

CHAPTER
2
SECTION 2**Note Taking Study Guide****INVADERS, TRADERS, AND EMPIRE BUILDERS**

Focus Question: How did various strong rulers unite the lands of the Fertile Crescent into well-organized empires?

As you read this section in your textbook, complete the table below to identify the main ideas about the different empires under each red heading.

Red Heading	Main Idea
First Empires Arise in Mesopotamia	
Conquests Bring New Empires and Ideas	

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Section Summary

INVADERS, TRADERS, AND EMPIRE BUILDERS

READING CHECK

What was Hammurabi's Code?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does the word *emerged* mean in the underlined sentence? The word *arose* in the same sentence is a synonym of *emerged*. Use this synonym to help you figure out the meaning of *emerged*.

READING SKILL

Identify Main Ideas Write a sentence in your own words that gives the main idea of the Summary.

Many groups rose to power in ancient Mesopotamia and made long-lasting cultural contributions. Some invaders simply destroyed; others created vast empires. The first invader, in 2300 B.C., was the Akkadian leader, **Sargon**. He conquered Sumer and formed the world's first empire. In 1790 B.C., **Hammurabi**, king of Babylon, unified Mesopotamia. He made the first important attempt to **codify**, or arrange and record, all laws of a state. Hammurabi's Code was carved on public pillars for all to see. It included **civil laws**, which covered private matters, like contracts, taxes, marriage, and divorce and **criminal laws**, which covered offenses against others, like robbery and murder.

Other conquerors brought new learning to Mesopotamia. Hittites extracted iron from ore to forge strong weapons. Although their empire collapsed around 1200 B.C., ironsmithing spread to Asia, Africa, and Europe, launching the Iron Age. Next, Assyrians, though warlike, created a well-ordered society and founded one of the world's first libraries.

Later, the ruthless Babylonian king **Nebuchadnezzar** controlled the region. He rebuilt and restored the city of Babylon to greatness. His empire eventually stretched from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea. However, it fell to Persia in 539 B.C. The Persian empire was enormous. It reached from present-day Turkey to India. Emperor Darius I formed provinces ruled by local governors. Yet, he encouraged unity by building roads across the empire and establishing a single Persian coinage. This helped people move from a **barter economy** toward a **money economy**. Another unifying force came from the Persian prophet **Zoroaster**, who taught belief in a single god and ideas of heaven, hell, and final judgment day. When both Christianity and Islam emerged, or arose, in the Middle East, these new religions stressed similar beliefs.

Not all achievements came from conquerors, however. The Phoenicians were skilled seatraders from the eastern Mediterranean coast. They formed colonies around the Mediterranean. A **colony** is a settlement ruled by people from another land. The Phoenicians spread Middle Eastern culture over a large area. However, perhaps their greatest achievement was the creation of an **alphabet**. The Greeks expanded on this letter system, leading to the alphabet we use today.

Review Questions

1. Who was Sargon?

2. How did Darius I encourage unity?
