4. Han Dynasty

Rise
Apex
Leaders
Fall
Eliminate Rivals

- Qin
- Xiang Yu
- Liu Bang
- Xiang Yu nearly destroyed Liu Bang’s forces in 204 B.C.E., but Liu regrouped and, in 202 B.C.E., succeeded in defeating Xiang Yu.
RISE

• Liu Bang leads one of the forces of peasant revolt against the Qin
• Eliminates rivals, establishes the Han
• Power to warlords
• Reduce taxes
• Power to Confucians
• Economic distress...
Economics

- Qin - high taxes push peasantry into revolt
New Gov. OLD definitions

• Mandate of Heaven
• New palaces
• New system of government
  – The empire was divided into two major areas.
    • western half was ruled directly by Liu
    • eastern part -- military strongmen who had been followers of Liu -- feudal power by him.
APEX OF THE HAN
Pax Sinica

- strong administrative machinery, strong leader **Wudi** (141-87 BCE)
- government monopolies in certain critical commodities, such as salt, alcohol, and iron
Pax Sinica

- recruitment of a highly educated administrative elite, a new version of the shi.
- Confucianism
  - moral guidance and restraint on the ruler,
  - could be overthrown based on Mandate of Heaven
Han Wudi

• 156 - 87 BCE
• vast territorial expansion
• strong and centralized Confucian state
• greatest emperor of the Han dynasty
• one of the greatest emperors in Chinese history.
• Made Han Dynasty one of the most powerful
• reign lasted 54 years
Han: Rise of the “Shi” [shr]

- Aka “scholar gentry” or “literati” or “intelligentsia” or “scholar elite” or “mandarins”
- Professional bureaucrat class
- Ran the empire day-to-day
- Become increasingly influential
- Confucian ideals
- End of Han – examination system
- “Meritocracy”
1. What commodities did government control under Wudi?
2. What was government control designed to prevent?
3. What did they decide after the Debate on Salt and Iron?
silk road

- silk from China westward
- glass, linen, and gold from the West
Beliefs

• Han – unifying force of Buddhism;
• transformation of Buddhism;
• “Han Synthesis”
  – attempt to unify all the rival schools of Chinese thought and philosophy that had developed over the previous three hundred years.
  – most lasting legacy of the Han dynasty.
“Han Synthesis”

- Confucianism
- Buddhism
- Daoism
Barbarians and the Han

• Great Wall, begun under Qin, added onto under Han

• Northern tribes raid new, wealthy trade routes and market towns

• Emperor Han Wudi
  – Presents as “tribute”
    • silk, alcohol, later porcelain and tea, or even princesses
  – Warfare
    • Xiongnu 匈奴 tribes
  – Fortifications
Barbarians and the Han
Han Achievements

• Buddhism reaches China
• Silk road
• Paper making
• Iron technology
• Glazed pottery
• Compass
• Wheelbarrow

• Rudder
• Stirrups
• Examination system
Disintegration

• land increasingly in hands of landed families
• increased exploitation of peasantry;
• “shr” and eunuchs = undo influence
• military suppression of revolts gave power to generals
Which pattern of the fall is illustrated (video clip)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall of Civilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. <strong>Leadership crisis</strong>: Government becomes corrupt. Leader may be distant, incompetent, insulated by attendants or uninterested. Government loses control of officials in far districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. <strong>Foreign threats</strong>: This may take the form of mass immigration or military threat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. <strong>Economic collapse</strong> – inflation, depression, money devaluation, disruption of vital trade routes. The gap between rich and poor widens/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. <strong>Fragmentation</strong> – empire breaks up into smaller pieces ruling themselves.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Map of Han Empire 87 BC]
Fall - Han

• Rival groups sought to increase their power and wealth.
  – Great landed families intermarried with the Liu house and tried to manipulate the imperial succession.
  – Military leaders used their power to intimidate weaker emperors.
  – Eunuchs, in theory merely menial servants in the imperial household, built up great power through their control of the inner chambers where emperors lived.
By late in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century, the dynasty began to face serious problems.

The power of landed families had led to greater exploitation of the mass of ordinary farmers.

Rebellions against the power of the wealthy landowners.
Fall - Han

Military suppression of these rebellions gave new power to the generals.

- 1. Military strongmen assumed control of large parts of the empire.
- 2. The power of the eunuchs was destroyed by the military, but in the process, the dynasty was further weakened.
- 3. By the early 3rd century, Han power was largely a hollow shell.
Fall - Han

- Collapsed 3rd century, ushering in a period of division known as the Three Kingdoms, from 220–265 C.E.
- Regional strongmen sought to protect their own power and fought amongst themselves