Key Concepts

Babylonian civilization

Oriental political thought

In Greek, it means between two rivers. Historically, it is the land situated within the Tigris-Euphrates river system, where ancient civilizations were born: Sumer, Assyria, Babylonia ( Iraq in the modern day)

A city that becomes independent and has its own government

Sumer

Civilization

Fertile Crescent

City-State

Mesopotamia

It often called “the cradle of civilizations”, a region that takes the shape of a crescent, situated in Western Asia, within the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, the Nile and the Mediterranean Sea.

An advanced state of human society, in which a high level of culture, science, industry, and government has been reached.

It is the name of the cities that first appeared in the southern part of “Mesopotamia”

“The term « Civilization » is derived from the Latin word *Civis* which means “Citizen” or “Townsman». It is a complex of human grouping with cultural-material and non-material/ ideational traits and a defined polity”

(egyankosh.ac.in, p10)

Its main traits include:

* The construction of cities: they become the centers for political, economic, social, cultural, and religious development.
* New political and military structures: an organized government bureaucracy and organized armies to gain land and power for defence.
* A new social structure based on economic power.
* Surplus on the agricultural level and the grewing of organized trade.
* Adistinct religious structure.
* The development of writing.
* Development of arts and intellectual activities.

(William J.Duiker, Jackson J.Spielvogel, 2016, p8,

www.bpi.edu)

What are the main characteristics of a civilization?



“ A civilization refers to an advanced state of intellectual, cultural, and material development in human society marked by progress in the arts and sciences, that extensive use of record keeping including writing and the appearance complex political and social institutions”

K.VENUGOPALAN, ARUN.K, 2011, p9)

« A Civilization is a complex society or culture group characterized by dependence on agriculture, long distance trade, state form of Government, occupational specialization urbanism and class stratification. Along with this core elements, civilization is often marked by combination of a number of secondary elements, including a developed transportation system, writing, standards of measurement, formal legal system, graet art style, monumental architecture, the mathematics, sophisticated metallurgy, and astronomy…

Civilization have been distinguished by their means of subsistence, types of livelihood, settlement patterns, forms of government, social stratification, economic systems, literacy and cultural traits”

K.VENUGOPALAN, ARUN.K, 2011, p9)

Babylon

Assyrians

The North

Akkadians ( in the North)

 Amorites (The West)

Sumerians

(The South)

Supremacy is the objective of the tribes

The adoption and preservation of the existing culture

4000 BCE, they were the first to settlers

The establishment of irrigation and the making of weapons

The development of cuneiform

Akkadians: 2300 BCE, includes the Sumerian city-states

Akkad was the capital city

The King Sargon I

Amorites: 1900 BCE, defeated Akkad

Babylon was the capital city

The famous king was/ Hammurabi

Assyrians formed the great power of the ancient Near East

1800 BCE, the introduction of iron weapons

The king Sargon II

With his son, the king Sennacherib, he capital city was Nineveh after the destruction of Babylon.

The overthrow of the Assyrians 600 BCE

The famous king was Nebuchadnezzar

The rebuilt of Babylon that became the capital city for the second time

Chaldeans

(Bob Joseph, « History of Cosmology in Western Civilization », University of Hawaii,

<https://home.ifa.hawaii.edu/users/joseph/1.%20Babylonians.pdf>)

Oriental political thought

Pharaonic Era

Egyptian Civilization

A monarchy

Theocratic government

The ruler is a king

Gods are the source of his mandate

The ruler is an intermediary between the divine and the people

The king is a representative of Gods’ will

This representation is embodied in the laws and the policies

From 3150BCE to 30 BCE

The kings are supposed to serve Ma’at the goddess of truth

She was considered as the personification of universal harmony and balance by which the people have been provided with culture and encouraged to be creative.

“Each king would begin his reign his reign by ‘presenting Ma’at’ to the other gods of the Egyptian pantheon as a way of assuring them that he would follow her precepts and encourage his people to do likewise during his reign. the government of ancient Egypt, for the most part, kept to this divine bargain with their gods and the result was the grand civilization of ancient Egypt.”

Joshua J.Mark, “Ancient Egyptian Government”,

<https://www.worldhistory.org/Egyptian_Government/>

The political life of the early vedic period :

* The highest officer is the king who was of high morality
* The king had to be just and have knowledge about the management of soldiers.
* Purohita was among the functionaries of the king, they were encharged of giving him advice..
* Senanis was also functionaries of the king, their role was to fight for the king in the war.
* The supreme commander of the armed forces was the senani, he was one of the ministers who were appointed by the king to run the administration effectively
* The second highest officer was the chief warrior in the army, the king appointed him. His task was the organization of the warriors and the leadership of the army when the king is absent. The chief of villages is called Gramani, in addition to the secret agents and the diplomats.
* The despotism of the king was under the check of many organizations and committees (the sabha: a centre for social gathering or the village assembly or a committee of selected seniors elders and the samiti: the bigger assembly), they were also a place of nations’problems discussions.
* The king was the chief justice

(Nirja Sharma and others, Ancient Indian Political Thought, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 2015.)

Indian civilization

Oriental political thought

 “The Heavenly Mandate is the doctrine invoked by the Chou family to justify their conquest; its main idea is that the ruler is the mediator between Heaven or Nature and man. The ruler has earned this role because he displayed virtue and the capacity to put into effect the benign Heaven’s will.

The proper family relations are a necessity to government.

The government of Benevolence i.e., human heartedness and goodness.

The government of superior men whose cultivated minds would lead their behavior to be both benevolently concerned for other men and ritually correct, the rites lead to the harmonized men’s spirits and led to harmonious relations among all men.

The essential act of government is to teach people virtue, after that, its task is to provide the material well-being.

The organization for defense against internal and external enemies is an acknowledgement of failure. The administration of government lies in getting the right men who are to be attracted through the power of the ruler’s own character”

(“Chinese political thought”, Encyclopedia,

<https://shorturl.at/djvM3>)

Chinese civilization

Oriental political thought