



Ancient River Dynasties in China

First Cities...

- ...came 1,000 years after Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Harappa



- What is a geographical reason as to why China is such a huge global power today?

Geography -

- China is isolated by natural barriers from other civilizations:

East: the Yellow Sea and the Pacific Ocean.

West: Desert.

Southwest: Himalaya Mountains.

North: Gobi Desert.

Rivers

- The Huang He (Yellow River) -North of China
- The Chang Jiang (Yangtze River)– Central China
- Loess – Yellow Silt
- Great for farming!
- North China Plain – China's heartland

Challenges-

- What environmental problems could China face?

- Chinese considered anyone outside of their culture as barbaric because they considered their country as the center of the civilized world.
- Ethnocentric

The First Dynasties of China -

- Define: Dynasty
- Xia (Shyah) Dynasty – 2000 BC
- Yu emerged as a leader who controlled the floods and created irrigation systems to tame the rivers and encourage settlement

Dynasties....

- Shang Dynasty
- Anyang – City built mainly of wood
- Massive earthen walls
- The Chariot
- Professional Warriors

- Why do you think the Shang people needed walled cities, and what does this demonstrate about the ability of the Shang leaders?

Dynasties....

- Zhou (Joh)

Adopted much of the Shang Culture

Justified their conquest

Feudalism

Improvements

- Roads and canals were built
- Agriculture
- Trade
- Coined Money
- Cast Iron

Justification for Ruling

- Mandate of Heaven – The authority to rule came from Heaven and a just ruler had DIVINE approval to rule. If he was a wicked or foolish King he could lose the Mandate of Heaven. Became central to Chinese government.
- Floods, riots, and other problems might be signs that the spirits were displeased with the King's rule and he could lose the Mandate.

Dynastic Cycle -

- Pattern of Rise, decline, and replacements of dynasties

- “. . . Let the king and his ministers labor with a mutual sympathy, saying, ‘We have received the decree of Heaven and it shall be great as the long-continued years of China; yea, it shall not fail of the long-continued years of Yin.’ I wish the king, through the attachment of the lower people, to receive the long-abiding decree of Heaven. . . .”

Chinese Culture:

- Family: Central to Chinese Culture

The elder men controlled the family's property and made all important decisions. Girls between 13-16 had arranged marriages. They were expected to obey their fathers, husbands, and sons.

Chinese Culture

- Religious Beliefs: Family was linked to Religious Beliefs

Spirits of family ancestors had the power to bring good fortune or disaster to living family members.

Every family member paid respect to the father's ancestors.

- What ancestor of yours would be the supreme protector?
- Why?

Chinese Culture:

- Social Classes: Society was sharply divided between Nobles and peasants

King

Warriors/Nobles: owned land

Peasants

Feudalism -

- Political system in which Nobles, or Lords, are granted use of the lands that legally are the King's.

- What two civilizations are most alike?
Why?
- What two civilizations are most different?
Why?