

Ancient egypt vs. mesopotamia assignment

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Ancient Egypt vs. Mesopotamia Jason Johnson Thousands of years ago, the first civilizations emerged onto the face of the Earth. They weren't as diverse as some of today's civilizations, but, they were still civilizations. Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia are maybe the most widely known of the first early civilizations. The two civilizations had similarities and differences in their political, economical, religious, and cultural aspects. Both of the civilizations had a form of political system. They both had a ruler or a king (or pharaoh).

Both civilizations rulers thought that they had a connection to the gods through their leadership. Though their belief was similar, they were a little different. The Egyptians and pharaohs believed that they were the incarnation of Horus and the son of the sun god, Re. Both of these civilizations were economically lucky to have built a civilization near an abundant source of water. The rivers they settled on had efficient seasonal flooding which helped their agriculture grow. These floods were seasonal meaning they happened at the same time every year. They also happened at the best time for crops to grow.

The two civilizations needed more than just food to thrive. In Mesopotamia, there would often be disagreements between farmers. That was one of the reasons Hammurabi's code was developed. The code was the law of Mesopotamia and helped establish justice. Unlike Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt did not have a law code. The reason being, the people believed that the divine king or pharaoh was the source of everything including justice and law. Almost every civilization has religious aspects. This also applies to ancient civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Both of these civilizations were polytheistic.

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Because Egypt was “the gift of the Nile” and generally prosperous and harmonious, Egyptian gods tended to reflect a positive religion with an emphasis on a positive afterlife. The most popular god, Osiris, was also the law giver as well as the keeper of the world of the dead. Mesopotamian religion, on the other hand, was very bleak and gloomy. Ancient Mesopotamian prayers demonstrate the lack of relationships with gods and goddesses who viewed humans with the suspicion and frequently sent calamities to remind everyone of their humanity. Such was the message found in the Gilgamesh Epic.

Both Egypt and Mesopotamia developed systems of writing that began as pictograms and were primarily used for record keeping. In both civilizations, a system of schools emerged training young boys as scribes, an important part of the ancient social class structure. Both civilizations actively engaged in trade, building commercially prosperous societies dominated by the wealthy and promoting a growing merchant and artisan class. All of these similarities, it can be argued, were the characteristics of cultural development, identified as a necessary element of civilization.