

## Significant People in The Shang Dynasty

The Shang Dynasty, which ruled ancient China from approximately 1600 BC to 1046 BC, produced some remarkable and influential individuals who shaped Chinese history.

King Tang was the dynasty's founder. After overthrowing the corrupt ruler of the Xia Dynasty, he established a fairer government and became respected for his just leadership.

Perhaps the most fascinating figure is Fu Hao, a wife of King Wu Ding. Unlike most women of her time, Fu Hao held enormous power. She commanded armies of more than 10,000 soldiers, led military campaigns against rival tribes, and performed important religious ceremonies as a high priestess. When archaeologists uncovered her tomb in 1976, they found over 200 bronze vessels, jade artefacts, ivory objects, and oracle bones — evidence of her extraordinary status.

King Wu Ding, who reigned for around 59 years, is considered one of the Shang's greatest kings. He strengthened the empire through military conquest and surrounded himself with talented advisors.

Oracle bone specialists played a crucial role too. They inscribed questions onto ox bones or turtle shells, applied heat to crack them, then interpreted the patterns as messages from royal ancestors.

These individuals reveal how the Shang Dynasty combined military strength, religious belief, and strong leadership.

## Questions

1. When did the Shang Dynasty rule ancient China?
2. Which dynasty did King Tang overthrow to come to power?
3. What made King Tang respected as a leader?
4. What was Fu Hao's relationship to King Wu Ding?
5. How many soldiers did Fu Hao command?
6. Name three types of objects found in Fu Hao's tomb.
7. What religious role did Fu Hao hold?
8. Approximately how long did King Wu Ding reign?
9. What materials were oracle bones made from?
10. What does the variety of objects in Fu Hao's tomb suggest about her importance in Shang society?



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