Key Terms, Concepts and Characters

October 12 and 17, 2006: Early village farming communities and their geographic expansion; emerging social stratification and organized community religion

Terms:
- Neolithic
- Prepottery Neolithic A
- Neolithic Revolution
- Prepottery Neolithic B

Sites:
- Abu Hureyra
- Beidha
- Cayönü Tepesi
- Jericho
- Çatal Hüyük
- Umm Dabaghiyah

Neolithic Age: last segment of the Stone Age - “New Stone Age”

1. Characterized by continuation of Mesolithic tool types and technology, esp. microliths, blade technologies. Additions include:
   - pressure flaking as a frequent technique - used to make well made bifacial projectile points.
   - ground stone tool technology as a regular part of tool kit to make axes, hoes, ground stone bowls, in addition to grinding stones, mortars, pestles, manos and metates
2. Addition of food production as a major part of the economic base
3. Addition of pottery as an artifact type.

Major features of the Neolithic or early farming era in the Middle East
- population increase
- sedentism - substantial buildings
- increasing social control
- elaboration of rituals
- increasing social differentiation - wealth accumulation
- craft specialization (work shops at Beidha, store rooms at Umm Dabaghiyah)
- trade increasingly important (Çatal Hüyük, Jericho)
Notes on early village farming: its character and expansion

General features
expansionistic - extensive, shifting cultivation
fairly high population growth rates
limited to areas with adequate rainfall

Rapid expansion over Fertile Crescent - stimulated by
similarity of environments over large area
lack of major geographic barriers (mountains, deserts, rivers)
use of similar crops and animals throughout the area
exchange networks well established among preexisting inhabitants (complex h and g)
preexisting semi-sedentary complex h and g - whose economies are not too different.

extensive agriculture (shifting cultivation, swidden, slash and burn)
principally rainfall based
long fallow cycle
minimal fertilization

intensive agriculture
irrigation
alternate year fallow cycle
mono-cropping frequent
various forms of fertilization more frequent

Near Eastern Neolithic Cultural Sequence - (approximate dates)

Ubaid culture ca. 6,700 - 5,500 BP (4,700(+) to 3,500 B.C.)
Hassuna, Samarra, Halaf cultures ca. 8,000 - 6,700 BP (6,000 - 4,700 B.C.)
Umm Dabaghiyah culture ca. 8,500 BP (mid-seventh millennium B.C.)
Çatal Hüyük culture 8,500 - 7,400 BP
Prepottery Neolithic B (PPNB) 9,000 - 8,500 BP
Prepottery Neolithic A (PPNA) 10,000 - 9,300 BP

(Mesolithic, ie. pre-Neolithic)
Natufian 12,500 - 10,500 BP