


Chinese Art and Literature



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Chinese Art and Literature

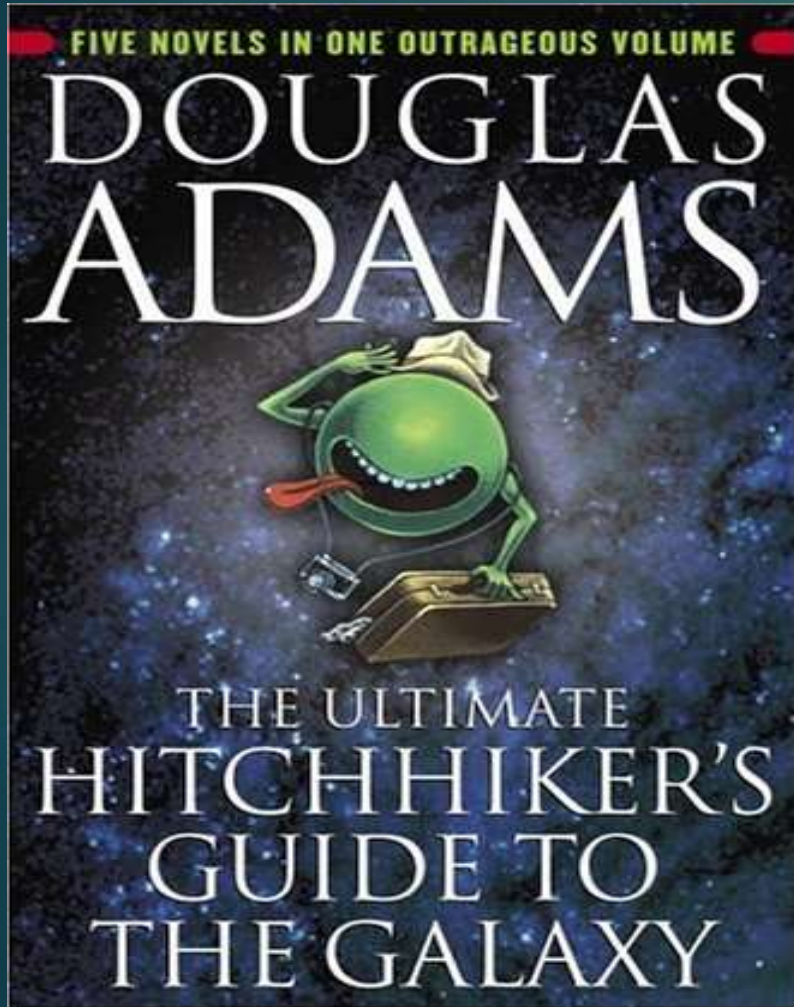
► Main Idea (Objective) :



► During the Tang and Song Dynasties China enjoyed a golden age of art and literature.

Chinese Art and Literature

► **Lecture Focus (Essential Question)** :

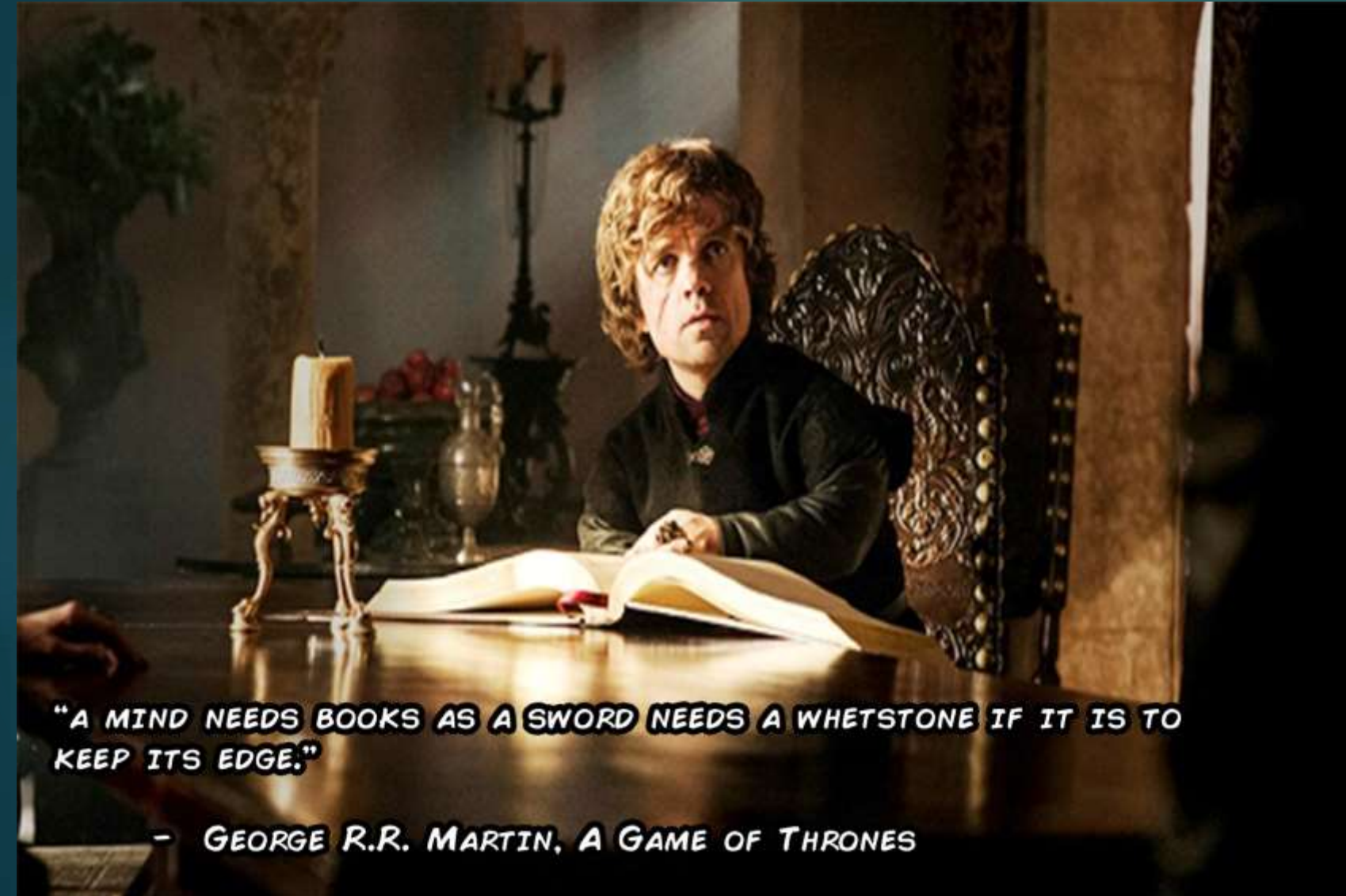


**"IN THE BEGINNING THE UNIVERSE WAS CREATED.
THIS HAS MADE A LOT OF PEOPLE VERY ANGRY AND BEEN WIDELY REGARDED
AS A BAD MOVE."**

- DOUGLAS ADAMS, THE RESTAURANT AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE

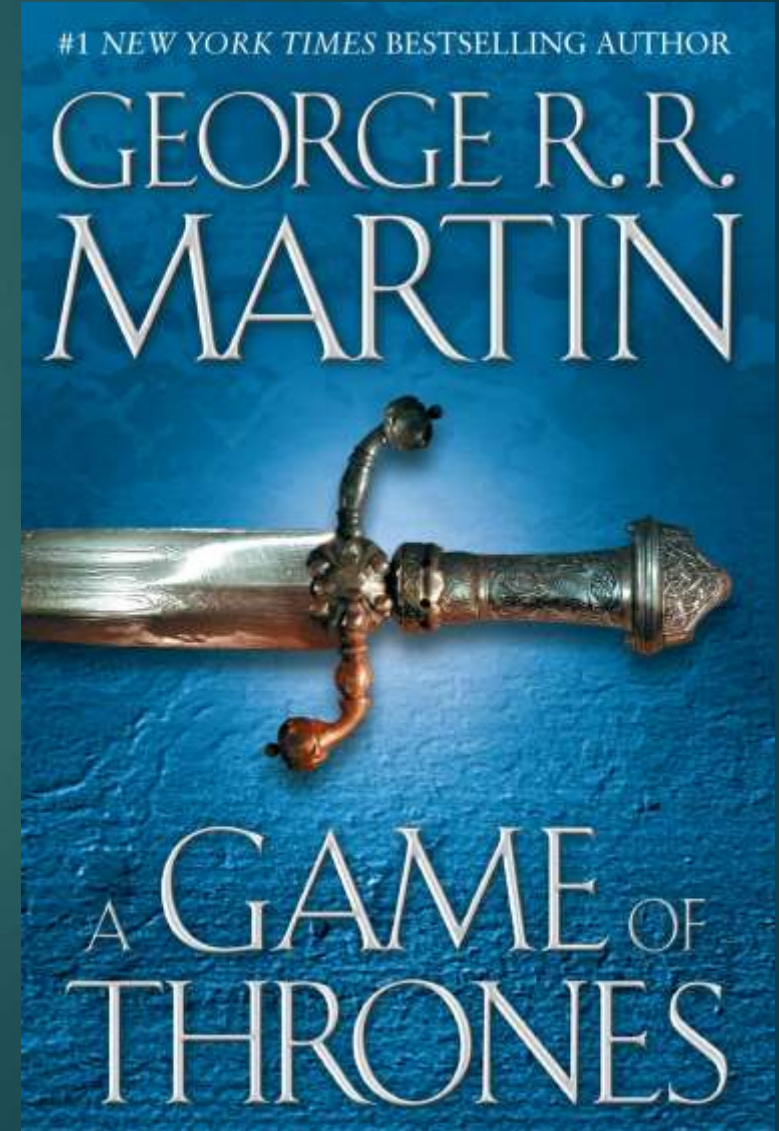
► If you were to choose one poem or passage of a book to read out loud in class, which poem or book would it be? Lets look at some famous Chinese authors and poets.

Chinese Art and Literature



"A MIND NEEDS BOOKS AS A SWORD NEEDS A WHETSTONE IF IT IS TO KEEP ITS EDGE."

- GEORGE R.R. MARTIN, A GAME OF THRONES



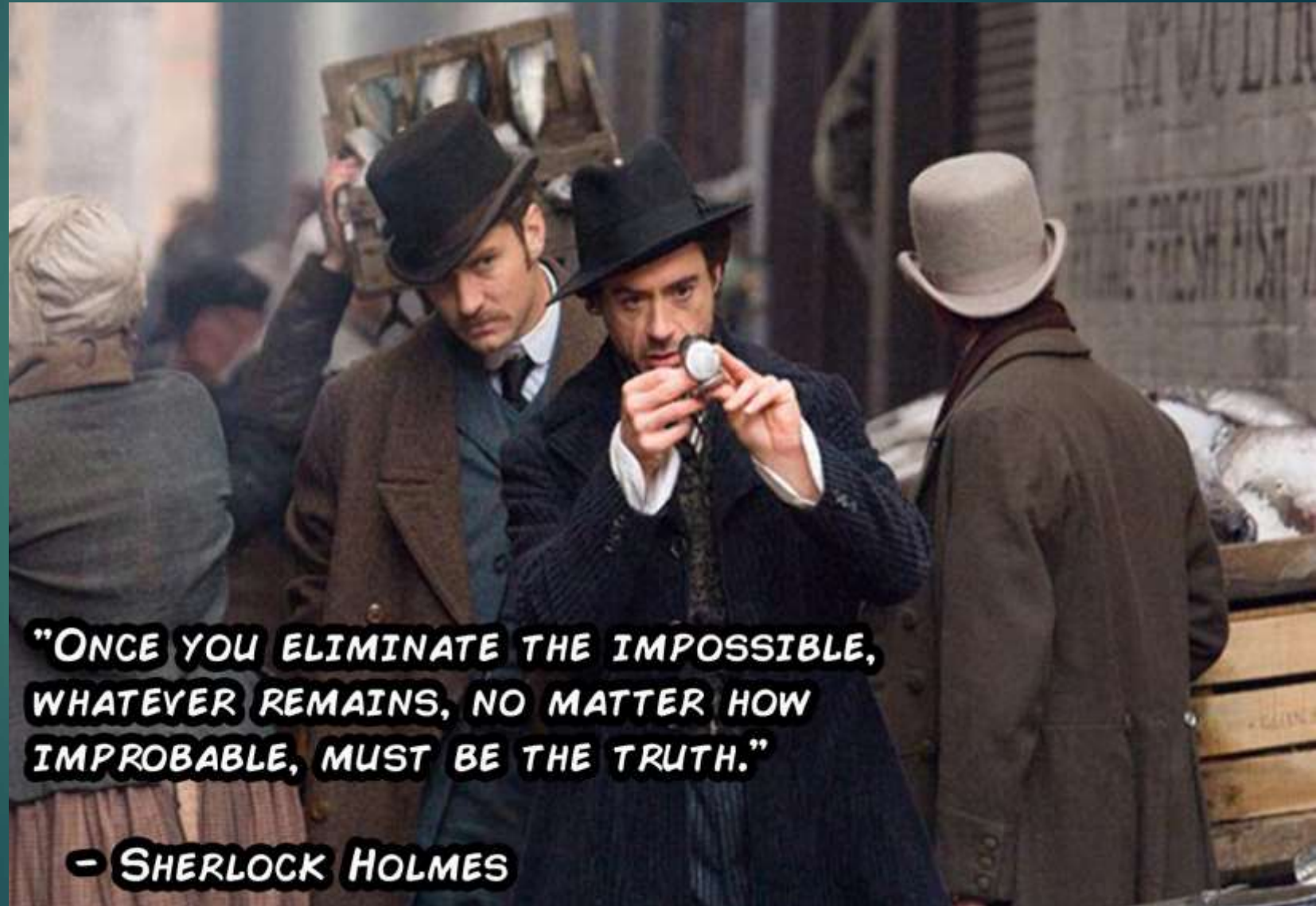
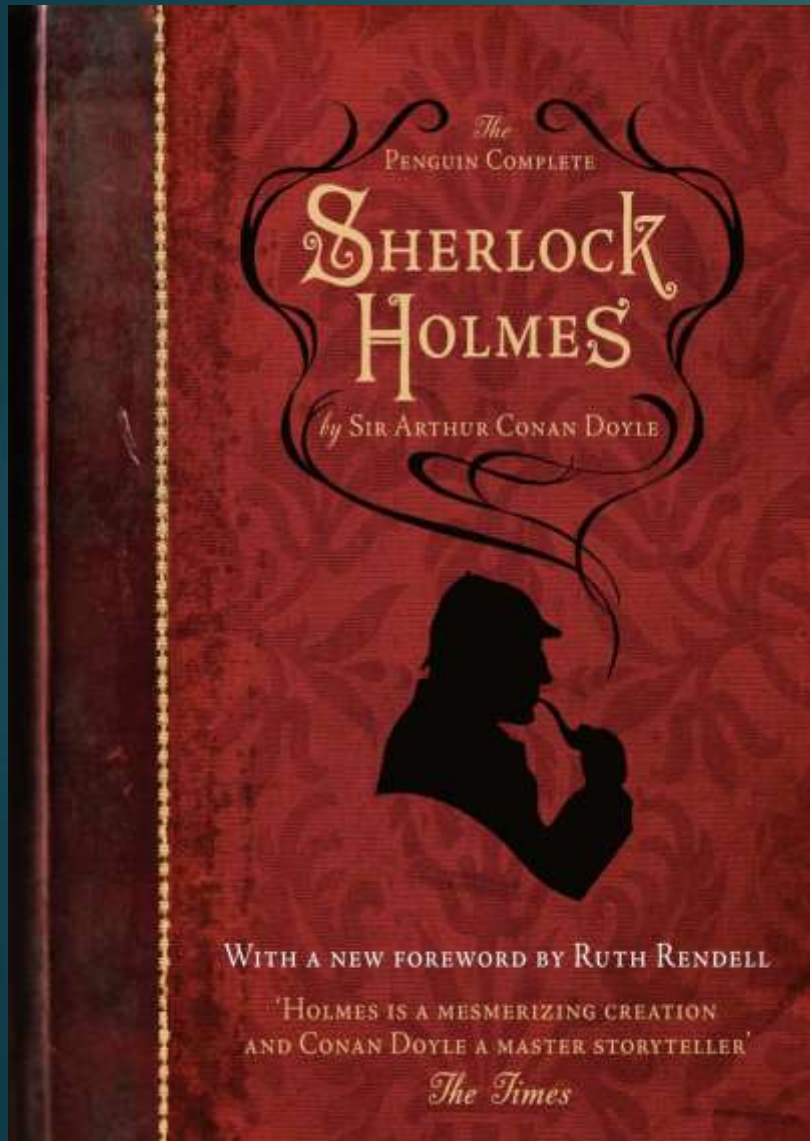
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

GEORGE R.R.
MARTIN



A GAME OF
THRONES

Chinese Art and Literature




Chinese Art and Literature

"WHATEVER LIFE HOLDS IN STORE FOR ME, I WILL NEVER FORGET THESE WORDS: 'WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY' THIS IS MY GIFT, MY CURSE."

- SPIDER-MAN



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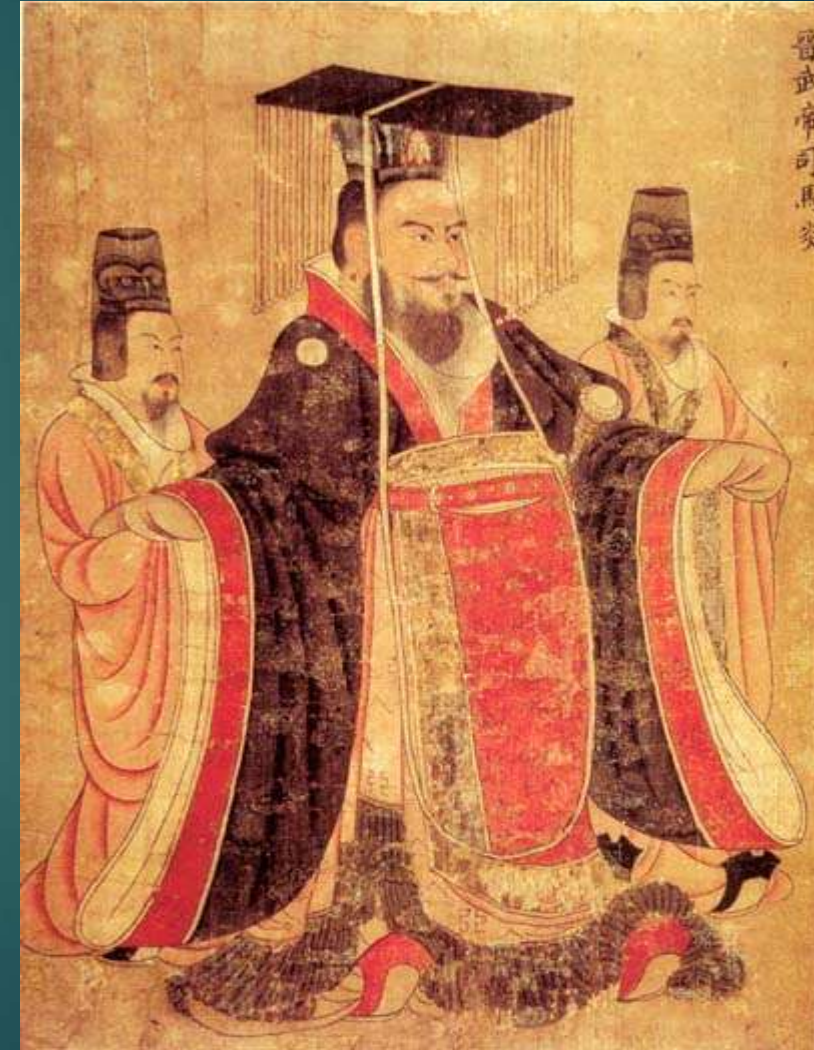
Chinese Art and Literature

- ▶ The Tang and Song eras were a golden age for Chinese culture.



- ▶ The invention of printing helped to spread Chinese ideas and artwork throughout the world.

Chinese Art and Literature



- ▶ Chinese emperors actively supported art and literature, and even invited artist and poets to live and work in the capital city of **Changan**.

What Was Tang Poetry Like?

- ▶ Chinese writers best expressed themselves in poems.



- ▶ In fact, the Tang Dynasty is viewed as the great age of poetry in China.

What Was Tang Poetry Like?

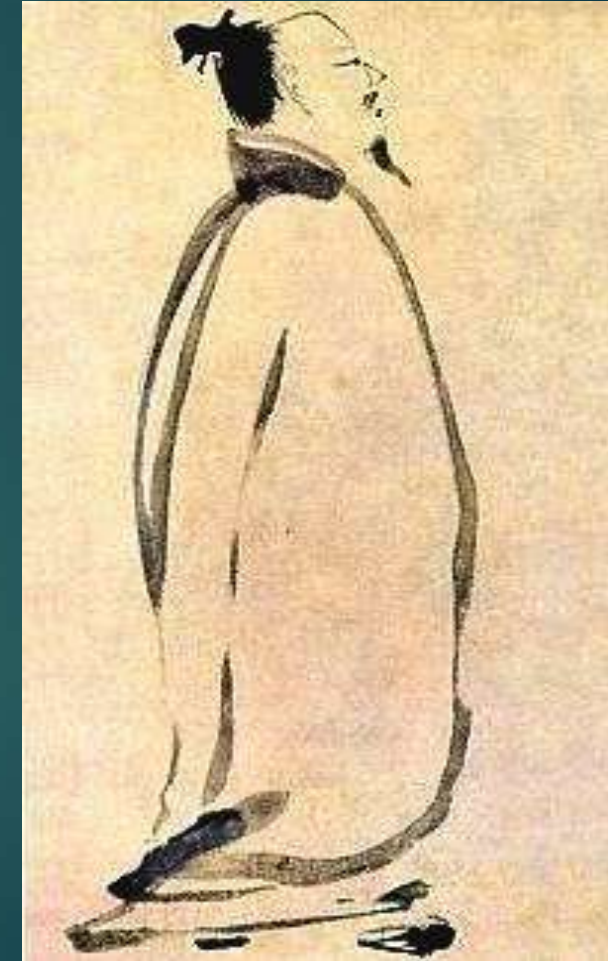
- ▶ Some Tang poems celebrated the beauty of nature, the thrill of seasons changing and the joy of having a good friend.



- ▶ Other Tang poems expressed sadness for the shortness of life and mourned the cruelty of friends parting ways.

What Was Tang Poetry Like?

- ▶ **Li Bo** was one of the most popular poets of the Tang era... his poems often centered around nature.



- ▶ The poem that Li Bo is probably best known for in China is "**A Quiet Night Thoughts**"...for centuries, Chinese schoolchildren have had to memorize it.

What Was Tang Poetry Like?

*“Moonlight in front of my bed – I
I took it for frost on the ground!
I lift my eyes to watch the
mountain moon,
Lower them and dream of home.”*

-Li Bo


“A Quiet Night Thoughts”



What Was Tang Poetry Like?

- ▶ Another favorite poet of the Tang Era was **Du Fu**.
- ▶ He was a poor civil servant who had a hard life .
- ▶ Civil War swept China and food was extremely hard to find...Du Fu nearly died of starvation.
- ▶ His problems opened his eyes to the sufferings of the common people.



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What Was Tang Poetry Like?

- ▶ As a result, **Du Fu's** poems were often very serious.



- ▶ They frequently dealt with issues such as social injustice and problems of the poor people in China.

What Was Tang Poetry Like?

- ▶ Du Fu wrote a poem called “*Spring Landscape*”...the poem discusses issues of a rebellion that left the capital city in ruins.

*“ Rivers and mountains survive
broken centuries.*

*Spring returns. The city grows
lush again.*

*Blossoms scatter tears thinking of
us, and this*

*Separation in a bird's cry startles
the heart.*

*Beacon-fires have burned
through three months.*

*By now, letters are worth ten
thousand gold...”*

- Du Fu,

“Spring Landscape”



What Was Tang Poetry Like?



▶ Questions:

- ▶ 1) Why was the Tang Dynasty called the “Great Age of Poetry” in China?
- ▶ 2) What did many Tang Poems celebrate?
- ▶ 3) What was happening in China to cause many hardships on people?

What Was Tang Poetry Like?



▶ **Questions:**

▶ 1) Why was the Tang Dynasty called the “Great Age of Poetry” in China?

▶ **Chinese writers began to express themselves through poems and art.**


▶ 2) What did many Tang Poems celebrate?

▶ **Beauty of Nature, seasons changing, good friends and sadness of death.**

▶ 3) What was happening in China to cause many hardships on people?

▶ **Civil war swept through China and food was hard to come by.**



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Primary Source: Li Bo

- ▶ By the end of his life, Li Bo was the most famous poet in China, as well a serious student of **Daoism**.



- ▶ Li Bo even became the mentor for a younger, unknown poet...this poet, Du Fu, would soon rival Li Bo in fame throughout China.

Primary Source: Li Bo

- ▶ In the following poem, Li Bo writes about parting ways from a friend...perhaps Du Fu!
- ▶ *“Green hills sloping from the northern wall. White water rounding the eastern city: once parted from this place the lone weed tumbles ten thousand miles. Drifting clouds – a travelers thoughts; setting sun – an old friends heart. Wave hands and let us leave now, hsiao – hsiao our hesitant horse neighing.”*

- Li Bo

“Seeing a Friend Off”



Primary Source: Li Bo

▶ **DBQ:** Document Based Question:

▶ Answer the following question in a well structured open ended response.

▶ **In the poem Li Bo discusses drifting clouds...How are drifting clouds like a travelers thoughts?**

Daoism

- ▶ What do you know about **Daoism**?



- ▶ Daoism developed in China during the violent, Civil War period known as the Warring States.

Daoism



- ▶ The Daoists (Taoism) considered it pointless to waste time on social involvement.
- ▶ Instead devoting their energies to reflection, in hopes that they could understand how to live in harmony with nature.

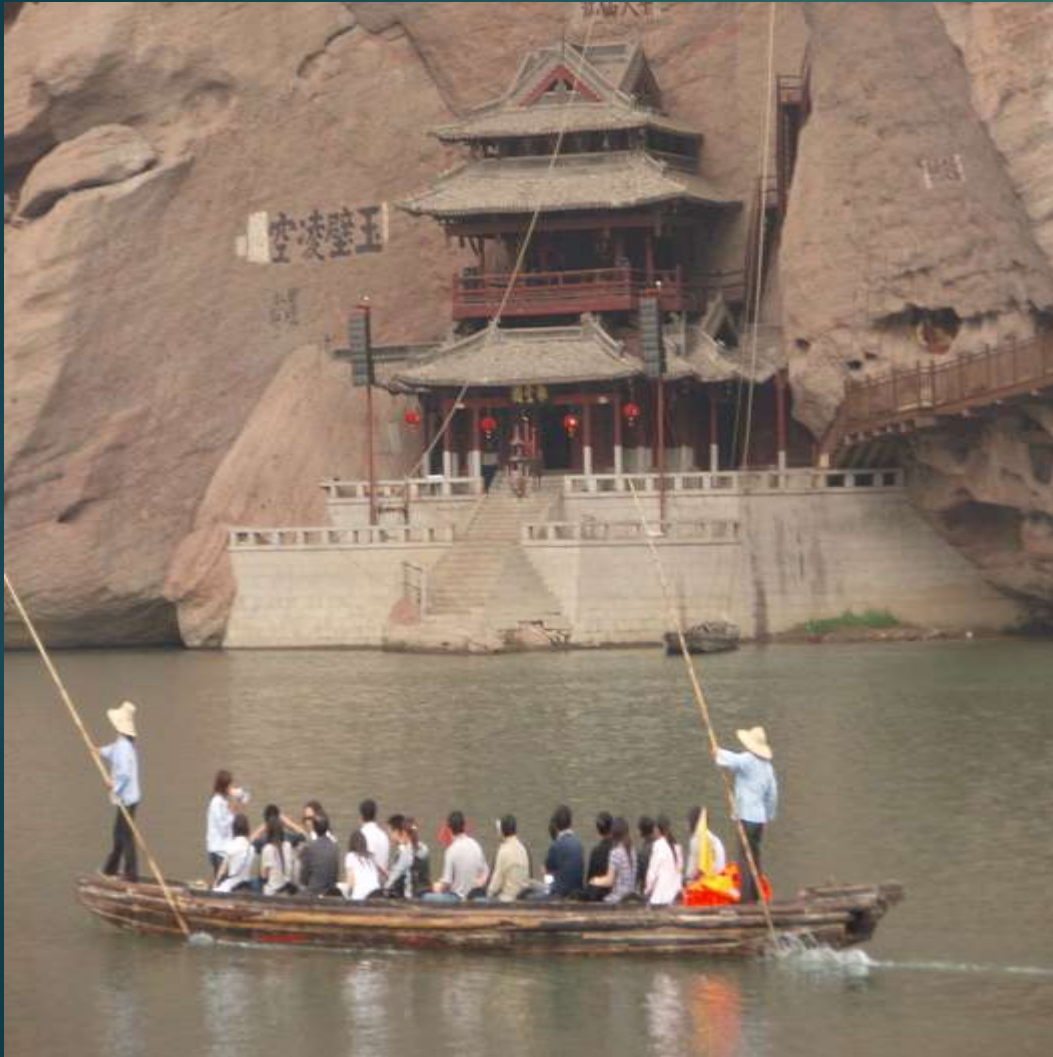
Daoism




The Daoists believed that, over time, this approach would bring harmony to society, as people stopped snooping around in affairs that they could not understand or control.

Daoism

- ▶ Daoism represented an effort to understand the important appeal of the world and nature.



- ▶ The central concept of Daoism is the mysterious idea of “**Dao**”, meaning “**the way**” or “**the way of nature**”

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Daoism

- ▶ “**Dao**” is the original force of the cosmos, an eternal principal that governs all the workings of the world... **harmony** with the universe is the intended result of many Daoism practices.



- ▶ Daoists envisioned the “Dao” as a passive force and really view it in conflicting terms: **Dao does nothing, and yet it accomplishes everything.**

Daoism

- ▶ The **Dao** resembles water, which is soft and yielding, yet is also so powerful that it eventually erodes even the hardest rock placed in its path.



- ▶ A prime belief revolved around the idea that people should be more like water and simply let order flow naturally.

Daoism

- ▶ Daoists believed that human beings should live in harmony with the passive and yielding elements of nature.



- ▶ That meant retreating from the world of politics and administration.

Daoism



- ▶ Ambition had only brought the world a state of chaos...the proper response was to cease frantic striving and live in as simple a manner as possible.

Daoism

- ▶ Daoist ethics emphasize the **Three Jewels of the Dao**:



- ▶ **Compassion** - A deep awareness of and sympathy for another's suffering
 - ▶ **Moderation** - Quality of being moderate and avoiding extremes
- ▶ **Humility** – Humble or Modest, doing something out of the goodness of your heart, not for yourself

Daoism

- ▶ For Daoists, the ideal leader was a wise man who was in harmony with the **Dao** governing so effortlessly that his people would not even realize they were being governed
- ▶ The Less government the better...



Daoism




- ▶ Instead of expensive kingdoms Daoists envisioned a world of tiny, self sufficient communities where people had no desire to conquer or even trade with neighboring societies.

Daoism

- ▶ Daoist taught that the Universe is a balance of opposites: female and male, light and dark, low and high...



- ▶ In each case opposing forces should remain in harmony.

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Daoism

- ▶ The **Yin-Yang** is a concept that came out of Daoism...
- ▶ According to **Yin-Yang** philosophy the universe, and everything in it, is both steady and repeated.



Daoism

- ▶ One force dominates and then it is replaced by the opposing force...this activity continues constantly and repeats itself over time:



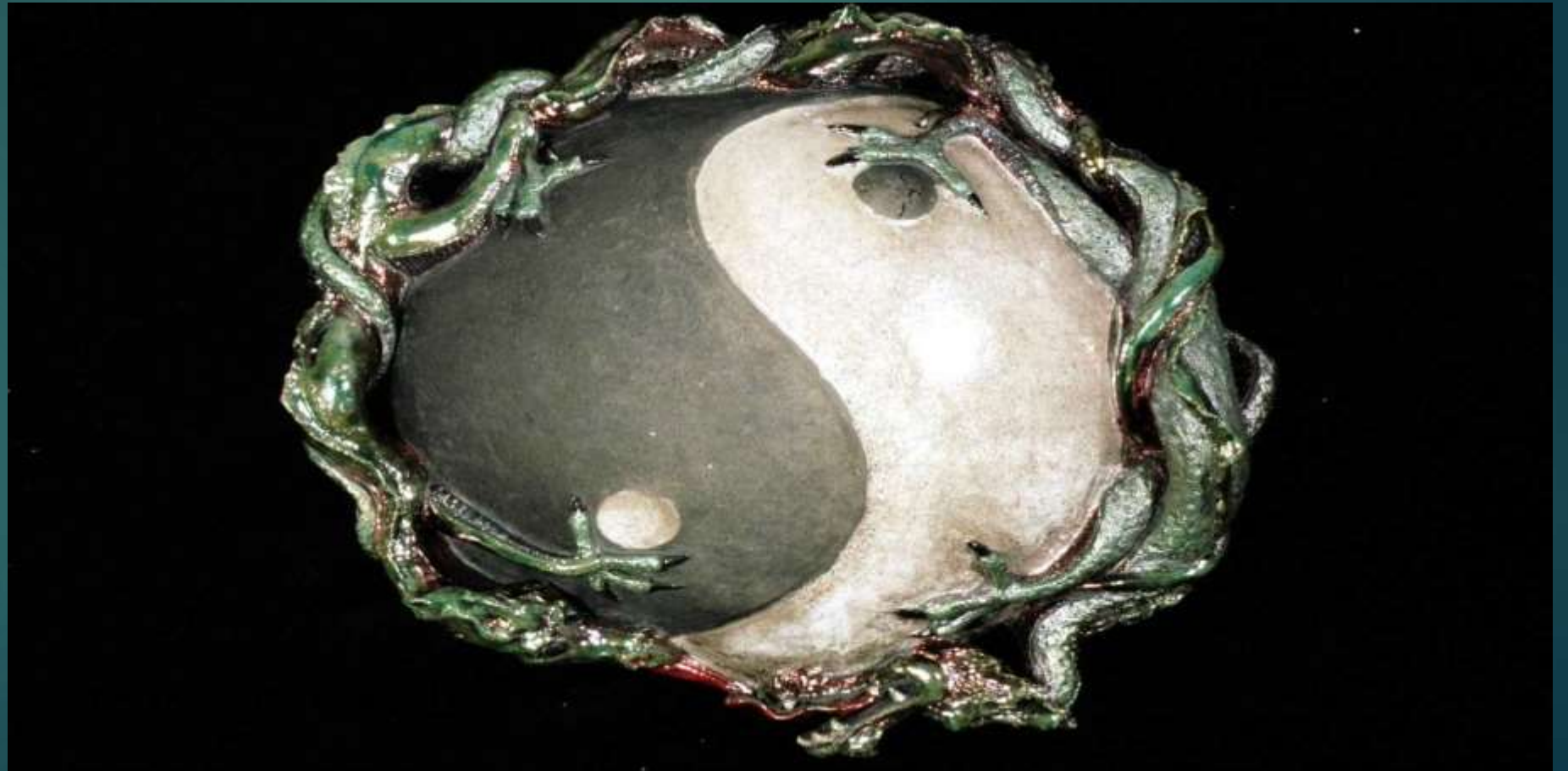
- ▶ Life and death
- ▶ Heaven and earth
- ▶ Night and day
- ▶ Dark and light
- ▶ Health and sickness
- ▶ Poverty and wealth



Daoism

▶ The black area represents **Yin** with the following characteristics:

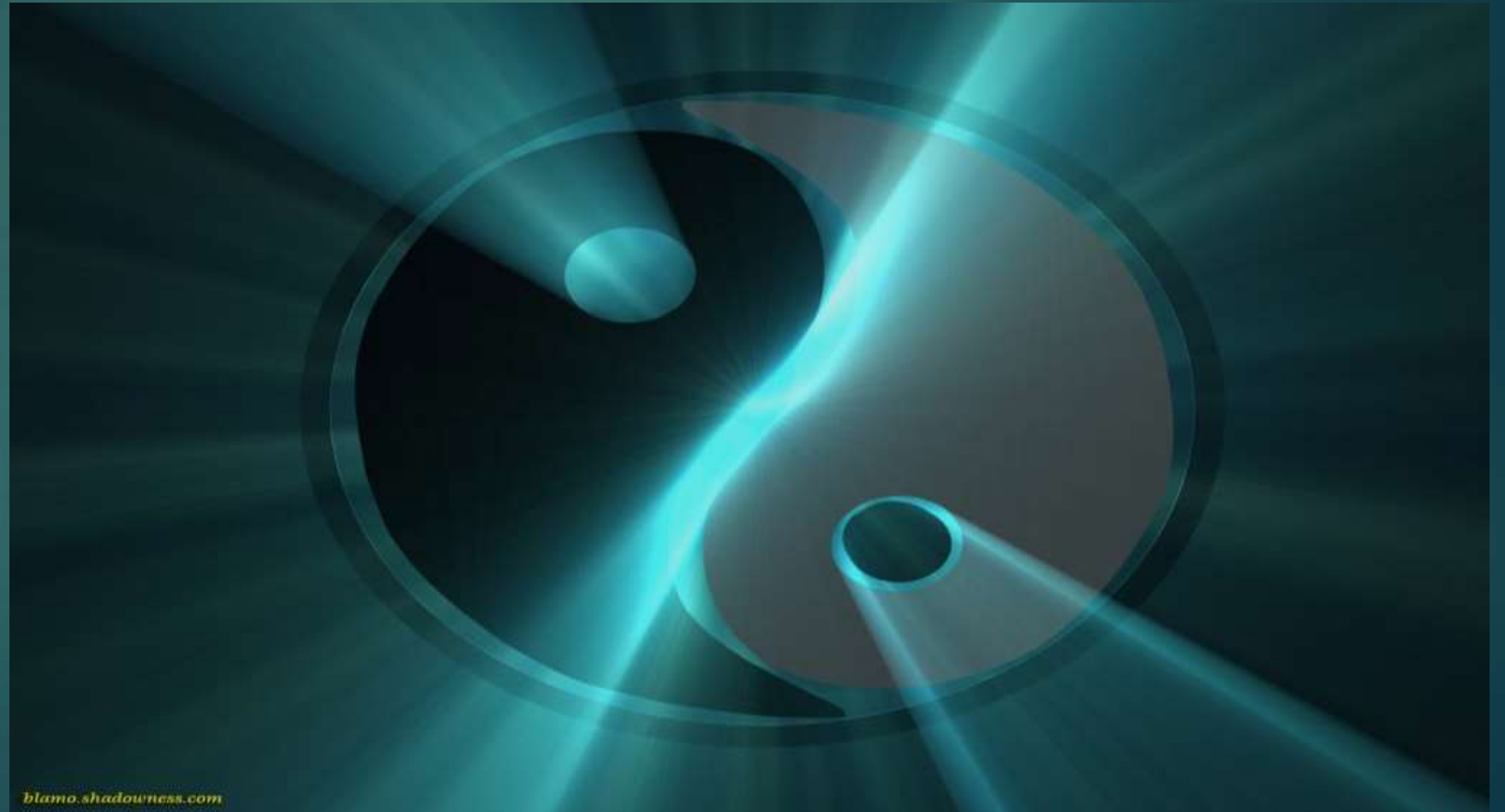
- ▶ Feminine
- ▶ Passive
- ▶ Moon
- ▶ Dark
- ▶ Cold
- ▶ Night
- ▶ Soft
- ▶ Rivers



Daoism

▶ The white area represents the **Yang** with the following characteristics:

- ▶ Male
- ▶ Active
- ▶ Logical
- ▶ Enlightenment
- ▶ Bright
- ▶ Light
- ▶ Creation
- ▶ Dominance
- ▶ Mountains



Daoism



- ▶ Today the symbol can be seen integrated into **Western Culture** as accessory, rather than the philosophical tool it truly is.

Daoism



Daoism



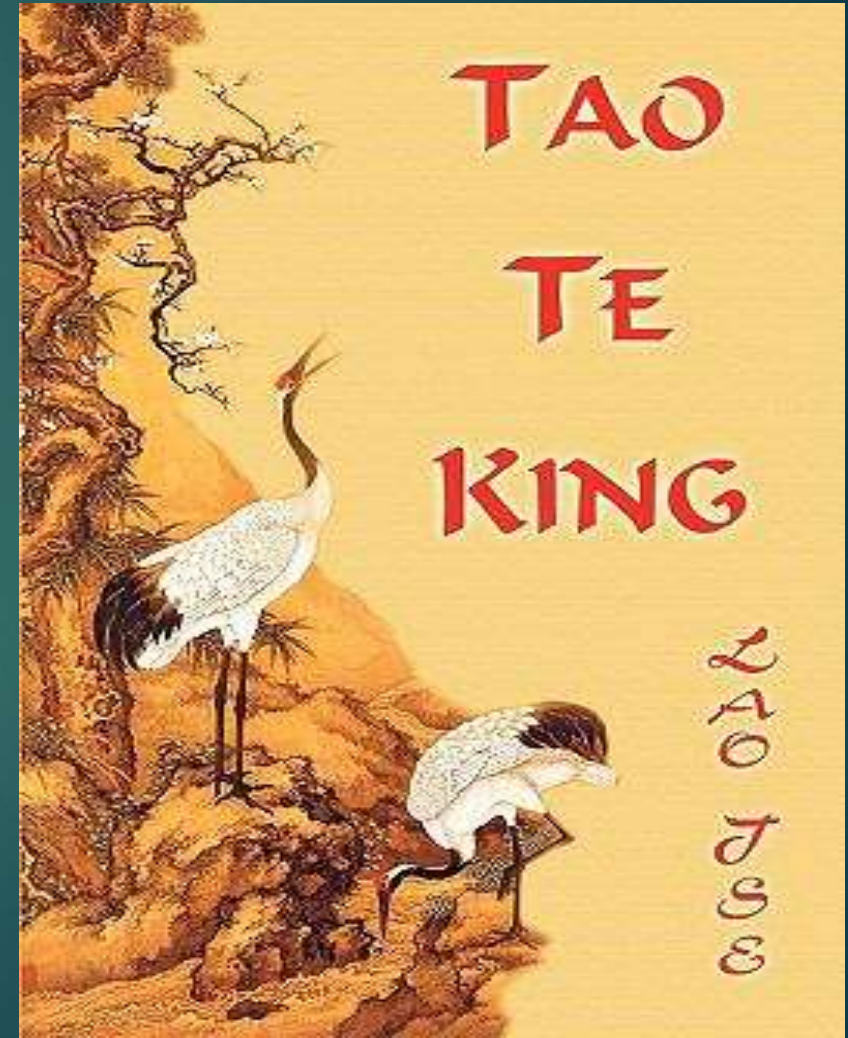
Daoism

- ▶ Who created Daoism?
- ▶ **Laozi** (Lowd-Zuh) - Was a mystic philosopher, record keeper for the Zhou Dynasty, and best known as the author of the **Tao Te Ching** (sacred text of Daoism)



Daoism

- ▶ His association with the **Tao Te Ching** has led him to be traditionally considered the founder of Daoism



- ▶ Laozi taught that people should not try to gain wealth, nor should they seek power.

Daoism

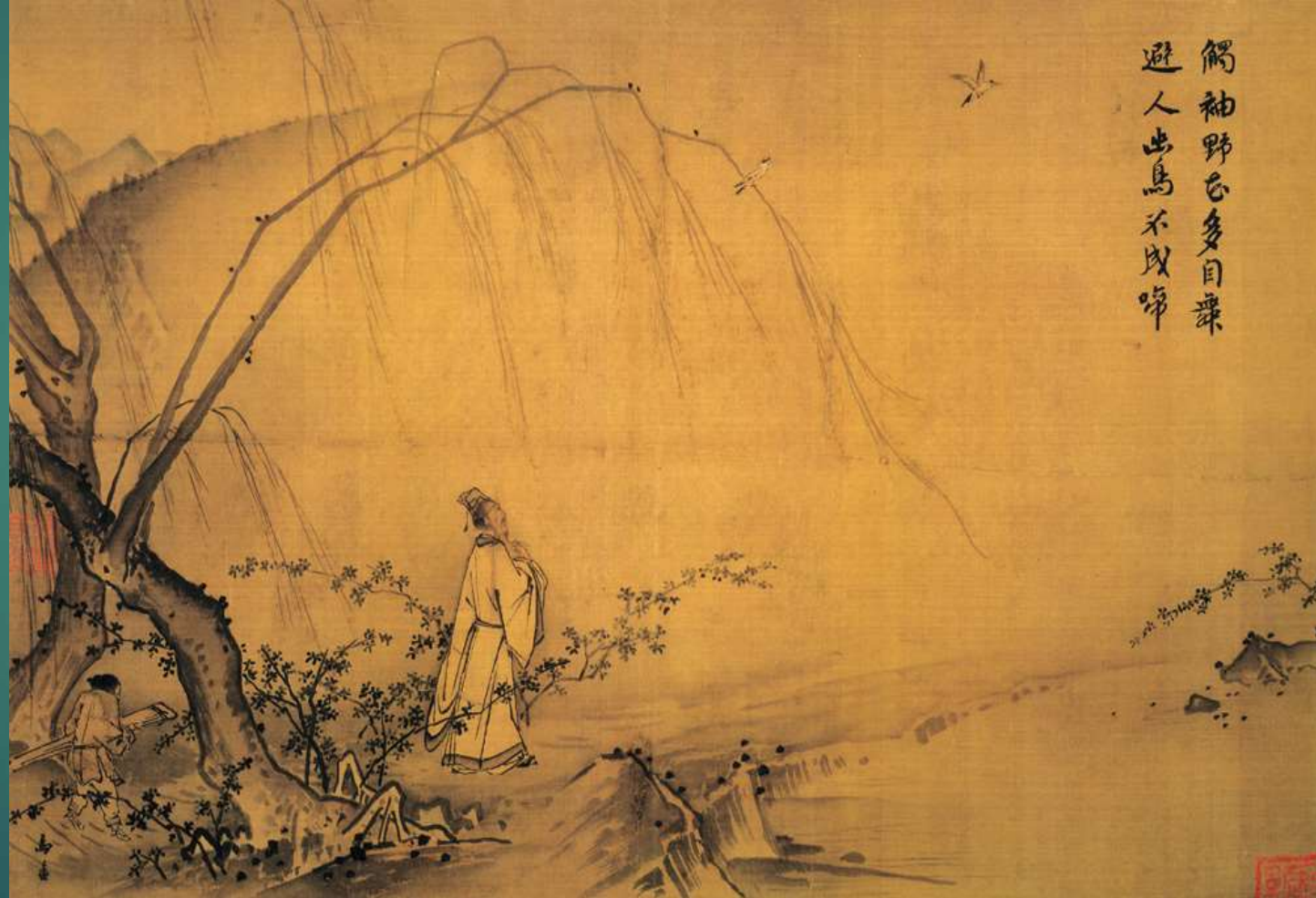
▶ **DBQ:** Document Based Questions



▶ Look at this ancient Chinese paintings...How were Daoist's beliefs depicted in landscapes painted during the Song Dynasty?


Daoism

► **DBQ:** Document Based Questions



觸袖野鳥多自舞
避人出鳥不成啼

- Analysis this ancient Chinese paintings...How were Daoist's beliefs depicted in landscapes painted during the Song Dynasty? **All of the paintings and poems were centered around nature.**

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Painting in the Song Dynasty

- ▶ The painting of landscapes became widespread during the Song Dynasty.



- ▶ However, Chinese artists did not try to make exact pictures of the landscapes they were painting

Painting in the Song Dynasty

- ▶ Instead, they wished to portray the “idea” of the mountains, lakes and other features of their landscapes.



- ▶ Also, empty spaces were left in paintings on purpose...this is because of the Daoist belief that a person cannot know the whole truth about something.

Painting in the Song Dynasty

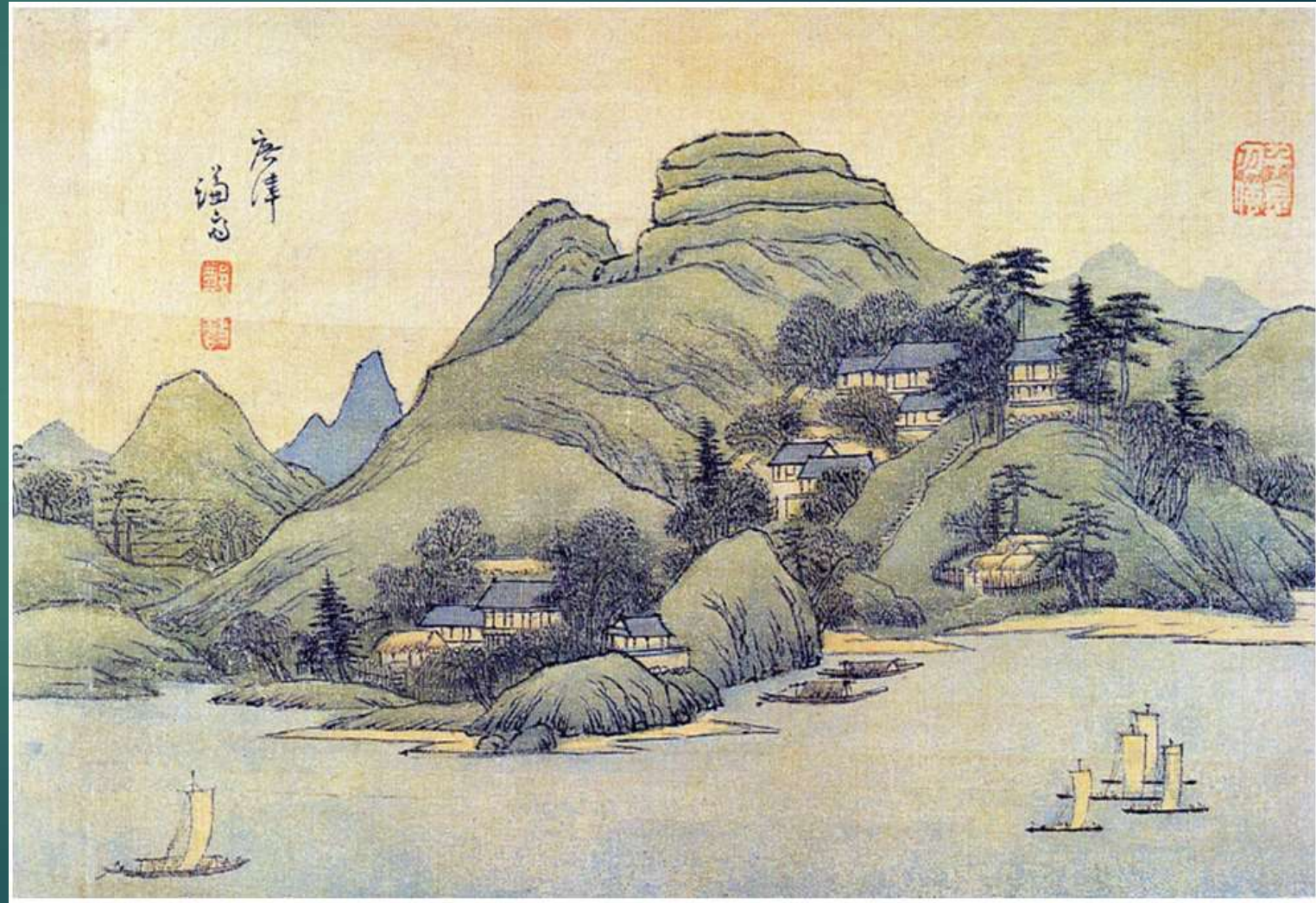
- ▶ Daoist beliefs also can be seen in the way people are portrayed.




- ▶ They are tiny figures, fishing in small boats or wandering up a hillside trail.

Painting in the Song Dynasty

- ▶ In other words, the people are living in, but not controlling, nature.



- ▶ They are only a part of harmony of the natural setting.

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Painting in the Song Dynasty

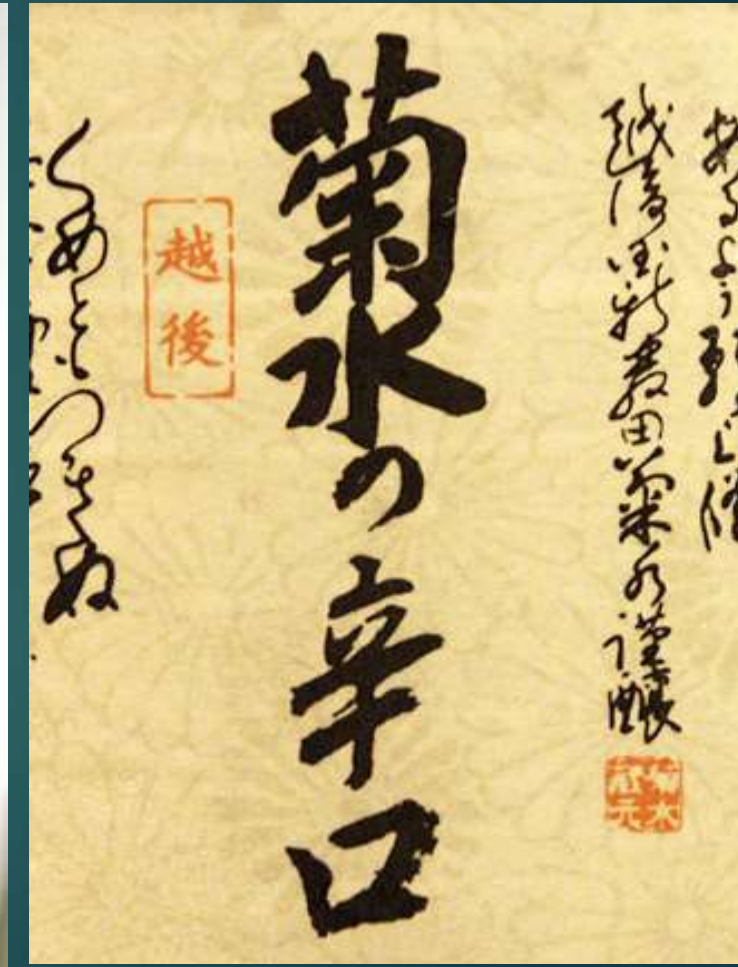
- ▶ Chinese painters often wrote poetry on their works.



- ▶ They used a brush and ink to write beautiful characters called **Calligraphy**.

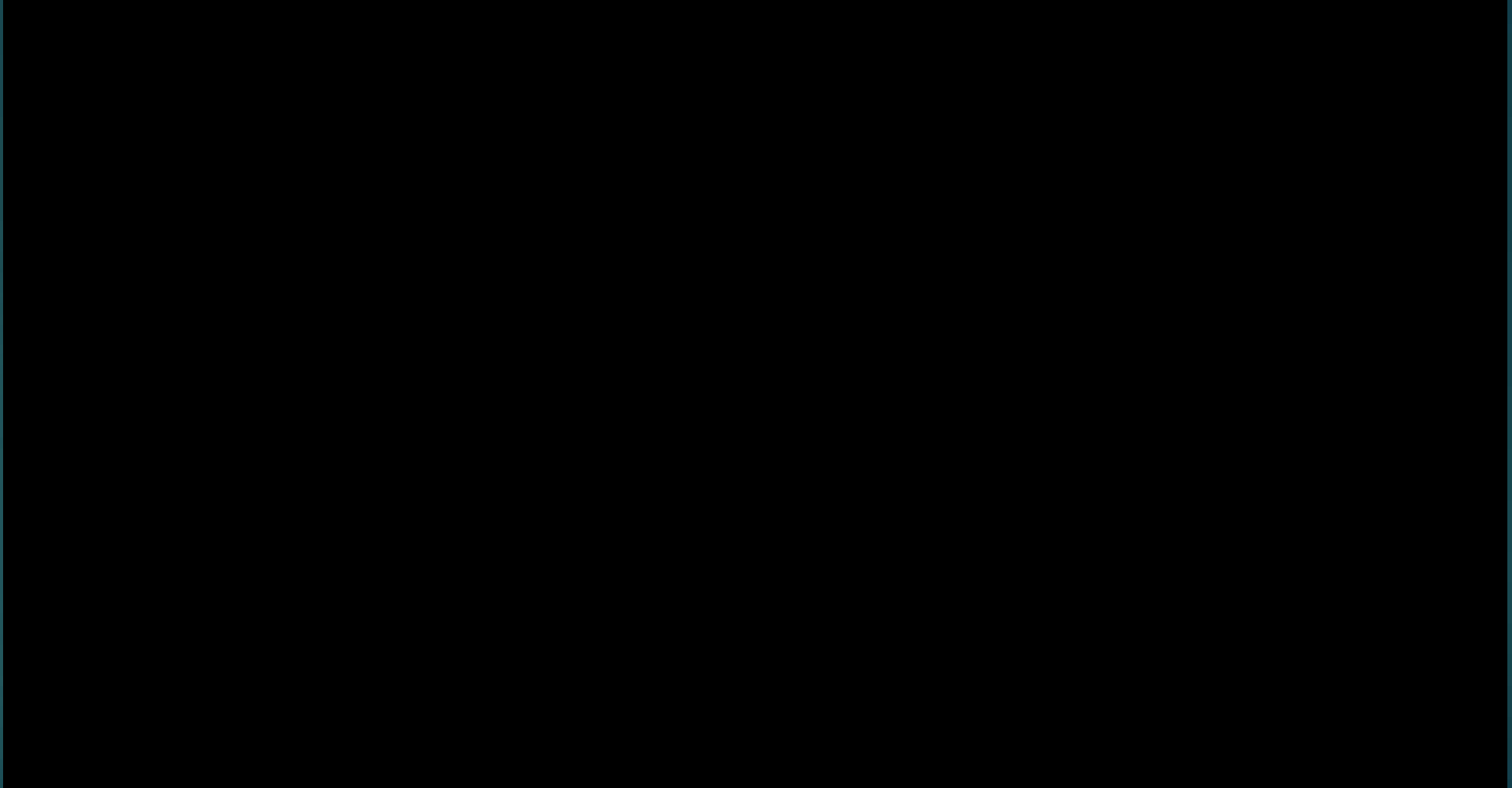
Painting in the Song Dynasty

- ▶ **Calligraphy** is the art of forming beautiful symbols by hand and arranging them well.

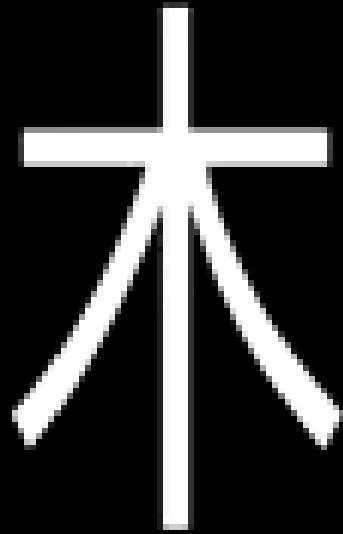


- ▶ It's a set of skills and techniques for positioning and inscribing words so they show integrity, harmony, some sort of ancestry, rhythm and creative fire.

Painting in the Song Dynasty

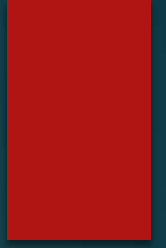


Painting in the Song Dynasty



TREE

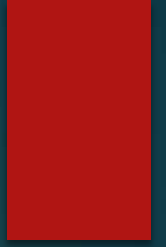
Painting in the Song Dynasty



▶ Questions:

- ▶ 1) What was the focus of many Tang era paintings?
- ▶ 2) Why were their empty spaces left on most paintings?
- ▶ 3) What is calligraphy?

Painting in the Song Dynasty



- ▶ **Questions:**

- ▶ 1) What was the focus of many Tang era paintings?

 - ▶ **Different aspects of nature**

- ▶ 2) Why were their empty spaces left on most paintings?

 - ▶ **Daoist believe a person cannot know the whole truth about something**

- ▶ 3) What is calligraphy?

 - ▶ **The art of forming beautiful symbols by hand**

Chinese Porcelain

- ▶ During the Tang period, Chinese artisans perfected the making of **Porcelain**.



- ▶ Because porcelain later came from China to the West, people today sometimes call porcelain by the name "China".

Chinese Porcelain

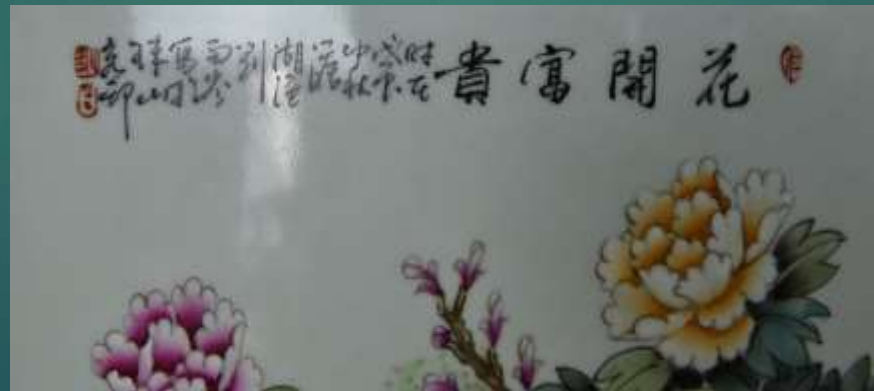


- ▶ Porcelain can be made into plates, cups, figurines and vases.
- ▶ In 851 C.E., an Arab traveler described the quality of the Tang porcelain:
 - ▶ **“There is in China a very fine clay from which are made vases...Water in these vases is visible through them and yet they are made clear.”**



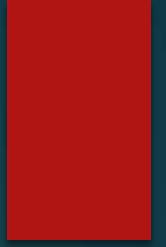
Chinese Porcelain

- ▶ The technology for making porcelain spread to other parts of the world.



- ▶ It finally reached Europe in the 1700's...however, the Chinese porcelain will always remain the pinnacle of ceramic achievement.

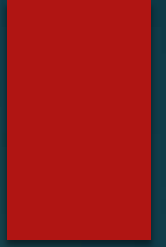
Chinese Porcelain



▶ Questions:


- ▶ 1) What is porcelain sometimes called today in the western countries?
- ▶ 2) What are some items that were and are still made out of porcelain?

Chinese Porcelain



▶ Questions:

- ▶ 1) What is porcelain sometimes called today in the western countries?
 - ▶ **“China” or “Fine China”**
- ▶ 2) What are some items that were and are still made out of porcelain?
 - ▶ **Plates, cups, figurines and vases**

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Chinese Porcelain

- ▶ **Contrast:**

- ▶ Answer the following question in well written open ended answer.

- ▶ **How do the two forms of printing invented by the Chinese differ from one another?**

Chinese Porcelain

▶ Creative Writing:

- ▶ Answer the following question in well written open ended answer.
- ▶ Read the poem “*Still Night Thoughts*” by Li Bo again. Then write a short four stanza poem similar to Li Bo’s about the view from you bedroom or kitchen window.

Chinese Porcelain

