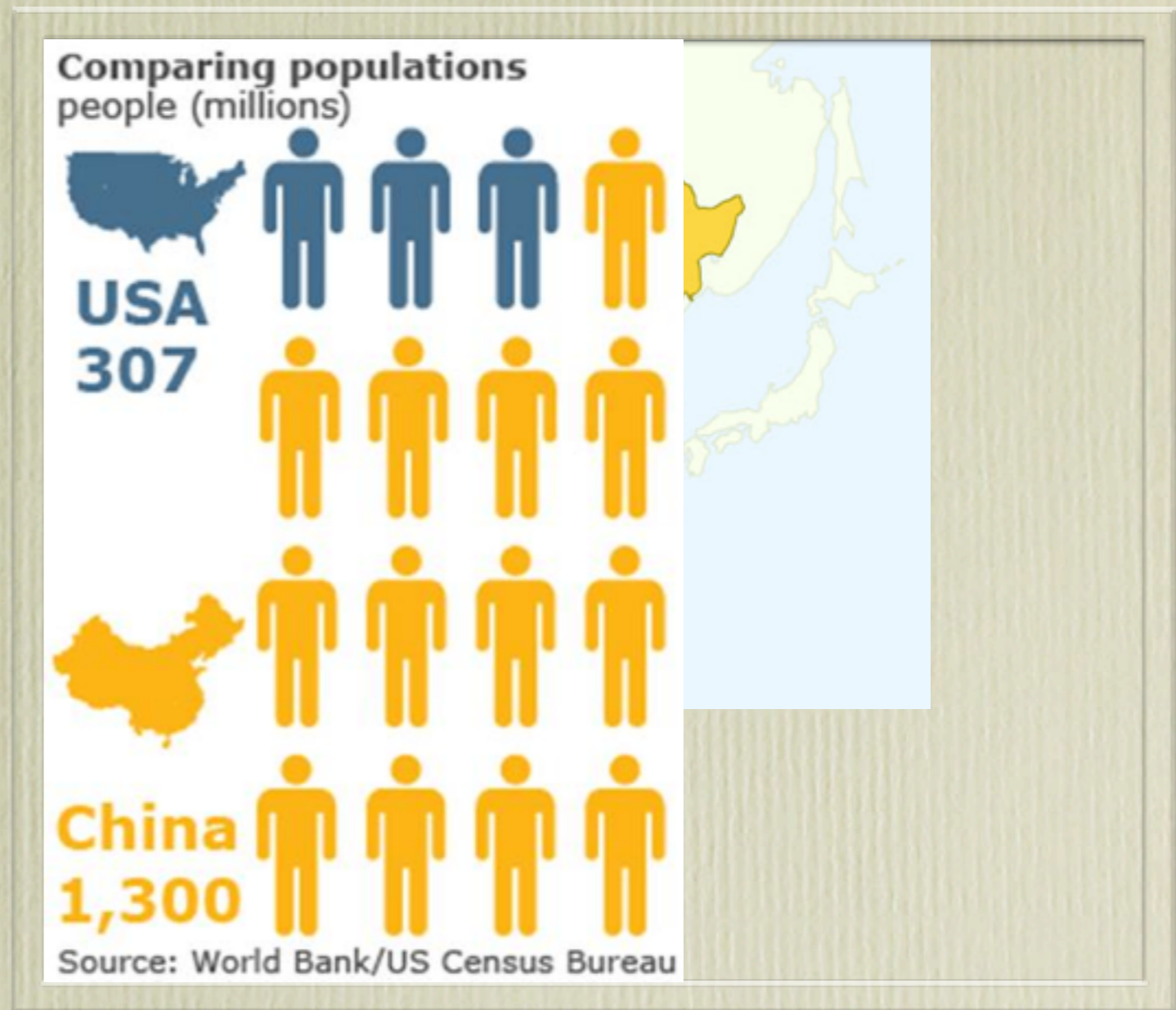




Introduction to China

I. China Today

- History: one of the world's oldest continuous cultural civilizations (~1500 BCE).
- Population: 1.34 billion people; 19.6% of world's population
- Religion: Buddhist 18%, Christian 5%, Muslim 2%, officially atheist



II. Looking Forward

- A. Optimism
 - One of the world's largest economies--and growing!
 - And biggest standing armies
 - Rising "superpower"
- B. Concern
 - Massive pollution
 - Wealth gap
 - Aging population





Source: Interactive Perthes Wall Map

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China: The First Dynasties and Dynastic Cycle

I. Dynasties

sequence of rulers from the same family

- A. Shang (1700 BC – 1100 BC)
 - Shapes Chinese civilization
 - Yangtze River Valley
 - Strong monarchy
 - Large army
 - Agricultural – most people are farmers.
 - Religion
 - Ancestor worship
 - Oracle bones
 - System of Writing
 - Calligraphy
 - One of the first in the world



I. Dynasties

- B. Zhou (1100BC – 400BC)
 - Why should the people support a new dynasty?
 - Introduced “Mandate of Heaven”
 - The Gods will support a fair ruler
 - Will not allow anyone corrupt to hold power
 - Population grows
 - Farming improves
 - Cities – roads, canals
 - Coins
 - Decline:
 - Rival leaders start to rise up against them



I. Dynasties

- C. Warring States Period (400BC – 221BC)
 - Still technically Zhou
 - Political chaos
 - Important effects of chaos:
 - New philosophies – Confucianism and Daoism (later this week)
 - First strong emperor – Qin



II. Dynastic Cycle

New Dynasty

- *brings peace*
- *(re)builds infrastructure*
- *protects people*
- *gives land to peasants*
- *economic growth*

Generations go by,
→
New Dynasty becomes...

Aging Dynasty

- *gov't neglects duties*
- *corruption*
- *heavy taxes*
- *decay of infrastructure*
- *can't/won't protect people*

New Dynasty claims
the Mandate of
Heaven

Problems

- *floods, earthquakes, etc.*
- *peasant revolts*
- *invaders attack empire*
- *crime + bandits*

Old Dynasty loses
the Mandate of
Heaven