

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS AND MARRIAGE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CUSTOMS, TRADITIONS, AND RITUALS IN SUMERIAN, BABYLONIAN, PERSIAN, EGYPTIAN, GREEK, ROMAN, CHINESE, EUROPEAN, AFRICAN AND AMERICAN CULTURES

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Abstract

This comparative study explores the diverse customs, traditions, and rituals surrounding marriage in various ancient civilizations, including Sumerian, Babylonian, Persian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Chinese, European, African, and American cultures. The study examines gender roles, marriage practices, and the historical and cultural contexts that have shaped them, as well as how marriage has contributed to and upheld social order. It demonstrates that although marriage was regarded as a sacred institution by all cultures, the particular traditions and ceremonies varied widely. This research uses qualitative methodology, which is done through the analysis of secondary sources, scholarly analysis, and thematic analysis of marriage practices among the selected civilizations. While arranged weddings were widespread in Sumerian and Babylonian societies, legal considerations like dowries and divorce laws were highly regarded in Greek and Roman societies. The study also emphasizes how different gender roles and expectations are in marriage, with some cultures emphasizing the submissive role of women while others value marriages with more equal partners. This study sheds light on the nuanced and varied approaches that ancient civilizations had to the institution of marriage and highlights the significance of comprehending previous cultural practices to better understand the roots of our present society.

Keywords: Marriage, Civilizations, Customs, America, Roman.

1. Introduction

Since the dawn of human society, marriage has been a fundamental social institution. The idea of marriage has changed over time, and various cultures have created distinctive customs, traditions, and rituals related to it. The traditions and customs of these ancient civilizations have had an impact on marriage-related practices and attitudes today.

We can learn more about the social and cultural forces that have influenced human society by examining the parallels and contrasts between these ancient civilizations. Around 4500 BCE, the Sumerian civilization, which was born in Mesopotamia, saw marriage as a contract between two families, with the bride's family paying a dowry (Kramer 1963; Vargas and Gallegos 1990; Harper et al. 1992; Mehta 2005; Anderson 2007; Mark 2014; Richardson 2019; Tellier 2019; Ali 2020; Neilson 2020; Sazonov et al. 2020; Waerzeggers 2020; Baird 2021). Around 2000 BCE, the same region saw the rise of the Babylonian civilization, which had a more patriarchal view of marriage (Stikker 2002; Parkinson and Galaty 2007; Moore and Kelle 2011; Asher and Westenholz 2013; Brooks 2022). There, the father of the bride would give his daughter in marriage, and the groom would pay the father a bride price (Doyle 1999). Marriage was regarded as a sacred relationship by the Persian civilization, which first appeared approximately 550 BCE on the land that is now Iran (Kuhrt 2001; Soules 2010; Waters 2014; Siljanen 2017). The bride and groom exchanged vows in front of witnesses during the elaborate wedding ceremony. Contrarily, the marriage ceremony of the Egyptian civilization, which first appeared approximately 3150 BCE, placed a strong focus on fertility and procreation (Aneni 2016; Akhter 2021; VerSteege 2023). The bride and groom would also trade rings and bracelets during the religious ceremony (Baines and Malek 2000). Marriage was regarded in ancient Greece and Rome as a way to create political allies and uphold social order (Shaw 1984; Foxhall 1989; Eskridge 1993). The father of the bride would discuss the terms of the marriage with the family of the groom, however, because the Greeks believed in arranged marriages. The bride and groom would exchange vows in front of witnesses in the Roman tradition, which supported love marriages (Glazebrook and Olson 2013). Marriage was seen as a way of carrying on the family line in Chinese culture, which first appeared approximately 1600 BCE (Lee et al. 2015). The bride and groom would exchange tea instead of wedding bands during the elaborate ritual. On the other side, marriage was seen as a religious sacrament by European civilization, which first appeared around 1000 CE (Bardis 1964; Goody 1983; Van 1986; Urbanczyk 2001; Le 2009). The bride and groom would exchange rings during a religious ceremony officiated by a priest (Coontz 2006). Marriage was seen as a way for tribes and communities to come together in African and American civilizations. Polygamy was prevalent, and men could have numerous wives in various African tribes. A shaman officiated at the wedding ceremony since, in Native American civilizations, marriage constituted a holy union between two people (Connah 2015). The importance of the study of ancient civilizations In order to grasp the diversity of human experience and the intricate interaction of cultural, social, and historical forces that have molded our conception of love, marriage, and family, it is crucial to understand different cultures and their marriage traditions (Westermack 1921).

A thorough investigation of historical sources and cultural contexts would be required to compare marriage practices in the Sumerian, Babylonian, Persian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Chinese, European, African, and American cultures in order to gain a nuanced understanding of the similarities, differences, and influences that have shaped these practices over time.

2. Marriage in Sumerian Civilization and Family Structure

The Mesopotamian civilization in the region between the *Euphrates* and *Tigris* Rivers is one of the ancient civilizations of the world that developed on the banks of rivers (Macklin and Lewin 2015). The first civilization that developed in the Mesopotamia region after transitioning from the Neolithic stage among the ethnic groups of West Asia is called the Sumerian civilization (McNeill 2009). So the Sumerians are considered the creators of the Mesopotamian civilization. The Sumerians are believed to have settled in Mesopotamia between 5000 and 4000 BC (Fischer 1994). However, the majority of archaeologists concur that civilization here began in 4000 BC and ended in 2400 BC as a result of Sargon I, the ruler of the Akkadian or ancient Babylonian empire, conquest (Rudgley 2000; Ashraf et al. 2022). This civilization made many contributions in various branches of urban administration, economics, religion, law, writing and literature, science, and art, which were followed by many later civilizations. This civilization's political structure, military system, social system, economy, religion, law, writing system", literature, art, and science played important roles in growth (Deutscher 2000). By 1760 BC, Hammurabi, the Semitic-speaking king, had incorporated all of Mesopotamia into his kingdom. In this civilization, family relationships were initiated by a marriage contract that included a proposal. The bridegroom used to pay a dowry to the bride. And the bride's father also gave dowry. Usually, husbands were not allowed to have multiple marriages while the wife was present. A second marriage was permitted if the wife died or was unable to bear children. When a girl got engaged, she was considered a member of her husband's family. In this situation, if the husband died, the husband's brother or any other male relative would have to marry (Burrows 1940). Sumerian families were always patriarchal. In the absence of parents, sons and daughters were sharers of the property. Although polygamy was legally discouraged in society, keeping concubines was still allowed. Wagering was common in marriage. The groom used to give dowry money to his prospective father-in-law before the marriage. Contracts for marriage were binding, and divorce was legal. In this civilization, slaves could not marry a free girl. Women enjoyed high status in Sumerian society. Sons and daughters had equal shares in the father's property. Women enjoyed the right to free trade, keep slaves, own land, buy and sell property in their own name, adopt a son or daughter, and seek refuge in the courts. At the end of this civilization, the status of women gradually declined.

According to Sumerian religious belief, gods also had families, and chaste and pious girls resided in the homes of any god. Because the Sumerian gods were anthropomorphized into animals to meet the needs of human society, the dominant class of society used women as objects of pleasure for the sake of religion. Fathers of daughters took pride in their daughters' participation in the church because of the priests. Northern women were more privileged in society than lower-northern women.

3. Babylonian Civilization and Marriage

Babylonia was a kingdom in southern Mesopotamia, which is part of modern Iraq (Nemet-nejat 1998). Areas called Sumer and Akkad were part of Babylonian (Gibson 1969). The first Babylonians are mentioned on a clay tablet from the time of King Sargon of *Akkad* in the 23rd century BC (Porada 1993). At that time, there was a small city on the *Euphrates* near *Sippar* between *Sumer* and *Akkad*, which is known as Babylon (Morozova 2005). The Amorites, a Semitic group from the Syrian Desert, occupied Babylon (Gelb 1961). They absorbed Sumerian and Akkadian cultures and were able to quickly make their own contribution. Gradually, Babylon became especially prosperous. It should be noted that after the death of Dhungi in 2006 BC, the Sumerian kingdom came under the rule of the *Elam's*. This people, known as the Amorites, occupied *Sumer* and *Akkad* and built the famous Babylonian civilization (Whiting 1995). The full development of the Babylonian civilization took place during the reign of *Hammurabi*, the most famous emperor of the Amorites, from 1792-1750 BC (Leick 2005). During *Hammurabi's* reign of about 42 years, Babylon quickly became the economic, political, and cultural center of a large empire. This era of *Hammurabi* is called the Golden Age of Babylon. *Hammurabi's* greatest achievement was the compilation and formulation of a universally accepted statutory law, rather than local customs and laws. This is the first compilation of laws in the history of the world. The purpose of which was to establish law and order in the country, to destroy wicked and dishonest people, and to protect the weak so that he could appear like the sun. In describing his various glories, heroics, and achievements, *Hammurabi* meant that when the god *Marduk* entrusted him with the responsibility of guiding the people and ruling the country, Mesopotamia was divided into many city-states, each in conflict with the other (Jacobsen 1943). Law and order were broken in this situation in the country. In this chaotic state; he brought these fragmented parts under one government. He introduced strict laws to ensure the proper governance of the empire. Through this, he was able to strengthen his authority and central rule (Pallis 1956). Some features of the laws enacted by *Hammurabi* are observed in the Babylonian civilization. For example, adherence to strict discipline, class-based legislation, generous behavior towards women, and expansion of trade. And through this law, the socio-economic and political status of the Babylonians can be identified. The sections of *Hammurabi's* law are:

perjury, perjury, embezzlement, and robbery; punishment for dereliction of duty; irrigation law; debt and usury law; commercial law; family and marriage law; adoption law; injury or injury law; land law; physicians' fees and malpractice peace; construction law; labor law; class dividend law; litigation arrangement, etc. As a civilization, the Babylonian civilization is very advanced. The economic condition of this civilization was very rich. Religiously, they believed in numerous gods and goddesses, like the Sumerians. In writing and literature, Babylonian science, art, architecture, etc. were very advanced. *Hammurabi's* laws gave special status to family rules in Babylon. Babylonian society was then divided into three classes. The upper classes included kings, priests, scholars, and soldiers. He could enjoy his own land. Artisans in the middle class were engaged in small-scale industries. They are the independent merchant class. The lower classes were poor peasants, common laborers, and slaves (Wood 2015; Mack 1979). In Babylonian society, the individual was the head, and the family was secondary. *Hammurabi's* code of laws gave priority to the rights and responsibilities of the individual over the rights and responsibilities of the family. On the death of a parent, property was divided equally among the children. Joint property was not owned. The laws of *Hammurabi* strictly legislated to keep family ties intact and harmonious, including husband-wife and children-children. This Act places special emphasis on marriage and the family system. Sections 128–129, 131, 136, 138, 141–143, 145–146, 150, 151–160, 162, 165, 168, and 170 of the Act contain the Marriage and Family Law. Marriages were performed through a contract (registry). Marriages would not be legal without a registry. Parents were responsible for arranging the marriage of sons and daughters. Dowry was given to the groom's father by the bride's side and by the groom's father to the bride's father, and debts were to be absorbed before the marriage (Sections 159–160). The bride's personal belongings or possessions were given as dowry. However, at the time of registration, the terms of the marriage contract had to be observed to the letter. Article 128 of the contract clearly states, if a man takes a wife and does not arrange a contract for her, that woman is not a wife. However, either the husband or the bride could divorce for good reasons. In the case of men, the husband had to take responsibility for the divorced wife and children. If there were no children, the husband would return his wife's dowry and bride price. He could divorce the wife by alleging torture by the husband. But if the wife's complaint was proved to be false, she would drown (Wells 2005). If the divorced wife remarried, she would not get a dowry or mortgage money. A husband could keep a concubine if the wife was sick or chronically ill. Even if a concubine did not get the status of a wife, her unborn child could be a free person. If the owner married a slave girl, she would become free. If a free woman married a slave, the slave also became a free man (Urch 1929). The father had immense authority over the son until marriage. The father could even sell the son's labor for a profit. The father could also give the girl a husband, servant, or concubine as per his wish. The children of a slave girl would inherit the

property after the father's death. A son could not be illegitimate without legal consent. In Babylonian society, men were generally monogamous. But if the wife was bound, he could take a slave girl or a concubine. But slaves and concubines were subordinate to the married wife in society's eyes, and their legal status was lower than that of the married wife (Bryant 2005). The wife lived off the dowry she received in marriage. The state did not count it if one married outside of a lawful marriage (Mack 1979). *Hammurabi's* laws provided for the high status of women. As they could trade if they wished. Again, if the husband or father was in debt, he could sell his wife or daughter or turn him into a slave to pay the debt. Daughters also inherited their father's and husband's property. *Hammurabi's* Law made adultery a highly reprehensible crime (Rohrlich 1980). Section 129 of the Act states that if the wife commits adultery with another man, both the man and the wife shall be drowned in water. In this case, the king can pardon the wife only at the request of the husband. If the husband accuses the wife of adultery but has no eyewitness proof, the wife can return to the husband's house with an oath in the name of the god (Section 131). However, divorce has been discussed in literature. In matters of divorce, the city councilor's arbitration is preferred. Section 142 of the Act declares that if a wife neglects her husband and declares, "You are not mine from today," In that case, the city council will investigate the matter. The wife could go to her father's house only if he approved the divorce based on her interview house only if he approved the divorce based on her interview. Thus, Hammurabi regulated family life through law. Hammurabi's code contained provisions on the status of women. Women enjoyed the right to trade in businesses, the right to own land and own slaves, and the right to seek recourse in court when necessary.

4. Persian Civilization and Marriage

The Persian civilization was a hybrid civilization consisting of a mixture of many civilizations and cultures. Previous civilizations had an impact on this civilization. The Babylonian cuneiform writing system had an impact on their system (Englund 2001). However, based on the Assyrian alphabet, they developed an alphabet with 39 letters (Burkert 2007). In the field of science, they could not show much innovation. Apart from a slight improvement to the Egyptian solar calendar, they had no contribution to make. However, the *Lydian's* reformed the coinage system with several additions, which were later adopted in many parts of Western Asia. However; there were also some fundamental contributions to Persian civilization. First, they were the first to establish a vast empire in the ancient world (Farazmond 2002). The Persian Empire extended from the banks of the Indus in Punjab, India, to the Aegean Sea and from the Indian Ocean to the Caspian Sea (Ward 2014). By bringing under their control the centers of civilization of this vast empire and the creation of a universal culture, their

achievements were able to introduce a fair and well-controlled regime in the vast empire. The Persian religion was completely independent, and it later influenced other religions. Their contribution in the field of architecture is also significant. Persian architecture was characterized by the fact that it was completely secular. They preferred palace architecture to temple architecture. Persian marriages were more or less the same despite differences in tradition and regionalism. However, the Islamic tradition has changed the style and doctrine of marriage rapidly. Marriage was done in several stages in this civilization. At first, if a man was suitable for marriage, his family would look for a bride, and when he found a bride of his choice, he would make a decision after repeated inquiries. In this case, the bride's family used to organize a tea circle. It looked after the bride and groom. Then, through formalities, the groom would propose, and if the bride agreed, the marriage would be arranged.

5. Egyptian Civilization, Administration and Commerce, Women and Marriage

The Egyptian civilization is one of the oldest civilizations in the history of the world. Civilization flourished in Egypt between about 4500 and 3000 BC (Montgomery 2012). The Greek historian Herodotus wrote around 400 BC, "He who has seen Egypt must have realized that it was a self-made land, a gift of the *Nile*" (Reed 1986). Historian *Myers* thinks that there is no river in the world equal to the Nile. Rudyard Kipling called Egypt a long strip of fruit and spice gardens. Not only do these theories hold, but in fact, the *Nile* River has made Egypt one of the birthplaces of ancient civilizations. In a word, the Nile is the lifeblood of Egyptian civilization. Topography and climate played a unique role in the origin and development of Egyptian civilization. The Mediterranean Sea to the north, the *Nubian* Desert to the south, the Red Sea to the east, and the *Libyan* Desert to the west (Murray 1951). In fact, the lifeblood of Egypt gave rise to the region's longest, most important, and most prosperous human civilization. The Egyptian population was ethnically Mediterranean-Caucasian (Morrow 2016). Egyptians were short, black, with long heads, straight and dark hair, deep eyes, and long noses (Fleming 1939). Among them are also people of *Negro* and *Libyan* appearance. From this, it seems that the blood of West Asian people has mixed between them (Diop and Cook 2012). Initially, they were nomadic in nature. They started farming in the fertile areas of the *Nile* River, domesticated wild animals, irrigated with river water, built houses, and sowed the seeds of social culture and civilization. The pharaoh was the supreme king of the country and possessed all the power and authority over all the land and wealth of the country. He was the head of the army and the head of the government. He depended on a group of bureaucrats for execution. The pharaoh's representative, the vizier, coordinated land survey work, the treasury, construction projects, the judiciary, and the archives (Schulz and Seidel

1998). The entire country was divided into 42 nomes. The administrators of each nome were accountable to the vizier for their work. Temples not only functioned as places of prayer but also served to store state wealth. The economy was centrally controlled. Although coins did not circulate in Egypt until the late period, a form of barter system prevailed among them (Meskell 2021). In this system, proof quantity was used as the unit of exchange for bags of food grains and "*Devan*". Workers were paid in food grains. An ordinary laborer would get five and a half kg, or about 200 kg, a month, and their supervisor would get seven and a half sacks, or about 250 kg. Commodity prices were fixed across the country. It used to cost 5 *Devan* to buy a dress. It used to cost 140 *Devan* to buy a cow. Goods could also be exchanged for food grains. But exchange rates were fixed." Coins were introduced by foreigners in the fifth century BC (Turner and Walbank 1984). Egyptian women held a respectable place in society. They enjoyed all the rights of men. Even in some spheres of life, the predominance of women was observed in Egypt. In Egypt, the queen was considered the wife, mother, or daughter of a god. The rights of girls over property were recognized. In matriarchal societies, girls enjoyed high social status. Even in a matriarchal society, dynastic succession was determined by the mother's line, which is why women held a very high place in society. Both men and women had the right to acquire and sell property, enter into contracts, marry and divorce, inherit, and seek justice in court. Due to the high status and rights of women in Egyptian society, women were often heirs to the throne and occupied the throne. The proof of this is the last ruler of the Egyptian civilization, Queen *Cleopatra* (Roller 2010). She was hereditary heir to the throne of Egypt around 30 BC. So it would not be an exaggeration to say that Egyptian society was a model for other civilizations in giving women rights and dignity. Although multiple concubines are recognized in the upper classes, most people have a wife. Rural women in Egypt took care of housework, child care, and other household tasks. While urban women spent idle time, they improved their finances by accepting loans and mutual assistance from well-to-do rural relatives and sisters. Various educational and vocational training programs are provided for women's employment and to maintain peaceful family relationships. Through this, leadership qualities are developed among urban women. Thus, they are encouraged to work as volunteers in efforts to overcome poverty and lead a better life. And rural women often work in the fields; they have very little opportunity to be independent in their economic activities. But urban women work in various establishments and factories. They sell produce and cook food on the streets. Even run coffee houses themselves. They have enough time to take care of their families. As a result, women in urban Egypt who work outside enjoy almost the same freedom as men to contribute to the family's economic activities. Monogamy was the general unwritten rule of marriage in ancient Egypt (Vaerting 2002). But wealthy people enjoyed the luxury of a *harem*. Divorce was also very rare at that time. The basic foundation of the ancient Egyptian social system was the family. However, there was no legal impediment to polygamy in

Egyptian society. *Pharaoh* could not have multiple marriages. However, the practice of keeping concubines was also prevalent in society at that time. Egyptian pharaohs were divinely empowered kings or emperors (O'Connor and Silverman 1995). Because of this, they could not marry outside the family. Many written materials from the reigns of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties suggest that romantic relations existed between husband and wife. However, despite this sweet relationship between husband and wife, many times separation also happened between them. In this case, the husband could divorce the wife, and the wife could divorce the husband. And the husband had to support the divorced, childless wife. Even if the husband and wife have children after separation; the husband has to support them. Egyptian women were married at the age of 12–14, and people believed that the purpose of life was to achieve family happiness the age of 12–14, and people believed that the purpose of life was to achieve family happiness. Although the husband was the householder, the presence of the wife was felt everywhere (Hunt 2008). Marriage is a prestigious and important matter in the social structure of Egypt. The majority of the time, family choice and supervision arrange marriages. After marriage, girls often live in their husband's paternal house. Regarding the marriage, the girl's guardians discuss it with the boy and the boy's family and guardians. Not only the male members of the family, but also the women, play a special role in the whole affair of marriage. Weddings in Egypt are lavish events—almost as lavish as they can afford. In both rural and urban societies in Egypt, boys and girls cannot arrange marriages of their own choice. In the matter of marriage, the decision of the parents of the bride and groom is considered final. In the case of marriage, attention is paid to the children's external beauty, education, piety, honesty, family tradition, lineage, etc. Monogamous marriage is prevalent in Egypt. Divorce is common in this society. One of the most important things in this society is that they prefer their cousins as spouses. One in five marriages in Egypt is between cousins. One of the main reasons for this is that the heirs to the property are of the same descent. No one from the clan can come and become a new heir to the property. Marriages that take place with strangers are called 'strange marriages' by the Egyptians. Women in the Ballade slums of Cairo arrange adult-child pairs for marriage. Sewing machines, televisions, and some other expensive items are combined gifts in marriage. In Egypt, the presence of the bride and groom begins with the recitation of the *Qur'an* at the beginning of the wedding ceremony, and it is customary for the bride's family to give many betrothal gifts. In this case, gold and furniture have to be given. The groom's party's sleeping room, dining room, sitting room, and children's room furniture are provided, and the bride's party has to prepare the kitchen room's electrical appliances and carpets.

6. Greek Civilization, Marriage and Dowry System

Greece is the cradle of ancient civilization. It is a small island country on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea in the southeastern corner of Europe (Van 2016). In the ancient world, this country was home to world standards in education, civilization, and culture. Greece's contribution to the spread of knowledge in the world is immense. The contribution of Greek civilization to the world's education, culture, civilization, and higher standard of living is unparalleled. Over the ages, many poets, writers, philosophers, and intellectuals emerged in this country. They glorified human civilization by leaving traces of strong faith in humanity and freedom. Among them, the names of epic poets *Homer*, *Pythagoras*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and world conqueror *Alexander* are particularly noteworthy (Adrados 2009). Greece is also called the birthplace of early democracy (Bian and Su 2022). In fact, Greek civilization is the foundation of modern Western civilization. Another name for Greek civilization is Hellenic civilization (Hart 1999). In ancient Greece, marriage was considered auspicious. The Greeks believed their king, *Cicerones'*, was half man and half god. He was the first to civilize human society by introducing monogamous marriage (Treggiari 207). Although men are free to relate to prostitutes, the institution of marriage legitimizes children. Not only that, the map of ancient Greece fixed the rights of women in marriage. That's why civilized people are still curious about that ancient region. *Gamelion* is the name of a month in the Athenian calendar (Thomson 1943). This Greek word means marriage. It is the winter month in which most marriages are arranged. A religious ceremony was performed at the wedding. Such as animal sacrifices, besides the inclusion of the wife's name along with the husband's. In ancient Greece, men were members of various societies. A Greek woman's higher status was not transferred to a man through marriage. In ancient Greece, the bride was between 14 and 16 years old, and the groom was between 20 and 30 years old. Men had to join the army at a young age, which would have taken a long time. And there was a custom of dowry in marriage, the amount of which was determined by the guardians of both parties. Dowry was to be paid to the woman as she did not get the husband's wealth and it was her livelihood during the emergency (Scheidel 2008). On the day of marriage, the bridegroom used to bathe in the holy spring. Then the groom would leave for the bride's house with a procession of friends. The bride and the wedding dress were worn, and the women's ceremony began the day before, with the hair of the bride being cut off and presented to the goddess Hera's shrine, along with the bride's childhood dolls. This means your virginity is over from now on. Relatives used to take the bride to the feast with a veil over her face. There, the bride eats apples or other fruits. This means that from now on, her food and other duties are the groom's. Then the bride and groom were sent to the groom's house before evening in the same chariot, along with the gifts and furniture (Garland 1990).

The new wife will continue to protect her husband's heart, take care of the family, weave clothes, take care of children, and study. Marriage with foreigners was not legal in ancient Greece. The marriage of a mother and sister was not legal. However, marriage with the father's brother was legal, and same-sex marriage was also legal (Mireaux 1959). At the beginning of Greek civilization, women were chaste saints. When this civilization reached its peak of development, women also began to lead lavish lives. They did not consider adultery to be a crime. At that time, brothels were the centers of literature and politics. Polygamy was also recognized in society, with kings taking multiple wives in the kingdom of *Bibian*, and *Philip al Macedoni* had seven wives.

7. Roman civilization, Marriage and Family

Before the Greek civilization reached its final stage of development, another empire, known as the Roman civilization, arose in the Mediterranean region on the banks of the *Tiber* River in Italy (Spickermann2021). Like many previous civilizations, the Roman civilization played a special role in its geographical location. Due to its geographical location, Rome had easy access to raids by intruders. Given this situation, the Romans acquired military skills. The smallest organization in Roman civilization was the family. In the Roman family, the household consisted of the head father, son, son-in-law, grandson, and unmarried daughter. All these families were characterized by the exclusive authority of the father. Like the Greek civilization, the Roman civilization was based on the city-state. The head of the Roman state was the king. The status of the father of the family was the status of the king in the state. He was simultaneously the ruler of the nation, the commander of the army, and the chief priest of the court of judges. The Roman monarchy existed from the prehistoric era to 510 BC (Keeley 1996). The aristocracy helped the king rule. Then the monarchy disappeared in 509 BC. Err begins the democratic era. The history of the first two centuries of this era is the history of the struggle for power between the *Patricians* and *Plebeians* (Vishnia 2012). Amidst Rome's severe economic problems and political chaos, two brothers, *Tiberius Magus* and *Gainus Gracchus*, emerged in Roman politics (Wendt 2016). Both brothers were quite successful in carrying out their groundbreaking reforms. But he enraged the proletariat by conspiring against him as he established a new system by passing the decisions of the Constituent Assembly into law without the consent of the Senate and by abolishing the commission on the trial of the proconsuls. The Senate defeated him in the election and declared him a national enemy. Like his elder brother, *Gainus* was sentenced to death along with *Gracchus* and his attendants. In Rome, after the murder of the *Grakas* brothers, political vendettas and civil wars ensued. It was then led by *Marius*, *Sulla*, *Pompey Caesar*, *Antony*, and *Octavian*. It is through them that the military dictatorship emerges (Morstein and Rosenstein 2006).

After defeating his rival *Mark Antony* at the Battle of *Actium*, *Octavian Caesar* emerged as the unchallenged statesman in Rome. During his time, the Roman Empire began (Kaufman and Green 1997). But in history, he was known as *Augustus Caesar*, and every subsequent emperor bore the title of *Augustus Caesar*. The politics of Rome after *Augustus* were existential. After the death of *Augustus Caesar* in 14 AD, the Claudine dynasty ruled Rome for 50 years, i.e., until 64 AD. A total of four rulers ruled this dynasty, namely *Tiberius*, *Caius Caelus*, *Claudius*, and *Nero* (Whittle 2019). After the suicide of the tyrant *Nero*, the throne of Rome was disputed for six years, and the army continued to play a role in the election of the ruler. 70 AD from AD 96 on, three *Flavian* rulers, *Veppian* (AD 70–79), *Timus* (AD 79–81), and *Domitian* (AD 81–96), ruled. Then came the *Antonine* Dynasty (Birley 2002). Between 96 and 192 AD, there were six rulers of this dynasty. These six rulers are *Narba* (96–98 AD), *Trajan*, *Hadrian*, *Antoninus Paras* (138–161 AD), *Marcus, Arlius*, and *Comdus* (180–192 AD) (Hobley 1995). Then 192 AD From 204 AD For about 100 years, the Roman Empire was ruled by an army or by rulers who supported it. During this time, Rome was attacked by various enemy nations, which accelerated the decline of the Roman Empire. Note that 235 AD From 284 to 284 AD, 225 of the 26 rulers were killed (Ando 2012). Then, in 476 AD, the Roman Empire effectively fell when the Western Roman Emperor *Romulus Augustulus* was overthrown by the barbarians (Andrews). In Roman civilization, the family was a stratum of society. The family institution was the smallest unit in society. Most notably; the father of the family had immense authority. The father was the family priest. He conducted religious activities and taught the duties and responsibilities of family members. In a word, the father is the doer in the family. The law recognizes him alone. An ideal Roman family consisted of husband and wife, elderly parents, and unmarried sons and daughters. Apart from these members forming the main family, there were a number of dependents with the family; they were slaves. As the head of the family, the father can buy and sell family property, enter into contracts, and hold office under the state. It is forbidden for the son to be a candidate for any office during the father's lifetime. If the son acquires the wealth, it is the property of the father in the eyes of the law. A son has no right to marry without his father's permission. Again, even after the daughter's marriage, she could not go to her husband's right without being separated from her father. Such a strict, dictatorial family system strengthened the structure of the family and formed the basis of the Roman state and ethics. The progress of society depended on the family. Marriage was the foundation of the Roman family. Three types of marriage were prevalent. In a customary marriage, the couple had to live together for a year, at the end of which they were recognized as husband and wife. In sale marriages, the bride was purchased from the father of the bridegroom. This type of marriage was common among the *Plebeians*. In these marriages, there was no particular obligation to maintain good manners. But patrician marriages were traditionally ritualized (Dixon 1992).

In the eyes of Roman law, women were not independent beings. All are always supervised by a male. But on social occasions, her husband can mingle freely with the guests. As the Roman Empire expanded, women's status changed. After the Greeks, the place of Roman civilization was the mighty Roman Empire, which spread over Asia, Europe, and Africa. In the early days of this civilization, women's chastity and honor were looked upon with dignity. But later, there was a provision to confine women under men. They had no separate name or identity but had to use the middle part of the father's name as the wife's name. The social status of the girl's father could be understood just by hearing the name and time of marriage. Elite Roman women were married as young as 12 (Shaw 1987). A Roman woman's lifestyle was similar: marrying at a young age, dying in childbirth, or giving birth to more children. The epitaph of a woman named *Veturina* states that *Veturina* married at the age of 11, was the mother of six children, and died at the age of 27. Women had to stay pregnant because it was not certain how many children would survive due to the short life expectancy. A noble princess named *Corlenia* had 12 children (Sulprizio 2020). Roman women had no legal rights or dignity during childbirth (Cook and Dickens 2003). If the husband did not want to raise a daughter, the wife could not say anything, even if she had to pay a dowry in marriage, and the family would not be protected. Female children were killed on the pretext. As a result, the population of Rome was reduced. In this situation, the Roman Emperor Augustus passed a law making celibacy a punishable crime. And encouraged marriage and more childbearing (Nguyen 2006). The father had sole control over the daughter. The father could have sold her as a slave if he wanted. Their movements were monitored. Women were forbidden to drink alcohol. The punishment for drinking alcohol was death.

8. Chinese Civilization, Marriage, Status of Women and Divorce of Chinese Soldiers

The *Huangho* River is called the "cradle of Chinese civilization" (Maspero 1928). The many regional cultures that developed in the *Huang Ho* and *Yangtze* River basins over thousands of years enriched Chinese civilization in various ways (Zheng et al. 2018). The Chinese civilization is one of the oldest civilizations in the world, with a continuous history spanning several thousand years (Loewe and Shaughnessy 1999). For this reason, Chinese civilization is called "one of the cradles of human civilization" (Murowchick 1994; Hamada 2004). The total area of China is 360, 0000 square miles (Fohs 1948). China is multifaceted, not only in terms of size and antiquity; its contributions have added many new things to world civilization. Chinese philosophy and literature are very rich. They have made outstanding contributions in science, script and writing systems, and the arts. Their contribution to the economy and politics is not less.

Rice, paper, and paper notes: China pioneered the recruitment of government positions through competition. Thus, the Chinese civilization has occupied a permanent seat in history by contributing more than many contemporary civilizations. Long before the birth of Christ, the Chinese called themselves "*Changhua*" or "*Chekwa*." At that time, the Chinese thought that their country was located in the middle of the earth and was a rich and prosperous country. Such thoughts arose because China was isolated from other countries. During the reign of China's dominant dynasty, the Chou Dynasty (1122–221 BC), "China" was a tax kingdom (Anderson 1999). But in 221 BC, China conquered the neighboring kingdoms, united the entire country, and subdued the country until 207 BC. The country was named 'China' after this dynasty (Swaine et al. 2000). Written and accepted history is available from 1500 BC to China's Shang Dynasty (1600–1046 BC) (Boltz 1986; Keightley 1996; Wang et al. 2020). Ancient history books such as the "Records of the Grand Historian" (100 BC) and the Bamboo Annals refer to Asian empires (SSu-ma et al. 1994). From then until the Shang Dynasty, the Chinese had no known means of long-term preservation of written records. During the *Zhou* dynasty (1046–256 BC), China's culture, literature, and philosophy flourished greatly (Wu 2015). From the 8th century BC, the Zhou rulers began to succumb to various internal and external pressures and, at one point, split into several smaller states (Huang 1997). The last period of this failed state regime was during the Chinese Civil War in 1927 (Esherick 1995). Many states and Chinese dynasties under the rule of warlords ruled a part of China that extended to present-day *Xingjian* and *Tibet* (Clarke 2011). *Qin Shi Huang* began Chinese imperial history by uniting various warring states into a small "empire" (*Huangdi*) of the *Qin* Dynasty in 221 BCE (Pines 2016). Later dynasties established a system of public administration, which gradually helped establish the Chinese emperor's control over large areas of what was then China. China's last empire was the *Qing* Dynasty (1644–1912), which was overthrown to form the Republic of China in 1912 and the People's Republic of China in 1949 (Peterson 2013). Traditional Chinese history shows periods of political unity and disunity. It can also be seen that China's history has been ruled by steppe people. Later, those who mingled with the Chinese Han population Cultural and political influences from different parts of the world, immigration, foreign trade, and treaties have played a role in shaping the culture of modern China. China was then divided into six kingdoms: *Han*, *Wei*, *Chao*, *Chi*, *Chu*, and *Yan*. King *Qin Shi Huang* united these six kingdoms to form the *Qin* Empire (Shiming 2006). He is known as the first Chinese emperor in history. He undertook to build a wall along the entire northern border of China to protect China from the aggressive *Tartars* (*Mangals*) (Lovell 2007). This is known as the Great Wall of China. Although only a small part of that wall exists today, *Qin Si Huang*, along with his Prime Minister *Lee Sing*, carried out several important political and economic reforms. *Shi Huang's* other contributions included central

government, unified laws and regulations, the introduction of written language, and coinage.

In Chinese culture, marriages were performed with the formal consent of the heads of the bride's and groom's families. According to traditional practice, this work was solved through the marriage lawyer. In ancient Chinese society; women were fairly respected and independent. In ancient China, marriages were arranged by arrangement. The parents of the bride and groom played an important role in the child's marriage. The mother's role was important in marriage. The bride and groom obeyed the guardians' opinion regarding the marriage. The marriage ceremony is completed by worshipping the memory of the gods, mortals, and the ancestors of the bride and groom. There were many marriage customs in ancient China. Men could have concubines, but only one wife. Polygamy was also not uncommon. Chinese women were free. Chinese families were patriarchal (Mao 2015). The inheritance of the father was that of the eldest son. Today, men in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are increasingly turning to Chinese and Vietnamese women for brides (Jones and Shen 2008). Men in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are increasingly marrying foreigners rather than finding native brides. In 2009, 15 percent of Taiwan's wives were foreign-born (Min and Kim 2009). South Korea had eight percent. Although this trend began in Japan in the 1980s, the proportion of foreign spouses has remained at roughly 5 to 6 percent (Ratherford et al. 2001). In all three countries, the number of women's jobs is increasing due to the improvement in the quality of women's education. As a result, many women are not willing to play the role of traditional housewives. So men are turning to foreign brides to protect their lineage and ancestral name. This trend started among the rural poor and has now spread to the urban middle class. Most women marry foreign men of their own free will, not under pressure from their parents. All in all, the results have created a new element to be captured in the statistics of female migration. The laws of that country do not provide any special way to escape from the tyranny of husbands. Even the husband does not have much right to the property. As a result, many women do not want to get married, even to get rid of family turmoil or emotional pain. Rather, in a country where women are pressured to marry, the pain of loneliness is understood. The administration of that country is quite worried about the growing celibacy there. In Chinese civilization; men were given the most importance. Their scriptures depict women as the "Waters of Woe" (Deacon 1982). The husband could divorce his wife or sell her as a concubine if he wished. Had to live like that. Remarriage was often impossible. Chinese couples are increasingly filing for divorce in China as capital gains taxes rise and to avoid paying higher taxes on the sale of second homes. In this case, each will own one apartment, and the second is to resort to a false divorce to evade taxes, legal experts have warned. This policy of forcing people to divorce to avoid taxes is definitely bad governance. After the introduction of the new

policy, people lined up to apply for divorce. So the Civil Affairs Bureau hung a banner as a reminder to beware of the real estate market, which risks divorce. However, if these policymakers reflect on themselves, be careful about setting a bitter divorce policy. *Hanjia Gaojianlin*, a Brielle estate consultant, says that making money is more important than marriage and family for modern Chinese people. This distorted precedent will undoubtedly leave a strange impression on human history. Journalist *Zhujudong* commented on fake divorce: "The general public should be considered in policy making, and fake divorce shows the degradation of society. Policy attempts should be made to avoid circumvention of the law in the determination. According to official statistics, Beijing and Shanghai have high divorce rates in China. And that is why, to avoid the tax levied on the sale of residential property, divorce is being done between the couple. The government has levied a 20 percent tax on dividends from assets sold, up from 1-2 percent earlier. There is a loophole in this law: if a couple has two assets and they are written in one's name and they separate, they do not have to pay tax. People are exploiting this loophole, and remarriage is again provided for in Chinese law. "The divorce rate is increasing every year," said *Zhong Tao*, a divorce lawyer in Shanghai. This is becoming a myth for many reasons, including the 20 percent tax hike. He therefore urged policymakers to close all loopholes in the law to avoid tax evasion'. Among non-commissioned officers (NCOs) in the Chinese army, divorce has risen alarmingly at various levels. Soldiers, who are deployed full-time for the security of the country, leaving their families, have taken a toll on their marital relationships. The country's military authorities have been active in protecting the families of NCOs. On the occasion of the New Year, the army has allowed wives to be kept in the cantonment; earlier, only high-ranking officers had this privilege. As the divorce rate of NCOs has increased, authorities have allowed them to stay with their families during the holiday season to keep their peace of mind and morale strong. President *Xi Jinping* has allowed soldiers to keep families close to work to train skilled manpower along with technological advancements. NCO *Bhishan* is happy with this. Wang *Shintao*, a senior NCO of the Twelfth Army Group, said, 'It feels great to suddenly have a piece of joy. It may be nothing to high-ranking army officers, but it is a big deal to us.

9. Marriage in European Civilization and Australian, African and American Tribal Marriage

Europe is a continent, comprising the western peninsula of the larger Eurasia continental landmass. In general, the *Ural Caucasus* Mountains, the *Ural River*, the watershed of the *Caspian* and Black Seas, and the waterway connecting the Black and *Aegean* Seas separate Europe from the Asian continent (Marshall 2016). Europe Asia and Africa are the third-most populous continents. The most widely used currency is the Euro. European civilization spread after the Romans (Cvijic 1918).

The fall of the Romans had a profound effect on them. As a result, they decide to leave the company of women. They believe that women are the source of all sin, the agents of devils, and the curse of the human race (Goody 1990). There was no change in the nature of men after marriage; rather, sitting in the church, women took an oath of lifelong servitude and obedience to men. Polygamy was common in African civilizations. Twenty percent of African men had more than one wife. All agreed on polygamy due to religion and socio-economic conditions in Africa. For example, due to the lack of good children in a good family, infant mortality, the barrenness of women, etc., they accept polygamy so that they can be free from this. The strange marriage customs of the '*Watusi*' tribe in Rwanda, Africa (Adekunle 2007). The bride and groom stand facing the guests present at the wedding. The groom gurgles water in his mouth and sprinkles it on the bride. Similarly, the bride and the bridegroom are sprinkled with coolie water on their faces. And the marriage is consummated within the phase of this sprinkling. Girls of the *Banda* tribe of Congo, Africa, must eat a raw whole chicken before marriage (Zaslavsky 1999). He cannot break a bone while eating the child. One who can eat according to the proper ritual will be considered marriageable. For the next year, he is not allowed to do any household or personal work. Others even bathe her, as long as she is not married. *Kalabit's Benyo* Island tribe girls are lucky. Because they can only propose marriage to the son of their choice. And as soon as a girl of this tribe proposes, the man is bound to accept her proposal. According to the Red Indians of the Lake *Atitlan* region of Guatemala, a marriageable young man who breaks a pot of water over a girl's head is considered to be proposing to her (Paul and Paul 1963). After marriage among the pygmy tribes of Africa, pygmy wives mark the husband with an arrowhead on his forehead, which is known as a marriage mark in society (Silver 1999). And this mark is so dark that even after the wound dries up, the scar remains for life. And virgin women understand that the man was previously married. Although the wedding ceremony of the *Zulu* tribal brides in Africa is done in their own style, after the bride is dressed on the wedding day, honey plasters are applied to her hair (Junod 1913). The new wife cannot open the honey-coated shell for at least six months. That is, the day the cocoon is opened, the honeymoon will end. Girls of the *Gabaya* tribe of Central Africa do not wear wedding rings on their fingers. The ring is made of twisted copper wire and worn on the ankle (Messing 1957). In the wedding ceremony of the *San Blas* tribe of Panama, two heads of stiff cloth are tied to two trees side by side (Sherzer 1990). The groom lies down on the hanging cloth, and then the bride, dressed in a dress, sits next to the groom. After sitting for a minute, the marriage between two people is completed. In 1740, the Russian empress *Karina*, who was known as cruel and heartless, had a decree that no man of one country could marry a woman of another country. If you do, you will have to live with the ugliest old woman in Russia in an ice palace on the banks of the *Neva* River. Australian tribes marriageable youths hang a double-sided, narrow piece of wood on a thread of tribal choice. He started

spinning at high speed with a girl. Hearing the spin sound produced by the rotation, the girl is bound to marry him. And a lock of hair that young men of the *Jibaro* tribe of Ecuador in South America desired before marriage Tie it with your own hair and show it to everyone (Kyle 1999).

10. Conclusion

All cultures saw marriage as a sacred institution, although the particular practices and ceremonies differed widely. For instance, marriages were planned by the families and included a contract in the Sumerian and Babylonian cultures, yet in the Egyptian culture, marriages were frequently arranged by the pharaohs for political reasons. Laws governing marriage, such as those pertaining to dowries and divorce, were highly valued in the Greek and Roman cultures. The expectations for gender roles and marriage differ widely between civilizations. Women were expected to be subordinate to their husbands in some civilizations, such as prehistoric China, whereas marriages were frequently more egalitarian in African and Native American cultures. The study demonstrates the significance of marriage in creating and upholding social order in prehistoric societies. Divorce was frequently viewed as a threat to the stability of society since marriages frequently acted as a means of creating alliances between families or bolstering political authority.

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Declaration of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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