

#7—Crash Course World History 2,000 Years of Chinese History! The Mandate of Heaven and Confucius

Answer each question with no more than 3 words or a number

China was really the first modern state--by which I mean it had a centralized (1)_____ and a corps of (2)_____ who could execute the wishes of that government and it lasted, in pretty much the same form, until 150 BCE to 1911 CE.

Chinese history is conveniently divided into periods called (3)_____ which are ruled by a king, or as the Chinese know him, an emperor, who comes from a continuous ruling family. The dynasty can end for two reasons: either they run out of dudes (which never happened thanks to the hard work of many, many concubines), or the emperor is overthrown after a rebellion or a (4)_____.

Leaving aside the Xia dynasty, which was sadly fictional, the first Chinese dynasty was the Shang, who were overthrown by the Zhou, which disintegrated into political chaos called the Warring States (5)_____, which ended when the Qin emperor was able to extend his power over most of the heretofore warring states, but the Qin were replaced by the Han, which was the dynasty that really set the pattern for most of China's history and lasted for almost 400 years after which China fell again into political chaos - which only means there was no dynasty that ruled over all of China -and out of this chaos rose the Sui, who were followed quickly by the Tang, who in turn were replaced, after a short period of no dynasty by the Song, who saw a huge growth in China's commerce that was still not enough to prevent them from being conquered by the Yuan, who were both unpopular and unusual... because they were (6)_____, which sparked rebellions resulting in the rise of the Ming, which was the dynasty that extended the Great Wall and made amazing vases but didn't save them from falling to the Manchus who founded a dynasty that was called the Qing, which was the last dynasty because in (7)_____ there was a rebellion and the whole dynastic system came to an end.

The concept of the (8)_____ dates from the Zhou Dynasty and current historians think that they created it to get rid of the Shang.

So basically the fact that one dynasty falls and is replaced by another in a (9)_____ that lasts for 3000 years is explained, in the eyes of early Chinese historians, by divine intervention based on whether the ruler behaves in a proper, upright (10)_____.

Let's see an example of the mandate of heaven in action. The Qin dynasty lasted only (11)_____ years, but it is one of the most important dynasties in Chinese history, so important in fact that it gave the place its name. The accomplishment of the Qin was to (12)_____ China under a single emperor for the first time in 500 years, ending the warring states period. The great Qin emperor Qin Shihuangdi, and his descendants developed a reputation for brutality that was (13)_____. But it was also exaggerated for effect so that the successor dynasty, the Han, would look more legitimate in the eyes of Heaven.

The early Han emperors, such as Wen, who came to power in (14)_____ BCE and ruled benevolently, avoiding extravagance in his personal behavior and ruling largely according to Confucian principles. Under Wen, there were no more harsh punishments for criticizing the (15)_____, executions declined, and, most importantly for the Confucian scholars who were writing the history, the government stopped (16)_____ books.

So who is this Confucius? Confucius was a minor official who lived during the (17)_____ period and developed a philosophical and political system he hoped would lead to a more stable state and society. Confucius was a conservative. He argued that the key to bringing about a strong and peaceful state was to look to the (18)_____ and the model of the sage emperors. By following their example of upright moral (19)_____, the Chinese emperor could bring order to China.

Confucius's idea of morally upright behavior boils down to a person's knowing his or her place in a series of hierarchical (20)_____ and acting accordingly. There are five key relationships—but the most important is the one between father and (21)_____, and one of the keys to understanding Confucius is **filial piety**, a son treating his father with reverential respect.

Ultimately the goal of both father and son is to be a (22)"_____" (**Junzi** in Chinese). If all men strive to be Junzi, the society as a whole will run smoothly. This idea applies especially to the (23)_____, who is like the father to the whole country.

So how do you know how to behave? Well, first you have to look to historical antecedents particularly the sage emperors. The study of history, as well as poetry and (24)_____ in order to understand and appreciate beauty, is indispensable for a Junzi.

The other important aspects to Junzi-ness are contained in the Confucian ideas of **ren** and **li**. Ren is usually translated as "propriety". It means understanding and practicing proper (25)_____ in every possible situation, which of course depends on who you're interacting with, hence the importance of the five relationships. Li is usually translated as (26)"_____" and refers to rituals associated with Chinese religion, most of which involve the veneration of (27)_____.

Traditional Chinese historians were all trained in the Confucian (28)_____, which emphasized the idea that good emperors behaved like good Confucians. In this history the political fortunes of a dynasty ultimately rest on one man and his actions, whether he behaves properly.

The Mandate of Heaven is remarkably (29)_____ as an explanation of historical causation. It explains why, as dynasties fell, there are often terrible storms and floods and peasant uprisings... If the emperor had been behaving properly, none of that stuff would have happened.

Now, a more modern historian might point out that the negative effects of terrible storms and floods, which include peasant uprisings, sometimes lead to changes in (30)_____. But that would take the moral aspect out of history and it would also diminish the importance of Confucian scholars. In short, the complicated circularity of Chinese history is mirrored by the complicated circularity of the relationship between those who write it and those who make it.

Answers:

China was really the first modern state--by which I mean it had a centralized (1)government and a corps of (2)bureaucrats who could execute the wishes of that government and it lasted, in pretty much the same form, until 150 BCE to 1911 CE.

Chinese history is conveniently divided into periods called (3)dynasties which are ruled by a king, or as the Chinese know him, an emperor, who comes from a continuous ruling family. The dynasty can end for two reasons: either they run out of dudes (which never happened thanks to the hard work of many, many concubines), or the emperor is overthrown after a rebellion or a (4)war.

Leaving aside the Xia dynasty, which was sadly fictional, the first Chinese dynasty was the Shang, who were overthrown by the Zhou, which disintegrated into political chaos called the Warring States (5)period, which ended when the Qin emperor was able to extend his power over most of the heretofore warring states, but the Qin were replaced by the Han, which was the dynasty that really set the pattern for most of China's history and lasted for almost 400 years after which China fell again into political chaos - which only means there was no dynasty that ruled over all of China -and out of this chaos rose the Sui, who were followed quickly by the Tang, who in turn were replaced, after a short period of no dynasty by the Song, who saw a huge growth in China's commerce that was still not enough to prevent them from being conquered by the Yuan, who were both unpopular and unusual... because they were (6)Mongols, which sparked rebellions resulting in the rise of the Ming, which was the dynasty that extended the Great Wall and made amazing vases but didn't save them from falling to the Manchus who founded a dynasty that was called the Qing, which was the last dynasty because in (7)1911 there was a rebellion and the whole dynastic system came to an end.

The concept of the (8) Mandate of Heaven dates from the Zhou Dynasty and current historians think that they created it to get rid of the Shang.

So basically the fact that one dynasty falls and is replaced by another in a (9)cycle that lasts for 3000 years is explained, in the eyes of early Chinese historians, by divine intervention based on whether the ruler behaves in a proper, upright (10)manner.

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The early Han emperors, such as Wen, who came to power in (14)180 BCE and ruled benevolently, avoiding extravagance in his personal behavior and ruling largely according to Confucian principles. Under Wen, there were no more harsh punishments for criticizing the (15)government, executions declined, and, most importantly for the Confucian scholars who were writing the history, the government stopped (16)burning books.

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Ultimately the goal of both father and son is to be a "(22)superior man" (**Junzi** in Chinese). If all men strive to be Junzi, the society as a whole will run smoothly. This idea applies especially to the (23)emperor, who is like the father to the whole country.

So how do you know how to behave? Well, first you have to look to historical antecedents particularly the sage emperors. The study of history, as well as poetry and (24)paintings in order to understand and appreciate beauty, is indispensable for a Junzi.

The other important aspects to Junzi-ness are contained in the Confucian ideas of **ren** and **li**. Ren is usually translated as "propriety". It means understanding and practicing proper (25)behavior in every possible situation, which of course depends on who you're interacting with, hence the importance of the five relationships. Li is usually translated as "(26)ritual" and refers to rituals associated with Chinese religion, most of which involve the veneration of (27)ancestors.

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