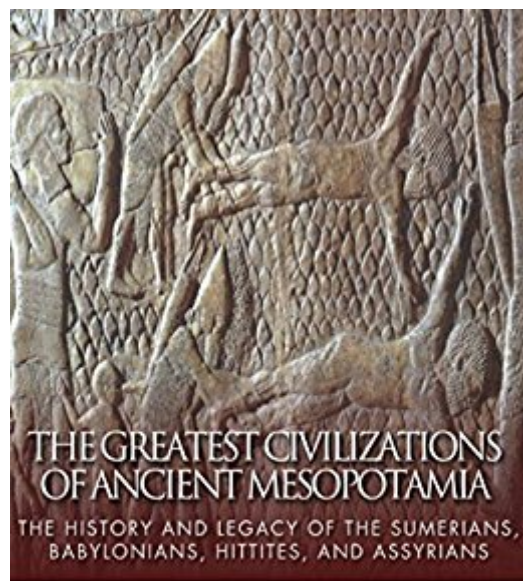


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The Greatest Civilizations Of Ancient Mesopotamia: The History And Legacy Of The Sumerians, Babylonians, Hittites, And Assyrians



by
CHARLES RIVER EDITORS



Synopsis

*Includes pictures *Includes primary sources from ancient records about their cultures and battles
*Includes bibliographies for further reading *Includes a table of contents

Although the Sumerians continue to get second or even third billing compared to the Babylonians and Assyrians, perhaps because they never built an empire as great as the Assyrians or established a city as enduring and great as Babylon, they were the people who provided the template of civilization that all later Mesopotamians built upon. The Sumerians are credited with being the first people to invent writing, libraries, cities, and schools in Mesopotamia (Ziskind 1972, 34), and many would argue that they were the first people to create and do those things anywhere in world. For a people so great it is unfortunate that their accomplishments and contributions, not only to Mesopotamian civilization but to civilization in general, largely go unnoticed by the majority of the public. Perhaps the Sumerians were victims of their own success; they gradually entered the historical record, established a fine civilization, and then slowly submerged into the cultural patchwork of their surroundings. Among the many cities of the ancient world, Rome and Athens may come to mind first, but the city of Babylon in the land of Mesopotamia was already an ancient, venerated city when the others were still inconsequential settlements. Today, Babylon has become a byword for greed, excess, and licentiousness, mostly due to its mention in the Bible, but a closer examination reveals that Babylon was so much more, and even perhaps the most important city in the ancient world. Ancient Babylon was home to great dynasties that produced some of the world's most influential leaders, most notably Hammurabi and Nebuchadnezzar, and these rulers invoked their wills on the entire ancient Near East and have been remembered as both progressive and cruel all at the same time. Babylon was also the seat of culture in ancient Mesopotamia and the place where scholars made amazing scientific advances that would not be eclipsed for several centuries. An examination of ancient Babylon demonstrates that it was truly the first great city in the ancient world. Compared to some of their contemporaries – including the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians – the Hittites were somewhat distant both culturally and geographically. The Hittites were an Indo-European speaking in an ocean of Afro-Asiatic and Semitic groups, their homeland was to the north of Mesopotamia, and it contained no major river like the Nile, Tigris, or Euphrates Rivers. The Hittite empire was also far less enduring than its neighbors, as it only existed from about 1800-1200 BCE (van de Mieroop 2007, 156), which was considerably shorter than most of the other major kingdoms of the Near East. With that said, the influence of the Hittites on the politics, economy, and overall situation of the ancient Near East cannot be understated; the Hittites were a force to be reckoned with while they existed. Although the Biblical accounts of the Assyrians are among the most interesting and are

often corroborated with other historical sources, the Assyrians were much more than just the enemies of the Israelites and brutal thugs. A historical survey of ancient Assyrian culture reveals that although they were the supreme warriors of their time, they were also excellent merchants, diplomats, and highly literate people who recorded their history and religious rituals and ideology in great detail. The Assyrians, like their other neighbors in Mesopotamia, were literate and developed their own dialect of the Akkadian language that they used to write tens of thousands of documents in the cuneiform script. This book looks at all four of these highly influential empires. Along with pictures depicting important people, places, and events, you will learn about the greatest civilizations of Ancient Mesopotamia like never before.

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Customer Reviews

This ebook is a very detailed history of Mesopotamia. CHARLES RIVER EDITORS probably will publish separate ebooks for the different cultures covered in this book. This book has to be read and read again to be sure you end up with a lot of new knowledge.

good source book

The book about ancient civilization was average. I would have liked to see more pictures in the book though.

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