
Compare And Contrast Analysis Of Mesopotamia And Egypt

Civilization does not get constructed overnight, but rather over decades or hundreds of years, failure after failure to finally be advanced. According to the Collins English dictionary, civilization is defined as, "The condition of being civilized; social organization of a high order, marked by the development and use of a written language and by advances in the arts, sciences, government, etc.". Another key aspect that civilization obtains a form of an established religion at the center of the organization. Without a form of civilization, that certain organizations would flourish and would not advance. This helps the community to sustain and develop to be functional at its highest. Though Mesopotamia started up before ancient Egypt, the two were heading towards building their form of civilization. Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt did demonstrate similarities as well as many differences in their build-up.

Mesopotamia was centralized between two rivers that tremendously helped with its successful start-up. The two rivers that contributed to the progress of civilization were the Tigris and Euphrates, as Mesopotamia was in the middle of the two. Around 4000 B.C, cities began appearing but not until 3000 B.C., cities were organized and many lived in Mesopotamia thanks to harvest. The food surplus allowed markets, which attracted money and represent the fundamental pillar of civilization. It was not until 6000 B.C. before the beginnings of irrigation systems and 5000 B.C. when the irrigations became effective. Producing great cities, "Uruk was the first of these cities, dating back to around 3200 B.C." and was one of the most massive cities. These cities became city-states, which combined smaller towns to cities and that were relatively close to farmland. Cities became more religious and in need of public works like construction, roads, irrigation and a need for government. Mesopotamia utilized brick as a building material but crumbled over time because it was delicate and could not hold together. The government consisted of Officials, tax collectors, ward bosses, and scribes and they, "..oversaw the communal labor necessary for maintaining aqueducts, irrigation canals, and water resources. They assisted merchants and traders when necessary, seeing to a caravan's protection". The community over time became sophisticated in writing which led to better politics and economics. Also, the people invented bronze which was employed as armor, swords, shields, plates, and knives for better living. Furthermore, throughout Mesopotamia, they used slaves who were prisoners or owed money then released after a couple of years. With numerous cities, each "..had its own patron god or goddess, and most of what we know of them has been passed down through clay tablets describing Mesopotamian religious beliefs and practices". One of their beliefs was Gilgamesh, who was a demi-god and ruled over Uruk and expressed stories about his extraordinary abilities. They did not believe in an afterlife but buried

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the dead with accessories. Though Mesopotamia was ruled and taken over numerous times, they did not manage to maintain a central rule and were ungovernable. This caused the fall of Mesopotamia and did not last long.

Ancient Egypt began around 3100 B.C. with its early dynastic period, and everything was located 20-30 km of the Nile River. Egypt took advantage of their location and over time they rapidly used the Nile for trade, travel, and communication. The form of writing the Egyptians employed was hieroglyphics, which used pictures and words. Throughout ancient Egypt's history, three kingdoms established, with each learning from the previous and advancing. In the old kingdom, pharaohs were absolute rulers and considered gods with an organized strong central state. During this period, Egyptians constructed pyramids of Giza and were built with limestone which lasted longer. The middle kingdom took part in a large drainage project to develop convenient farmland to produce more food. The pharaoh then added help as they "...appointed their high officials and they chose members of their family". The new kingdom produced influential pharaohs who forged a mighty empire that reached the Euphrates River. Each kingdom implemented its part to make Egypt stronger and more functional. In the course of these kingdoms, lower and upper Egypt were united and separated several times. Religion was critical to ancient Egypt as "There were 700 gods and goddesses and many were combined to create new deities". Egyptians believed in an afterlife and had to prepare for their journey, especially for the Pharaoh who was buried with valuables and would construct monuments for burial sites. The evolution of ancient Egypt represents a gradual process but over time they established strong dynasties which lead to a longer ruling.

Having similar construction, both Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt grew to form a civilization for its people but included many differences. First, both had relied tremendously on the river(s) they lived nearby, which lead to civilization. With the help of the river(s), they traded up and down with other regions and produced food. Moreover, their ability to form a writing system which started around a similar time as each other. The introduction of slavery was also key to both, as they helped with construction but ancient Egypt was harder on their slaves. Next to slaves, peasants were at the bottom of rankings for the two. The Nile River was reliable and predictable while the Tigris and Euphrates were not. Plus, the government was directed differently as Egypt had pharaohs and officials, Mesopotamia was ruled by kings and priests. Furthermore, the belief of the afterlife did not exist in Mesopotamia but in Egypt, it was an enormous part of their religion as they followed religion very seriously. Egypt's building material obtain stone while Mesopotamia was made of mud which failed to last long compared to Egypt. Ultimately, Egypt was unified therefore lasting longer than Mesopotamia because it was not and lacked managing the region under control from others overtaking it.

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