World History: Hammurabi Code

Some defining characteristics of the Hammurabi Code included that it was the first set of laws that laid out to the civilization what was required from them and how the law will be enforced upon them. Another characteristic would be that the Hammurabi Code strictly defines the hierarchical structure of their civilization. The Hammurabi Code also influenced the Hebrews law code by instituting an “eye for an eye” system. Next, the Hammurabi Code enacted specific punishments and would enforce them through the “ruling of the gods”. The “ruling of the gods” means that the river would dictate if the person where to be kept alive or drown in the river. These defining characteristics of the Hammurabi code indicate that the laws were not the earliest law code, but simply shuffled and gave structure to laws that were created before it.

Some ideas that were valued by the Hammurabi Code include their gods, social structure, exacting punishment fit for their crimes, and enforcing laws strictly with no leniency. I see some common themes between the Code of Assura and the Code of Nesilim. They include the wife in a marriage would have less power than a man in a marriage. Also, that there were similar traits pertaining to marriage in the Hammurabi Code and the Code of Assura and Nesilim. They all detail specific situations where according to their codes either the man or the women benefits somehow, and the codes are always interpreted by the lawmaker who in all codes was the King.

A ritual is a religious ceremonial event that revolves around an action in service to your faith and beliefs. A ritual serves society by being a way to follow traditions and customs of your religion. It can also serve to unite people in a civilization and be a service to the civilizations gods that they worship. According to Mark Soileau, the purpose of a ritual such as the sofra is,” While the sofra is a meal, its aim is to provide for its participants not just food and drink but also spiritual nourishment, which comes in large part from the speech of the baba, in the form of stories, jokes, poetry, and commentary.” This quote illustrates the sofra as not just a physical ritual but one involving your spirit and your community participating. So many cultures and religions have a ritual utilizing food and drinks in some way due to physically ingesting something shows the many symbolic references that exists when food and drinks are involved in a ritual. Food can also serve to symbolize many things about a culture. For instance, a ritual that includes food in it is being used in a religious way, and through the process of digestion and indigestion the meal can be symbolic. This shows that a culture would value religion very highly, and that they carry out many rituals over the course of the year. According to Mark Soileau,” As the meal is ritualized within a religious tradition, the foods and drinks are imbued with cultural significance, coming to reflect the beliefs, values, cosmology, history, hierarchical structures, and other aspects of the religious culture.” Lastly, this quote details how food is represented and used to reflect a culture's values and ideals.

Works Cited

1. Soileau, Mark. “Spreading the Sofra: Sharing and Partaking in the Bektashi Ritual Meal.” Spreading the Sofra: Sharing and Partaking in the Bektashi Ritual Meal, vol. 52, no. 1, Aug. 2012, pp. 1–30., doi:10.1086/665961.