

China.

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- A. Civilization in China followed the same pattern as other early civilizations: dependency on a river valley with fertile soil as the foundation for agriculture. The Huang He River carried fine yellow dust blown across the North China Plain; the yellowish soil, called **loess**, gave the river its nickname: the Yellow River. Unlike other civilizations, the Chinese were confronted with destructive flooding, long/cold winters, short/hot summers, dust storms and unpredictable rainfall.
- B. The Yangshao (5000-3000 BC) and Longshan (3000-2000 BC) Cultures. The people were generally farmers, hunters and fishermen, but archaeologists have uncovered evidence of painted pottery as well. Some evidence exists that they raised Silkworms. The arrangement of houses ^{video?} indicates a strong family connection.
- C. Chinese civilization developed with limited contact with early contemporary civilizations. Geography restricted trade and communication. Isolation will become a theme for Chinese history.

THE AMERICAS

The first inhabitants of North America probably migrated across a land bridge that once connected Russia and Alaska. Many left the cold climate of northeast Asia and northwest America to move southeast throughout the continent. Others foraged for large game and plant foods. Still others settled throughout the continent becoming farmers (pumpkins, potato, squash, maize).

The Olmec.

- A. The term **MESOAMERICA** refers to the land in southern Mexico and northern Central America. It may have been the location of the first civilization in North America. They “civilized” much ²⁰⁷ later than the four river civilizations—in fact, not until 1200 BC! The region provided a warm climate and abundant water necessary for farming.
- B. The Olmec developed cities in San Lorenzo and La Venta. The society was divided into just two classes of people: the farmers, who worked the land, and the elites, who governed, owned the best land and supervised religion. They were a productive agricultural society with large cities and architectural accomplishments yet lacked iron tools.