

# Political Organizations in Early China



- As in the Indus River valley of India, fertile rivers valleys in China allowed villages and towns to flourish along their banks.



- The most important of these valleys were those of the **Yellow River** and the **Yangzi River**, which began to support people after about 7000 B.C.E.

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# Early China

- The major issue regarding these rivers is that they are completely unpredictable.



- The **Yellow River** rises in the mountains boarding the high plateau of Tibet and continues about 3,000 miles before emptying into the Yellow Sea.

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## Early China

It takes its name from **Huang He** meaning “Yellow River” from the vast quantities of light-colored soil that it picks up along its route.



- So much soil becomes suspended in the river that the water actually becomes yellow.

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# Early China

- This soil gradually builds up, raising river beds and actually forcing the water out of its established path, periodically unleashing tremendous floods.



- The Yellow river has caused so much devastation that it has earned the nick name “China’s Sorrow”.

# Early China



**Early China**



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# Early China



- Despite the periodic damage caused by the river, the soil it deposits is extremely fertile and easy to work, so even before the introduction of metal tools...cultivators using wooden tools could bring in a generous harvest.

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## Early China



- The **Three Gorges Dam** is a hydro-electric dam that spans the Yangtze River in China.



- The Three Gorges Dam is the world's largest power station...using the destruction of this river in the most positive way possible.

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# Right Now In China



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**Right Now In China**

- Facts:

- The Three Gorges Dam will consist of a 610-foot high wall running 1.3 miles from bank to bank.
  - The Three Gorges Dam cost \$37 billion to build
- 13 cities, 140 towns, and more than 1,600 villages have been submerged under the world's largest reservoir. An official count of 1.3 million people were relocated.
- Upon the dam's completion, 1,300 known archeological sites were lost forever under water.
- Since partial completion in 2006, there have been reports of cracks, landslides, ecological deterioration, and accumulation of algae
- Over 360 million people live within the watershed of the Yangtze River... If the one in one thousand chance of a dam collapse occurred, the millions of people who live downstream would be endangered.



November 7, 2006



April 17, 1957

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# Right Now In China



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**Right Now in China**



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**Right Now in China**



**Right Now in China**



- As in Mesopotamia and India, agriculture surplus resulted in an increased population and gave rise to complex societies.

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## Early China

- Chinese legends speak of three ancient dynasties that brought China under unified rule in the third century B.C.E.



- These dynasties were **Hereditary States** that extended their control over progressively large regions of China, however none of them embraced all of the territory of modern China.

# Early China





- **Dynasty** - A family or group that maintains power for several generations

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# Early China

- Around 2200 B.C.E. China came under the control of **Yu the Great**, who founded the **Xia (Shah) Dynasty**



- The **Xia** were the first to organize public life in China on a large scale.

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# Early China

- For many years, the Xia Dynasty was thought to be a part of a myth that the Chinese tell as part of their ancient oral histories.



- However, in 1959 archeological evidence was found that placed the Xia in the ancient city of **Yanshi**

## Early China



# Early China

- The establishment of the Xia Dynasty is an important milestone in the history of Chinese civilization and marks the beginning of the **Class Society**.



- **Class Society** – Social classes of people that are arranged by their economic and cultural groups.

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# Early China

- **Yu the Great** first set up the Xia Dynasty under the **Abdication System**, which is choosing the leader according to their ability.



- After he died, his son **Qi** broke up that system and made himself the Xia emperor...from that time onwards the Xia used **Hereditary System**, passing power down through family ties.

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# Early China

- The Xia Dynasty ended under the reign of **Jie**, a very notorious tyrannical emperor in Chinese history who routinely mistreated his people.



- Jie** etching with a halberd, representing oppression, and sitting on two ladies, symbolizing his abuse of power.

# Early China

- After Jie took the throne, he lived an extravagant life day and night without any thought for his country or its people...

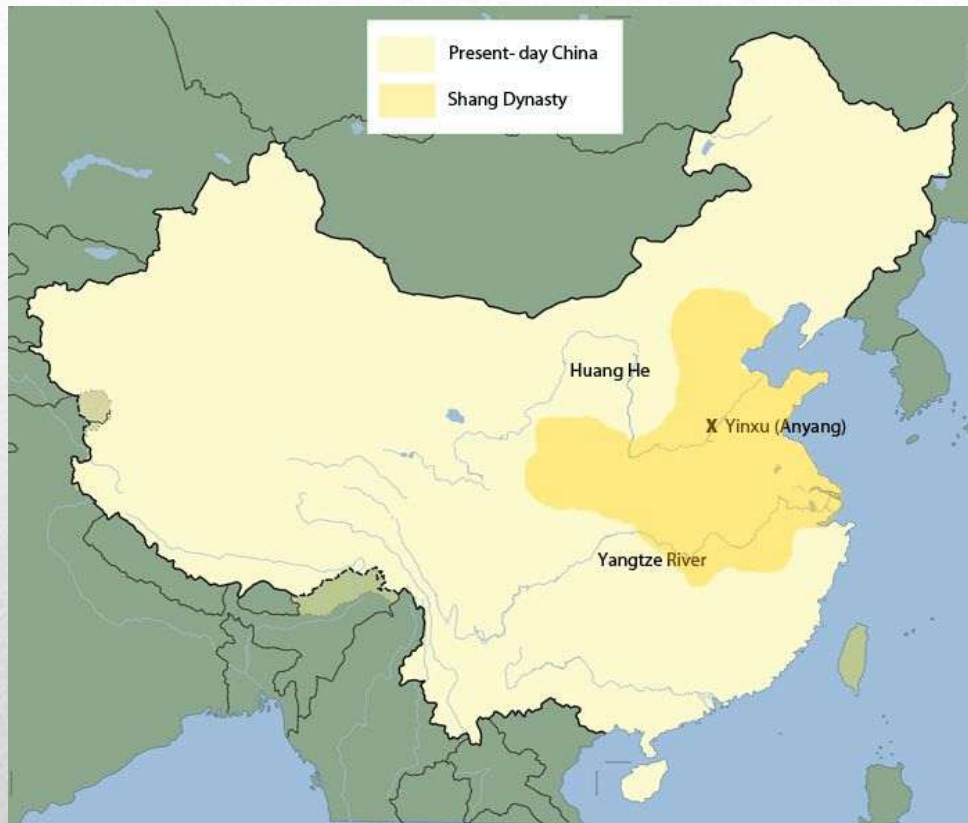


- All of his actions enraged the people so much that they rebelled under the leadership of **Tang**, the chief of the **Shang Tribe** that was located along the Yellow River.

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# Xia Dynasty





- The Shang Dynasty came to power in 1766 B.C.E. and lasted until 1122 B.C.E. under the leadership of the Shang **King Tang**.

# Early China

- Shang ruling elites managed to monopolize the production of bronze equipment within the Yellow River valley



- This control over bronze production strengthened Shang forces against those of the Xia and they had very little difficulty imposing their rule on agricultural villages.

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# Early China

The Shang state rested on a vast network of walled towns whose local rulers recognized the authority of the Shang Kings (30 in total)



During the course of their reign the Shang controlled over one thousand towns.

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# Early China



# Early China

- The Shang also established important capital cities that became the most vital part of their civilizations (there were eight different capitals, **Yin Xu**)



- The capitals not only commanded the administration but became the center for culture, economic growth, arts, crafts, trade and religious centers.

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# Early China



- **Anyang City** is an ancient city with a history of over 3,000 years and is one of the Eight Ancient Capitals of China.

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# Early China

- The Shang devised a strict social order within the civilization in order to maintain strict control over the state. .
  - **King** - who was at the center of Shang religious and political life.
  - **Nobles** - served as the kings advisors and preformed specific government and religious duties
  - **Warriors** – military men obtained some wealth
  - **Artisans** – skilled manual workers
  - **Farmers** – Did farmer things
  - **Slaves** - societies lowest ranking class and at the same time was an important source of labor during the Shang period

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# Early China

- The sad thing is that farmers had one of the most important jobs of anyone living in the Shang Dynasty...they grew food and raised all of the livestock.



- At the end of the day taxes claimed much of what they earned and left them extremely poor...same as today really.

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# Early China



- The Shang made many important advances in the Chinese way of life, including China's first writing system.
- This system used more than **2,000** symbols to express words and ideas.



# Early China



- Although the system has gone through many changes over the years, the Chinese symbols used today are directly based on those of the Shang period.

## Early China



- The Shang's first writings were found on **Oracle Bones**, primarily ox scapulae (shoulder) and turtle shells, originally used for **divination**.
- **Divination** – The practice of seeking knowledge of the future or the unknown through supernatural means.

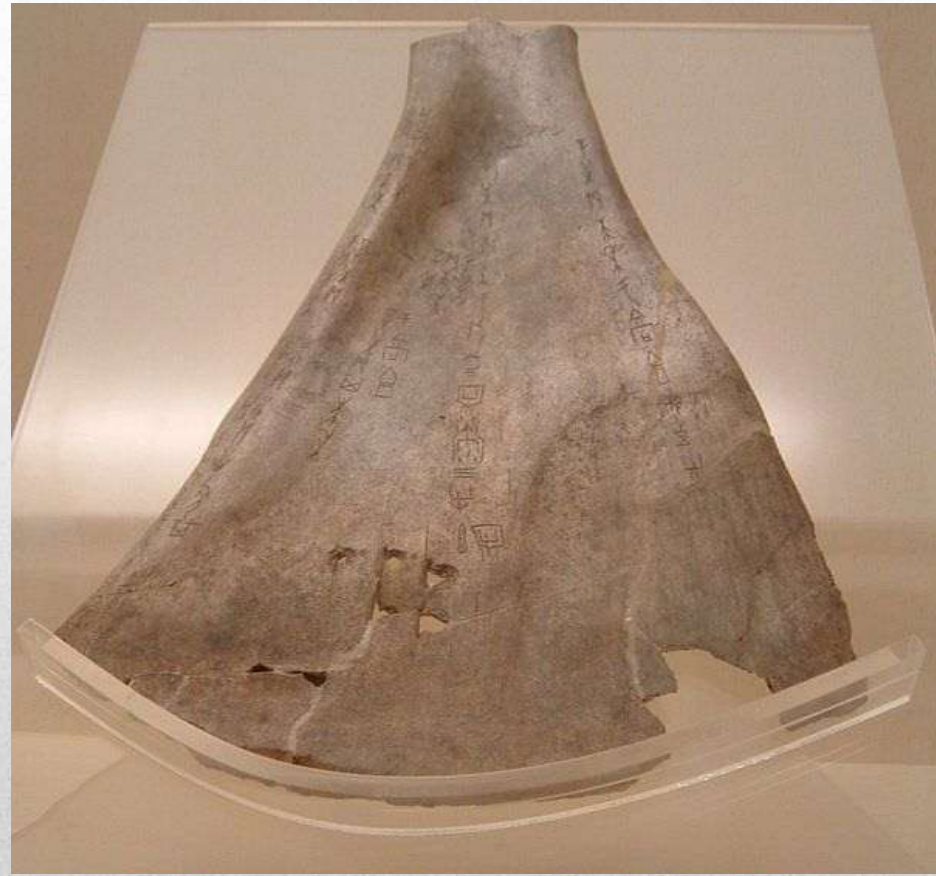


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## Early China



- **The Oracle Bones Process** - a priest would carve questions about the future on these bones and shells.
- They were then heated causing them to crack.
- Priest believed that they could “read” these cracks to predict events that would happen in the future.



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# Early China



# Early China

- The fall of the Shang Dynasty, which was very much like the Xia Dynasty, came from the hands of its final king, **King Zhou**



- In his later years, **King Zhou** was obsessed with drinking, sex and a general lack of morals, preferring these to the proper governance of the country, basically he ignored almost all affairs of state.

# Early China

- One of the most famous forms of entertainment was the "Wine Pool and Meat Forest" essentially a large pool, big enough for several canoes, was constructed on the Palace grounds filled with ...wine
- A small island was constructed in the middle of the pool, where trees were planted, which had branches made of roasted meat skewers
- This was considered one of the most famous examples of decadence and corruption of a ruler in Chinese history.

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## Early China

- In order to fund King Zhou's heavy expenses each day, extremely heavy taxes were implemented, the civilians suffered greatly, and lost all hope for the Shang Dynasty.



Ultimately King Zhou was just a cruel tyrant who created cruel laws, tortured his people and exploited his power and was eventually killed by **King Wu** of the **Zhou kingdom**.

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# Early China



- The Shang were originally considered to be a myth...much like the Xia



- Until the Shang Dynasty oracle bones were unearthed periodically by local farmers, starting as early as the Han Dynasty (220 C.E.)

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# Early China



- By 19th century China, these relics were actually being sold as **Dragon Bones** in the traditional Chinese medicine markets.

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## Early China

- They were being used either whole or crushed for the healing of various ailments.



- The turtle shell fragments were prescribed for malaria, while the other animal bones were used in powdered form to treat knife wounds and other injuries.

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## Early China

- The bones were then traced to **Anyang**, which was the last Shang Capital.



- Further investigation showed The oracle bones are the earliest known examples of ancient Chinese writing, and contain the complete royal genealogy of the Shang dynasty.

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# Early China

- The **Zhou's** rebellion and subsequent take over of the Shang Dynasty changed the course of China forever.
- Essentially what happened was the Shang districts embraced the **Zhou Kingdom** in their assault on the Shang Dynasty.
- The Zhou went on to become the longest and most successful ruling state in Chinese History.



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# The Zhou Dynasty

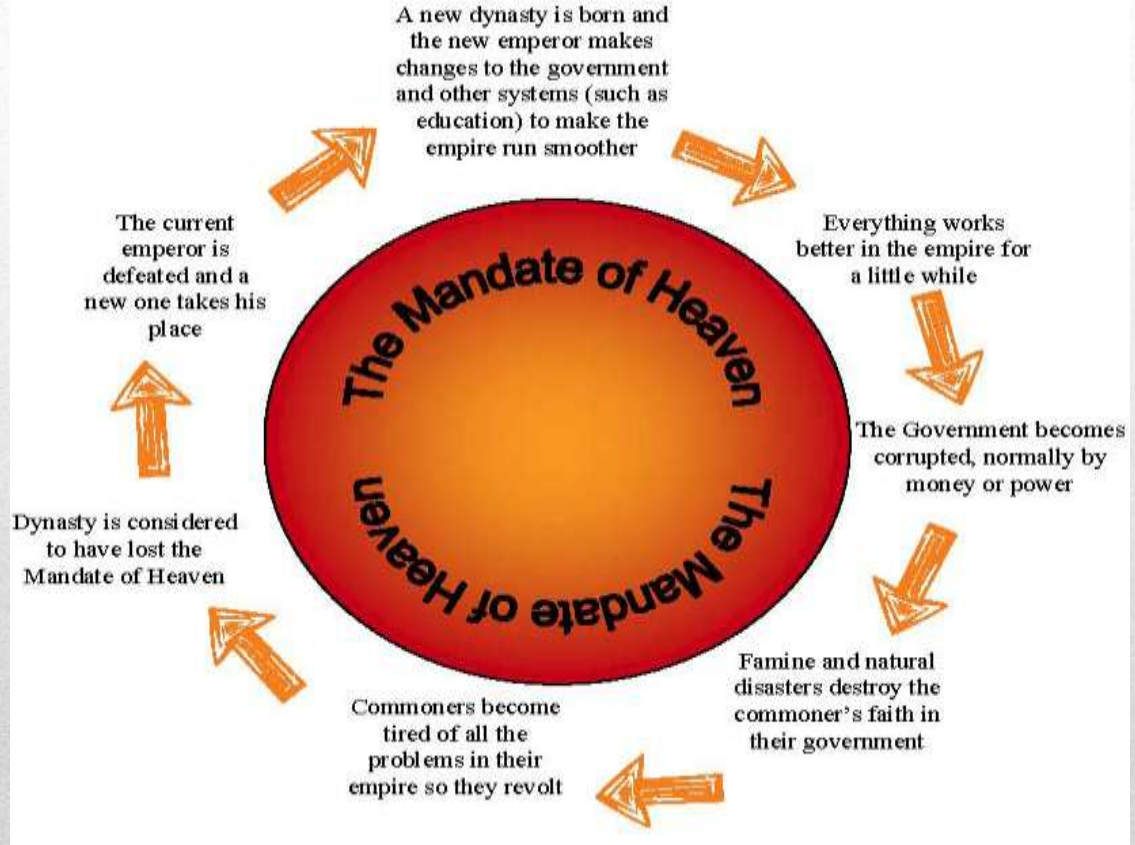


- The Zhou Dynasty lasted longer than any other dynasty in Chinese history lasting from 1122 – 256 B.C.E. (866 years)

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# The Zhou Dynasty

- The Zhou used an idea called the **Mandate of Heaven** to validate their takeover and subsequent ruling of the former Shang kingdom.
- **The Mandate of Heaven** states Heaven, or “*Tian*”, gave permission to a king or leader to take rule from any tyrant who has lost control.



# The Zhou Dynasty



- No king or emperor could rule without “**Tians**” permission.
- If a emperor was found to be evil, “**Tian**” would support a new leader in ruling.



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## The Zhou Dynasty





- The Zhou adopted much of the Shang lifestyle, often importing Shang families or communities to new towns they built to utilize the knowledge of the Shang artisans.

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# The Zhou Dynasty

- The bronze vessels of the Zhou are nearly identical with those of the Shang.



- The Zhou also adopted much of the Shang writing system, rituals, and administration techniques.

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# The Zhou Dynasty

- The Zhou had multiple Capital Cities (Haojing and Luoyang)



- Part of their success was the result of gaining the allegiance of citizens who were being mistreated by the Shang Emperor.

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# The Zhou Dynasty

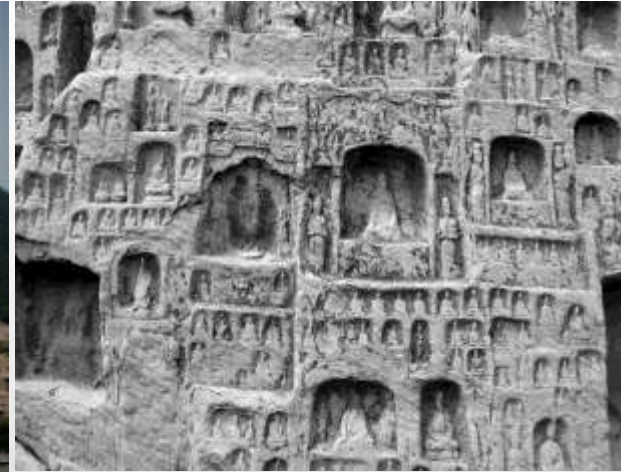
- Luoyang located on the central plain of China, one of the cradles of the Chinese civilization.



- Luoyang was one of the Great Ancient Capitals of China

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# The Zhou Dynasty



- **Longman Grotto**- one of China's world heritage sites located in the capital, featuring more than 2,300 grottoes, or caves, 110,000 Buddhist images and is found in Luoyang

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# Zhou Dynasty



- The Longmen Grottoes are located in the south of Luoyang City.

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# Zhou Dynasty



**Zhou Dynasty**



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**Zhou Dynasty**





- Starting 493 C.E., patrons and contributors included emperors, members of the royal family, other rich families, generals, and religious groups

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# Zhou Dynasty

- The Zhou began a different form of governing, which was basically **feudal**.



- **Feudalism** – Political system that featured an exchange of land in return for military and other services.

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# The Zhou Dynasty



- Similar systems of Feudalism also developed in Japan with the Samurai around 1100 C.E.

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# The Zhou Dynasty



- ...and most famously in Europe during the Middle Ages.

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## The Zhou Dynasty



- While each civilization practiced a slightly different feudal system the basic component, land for military service was the same.

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# The Zhou Dynasty



- During the Zhou Dynasty land was granted to citizens, from the King in return for their loyalty, military support and other services.

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# The Zhou Dynasty

- These citizens were also called “Lords” or people of high rank within society.



- Lords paid taxes and provided soldiers to the King as needed.

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# The Zhou Dynasty

- This system was described with great detail in the **Book of Songs**, the earliest existing collection of about 305 Chinese poems, composed by various authors of the Zhou Period.



- “Everywhere under vast Heaven, There is no land that is not the King’s, Within the borders of those lands, There are none who are not the King’s servants”*

# The Zhou Dynasty



- The Zhou's Feudal System of government brought a much needed order to China.



- Ruling through Lords helped the Dynasty control distant areas and ensure loyalty to the King

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# The Zhou Dynasty

- Over time however, the political system broke down.



- Lords passed their power and wealth to their sons, who were less loyal to the current King.

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# The Zhou Dynasty



- As these Lords and local rulers gained more power they began to reject the authority of the King.

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# The Zhou Dynasty

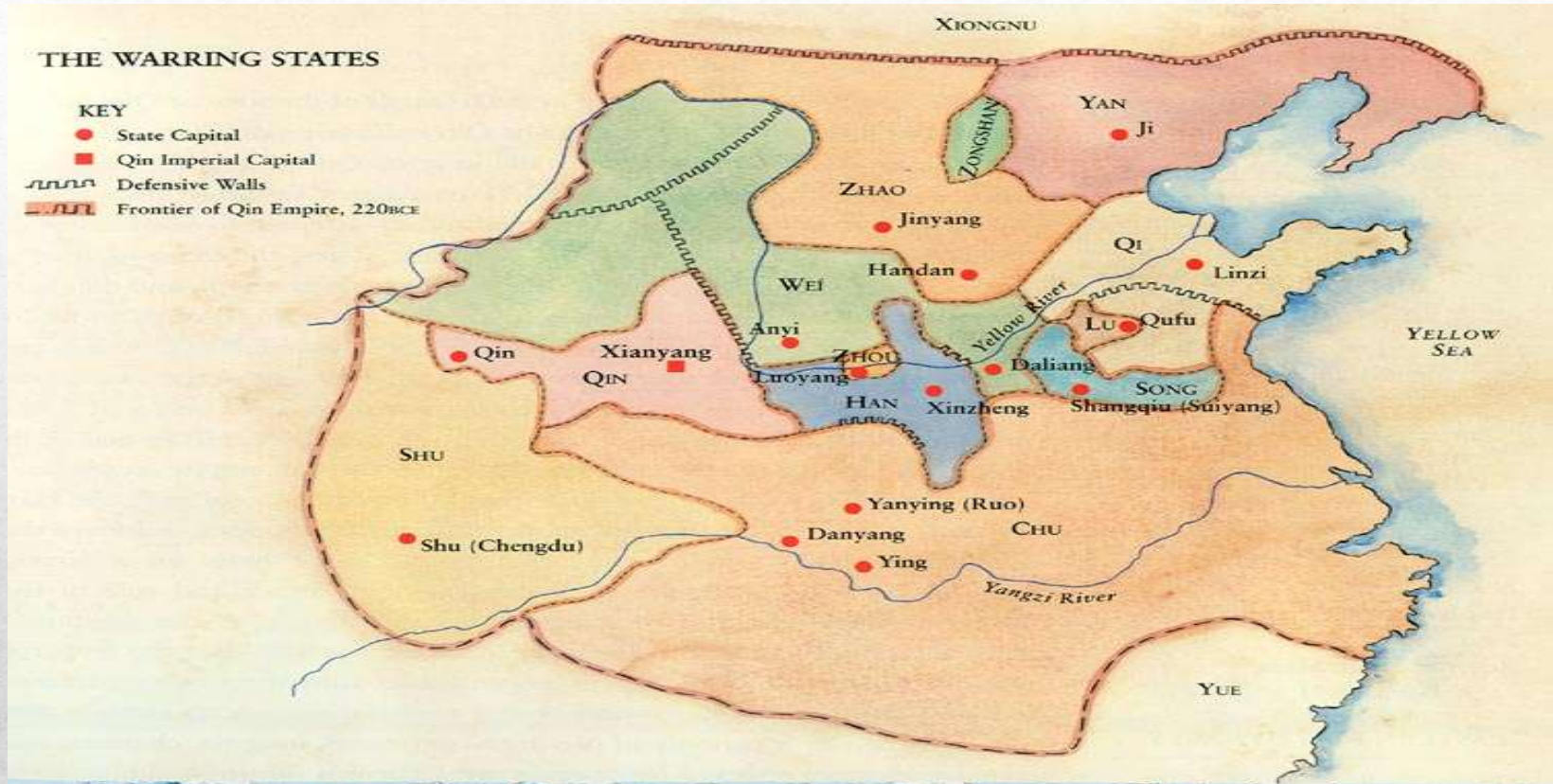
- As the Lords' loyalty to the Zhou King lessened, many refused to fight against invasions.



- In 771 B.C.E. war had finally reached the capital city and the Zhou had lost...but the Dynasty survived in a very rudimentary fashion...lords' began to fight amongst each other and by 481 B.C.E. China had entered an era known as the **Warring States**.

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# The Zhou Dynasty



• **Warring States** – A time of civil war in China where armies grew, fighting was brutal and cruel soldiers fought for territory, not honor.

# The Zhou Dynasty



- During the Warring States period thousands of armies fought to gain control of China.
- New weapons and battle techniques were introduced causing the civil wars to last more than 200 years.  
(Iron)

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# The Zhou Dynasty



- Out of this civil distress a ancient text was written called **The Art of War** by **Sun Tzu**.
- **Sun Tzu** – was a Chinese military general, strategist and philosopher under the **State of Wu** which was located within the Zhou Dynasty



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## The Zhou Dynasty



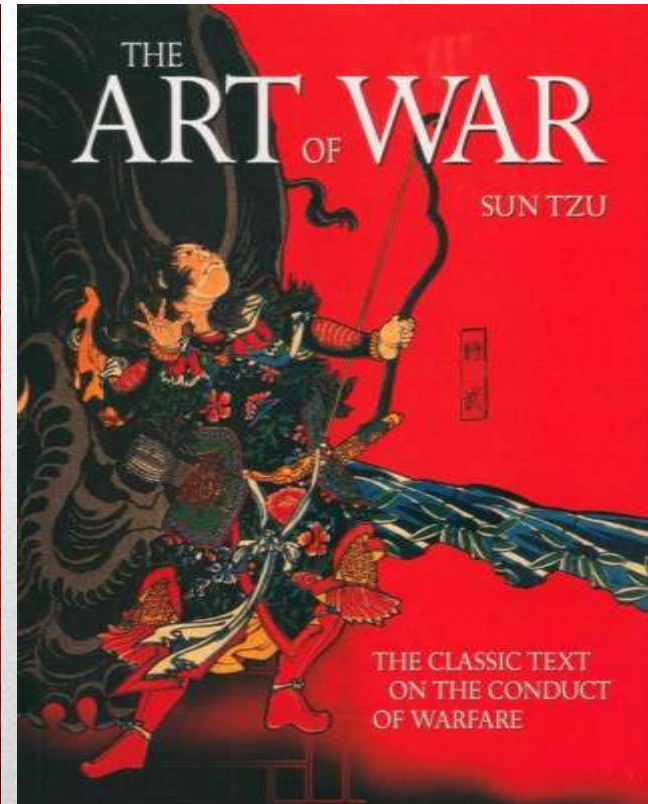
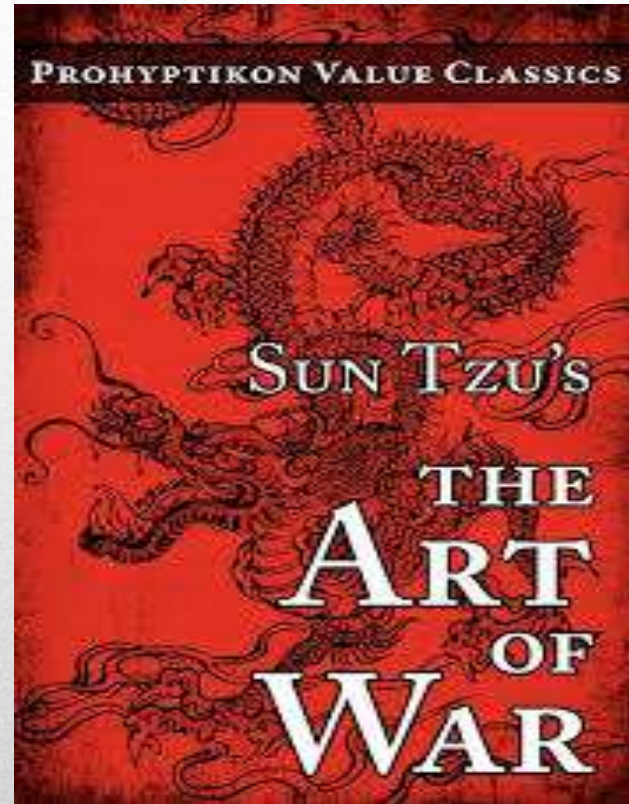
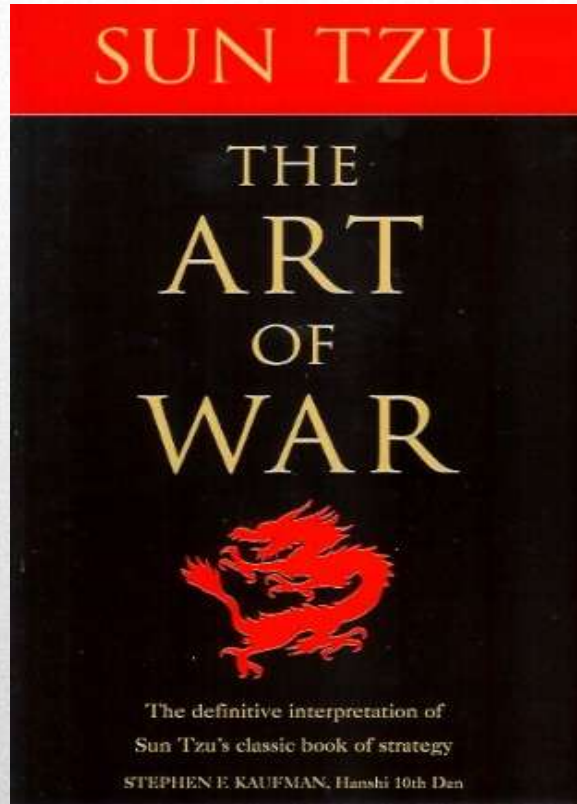
- **The Art of War** was composed of 13 chapters, each of which is devoted to one aspect of warfare
- The Art of War is the definitive work on military strategies and tactics of its time. (Bamboo Edition)



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# The Zhou Dynasty





- The book is still used today within modern militaries...and can be purchased at your local book store

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## The Zhou Dynasty



- The decline of the Zhou took place along with the important changes in the family structure.

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# The Zhou Dynasty

- For centuries the “family” had been the foundation of life in China.



- Large famines going back several generations formed powerful alliances.

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# The Zhou Dynasty



- When these families broke apart, they lost their power and close relatives became mortal enemies.

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# The Zhou Dynasty

- Bonds of loyalty weakened even small families, especially among the upper class.



- Brothers plotted against each other over inheritances, while fathers tried to maintain peace by dividing his land evenly.

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## The Zhou Dynasty

- This actually created more problems with Brothers building up their own individual wealth and armies to challenge each other.



- In some drastic instances they would even kill their own fathers for absolute power.

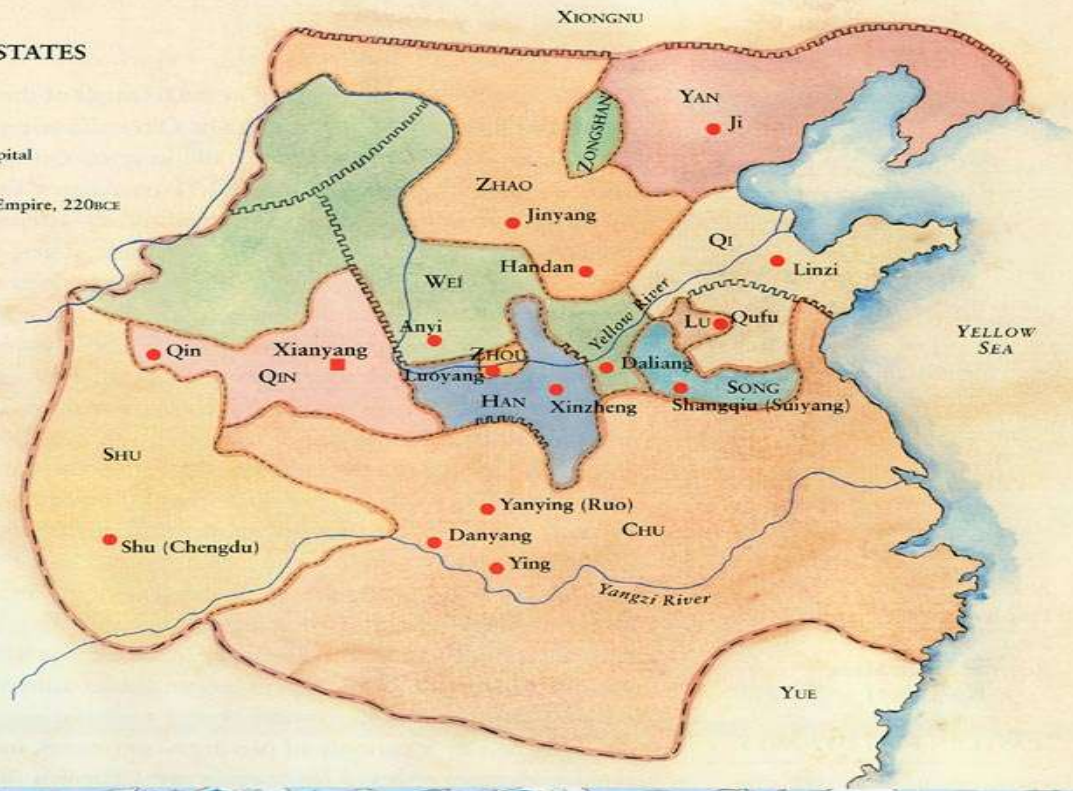
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# The Zhou Dynasty



## THE WARRING STATES

- KEY
- State Capital
  - Qin Imperial Capital
  - Defensive Walls
  - - - Frontier of Qin Empire, 220BCE



- During the Warring States period, China lacked a strong government to stop power struggles within the ruling classes...society fell into a period of disorder and absolute chaos.

# The Zhou Dynasty



- What do you know about that little wall in China???

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# The Zhou Dynasty and the Great Wall





- Over twenty states and dynasties were involved in the building of the Great Wall...including the Zhou.

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## **The Zhou Dynasty and the Great Wall**



- The creation of the Great Wall was initiated during the Warring States Period to prevent the invasion by other states of China and outer tribes. (**6,000 Miles in total length**)

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# The Zhou Dynasty and the Great Wall



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## **The Zhou Dynasty and the Great Wall**



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