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When the Mesopotamian culture and the Egyptian culture are compared, it is apparent that the Mesopotamian culture fostered an attitude of tension and precariousness about life, while the Egyptians enjoyed a more stable and placid cultural state of mind. The geographic, religious, political, economic, and social factors of these civilizations are much of the cause for these vastly differing ~~states~~ attitudes.

The first major contributing factor to the different mental states of the Egyptians and the Mesopotamians is the geographical features of these cultures' respective countries. The Mesopotamians lived in the "fertile crescent", but this area (contrary to its name) is ~~difficult~~ uncondusive to agriculture in several ways. The main agricultural complication was the irregularity of the floodings of the rivers. Since the earth is not fertile, till it

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has flooded it, (thus fertilizing the ground with ~~at~~ silt) the unpredictable flooding would have given the farmers long stretches of bad times, interspersed with a few good crops. A flood could wipe out crops if it came at the wrong time, or, for want of a fertilizing flood, the land could ~~be~~ be infertile for several growing seasons. The natural Desert climate would have further limited agriculture. ~~Decreased floods~~

Floods could also be destructive of property and life. The mesopotamians struggled with constant natural disasters from weather and the Rivers. ~~Decreased floods~~

Another contributing ^{geographic} factor to the Mesopotamians' pessimistic attitude was their military insecurity. Mesopotamia is wide open to attack, and the people there were victims of conquest after conquest. These ~~realities~~ ^{realities} openness to attack, combined with the difficulties of agriculture and the constant natural disasters, led the Mesopotamians to their attitude of helplessness and pessimism.

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By contrast, the Egyptians lived in an area where the river's flooding was predictable. They based a calendar on the Nile's flood cycle, and took advantage of their knowledge to maximize the agricultural potential of their limited land area. Furthermore, the Egyptians were protected on three sides from attack by deserts and cataracts. This ~~lack~~ security of life from danger of attack or ^{unpredictable} ~~unplanned~~ flooding fostered an attitude of peace and security in Egyptian culture.

Religious factors further contributed to the differences in the two cultures.

The Mesopotamians viewed the gods as fickle, volatile forces who viewed man as a work vessel. Man was created to "bear the ~~the~~ labor-basket" for the gods, and had little other value. Mesopotamians had little or no hope of an afterlife, and depended upon priests to mediate between the

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unpredictably dangerous gods and mankind. This religious attitude of helplessness and mankind's purpose contributed greatly to the Mesopotamian's tense attitudes.

The Egyptians, on the other hand, had the firm belief of a pleasant afterlife to give them hope. Their structured set of ^{moral} guidelines for life gave them an orderly equation for how to (eventually, at least) be happy. The priests gave further guidance to their lives. The Pharaoh, a god here on earth, was seen as the bridge to the afterlife, so obedience to his theocracy was a further guarantee of a happy afterlife. These religious factors fostered the Egyptian's peaceful attitude even now.

Politically ^{administratively} the Egyptians and the Mesopotamians differed. The Mesopotamians were ruled by a king whose power was granted to him by the gods but he could not protect them

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✓ from the gods or from nature. Egyptians, on the other hand, were ~~led~~ led by Pharaoh. Pharaoh, as a god, could ~~intercede~~ intercede for man. Also, he himself, as a god, ~~protected~~ protected the people in return for their service to him. Service to Pharaoh was not slavery, but a bargain for protection in this life and a ~~gette~~ ^{gette} passage to the next. The Egyptians were ^{also} more unified with their own country ~~as a whole~~ overall than the Mesopotamians. Less internal strife leads to less insecurity in a people. Economically, Egypt was better off, ~~both~~ both due to more successful agriculture, and the willingness of the people to serve their monarch. More economic security in Egypt led to more emotional security on the part of its people.

The final contributing factor to the different ~~so~~ cultural attitudes in Egypt as opposed to Mesopotamia is the Social Factor. Mesopotamia was very structured in class order. The social classes

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were treated inequitably by the existing laws. ~~and~~ In Egypt, the people were less class-bound. Since all were servants of the Pharaoh, there was less need to be discontented with your lot in life. Also, in the absence of the Mesopotamian difficulties with agriculture and natural disasters, the people as a whole were more prosperous. More prosperity leaves more time to enjoy life and relax a little, at least for the upper classes. This ~~was also a cultural factor~~ helped the Egyptians relax more as a culture, whereas the Mesopotamians were, as a whole, more concerned with the business of survival. That depressed them even more.

Women were seen more as equals to men in Egyptian society as well. Women could have jobs (scribe, storyteller), and were depicted as equal partners with the husband in the family. The royal women were respected and participated in politics. ~~and~~ When the women of a nation have more

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self-respect and education, they give self-respect and knowledge to their children, further increasing the peace and stability of the Egyptian mindset. This gender equality and a more equal treatment of classes in Egypt made them ~~people~~ enjoy life more than the class-bound Mesopotamians.

The Mesopotamians lived a harsh life as a people compared to the easier life of their Egyptian neighbors. The Geographic, Religious, Political, Economic, and Social differences between these two peoples ^{was much of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~cause~~ ^{cause} ~~of~~ their vastly different attitudes.

excellent essay!