

4 Shang Dynasty



What was the legacy of the Shang Dynasty?

- The Shang Dynasty ended in 1046 BC when Emperor Zhou lost the Battle of Muye.
- The organisation of governments worldwide follows the model of the Shang Dynasty.
- Dynasties that followed the Shang built on their achievements, until the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1911. This included later developments in the arts, writing and technology.
- Monarchs throughout history believed in the Divine Right of Kings.

What was the Shang Dynasty?

- The Shang Dynasty was a ruling family from 1600-1050 BC. They believed they had the mandate of heaven to rule over the Chinese people.
- The family ruled the North China Plain and built sophisticated cities including Yin Xu, the capital.
- The Shang Dynasty began when Emperor Tang defeated the last emperor of the Xia Dynasty.
- The dynasty ended with Emperor Zhou, who was overthrown when he became a tyrant.
- People were organised into different classes.

How do we know so much about the Shang Dynasty?

- Artefacts found in tombs such as weapons, jewellery and pottery.
- The tomb of Fu Hao was excavated in 1976 and contained thousands of objects.
- Archaeologists discovered writing on oracle bones in 1898.

Who was Fu Hao and why was she important?

- Fu Hao was one of the Emperor Wu Ding's 64 wives.
- She was a powerful military leader and advisor to the emperor.
- She also conducted important ceremonies including animal and human sacrifice.

What were the achievements of the Shang Dynasty?

- The Shang independently developed efficient methods for shaping bronze and creating decorated objects.
- They used bronze to build chariots, weapons and tools, which were used in warfare and farming.
- They were the first civilization in ancient China to use writing.
- The Shang Dynasty united different states in China in an organised civilization.
- In contrast, in Britain, clans were led by chiefs and agriculture was the main industry.



Emperor Tang



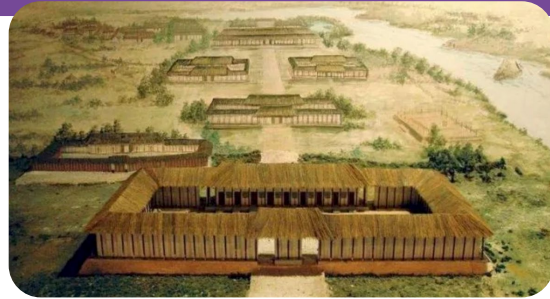
Fu Hao



Emperor Wu Ding



Emperor Zhou



- 2400 BC**: The Bronze Age begins in China.
- 1600 BC**: King Tang overthrows the last emperor of the Xia Dynasty. The Shang Dynasty begins.
- 1300 BC**: The capital moves to Yin Xu.
- 1250-1192 BC**: Emperor Wu Ding reigns over the Shang Dynasty and General Fu Hao leads lots of successful military campaigns.
- 1066 BC**: The Shang Dynasty is defeated.
- 1928 AD**: Excavations begin in Anyang and many Shang artefacts are found.
- 1976 AD**: The tomb of Fu Hao is discovered.

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|---|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| Archaeology The study of human history through ruins and artefacts. | Primary source A source created at or from the time studied. | Secondary source A source created after the event, based on primary sources. | Hierarchy being ranked according to status. | BC Before Christ. Based on the Christian calendar as a way of marking time. | AD Anno Domini. Latin for 'in the year of the Lord' marking years since the birth of Jesus. Christian calendar. | Bronze The first metal widely used by humans, made by mixing copper and tin. | Civilization An organised group of people living together. | Technology Tools and techniques for making things. | Sacrifice An act of slaughtering an animal or person for religious ceremony. | Ancestor A family member that came before your grandparents. | Oracle A way of seeking advice from gods or ancestors. | Dynasty A family that rule a country or state for many generations. | Class People divided into groups based on wealth or social status. |
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