

World History

Social Hierarchy of Han China

Name: _____
 Section: _____
 Score: ____/5

Directions: Using the information provided you will be creating an organizer to display the social and political organization of the Han Dynasty of China. Use the attached readings to come up with the levels of stratification, and be able to describe who is in each level and what types of jobs do they have. Once you are done reading the articles and compiling the information you will design

and organize the information into an infographic for display. This could be a hierarchy pyramid, pie chart, line chart, etc...

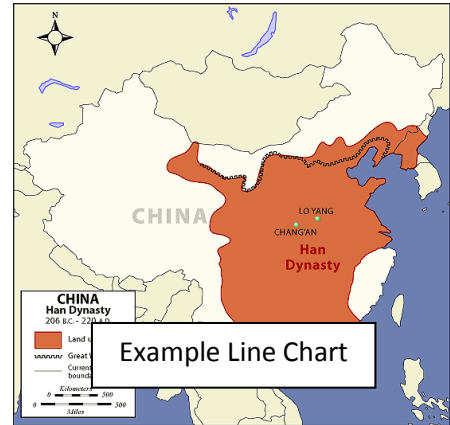
Scoring

_____/4 Design

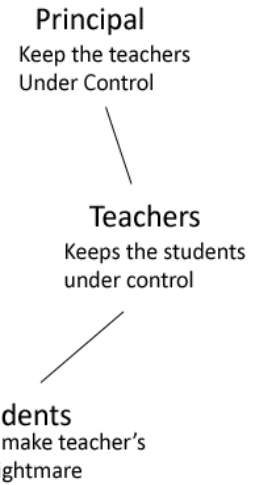
- Organized
- Visually Appealing
- Information
 - o Easy to read
- Structurally easy to follow

_____/6 Factual Information

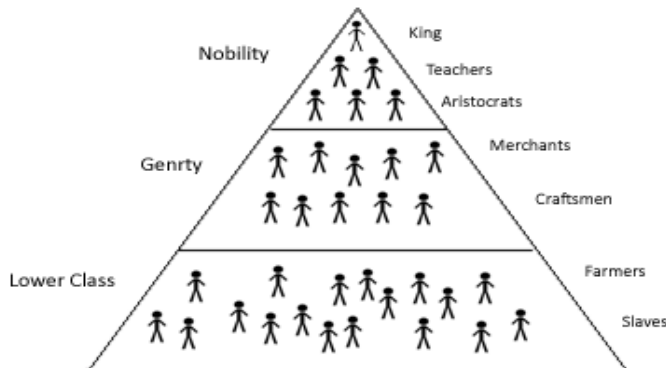
- Social Structure
 - o Descriptions OK
 - o Duties OK
 - o Correctly organized on Pyramid
- Government
 - o Descriptions OK
 - o Duties OK
 - o Correctly organized on Pyramid



School Hierarchy



Example Pyramid



Han Dynasty Government

The Han dynasty followed the Qin dynasty to become the second imperial dynasty of China. Comprised of two periods, the Western Han and the Eastern Han, the Han dynasty was a product of a rebellion that began after the death of the First Emperor. The Han dynasty government was largely characterized by a combination of feudal structures and central bureaucracy. The emperor was the head of the government. He was responsible for creating laws, heading the armed forces as its commander-in-chief and serving as the chief executive official.

The Han dynasty's imperial government system was patterned after its predecessor, the Qin dynasty. A central control was established, meaning that the emperors had full control over all of China. In theory, the powers of the emperor were absolute and unlimited. The emperors had three councilors of state, the Chancellor over the Masses, the Imperial Counselor and the Grand Commandant. Each of the counselor's main duty was to draft the government budget, conduct disciplinary procedures for government officials and to command and the military, respectively. There were then nine ministers, each of them assigned to head a specialized ministry.

During the early parts of the Han dynasty government, imperial princes were given the title of kings. They were given territories which they could pass on to their sons until the bloodline ends. This system was later scrapped by the emperor. The makers of the Han dynasty were credited with being the first politicians in Chinese history to develop a system of training and educating future administration officials. Becoming an actual official was still more possible through recommendations instead of examinations though.

The local government was comprised of the province, commandery, county and the district respectively. During the Early Han period, there remained only 12 provinces, each of which was under the control of a central government appointed governor. These governors were responsible for inspecting the administrators of certain commanderies and they evaluated officials based on competence, honesty and obedience. Commanderies consisted of counties. Counties are the smallest political division in the Han era to have a centrally appointed official.

Like all the other aspects of the Han dynasty, the Han dynasty government system was more or less implemented throughout the imperial history of China. Most of their ways may have been adapted from the Qin dynasty but it was through the Han period that the system was fully cemented. Proof again of how the Han dynasty earned its reputation as one of the most powerful dynasties in the history of China.

"Han Dynasty Social Structure", Totallyhistory.com, Collected Oct 2, 2013, <http://totallyhistory.com/han-dynasty-social-structure/>

Han Dynasty Social Structure

The second imperial dynasty of China was known as the Han Dynasty. It followed the Qin dynasty and founded by the rebel peasant leader Liu Bang. This regime was said to have retained the legalistic nature of the Qin dynasty, while eliminating its extreme ways such as corporal punishment. It was a period by characterized by age of cultural consolidation, economic affluence and major technological advances. More importantly, this dynasty was characterized by the rigid Han Dynasty social structure.

The society of the Han Dynasty can generally be described as highly structured with a clear definition of each social class. Han China was comprised of a three-tiered social system. Aristocrats and bureaucrats were at the top of this hierarchy followed by skilled laborers like farmers and iron workers. The bottom tier consisted of unskilled laborers such as servants and slaves. The emperor was at the top of the whole hierarchy.

At the top of the Han Dynasty social structure was the emperor. No subject was allowed to address the present emperor by name lest they take the risk of punishment. The most powerful relative of the emperor was the empress dowager or the wife of the previous emperor. Empress dowagers have the power to issue edicts and pardons as well as to appoint a new emperor in the case of the present emperor passing away without a designated heir.

Certain nobles were also present during different periods of the Han Dynasty. During the early Western Han, some military officers were designated as Kings and they ruled over semi-autonomous fiefs. Later on, only the emperor's male relatives were given that designation. Regents and eunuchs were positions that were given to a few officials during the later periods of the dynasty. At the same time, those serving the government also had privileged positions during this dynasty. They were immune from arrests unless permission from the emperor was granted. Scholars also belonged to the same tier as that of the nobles and the government officials.

Farmers and peasants comprise the second tier of the Han dynasty's social hierarchy. Their social status can be considered to be above that of the laborers but well below those of the wealthier landowners. However, they were not looked down by their fellow gentrymen since the wealthy depended on them for their products.

Third class citizens consisted mainly of artisans and craftsmen who were responsible making useful items such as swords and knives as well as creating luxury goods for the wealthier class. They also belong to the second tier of the society. However, their status is held below that of farmers. Despite this, they were still allowed to wear fancy outfits and ride on carriages and horses. They weren't prohibited from becoming officials.

Merchants belonged to the third tier along with the commoners and the servants. They were viewed as lowly by scholars and registered merchants were made to wear white as an indicator of their lowly status. Slaves make up about 1% of the dynasty's whole population. They can either be privately owned or state-owned. State-owned slaves were often given work in palaces and offices while privately-owned slaves often end up doing domestic services and even farming.

The Han Dynasty social structure influenced China's social structures long after it ended. It is important to note, however, that the assigned social classes for each member of the society dictated their status but not their wealth or power.

"Han Dynasty Social Structure", Totallyhistory.com, Collected Oct 2, 2013, <http://totallyhistory.com/han-dynasty-social-structure/>

Han Dynasty Social Structure

Tier	Description of Tier (Who is in it?)	Duties/Powers
1	Emperor:	
	Empress Dowager:	
	Councilors of State:	
	Imperial Princes:	
	Governors:	
	Nobles:	
2	Farmers and Peasants:	
3	Artisans and Craftsmen:	
	Merchants:	
	Slaves:	