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内容概要

It is easy to have a quick lookat China's past and present , but it takes time to gain a panoramicknowledge of China. The "Pan-oramic China" series is meant toassist readers , especially those overseas , in this respect. Each volume in the series focuses on a province , municipality or autono-mous region , describing , with illustrations , the outstanding char-acteristics of each area from dif-ferent perspectives.



书籍目录

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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 ba-sic 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 hierarchi-cal 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, represent-ing pre-Qin ritual theory, were listed, one after the other, as compulsory classics for students in government schools. The royal courts of all ensuring 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 be-tween their two families; when family mem-bers or friends passed away, there was the funeral ceremony as a token of grief; to re-call the virtues of ancestors, there were ritu-als 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 oflow 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 inlife, resulting in social stability.

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