

Notes on Quiz #1: Semitic Mesopotamia

1. All of the following are true of Sargon EXCEPT:

- a. He claimed to be the lover of Ishtar
- b. He was king of the Akkadians
- c. He ruled weakly and passively
- d. He established the first Near Eastern empire

Sargon was a king of Akkad, one of the Semitic cities that rose in Mesopotamia after the Sumerians, during the Bronze Age. He's credited with creating the first multinational empire, after conquering or absorbing many of the lands and peoples of the Fertile Crescent. He rules over this empire oppressively and ruthlessly—one of the reasons it did not last.

2. The Old Babylonian Empire was known for

- a. Mathematics and astronomy
- b. Romance novels
- c. Inventing an early form of baseball
- d. Lasting for thousands of years

The Bronze Age Babylonian Empire, also known as the Old Babylonian Empire, attracted those skilled in mathematics and astronomy and was one of the first powerhouses in these fields. The empire lasted c. 1894 BCE – c. 1595 BCE, about 400 years.

3. All of the following are true of the Code of Hammurabi EXCEPT:

- a. It was a compilation of laws relating to civil and criminal procedures
- b. Its penalties were harsher than older laws
- c. It helped to unify the empire by placing it under a single legal system
- d. The three classes—noble, free, and slave—were treated exactly equally

It was a law code, one of the earliest known in history, issued by Hammurabi, a king of the Old Babylonian empire during the 18th century BCE. For the most part it dealt with applying justice to conflicts between individuals, often having to do with property or commercial transactions, with different provisions depending on class.

4. The Indo-European people who settled in central Anatolia (modern Turkey) were the

- a. Hittites
- b. Mennonites
- c. Kassites
- d. Samsonites

The Hittites were an Indo-European people who settled in central Anatolia. They were among the earliest masters of bronze.

5. All of the following are true of the Indo-Europeans EXCEPT:

- a. They were originally nomads
- b. They were pastoral (animal herders)
- c. They never migrated anywhere and all its tribes stayed in their homeland until they died out
- d. Their language was the origin of many related later languages, including Persian, Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit

The Indo-Europeans were a pastoral people and so constantly in search of new grazing lands as their populations increased. As such, whole nations of Indo-Europeans left the Indo-European Homeland on the central Asian steppes, migrating into new lands to the south, west, and east. These nations were the ancestors of the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Vedic Hindu peoples, among many others.

Optional Extra Credit

EC. Give an example of one of the punishments you remember from the Code of Hammurabi.

Examples of provisions include:

- If a man accuses another man and charges him with homicide, but cannot bring proof against him, his accuser shall be killed.
- If a man breaks into a house, they shall kill him and hang him(?) in front of that very breach.
- If a man has a debt lodged against him, and the storm-god Adad devastates his field or a flood sweeps away the crops, or there is no grain grown in the field due to insufficient water—in that year he will not repay grain to his creditor; he shall suspend performance of his contract [literally "wet his clay tablet"] and he will not give interest payments for that year.
- If a merchant should give silver to a trading agent for an investment venture, and he [the trading agent] incurs a loss on his journeys, he shall return silver to the merchant in the amount of the capital sum.
- If a man takes in adoption a young child at birth [literally "in its water"] and then rears him, that rearing will not be reclaimed.
- If an [awilum] should blind the eye of another [awilum], they shall blind his eye.
- If a builder constructs a house for a man but does not make it conform to specifications so that a wall then buckles, that builder shall make that wall sound using his own silver.
- If an ox gores to death a man while it is passing through the streets, that case has no basis for a claim.
- If a man rents a boat of 60-[kur] capacity, he shall give one sixth [of a shekel] of silver per day as its hire.
- If a slave should declare to his master, "You are not my master", he [the master] shall bring charge and proof against him that he is indeed his slave, and his master shall cut off his ear.