ANCIENT CHINA
Geography of China / And Barriers

• An isolated civilization made up of long distances and physical barriers
• This contributed to the belief that China was the center of the earth
• West & Southwest are mountain ranges:
  • 1. Tien Shan
  • 2. Himalayas
• To the southeast thick jungles divide China
• To the north is the Gobi desert
• To the east is the Pacific Ocean
• The Chinese did trade with is neighbors and the Middle East and beyond
• Chinese encountered nomadic peoples called barbarians who did not speak Chinese and lacked the skills and achievements of a settled society
• Nomads conquered China from time to time but were usually
River of Sorrows

• The Huang He got its name from the Loess or fine windblown yellow soil

• Called the River of Sorrows because the loess settles on the river bottom which raises the water level

• Peasants built dikes which if broken would be disastrous
River of Sorrows Today
Shang Dynasty Begins / Government

- Dominates China from about 1650 to 1027 BC During which Chinese civilization takes shape
- Had large palaces and tombs,
- Kings who led warriors into battle
- Women had considerable status
- Kings probably controlled small areas while loyal princes and nobles governed most of the land
- They were likely heads of important clans or groups of families who claimed a common ancestor
- Probably made up of city-states
Social Classes

• 1. Royal family / noble warriors

• 2. merchants and artisans

• 3. peasants
Peasant Life

• Most people were peasants
• Lived in farming villages
• Difficult lives working fields with stone tools and forced to fight when wars broke out
Religious Beliefs

• Maintained a complex beliefs with many gods and nature spirits
• Chief god was **Shang Di** and a mother goddess who brought plants and animals to Earth
• Gods do not respond to mortals only spirits of the greatest mortals such as the ancestors of the king could get the ear of the gods so prayers of rulers and nobles to ancestors were thought to serve the community would ensure a good harvest or victory in war
• At first only the **royal family** had ancestors important enough in influence the gods
• Gradually other classes shared in these **rituals**
• To honor ancestors they offered them sacrifices of **food** and other necessities
• Chinese believed the universe reflected a delicate balance between two forces **Yin** and **Yang**
• **Yin** was linked to the earth, darkness and female forces
• **Yang** stood for heaven light and male forces
• A well balanced universe depended on maintaining balance between **yin and yang**
• Video 4 min: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezmR9Attpyc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezmR9Attpyc)
Yin and Yang

YING
NEGATIVE
FEMALE
NIGHT
PASSIVE
MOON
INTUITIVE
COLD
SOFT

YANG
POSITIVE
MALE
DAY
ACTIVE
SUN
LOGICAL
HOT
HARD
System of Writing / The Difficult Study of Writing

• Chinese system of writing used both pictographs and ideographs, signs that expressed thoughts or ideas.
• Written Chinese took shape almost 4,000 years ago.
• It evolved to include tens of thousands of characters.
• Each character represented a word or idea and was made up of a number of different strokes.
• Chinese writing remains one of the most difficult languages to learn having up to 10,000 characters while English or Arabic contain only a couple of dozen representing basic sounds.
• Calligraphy the fine handwriting turned into an elegant form of art.
• People in different parts of China often could not understand each other but they did all use the same writing.
### Evolution of Chinese Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Picture</th>
<th>Evolution</th>
<th>Modern character</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Sun" /></td>
<td>→</td>
<td>日</td>
<td>sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Moon" /></td>
<td>→</td>
<td>月</td>
<td>moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Tree" /></td>
<td>→</td>
<td>木</td>
<td>tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Mountain" /></td>
<td>→</td>
<td>山</td>
<td>mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Water" /></td>
<td>→</td>
<td>水</td>
<td>water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Field" /></td>
<td>→</td>
<td>田</td>
<td>field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Door" /></td>
<td>→</td>
<td>門</td>
<td>door</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.1. The evolution of pictographic characters.
EXAMPLES OF CHINESE WRITING

兔 虎 牛 鼠
RABBIT TIGER OX RAT

羊 马 蛇 龙
SHEEP HORSE SNAKE DRAGON

猪 狗 鸡 猴
Pig Dog Rooster Monkey
Chinese Writing
The Zhou Dynasty begins
The Mandate from Heaven

- The Zhou people overthrew the Shang in 1027 BC and set up a dynasty lasting until 256 BC
- **Mandate of Heaven** or divine right to rule
- Because of the cruelty of the Shang king it was declared that because he treated the people so bad the gods sent ruin on him
- The Mandate of Heaven was passed the Zhou who treated the multitude of people well
- Dynastic cycle was the rise and fall of dynasties
- Floods, famine and other catastrophes were signs that a dynasty had lost the favor of Heaven
- This would result in new leaders seizing power and
- Setting up new dynasties
The Dynastic Cycle in China

The dynastic cycle refers to the rise and fall of dynasties.

The New Dynasty
- Restores peace
- Appoints loyal officials
- Redistributes land to peasants
- Builds canals, irrigation systems, and roads
- Repairs defensive walls

The Aging Dynasty
- Neglects government duties
- Ignores corrupt officials
- Loses control of the provinces
- Imposes heavy taxes to pay for luxuries
- Allows defensive walls to decay

Problems
- Floods, famine, earthquakes
- Invasions
- Armed bandits in the provinces
- Peasant revolts

New dynasty claims the Mandate of Heaven
Aging dynasty loses the Mandate of Heaven
Feudal State

• Zhou rewarded their supporters by granting the control over different regions

• Feudalism was a system of government in which local lords governed their own lands but owed military service and support to the ruler
Barter – goods and services were traded without the exchange of money. However, before trade could occur, there had to be a “double coincidence of wants”. Each trader had to have something the other wanted.

I’ll trade you a chicken for a pair of shoes.

I would love to sell you these shoes but I can’t eat chicken, due to my bad teeth, caused by smoking.

In a barter economy a chicken farmer who wants to buy shoes may have to first trade chickens for apples and then apples for shoes because the guy selling shoes wants only apples. Money eliminates this problem.
Economic Growth

- Chinese economy grew
- Iron working arrived about 500 BC
- This enabled farmers to produce more food
- Commerce expanded too
- Chinese began using Money for the first time making trade easier
- Economic expansion led to an increase in population
- Feudal nobles expanded their territories and encouraged peasants to settle in the
Ancient Chinese Coins
Chinese Achievements

• Astronomers studied movements of the **planets** and recorded eclipses of the sun, helping them to develop an accurate calendar with 365 1/2 days.

• By 1,000BC the Chinese discovered how to make **silk** from the cocoons of **silkworms**.

• Only **royalty** could afford robes made from silk.

• Under the **Zhou** the Chinese made the first **books**!!!
Silk Production
Chinese Silk Clothing
Wisdom of Confucius

- **Confucius** was born 551 BC to a noble but poor family.
- Was a brilliant scholar & tried to become an adviser to a local ruler but couldn’t find a permanent position so he turned to teaching.
- His reputation for wisdom grew and attracted many students.
- His sayings were collected by his students in the *Analects*.
- He took little interest in religious matters.
- He developed philosophy or system if ideas concerned with worldly goals.
- Especially how to **ensure social order and good government**.
Five Relationships

• Confucius taught that harmony resulted when people accepted their place in society
• **He stressed five key relationship**
  • 1. Father to Son
  • 2. Elder brother to younger brother
  • 3. Husband to Wife
  • 4. Ruler to subject
  • 5. Friend to Friend
• Except for friendship, none of these relationships is equal,
• Everyone had duties and responsibilities
• Correct behavior would bring order and stability
• Confucius put **FILIAL PIETY** or respect for parents above all other duties
• Other duties include honesty, hard work, and concern for others
• “Do not do to others what you do not wish yourself
Government

• Rulers had responsibility to provide GOOD GOVERNMENT

• In return, people would be respectful and loyal subjects

• The best ruler was a virtuous one who led people by good example

• Government officials should be well educated

• Confucius video 5:36: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUhGRh4vdb8
THE SPREAD OF CONFUCIANISM

• After his death Confucius ideas influenced every area of Chinese life from the choosing of scholars and as officials to reverence for ancestors

• Close to a third of the world’s population came under its influence
HARSH IDEAS OF LEGALISM

• A harsh philosophy grew from the teachings of Hanfeizi, who died 233 BC
• He felt the nature of man was EVIL. And goodness was acquired
• Felt that greed was the motive for most actions and caused most of the conflicts
• The only way to achieve order was to pass strict laws and impose harsh punishments not goodness was a ruler’s greatest virtue
• Many feudal rulers chose Legalism as the best way to keep order
• Legalists ideas forced people to work on government projects and punished those who don’t do their duties
Daoism: The Unspoken Way

• Founder or Daoism was Laozi or Old Master and wrote The Way of Virtue
• Concerned was with living in harmony with nature and rejected conflict and strife with many turning away from society and living as hermits, artist or poets
• Daoists view government as unnatural and therefore cause many problems
• Best government is one that governed the least
• Daoism Video 5:29: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFb7Hxva5rg
A Blend of Ideas

• Gradually people blended Confucian and Daoist teaching

• Confucianism showed them how to *behave* and Daoism influenced their view of the *natural world*

• Mahayana Buddhism was spread by missionaries and *merchants* from India to *China* and became very popular in times of crisis

• It promised and escape from *suffering* and offered hope of eternal *happiness* and presented Buddha as a compassionate god and hope of salvation.

• Buddhist monasteries became important centers of learning and arts
Shi Huangdi

- Zheng proclaimed himself Shi Huangdi, the first emperor
- He spent 20 years conquering most of the warring states in Zhou China to end its divisions
- He centralized power with help of Legalist advisers and built a strong authoritarian government of the Qin dynasty
Shi Huangdi
Unity Imposed

- Emperor Shi Huangdi abolished **feudalism**
- He replaced feudal states with **36 military districts**
- He sent inspectors to **spy** on local officials and report back to him
- Still peasants had to pay **high taxes** to support armies and **building projects**
- To promote unity he standardized **weights and measures** and replaced Zhou coins with **Qin** coins
- Writing became uniform and workers repaired and extended **roads**, canals to strengthen transportation
Crackdown on Dissent

- Shi Huangdi moved harshly against critics
- They were *jailed, tortured* or killed
- He also had a ruthless campaign of *book* burning and ordered destruction of all works of literature and *philosophy* burned, only books on *medicine and agriculture* were allowed
The Great Wall

• Shi Huangdi’s most remarkable & costly achievement was the **Great Wall of China**
• He ordered earlier feudal walls to be joined
• It took hundreds of thousands of labors years to build the **25 foot height** wall topped with a wide brick **road**
• The wall was thousands of miles long and while it did not keep out invaders it did become an important symbol to Chinese people
• History channel: [http://www.history.com/topics/great-wall-of-china/videos/history-of-the-great-wall](http://www.history.com/topics/great-wall-of-china/videos/history-of-the-great-wall)
• 8 min [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZnsXw6igjw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZnsXw6igjw)
GREAT WALL OF CHINA
Great Wall Of China
Great Wall of China
Terracotta Soldiers

• The **Terracotta Army** or the "Terracotta Warriors and Horses" is a collection of terracotta sculptures depicting the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China. It is a form of funerary art buried with the emperor in 210–209 BCE and whose purpose was to protect the emperor in his afterlife.

• The figures, dating from approximately the late third century BCE were discovered in 1974 by local farmers. The figures vary in height according to their roles, with the tallest being the generals. The figures include warriors, chariots and horses. Estimates from 2007 were that the three pits containing the Terracotta Army held more than 8,000 soldiers, 130 chariots with 520 horses and 150 cavalry horses, the majority of which remained buried in the pits nearby.

• Terra Cotta Soldiers 4:10
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsUE-ZtcUFg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsUE-ZtcUFg)

• 50: min: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UJOcsCHyIQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UJOcsCHyIQ)
Terra-Cotta Soldiers
The Han Dynasty

- As emperor Liu Bang took the title of Gao Zu.
- He continued efforts to unify China, lowered taxes and eased some of the harsh Legalist polices thus creating a strong foundation for the Han dynasty.
Emperor Wudi

• Most famous Han Emperor was Wudi
• He strengthened the government and the Economy as well as chose Confucian men of wisdom for officials
• He improved Canals and Roads
• Wudi imposed a government Monopoly or complete control of a product or business by one person or group, on iron and salt
• Wudi followed a policy of Expansionism by increasing the amount of territory under Chinese rule and encouraging settlers, soldiers and traders to spread Chinese culture
Salt Mining Today
Silk Road to the West

• Wudi opened up a trade route linking China with the west that would become known as the Silk Road

• Eventually the road would stretch for 4,000 miles linking China to the Fertile Crescent

• 15 min virtual tour: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56IzyMfLJFA

• 5 min animated ted talk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vn3e37VWc0k
Civil Service Examination

• Han emperors made Confucianism the Belief system of the state

• Han emperors adopted the idea that government officials should win positions by Merit (based on their ability to perform a job, rather than on their political connections) rather than through family background

• To find the most qualified officials, they set up system of Exams but to pass candidates had to study Confucian classics, history, poems and handbooks on customs

• Typically only those who could afford years of study, the wealthy, could hope to succeed

• Because of filial piety and the superiority of men, women were kept from taking the exam so government jobs were forbidden to Women

• The civil service exam put well trained men into every level of the government
Collapse of the Han Empire

• Over time the Han dynasty declined, the emperors could no longer control powerful warlords or local military rulers
• Roads and canals fell into disrepair, heavy taxes pushed peasants into Revolt
• Finally in 220 AD the Han emperor was overthrown and broke into several Kingdoms and invaders poured over the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievements of the Han <strong>Golden Age</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Science**

- Han scientists wrote texts on **Chemistry**, zoology, **Botany** etc.
- Astronomers observed measured movements of stars, planets enabling an improved calendar & timekeeping devices.

**Medicine**

- Physicians diagnosed diseases, experimented with herbal remedies.
- **Acupuncture** was when doctors inserted needles under the skin at specific points to relieve pain or treat some illnesses. Restores balance of Yin and Yang.
Acupuncture
Technology

• In its time, Han China was the most technologically advanced civilization in the world

• Some advances were
  1. paper
  2. advanced methods of shipbuilding
  3. invented the rudder to steer
  4. bronze and iron stirrups
  5. Fishing reels
  6. Wheel Barrows
  7. Suspension Bridges
  8. Chain Pumps
LOOKING AHEAD

• The Han united China and created an empire about the same size as the Continental United States

• They established a system of government that would survive until 1912