

CONTEXTUALIZATION: AGRARIAN SOCIETIES EVENT CARDS

Sedentary foragers learned a great deal about their local environments, including which plants grew well in certain conditions and times of year.	Sedentary foragers began experimenting with growing and harvesting plants to accommodate growing populations.	For much of our existence (since about 300,000 years ago), modern humans have been predominantly foragers.	Cities required more organization and increased job specialization, as the storage and distribution of food surpluses meant that not everyone in the city had to farm.
As population increased and people formed villages, they often needed someone to organize projects such as the storage and distribution of food, or to provide for defense. Powerful rulers gained control of many societies and these rulers often also held religious significance.	Foragers near river valleys were able to remain near these regions due to abundant resources. These foragers became semi-sedentary, meaning they were able to stay in one place for an extended time.	As sedentary foraging populations increased, more resources were necessary.	As populations grew in cities/ city-states, more resources were needed, and early states and empires formed.
Large states and empires generally had common characteristics such as surplus and storage of food, monumental architecture, rulers, militaries, taxes, belief systems, and laws. Alongside these large states and empires, some people continued to forage while others were pastoralists.	The end of the last ice age (c. 10,000 BCE) led to a warming period on Earth.	Large building projects began, such as the creation of defensive walls, which were built to protect the inhabitants of the city or city-state including the rulers, priests and priestesses, and other important members of the community.	After thousands of years of humans experimenting with different crops, and with the gradual increases in population, villages and cities began to form.
	As global temperatures increased, areas near river valleys became lush with vegetation.	As the population of villages increased, some became cities (c. 3500 BCE). These cities were often connected with other villages, cities, and societies through trade networks, where goods (pottery, food, and metals) and ideas were exchanged.	