



## Culture of the Ancient East

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### Abstract

The article describes the emergence and development of the culture of the ancient period, such as ancient Egypt, Babylonia, India and China. These were the first centers of world culture, thanks to which civilizations arose in later epochs.

**Keywords:** History; States; Culture; Civilization; Evolution; Society

### Scientific Method and Methodology

This theme was studied on the basis of general philosophical methods of scientific analysis: a dialectical, historical-logical, objective-structural, systems approach and so on. The history ancient world lasted from the end of the IV millennium BC until middle of the 1st millennium BC. From the end of IV millennium BC begins a new stage in the history of mankind. In this duration originated slave states on wide territory - from the Mediterranean Sea to the Pacific Ocean. The first states on earth arose in the Bronze Age in the valleys of the large rivers of the Nile, Tigris, and Euphrates. In these valleys, was possible to create agriculture on the basis of irrigation systems.

### Ancient Egypt

Was located in north-eastern Africa, consisting of deserts. The largest river Nile flowed from south to north of Egypt. On the coast of the Nile flourished agriculture, gardening, and apiculture. Egypt is one of the oldest centers of world civilization. In the III millennium BC, a powerful slavery state was formed in Egypt. Egypt becomes a centralized state that had an active foreign policy. The capital of the state was Memphis. There was progress in the economic, political sphere and were established cultural contacts between the regions of the Middle East. The tools were improved, were forms of crafts as stonemason, ceramics, weaver, fashion designer, and dressmaker. The Nile became a wide trade road, around which were formed towns. The Nile valley became a prosperous country. Egypt became a despotic monarchy. The

bureaucratic apparatus ruled the country. In Egypt were developed slave-owning relations. Slave work was used in all labour. Slaves belonged to the state, temples, and aristocrats. A slave was considered property, but he had some personal rights. Prisoners of war are strangers, and also people who could not pay their debts became slaves. The landowners used people on their land and created exploitation. Exploitation is inhumanity, enjoyment, and use of the work of others. Farmers and craftsmen were paid taxes on material and money resources. They were forced to give part of his work to the landowner. Slaves were brutally exploited. In this way, conflict and struggle began between the upper and lower classes. The king of Egypt - pharaoh had unlimited power, he owned the all lands of the country, large labour resources. Pharaoh was considered a god or a generation of the gods. Pharaoh ruled Egypt with a large army, he appointed governors, and gave gifts to aristocrats and government servants. The pyramid was the mausoleum of the pharaohs. The largest pyramid of Cheops was built, which is one of the Seven Wonders of the World. This pyramid was built by 100 thousand people for 30 years in 2600 BC. The height of this pyramid is 150 meters. The first written signs appeared in Egypt - a hieroglyph, which was written in papyrus. Schools operated, but only children in the upper classes of society studied in them. In the sphere of exact sciences was made a great success. The Egyptians made mathematical numbers 10, 100, etc. The Egyptians in the sphere of astronomy compiled a calendar by which 1 year consisted of 12 months and 365 days. Sunny and water clocks were invented. In the sphere of medicine, Egyptian doctors treated patients by pulse (heartbeat). Special sphere of

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medicine appeared, such as diagnostics, surgery, therapy, pharmaceuticals, etc. In ancient Egypt, were developed sculpture, and were built the mausoleums, temples, etc. In the sphere of religion, the Egyptians believed in polytheism, there were idols in the temples, and the pharaoh was also considered sacred. Egypt flourished during the middle kingdom (2nd millennium BC) and the new kingdom (1st millennium BC). In the XII century, BC as a result of the attack of the Libyan tribes, change of rulers, uprisings, Egypt lost its former power; the central domination became weak and the fall of the kingdom of Egypt. In the XI century BC Egypt break up into two kingdoms - Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt.

## Mesopotamia

In western Asia, the Euphrates and Tigris rivers flowed from the Caucasus Mountains into the Persian Gulf. The land between rivers - Euphrates and Tigris was called Mesopotamia. In the second half of the 3rd millennium BC in Mesopotamia were formed slave states - Sumer, Akkad, Babylon and Assyria. These states had their own judicial, monetary, legal and administrative systems. King Sargon (2316-2261 BC) created Akkad - a large centralized state in Mesopotamia. Under him, the royal economy increased significantly, an irrigation system was established and was introduced a single system of weights and measures. Sargon was the founder of a dynasty that ruled Mesopotamia for about 150 years. However, Akkad state stayed under the Guts tribes for more than a century. King Lugalzitis created Sumer state and its capital was Ura (or Uruk). At the end of the 2nd millennium BC (XXI century BC) as a result of the struggle with the nomadic tribes, were destroyed Sumer and Akkad states. In the north of Mesopotamia, on the costs of the Tigris, in the second half of the XIII century BC was formed Assyria state with its capital Assyria. It became the first great military empire in the history of the ancient World, which united almost all the states of the Middle East. In the 7th century BC, it covered a wide territory - Mesopotamia, Eastern Mediterranean sea, Egypt, Asia Minor, Elam, Persian and Median tribes. At the end of the 7th century BC, the Assyrian state was destroyed by the Median tribes and Babylon. In the south of Mesopotamia, arose the Babylonian state with the capital of Babylon. This state was located on the costs of the Euphrates River. Babylon was surrounded by 8-meter walls and large tower gates. In the centre of the town, there was a 7-floor, 90-meter temple; there were markets, beautiful buildings, gardens and fountains. Babylonians developed architecture and inventive art. The royal palaces consisted of 210 rooms and 30 verandas. The people composed a lot of myth and legends. In fiction literature appeared prose and poetry. There was a belief - polytheism. A large library was opened in Babylon, and it had more than 30 thousand books. The king of Babylon built a hanging garden for his wife, which is one of the seventh wonders of the world. But after a 1.5 century flood of the Euphrates destroyed the garden. The population of

Mesopotamia invented weight and metric (measure). The Babylonians wrote a letter in clay. In mathematics, Babylon people 1 hour divided into 60 minutes. In the Astronomy, they determined a circular process of the moon around the sun, which is 1 month, dividing 1 month into 4 weeks and 1 week into 7 days. Babylon's doctors learned to treat eyes, teeth, throat, etc. In the first half of the XVIII century BC the Babylonian king Hammurabi (2 thousand BC; 1792-1750 BC) united the states of Mesopotamia and published right laws, according to which everyone was equal right. The laws of Hammurabi divided a population into three categories: free full-right people; free, but no full-right people, workers of royal households; slaves. The reign of Hammurabi is the time of the highest prosperity of Babylonia in the II millennium BC. At the end of 7th-6th centuries BC during the time of King Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 BC), Babylonia becomes the largest state of Mesopotamia. However, in the second half of the VI century BC Babylon was destroyed by the Persian king Cyrus Great.

## Ancient India

In the III millennium BC arose the Harappa civilization. The centers of this civilization were the large towns of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, which had trade contacts with Mesopotamia. As a result of unfavorable climatic conditions, epidemics, attacks of nomadic tribes, this civilization was destroyed at the end of II millennium BC. Ancient India was located in southern Asia, on the Indian peninsula. This country has the highest mountain in the world - the Himalayas. From this mountain flow two rivers - Hind and Gang. In the 2nd millennium BC, the Aryan tribes migrated to the territory of India, settled in the Gang valley and mixed with the local tribes. They begin to engage in rice growing, they had first states, towns, patriarchal slavery. About this informed the ancient book "Rig Veda". In the VI century, India was a small state. During the reign of the Gupta state (4th-6th centuries), a territory of state expanded, developed the economy and culture. Castes became the main element of a state system. In the V-VI centuries, there was an economic decrease, and in middle of the VI century, the Gupta dynasty stopped existing. After that time, India again divided multi small states and enters the era of the Middle Ages. The old civilization of India took shape on the banks of the Gang and Hind rivers. The ancient literatures of India are "Ramayana" and "Mahabharata", in which written the best qualities of morality. In the field of astronomy, the Indians defined movements of the sun, the moon, and the earth. In the field of mathematics, they invented the numbers "0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9", which were used by people around the world. The Hindus invented the chess game, created pieces from the dice, and played with these pieces on a chessboard. In ancient India, architecture and sculpture was developed. In the temples were depicted 4 lions. Indian products - delicate matter,



elephant bone, precious stones, and medicinal plants were known throughout the world [1-4].

About 80% of the lands of ancient China were mountainous. In the western part of China, in the mountains, the population was busied in animal breeding, and in the eastern part, in the flatlands, with agriculture. The ancient Chinese were mainly busied in agronomy. Agriculture was based on atmospheric irrigation. The most ancient people of China were the Tibetans, Tungues, Mangers, and Mongols. Ancient China was located on the coasts of the rivers Yangtze and Haunches. King Xin Shu Huangdi (III century BC, 246-206 BC) established Sin state. He united 36 states and formed the absolute power imperial. He was an inhuman emperor. He alive buried more than 400 people in the grave (because, they criticized him in their works). During his reign, were built towns, canals, roads, the Great Wall of China (5 riders could ride on the top of this road). The Sin Empire was destroyed by an uprising. The Han Empire (206 BC-220) ruled in China for more than IV centuries. During this period, the kings of the Han Empire conquered Central Asia and opened the Great Silk Road. The Chinese state became rich, where hard exploited slaves. As a result, took place uprising «red faces" (18-23 years) and «yellow bandages" (184-204 years). The uprisings were broken-down, but they hard impacted to slave structure. The ancient Chinese writing was hieroglyphic. The sciences, such as geography, astronomy, agronomy were developed. Chinese historian Sima Sian wrote the book "Notes on History". Chinese believed that the earth is like an egg. "Tea - Choy" is a Chinese word that was first used to treat patients. They invented tea, the compass and paper, which Europeans learned about several centuries later. The Great Silk Road (length 4022 km) began with China and ended in Rome. The ancient Chinese considered the sun, moon, nature and earth as a holy. Taoism (VI century BC) and Confucius (V-VI century BC) were the religious and moral teachings of ancient Chinese. Thus, the first centers of culture and civilization of ancient world appeared in the East. The material and spritual culture developed in those geographical regions, i.e. on the banks of rivers, where it was possible to engage in agriculture, cattle breeding and craft. The achievements of the ancient Eastern states became the basis for the further development of the countries of the East and had a strong influence on ancient Greece and Rome that were the foundation of European civilization.

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