

HISTORY

EMPIRE BUILDERS: CHINA

3 x 52' (ENG, GER)

Throughout the ages great empires have come and gone. But all have left great legacies, monuments, inventions and innovations, changing history and the way we live.

China is one of the oldest civilisations on earth and one of unparalleled continuity. Confucian values still underpin much of society despite the Communist Revolution of the middle of last century which signalled such a dramatic break from it's past. This three-part Empire Builders mini-series explores the culture and values that have made China such a resilient civilisation and how these have impacted on modern China today.



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1. Imperial China

How did the great imperial dynasties of China, including the Zhou, Han, Tang, Song and Ming, impact on China today? We explore the origins of the Silk Road and what these dynasties left behind and visit great sites including the Terracotta Warriors, Great Wall, Buddha of Leshan, Grand Canal and Ming Tombs.

2. The Century of Humiliation

The 19th and early 20th centuries saw the decline of China. The Opium Wars, Taiping and Boxer Rebellions led to western domination and many Chinese leaving the country. The last imperial dynasty, the Qing expanded the empire to its greatest extent, presided over the Chinese Enlightenment and left behind iconic sites such as the Forbidden City and the Temple of Heaven. But with its collapse and the removal of its last child Emperor, China turned West. How did these momentous events impact on China today?

3. Modern World, Modern Emperors

This episode explores the period from the birth of the Chinese republic in 1911 to the civil war, bloody Japanese occupation, the coming to power of Mao and the Communist Party, the Cultural Revolution, up to the present day. We visit Tiananmen Square, the booming skyscraper cities of Shanghai and Beijing and President Xi's Belt and Road. How has the tumultuous last 100 years impacted Communist China's ambitions as a superpower today and its relations with Taiwan which also sees itself as the rightful guardian of Chinese history and culture?