

CHINA

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China is one of the oldest civilizations in the world. It's history is believed to have begun in 3rd millennium BC.

China, with almost 4,000,000 square miles, is the 3rd largest country in the world. Most of China's population lives in 1/4 of it's' area. More than 1/3 of the country is mountainous.

The principal crop of China is rice.

The capital is Peking, which in 1974 had over 7 million people and has close to 10 million now.

The official language is based on Peking dialect, and there are 51 languages in all, used in China.

Since 1949, Chinese religions that were discouraged but not prohibited include Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism.

China is a communist state, but the party has no actual position in the constitution. In the constitution, the highest organ of authority is the National People's Congress. It is composed of deputies elected by the Providence Municipalities and the People's Liberation Army.

The Great Wall of China was built during the Han dynasties, which was 206 BC to 221 AD. This was, also, when Buddhism was introduced, The Great Wall runs from the coast north of Peking across 2,000 miles of mountains and valleys and ends in the North West. Han dynasty troops patrolled the wall to keep an eye on barbarian people from the north, whose raids were a menace to Han farmers. One little known fact is that the Great Wall is the only thing that can be seen with the naked eye from the moon.

In China, traditions more than 2,000 years old are not unusual, before the revolution, the Chinese family was governed much as Confucius, the greatest Chinese philosopher, had advised; the husband ruled the wife, the older children and the younger children. Most wives work, and received the same pay as men. Many children are better educated than their parents and have more responsibility in the family. Yet, ancient traditions die hard, and the Chinese family is still dominated by fathers.

80% of the Chinese people are peasants. The land belongs to them, not individually, but in groups known as communes. Big or small, they work in the

same way; they have elected leaders who, with the help of government technicians, decide which crops to grow and how to divide the work. They arrange housing, schools and leisure activities for all the members. In a commune each family lives in a small single story house, usually made of clay or stone. The old people usually live with their children and grandchildren.

The government has undertaken an intensive campaign for birth control. Families are now penalized for having more than one child. Rapid development has resulted in China's emergence as a world superpower, with Peking serving as the cultural, economic and communications center of the nation. It was during 1971 that The People's Republic was officially recognized by the United Nations, and the growing harmony between China and the Western World promises to end China's isolation. With new terms for trade, technology and tourism, there is a growing number of people who have the opportunity to view the arts and literature of China's ancient civilization.