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# THE CHINESE CIVILISATION



## Learning objectives

After reading the lesson you will be able to identify the Following:

Main Characteristics:

Origin, Location, Rivers

Society: Social life – Family, Community

Town Planning

Occupations, Trade, Art and (Craft) Architecture

Religious Beliefs

Decline

**Location and Origin:** The earliest Chinese civilisation developed along the banks of the river **Hwang Ho** (also called yellow river for its colour). The river provided fertile soil and

water for cultivation of crops. At the same time it destroyed homes and irrigation canals. So it is also called the '**Sorrow of China**'. The river was thus a blessing as well as a cause of suffering.



Extent of early Chinese civilisation

- ❖ Buddha's main teachings are contained in the Tripitakas. Buddhism was divided into Mahayana and Hinayana sects.
- ❖ Buddhism and Jainism had many similarities. Both religions opposed the caste system and ritualism. They believed in equality of all human beings. They advocated ahimsa. Both religions were spread by means of the language spoken by the common people. This is because both arose as reactions against the extreme rigidity and ritualism of Hinduism in this period.
- ❖ Jainism and Buddhism enriched Indian culture and left their impact upon Hinduism, as well as upon the society as a whole.
- ❖ Jainism, Buddhism (and Confucianism) had many similarities because they addressed society and wanted to reform it.



## EXERCISES

### I. State whether the following statements are true or false.

- a) Siddhartha was the original name of Gautam Buddha.
- b) Mahavira was the first *Tirthankar*.
- c) Mahavira preached the Middle Path.
- d) Ashoka and Kanishka were great followers of Jainism.
- e) Buddhists and Jains used Sanskrit for writing their religious texts from the very beginning.
- f) Buddha gave his first sermon at Bodh Gaya.

### II. Fill in the blanks.

- a) The *Tripitakas* relate to \_\_\_\_\_.
- b) Gautam Buddha preached in the \_\_\_\_\_ language.
- c) Pawapuri is a site sacred to \_\_\_\_\_.
- d) The Middle Path was prescribed by \_\_\_\_\_.
- e) Jainism \_\_\_\_\_ the authority of Vedas.

### III. Make correct pairs.

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| a) Jatakas  | i) Language that Buddha used to preach |
| b) Angas    | ii) Jainism laid much stress on        |
| c) Sanskrit | iii) Jain texts                        |
| d) Pali     | iv) Buddha's life-stories              |
| e) Sanchi   | v) Language used by Mahayanas          |
| f) Ahimsa   | vi) Buddhist Stupa                     |
| g) 12 Angas | vii) The Enlightened One               |
| h) Buddha   | viii) Mahaviras teachings              |