

# Chapter 2

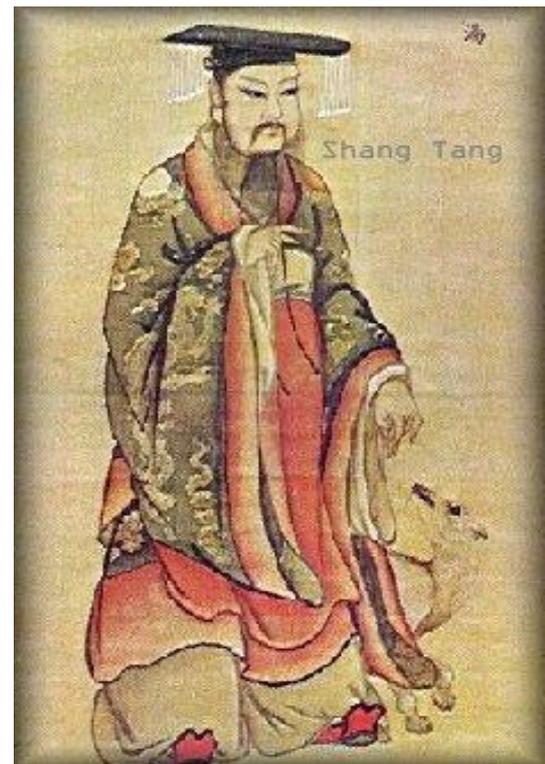
## Classical China



Ms. Sheets  
University High School

# Chinese Dynasty Song

- Using the tune *Frere Jacques*
- Shang, Zhou (“Joe”), Qin (“chin”), Han
- Shang, Zhou (“Joe”), Qin (“chin”), Han
- Sui (“swee”), Tang, Song
- Sui (“swee”), Tang, Song
- Yuan, Ming, Qing (“ching”), Republic
- Yuan, Ming, Qing (“ching”), Republic
- Mao Zedong, Mao Zedong



• [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqHR1uAc\\_-Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqHR1uAc_-Q)

# Shang Dynasty (1600-1046 BCE)

- First documented rule in China (after Xia dynasty?)
- Emerge out of the Huang He River Valley civilization
  - Views itself (China) as center of the world
    - Isolated; little trade with outside



# Dynasty Cycle

- New dynasties usually emerged from a family of a successful general, or even from a peasant rebellion.
- Over time, dynasties grew weak
- When one dynasty declines, another emerges

## New Dynasty

- Restore Peace
- Protects Citizens
- Builds Infrastructures

New Dynasty  
Becomes  
Old Dynasty

## Old Dynasty

- Over Tax Citizen
- Poor Protection
- Decline in Infrastructure
- Injustices

New Dynasty Claims  
Mandate of Heaven

## Disasters

- Natural Disasters
- Revolts
- Invaders

Old Dynasty Loses  
Mandate of Heaven

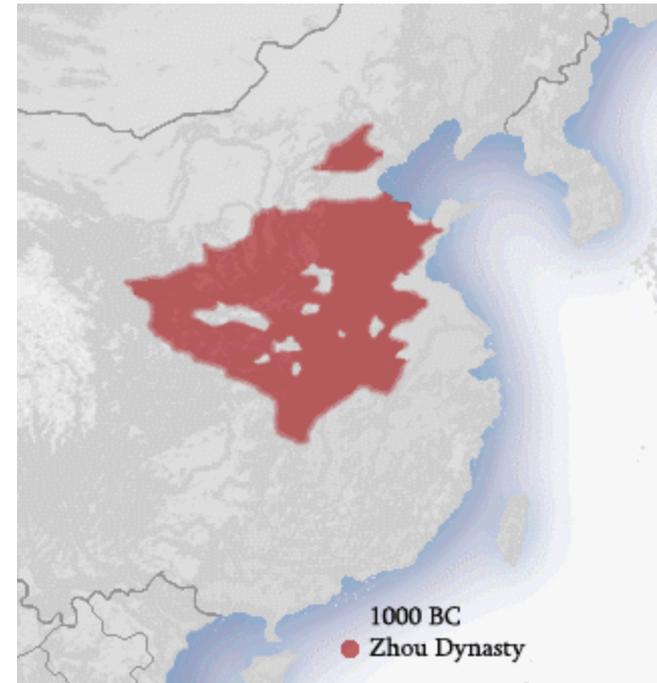
# Zhou Dynasty 1029-258 BCE



- Wu Wang displaced the Shang Dynasty
- Extended territory south into the Yangtze River valley
- Cultural changed:
  - Promoted one standard spoken language (Mandarin Chinese)
  - Human sacrificed banned
- Created “Mandate of Heaven”
  - Used to justify dynastic rule based on the idea that Heaven transferred power of the dynasties and legitimized the current dynasty
  - Heaven would also be displeased with a poor leader and would cause that dynasty’s overthrow

# Zhou Dynasty and Feudalism

- Governed using feudal kingdoms (Feudalism)
  - Rulers gave land to family members, other noble families, and regional princes
  - In exchange for land, tax revenues and military troops were provided to the dynasty
  - Empire is so large (transportation/communication hard), feudalism seemed logical
  - Problems? Feudalism is unstable; depends on loyalty
- Era of the Warring States (402-201 BCE)
  - Eventually, regional rulers who were frustrated with Zhou emperors formed independent armies and broke away from Zhou China
- Great philosophers tried to restore order and create political/social harmony through education
  - Confucius and Confucianism
- Zhou declined because of 1) weakness of feudalism and 2) nomadic invasions



# QUICK REVIEW

What kind of political system did the Zhou use? Was it effective or ineffective, ultimately?

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# Qin Dynasty (221-201 BCE)

- Qin Shi Huangdi – first and main emperor of Qin China
  - Intelligent ruler: knew Zhou's weakness was feudalism
  - Centralizes power and ends feudalism by capturing feudal estates controlled by Chinese aristocrats
  - Created non-aristocratic officials to oversee provinces; no conflict of interest
  - Brutal ruler; powerful army crushed uprisings; used Legalism



Shi Huangdi

# Qin Dynasty, cont.

- Shi Huangdi began Great Wall of China
  - Now over 3,000 miles long
  - Built to protect from outside invasion
  - Largest construction project in human history; built by forced labor, many died
- Created national census
  - Calculate tax revenues and organize labor services more efficiently
- Standardized coinage, weights and measurements
- Created uniform written Mandarin Chinese
- Supported peasants with new irrigation projects
- Ultimately, Shi Huangdi was unpopular
  - Burned books; taxed heavily; military conscription



Shi Huangdi

# Terracotta Army

- Created around 210 BCE
- Purpose: defend Shi Huangdi's tomb, help him rule in the afterlife
- Over 8,000 individual soldiers, 130 chariots, 520 horses buried in four pits around the tomb
- Terracotta: clay-based unglazed ceramic



# Han Dynasty (201 BCE-220 CE)

- Period of stability, prosperity, peace
- Maintain centralized government from Qin
- Examination system developed: process for selecting civil servants to work in government
  - Emperor Wu Ti required civil servants to have formal training in Confucianism
  - Created scholar bureaucrats
  - Contributes to Han stability



Emperor Wu Ti

# Han Dynasty (201 BCE-220 CE)

- Extensive expansion of territory into central Asia
- Trade routes led to contact with India, Parthian Empire, Roman Empire
  - Beginning of Silk Roads
- Buddhism spreads
- Invasions by the Huns (Xiongnu) and a weak central government ended the dynasty
- 184 CE: Yellow Turban Rebellion
  - Peasants rebel; frustrated by corruption of government and emperor
- Three Kingdoms Period (220-589 CE): China was in a state of chaos



Han territory



# QUICK REVIEW

What kind of government system did the Qin use?  
What did the Han add to this system?

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# Political Institutions in Classical China

- In Classical China, the belief in the desirability of central government is created.
  - Why? The government was seen as providing services for the people
  - Expansion of state functions allowed government to reach the common people (ex: regulation of agricultural production to control costs)
- Power of the emperor developed in Qin and Han
  - Central authority and strong government that supports emperor
- Development of a educated, professional bureaucracy (civil servants)
  - Han create civil service tests to standardized selection process
- Little emphasis on military since China did not depend on expansion to maintain its stability

# Religion and Culture in China

- Religion
  - Rulers in the Zhou dynasty maintained a belief in gods and stressed the importance of a harmonious earthly life
  - Ancestor worship
- Philosophies/Ideologies
  - 1) Confucianism
  - 2) Legalism
  - 3) Daoism/Taoism



Confucius handing the Buddha to Laozi

# Confucianism

- Chinese ethical and philosophical system
- Developed from the teachings of Confucius (551-478 BCE) on the eve of the Era of the Warring States (recorded in *Analects of Confucius*)
- Confucianism spread throughout Classical China; predominant philosophy
- Confucianism is incorporated into government teachings with Wu Ti
  - Supports loyalty to the state
  - Uses father/son :: emperor/subject analogy
- Confucian beliefs:
  - Education; Self-regulation; proper exercise of power; propriety and etiquette; familial love and respect for parents; righteousness; honesty and trustworthiness; loyalty to the state; humaneness; respect elders/superiors



Confucius

# Legalism

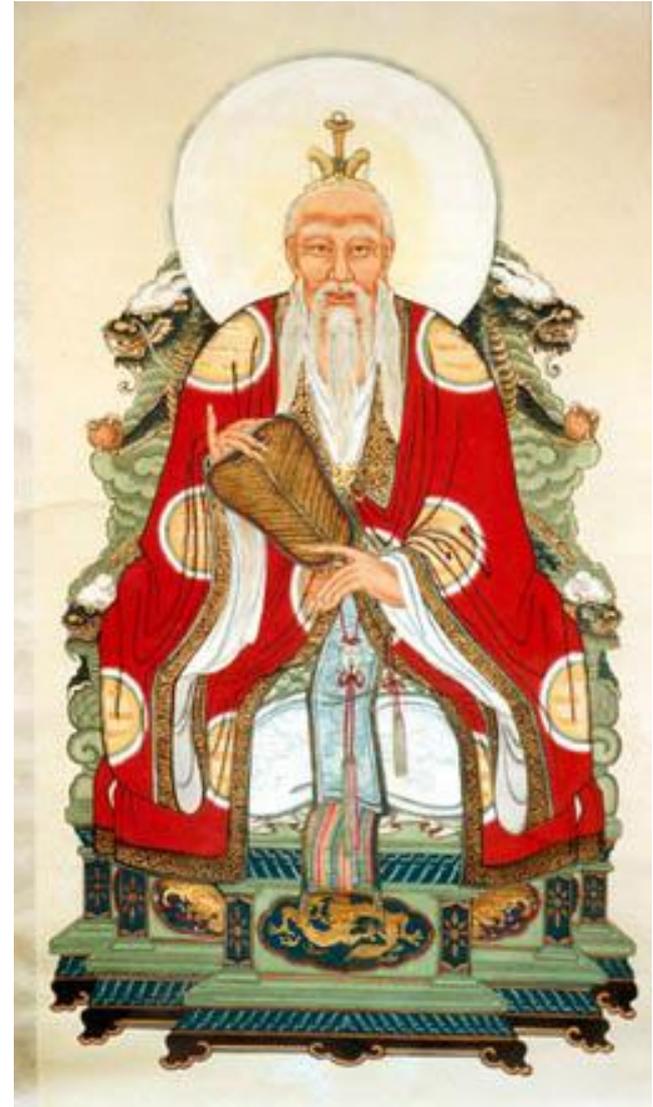
- Qin and early Han periods
- Strict system of obedience to government and law
- Favors authoritarian state ruled by force (army to control people)
- Human nature is evil and requires constant discipline
- People's responsibility to work for the government
- Not successful in China overall, but influenced some policies and ideologies



Shi Huangdi admired  
Legalist thinkers

# Daoism/Taoism

- Founded by Lao Tzu (Laozi) (5<sup>th</sup> c. BCE)
- Promoted humility, frugal living, simplicity
- Harmony with nature, astrology
- Yin and Yang
- Secret rituals, ceremonies, mystery, magic
- People should follow personal paths to self-knowledge
- Little emphasis on formal education and learning
- Many emperors favored Daoism



Lao Tzu

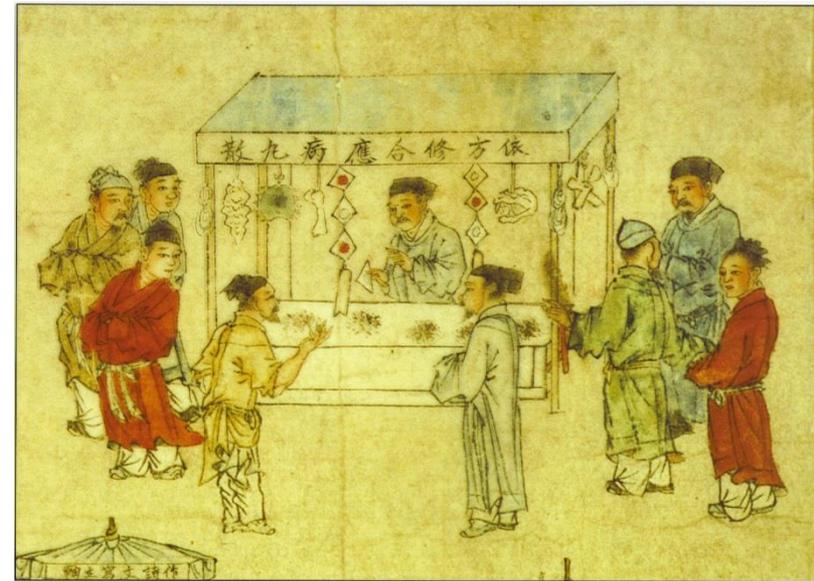
# QUICK REVIEW

What are the three philosophical systems of Classical China?

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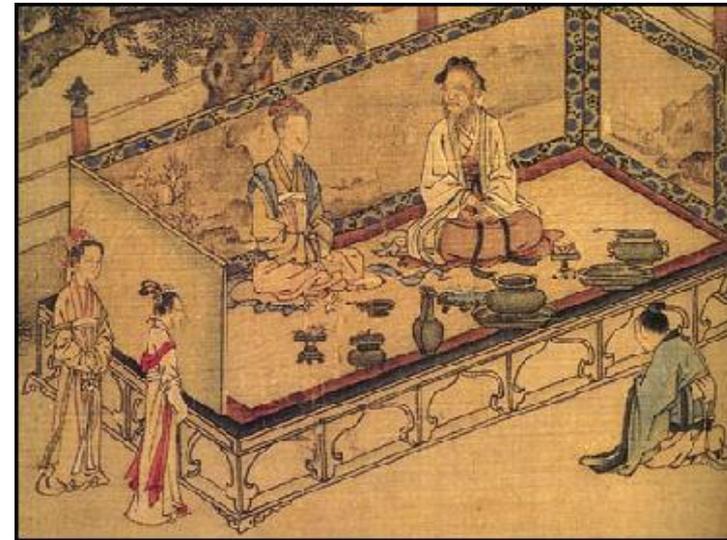
# Economy in China

- Standardization of weights and measures by Qin facilitated trade
  - Extensive and regular internal trade using copper coins
- Trade focused on luxury items: silk, jewelry, leather, furniture
- Trade was not highly valued in Classical Chinese society (Confucian value of learning emphasized; merchants viewed poorly)
- Focused on agriculture; virtues of peasants
  - Expansion into Yangtze River Valley
  - Wheat grown in north, rice in south
  - Result: population growth
  - Traded food between wheat and rice growing regions



# Society in China

- Social classes were hereditary
  - Not permanent; could move up
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Class: Landowning aristocracy and educated bureaucrats (2%)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Class: Laboring masses: peasants and urban artisans
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Class: Unskilled jobs; performing artists, merchants, household slaves
    - Punished more harshly than other groups
- Importance of unity and extended families
- Patriarchy
  - Women: power through sons, as mother-in-law
  - Property rights: oldest male inherited
- Power of parents
  - Children punished severely for disobedience
- Ancestor worship



# Science and Technology in China

- Accurate calendar (444 BCE): 365.25 days
- Observed movements of Saturn and Jupiter
- Developed early seismograph to measure earthquake strength
- Medical research (principles of hygiene and anatomical knowledge)
- Ox-drawn plows (300 BCE)
- Iron mining
  - Pulleys bring material to surface
  - Improved tools and weapons
- Water-powered mills
  - Aided manufacturing
- Paper
  - Allows government to keep records



# Chinese Art

- Highly decorative, often representing nature
- Chinese calligraphy
- Artwork found on bronze, pottery, carved jade, ivory, woven silk screens
- No monumental buildings or large monuments
- Many palaces and tombs

