State-Building (POL)

Early Civilizations
Sumerian Government

- Divided into city-states (the city and the land surrounding it) with independent governments
- Land belonged to the gods so the first rulers were priests.
- Competed for land and water = war
  - Military leaders became more important than priests
    \[\Rightarrow\] kings ruling over kingdoms but were still viewed as a link to the gods
- With few natural barriers to prevent invasion and no central government, the Sumerian city-states declined around 2300 BCE
Babylonian Government

- Babylonians were Persians (from modern-day Iran)
- Took control of Mesopotamia around 1900 BCE using a new weapon - the compound or composite bow - and build a large diverse empire
- Most powerful king was Hammurabi
  - Abolished local governments and appointed officials loyal to him
  - Reorganized the tax structure to improve agriculture
  - Code of Hammurabi was a set of law codes put into writing on stone monuments (first written laws)
    - “an eye for an eye” (lex talionis) - punishment should fit the crime
    - Brought stability and justice over individual vengeance
Later Mesopotamian Governments

- **Assyrian Empire**
  - Used iron weapons, chariots, and professional soldiers promoted on the basis of merit to overpower neighboring cities.
  - Grew too large to effectively rule
- **Chaldean Empire**
  - Under the rule of Nebuchadnezzar
    - Known for its hanging gardens
  - Fell to foreign invaders and was the last Mesopotamian empire
Egyptian Kingdoms

- 3100 BCE - King Menes unites Upper and Lower Egypt creating one large kingdom
- Old Kingdom (2660-2160 BCE)
  - King or queen leading became known as a pharaoh
  - Rulers were theocrats - they held both religious and political power
  - Used their authority to undertake extensive building projects
    - Most pyramids were build during the Old Kingdom
    - Believed pharaohs were descended from gods and immortal so great effort was made to preserve and honor their bodies in death
  - All lands belonged to the pharaoh but eventually land was granted to officials for their service ⇒ nobility who eventually challenge the pharaoh’s rule (also weakened by a period of drought and famine)
  - The kingdom is again split and civil war takes over
Egyptian Kingdoms

- **Middle Kingdom (2040-1786 BCE)**
  - Mentuhotep II reunites Egypt under a central government
  - Encouraged loyalty by having statues and other art made that showed them as wise and caring protectors
    - Renewal of art, religion, and literature
    - Many temples to the gods were built
  - Huge irrigation projects
  - Used their armies to expand (conquered gold-rich Nubia to the south)
  - Invaded by the Hyksos (nomadic pastoralists from modern-day Syria) who used horse-drawn chariots and improved bows and arrows to defeat the Egyptians
Egyptian Kingdoms

- New Kingdom (1570-1070 BCE)
  - Pharaohs used the new technology to eventually defeat the Hyksos and greatly expand their territory
  - Gained access to bronze and wood resources
  - Akhenaton (1350 BCE) tried to change the religion to worship one sun god (Aten) but failed ⇒ made the priests more powerful
  - Ramses the Great (1290 BCE) built more temples and statues than any other pharaoh
    - Successfully withstood attack from the Hittites who were using iron tools and weapons
  - His successors lacked his power and skills and the mighty Egyptian Empire would decline until modern times
Aryan Government

- Aryan tribes were organized into clans, each with its own territory and headed by a male chief
- No central government
- Clans sometimes fought each other
- Continued their herding lifestyle but eventually began to farm and intermingle with the native peoples
- Brahmins held significant authority in Indian society
  - Priests who performed daily rituals honoring the gods
Chinese Dynasties

- Xia Dynasty (400 years)
  - Yu organized projects to build roads for trade, create ditches to control flooding, and drain swamps for farmland. Created zones of defense each led by a local ruler who reported to him.
  - He passed his power to his son Qi and thereby created the first Chinese dynasty (the Xia Dynasty)
    - Little is known about the Xia dynasty because there was no writing system but archeological evidence proves it did exist.
Chinese Dynasties

- Shang Dynasty (600 years)
  - 1750 BCE – a local leader named Tang overthrows the Xia king and takes power, marking the beginning of the Shang Dynasty
    - The Shang conquered neighboring people and wielded tremendous economic and religious power.
    - Shang rulers controlled the copper and tin mines which gave them a monopoly over the production of bronze and more powerful weapons than anyone around them
    - Waged war on their enemies - captured prisoners who were either enslaved or sacrificed to the gods
  - Over time the Shang kings became weaker
Chinese Dynasties

- Zhou Dynasty (900 years)
  - 1045 BCE - a military leader named Wu raised his own army and killed the Shang king thereby ending the dynasty
    - Zhou dynasty is the longest in Chinese history
    - First 200 years = The First Golden Age
      - A period of peace, prosperity, and innovation
    - Zhou kings centralized the government and expanded their territory
    - Mandate of Heaven ⇒ the idea that a just ruler’s power was bestowed by the gods, kings were “sons of heaven”
      - Invasions or natural events were seen as a ruler no longer having the Mandate of Heaven
Chinese Dynasties

- Zhou Dynasty (900 years)
  - Eventually the kingdom became too big and it was divided into regions under control of relatives or friends loyal to the king (like city-states)
    - Local rulers controlled their lands, paid taxes to the king, and provided soldiers to the king’s army
    - Regional leaders had to visit the king’s court to proclaim their loyalty
  - Also built alliances with neighbors along the borders to shield from nomadic invasions
  - Regional authorities eventually started rebelling and gaining control of iron resources
The Chavin

- 1000 - 200 BCE along the coast of modern-day Peru near the Andes Mountains
- Developed three urban centers, each with more than 10,000 people
- Weak political structure
- Civilization declined into smaller regional groups
  - Difficult geography led to integrated economic zones that were complicated with regional warfare
  - One of those regional groups was the Mochica who left evidence of a highly religious, socially diverse, and economically complex society
The Olmec

- Mesoamerica (1200-400 BCE)
- Core and foundational civilization for the Maya and Aztec that come later
- Primarily agricultural near small rivers
- Authoritarian government was likely based on huge construction projects that would have required vast coordination
  - One of these construction projects was massive human heads carved from huge slabs of black basalt - would have required thousands of laborers
- Internal conflict seems to have led to their decline (no written language)
Austronesian Speakers

- Migrated to New Guinea (5000-2500 BCE)
  - Assimilating with the existing population
  - Introduced agriculture (not with Australia aboriginals who remained hunter-foragers)
  - Continued to migrate by boat over 10,000 miles during the next 1,000 years
- Earliest known people were the Lapita, known for their terra-cotta pottery
  - Local hereditary chiefdoms
  - Physical contests for leadership roles
  - Chiefs and aristocrats eventually came to be seen as semi-divine or divine by their subjects
- On large islands like Hawaii, chiefs and nobles organized public life in their districts by leading ritual services and maintaining irrigation systems