

The Sumerians had a great literature and a complicated religious system. Their legal principals^s seem to have been worked out in great detail. So great an influence did the shadow of their culture exert upon succeeding generations that long after they had disappeared as a race, the language was used as the language of culture in Babylonia and many legal, religious and official documents were written in it, as Latin was used during the Middle Ages and even up to the beginning of the present century, long after it had ceased to exist ~~XX~~ as a spoken language. The Sumerians had disappeared and their language was a dead language as far as popular use was concerned before the time of Abraham, but it was studied by the scribes of Babylonia as much as 1500 years later.

For a long time we have Sumerian city states, with an occasional domination of one over the rest and a certain number of Semitic cities vying with them for control and eventually conquering them.

During this early period before the time of Abraham, there are cases in which a great conqueror carried his arms as far west as the Mediterranean Sea. It used to be thought that the account of the warlike expeditions of the kings as described in Genesis 14, could not have occurred at so early a date; that kings could not have taken a force sufficient to really wage warfare so many hundreds of miles away from their home at that early date. We now have ^{definite} ~~certain~~ records, however, of similar expeditions which occurred even some centuries before the time of Abraham.

After a long period of rise and decline of many of these city states, a period which has left us a large literature and many historical data, about 2200 B.C., we find a group of people appearing in Mesopotamia which has more affinity with the Western Semites than with the Eastern Semites. These people have been variously called