

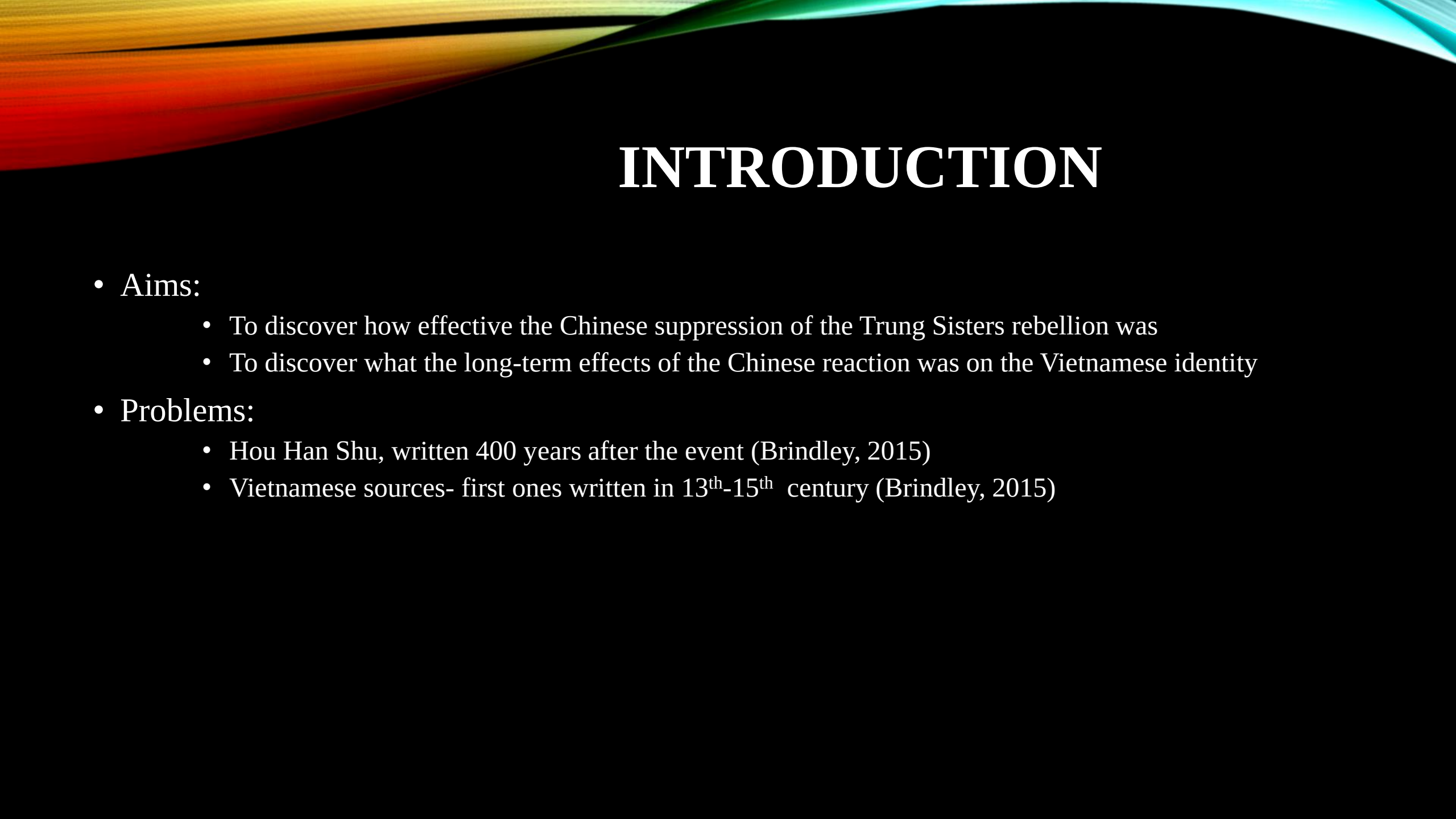
HOW DID THE HAN DYNASTY REACT TO THE TRUNG SISTERS REBELLION (40-43A.D.) AND WHAT EFFECT DID THIS HAVE ON VIETNAMESE CULTURE



Image 1: Trung Sisters riding elephants. Source: Wikipedia (accessed 04/02/2024)



Image 2: statue of Ma Yuan. Source: Wikipedia (accessed 04/02/2024)



INTRODUCTION

- Aims:
 - To discover how effective the Chinese suppression of the Trung Sisters rebellion was
 - To discover what the long-term effects of the Chinese reaction was on the Vietnamese identity
- Problems:
 - Hou Han Shu, written 400 years after the event (Brindley, 2015)
 - Vietnamese sources- first ones written in 13th-15th century (Brindley, 2015)

BACKGROUND AND CAUSES

- 111B.C.- Nanyue conquered (Holcombe, 1997-98)
- Red River Region- trade hub for Han (Holcombe, 2017)
- Causes:
 - Increasing interference by Chinese officials (Ly Te Xuyen, *Departed spirits of the Viet Realm*)
 - Han migration to the south (Bielenstein, 2006)
 - Increase in Yue national awareness (Bielenstein, 2006)
 - Wang Mang's centralization and Sinification (Holmgren, 1980)
 - Attack on power of Yue nobility (Taylor, 1983)
 - Immediate cause: legal dispute between governor and the elder Trung Sisters' husband (Holcombe, 2017)

OVERVIEW OF THE REBELLION

- 40A.D.Trung Rebellion quickly seized 60 cities (Fan Ye, HHS24)
- Spread to rest of Vietnam and Chinese border provinces (Brindley, 2015)
- 42A.D.- Guangwudi sends Ma Yuan to crush rebels (Bielenstein, 2006)
- Ma Yuan led across land- supplied by sea, swiftly crushed rebellion (Fan Ye, HHS24)- use of scorched earth (Holcombe, 1997-98)
- Trung Sisters either executed or died in battle (Fan Ye, HHS24; Ly Te Xuyen, *Departed spirits of the Viet Realm*) , along with many supporters, others exiled (Brindley, 2015)

HAN REACTION TO REBELLION

- Execution or deportation of leading members of the rebellion (Taylor, 1983)
- Destruction of the Bronze drums (Fan Ye, HHS24) Yue authority symbols (Holmgren, 1980)
- Built forts and put garrisons in the region (Taylor, 1983)
- Also improved irrigation and made canals (Fan Ye, HHS24)
- Sinification:
 - Set up Chinese prefectural system (Fan Ye, HHS24)
 - Removed discrepancies in law (Fan Ye, HHS24)
 - Forced Chinese script, administration and land system on Yue (Tate, 1971; Taylor 1983)
 - Enforcement of Chinese dress and architecture (Holmgren, 1980; Holcombe, 2017)
 - Remaining Yue Aristocracy educated in Chinese fashion (Holmgren, 1980)
- Ma pushed through Wang Mang's earlier policies by force (de Crespigny, 2018)

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES OF HAN POLICY

Successes

- Vietnamese did adopt Chinese script, administrative and technological systems (Tate, 1971)
- Adopted Chinese patriarchal values (Taylor, 1983)
- Much of the elite was Sinicized (Taylor, 1983)
- China did maintain control over the region until 939 (Tate, 1971)

Failures

- Vietnamese kept their own language (Tate 1971)
- Chinese preferred to choose fellow Chinese to govern province (Tate, 1971)
- Ma's Sinification did not stop rebellions, indeed they were regular (Ying-Shih, 2006)
- Failed to expand the Sinification in the countryside (Holmgren, 1980)
- Vietnamisation? (Taylor, 1983)
- Chinese officials often corrupt (Taylor, 1983)

EFFECTS ON VIETNAMESE CULTURE AND BELIEF

- Trung Sisters became a legitimising tool of the Vietnamese emperors (Ly Te Xuyen, *Departed spirits of the Viet Realm*)
- The Rebellion became a symbol of Vietnamese resistance to foreign oppression (Keay, 2009)
- Foundational myth (Ying-Shih, 2006)
- Trung Sisters also an embarrassment (Taylor, 1983)
- Long-term effect- Vietnamese fear of China even after being colonized by France (Burleigh, 2014)

CONCLUSION

- The Han were very effective in the short-term in maintaining control of Vietnam, many of their policies and attitude were adopted by the Vietnamese
- In the long-term their lack of trust in the native leadership, corruption of their own officials and failure to stamp out the Vietnamese language ultimately undermined Chinese success
- To the Vietnamese, the Trung Sisters became a foundational myth and symbol, albeit a mildly embarrassing one, and near-millennium of Chinese rule after the suppression of the Trung rebellion has led to a long-term fear of China

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Images used

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