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World Civilization I

03/23/2022

Research & Writing Assignment week 9

For this week's research and writing assignment I took a closer look at the Tibetan Empire, which lasted from 618-841 and is considered as one of the greatest Buddhist hierarchies in the history.

The Tibetan Empire was a very powerful empire in Tibet in central Asia and was founded by Songsten Gampo. He managed to unite various Tibetan tribes and was able to expand his kingdom with diplomacy and through conquest. The Tibetan Empire became a major power in Asia and was known for its strong military and their rich cultural heritage. The Tibetan Buddhism started to flourish in this time and was becoming more and more dominant and also led to the spread to neighbor regions like China.

In the Tibetan Empire, the social structure was build like a pyramid with the King/Emperor on the top, who had the absolute power. The King had ministers and advisors assisting him with the decision making and to govern the empire. The first group under the emperor was the aristocrats, who had wealth and power. This group was split into two again, with one part being the royal family and some powerful families who were called the hereditary aristocracy and the second group being the appointed aristocracy which was consisting of officials who got appointed by the emperor. The next group in the pyramid is the commoners who made up the biggest part of the population and got divided into different groups/classes, based on their social status and occupation. At the bottom of this pyramid were the slaves or serfs and these people had only few rights and were the property of the aristocracy.

Lastly I want to talk about some distinctive feature of Tibet and what made this region so unique compared to others. The first unique feature about Tibet is definitely the location, because Tibet gets sometimes called “Roof of the World”, since its average elevation is about 14,800 feet. With this feature Tibet is the highest region on earth and makes it so different than everything else. Because of this the natural beauty of the area is very unique too and many people know Tibet for its mountains, clear lakes and glaciers. Another aspect that is different from other cultures is the architecture, which is characterized by flat roofs, white walls and woodwork. The unique architecture is important because the buildings have to withstand the high altitude and harsh climate. If the people in Tibet don’t live in their houses or temples, many of them have a nomadic lifestyle, which means they live with the seasons and live in tents or shelters and have herds of sheep or yaks. Based on these living situations, the cuisine is very unique and is based on hearty dishes like yak meat, dumplings and Tsampa. The last unique aspect is the language in Tibet which belongs to the Tibetic language family and is written with the help of a script called the Tibetan script.

Overall you can say that Tibet is a very unique and fascinating area on our planet with rich history. The unique history from the Tibetan Empire and all the geographical features make it such a special place and very important in history.

Works cited

<https://books.google.at/books?hl=en&lr=&id=7G61UifCEZMC&oi=fnd&pg=PA3&dq=tibetan+empire+history&ots=MsKDPHDXdw&sig=41MD9dAwrN2G3IGSg7cJpKo-p-w#v=onepage&q&f=false>

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Frameworks (page 296)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tibetan_Empire (for some of the basic facts)