

Jeanine Gherardi

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World Civilization

Social Hierarchies

According to historians, the development of social hierarchies began with the spread of agriculture and they were created with the intention of categorizing individuals into specific groups. In accordance with numerous rules, these groups were named social classes and classified as superior and inferior. Each society had their own distinct hierarchy and there are some similarities and differences between them.

Ancient Israel's social pyramid was separated into five classes, the highest rank was considered the Pharaoh, he was the ultimate authority and no one possessed more power in the kingdom, not even the king. All the people had to adhere to the demands of the Pharaoh. The upper class people were next in rank, and they were wealthy people who owned land in Israel, combined with people who were army and government officials. The middle class included merchants and artisans, who had some authority but much less than the upper class. Unskilled laborers, as well as farmers and non-administrative workers did not have many rights, they were among the low class. And the lowest level is of slaves and servants. These people were allowed to do just one thing in their life, and that was to serve their owner.

The Shang Dynasty social pyramid was similar to ancient Israel except they separated their society in four instead of five, and Shang Dynasty had the king on top who ruled the kingdom not Pharaoh. Next rank came the aristocracy, these people were the most respected

social class, and even governed the smaller areas of the dynasty. People who mainly worked with bronze, like the artisans and craftsmen belonged to the middle class. And Shang society's lowest class was the peasants, who were mostly farmers. There was not a class system set aside for slaves and servants as Israel incorporated.

The ancient Egyptian social hierarchy, like Israel placed the Pharaoh at the top and Pharaohs were believed to be god in the human form. They not only made rules and laws but also had the responsibility of implementing them. Next came the Viziers, it was the Pharaoh who appointed a Vizier in each province. Nobles also had a high social standing in the days of the ancient Egyptians but came below the status of the Pharaohs. They were respected individuals who made local laws and maintained decorum and peace in the society. The priests were those individuals who performed the task of keeping the Gods happy and satisfied. They performed ceremonies and rituals in the temples of Ancient Egypt and took orders from Pharaohs. The scribes fell next in the social hierarchy pyramid of the Ancient Egypt days. These were the educated class of people who knew how to read and write and were required to work in governmental institutions. They maintained records, worked with viziers and were respected for their knowledge and skills.

<https://www.hierarchystructure.com/social-hierarchy-of-ancient-china/>

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