

DOWNLOAD PDF THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF CHINA TO THE END OF THE CHOU DYNASTY

Chapter 1 : The Ancient History of China to the End of the Chou Dynasty

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The ancient China era was c. Without any reliable historical records, most of what has been pieced together about prehistoric life in China comes from speculation about human activity at archaeological sites and unearthed relics. The rest comes from what might be truth within Chinese mythology. The Xia Dynasty c. Most of the evidence for the Xia Dynasty, including its name, is perhaps just legend. Chinese civilization began along the Yellow River in the Shang era, and spread from there when Bronze Age culture reached its peak. Then, traditional Chinese philosophies, such as Confucianism and Daoism, developed in the feudal Zhou era as China expanded in territory and population. Ancient China finally fractured into warring kingdoms for years, and its reunification marked the start of the imperial China age. The Shang Dynasty c. Many bronze objects and jade articles, which date back to BC, have been found to support these early archaeological records. The earliest form of Chinese writing "oracle bones" was found. The inscriptions on animal bones had pictographic characters. The Zhou Dynasty BC After the Shang era, the larger Zhou era territory was divided by a network of feudal states and was ruled over by kings. The king of Zhou only had direct control over a small portion of the realm and received tributes from the feudal states. It was a fairly peaceful time but, after BC, the Zhou king lost his authority and seven prominent states emerged. This era was divided into three periods: It marked the transition from tribal society to feudal society. Major philosophies and religions emerged that were the basis of Chinese beliefs in later eras, such as Confucianism and Daoism. The imperial China period makes up the bulk of Chinese history. With the cyclical rise and fall of dynasties, Chinese civilization was cultivated and prospered in times of peace, then reformed after rebellions and conquests. During this period, a number of institutions were established that laid the foundation of the basic political system for the next 2, years. The short-lived Qin Dynasty was the first to unite China as a country under an emperor instead of a ruling clan. A bureaucratic government was introduced, and was continued by the less extreme Han Dynasty. He and his Qin state united China by conquering the other warring states, and he ruled with an iron fist. Qin Shi Huang centralized the power of the empire after he took the throne and set up a system of laws. He standardized units of weight and measurements, as well as the writing system. The Qin Dynasty was the first and shortest imperial dynasty in China. During the later period of the Qin Dynasty, Liu Bang, a peasant leader, overthrew the unpopular Qin regime and established the Han Dynasty. In the Han Dynasty, a bureaucratic system in which promotion was based on merit was established and Confucianism was adopted by the state for national governance. During the reign of Emperor Wudi r. The multiethnic country became more united during the Han regime. It had far-reaching impacts for every dynasty that followed it. Its hold on power was tenuous, however, and China again fractured, this time into the Southern and Northern Dynasties " During this messy time, many religions emerged and Buddhism was popular among the barbarian kingdoms in North China. China went from having four warring kingdoms to being the most culturally sophisticated and technologically developed nation. Finally, it was consumed by the rise and fall of the phenomenal Mongol Empire, which stretched to Europe. It was a short, intense dynasty, with great conquests and achievements, such as the Grand Canal and the rebuilding of the Great Wall. It ruled for three centuries, and it was also the golden age for poetry, painting, tricolored glazed pottery, and woodblock printing. This situation continued to the end of the Tang Dynasty. This ended when one of the northern kingdoms defeated its neighbors and established the Song Dynasty. The modern-day northern Hebei Province was occupied by the Khitan and was under the control of the Liao Dynasty " In the northwest, the Western Xia Dynasty " " ruled by the Tanguts " controlled the modern-day Gansu and northwestern Shaanxi. Then the Song government moved and reestablished the capital in Hangzhou, establishing the Southern Song Dynasty " The Song era was a period of technological advances and prosperity. During the Song Dynasty,

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the handicraft industry as well as domestic and foreign trade boomed. Many merchants and travelers came from abroad. The "four great inventions" of the Chinese people in ancient times—paper, printing, the compass, and gunpowder—were further developed in the Song Dynasty. At the end of the 12th century, Mongolian rule grew steadily. With Genghis Khan and his descendants expanding their territory, the Mongol Empire extended all the way to Eastern Europe. The part of the Mongolian khanate that ruled China was known as the Yuan Dynasty. He made Dadu (modern-day Beijing) the capital of the first foreign-led dynasty in China. However, they became increasingly inadequate in the ages of exploration, colonization, and industrialization. The Ming Dynasty—The Forbidden City After a series of natural disasters and rebellion movements led by the Han people, a new native dynasty was established in . It was the last ethnic Chinese dynasty, sandwiched between two foreign ones. The Ming Dynasty represented a long period of stability. When his son and successor, Zhu Di, ascended the throne, he started to build the Forbidden City in Beijing. In , he officially made Beijing his capital. He was very supportive of international trade and sponsored several voyages to the West. It was an era of native Chinese strength and prosperity, which faltered due to natural disasters and greedy leadership, as had so many dynasties before it. Eventually, the Ming Dynasty fell due to the frequent peasant rebellions and Manchu attacks. The Manchus attacked China for three generations in succession, and finally founded the Qing Dynasty. The two most famous emperors of the Qing Dynasty were Emperor Kangxi r. Their reigns were "a golden age of prosperity". However, the last Chinese dynasty is shamefully remembered for the forced trade of the late Qing era. China was reduced to being a semi-colonial, semi-imperial country after the First Opium War, which began in . However, the Republic of China could not be firmly established across China, with civil war ensuing for decades.

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Chapter 2 : Zhou dynasty | Chinese history | racedaydvl.com

When, in , about the time of the battle of Leipzig, patriotic cares preyed upon his soul, Germany's great poet, Goethe, took refuge in the history of China. The novelty of the study and the very diversity of the subject had, we may conclude from his own words, a salutary effect on his mind. The.

Worksheets Dynasties of Ancient China Dynasty means rulers of the same family who rule for generations to come. It also means an era during which that family ruled. Several dynasties ruled China for over years There were 13 dynasties that ruled ancient China. They are as follows: Xia dynasty Xia dynasty is considered to be the first dynasty in ancient China which lasted for almost years including the rule of 17 emperors. This dynasty was set up by Yu the great under the system of choosing emperors based on their abilities. Such a system was called Abdication system. After his death, his son Qi took over the throne by breaking the abdication system. It was from that time on that abdication system gave way to hereditary system. Amongst all his kids, Shaokang and Huai greatly contributed to the development of Chinese society. During this period there were also some dictatorial emperors like Taikang, Kongjia, and Jie. Agricultural tools were made of stone and bone. Also during this period, bronze was produced on a large scale. He was a tyrannical emperor. He lived an extravagant life with no thought for his country. He killed many of his ministers who came up with good advises. All his actions enraged the people and therefore they finally became followers of leader Tang who was the chief of the Shang tribe which later on set up the Shang dynasty by throwing away the Xia. Shang dynasty Shang dynasty lasted for around years and was led by 30 different emperors. It is also called the Yin dynasty. Tang was the founder of this dynasty. Tang brought in lot many new changes with the help of his two ministers. He governed his people with kindness and compassion. It was under his rule that people remained happy and the country also prospered. Things went fine till the ninth emperor, after which came the downfall of the Shang dynasty. Family members of the tenth emperor made several attempts to overthrow him and take charge of the throne. Soon he was thrown and the empire was taken over by Wuwang chief of Chou dynasty. Chou Zhou dynasty The founder of this dynasty was Wuwang. He made Haojing its capital. This dynasty ruled for the longest period of over years under the rule of 37 different emperors. The Chou dynasty is classified into two periods i. Each of these periods saw stormy wars. This led to the rise of new dynasty called the Qin dynasty. The dynasty ruled over China only for 15 years but in spite of such a short duration, it played an important role in Chinese history. Emperor Qin in order to strengthen the unity of the nation and to maintain the Qin Dynasty he carried out many reforms in politics, economy, military affairs, and culture. It was he who he standardized weights and measures and he insisted that the round coin with square hole Ban Liang Coin should be the coin used in the country. Emperor Yingzheng was the successor to the throne after Shi Huangdi. He was succeeded by Hu Hai. It was due to his negligence that a revolt took place between Chen Sheng and Wu Guang. Later the revolt was led by Xiang Yu and Liu Bang. It was known as the Chu-Han war, and it lasted for four years. Han dynasty Han consisted of two dynasties: During the period there were 24 emperors on the throne. Many were excellent contributing to the prosperity of the country with Emperors Gaozu, Wen, Jing and Wu among them. The Han Dynasty was a period of peace and prosperity as many effective measures were taken by the emperors during their rule. Six dynasties Six dynasties have got its name for the six successive dynasties that appeared in Southern China during the period. This period immediately followed the fall of the Han Dynasty in AD, and was a period of time where China was not united under a single leader. The 6 dynasties that held power during the three and a half centuries were: Sui dynasty The Sui Dynasty lasted for only 38 years and had only three emperors during its tenure. Sui united China again under one rule. They also expanded the Great Wall and built the Grand Canal. The decline of the Sui Dynasty started from the second monarch, Emperor Yang, who was a tyrant. He as a son showed no respect for his parents, slaughtered people and grabbed the throne. Emperor Yang led a luxurious and corrupt life. When Emperor Yang was killed by one of his subordinates, the dynasty completely collapsed. Tang dynasty After Emperor

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Yang was killed by his chancellor, Yuwen Huaji, Li Yuan took the chance to proclaim himself as the emperor and changed the state title into Tang, continuing to keep Changan as the capital city. Arts, literature, and technology all flourished. Thus, putting the powerful and mighty dynasty to an end. After the death of the Later Zhou emperor and the forced resignation of his son, the Song dynasty came into power. Song dynasty was founded by General Zhao Kuang-yin. This first emperor of the Song dynasty was put on the throne by his own troops in Kaifeng. He slowly reconquered all of China. First he defeated the empire Chu, then Shu in Szechuan, next south China and in the s the other small empires. Thus unification was completed in AD, with the conquer of the northern Han empire. Yuan dynasty After the Mongols defeated the people of Song dynasty in a long war, Kublai Khan, a Mongol leader, established the Yuan dynasty. Ming dynasty The last of the great Chinese dynasties, the Ming dynasty finished the Great Wall and built the Forbidden City, an enormous palace for the Emperor. The Ming dynasty came into power by overthrowing the rule of the Mongols. Qing dynasty The last emperor of the Ming dynasty hanged himself when army of peasants led by Li Zicheng entered Beijing. This way Manchus set up a new dynasty called the Qing dynasty. This dynasty ruled China for the next years. Qing dynasty was succeeded by Republic of China thus ending the period of ancient dynasties.

Chapter 3 : Kids History: The Zhou Dynasty of Ancient China

The Chou or Zhou dynasty ruled China from about 1046 to about 256 B.C. It was the longest dynasty in Chinese history and the time when much of ancient Chinese culture developed. The Chou Dynasty followed the second Chinese dynasty, the Shang.

In BCE, however, the Zhou capital was sacked by invaders, and the Zhou capital was moved further east. Scholars use this event to divide the history of the Zhou dynasty into two periods: The former was a time of strong kings, who expanded their borders by conquest and colonisation; the second period was one of weak kings who allowed powerful regional states to emerge. The Zhou period as a whole was a time of dramatic change for ancient China, in government, war, philosophy, economy and society. The Western Zhou dynasty

We have seen that the old Shang state system formed a kind of confederation of states in which many semi-independent rulers acknowledged the overlordship of the Shang king. One of these states was the kingdom of Zhou, which lay on the western frontiers of the Shang-dominated area, and may not have been fully assimilated into it. The last Shang king committed suicide, and the victor moved the capital to the city of Zengzhou. That period known in ancient Chinese history as the Zhou dynasty had begun. His example of faithful service to the king, and not grasping for supreme power for himself, made him one of the most revered figures in the whole of Chinese history. A portrait of the Duke of Zhou from Sancai Tuhui

When many of the former Shang-dominated states to the east tried to shake off Zhou rule, the duke of Zhou led an expedition which brought them firmly under control. The new political system

The new Zhou rulers consolidated their rule by placing members of their family and other loyal followers in charge of many of the states which had formed the old Shang confederation. Some of the previous lords kept their territories by submitting to Zhou authority, and others were brought into the Zhou royal family by marriage, but the end result was that the old Shang confederation was welded into a much tighter political system under the control of the Zhou royal clan. Thus was laid the foundations of the Western Zhou system of government: The vassal prince owed the Zhou king loyalty and obedience, was expected to render the king advice, provide labourers for major construction projects, and lead his armed followers on campaigns as part of the Zhou army. This army was constantly engaged expanding the borders of the kingdom at the expense of neighbouring peoples. Within two or three generations of the beginnings of the dynasty, the expansion of the Zhou kingdom had led to it being divided into over one hundred of these principalities. This hierarchical system of power proved to be highly effective in expanding the borders of the kingdom. It motivated ambitious military leaders to push out Zhou rule into neighbouring lands in the expectation of being granted a slice of frontier territory as a reward for their efforts. According to traditional Chinese histories, the early Western Zhou kings were supported by a strong army, split into two major units: Zhou military power was dealt a major blow, however, when, in c. 600 B.C. The expansion of Zhou rule was not only outwards into neighbouring lands. To deal with this situation, princes would assign areas of as-yet-untamed land to family members or loyal followers, and give them a group of peasant-soldiers and their families with whom to plant a fortified settlement in the wilderness in a settlement pattern later idealized as the well-field system. Such colonies would act as bases from which the surrounding peoples would be brought under Zhou control. In this way, the territories of the Zhou princes, into which the Zhou state had originally been divided, came themselves to be divided into many fiefs. A hierarchy of princes and lords had developed, in which the princes held their territories from the Zhou king in exchange for their loyalty and support, and subordinate lords held their fiefs from the princes, also in exchange for loyalty and support. Trends in culture and society under the early Zhou

The Western Zhou period was a vital and formative one in ancient Chinese history. Literature, music and poetry flourished, bronzes reflected changing cultural preferences and there is abundant evidence for growing trade. An early Zhou palace at Fenzhou, probably the residence of a high ranking member of the royal family, is very similar to those of the Shang, and the early Zhou adopted the ritual and burial practices of the Shang. Typical Shang forms of bronze ritual

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vessels continued to be made. The burial of chariots, horses and charioteers in pits associated with the nobility also continued from Shang times. Chinese pu vessel with interlaced dragon design, Spring and Autumn period

One thing that seems to have changed immediately was that the use of oracle bones for divination ceased. With this practice stopped, many priests must have lost much of their importance, perhaps even their jobs. Their literacy skills, however, would have been very useful, and many probably found employment as scribes and officials with the court of the new king, or in the households of the many Zhou princes who now found themselves needing all the help they could get to administer their new territories. In styles of metalwork and other crafts, it was not long before new workmanship and decoration appeared, reflecting wider social changes under the early Zhou. A bronze industry hitherto dedicated to the provision of specific items for court ritual purposes now turned to the mass production of practically identical pieces. These were purchased by an expanding ruling class, which arose from the multiplying of centres of royal power amongst more than a hundred Zhou rulers of principalities and a much larger number of subordinate lords of fiefs. During these early Zhou centuries, marked regional styles also developed. Zhou expansion may have been driven as much by growing populations as by military aggression. In the early Zhou period agricultural productivity began to rise. Soya beans had been introduced into northern and central China towards the end of the Shang period. This highly nutritious crop was grown as part of a rotational system with millet. This would have significantly expanded the sustenance base of the population, and led to an increase in numbers. Another development at this time was the introduction of the use of iron. Iron objects are much easier and cheaper to produce than bronze ones, because whereas iron is found in many places in the earth, copper and tin are not nearly so widespread. They also have to be carefully smelted together to make bronze. As the use of iron spread, farming could become much more productive. Using tough new metal tools where previously they had to use wood, bone or stone ones meant that farmers could carry out more clearing, digging, chopping, ploughing and so on, and so produce more food.

The decline of the Western Zhou dynasty

The early Zhou political system retained its cohesion for several centuries. The rulers of the principalities which made up the Zhou state continued by and large in their allegiance to the Zhou king, and the frontiers of the Zhou state were pushed ever further outwards, including despite several major setbacks into the Yangtze region to the south. As time passed, however, the ties of blood thinned, and the Zhou ruling clan, widely-distributed as it was over many principalities, became increasingly fragmented in its loyalties. At the beginning of the Zhou period, princes given charge over the different territories had often found themselves surrounded by hostile peoples, and dependent on the military of the Zhou king to maintain them in their new positions. Over the centuries, however, their local control had grown with the subjection of indigenous populations and the expansion of the populations at their command. Their local power-bases had become more secure, and they themselves had become more focussed on their own territorial interests rather than on their obligations to the kingdom as a whole. The occurrence of rich burials on a royal scale in different parts of the Zhou realm testifies to the growing independence and power of these princes. By the 8th century, also, the Western Zhou court was facing mounting external pressures. The Western Zhou period came to a sudden end when the royal capital, Haojing, was sacked by a coalition of barbarians and rebels. The Zhou capital was then moved further east, and later scholars have given the term Eastern Zhou to the following period BCE. From being a single political entity, ancient China became fragmented amongst numerous competing states. The Eastern Zhou dynasty

The Eastern Zhou kings were too weak to control the power of the territorial princes. The stronger annexing the weaker, and large and powerful regional states began to emerge. These states formed the central players in this new phase of ancient Chinese history. Such are the continuities between them, however, that for our purposes they are best treated as one period. Together they mark one of the most important phases of all Chinese history. With the decline in the royal authority of the Zhou kings, the later Zhou period saw the rise of a new trans-state system to regulate the conflict between the states. In time this system was to prove inadequate in controlling the conflict between the states; this was only resolved when one of the states triumphed over all the rest. Huge armies

In the first centuries of the Eastern Zhou period, the forces which the states fielded against

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each other were based on chariots, manned by warrior-aristocrats who fought according to widely recognised rules of war. Later, however, as populations grew, the economy expanded and states became larger, better organized and more powerful see below , permanent armies could now be maintained. This greatly contributed to the militarization of the states during this period. Unsurprisingly the period saw major advances in both military strategy and technology. Statue of Sun Ztu Author of the Art of War These armies came to be commanded by professional generals, increasingly of non-aristocratic birth. Actual warfare was supplemented by active diplomacy, as states tried to forge alliances against their enemies. Spies were used liberally, enemy ministers were assassinated, corrupted or blackmailed, and all ways were used to gain advantage over other states. The Chinese states did not only fight amongst themselves. The threat from barbarians beyond the frontiers of Chinese civilization, especially from the steppes of central Asia, continued to mount. Several states in the northern frontier areas built long walls to keep out the steppe nomads, as well as invasions from neighbouring states. Bureaucracy To achieve success in war, the more successful princes changed the way they governed their territories “ or states, as we should now call them. To make their military power more effective, they needed to raise and maintain large numbers of troops “ who of course required paying. This in turn required taxes to be collected regularly and effectively. These practices continued into the later Zhou period, but they proved increasingly inadequate for the new conditions. Increasingly the princes used their own household officials and personal retainers to collect the taxes directly from the villages and to recruit the men for their armies. All the leading states of the period expanded the number of officials they employed, so that their governments could regulate and tax their populations more effectively. Moreover, following the example of Chu, the leading states divided their territories into districts headed by officials prefects appointed by the government to administer the localities, further restricting the power of the local aristocracies. Below them, These officials came to form a new element within society “ educated, professional civil-servants, appointed to their tasks on the basis of their ability and loyalty to the prince rather than on noble birth. Social and economic changes This fragmentation of power marked the beginning of a period of technological advance and economic expansion. The more successful of the princes realized that military and political power rested upon a sound economic base. They took steps to develop trade and industry within their states. Metal coins were first introduced in ancient China at this time at about the same time as they were in the Middle East , and this would have helped stimulate trade. The first large-scale irrigation projects were begun, to bring more land under cultivation and improve agricultural production. These often required the digging of canals, which would have greatly benefited trade as carrying goods by water was always much cheaper than by land until the coming of railways. Iron tools gradually became more common in agriculture. Chinese iron-workers began using casting technologies from c. The casting of molten iron into moulds, requiring the control of very high temperatures, was not matched in the West for centuries to come. Foundries were large-scale industrial units, as were salt and coal mines. The introduction of cast-iron agricultural tools greatly increased the productivity of the land, and acted as a further stimulus to population growth. Towns and cities increased in both size and number, though since buildings were made largely of wood very little has survived from this period. The density of populations within the walls of these towns was much higher than in Shang times. All these developments stimulated social mobility. Peasants were able to buy and sell their land more easily, with the result that farms became more productive. New towns sprung up around markets.

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Chapter 4 : Zhou Dynasty of Ancient China - foundations of Chinese civilization

The Ancient History of China to the End of the Ch'ü Dynasty Item Preview.

The Confucian chronicle of the early years of this process led to its title of the " Spring and Autumn " period. Others followed, marking a turning point, as rulers did not even entertain the pretence of being vassals of the Zhou court, instead proclaiming themselves fully independent kingdoms. A series of states rose to prominence before each falling in turn, and Zhou was a minor player in most of these conflicts. The last Zhou king is traditionally taken to be Nan , who was killed when Qin captured the capital Wangcheng [1] in BC. A " King Hui " was declared, but his splinter state was fully removed by BC. The Eastern Zhou, however, is also remembered as the golden age of Chinese philosophy: The Mohists , for instance, found little interest in their praise of meritocracy but much acceptance for their mastery of defensive siege warfare; much later, however, their arguments against nepotism were used in favor of establishing the imperial examination system. Culture and society[edit] Silk painting depicting a man riding a dragon , painting on silk , dated to 5th-3rd century BC, from Zidanku Tomb no. The concept of the "Mandate of Heaven". They did this so by asserting that their moral superiority justified taking over Shang wealth and territories, also that heaven had imposed a moral mandate on them to replace the Shang and return good governance to the people. The Zhou agreed that since worldly affairs were supposed to align with those of the heavens, the heavens conferred legitimate power on only one person, the Zhou ruler. Any ruler who failed in this duty, who let instability creep into earthly affairs, or who let his people suffer, would lose the mandate. Under this system, it was the prerogative of spiritual authority to withdraw support from any wayward ruler and to find another, more worthy one. In using this creed, the Zhou rulers had to acknowledge that any group of rulers, even they themselves, could be ousted if they lost the mandate of heaven because of improper practices. The book of odes written during the Zhou period clearly intoned this caution. After the Zhou came to power, the mandate became a political tool. One of the duties and privileges of the king was to create a royal calendar. This official document defined times for undertaking agricultural activities and celebrating rituals. Since rulers claimed that their authority came from heaven, the Zhou made great efforts to gain accurate knowledge of the stars and to perfect the astronomical system on which they based their calendar. Many of its members were Shang, who were sometimes forcibly transported to new Zhou to produce the bronze ritual objects which were then sold and distributed across the lands, symbolizing Zhou legitimacy. There were many similarities between the decentralized systems. In matters of inheritance, the Zhou dynasty recognized only patrilineal primogeniture as legal. The farther removed, the lesser the political authority". Ebrely defines the descent-line system as follows: A lesser line is the line of younger sons going back no more than five generations. Great lines and lesser lines continually spin off new lesser lines, founded by younger sons". Brashier writes in his book "Ancestral Memory in Early China" about the tsung-fa system of patrilineal primogeniture: In discussions that demarcate between trunk and collateral lines, the former is called a zong and the latter a zu, whereas the whole lineage is dubbed the shi. Centralization became more necessary as the states began to war among themselves and decentralization encouraged more war. If a duke took power from his nobles, the state would have to be administered bureaucratically by appointed officials. Despite these similarities, there are a number of important differences from medieval Europe. One obvious difference is that the Zhou ruled from walled cities rather than castles. When a dukedom was centralized, these people would find employment as government officials or officers. These hereditary classes were similar to Western knights in status and breeding, but like Western clergy were expected to be something of a scholar instead of a warrior. Being appointed, they could move from one state to another. Some would travel from state to state peddling schemes of administrative or military reform. Those who could not find employment would often end up teaching young men who aspired to official status. The most famous of these was Confucius , who taught a system of mutual duty between superiors and inferiors. In contrast, the Legalists had no time for Confucian virtue and advocated a system of strict laws and harsh

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punishments. The wars of the Warring States were finally ended by the most legalist state of all, Qin. When the Qin dynasty fell and was replaced by the Han dynasty, many Chinese were relieved to return to the more humane virtues of Confucius. All farming lands were owned by nobles, who then gave their land to their serfs, a situation similar to European feudalism. For example, a piece of land was divided into nine squares in the well-field system, with the grain from the middle square taken by the government and that of surrounding squares kept by individual farmers. This way, the government was able to store surplus food and distribute it in times of famine or bad harvest. Some important manufacturing sectors during this period included bronze smelting, which was integral to making weapons and farming tools. Again, these industries were dominated by the nobility who directed the production of such materials. The chancellor of Wei, Sunshu Ao, who served King Zhuang of Chu, dammed a river to create an enormous irrigation reservoir in modern-day northern Anhui province. The later Wei statesman Ximen Bao, who served Marquis Wen of Wei BC, was the first hydraulic engineer of China to have created a large irrigation canal system. As the main focus of his grandiose project, his canal work eventually diverted the waters of the entire Zhang River to a spot further up the Yellow River. Military[edit] The early Western Zhou supported a strong army, split into two major units: The armies campaigned in the northern Loess Plateau, modern Ningxia and the Yellow River floodplain. Early Zhou kings were true commanders-in-chief. They were in constant wars with barbarians on behalf of the fiefs called guo, which at that time meant "statelet" or "principality". King Li led 14 armies against barbarians in the south, but failed to achieve any victory. King Xuan fought the Quanrong nomads in vain. King You was killed by the Quanrong when Haojing was sacked. Although chariots had been introduced to China during the Shang dynasty from Central Asia, the Zhou period saw the first major use of chariots in battle. The greatest Chinese philosophers, those who made the greatest impact on later generations of Chinese, were Confucius, founder of Confucianism, and Laozi, founder of Taoism. While the system was initially a respected body of concrete regulations, the fragmentation of the Western Zhou period led the ritual to drift towards moralization and formalization in regard to: The five orders of Chinese nobility. Ancestral temples size, legitimate number of pavilions Ceremonial regulations number of ritual vessels, musical instruments, people in the dancing troupe See also: Dates in Chinese history before the first year of the Gonghe Regency in BC are contentious and vary by source.

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Chapter 5 : The History of China, Chinese Dynasties, Timeline

The Zhou Dynasty (BCE) was the longest-lasting of ancient China's dynasties. It followed the Shang Dynasty (c. BCE) and it finished when the army of the state of Qin captured the city of Chengzhou in BCE.

It lasted for years, till BC, making it the longest reigning dynasty in the history of China. However, real power was held by Zhou emperors for only the first years, a period known as Western Zhou. This was followed by the Eastern Zhou period when Zhou rulers were only nominal heads with actual power being distributed between various feudal chiefs. Here are 10 interesting facts about the major emperors and important events; as well as the founding, reign and fall of the Zhou dynasty. According to legend, Jiang Yuan, a consort of mythical and semi-historical Emperor Ku, miraculously conceived a child after stepping into the divine footprint left by the supreme Chinese deity Shangdi. This child was abandoned by his mother three times but was saved each time by animals, woodcutters and the great bird. His descendants went on to establish the Zhou dynasty in China. Statue of Houji – The legendary founder of the Zhou dynasty 2 Gugong Danfu is considered the first great leader of Zhou Painting depicting King Wu of Zhou The Zhou coexisted with the Shang dynasty, the first Chinese dynasty for which there is archaeological evidence. Gugong Danfu, later called Great King of Zhou, is credited with initiating the growth of the dynasty. His youngest son Jili then expanded their territory through numerous campaigns against the Rong, who lived in and around the extremities of ancient China. The battle led to the end of the Shang dynasty and the beginning of the Zhou dynasty. King Zhou of Shang set fire to his palace and committed suicide. King Wu, the first king of the dynasty, followed his victory over Shang by establishing many feudal states under his 16 younger brothers and clans allied by marriage. King Wu is considered one of the great heroes of China. However his reign was cut short due to his death two or three years after establishing the dynasty. Known as the Duke of Zhou, Dan successfully suppressed the rebellions and consolidated the Zhou kingdom. He aptly stepped down as regent after his nephew came of age. In later centuries, Duke of Zhou was hailed as a paragon of virtue and given many titles. King Mu of Zhou, the fifth king of the dynasty, is considered a pivotal ruler. However he sowed the seeds of hatred among tribes which would later have dire consequences for the dynasty. King Mu, with a reign of 55 years from ca. He is also famous for his legendary love affair with the Chinese goddess Queen Mother of the West. According to Chinese mythology, during his contact with the goddess, Mu is passed on with secret teaching but fails to benefit from it and dies like an ordinary mortal. He was exiled by the nobles leading to a period known as Gonghe Regency during which the dynasty was ruled by two dukes. This is considered the end of the Western Zhou dynasty during which the Zhou had actual control over the political and military affairs of a large part of China. He was thus the thirteenth king of Zhou dynasty and the first of Eastern Zhou. During the Eastern Zhou period, the Zhou emperors held real control only over a small royal region centred at their capital. Though the Zhou still had nominal and ritual importance, the real power fluctuated between various feudal chiefs whose fiefdoms became increasingly independent states. Map of China in late Spring and Autumn period, 5th century BC 8 Eastern Zhou era saw continuous struggle for power among various states The Eastern Zhou period allowed the emperors of the dynasty to rule as figureheads of the various states for over five more centuries. The Eastern Zhou era is further divided into two periods: During the Spring and Autumn period there were many small states which clashed for supremacy with each other. This ultimately led to the formation of seven major Warring States initiating the Warring States period. At the beginning of his reign in BC, he moved the capital from Chengzhou to Wangcheng. King Nan was imprisoned in Wangcheng and died shortly afterwards. His reign of fifty-nine years is the longest not only in Zhou Dynasty but all pre-imperial China. Zheng started his campaign to conquer the remaining six kingdoms in BC and by BC achieved his goal of unification of China. Qin Dynasty became the first imperial dynasty of China. The Zhou era saw great advancements in many areas, especially those of agriculture, art, philosophy and literature. The Chinese script evolved into its almost-modern form and first large scale projects

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of irrigation were undertaken. The Eastern Zhou period is considered the Golden Age of Chinese philosophy with the most prominent philosophers in the history of China living during the period including Confucius, Mencius, Laozi and Shang Yang. The later Zhou era thus saw great cultural and intellectual expansion in the country.

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Chapter 6 : Wu Wang | racedaydvl.com

The Ancient History of China to the end of the Ch'ü Dynasty. Pp. xiii, Price, \$ The Ancient History of China to the end of the Ch'ü Dynasty. Pp. xiii.

The vast time sweep of the Zhou dynasty—encompassing some eight centuries—is the single longest period of Chinese history. However, the great longevity of the Ji lineage was not matched by a similar continuity of its rule. At various times they were a friendly tributary state to the Shang, alternatively warring with them. One of the Zhou ruling houses devised a plan to conquer the Shang, and a decisive battle was fought, probably in the mid-th century bce. However, a rebellion broke out before the whole Shang territory could be consolidated by the Zhou. The fighting went on for three years before the rebellion was put down, and finally the Zhou solidified their reign over all of China. To support the empire in the east and its loyal feudal rulers, an eastern capital was built at Luoyang on the middle reaches of the Huang He. The stability of that arrangement lasted some years before it began to collapse with the increasing local interests of the 20 or more feudal lords. In the 8th century bce the political system, which had essentially consisted of a network of extended family, began to weaken seriously. The period before bce is usually known as the Xi Western Zhou dynasty, and that from is known as the Dong Eastern Zhou dynasty. The Dong Zhou itself is often further subdivided into the Spring and Autumn Chunqiu period — bce, when China consisted of many small squabbling states, and the Warring States Zhanguo period — bce, when the small states consolidated into several larger units, which struggled with one another for mastery. Courtesy of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts Cultural achievements The visual arts of the Zhou dynasty reflect the diversity of the feudal states of which it was composed and into which it eventually broke up. The arts of the early Xi Zhou were essentially a continuation of those of the Shang dynasty. That was especially true of works in bronze, in which there was an accelerated deterioration of the variety of shapes, the decoration, and the craftsmanship of casting. It was not until the Dong Zhou and the classical age of Confucius and Laozi that unique local traditions became apparent. The range of applied decoration for the first time included pictorial subjects—for example, hunting scenes and chariots and horsemen. As the empire was breaking up, arts and culture were flowering in the various component states, encouraged and stimulated by the highly localized interests that fed the impulse toward independence of the empire. The remains of many of the feudal capitals during the Zhou period have been uncovered and reveal great buildings with rammed-earth floors and walls. There were also two-story buildings and observation towers, and Laozi mentions a nine-story tower. Although with the exception of a few works on silk no painting survives from the Zhou, written descriptions of paintings evidence their themes, including figures, portraits, and historic scenes. Lacquerware including gold and silver inlay became finely developed, and bronzework carried on from the great legacy of the Shang. Jade ornaments and objects were used lavishly for funerary and ritual purposes, and ornamental carvings reflected superb craftsmanship. Pottery continued Shang traditions and expanded greatly in variety of shapes and finishes during the Warring States period. Wood bowl decorated in red and black lacquer with stylized birds and animals, from Changsha, China, late Zhou dynasty, 3rd century bce; in the Seattle Art Museum, Washington. Iron, ox-drawn plows, crossbows, and horseback riding were all introduced; large-scale irrigation and water-control projects were also instituted for the first time, greatly increasing the crop yield of the North China Plain. The communication system was also greatly improved through the construction of new roads and canals. Trade was increased, towns grew up, coinage was developed, chopsticks came into use, and the Chinese writing system was created out of its primitive beginnings in the Shang period. There was also a great philosophical flowering: Literature flourished with Confucius and other great Chinese philosophers. Later generations of Chinese have regularly studied the Zhou dynasty for information regarding the origin of their civilization. Learn More in these related Britannica articles:

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Chapter 7 : Chou Dynasty | racedaydvl.com

Zhou dynasty, Wade-Giles romanization Chou, dynasty that ruled ancient China for some eight centuries, establishing the distinctive political and cultural characteristics that were to be identified with China for the next two millennia. The beginning date of the Zhou has long been debated.

Gale Encyclopedia of World History: In the latter half of the dynasty, political power shifted to the rulers of autonomous regional states, who employed professional civil servants. Background The Chou dynasty was the last of three hereditary dynasties—the Hsia, Shang, and Chou—that ruled ancient China. The Chou was the longest-running dynasty in Chinese history, spanning almost a millennium BC. The Chou dynasty is divided into two periods. Despite its longevity, the Chou dynasty was marked by political chaos as it followed a path from centralized monarchy to decentralized state authority and, ultimately, to imperial rule. The Chou was preceded by the Shang dynasty, even though archaeological evidence suggests that the two shared some elements of a common culture and may have coexisted for a time. In reality, it is likely that the decentralized political system through which the Shang controlled its territories had weakened, providing an opportunity for the Chou to overtake the faltering dynasty. The transition from Shang to Chou was marked by the introduction of the concept of heaven, which the Chou thought of as the moral power of the universe. Central to this worldview was the idea that the rule of the Chou king was a gift bestowed by heaven: If the king acted properly, his mandate to rule would be retained and the kingdom would flourish; however, if the king neglected his duties or acted tyrannically, his mandate would be revoked and the kingdom would descend into chaos. Thus, moral values came to be associated with the conduct of government; this idea would be taken up by the philosopher Confucius BC. The Shang had ruled through a decentralized system of vassalage based on a strong mutual sense of obligation. The early Chou rulers developed this political form into a more tightly bound system of feudalism held together by kinship ties. All relationships between the king and the nobility were forged by kinship and marriage—every level of the political hierarchy was, in effect, an extension of the royal family. By BC the feudal system comprised some two hundred lords. As the Chou enlarged its territory, however, kinship ties became more diluted and regional lords gained greater power. By the eighth century BC the Chou dynasty was straining under pressure from non-Chinese groups and rebellious states that it was attempting to control, and in BC the Chou capital of Hao was sacked, bringing the Western Chou dynasty—and with it, the central authority of the monarchy—to an end. The Eastern Chou dynasty was characterized by political disorder and violence. During the Spring and Autumn period named for a series of historical annals published at the time, Chou lands were split up into fifteen major states and several smaller fiefdoms, each of which had autonomy over its affairs. The king continued to handle ceremonial and religious functions but lacked any real military or political power. This decentralized system bred rivalry and warfare among the states that escalated over time. During the Warring States period the states coalesced once again as a handful of powerful rulers consolidated their authority and struggled for dominance. Government Structure Under the Western Chou dynasty, territories were governed through a system of feudalism headed by a hereditary monarchy. All land in the kingdom belonged to the Chou king, who distributed it to his nobles, all of whom were bound to him through kinship ties. This relationship was repeated down the social hierarchy as greater nobles made similar arrangements with lesser nobles. Titles passed through the male line from father to son. Each lord appointed his own administrative and military officials, whose offices were also hereditary. Under the Eastern Chou dynasty, the king was reduced to performing only ceremonial and religious functions; indeed, he was king in name only. Rather than delegate their authority, as under the feudal system, these rulers enlisted a new cadre of educated bureaucrats known as shi, whose service was based on merit rather than on family ties. The great Chinese philosophers Confucius and Mencius c. Political Parties and Factions During the Chou dynasty, political thought was divided among three camps that both competed and coexisted with one another: Confucianism, Taoism, and legalism. It was also the outcome of a well-structured, hierarchical

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society in which everyone accepted their place and acted in accordance with their status. Thus, Confucianism emphasized moral virtue and order—chiefly embodied in the king—as the keys to good government. It held up the feudal system of the early Chou as the ideal. Taoism, which was premised on the teachings of Lao-tzu sixth century BC, advocated a more hands-off method of governance. For Lao-tzu, ambition and desire were the chief ills of society, and thus the best structure of government was a system of small, autonomous villages, each living by its own means in harmony with one another. According to this theory, government should do little, leaving the people to their individual freedom. Finally, legalism, so called because of its emphasis on laws, was the most stringent of the ideologies. Legalism maintained that the moral qualities of the ruler were irrelevant to good government—that order depended instead on effective institutional structures and practical political solutions to contemporary problems. The legalists advocated a strict system of laws, applied objectively and equally to everyone. With an effective legal system, they believed, a ruler could let government run itself. Major Events The Western and Eastern Chou dynasties were demarcated by BC, when the Chou capital of Hao was sacked by foreign invaders from the north, who were aided by rebel Chinese states. The last Western Chou ruler, King You d. Thereafter, the capital was moved eastward to Luoyang, a location that was considered safer. However, the move marked a turning point in the history of the Chou dynasty: In BC the last Chou ruler was deposed. Chinese Civilization in the Making, 600 BC. Landscape and Power in Early China: Cambridge University Press, The World of Thought in Ancient China. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cite this article Pick a style below, and copy the text for your bibliography.

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Chapter 8 : Timeline of Chinese History and Dynasties | Asia for Educators | Columbia University

The Chou dynasty was the last of three hereditary dynasties—the Hsia, Shang, and Chou—that ruled ancient China. The Chou was the longest-running dynasty in Chinese history, spanning almost a millennium (BC).

It was the longest ruling dynasty in the history of China. King Wu established a new dynasty, the Zhou Dynasty. This concept taught that the leaders gained their authority to rule from the gods. They believed that when the Zhou overthrew the Shang Dynasty, this was because the Shang had become tyrants and the gods allowed them to fall. The government of the Zhou was based on the feudal system. The emperor divided the land into fiefs that were usually ruled by his relatives. The nobles who ruled the fiefs basically owned the farmers who worked their lands. Religion The latter period of the Zhou Dynasty is famous for the beginnings of two major Chinese philosophies: The Chinese philosopher Confucius lived from to BC. Many of his sayings and teachings impacted the culture and government throughout the rest of the history of Ancient China. Taoism was introduced by another famous philosopher Lao Tzu. He introduced the concept of the yin and the yang. Technology Several technological advances occurred in China during this period. One was the invention of cast iron. This enabled strong and durable iron tools and weapons to be manufactured. Other important innovations included crop rotation which allowed more efficient use of the land and the addition of soybeans as a major crop. The first part of the Zhou Dynasty is the Western period. This was a time of relative peace. Around BC the Zhou king lost control of some of his territories. Many of his lords rebelled and took over the capital city. The son of the Zhou king escaped to the east, however, and built a new capital. The dynasty that ruled from the new eastern capital is called the Eastern Zhou. They did what they wanted and often fought amongst each other. By the end of this period many of the lords had conquered each other to where there were only seven main states. There were seven major states left in the empire. It was clear that they would fight each other until only one was left. At the end of this period the leader of the Qin state, Qin Shi Huang, conquered the other six states and crowned himself as the first emperor of a united China. Interesting Facts about the Zhou Dynasty A lot of the bronze vessels made during this time had detailed inscriptions on them. Archeologists have been able to learn a lot about the Zhou from these inscriptions. One of the most popular pieces of literature was a collection of poems called the Book of Songs. Battles between the states were generally fought under a strict set of "rules". The soldiers of the time were considered chivalrous and fought with honor. The famous book on war the Art of War was written by Sun Tzu during this time. Although iron was introduced during this period, the Zhou are most famous for their work with bronze. Activities Take a ten question quiz about this page. Listen to a recorded reading of this page: Your browser does not support the audio element. For more information on the civilization of Ancient China:

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Chapter 9 : Zhou dynasty - Wikipedia

The dynasty ruled over China only for 15 years but in spite of such a short duration, it played an important role in Chinese history. Emperor Qin in order to strengthen the unity of the nation and to maintain the Qin Dynasty he carried out many reforms in politics, economy, military affairs, and culture.

Wu wang Wu wang died ca. He was the leader of the forces that overthrew the Shang dynasty. The original name of Wu wang was Chi Fa. His family had settled in the Wei River valley of Shensi Province during the final years of the Shang dynasty. Archeologists have examined the cultural remains of the area but are yet uncertain to what extent the preconquest Chou people differed from the ruling Shang. Chou Hsin is depicted in the Chinese tradition as an evil despot and debauchee who delighted in torturing and abusing his subjects. Wen wang, who then held the title of Earl of the West Hsi po , became alienated from the Shang ruler and established a strong power base for his family in the Wei valley. He engaged in several skirmishes with the Shang, but it was his son, Wu wang, or the Martial King, who undertook large-scale warfare against Chou Hsin. Assisted by his younger brother, Chi Tan, later known as the Duke of Chou Chou kung , Wu wang organized an army composed of nobles who had been mistreated by Chou Hsin. According to the prevailing tradition, Wu wang first met with his troops at a place called Meng Ford, where they urged him to attack Chou Hsin immediately. Wu wang refused to follow their advice, claiming that the proper time had not yet arrived. Two years later, when resentment against Chou Hsin had reached its peak, Wu wang gathered his troops again at Meng Ford and sent them out against the Shang on the plain of Mu just outside the Shang capital. The Shang troops were completely routed, and Chou Hsin was forced to commit suicide. Wu wang immediately proclaimed the end of the Shang reign and the beginning of the Chou dynasty. The traditional date for the founding of the Chou dynasty is B. Having conquered the Shang by military might, Wu wang now had the problem of maintaining control. One of his first acts was to bestow parcels of territory on those groups who had helped him defeat the Shang. Several years after the Shang conquest, Wu wang died. The traditional date for his death is B. Their History and Culture ; 4th rev. The Western Chou Empire