

## CIVILIZATION

**Civilization is a way of life that arose after people began to live in cities or in societies organized as states. The word comes from the Latin word *civis*, which means *citizen of a city*.**

**A civilization consists of the art, customs, technology, form of government, and everything else that makes up the way of life in a society. In this respect, civilization is similar to culture.**

But culture refers to any way of life and includes both simple and complex life styles. The word *civilization* refers only to life styles that feature complex economic, governmental, and social systems. Therefore, although every human being lives within a culture, not everyone lives within a civilization.

**Throughout history, individual civilizations have arisen and collapsed, but the basic features of civilization do not disappear. Ideas and inventions are spread from one civilization to another. In many cases, similar developments occur independently in different civilizations.**

### **How civilizations develop**

During most of the prehistoric period, people lived in small groups and moved from place to place in search of food. They hunted, fished, and gathered wild plants. These early people had a simple social organization based on family ties.

**About 9000 B.C, people in the Middle East began to cultivate cereal grasses and other plants. They also domesticated goats and sheep at about this time. The rise of agriculture was a major step in the development of civilization. Farmers settled in permanent villages, where they could grow enough food to support a few craftworkers and priests. Periodic food shortages led to increased trade among villages**

By about 3500 B.C, people in the Middle East had learned to smelt copper and make bronze tools and weapons. The demand for metal increased, and priests and chieftains gained greater control over trade. Gradually, villages in the Middle East grew into cities. Religious shrines and sacred places, which flourished as ceremonial sites, became the centres of economic and political power in the emerging cities.

**Several civilizations developed independently in various parts of the world. The first one arose about 3500 B.C in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley in the Middle East. Others developed in the Nile Valley in Egypt, the Indus**

**Valley in what are now Pakistan and northwestern India, the Huang He Valley in China, and the Andes Mountains of present-day Peru. These ancient civilizations grew up**

**in widely different natural environments. The people developed systems of writing and new forms of government, made advances in science and technology, and art.**

### **Why civilizations rise and fall.**

Philosophers, historians, and archaeologists have suggested many reasons for the rise and fall of civilizations. Georg W. F. Hegel, a German philosopher of the early 1800's,

compared societies to individuals who pass the torch of civilization from one to another. During this process, according to Hegel, civilization develops through three stages: (1) rule by one person, a dictator; (2) rule by one class of society; and (3) rule by all the people. Hegel believed the process eventually results in freedom for all people.

The German philosopher Oswald Spengler thought civilizations, like living things, are born, mature, and die.

**The British historian Arnold Toynbee proposed his theory of *challenge and response*. Toynbee believed that civilizations arise only where the environment challenges the people, and only when the people are ready to respond to the challenge. For example, a hot, dry climate makes land unsuitable for farming and represents a challenge to people who live there. The people may respond to this challenge by building irrigation systems to improve the land. Toynbee also suggested that civilizations collapse when the people lose their creativity.**

Most archaeologists attribute the rise of civilizations to a combination of causes, including the structure of political and social life, the ways people modify their environment, and changes in population. In many cases, civilizations may have appeared because local chieftains took deliberate steps to strengthen their own power. Many scientists believe that political forces and the misuse of land and other natural resources resulted in the economic and political collapse of early civilizations.

#### UNKNOWN WORDS

|                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| term             | izraz                |
| inherited traits | podedovane lastnosti |
| obtain           | dobiti, prejeti      |
| extension        | podaljšek            |
| artificial limb  | umeten ud            |
| fang             | čekan                |
| capability       | sposobnost           |
| plough           | plug                 |
| majority         | večina               |
| newcomer         | prišlek              |
| shrine           | svetnikov grob       |
| cooper           | baker                |
| pattern          | vzorec               |
| deliberate       | premišljen           |
| irrigation       | namakanje            |
| torch            | bakla                |
| minority         | manjšina             |
| attribute        | prispevati           |
| strengthen       | okrepiti, utrditi    |
| resource         | vir                  |
| to collapse      | sesuti se            |
| to smelt         | taliti               |
| to flourish      | uspevati             |
| to tame          | ukrotiti             |
| to domesticate   | udomačiti            |

to emerge  
to lag

pojavit se  
zaostajati