

<<陕西>>

图书基本信息

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作者：胡戟

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内容概要

It is easy to have a quick look at China's past and present , but it takes time to gain a panoramic knowledge of China. The “ Pan-oramic China ” series is meant to assist readers , especially those overseas , in this respect. Each volume in the series focuses on a province , municipality or autonomous region , describing , with illustrations , the outstanding characteristics of each area from different perspectives.

书籍目录

The Qinling Mountains-Cradle of the Thousand-Year-Old Ancient Capital
 The Qinling Mountains , the Central Shaanxi Plain and the Wei River
 The Cradle of a Thousand-Year Capital City
 An ideal Place for Human Habitation
 Emperor Yan and the Yellow Emperor-First Ancestors of the Chinese Nation
 The Legend of Emperor Yan and the Emperor Yan Temple
 Legends About the Yellow Emperor and the Yellow Emperor Temple
 Civilization Based on Rites of the Duke of Zhou and Bronze Culture
 The Establishment of the Zhou Dynasty
 The Duke of Zhou Establishes Rites
 A Civilization Centered on Rites
 Bronze Culture
 Qin Shi Huang and the World's Eighth Wonder
 Qin Terracotta Warriors and Horses
 Rare Treasures Found at the Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum
 The Pioneering Spirit of the Han Dynasty
 Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty
 The Explorer Zhang Qian
 The Historian Sima Qian
 Improvements in Papermaking Technology by Cai Lun
 Tang Dynasty - the Golden Age
 Civilization and Openness
 The Golden Age and Sage Emperors
 The Age of Poetry
 Honesty and Tolerance
 Chang'an and the Silk Road
 Silk and the Silk Road
 Chang'an-Focus of World Attention
 Chang'an : Enriched by Foreign Cultures
 Religious Culture - a Splendid Mix of Chinese and Western Civilizations
 Xuanzang and the Wild Goose Pagoda
 The Famen Temple and Its Underground Palace
 Co-existence of Different Religions
 Red Shrine and Green Revolution at Yan'an
 Red Shrine
 Yan'an through the Eyes of Foreigners
 Green Revolution
 Today's Qinling Mountains - a Gift to the Earth
 Lessons from History
 Conservation of Flora and Fauna
 Appendix : Major Foreign Affairs Agencies of Shaanxi Province
 Appendix : Major International Travel Agencies of Shaanxi Province
 Appendix : Major Hotels of Shaanxi Province

章节摘录

A Civilization Centered on Rites When the Duke of Zhou established rites , that is , a civilization centered on rites , traditional Chinese culture finally took basic form. The Duke of Zhou was the first to set up the patriarchal system with inheritance by the eldest son by the principal wife at its core , together with a series of political measures , thus guaranteeing the hierarchical relationship between husband and wife , father and son , king and subject. Several hundred years later , the famous Chinese thinker and teacher Confucius (551-479BC) had the rites sorted out and improved , turning them into the core of Confucian culture. After the Western Han Dynasty (206-25 BC) , Ceremonial Rites , The Rites of Zhou and The Book of Rites , representing pre-Qin ritual theory , were listed , one after the other , as compulsory classics for students in government schools. The royal courts of all ensuing dynasties vigorously promoted the rites , and eventually made them penetrate into the life of every citizen. When a boy reached adulthood , there was the hat-wearing ritual symbolizing that it was time for him to shoulder his adult responsibilities ; when man and woman were paired , there was the wedding ceremony between their two families ; when family members or friends passed away , there was the funeral ceremony as a token of grief ; to recall the virtues of ancestors , there were rituals of offering sacrifices to maintain the family cohesiveness ; when troops went on an expedition , there were military rites ; and there were also rites of hospitality for state diplomacy and between friends. All these gradually evolved into a basic code of conduct in China , a country with propriety. The people in the Zhou Dynasty had their roots in the fertile loess soil , and the Zhou culture born there was also deeply rooted in the loess civilization. People had lived on this land in contentment and engaged in farming ; they knew that the more plowing and weeding , the better the crops ; and they were used to finding protection through collective strength. Just as children must obey parents , a person of low status must submit to a superior. Thus came the three cardinal guides- ruler guides subject , father guides son and husband guides wife. In a clan , the oldest male senior with the same family name was the core of the clan ; in a country , the emperor was supreme. This hierarchical system restricted people and made them stick to their allocated place in life , resulting in social stability.

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