**INSTRUCTOR’S MANUAL**

**CHAPTER 1: BEGINNINGS**

**I. LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

* To describe the transition from Neolithic to settled communities in the period from 15,000 to 5,000 B.C.E.
* To outline how early civilizations of the ancient Middle East laid the basis for Western culture.
* To examine the artistic and intellectual contributions of early, major civilizations of the ancient Middle East including Egypt, Sumer, Assyria, Crete, and Mycenae.

**II. OUTLINE OF CHAPTER CONTENTS**

**Before History**

Paleolithic Developments  
Neolithic Developments

**Mesopotamia**

Sumer  
 *The Epic of Gilgamesh*  
 Akkadian and Babylonian Culture  
 The Law Code of Hammurabi  
 The Assyrians  
 Persia

**Ancient Egypt**

Egyptian Religion  
 Old Kingdom  
 Architecture  
 Sculpture  
 Middle Kingdom

New Kingdom  
 The Amarna Revolution: The Reign of Akhenaton and Nefertiti  
 Tutankhamen and the Post-Amarna Period  
 Literature

**The Prehistoric Aegean**

The Cycladics  
 The Minoans

The Excavation of Knossos  
 Life and Art in the Minoan Palaces  
 Linear A and Linear B  
 The Decline of Crete  
The Mycenaeans  
 Heinrich Schliemann and the Discovery of Mycenae  
 Mycenaean Art and Architecture

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**IV. SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION**

1. What were the motivating impulses in art for early civilizations? How are these impulses reflected in the artifacts of these civilizations? How is the style of an artwork conditioned by its function?

2. What are some of the difficulties involved with trying to reconstruct early cultures?

3. Why is the development of writing the most important product of this period? Do you believe early civilizations gave the development of writing the same importance that we attach to it? How does writing reveal important aspects of ancient cultures and values? What specifically in the text reveals these values?

**The Hero’s Quest**

Compare and contrast *The Epic of Gilgamesh* to a modern example of “quest literature” (or to movies such as the *Star Wars* series). What is being sought? Why is it being sought? What trials are involved in the quest? How do these trials contribute to the maturation of the hero? What are the rewards for successfully completing the quest? What historical, social, or religious differences can be cited to explain the differences between the quests of ancient and modern heroes?

**The Mother Goddess**

Consider the *Venus of Willendorf* (Fig. 1.6) or other examples of mother goddesses or symbols of fertility. What attributes of the mother goddess are apparent in the statue? Why might an early civilization make a mother goddess the center figure in its religion?

**Artistic Styles**

1. Compare and contrast the *Lady of Pazardzik* (Fig. 1.13), the *Bust of Queen Nefertiti* (Fig. 1.35), and a Cycladic idol. What are the important characteristics of each? What is the function of each? How do their functions influence their styles? To what degree is each realistic or idealized?

2. Cycladic idols are simplified, geometric shapes. Why might a culture choose to craft deities that are not realistic? Which of these figures looks the most modern?

**V. ASSIGNMENTS FOR STUDENTS**

1. Not all ancient art has a religious function. Write a paragraph describing the kinds of nonreligious art discussed in this chapter and speculate on what nonreligious art tells us about the people who made it.

2. Using specific examples from Chapter 1, explain the major style differences in the sculpture of two of the civilizations discussed.

3. Architecture is dependent upon available materials and technology, function, and aesthetic judgments. Using the architecture of several cultures discussed in this chapter, explain how each example reflects these factors and how these factors come together in each example to create an overall effect.

4. Write an outline for a quest by a modern American hero. What would be sought and why? Who would do the searching? What trials would be endured? How would the hero’s character mature as a result of these trials? What would be the rewards of the quest? How would your hero’s quest differ from that of Gilgamesh?

5. Research art from early Chinese, Indian, Aboriginal, African, or Native American cultures. How do these art forms compare to those included in this chapter? Which are they most like? Least like? Which characteristics of style and function do they share?

6. Speculate on what your life would be like if there were no form of writing. How would you transmit or preserve what you hold most sacred or important in your life?

7. How does modern law differ from that of the *Code of Hammurabi*? What are the advantages of our laws? Of Hammurabi’s code?

8. Investigate the discoveries about the pyramids made by Dr. Mark Lehner. What has he discovered about the purposes and construction techniques used to build the pyramids?

9. Several leaders of Egypt were women. The most famous was Hatshepsut. Research and report on what is known about her life and accomplishments.

**VI. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**From the History Channel:**

*Mummies and the Wonders of Ancient Egypt  
Egypt’s Great Queen (Hatshepsut)  
The Sphinx of Egypt  
The Curse of King Tut  
Egypt Beyond the Pyramids  
00Egypt: Land of the Gods  
The Great Pharaohs of Egypt  
King Tut: The Face of Tutankhamen  
Seven Wonders of the Ancient World  
Cleopatra’s World: Alexandria Revealed  
The Great Pyramids of Giza and Other Pyramids (Modern Marvels)  
Great Builders of Egypt  
Ramses the Great (In Search of History)  
Library of Alexandria  
Akhenaton: Egypt’s Heretic King (In Search of History*

**From the Discovery Channel:**

*Ancient Civilizations: The Land of the Pharaohs & Cleopatra: First*

*Woman of Power  
Egypt Uncovered  
Nubia: The Forgotten Kingdom  
The Great Egyptians I and II  
Journey through the Valley of the Kings  
Building the Great Pyramids  
Women Pharaohs*

**From PBS:**

*National Geographic Specials: Egypt  
Egypt’s Golden Empire*

**From Films for the Humanities:**

*Before the Alphabet  
Akhenaton and Nefertiti: Rulers of Egypt  
Ancient Egyptians  
Egypt: The Sands of Time* (Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms)  
*The Egyptian Collection: The Beauty of it All* (Collection of the British Museum)  
*Exploring the Egyptian Pyramids  
Fayum: Land of the Crocodile God  
The Riddle of Amarna*