

高等学校英语专业系列教材
Textbook Series for Tertiary English Majors

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中国文化概论

(第3版)

A

An Introduction to Chinese Culture

✦ 主编 周 仪 廖建思



重庆大学出版社

内容提要

本书主要针对我国英语专业学生对祖国传统文化不甚了解,或者即使了解一些但却不知道如何用英语表达的情况而编写。本书旨在让学生既学习英语语言知识,又学习中国文化知识。全书共7章,涉及中国历史、中国传统文化、文学与艺术、科学技术、教育、传统习俗、旅游文化等方面。本书可作为英语专业学生的教材使用,也可供其他具有相当英语水平的学习者使用。

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

中国文化概论:英文/周仪,廖建思主编. -- 3版

. -- 重庆:重庆大学出版社,2019.3

求知高等学校英语专业系列教材

ISBN 978-7-5689-1452-9

I. ①中… II. ①周… ②廖… III. ①英语—高等学校—教材②中华文化 IV. ①H319.39

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2018)第298323号

中国文化概论(第3版)

周 仪 廖建思 主 编

责任编辑:杨 琪 版式设计:叶抒扬

责任校对:王 倩 责任印制:赵 晟

*

重庆大学出版社出版发行

出版人:易树平

社址:重庆市沙坪坝区大学城西路21号

邮编:401331

电话:(023)88617190 88617185(中小学)

传真:(023)88617186 88617166

网址:<http://www.cqup.com.cn>

邮箱:fxk@cqup.com.cn(营销中心)

全国新华书店经销

重庆共创印务有限公司印刷

*

开本:787mm×1092mm 1/16 印张:11.5 字数:251千

2019年3月第3版 2019年3月第14次印刷

ISBN 978-7-5689-1452-9 定价:39.00元

本书如有印刷、装订等质量问题,本社负责调换

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总 序

进入 21 世纪，高等教育呈现快速扩展的趋势。我国高等教育从外延式发展过渡到内涵式发展后，“质量”已成为教育改革与发展的关键词。由国务院颁布的《国家中长期教育改革和发展规划纲要（2010—2020）》（以下简称《纲要》）明确要求狠抓本科教育人才培养存在的主要问题，厘清高等教育人才培养目标、理念、社会需求，制订本科教学培养模式、教学内容和方法、质量保障与评估机制，切实提高人才培养的质量。我国英语专业在过去的数十年中经过几代人的努力，取得了显著的成绩和长足的发展。特别是近年来随着经济社会的快速发展和对外交流活动的增多，“一带一路”倡议的提出和“讲好中国故事”的需要，英语专业的学科地位也随之大大提升，其规模目前发展得十分庞大。英语专业虽然经历了一个“跨越式”“超常规”的发展历程，但规模化发展带来的培养质量下滑、专业建设和人才需求出现矛盾、毕业生就业面临巨大挑战等严峻的现实表明，英语专业的教育、教学与育人又到了一个不得不改的关键时刻。

《纲要》在强调狠抓培养质量的同时，也提出了培养“具有国际视野、通晓国际规则、能参与国际事务和国际竞争”人才战略方针。基于这样的战略需求，外语专业教学指导委员会明确提出了人才“多元培养，分类卓越”的理念。基于这样的理念，即将颁布的《英语专业本科教学质量国家标准》（以下简称《国标》）对英语专业本科的现有课程设置提出新的改革思路：英语专业课程体系包括公共课程、专业核心课程、专业方向课程、实践环节和毕业论文（设计）五个部分；逐步压缩英语技能课程，用“内容依托式”课程替代传统的英语技能课程，系统建设语言学、文学、文化、国别研究等方面的专业课程。

自 2001 年开始，在重庆大学出版社的大力支持下，我们成立了由华中、华南、西南和西北以及东北地区的知名专家、学者和教学一线教师组成的“求知高等学校英语专业系列教材”编写组，以《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》为依据，将社会的需求与培养外语人才的全面发展紧密结合，注重英语作为一个专业的学科系统性和科学性，注重英语教学和习得的方法与规律，培养学生能力和育人并举，突出特色和系列教材的内在逻辑关系，反映了教学改革的新理念并具有前瞻性，建立了与英语专业课程配套的新教材体系。“求知高等学校英语专业系列教材”经历了 10 余年教学实践的锤炼，通过不断的修订来契合教学的发展变化，在教材的整体性和开放性、学生基本技能和实际应用能力的培养、学生的人文素质和跨文化意识的培养这三方面上有所突破。通过这套系列教材的开发建设工作，我们一直在探讨新的教学理念、模式，探索英语专业人才培养的新路子。今天，我们以《国

标》为依据，回顾我们过去十多年在教学改革上所做的努力，我们欣慰地看到我们的方向是契合英语专业学科定位和发展的。随着《国标》指导思想明确，为了适应英语专业学科课程设置的进一步调整，我们对“求知高等学校英语专业系列教材”进行了新一轮的建设工作。

全新的系列教材力求在以下方面有所创新：

第一，围绕听、说、读、写、译五种能力的培养来构建教材体系。在教材内容的总体设置上，颠覆以往“以课程定教材”的观念，不再让教材受制于刻板的课程设置体系，而是引入 Program 理念，根据《国标》中对学生的能力要求，针对某方面的具体能力编写对应的系列教材。读写和听说系列不再按照难度区分混合编排题材，而是依据文体或专业性质的自然划分，分门别类地专册呈现，便于教师在教学中根据实际需要搭配组合使用。例如，阅读教材分为小说类、散文类、新闻类等；口语教材按专题成册，分为基本表述、演讲、辩论等。

第二，将五种能力的提升融入人文素养的综合提升之中。坚持英语专业教育的人文本位，强调文化熏陶。在跨学科新专业不断涌现的背景下，盲目追求为每种新专业都专门编写一套教材，费时费力。最佳的做法是坚持英语专业核心教材的人文性，培养学生优秀的语言文化素养，并在此基础上依照专业要求填补相关知识上的空缺，形成新的教材配比模式和体系。

第三，以“3E”作为衡量教材质量的标准。教材的编写上，体现 Engaging, Enabling, Enlightening 的“3E”功能，强调教材的人文性与语言文化综合能力的培养，淡化技能解说。

第四，加入“微课”“翻转课堂”等元素，便于课堂互动的开展。创新板块、活动的设计，相对减少灌输式的 lecture，增加学生参与的 seminar。

我们希望通过这套系列教材的全新修订和建设，落实《国标》精神，继续推动高等学校英语专业教学改革，为提高英语专业人才的培养质量探索新的实践方法，为英语专业的学生拓展求知的新空间。

“求知高等学校英语专业系列教材”编委会

2017年6月



Preface

At the beginning of the 1990s, when the first group of American students came to study at Guangxi University, I was assigned to teach them Chinese culture. They were interested in this course very much. Having learned something about Confucianism and Taoism, they had a discussion with our students in the English Department. I was shocked to find how little our students know about our own ancestors. They were so ignorant of our history and our national heritage that some of them had no idea which historical period Confucius lived in or what his famous sayings were, and many of them dared not utter a word throughout the discussion.

This reminded me of what Chairman Mao said in his article *Reform Our Study*:

Many party members are still in a fog about Chinese history, whether of the last hundred years or of ancient times. There are many Marxist Leninist scholars who cannot open their mouths without citing ancient Greece; but as for their own ancestor—sorry, they have been forgotten.

It occurred to me that it might benefit our students (both Chinese and American) if they had a textbook on Chinese culture written in English. I talked it over with Prof. Liang Yihua, who was then Director for International Relations of Guangxi University. He shared my idea. With our collaborative effort, *Chinese Culture* came out in 1994. The book, however, limited in space, deals only with Chinese cultural traditions—Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. We have been longing to rewrite it, and expand it so that our students will be provided with more, extensive information covering every aspect of Chinese culture.

Thanks to the editors of Chongqing University Press who are organizing scholars from the universities in Northwest, Southwest and Central China to compile a series of textbooks for the English majors, including *An Introduction to Chinese Culture*, which I volunteer to undertake.

This book is based upon my previous books on Chinese culture and my experience in teaching this course for the past ten years. After six months of intense work, I now have a pile of finished manuscripts on my desk and some breathing space.

My acknowledgements should go to those authors whose works I have consulted. I especially would like to thank my dear friend and colleague Professor Liang Yihua and American teacher Patricia Ann Cobb and British teacher Cheritan Hunt, who helped to read the manuscripts chapter by chapter and gave me many suggestions.

Zhou Yi
Guangxi University
March, 2003

修订说明

2017年新年伊始，中共中央办公厅、国务院办公厅印发了《关于实施中华优秀传统文化传承发展工程的意见》（以下简称《意见》）。《意见》指出：“文化是民族的血脉，是人民的精神家园。文化自信是更基本、更深层、更持久的力量。中国文化独一无二的理念、智慧、气质、神韵，增添了中国人民和中华民族内心深处的自信和自豪。”“中华文化源远流长、灿烂辉煌。在5000多年文化发展中孕育的中华优秀传统文化，积淀着中华民族最深沉的精神追求，代表着中华民族独特的精神标识，是中华民族生生不息、发展壮大的丰厚滋养，是中国特色社会主义植根的文化沃土，是当代中国发展的突出优势，对延续和发展中华文明、促进人类文明进步，发挥着重要的作用。”“实施中华优秀传统文化工程，是建设社会主义文化强国的重大战略任务，对于传承中华文脉、全面提高人民群众文化素质、维护国家的治理体系和治理能力现代化，具有重要意义。”

本书的修订以《意见》的精神为指导，用英语全面地介绍中华优秀传统文化，使我们的大学学生在传统文化的熏陶下，具备“良好行为规范，高雅审美情趣，质朴道德操守、深邃哲学思想”，在未来的涉外活动中，不卑不亢、谦和自信，弘扬和传承中华优秀传统文化。

本书的修订目标是：保持本书的经典性、人文性和知识性，培养学生优秀的语言文化素质；使我们的大学学生具有深厚的文化底蕴，对祖国的文化精髓，能用英语如数家珍般说出来。

考虑到此书已被广大读者接受、被全国多所大学采用为教材，本书在修订中力图保持它原有的趣味性，使我们的学生发觉学习中华传统文化是十分有趣的事情，而用英语来表达深奥的古文并不是一件难事。

本书的修订增加了课堂互动的教学设计，如课堂讨论（seminar）、课堂展示（presentation）、问答、背诵古典诗词等，以培养学生的口语能力。

本书尽量用简易英语（easy English）写作，删除了原书中一些难懂的哲学讲解，并对必要的经典陈述附上中文。通过修订，我们希望本书成为讲述中国文化通识知识的英文教材。

编者

2018年9月



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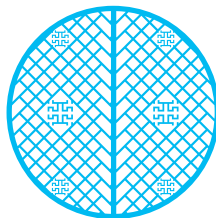
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Chapter One

Chinese History



- ◆ A Chronological Table of Chinese History
- ◆ A Brief Account of Chinese History



I

A Chronological Table of Chinese History

(中国历史编年表)

Dynasty (朝代)	Era (纪元)
the Five Emperors	3000 B.C.E.—2100 B.C.E.
Xia Dynasty (夏)	2100 B.C.E.—1600 B.C.E.
Shang Dynasty (商)	1600 B.C.E.—1100 B.C.E.
Zhou Dynasty (周)	Western Zhou Dynasty (西周) 1100 B.C.E.—771 B.C.E.
	Eastern Zhou Dynasty (东周) 770 B.C.E.—256 B.C.E.
Qin Dynasty (秦)	221 B.C.E.—206 B.C.E.
Han Dynasty (汉)	Western Han (西汉) 206 B.C.E.—25 A.D.
	Eastern Han (东汉) 25 A.D.—220 A.D.
Three Kingdoms (三国)	Wei (魏) 220 A.D.—265 A.D.
	Shu Han (蜀汉) 221 A.D.—263 A.D.
	Wu (吴) 222 A.D.—280 A.D.
Western Jin Dynasty (西晋)	265 A.D.—317 A.D.
Eastern Jin Dynasty (东晋)	317 A.D.—420 A.D.
Southern Dynasties (南朝)	Song (宋) 420 A.D.—479 A.D.
	Qi (齐) 479 A.D.—502 A.D.
	Liang (梁) 502 A.D.—557 A.D.
	Chen (陈) 557 A.D.—589 A.D.
Northern Dynasties (北朝)	Northern Wei (北魏) 386 A.D.—534 A.D.
	Eastern Wei (东魏) 534 A.D.—550 A.D.
	Northern Qi (北齐) 550 A.D.—577 A.D.
	Western Wei (西魏) 535 A.D.—556 A.D.
	Nothern Zhou (北周) 557 A.D.—581 A.D.
Sui Dynasty (隋)	581 A.D.—618 A.D.
Tang Dynasty (唐)	618 A.D.—907 A.D.
Five Dynasties (五代)	Later Liang (后梁) 907 A.D.—923 A.D.
	Later Tang (后唐) 923 A.D.—936 A.D.
	Later Jin (后晋) 936 A.D.—947 A.D.
	Later Han (后汉) 947 A.D.—950 A.D.
	Later Zhou (后周) 951 A.D.—960 A.D.
Song Dynasty (宋)	Northern Song Dynasty (北宋) 960 A.D.—1127 A.D.
	Southern Song Dynasty (南宋) 1127 A.D.—1279 A.D.

Continued

Dynasty (朝代)	Era (纪元)
Liao Dynasty (辽)	907 A.D.—1125 A.D.
Jin Dynasty (金)	1115 A.D.—1234 A.D.
Yuan Dynasty (元)	1206 A.D.—1368 A.D.
Ming Dynasty (明)	1368 A.D.—1644 A.D.
Qing Dynasty (清)	1616 A.D.—1911 A.D.
Republic of China (中华民国)	1912 A.D.—1949 A.D.
People's Republic of China (中华人民共和国)	1949 A.D.—

· *Exercise* ·

Sum up the chronological table of Chinese history in one sentence.

II

A Brief Account of Chinese History

China is a large country with a long history. It has a territory about the size of Europe and a population about a quarter of that of the world. In this vast country of ours, there are large areas of fertile land which provide us with food and clothing; mountain ranges which are covered with forests and abound in mineral deposits; rivers and lakes which furnish us with water transport and irrigation; a long coastline which facilitates communication with nations beyond the seas. From ancient times our forefathers have labored, lived and multiplied on this vast territory.

China is one of the four homes of the world's earliest civilizations. It has a recorded history of nearly 4,000 years. Throughout the history of Chinese civilization its agriculture and handicrafts have been renowned for their high level of sophistication. During these 4,000 years, China has nurtured many great thinkers, scientists, inventors, statesmen, strategists, men of letters and artists, yielding a rich cultural heritage and fine cultural traditions.

The ancient civilization of China has exercised great influence on the modern world. Ezra Pound's translation of Confucian philosophy aroused great interest from the Western world in Eastern philosophy, and his translation of many ancient Chinese poems interested men of letters in the West. The personal dinner place settings used by the first three American presidents, George Washington, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson,

were of Chinese origin, a vivid evidence of China's artistic attraction for the American founding fathers.

The Chinese history can be divided into two periods: the ancient period (ancient times—1840) and the modern period (1840—present).

The Ancient Period

Chinese history began with two legendary figures—Emperor Huang (黄帝) and Emperor Yan (炎帝), who, together with their tribes, inhabited in the area of Huanghe River (the Yellow River) basin in the years around 3000 B.C.E. By the time of Xia Dynasty (夏朝, 2100 B.C.E.—1600 B.C.E.) after centuries of living side by side, these two tribes gradually melted into one. That's why the Chinese people usually call themselves “the descendants of Yan and Huang” (炎黄子孙). People at that time believed that the land they lived on was the center of the world, and called their state the “Middle Kingdom”, thus giving China its country name.

Although there are no reliable historical data to test the existence of this period, yet legends are abundant, and modern archaeology has found authentic materials—pottery vessels, stone tools and weapons as offerings to accompany the dead in the unearthed ancient tombs, which provide evidence of the life of our ancestors before the Xia Dynasty.

There are many legends describing the life of the people in this period, especially of the three sage Kings after Emperor Huang and Emperor Yan—Yao (尧), Shun (舜) and Yu (禹). Let's quote some here for you to enjoy.

How Yao and Shun Passed the Throne to the Worthy and the Capable (尧、舜禅让)

According to the *Book of History* (《尚书》, a book of ancient times, recording the history from the time of Yao, Shun, Yu down to the early Zhou Dynasty), when Yao was very old, he summoned the chiefs of the Four Mountains and said, “I have been on the throne for seventy years. Who can carry out the mandate of Heaven in place of me?” The chiefs of the Four Mountains all said, “We have no such virtues. We would only disgrace the throne. Your son is the right person to ascend the throne.” Yao said, “I know him, he is mean and stupid.” And Yao asked his officials to recommend someone else. Then the King was told that there was a poor young man named Shun. He was the son of a blind man. His father was wicked, his mother deceitful and his brother arrogant, yet he was filial to them and lived with them in harmony. The King said, “That is the right person to be the new king. I will try him. I will give him my two daughters, and observe his behavior.” So his two daughters, Owang (娥皇) and NuYing (女英), came to the bend of the Gui

River to be the wives of Shun. Years later Shun ascended the throne.

As the legend has it, when Shun inspected the southern states, he became very ill and died in Xiang (湘, at present Hunan Province). His two wives followed his footsteps to Xiang and cried to death. Their tears dented the bamboo, which is the bamboo we have now in Hunan Province, called “tear bamboo” (斑竹).

How Yu, the Great, Conquered the Flood (大禹治水)

Some time around 2200 B.C.E., a great flood covered the earth. Shun sent Gun (鯀), Yu’s father to control the flood. Gun led people to build dams to block the flood but failed. So Shun gave order to kill Gun. When Yu grew up, he undertook his father’s unfinished task. This time he drew from the lessons of his father. He did not build dams, but led people to dig ditches to lead the water away. He worked ceaselessly for thirteen years and succeeded in bringing the flood under control. As the legend has it, so busy was he that “thrice he had gone past his own house without even looking in.” As a reward for his achievement, Shun passed the throne to Yu. When Yu died, his son Qi (启) seized power and founded Xia, the first dynasty in China, thus beginning the hereditary system in Chinese history.

The Xia Dynasty (夏朝, 2100 B.C.E.—1600 B.C.E.)

The ethnic group of the Xia Dynasty is the Hua Xia nationality. That’s why the Chinese people are also called the Hua People in other parts of the world.

At the beginning of the Xia Dynasty the Youhu tribe (有扈氏部落) in the west border rose in rebellion. King Qi led his army and defeated the enemy in Gan (甘), at present in Henan Province. This is the first battle recorded in Chinese history.

Farming and stock breeding were already well developed in the Xia Dynasty. People were familiar with the phenomena of the changes of seasons and arranged their farm work and other activities accordingly.

The last king of Xia, Jie (桀), is notorious in Chinese history for his debauchery. He built “ponds of wine and forests of meat” (酒池肉林) to entertain himself and his concubines, resulting in the fall of the state.

One thing worth mentioning is that one of Kings of Xia, Shaokang (少康), used sorghum to brew wine in about 1800 B.C.E., thus began the Chinese culture of wine.

The Shang Dynasty (商朝, 1600 B.C.E.—1100 B.C.E.)

The Shang Dynasty is renowned for its high development of bronze techniques

which brought about the separation of Chinese society into town and country dwellers. The nobility and their craftsmen lived in towns, supported by the peasants living in the countryside.

Regular religious rites were popular among the Shang nobles. In addition to a supreme god, they worshipped the spirits of their ancestors. The ceremonies involved the sacrifice of hundreds of animals, domestic as well as those obtained from the hunt. Their tombs were filled with hundreds of objects made of gold, jade, bronze and stone, for their use in the after-life, and in many cases, their slaves were buried with them as well.

Our knowledge of the Shang period comes not only from the excavations of ancient tombs, but also from the inscriptions on oracle bones and tortoise shells. In the time of the Shang, a favorite method of divination was to scrape a thin spot on a tortoise shell, put it over a flame, and have diviners interpret the cracks that appeared on the shell. This was the beginning of the Chinese written language.

The dissoluteness and extravagance of the Shang rulers led to the revolt of the people, and the establishment of the Zhou Dynasty.

The Zhou Dynasty (周朝, 1100 B.C.E.—256 B.C.E.)

The Zhou Dynasty lasted for over 800 years, dividing the Western Zhou and Eastern Zhou, which includes the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods.

The Zhou Dynasty is a significant period in Chinese history for it saw the evolution of the Chinese society from a slave system to a feudal one. It also witnessed the flourishing of Chinese culture.

It is interesting to note how the Shang Dynasty came to its end. King Zhou (纣王), the last Shang emperor, was a debauched tyrant. He used to dine with three thousand people in a forest whose leaves were made of meat and they drank like cows from a pond of wine. Meanwhile, the state of Zhou had gained influence among the vassal (封臣的) states because of its wise ruler, Ji Chang (姬昌), who later became King Wen (文王) of the Zhou Dynasty. Ji Chang's reputation and influence made King Zhou jealous. On one of Ji Chang's tributary (进贡的) visits to the Shang court, King Zhou threw him in prison, where he was confined for seven years. While in prison, Ji Chang reflected on Yin (阴) and Yang (阳) and had the idea to put Fuxi's (伏羲) trigram upon trigram to form a hexagram, symbolizing a higher level of diversification. He gave names to the sixty-four possible hexagrams and attached to each a text to convey its attribute. Later, the oracle announcements of the hexagrams were annotated and embellished by Confucius, and *Ten Wings* (十翼) were attached to it. That is how the book *I-Ching* (《易经》) came down to us.

As the legend has it, Fuxi observed the phenomena in Heaven at night (夜观星象), studied the developments of things on Earth (日察地理), learned the languages of birds and animals and the disposition of the land, drew from the lessons of persons near and things afar, and then created the eight trigrams (八卦) which are figures made up of three elements that are either *Yin* or *Yang*, symbolizing Heaven, Earth, Thunder, Water, Mountain, Wind, Fire and Lake.

According to the *Book of History*, King Zhou was surprised to know that Ji Chang had created the hexagrams and could foretell the future with them. So when Ji Chang's son came to visit his imprisoned father, King Zhou killed him, made cakes of his flesh and sent them to Ji Chang to see whether he knew the truth. Ji Chang cast a hexagram and knew it was his son's meat. Would he eat the cakes? If not, King Zhou would kill him; if yes, how could a father eat his own son's meat? After praying to god to pardon him, he swallowed up the meat cake which rolled up and down in his stomach and he felt like vomiting. Then he vomitted out the meat cake which immediately turned into a rabbit and ran away. That's the origin of rabbits on earth. (The English words "vomit" and "rabbit" have the same Chinese sound "tu".)

The release of Ji Chang was eventually arranged by bribing King Zhou with beautiful women, fine horses and rare animals. King Zhou was so pleased with the gifts that he even granted Ji Chang the right to bear arms against his neighboring states.

The plan to overthrow King Zhou was long under way. Ji Chang had taken advantage of the right to bring his immediate neighbors in line. Then he sought out the wise hermit Jiang Shang (姜尚), known to later ages as the old Master Jiang (姜太公), to be his right-hand man.

Old Master Jiang spent his time fishing, with a straight hook, thirty inches above water. When asked about this seemingly futile exercise, he answered, "What I am after is not fish, but princes and emperors." That is to say, he eschewed the material glories of the world to wait for the call of a true noble cause.

Ji Chang died without taking actions against King Zhou. His successor, Ji Fa (姬发), who later became King Wu (武王), made Jiang Shang his Chief-of-Staff. Two years later his call for a revolution was answered by all the neighboring states, which came forth with four thousand chariots. Before the joint forces assembled in the field of Mu (牧野, 今河南淇县附近), he delivered a historic speech that was preserved for posterity in the *Book of History*.

King Zhou met the rebellious forces with an army of seven hundred thousand. However, it was a ragtag army (乌合之众) with no will to fight, and most of the soldiers

went over to King Wu. Disaster did befall the evil Zhou. Conceding defeat, he retreated to the Deer Pavilion (鹿台), scene of his numerous past orgies. There, clasping to his bosom his priceless jade collection, King Zhou burned himself to death. The downfall of the Shang Dynasty heralded a new period in China's history—the Zhou Dynasty.

The Zhou period witnessed the “contention of one hundred schools of thought” (百家争鸣). Among them the most famous are Confucius (孔子), Mencius (孟子), Lao Zi (老子), Zhuang Zi (庄子), Mo Zi (墨子) and Han Fei Zi (韩非子).

Confucius held that through the restoration of the early Zhou's ritual and self-cultivation, a man's conduct would become noble, unselfish, just and benevolent. Mencius believed that man's nature was basically good, while Xun Zi, another Confucian, argued that it was basically evil. Those opposed to Confucius included Mo Zi who preached a doctrine of universal love as the basis for peace and order. The response of the Taoists, however, to the moral and physical upheavals was to favor not strong government, but no government at all. Human institutions, ambition and striving were rejected in favor of simplicity, humanity and a return to nature.

Both the Confucian and Taoist schools were to have an immense influence on later Chinese thought. But the immediate winners in the controversies of the period were the legalists (法家) who held that human nature was essentially evil, and only a system of reward and punishment could ensure the survival of the state and its supremacy over all others.

The Qin Dynasty (秦朝, 221 B.C.E.—206 B.C.E.)

With the help of the political and social reforms carried out by Shang Yang (商鞅), a legalist, Qin Shihuang (秦始皇), the First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty, succeeded in annexing the other six states and established the first centralized monarchy in Chinese history.

Though the Qin Dynasty lasted only 15 years, its significance in Chinese history is tremendous. The Qin Empire ushered in four centuries of unity under itself and the succeeding Han Emperors. The country was divided into provinces and districts, all placed under the control of the central government; the written language was simplified and made uniform, and the weights, measures and coinage were standardized. A network of roads was built, stretching from the capital to the furthest limits of the Empire, while standard dimensions were set for the wheel-base of all carriages and carts. In an attempt to end all opposition, over 400 scholars were buried alive, and all books were burnt, except for those on technology, divination, medicine and agriculture. Land reclamation (开垦荒地), tilling of the soil (深耕) and weaving of textiles were encouraged. As a defense against the northern nomads (游牧民族), hundreds and thousands of peasants

were conscripted to join up and extend the walls of the former northern states into the Great Wall of China. The completed Great Wall stretched some ten thousand li (里, around 5,000 kilometers).

Though Qin Shihuang's contribution to China's civilization is great, yet in traditional culture he is remembered mainly for his tyranny and cruelty. Not long after Qin Shihuang's death, a rebellion broke out—the first peasant uprising in China's history, led by Chen Sheng (陈胜) and Wu Guang (吴广), and the Qin Empire was overthrown.

The Han Dynasty (汉朝, 206 B.C.E.—220 A.D.)

Drawing lessons of defeat from the Qin Dynasty, the early Han ruling class adopted a policy of rehabilitation (休养生息). As a result, the Han Dynasty saw peace and prosperity. Agriculture and handicraft made rapid development, commerce flourished and there were a variety of notable achievements in culture and science, including Sima Qian's *The Records of the Historians* (司马迁:《史记》) and the invention of the seismograph (地动仪) by Zhang Heng (张衡). The invention of paper, perhaps China's greatest contribution to the world culture, was also a product of this period. The Confucian classics were recovered, re-edited and commented on, and Confucianism became the most important philosophy, thus the supremacy of the Confucian school was established. Han Wudi (汉武帝) also sent Zhang Qian (张骞) on friendly expeditions to the Western Regions, reaching Rome, opening up the Silk Road (丝绸之路) to the West.



The seismograph invented by Zhang Heng

Wei (魏, 220 A.D.—265 A.D.)

Jin (晋, 265 A.D.—420 A.D.)

Southern and Northern Dynasties (南北朝, 420 A.D.—581 A.D.)

With the downfall of the Han Dynasty, China entered the Three Kingdoms Period, in which Chinese territory was divided between the states of Wei (魏), Shu Han (蜀汉) and Wu (吴). Burning and pillaging ravaged the country in the last years of the Han Dynasty, and the Three Kingdoms arose as contenders for imperial power. The famous novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (《三国演义》) by Luo Guanzhong (罗贯中) was based on the historical facts of this period. At the end of this period, China was briefly united during the Jin Dynasty (晋朝, 265 A.D.—420 A.D.) but this was followed by a period of