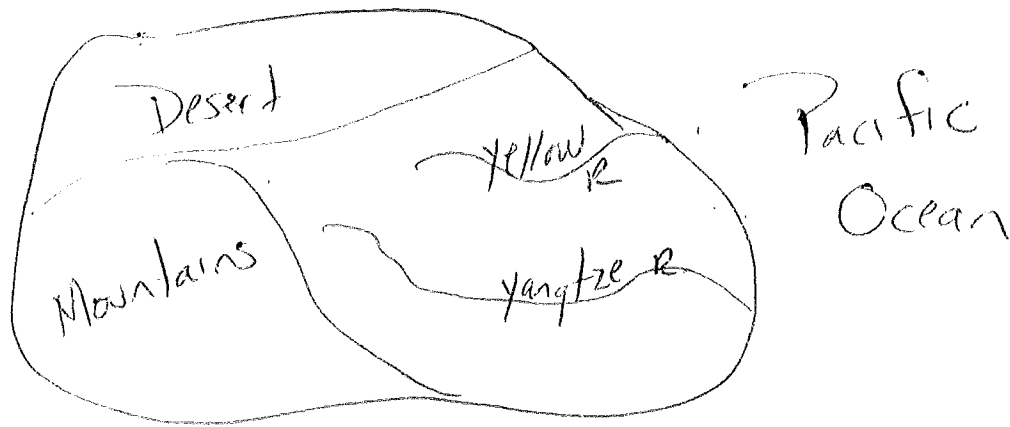


Geography

The geography of Ancient China shaped the way the civilization and culture developed. This large land was isolated from much of the rest of the world by dry deserts to the north and west, the Pacific Ocean to the east, and the impassable Himalayan Mountains to the south. This isolation enabled the Chinese to develop independently from other world civilizations.

Map showing the geography of China :



Two important geographical features of ancient China were the two major rivers, the Yellow River to the north and the Yangtze River to the south. The Yellow River is often called the "Cradle of Chinese Civilization" because this is where the Chinese civilization first formed. It is also called the Huang He River or China's Sorrow because of the devastating

Floods that is could cause. The entire northern region is said to appear yellow because of the fertile minerals in the soil called loess. Early Chinese Farmers built small villages along the Yellow River. The rich yellow colored soil was good for growing a grain called millet.

The Yangtze River is south of the Yellow River and flows in the same direction (west to east). It is the third longest river in the world. Just like the Yellow River, the Yangtze played an important role in the development of the culture and civilization of Ancient China. Farmers that lived along the Yangtze River took advantage of the Warm climate and rainy weather to grow rice. Irrigation techniques were developed and the Chinese would flood their fields to make shallow paddies for growing rice. The Chinese tried to make the most of their land by developing a technique called terracing. They carved steps into the mountain sides to increase the surface area for farming.

China also contains the Himalaya Mountains. These are the highest mountains in the world. They provided a nearly impassable border for Ancient China, keeping the area isolated from many other civilizations. To the north and West of Ancient China was the large Gobi Desert. This harsh desert also kept the Chinese civilization separated from the rest of the world.