

Language and Life in China

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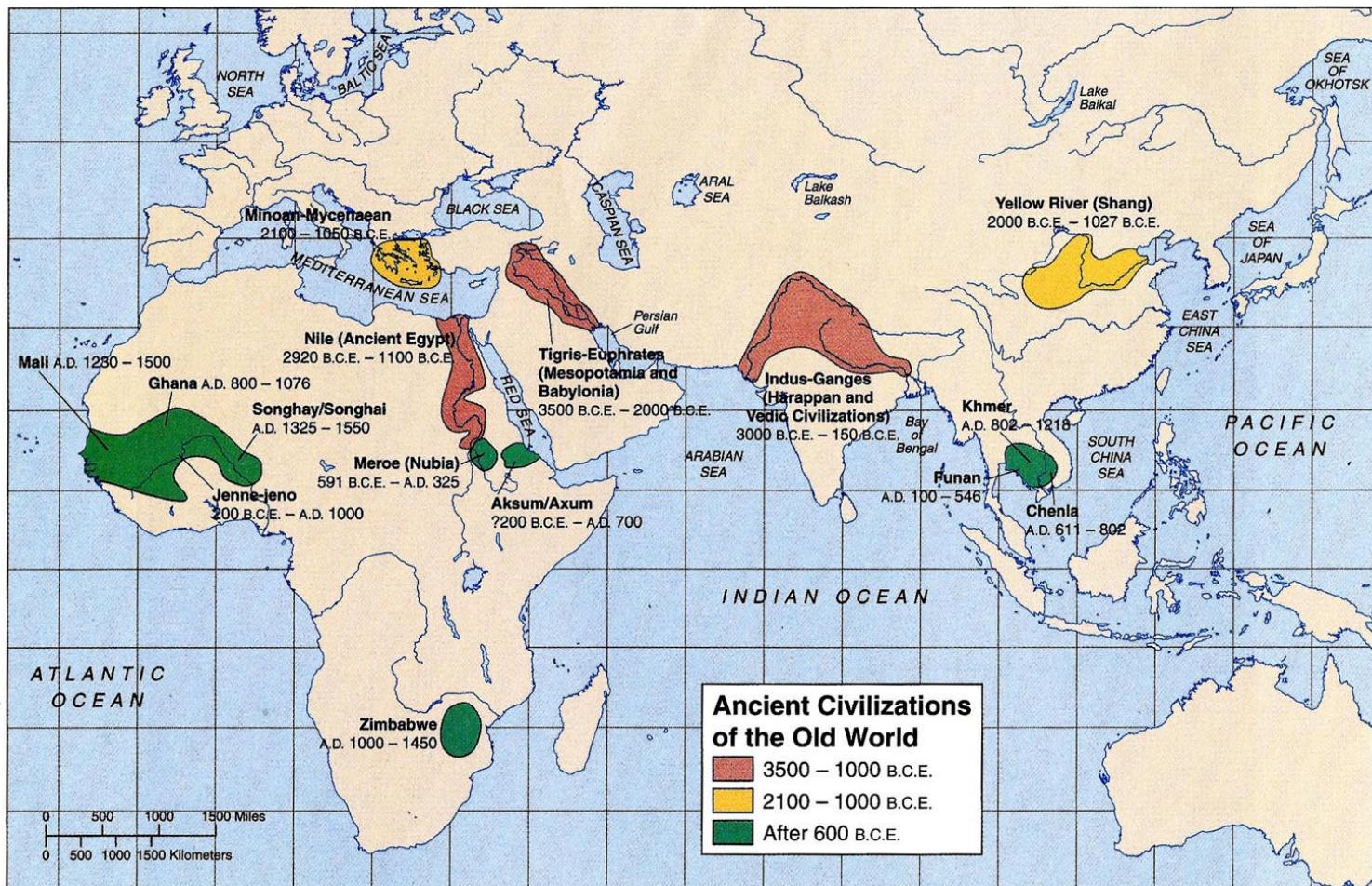


Introduction

- Basic facts about China:
 - Geography
 - Ethnic groups
 - Standard language and dialects
 - Writing system
 - A brief history of China

Historical background

Ancient Civilizations of the Old World



Creation of Heaven and Earth by Pangu

- The creative myth that was spread in the Orient in ancient times.
- The creator of Heaven and Earth



Creation of Heaven and Earth by Pangu

- After he died, his body turned into all the things in the universe.
 - Left eye→sun; right eye→moon; body→high mountains; blood→rivers; muscle→soil field; hair→stars; beard→grasses; teeth→iron; bones→huge stones; essence in his body→pearls and precious jade; breath→wind and cloud; shout→thunderbolt; sweat→rain
 - A lot of insects on his body were blown by wind into living human beings.
- Both of the Miao and Yao people took Pangu as their ancestors

Nü Wa

A goddess in ancient Chinese mythology best known for creating mankind and repairing the pillar of heaven.



Nü Wa



- Used loess to make humans
- Assigned them different genders
- Gave them a name “ren” 人
- Reflects the “matriarchal clan society”

Nü Wa

- Smelted together five-colored stones in order to patch up the azure sky
- Cut off the legs of the great turtle to set them up as the four pillars
- Killed the black dragon to provide relief for the central regions of the Sinitic world
- Piled up reeds and cinders to stop the surging waters.

Prehistoric Time

- ‘Descendants of the Yan Emperor and the Yellow Emperor’
- 炎黃子孙 yan huang zi sun
 - Legendary personages
 - The Yan Emperor
 - ox-headed, sharp-horned, bronze-foreheaded, and iron-skulled
 - Shennong
 - Taught basic agriculture, e.g. how to use the plow
 - use medical plants (Medicine King)
 - United tribes with fire/slash-and-burn agriculture



Shennong
ploughing
the fields,
depicted in
a mural
painting
from the
Han
dynasty.



Prehistoric Time

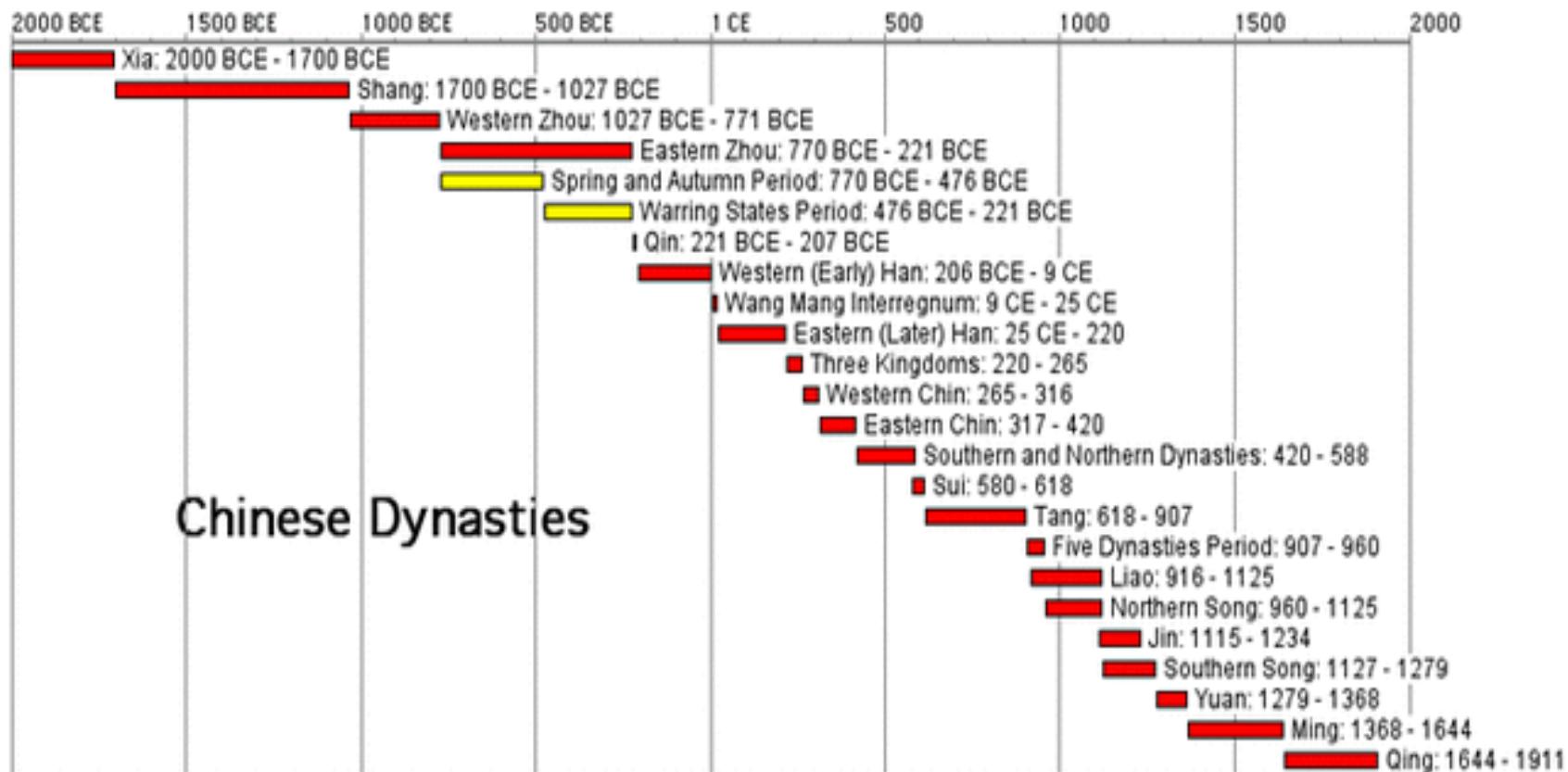
- ‘The Yellow Emperor’
 - Great inventor and warrior
 - Initiator of Chinese Civilization
 - Taught nomadic tribes how to build shelters, tame wild animals, grow the five Chinese grains.
 - Goaded Cangjie into creating the first Chinese writing system.
 - His principle wife Leizu invented sericulture and taught people how to weave silk and dye clothes.



“Five” in Han culture

- Five Grains/Five Cereals
- Five Elements (generate and overcome each others)
 - metal, wood, water, fire, earth
- Five Directions
 - east, south, west, north, center
- Five Colors
 - red, black, white, qing, yellow
- Five Tones (a pentatonic scale)

Dynasties



Xia Dynasty

- First Chinese dynasty, patrimonial
- 21st century BCE
- Established near Yellow River
- Groups of tribes, practiced slavery
- Chinese civilization is also called
‘Hua-Xia Civilization’

Yu the Great

- Founder of Xia dynasty
- Famed for flood control





Oracle-bone Script

- Shang Dynasty (1766 – 1122 BC)

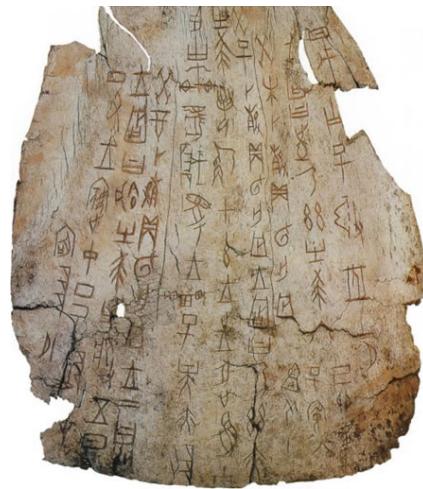




Oracle-bone Script

- Shang Dynasty
- Earliest record of written Chinese for the purpose of divination
- Inscriptions carved on turtle shells and oxen shoulder blades
- A fully functional and mature writing system
- The graphs had evolved into a variety of mostly non-pictographic functions.

Oracle-bone Script



秦樂陸年母女國馬安山光鳳若麥雷栗田火動勵
人畠部正木生一二三四五六七八九十大小犬耳
車赤王口立左右白青貝入力止足垂心憂雷天羊
糸牛北南東西京食鳥春夏秋冬龜買禾香夢子季

Four animal examples:



Four animal examples:

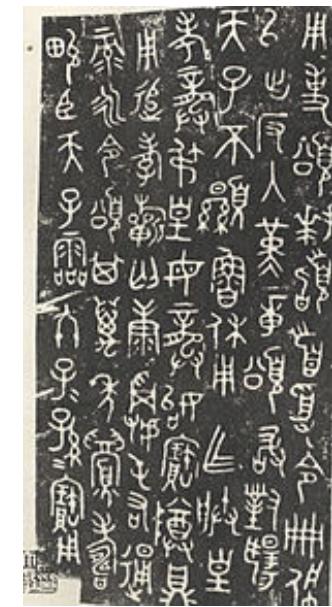
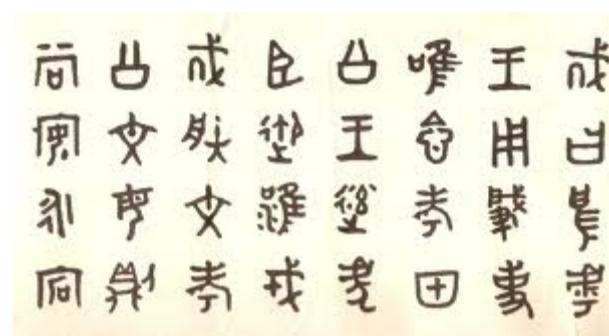


龜 象 鼠 虎
龟 象 鼠 虎

gui xiang shu hu

Bronze Script

- Shang Dynasty and Western Zhou Dynasty (11th century – 770 BC)
- Inscriptions carved on the surface of bronze vessels for sacrificial ceremonies





Western Zhou (1046 – 771 BC)



Feudalism in Western Zhou



Old Chinese

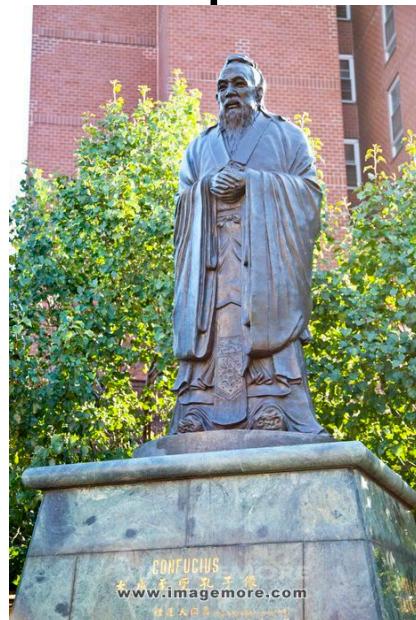
- 771 BC – 220 CE
 - Spring and Autumn Period
 - Warring States Period
 - Qin Dynasty
 - Han Dynasty
- *Yayan* ‘refined speech’
 - Common language evolved from languages spoken in the Xia and Shang dynasties
 - Is believed to evolve from languages spoken in the Xia and Shang dynasties, around today’s Henan province



Confucius Says

- 子所雅言，诗书执礼，皆雅言也
 - “What the Master (Confucius) discussed are the Book of Odes, the Book of History, and the maintenance of propriety. (These) are all refined speech.”

Link:
Reading
Chinese Poems
in diachronic
pronunciation



Spring and Autumn Period

- A hundred schools of thought
 - Ru: Confucius (Kongzi), Mencius (Mengzi), Xunzi
 - Dao: Laozi, Zhuangzi
 - Mo: Mozi
 - Jianai (to love everyone impartially), feigong (to criticize wars)
 - Fa: Hanfeizi
 - To govern with strict laws.

Qin Dynasty (221 – 206 BC)

- Qin Shi Huang (The First Emperor) and one unified Middle Kingdom

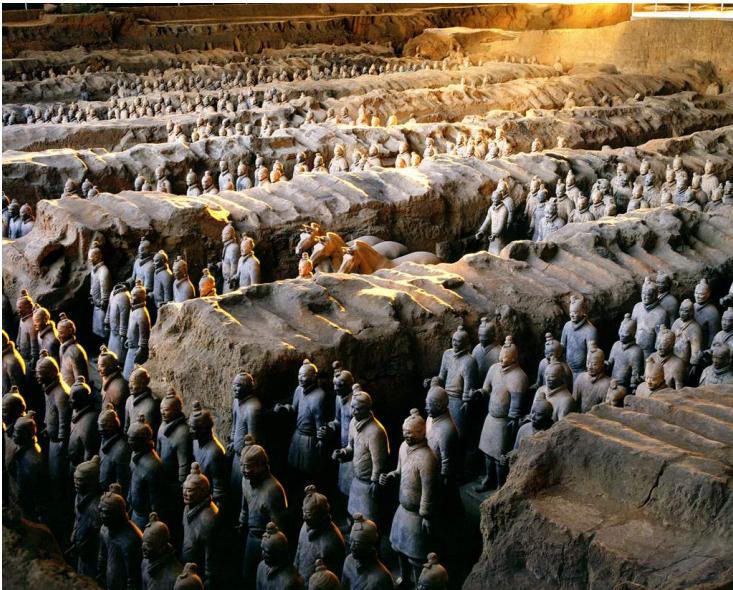


Qin Shi Huang

- Unification of China
 - For the first time, all of China was unified under one ruler.
- Administrative reforms
 - Abolished feudalism and divided China into administrative units; Appointments were based on merit instead of hereditary rights.
- Economic reforms
 - Standardized weights and measures, currency, and length of the axles of carts to facilitate transport on the road
 - Unified the Chinese script
- Philosophy
 - Eliminated the Hundred Schools of Thought including Confucianism and other philosophies;
 - Legalism was the endorsed ideology
- Public works
 - Began to build the Great Wall to prevent nomadic tribes from the north and north-west
- Legacy
 - Terracotta Army; Mausoleum.

Terracotta Army

[Link](#)

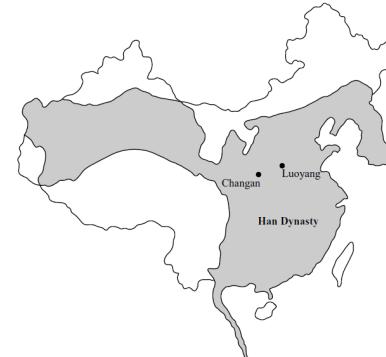


Traces of Han Purple were found on Terracotta Warriors of Han Dynasty.

Han Dynasty (206 BC – 220 CE)



Han Dynasty



- Confucianism used as ruling beliefs
- Paper was made for the first time.
- Records of new farming techniques.
- Buddhism was transmitted from India into the Han Empire
 - The translation provided useful texts for investigating the spoken language of Middle Chinese

Middle Chinese

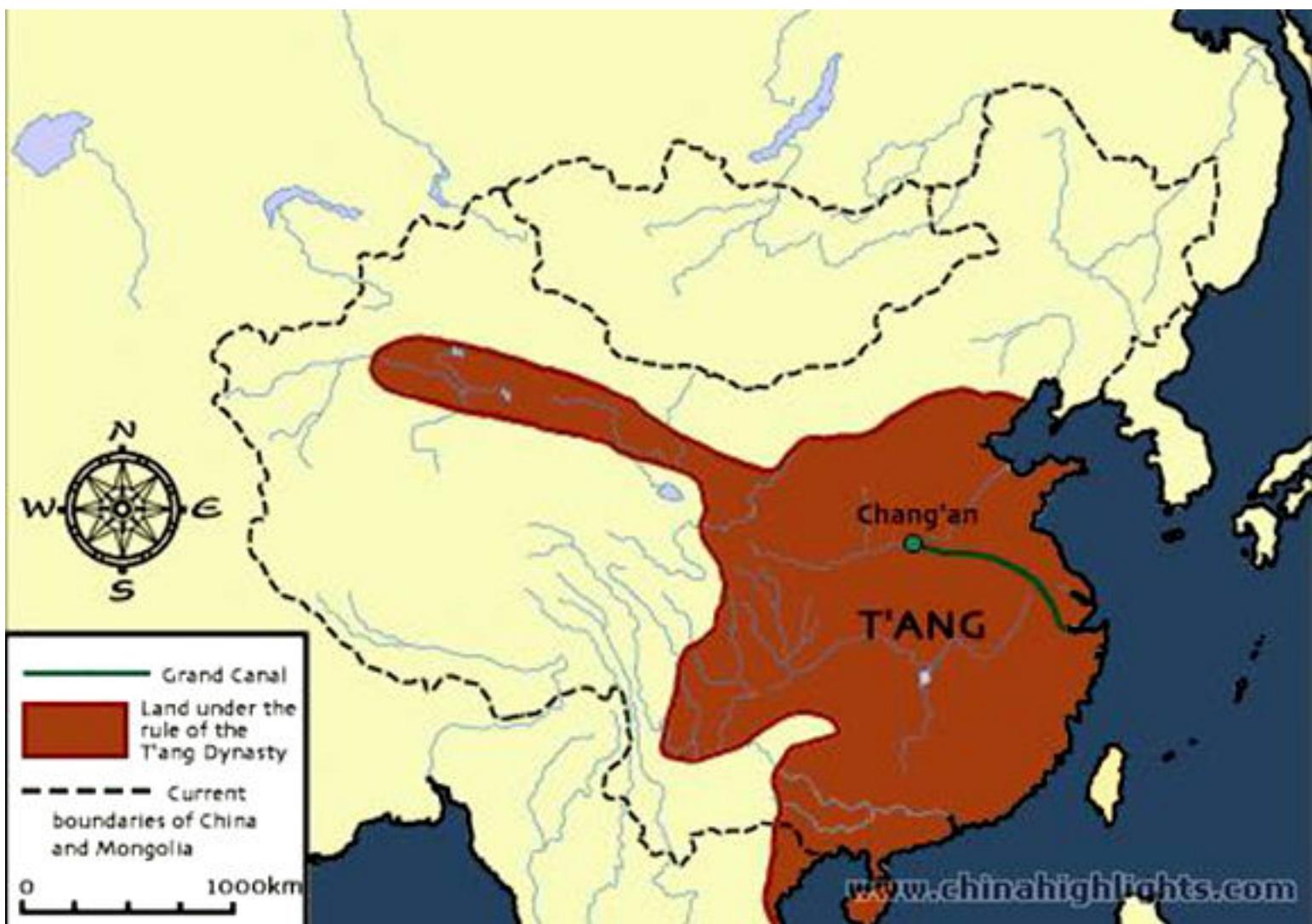
- 220 – 960
 - Sui and Tang Dynasties
- Sui Dynasty
 - Very short with only two emperors and lasted for 39 years in total
 - The Grand Canal
 - The longest artificial river in the world (1,014 m)
 - Starting at Beijing, it passes through Tianjin and four provinces, linking the Yellow River and Yangzi River.
 - It has allowed faster trading and has improved China's economy.



Sui Dynasty (589 - 618)



Tang Dynasty (618 - 907)



Tang Dynasty



- *Keju* ‘imperial examination’
 - to select candidates for the state bureaucracy
 - dated back to Han Dynasty, and remained so until its abolition in 1905
 - based on knowledge of the classics and literary style, not technical expertise
 - 1st place: 状元 zhuangyuan; 2nd place: 榜眼 bangyan; 3rd place: 探花 tanhua

The Rhyme Book

- *Qieyun ‘Spelling Rhymes’*
- Published by Lu Fayan in 601
 - A rhyme dictionary that divides characters into various rhyming categories according to their tonal qualities

Left page (Dong category):

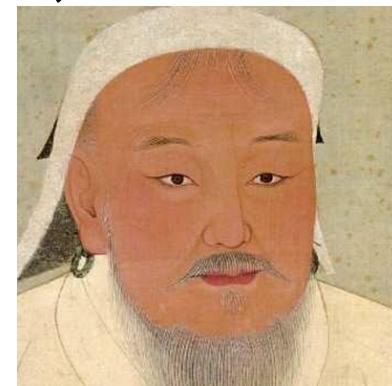
音	喉	音	齒
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○龍○洪○烘○翁○	○拂○蔑○忽○崇○	○拂○蔑○忽○崇○	○蒙○蓬○
○戎○隆○形○雄○	○○○充○終○	○蟲○仲○	○普○豐○風○
○融○融○融○融○	○嵩○嵩○嵩○嵩○	○○○○○	○○○○○
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○弄○閑○烘○禦○	○送○熟○熟○熟○	○夜○漏○痛○凍○	○夢○撻○○
○○○○○	○○○○○	○○○○○	○○○○○
○送○送○送○送○	○趙○趙○趙○趙○	○仲○仲○仲○仲○	○隱○鳳○諷○
○屋○屋○屋○屋○	○祿○穀○端○屋○	○速○族○疾○鍊○	○木○暴○芥○卜○
○肉○六○圓○畜○都○	○縮○逐○叔○似○	○逐○蕃○竹○	○目○伏○嫁○福○
○育○育○育○育○	○蒲○蒲○蒲○蒲○	○○○○○	○○○○○

Right page (Shi category, Bei section):

牙	音	舌	音	脣
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○孔○攘○動○捕○董○	○蝶○慕○臻○	○○○○○	○○○○○	○○○○○
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Early Modern Chinese

- 960 – 1900
- Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasty
- The land north of the Yangtze River was ruled by Altaic speakers
 - The Middle Chinese tonal category, *rusheng* ‘entering tone’, was lost in the northern dialect





- 960 - 1127
- Strong bureaucracy
- Civil service system
- State starts to emphasize Confucianism again
- Jurchen tribes overthrew Northern Song

- 1127 - 1279
- A time for fine poetry and painting.
- Gun power.
- China's first real navy.
- Invaded by the Mongols



Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368)



Ming Dynasty

- 1368 – 1644
- Re-established Han-Chinese ruling
- Secondary Capital: Nanjing
- Yong Le Emperor: the Forbidden City
- 16th – 17th century Italian missionaries
 - Chinese texts with Roman letters
annotating Chinese pronunciation



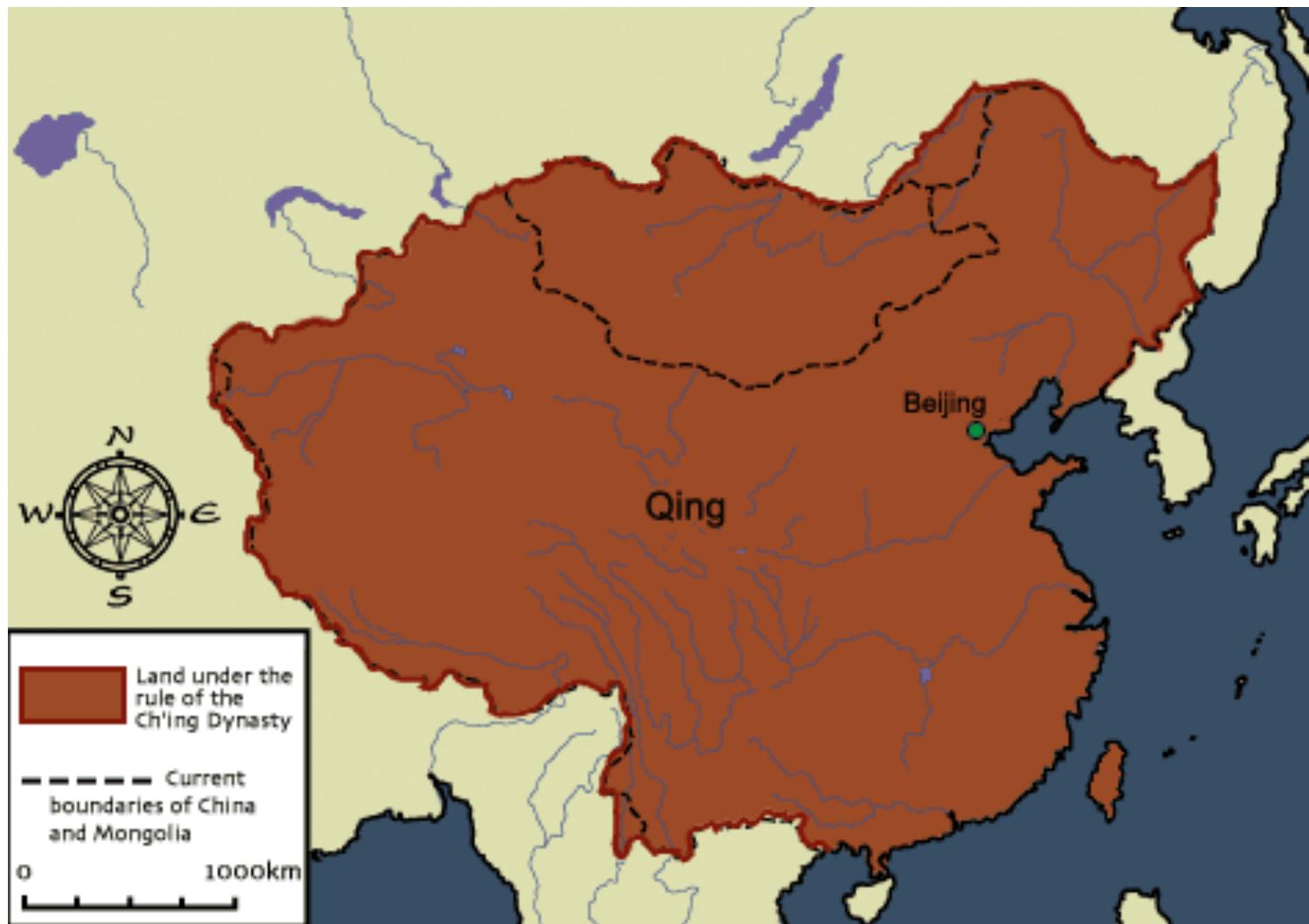
Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)



Qing Dynasty

- Capital: back to Beijing
- Beijing dialect was the de facto official language
- Imperial government tried to construct a national language and adopt a phonetic-spelling system to replace Chinese characters

Qing Dynasty (1644-1911)



Modern Chinese

- 1900 – present
 - Qing Empire was overthrown by the National Party, which later founded Republic of China in 1911
 - The Beijing dialect was adopted as the national language in 1932
 - *Zhuyin fuhao* ‘sound-annotating symbols’
- ㄅ ㄉ ㄇ ㄈ ㄤ ㄬ ㄮ ...

- Communist Party led by Mao Zedong defeated the National Party in 1949 and founded People's Republic of China



- Standard language: *Putonghua*
- Phonetic scheme for annotation: *Pinyin*
- Simplified characters were moderated in the 1950s and 60s

Traditional	開 圖 樂 學
Simplified	开 图 乐 学
	Open Picture/Diagram Fun Learn

- *Putonghua*: “the standard form of Modern Chinese with the Beijing phonological system as its norm of pronunciation, and Northern dialects as its base dialects, and looking to exemplary modern works in *baihua* ‘vernacular literary language’ for its grammatical norms”
- *Pinyin*: b p m f d t n l ...

Major Periods of the language

Oracle and Bronze inscriptions	sixteenth century to 771 BCE
Old Chinese	771 BCE to 220 CE
Middle Chinese	220 CE to 960
Early Modern Chinese	960 to 1900
Modern Chinese	1900 to present

The Forbidden City

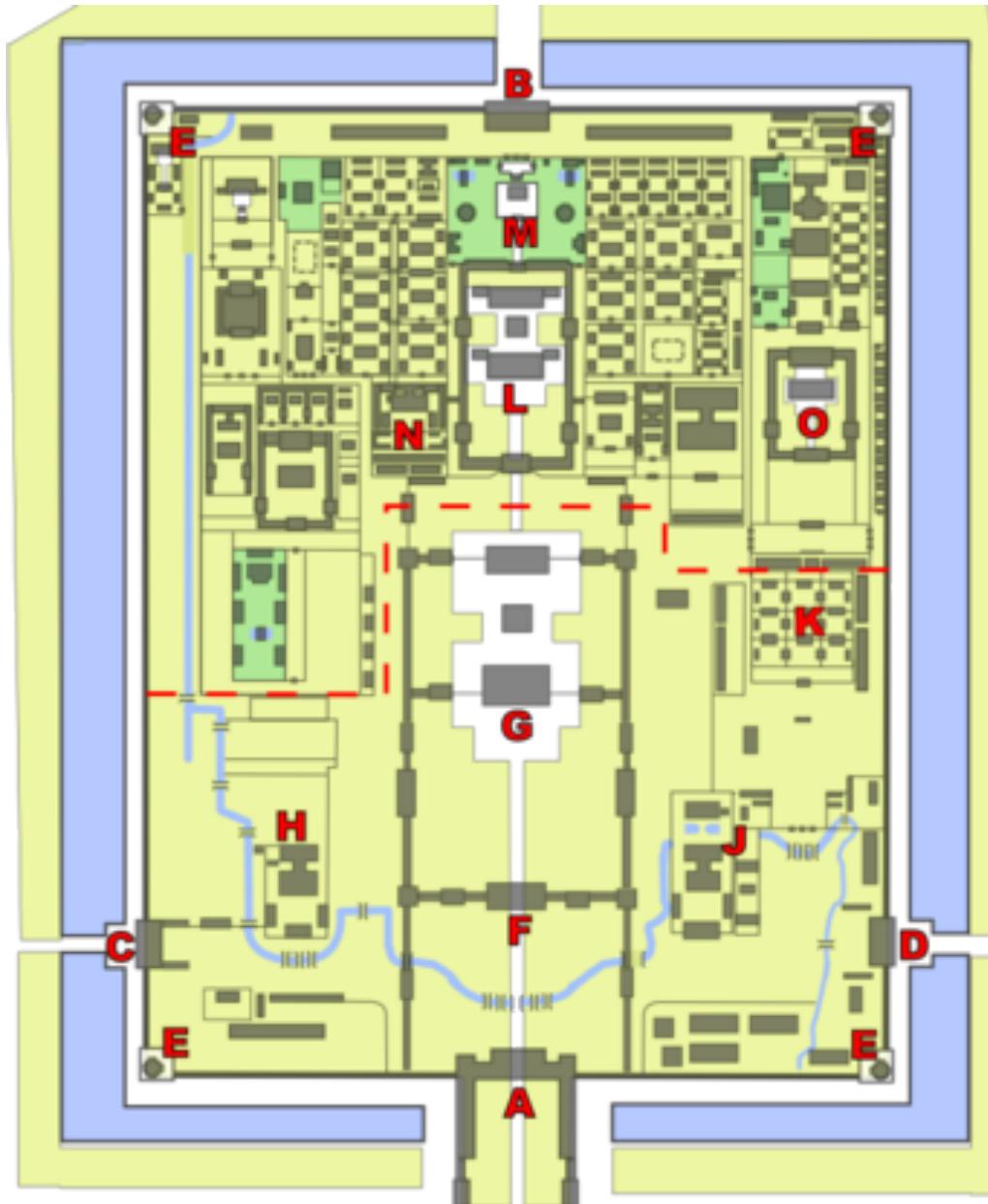


The Forbidden City

紫禁城 Zi Jin Cheng / 故宫 Gu Gong

- The Chinese imperial palace from the Ming dynasty to the end of the Qing dynasty (1420-1912)
- Constructed from 1406 to 1420, the complex consists of 980 buildings and covers 180 acres.
- Zi, or "Purple", refers to the North Star, which in ancient China was called the *Ziwei* Star, and in traditional Chinese astrology was the heavenly abode of the Celestial Emperor

Plan of the Forbidden City



- A. Meridian Gate
- B. Gate of Divine Might
- C. West Glorious Gate
- D. East Glorious Gate
- E. Corner towers
- F. Gate of Supreme Harmony
- G. Hall of Supreme Harmony
- H. Hall of Military Eminence
- J. Hall of Literary Glory
- K. Southern Three Places
- L. Palace of Heavenly Purity
- M. Imperial garden
- N. Hall of Mental Cultivation
- O. Palace of Tranquil Longevity

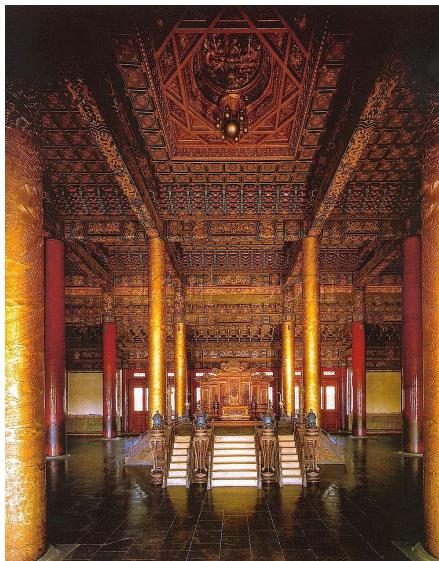
Meridian gate 午門 wu men



Gate of Supreme Harmony 太和门 tai he men



Hall of Supreme Harmony 太和殿 tai he dian



Palace of Heavenly Purity 乾清宮 qian qing gong



Hall of Mental Cultivation 养心殿 yang xin dian



Gate of Divine Might 神武门 shen wu men

