

Chinese Civilization

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- The Chinese Civilization was one of the most ancient civilizations of the world.
- The Chinese were always proud of their civilization and they considered it the best civilization of the world.
- The Chinese considered their country as 'Tien Hsia' which means 'the country within the Heaven'.

Geography

- The main land of China was divided into three distinct areas- South China, Central China and North China.
- The rivers and the valleys had greatly contributed to the development of the Chinese civilization.
- The river valleys were very fertile which facilitated agriculture.
- The Chinese civilization developed on the banks of the Hwang Ho River.

Political History of Ancient China

- The Chinese civilization is believed to 7,000 years old.
- The Hisa Dynasty is considered the first historical dynasty which ruled for about 439 years.
- After the Hisa Dynasty, the Shang Dynasty ruled over China from around 1766 B.C. to 1122 B.C.
- After the Shang Dynasty, the Chou Dynasty ruled from 1112 B.C. to 256 B.C.

Political History of Ancient China

- Chou Dynasty was succeeded by the Chin Dynasty around 250 B.C.
- The areas ruled by the Chin rulers came to be known as China.
- After Chou Dynasty, the Hans Dynasty ruled China upto the beginning of the 3rd Century A.D.
- In around 618 A.D. the Tang Dynasty came to power in China.
- The Tang period is called the 'Golden period' of China in the cultural field.

Chinese Society

- In the ancient times, the Chinese society was mainly divided into two classes- Upper class and Lower class.
- The upper class or ruling class consisted of the Emperor, the aristocrats and nobles. They lived a very luxurious, comfortable and gracious life
- Next to the ruling class, there were literary or intellectual class, merchants, artisans and rich peasants. The intellectuals were the most respected class in the early Chinese society.

Chinese Society

- The soldiers occupied a low place in ancient Chinese society. The invading barbarians and the prisoners of wars were included in Chinese army.
- The landless peasants and the slaves were the lowest class in the Chinese society. Most of the slaves were war captives and their condition was very bad as they could be sold and bought in the markets like a commodity.
- The poor classes lived in small houses and did not have a comfortable life.

Economic Life

- Agriculture formed the basis of the Chinese economic life.
- The canals and dams were used for irrigation.
- The Chinese cultivated various crops, such as rice, potato, wheat, papaya, watermelon, banana, apple, nuts etc.
- The Chinese also used to grow cotton and tea. Probably tea came to be used in China from the 3rd century A.D.

Economic Life

- In addition to agriculture, the Chinese were also expert craftsmen.
- They manufactured wooden household goods including tables and chairs.
- They also made beautiful items of gold, silver, iron and bronze.
- Chinese women were engaged in spinning and weaving.
- They also made beautiful pottery. They were expert in carving in jade stone. They also manufactured paper for writing. They also produced glass and made bronze mirrors.

Economic Life

- The Chinese were active in trade and commerce.
- The Chinese carried on trade with Mesopotamia, Egypt, Rome, India etc.
- Leather, woolen silken goods were famous handicrafts of China which they used to export.
- They also used to export silk, spices salt, iron and other items.
- Sometimes in lieu of coins, the Chinese traders used to take horses and other commodities.

Thank You