

Lecture 2

Genesis of culture.

Archaic culture. Ancient civilizations

1. Primitive (archaic) culture. Main features. Peculiarities and forms of religion of primitive society.
2. Mesopotamian culture.
3. Culture of Ancient Egypt.

1. Primitive (archaic) culture. Main features. Periodization, peculiarities and forms of religion of primitive society.

- Archaic culture is the oldest – 1750000 years ago;
- First people were different but their culture had common features:
 - **Syncretism** (*greek* – syncretismos – joining together; *lit.* non-segmentation) – special type of perception when primitive people did not isolate themselves from the environment.
 - **Homogeneity** of the society – no social division – basis for joining – real kinship;
 - **Egalitarianism** = equality of all members of the tribe or clan in respect to leadership or material values;

- **Traditionalism** – ???

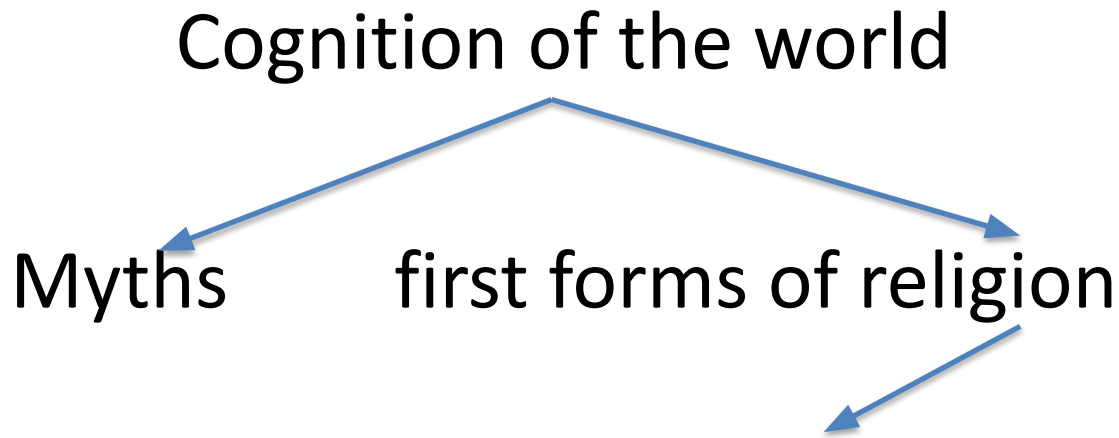
all spheres of life are subordinated to some tradition or ritual. **Taboo** system;

- **Collectivism** - ???

- **Absence of written language**

- **Mythological thinking** -???

transfer of human's inner properties to the outside world.



Totemism –

natural object/animal believed by the society to have some significance and adopted as an emblem;

Animism – (*latin* anima – soul, spirit)

faith in existence and transmigration of the soul, afterlife world, resurrection and so on.

Fetishism –

(port. amulet, idol) – identification of some in animated item with some spirit.

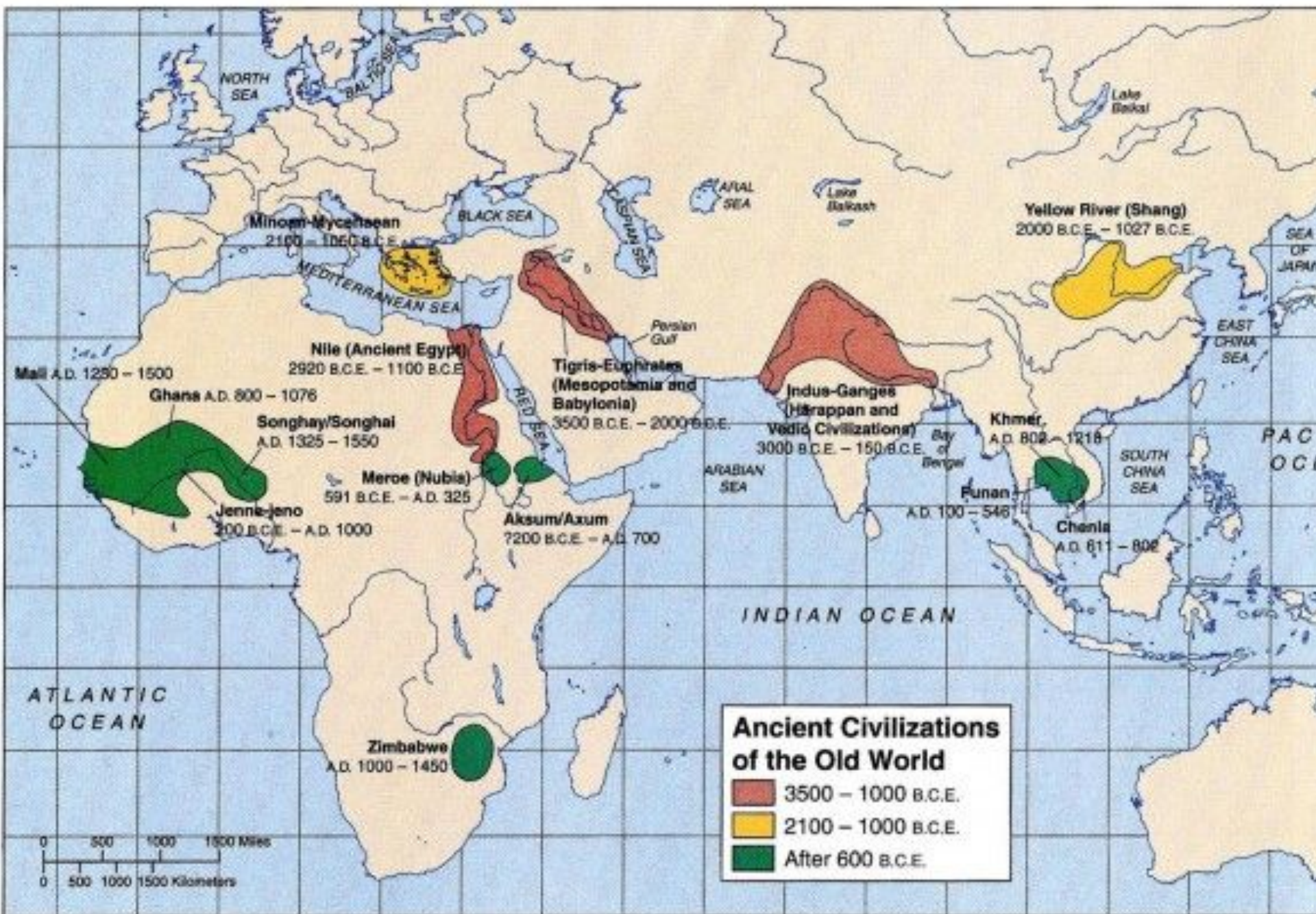
Magic - belief in the supernatural connection between real objects or actions.

Shamanism ('shaman' is translated 'possessed') is a system based on ability of some people (priests) to go into the changed states of psychics (trance etc.).

Watch the film and find all possible forms of primitive religion

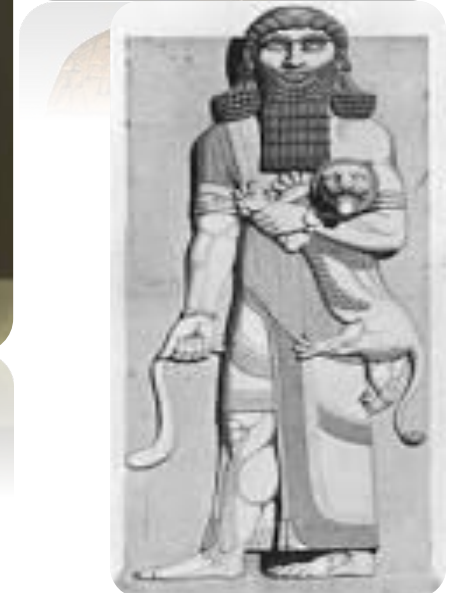
2. Mesopotamian culture

Ancient Civilizations of the Old World



Importance of the first civilizations

- First states
- private property
- written language
- system of laws
- libraries
- wheel and potter's wheel



Appearance of the first civilizations

First oriental civilizations 3 – 4 thousand years B.C.

- South Asia, North Africa, India, China.

Basin of two large rivers ->

built irrigation systems->

developed agriculture, cattle breeding, gardening.

Needed large supplies of grain and other products of agricultural activity ->

communities joined into states ->

special type of administrative management appeared:



Oriental Despotism –

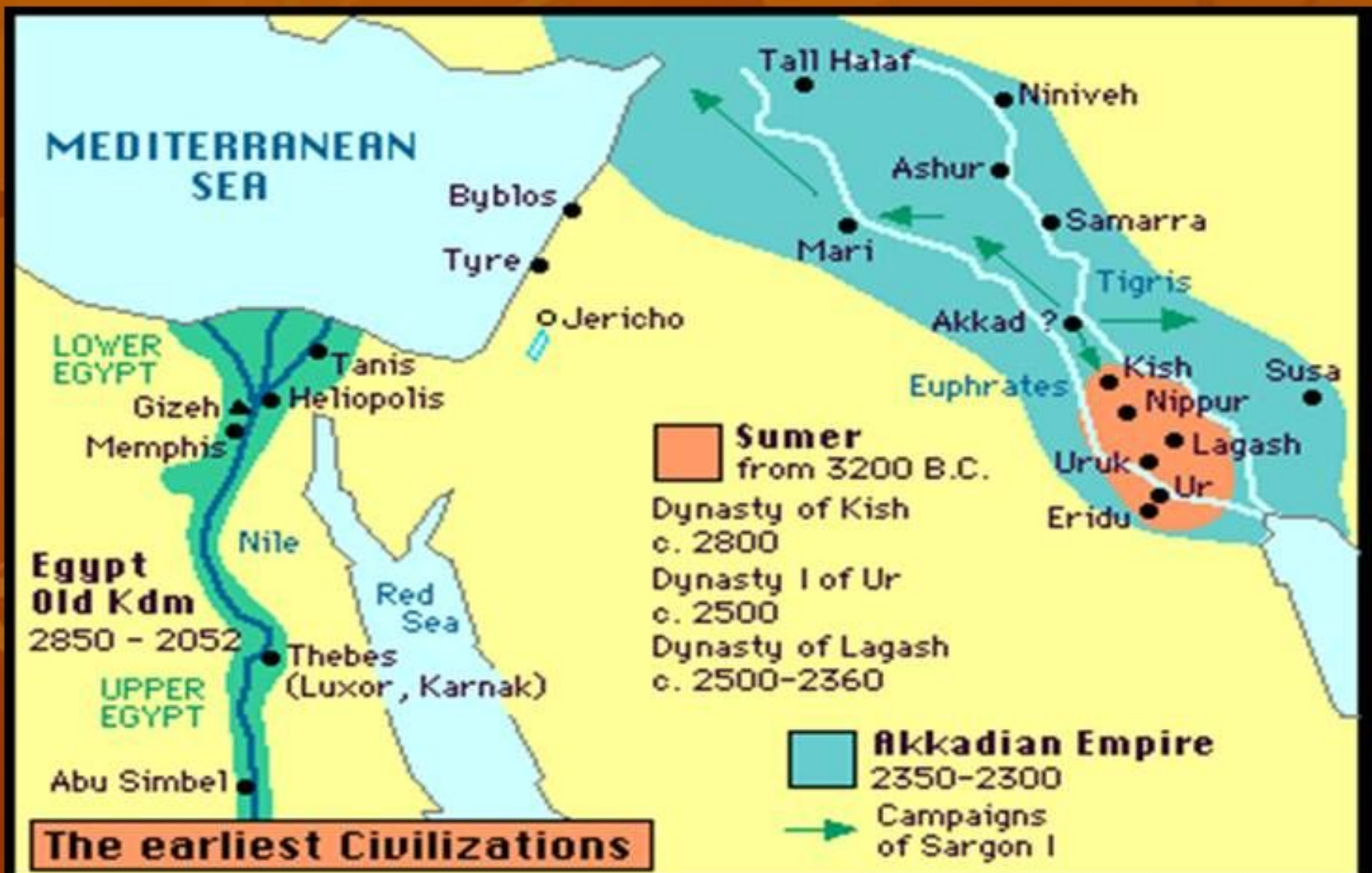
special type of political government characterized by the existence of:



Ruler – embodied
God

Large amount of
slaves and
peasants

Priests –
preserving and
carrying on rituals



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Sumerian civilization

The first civilization is recognized - **the Sumer civilization** that emerged **4 thousands years ago** in the territory of Mesopotamia .

The achievements of this civilization

- the first towns and cities enclosed by large walls
- temples on top of **ziggurats** (huge stepped pyramids that had flat tops)
- they invented the writing (**pictographs** or **cuneiform** on clay tablets)
- they developed art, e.g. **glyptic** is a carving on the stone seals.

The background of the slide is a blurred image of a city with a river. In the foreground, a boat is visible on the water. The city buildings are in the background, and the sky is blue. The text is overlaid on this image.

Watch the film and give the answers to the questions

1. What were the main occupations of nomads?
2. What were the first achievements of the Sumerians?
3. What was the main problem for developing agriculture and how did they solve it?
4. Enumerate the inventions and discoveries made by Sumerians.
5. How did the city-state were organized?
6. What were the main constructive material?
7. What occupations existed in the Sumerian civilization?
8. What were the king's responsibility?
9. Did the have a tax system and what kind of taxes existed?

3. Culture of ancient Egypt

- 4 thousand year B.C. – Nile valley – first state organisation;
- Basis – incomprehensibility & stability;
- Cult of **pharaoh**
 - Absolute power
 - Owner of all material, human, natural resources
 - Unspoken obedience

- *Religion*

- Polytheistic

- Henotheistic

- Zoomorphic

- Antropomorphic

- Each god has own name (some times more than one)

1. Ptah – god-creator;

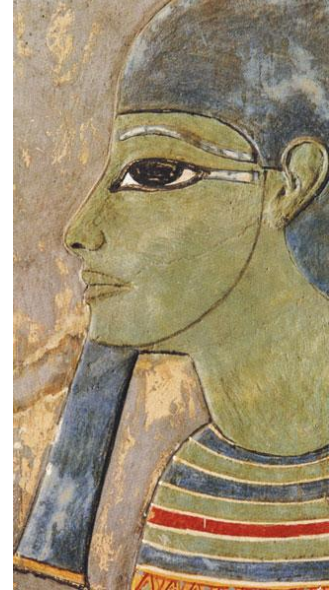
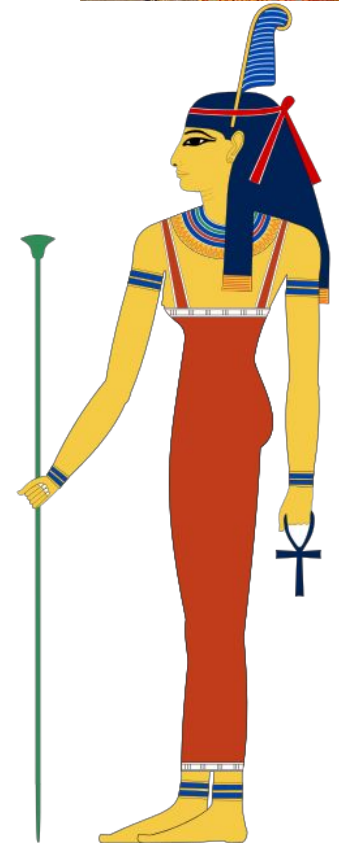
2. Seth – Osiris' brother – god of anger, rage, destruction, war;



3. Amun – main deity, god of the sky



4. Maat – goddess of truth, balance, order, law, morality, and justice.





5. Osiris

- god of the afterlife, the underworld and the dead;

6. Isis

- was worshipped as the ideal mother and wife as well as the patroness of nature and magic..

- 14 cent. B.C. – Amenhotep IV - **Akhenaten**
"Effective for Aten":



- Religious reform – monotheism – main deity God of Sun – **Aton**
- Failed – strong priesthood & nobility.
- his monuments were dismantled and hidden, his statues were destroyed, and his name excluded from the king lists.
- City **Akhenaten** (19 cent.)
- his queen Nefertiti, his son Tutankhamun