

Ancient River Valley Civilizations

1. Mesopotamia: Tigris and Euphrates Rivers
2. Egypt: Nile River
3. India: Indus and Ganges Rivers
4. China: Yellow and Yangtze Rivers



The Growth of Civilization

- Agricultural Revolution: farming created settled communities
- The five traits of a civilization
 - Cities
 - Writing
 - Specialized workers
 - Complex institutions
 - Technology




Mesopotamia / Fertile Crescent

Located between Tigris and
Euphrates Rivers



Some contributions of ancient civilizations

- **Sumer**: *first civilization*, plow, sailboat, wheel, cuneiform, ziggurats, polytheism
 - **Babylon**: Code of Hammurabi
 - **Phoenicians**: the alphabet and improved shipbuilding
 - **Jews**: ethical monotheism, Judaism
 - **Persians**: well-built empire based on tolerance
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Egypt, “Gift of the Nile”



History of pharaohs

- Around 3200 B.C., King Narmer of Upper Egypt conquered Lower Egypt and united the two kingdoms
- The Egyptian kings used the title of “pharaoh” and were considered god/kings



Some contributions of Egyptian civilization

- Hieroglyphics
- Egyptian religion (polytheistic)
- Pyramids
- Mummification
- Medicine



Bronze Age



Indus Valley

- Located between Indus and Ganges Rivers



Some of the many contributions of Indus Valley civilizations include. . .


- Sanskrit
- Hinduism
- Buddhism
- Reincarnation
- Caste system



Complex Institutions

Religion in the Indus Valley

Hinduism

- Hinduism is a mixture of Aryan and ancient Indian culture
 - The sacred writings are the Vedas that explain the basic philosophy of **Hinduism.**
 - Beliefs include **reincarnation, moksha, and castes.**
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A second religion of the Indus Valley is Buddhism.

- Founder = Sidhartha Gautama
- Beliefs = Four Noble Truths,
Eightfold Path,
Nirvana
- No complex rituals, as in Hinduism, and it is taught in the everyday language.



Indus River Valley

- Indus sites not fully discovered yet
- No kings/queens known
- Few available records
- Was largest empire until Persia develops 1000 years later



Indus River Valley

- Two main cities of the Indus Valley
- Harappa
- Mohenjo-Daro
- Both carefully planned & laid out in a grid pattern
- Structures built of oven-fired bricks
- Homes had indoor plumbing



Indus River Valley

- Archaeologists believe the 2 cities had strong organized government
- Food seemed to be in good supply
- City planning indicates development of mathematical skills
- Indus first to cultivate cotton
- Polytheistic religious beliefs



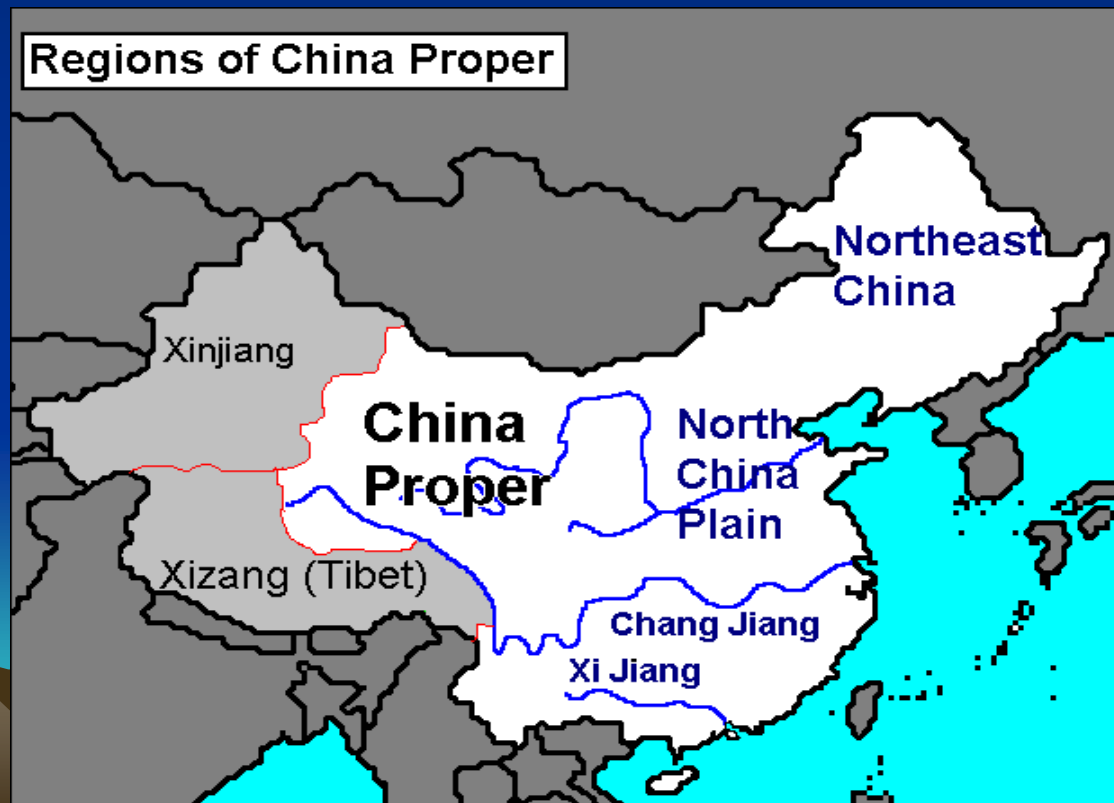
Huang He River Valley

- China's geography has isolated it
- Chinese developed belief that China was the center of the Earth & source of all civilization
- China to south & southwest hemmed in by Tien Shan & Himalaya mountains



China's River Valley

- Located between the Yellow (Huang-He) and Yangtze (Chang Jiang) Rivers



Chinese philosophies

- Confucianism: based on family, respect and education
- Daoism: based on living simply and harmony with nature
- Legalism: based on a strict and powerful government



Some of China's many contributions include...

- Printing
- The Great Wall of China
- Dynastic cycle



明憲字釋翁烈將至今寶錄
繪以手帶之其自著經不古其長其
藥時益不同不其翻土用苦再火今藥
之香文野有親密故水限高下不平兼與
昔茲咳之以草火熱細息而丸不以木盒
之每隨論一胡木發類之有音字素無常
明以論一對內有重齋管不用限以形
字皆有幾明吸之也善字每字有二十箱
限藥二對日具更互用之細息可救每一
對一對明佩一對日自亦字也明皆繼畢

Huang He River Valley

- China's history began in Huang He Valley
- People learned to farm during the Neolithic Age
- The yellow soil particles in the river give it its name "Yellow"
- Also known as "China's Sorrow" because of the unpredictable flooding



Huang He River Valley

- The flooding is due in part to the loess in the water that raises the level of the river
- Flooding has often been disastrous
- First Chinese in the valley to develop were the Shang
- Zhou overthrew the Shang
- Developed Mandate of Heaven idea



Huang He River Valley

- Mandate of Heaven says that the gods allowed a dynasty to rule until that dynasty got old & corrupt
- New dynasty was given new Mandate of Heaven to overthrow old
- This changing of dynasties is called the Dynastic Cycle



Start here

A new dynasty comes to power.

The emperor reforms the govt. & makes it more efficient.

Lives of common people improved; taxes reduced; farming encouraged.

Problems begin (extensive wars, invasions, etc.)

Taxes increase; men forced to work for army. Farming neglected.

Govt. increases spending; corruption.

Droughts, floods, famines occur.

Poor lose respect for govt. They join rebels & attack landlords.

Rebel bands find strong leader who unites them. Attack the emperor.

Emperor is defeated !!



Huang He River Valley

- By 1000 BC Chinese had develop silk production
- Chinese also produced first books under the Zhou
- Also produced porcelain, writing, coined money and cast iron



Other Civilizations to Consider

- Indo-European Civilizations
 - Aryans
 - Hittites



Aryans

- Developed ***Caste System***
 - Lighter skin, higher caste
 - Aryans blended cultures
 - Brought in Hinduism
 - Believed in reincarnation
 - Karma & dharma
 - Cows are sacred



Hittites

- Centered in Anatolia (modern Turkey, Asia Minor)
- Developed iron technology
- Developed the chariot which changed warfare dramatically



Other Civilizations to Consider

- Fertile Crescent
 - Phoenicians
 - Coast of eastern Mediterranean Sea
 - Carriers of civilization
 - Created alphabet



Final Thoughts

- How are these groups similar?
- How are they different?
- What did they contribute to the world?
- What impact did geography have on each society?

