

# HISTORY OF CHINA

## Shang Dynasty

Shang dynasty is also called Yin dynasty in history. It has been said that Shang dynasty was built by a rebel leader who overthrew the last Xia ruler. Shang dynasties run from 1700 B.C. to 1027 B.C. The civilization of Shang has been known to people for a long time.

There were mainly agriculture, hunting and animal husbandry as the economic forms in Shang dynasty. A number of ceremonial bronze vessels with inscriptions date from the Shang period; the workmanship on the bronzes attests to a high level of civilization.

A line of hereditary Shang kings ruled over much of northern China, and Shang troops fought frequent wars with neighboring settlements and nomadic herdsmen from the inner Asian steppes.

The capitals, one of which was at the site of the modern city of Anyang, were centers of glittering court life. Court rituals to propitiate spirits and to honor sacred ancestors were highly developed.

In addition to his secular position, the king was the head of the ancestor- and spirit-worship cult. Evidence from the royal tombs indicates that royal personages were buried with articles of value, presumably for use in the afterlife.

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### Political History of Shang

The Shang Dynasty (Chinese: 商朝) or Yin Dynasty (殷代) was, according to traditional sources, the second Chinese dynasty, after the Xia Dynasty. They ruled in the northeastern regions of the area known as "China proper", in the Yellow River valley.

According to the chronology based upon calculations by Liu Xin, the Shang ruled between 1766 BC and 1122 BC, however according to the chronology based upon the Bamboo Annals, it is between 1556 BC and 1046 BC. The results of the Xia Shang Zhou Chronology Project places them between 1600 BC and 1046 BC. According to historical tradition the Shang Dynasty followed the (possibly mythical) Xia Dynasty and preceded the Zhou Dynasty.

Direct information about the Shang Dynasty comes from Shang inscriptions on bronze artifacts, but mainly from oracle bones—turtle shells, cattle scapulae or bones on which were written the first significant corpus of recorded Chinese characters. Other sources on the Shang come from historical records of the later Zhou Dynasty and the Han Dynasty *Shiji* by Sima Qian. The inscriptions on the oracle bones are divinations, which can be gleaned for information on the politics, economy, culture, religion, geography, astronomy, calendar, art and medicine of the period, and as such provide critical insight into the early stages of the Chinese civilization.

One site of the Shang capitals, later historically called the Ruins of Yin (殷墟), is near modern day Anyang. Archaeological work there uncovered 11 major Yin royal tombs and the foundations of palaces and ritual sites, containing weapons of war and remains of animal and human sacrifices. Tens of thousands of bronze, jade, stone, bone and ceramic artifacts have been obtained; the workmanship on the bronzes attests to a high level of civilization. In terms of inscribed oracle bones alone, more than 20,000 were discovered in the initial scientific excavations in the 1920s to 1930s, and over four times as many have since been found.

### Culture and Art

According to Chinese tradition, the Shang dynasty was founded by a rebel king who overthrew the last Xia ruler in the Battle of Mingtiao. According to the *Shiji*, the Shang had a long history, and there are different theories about their origin.[16] A study of their bones illustrated a Huaxia people origin.[17] Its civilization was based on agriculture, augmented by hunting, animal husbandry,[18] war, and human sacrifice.[19] The *Records of the Grand Historian* state that the Shang moved its capital six times. The final and most important move to Yin in 1350 BC led to the golden age of the dynasty. The term Yin dynasty has been synonymous with the Shang in history, and indeed was the more popular term, although it is now often used specifically in reference to the later half of the Shang. The Japanese and Koreans still refer to the Shang dynasty exclusively as the Yin (In) dynasty.

A line of hereditary Shang kings ruled over much of northern China, and Shang troops fought frequent wars with neighboring settlements and nomadic herdsmen from the inner Asian steppes. The capitals, particularly that in Yin, were centers of glittering court life. Court rituals to appease spirits developed. In addition to his secular position, the king was the head of the ancestor- and spirit-worship cult. The king often performed oracle bone divinations himself, especially near the end of the dynasty. Evidence from the royal tombs indicates that royal personages were buried with articles of value, presumably for use in the afterlife. Perhaps for the same reason, hundreds of commoners, who may have been slaves, were buried alive with the royal corpse. A late Shang dynasty bronze ding vessel with taotie motif

The Shang had a fully developed system of writing as attested on bronze inscriptions, oracle bones, and a small number of other writings on pottery, jade and other stones, horn, etc.:[20] its complexity and state of development indicates an earlier period of development, which is still unattested. Bronze casting and pottery also advanced in Shang culture. The bronze was commonly used for art rather than weapons. In astronomy, the Shang astronomers saw Mars and various comets. Many musical instruments were also invented at that time.

### **Oracle Bone Inscription**

The oracle bone script of the late Shāng appears archaic and pictographic in flavor, as does its contemporary, the Shāng writing on bronzes. The earliest oracle bone script appears even more so than examples from late in the period (thus some evolution did occur over the roughly 200-year period).

Comparing oracle bone script to both Shāng and early Western Zhōu period writing on bronzes, oracle bone script is clearly greatly simplified, and rounded forms are often converted to rectilinear ones; this is thought to be due to the difficulty of engraving the hard, bony surfaces, compared with the ease of writing them in the wet clay of the molds the bronzes were cast from. The more detailed and more pictorial style of the bronze graphs is thus thought to be more representative of typical Shāng writing (as would have normally occurred on bamboo books) than the oracle bone script forms, and this typical style continued to evolve into the Zhōu period writing and then into the seal script of the Qín state in the late Zhōu period.

It is known that the Shāng people also wrote with brush and ink, as brush-written graphs have been found on a small number of pottery, shell and bone, and jade and other stone items, and there is evidence that they also wrote on bamboo (or wooden) books just like those found from the late Zhōu to Hàn periods, because the graphs for a writing brush and bamboo book (𠄎 cè, a book of thin vertical slats or slips with horizontal string binding, like a Venetian blind turned 90 degrees) are present in the oracle bone script.

Since the ease of writing with a brush is even greater than that of writing with a stylus in wet clay, it is assumed that the style and structure of Shāng graphs on bamboo were similar to those on bronzes, and also that the majority of writing occurred with a brush on such books. Additional support for this notion includes the reorientation of some graphs, by turning them 90 degrees as if to better fit on tall, narrow slats; this style must have developed on bamboo or wood slat books and then carried over to the oracle bone script. Additionally, the writing of characters in vertical columns, from top to bottom, is for the most part carried over from the bamboo books to oracle bone inscriptions.

In some instances lines are written horizontally so as to match the text to divinatory cracks, or columns of text rotate 90 degrees in mid stream, but these are exceptions to the normal pattern of writing, and inscriptions were never read bottom to top.

The vertical columns of text in Chinese writing are traditionally ordered from right to left; this pattern is found on bronze inscriptions from the Shāng dynasty onward. Oracle bone inscriptions, however, are often arranged so that the columns begin near the centerline of the shell or bone, and move toward the edge, such that the two sides are ordered in mirror-image fashion.

### **The Bronze of Shang Dynasty**

Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties has been called bronze dynasty in China's history. The production technique of Shand was the most advanced in the same age among other parts of the world. The bronze of Shang was not only an intruments of drinking or keeping, it was also a kind of culture, which can reflect many aspects of the age. There were mainly agriculture, hunting and animal husbandry as the economic forms in Shang dynasty. A number of ceremonial bronze vessels with inscriptions date from the Shang period; the workmanship on the bronzes attests to a high level of civilization.

The products of bronze were mainly used by the noble families and the emperors and loyal members. They seemed the bronze as a sign that had higher social position. It was said that a 830 kilograms of bronze pot was made by two to three hundred workers.

The bronze of Shang was not only good design, but also owned great art value and literature meaning. It is a valuable instrument for the Chinese museum and history learning centre.

With the development of bronze technology and workmanship, more and more bronze were produced for many tools. They were including the drinking cups and the pots, agriculture tools and transportation tools in the horse cart and so on.

The production of bronze in Shang dynasty showed that China's is a great country that has a great civilization in ancient times. The civilization of China has done a great contribution to the world civilization.

## **Zhou Dynasty**

According to Chinese accounts, Zhou was built by a chieftain of a tribe called Zhou. The chieftain overthrew Shang's last ruler and built the Zhou dynasty. He settled down in Hao, a city near today's Xi'an city in Shaanxi province. Take a Xian Tours to experience the historical site.

Zhou dynasty has lasted for a long time from 1027B.C. to 221B.C. The philosophers of Zhou's period enunciated the doctrine of "mandate of the heaven: and produced the notion that the ruler governed by divine right but his dethronement would prove that he had lost his mandate.

The Zhou Dynasty originated from the Zhou clan whose existence stretches back into history. By the 11th Century BC, the Zhou Clan had become increasingly powerful and had extended throughout the present Shaanxi and Gansu Provinces. The Zhou Clan's mightiness increasingly menaced the Shang Dynasty and the conflict between the two groups intensified.

At that time, the Shang Dynasty was under the rule of King Zhou. He was atrocious to his people and doted on his imperial concubine, Daji. All he did caused great rage amongst his people. The chief of the Zhou Tribe, Zhou Wenwang thought it was the right time to attack the Shang Dynasty and entrusted his son Ji Fa to fulfill his last wish.

After Zhou Wenwang died, his son Ji Fa (Zhou Wuwang) succeeded him. He made full preparations for the war and killed King Zhou. Thus the Shang Dynasty ended in 1046 BC. Later, Zhou Wuwang established the Zhou Dynasty and made Haojing (the present Chang'an County, Shaanxi Province) its capital. The Zhou Dynasty was the longest dynasty in Chinese history. It lasted for over 800 years and included the reigns of 37 emperors. The Zhou Dynasty is divided into two periods: the Western Zhou Dynasty (11th century BC to 771 BC) and the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (770 BC - 221 BC).

It is so divided because the capital cities in the Western Zhou Dynasty of Fengyi (presently in the southwest of Chang'an County, Shaanxi Province) and Haojing lie to the west of the Eastern Zhou's capital of Luoyi (present Luoyang, Henan Province). As to the Eastern Dynasty, it is divided into the Spring and Autumn Periods (770 BC-476 BC), and the Warring States Period (476 BC - 221 BC). Each of the periods featured turbulent wars.

The achievements during the Zhou Dynasty in economy, politics, science and culture, were much more illustrious than any which occurred during the Shang Dynasty.

In the year 221 BC, Qin defeated the other six states which existed during the Warring States Period and unified China. Thus, history moved forward to a new age called the Qin Dynasty.

### **Western Zhou Dynasty**

The Zhou Dynasty (1045-256 BC) followed the Shang Dynasty and was followed by the Qin Dynasty in China. The Zhou dynasty lasted longer than any other dynasty in Chinese history — though the actual political and military control of China by the dynasty only lasted during the Western Zhou period. During the Zhou Dynasty, the use of iron was introduced to China, while this period of Chinese history produced what many consider the zenith of Chinese bronze-ware making.

The dynasty also spans the period in which the written script evolved from the ancient stage as seen in early Western Zhou bronze inscriptions, to the beginnings of the modern stage, in the form of the archaic clerical script that emerged during the late Warring States period. During the Zhou Dynasty, the origins of native Chinese philosophy developed, its initial stages beginning in the 6th century BC.

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. Other philosophers, theorists, and schools of thought in this era were Mozi, founder of Mohism; Mencius, a famous Confucian who expanded upon Confucius' legacy; Shang Yang and Han Feizi, responsible for the development of ancient Chinese Legalism (the core philosophy of the Qin Dynasty); and Xunzi, who was arguably the center of ancient Chinese intellectual life during his time, even more so than iconic intellectual figures such as Mencius.

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### **Agriculture and Handicraft of Zhou Dynasty**

Zhou's king has a governing right to control all his people. The land of the whole country was divided from the high level to the lower level of regime officials. The common peasant worked for their land owner. Some people said that the peasant has some kind of freedom but some said that they were just slavery.

The tools used by peasants were mainly made by some animal bones and plants and some of them made by bronze. The number of agriculture products become larger and the percentage of pasturage become smaller. The bronze was used widely and to more fields. The words on some bronze are important to learn the history of Zhou dynasty.

In the late of Zhou, the medium for exchanging goods appeared. But the major forms were seen as goods to good exchanging, for example one horses and one piece of silk was equivalent to five slaveries.

The use of the bronze has greatly improved the productivity of Zhou, but the corruption of the government made the country declined in the final years of the dynasty.

### **The Decline of Zhou Dynasty**

The decline of Zhou was mainly caused by the corruption of the government and the natural calamity. Before 900 B.C., Zhou Li Wang was enthroned. Zhou Li Wang was a money grabber and eager for personal interest. He was also a cruel emperor that known to many history lovers. He controlled his people by strict rules and cruel regulations.

In 841B.C, the people around the capital break out a rebellion and drove out Zhou Liwang the last emperor of Zhou. This is called "the national rebellion" in China's history. The rebellion showed the strength of the peasants and their courage to against the controllers.

After Zhou Liwang's retire, Zhou Gong and Zhao Gong were selected by people to be the ruler of Zhou dynasty. This is called "common government". This is also the year that China had the exact record of anno dominie. Zhou Liwang grabbed all the forest and river and lake. The common people can not fish in the lake and can not hunt animals in the forest.

His strict behavior aroused the hate and angry of the peasant and common people which lead to the rebellion in the near of the capital of Xia dynasty. It is the rebellion overthrew the administrative of Zhou Liwang, the final king of Xia dynasty.

### **The spring and Autumn Period**

Although there were many civil strife and in the period of disunity, the Spring and Autumn period saw a great prosperity in cultural movement and development. It has been called the golden age in China's history.

The civil war of the period was led by the different interests of each empire. Each empire tried its best to seize more fields and more people. This situation was also good for the unity of the whole country. But too many wars and civil strife made the people in the period live a sad and depressed life. It was in the depressed society, the reform and new life is eagerly needed by most of people. So there appeared the hundred schools of thoughts in the period.

The regional lords wanted to build a strong and a big administrative area so that they can collect more taxation and build a strong army to defeat other regional lords.

In order to develop the economic and military as well as the production, the regional lords need a lot of skilled and literature officials and excellent teachers to help them. Thus the great thoughts and ideas were produced in the situation.

The uses of iron have improved the production of agriculture and the iron was also used to forge as weapons. Numerous of Walls were built around the cities and the board of every country.

It is in the situation that many philosophies were produced to conduct and analyze the disunity conditions. The hundred schools of thoughts were appeared under the great situations.

The thoughts and the discipline of the great thinkers influenced the Chinese history until today.

## **Qin Dynasty**

In 221 B.C., Chinese were unified for the first time to construct a great country that ended the long era of disunity and warring. In that year the western frontier state of Qin, the most aggressive of the Warring States, subjugated the last of its rival state.

Centralization and autarchy were achieved by ruthless methods and focused on standardizing legal codes, bureaucratic procedures, the forms of writing and coinage, and the pattern of thought and scholarship.

To silence criticism of imperial rule, the kings banished or put to death many dissenting Confucian scholars and confiscated and burned their books. Qin expansionism was aided by frequent military expeditions pushing forward the frontiers in the north and south.

In order to fend off barbarian intrusion, the fortification walls built by the various warring states were connected to make a 5,000-kilometer-long great wall. What is commonly referred to as the Great Wall is actually four great walls rebuilt or extended during the Western Han, Sui, Jin, and Ming periods, rather than a single, continuous wall. At its extremities, the Great Wall reaches from northeastern Heilongjiang Province to northwestern Gansu.

A number of public works projects were also undertaken to consolidate and strengthen imperial rule. These activities required enormous levies of manpower and resources, not to mention repressive measures.

Revolts broke out as soon as the first Qin emperor died in 210 B.C. His dynasty was extinguished less than twenty years after its triumph. The imperial system initiated during the Qin dynasty, however, set a pattern that was developed over the next two millennia.

Qin Shihuang, called Yingzheng, was the son of Zhuang Rangwang (some one has said he was the bastard of Li Buwei, a famous figure in China history) He was a great politics, military leader, and the first emperor of China. He enthroned when he was thirteen years old and become the emperor in his 39. In the end of War period, Qin has become the strongest state that can unify the other six small eastern states.

When Yingzheng was enthroned, Li Buwei held a very important position in the official. In 238 B.C., he controlled the power to govern the whole country and deposed Li's position and promoted Li Shi and Wei Liao and so on. From 230 B.C. to 221 B.C, Qin destroyed Han, Wei, Chu, Yan, Zhao and Qi six small states around China. And finally he established the first united, multi-ethnic and feudal country in China's history.

After Qin Shihuang unified the six states, he thought himself made the biggest contribution. So he called himself Huang Di which in Chinese means glory, greatness and beauty.

Qin Shi Huang in English means the beginning emperor who declared his sons and grandson will be called the second generation and the third generation even the ten thousand generation. He had fancied that his position would pass from one generation to thousands of generation. He established a systematic official from the regional to the central government and he has the great right to control the whole country by himself.

Based on the law of ancient, Qin absorbed other six states' regulation and laws and made the unified law and put them into practice. He removed the former six states' important officials to the inner China in order to control them well. He announced the folk can not collect weapons. The weapons he seized from the people to be melted to 12 iron man.

Through these regulations and laws, Qin Shi Huang had control the whole country mightily, while the Qin people lead a depressed life and a sorrow life.

### **Zhao Gao**

Zhao Gao is the only eunuch in the history of China to have been appointed prime minister. He hail from the state of Zhao, and was said to be forced into castration and entered into the service of Qin after the demise of his state. Furthermore , it was said that the Qin general Meng Tian rape his wife during the invasion of Zhao. These humiliations couple with the demise of his country has led to the burning vengeance in Zhao Gao's heart. He secretly vow for revenge against the Qin dynasty.

After he entered into the service of Qin, he served as tutor to the emperor's second son Huhai and was also in the emperor's good graces. After the death of Qin Shi Huang, Zhao Gao and Li Si forged the edict proclaiming the heir to be Huhai while schemingly got rid of Fusu and the hated general Meng Tian through trickery. At long last Zhao Gao was able to destroy Meng Tian his hated enemy.

Later, Zhao Gao even got rid of Li Si and got what his heart desire the post of prime minister. With absolute power, he begin even to sidelined the second Qin Emperor and lead the empire governance to decline greatly. His mismanagement of the state led to widespread rebellion and ruin the very foundations that former Qin Rulers had taken hundred of years to build.

He even later murdered Huhai and intend to continue to rule by installing Fusu's son Ziyin on the throne, but the latter did not desire to be his pawn and kill him instead. After the death of Zhao Gao, Ziyin knowing that the game is as good as lost surrendered to Liu Bang and the Qin dynasty vanguished forever. Well, can we say Zhao Gao finally had his revenge on the Qin Rulers for destroying his state of Zhao, and for taking everything away from hi - his masculinity, his pride, his family. The eunuch who

### **Meng Tian-First General of Chin**

Meng Tian (蒙恬) (?-210 BC) was a general of the Qin Dynasty who distinguished himself against the Xiongnu and in the construction of the Great Wall of China. He descended from a great line of military generals and architects. By the time the Qin Dynasty conquered the other six states and began its reign over a unified China in 221 B.C., the nomadic ethnic Xiongnu had grown into a powerful invading force in the north and started expanding both east and west.

Qin Shihuang, the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty, sent a 300,000-strong army headed by General Meng Tian to drive the Xiongnu northward for 350 km and built the Great Wall to guard against its invasion. Meng Tian's ingenuity can be seen in the efficient (though inhumane) building policy, the consideration of topography, and the utilisation of natural barriers.

Meng Tian supervised the construction of a road system linking the former Yan, Qi, Wu and Chu areas, as well as number of roads especially for imperial use. The system eventually formed played an extremely important role in ancient transportation and economic exchanges.

He is also regarded as the inventor of "Ink brush" and is memorized at "Huzhou Pen Festival". When the emperor Qin Shi Huang died, Meng's death was brought about through the plotting of Zhao Gao. He was forced to commit suicide, and his family was killed. Three years after his death, the Qin Dynasty collapsed.

### **Shang Yang Reform**

Shang Yang (ca. 390-338 BC) was a Chinese statesman and political philosopher. He was one of the founders of Chinese Legalism and organized the rise to power of the Ch'in dynasty. The real name of Shang Yang was Kung-sun Yang; he was also known as Wei Yang. He was born in Wei, a state in north-central China. His mother was a concubine of a member of the Wei royal family. In his youth he specialized in criminal law and served as tutor to the Wei princes. He was a favorite of the Wei prime minister, who recommended to the Wei ruler that Shang Yang succeed to the ministry upon his death. This request was denied, and Shang Yang, feeling that he was not appreciated in Wei, journeyed to the western state of Ch'in, which had been seeking men who could offer practical advice on state affairs.

Becoming the confidant of Duke Hsiao, who was just then embarking on a program of military expansion and revitalization of the state, Shang Yang presented him with a comprehensive plan for the accomplishment of these ends. He proposed a complete reform of the political, social, and economic structure of the state. He advocated strengthening the judicial system and the imposition of severe punishments for crimes of all kinds.

There was to be a group sharing of guilt and punishment, and people were required to inform on lawbreakers. Those who failed to denounce a criminal were cut in two. Rank and position would be given only to those who

distinguished themselves in military affairs. Membership in the Ch'in royal clan was denied to nobles who achieved no military success.

Central to Shang Yang's economic theory was an over-whelming emphasis on agriculture and a rejection of "nonessential" activities such as commerce and manufacturing. He proposed that anyone engaging in secondary professions be sold as slaves. His most famous economic reform was the abolition of the idealized system of landholding known as the "well-field system," in which a section of land was divided into nine portions, tilled by eight families in common, with the produce from the ninth portion reserved for the overlord.

Shang Yang reportedly substituted for this system individual ownership of property and had new land brought under cultivation. He also introduced a poll tax and a produce tax. Actually, the well-field system may well have been abolished already, and Shang Yang may not have had anything to do with originating this reform. Given a high military post, Shang Yang led an expedition against his home state of Wei, which he conquered in 350 B.C. He supervised the building of a new capital at Hsien-Yang. He applied his laws so strictly and impartially that even the crown prince was punished on several occasions, even having his nose sliced off. In 341 Shang Yang led another expedition against Wei and forced it to cede to Ch'in all of the land west of the Yellow River. For his services, Shang Yang was rewarded with a fief of 15 cities in Shang (modern Shensi), from which his names Lord Shang and Shang Yang are derived.

Duke Hsiao died in 338, and his successor was the crown prince whom Shang Yang had punished earlier. Shang Yang was then charged with plotting rebellion and forced to flee. One account states that he tried to take refuge in an inn but was refused entrance because the law of Lord Shang prohibited the lodging of fugitives! He tried to return to Wei, but he was sent back to Ch'in. Shang Yang was finally killed making a stand at his fief in Shang. His body was pulled apart by chariots and his whole family executed. Shang Yang is credited with the authorship of the Book of Lord Shang (Shang-Chün shu), a collection of economic, legal, and political treatises, many of which are elaborations of the program he developed in Ch'in. It is doubtful that this book actually comes from his hand, nor is it the work of a single author. Because of its emphasis on law, this work is considered one of the major ancient Chinese works on Legalist philosophy.

### **Li Si**

Li Si (Chinese: 李斯, pinyin: Lǐ Sī; Wade-Giles: Li Ssu) (ca. 280 BC - September or October 208 BC) was the influential Prime Minister (or Chancellor) of the feudal state and later of the dynasty of Qin, between 246 BC and 208 BC. A famous Legalist, he was also a notable calligrapher. Li Si served under two rulers: Qin Shi Huang, king of Qin and later First Emperor of China -- and his son, Qin Er Shi. A powerful minister, he was central to the state's policies, including those on military conquest, draconian centralization of state control, standardization of weights, measures and the written script, and persecution of Confucianism and opponents of Legalism. His methods of administration of China is seen by some as being an early form of totalitarianism.

Li Si was originally from Shang Cai (上蔡) in the kingdom of Chu. When he was young, he was a minor official in Chu. According to the Records of the Great Historian, one day Li Si observed that rats in the restroom were dirty and hungry but the rats in the barnhouse were well fed. He suddenly realized that "the values of people are determined by their social status." He made up his mind to take up politics as his career, which was a common choice for scholars not from noble family during the Warring States Period. After having finished his education with the famous Confucian thinker Xun Zi, he moved to the most powerful state at that time - Qin and tried to advance his political career there.

During his stay in the state of Qin, Li Si became a guest of the prime minister Lu Buwei (呂不韋) and got the chance to talk to the ruler of Qin - Qin Shi Huang. Qin Shi Huang was impressed by Li Si's view of how to unify China. Having adopted Li Si's proposal, the ruler of Qin spent generously to lure intellectuals to the state of Qin and sent out assassins to kill important scholars in other states. According to the Records of the Grand Historian (史記), Li Si was responsible for the death of Han Fei. A minor prince in the state of Han, Han Fei was an excellent writer whose essays reached the attention of the king of Qin. When Qin made war on Han, Han Fei was dispatched as a diplomatic envoy to Qin. Li Si, who envied Han Fei's intellect, persuaded the Qin king that he could neither send Han Fei back (as his superior ability would be a threat to Qin) nor employ him (as his loyalty would not be to Qin). As a result, Han Fei was imprisoned, and Li Si convinced him to commit suicide by poisoning. According to Sima Qian, Li Si persuaded Qin Shi Huang to suppress intellectual dissent, and when Confucian scholars protested, 460 of them were buried alive. Li Si himself penned the edict in 214 BC which ordered widespread destruction of historical records and literature in 213 BC, including key Confucian texts, which he thought detrimental to the welfare of the state.

When Qin Shi Huang died while away from the capital, Li Si and the chief eunuch Zhao Gao suppressed the late emperor's choice of successor, caused the crown prince to commit suicide, and installed another prince, Qin Er Shi (229B.C-207B.C) in his place. During the tumultuous aftermath, Zhao Gao convinced the new emperor to install his followers in official positions. When his power base was secure enough, Zhao Gao then had Li Si killed in 208 BC in a grisly manner -- being cut in half in public. Li Si is mentioned in Elias Canetti's novel: Auto-da-fe (1935).

### **Bai Qi- General of Qin**

Bai Qi (simplified Chinese: 白起 pinyin: Bái Qǐ) (?-257 BC) was an outstanding military leader in the state of Qin in the Warring States Period. Born in Mei (now the Mei County in Shaanxi Province, China). As a commander of Qin for more than 30 years, Bai Qi slew a total of one million six hundred and fifty thousand soldiers, seized 70 cities of the other 6 States in the Warring States Period. No record has been found to show that he was defeated even once all through his military career.

He was promoted from Zuo Shu Zhang to Da Liang Zao by King Zhaoxiang of Qin. He had commanded wars against the states of Han, Wei, Zhao and Chu, seizing large areas from these states. In 278 BC, he led the army from Qin to capture Ying, capital of the state of Chu.

In reward of this, he was titled as Sir Wu An (lit. Martial Peace), since he brought peace to Qin by conquering its enemies. During the Battle of Changping in 260 BC, he succeeded Wang He as the commander of Qin army, and soon defeated Zhao army commanded by Zhao Kuo.

Zhao army was split into two parts and its supply lines were cut off by Bai Qi. More than 400,000 Zhao soldiers, who surrendered after Zhao Kuo was shot down by Qin archers, was decided to be buried alive by Bai Qi. In 257 BC, Qin had a defeat in Handan, capital of Zhao, the King of Qin ordered him to take over the army as a commander.

Bai Qi, however, believed that it was not the correct time to attack Zhao, so he refused the command of the king with an excuse of his sickness. The Prime Minister of Qin, Fan Ju tried to persuade Bai Qi, but he failed. The king, therefore, had to use Wang Ling (王陵), another prominent military general of Qin, instead of Bai Qi, as the commander.

Nevertheless, this decision did not help Qin army in the battle at all. After more than 5 months continuous defeat in Handan, the king asked Bai Qi to be the commander again. Bai Qi, who believed Qin cannot gain a victory in this battle, refused the request with the excuse of his sickness, once more.

Having been refused several times, the King, who had become angry, removed all titles from Bai Qi and forced him to leave Xianyang, the capital of Qin. In addition, the prime minister of Qin, Fan Ju, feeling he had lost face by Bai Qi's refusals, made the King of Qin believe that Bai Qi would join another state as a general and become a threat to the State of Qin. Convinced by Fan Ju, the King of Qin then forced Bai Qi to commit suicide in Duyou (杜邮).

### **Decline of Qin Dynasty**

After Qin Shi Huang unified the six states, he believed that he had made a big contribution. He called himself Huang Di which in Chinese means glory, greatness and beauty. After Qin Shi Huang died, Zhao Gao colluded with Hu Hai and Li Shi to murder Qin Shi Huang's eldest son. They made Hu Hai the third emperor of Qin. Hu Hai was an incompetent who had no the strength to prevent the rebellion from the his opposition.

Qin's decline was caused mainly by the unhumanic regulations, the cruel laws and high taxation imposed on the peasants. Although Qin's strong army and strict regulations and laws, it could not oppose the rebellion of peasants. They used the agriculture tool as the weapons and the broken cloth as their flag to fight against the Qin government.

Qin absorbed the other six states' regulations and laws and made a unified set of laws and put them into practice. He took the former six states' important officials to the inner China in order to control them well. He restricted the availability weapons. The weapons he seized from the people were melted to make 12 iron statues.

Through these regulations and laws, Qin Shi Huang had control the whole country, while the Qin people lead a depressed life and a sorrowful life.

209B.C. July, Cheng Sheng and Wu Guang lead a peasant rebellion but were defeated and sentenced to death.

The war against Qin continued and was lead by Liu Bang and Xiang Yu. They broke into the center of Qin. At the same time, Zhao Gao killed Li Shi and Hu Hai and promoted Zhi Ying, the grandson of Qin Shi Huang to be the emperor.

207B.C. Xiang Yu destroyed the best of Qin's army which crippled. 206B.C. Liu Bang seized the capital of Qin and captured the emperor. Qin disappeared the same year.

## Han Dynasty

Han Dynasty played an important role in history of China. It contributed to the Chinese culture and civilization. After Qin was overthrown by the peasants rebellion, Liu Bang and Xiang Yu were two leaders that struggled to seize the regime position of a new dynasty. They have gone against each other and at last Liu Bang defeated Xiang Yu to be the first emperor of Han dynasty. Chang'an became capital during the Han Dynasty after a short national war.

Building upon the base of Qin dynasty, the new empire retained much of the Qin administrative structure but retreated a little from centralized rule by establishing vassal principalities in some areas for the sake of political convenience.

Instead of using the previous harsher and crule laws and regulation against the common people. The Han rulers modified some of the harsher aspects of the previous dynasty; Confucian ideals of government, out of favor during the Qin period, were adopted as the creed of the Han Empire, and Confucian scholars gained prominent status as the core of the civil service.

A civil service examination system also was initiated. Intellectual, literary, and artistic endeavors revived and flourished.

The Han period produced China's most famous historian, Sima Qian ( 145-87 B.C.?), whose Shiji ( Historical Records) provides a detailed chronicle from the time of a legendary Xia emperor to that of the Han emperor Wu Di 141-87 B.C.).

Technological advances also marked this period. Two of the great Chinese inventions, paper and porcelain, date from Han times.

The Han dynasty, after which the members of the ethnic majority in China, the "people of Han," are named, was notable also for its military prowess. The empire expanded westward as far as the rim of the Tarim Basin (in modern Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region), making possible relatively secure caravan traffic across Central Asia to Antioch, Baghdad, and Alexandria.

The paths of caravan traffic are often called the "silk route" because the route was used to export Chinese silk to the Roman Empire. Chinese armies also invaded and annexed parts of northern Vietnam and northern Korea toward the end of the second century B.C.

Han control of peripheral regions was generally insecure, however. To ensure peace with non-Chinese local powers, the Han court developed a mutually beneficial "tributary system"

Non-Chinese states were allowed to remain autonomous in exchange for symbolic acceptance of Han overlordship.

Tributary ties were confirmed and strengthened through intermarriages at the ruling level and periodic exchanges of gifts and goods.

After 200 years, Han rule was interrupted briefly (in A.D. 9-24 by Wang Mang or a reformer), and then restored for another 200 years.

The Han rulers, however, were unable to adjust to what centralization had wrought: a growing population, increasing wealth and resultant financial difficulties and rivalries, and ever-more complex political institutions. Riddled with the corruption characteristic of the dynastic cycle, by A.D. 220 the Han empire collapsed.

### Invention of Paper in China

In its beginning age, paper was used as the the tool for recording the important events and data. Before the invention of paper, the turtle shell, animal bone, golden stone, bamboo slips, wood and cloth were used for recording and remembering things.

Oracle bones from Shang dynasty and the words written iron pans and other objects were unearthed during the 20th century. Bamboo and wooden boards from the Qin and Han were discovered in recent years.

There were many difficulties in using ancient materials for writing. The animal bones could not be found easily and stone was heavy. Good cloth was too expensive to use for writing. And bamboo slips and wooden boards took too much space. All of these tools were not easily used and with no convenience.

With the development of society, there was a great need for cheap and easy to get writing. After many times of research and practice, paper was invented using twine, broken cloth and the unused net. The story of invention of paper, was dated back to the history book written by Fan Hua(398-445A.D.). It is said that Cai Lun(62-121A.D.) who was a eunuch of Dong Han dynasty invented the paper in 105 A.D.

Recent study and research shows that more research is needed to prove the beginnings of paper in Han dynasty. And that earlier examples of paper have been unearthed in Tibet area.

The invention of paper was a great contribution to the Chinese civilization and to the civilization of the world. The supply of cheap paper meant that great thoughts could be written on the paper and read by people. Advanced and new ideas could be passed quickly and widely to the majority of people. It has promoted and quickened the steps of human civilization and development.

Invention of the paper has enriched the culture and and literature. More and more great works were produced and passed to the majority of people.

### **Western Han Dynasty**

The Han Dynasty (simplified Chinese: 汉朝, traditional Chinese: 漢朝, pinyin: Hàn Cháo; Wade-Giles: Han Ch'ao; IPA: [xân tʂʰǎŋ]; 206 BCE – 220 CE) was the second imperial dynasty of China, preceded by the Qin Dynasty (221–206 BCE) and succeeded by the Three Kingdoms (220–265 CE). It was founded by the peasant rebel leader Liu Bang, known posthumously as Emperor Gaozu of Han. It was briefly interrupted by the Xin Dynasty (9–23 CE) of the former regent Wang Mang. This interregnum separates the Han into two periods: the Western Han (206 BCE – 9 CE) and Eastern Han (25–220 CE). Spanning over four centuries, the period of the Han Dynasty is considered a golden age in Chinese history.[1] To this day, China's majority ethnic group refers to itself as the "Han people".[2] The Han Empire was divided into areas directly controlled by the central government, known as commanderies, and a number of semi-autonomous kingdoms. These kingdoms gradually lost all vestiges of their independence, particularly following the Rebellion of the Seven States.

The Xiongnu, a nomadic confederation which dominated the eastern Eurasian Steppe,[3] defeated the Han army in battle in 200 BCE. Following the defeat, a political marriage alliance was negotiated in which the Han became the de facto inferior partner. When, despite the treaty, the Xiongnu continued to raid Han borders, Emperor Wu of Han (r. 141–87 BCE) launched several military campaigns against them. The ultimate Han victory in these wars eventually forced the Xiongnu to accept vassal status as Han tributaries. These campaigns expanded Han sovereignty into the Tarim Basin of Central Asia and helped establish the vast trade network known as the Silk Road, which reached as far as the Mediterranean world. Han forces managed to divide the Xiongnu into two competing nations, the Southern and Northern Xiongnu, and forced the Northern Xiongnu across the Ili River. Despite these victories, the territories north of Han's borders were quickly overrun by the nomadic Xianbei Confederation.

### **Eastern Han Dynasty**

During the widespread rebellion against Wang Mang, the Korean state of Goguryeo was free to raid Han's Korean commanderies; Han did not reaffirm its control over the region until 30 CE.[46] The Trung Sisters of Vietnam rebelled against Han in 40 CE. Their rebellion was crushed by Han general Ma Yuan (d. 49 CE) in a campaign from 42–43 CE.[47] Wang Mang renewed hostilities against the Xiongnu, who were estranged from Han until their leader Bi (比), a rival claimant to the throne against his cousin Punu (蒲奴), submitted to Han as a tributary vassal in 50 CE. This created two rival Xiongnu states: the Southern Xiongnu led by Bi, an ally of Han, and the Northern Xiongnu led by Punu, an enemy of Han.[48] During the turbulent reign of Wang Mang, Han lost control over the Tarim Basin, which was conquered by the Northern Xiongnu in 63 CE and used as a base to invade Han's Hexi Corridor in Gansu.[49] Dou Gu (d. 88 CE) defeated the Northern Xiongnu at the Battle of Yiwulu in 73 CE, evicting them from Turpan and chasing them as far as Lake Barkol before establishing a garrison at Hami.[50] After the new Protector General of the Western Regions Chen Mu (d. 75 CE) was killed by allies of the Xiongnu in Karasahr and Kucha, the garrison at Hami was withdrawn.[51] At the Battle of Ikh Bayan in 89 CE, Dou Xian (d. 92 CE) defeated the Northern Xiongnu chanyu who then retreated into the Altai Mountains.[52] After the Northern Xiongnu fled into the Ili River valley in 91 CE, the nomadic Xianbei occupied the area from the borders of the Buyeo Kingdom in Manchuria to the Ili River of the Wusun people.[53] The Xianbei reached their apogee under Tanshihuai (檀石槐) (d. 180 CE), who consistently defeated Chinese armies. However, Tanshihuai's confederation disintegrated after his death.

## **Han Wudi's Contribution**

In China's history, the name of Qin Shihuang (First Emperor Qin Dynasty) is revered in the same way as Han Wu Di (Han Dynasty). When people mention Han Wu Di they describe his greatness and success. Han Wu Di was a talented military commander who was able to control the attacking Hun raiders from the north and west of China. He constructed a series of fortifications on his western borders which became part of the Great Wall of China. His contribution to China cannot be underestimated. Many commentators claim that no emperor who followed could reach the standard that was set by Han Wu Di. Han Wu Di and his son had a great influence on the later emperors of Han dynasty.

Han Wudi had an unusual life. His mother has been married before coming into the palace. She was married to a family with the surname of Wang. Wang Shi had given birth to a girl in her previous marriage. Han Wu Di's grandmother forced her daughter, Wang Shi to marry to the third son of the Emperor, Han Wen Di. Han Wu Di became one of the most important emperors in Chinese history.

## **The Importation of Buddhism to China**

Buddha was worshiped by some royalty and some of the nobles. At this time, Buddhism was connected with supernatural being and the doctrine of Buddhism was meant to keep the mind and soul clear and quiet. The image of Buddha and the image of Lao Zi were worshiped in the same place. Buddhism did not spread to the common people until the age of disunity. It was this period that led to the great development of Buddhism.

The importation of Buddhism has had great influence on the culture of China. From its importation in the early history, Buddhism has developed and passed from generation to generation. It has a deep connection in China's history.

In following dynasties, Buddhism has been used as a spiritual administrative tool to control thought and behavior. Many Chinese opera and stories were written about it and connecting with it. It is rooted deeply in every Chinese's thought.

But Chinese people did not choose it as their religion and most of Chinese don't believe in the Buddhism doctrine. But the Buddhism thought has given Chinese people a new connotation and it was connected to clear and quiet that many Chinese people wished the life-style.

## **Liu Bang**

Emperor Gao (256 BC or 247 BC – 1 June 195 BC), commonly known within China by his temple name, Gaozu (Chinese: 高祖 pinyin: Gāozǔ, Wade-Giles: Kao Tsu), personal name Liu Bang (Wade-Giles: Liu Pang), was the first emperor of the Han Dynasty, ruling over China from 202 BC to 195 BC. Liu Bang was one of the few dynasty founders in Chinese history who emerged from the peasant class (another major example being Zhu Yuanzhang of the Ming Dynasty).

In the early stage of his rise to prominence, Liu was addressed as "Duke of Pei", with the "Pei" referring to his hometown of Pei County. He was also granted the title of "King of Han" by Hegemon-King of Western Chu Xiang Yu, when Xiang split the former Qin empire into the Eighteen Kingdoms, and he was known by this title before becoming Emperor of China.

Liu Bang was born in a peasant family in Zhongyang, Fengyi, Pei County (沛縣豐邑中陽里, present-day Feng County, Jiangsu province). His parents' names were not recorded in history and they were referred to as "Liu Taigong" (劉太公, Old Sir Liu) and "Liu Ao" (劉媪); Old Madam Liu). Before Liu Bang's birth, his mother was taking a nap one day when she dreamt of a divine being. Just then, there was lightning and thunder and the sky darkened. Liu's father went to see his wife and saw a dragon beside her. Shortly after that, Liu's mother became pregnant and gave birth to Liu Bang. Liu had a high nose, nice whiskers and a beard, bearing some resemblance to a dragon in appearance. He had 72 dark spots on his left leg as well. The young Liu Bang was outspoken, charismatic and of great forbearance and tolerance.

However, Liu enjoyed loafing, disliked reading and showed no interest in farming, hence his father often chided him as a "little rascal". Liu persisted in his idling ways and depended on his brother's family for food and lodging. When he grew older, he was appointed as a patrol officer and forged close relationships with the officials in the county office, earning himself a little reputation in his hometown. While having drinks with his friends in the local taverns, they would notice a silhouette of a dragon on him whenever he was drunk. The tavern owners felt that Liu Bang was an extraordinary person and provided him with drinks each time free of charge. One day back

in his hometown, a respectable man known as Lord Lü, who had recently moved to Pei County, was visited by the most famous men in town.

Xiao He, who was in charge of helping Lord Lü collect the gifts from the visitors, announced, "Those who do not offer more than 1,000 coins in gifts shall be seated outside the hall." Liu Bang went there without bringing a single cent and said, "I offer 10,000 coins." Lord Lü saw Liu Bang and was impressed with Liu on first sight, that he immediately stood up and welcomed Liu into the hall to sit beside him. Xiao He told Lord Lü that Liu was not serious, but Liu ignored him and chatted with Lü. Lü said, "I used to predict fortunes for many people but I've never seen someone so exceptional like you before." Lord Lü then offered his daughter Lü Zhi's hand-in-marriage to Liu Bang and they were wed. Lü Zhi bore Liu Bang a son (future Emperor Hui of Han) and a daughter (future Princess Luyuan).

### **Three Kingdoms Period**

The Three Kingdoms was appeared in the age of civil wars and disunity when the Han dynasty collapses. The period lasted for nearly four centuries under the rule of warlords. (A.D. 220-280)

In later times, fiction and drama greatly romanticized the reputed chivalry of this period. Unity was restored briefly in the early years of the Jin dynasty (A.D. 265-420), but the Jin could not long contain the invasions of the nomadic peoples.

In A.D. 317 the Jin court was forced to flee from Luoyang and reestablished itself at Nanjing to the south.

The transfer of the capital coincided with China's political fragmentation into a succession of dynasties that was to last from A.D. 304 to 589. During this period the process of civilization accelerated among the non-Chinese arrivals in the north and among the aboriginal tribesmen in the south.

This process was also accompanied by the increasing popularity of Buddhism (introduced into China in the first century A.D.) in both north and south China.

Despite the political disunity of the times, there were notable technological advances. The invention of gunpowder (at that time for use only in fireworks) and the wheelbarrow is believed to date from the sixth or seventh century. Advances in medicine, astronomy, and cartography are also noted by historians.

#### **Kingdom Shu**

The decreasing strength of the Cao clan was mirrored by the decline of Shu. After Zhuge Liang's death, his position as Lieutenant Chancellor fell to Jiang Wan, Fei Yi and Dong Yun, in that order. But after 258, Shu politics became increasingly controlled by the eunuch faction and corruption rose. Despite the energetic efforts of Jiang Wei, Zhuge's protege, Shu was unable to secure any decisive achievement. In 263, Wei launched a three-pronged attack and the Shu army was forced into general retreat from Hanzhong. Jiang Wei hurriedly held a position at Jian'ge but he was outflanked by the Wei commander Deng Ai, who force-marched his army from Yinping through territory formerly considered impassable. By the winter of the year, the capital Chengdu fell due to the strategic invasion of Wei by Deng Ai who invaded Chengdu personally. The emperor Liu Shan th

#### **Cao Cao**

In 191, there was some talk among the coalition of appointing Liu Yu, an imperial relative, as emperor, and gradually its members began to fall out. Most of the warlords in the coalition, with a few exceptions, sought the increase of personal military power in the time of instability instead of seriously wishing to restore the Han Dynasty's authority.

The Han empire was divided between a number of regional warlords. Yuan Shao occupied the northern area of Ye and extended his power, by taking over his superior Han Fu with trickery and intimidation, north of the Yellow River against Gongsun Zan, who held the northern frontier. Cáo Cāo, directly to Yuan's south, was engaged in a struggle against Yuan Shu and Liu Biao, who occupied respectively the Huai River basin and Middle Yangzi regions. Further south the young warlord Sun Ce, taking over after the untimely death of Sun Jian, was establishing his rule in the Lower Yangzi, albeit as a subordinate of Yuan Shu. In the west, Liu Zhang held Yizhou province while Hanzhong and the northwest were controlled by a motley collection of smaller warlords such as Ma Teng of Xiliang, the original post of Dong Zhuo. Dong Zhuo, confident in his success, was slain by his own adopted son, Lü Bu and his father-in-law Wang Yun.

Lü Bu, in turn, was attacked by Dong Zhuo's supporters: Li Jue, Guo Si, Zhang Ji (Zhang Xiu's Uncle) and Fan Chou. Wang Yun and his whole family were executed. Lu fled to Zhang Yang, a northern warlord, and remained

with him for a time before briefly joining Yuan Shao, but it was clear that Lü Bu was far too independent to serve another.

## **Zhuge Liang**

Zhuge Liang (traditional Chinese: 諸葛亮, simplified Chinese: 诸葛亮, pinyin: Zhūgě Liàng, 181–234) was Chancellor of Shu Han during the Three Kingdoms period of China. He is often recognised as the greatest and most accomplished strategist of his era.

Often depicted wearing a robe and holding a fan made of crane feathers,[2] Zhuge was not only an important military strategist and statesman; he was also an accomplished scholar and inventor. His reputation as an intelligent and learned scholar grew even while he was living in relative seclusion, earning him the nickname "Wòlóng" (臥龍 or "Sleeping Dragon"). Zhuge is an uncommon two-character compound family name. His name – even his surname alone – has become synonymous with intelligence and tactics in Chinese culture.

## **Kingdom Wei**

Cao Huan succeeded to the throne in 260 after Cao Mao was killed by Sima Zhao. Soon after, Sima Zhao died and his title as Lord of Jin was inherited by his son Sima Yan. Sima Yan immediately began plotting to become Emperor but faced stiff opposition. However, due to advice from his advisors, Cao Huan decided the best course of action would be to abdicate, unlike his predecessor Cao Mao. Sima Yan seized the throne in 264 after forcing Cao Huan's abdication, effectively overthrowing the Wei Dynasty and establishing the successor Jin Dynasty. This situation was similar to the deposal of Emperor Xian of the Han Dynasty by Cao Pi, the founder of the Wei Dynasty.

## **Kingdom Wu**

Following Sun Quan's death and the ascension of the young Sun Liang as emperor in 252, the kingdom of Wu went into a period of steady decline. Successful Wei suppression of rebellions in the Huainan region by Sima Zhao and Sima Shi reduced any opportunity of Wu influence. The fall of Shu signalled a change in Wei politics. After Liu Shan surrendered to Wei, Sima Yan (grandson of Sima Yi), overthrew the Wei emperor and proclaimed his own dynasty of Jin in 264, ending forty-six years of Cao dominion in the north. After Jin's rise, Emperor Sun Xiu of Wu died, and his ministers gave the throne to Sun Hao. Sun Hao was a promising young man, but upon ascension he became a tyrant, killing or exiling all who dared oppose him in the court. In 269 Yang Hu, Jin commander in the south, started preparing for the invasion of Wu by ordering the construction of a fleet and the training of marines in Sichuan under Wang Jun. Four years later, Lu Kang, the last great general of Wu, died leaving no competent successor. The planned Jin offensive finally came in the winter of 279. Sima Yan launched five simultaneous offensives along the Yangzi River from Jianye to Jiangling whilst the Sichuan fleet sailed downriver to Jing province. Under the strain of such an enormous attack, the Wu forces collapsed and Jianye fell in the third month of 280. Emperor Sun Hao surrendered and was given a fiefdom on which to live out his days. This marked the end of the Three Kingdoms era, and the beginning of a break in the forthcoming 300 years of chaos.

## **Liu Bei**

Liu Bei (161– 21 June 223), styled Xuándé (玄德), was a general, warlord, and later the founding emperor of Shu Han during the Three Kingdoms era of China. Despite having a later start than his rivals and lacking both the material resources and social status they commanded, Liu overcame his many defeats to carve out his own realm, which at its peak spanned modern day Sichuan, Guizhou, Hunan, part of Hubei and part of Gansu. Culturally, due to the tremendous popularity of the novel Romance of the Three Kingdoms by Luo Guanzhong, Liu Bei is widely known as the ideal benevolent, humane ruler who cared for his people and selected good advisors for his government. His character was a salutary example of a ruler who adhered to the Confucian set of moral values, such as loyalty and compassion.

According to the Records of Three Kingdoms, Liu Bei was born in Zhuo Commandery (涿, present day Zhuozhou, Baoding, Hebei), and was a descendant of Liu Zhen, the son of Liu Sheng, a son of Emperor Jing. However, Pei Songzhi's commentary, basing on Dian Lue (《典略》), said Liu Bei was a descendant of Marquess of Linyi (臨邑侯), also from Emperor Jing. His grandfather Liu Xiong (劉雄) and father Liu Hong (劉弘) were both employed as local clerks. Liu Bei grew up in a poor family, having lost his father when he was still a child. To support themselves, Liu and his mother sold shoes and straw-woven mats. At the age of fourteen, Liu Bei, sponsored by a more affluent relative who recognised his potential in leadership, went to study under the tutelage

of Lu Zhi (a prominent scholar and, at the time, former Administrator of Jiujiang). There he met and befriended Gongsun Zan, a prominent northern warlord in future.

### **Sun Tzu and Art of War**

An interesting document which has survived from the close of the Han period is the short preface written by the Great Ts`ao Ts`ao, or Wei Wu Ti, for his edition of Sun Tzu. I shall give it in full:— I have heard that the ancients used bows and arrows to their advantage. The Shu Chu mentions "the army" among the "eight objects of government." The I Ching says: "'army' indicates firmness and justice; the experienced leader will have good fortune." The Shih Ching says: "The King rose majestic in his wrath, and he marshaled his troops." The Yellow Emperor, T`ang the Completer and Wu Wang all used spears and battle-axes in order to succor their generation. The Ssu-ma Fa says: "If one man slay another of set purpose, he himself may rightfully be slain." He who relies solely on warlike measures shall be exterminated; he who relies solely on peaceful measures shall perish. [...] In military matters, the Sage's rule is normally to keep the peace, and to move his forces only when occasion requires. He will not use armed force unless driven to it by necessity.

Many books have I read on the subject of war and fighting; but the work composed by Sun Wu is the profoundest of them all. [Sun Tzu was a native of the Ch`i state, his personal name was Wu. He wrote the Art of War in 13 chapters for Ho Lu, King of Wu. Its principles were tested on women, and he was subsequently made a general. He led an army westwards, crushed the Ch`u state and entered Ying the capital. In the north, he kept Ch`i and Chin in awe. A hundred years and more after his time, Sun Pin lived. He was a descendant of Wu.] In his treatment of deliberation and planning, the importance of rapidity in taking the field, clearness of conception, and depth of design, Sun Tzu stands beyond the reach of carping criticism. My contemporaries, however, have failed to grasp the full meaning of his instructions, and while putting into practice the smaller details in which his work abounds, they have overlooked its essential purport. That is the motive which has led me to outline a rough explanation of the whole.

Sun Tzu Wu was a native of the Ch`i State. His ART OF WAR brought him to the notice of Ho Lu, [2] King of Wu. Ho Lu said to him: "I have carefully perused your 13 chapters. May I submit your theory of managing soldiers to a slight test?" Sun Tzu replied: "You may." Ho Lu asked: "May the test be applied to women?" The answer was again in the affirmative, so arrangements were made to bring 180 ladies out of the Palace. Sun Tzu divided them into two companies, and placed one of the King's favorite concubines at the head of each. He then bade them all take spears in their hands, and addressed them thus: "I presume you know the difference between front and back, right hand and left hand?" The girls replied: Yes. Sun Tzu went on: "When I say "Eyes front," you must look straight ahead. When I say "Left turn," you must face towards your left hand. When I say "Right turn," you must face towards your right hand. When I say "About turn," you must face right round towards your back." Again the girls assented. The words of command having been thus explained, he set up the halberds and battle-axes in order to begin the drill. Then, to the sound of drums, he gave the order "Right turn." But the girls only burst out laughing. Sun Tzu said: "If words of command are not clear and distinct, if orders are not thoroughly understood, then the general is to blame." So he started drilling them again, and this time gave the order "Left turn," whereupon the girls once more burst into fits of laughter. Sun Tzu: "If words of command are not clear and distinct, if orders are not thoroughly understood, the general is to blame. But if his orders ARE clear, and the soldiers nevertheless disobey, then it is the fault of their officers." So saying, he ordered the leaders of the two companies to be beheaded.

Now the king of Wu was watching the scene from the top of a raised pavilion; and when he saw that his favorite concubines were about to be executed, he was greatly alarmed and hurriedly sent down the following message: "We are now quite satisfied as to our general's ability to handle troops. If We are bereft of these two concubines, our meat and drink will lose their savor. It is our wish that they shall not be beheaded." Sun Tzu replied: "Having once received His Majesty's commission to be the general of his forces, there are certain commands of His Majesty which, acting in that capacity, I am unable to accept."

Accordingly, he had the two leaders beheaded, and straightway installed the pair next in order as leaders in their place. When this had been done, the drum was sounded for the drill once more; and the girls went through all the evolutions, turning to the right or to the left, marching ahead or wheeling back, kneeling or standing, with perfect accuracy and precision, not venturing to utter a sound. Then Sun Tzu sent a messenger to the King saying: "Your

soldiers, Sire, are now properly drilled and disciplined, and ready for your majesty's inspection. They can be put to any use that their sovereign may desire; bid them go through fire and water, and they will not disobey." But the King replied: "Let our general cease drilling and return to camp. As for us, We have no wish to come down and inspect the troops." Thereupon Sun Tzu said: "The King is only fond of words, and cannot translate them into deeds." After that, Ho Lu saw that Sun Tzu was one who knew how to handle an army, and finally appointed him general.

In the west, he defeated the Ch`u State and forced his way into Ying, the capital; to the north he put fear into the States of Ch`i and Chin, and spread his fame abroad amongst the feudal princes. And Sun Tzu shared in the might of the King.

## Jin Dynasty

The Jin Dynasty was founded in what would become northern Manchuria by the Jurchen tribal chieftan Wányán Āgūdǎ (完顏阿骨打) in 1115. In 1125, it successfully annihilated the Liao Dynasty which had held sway over northern China, including Manchuria and part of the Mongol region for several centuries. Also at this time, the Jin made overtures to the Korean kingdom of Goryeo, which Emperor Yejong refused.

On January 9, 1127, Jin forces ransacked Kaifeng, capital of the Northern Song Dynasty, capturing both Emperor Qinzong, and his father, Emperor Huizong, who had abdicated in panic in the face of Jin forces. Following the fall of Kaifeng, Song forces under the leadership of the succeeding Southern Song Dynasty continued to fight for over a decade with Jin forces, eventually signing the Treaty of Shaoxing in 1141, calling for the cessation of all Song land north of the Huai River to the Jin and the execution of Song General Yue Fei in return for peace. [edit] The migration south Jade ornament with flower design, Jin Dynasty, Shanghai Museum. After taking over Northern China, the Jin Dynasty became increasingly Sinicized. About three million people, half of them Jurchens, migrated south into northern China over two decades, and this minority governed about thirty million people.

The Jurchens were given land grants and organized society into 1,000 households (猛安- meng'an) and 100 households (謀克- mouke). Many married Hans, although the ban on Jurchen nobles marrying Hans was not lifted until 1191. After Jin Emperor Taizōng (太宗) died in 1135, the next three Jin emperors were grandsons of Wányán Āgūdǎ by three different princes. Young Jin Emperor Xizōng (熙宗) (r. 1135-1149) studied the classics and wrote Chinese poetry. He adopted Han cultural traditions, but the Jurchen nobles had the top positions. Later in life, Emperor Xizōng became an alcoholic and executed many officials for criticizing him. He also had Jurchen leaders who opposed him murdered, even those in his own Wanyan family clan. In 1149 he was murdered by a cabal of relatives and nobles, who made his cousin Wányán Liàng (完顏亮) the next Jin emperor. Because of the brutality of both his domestic and foreign policy, Wanyan Liang was posthumously demoted from the position of emperor. Consequently, historians have commonly referred to him by the posthumous name of Prince Hǎilíng (海陵王).

Rebellions in the north A marble statue of a Buddhist monk, 1180 AD, Jin Dynasty. Having usurped the throne, Wanyan Liang embarked on the program of legitimizing his rule as an emperor of China. In 1153, he moved the empire's main capital from Huining Fu in northern Manchuria (south of present-day Harbin) to the former Liao capital, Yanjing (now Beijing).[4][5] Four years later, in 1157, to emphasize the permanence of the move, he razed the nobles' residences in Huining.[4][5] Hǎilíng also reconstructed the former Song capital, Bianjing (now Kaifeng), which had been sacked in 1127, making it the Jin's southern capital.

### Western Jin

The first of the two periods, the Western Jin Dynasty (ch: 西晉, 265–316), was founded by Emperor Wu, better known as Sima Yan. Although providing a brief period of unity after conquering the state of Eastern Wu in 280, the Jin could not contain the invasion and uprising of nomadic peoples after the devastating War of the Eight Princes. The capital was Luoyang until 311 when Emperor Huai was captured by the forces of Han Zhao. The successive reign of Emperor Min lasted four years in Chang'an until its conquest by Han Zhao in 316.

Meanwhile remnants of the Jin court fled from the north to the south and reestablished the Jin court at Jiankang, south-east of Luoyang and Chang'an and near modern-day Nanjing, under the Prince of Langye. Prominent local families of Zhu, Gan, Lu, Gu and Zhou supported the proclamation of Prince of Langye as Emperor Yuan of the Eastern Jin Dynasty (ch: 東晉 317–420) when the news of the fall of Chang'an reached the south. (Because the emperors of the Eastern Jin Dynasty came from the Langye line, the rival Wu Hu states which did not recognize its legitimacy would at times refer to Jin as "Langye.")

## Great Poet-Tao Yuanming

Tao Qian (simplified Chinese: 陶潜, traditional Chinese: 陶潛, pinyin: Táo Qián; Wade-Giles: T'ao Ch'ien, 365–427), better known as Tao Yuanming (陶淵明), was a Chinese poet. Born in modern Jiujiang, Jiangxi, he was one of the most influential pre-Tang Dynasty (618-907) Chinese poets. He came from a notable family which had descended into poverty; when young, he was torn between ambition and a desire to retreat into solitude. His great-grandfather was the famous Eastern Jin general and governor, Tao Kan. He served in a series of minor posts, but his sister's death, as well as disgust at the corruption and infighting of the Jin Court prompted his resignation, convincing him that life was too short to compromise on his principles; as he put it himself, he would not "bow like a servant in return for five bushels of grain" ("為五斗米折腰" has entered common usage to mean "swallowing one's pride in exchange for a meager existence". 'Five bushels of grain' refers to the salary of a low-ranking official). He lived in retirement for his last 22 years. Approximately 130 of his works survive. Most of them were poems or essays, which depict an idyllic pastoral life of farming and drinking; because of this he would later be termed the "Poet of the Fields". While his poems were not influential in his time, they would later be a major influence on the poetry of the Tang and Song Dynasties. Du Fu, his great admirer, wrote in his poem Oh, Such a Shame which describes his own life in the countryside: Only by wine one's heart is lit, / only a poem calms a soul that's torn. / You'd understand me, Tao Qian. / I wish a little sooner I was born! Apart from his poems, Tao is perhaps best known today for his short but intriguing depiction (in prose) of a land hidden from the outside world called "Peach Blossom Spring" (桃花源記). The name Peach Blossom Spring (桃花源 Tao Hua Yuan) has since become the standard Chinese term for 'utopia'.

### The flourishing of Buddhism

Since its incoming, Buddhism flourished in the period of Wei, Jin and Nan Bei Dynasties. There are several reasons for the phenomenon. First, The situation of the time leads to the hard life of people which make them believe the Buddhism can give them happiness after they died. In the three hundred of years of ruling, the regime changed often. Corruption was prevailed in government from high to low. Besides these, the interlude of the foreign groups worse the life of people. The common people can not find hope in the real life, which make them put their hope in the religion. To comfort people's worsening life, Buddhism abstinence people's appetency. Buddhism was developed in the situation. The Buddhism religion can be flourished for its doxy was needed at the time. In the early time, Buddhism's doxy was mainly said that spirit can not be disappeared after one died. Second, one will be punished by the nature when he does wrong. Third, the life of people can be recycled. This doxy meets the need of the wrenched and the ruined for the hope of good life.

### Eastern Jin

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Militaristic authorities and crises plagued the Eastern Jin court throughout its 104 years of existence. It survived the rebellions of Wang Dun and Su Jun. Huan Wen died in 373 before he could usurp the throne (which he had intended to do). Battle of Fei turned out to be a victory of Jin under a short-lived cooperation of Huan Chong, brother of Huan Wen and the Prime Minister (or Imperial Secretariat) Xie An. Huan Xuan, son of Huan Wen, usurped and changed the name of the dynasty to Chu. He was toppled by Liu Yu, who ordered the strangulation of the reinstated but retarded Emperor An. The last emperor and brother of Emperor An, Emperor Gong, was installed in 419. The abdication of Emperor Gong in 420 in favor of Liu Yu, ushered in the Liu Song Dynasty and a series of dynasties in the south, collectively known as the Southern Dynasties. The Jin Dynasty thus came to an end. Meanwhile North China was ruled by the Sixteen Kingdoms, many of which were founded by the Wu Hu, the non-Han Chinese ethnicities. The conquest of the Northern Liang by the Northern Wei Dynasty in 439 ushered in the Northern Dynasties.

## Tang Dynasty

By the end of the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420-589), China had witnessed disunity and chaos for about 270 years.

In 577, the Northern Zhou conquered the Northern Qi and reunified the North China. The Northern Zhou, known as the reign of Yuwen family of the Xianbei ethnic group, continued for 24 years with five emperors over three generations.

In 581, Yangjian, a relative of the royal family, usurped the throne and renamed the empire the Sui Dynasty with Chang'an (present Xian City in Shaanxi Province) as his capital city. Yangjian was historically called Emperor Wen.

After the founding of the empire, Emperor Wen quickly carried out a series of military plans to unify the country. Finally in 589, Emperor Wen wiped out the Chen Dynasty and reunified the south and the north.

Sui Dynasty lasted for only 38 years with two generations. History shows it was one of the short-lived Chinese dynasties. The Sui Dynasty's early demise was attributed to the government's tyranny and ceaseless wars.

Emperor Wen died unexpectedly in 604 and his second son Yangguang, historically known as Emperor Yang, succeeded to the throne.

In the early part of his reign Emperor Yang benefited from the reforms introduced by his father and the Sui Dynasty achieved full economic prosperity.

However, lulled by his easy success, Emperor Yang soon began to abuse his power. On the one hand, he continued to carry out lavish construction projects, such as the Great Wall, the Great Canal and the relocation of his capital in Luoyang.

On the other, he repeatedly went on pleasure trips and all too frequently launched wars on his neighbors. Some of Emperor Yang's policy did contribute a lot to the social development and the stability of the country, however, they made the ordinary people 'all out at the elbows'.

Emperor Yang's extravagance and putridness finally led to the exhaustion of the country's resources. Beginning in 613, rebellions broke out one by one. In 616, forced by the chaotic situation, Emperor Yang, retreated to Jiangdu (present Yangzhou City in Jiangsu Province).

With the emperor absent, Liyuan, a general stationed in Taiyuan, conquered Chang'an and put a new emperor on the throne.

In 618, Emperor Yang was murdered in Jiangdu by one of his aides. Quickly, Liyuan deposed the new emperor and established his own dynasty in Chang'an - the Tang Dynasty, declaring himself Emperor

### **Diplomatic Relationship of Tang**

The Tang Dynasty also marked a golden age of relations with foreign powers. The excellence of its advanced civilization rendered the Chinese Empire the envy of countries throughout Asia, Europe and Africa. Each in their turn sent envoys and merchants to trade with the Tang, whose empire was to become a world center for trade and cultural exchange.

The Tang was trading with more than seventy countries. To foster this trade, the government allowed tax concessions to foreigners, who were permitted to settle in China and to marry Chinese citizens. Some even went on to secure positions within the government. Many foreign countries began to call the Chinese 'Tang people', an appellation that survives in some countries to this day.

### **Relationship between Tang and Japan**

Contact between China and Japan had been established in the early part of the Han Dynasty. This was enhanced by both the Sui and the Tang. During the Tang Dynasty Japan sent envoys to China on nineteen separate occasions. Students and monks swarmed into the empire to study.

There were two people in particular worthy of mention here. They were Apeizhongmalu and a monk named Konghai. Apeizhongmalu was the most famous of the Japanese students who came to China. Emperor Taizong gave him the Chinese name Chaoheng.

Not only did he become an official in the central government through the examination system but he also became a close friend of famous poets such as Libai and Wangwei. Of the monks who came to China, Konghai was the most outstanding. They arrived in 804 and studied Buddhism at the Qinlong Temple. On his return to Japan, he took with him over one hundred and eighty Buddhist scriptures and established the Tantra sect of Buddhism there.

Students and monks were sent also to Japan from China. Jianzhen is considered to be the most influential of the monks. He successfully traveled to Japan in 754 after five attempts to visit. It was he who introduced Lu Buddhism to the Japanese and he taught sculpture, architecture and painting.

It was thanks to these cultural exchanges that benefits were derived by both nations. Chinese culture and technology spread to Japan. The Japanese political system, legislation, economic policy, life style and culture were all deeply influenced by that of the Tang. In return, Japanese culture was introduced into China, in particular this was true of music and dance, which became very popular.

### **Relationship between Tang and Xinluo**

In the early years of the Tang, the Korean Peninsula was divided into three separate kingdoms. These were Gaoli, Baiji and Xinluo. All three had contact with China but in 660 China conquered Baiji and in 668 did likewise with Gaoli. Xinluo resisted the might of the empire and the Tang retreated from the Korean Peninsula. In 675, Xinluo united the peninsula.

Xinluo maintained its relations with China and its students formed the greatest number studying in China. Meanwhile, on the basis of the volume of imports from the empire, Xinluo became China's greatest trading partner.

The Tang culture began to have an enormous influence on the Xinluo. In 675 they adopted the tang calendar. In mid eighth century, they reformed their administration on the lines of that of the Tang and then in 788 adopted the civil service examination system for the appointment of officials. Tea cultivation, engraving and printing skills were also introduced from China. In return, Gaoli music was introduced to China and imported goods from Xinluo further enriched the lifestyle of the people of the Tang Empire.

### **Friendship with Persia and Dashi**

Friendly relations were established and maintained with both Persia (today's Iran) and Dashi (Arab nations). Two Persian princes settled in Chang'an and Persian merchants established themselves all over the empire.

In Chang'an, Luoyang, Yangzhou and Guangzhou, shops owned by Persian merchants were noted for the gems, coral, carnelian, spices and medicines that they offered for sale. Persian dates and spinach were introduced into China. Chinese merchandise such as silk, porcelain and paper was brought by the Persians and traded in the West via the Silk Road.

Arabians were known to the Tang as Dashi. In 651, the Dashi sent envoys to Chang'an to establish trade on over forty occasions and their merchants set up businesses in Guangzhou, Yangzhou, Chang'an, Luoyang, Quanzhou and other cities. They settled down and learned Chinese culture, while some were appointed to government posts. They built their mosques and their religion was given due respect by the Tang.

### **The First Woman Emperor-Wu Zetian**

Wu Zetian was born in 624 and died in 705 in her 81 years old. She was empress of Li Zhi (Tang Gaozong, one of Tang's emperors). She changed the country name to Zhou and made Luo Yang as the capital. She was in her position from 690 to 705.

Wu Zetian was the a consultant of Li Shimin and the wife of Lizhi. Li Shimin was Li zhi's father. After 30 years of assistance of Li Zhi to administrate the country, she enthroned to be the emperor and Chang the country's name to Zhou. She was the only woman emperor in China's history. From the days he attend the administration to retire for sickness, she spend more than half a century.

During this period, Tang saw a table development in economic and social and culture development. Her contribution to Tang dynasty was remembered by a lot of Chinese. Song Qingling, a famous figure in China said Wu Zetian was a excellent politician in the feudal society.

### **Prosperity of Zhenguan**

Under his twenty-three years rule, he did the great job more than any emperor before him. Taizong reformed agriculture, manufacturing and commerce. As the improvements achieved in both agricultural and manufacturing production were surpluses that was available for foreign trade. This made the country first strong economy and the commercial enterprise throughtout the world.

Among the manufacturing industries that became highly developed were porcelain production, bronze and iron smelting and casting, shipbuilding, and textiles with new techniques for weaving and dyeing.

Political progress was achieved by the overhaul of the examination system first introduced by the Sui for the appointment of officials. This system ensured that administrators were selected on merit rather than nepotism or bribery. In this way only the best men were appointed to vital posts within the government of the country.

Political corruption was virtually unknown as a result of these sound administrative structures. The transport system was improved. The improvement of roads and waterway connections between important cities. This also strengthened border protection.

The strong economical and commercial were traded with Japan, Persia, Arabia, India and Korea. This factors let the period with TaiZong's reign was refered to as "The Prosperity of Zhenguan". Taizong would remind himself of this frequently by quoting a maxim of the great philosopher, Zhuangzi, 'the waters can both float and capsize a vessel.' The emperor clearly understood how these words were a metaphor for his relationship with the empire that the peasant classes were proved to be a very dangerous against government. With the people satisfied and enjoyed the standard of living that could lead to a long empire. There were two factors that ensured the political stability he sought to achieve. 1. to pick the right person for the work. 2. to seek the opinions of others before making a decision. Taizong's only accepted a man's ability regardless of his background. There were many important official came from lower class. Yuchi Jingde was a former blacksmith which became one of his ministers. Qinqiong, a minor official was appointed as a minister. Emperor Taizong's willingness to listen to the opinions of others and his ability to both seek and act upon good advice was a major factor of his successful reign.

### **Restoration of Empire-Tang Dynasty**

The Tang dynasty (A.D. 618-907), with its capital at Chang'an , is regarded by historians as a high point in Chinese civilization--equal, or even superior, to the Han period.

Its territory, acquired through the military exploits of its early rulers, was greater than that of the Han. Stimulated by contact with India and the Middle East, the empire saw a flowering of creativity in many fields.

Buddhism, originating in India around the time of Confucius, flourished during the Tang period, becoming thoroughly sanitized and a permanent part of Chinese traditional culture.

Block printing was invented, making the written word available to vastly greater audiences. The Tang period was the golden age of literature and art.

A government system supported by a large class of Confucian literati selected through civil service examinations was perfected under Tang rule. This competitive procedure was designed to draw the best talents into government.

But perhaps an even greater consideration for the Tang rulers, aware that imperial dependence on powerful aristocratic families and warlords would have destabilizing consequences, was to create a body of career officials having no autonomous territorial or functional power base.

As it turned out, these scholar-officials acquired status in their local communities, family ties, and shared values that connected them to the imperial court. From Tang times until the closing days of the Qing empire in 1911, scholar-officials functioned often as intermediaries between the grass-roots level and the government.

By the middle of the eighth century A.D., Tang power had ebbed. Domestic economic instability and military defeat in 751 by Arabs at Talas, in Central Asia, marked the beginning of five centuries of steady military decline for the Chinese empire.

Misrule, court intrigues, economic exploitation, and popular rebellions weakened the empire, making it possible for northern invaders to terminate the dynasty in 907. The next half-century saw the fragmentation of China into five northern dynasties and ten southern kingdoms.

### **Poets of Tang-Li Bai, Du Fu, Wang Wei and Bai Juyi**

The Tang Dynasty was the golden age of Chinese poetry. In the number of poems and variety of poetic forms, the beauty of imagery and broadness of themes, Tang poetry surpassed all that had preceded it. The Complete Anthology of Tang Poetry, edited during the Qing Dynasty (1644 - 1911), contains over 50,000 poems written by some two thousand poets. The collection provides a magnificent insight into all aspects of the social life of the period.

Tang poets are held in high regard and among the most notable are Li Bai, Du Fu and Bai Juyi.

#### **Li Bai(712-770)**

the Immortal Poet, living during the peak of the Tang period, wrote as many as nine hundred poems. He was probably the greatest of the ancient Chinese poets. It is generally agreed that between them, Li Bai and Du Fu elevated the poetic form to a level of power and expression that remains unsurpassed by poets of subsequent generations.

His work is characterized by its imaginative and unrestrained expression of feeling. Rated as a romantic poet, his writings are endowed with a deep appreciation of people and their lives. The magnificent scenery he saw and enjoyed as well as the profound expression of his own desires and sorrows are subjects of his work.

### **Du Fu(712-770)**

The Sage of Poets, lived in a period of change when the prosperity of the Tang began to decline. Having suffered obstacles in his official career, he began to travel around the country and to write poetry.

Living as a refugee during the Rebellion of An and Shi gave him a personal empathy with the sufferings of the poor. His work shows a great depth of feeling for the plight of the common people. In 759, Du Fu went to live in Chengdu and it is here that his former residence the Thatched Cottage is open for viewing by visitors.

Recording as they do both the military and political situations pertaining at this time, Du Fu's poems are referred to as "the mirror of his time". He is regarded as providing a typical representation of realism in poetry. The most popular of his poems are the Three Officials and Three Leaves.

### **Wang Wei(772-846)**

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### **Bai Juyi(772-846)**

Bai Juyi was the son of an official. As a young man, he wandered about to escape from the wars and hence suffered from poverty and hunger. Later, after having succeeded in the civil service examinations, he served for fifteen years as an official.

He was disliked and ostracized by his noble colleagues and was sent away from the capital to work in remote cities. Bai Juyi wrote almost three thousand poems, his output exceeding that of the other Tang poets.

With their themes centring on the important social and political problems, Bai Juyi used plain and simple language that proved enlightening even for those who had not received even the poorest education. He also wrote many lyrics expressing his personal feelings.

His long narrative poem The Song of the Pipa Player is among the best known. (A pipa is a musical instrument).

## **Song Dynasty**

In political terms, the fall of the Tang Dynasty (681-907) and the resultant disintegration of the empire did not mean a sharp break with the past.

The Five Dynasties all aspired to the reunification of China and by 959 the Later Zhou had brought much of the country back under a single ruler.

The changes of dynasty were due to the change of ruling family. The ruling elite remained unaltered and the civil service continued the routine tasks of government with no serious disruption

In the south in several of the Ten States the same continuity was evident and the examination system continued.

When Zhao Kuangyin seized power by a coup in Chenqiaoyi in 960 he was able to consolidate and extend his control in a restrained and methodical manner.

The Song Dynasty that he founded has been divided into two periods. Firstly, the Northern Song when the capital was in Dongjing (present day Kaifeng City in Henna Province) from 960 to 1127.

Secondly, the Southern Song, with their capital in present day Hangzhou from 1127 to 1279.

The Song Dynasty ranks alongside the Tang and also the Han (206 BC - 220 AD) in importance. For a little under three and a quarter centuries under its rule, China enjoyed a period of economic growth coupled with great artistic and intellectual achievement.

It has been said that song was referred as the Renaissance of Chinese which compared to Europe's Renaissance. It is a great period in China's history.

## Yuan Dynasty

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### **Politics of Yuan Dynasty**

During the 13th Century a great leader, Temujin, was to emerge from among the nomadic tribes of the Mongolian steppes. These tribesmen occupied the area between the northern Daxing'an Mountains and the eastern bank of the Argun River.

As skilled horsemen, they were to become a formidable fighting force once the tribes had united under Temujin's leadership. In 1206 Temujin was formally elected as ruler over Greater Mongolia, encompassing the Mongolian Plateau and the Gobi Desert, and he adopted the name and title of Genghis Khan.

The newly elected Khan set about extending his empire and set his sights on China. In 1227 he defeated the Western Xia and in 1234 he defeated the Jin. This was to open the way to unify the whole of China for the first time under a non-Chinese regime, a people who eventually were to become an ethnic group.

Following Genghis' death, his grandson succeeded him and as Kublai Khan, the new leader established the Yuan Dynasty in 1271, with his capital city at Dadu (present day Beijing).

Kublai, who was known as Emperor Shizong continued to annex Chinese territory and in 1279 the Yuan forces captured Hangzhou, the capital city of the Southern Song (1127 -1279). The Song Emperor Gong, together with his mother the Empress Xie was taken into captivity.

Three years later in 1279, the Yuan engaged in a maritime war in Yashan and crushed the "New Song" which had been formed by exiled officials and survivors from the Southern Song.

With their dynasty now firmly established in the Chinese empire, the Yuan found themselves rulers of a complex group of peoples who inhabited the largest land based empire ever to exist, stretching from what is now Korea and western Russia in the north and from Burma to Iraq in the south. But they were rulers with no experience of administration. Consequently, they adopted Chinese political and cultural models.

Ruling from their capital city Dadu, the Mongol Khans increasingly adopted the role and style of Chinese emperors. However, they failed to unite the people and caused further dissension by forming them into clearly defined ethnic groups.

The four classes created were firstly, the Mongols themselves, next came their allies and non-Chinese people from Inner-Asia, a class to be called the Semu. The third class was made up of the people of Northern China and they were called the Han. Lastly, came the people of Southern China, who were referred to as the Nan.

The Mongols in the first group enjoyed the greatest privileges under the regime, while the fourth group, the Nan were to have the least. The same applied in so far as taxation and the penal code were concerned as this had a very divisive effect on the population as a whole. Mixed marriages were forbidden and it was impossible to gain promotion from one group to another.

During the 1340's and 1350's, internal political cohesion disintegrated due to rivalry between various factions at court, rampant corruption and a succession of natural calamities.

These elements all fuelled the fires of rebellion. Mutinying workers, pirates, smugglers and rebel peasants ultimately were victorious in their fight with Mongol troops and the Yuan Dynasty was overthrown. The last Yuan Emperor together with his court fled from the country while many of the Mongols were content to remain and become integrated with the Chinese population.

The man who led the final onslaught against the Yuan was Zhu Yuanzhang and he was to become the first Ming (1368 - 1644) Emperor. The Mongols were so weakened that it was not until the 15th Century that they gained sufficient strength under a leader known as Dayan Qaghan to attack the Empire's frontiers once again.

The Manchu emperors of the Qing Dynasty (1644 -1911) accepted the final submission of the Mongol rulers and thus Mongolia became a part of China.

The Yuan Dynasty lasted ninety-eight years with eleven emperors. From then on, Beijing gradually ascended as the political, economic, and cultural center of China.

### **The Four Class System**

The territory of the Yuan Dynasty was divided into the Central Region (腹裏) and places under control of various Xing Zhongshusheng (行中書省 or 行省) or the Xuanzheng Institute (宣政院). The Central Region, consisting of present-day Hebei, Shandong, Shanxi, the south-eastern part of present-day Inner Mongolia and the Henan areas to the north of the Yellow River, was considered the most important region of the dynasty and directly governed by Zhongshusheng (中書省, "Secretariat") at Dadu; similarly, another top-level administrative department called the Xuanzheng Institute governed the whole of modern-day Tibet and a south-east part of Turkestan. Xing Zhongshusheng (行中書省,

"branch Secretariat" or "en-route Secretariat"), or simply Xingsheng (行省), were provincial-level administrative organizations or institutions, sometimes roughly translated as "Province", though they were not exactly provinces in modern sense. There were 11 Xing Zhongshusheng or Xingsheng in Yuan Dynasty.[22] 1. Gansu Xingsheng (甘肅行省) with Zhangye District as its seat of government. Under this came most of present-day Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region (originally the Tangut territory), south-eastern Gansu Province, and part of north-eastern Amdo. 2. Henan Jiangbei Xingsheng (河南江北行省) with Kaifeng District as its seat of government. Under this came the Henan areas to the south of the Yellow River, north-east Hubei, Jiangsu, the north-eastern part of Jiangxi Province.

### **Diplomatic Relationship**

The last years of the Yuan Dynasty were marked by struggle, famine, and bitterness among the populace. The dynasty was, significantly, one of the shortest-lived dynasties in the history of China, covering just a century, 1271 to 1368. In time, Kublai Khan's successors lost all influence on other Mongol lands across Asia, while the Mongols beyond the Middle Kingdom saw them as too Chinese. Gradually, they lost influence in China as well. The reigns of the later Yuan emperors were short and were marked by intrigues and rivalries. Uninterested in administration, they were separated from both the army and the populace.

China was torn by dissension and unrest; outlaws ravaged the country without interference from the weakening Yuan armies. Regardless of the merits of his reign, Shidebala (Emperor Yingzong) ruled for only two years (1321 to 1323); his rule ended in a coup at the hands of five princes. They placed Yesün Temür (or Taidingdi) on the throne, and, after an unsuccessful attempt to calm the princes, he also succumbed to regicide. When Yesün Temür died in Shangdu in 1328, Tugh Temür was recalled to Dadu by the Qipchaq commander El Temür.

He was installed as the emperor (Emperor Wenzong) in Dadu while Yesün Temür's son Ragibagh succeeded to the throne in Shangdu with the support of Yesün Temür's favorite retainer Dawlat Shah. Gaining support from princes and officers in Northern China and some other parts of the dynasty, Dadu-based Tugh Temür eventually won the civil war against Ragibagh in 1329. Afterwards, Tugh Temür abdicated in favour of his brother Kusala who was backed by Chagatai Khan Eljigidey and announced Dadu's intent to welcome him.

However, Kusala suddenly died only 4 days after a banquet with Tugh Temür. He was supposedly killed with poison by El Temür, and Tugh Temür then remounted the throne. Tugh Temür also sent delegates to the western Mongol khanates in order to be accepted as the suzerain of Mongol world. He gave Eljigidey the imperial seal and precious gifts and sent 3 Chingisid princes to Ilkhanate and Golden Horde. Western khanates responded favorably and sent tribute missions to the Yuan emperor.

However, he was mainly a puppet of the powerful official El Temür during his latter three-year reign. El Temür purged pro-Kusala officials and brought power to warlords, whose despotic rule clearly marked the decline of the dynasty.

## **Importance of Yuan Dynasty**

Succession was a problem for the Yuan Dynasty, later causing much strife and internal struggle. This emerged as early as the end of Kublai's reign. Kublai originally named his eldest son, Zhenjin (Chinese: 眞金) as the Crown Prince (Chinese: 皇太子) — but he died before Kublai in 1285. Thus, Zhenjin's son ruled as Temür Khan for approximately 10 years following Kublai's death (between 1294 and 1307).

Temür Khan decided to maintain and continue much of the work begun by his grandfather. He also made peace with the western Mongol khanates as well as the neighboring countries such as Vietnam, which recognized his nominal suzerainty and paid tributes for a few decades. However, the corruption in the Yuan Dynasty began during the reign of Temür Khan. Külüg Khan became Khagan of the Yuan after the death of Temür Khan. Unlike his predecessor, he did not continue Kublai's work, but largely rejected it. During his short reign (1307 to 1311), Yuan fell into financial difficulties, partly due to bad decisions made by Külüg. By the time he died, China was in severe debt and the Yuan Dynasty faced popular discontent.

## **Three Great Inventions**

The four Great Inventions of the ancient China has played an important role in the development of ancient China's economic, politics and culture. They also did a great contribution to the world civilization in many aspects.

Three of them were appeared in Song dynasty.

### **Invention of Printing**

Printing come into use in Sui dynasty and was developed and improved by Bisheng of Song Dynasty. Bisheng used the character mode to print a Chinese Character, which is called "live character printing". One Character has a model and the mode can be used for many times until its broken. This method saved a lot of time and energy in carving the words on the wood for every character mode can be reused.

The Character mode was made by sticky earth and then dried in a firing cave. The character mode can be reused in the next printing. Thus quicken the printing speed and save a lot of time.

The technique of printing was spread to Europe by Mongolian in the later years after its appearance. The invention had a great impact in the education and culture of the whole world.

### **Invention of Compass**

In the south in several of the Ten States the same continuity was evident and the examination system continued. When Zhao Kuangyin seized power by a coup in Chenqiaoyi in 960 he was able to consolidate and extend his control in a restrained and methodical manner.

The Song Dynasty that he founded has been divided into two periods. Firstly, the Northern Song when the capital was in Dongjing (present day Kaifeng City in Henna Province) from 960 to 1127.

Secondly, the Southern Song, with their capital in present day Hangzhou from 1127 to 1279.

### **Invention of Explosive**

The Song Dynasty ranks alongside the Tang and also the Han (206 BC - 220 AD) in importance. For a little under three and a quarter centuries under its rule, China enjoyed a period of economic growth coupled with great artistic and intellectual achievement.

It has been said that song was referred as the Renaissance of Chinese which compared to Europe's Renaissance. It is a great period in China's history.

## **The Economic of Yuan Dynasty**

Following their invasion, the Mongols confiscated a vast amount of arable land and turned it over to pasture. State owned land was often granted to Mongol aristocrats and to Buddhist monasteries. These actions coupled with harsh taxes impoverished the peasant farmers, many of whom migrated to the South. Due to their ignorance of the need to control flooding, the Mongols neglected river defences and the Yellow River shifted its course with a resultant large loss of life.

The incorporation of China into the Mongol empire did little to help their economy as so much trade was under foreign control. As trading profits were taken out of China, the metal currency was depleted and this led to the use of paper money and inflation.

Large scale corruption existed and this together with the Mongol desire for splendor such as demonstrated by their building of Dadu caused impoverishment.

Under Kublai, things were improved. He brought together groups of fifty households to develop land for agriculture, to improve flood defences and irrigation.

This encouraged silk production. He also promoted the interests of artisans and merchants. He supported Ortogh, an association of mainly Muslim traders, who managed the trade along the Silk Road.

He made wider use of paper currency but ensured its value was backed by adequate supplies of silver. This was an encouragement to commerce and with the construction of roads, improved canals and a postal system economic activity was enhanced. Towards the end of his reign, economic problems started to escalate. His foreign expeditions and massive public works programs such as the extension of the Great Canal imposed a heavy burden on the country's exchequer.

Kublai employed a series of *semu* finance ministers who were very unpopular as a result of their taxation methods. His successors continued to suffer from financial problems which they endeavored to control by raising revenue from monopolies, currency manipulation and the profits of a growing maritime trade.

Ayurbarwada instituted a land census with a view to ensuring all holdings were suitably taxed. This led to strong opposition and so land owners in the South were left to prosper. In the North and to a lesser extent in the South, the Mongols rewarded their followers with grants of land together with rights over the tenants upon it which meant households were placed in bondage. The government sought to control the exploitation of such households but continued internal migration indicates that this was not altogether a success.

Although the Mongols did encourage agriculture, the number of peasant uprisings towards the end of their reign shows that rural life was harsh during the Yuan period.

In the fourteenth century, China suffered thirty five severe winters and in 1332 abnormal rainfall, with consequent flooding which was the cause of much loss of life.

### **Religion and Culture**

A rich cultural diversity developed during the Yuan Dynasty. The major cultural achievements were the development of drama and the novel and the increased use of the written vernacular. The political unity of China and much of central Asia promoted trade between East and West. The Mongols' extensive West Asian and European contacts produced a fair amount of cultural exchange. The other cultures and peoples in the Mongol World Empire permanently influenced China.

Tibetan-rite Tantric Buddhism also took permanent root in Chinese buddhism. The Muslims of the Yuan Dynasty introduced Middle Eastern cartography, astronomy, medicine, clothing, and diet in East Asia. Middle Eastern crops such as carrots, turnips, new varieties of lemons, eggplants, and melons, high-quality granulated sugar, and cotton were all either introduced or successfully popularized by the Yuan Mongols.[17] Western musical instruments were introduced to enrich Chinese performing arts. From this period dates the conversion to Islam, by Muslims of Central Asia, of growing numbers of Chinese in the northwest and southwest. Nestorianism and Roman Catholicism also enjoyed a period of toleration.

Buddhism (especially Tibetan Buddhism) flourished, although Taoism endured certain persecutions in favor of Buddhism from the Yuan government. Confucian governmental practices and examinations based on the Classics, which had fallen into disuse in north China during the period of disunity, were reinstated by the Yuan court, probably in the hope of maintaining order over Han society. Advances were realized in the fields of travel literature, cartography, geography, and scientific education.

### **Decline and Fall of Yuan Dynasty**

The Yuan remnants retreated to Mongolia after the fall of Yingchang to the Ming in 1370, where the Yuan Dynasty was formally carried on. Under the name Northern Yuan the Mongols resisted the Ming. According to Chinese political orthodoxy, there could be only one legitimate dynasty whose rulers were blessed by Heaven to rule as Emperor of China (see Mandate of Heaven), and so the Ming and the Northern Yuan denied each other's legitimacy as emperors of China, although the Ming did consider the previous Yuan which it had succeeded a legitimate dynasty. Historians generally regard Ming Dynasty rulers as the legitimate emperors of China after the Yuan Dynasty, though Northern Yuan rulers also claimed this title.

## **Chinese Regain Power- Ming Dynasty**

The Yuan dynasty was collapsed in the rivalry among the Mongo imperial heirs, natural disasters, and numerous peasants uprising. The Ming dynasty (1368-1644) was established by Zhu Yuanzhang, who was a Han Chinese peasant and former Buddhist monk turned rebel army leader.

With its capital first at Nanjing (which means Southern Capital) and later at Beijing (or Northern Capital), the Ming reached the zenith of power during the first quarter of the fifteenth century.

Annam, which was called northern Vietnam, was conquered by Chinese armies. The fleets of China also sailed to the Indian Ocean and cruised to the east coast of Africa.

The maritime Asian nations sent envoys with tribute for the Chinese emperor. Internally, the Grand Canal was expanded to its farthest limits and proved to be a stimulus to domestic trade.

The Ming maritime expeditions stopped rather suddenly after 1433, the date of the last voyage. Historians have given as one of the reasons the great expense of large-scale expeditions at a time of preoccupation with northern defenses against the Mongols.

Opposition at court also may have been a contributing factor, as conservative officials found the concept of expansion and commercial ventures alien to Chinese ideas of government.

Pressure from the powerful Neo-Confucian bureaucracy led to a revival of strict agrarian-centered society.

The stability of the Ming dynasty, which was without major disruptions of the population (then around 100 million), economy, arts, society, or politics, promoted a belief among the Chinese that they had achieved the most satisfactory civilization on earth and that nothing foreign was needed or welcome.

Long wars with the Mongols, incursions by the Japanese into Korea, and harassment of Chinese coastal cities by the Japanese in the sixteenth century weakened Ming rule, which became, as earlier Chinese dynasties had, ripe for an alien takeover.

In 1644 the Manchus took Beijing from the north and became masters of north China, establishing the last imperial dynasty, the Qing (1644-1911).

### **The Navigation of Zheng He to Western countries**

The Ming reached their zenith of power during the first quarter of the fifteenth century. The territory they controlled was smaller than that of the Yuan.

However, at the height of their power, they controlled the Mongols in the north, captured the Western Region in the west, conquered the Jurchen (also Nuzhen) in the northeast, governed Tibet in the southwest and established the Jiaozhi Prefecture in the south.

During the Ming period, Zheng He's long voyages to Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean made the Ming much more influential abroad than the Tang and no less influential than the later Qing

The Ming period seems to have been one of China's most prosperous. Pressure from the Neo-Confucian bureaucrats led to an agrarian-centered based society.

This was a stable period and the population numbered some 100 million. The incredible advances in the sciences and arts that were achieved under Ming rule led them to believe that they had created the most perfect civilization on earth

It was also during these centuries that the great potential of south China came to be fully exploited. New crops such as maize, cotton, and sweet potato were widely cultivated, and industries such as those producing porcelain and textiles flourished

Another accomplishment of the Ming was the final and lasting construction of the Great Wall. While the Great Wall had been built in earlier times, most of what is seen today was either built or repaired by the Ming. The brick and granite work was enlarged, the watch towers were redesigned and cannons were placed along its length. Not least, the Ming Dynasty is also noted for its sea explorations but a failure to consolidate any gains from this effort resulted in no permanent value being derived from it.

The dynasty is best known for its strong and complex central government, which unified and controlled the empire. Ironically, it was this same complexity that later prevented the Ming government from being able to adapt to changes in society and eventually led to its decline

In the closing years of the Ming, due to the long wars with the Mongols, repeated attacks on Korea by the Japanese, and even Japanese attacks on Chinese coastal cities greatly hurt the economy of the Ming.

Worse still, owing to their inability to meet the high tax demands, many peasants abandoned their lands. This led to an economic crisis for the dynasty. Unfortunately, the situation was worsened by a peasant uprising in 1627.

In 1644, troops led by Li Zicheng, the most prominent rebel leader, captured Beijing. While he was negotiating terms of a military surrender with Wu Sangui, commander of the last of the Ming army, Wu cast in his lot with the invading Manchu army leader, Dorgon. These people from the north succeeded in defeating the rebels. This then left the way clear for the Manchu to complete their invasion of China.

The Ming Dynasty lasted for 276 years with 16 emperors occupying the throne. After it collapsed, the Qing Dynasty (1644 - 1911), another ethnic group regime, began its reign in China.

### **Economic of Ming Dynasty**

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## **Qing Dynasty**

Qing Dynasty, with its capital Beijing, was the last ruling of China from 1644 to 1912. Although the Manchus were not Han Chinese and were strongly resisted, especially in the south, they had assimilated a great deal of Chinese culture before conquering China Proper. Realizing that to dominate the empire they would have to do things the Chinese way, the Manchus retained many institutions of Ming and earlier Chinese derivation. They continued the Confucian court practices and temple rituals, over which the emperors had traditionally presided.

The Manchus continued the Confucian civil service system. Although Chinese were barred from the highest offices, Chinese officials predominated over Manchu officeholders outside the capital, except in military positions.

The Neo-Confucian philosophy, emphasizing the obedience of subject to ruler, was enforced as the state creed. The Manchu emperors also supported Chinese literary and historical projects of enormous scope; the survival of much of China's ancient literature is attributed to these projects. Ever suspicious of Han Chinese, the Qing rulers put into effect measures aimed at preventing the absorption of the Manchus into the dominant Han Chinese population.

Han Chinese were prohibited from migrating into the Manchu homeland, and Manchus were forbidden to engage in trade or manual labor. Intermarriage between the two groups was forbidden.

In many government positions a system of dual appointments was used--the Chinese appointee was required to do the substantive work and the Manchu to ensure Han loyalty to Qing rule.

The Qing regime was determined to protect itself not only from internal rebellion but also from foreign invasion. After China Proper had been subdued, the Manchus conquered Outer Mongolia (now the Mongolian People's Republic) in the late seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century they gained control of Central Asia as far as the Pamir Mountains and established a protectorate over the area the Chinese call Xizang but commonly known in the West as Tibet.

The Qing thus became the first dynasty to eliminate successfully all danger to China Proper from across its land borders. Under Manchu rule the empire grew to include a larger area than before or since; Taiwan, the last outpost of anti-Manchu resistance, was also incorporated into China for the first time. In addition, Qing emperors received tribute from the various border states.

The chief threat to China's integrity did not come overland, as it had so often in the past, but by sea, reaching the southern coastal area first. Western traders, missionaries, and soldiers of fortune began to arrive in large numbers even before the Qing, in the sixteenth century. The empire's inability to evaluate correctly the nature of the new challenge or to respond flexibly to it resulted in the demise of the Qing and the collapse of the entire millennia-old framework of dynastic rule.

### **The Imperial Examination and the Opening of School**

The imperial examination system has lasted from Sui and Tang dynasty to Qing dynasty for selection of official members and the reserves of governing people. There are many art sections in Tang's examination and held every years. There are only Jingshi in art section to exam of the Ba Gu Wen. While the military section checking the horseracing and weight lifting.

The imperial examination in Ming dynasty can be divided into County examination, provincial examination and Palace examination. Tongsheng first took part in the examination held by county. The qualified students were called Xiu Cai or Sheng Yuan. And then they come to Fuzhou ( bigger administrative districts) to learn more things.

The excellent students can be decided as the KeJu and then have the qualification to take part in the provincial examination. The provincial exam was held three years a time and the qualified was called Juren, who will have the qualification to take part in the exam held by the central government.

### **Emperor Yongzheng**

Yongzheng, titled Qing Shizong, was the 4th son of emperor Kangxi. Because Kangxi had many sons, the rivalry between each was very fierce. Yongzheng had to fight hard, and after the crown prince's failure to do his duties, Yongzheng had a chance to become the crown prince. But because of strong rivalry, this decision was never made.

When emperor Kangxi was at his death bed, he called Yongzheng over. It was rumored that he poisoned the old emperor, and added a stroke to the proclamation of emperor, that made the statement "...pass the throne to 14th son" to "pass the throne to 4th son". This rumor of course could never be proved.

After ascending the throne, he carried out a series of new policies that much benefited the development of the Qing dynasty. Just to name a few: he established the "Junji Chu" (Cabinet of Military) and weakened the power of the princes to strengthen the central power; he improved the tax law by demanding taxes according to the number of acres of land; by dispatching ministers to the minority areas, he strengthened the control over them.

Yongzheng set up the rule of choosing successor secretly. The rule was: the emperor wrote his successor's name on two pieces of paper, then put one piece of paper in a box and had the box stored behind the stele in the Qianqing Palace. The emperor had the other identical copy with him or hidden somewhere. Upon the emperor's passing, the ministers would take out the paper in the box and compare it with the copy with the emperor. If they were deemed identical, the person whose name was on the paper would be the new emperor. Since that, there was no contention for imperial throne. Yongzheng was in power for only 13 years but he laid the foundation to the prosperous reign of Qianlong. Without Yongzheng's efforts, Qianlong could not become the emperor he was. However, his reign was full of turbulence as the other princes were always trying to dethrone him. One time, in alliance with the Eight Kings, the 7th, 8th and 9th son of Kangxi almost dethroned Yongzheng, if it were not for the 13th prince who came to help out. But because of this event, the 13th prince died and Yongzheng lost the only brother that was close to him. Because this plot also involved his first son, Yongzheng, who did not want Qian Long to share the same tragedy as he, sent orders for the first son to commit suicide. This way, when Qian Long ascended the throne, he had no rivals.

Although Yongzheng achieved so much, because of his revival of the Wenzi Yu (suppressing of scholars and burning of books) and his cruelty, he had many bad names that survived till today. In August 1735, Yongzheng died in the Summer Palace and then was buried in the Tai Mausoleum in today's Hebei Province.

### **Emperor Guangxu**

Even after he began formal rule, Cixi continued to influence his decisions and actions, despite residing for a period of time at the Imperial Summer Palace (Yiheyuan) which she had ordered Guangxu's father, the Prince Chun, to construct, with the official intention not to intervene in politics. After taking power, Guangxu was obviously more reform-minded than the conservative-leaning Cixi.

He believed that by learning from constitutional monarchies like Japan, China would become more politically and economically powerful. In June 1898, Guangxu began the Hundred Days' Reform, aimed at a series of sweeping political, legal, and social changes. For a brief time, after the supposed retirement of Empress Dowager Cixi, Emperor Guangxu issued edicts for a massive number of far-reaching modernizing reforms with the help of more progressive Qing mandarins like Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao.

### **Li Shizhen- A Famous Doctor in Qing Dynasty**

Li Shizhen's father, Li Yanwen was a famous local doctor. Li Shizhen learned from his father and learned a lot from the common people. He put great efforts to search the herbage and gain lots of experience in Chinese herbage treatment. When he was 38 years old, he has been appointed to control the hospital and treatment department by Chu Wang( The king of Chu)

Three years later, he has been introduced to come into the capital and to act as the major doctor. Tai Yi was an organization for the royal court and was destroyed by the unqualified doctor. Li Shizhen only stayed there for one year and then returned home.

Li Shizhen has been checked more than 800 medical and academic books. With his rich experience and knowledge, he spend 27 years to compose his famous book, Ben Cao Gang Mu, which enjoy good fame around the world. It was also a conclusion book before the Ming dynasties.

The book has been translated to many versions. He also published other books, such as Ping Hu Mai Xue, Qi Jing Ba Mai Kao and so on.

The doctor business passed in Li Shizhen's family from his grand father to his father and to him. His grand father and father were both famous local doctors. But the family was often treated badly by the local officials.

In order to get out of the difficulty, his father decided to send him to take part in the imperial examination for the hope that one day he can gain the fame and the power to defend his family and be a successful man. .But he often got ill when he was young. For his straightforward personality, he show no interest in the old examination forms. Since he got the degree in old dynasty, he failed in many times of examination.

After several failures, he gave up the plan of being official in government by the imperial examination. He concentrated in medicine field and he told his father about his determination to be a famous doctor.

He wrote to his father "My body like a boat in the counter current and my determination can not be changed at all. I am looking forward to your agreement and fear nothing." Facing the cruel reality, his father awakened finally and accepts his requirement and taught him by heart. In a few years, he become a very famous doctor.

### **Emperor Kangxi**

Kangxi succeeded imperial throne at the age of 8 on February 17, 1661, twelve days after his father's death. He ruled during the years from 1661 to 1722 -- the longest reign on the throne in China's history, 61 years.

When he was still a child, Kangxi was quite hard-working and showed great talent in literature. Because he was too young, his father appointed four ministers to help him to administrate the country, one of whom, named Ao Bai, secretly fostered his own henchmen against the young emperor. When Kangxi was old enough to rule the nation, he cleverly smashed Ao Bai's plot.

In the course of his five tours to South China (in the years 1684, 1689, 1699, 1703, and 1707) he made painstaking efforts to inspect conservancy projects and so spurred the officials in charge to be more efficient and conscientious. He frequently singled out those who were reported as incorrupt for promotion .

Desirous of lessening the opposition of recalcitrant Chinese scholars to the new regime, he solicited their help in the compilation of Ming-shi . In order to obtain capable scholars for this project he summoned many to complete in a special examination. He selected learned men and good calligraphers to be his personal secretaries, their office being known as the Imperial Study. Many famous works on literature and art were compiled under his order.

During Kangxi's reign, the society accumulated huge wealth and most of the time enjoyed peace and prosperity. In Chinese history, the good ruling from Emperor Kangxi's reign to Emperor Qianlong's reign was called "Kang Qian Sheng Shi", with prosperity lasting more than 100 years, and this was the last most prosperous period in ancient China.

### **Emperor Qianlong**

Emperor Qianlong is Emperor Yongzheng's fourth son. He was born in the 50th year of Emperor Kangxi's reign (1711), and died in the 4th year of Emperor Jiaqing's reign at the age of 89. He was the sixth Emperor of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) and also the emperor who lived for the longest time in Chinese history.

Qianlong showed his talent when in his childhood. Because of this, his grandfather Emperor Kangxi liked him a lot. After setting up the rule of choosing successor secretly, Emperor Yongzheng chose Qianlong to succeed the throne without hesitation.

Qianlong was 25 years old when he succeeded the throne. He learnt his grandfather's and his father's ways of running the state affairs. And he skillfully dealt with the relationship between Manchu, Han and other ethnic minorities to consolidated imperial power. His reign was the most prosperous period of Qing Dynasty.

Qianlong was a keen poet, writer and calligrapher: he produced three collections of essays and five albums of poetry, making him one of the most prolific poets and calligraphers in ancient China. He was highly accomplished in painting and was fond of collecting cultural antiques -- there were many examples of jade carving, tooth carving, bamboo and wood carving, lacquer art, enamel and porcelain art in his imperial study. He also sponsored the compilation of Si Ku Quan Shu (Complete Collection in Four Treasuries), which is regarded as the largest series in Chinese history and a valuable treasure representing Chinese culture. He was familiar with military strategies and invented Shi Quan Wu Gong (perfect gongfu). He was fond of hunting and traveling, and traveled to Southern China six times for inspection. Almost every autumn, he would visit Wutai Mountain in the west and Confucius's Temple in the south.

Qianlong promised that he would abdicate after ruling as an emperor for 60 years, because that his grandfather Emperor Kangxi's reign lasted for 61 years, and Qianlong did not want to exceed his grandfather. In 60th year of his reign, he carried out his promise, and his son Yuyan (Emperor Jiaqing) became the new emperor. Actually, Qianlong was still running the country. A lot of important affairs was reported to and solved by him.

Qianlong took great pride in his administrative style which ushered in a period of great prosperity in the country. Emperor Qianlong's reign marked the peak of feudalism in China and, together with the reign of Emperor Kangxi, this period is known as Kang Qian Sheng Shi (the Great Prosperity of Emperor Kangxi and Qianlong).

Unfortunately, however, in his old age he appointed corrupt officials such as Huo Shen, and problems of extortion and poor administration contributed directly to the decline of the Qing Dynasty.

### **Empress Cixi**

Empress Dowager Cixi (Chinese: 慈禧太后, pinyin: Cíxǐ Tàihòu; Wade-Giles: Tz'u-Hsi T'ai-hou) (29 November 1835 – 15 November 1908), of the Manchu Yehe Nara Clan, was a powerful and charismatic figure who became the de facto ruler of the Manchu Qing Dynasty in China for 47 years from 1861 to her death in 1908. Selected by the Xianfeng Emperor as a concubine in her adolescence, she climbed the ranks of Xianfeng's harem and gave birth to a son who became the Tongzhi Emperor upon Xianfeng's death.

Cixi ousted a group of regents appointed by the late emperor and assumed regency over her young son with the Empress Dowager Ci'an. Cixi then consolidated control and established near-absolute rule over the dynasty. She installed her nephew as the Guangxu Emperor in 1875. A conservative ruler who refused to adopt Western models of government, Cixi rejected reformist views and placed Guangxu under house arrest in later years for supporting reformers. However, after a humiliating clash with the Eight-Nation Alliance, external and internal pressures led Cixi to attempt institutional changes and appoint reform-minded officials.

Ultimately, the Qing Dynasty collapsed a few years after her death. Historians from both Kuomintang and Communist backgrounds have generally portrayed her as a despot and villain responsible for the fall of the Qing Dynasty, but in recent years professional historians have suggested that she was a scapegoat for problems beyond her control, a leader no more ruthless than others, and in fact an effective if reluctant reformer in the last years of her life.