

ANCIENT
CIVILIZATIONS

ANCIENT

CHINA



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A DAY IN THE FIELDS



RICE TERRACES IN
MODERN-DAY CHINA

A peasant girl helps her mother fill a stone pot with vegetables. She places it over the fire in their hut. The vegetables will cook while they work in the fields.





HARVESTING RICE



They meet the girl's father in the **paddy**. Water floods between the rows of rice. The girl bends to pull weeds. Her stomach growls as she works. But she knows there will be a delicious meal waiting at home. It will be time to eat after a day of farming in ancient China!

WHO WERE THE ANCIENT CHINESE?

TEMPLE OF WHITE HORSE IN
HENAN PROVINCE, CHINA.

Ancient China was a civilization in eastern Asia that lasted more than 1,800 years. Its history is divided into **dynasties**. Ancient China began with the Shang dynasty around 1600 BCE. The Han dynasty's fall in 220 CE brought its end.

Ancient China called itself *Zhongguo*, or "Middle Empire." It reached its peak of **culture** and power during the Han dynasty. Its borders reached present-day Vietnam, North Korea, and Central Asia. At its height, ancient China had around 60 million people.

ANCIENT CHINA'S DYNASTIES

SHANG

1600 TO 1046 BCE

KNOWN FOR

- creation of bronze items such as weapons
- early Chinese writing

ZHOU

1046 TO 256 BCE

KNOWN FOR

- development of Confucianism and Taoism
- Mandate of Heaven
- iron
- plows pulled by oxen

QIN

221 TO 207 BCE

KNOWN FOR

- unification of China
- beginning of the Great Wall
- terra-cotta army
- Shihuangdi orders books burned

HAN

206 BCE TO 220 CE

KNOWN FOR

- golden age of culture and literature
- imperial academy created to prepare people for government jobs
- paper, kites, and sundials
- Silk Road trading route

Ancient China's landscape featured the Yangtze, Yellow, and many other rivers. They offered easy travel for a growing civilization. They also provided rich soil for farming.

Advances in agriculture strengthened ancient China. Iron plows and wheelbarrows helped farmers perform everyday tasks more easily. Each season, farmers chose different crops to plant in their fields. This rotation kept the soil healthy. Chinese farming practices made more food available as China's population grew.

「HAN DYNASTY ANCIENT CHINA」





YANGTZE RIVER