

The Babylonian Empire

Babylonians: Around 1900 BCE, a Persian people (modern-day Iran) invaded and took control of Mesopotamia

- Built a new capital city called Babylon
- *Empire:* Eventually controlled a large territory that included diverse cultural groups

King Hammurabi

- Powerful king who conquered all of Mesopotamia and ruled for more than 40 years (until ~1750 BCE)
 - Abolished local governments
 - Appointed officials responsible only to him
 - Reorganized the tax structure & increased the amounts of tax collected
- *Code of Hammurabi*
 - Set of law codes; main purpose was to protect people's rights

Babylonian Society and Culture

Resembled Sumer in several ways:

- Adopted Sumerian religious beliefs
- Patriarchal society

Astronomy

- Some Babylonians were skilled astronomers and devised a lunar calendar
- Astronomy was linked to the Babylonians' religious practices of fortune-telling and astrology

Women in Babylonia

- Women enjoyed more rights than the women in Sumer had
- Potential occupations: Merchants, traders, scribes
- Marriage arranged by parents
 - Could leave her husband if he was cruel and take her property with her
 - Could not divorce