

Life in the Country: The vast majority of people in Han times were farmers. They lived in one or two story mud houses with tiled or thatched roofs. They had curtains on the windows. Barns and other buildings surrounded the house. Several families lived in one house to allow them to work their fields together. They still did not own their farms, but farms were larger in size, because families had learned to team up. This solved a major problem. Together, they were able to produce more food than they needed, which allowed them to trade food for other items. This made a world of difference to their lives.

They still worked very hard. They went to bed at dark and got up at dawn. They dressed in simple clothes. Both men and women wore shirts and pants made of scratchy dark cloth, and sandals made of straw. They stuffed their clothes with paper and cloth, to stay warm in the winter. They steamed much of their food over boiling water on stoves. In the south, they ate rice, steamed dumplings, and fish, flavored with garlic and onions. In the north, they ate wheat instead of rice, but they ate mostly the same foods. Still, compared to their life under the Qin Dynasty, life had improved.

Quick Han Times History Note

Although outsiders call this land China, after Ch'in (Qin) times, the Chinese, still today, call themselves Han people.

Han Times Questions:

1. Why did the Han rewrite the teachings of Confucius?
2. How did some merchants make the people (farmers and nobility) angry?
3. How did we learn most of what we know about the Han Dynasty?
4. What was the main subject taught in public school?