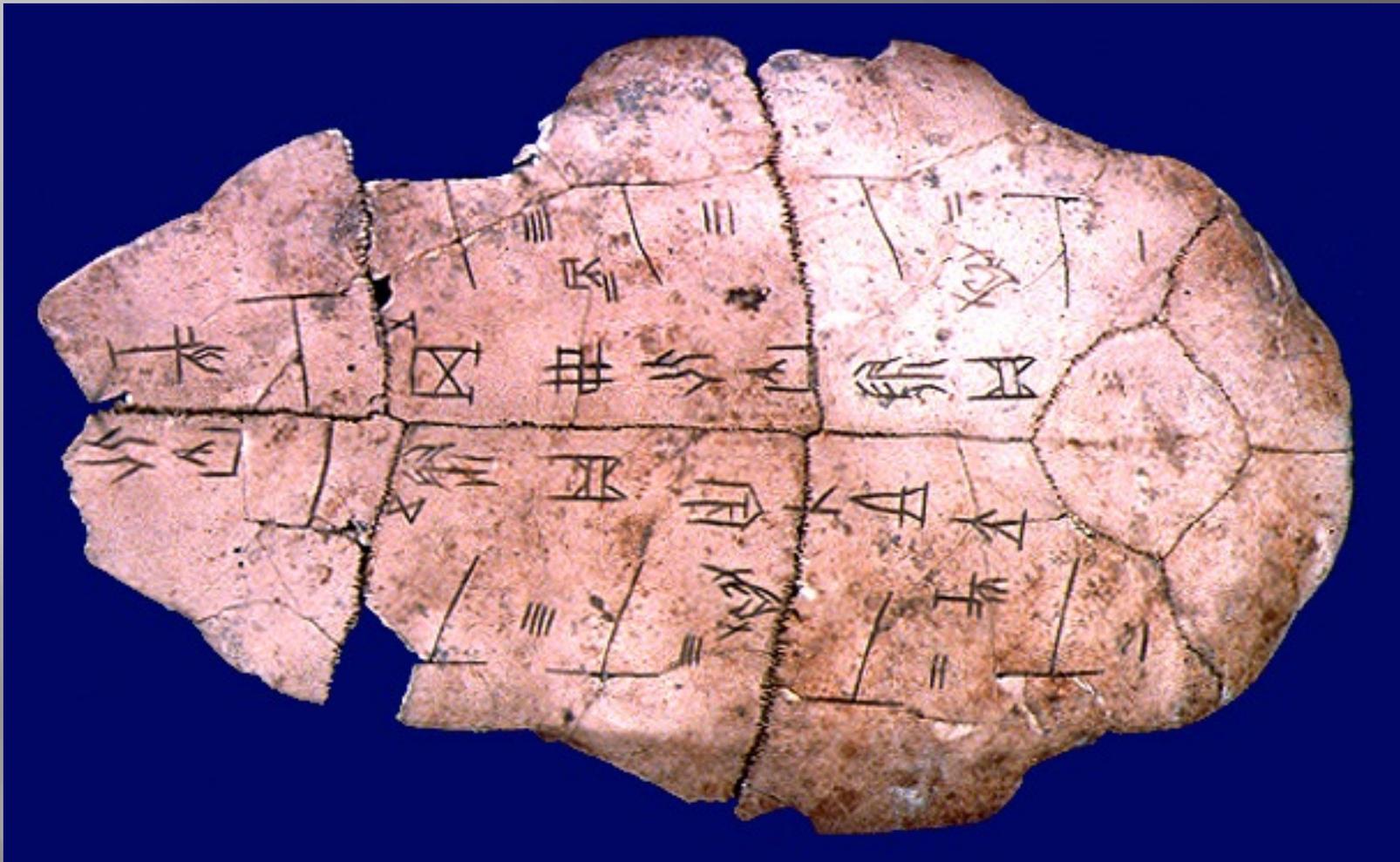


Early Dynasties

- ▣ Xia Dynasty (c. 2070 – c. 1600 B.C.E.)
 - Not much known, mostly legend verified by some archaeological findings.
 - *Records of the Grand Historian* (109 – 91 B.C.E.) by Sima Qian.
 - Early writing found on bones and shells.
- ▣ Shang Dynasty (1600 – 1046 B.C.E.)
 - Chinese culture as we discussed earlier begins to develop during this period.
 - History pieced together from oracle bones.
 - What is an oracle bone?



Oracle bones from the Shang period.



Politics and Society of Shang

- Primarily agricultural society ruled by a king and aristocratic class.
- King (王; *wang*) was an intermediary between “heaven” and earth.
 - Religious system revolved around gods in early Shang period.
 - Human sacrifice evolves into ancestor veneration by end of Shang Dynasty.
 - Emergence of idea of Mandate of Heaven (天命)
- Differentiation of classes: aristocrats, peasants, and slaves.
- Writing system disseminates throughout East Asia.

Last Shang King



- ▣ King Di Xin (aka Zhou Wang; 紂王).
- ▣ Added territory to Shang empire.
- ▣ According to Sima Qian, he was given to drinking, women, festive orgies, and “songs with crude lyrics.”
- ▣ Ignored affairs of state.
- ▣ Fall of Shang Dynasty, 1046 B.C.E.

Zhou Dynasty

- ▣ Zhou Dynasty (1045 – 256 B.C.E.), named after the Zhou province, emerged in western Yellow River as a principality of the Shang Dynasty.
- ▣ Founded by Ji Chang, son Ji Fa (aka King Wu) first Zhou emperor; claimed Mandate of Heaven.
- ▣ Battle of Muye (1046 B.C.E.), Zhou army attacks Shang capital; Di Xin sets his own palace on fire and is burned alive.
- ▣ Dynasty divided into Western Zhou and Eastern Zhou dynasties.





Zhou Politics

- ▣ Zhou Dynasty becomes “feudal”: *Fengjian* system.
 - Decentralized rule, emperor appoints lords and vassals as territorial governors.
 - Eventually results in instability.
- ▣ Mandate of Heaven elaborated on.
 - Not only justifies rule, but also overthrow.
 - “He who wins is the king; he who loses is the rebel.”
 - Permanent rule of statecraft.

DYNASTIC CYCLE

New leader
gains
Mandate of
Heaven

Dynasty is founded by
a powerful leader

Period of Rebellion,
dynasty overthrown

Period of great
power and
prosperity

- restores peace
- restores glory to country
- builds roads, irrigation systems, improves everyday life of people in dynasty

Leader loses
Mandate of
Heaven

Period of Decline

- higher taxes
- social services decline
- natural disasters

Zhou Economy

- ▣ Feudal economy and land divisions: “well field system” from Chinese character for well, *jing* (井); slavery decreased.
- ▣ Development of an artisanal and merchant class in the walled towns and villages.
- ▣ Improvements in agriculture = improved crop yields = rise in population.
- ▣ Silk trade begins with ancient Mediterranean and Middle East cultures.
- ▣ Barter system transitions into money system.

Cosmological Beliefs

- ▣ Anthropomorphic god Shang Di evolves into Heaven (*tian*, 天).
- ▣ *Yang* and *Yin*; harmony/balance.
- ▣ The *Dao* (道, Way): ethical way of living, similar to *Dharma*.
- ▣ Competing schools of philosophy:
 - *Confucianism*: more philosophy than religion.
 - *Daoism*: more religion than philosophy.

Confucianism



- ❑ How did Confucius (Kung Fuci) explain *Dao*?
- ❑ First, duty to family and community.
- ❑ Second, “human-heartedness” compassion or empathy for others.
- ❑ Third, deemphasize gods, death, and the afterlife.

Daoism

- ▣ Founded by Laozi (4th c. B.C.E.), contemporary of Confucius.
- ▣ Similar to Confucianism, except:
 - Inaction over action.
 - Let nature take its course.
 - Stress on deities and spirits.

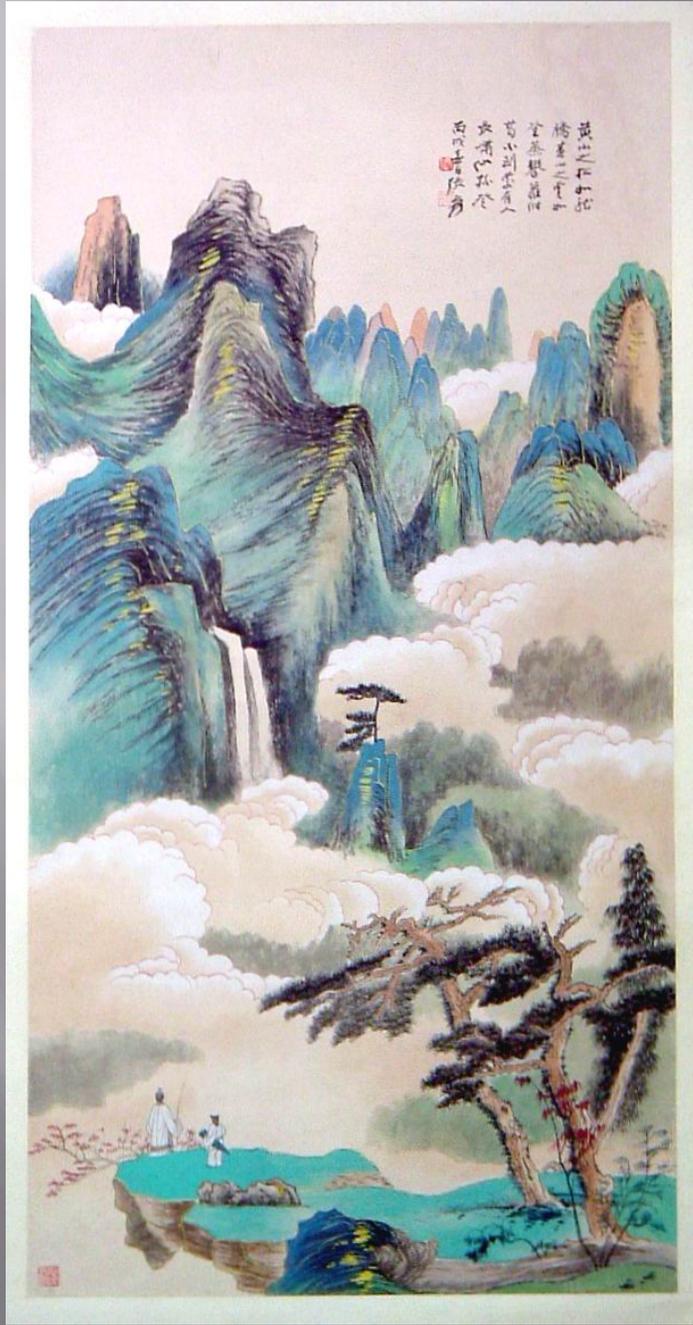


Philosophical developments

	Concept of human nature	Concept of government	Tolerance for other ideas
Confucianism			
Daoism (Taoism)			
Legalism			



Daoist landscape painting. What do you notice about this artwork?



Ancient China

