

Episode 05 - Mesopotamia and Babylon



Mesopotamia

land between the rivers
(Tigris and Euphrates)

Sumer = first kings/cities (4500 BCE)

=

upriver = frontier = less govt, less ppl
less protection
more freedom



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Akkad = (3500 BCE)

Assyria = 2500 BCE



War constant between cities
= supply needs

=

Sargon (2300) = conquer world



Babylon

trade city right in middle of rivers
(natural economic capital)

=

new type of city
(not farming but trade, production)

=

1st cosmopolitan city!



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(city of the universe)

=

massive size (250K vs 5k)

+



1st cosmopolitan city!

(city of the ordered universe)

=

massive size (250K vs 5k)

+

diversity!

= votex of ppl + knowledge

= invention explosion

= spread of knowledge, math

= lunar calendar, bronze tools

= gilgamesh stories

(= richest, smartest, coolest place)

Legitimacy in Gilgamesh

1. kings can't be jerks, people + gods won't take it

GILGAMESH went abroad in the world, but he met with none who could withstand his arms till he came to Uruk. But the men of Uruk muttered in their houses, 'Gilgamesh sounds the tocsin for his amusement, his arrogance has no bounds by day or night. No son is left with his father, for Gilgamesh takes them all, even the children; yet the king should be a shepherd to his people. His lust leaves no virgin to her lover, neither the warrior's daughter nor the wife of the noble; yet this is the shepherd of the city, wise, comely, and resolute.'



Legitimacy in Gilgamesh

1. kings can't be jerks, people + gods won't take it
2. great men do great things but you're still gonna die = great deeds live on in stories



Legitimacy in Gilgamesh

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Trauma in Gilgamesh

1. great flood (ie. Gods) can murder everyone if they get mad. life = dependent on Gods
2. life sucks – getting old sucks - friends and lovers die – living forever sucks (Utnapishtim)
3. civilization/responsibility sucks (Enkidu noble savage) (adventures outside city)



Things to Note in oldest story

- LGBT themes are cool. (gilgamesh + enkidu = homosocial/homoerotic relationship = bi)
- Bros before Hos + women make men weak by civilizing them (but, dude, totally irresistible)
- most awesome story = hebrews (and other mesopotamians) sampled huge parts for their stories
(Noah, Ecclesiastes, Snake, 7th day rest/calm, whirlwind)





Disadv:

diversity

=

languages (which one is right?)

law/customs = $\overline{\setminus} _ (\text{ツ}) _ / \overline{\setminus}$

anonymous = no one knows you

= no friends/protection

= who watches kids, lends you \$

= crime (theft) = no one knows you

Hammurabi – the Law Giver – 1750 BCE



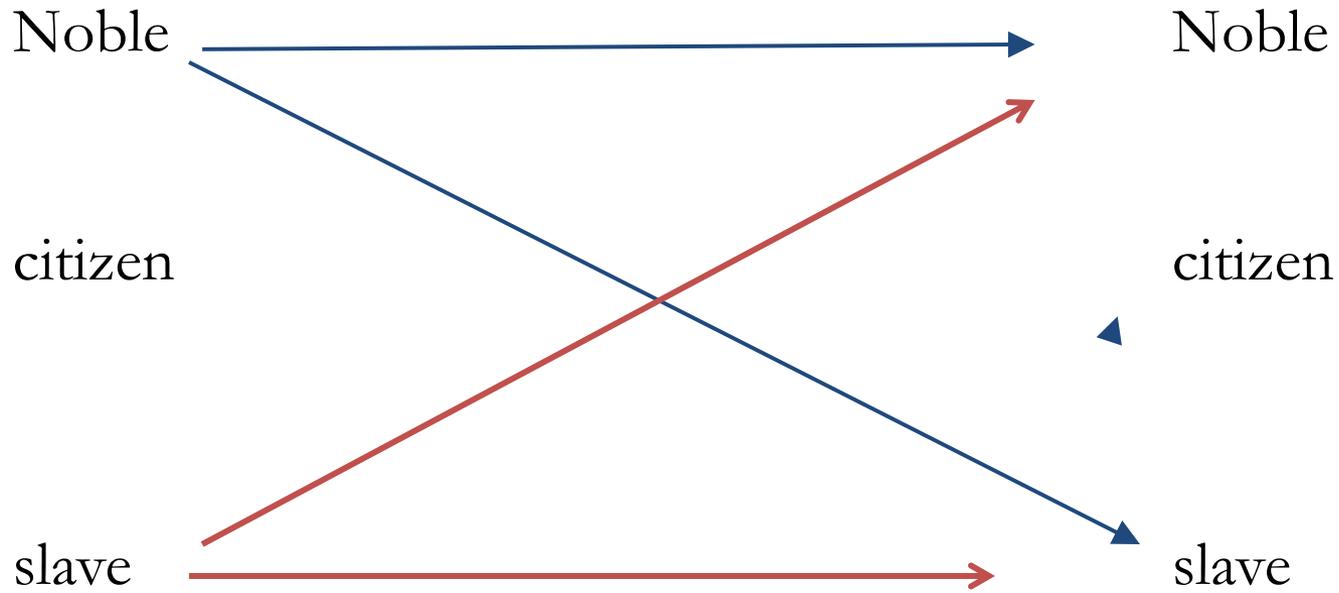
Solution:

Law Code

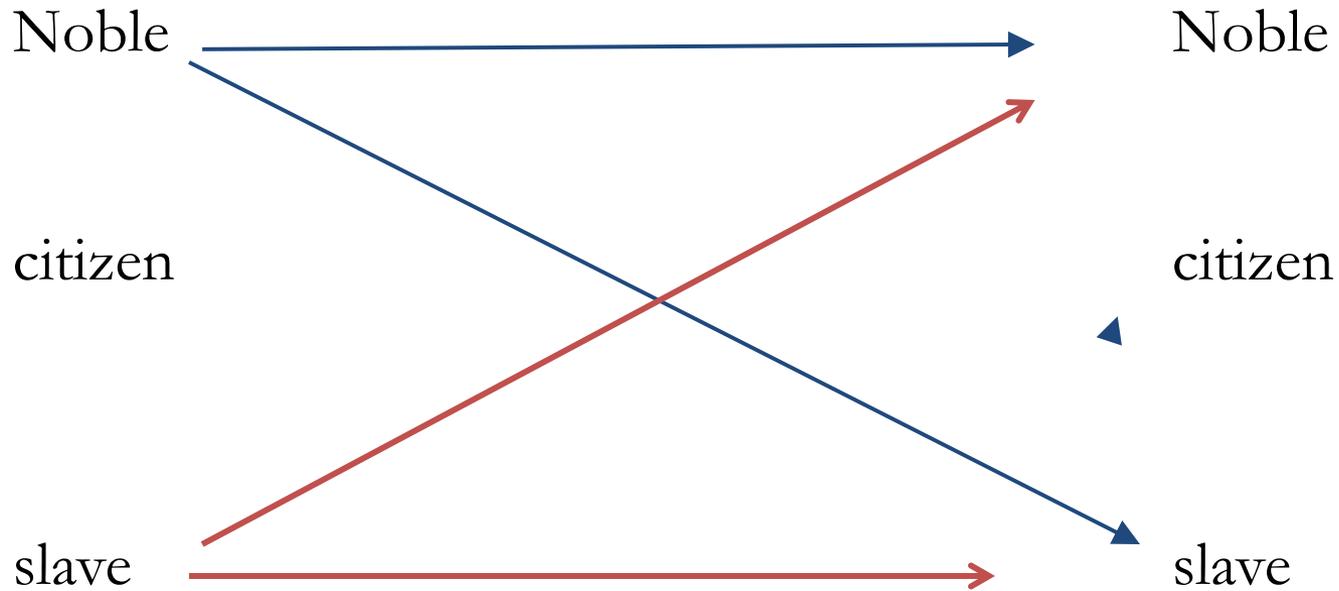
(who you are *

what you did /

who you did it to)



Eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth



Eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth

IF

of the same social status

problem of the lawcode

Women?

should they get the eye for an eye treatment?

Women in the Law Code

= children = not responsible = not citizens

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Women in the Law Code

= children = not responsible = not citizens

= ward of father/brother/husband = no indep. few ec/pol rights

= legally protected role = WIFE and MOTHER = rights
= male limitations on behavior towards women,

virginity = possession her body

= female divorce if no kids

= own money (dowry)

= NOT PROPERTY



babylonian and mesopotamian warfare

2000 bce - 600 bce



Chariot Revolution (2000BC)

= first super weapon = new legitimacy



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= mobile artillery platform
(kill without being killed)

= only rich could afford

= only rich matter

= footmen = destroyed



Chariot Revolution (2000BC)

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= mobile artillery platform
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= only rich matter

= footmen = destroyed

= arms race

3 big empires =

balance of power

= small cities/kingdoms

dont matter anymore

sargon = 5K footman = conquered world

Ramses II = 5K chariots + 20K infantry

The world in 1100BC:

Babylon = cosmo. city = trade goods = \$ /

Egypt = Nile = agriculture = \$ /

Hittites = asia minor mts = cheap metals (lower cost to compete)



1st Apocalypse = Bronze Age Collapse (1200 - 1000 BC)

nomads on the move – hit other nomads – push into settled zones – settled move into other settled
all major civilizations wrecked. trauma for mesopotamian world (see Exodus)



THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN c.1250-C.1150 BC



end