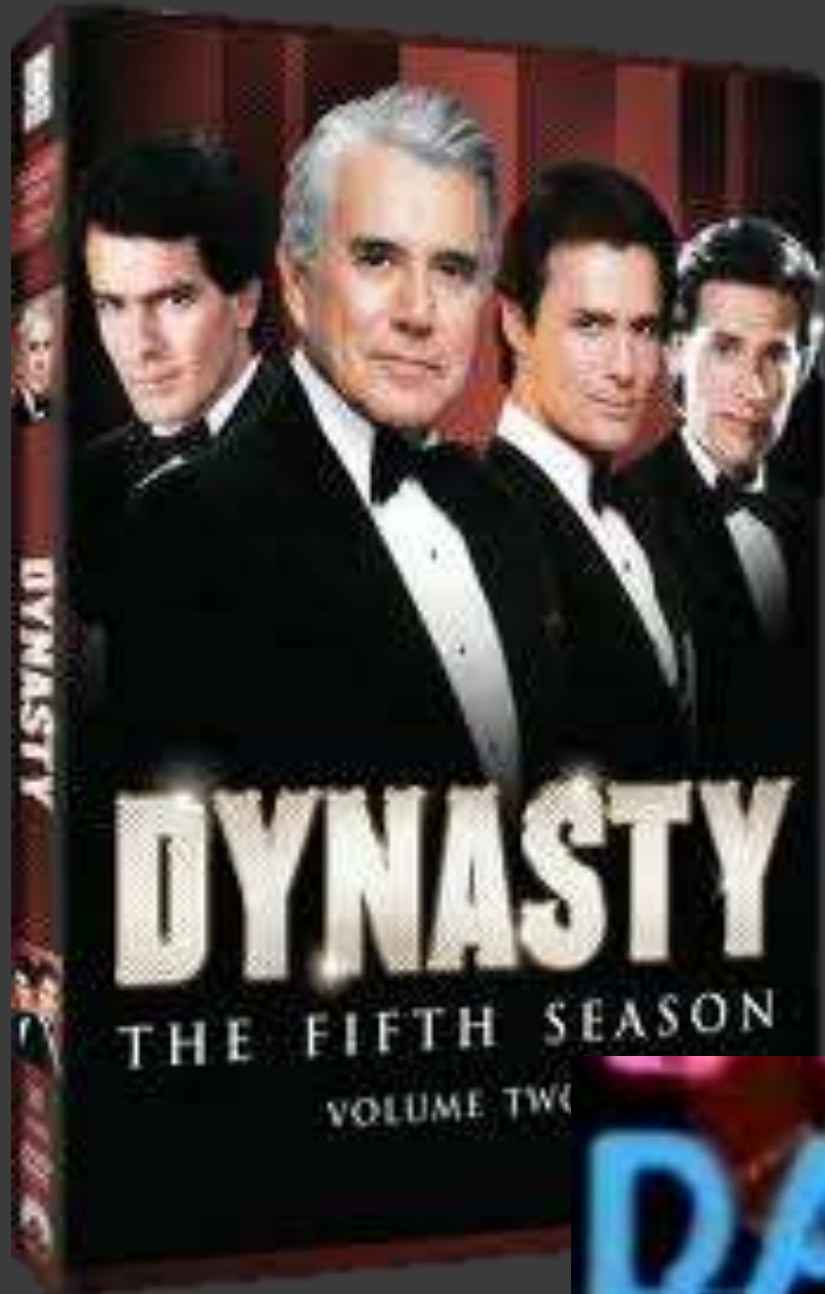




DYNASTY DAYS: SHANG/ZHOU/QIN/HAN

October 2/3, 2012



DAYS



SHANG DYNASTY



Shang Dynasty (1600-1050 BCE)

Summary:

- The Shang Dynasty overthrows the Hsia(Xia) Dynasty because the last Hsia king had become very corrupt.
- The Shang begins to crumble under the stress of barbarian attacks not only from the south, but also the east.
- The Zhou unites all of the Shang's enemies under them and defeats the Shang.
- The Shang are completely defeated when the last Shang king, named Zhou, attempts to quell some barbarians in the north. Seeing that the army is weaker because of its fight in the north, the Zhou leader, Wu-wang attacks and destroys the Shang capital city, Anyang.

Shang Dynasty

Key Leaders:

- Tang the Great defeated the last, evil king of the Xia Dynasty, sending him into exile. The Shang changed their capital numerous times because of environmental problems, hostile neighbors, or because they were a semi-nomadic people used to moving.
- The cycle of founding of a dynasty by a great king and ending a dynasty with the ousting of an evil king continued.
- The final, tyrannical king of the Shang is commonly called King Zhou. He killed his own son, tortured and murdered his ministers and was overly influenced by his concubine. The Zhou army defeated the last king of the Shang, whom they called the Yin, at the battle of Muye. The Yin king immolated himself.

Shang Dynasty

Unique Features:

- The Shang leaves the earliest evidence of a writing system as well as the first historical records. The Shang society also begins to divide into upper and lower classes. Its military makes use of horse and chariot. These technologies prove a formidable force against the barbarian tribes and other small city-states around it.
- The Shang worship their ancestors, who intercede with the gods on behalf of the living. There is a supreme god called "Deity Above" or "Lord on High." Underneath him are smaller gods of things found in nature like sun, moon and wind. These gods serve as couriers to the "Deity Above."
- When kings are buried, their officials are sometimes killed and buried with them to aid royalty in the afterlife. The kings also serve in the court of the "Deity Above."

Shang Dynasty

Inventions/Innovation:

- Earliest glazed pottery, evidence of a potter's wheel
- Industrialized bronze casting used for rituals, wine, and food, as well as weapons and tools
- advanced jade carving
- determined the year was 365 1/4 days
- made reports on diseases
- first appearance of Chinese script, oracle bones
- Steppe-like war chariots
- Remains have been found of palace foundations, burials, and rammed earth fortifications.



ZHOU DYNASTY



Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 BCE)

Summary:

- The Chou or Zhou dynasty ruled China from about 1027 to about 221 B.C. It was the longest dynasty in Chinese history. Originally pastoralists, the Chou set up a (proto-)feudal social organization based on families, with administrative bureaucracy, and developed a middle class. The Chou's origins are unknown. The earliest record of their existence is in the Wei Valley.
- Some philosophies gain influence: Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism.
- The Chou dynasty is divided into two sections: Western or Early Chou, and Eastern or Later Chou.
- The Chou Dynasty inherits the culture of the Shang Dynasty because the Chou is less advanced.

Zhou Dynasty

Summary:

The Western Chou are attacked:

- Nomads from the Northwest who are searching for food. The remaining people from the ruling class who survive the attack establish a new capital, Loyang (or Luoyang).

Zhou Dynasty

Summary:

Eastern Chou is further divided into two sections:

- The "Spring and Autumn" lasts from 771-481 BC. During this time, conflict between the city-states break out. Iron is discovered and used to help in agriculture. The improvements in agriculture led to surplus food, which in turn led to population growth. Beginning of the Warring States Period, many scholars are pursuing knowledge through philosophy. (The One Hundred Schools of Thought)
- The Warring States period lasts from 481-256 BC. The growing settlements clash against one another in "total war." The smallest city-states ally together to avoid being swallowed up. However, the large city-states defeat the alliances and gain hegemony in China. One of those city-states in the east, called the Ch'in, gains enough dominance through conquering barbarians and win over China.

Zhou Dynasty

Key Leaders:

- The Zhou were originally semi-nomadic and had co-existed with the Shang. The dynasty was begun by Kings Wen (Ji Chang) and Zhou Wuwang (Ji Fa) who were considered ideal rulers, patrons of the arts, and descendants of the Yellow Emperor.
- "Warrior King" was the son of the leader of the Chou (Zhou) located on the western border of the Shang's China. Coalition, leaders of other states to defeat the last, evil ruler of the Shang. They succeeded and Wuwang became the first king.
- A class of scholars developed, whose members included the great Chinese philosopher Confucius. The Book of Changes was written during the Chou Dynasty. The philosopher Lao Tse was appointed librarian for the historical records of the Chou kings. The Chou banned human sacrifice and saw their success over the Shang as a mandate from heaven. Ancestor worship developed.

Zhou Dynasty

Unique Features:

- Iron was introduced and Confucianism was developed. Sun Tzu wrote The Art of War in about 500 B.C.
- They create the concept of that the previous dynasty had made many mistakes and therefore lost the support of "Deity Above," otherwise known as the Mandate of Heaven. This legitimizes the Chou rule. For centuries to come all kings claim that the supreme god supported their rule.
- As the population grows, the Chou people begin following a social structure much like that found in Feudal Europe in the Middle Ages. There is an upper class, made up of rulers. Following close behind are the people who hold important positions in the army, hold government positions, or are educated scholars. The lowest class is made up of the peasants who farm or do other manual labor. The lower classes are made vassals of the upper classes. This means

Zhou Dynasty

Inventions/Innovation:

- Aristocratic system of warfare changed: peasants fought; there were new weapons, including crossbows, chariots, and iron armor.
- Ox-drawn ploughs, iron and iron casting, horseback riding, coinage, multiplication tables, chopsticks.
- Roads, canals, and major irrigation projects were developed.
- Legalism provided the philosophical background for the first imperial dynasty, the Qin Dynasty. Legalism accepted that humans are flawed and asserted that political institutions should recognize this. Therefore the state should be authoritarian, demanding strict obedience to the leader, known rewards and punishments.
- Inlay, Iron casting, Iron weapons, Chariots, Dye, Glass, Astronomy, Magnetism, Arithmetic, Fractions, Geometry, Plowing, Pesticides, Fertilizers, Acupuncture



QIN DYNASTY



Qin/Ching Dynasty (221-206 BCE)

Summary:

- Dynasty ran from 221-206 B.C. The first emperor, Qin Shihuangdi, founded the Qin Dynasty. He built the Great Wall to keep out northern invaders, and centralized the Chinese government. His tomb contained 6000 terra cotta figurines commonly believed to be soldiers. The Qin accomplishments:
 - Existed during the Warring States Period, first imperial dynasty.
 - Militarily superior and used cavalry for the first time in China. The government of China was Legalist, a system that held the power of the state and its monarch's interests paramount.
 - This policy led to a strain on the treasury and, ultimately, the end of the dynasty. Described as a police state with the government holding absolute power. Private weapons were confiscated.

Qin/Ching Dynasty

Key Leaders:

- By 211 BC, Qin Shihuang Di, the first emperor of China, was 38 years old when he came into power, unifying China from a 200-year period where six warring states all vied for power. While his Dynasty only lasted 15 years, the impact of the Qin Emperor on China cannot be understated.
- Practices and policies of the Qin Dynasty (221 BCE-206 BCE) were so influential and conducive to power that they were carried into the subsequent Han Dynasty and continue to flourish in present-day China.
- Although he is a strong emperor, there are flaws in his rule. Taxes are too high and the lands conquered are too vast to maintain. When Shihuangdi dies, a number of men scramble for the position of emperor and the dynasty falls.

Qin/Ching Dynasty

Unique Features:

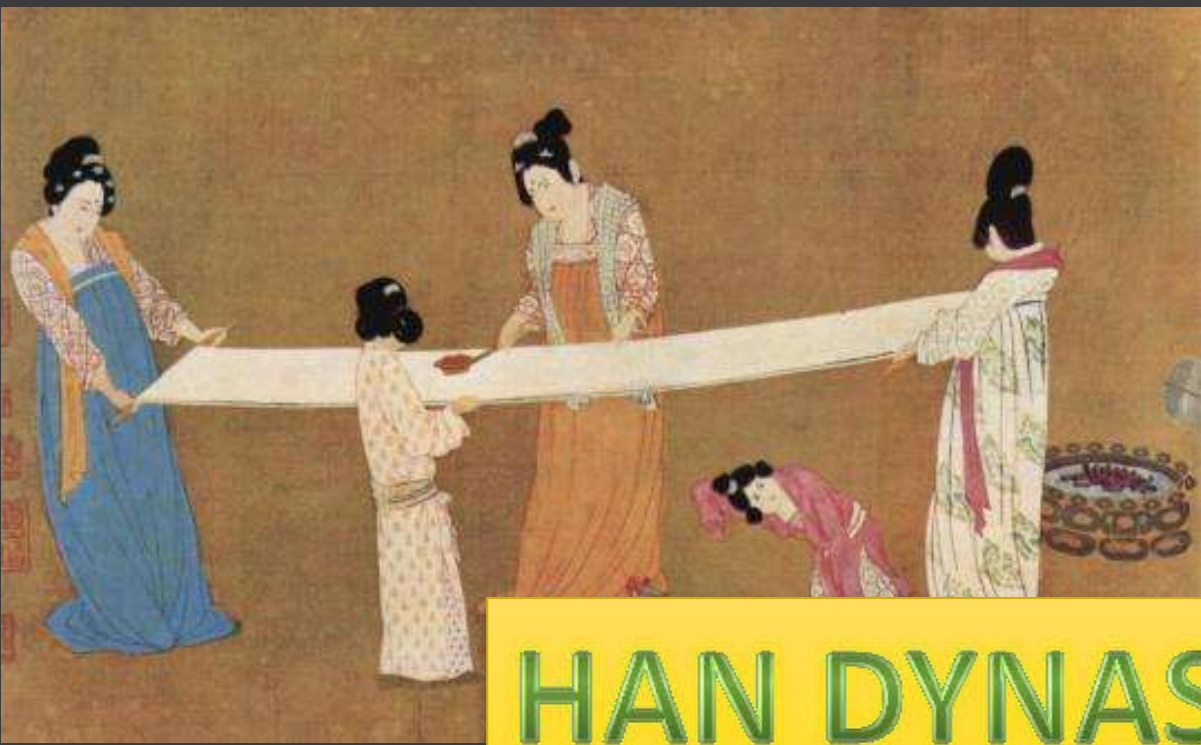
- King works to standardize as many things as possible, from weights and measurements to the size of chariot axles. He even establishes one centralized army and standardizes the money system.
- The emperor, who dies in 210 BC, has 8 thousand terra cotta statues made to create an army that would serve him after death.
- This is reminiscent of the human sacrifice that occurred in earlier dynasties at the death of rulers. He also has chariots and armor buried with him.
- The first Great Wall of China that went from the Pacific Ocean into the middle of Asia, connects the existing dirt defense walls to keep out the barbarians on the frontier.
- This and other large constructions like roads and canals make the burden of taxes heavy.

Qin/Ching Dynasty

Inventions/Innovation:

- [Compass](#)
- **Central Rule:** The dynasty adhered to Legalist principles, a Chinese philosophy that followed strict compliance to a rule of law. This belief allowed Qin to rule the population from a centralized power structure and proved a very effective way to govern. Such a policy however, did not allow for dissent.
- **The Great Wall:** Construction of the Great Wall of China marked national boundaries that led to greater unity. Such a move was defensive, to protect against invading nomadic tribes to the north, though later dynasties were more expansionist and built over Qin's original wall.

- **Written Script:** Qin instituted a uniform written language, allowing for greater communication and implementation of policies. Such a script allowed scholars to share information to a greater number of people and lead to the transmittal of culture that was previously only seen by a few. A single language allowed the later dynasties to communicate with nomadic tribes and pass along information on how to negotiate or fight with them.
- **Roads:** The construction of roads allowed for greater connections between provinces and major cities. The dynasty also standardized the length of axles in carts so that they could all ride on the newly-built roads.
- **Weights and Measures:** The dynasty standardized all weights and measures that led to more efficient commerce and would allow subsequent dynasties to develop a taxation system.
- **Coinage:** The dynasty also standardized the Chinese currency, adding to greater commerce.



HAN DYNASTY



Han Dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE)

Summary:

- The Han Dynasty, which was founded by Liu Bang (Han Gaozu), lasted for four centuries. The Han established the capital at Chang'an (today's Xi'an) as a part of the Silk Road and began to make contact with the West.
- The Han Dynasty was divided into two periods, the earlier, Western Han Dynasty, from 206 B.C. - A.D. 8/9, and the later, Eastern Han Dynasty, from 25-220. Emperor Gao maintained the centralized government of his predecessors, and started an enduring bureaucracy based on intellect rather than aristocratic birth. This was in line with the switch from Taoism to Confucianism. By the end of the Western Han, there were 3000 scholars enrolled in the academy for the imperial bureaucracy.
- The empire of the Han extended into Mongolia, Vietnam, and Korea, and the population of China increased to 50,000,000.

Han Dynasty

Key Leaders:

- The general Kao Tzu wins over the other conflicting military commanders who want control. He unifies and consolidates China.
- Emperor Wu-ti (140-87 BC) takes more control, for example, he uses government monopolies of such items as salt and iron to gain control over the economy. He fights against the weakening nomads and conquers the Huns in Vietnam and Manchuria.
- Emperor Wang Mang (9-23 AD) dislikes the growing powers of the large families - takes some of this power away, gains the families' anger. Mang also upset the poor because he did not institute welfare reform fast enough. Mang is murdered.
- Kuang Wo Ti (25-57 AD) gains control, capital, Ch'ang-on to Loyang.
- China's greatest historian, Sima Qian, lived during this period. Records a Roman embassy from Emperor [Antoninus Pius](#) Emperor.

Han Dynasty

Unique Features:

- Emperor Gao maintained the centralized government of his predecessors, and started an enduring bureaucracy based on intellect rather than aristocratic birth.
- Han population of China increased to 50,000,000.
- Buddhism monks come from India and begin to spread the religion of Buddhism through China. Buddhism takes root as the Han Dynasty crumbles.

Han Dynasty

Inventions/Innovation:

- Civil Service competitive exams
- State Academy
- [Seismograph](#) invented to detect earthquakes
- Iron ploughs led by oxen became common; coal to smelt iron
- Water-power mills
- Censuses
- Paper invented
- [Probably gunpowder.](#)
- Technological advances also marked this period. Two of the great Chinese inventions, paper and porcelain, date from Han times.

THE END



Pictures taken during my [NCTA](#) Study Tour to China in Summer 2006. Many facts came from the books: [China: The Balance Sheet](#) & [China, Inc.](#) Other information came from various articles and websites, hyperlinked in this presentation.

Any follow questions or helpful additions would be welcome. Email me at trmitchell31@yahoo.com