

Comprehension

Read the passage and the questions that follow.

I was born on 11th November 1919...By the time I was born my father was already past middle age. Of his 8 children only 5 sons survived. The others, all girls, had died long before I was born. At the very onset, my brothers might have looked upon me with some misgiving. Mongol parents do not make wills. When the head of the family dies, property is distributed equally to male heirs. Daughters do not receive any inheritance, but are given a precious dowry at the time of their marriage. As there were already 4 sons, my arrival could only mean a smaller proportion of the family property for each of them. If, however, they felt any resentment, they never shared it. In my early childhood, my four brothers were always affectionate and protective towards me.

My native village contained some 40 of 50 families, divided into two distinct groups. Our cluster of families occupied the northern section of the village. The other, in accordance with Mongol custom, lived in a direct line south. All members of both groups belonged to the onon clan and were therefore related to each other to some degree. This close relationship resulted in a relaxed friendly atmosphere especially among the adult members of the community.

For the most part, our villagers were farmers; although logging and hunting provided additional income, it was the earth that gave us our livelihood...

Life in the Onon clan was regulated by an unwritten code of conduct. Special problems that concerned the whole community were decided by the area village council, consisting of 6 or 7 elderly men known for their wisdom and broad experience. The relationships of each person to every member of the village were rigidly prescribed and clearly understood by all. Parents drilled into their children a deep-seated respect for the elders and unquestioning obedience.

Very elderly people were treated with the utmost respect, courtesy by all. Wealth, poverty or position in life had nothing to do with this. According to the thinking of our people, honours and riches are bestowed by mere men, but ripe old age is a gift from Heaven!

Adapted from: Family life in Mongolia by Rounge Onona A description of his Childhood.

Questions:

1. Why may the writer's brothers have looked at him with some misgiving? (2marks)

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2. How did daughters receive part of their family's property? (2marks)

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3. What brought about the friendly atmosphere between the two groups of the Onon clan? (2marks)

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4 .How did the villagers earn their living?(2marks)

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5 .Explain the meaning of the following words and expressions as they are used in the passage. (2marks)

A) By the time I was born

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B) At the very onset.....

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C)relaxed friendly atmosphere.....

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D)Unwritten code of conduct.....
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Stay home stay safe