



# Pre-Imperial Dynasties

1700 – 221 BCE

Shang - Qin





# Shang Dynasty 1766-1050 BCE

- Important Because: First Chinese Dynasty historians have evidence of
- Called the Yellow River Civilization
- Bronze Civilization
- Development of writing
  - Pictograph to Ideograph





# Object Identification: Shang



- Looking at the object to the left try to determine what is it? What is it made out of? How might it have been used?





# Oracle Bones



- Earliest example of Chinese writing
- Would carve questions into bones than Diviners would interpret what cracks meant.





# Object Identification: Shang



- Looking at the object to the left try to determine what is it? What is it made out of? How might it have been used?





# Bronze Gu



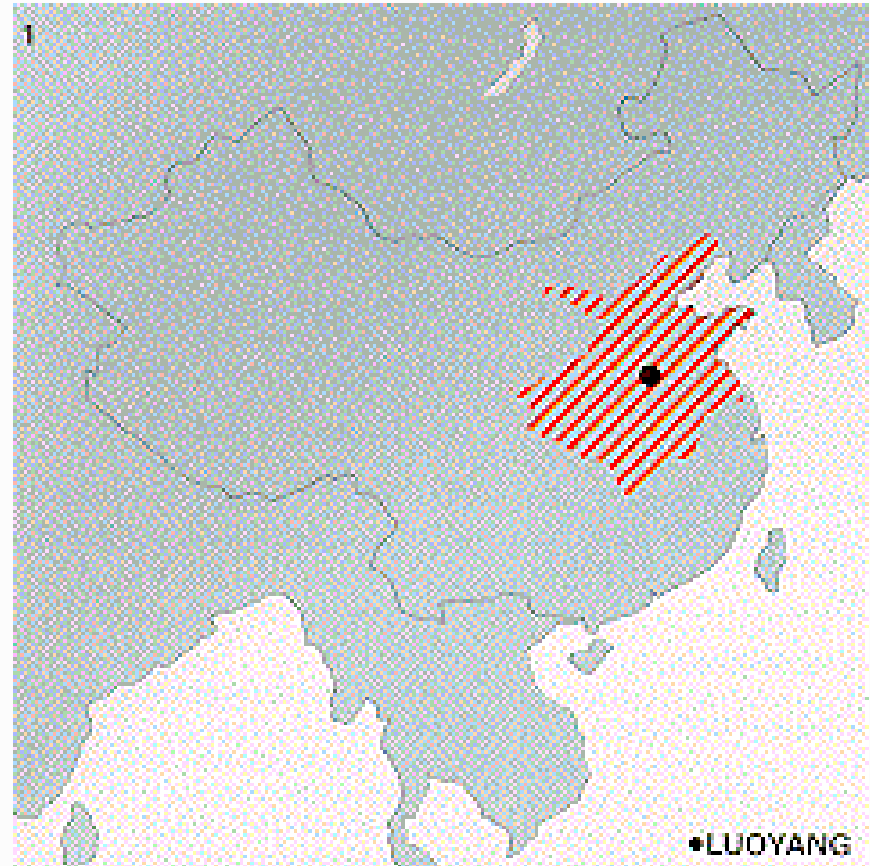
- Wine vessel
- Decorated with animals like snakes, and dragons





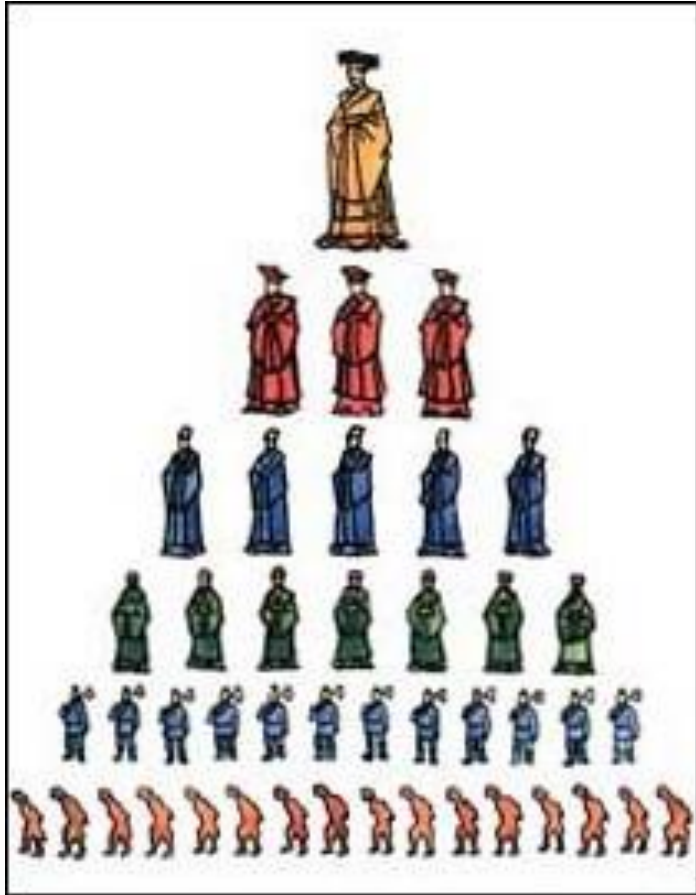
# Zhou Dynasty 1027-256 BCE

- Important Because:  
Development of  
feudalistic system in  
China
- Longest lasting Dynasty
- Well-field system  
developed
- Introduction of Iron





# New Idea: Fengjian (Feudalism)



- King divided lands among people below him, who then divided their own lands
- Gave power to local authorities who ruled on behalf of the king
- Everybody paid taxes up







# New Idea: Mandate of Heaven

- Based on four principals:
  - Right to rule is granted by heaven
  - There is only one heaven, therefore there can only be one ruler
  - Right to rule is based on virtue of ruler
  - The right to rule is not limited to one dynasty





# Mandate of Heaven

## Idea of the DYNASTIC CYCLE



Dynasty  
Founded  
(Receives  
Heaven's  
Mandate)

Peak

Reaches peak  
of prosperity  
under  
vigorous early  
emperors

Enters a period of steady  
decline, ultimately  
resulting in loss of  
Heaven's Mandate

*One Cycle would be roughly 250 - 350 years*





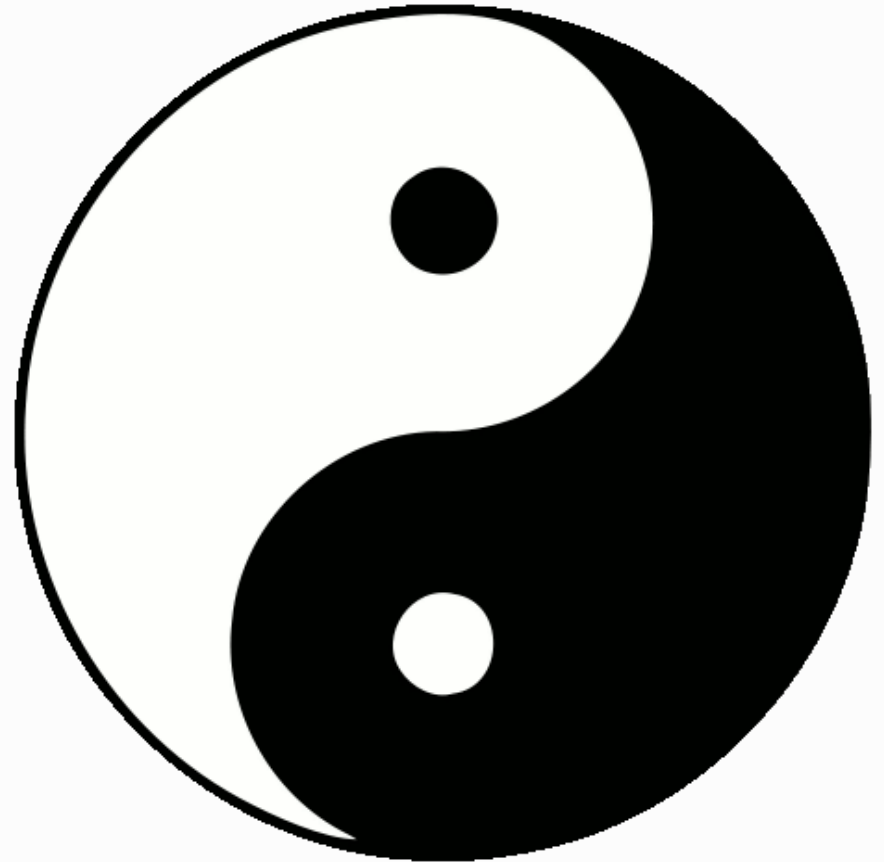
# Three schools of Chinese Thought

- Taoist
  - Comparable to “the force”
  - Stresses the equality of the universe
- Legalist
  - Machiavellian thought
  - Laws should dictate **everyone** to ensure the good of society
- Confucius
  - Belief that if all relationships were approached with decorum and humanity the world would be better off





Central Question:  
Which of the three  
Chinese schools of  
thought would you most  
agree with? And Why





# Pre-Imperial Dynasties

221 BCE – 220 CE

Qin





# Qin Dynasty

## 226 – 221 BCE

Important Because: Unification of China

- Qin Shih Huang
- Known for enormous public works projects
- Heavily legalistic – Anti Confucius
- Set the precedent for Imperial China
- Unified weights and measure





# Central Question

Why might a unified weights and measures system have been important?





# Qin Shi Huang

- Great Wall
- Did away with feudal system
- Established cultural uniformity
  - Burning of Books Decree
- Established 36 provinces under central rule







# New Invention: The Great Wall

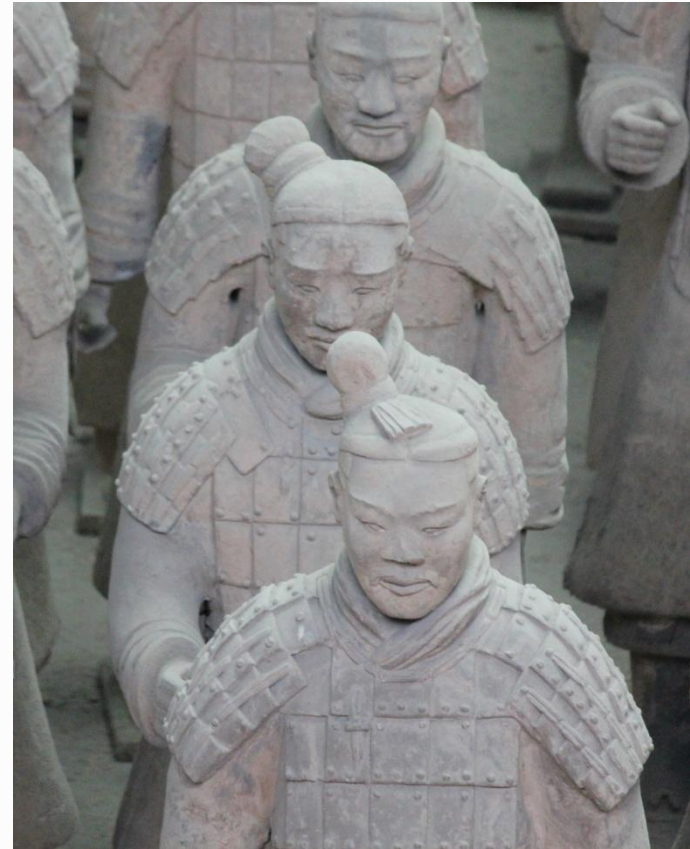
- Built as line of defense against the Hsiung Nu or “Huns”
- Used system of signal fires
- Constructed using stones, masonry, packed earth and even bodies





# Terra Cotta Warriors

- Built as guides to lead Qin Shi Huang into the afterlife
- Roughly 6000 in all
- All made in likeness of an actual Chinese soldier





# Death of Qin Shi Huang



- Either died of sickness or murder
- Viewed as a tyrant
- China dissolves into warring states period

