the stone tools and evidence of complex social relations uncovered from prehistoric sites. The production of such artworks and tools over wide areas and long periods of time demonstrates that skills and ideas were not simply individual but were deliberated passed along within societies. These learned patterns of action and expression constitute culture. Culture includes material objects, such as dwellings, clothing, tools, and crafts, along with nonmaterial values, beliefs, and languages. Although it is true that some animals also learn new ways, their activities are determined primarily by inherited instincts. Only human communities trace profound cultural developments over time. The development, transmission, and transformation of cultural practices and events are the subject of history.

Stone toolmaking, the first recognizable cultural activity, first appeared around 2 million years ago. The Stone Age, which lasted from then until around 4,000 years ago, can be a misleading label. Stone tools around

Tigris (TIE-gris) Euphrates (you-FRAY-tees) Huang He (huang huh)
<table>
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<th>Indus Valley</th>
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<td>3500 B.C.E.</td>
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<td>3100–2575 B.C.E.</td>
<td>Early Dynastic</td>
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<td>3000 B.C.E.</td>
<td>3000–2350 B.C.E.</td>
<td>Early Dynastic (Sumerian)</td>
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<td>1900–1600 B.C.E.</td>
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at archaeological sites, but not all tools were of stone. They were made as well of bone, skin, and wood, materials that survive poorly. In addition, this period encompasses many cultures and subperiods. Among the major subdivisions, the Paleolithic (Old Stone Age) lasted until 10,000 years ago, about 3,000 years after the end of the last Ice Age, long periods when glaciers covered much of North America, Europe, and Asia. The Neolithic (New Stone Age), which is associated with the origins of agriculture, followed.

Food Gathering and Stone Technology

Fossilized animal bones bearing the marks of butchering tools testify to the scavenging and hunting activities of Stone Age peoples, but anthropologists do not believe that early humans lived primarily on meat. Modern foragers (hunting and food-gathering peoples) in the Kalahari Desert of southern Africa and the Ituri Forest of Central Africa derive the bulk of their day-to-day nourishment from wild vegetable foods. They eat meat at feasts. Stone Age peoples probably did the same, even though the tools and equipment for gathering and processing vegetable foods have left few archaeological traces.

Like modern foragers, ancient humans would have used skins and mats woven from leaves for collecting fruits, berries, and wild seeds, and they would have dug up edible roots with wooden sticks. Archaeologists suspect that the doughnut-shaped stones often found at Stone Age sites served as weights to make wooden digging sticks more effective.

Cooking makes both meat and vegetables tastier and easier to digest, something early humans may have discovered inadvertently after wildfires. Humans may have begun setting fires deliberately 1 million to 1.5 million years ago, but proof of cooking does not appear until some 12,500 years ago, when clay cooking pots came into use in East Asia.

Studies of present-day foragers also indicate that Ice Age women probably did most of the gathering and cooking, which they could do while caring for small children. Women past child-bearing age would have been the most knowledgeable and productive food gatherers. Men, with stronger arms and shoulders, would have been better suited for hunting, particularly for large animals. Some early cave art suggests male hunting activities.

*Paleolithic* (pá-lé-o-lit’-ik)  *Neolithic* (né-o-lit’-ik)
The same studies, along with archaeological evidence from Ice Age campsites, indicate that early foragers lived in groups that were big enough to defend themselves from predators and to divide responsibility for food collection and preparation, but small enough not to exhaust the food resources within walking distance. Even bands of around fifty men, women, and children would have moved regularly to follow migrating animals or collect seasonally ripening plants in different places.

In regions with severe climates or lacking in natural shelters like caves, people built huts of branches, stones, bones, skins, and leaves as seasonal camps. Animal skins served as clothing, with the earliest evidence of woven cloth appearing about 26,000 years ago. Groups living in the African grasslands and other game-rich areas probably spent only three to five hours a day securing food, clothing, and shelter. This would have left a great deal of time for artistic endeavors, toolmaking, and social life.

The foundations of what later ages called science, art, and religion also date to the Stone Age. Gatherers learned which local plants were edible and when they ripened, as well as which natural substances were effective for medicine, consciousness altering, dyeing, and other purposes. Hunters learned the habits of game animals. People experimented with techniques of using plant and animal materials for clothing, twine, and construction. Knowledge of the environment included identifying which minerals made good paints and which stones made good tools. All of these aspects of culture were passed orally from generation to generation.

Early music and dance have left no traces, but visual art has survived abundantly. Cave paintings date from as early as 32,000 years ago in Europe and North Africa and somewhat later in other parts of the world. Because many feature food animals like wild oxen, reindeer, and horses, some scholars believe the art records hunting scenes or played a magical and religious role in hunting. A newly discovered cave at Vallon Pont-d’Arc in southern France, however, features rhinoceros, panthers, bears, owls, and a hyena, which probably were not hunted for food. Other drawings include people dressed in animal skins and smeared with paint and stencils of human bodies. Some scholars suspect that other marks in cave paintings and on bones may represent efforts at counting or writing.

Some cave art suggests that Stone Age people had well-developed religions, but without written texts, it is hard to know what they believed. Some graves from about 100,000 years ago contain stone implements, food, clothing, and red-ochre powder, indicating that early people revered their leaders enough to honor them in death and may have believed in an afterlife.

The Agricultural Revolutions

Around 10,000 years ago, some human groups began to meet their food needs by raising domesticated plants and animals. Gradually over the next millennium, most people became food producers, although hunting and gathering continued in some places.

The term Neolithic Revolution, commonly given to the changeover from food gathering to food producing, can be misleading. Neolithic means “new stone,” but the new tool designs that accompanied the beginnings of agriculture did not define it. Nor was the “revolution” a single event. The changeover occurred at different times in different parts of the world. The term Agricultural Revolutions is more precise because it emphasizes the central role of food production and signals that the changeover occurred several times. The adoption of agriculture often included the domestication of animals for food (see Map 1.1).

Food gathering gave way to food production over hundreds of generations. The process may have begun when forager bands, returning year after year to the same seasonal camps, scattered seeds and cleared away weeds to encourage the growth of foods they liked. Such semi-cultivation could have supplemented food gathering without the permanent settlement of the group. Families choosing to concentrate their energies on food production, however, would have had to settle permanently near their fields.

Specialized stone tools first alerted archaeologists to new food-producing practices: polished or ground stone heads to work the soil, sharp stone chips embedded in bone or wooden handles to cut grasses, and stone mortars to pulverize grain. Early farmers used fire to clear fields of shrubs and trees and discovered that ashes were a natural fertilizer. After the burn-off, farmers used blades and axes to keep the land clear.

Selection of the highest-yielding strains of wild plants led to the development of domesticated varieties over time. As the principal gatherers of wild plant foods, women probably played a major role in this transition to plant cultivation, but the task of clearing fields probably fell to the men.

In the Middle East, the region with the earliest evidence of agriculture, human selection had transformed certain wild grasses into higher-yielding domesticated grains, now known as emmer wheat and barley, by 8000 B.C.E. Farmers there also discovered that alternating the cultivation of grains and pulses (plants yielding edible seeds such as lentils and peas) helped maintain fertility.
Map 1.1 Early Centers of Plant and Animal Domestication. Many different parts of the world made original contributions to domestication during the Agricultural Revolutions that began about 10,000 years ago. Later interactions helped spread these domesticated animals and plants to new locations. In lands less suitable for crop cultivation, pastoralism and hunting remained more important for supplying food.
Plants domesticated in the Middle East spread to adjacent lands, but in many parts of the world, agriculture arose independently. Exchanges of crops and techniques occurred between regions, but societies that had already turned to farming borrowed new plants, animals, and farming techniques more readily than foraging groups did.

The eastern Sahara, which went through a wet period after 8000 B.C.E., preserves the oldest traces of food production in northern Africa. As in the Middle East, emmer wheat and barley became the principal crops and sheep, goats, and cattle the main domestic animals. When drier conditions returned around 5000 B.C.E., many Saharan farmers moved to the Nile Valley, where the river's annual flood provided water for crops.

In Greece, wheat and barley cultivation, beginning as early as 6000 B.C.E., combined local experiments with Middle Eastern borrowings. Shortly after 4000 B.C.E., farming developed in the light-soiled plains of Central Europe and along the Danube River. As forests receded because of climate changes and human clearing efforts, agriculture spread to other parts of Europe over the next millennium.

Early farmers in Europe and elsewhere practiced shifting cultivation, also known as swidden agriculture. After a few growing seasons, farmers left the fields fallow (abandoned to natural vegetation) and cleared new fields nearby. Between 4000 and 3000 B.C.E., for example, communities of forty to sixty people in the Danube Valley supported themselves on about 500 acres (200 hectares) of farmland, cultivating a third or less each year while leaving the rest fallow to regain its fertility. From around 2800 B.C.E., people in Central Europe began using ox-drawn wooden plows to till heavier and richer soils.

Although the lands around the Mediterranean seem to have shared a complex of crops and farming techniques, geographical barriers blocked the spread elsewhere. Rainfall patterns south of the Sahara favored locally domesticated grains—sorghums, millets, and (in Ethiopia) teff—over wheat and barley. Middle Eastern grains did not grow at all in the humidity of equatorial West Africa; there, yams became an early domestic crop.

Domestic rice originated in southern China, the northern half of Southeast Asia, or northern India, possibly as early as 10,000 B.C.E. but more likely closer to 5000 B.C.E. The warm, wet climate of southern China particularly favored rice. Indian farmers cultivated hyacinth beans, green grams, and black grams along with rice by about 2000 B.C.E.

In the Americas a decline of game animals in the Tehuacán Valley of Mexico after 8000 B.C.E. increased people's dependence on wild plants. Agriculture based on maize (corn) developed there about 3000 B.C.E. and gradually spread. At about the same time, the inhabitants of Peru developed a food production pattern based on potatoes and quinoa, a protein-rich seed grain. People in the more tropical parts of Mesoamerica cultivated tomatoes, peppers, squash, and potatoes. In South America's tropical forests, the root crop manioc became the staple food after 1500 B.C.E. Manioc and maize then spread to the Caribbean islands.

The domestication of animals expanded rapidly during these same millennia. The first domesticated animal, the dog, may have helped hunters track game well before the Neolithic period. Later, animals initially provided meat but eventually supplied milk, wool, and energy as well.

Refuse dumped outside Middle East villages shows a gradual decline in the number of wild gazelle bones after 7000 B.C.E. This probably reflects the depletion of wild game through overhunting by local farmers. Meat eating, however, did not decline. Sheep and goat bones gradually replaced gazelle bones. Possibly wild sheep and goats learned to graze around agricultural villages to take advantage of the suppression of predators by humans. The tame animals may gradually have accepted human control and thus became themselves a ready supply of food. The bones of tame animals initially differ so little from those of their wild ancestors that the early stages of domestication are hard to date. However, selective breeding for characteristics like a wooly coat and high milk production eventually yielded distinct breeds of domestic sheep and goats.

Elsewhere, other wild species were evolving domestic forms during the centuries before 3000 B.C.E.; cattle in northern Africa or the Middle East, donkeys in northern Africa, water buffalo in China, humped-back Zebu cattle in India, horses and two-humped camels in Central Asia, one-humped camels in Arabia, chickens in Southeast Asia, and pigs in several places. Like domestic plant species, varieties of domesticated animals spread from one region to another. The Zebu cattle originally domesticated in India, for example, became important in sub-Saharan Africa about 2,000 years ago.

Once cattle and water buffalo had become sufficiently tame to be yoked to plows, which happened long after their initial domestication, they became essential to the agricultural cycle of grain farmers. In addition, animal droppings provided valuable fertilizer. Wool and milk production also followed initial domestication by a substantial period.

In the Americas, domestic llamas provided meat, transport, and wool, while guinea pigs and turkeys

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maize (mayz) quinoa (ke-NOH-uh) Zebu (ZEE-bo)
provided meat. Dogs assisted hunters and also provided meat. Some scholars believe that no other American species could have been domesticated, but this cannot be proven. Domestic species could not be borrowed from elsewhere, however, because of the geographical isolation of the Americas.

Pastoralism, a way of life dependent on large herds of grazing livestock, came to predominate in arid regions. As the Sahara approached its maximum dryness around 2500 B.C.E., pastoralists replaced farmers who migrated southward (see Chapter 7). Moving herds to new pastures and watering places throughout the year made pastoralists almost as mobile as foragers and discouraged accumulation of bulky possessions and substantial dwellings. Like modern pastoralists, early cattle keepers probably relied more heavily on milk than on meat, since killing animals diminished the size of their herds. During wet seasons, they may also have engaged in semicultivation or bartered meat and skins for plant foods with nearby farming communities.

Why did the Agricultural Revolutions occur? Some theories assume that growing crops had obvious advantages. Grain, for example, provided both a dietary staple and the makings of beer. Beer drinking appears frequently in ancient Middle Eastern art and can be dated to as early as 3500 B.C.E. Most researchers today, however, believe that climate change drove people to abandon hunting and gathering in favor of pastoralism and agriculture. So great was the global warming that ended the last Ice Age that geologists gave the era since about 9000 B.C.E. a new name: the *Holocene*. Scientists have also found evidence that temperate lands were exceptionally warm between 6000 and 2000 B.C.E., when people in many parts of the world adopted agriculture. The precise nature of the climatic crisis probably varied. In the Middle East, shortages of wild food caused by dryness or population growth may have stimulated food production. Elsewhere, a warmer, wetter climate could have turned grasslands into forest and thereby reduced supplies of game and wild grains.

In many drier parts of the world, where wild food remained abundant, agriculture did not arise. The inhabitants of Australia relied exclusively on foraging until recent centuries, as did some peoples on the other continents. Amerindians in the arid grasslands from Alaska to the Gulf of Mexico hunted bison, and salmon fishing sustained groups in the Pacific Northwest. Ample supplies of fish, shellfish, and aquatic animals permitted food gatherers east of the Mississippi River to become increasingly sedentary. In the equatorial rain forest and in the southern part of Africa, conditions also favored retention of older ways.

Whatever the causes, the gradual adoption of food production transformed most parts of the world. A hundred thousand years ago, world population, mostly living in the temperate and tropical regions of Africa and Eurasia, did not exceed 2 million. The population may have fallen still lower during the last glacial epoch, between 32,000 and 13,000 years ago. Agriculture supported a gradual population increase, perhaps to 10 million by 5000 B.C.E., and then a mushrooming to between 50 million and 100 million by 1000 B.C.E.²

Life in Neolithic Communities

Evidence that an ecological crisis may have triggered the transition to food production has prompted reexamination of the assumption that farmers enjoyed a better life than foragers did. Early farmers probably had to work much harder and for much longer periods than food gatherers. Long days spent clearing and cultivating the land yielded meager harvests. Guarding herds from predators, guiding them to fresh pastures, and tending to their needs imposed similar burdens.

Although early farmers commanded a more reliable food supply, their diet contained less variety and nutrition than that of foragers. Skeletons show that Neolithic farmers were shorter on average than earlier foragers. Death from contagious diseases ravaged farming settlements, which were contaminated by human waste, infested by disease-bearing vermin and insects, and inhabited by domesticated animals—especially pigs and cattle—whose diseases could infect people.

A dependable supply of food that could be stored between harvests to see people through nonproductive seasons, droughts, and other calamities proved decisive in the long run, however. Over several millennia, farmers came to outnumber nonfarmers, permanent settlements generated cultural changes, and specialized crafts appeared in fledgling towns.

Some researchers envision violent struggles between farmers and foragers. Others see a more peaceful transition. Violence may well have accompanied land clearance that constrained the foragers’ food supplies. And farmers probably fought for control of the best land. In most cases, however, farmers seem to have displaced foragers by gradual infiltration rather than by conquest.

The archaeologist Colin Renfrew maintains that over a few centuries, farming populations in Europe could have increased by a factor of fifty to one hundred just on the basis of the dependability of their food supply. In his view, as population densities rose, individuals with fields

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Holocene (HAWL-uh-seen)
farthest away from their native village formed new settlements, leading to a steady, nonviolent expansion of agriculture consistent with the archaeological record. An expansion by only 12 to 19 miles (20 to 30 kilometers) in a generation could have brought farming to every corner of Europe between 6500 and 3500 B.C.E. Yet it would have happened so gradually as to minimize sharp conflicts with foragers, who would simply have stayed clear of the agricultural frontier or gradually adopted agriculture themselves. Studies that map similar genetic changes in the population also suggest a gradual spread of agricultural people across Europe from southeast to northwest.

As in forager (mound, kinship and marriage bound farming communities together. Nuclear family size (parents and their children) may not have risen, but kinship relations traced back over more generations brought distant cousins into a common kin network. This encouraged the holding of land by large kinship units known as lineages or clans.

Because each person has two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, and so on, each individual has a bewildering number of ancestors. Some societies trace descent equally through both parents, but most give greater importance to descent through either the mother (matrilineal societies) or the father (patrilineal societies).

Some scholars believe that descent through women and perhaps rule by women prevailed in early times. The traditions of Kikuyu farmers on Mount Kenya in East Africa, for example, relate that women ruled until the Kikuyu men conspired to get all the women pregnant at once and then overthrew them while they were unable to fight back. No specific evidence can prove or disprove legends such as this, but it is important not to confuse tracing descent through women (matrilineality) with rule by women (matriarchy).

Religiously, kinship led to reverence for departed ancestors. Old persons often received elaborate burials. A plastered skull from Jericho in the Jordan Valley of modern Israel may be evidence of early ancestor reverence or worship at the dawn of agriculture.

The religions of foragers tended to center on sacred groves, springs, and wild animals. In contrast, the rituals of farmers often centered on the Earth Mother, a deity believed to be the source of new life, an all-powerful (and usually male) Sky God, and divinities representing fire, wind, and rain.

Assemblages of megaliths (meaning "big stones") seem to relate to religious beliefs. One complex built in the Egyptian desert before 5000 B.C.E. includes stone burial chambers, a calendar circle, and pairs of upright stones that frame the rising sun on the summer solstice. Stonehenge, a famous megalithic site in England constructed about 2000 B.C.E., marked the position of the sun and other celestial bodies at key points in the year. In the Middle East, the Americas, and other parts of the world, giant earth burial mounds may have served similar ritual and symbolic functions.

In some parts of the world, a few Neolithic villages grew into towns, which served as centers of trade and specialized crafts. Two towns in the Middle East, Jericho on the west bank of the Jordan River and Çatal Hüyük in central Anatolia (modern Turkey), have been extensively excavated (Map 1.2 shows their location). Jericho revealed an elaborate early agricultural settlement. The round mud-brick dwellings characteristic of Jericho around 8000 B.C.E. may have imitated the shape of the tents of foragers who once had camped near Jericho's natural spring. A millennium later, rectangular rooms with finely plastered

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**Neolithic Goddess** Many versions of a well-nourished and pregnant female figure were found at Çatal Hüyük. Here she is supported by twin leopards whose tails curve over her shoulders. To those who inhabited the city some 8,000 years ago, the figure likely represented fertility and power over nature. (C. M. Dixon Ancient Art & Architecture Collection)

Çatal Hüyük (cha-TAHL hoo-YOOK)