History Report: Comparison Of Ancient Rome And China

1. Environment

How did the ancient Civilizations adapt to the landscape/climate and how did they survive? (conceptual)

Ancient China:

Ancient China is made up of forests, hills, mountains, and deserts. The ancient Chinese adapted to this by using the natural resources it provided. They settled along the Yellow River, also now known as Huang He River in China, and used it to fish and farm. The rich soil of the Yellow River made it easy to grow crops and grains. The main grain was called millet. The ancient Chinese would grow millet along the river. In this area, farmers also raised cattle and sheep. Another river in China is the Yangtze River, it flows in the same direction as the Yellow river (west to east). The ancient Chinese took advantage of this river as it had warm weather and was rainy to grow rice. This weather is perfect to grow rice as rice is a ‘tropical crop’ and needs warm weather. The water from the river provided the ancient Chinese water for washing and drinking. It also provided a form of transport for them. When there was a drought, they used the rivers to learn how to build dams and systems to control the water systems. The main use of these rivers are for transport, food, water, and a learning opportunity.

The climate of ancient China varies from tropical weather to polar weather. This is because China is very large so different parts of China are closer to polar areas than others. Tropical climate can be found on the Hainan Islands. They would have a large amount of rain in the summer months. In the south East it is usually very hot and humid. The winters in the North East can get up to -40°C, whist the summers can get up to 35°C. Ancient China was modified to suit their culture and everyday life.

Ancient Rome:

The climate of ancient Rome is classified as ‘Mediterranean climate’. Mediterranean climate includes of warm weather and similar weather in winter. Ancient Rome first started in a little town in the center of Rome. As the population grew, ancient Rome grew as well. Soon after ancient Rome grew all over Europe. As ancient Rome grew, the climate changed from where Rome was spread. There were mountains, deserts, forests and all sorts of landscapes all over Rome. The ancient Romans depended on farming to survive. Since ancient Rome was in a Mediterranean climate, they had ‘light and crumbly soil’ to grow crops in. 90% of the Romans lived in the country, so farming was a huge part of their lives. The farmers would plant the seeds in spring and will harvest them in autumn. They would grow barley, grapes, olives and wheat. These were easy to grow. Every household took advantage of the summers by stocking up food for the winter to come.

2. Society

How were the classes set out in each of the Civilizations? (conceptual)

Ancient China:

The Emperor is at the top of all the classes. They held the power over everyone and made the country's decisions. The emperor owned most of the land and were wealthy. There is one emperor ruling the country at a time, when the emperor dies, it's son would take its place. Soldiers were next because they were the defenders of the country. They will protect the country to ensure safety to all the people. Soldiers keep the people under control. Since soldiers were second highest class, they had great wealth. The next class were nobles. Nobles were landowners and they give profit to the emperor or king to ensure protection. All nobles had extraordinary clothing, jewelry and houses. They would hunt wild animals for sport. If one noble committed a crime, the emperor would make them choose what way they would be killed. Farmers were next, they had to sustain food for the whole country. They own a patch of land to grow crops and harvest them. They were fed-well but they often had to harvest crops all day. The next class were the Gong class. They were artists and craftsmen. They made goods and merchandise for emperors. They often didn't own land and had to rent it, they would pay the owner money or things that they have made. They were not very respected and had limited rights. The next class were the Shang class, they were traders, shopkeepers, merchants and bankers. They transport goods from class to class. They made lots of money, but they were not respected. The last class were slaves, they worked all day and their life expectancy was 30 years.

Ancient Rome:

The emperor was at the top of all the classes. They ruled all the land. Next were patrician families. They were wealthy and owned land. Senators were next because they served in the senate and they controlled the country's money. Next were equestrians who owned properties and who chose business/working over politics. Next were the plebeians who were artists, bakers and craftsmen. They worked for a living and they were men. Next were freed slaves. These slaves have been freed, either paying for freedom or their owner had given them freedom. Now they work for a living (farming). Slaves were the last class. Slaves were sometimes prisoners from war or abandoned children.

Were the slaves treated rightfully? (debatable)

Ancient China:

I don't think the slaves were treated rightfully in ancient china because they didn't get to live long. They were often killed at funerals as a sacrifice. They would work all day and every day. Slaves were owned by masters, so they had to do what ever they said. I believe that everyone should do their part and not leave it all to one person. I think everyone should be equal and do a little bit of everything.

Ancient Rome:

Even though there were slaves in ancient Rome, they had a better opportunity to be set free. They could pay their master money, or their master could grant them to be free. Therefore, they could work for a living. Slaves in general were treated very badly and unfairly.

3. Economy

What were the main things used for trade in these civilizations? (factual)

Ancient China:

The main trade item that ancient China used was silk. They also sold spices, salt, tea, sugar and porcelain. They used the Silk Road to deliver these trade items. The Silk Road connects different kingdoms together. It is called the Silk Road because it was the main route to deliver silk. Silk was invented in 2696 BC by the wife of the Yellow Emperor. The silk road was 6437 km long.

Ancient Rome:

Ancient Rome traded a lot of materials and goods. They traded food; beef, corn, spice, olive oil and wine. They also traded goods; glassware, lead, iron, leather, perfumes, marble, dye, silver, timber and tin. Their main trading partners are Spain, The Middle East, France and North Africa. The ancient Roman's route to deliver these trade items were a cross between sea routes and road routes. The roads were built by the Romans and the sea route was across the Mediterranean Sea.

What did the civilizations use for currency? (factual)

Ancient China:

In ancient China, they used coins as their currency. These coins were usually made of iron, silver, copper and gold. They had different weights, shapes and signature marks. In 960- 1127 ancient China introduced paper money. Before the coin currency, the ancient Chinese used shells as currency because they were easy to count and carry.

Ancient Rome:

In ancient Rome, they used coins as their currency like ancient China. These coins were typically made of gold, copper, bronze ans silver, all different types of metal. Even though these coins were made of metal, the value that the coin was worth was slightly higher than what the metal was worth.

4. Gender Roles

Did women have the same as opportunities men in these civilizations? (Conceptual)

Ancient China:

It was unlucky to have a baby girl, so many baby girls were dumped and the ones who survived were given names of flowers and birds in hope that they will find a good husband. Boys were more respected than girls, it was thought that girls were useless because at one point in their life, they would leave the family. Unlike boys who would stay and farm for the family. Most

women don’t know how to read or write. Women that had enough education to become a physician, could only treat female patients. Women didn’t have as many rights as men because they weren’t allowed to speak publicly.

Ancient Rome:

In ancient Rome, women had to be under supervision by men at all times. Roman women had to be strong in households to do the cleaning and cooking. They also had the role of educating their children and supervising them. Women had to work the same amount as men while cooking and looking after the children. Not all women got educated to read and write. The girls in higher classes in the social economy could learn to read and write. Most girls were taught how to sow and weave thread/clothing. Boys got educated and if their families were rich, they would sometimes get a slave to walk them to school for safety. Women weren’t allowed to vote or hold public events although women were allowed to own a property. They were also allowed to own and run a business, women often got a lot of money from this and became wealthier.

Were the opportunities for both men and women equal and fair? (Debatable)

Ancient China:

Men and women didn’t have the same rights and it should be considered unfair or unequal. They should be allowed the same opportunities as men. Just because they are not the same gender, it doesn’t mean they can’t do the same things. It says that if a woman gets enough education, then they can become a physician but can only treat female patients. Just because they are the same gender doesn’t mean they can only treat female patients. Why could only men speak in public but not women? Just because boys can grow up to be farmers and work, it doesn’t mean girls can’t do the same. Girls should be loved the same as boys.

Ancient Rome:

Women and men in ancient Rome should have the same rights. There would always be a limit on what women can do even the emperor’s daughter. There weren’t many stories about women in ancient Rome because they weren’t allowed anything to do with politics and most women couldn’t write, so they couldn’t write their own stories. Women were not treated fairly and equally in ancient Rome.

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