

# Ancient China

古代中国

# Dynasty

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- **A line of rulers coming from the same family**
- **Name of dynasty ≠ name of family**

# Mandate of Heaven

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- **Fit to rule according to the heavens**
- **Natural disasters = bad ruler**

# Ancient China

c. 1750-1045 BCE – Shang Dynasty

- Into divination: Oracle Bones
- Ox scapula or tortoise shell
- Carve questions
- Heated rod pressed into center
- The way it cracked told the “fortune”



# Ancient China

- c. 1,050-250 BCE – Zhou Dynasty
- Hierarchical (order of rank) political & social system
- Warring States – 8 regions fought wars for power & influence until *Qin* conquered them all



# The Warring States of China c. 260 BCE



# Ancient China

- C. 221-206 BCE **Qin Dynasty**

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- “China” likely derived from *Qin*
- Won because:
  - Used to defending itself against “barbarians” up north
  - Adoption of Legalism
  - Qin Shi Huang Di

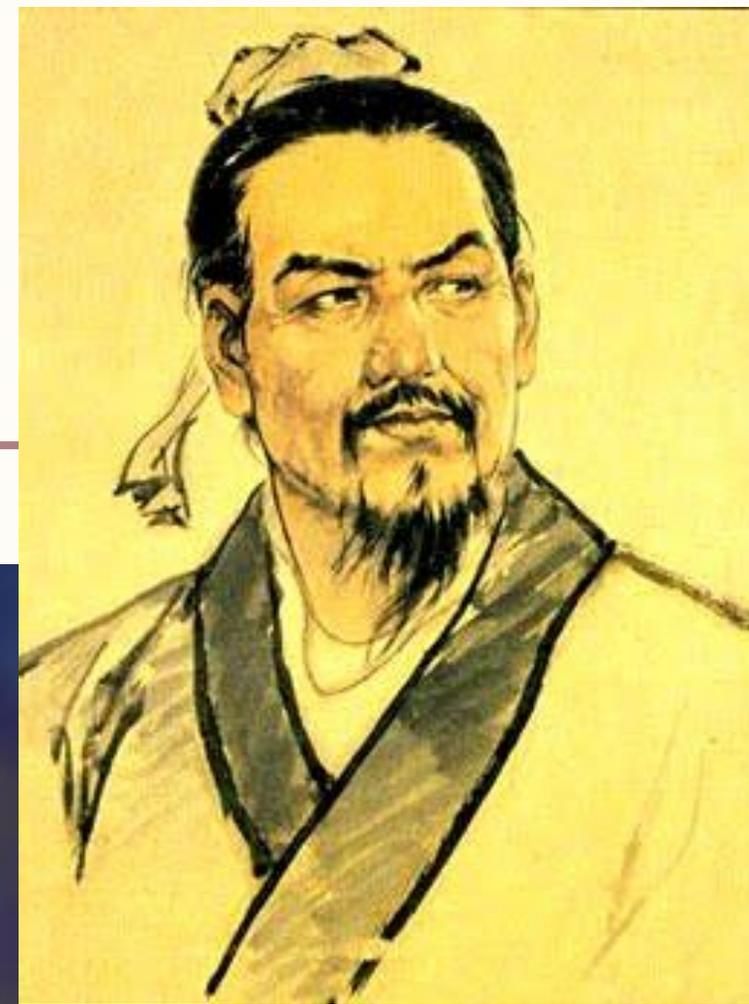
# Qin Shi Huangdi

- Birth name: Zheng (pronounced “Jung”)
- “Named” himself:
  - Qin = Empire of Qin
  - Shi = First
  - Huangdi = Emperor
- Ambitious
- Ruthless
- Said his empire would last 10 thousand generations



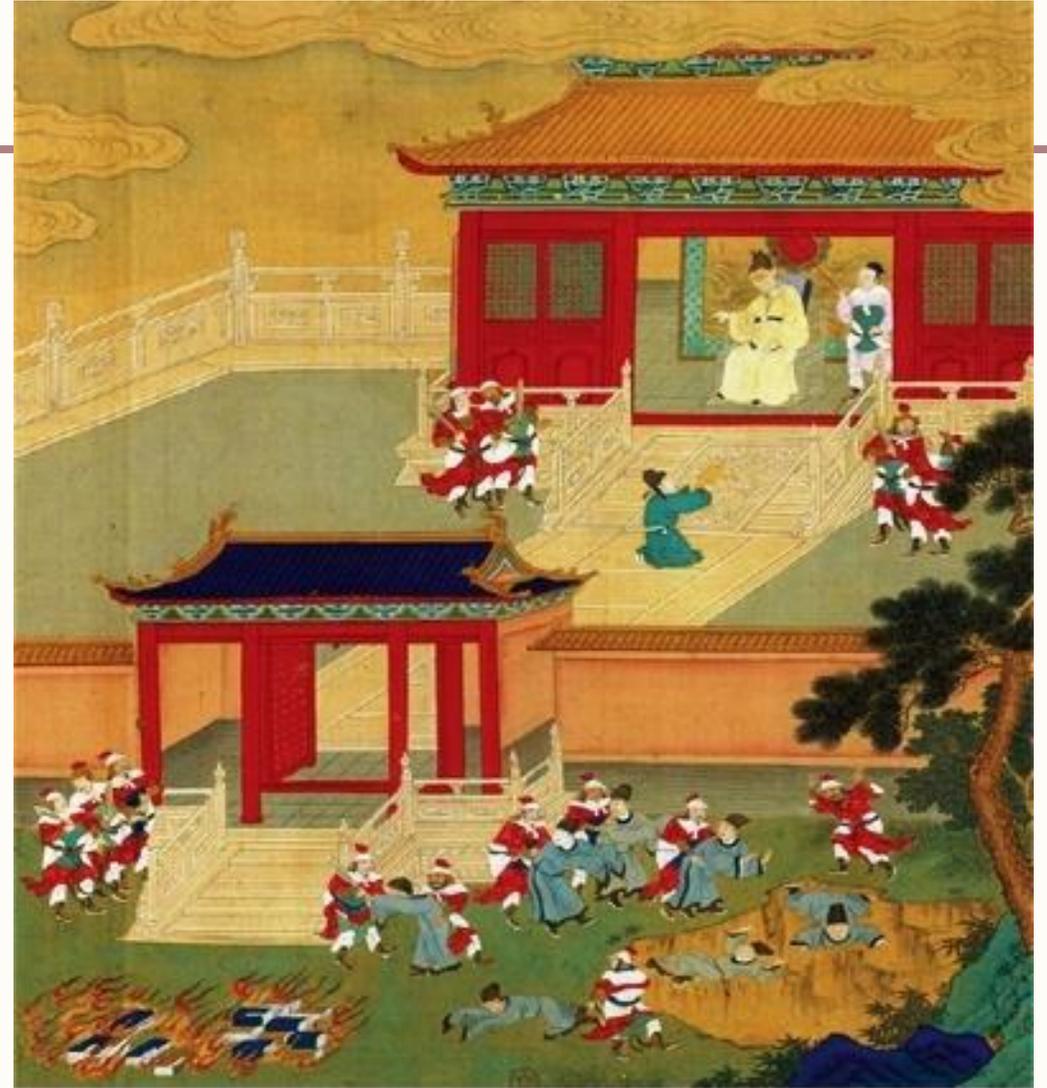
# Legalism

- Humans are naturally selfish
- PUNISHMENTS <3
- Social harmony only possible through:
  - Strong state law
  - Absolute authority
  - No moral/religious views
    - *Anti-Confucian*



# Burning of the Books (and Burying of the Scholars)

- Legalists thought Confucian ideals undermined absolute authority
- Too focused on the past
- C. 213 BCE
  - Publically burned books
  - Buried/executed scholars



# But...was it real?

- Author Sima Qian wrote about the event
- Records of the Grand Historian
- A century after events took place
- Some believe it was Han Dynasty “propaganda” to make Qin Dynasty look worse
- Books/lives were lost, but maybe not as dramatically as retold



# Government: Unitary

- **End of primogeniture:**

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- ~~Eldest son gets property~~

- Land now broken up/passed on to several heirs

- **Standardization → Unified**

- **Weights/measures**

- **Coins**

- **Writing**

# Great WALLS of China



# Great Walls of China

- Built as defense from nomads in north
- “Barbarians” kept raiding farmers and pastoralists
- Also took in newly captured territory
- Emperor “conscripted” men to work on the walls
- Also called for military service
- Building of cities



# Literature: AKA, women throw themselves into rivers all day, every day

- Lady Meng Jiang
- Story of female devotion







**I'M OUT**  
**\*mic drop\***

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# DEATH

- 210 BCE (15 year dynasty)
  - Buried in his own massive tomb
  - Undiscovered
  - Terracotta (baked clay) tomb nearby
  - Discovered in 1970s
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  - Empire falls into disarray
  - 
  -
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# Terracotta Warriors



# FEATURES

**Ranks** Hairstyles and headgear reflect the army's hierarchy. Soldiers wear simple caps or hair swept into a topknot. Officers wear caps crowned by ornamental designs.

SOLDIERS

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OFFICERS BY RANK

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Low



Mid



High



# Han Dynasty

- 202 BCE – 220 CE
- Ruled by Liu Bang
- AKA Gaozu (gow-dzu)
- “Peasant-like”
- Easy-going
- Loved drinking
- Renounced *some* Qin harshness/laws



# A few changes:

- Empire was weak from rebellions during Qin

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- Reverted to distributing land to families/government
- All surpluses frugally stored for future distribution
- Army was weak:
  - Appeased northern nomads (Xiongnu) with gifts
  - And princesses

# Emperor Wu

- Influenced by his formidable mother
  - Empress Lu
  - Ruled 141 – 87 BCE after father died
    - Came into rule as a teen
  - Xiongnu kept attacking anyway → Abandoned appeasement
  - Built up armies
    - Long, brutal wars
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# Society

- **Agricultural**
  - **Family: fundamental unit**
  - **Multiple generations in one household**
  - **Basic values:**
    - **Loyalty**
    - **Obedience to authority**
    - **Respect for elders/ancestors**
    - **Concern for honor/appropriate conduct**
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- **Women: Three Submissions**
    - **To parents**
    - **To husband**
    - **To son (when husband dies)**

# Sima Qian : Great Historian

- C. 145-85 BCE

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- Employed by Emperor Wu

- “Father of History” because

  - Mad organization skills →

- Dynastic histories

- Accounts of noble families

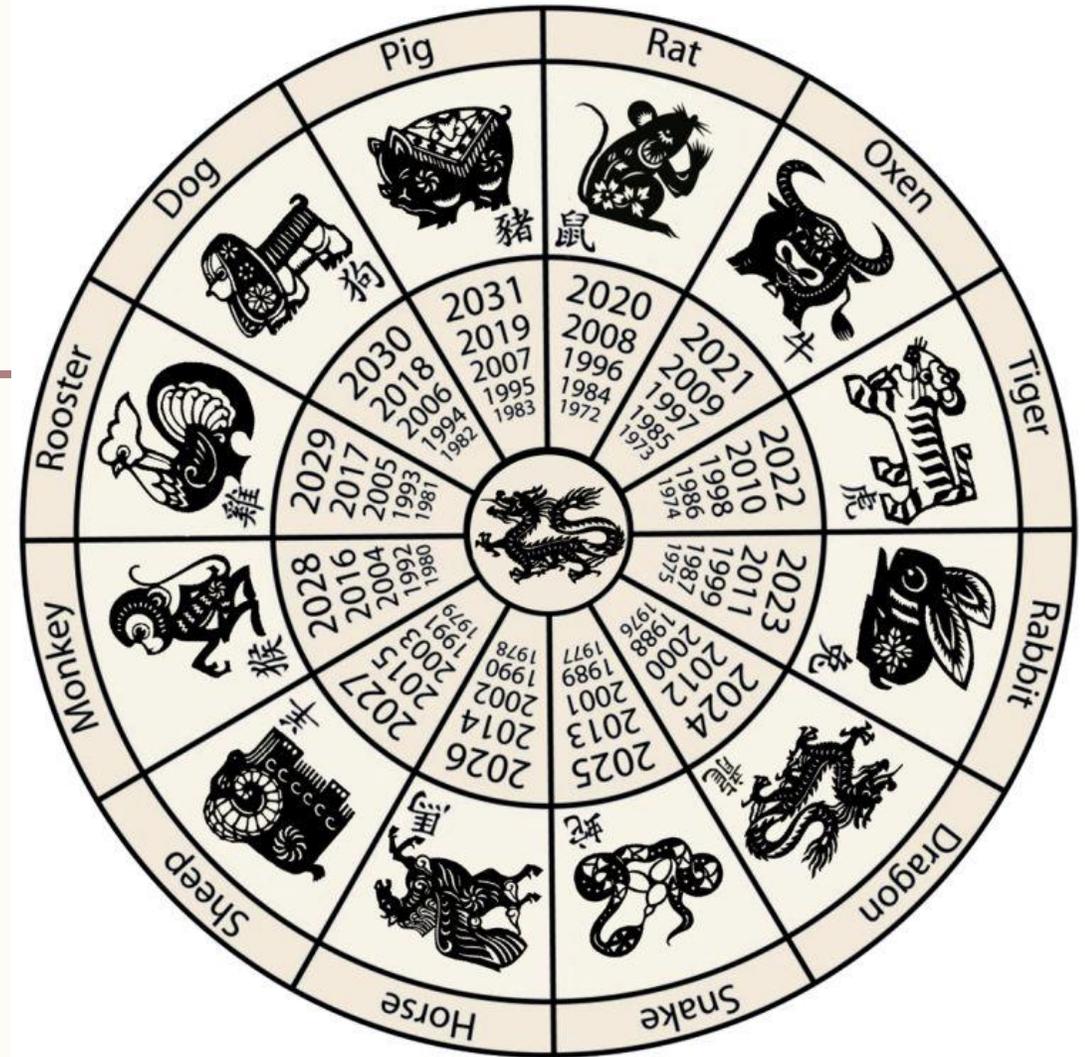
- Biographies of important people

- Chart of events

- Essays on special topics

# Technology/Science

- Watermill → Grind Stone
- Paper
- Seismic instrument measure earthquakes
- More roads (leading to Silk Road)
- Studies in astronomy
  - Constellation bodies → Calendars/Horoscopes



# Religions

- Confucianism
- Daoism
- Believed in nature, ghosts, spirits
- Buddhism
  - Originally rejected
  - Shaving heads/celibacy vs. traditional family values



# Their Fall

- Forces exhausted from defending borders/frontiers

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- Nobles owned all land = civil unrest
- Lack of military conscription = forced to hire foreign soldiers
- Loyal to money
- General Cao Cao eventually dealt last blow

# Women

- Their status and freedoms were different in every dynasty



| <b>Shang (1766-1152 BC)</b>                                  | <b>Song (960 – 1279 AD)</b>                                     | <b>Qing (1644 – 1911)</b>                                       |
|--|---|---|
| Were only expected to bear healthy sons (heirs)              | Could become military generals                                  | More equal opportunities, but still limited depending on wealth |
| Remain subservient to all male figures                       | Played great parts in family decision-making                    |   |
| House work and no compensation or gratitude                  | Not limited to domestic life; could ride horses and play tennis | More active role in families, but still subservient to males    |
| Only worth their dowry (The price for marrying the daughter) | Could inherit land and money                                    |   |
| Not permitted education                                      | Became better educated  | Allowed to divorce, but still subject to shaming                |