CENGAGE

Societies, Networks, & Transitions

A GLOBAL HISTORY

FOURTH EDITION

CRAIG A. LOCKARD

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A GLOBAL HISTORY

Fourth Edition

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CENGAGE

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***Societies, Networks, and Transitions: A Global History*, Fourth Edition**
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Preface

> *"Awareness of the need for a universal view of history—for a history which transcends national and regional boundaries and comprehends the entire globe—is one of the marks of the present. Our past [is] the past of the world, our history is the first to be world history."*[1]
>
> —British historian Geoffrey Barraclough

British historian Geoffrey Barraclough wrote these words four decades ago, yet historians are still grappling with what it means to write and study world history, and why it is crucial to do so, especially to better inform today's students about their changing world and how it came to be. The intended audience for this text is students taking introductory world history courses and the faculty who teach them. Many of these students will be taking world history in colleges, universities, and community colleges, often with the goal of satisfying general education requirements or building a foundation for majoring in history or a related field. Most others will take world history in secondary schools, often as Advanced Placement courses. Like the contemporary world, the marketplace for texts is also changing. Both students, many of whom have outside jobs, and instructors, often facing expanded workloads, have increasing demands on their time. New technologies are promoting new pedagogies and a multiplicity of classroom approaches. Hence, any textbook must provide a sound knowledge base while also enhancing teaching and learning whatever the pedagogy employed.

To make this fourth edition even more accessible and reader friendly than the first three editions, we have included more human-interest material and short quotes from primary sources to liven up the narrative and convey a better sense of the diverse people of all backgrounds in world history and streamlined and shortened the narrative. Based on instructor feedback, we have kept the popular *Societies, Networks, and Transitions* essay features at the beginning of each Part in order to give them more prominence and added more human interest material to them. Like the core chapter narrative, these essays are organized by theme so that students can easily grasp the major parallels and changes that take place over the timeframe of the part. There has been considerable new scholarship since the third edition in all areas of world history and I have updated the narrative to include some of the most important findings as well as covering recent developments (see below). I believe that these changes and additions enhance the book's presentation and clarity and enable it to convey the richness and importance of world history for today's students and tomorrow's leaders while also making the teaching of the material easier for both high school and college instructors using this text.

Twenty-first-century students, more than any generation before them, live in multicultural countries and an interconnected and rapidly changing world. The world's interdependence calls for teaching a wider vision, which is the goal of this text. My intention is to create a meaningful, coherent, and stimulating presentation that conveys to students the incredible diversity of societies from earliest times to the present, as well as the ways they have been increasingly connected to other societies and shaped by these relationships. History may happen "as one darn thing after another," but the job of historians is to make it something more than facts, names, and dates. A text should provide a readable narrative, supplying a content base while also posing larger questions. The writing is as clear and thorough in its explanation of events and concepts as I can make it. No text can or should teach the course, but I hope that this text provides enough of a baseline of regional and global coverage to allow each instructor to bring her or his own talents, understandings, and particular interests to the process.

I became involved in teaching, debating, and writing world history as a result of my personal and academic experiences. My interest in other cultures was first awakened in the multicultural Southern California city where I grew up. Many of my classmates and neighbors or their parents had come from Asia, Latin America, or the Middle East. There were also substantial African American and Mexican American communities. A curious youngster did not have to search far to hear music, sample foods, or encounter ideas from many different cultures. I remember being enchanted by the Chinese landscape paintings at a local museum devoted to Asian art, and vowing to one day see some of those misty mountains for myself. Today many young people may be as interested as I was in learning about the world, since, thanks to immigration, many cities and towns all over North America have taken on a cosmopolitan flavor similar to my hometown.

While experiences growing up sparked my interest in other cultures, it was my schooling that pointed the way to a career in teaching world history. When I entered college, many undergraduate students in the United States, often as part of the general education requirement, were required to take a year-long course in Western Civilization that introduced students to Egyptian pyramids, Greek philosophy, medieval pageantry, Renaissance art, and the French Revolution, enriching our lives. Fortunately, my university expanded student horizons further by adding course components (albeit brief) on China, Japan, India, and Islam while also developing a study abroad program. I participated in both the study abroad semester in Salzburg, Austria, and a year-long student exchange with a university in Hong Kong, which meant living with, rather than just sampling, different customs, outlooks, and histories.

[1]Geoffrey Barraclough, *Main Trends in History* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1979), p. 153.

More teachers and academic historians came to realize that the emphasis in U.S. education on the histories of the United States and western Europe, to the near exclusion of the rest of the world, was not sufficient for understanding the realities of the twentieth century nor is it today. For decades young Americans have been sent thousands of miles away to fight wars in countries, such as Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, that many Americans had never heard of. Newspapers and television reported developments in places such as Japan and Pakistan, Egypt and Congo, Cuba and Brazil, which had increasing relevance for Americans. Over the past sixty years graduate programs and scholarship directed toward Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Latin American, Pacific Island, and eastern European and Russian history also grew out of the awareness of a widening world, broadening conceptions of history. I attended one of the new programs in Asian Studies for my MA degree, and then the first PhD program in world history. Thanks to that program, I encountered the stimulating work of pioneering world historians from North America such as Philip Curtin, Marshall Hodgson, William McNeill, and Leften S. Stavrianos. My own approach, developed as I taught undergraduate world history courses beginning in 1969, owes much to the global vision they offered.

To bring some coherence to the emerging world history field as well as to promote a global approach at all levels of education, several dozen of us teaching at the university, college, community college, and secondary school levels in the United States and Canada came together in the early 1980s to form the World History Association (WHA), for which I served as founding secretary and later as a member of the Executive Council. The organization grew rapidly, encouraging the teaching, studying, and writing of world history not only in the United States but all over the world. The approaches to world history found among active WHA members vary widely, and my engagement in the ongoing discussions at conferences and in essays, often about the merits of varied textbooks and teaching methods, provided an excellent background for writing this text.

The Aims and Approach of the Text

Societies, Networks, and Transitions: A Global History provides an accessible, thought-provoking guide to students in their exploration of the landscape of the past, helping them to think about it in all its social and cultural diversity and interconnectedness and to see their lives with fresh understanding. It does this by combining clear writing, special learning features, current scholarship, and a comprehensive, global approach that does not omit the role and richness of particular regions.

There is a method behind these aims. For fifty years I have written about and taught Asian, African, and world history at universities in the United States and, as a visiting professor, Malaysia. A cumulative seven years of study, research, teaching, or travel in Southeast Asia, East Asia, East Africa, and Europe gave me insights into a wide variety of cultures and historical perspectives. Finally, the WHA, its publications and conferences, various academic and teaching-oriented journals devoted to world history, and the electronic listserv H-WORLD have provided active forums for vigorously discussing how best to think about and teach world history.

The most effective approach to presenting world history in a text for undergraduate and advanced high school students, I have concluded, is one that combines the themes of connections and cultures. World history is very much about connections that transcend countries, cultures, and regions, and a text should discuss, for example, major long-distance trade networks such as the Silk Road, the spread of religions, maritime exploration, world wars, globalization, and transregional empires such as the Persian, Mongol, and British Empires. These connections are part of the broader global picture. Students need to understand that cultures, however unique, did not emerge and operate in a vacuum but faced similar challenges, shared many common experiences, and influenced each other.

The broader picture is drawn by means of several features in the text. To strengthen the presentation of the global overview, the text uses a short but innovative essay feature titled "Societies, Networks, and Transitions." Appearing at the beginning of each of the six chronological parts, this feature analyzes and synthesizes some of the wider trends of the era, such as the role of long-distance trade, human migrations, the spread of technologies and religions, gender relations and experiences, and global climate change. The objective is to introduce and amplify the wider transregional messages developed in the part chapters and help students to think about the global context in which societies are enmeshed. The essays also make comparisons, for example, between the Han Chinese, Mauryan Indian, and Roman Empires, and between Chinese, Indian, and European emigration in the nineteenth century. These comparisons help to throw further light on diverse cultures and the differences and similarities between them during the era covered. Finally, each essay is meant to show how the transitions that characterize the era lead up to the era discussed in the following part. Furthermore, six chapters largely concentrate on global or transregional rather than regional developments.

However, while a broad global overview is a strongly developed feature of this text, most chapters, while acknowledging, highlighting, and explaining relevant linkages, focus on a particular region or several regions. Most students learn easiest by focusing on one region or culture at a time. Students also benefit from recognizing the cultural richness and intellectual creativity of specific societies. From this text students learn, for instance, about Chinese poetry, Indonesian music, Arab science, Greek philosophy, West African arts, Polynesian outrigger sailing, Indian cinema, Latin American economies, French painting, Mayan city life, and Anglo-American political thought. As a component of this cultural richness, this text also devotes considerable attention to the enduring religious traditions, such as Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, and Islam; issues of gender; and popular culture such as music. The cultural richness of a region and its distinctive social patterns can get lost in an approach that minimizes regional coverage. Today most people are still mostly concerned with events in their own countries, even as their lives are reshaped by transnational economies and global cultural movements.

Also a strong part of the presentation of world history in this text is its attempt to be comprehensive and inclusive. To

enhance comprehensiveness, the text balances social, economic, political, and cultural and religious history, and it also devotes some attention to geographical, environmental, and climate contexts as well as to the history of ideas and technologies. At the same time, the text highlights features within societies, such as economic production, technological innovations, and portable ideas, that had widespread or enduring influence. To ensure inclusiveness, the text recognizes the contributions of many societies, including some often neglected, such as sub-Saharan Africa, pre-Columbian America, Southeast Asia, and Oceania. In particular, this text offers strong coverage of the diverse Asian societies. Throughout history, as today, the great majority of the world's population has lived in Asia.

Organizing the Text

All textbook authors struggle with how to organize the material. To keep the number of chapters corresponding to the twenty-eight or thirty weeks of most academic calendars in North America, and roughly equal in length, I have often had to combine several regions into a single chapter to be comprehensive, sometimes making decisions for conveniences sake. For example, unlike texts that may have only one chapter on sub-Saharan Africa covering the centuries from ancient times to 1500 CE, this text discusses sub-Saharan Africa in each of the six chronological eras, devoting three chapters to the centuries prior to 1500 CE and three to the years since 1450 CE. But this sometimes necessitated grouping Africa, depending on the era, with Europe, the Middle East, or the Americas. Unlike texts that may, for example, have material on Tang-dynasty China scattered through several chapters, making it harder for students to gain a cohesive view of that society, I want to convey a comprehensive perspective of major societies such as Tang and Song China. The material is divided into parts defined as distinct eras (such as the Classical and the Early Modern) so that students can understand how all regions were part of world history from earliest times. I believe that a broadly chronological structure aids students in grasping the changes over time while helping to organize the material.

Distinguishing Features

Several features of *Societies, Networks, Transitions: A Global History* will help students better understand, assimilate, and appreciate the material they are about to encounter. Those unique to this text include the following.

Introducing World History World History may be the first and possibly the only history course many undergraduates will take in college. The text opens with a short essay that introduces students to the nature of history, the special challenges posed by studying world history, and why we need to study it.

Balancing Themes Three broad themes—uniqueness, interdependence, and change—have shaped the text. They are discussed throughout in terms of three related concepts—societies, networks, and transitions; they are also clearly identified in the text via the use of icons. These concepts, discussed in more detail in "Introducing World History," can be summarized as follows:

- SOCIETIES Influenced by environmental and geographical factors, people have formed and maintained societies defined by distinctive but often changing cultures, beliefs, social forms, institutions, and material traits.
- NETWORKS Over the centuries societies have generally been connected to other societies by growing networks forged by phenomena such as migration, long-distance trade, exploration, military expansion, colonization, the spread of ideas and technologies, and webs of communication. These growing networks modified individual societies, created regional systems, and eventually led to a global system.
- TRANSITIONS Each major historical era has been marked by one or more great transitions sparked by events or innovations, such as settled agriculture, Mongol imperialism, industrial revolution, or world war, that have had profound and enduring influences on many societies, gradually reshaping the world. At the same time, societies and regions have experienced transitions of regional rather than global scope that have generated new ways of thinking or doing things, such as the expansion of Islam into South Asia or the European colonization of East Africa and Mexico.

Through exposure to these three ideas integrated throughout the text, students learn of the rich cultural mosaic of the world. They are also introduced to its patterns of connections and unity as well as of continuity and change.

"Societies, Networks, and Transitions" Mini-Chapters A short, thematically organized feature at the beginning of each part assists the student in backing up from the stories of societies and regions to see the larger historical patterns of change and the wider links among distant peoples. This comparative analysis allows students to identify experiences and transitions common to several regions or the entire world and to reflect further on the text themes. Additionally, the feature provides an important overview of key developments in the subsequent set of chapters.

Debate the Historians Since one of the common misconceptions about history is that it is about the "dead" past, included at the end of each part is a brief account of a debate or controversy among historians over how an issue in each of the six eras should be interpreted and what it means to us today. For example, why are the major societies dominated by males, and has this always been true? Why and when did Europe begin its "great divergence" from China and other Asian societies? How do historians evaluate contemporary globalization and its future? Reappraisal is at the heart of history, and many historical questions are never completely answered. Yet most textbooks ignore this dimension of historical study; this text is innovative in including it. The Debate the Historians essays will help show students that historical facts are anything but dead; they live and change

their meaning as new questions are asked by each new generation. This feature has enjoyed especially enthusiastic support from teachers and reviewers.

Meet the People It is impossible to recount the human story without using broad generalizations, but it is also difficult to understand that story without seeing historical events reflected in the lives of men and women, prominent but also ordinary people. Each chapter contains a Meet the People feature that focuses on the experiences or accomplishments of a woman or man, to convey the flavor of life of the period, to embellish the chapter narrative with interesting personalities, and to integrate gender into the historical account. These try to show how gender affected the individual, shaping her or his opportunities and involvement in society. Several focus questions ask the student to reflect on the profile. For instance, students will examine a historian in early China, look at the spread of Christianity as seen through the life of a pagan female philosopher in Egypt, learn why Vietnamese today still honor two women rebels who lived two millennia ago, follow a fourteenth-century Moroccan's travels around Afro-Eurasia, relive the experience of a female slave in colonial Brazil, be introduced to a famed Ottoman Turkish architect, learn about an English minstrel and activist coal miner, find out about a Noble Prize-winning Kenyan environmentalist, and envision modern Indian life through a sketch of a film star.

Special Coverage This text also treats often-neglected areas and subjects. For example:

- It gives attention to several regions with considerable historical importance but often marginalized or even omitted in many textbooks, including sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, Korea, Central Asia, pre-Columbian North America, ancient Mesoamerica and South America, the Caribbean, Polynesia, Australia, Canada, and the United States.
- It includes discussions of significant groups that have transcended regional boundaries, such as the Silk Road caravan travelers and traders, Mongol empire builders, Indian Ocean maritime traders, Viking explorers, Chinese and Indian migrants to faraway lands, and contemporary humanitarian organizations such as Amnesty International and Doctors Without Borders.
- It features extensive coverage of the roots, rise, reshaping, and enduring influence of the great religious and philosophical traditions.
- It blends strong coverage of gender, particularly the experiences of women, and of social history generally, into the larger narrative, an approach praised by many reviewers and teachers.
- It devotes the first chapter of the text to the roots of human history. After a brief introduction to the shaping of our planet, human evolution, and the spread of people around the world, the chapter examines the birth of agriculture, cities, and states, which set the stage for everything to come.
- It includes strong coverage of the world since 1945 right up to 2019, a focus of great interest to many students.
- It includes increasing attention to environmental and climate change issues in the past and today.

Discover Historical Voices Many texts incorporate excerpts from primary sources, but this text also keeps student needs in mind by using up-to-date translations and addressing a wide range of topics. Included are excerpts from important Buddhist, Hindu, Confucian, and Islamic works that helped shape great traditions. Readings such as a collection of Roman graffiti, a thirteenth-century description of a Chinese city, a report on an Aztec market, and a manifesto for modern Egyptian women reveal something of people's lives and concerns. Also offered are materials that shed light on the politics of the time, such as an African king's plea to end the slave trade, Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, and a recent *Arab Human Development Report*. Four new primary source readings are included in this edition, including an introduction to China's "New Silk Road" Belt and Road Initiative and an overview of the Anthropocene concept. The wide selection of document excerpts is also designed to illustrate how historians work with original documents. Unlike most texts, chapters are also enlivened by brief but numerous excerpts of statements, writings, or songs from people of the era that are effectively interspersed in the chapter narrative so that students can better see the vantage points and opinions of the people then living.

Chapter Learning Aids

The carefully designed learning aids are meant to help faculty teach world history and students actively learn and appreciate it. A number of aids have been created, including some that distinguish this text from others in use.

Chapter-Opening Features A chapter outline shows the chapter contents at a glance. The outlines include *focus questions* for each section to prepare students for thinking about the main themes and topics of the chapter. We have also added a *thought question* that asks the student to relate the material in that section of the chapter to today and often to their own lives and experiences. Chapter text then opens with a quotation from a primary source pertinent to chapter topics. An interest-grabbing vignette or sketch then funnels students' attention toward the chapter themes they are about to explore.

Thematic Icons Every major section within each chapter is now identified by helpful thematic icons that let students know which of the main themes, societies, networks, or transitions are being discussed.

Timelines To help students grasp the overall chronological picture of the chapter, timelines highlight key dates and events for each of the major regions discussed in each chapter.

Special Boxed Features Each chapter contains a *Discover Historical Voices* drawn from a primary source, and a *Meet the People* highlighting a man or woman from that era. Questions

are also placed at the end of the primary source readings and profiles to help students comprehend the material.

Maps and Other Visuals Maps, photos, chronologies, and tables are amply interspersed throughout the chapters, illustrating and unifying coverage and themes. Thought questions have also been added to images and maps to give students experience in analyzing these kinds of sources.

Section Summaries At the end of each major section within a chapter, a bulleted summary helps students to review the key topics.

Chapter Summary At the end of each chapter, a concise summary invites students to sum up the chapter content and review its major points.

Key Terms and Pronunciation Guides Important terms likely to be new to the student are boldfaced in the text and immediately defined. These key terms are also listed at the end of the chapter and then listed with their definitions at the end of the text. The pronunciation of foreign and other difficult terms is shown parenthetically where the terms are introduced to help students with the terminology.

New to This Edition

In developing this new edition, I have also benefited from the responses to the first three editions, including correspondence and conversations with instructors and students who used the text.

Incorporating many of their suggestions and preferences, each of the six Parts opens with the comparative "Societies, Networks, and Transitions" essays that provide students an overview of important themes in the coming set of chapters. The chapter structure is now streamlined by combining some materials and hence eliminating superfluous headings and subheadings.

In addition to all these changes, there has been considerable new scholarship since the third edition in all areas of world history, including in recent history, and I have tried to update the narrative to include some of the most important findings. Hence, all the chapters include new information. Paleontology, archaeology, and ancient history are lively fields of study that constantly produce new knowledge, making some of the material on these fields in earlier editions obsolete or outdated. The chapters in Part I include extensive updates on subjects such as human evolution, the spread of modern humans, the rise of agriculture, the emergence of states, early human migration to and settlement in the Americas, and ancient migrations into the Indian subcontinent. Parts II–V incorporate new material on such subjects as the maturation of Hinduism, Austronesian migrations, precolonial Australian agriculture, pre-Columbian and postconquest Western Hemisphere societies, the role of pandemic diseases, environmental history, climate change throughout history, the overland and maritime Silk Roads, the "Silver Way" trans-Pacific trade, the trans-Atlantic slave trade, Ottoman naval expansion, Native American revolts against colonialism, and the experiences of women and LGBTQ people in varied societies.

As most readers know, many important developments have occurred in the past decade, and hence the chapters in Part VI have required the most revision. Many events and processes have rapidly reshaped world politics, economies, and environments and hence of human life and international relationships. I have addressed some of the most critical, such as the rise of China and U.S.–China rivalry, the disruptive presidency of Donald Trump, trade wars, China under Xi Jinping, tensions in the South China Sea, China's Belt and Road Initiative, Russian policies and actions toward the Western nations, Brexit, right-wing populist nationalism (especially in Europe and the United States), antidemocratic movements and leaders, Narendra Modi and Hindu supremacy in India, the Saudi Arabia–Iran rivalry and its consequences, migration and refugee crises (such as the U.S.–Mexico border, Europe, and the Rohingya), growing challenges to the globalized world order, protests in many places (including Hong Kong and Iraq), local wars (such as Yemen and Ukraine), political changes in various countries (including Indonesia, South Africa, Brazil, Italy, India, and Zimbabwe), the experiences of feminists and women's rights movements around the world, the burning of tropical rain forests (especially in Brazil and Indonesia), and the effects of and dangers from global warming.

Ancillaries

A wide array of supplements accompanies this text to assist students with different learning needs and to help instructors master today's various classroom challenges.

Instructor Resources

MindTap™ for *Societies, Networks, and Transitions* is a flexible online learning platform that provides students with a relevant and engaging learning experience that builds their critical thinking skills and fosters their argumentation and analysis skills. Through a carefully designed chapter-based learning path, MindTap™ supports students as they develop historical understanding, improve their reading and writing skills, and practice critical thinking by making connections between ideas.

Students read sections of the eBook and take Check Your Understanding quizzes that test their reading comprehension and understanding of the chapter's content. They put critical thinking skills into practice to complete chapter tests that focus on important events and themes and include map- and primary-source-based questions. Students also use critical thinking skills to analyze textual and visual primary sources in each chapter through a chapter-opening, autograded image primary-source activity and a later manually graded short essay activity in which they write comparatively about primary sources. In some of the writing prompts, students use other writing formats beyond the essay (such as letters or memos) to imagine themselves as historical actors.

Beyond the chapter-level content, students can increase their comfort in analyzing primary sources through a set of twenty-six thematically organized, autograded primary-source

activities that span the text and cover topics such as Westward Expansion, the Civil War, Reconstruction, the Atomic Bomb, the Cultural Cold War, and the Civil Rights Movement. They also practice synthesizing their knowledge and articulating what they have learned through responding to essay prompts that span broader themes in the book and ask them to engage with primary sources to defend their arguments.

MindTap™ also allows instructors to customize their content, providing tools that seamlessly integrate YouTube clips, outside websites, and personal content directly into the learning path. Instructors can assign additional primary-source content through the Instructor Resource Center, a database that houses hundreds of primary sources.

The additional content available in MindTap™ mirrors and complements the authors' narrative, but also includes primary-source content and assessments not found in the printed text. To learn more, ask your Cengage Learning sales representative to demo it for you—or go to www.cengage.com/mindtap.

Instructor's Companion Website The Instructor's Companion Website, accessed through the Instructor Resource Center (login.cengage.com), houses all of the supplemental materials you can use for your course. This includes a Test Bank, Instructor's Manual, and PowerPoint Lecture Presentations.

- **Test Bank** The Test Bank contains multiple-choice and true-or-false questions for each chapter and is available in **Cognero**® and within MindTap™. The Cognero® version includes essay questions. Cognero® is a flexible, online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content for *Societies, Networks, and Transitions*. With Cognero®, you can create multiple test versions instantly and deliver them through your LMS from your classroom, or wherever you may be, with no special installs or downloads required. The following format types are available for download from the Instructor Companion Site: Blackboard, Angel, Moodle, Canvas, and Desire2Learn. You can import these files directly into your LMS to edit, manage questions, and create tests.
- **PowerPoint Lectures** The PowerPoint Lectures have a new design intended to support instructor and student participation with key content coverage, images, maps, and figures from the text, new discussion questions, reflection questions, and "quick check" comprehension questions. Also available is a JPEG library of images and maps for each chapter. They are in an ADA-compliant, concise visual format suited for in-class presentations or for student review.
- **Instructor's Resource Manual** The Instructor's Resource Manual closely complements the new PowerPoint design and is focused on supporting instructors who are new to teaching or new to using *Societies, Networks, and Transitions*. It includes chapter summaries, suggested lecture topics, a listing of the in-book primary sources, discussion questions for the primary sources, and other resources for teaching a World History survey course.

Reader Program Cengage Learning publishes a number of readers, some containing exclusively primary sources, others a combination of primary and secondary sources, and some designed to guide students through the process of historical inquiry. Visit Cengage.com/history for a complete list of readers.

Custom Options Nobody knows your students like you, so why not give them a text that is tailor-fit to their needs? Cengage Learning offers custom solutions for your course—whether it's making a small modification to *Societies, Networks, and Transitions* to match your syllabus or combining multiple sources to create something truly unique. You can pick and choose chapters, include your own material, and add additional map exercises. Ensure that your students get the most out of their textbook dollar by giving them exactly what they need. Contact your Cengage Learning representative to explore custom solutions for your course.

Student Resources

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Formats

The text is available in a one-volume hardcover edition, a two-volume paperback edition, and as an interactive eBook. *Volume I: To 1500* includes Chapters 1–14; *Volume II: Since 1450* includes Chapters 15–31.

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About the Author

Craig A. Lockard is Ben and Joyce Rosenberg Professor of History Emeritus in the Social Change and Development Department at the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay, where from 1975 to 2010 he taught courses on Asian, African, comparative, and world history. He has also taught at SUNY-Buffalo, SUNY-Stony Brook, and the University of Bridgeport, and twice served as a Fulbright-Hays professor at the University of Malaya in Malaysia. After undergraduate studies at the University of Redlands, during which he was able to spend a semester in Austria and a year as an exchange student at Chung Chi College in Hong Kong (now part of the Chinese University of Hong Kong), Dr. Lockard earned an MA in Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii and a PhD in Comparative World and Southeast Asian History at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. His published books, articles, essays, and reviews range over a wide spectrum of topics: world history; Southeast Asian history, politics, and society; Malaysian studies; Asian emigration and diasporas; the Vietnam War; and folk, popular, rock, and world music. Among his major books are *Southeast Asia in World History* (2009); *WORLD* (2009); *Chinese Society and Politics in Sarawak: Historical Essays* (2009); *Dance of Life: Popular Music and Politics in Modern Southeast Asia* (1998); and *From Kampung to City: A Social History of Kuching, Malaysia, 1820–1970* (1987). Dr. Lockard was also part of the task force that prepared revisions to the U.S. National Standards in World History (1996). He has served on various editorial advisory boards, including the *Journal of World History*, *World History Connected*, and *The History Teacher*, and as book review editor for the *Journal of Asian Studies* and the *World History Bulletin*. He was one of the founders of the World History Association, served as the organization's first secretary and several terms as a member of the Executive Council. Dr. Lockard was awarded the WHA's highest honor, the Pioneer of World History award, in 2017. He has lived and traveled widely in Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Note on Spelling and Usage

Transforming foreign words and names, especially those from non-European languages, into spellings usable for English-speaking readers presents a challenge. Sometimes, as with Chinese, Thai, and Malay/Indonesian, several Romanized spelling systems have developed. Generally, I have chosen user-friendly spellings that are widely used in other Western writings (such as *Aksum* for the classical Ethiopian state and *Ashoka* for the classical Indian king). For Chinese, I generally use the *pinyin* system developed in the People's Republic over the past few decades (such as *Qin* and *Qing* rather than the older *Chin* and *Ching* for these dynasties, and *Beijing* instead of *Peking*), but for a few terms and names (such as the twentieth-century political leaders *Sun Yat-sen* and *Chiang Kai-shek*) I have retained an older spelling more familiar to Western readers and easier to pronounce. The same strategy is used for some other terms or names from Afro-Asian societies, such as *Cairo* instead of *al-Cahira* (the Arabic name) for the Egyptian city. Since the 1940s some countries have changed the well-known and long-used names of cities and states, such as *Mumbai* (the current Indian usage) instead of *Bombay* for India's largest city, and *Myanmar* instead of *Burma.* I have used the older name before Part VI. In some cases I have favored a newer spelling widely used in a region and modern scholarship but not perhaps well known in the West. For example, in discussing Southeast Asia I follow contemporary scholarship and use *Melaka* instead of *Malacca* for the Malayan city and *Maluku* rather than *Moluccas* for the Indonesian islands. Sometimes experts differ in spellings. For example, some Africa specialists use *Gikuyu* and others *Kikuyu* for the Kenyan ethnic group. In this case I use one spelling throughout. To simplify things for the reader I have tried to avoid using diacritical marks within words. Sometimes their use is unavoidable, such as for the premodern Chinese city of *Chang'an*; the two syllables here are pronounced separately. I also follow the East Asian custom of rendering Chinese, Japanese, and Korean names with the surname (family name) first (e.g., *Mao Zedong*, *Tokugawa Ieyasu*). The reader is also referred to the opening essay, "Introducing World History," for explanations of the dating system used (such as the Common Era and the Intermediate Era) and geographical concepts (such as Eurasia for Europe and Asia and Oceania for Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific islands).

Introducing World History

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step."

—Chinese Proverb

This introduction helps you take the important "first step" toward understanding the scope and challenge of studying world history, presenting the main concepts and themes of world history to serve as your guide, while providing a foretaste of the lively debates among historians as they try to make sense of the past, and how societies' contacts with one another, and the changes they often fostered, created the interconnected world we know today.

What Do Historians Do?

History, the study of the past, looks at all of human life, thought, and behavior. The job of the historian is to both describe *and* interpret the past. Most professional historians want to make sense of historical events. Two general concepts help in these efforts: continuity and change. The legal system in the United States, for example, is unlike any other in the world, but has also been shaped in part by both English and ancient Roman legal practices.

Historians face their greatest challenges in interpreting the past. Although most strive to support their generalizations with evidence, they often disagree on how an event should be interpreted, sometimes because of political differences. In 1992 a widely publicized debate marked the 500-year anniversary of the first cross-Atlantic voyage of Christopher Columbus to the Western Hemisphere in 1492. Some historians pictured Columbus as a farsighted pioneer who made possible communication between the hemispheres, while others saw him as an immoral villain who began a pattern of exploiting and killing Native American peoples by Europeans. Similar debates raged about whether it was necessary for the United States to drop atomic bombs on Japan in 1945, killing thousands of Japanese civilians but also ending World War II. Indeed, many nations struggle with coming to terms with their history, its glories and failures. Today political leaders, scholars, and average citizens in countries like India, China, the Netherlands, Portugal, Australia, Ethiopia, South Africa, Bolivia, Canada, and the United States argue over historical events and developments that happened decades, hundreds, or even sometimes thousands of years ago. Some Europeans debate, sometimes bitterly, over how to assess the colonialism they once imposed on societies in Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

Our understanding of the past often changes as historians both acquire new information and use old information to answer new questions. Only within the past seventy years, for example, have historians studied the diaries and journals that reveal the important role of women during the American Civil War and the American Revolution against the British. Recently some historians used long neglected sources to conclude that, a millennium ago, China had the world's most dynamic economy and sophisticated technology. Similarly, historians have now discovered thousands of old books written in African languages, forcing a rethinking of literacy and scholarship in West African societies hundreds of years ago. Archaeological discoveries have now given us a better appreciation of the sophistication of various pre-Columbian American societies as well as of indigenous Aboriginal Australians..

What history "tells us" is constantly evolving. New evidence, changing interests, and the asking of new questions all add up to seeing things in a new light. No text contains the whole or final truth. **Historical revision**, or changing understanding of the past, and the difficulties of interpretation also make history controversial. In recent years heated debates about what schools should teach about history have erupted in many countries, including Japan, India, France, Egypt, Malaysia, Belgium, Britain, South Africa, and the United States.

Historians bridge the gap between the humanities and social sciences. As humanists, historians study the philosophies, religions, literatures, and arts that people generated over the ages. As social scientists, historians examine political, social, cultural, and economic patterns, though frequently asking questions different from those asked by anthropologists, economists, political scientists, and sociologists, who are generally more concerned with the present and theoretical questions. In the past several decades environmental history has become better understood and historians, including those of us who write about the world as a whole, need to pay attention to how humans affect the land, waters, plants, animals, and climate and how these in turn shape our lives. Historians also study people in their many roles and stations in life, the accomplishments of the rich and famous, as well as the struggles and dreams of common women and men.

Why Study World History?

World or global history, the broadest field of history, studies the human record as a whole and the experiences of people in all the world's inhabited regions—Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian Ocean basins—and also helps us better understand individual societies by making it easier to look at them comparatively. Studying history on a global scale also brings out patterns of life, cultural traditions, and connections between societies that go beyond a particular region, such as the spread of Buddhism, which followed the trade routes throughout southern and eastern Asia. World history helps us comprehend both the "forest" ("big picture") and the "trees" (individual societies), allowing us to situate ourselves in a broader context.

This enhances our ability to understand our increasingly connected world. Decisions made in Washington, D.C., Paris, or Beijing influence citizens in Argentina, Senegal, and Malaysia, just as events elsewhere often affect the lives of people in Europe and North America. World historians use the widest angle of vision to comprehend how diverse local traditions and

international trends intermingle. Western phenomena such as McDonald's, Hard Rock Cafes, French wines, Hollywood films, churches, the Internet, cell phones, and text messaging have spread around the world but so have "non-Western" products and ideas, among them Mexican soap operas, Chinese food, Japanese cars, Indonesian arts, African rhythms, and the Islamic religion. We must remember that, for all their idiosyncrasies, each society develops in a wider world.

A global perspective also highlights the past achievements of but also some of the challenges that have faced all peoples. The history of science, for example, shows that key inventions—among others printing, sternpost rudders, the compass, the wheelbarrow, gunpowder—originated in China, and the modern system of numbering came from India, reaching Europe from the Middle East as "Arabic" numerals. Indeed, various peoples—Mesopotamians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Chinese, Indians, Arabs—built the early foundation for modern science and technology; their discoveries moved along the trade routes. Importers of technology and ideas often modified or improved on them. For example, Europeans made good use of Chinese, Indian, and Arab technologies, as well as their own inventions, in their quest to explore the world in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The interdependence among and exchanges between peoples is a historical as well as a present reality. Furthermore, over the millennia various societies have encountered some of the same or similar challenges, such as climate change, food scarcity, epidemic diseases, invaders, and catastrophic wars. Learning how they dealt with these and perhaps overcame or adjusted to them can provide examples for us as we contend with the turmoil of today's world.

The World History Challenge

When we study world history, we examine other countries and peoples, past and present, with which we may be unfamiliar. World history helps us to recognize how some of the attitudes we absorb from the particular society and era we live in shape, and may distort, our understanding of the world and of history. Coming to terms with this mental baggage means examining such things as maps and geographical concepts and acquiring intellectual tools for comprehending other cultures.

Broadening the Scope of Our Histories

During much of the twentieth century and even in some places today, many high school and college students in North America were taught some version of a course, usually called Western Civilization, that emphasized the rise of western Europe and the European contributions to modern North American societies. This course recognized the undeniably influential role of Western nations, technologies, and ideas in the modern world, but also reflected more available data and research on Europe and North America compared with the rest of the world. This approach often exaggerated the role that Europe played in world history before modern times, pushing Asian, African, and Native American peoples and their accomplishments into the background while underplaying the contributions these peoples made to Europe. Students usually learned little about China, India, or Islamic societies, and even less about Africa, Southeast Asia, or pre-Columbian and Latin America.

In the 1960s history teaching began to change in North America. The political independence of most Asian, African, and Caribbean nations from the colonial empires imposed by several Western nations fostered a more sophisticated understanding of African, Asian, Latin American, Native American, and Pacific island history in North America and Europe, making it easier to write a history of the entire globe. As a result, world history courses, rare before the 1960s, became increasingly common in U.S. universities, colleges, and high schools by the late twentieth century and have proliferated in several other countries, such as Australia, Canada, South Africa, China, and the Netherlands.

Revising Maps and Geography

Maps not only tell us where places are; they also create a mental image of the world, revealing how peoples perceive themselves and others. For example, for several millennia Chinese maps portrayed China as the "Middle Kingdom," the center of the world surrounded by "barbarians," reflecting and deepening the Chinese sense of superiority over neighboring peoples. Similarly, twenty-five hundred years ago, Greek maps showed Greece at the center of the inhabited world known to them.

Even modern maps can be misleading. The Mercator projection (or spatial presentation) still used in many school maps and atlases in North America and elsewhere, is based on a sixteenth-century European model that, by picturing the world as a rectangle rather than an oval, distorts the relative size of landmasses, greatly exaggerating landmasses on the northern third including Europe, North America, and Greenland while diminishing the lands nearer the equator and in the Southern Hemisphere. Hence, Africa, India, Southeast Asia, China, and South America look much smaller than they actually are. In the United States, maps using a Mercator projection have often tellingly placed the Americas in the middle of the map, cutting Asia in half, suggesting that the United States, appearing larger than it actually is, plays the central role in the world. Some alternative maps give a more accurate view of relative size. For example, the oval-shaped Eckert projection uses an ellipse that shows a better balance of size and shape while minimizing distortion of continental areas. A comparison between the Mercator and Eckert world maps is shown below, on pp. xxxi-xxxii.

Concepts of geographical features and divisions, such as continents, the large landmasses on which most people live, also shape mental images. The classical Greeks used the terms *Europe*, *Africa*, and *Asia* in defining the world they knew twenty-five hundred years ago; later Europeans transformed these terms into the names for continents. For centuries Western peoples have considered Europe a continent, although Europe is not a separate landmass, and the physical barriers between it and Asia are not that significant. If towering mountain ranges

and other geographical barriers mark off a continent, India (blocked off by truly formidable mountains), China, or Southeast Asia make better candidates than Europe. Seeing Asia as a single continent is also a problem, given its spectacular size and geographical diversity. Today world geographers and historians often consider Europe and Asia to constitute one huge continent, Eurasia, containing several subcontinental regions such as Europe, South Asia, and East Asia.

Popular terms such as *Near East*, *Middle East*, or *Far East* are also misleading. They were originally formulated by Europeans to describe regions in relationship to Europe. Much depends on the viewer's position; Australians, for example, often label nearby Southeast and East Asia as the "Near North." Few Western scholars of China or Japan today refer to the "Far East," preferring the more neutral term *East Asia*. This text considers the term *Near East*, long used for western Asia, as outdated, but it refers to Southwest Asia and North Africa, closely linked historically (especially after the rise of Islam fourteen hundred years ago), as the Middle East, since that term is more convenient than the alternatives. The text also sometimes uses the term *Oceania* to refer to Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific islands.

Rethinking the Dating System

A critical feature of historical study is the dating of events. World history challenges us by making us aware that all dating systems are based on the assumptions of a particular culture. Many Asian peoples saw history as moving in great cycles of birth, maturation, and decay (sometimes involving millions of years), whereas Westerners saw history as moving in a straight line from past to future (as can be seen in the chronologies within each chapter). Calendars were often tied to myths about the world's creation or about a people's or country's origins. Hence, the classical Roman calendar was based on the founding of the city of Rome around twenty-seven hundred years ago.

The dating system used throughout the Western world today is based on the Gregorian Christian calendar, created by a sixteenth-century Roman Catholic pope, Gregory XIII. It uses the birth of Christianity's founder, Jesus of Nazareth, around two millennia ago as the turning point. Dates for events prior to the Christian era were identified as BC (before Christ); years in the Christian era were labeled AD (for the Latin *anno domini*, "in the year of the Lord"). Many history books published in Europe and North America still employ this system, which has spread around the world in recent centuries.

The notion of Christian and pre-Christian eras has no longer been satisfactory for studies of world history because it is rooted in the viewpoint of only one religious tradition, whereas there are many traditions in the world, usually with different calendars. Muslims, for example, who consider the revelations of the prophet Muhammad to be history's central event, begin their dating system with Muhammad's journey, within Arabia, from the city of Mecca to Medina in 622 AD. The Chinese chronological system divides history into cycles stretching over twenty-four million years. The Chinese are now in the fifth millennium of the current cycle, which corresponds more accurately than does the Gregorian calendar to the beginning of the world's oldest cities and states, between five thousand and six thousand years ago. Many other alternative dating systems exist. Selecting one over the others constitutes favoritism for a particular society or cultural tradition.

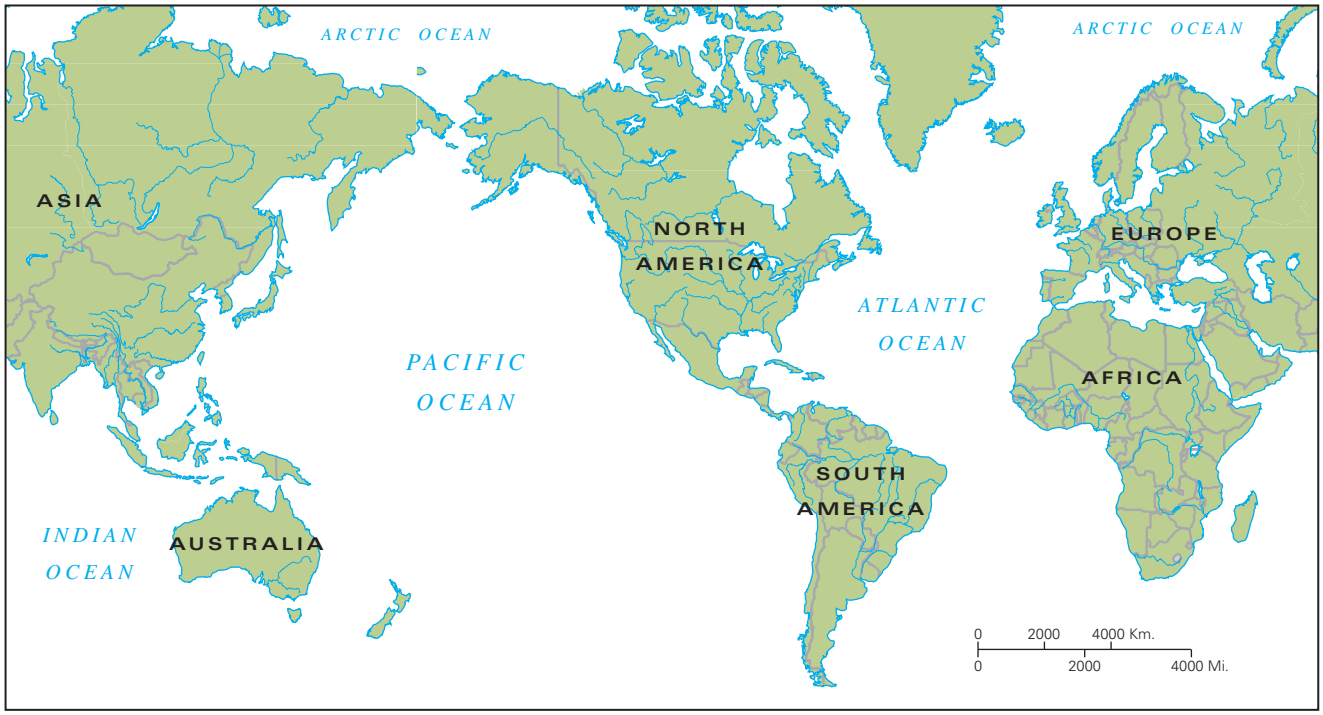
Therefore, most world historians and many specialists in Asian and African history, and some in European, U.S., and Latin American history, have moved toward a more secular, or nonreligious, concept, the Common Era. This system still accepts as familiar, at least to Western readers, the dates used in the Western calendar, but it calls the period after the transition a "common" era, since many influential, dynamic societies existed two millennia ago throughout the world, not only in the Judeo-Christian Holy Land. Two millennia ago, the beginning of the Common Era, the Roman Empire was at its height, Chinese and Indian empires ruled large chunks of Asia, and many peoples in the Eastern Hemisphere were linked by trade and religion to a greater extent than ever before. Several African and American urban societies also flourished. Hence this period makes a useful and familiar benchmark. In the new system, events are dated as BCE (before the Common Era) and as CE (Common Era, which begins in year 1 of the Christian calendar). This change is an attempt at including all the world's people.

Rethinking the Division of History into Periods

To make world history more comprehensible, historians divide long periods of time into smaller segments, such as "the ancient world" or "modern history," each marked by certain key events or turning points, a system known as **periodization**. For example, scholars of European, Islamic, Chinese, Indonesian, or U.S. history generally agree among themselves on the major eras and turning points for the region or country they study, but world historians need a system that can encompass all parts of the world since most historic events did not affect all regions. For instance, developments that were key to eastern Eurasia, such as the spread of Buddhism, did not directly affect western Eurasia and Africa in these centuries; the Americas remained isolated from the Eastern Hemisphere until about five hundred years ago.

Given the need for an inclusive chronological pattern, this book divides history into periods, each notable for significant changes around the world:

1. **Ancient (100,000–600 BCE**) The Ancient Era, during which the foundations for world history were built, can be divided into two distinct periods. During the long centuries known as Prehistory (ca. 100,000–4000 BCE), peoples who made and used stone tools and lived in small groups, survived by hunting, gathering, and scavenging food. Eventually some of them in southwest Asia began simple farming and living in villages, launching the era



MERCATOR PROJECTION

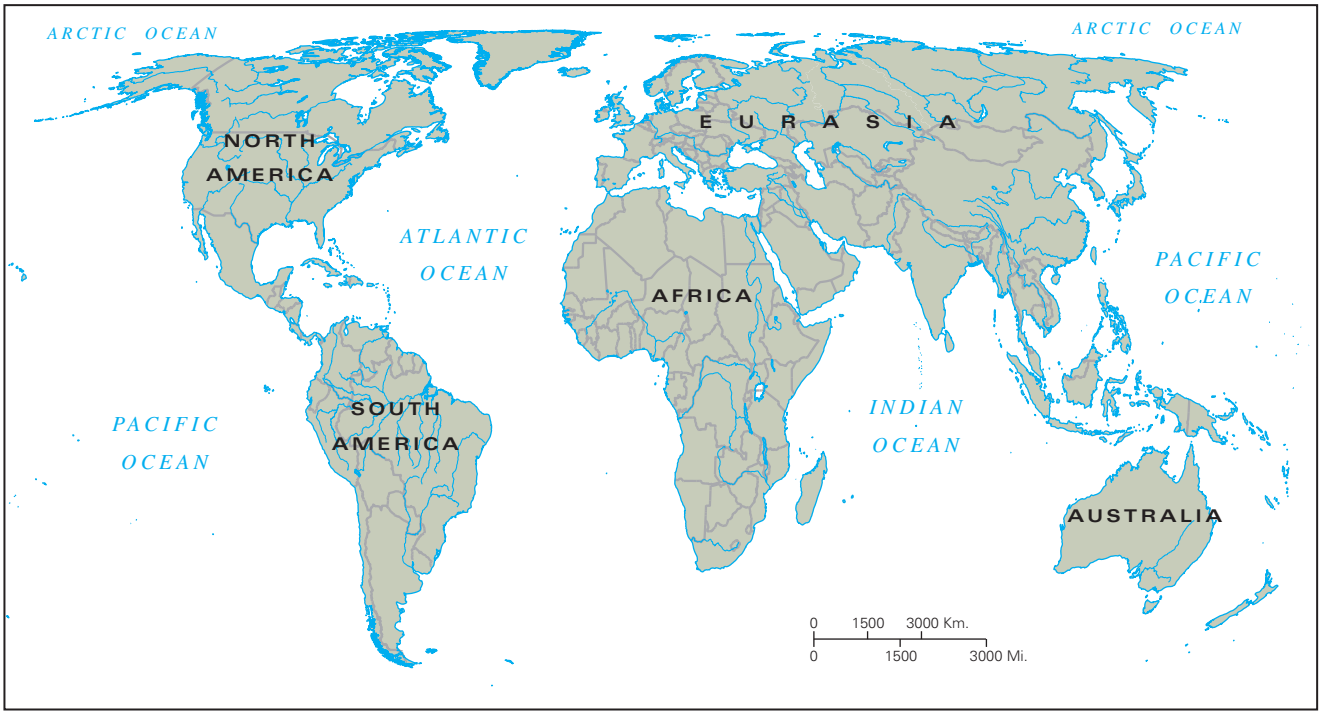
of agrarian societies. Between 4000 and 600 BCE, agriculture became more productive, the first large cities and states were established in both hemispheres, and some societies invented writing, allowing historians to better study their experiences and ideas.

2. **Classical (600 BCE–600 CE)** The creation of more complex states and agrarian societies, the birth of major religions and philosophies, the formation of the first large empires, and the expansion of long-distance trade, which linked distant peoples, marked the Classical Era.
3. **Intermediate (600–1500 CE)** The Intermediate Era, comprising a long middle period or "Global Middle Ages" of expanding horizons that modified or displaced the classical societies, was characterized by increasing trade connections between distant peoples within the same hemisphere; the growth and spread of several older religions and of a new faith, Islam; and oceanic exploration by Asians and Europeans. Some world historians refer to these centuries as the Medieval or Post-Classical Era.
4. **Early Modern (1450–1750 CE)** During the Early Modern Era, the whole globe became intertwined as European exploration and conquests in the Americas, Africa, and southern Asia fostered the rise of a global economy, capitalism, and a trans-Atlantic slave trade while undermining American, African, and some other societies. China also built a large empire dominating much of East Asia.
5. **Modern (1750–1945 CE)** Rapid technological and economic change in Europe and North America, Western colonization of many Asian and African societies, large-scale migrations of Europeans and Asians to distant lands, political revolutions and ideologies, world wars, and a widening gap between rich and poor societies distinguished the Modern Era.
6. **Contemporary (1945–present)** In the Contemporary Era we see a more closely interlinked world, including the global spread of commercial markets, cultures, and communications; the collapse of Western colonial empires; international organizations; new technologies; struggles by poor nations to develop economically; environmental destruction; movements for and against globalization; and conflict between powerful nations.

Understanding Cultural and Historical Differences

The study of world history challenges us to understand peoples and ideas very different from our own. The past is, as one writer has put it, "a foreign country; they do things differently there."[1] As human behavior changes with the times, sometimes dramatically, so do people's beliefs, including moral and ethical standards. For example, in Asia centuries ago, Assyrians and Mongols sometimes killed everyone in cities that resisted their conquest. Some European Christians seven hundred years ago burned suspected heretics and witches at the stake and enjoyed watching blind beggars fight. Across the Atlantic, American peoples such as the Aztecs and Incas engaged in human sacrifice. None of these behaviors would be morally acceptable today in most societies.

[1]P. I. Harley, quoted in David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), xvi. The quote is on p. xxxi.



ECKERT PROJECTION

Differences in customs complicate efforts to understand people of earlier centuries. We need not approve of empire builders, plunderers, human sacrifice, and witch burning, but we should be careful about applying our current standards of behavior and thought to people who lived in different times and places and had different mindsets. We should avoid **ethnocentrism**, viewing others narrowly through the lens of one's own society and its values. Many historians perceive value-loaded words such as *primitive*, *barbarian*, *civilized*, or *progress* that carry negative or positive meanings as often matters of judgment rather than fact. For instance, soldiers on the battlefield may consider themselves civilized and their opponents barbarians. And progress, such as industrialization, often brings negative developments, such as pollution and greenhouse gases, along with the positive.

Today anthropologists use the term **cultural relativism** to remind us that, while all people have much in common, societies are diverse and unique, embodying different standards of proper behavior and thought. Hence, cultures may have very different ideas about children's obligations to their parents, what happens to people's souls when they die, or what constitutes pleasing music. We can still conclude that Mongol empire builders in Eurasia some eight hundred years ago were brutal; or that the mid-twentieth-century Nazi German dictator, Adolph Hitler, was a murderous tyrant; or that laws in some societies today that blame and penalize women who are raped are wrong. But cultural relativism discourages us from criticizing other cultures or ancient peoples just because they are or were different from us.

The Major Themes

This text uses certain themes to take maximum advantage of world history's power to illuminate both change and continuity as we move from the past to the present. Specifically, the author asked himself: What do educated students today need to know about world history to understand the globalizing era in which they live?

Three broad themes shaped around three concepts—societies, networks, and transitions—help you comprehend how today's world emerged.

1. SOCIETIES are broad groups of people that have common traditions, institutions, and organized patterns of relationships with each other. Societies, influenced by environmental factors, were defined by distinctive but often changing cultures, beliefs, social forms, governments, economies, and ways of life. In many cases they formed or became part of states.
2. NETWORKS are collections of links between different societies, such as the routes over which traders, goods, diplomats, armies, ideas, religions, and information travel. Over the centuries societies were increasingly connected to, and modified by, other societies, through growing networks forged by phenomena such as population movement, long-distance trade, exploration, military expansion, colonization, and the diffusion of ideas and technologies. Growing networks eventually fostered a global system in which distant peoples came into frequent contact.

3. TRANSITIONS are passages, changes, events, or movements that reshape societies and regions. Each major historical era was marked by one or more great transitions that were sparked by events or innovations that had profound, enduring influences on many societies and that gradually reshaped the world.

The first theme recognizes the importance in world history of the distinctiveness of societies. Cultural traditions and social patterns differed greatly. For example, around 2,000–2,500 years ago societies in Eurasia fostered several influential philosophical and religious traditions, including Confucianism in eastern Asia, Hinduism and Buddhism in South Asia, and Christianity, born in the Middle East and later nourished both there and in Europe. Historians often identify unique traditions in a society that go back hundreds or even thousands of years. Some historians apply the term *civilization* to larger, more complex societies such as ancient Egypt and China that left an extensive record of bureaucratic governments, monumental architecture, writings, and influential thought, but this is a controversial concept that neglects societies with less known histories. Since ancient times some peoples have seen themselves as "civilized" and criticized other societies as "barbarians." *Civilization* could also refer to any large grouping of people with a common history and traditions, such as the Arabs, Maya, or French. Thus the term is too subjective to have much value in understanding world history. It is not used in this text.

The second theme acknowledges the way societies have contacted and engaged with each other through networks to create the interdependent world we know today. The spread of technologies and ideas, exploration and colonization, and global trade across Eurasia and Africa and then into the Western Hemisphere spurred this interlinking process. Today networks such as the World Wide Web, airline routes, multinational corporations, and terrorist organizations operate on a global scale. The third theme helps to emphasize major developments that shaped world history. The most important transitions include, roughly in chronological order, the beginning of agriculture, the rise of cities and states, the birth and spread of philosophical and religious traditions, the forming of great empires, the linking of Eurasia by the Mongols, the European seafaring explorations and conquests, the Industrial Revolution, the forging and dismantling of Western colonial empires, world wars, and the invention of electronic technologies that allow for instantaneous communication around the world.

With these themes in mind, the text constructs the rich story of world history. The intellectual experience of studying world history is exciting and will give you a clearer understanding of how the world as you know it came to be.

PART I

Ancient Foundations of World History, to ca. 600 BCE

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Most of us carry pictures in our minds of the world's ancient peoples and their ways of life: prehistoric cave dwellers huddling around a fire, wandering desert tribes, towering pyramids, and spectacular ruins of cities and temples. In fact, the centuries between 100,000 and 600 BCE saw the evolution of these and many other social and cultural phenomena, more complex and often more significant for us today than these mental pictures convey. These centuries also saw humans take the first steps in establishing regular contacts and exchanges, often those of trade, with one another, creating the networks that linked many societies over wide areas. World history is a record of human migrations, environmental adaptations, and social interactions over ever larger distances. People today live in the shadow of the ancient peoples who began farming, learned to work metals, and founded the first cities and states in Eurasia, Africa, and the Americas. These ancient centuries, and the transitions that marked them, constructed the foundations for much that came later, including organized societies and the growing networks that connected them. The ancient world is hotly debated and its meaning contested today. It is impossible to understand the modern world without studying the deep past.

With the first great transition in human history, the introduction of agriculture some 10,000 to 12,000 years ago, people began to deliberately cultivate plants and raise draft animals. In recent years the rise and benefits of this way of life have been the subject of often heated debate among scholars. Many now view the old notion of an Agricultural Revolution as misleading since the changes were often gradual as many people mixed both cultivation and foraging to survive. Some argue that the problems farming eventually created—such as more social inequality, hierarchy, congested cities, powerful and often oppressive states, population explosion, and soil depletion—often outweighed the benefits. Others think that this perspective romanticizes pre-farming communities as egalitarian, unspoiled utopias. Whatever the case, agriculture was the essential building block that stimulated other major developments, in particular the founding of cities and states and the invention of metalworking. We can thank early farmers in Eurasia and northern Africa for giving us valuable inventions such as pottery, cloth, and the plow. New developments then fostered other changes. For example, better means of transportation over land and sea allowed people, goods, foods, ideas, and diseases to travel longer distances in a shorter time. Bananas, first cultivated in New Guinea seven thousand years ago, eventually spread around the world, grown in many societies in both hemispheres. Expanded trade encouraged cities, and metal weapons and improved transportation allowed city rulers to build or expand states.

Transportation became the basis for networks of trade and cultural exchange linking distant societies. In turn, this wider sharing of ideas helped bring about further transformations in social and cultural patterns. Today, like the ancients, we still get our food mostly from intensive agriculture and livestock raising, work metals into useful products like tools, ride in wheeled vehicles and boats that allow us to travel over long distances, worship in religious buildings, and often live in cities, where people representing several classes and many occupations work and trade. These cities, like ancient cities, are mostly located in powerful states that are administered by bureaucratic governments and protected by military forces. The Ancient Era built the framework for much that came later.

Technological Foundations

TRANSITIONS

We can credit the ancient peoples for inventing useful technologies such as metallurgy (metalworking) and for vastly improving transportation. Today we take these technologies

for granted; indeed, they are basic to modern industrial life. In ancient times, however, people developed these technologies to help them solve particular problems. Once developed, they had many consequences and spurred many transitions. For example, metallurgy became a key to economic growth but also led to deforestation as forests were cut to make charcoal to fire the kilns. Bronze and, a few centuries later, iron aided agriculture, transportation, and communication (see Map I.1: Metals and Great States, ca. 1000 BCE).

The Copper and Bronze Ages

The first metal to be worked was copper. Stoneworkers discovered that heating copper reduced it to liquid form and allowed it to be shaped in a mold. As it cooled, it could be given a good cutting edge. Many peoples in both hemispheres made copper tools and weapons, and they traded copper widely.

Beginning around 3000 BCE in western Asia, metalworkers figured out how to mix copper with tin or arsenic to create bronze. This discovery launched the Bronze Age in the Eastern Hemisphere. The Sumerians were the first society known to use bronze in commerce. Between 2600 and 2000 BCE bronze technology was adopted or invented in northern Africa (Egypt and Nubia), eastern Europe, India, China, and Southeast Asia. In South America, some peoples made use of another copper-arsenic alloy, as well as silver and gold.

Bronze technology affected life. Easier to make and more durable than copper, bronze was well suited for tools, drinking vessels, and weapons. In Hebrew tradition, the formidable biblical Philistine warrior Goliath had a bronze helmet, bronze armor on his legs, and a bronze javelin. Since many regions lacked adequate tin deposits, bronze making probably spurred both trade networks and warfare. Armies were formed in part to protect or acquire mines, markets, and trade routes. Metalsmiths were so valuable that invading armies often carried them home in captivity. Finally, copper and bronze, as well as gold and silver, were used for the first coins, which gradually became the major medium of exchange.

The Iron Age

The making of iron provided the next technological breakthrough. Western Asia had little tin but large quantities of iron ore. Iron was much harder to work than copper: artisans needed to produce higher temperatures, and heating produced a spongy mass rather than a liquid. Eventually inventive workers, possibly in the Hittite kingdom along the Black Sea or in Palestine, discovered a completely new but laborious technology that involved repeatedly heating and hammering the iron and plunging the result into cold water.

The Iron Age began in western Asia and Egypt by around 1600 BCE. Between 900 and 500 BCE, iron technology was also adopted or invented in Greece, India, western and central Europe, Central Asia, China, Southeast Asia, and West and East Africa. Some peoples acquired iron through trade, and others through contact with ironworking peoples. Eurasians and Africans may have especially benefited from having iron-producing societies close enough to each other to regularly exchange ideas. In contrast, many thousands of miles, much of it rain forest or desert, separated the societies of North and Mesoamerica from those in the Andes region, limiting contact. Since ironworking didn't originally develop in the Americas or Australia, these societies had no iron weapons or tools until centuries later.

Ironworking brought many advantages. The metal was cheaper to make than bronze and also more adaptable: with it people could produce better axes for cutting wood, plows for farming, wagon wheels for transport, and swords for warfare. For example, in Hebrew tradition, the Israelites could not drive the Canaanites out of the Palestinian lowland because they had iron chariots. Centuries later metalworkers learned how to add carbon to iron to make steel. But like many technologies, iron proved a mixed blessing. While it improved farming, it also made for deadlier weapons. Armies equipped with iron-tipped weapons enjoyed a strategic advantage over their neighbors. Although iron shields afforded some protection, more men may have died as warfare became more frequent.

The Rise of Cities and Population Growth

TRANSITIONS

Beginning around 3500 BCE the social and cultural forms common to hunters and gatherers began to change as more and more people settled down to farming and developed more organized societies. Gradually some farming villages became towns and then cities. Ancient cities represented a huge change in the way humans related to their environment. People had to adapt to densely populated neighborhoods full of often unfamiliar people who may have been newcomers as more migrated to cities from rural areas or other regions. A mix of different languages and customs offered possibilities for learning and expanding horizons but also suspicion and conflict. From the very beginning, ancient cities served a variety of functions. Some, like several Mesopotamian and South American cities, developed as centers for religious ceremonies. Cities in Egypt and China, by contrast, seem to have been founded chiefly as administrative centers to govern the surrounding territories. Many others, including those in India, Nubia (in Northeast Africa), and Mexico, formed around marketplaces. The shift from the relatively egalitarian ethos of hunting and gathering to a more hierarchical social organization changed people's lives. Because trade was a major city activity, merchants became prominent members of urban society, making products from near and far available in their shops and stalls. Increasingly people were divided into social classes, with the wealthier groups controlling the distribution and consumption of economic resources. The inequality between the rich and poor often became very wide.

Productive agriculture and urbanization fostered a dramatic increase in population around the world. The most densely populated ancient societies emerged where agriculture, aided by irrigation, flourished: in large river valleys, particularly the floodplains of the Nile in Egypt, the Tigris-Euphrates in Mesopotamia, the Indus in India, and the Yellow and Yangzi in China. Between 8000 and 500 BCE the world's population jumped from 5 or 10 million up to an estimated 100 million. The great majority of these people lived in Mesopotamia (the most densely populated area), Egypt,

MAP I.1 Metals and Great States, ca. 1000 BCE The earliest states arose in river valleys—the Nile, Tigris-Euphrates, Indus, and Yellow—and these early states also worked metals, first bronze and then iron, to produce tools and weapons.

Q What does this map tell us about the spacing between the earliest states and the geographical features that encouraged or discouraged communication?

India, China, and southeastern Europe. People were also living longer than during the Stone Age, when a third died before age twenty and only a tenth lived past forty. Bronze Age peoples lived into their early forties, and probably 5 to 10 percent lived past sixty.

Transportation Breakthroughs and Human Mobility

NETWORKS

Metalworking was only one of several valuable technologies invented in ancient times. The invention and spread of wheeled vehicles and boats also made it easier for people to migrate or carry cargo over longer distances. The ancient era saw several great migrations involving large numbers of people over the centuries. Using carts and chariots, Indo-European peoples occupied large areas of Eurasia. Traveling by foot or in canoes, and also possessing iron technology, Bantu-speaking peoples from western Africa settled the forests and grasslands of the southern half of Africa. Boat sails had been invented in the Middle East by 5000 BCE, allowing wind to be harnessed to drive boats. Using seagoing boats, especially large outrigger canoes, peoples from Southeast Asia sailed to and settled most of the widely scattered Pacific islands. Increasingly better forms of transport made it easier for distant peoples to come into contact with one another and share their ways of life. Maritime trade networks, such as those linking Pacific islands with Southeast Asia and the eastern Mediterranean with northwest Europe, stretched over vast distances.

This increased travel inspired the first maps, drawn in Mesopotamia around 2300 BCE. These maps, carved onto small tablets and then baked, recognized distant relationships in portraying agricultural land, town plans, and the world as known to Babylonians. Such a map from the sixth or seventh century BCE reveals how trade and communication had expanded their horizons. The map shows the Babylonian world, including rivers, canals, cities, and neighboring states, in the center of a flat earth, with the remote lands on the fringe inhabited by legendary beasts. The mapmaker noted that his sketch showed the "four corners" of the earth.

Trade and Networks of Exchange

NETWORKS

Trade networks moving objects of value, from raw materials to luxury goods, linked major cities and even distant societies. Between 4000 and 3000 BCE traders began shipping minerals, precious stones, and other valued commodities over long distances. Goods traveled initially by riverboat and by donkey, horse caravans, or by llamas in South America. By 2000 BCE, however, sea trading in the Mediterranean Sea, Persian Gulf, and Indian Ocean had become more important. Mesopotamia became a commercial hub linking southern and Central Asia with Egypt and Italy. Its location allowed it to draw ideas, produce, and people from a huge hinterland. Similarly, Egypt connected Africa and Eurasia. The Persian Gulf has served as a contact zone for over five millennia, with various cities serving as major trade hubs.

DEA/A. DAGLI ORTI/De Agostini/Getty Images

IMAGE I.1 Terra-Cotta Figure from Harappa Terra-cotta figures like this one found in the ruins of Harappa show the diverse hairstyles and ornaments popular in the city. Archaeologists believe that these indicate the diversity of social classes and ethnic groups that inhabited Harappa.

Q What does the photo tell us about the lives of women in Harappa?

Beginning around 1200 BCE, the heavily urbanized Phoenicians, who lived in what is now Lebanon and Syria, established many trading ports around the Mediterranean, becoming the first known society to flourish mostly through interregional commerce rather than farming. Gradually trade routes expanded over long distances, increasing contacts between societies with different cultures and institutions.

Trade fostered other innovations. The need to guide ships or caravans to distant destinations, as well as the belief that the changing night skies could influence human activity (astrology), sparked the study of the stars. Babylonian astrological beliefs and the zodiac may have been spread by trade to western Asia and southern Europe, where they became popular. Today people in societies around the world consult astrology before making decisions. Growing trade also required the creation of currencies, without which our modern economic life would be impossible. Simple forms of money, mostly varied weights of precious metals like silver, were invented between 3000 and 2500 BCE in Mesopotamian cities. Legal codes were then written that specified fines, interest rates, and even the ideal price of some common goods. By 600 BCE the first gold coins were being struck in western Asia. Money made exchange easier, especially in cities, and it may have stimulated the development of mathematics as a tool for calculating wealth. Various ancient societies in both hemispheres developed some system of mathematics.

States, Political Hierarchies, and Warfare

TRANSITIONS

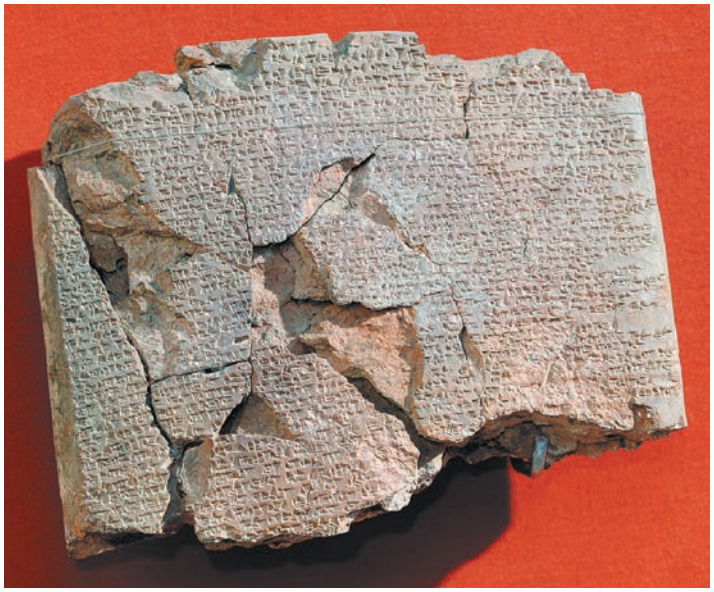
Closely related to urbanization and trade was the emergence of the first states, hierarchically organized political and bureaucratic structures that were governed by powerful elites and that often comprised many cities. States marked a major transition to more complex and organized societies. Kings and emperors, and occasionally queens, ruled, sometimes ruthlessly, over many rural peasants and city dwellers who paid taxes, in money or in agricultural products, in acknowledgment of the ruler's ability to keep order, promote justice, and protect his or her subjects from harm. According to ancient Hindu sacred writings: "Him do ye proclaim, O men as kings and father of kings, the lordly power, the suzerain of all creation…the slayer of foes, the guardian of the law."[1] Opposition to the rulers and their policies was viewed as treason and could mean death or imprisonment.

The first known states formed in Mesopotamia around 3500 BCE and in Egypt by 3000 BCE. Between 3000 and 1000 BCE states were also established in India, China, Vietnam, Nubia, and southeastern Europe, as well as in Mesoamerica and South America. Today we take for granted the notion of large political units to whom people owe allegiance, but in the ancient world they were major innovations. By 2350 BCE the first empires, formed by conquest, appeared in Mesopotamia. Among the consequences of states and empires was the rise of conflict between them as well as with nearby pastoral peoples, which resulted in increased warfare.

One of the chief tasks of the rulers was to protect and perhaps expand their state, and often rulers waged war to acquire land and people and thereby gain more resources and tax revenues. Warfare by settled peoples required a powerful state. To wage war, kings had to marshal resources such as food and metals as well as recruit soldiers. Rulers also had to discourage dissent and instill among the population a sense that warfare was worthwhile. Even today people remember the legends of great ancient warriors (real or mythical), such as Hercules at Troy. But soldiers experienced difficult lives. One Egyptian text reported that a soldier "is awakened when an hour has passed and he is driven like an ass. He works till the sun sets. He is hungry, his body is exhausted, he is dead while still alive. His body is broken with dysentery."[2]

Warfare became increasingly lethal as weaponry and strategy improved. When the powerful Assyrians, who built a great empire, swept through Mesopotamia in the ninth century BCE, their advanced cavalry and siege weaponry enabled them to level and burn the great city of Babylon. Later the Assyrians themselves experienced defeat, as their capital, Ninevah, fell to "the noise of the whip and of rattling wheels, galloping horses, clattering chariots!"[3] Even though many ancient cities were surrounded by defensive walls, they were still vulnerable to well-armed foes.

In Afro-Eurasia many wars matched states against pastoral nomads, who were attracted by the wealth of the farming societies and their cities. Often viewed by the farming peoples as pre-literate "barbarians," nomads made art, worked metals, possessed many horses or camels, and pioneered the



Victor Boswell/National Geographic Image Collection

IMAGE I.2 Fragments of Egyptian-Hittite Treaty This carved stone fragment contains a treaty, signed around 1250 BCE, between Egypt and the Hittite kingdom in Anatolia that ended a war between the two states. The treaty is inscribed in the widely used cuneiform script of the Akkadian language. It eloquently demonstrates the reality of ancient warfare but also expresses the age-old quest for peace.

Q Can you speculate on what we might learn about these ancient societies if we could read the translation of the treaty?

[1]From the *Brahmanas*, quoted in F.R. Allchin, *The Archaeology of Historic South Asia: The Emergence of Cities and States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 86–87.
[2]Quoted in Barbara Mertz, *Red Land, Black Land: Daily Life in Ancient Egypt*, rev. ed. (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1978), 135–136.
[3]Nahum 3:2–3, *The Holy Bible*, New King James Version (Chicago: Thomas Nelson, 1983), 907.

development of chariot and cavalry warfare. Between 2000 and 1000 BCE nomadic peoples occasionally conquered cities and states. As an example of how warfare could spawn cultural transitions, many of these pastoralists eventually adopted some of the ways of the conquered farmers, while the urban peoples acquired the pastoralists' military technologies.

The costs of war, in treasure and people, also prompted rulers to make peace treaties with rival powers and inspired a Hebrew prophet to call for beating "their swords into ploughshares, their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation."[4] The quest for peace was as old as the urge to wage war.

Institutionalized Religions

SOCIETIES

Institutionalized religions shaped the values and behavior of societies, just as they do most places today. While most pre-farming peoples were polytheists or animists, believing in many gods or spirits, a few, such as the Hebrews and some African societies, were monotheists, believing in one high god who presided over the universe. The rise of agriculture and then cities gradually transformed for many people the belief that nature was alive with spiritual forces to more systematic theologies and organized religious observances. These beliefs and practices gave order and meaning to people's lives and may have promoted cooperation and a sense of community. Ideas about the fate of individual humans after death as well as notions of right and wrong differed widely as societies developed unique traditions and beliefs.

Religious views spread from one society to another, at first orally, through myths or stories about the interaction of gods with the human world. These myths explained the birth of the universe, the progression of seasons, the uncertainties of agriculture, the flooding of rivers, and human dramas such as battlefield losses and victories. Religious views and myths were later captured in sacred books, and several thousand years later many millions of people still revere some of these books, such as the Hebrew Bible and the Hindu Vedas. Oral traditions and sacred texts helped Egyptian and Mesopotamian ideas, such as an afterlife, Day of Judgment, and Garden of Eden, to become influential around the Mediterranean Basin and western Asia.

Full-time religious specialists often replaced the shamans, the part-time spiritual leaders associated with earlier times. With the rise of agriculture and larger communities, a priestly class was seen as able to communicate with the gods and interpret their will. Because they provided essential services such as writing or calculating the time of the annual floods and staffing temples serving thousands of believers, priests were the first social group to be freed from direct subsistence labor.

Institutionalized religions influenced societies. Since religious ceremonies and ideas provided supernatural sanction for the social and political order, they became a powerful force for social control. Challenging the political or social system, which was seen as divinely inspired, now constituted blasphemy and condemned one to eternal punishment after death. Most of the ancient religions, led by men and worshipping chiefly male gods, supported patriarchal attitudes.

Writing and Its Consequences

SOCIETIES

Writing, which allowed for recordkeeping and improved communication, was one of the most crucial cultural innovations. It first arose in Mesopotamia around 3300 to 3400 BCE, rapidly spread to nearby western Asians, and later developed in many societies around the world, with a wide variety of scripts. Although limited to a relatively small group of people for much of history, writing was a critical invention of several early societies that increased occupational specialization, including the emergence of clerks, scribes, bureaucrats, and eventually teachers, scholars, and historians. Initially developed chiefly to keep commercial accounts, codify legends and rituals, or record political proclamations, writing later gave birth to literature, historiography, sacred texts, and other forms of learning and culture that could now be transmitted and expanded. Hence the Sumerian epic of Gilgamesh influenced both the Hebrew book of Genesis and the stories of the Greek bard Homer many centuries later. Rulers used writing to communicate over long distances with district governors and foreign leaders, and merchants used it to make arrangements with merchants in other cities, enhancing the role of communication networks.

Writing, however, had contradictory consequences. On the one hand, it clearly stimulated creativity and intellectual growth while allowing for a spread of knowledge. But writing often became a tool for preserving the social and political order, especially when literacy was restricted to a privileged elite such as bureaucrats, lawyers, or priests. For example, a soldier in ancient China complained that he and his colleagues wanted to return home, but they "were in awe of the [official] orders in the tablets."[5] Sacred literature was also frequently closed to debate, since it supposedly came from the gods.

Social Inequality, Patriarchy, and Social Life

SOCIETIES

With less equality but more people, the potential for social conflict increased. Most farming-based communities included haves and have-nots, landlords and landless, free citizens and slaves. The gap between rich and poor made crime a serious problem. Theft was common in major Mesopotamian and Egyptian cities and was addressed through harsh law codes. In societies with large enslaved populations, which included debtors and prisoners of war, revolt was a possibility. Although more pervasive in Mesopotamia than in China, Egypt, and India, slaveholding was common in all ancient agricultural societies.

Patriarchy was another source of inequality and remains a feature of life today. To protect their own privileged position and power monopoly in society, men increasingly

[4]Isaiah 2:4, *Holy Bible*, 683.
[5]Quoted in Herlee Glessner Creel, *The Birth of China: A Survey of the Formative Period of Chinese Civilization* (New York: Frederick Unger, 1961), 256.

sleepingpanda/Shutterstock.com

IMAGE I.3 Bells of Marquis Yi of Zeng Music had a key function in the court life of Zhou-dynasty China. This sixty-four-piece, two-toned bell set was found in the tomb of a regional ruler, Marquis Yi of Zeng, which also contained many flutes, drums, zithers, pan pipes, and chimes. Five men using mallets and poles were needed to play this set of bells.

Q On what kinds of occasions do you think this bell set might have been played?

believed that women were unsuited to run governments or families, and few women were allowed to do so. Social changes that required heavy physical labor in farming, warfare, and long-distance trade influenced gender and family relations. Women became known as the "weaker sex" and were often assigned chiefly domestic tasks. An ancient Chinese saying asserted that "men plow and women weave."[6] Although women continued to produce some of the pottery and most of the cloth, and some helped in family gardens and care of farm animals, they were no longer equal contributors to food needs because they now spent more time at home. In farming families, women were also encouraged to bear a larger number of children to help in the fields. In many places, men, especially rulers and the rich, had multiple wives or took concubines. Sexual options became more limited for women because men wanted to ensure that their personal wealth could be passed on to children of known paternity. For much of history the creation of new life seemed to be a mystical power that females possessed. Such terms as "Mother Nature" and "Mother Earth" are survivors from that understanding.

Most urban women led busy lives. As households began to stir each morning, they may have prepared a quick meal for husbands and sons heading out to their work, perhaps as artisans, peddlers, soldiers, or laborers. Many used pots and pans made of copper or bronze to cook and serve the food. After cleaning up the meal, many women walked through dusty streets to market stalls to buy food grown on nearby farms. As they returned home, they may have passed children playing in the narrow alleys, perhaps watched by grandparents. In some societies, the wealthier women were increasingly restricted inside walled courtyards. The poorest women and men begged, searched through trash, or offered their services to those who were better off.

Despite the social inequality and long hours of toil, leisure activities developed that are familiar to us today. For example, the Sumerian city dwellers in Mesopotamia enjoyed dancing and music and invented beautiful, elaborate harps and lyres for their pleasure. Chinese music lovers preferred flutes and drums, and Egyptians favored metal horns. Music was used for worship, festivals, and work, but the oldest known love songs had also appeared by 2300 BCE in Egypt. Wrestling became a popular sport in many cultures.

Alcoholic drinks like beer and wine were also common, often consumed in public taverns. In many societies drinking became an integral part of leisure and social relationships. The literary figure Homer summed up the pleasures favored in early Greece: "The things in which we take a perennial delight are the feast, the lyre [a musical instrument], the dance, clean linen in plenty, a hot bath and our beds."[7] These are pleasures that most modern people share, indicating that some things have not changed much in three thousand years.

[6]Quoted in Merry Wiesner-Hanks, *Gender in History* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001), 61.
[7]From Homer's *The Odyssey*, quoted in Rodney Castledon, *Minoans: Life in Bronze Age Crete* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 9.

CHAPTER

1

The Origins of Human Societies, to ca. 2000 BCE

It takes a long time to build a mountain.

—Malay proverb

Dmitry Pichugin/Shutterstock.com

IMAGE 1.1 Tassili Archers Thousands of ancient paintings on rock surfaces and cave walls record the activities of African hunters, gatherers, and pastoralists. This painting of archers on a hunt was made in a rock shelter on the Tassili plateau of what is today Algeria, probably long before the Sahara region had dried up and become a harsh desert.

Q What does the rock painting show us about some of the animals these people had possessed or hunted?

The human story was already very old when, at Abu Hureyra **(AH-boo hoo-RAY-rah)** in the Euphrates **(you-FRAY-teez)** River Valley of what is now Syria, a group of villagers became some of the world's first farmers, thus taking a large step in shaping world history. People who hunted game and gathered vegetables and nuts occupied Abu Hureyra 13,000 years ago, when the area was wetter and blessed with many edible wild plants and herds of Persian gazelles. But a long cold spell brought a drought; to survive, the Abu Hureyra villagers began cultivating the most easily grown grains and later raised domesticated sheep and goats. By 7600 BCE they had shifted completely to farming and animal herding.

The Abu Hureyra farmers pursued a life familiar to rural folk for millennia afterward and even similar to many places today. A village was composed of several hundred people crowded into narrow lanes and courtyards, with families dwelling in multiroom mud houses with plaster floors. At night family members studied the sky and pondered the mysteries of the universe. Men did much of the farm work while women carried heavy loads on their heads, prepared meals, and ground grain in a kneeling position—activities that were hard on arms, knees, and toes. Work for both women and men called for muscle power and strong arms, and many villagers suffered from arthritis and lower back injuries. Abu Hureyra was abandoned in 5000 BCE.

Prehistory includes a vast span of time during which all living creatures appeared and developed. Humans evolved physically, mentally, and culturally over many millennia, learning to make simple tools and then spreading throughout the world. Later most societies, like the Abu Hureyra villagers, made the first great historical transition from hunting and gathering to farming and animal herding, profoundly changing the relationship between people and the environment. The rise of agriculture all over the world made possible the emergence of larger societies with cities, states, and more advanced technologies, which in turn stimulated long-distance trade and the rise of social, cultural, and economic networks linking distant societies. The ancient farmers, traders, and city folk laid the bedrock for the world we live in today.

IN THIS CHAPTER

1-1 Prehistory: The Cosmos, Earth, and the Roots of Humanity

TRANSITIONS

Q According to most scientists, what were the various stages of human evolution?

Some scholars have promoted a "big history" that places the development of human societies and networks in a much longer and more comprehensive framework. They argue that we cannot comprehend the rise of complex societies without knowledge of pre-farming peoples, human ancestors, and, before that, the beginning of life on Earth and the formation of our planet within the larger cosmic order. Recurring patterns of balance and imbalance and of order and disorder in the natural world, such as global warming and cooling, have always played a role in human history. People have speculated about the origins of the cosmos, Earth, life, and humanity for countless generations. Over the years their views have been integrated into religions.

CONNECTION to TODAY

How do you think that early speculations about the cosmos and the world might have influenced the beliefs of people in modern times?

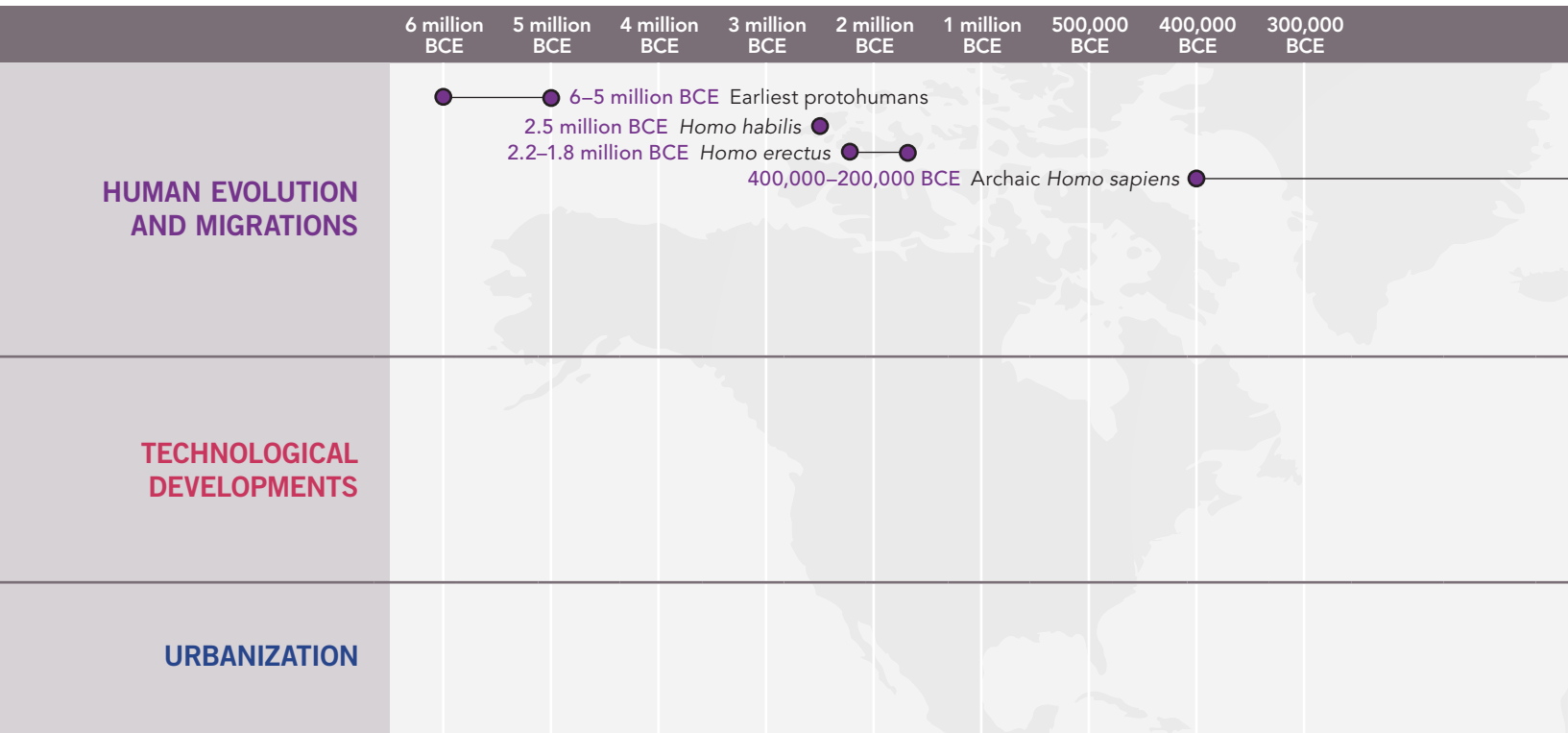
1-1a Perceptions of Cosmic Mysteries

Human development on Earth constitutes only a tiny fraction of the long history of the universe, which most astronomers think began in a Big Bang explosion some 13.7 billion years ago. As the universe expanded, matter coalesced into stars, which formed into billions of galaxies. Our solar system emerged about 4.5 billion years ago out of clouds of gas. On earth the developing atmosphere kept the surface warm enough for organic compounds to coalesce into life forms. This is the story presented by modern science.

Over the centuries most human societies, to explain their existence, crafted creation and origin stories and cosmologies explaining the natural and supernatural worlds. While varying greatly, these explanations usually involved myths or legends of some divine creator or creators. The earliest known creation story developed by a farming-based society, from Mesopotamia, claimed that heaven and Earth were formed as one in a primeval sea and were separated by the gods, powerful human-like beings unperceivable to mortals. Mesopotamian beliefs influenced the seven-day creation story in the Hebrew book of Genesis.

Many cosmological traditions, however, were very different. Ancient Hindu holy books describe a universe emerging out of nothingness: "There was neither nonexistence or existence then…neither the realm of space nor the sky which is beyond. Darkness was hidden by darkness…emptiness."[1] Then a great heat formed the cosmos and generated life. The Chinese believed that the universe was created out of chaos and darkness when the creator Pan Ku fashioned the sun, moon, and stars to put everything in proper order, producing a unifying force in the universe, the "way," or dao **(DOW)**. A related Chinese theory, *fengshui* **(fung-SHWAY)**, suggests that the earth itself contains natural forces that people must

[1]From the *Rig Veda*, quoted in Carolyn Brown Heinz, *Asian Cultural Traditions* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland, 1999), 132.



comprehend in order to properly situate buildings and graves, ideas that were recently popularized, gaining a following in some Western countries.

1-1b Early Life and Evolutionary Change

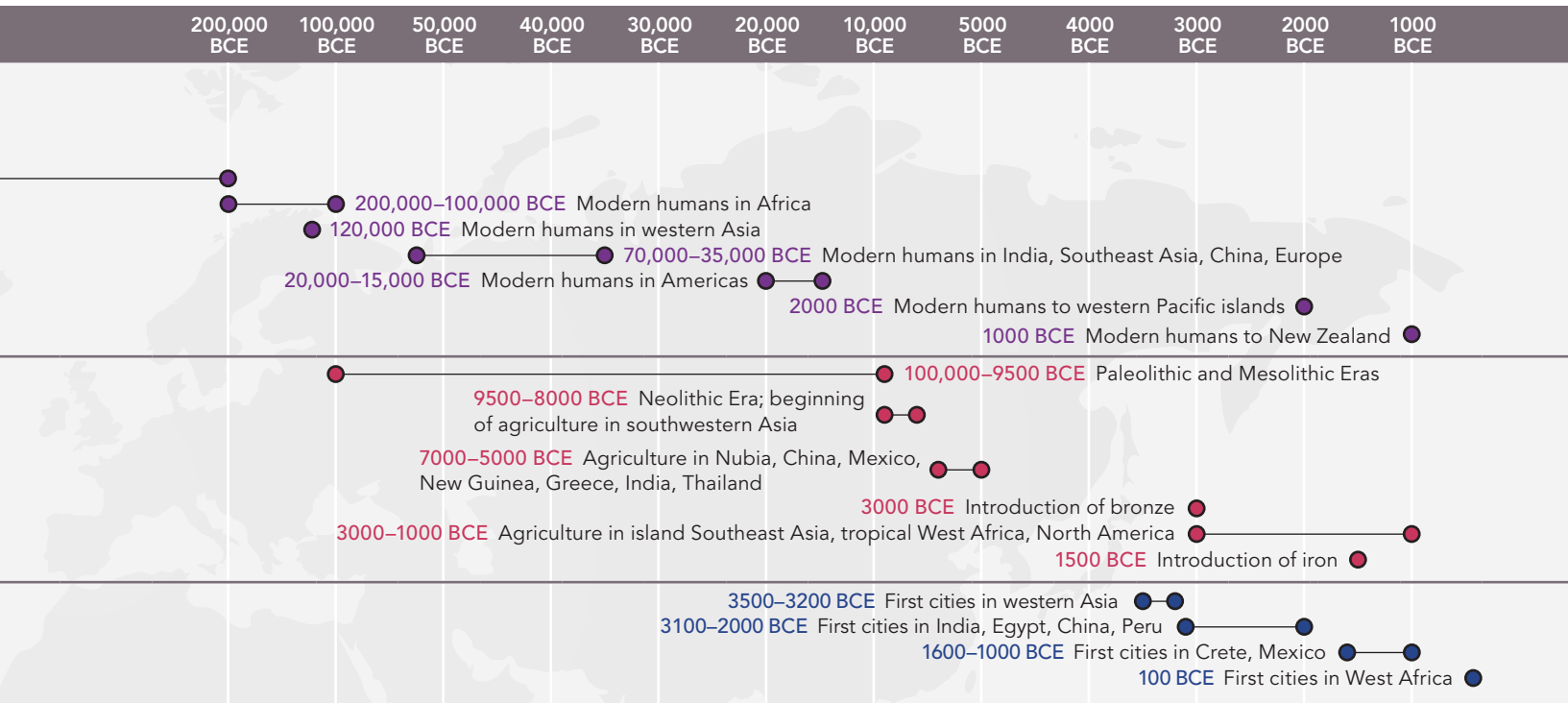
Life has a long history. Simple, single-celled life emerged by perhaps 3.5 to 3.9 billion years ago and remained dominant until about a half billion years ago, when complex life forms proliferated in incredible variety. Animal life colonized the land between 400 and 500 million years ago and evolved into many species. Volcanic and earthquake activity influenced human history, and sometimes intense volcanic eruptions dramatically altered regional and even global climates. Warmer or cooler climates helped shape human societies and sometimes undermined them. Most natural scientists, while still debating the mechanisms, agree that living things change over many generations through evolution, modifying their genetic composition to adapt to their changing biological and physical environment.

A half dozen massive species extinctions have occurred in the past 400 million years. For example, 250 million years ago gigantic volcanic eruptions produced enough climate-changing gases to rapidly warm the planet and almost wipe out all life. The best-known extinction involved the dinosaurs, which flourished for 150 million years before dying out about 65 million years ago, probably from the cooling of the planet from increasing volcanic activity combined with the cataclysmic impact of one or several large asteroids or comets smashing into the earth, destroying food sources and killing off about 70 percent of all species. This occurrence gave mammals a chance to rise, and one group eventually evolved into humans. So far humans have been lucky. Scientists estimate that 99 percent of all species eventually became extinct when conditions changed dramatically. Yet species have died rapidly over the past two hundred years, most likely because of environmental changes such as pollution, habitat removal, and global warming generated by human activity; this trend is rapidly accelerating today.

Eventually evolutionary changes among one branch of mammals led to the immediate ancestors of humans, which are part of the primate order, the mammal category that includes the apes. Over 98 percent of human DNA is the same as that of chimpanzees and bonobos, although human-chimp lines diverged sometime between five and six million years ago. By using their superior brain to gain an evolutionary edge, humans ultimately dominated other large animal species. They formed complex social organizations that emphasized cooperation for mutual benefit, developed tools, mastered fire, and learned how to use speech, all of which gave them great advantages. Ultimately they developed a more complex technology to manipulate the physical environment in many ways to meet their needs. Understanding human origins requires archaeologists and other scientists to sift through evidence from many sources, including fossils, DNA, early tools and other artifacts, caves, and campsites. New evidence is regularly discovered, fostering new understanding but also controversies. However, there is much that scholars and scientists agree on.

Hominids (HOM-uh-nids), a family including humans and their immediate ancestors, first evolved five to six million years ago from more primitive primates in Africa, where the span of human prehistory is much longer than anywhere else. The most extensive fossil evidence comes from the southern African plateau and the Great Rift Valley of East Africa, a wide, deep chasm stretching from Ethiopia south to Tanzania. Scientists vigorously debate fossil and artifact remains and whether teeth, skulls, and bones

hominids A family including humans and their immediate ancestors.



belong to ancestors of humans, other hominid species who died out, or apes, but fossil discoveries and analyses of DNA sometimes recovered from them point to several stages and branches in early human evolution. A common ancestral, apelike group living in the woodlands and savannahs of East Africa developed occasional and then permanent bipedalism (walking upright on two feet), making more activity possible by leaving hands free for holding food or babies, making and manipulating objects such as tools, and carrying food back to camp. Bipeds, being higher off the ground, could also scan the horizon for predators or prey.

Diverse hominid groups apparently coexisted at the same time, but only one led to modern humans. Early hominids known as **australopithecines (aw-strah-lo-PITH-uh-seens)** lived in eastern and southern Africa four or five million years ago, with brains about one-third the size of our brains. Some 2.5 million years ago one branch of australopithecines evolved into our direct ancestor. The earth cooled, fostering the first of a series of Ice Ages, which covered large areas of northern Eurasia and North America with deep ice sheets and glaciers. As Africa and its hominid inhabitants experienced a drier climate and more open habitats, the challenges posed by this climate change encouraged increased intelligence. Our likely ancestor ***Homo habilis*** **(HOH-moh HAB-uh-luhs)** ("handy human") had a larger brain size and ability to make and use simple stone tools for hunting and gathering. Stone choppers and later hand axes made possible a more varied diet, more successful hunting, and larger groups that could cooperate to share food. The other branches of australopithecines died out.

As hominid societies developed, males increasingly became the hunters or scavengers for meat and females the gatherers of nuts and vegetables, a subsistence model often known as foraging. Although meat became a more crucial protein source, gathering still probably brought more food than hunting or scavenging. These early humans were most likely vegetarians, like many primates today. Cooperation between the sexes and group members was the key to survival and probably involved communication through gestures and vocal cries.

australopithecines Early hominids living in eastern and southern Africa four to five million years ago.

Homo habilis ("handy human") A direct ancestor of humans, so named because of its increased brain size and ability to make and use simple stone tools for hunting and gathering.

Homo erectus ("erect human") A hominid that emerged in East Africa probably between 1.8 and 2.2 million years ago.

Neanderthals Hominids who were probably descended from *Homo erectus* populations in Europe and who later spread into western and Central Asia.

1-1c *Homo Erectus*, Neanderthals, and Migrations Out of Africa

Probably between 1.8 and 2.2 million years ago, when their environment fluctuated, more advanced hominids, called ***Homo erectus*** ("erect human"), evolved from *Homo habilis* in East Africa. They had a brain about two-thirds the size of ours and eventually developed a more complex and widespread tool culture including hand axes, cleavers, and scrapers. They spread to other parts of Africa, preferring the open savannah.

Between one and two million years ago, as southern Eurasia developed a warmer climate, some *Homo erectus* bands migrated out of Africa, perhaps following game herds. They carried with them refined tools, more effective hunting skills, and an ability to adapt to new environments. This first great migration in human history corresponded to the ebb and flow of the Ice Ages as well as the periodic drying out of the Sahara region. Over thousands of years these hominids came to occupy northern Africa, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia, China, Europe, and perhaps Australia.

One of the earliest and best studied non-African sites, perhaps 1.8 million years old, was found in the Caucasus **(KAW-kuh-suhs)** Mountains of western Asia. Bones and tools discovered in Chinese caves and skulls from the Indonesian island of Java, then connected to mainland Asia, have been dated at 1.6 to 1.9 million years ago, and one recent but controversial find in China suggests an even older date of 2.1 million. Fossils from frigid eastern Siberia date back 300,000 years, indicating how adaptable and resourceful the species had become. These hominids also lived in Spain by 800,000 BCE. However, their tool cultures differed somewhat from those of Chinese *Homo erectus*, indicating cultural diversity and perhaps major variation from the Asian species. By 500,000 years ago *Homo erectus* in China lived in closely knit groups, engaged in cooperative hunting, and used both wood and bamboo for containers and weapons. Most lived in caves, but some built simple wooden huts for shelter. Their hand axes were the Swiss army knives of their time, with a tip for piercing, thin edges for cutting, and thick edges for scraping and chipping. Scientists debate whether *Homo erectus* could use speech or make art. Finding their fossils on Indonesian islands suggest that they could build and sail primitive boats.

Discovering how to start and control fire was perhaps the most significant human invention. Where or when people first used fire or how many millennia it took for knowledge of fire to spread widely remains unclear; *Homo erectus* probably controlled fire at least one million years ago. Fire opened up many possibilities, providing warmth and light after sunset, frightening away predators, and making possible a more varied diet of cooked food, which fostered group living and cooperation as people gathered together around campfires. Fire also enabled ancestral humans to spread to cooler regions, such as Europe and northern Asia.

Beginning around 400,000 years ago, a vibrant new tool culture emerged that has been identified with the **Neanderthals (nee-AN-der-thals)**, hominids probably related to *Homo erectus*. Earlier generations of scientists, obsessed with the question of what separates humans from nature and makes us superior, believed that Neanderthals were very primitive compared to modern humans, but we now know that they were just as evolved and social as, and behaved in similar ways to, modern humans, and in fact contributed genes to us. Neanderthals gradually inhabited a wide region stretching from North Africa to western and Central Asia and, by 200,000 BCE, Europe, especially Spain and Germany. We might have cartoonish images of Neanderthals as simple-minded brutes whacking each other with clubs, but their cranial capacity equaled that of modern humans, and they had larger bodies. Skillful hunters with deadly spears, they ate large animals as well as plants and shellfish. Neanderthals maintained social values, buried their dead, cared for the sick and injured, and produced impressive cave art. Scholars debate whether they possessed spoken language, but agree that they were capable of

communication, used tools, made bone flutes, wore jewelry, and sailed boats to Mediterranean islands. Recent fossil discoveries in Siberia and Tibet suggest that a species related to Neanderthals, known as **Denisovans (dun-EE-suh-vinz)**, may have once been widespread in eastern Eurasia before the arrival of modern humans, but their exact relationship to the Neanderthals and to modern humans is a matter of debate. Recent genetic studies suggest that Neanderthals and Denisovans also interbred with at least three other unknown early human groups as they spread across Eurasia.

Neanderthals had long lived in Palestine when modern humans arrived there from Africa and apparently shared the territory for many centuries. Around 45,000 years ago some modern, tool-using humans, known as **Cro-Magnons (krow-MAG-nuns)** after a French cave where early fossils were found, began migrating into Europe from Asia. Recent analyses have found that modern humans in Europe and Asia (but not Africa) have a small number of Neanderthal genes, suggesting some interbreeding. Many people in eastern Asia and the Pacific islands also inherited 3 to 5 percent of their DNA from Denisovans. A recent but disputed study suggests that Denosovans may have mated with modern humans as recently as 15,000 years ago. Recent finds also reveal some possible cases of Neanderthal–Denisovan mixing. Modern humans inherited some Neanderthal DNA that helps protect us from certain infections. The last Neanderthals died out by 30,000 BCE. Whether and how Neanderthals were ultimately annihilated, outnumbered, outcompeted, assimilated, or simply outlasted by the more resourceful and adaptable modern humans, who had better technology and warmer clothing, generates much debate among scholars.

1-1d The Evolution and Diversity of *Homo Sapiens*

The transition from *Homo erectus* to archaic forms of ***Homo sapiens*** ("thinking human"), a species physically close to modern humans, began around 400,000 years ago in Africa. By 200,000 years ago a more widespread, complex tool culture indicated *Homo sapiens* occupation. Eventually members of *Homo sapiens* were the only surviving hominids and humanity became a single species, despite some superficial differences. With a larger brain, Archaic (early) *Homo sapiens* were more adaptive and intelligent, able to think conceptually. They lived in fairly large organized groups, built temporary shelters, created crude lunar calendars, killed whole herds of animals, and raised more children to adulthood. Possession of language gave *Homo sapiens* an advantage over all other creatures, allowing them to share information over the generations, adjust to their environment, and overcome challenges collectively.

Scientists debate precisely how and where *Homo erectus* evolved into *Homo sapiens*, with some arguing that the evolution occurred in different parts of the Afro-Eurasian zone. The most widely supported scenario based on rich finds, called the African Origins theory, suggests that *Homo sapiens* evolved only in Africa. Until recently, the oldest known fossils of our species in East Africa dated back about 195,000 years. But fossils discovered in 2017 in Morocco, in far northeastern Africa thousands of miles from East Africa, are roughly 300,000 years old, suggesting that, if other scientists confirm the finds as *Homo sapiens*, not just East Africa but the whole African continent might be considered the "cradle of humankind." More discoveries in the future may well deepen our knowledge but also complicate our understanding of the human past.

Whatever the case many *Homo sapiens* eventually left Africa, perhaps in several dispersals or waves likely sparked by sporadic climate change, and then spread throughout Afro-Eurasia, displacing and ultimately dooming the remaining *Homo erectus*, Neanderthals, and Denisovans. The study of genetic codes mostly supports the African Origins theory. But many mysteries about hominid evolution remain. For example, scientists debate whether a controversial 210,000-year-old skull found in Greece is Neanderthal or *Homo sapien*, raising questions about human migration from Africa. And 18,000-year-old bones of diminutive but tool-using hominids, 3 to 3.5 feet tall as adults, on the small remote Indonesian island of Flores sparked debate as to where these fossils fit into the human family tree. The Flores people (nicknamed by observers "hobbits" because of their small stature) may have been miniature versions of *Homo erectus* or *Homo sapiens* or perhaps constituted some unknown, and more primitive, human-like species. In 2019 another fossil discovery in a Philippine cave adds to the mystery. What scientists have named *Homo luzonensus* ("Luzon Man"), who seems to have had a mix of human, *Homo erectus*, *Homo floresiensis*, and australopithecus traits and may also have been small in size, lived there fifty thousand years ago and may or may not descend from *Homo erectus* or perhaps Denisovans. No land bridges ever connected Luzon or Flores to the Asian mainland, raising more questions as to how they got to the islands. These finds confirm that human evolution was highly versatile and diverse as groups adapted to unknown conditions around the world.

However and wherever the evolution into *Homo sapiens* occurred, all humans came to constitute one species that could interbreed and communicate with each other. It remains unclear whether a few differences in physical features, such as skin and hair color and eye and face shape, developed earlier or later in *Homo sapiens* evolution. Recent studies suggest that these appeared between 40,000 and 100,000 years ago. In the past, some scholars attempted to explain these physical differences through allegedly objective or scientific categories, such as the nineteenth-century concept of "race," or a large group thought to share distinctive genetic traits and physical characteristics. Attempts to organize societies by such categories have produced horrible abuses, systematic inequalities, and even genocide. But, by the late twentieth century, most experts discarded "race" as a scientific concept not only because of its inability to classify human populations and its harmful legacy, but also because "race" is now viewed as a social construct—a subjective concept created by individuals and groups to describe their identities and those of others. Such categories change with time and social context and are not scientific fact. Much genetic

Denisovans Hominids related to Neanderthals who lived in eastern Eurasia.

Cro-Magnons The first modern, tool-using humans in Europe.

Homo sapiens ("thinking human") A hominid who evolved around 400,000 years ago and from whom anatomically modern humans (*Homo sapiens sapiens*) evolved around 100,000 years ago.

SPL/Science Source

IMAGE 1.2 The Laetoli Footprints Some four million years ago in Tanzania, three australopithecines walked across a muddy field covered in ash from a nearby volcanic eruption. When the mud dried, their tracks were permanently preserved, providing evidence of some of the earliest upright hominids.

Q What about our hominid ancestors do you think scientists can learn from ancient footprints?

intermixing occurred over the millennia. Observable physical attributes such as skin color reflect a tiny portion of one's genetic makeup and thus cannot predict whether two groups are genetically similar or different. For example, the earliest hunter gatherers in Britain ten thousand years ago may have had dark skin, but later arrivals, farmers from the Middle East, intermarried with them. For all of these reasons, some argue that there is no such thing as a pure "European," or anyone else, in the past or today. Scientifically speaking, humans are much more similar than different.

Sometime between 135,000 and 100,000 years ago in Africa, anatomically modern humans with slightly larger brains, known as *Homo sapiens sapiens*, developed out of *Homo sapiens*. With this biological change, language and culture expanded in new directions and developed many variations. Scholars debate whether creativity, intelligence, and even language abilities were innate to *Homo sapiens sapiens*, as suggested by advanced stone tools and wall paintings in South African caves from 75,000 to 100,000 years ago, or arose only some 50,000 years ago, possibly as a result of a genetic mutation. With this great transition humanity reached its present level of intellectual and physical development, establishing the foundation for the constant expansion of information networks to a global level.

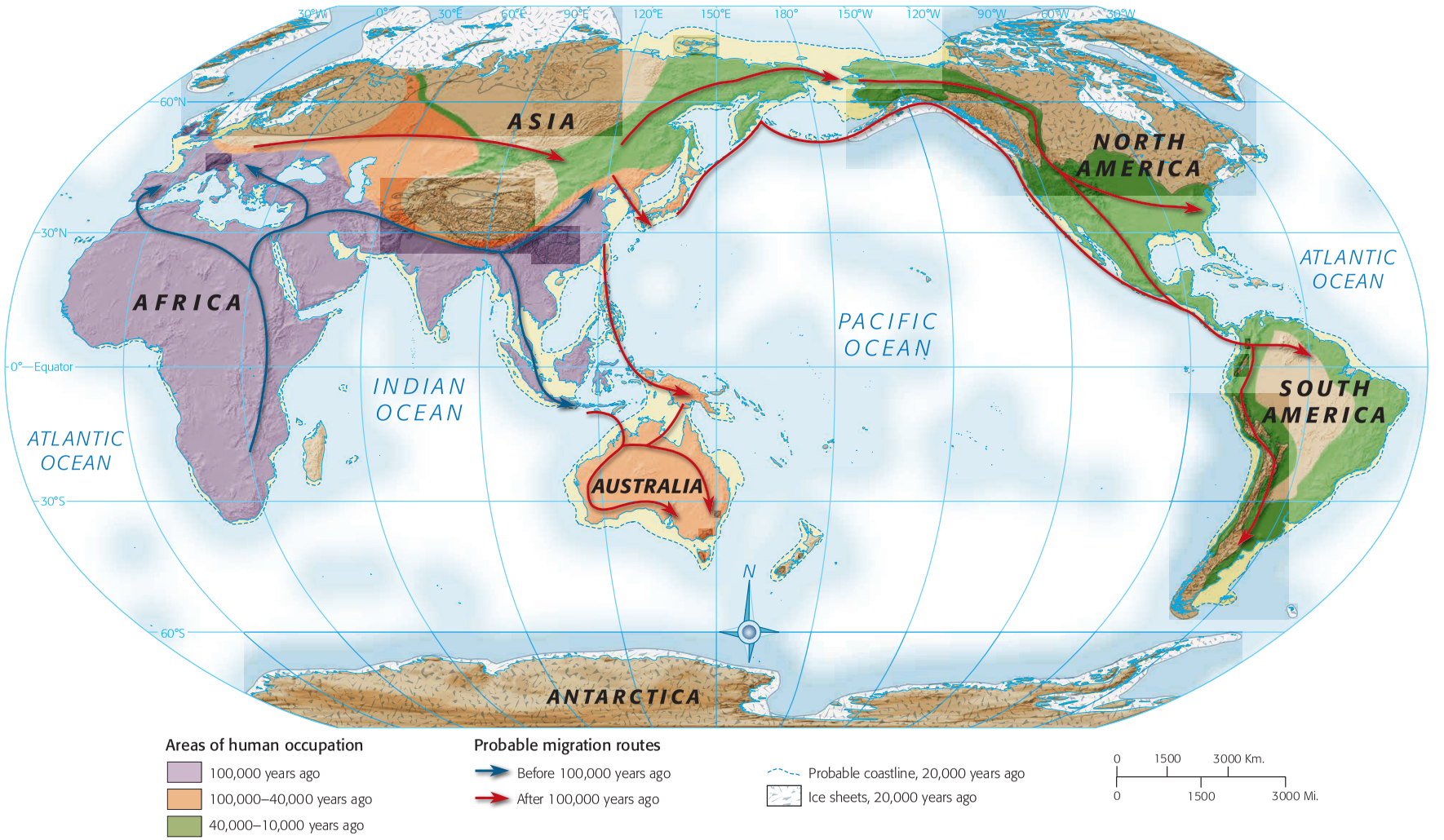
Modern human language development made possible complex cultures with shared learning and became the main method of communication for much of history. Five or six thousand languages emerged around the globe. Some, such as English and German, have a clear common ancestry, but scholars debate the relationships and origins of most of the world's languages. Human intellectual development also included thinking in abstract, symbolic ways, revealed early in decoration and art. Ocher **(O-ker)**, for example, a natural red iron oxide, was mined in various African locations and probably used for body decoration. The first gorgeous cave and rock art appeared at opposite ends of Eurasia, in southwestern Europe and Southeast Asia, around forty thousand years ago, and over the next ten thousand years became widespread in Africa, Eurasia, and Australia. This shows that art was developing about the same time across the Eastern Hemisphere. The art probably had magical, religious, or ritual purposes, such as the celebration of spirits or valued animals. But some old cave paintings in Europe represent star constellations, telling us about their concept of time and interest in the seasons or the future.

1-1e The Globalization of Human Settlement

Pushed by changing environments sparking a quest for food resources, beginning by around 120,000 years ago or perhaps even earlier, and continuing until some 12,000 years ago, restless modern humans settled much of the world. As people spread, genetic differences grew and *Homo sapiens sapiens* proved able to adapt to many environments. Some had already left Africa to settle in Palestine, where they likely encountered and perhaps interbred with Neanderthals. Eventually modern humans reached central and eastern Eurasia, from where some moved on to Australia and the Americas.

With many traveling east along or near the Indian Ocean coast, and others perhaps taking a northern route through Central Asia, modern humans crossed to the eastern half of Asia, arriving in India and Southeast Asia by 70,000 years ago and maybe earlier, China between 70,000 and 120,000 years ago, Japan by 25,000 and 30,000 BCE, Tibet by 30,000 and 40,000 years ago, Siberia 30,000 years ago, and Europe between 35,000 and 45,000 years ago (see Map 1.1). To reach Australia and New Guinea from Southeast Asia across a very shallow sea required rafts or boats, but modern humans may have settled there between 73,000 and 45,000 BCE. The peopling of the far-flung Pacific islands to the east began much later, around 2000 BCE.

Archaeologists long thought that the peopling of the Americas came very late, the earliest migration into North America occurring only 12,000 to 15,000 years ago. But recent discoveries suggest that the pioneer arrivals may have crossed from Northeast Asia, probably in very small numbers,



MAP 1.1 Spread of Modern Humans Around the Globe Most scholars believe that modern humans originated in Africa and that some of them began leaving Africa around 100,000 years ago. Gradually they spread out through Eurasia. From eastern Asia, some crossed to the Americas.

Q In what ways does this map suggest that migration should be considered one of the main themes of human history from our very beginnings in Africa?

as early as 15,000-20,000 or possibly, as a few disputed studies propose, even 30,000 or 40,000 years ago (see Chapter 4). At various times a wide Ice Age land bridge connected Alaska and Siberia across today's Bering Strait, and the evidence for several migrations chiefly from Asia over thousands of years is strong. The first settlers moved by land or by boat along the coast. A few highly controversial studies suggest that some Stone Age settlers arrived in eastern North America from Spain. Gradually Asian migrants settled throughout the Western Hemisphere, becoming the ancestors of today's Native Americans. DNA research suggests that all modern Native Americans, from North America to Chile, are closely related to each other and to several peoples in eastern Siberia or the Altai region of Central Asia. Some Native American languages also have a distant but possible connection to several Siberian languages.

KEY POINTS

- Early hominids first evolved in Africa (most likely East Africa) four to six million years ago.
- Of the early hominids, our direct ancestor, *Homo habilis*, was most successful because it used simple stone tools.
- *Homo erectus* developed more refined tools and migrated to Eurasia and throughout Africa; *Homo sapiens* had larger brains and evolved into modern humans, who developed language and spread throughout the world.
- Though humans from different parts of the world may have different appearances, their genetic differences are insignificant.

1-2 The Odyssey of Early Human Societies

SOCIETIES

Q How did hunting and gathering shape life during the long Stone Age?

CONNECTION to TODAY

Can you see any parallels between hunting and gathering by early people and the leisure activities many people enjoy today of hunting and collecting natural and organic foods in the wild?

For thousands of years humans lived at a very basic level in small, usually mobile, family-based societies during what is often called the Stone Age, a misleading term because people also used other materials, such as wood and bone, to help them sustain life. This era included three distinct periods. The long **Paleolithic (pay-lee-oh-LITH-ik)** period (or Old Stone Age) began about 100,000 years ago. The **Mesolithic (mez-oh-LITH-ik)** period (Middle Stone Age) began around fifteen thousand years ago, when the glaciers from the final Ice Age receded. Major meat sources in Eurasia and North America that were adapted to Ice Age climates, such as the herds of woolly mammoths and mastodons, died out from warming climates, catastrophic disease, or hunting by humans. The **Neolithic (nee-oh-LITH-ik)** period (New Stone Age) began between 9500 and 8000 BCE in Eurasia, with the transition from hunting and gathering to simple farming.

Paleolithic The Old Stone Age, which began 100,000 years ago with the first modern humans and lasted for many millennia.

Mesolithic The Middle Stone Age, which began around 15,000 years ago as the glaciers from the final Ice Age began to recede.

Neolithic The New Stone Age, which began between 10,000 and 11,500 years ago with the transition to simple farming.

1-2a Hunting, Gathering, and Cooperation

The earliest and simplest forms of society, small groups of twenty to sixty members, depended on members cooperating to fish, hunt live animals, scavenge for dead or dying animals, and gather edible plants, a subsistence way of life that depended on naturally occurring resources. Improved tools made possible more food options and better weapons against predators or rivals, and hunting became more important. When the bow and arrow were invented in Africa, Europe, and southwestern Asia at least fifteen thousand years ago, hunters could kill large animals at a safer distance. Although the main hunters, men, gained prestige, meat usually provided a small part of the diet. Some coastal peoples became skilled deep-sea fishermen by forty thousand years ago, inventing fishhooks, harpoons, fuel lamps, dugout boats, and canoes. Some also traded with neighboring groups. For example, in Eurasia treasured obsidian tools were traded over hundreds of miles by 30,000 to 40,000 years ago.

For much of history the gathering by women of edible vegetation such as fruits and nuts was probably more essential for group survival than obtaining meat, giving women status and influence. This is still true among many hunter-gatherers today. For example, among the Hadza of northern Tanzania, men are very often unsuccessful in their hunt for large animals while women, both young and old, provide the majority of calories to their families and group through gathering. Often grandmothers were the key to survival. Furthermore, women probably helped develop new technologies such as grinding stones, nets (to catch small animals), baskets, and primitive cloth. Woven cloth clothing appeared by 28,000 years ago and eyed sewing needles by 45,000 years ago. Pottery was made at least 18,000 years ago in China.

Although we must be cautious in comparing modern hunters and gatherers to peoples who lived many millennia ago, today's few remaining hunter-gatherers can probably reveal something about ancient pre-farming societies. Throughout history and even today many people have looked on those in less complex societies as "barbarians" or "uncivilized" because they are poor in material wealth, lack modern technology, and do not have their own highly organized governments. But many of these people may have enjoyed happy, moral, and fulfilling lives without living in richer but stressful cities and towns with competitive economic values and poor people of their own. The hunter-gatherer way of life may not have been as impoverished as we sometimes imagine. Many twentieth-century hunter-gatherers, such as the Mbuti **(em-BOO-tee)** of the Congo rain forest and the !Kung of the Kalahari Desert, enjoyed varied, healthy diets mixing fish, meat, and plants generally packed with nutrients and fiber. In recent years in many countries the so-called Paleolithic (Paleo) or stone-age diet has become a modern fad based on mainly eating foods presumed to have been available to early humans. But critics contend that the lifestyles and digestive abilities of people today are very different from those thousands of years ago, diminishing the diet's benefits. Hunter-gatherers generally also benefited from lots of physical activity; lack of chronic diseases like heart disease and cancer; often longer life expectancies; a rich communal life; and, for some, adequate food. Many spent only ten to thirty hours a week obtaining food, establishing camps, and doing domestic chores, and hence had plenty of time for music, dance, and socializing (see Meet the People: The !Kung Hunters and Gatherers). Yet hunter-gatherers always faced serious challenges. Early humans had to make their own weapons and clothing and construct temporary huts. For some groups, life remained precarious and many died young, since not all enjoyed access to adequate food resources and medical care was primitive.

Hunting and gathering generally encouraged cooperation, fostering closely knit communities based on kinship. Members communicated with one another and passed information from one generation to another, conveying a sense of the past and traditions. Personal relationships were paramount, while obtaining material wealth was devalued because the mostly nomadic way of life made individual accumulation of material possessions impractical. These small groups shared food resources among immediate family and friends, thus helping to ensure survival and promoting an intense social life. But harmony and mutual affection were not guaranteed. Those who violated group customs could be killed or banished, and sometimes conflicts split groups apart. Most hunter-gatherer bands had no government or leader; social responsibilities linked people together in relatively egalitarian relationships; and all members generally had equal access to resources. Yet groups often tended to reward the most resourceful members.

Women and men probably enjoyed a roughly comparable status, as they do in many hunter-gatherer societies today. Gender relations could be flexible, with the work of obtaining and preparing food sometimes based on ability and knowledge rather than gender. As key providers of food, women may have participated alongside men in group decision making. They also likely held a special place in religious practice as bearers of life. This may have been the source for concepts like Mother Nature and Mother Earth still used today. Midwives were highly respected. **Matrilineal (mat-ruh-LIN-ee-uhl) kinship** patterns, which trace descent and inheritance through the female line, were probably common, as they are today in these societies. But physically stronger and often more assertive men enjoyed some advantages over women. Although childbearing influenced women's roles, women were not constantly pregnant. Since it was necessary to limit group size to avoid depleting environmental resources, most societies practiced birth control and abortion. Breastfeeding an infant for several years suppressed ovulation and created longer intervals between pregnancies. Paleolithic populations grew slowly, perhaps by only 10 percent a century.

1-2b Cultural Life and Violence

Some aspects of culture that we might recognize today were taking shape, such as religious belief. As people sought to understand dreams, death, and natural phenomena, they developed both **animism (ANN-uh-miz-um)**—the belief that all creatures, as well as inanimate objects and natural phenomena, have souls and can influence human well-being—and **polytheism (PAUL-e-thee-ism)**, the belief in many spirits or deities. Since spirits were thought capable of helping or harming a person, **shamans (SHAW-mans)**, specialists in communicating with or manipulating the supernatural realm, became important; many shamans were women, and some biologically male shamans who assumed female roles were what today might be called *transgender*. Objects found in graves suggest some groups believed in some sort of an afterlife by 35,000 years ago or earlier. Some social activities developed early, including music, dance, making and drinking early homemade forms of beer or wine, and painting on rocks and cave walls. Primitive flutes can be traced back 45,000 years. Dancing and singing likely promoted togetherness. Perhaps the world's oldest temple, Goblekli Tepe in Turkey, was built by hunter-gatherers around 9000 BCE and used for ceremonies where people consumed meat and probably got drunk in great feasts while honoring their gods.

Egalitarian, self-sufficient societies enriched by spirituality and leisure activities may sound appealing to many modern people, but violence between and within different societies has also been a part of human culture throughout history. Predators such as bears, wolves, and lions hunted people, perhaps instilling

matrilineal kinship
A pattern of kinship that traces descent and inheritance through the female line.

animism The belief that all creatures as well as inanimate objects and natural phenomena have souls and can influence human well-being.

polytheism A belief in many spirits or deities.

shamans Specialists in communicating with or manipulating the supernatural realm.

a terror of dangerous animals, apparent in myths and folklore, such as the tale of Little Red Riding Hood, that have been passed down through countless generations. Men proved their bravery by killing predators, rivals, or enemy warriors to attract women.

Anthropologists debate whether humans are inherently aggressive and warlike or peaceful and cooperative. Today's hunter-gatherer or simple agriculture societies suggest that both patterns are common. Some peoples, such as the Hopi and Zuni of the American Southwest, the rain forest–dwelling Penan of Borneo, and many Australian Aborigines, have generally avoided armed conflict. But most societies have engaged in at least occasional violence, such as when their survival or food supply was threatened. Some societies admired military prowess. For example, the Dani of New Guinea lost a third of their men to conflicts with their neighbors. We might conclude that humans have a capacity but not a compulsion for aggressive behavior but naturally seek self-preservation, and social and cultural patterns promoting certain behaviors often arise in response to environmental conditions.

1-2c The Heritage of Hunting and Gathering

Hunting and gathering never completely disappeared. Throughout history some peoples have found this way of life the most realistic strategy for survival with remarkable success. Most recent hunter-gatherers have made only a marginal impact on the surrounding environment because of their small numbers and limited technology. Learning to live within environmental constraints, they were highly successful adapters. Hunter-gatherers in what is today Jordan were baking flat bread from wild cereals around 14,400 years ago, preceding agriculture by four thousand years and perhaps stimulating ideas for cultivating crops. Although generating little material wealth, hunting and gathering remained viable for many societies, such as Australian Aborigines, until modern times. Some Australian Aborigines relied largely on this pattern, especially in the harsh deserts, but others combined it with productively cultivating crops, sometimes intensively, suitable for their environment. Trade routes spanned the continent, and many Aborigines developed notions of land management as well as rich mythologies about their origins and their relationship to the fragile environment.

Gonzalo Azumendi/The Image Bank/Getty Images

IMAGE 1.3 Cave Paintings in Europe This Ice Age painting of bison and deer is from a cave in Altamira, Spain. Many paintings on cave walls have been found in France and Iberia. Paleolithic peoples all over the world painted pictures of the animals they hunted or feared as well as of each other, suggesting an increasing self-awareness.

Meet the People

The !Kung Hunters and Gatherers

While all societies change over time, often in response to environmental conditions, the remaining hunter-gatherer peoples today may give us a glimpse of how some prehistoric peoples lived. The !Kung, a subgroup of the Khoisan people (once disdainfully called Bushmen by European settlers), live in the inhospitable Kalahari Desert in southwestern Africa, in what is today Botswana and Namibia. Several thousand years ago the Khoisan were widespread in the southern half of Africa, and some probably adapted to desert life a long time ago. Some scholars think many Khoisan peoples may be the direct descendants of a very early dispersal of *Homo sapiens sapiens* from East Africa to southern Africa by 150,000 years ago or earlier, and their languages may be some of the world's oldest.

Over the millennia the !Kung became skilled hunter-gatherers. Women obtain between 60 and 80 percent of the food, collecting nuts, berries, beans, leafy greens, roots, and bird eggs, as well as catching tortoises, small mammals, snakes, insects, termites, and caterpillars. The men, who can follow animal tracks and other clues for many miles without rest, hunt animals, snare birds, and extract honey from beehives. The !Kung utilize some fifty species of plants and animals for food, medicine, cosmetics, and poisons. Although unfamiliar to Westerners, their food sources are highly nutritious.

The !Kung have adapted well to a harsh environment. Even during periodic drought conditions, the diversity of !Kung food sources ensures a steady supply. Furthermore, their diet is low in salt, carbohydrates, and saturated fats and high in vitamins and roughage. Combined with a relatively unstressful life, such a diet helps them avoid modern health problems like high blood pressure, ulcers, obesity, and heart disease. Living far from clinics, they die more easily from accidents and malaria. Nonetheless, !Kung life expectancy is similar to that in many industrialized countries.

ERIC LAFFORGUE/Alamy Stock Photo

IMAGE 1.4 Modern San Family Around a Fire
A modern San family gathers around a fire in a traditional Namibian village. Like the San in recent times, most people lived from hunting and gathering during the long centuries before the beginnings of agriculture, usually in small groups of a few families.

Q What does the photo tell us about San clothing, decoration, and housing?

Spending only fifteen to twenty hours a week in maintaining their livelihood, the !Kung have ample free time for resting, visiting friends, and playing games. Children have few responsibilities because their labor is not needed for the group's survival. The !Kung value gender interdependence and are willing to do the work normally associated with the opposite sex. Hence, fathers take an active role in childrearing. They prefer companionship to privacy, and their intense social life is symbolized by a large communal space in the midst of the camp surrounded by family sleeping huts. The !Kung strongly discourage aggressiveness. Their folk stories praise the animal tricksters who evade the use of force.

Throughout history farming peoples have affected hunter-gatherers. In recent decades the !Kung have faced many challenges that have altered the lives of many bands. Most are no longer completely self-sufficient, trading desert products to nearby farming villages for tools and food. Others have been drafted into the military, have taken up wage labor, or have been displaced because their territory has been claimed by governments or business interests. Today, forced or induced to abandon their traditional ways of life, some disoriented !Kung have moved to dilapidated, impoverished villages on the edges of towns. The future for their ancestral lifestyle is unpromising.

Reflection Questions

1. What role does the gathering by women play in the !Kung economy?
2. How does the traditional !Kung way of life promote leisure activity?
3. What problems do the !Kung face today?
4. What about traditional !Kung life do you think might appeal to people today?