

Civilization in Ancient China

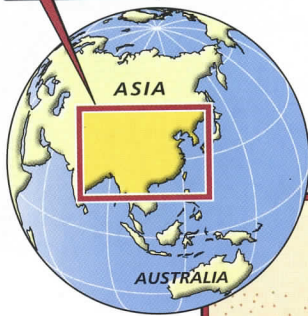
China has one of the oldest continuous civilizations in the world. Chinese civilization developed from two early cultures living in two river valleys.

- The earliest Chinese culture was the Yangshao. It developed 7,000 years ago in the Huang He Valley, in what is now northern China.
- The Longshan culture developed about 2,000 years later and eventually replaced the Yangshao.
- China's first **dynasty** or family of rulers emerged from the Longshan culture. It is known as the Shang dynasty.
- The Shang dynasty ruled a portion of what is now China for more than 600 years.



A Rice was first grown in the Yangtze Valley around 5000 B.C. It became the main crop of southern China.

Area shown in maps B and C



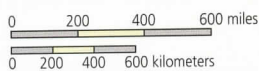
B

The development and spread of early farming cultures advanced Chinese civilization. Compare what was grown in northern China with what was grown farther south.

Early Chinese Civilizations

5000–1700 B.C.

- Yangshao, 5000–3000 B.C.
- Longshan, 3000–1700 B.C.
- Farming settlement
- Millet
- Rice
- Spread of rice farming
- Culture group
- Desert
- China's boundary today



Shang Dynasty
1766–1122 B.C.

- Ruled by Shang dynasty
- ★ Final Shang capital
- YONG** State under Shang control
- Thais** Culture group
- Desert
- China's boundary today

0 200 400 600 miles
0 200 400 600 kilometers

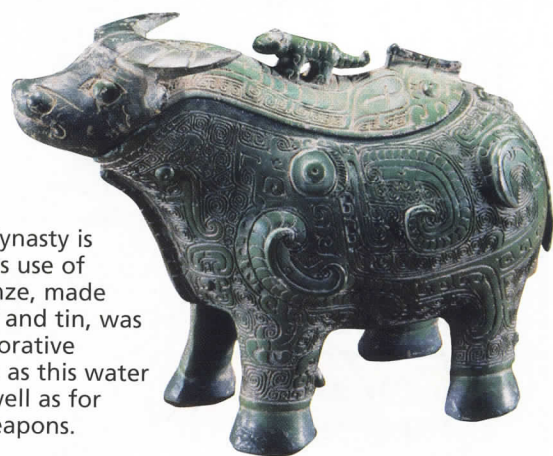


C The Shang dynasty unified most of the areas settled by earlier Chinese cultures. While most people still lived in small farming communities, the nobles, warriors, priests, and craftspeople lived in larger towns with palaces and temples.

Development of Writing: Chinese Characters
1600 B.C.–Today

Object	Pictograph 1600 B.C.	Ancient Character 200 B.C.	Present Character 200 A.D.
Ear			
Moon			
Rain			

D Writing developed during the Shang dynasty. Chinese characters represented ideas, not sounds. Everyone used the same characters so people could communicate through writing even if they spoke different languages.



E The Shang dynasty is known for its use of bronze. Bronze, made from copper and tin, was used for decorative objects, such as this water buffalo, as well as for tools and weapons.

Can we keep it in the family?

When the rule of a kingdom or an empire is passed down from one family member to another, usually from a father to a son, it is sometimes called a **dynasty**. Ancient China was ruled by a series of dynasties, as was ancient Egypt.