

First ancient civilizations

[History](#)



Similarities and Differences between the Early Mesopotamia and Huang He River Valley A civilization represents a group of people who live and work together and who mostly share a common culture. Characteristics of a civilization include arts, political organization, Technological and educational advancement, writing and religion. Music in the area of arts is important for entertainment and worship while political organization is important to keep things in order. Technological and educational advancement has resulted in the invention of the wheel and writing has aided in communication and record keeping. The world today is a global village due to the advance of computers and the internet. Religion is of crucial importance to society since it facilitates the guarding of morals in society.

The word Mesopotamia in the Greek language means ‘ the land between two rivers’, because the civilization began between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. It was in the Eastern Mediterranean, had the Zagros Mountains to the northeast and the Arabian Peninsula to the southeast, and corresponded to the present-day Iraq, most parts of Iran, Turkey and Syria.

It was called Al Jazira by the Arabs and has been termed to as the Fertile Crescent. This civilization is the earliest in world history and, one which lasted for the longest time having begun around 3500 BC and ended in (Chadwick, 2005). It had much influence in western civilizations and most of these civilizations laid their foundations based on its example. Unlike other civilizations, Mesopotamia was a collection of various cultures, which were only bound together by their gods, writing and how they treated women. Mesopotamia is regarded as the cradle of civilization because it was the first to build cities, use the potter’s wheel, to develop writing, to organize armies, use large quantities of bronze and is called the place where history began.

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The yellow river civilization in china began in 4000 BC in China. Since water is known to play a critical role in the development of a civilization, the yellow river civilization owed its origin and development to the yellow river. The yellow river occupies a place of importance in china and has been known as the mother river of china. Just as the Egyptians credit their existence to the river Nile, the Chinese also attach great importance to the yellow river, referring to it as the cradle of Chinese civilization. The yellow river population was the centre of politics, economy and culture of the Chinese. It was also the center of science and technological advancement. It existed for 2000 years, covering the period between 4000BC to 2000BC (Chadwick, 2005). The yellow river played a great role since it is a big river and the soils around it were fertile, a fact that made the area agriculturally suitable for ancient Chinese to settle. The river is long too, covering a area around 2900 miles long and carrying rich yellow soil from Mongolia to the Pacific ocean, and thus suitable for a large population. It looks yellow due to this rich and fertile soil and thus the origin of its name.

Similarities between the two civilizations were for example that food production is important to a civilization and thus the need of fertile land and water. This was an important reason why both civilizations started along rivers. The rivers also facilitated water transport to carry out trade, facilitate transport, and provide water for human consumption. This movement to the civilizations laid down the foundations for political organization, human civilization and the building of infrastructure. Irrigation was another similarity because it was practiced by both civilizations.

The differences were that while the Mesopotamian civilization was made up of many city states that were independent , the yellow river one was made

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up of local units under a King's rule and thus political control was possible. The Mesopotamian civilization was able to exert influence outside its scope in this respect unlike the yellow river one whose influence was mostly upon the Chinese society. In the area of society and economics, Mesopotamians followed the laws set by Hammurabi while the yellow river society had the family unit as the most vital social institution, with the father having full control of the family. In religion, Mesopotamia had a set of gods in each city-state and temples called Ziggurats (Chadwick, 2005). The gods were many times named after the different manifestations of nature and they were invoked to assist in good harvests and such issues. The yellow river society worshipped ancestors through oracle bones and many other ways. The dead were invoked to give advice during these types of services. The Mesopotamia civilization also lasted for a longer period.

Today's society owes much to this civilizations which developed so much without referring to other people unlike today where the world has become a global village due to technological advance.

References

Chadwick, R. (2005). *First Civilizations: Ancient Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt*. London: Equinox Publishing Limited.