

Medieval China

Backwards Planning Curriculum Units

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How to Use This Unit

Backwards planning offers an innovative yet simple approach to meeting curriculum goals; it also provides a way to keep students engaged and focused throughout the learning process. Many teachers approach history instruction in the following manner: they identify a topic required by state and/or national standards, they find materials on that topic, they use those materials with their students, and then they administer some sort of standard test at the end of the unit. Backwards planning, rather than just starting with a required instructional topic, goes a step further by identifying exactly what students need to know by the end of the unit—the so-called “enduring understandings.” The next step involves assessment: devising ways to determine whether students have learned what they need to know. The final step involves planning the teaching/learning process so that students can acquire the knowledge needed.

This product uses backwards planning to combine a PowerPoint presentation, activities that involve authentic assessment, and traditional tests (multiple-choice and essay) into a complete curriculum unit. Although the materials have enough built-in flexibility that you can use them in a number of ways, we suggest the following procedure:

1. Start with the “essential questions” listed on slide 2 of the PowerPoint presentation (these also appear in the teacher support materials). Briefly go over them with students before getting into the topic material. These questions will help students focus their learning and note taking during the course of the unit. You can also choose to use the essential questions as essay questions at the end of the unit; one way to do this is to let students know at the outset that one of the essential questions will be on the test—they just won’t know which one.

2. Next, discuss the activities students will complete during the unit. This will also help focus their learning and note taking, and it will lead them to view the PowerPoint presentation in a different light, considering it a source of ideas for authentic-assessment projects.

3. Present the PowerPoint to the class. Most slides have an image and bullet points summarizing the slide’s topic. The Notes page for each slide contains a paragraph or two of information that you can use as a presentation script, or just as background information for your own reference. Use the “show set up” function in PowerPoint to present with “two monitors.” Have yours set to include the ‘notes view’ and let the projector show only the slides to the students.

You don’t need to present the entire PowerPoint at once: it’s broken up into several sections, each of which concludes with some discussion questions that echo parts of the essential questions and also help students to get closer to the “enduring understandings.” Spend some time with the class going over and debating these questions—this will not only help students think critically about the material, but it will also allow you to incorporate different modes of instruction during a single class period, offering a better chance to engage students.

4. Have students complete one or more of the authentic-assessment activities. These activities are flexible: most can be completed either individually or in groups, and either as homework or as in-class assignments. Each activity includes a rubric; many also have graphic organizers. You can choose to have students complete the activities after you have shown them the entire PowerPoint

presentation, or you can show them one section of the PowerPoint, go over the discussion questions, and then have students complete an activity.

5. End the unit with traditional assessment. The support materials include a 20-question multiple-choice quiz; you can combine this with an essay question (you can use one of the essential questions or come up with one of your own) to create a full-period test.

6. If desired, debrief with students by going over the essential questions with them again and remind them what the enduring understandings are.

We are dedicated to continually improving our products and working with teachers to develop exciting and effective tools for the classroom. We can offer advice on how to maximize the use of the product and share others' experiences. We would also be happy to work with you on ideas for customizing the presentation.

We value your feedback, so please let us know more about the ways in which you use this product to supplement your lessons; we're also eager to hear any recommendations you might have for ways in which we can expand the functionality of this product in future editions. You can e-mail us at access@socialstudies.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Medieval China: Backwards Planning Activities

Enduring understandings:

- China has mostly been a vast nation of peasants going through many cycles of unity, each under the rule of an imperial dynastic family, alternating with times of civil war and chaos.
- After the fall of the Han Dynasty in 220 CE, each of three medieval dynasties—the Sui, Tang, and Song—were able to unify China through strong military action and economic reforms that eased pressures on the peasants; in time, however, each ended in unrest often due to concentration of land ownership and higher tax burdens on the peasants.
- The dynasties also continued to develop China’s exam system for selecting officials on the basis of “merit,” and this also was seen as a unifying factor adding to their stability.
- Confucianism was the central system of ideas on which the exam system was increasingly based. It stressed a set of relationships that promoted respect for tradition and legitimate authority.
- Confucianism remained the dominant philosophy in China, but at times Buddhism and Daoism especially offered alternative ways of looking at life, society, and the individual.
- Outside threats from nomadic societies to the north were a recurring danger for each of the dynasties.
- Major public works projects such as canals, the Great Wall, irrigation projects, etc., enhanced economic life in China, but also at times strained government revenues and caused unrest among millions forced to work on such projects.
- A wide range of technological developments and innovations kept China growing in a dynamic way throughout these centuries.

Essential questions:

- Why has China seen a constant cycle of unifying dynasties separated by times of civil war and chaos?
- How did problems related to land ownership and the tax burden on the peasantry influence both the rise and the fall of China’s medieval dynasties?
- To what extent did China’s imperial exam system bring about the selection of officials based on merit, and how did that exam system help China’s rulers promote a more centralized and unified state?
- Why was Confucianism such a dominant way of thinking among China’s educated ruling elites in these centuries?
- What has been the appeal of Buddhism to many Chinese, and why was it regarded with suspicion at times by some of China’s rulers?
- In what ways was China’s “medieval” period a time of dynamic technological and economic change and development?

Learning Experiences and Instruction

Students will need to know...	Students will need to be able to...
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. some of the most important emperors in each of China's three medieval dynasties. 2. that many of China's emperors have centralized control over all of China well, but at other times they have lost that central control completely 3. that during China's medieval era, technological change and long-distance trade flourished 4. that China has often sought unity through a bureaucracy of officials chosen on the basis of strict exams 5. that many emperors undertook massive public works projects such as the Great Wall and the Grand Canal 6. the Confucianism was the most important body of thought influencing China's ruling elites. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. read and interpret primary source documents from China's medieval era 2. understand some of the reasons for the rise and fall of China's imperial dynasties 3. identify some important emperors and other figures from this era and be able to explain their importance 4. understand and debate certain key controversies having to do with China's leadership and development in the medieval era 5. identify causal relationships between various events and developments during this period.

These lessons incorporate the following learning activities to help students reach the enduring understandings:

- Overview of essential questions and basic understandings
- Class discussion of subject matter questions in the presentation
- Teacher introduction of common terms and ideas in the essential questions and related projects
- Provide students with primary source materials from which they will complete the related projects in the unit
- Students conduct research in groups to be used later in individual and group projects
- Informal observation and coaching of students as they work in groups
- Evaluation and delivered feedback on projects and research reports
- Students create and present their unit projects
- Posttest made of multiple-choice questions covering the presentation, with one or more essential questions as essay questions

Project #1: Were Wendi and Yang Di Great Leaders or Terrible Tyrants?

Overview:

In this lesson, students attempt to evaluate the leadership qualities of the two emperors of the Sui Dynasty. This very brief dynasty (581–618) was energetic and creative in reunifying China after centuries of disunity. However, it was also brutal in the demands made on millions to contribute to major building projects that enhanced China’s economic and military power. Evaluating leadership in such a distant time and different cultural context is not easy. This lesson gives students a chance to do this.

Objectives:

As a result of completing the lesson, students will be able to:

- identify the major actions and accomplishments of the two Sui Dynasty rulers
- explain whether they think one or the other of these two rulers was a great leader
- consider how perspectives can vary in different historical periods and across cultures.

Time required:

Two class periods (with one period for small-group presentations)

Materials:

Computer(s) with Internet access, a printer, the “Great Emperors Worksheet” (provided)

Methodology:

Ask students how they would define a “great” leader. What qualities would they expect to see in a great leader? What sorts of accomplishments might make them consider a leader great? List their ideas on the board. Then ask them if the qualities that make someone a great leader today, say a great president, are also the same for all times and cultures.

As a class, then review the PowerPoint slides 7–10 regarding the two emperors making up China’s Sui Dynasty. Check for understanding by posing these questions to the class:

- What were some of Wendi and Yang Di’s main beliefs about their role as emperors?
- What were some of their main accomplishments?

- In what ways did either of them help all of China?
- In what ways did either of them hurt China?

To deepen their knowledge of these two emperors, have students use the PowerPoint and other print and/or Internet resources to do further research (see the “Suggested Web resources” section for this lesson). Then have students fill out the “Great Emperors Worksheet” where they will take notes both “pro” and “con” for each emperor regarding three different aspects of his performance. Then have students use their notes from the “Great Emperors Worksheet” to guide them in writing two paragraphs describing their overall judgment about each of these two rulers and explaining their reasoning. Students should support their arguments with examples from the research they have done. In a final class discussion, ask students to describe and explain some of the points they have made in their paragraphs. Also, ask the class to imagine themselves in the shoes of someone living during the Sui Dynasty. Do they think such a person might have had a different impression of these leaders from that perspective, as opposed to their 21st-century point of view? Why or why not?

Evaluation:

Evaluate students based on their paragraphs and their participation in the discussion as well as on their work in completing the “Great Emperors Worksheet.” While you may wish to develop your own rubric for this project, a sample rubric is included as a guideline.

Suggested Web resources:

The following is a sampling of possible resources for the activity. You should supplement this list by assisting students in finding related information via a reputable search engine.

Sui Dynasty

- <http://www.emayzine.com/lectures/140asia.htm>
- <http://www.chinatraveldepot.com/C159-Sui-Dynasty>
- <http://library.thinkquest.org/12255/library/dynasty/sui.html>
- <http://www.warriortours.com/intro/history/sui/>
- <http://www.history-of-china.com/sui-dynasty/>
- <http://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/1xarsui1.htm>
- <http://www.greatwall-of-china.com/48-24/the-wall-of-the-sui-dynasty.html>
- http://occawlonline.pearsoned.com/bookbind/pubbooks/stearns_awl/chapter18/objectives/deluxe-content.html

Wendi

- <http://www.panda-greatwall.com/everything-chinese/chinese-culture/88-chinese-civilization-5000-year-history/362-emperor-wen-of-sui-dynasty.html>
- http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Emperor_Wen_of_Sui

Yang Di

- <http://www.chinatown-online.com/cultureeye/highlights/grand.htm>
- <http://www.seeraa.com/china-history/suiyangdi.html>

Great Emperors Worksheet

Category	Wendi	Yang Di
Provided unity and defended the empire	<p>Pro:</p> <p>Con:</p>	<p>Pro:</p> <p>Con:</p>
Improved economic life	<p>Pro:</p> <p>Con:</p>	<p>Pro:</p> <p>Con:</p>
Provided justice	<p>Pro:</p> <p>Con:</p>	<p>Pro:</p> <p>Con:</p>

Great Emperors Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	Student score
Checklist: student provides specific examples and details to illustrate	Provides specific examples, with excellent attention to clarity and detail	Provides specific examples, but examples lack clarity or detail	Provides too few specific examples	Provides no specific examples, or examples provided do not make sense	
Paragraphs: student makes a reasoned argument for a clear judgment about each emperor	Student makes reasoned arguments backed by relevant details	Student makes reasoned arguments but without much detail backing it up	Student makes judgments without much detail or with detail only about one of the emperors	Student makes no reasoned argument about either emperor	
Paragraphs: neatness, grammar, and spelling	Paragraph contains almost no grammatical and/or spelling mistakes and is very neatly presented	Paragraph contains a few grammatical and/or spelling mistakes, but is presented neatly	Paragraph contains some grammatical and/or spelling mistakes, or is somewhat carelessly presented	Paragraph contains numerous grammatical and/or spelling mistakes, or is presented in a very sloppy manner	
Other criteria as set by the teacher					
Total Score					

Project #2: Silk Road Travel Guide

Overview:

The “Silk Road” was actually a continually shifting network of trade routes extending from China across central Asia through present-day Iraq to points on the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. In this lesson, students produce a Silk Road Travel Guide and make it available to the rest of the students in the class.

Objectives:

As a result of completing the lesson, students will be able to:

- identify some of the most famous stopping points along the Silk Road routes
- understand the many challenges and the many opportunities these routes presented to travelers and traders
- appreciate the many kinds of trade, intellectual exchange, and cultural interaction made possible by the Silk Road trading networks.

Time required:

Four class periods

Materials:

Computer(s) with Internet access, word-processing and PowerPoint software, a printer, the “Silk Road Student Handout” (provided)

Procedures:

Assign students small groups. Each group’s task is to assemble illustrations, create a map (or maps), and write diary entries, all as part of a Silk Road Travel Guide that the groups will make available to other students in the class. The guide could take the form either of a notebook, a bulletin-board display, or a PowerPoint presentation.

The Silk Road routes began to be used extensively during the Han Dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE). Silk was only one of many products carried along these routes. Others included porcelain, perfumes, sesame seeds, incense, pepper, gold, carpets, glass, gunpowder, horses, furs, slaves, steel, and more. The main route made its way westward through several Chinese cities to Dunhuang, where it split into routes skirting north or along the southern part of the Great

Taklamakan Desert. Other key stopping points along the way included Kashgar, the Merv oasis, Samarkand, Baghdad, and Palmyra near the Mediterranean Sea.

The student group should assemble illustrations and information on as wide an array of topics as they can think of. Examples of entries or items to include in the guide are:

- Types of goods traded
- Inventions or technologies exchanged at times along these routes
- Religious ideas and other intellectual exchanges
- Animals used for transporting goods
- Organizational details of trade caravans
- Natural obstacles encountered, such as mountains, deserts, cold, snow, drought, disease
- Human obstacles encountered, such as bandits, marauding horsemen, warfare, etc.

In addition, the guide should include at least one map of the major routes, along with detailed descriptions of life in these four key Silk Road stops:

- Dunhuang
- Kashgar
- Samarkand
- Palmyra

Have the group use the suggested Internet resources or other print resources to learn about the Silk Road. Devote one class period for each group to go over the contents of its guide in a presentation to the rest of the class. Ask each student in the group to use the “Silk Road Student Handout” to summarize what they have learned about the Silk Road and its importance in the history of China and of Eurasia in general.

Evaluation:

After this lesson is complete, evaluate the members of the student group using a suitable rubric. A sample rubric is included with this lesson, which you may either use or adapt to meet your individual circumstances.

Suggested Web resources:

This site has extensive links to many other good Internet sites on various aspects of the Silk Road

<http://factsanddetails.com/china.php?itemid=50&catid=2&subcatid=90>

In addition, these sites may all be useful:

- <http://alumnus.caltech.edu/~pamlogan/srart.html>

- <http://archaeology.about.com/cs/asia/a/silkroad.htm>
- <http://www.passcal.nmt.edu/~bob/passcal/china/china11.htm>
- <http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/maps/maps.html>
- <http://idp.bl.uk/>
- <http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/index.html>
- <http://www.regit.com/regitour/china/intplace/silkroad.htm>

Dunhuang

- <http://www.silk-road.com/dunhuang/dhintro.html>
- <http://www.chinatoday.com.cn/English/chinatours/dunhuang.htm>

Kashgar

- <http://onthesilkroad.blogspot.com/2007/07/kashgar-s.html>
- <http://www.nytimes.com/1994/05/15/magazine/kashgar-on-china-s-silk-road.html>

Samarkand

- <http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/cities/uz/samarkand/samarkand.html>
- http://www.sairamtour.com/uzbekistan/uz_05_02.html

Palmyra

- <http://onthesilkroad.blogspot.com/2007/04/palmyra-syria-old-new.html>
- <http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/cities/syria/palmyra/palmyra.html>

Silk Road Student Handout

Name one Silk Road city and explain its importance as a Silk Road stopping point.	
Name three main goods carried on the Silk Road and explain why they were so important to the trading network.	
Describe how the Silk Road was used to transmit ideas and bring about cultural sharing.	
Describe the biggest challenges faced by caravans traveling to and from China in its medieval era.	

Silk Road Travel Guide Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	Student score
Handout: identification and description of specific details about the Silk Road	Student identifies key features and details accurately and describes them clearly	Student describes some key features and details accurately and clearly	Student describes a few features and details adequately but not always clearly	Student describes a few features and details but not very accurately	
Handout: analysis and explanations of the importance of the details listed about the Silk Road	Student clearly explains the importance of specific features and details	Student explains the importance of many of the specific features and details listed	Student only vaguely describes the importance of some of the specific features and details listed	Student fails to explain the importance of the specific features and details listed	
Contribution to the group's production and presentation of the guide	Student makes a substantial contribution to the guide	Student makes an adequate contribution to the guide	Student makes a minimal contribution to the guide	Student makes no contribution to the guide	
Total score					

Project #3: Technological Triumphs of China's Medieval Dynasties

Overview:

This lesson helps students better understand and appreciate the technological accomplishments of China during its medieval dynasties. In those centuries, China was in many ways the leading technological society in the world. As historian Joseph Needham spent a lifetime discovering, China was ahead of all other major civilizations in its technical sophistication in many areas. In this lesson, four small groups prepare presentations designed to show China's achievements in four key technological areas.

Objectives:

As a result of completing the lesson, students will be able to:

- appreciate one of China's unique strengths as a civilization
- identify and attempt to date some important Chinese inventions
- better understand how these inventions worked and how they contributed to China's development in the medieval period.

Time required:

Three class periods

Materials:

Computer(s) with Internet access, word-processing software, a printer, the "Chinese Technology Worksheet" (provided)

Methodology:

Assign students to four small groups. Each group will be responsible for researching the origins and development within China of one of the following four key inventions or technologies:

- Papermaking
- Printing
- Shipbuilding and navigation
- Gunpowder and explosives

China made discoveries and advances in all of these areas in the Tang and Song eras. It led the world in first developing three items—papermaking, woodblock printing, and gunpowder. Centuries before Gutenberg developed printing with metal movable type in the 1400s in Europe, China was printing whole pages using woodblocks and also developing its own versions of movable type. The even earlier invention of paper (possibly in the first century CE) made these efforts to master printing logical. Gunpowder was discovered probably as early as the ninth century CE, and contrary to a common misconception, China did find ways to use it in weapons and warfare. As for shipbuilding, China forged ahead in these centuries in many ways. China discovered magnetism as early as the fourth century BCE, and developed the compass before anyone else. In general, Chinese navigational techniques improved throughout this era. Larger ships were developed that could hold more than 600 people; multiple masts improved navigability and speed; separate watertight compartments protected cargo; a sternpost rudder improved steering.

Explain to the class that this activity will help them learn more about these technological advances in China in its medieval era. Several of the links listed in the “Suggested Web resources” for this lesson discuss these developments.

Divide students into four small groups and have each group learn more about one of the four inventions and technological developments. Each small group should complete the following tasks:

1. Summarize the views of historians as to when China first discovered or developed the technology or invention your group is researching.
2. Describe how China developed and refined that invention or technology over time.
3. Provide illustrations and diagrams of examples of the invention or technology.
4. Summarize what is known about how the invention or technology later spread to other cultures.

In preparing the groups for their talk, ask each member of each group to complete the “China’s Technology Worksheet.” Students can use their completed checklists to guide them as they use the links in the Web Resources section, and as they prepare a brief group presentation on their area of technology in China. Devote one class period for all four groups to make their brief presentations and to give the class time to participate and ask questions.

Evaluation:

At the end of the lesson, evaluate student work using a suitable rubric. A sample rubric is included with this lesson, which you may either use or adapt to meet your individual circumstances.

Suggested Web resources:

The following is a sampling of possible resources. You should supplement this list by assisting students in finding related information via a reputable search engine.

Paper

- <http://www.sacu.org/paper.html>
- http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/en_aboutchina/2003-09/24/content_26514.htm
- http://ipst.gatech.edu/amp/collection/museum_invention_paper.htm
- <http://www.computersmiths.com/chineseinvention/paper.htm>

Printing

- <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/song/tech/printing.htm>
- <http://big5.cgan.net/english/english/cpg/engcp20.htm>
- <http://kaleidoscope.cultural-china.com/en/136Kaleidoscope4.html>
- <http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/literature/printing.htm>

Gunpowder

- <http://asianhistory.about.com/od/asianinventions/a/InventGunpowder.htm>
- <http://www.silk-road.com/artl/gun.shtml>
- <http://www.chinesecultureonline.org/past.jsp?catName=invention¢erName=gunpowder>
- <http://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/miltech/firearms.htm>

Shipbuilding

- <http://kaleidoscope.cultural-china.com/en/136Kaleidoscope2.html>
- http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/en_madeinchina/2005-06/21/content_69874.htm
- http://www.smith.edu/hsc/museum/ancient_inventions/compass2.html
- <http://www.ancientchinalife.com/famous-ancient-chinese-ships.html>

China's Technology Worksheet

Invention or technology	
When do historians say it was first discovered?	
How did China refine or develop it further over the centuries?	
What is known about how it spread to other societies outside of China?	

China's Technology Rubric

Category	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	Student score
Handout: knowledge of the origins of the assigned Chinese invention or area of technology	Student provides an accurate, detailed, and meaningful explanation of the invention or technology	Student makes an accurate and reasonable explanation of the invention or technology	Student provides some key details about the invention or technology	Student provides little or no accurate or meaningful detail about the invention or technology	
Handout: explanation of the development and spread of the invention or technology	Student understands in detail how the invention or technology developed and spread	Student understands in general how the invention or technology developed and spread	Student has a vague sense of how the invention or technology developed and spread	Student has little or no sense of how the invention or technology developed and spread	
Participation in the group presentation to the class	Student participated fully and creatively in planning and carrying out the group's presentation	Student participated actively in planning and carrying out the group's presentation	Student participated somewhat in planning and carrying out the group's presentation	Student did not participate well or at all in planning and carrying out the group's presentation	
Total score					

Discussion Questions

1. What factors led to the collapse of the Han Dynasty? Can these same factors be seen in the collapse of other Chinese dynasties like the Sui, Tang, or Song? Are there certain patterns that can be observed within the Chinese dynasties that cause them to weaken? Can these same patterns be observed in other civilizations? What steps might a government take to keep this pattern from repeating itself? What problems might accompany these actions?
2. Evaluate the technological contributions of the Chinese during the Sui, Tang, and Song dynasties. How did these contributions affect society? What type of long-lasting effects did these innovations have?
3. Examine some of the social problems that China faced. What steps could have been taken to resolve these problems? Were those solutions practical at that time? How have other societies dealt with social problems and how successful were they?
4. What was the nature of artistic accomplishment during the Tang and the Song dynasties?

1. Possible Answers

- The Han dynasty experienced problems such as struggles for power by elites, government officials (eunuchs) attempting to seize power, fighting among government officials, an uninvolved central leader or one who took little interest in the affairs of state, dissatisfaction by the people in the country (particularly the peasants), financial problems, threats from foreign invaders, etc. These same factors can also be seen as weaknesses in the other dynasties: financial expenditures and peasant dissatisfaction contributed to the downfall of the Sui; peasant dissatisfaction and imperial weakness led to the downfall of the Tang; and the Song collapsed from problems within the government and foreign attackers.
- Have students trace these patterns (or lack of patterns) in other prominent civilizations (and their collapses)—perhaps have students look at the Roman Empire, the Aztecs, the Egyptians, etc.

2. Possible Answers

- Have students consider the various innovations of the Chinese and their purposes: things used in trade (silk, tea, porcelain, etc.); things that contributed to or were used in travel (shipbuilding, gunpowder use, compass, etc.); agricultural innovations; military inventions (gunpowder, as well as other weapons); innovations used to improve society or to entertain (printing press, clocks, etc.).
- There were other types of innovations that can also be discussed: the Grand Canal, work on the Great Wall, urbanization and city development, etc.
- Use this time to talk about diffusion and the impacts that it had. Make sure to point out that diffusion went into China as well as out of it—goods and ideas (Buddhism, for example) came to China just as many things moved from China to other places via trade and other contacts.

3. Possible Answers

- Peasants and lower classes: their greatest need was land, but very little long-term land reform was permanently implemented. Convincing the elites to allow land to rest in the hands of the people other than themselves proved to be very difficult.
- Women were generally assigned a limited role in society, although there are noted examples of women who were successful. Education was generally limited for women, which in turn, limited their ability to participate in government, bureaucracy of merit, etc. Additionally, the use of footbinding by the upper classes further limited the role that women could play in society. In lower classes, women had more public interaction because their labor was needed. Very little was done to improve the position of women.

4. Possible Answers

- Students should discuss poetry during this time period and note the subjects that different poets addressed and the form that the poems followed. Find other examples of poetry and have students examine them as well. Ask students to consider what they like and dislike about this type of poetry.
- Examine the subjects of paintings and give particular attention to the landscapes.
- Direct students to talk about the novels and literature (including nonfiction works). Ask students to consider how revolutionary these works were at the time.

Extension Activities

1. Empire Comparison

- a. Have students create a comparison chart between the three Chinese dynasties of this unit—the Sui, Tang, and Song. Have students create the categories by which these dynasties are to be compared—political structure, economy, religion, technology, foreign interaction, social classes, gender, etc.
- b. Once the comparison chart is complete, have students choose one of the three dynasties and create a “visual metaphor” of that dynasty, focusing on the events and people they listed on their charts. The visual metaphor should be a “person” which visually depicts the elements of that dynasty. For example, the Sui dynasty might be drawn as a short man (since the dynasty existed for such a short time). This man might have a shovel in one hand (to represent the building of the Grand Canal), a postcard in his pocket of the Great Wall (to indicate the work done on the wall), a Wendy’s fast food cup in his other hand (to represent the ruler Wendi), etc. Students should provide a key and indicate what each thing in the picture represents plus a brief explanation of the event or person. Additional research will enable students to provide more specific information on their charts and their pictures.
- c. A final element of this activity could be for students to write a comparison essay on these dynasties—encourage students to use the categories they created as the main ideas for their paragraphs.

2. Art Evaluation

- a. Have students use the Internet and reference books to generate a collection of art from the Tang and Song dynasties. Students can work independently or in groups and can be assigned both visual and written art, or the categories can be divided. Depending on the nature of the class, students or groups could work on such topics as painting, ceramics, poetry, novels, artists, nonfiction works, music, theater, street performances, etc.
- b. Have students create a presentation that discusses and illustrates the different artistic elements and creations from this time period. Encourage students to be creative in their presentations: they might create a PowerPoint, have a poetry reading, generate a book report on a novel or work of nonfiction, a poster of artists, etc.
- c. Allow students to research the techniques and elements of a particular type of art (landscapes, poetry, etc.), and have them create their own art, including the same elements and characteristics that the Chinese would have included. This is probably best done with poetry and painting (since many of the paintings were generally fairly monochromatic, students could create ink or pencil drawings).

3. Illustrated Timeline

- a. Instruct students to make a list of the important events that occurred during each of the dynasties by using the Internet or resource books.
- b. Have students define or explain the relevance of the events they have identified.

- c. Once students have created their lists of events and explanations, have them design a symbol that represents the event and then place those symbols on a timeline to indicate the order in which the events occurred.

4. Hall of Fame

- a. To help students understand the role that different people played during this time period, have the class create a Hall of Fame. Students should each be assigned one person to research and represent (students can work in pairs if desired).
- b. The information about the people can be shared with the class in a variety of ways: students could create a poster discussing their person, trading cards for their person to exchange with others in their class, tombstones to be displayed around the room, “wanted” posters, etc.
- c. Give students a chance to circulate around the room and take notes as needed.

Internet Resources

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/eastasia/eastasiasbook.html>

This collection of primary sources contains a wide collection from the Sui, Tang, and Song dynasties. Primary sources for this time period are available in such areas as poetry, maps, technology images (crossbow, printing, money, etc.), and religious writings (Confucian *Analects*, the writings of Lao Tzu, etc.).

<http://www.languages.ufl.edu/EMC/>

This Web site contains a collection of journals that are comprised of articles dating from 1994. There are nine journals available, and they are generally focused on the time between the fall of the Han dynasty and the early Tang dynasty. The articles contained within the journals are varied and include such topics as scholar-gentry, interpretation of Daoism, social class, literature, the Three Kingdoms, etc.

<http://www.art-and-archaeology.com/timelines/china/tang.html>

This site is a collection of art and includes poetry, sculpture, painting, and other artistic creations. The links to the art of different dynasties are arranged chronologically along the bottom of the page. The page contains actual images, as well as links to various other collections and examples.

<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/song/>

This is a site provided by the University of Columbia through its link “Asia for Educators.” This page is devoted to the Song dynasty and provides both print and visual materials—with a special focus on a scroll painting and a discussion of elements of Song society (economic growth, commercialization, urbanization, intellectual life, and social change). There are also some online readings available plus class materials. By clicking on the “Asia for Educators” link, a new window opens with a variety of teacher materials and links on other Asian topics.

Medieval China: Multiple-Choice Quiz

1. Su Shi's poetry was most noted for its:
 - A. romantic nature
 - B. unusual emphasis on the role of women
 - C. lack of appeal to the elite members of the court
 - D. attempts to fuse his interests in both painting and poetry.
2. The correct order for Chinese dynasties is:
 - A. Han, Tang, Song, Sui
 - B. Tang, Han, Song, Yuan
 - C. Han, Sui, Tang, Song
 - D. Han, Song, Sui, Yuan
3. The *Three Kingdoms* can best be described as
 - A. the time period between the Han and the Sui dynasty
 - B. the division of the empire with the collapse of the Northern Song
 - C. the power agreement reached during the Tang dynasty to satisfy the landed elites
 - D. the existence of three separate provinces in China during the Sui Dynasty.
4. One benefit of the civil exam system was that:
 - A. it managed to keep the elites out of the government
 - B. it opened up government jobs to those who were better prepared
 - C. it allowed women to finally demonstrate their skills in governance
 - D. it allowed the emperor to consolidate his power because no one could pass the exam.
5. All of the following are examples of Chinese goods used in trade except:
 - A. aromatic woods
 - B. silk
 - C. porcelain and lacquerware
 - D. tea.

6. The Grand Canal:
- A. was only useful until the Chinese perfected the compass which allowed them to pursue oceanic trade
 - B. was never completed because of the unexpectedly high cost
 - C. was initially built by the Song for the purpose of providing a way to defend the South against northern invaders
 - D. was designed during the Sui to facilitate trade between the northern and southern portions of China.
7. Wang Anshi is noted for:
- A. religious persecution
 - B. financial reforms
 - C. starting a rebellion
 - D. military strategy
8. Of the different religions that were diffused to China, which came to have the greatest influence?
- A. Islam
 - B. Buddhism
 - C. Nestorian Christianity
 - D. Shintoism
9. Wu Zhao is best known:
- A. for his reforms that attempted to implement land reform
 - B. as the only female emperor
 - C. as the premier poet of the Tang dynasty
 - D. for his loss of the northern portion of China.
10. The An Lushan Rebellion was an example of:
- A. the reaction against footbinding by the lower classes
 - B. eunuchs' efforts to seize greater power from the emperor
 - C. the fight to unify the northern and southern portions of China
 - D. attempts by the peasants to improve their position in society.
11. China's tributary system:
- A. was the way the emperor controlled the peasants
 - B. was the collective name of the different taxes paid throughout China
 - C. allowed China to control foreign territories without actually occupying them
 - D. proved to be the weakness that the Mongols used to take over the Chinese.

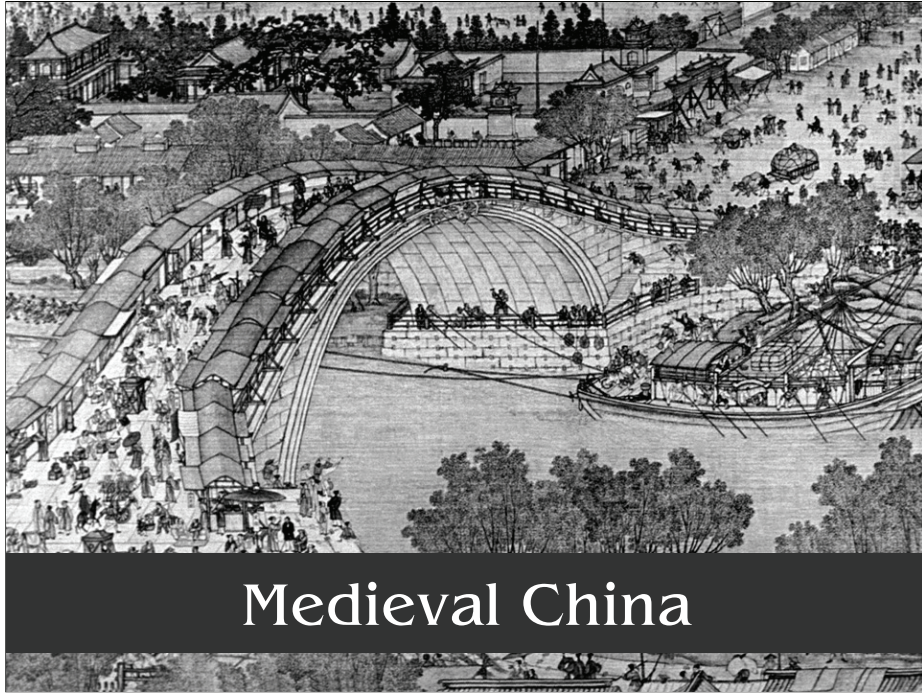
12. Which of the following is true about Tang painting?
- A. Very little of it has survived.
 - B. It mostly focused on portraiture.
 - C. It drew on techniques learned from Muslim traders.
 - D. Most of it was created on silk tapestries.
13. The Song government gave more power to:
- A. the military
 - B. the scholar-gentry
 - C. the eunuchs
 - D. the Buddhist monks.
14. Footbinding was:
- A. a punishment given to women who were found unfaithful
 - B. used to keep peasant women from taking jobs that could otherwise be held by men
 - C. a sign of social status for upper classes and a means of controlling women
 - D. modeled by the Japanese and Mongols.
15. The rule of Gaozong can best be described as:
- A. positive, since he implemented a number of beneficial policies like land redistribution
 - B. negative, since it was under his rule that the Khitan took over provinces in the north
 - C. negative, since he allowed the eunuchs to loot the imperial treasury
 - D. positive, since he successfully kept the Mongols out of southern China.
16. “Flying cash” was:
- A. the payment the government made to the Jin to keep them out of the south
 - B. a form of credit that allowed merchants to withdraw their money in different locations as needed
 - C. the name given to goods that China traded along the Silk Road
 - D. the money that the government was forced to pay out of the treasury to keep the peasants happy when land reform did not materialize
17. The man who reunited China after the collapse of the Han Dynasty and who established the Sui Dynasty was
- A. Wendi
 - B. Tang Taizong
 - C. Xuanzong
 - D. Li Bo

18. Urbanization during the Tang and the Song:
- A. struggled due to the bankruptcy of the imperial treasury
 - B. was limited to small but wealthy towns
 - C. flourished, with cities growing in size and offerings
 - D. was abandoned in favor of a more agrarian approach.
19. The primary emphasis of Confucianism was:
- A. on the need for a person to focus more on the natural world than other things
 - B. ancestor worship
 - C. focused on the value of self-reflection
 - D. concerned with the need to operate within proper relationships.
20. Which of the following was not a technological advance in China?
- A. Printing press
 - B. Compass
 - C. Water clock
 - D. Astrolabe

Medieval China: Multiple-Choice Quiz

Answer Key

1. D
2. C
3. A
4. B
5. A
6. D
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. D
11. C
12. A
13. B
14. C
15. A
16. B
17. A
18. C
19. D
20. D



China is the most populous country in the world, being the homeland of over one billion people. It is one of the major powers in international affairs today. A significant aspect of China is its long cultural and national history. The Chinese people have shared a common culture longer than any other civilization. For example, the Chinese writing system has been in existence for almost 4000 years. The Chinese imperial dynastic system of government, which continued for centuries, was established as early as 221 BCE. Although specific dynasties were overturned, the system survived into the 20th century.

Essential Questions

1. Why has China seen a constant cycle of unifying dynasties separated by times of civil war and chaos?
2. How did problems related to land ownership and the tax burden on the peasantry influence both the rise and the fall of China's medieval dynasties?
3. To what extent did China's imperial exam system bring about the selection of officials based on merit, and how did that exam system help China's rulers promote a more centralized and unified state?
4. Why was Confucianism such a dominant way of thinking among China's educated ruling elites in these centuries?
5. What has been the appeal of Buddhism to many Chinese, and why was it regarded with suspicion at times by some of China's rulers?
6. In what ways was China's "medieval" period a time of dynamic technological and economic change and development?

Before the Medieval Period

- Han Dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE): growth and expansion
- Mandate of Heaven
- Medieval China's three dynasties:
 - Sui (580–618)
 - Tang (618–906)
 - Song (960–1127)
- Recovery and a time of great glory and development



Zhang Qian, explorer during the Han dynasty, travels west

Under the Han dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE), China had grown and flourished as a major classical empire, exerting its influence in the East as the Roman Empire exerted its influence in the West. Chinese leaders governed by the principle of the Mandate of Heaven, a political and social philosophy which held that “Heaven” would always act in the best interest of the Chinese people. If a leader ruled unwisely, he would soon lose his authority, and “Heaven” would ensure that the “mandate” to rule would go to someone else.

Though China had expanded and become strong during their reign, the Han began to show signs of weakness that ultimately led to their collapse. After the fall of the Han, China experienced a period of uncertainty largely due to the fact that the country no longer had a strong central government.

At the time that the Roman Empire collapsed and what was left of that empire shifted east to Constantinople (in the late fifth century CE), China experienced a revival. After the Sui dynasty asserted control and reunified the country in the late sixth century, China once again became a powerful empire. Three major dynasties ruled China during the period following this restoration: the Sui (580–618), the Tang (618–906), and the Song (960–1127). Historians often refer to this period as “medieval China.” While China struggled with serious problems during this era, it also witnessed the growth of major cities and experienced a cultural flowering.

The Collapse of the Han Dynasty

- The Han Dynasty ended in 220 CE
- Strong regional states replaced the Han Dynasty
- “Period of the Three Kingdoms”



Map of the Three Kingdoms

In the same way that the late Roman Empire struggled with the pressure of invading groups, China, too, had to deal with the threat of a barbarian invasion. For the Han Dynasty, the invaders came from northern and central Asia and defenses against them further served to drain limited resources—both in terms of finances and government attention.

The Han Dynasty finally came to the brink of collapse after nearly a century of growing disintegration, conflict between rival warlords and factions, and general disillusionment with the government.

As the Han’s centralized government collapsed, a number of strong regional states developed, including the Shu in Sichuan, the Wu along the lower Yangzi, and the Wei in the north.

These different groups essentially operated as independent states and comprised rival warlords who fought among themselves for control and influence. The three groups (the Shu, Wu, and Wei) struggled with each other during the time period between the Han Dynasty and the Sui Dynasty in an era often referred to as the “Period of the Three Kingdoms.” This time period is often depicted as a rather glorious time, but in reality was a pretty dismal time in which to live.

Power Struggles Between the Han and the Sui



Taoist and alchemist Tao Hengjing

- People longed for centralized government
- Taoism
- Political instability did not result in a loss of culture

The warlords took advantage of the political vacuum and fought to improve their political power and territorial holdings. Many people in China, however, wanted to see a restoration of centralized control.

Due to the lack of any centralized government, plus the conflicts that erupted between the warlords, refugees from the north—including both peasants and educated wealthy elites—fled to the southern part of China to avoid the disarray. Despite the conflicts, creativity still flourished. For example, while the structured nature of the Confucian order essentially disappeared, Taoism thrived. Rather than emphasizing the need to function within one of the five basic types of relationships as taught in Confucianism, the Taoists taught that one should search for harmony with the forces of nature.

Regardless of the political break during this time period, there was still an ongoing flowering of culture that acted as a bridge between the Han and Sui dynasties.

Discussion Questions

1. Explain the concept of the “Mandate of Heaven.”
What sorts of things do you think would have to happen for people to speak of a Chinese dynasty as having lost the Mandate of Heaven?
2. The Han Dynasty is often compared with the Roman Empire, which existed at the same time. In what ways were the fall of these two great empires similar? How did they differ with regard to what followed?

1. The Mandate of Heaven was a political-social philosophy that served as the basic Chinese explanation for the success and failure of monarchs and states. The concept had to do with a general understanding that a regime or dynasty had the favor of heaven if it was successful, or had lost the favor of heaven and was doomed. Signs of this traditionally were civil unrest, famine, flood, drought, corruption in the imperial household, etc. (that is, a series of human or social and also natural disasters).
2. In the same way that the late Roman Empire struggled with the pressure of invading groups, China, too, had to deal with the threat of invasions. For both societies, the cost of defenses against outsiders were increasing to a point the central government could not sustain, etc.

The Sui Dynasty

- After the fall of the Han, warlords ruled China
- In 581, Yang Jian seized power and changed name to Emperor Wendi
- Reunited north and south to restore the empire
- Reestablished Confucianism



Emperor Wendi

After the fall of the Han Dynasty in 200 CE, warlords ruled China for the next three-and-a-half centuries. Then in the late sixth century, the Sui Dynasty was established by Yang Jian, who had been prime minister for the Northern Zhou warlords. After seizing power in the north, he renamed himself Emperor Wendi and set out to reassert imperial authority over all of China by reuniting north and south under his control.

Claiming he had the Mandate of Heaven to rule, Wendi defeated the ruler of the Chen kingdom in the south in 589, reuniting the two halves of China and restoring the empire. His successor Yang Di conquered northern Vietnam and assimilated it into the empire; however, he failed to conquer northern Korea or southern Manchuria.

The Sui Dynasty reestablished Confucianism as the central philosophy of the government and passed that legacy on to the dynasties that were to follow, like the Tang. Buddhists, however, also had a strong political presence in the Sui Dynasty.

Emperor Wendi's Reforms



Portrait of Emperor Wendi

- Land reforms improved position of the peasants
- Higher status for the militia
- Improved currency system
- Unification facilitated trade
- Strengthened governmental centralization

One of Wendi's goals was to improve the position of peasants by placing some land in their hands. In addition, he lightened the burden of forced labor on the peasants and decreased the tax burden that they carried. These reforms helped increase agricultural production, which in turn increased the population in China.

The emperor also raised the status of the militia, providing those who served in the military with their own land and giving them property rights. The result of this policy was the development of a very powerful, committed, and loyal military made up of primarily peasant farmers.

In order to improve economic stability, Wendi improved the currency system and created a standardized system of weights and measures.

The unification of north and south China opened up markets and trade routes that had been much more restricted during the time between the Han and the Sui. Trade began to thrive within China and between China and other regions.

Wendi wanted to ensure that the government was firmly in his control and that the people who served in the government were loyal to him instead of to local or regional interests. Consequently, he eliminated some local administrative positions and required that the people holding the remaining ones would transfer to a different position every three years. This policy decreased the likelihood that appointees could become entangled in local politics.

Yang Di's Construction Projects

- Repair projects
- The Grand Canal
- Large labor force
- Costs: financial and in human lives



Yang Di came to power in 604. During his reign, he instituted a number of massive building projects. He first turned his attention to repairing the Great Wall, which he saw as a critical element in China's defense that had not been worked on since the collapse of the Han. In addition, Yang Di worked to rebuild roads in order to improve the movement of people and goods throughout China. He also constructed granaries and irrigation systems in the increasingly populated regions of the Yangzi River Valley.

Yang Di's greatest construction project was the building of the 1200-mile Grand Canal, which connected the city of Hangzhou in the south with the city of Zhoujun (Beijing) in the north. Yang Di used the canal to transport the agricultural wealth and resources of the south to political and military centers in the north.

Yang Di's construction projects required enormous amounts of labor. For example, more than two million men took part in the rebuilding the city of Luoyang, one million more were forced to work on repairing the Great Wall and roads, and the Grand Canal project (which lasted seven years) required a labor force of five-and-a-half million people. To obtain the manpower he needed, Yang Di forced many commoners into mandatory service: anyone between the ages of 15 and 55 was considered fit for work. Many workers died on these construction projects, and Yang Di spent huge sums of money to get them completed.

The Collapse of the Sui



Yang Di, the last major Sui emperor

- Peasant rebellions
- Failed military campaigns
- Financial problems

A series of peasant rebellions broke out, partly because of discontent over forced labor and military reverses in Korea. Both Wendi and Yang Di had issued laws forbidding peasants to possess arms, but this did not stop them from securing them or revolting. There were more than one hundred revolts that involved more than a million peasants.

At the same time that the peasants were expressing their displeasure with the dynasty, Yang Di launched disastrous military campaigns in Korea and central Asia that required large levies of grain and men. The attempts to conquer both of these areas failed and further contributed to the dissatisfaction with the leadership.

The military efforts to put down the peasant revolts—as well as the expense of mobilizing and dispatching imperial troops in attempts to conquer territory—had a serious impact on the treasury.

The peasant uprisings, the failed military campaigns, and the precarious nature of the financial system made the dynasty susceptible to outside forces. In 618, the emperor was assassinated by his own ministers, and after only 30 years of existence, the Sui Dynasty came to an abrupt end.

Discussion Questions

1. What steps did Emperor Wendi take to restore order and help unify China once again after the Period of the Three Kingdoms?
2. What was the main value of the Grand Canal, which was one of Wendi's major construction projects?
3. The Sui Dynasty collapsed in 618, just 30 years after it began. Why do you think the Sui Dynasty was so short-lived?

1. He gave peasants and his soldiers more land to farm, he made the tax system less burdensome, he improved the central government's administration, he carried out major building projects that enhanced trade and production, etc.
2. It made it easier to transport large amounts of food from the rich agricultural regions of southern China to northern China.
3. Answers may vary, but students should see that the enormous building projects and military adventures drained resources, caused suffering among the millions conscripted to work on them.

The Tang Dynasty

- Li Yuan
- Emperor Tang Taizong
- Successful policies



Li Yuan



Tang Taizong

Li Yuan was a Sui official. He originally had supported the Sui, but he came to believe that Yang Di was hurting the empire, and so he led a charge to seize power. The peasant wars at the end of the Sui Dynasty had decreased the power of the landlords, which enabled Li Yuan to lead a successful uprising, sweeping the Sui Dynasty from power and seizing authority for himself. He began the Tang Dynasty, which would last until 907.

Li Yuan abdicated the throne for his son Tang Taizong (627–649) who is remembered as a benevolent leader, a good general, and a successful moderator of the harsh rule of the Sui Dynasty. The title that he took, *Taizong*, means “great ancestor.”

Under his leadership, the capital of Chang’an was constructed, peasant banditry became less common, the price of rice remained low, and the tax on peasants remained relatively low. A number of other important policies were instituted during the early years of the Tang, including the maintenance of an extensive communication network, the use of the equal-field system (which sought to fairly distribute land in order to avoid concentration of ownership in the hands of a few), and the development of the “bureaucracy of merit.”

Gaozong: Domestic Policies

- Restored the feudal order
- Land reform for peasants
- State involvement in economic production
- Other economic endeavors
- Education and governing officials
- Growth of towns and cities



When Gaozong came to power after Taizong, he took measures to reestablish the previous, feudal social structure and won great political and military power. During his reign, many peasants received land under a reform program. In addition, Gaozong increased work on irrigation, and the rural economy prospered and grew.

The government also helped establish workshops that produced carpets, brocade, and metal objects (including coins). In order to finance these activities, the government generated money from land taxes and also tightly controlled its monopolies on items such as salt, tea, grain, and alcohol.

China also had a number of other important and successful economic activities, such as shipbuilding, bronze-mirror production in Yangzhou, brocade and salt production in Sichuan, porcelain manufacturing in Jiangxi, and mining interests that produced silver, iron, tin, and lead. Trade continued to grow and prosper both in the rural and urban areas, facilitated by the Grand Canal and other transportation routes. In addition, Gaozong also rebuilt roads in China and constructed post stations along the roads where messengers could safely stop and rest.

Both Taizong and Gaozong were remembered for their emphasis on education and the conscientious nature of the officials who served them in their courts. Their governments emphasized the benevolence of Confucianism and the Confucian understanding of relationships. Under both of these leaders, the population of the country grew and the empire prospered.

Under Gaozong, the capital of Chang'an grew and became a center for international trade and cultural interaction. Several towns also developed along rivers and seacoasts.

Gaozong: Foreign Interaction



Buddhist statue

- Expansion: Korea, Northern Vietnam, southern Manchuria, and Tibet
- Trade with central and western Asia
- Spread of Chinese culture
- Religious missionaries

The empire grew under Gaozong's leadership. Korea was reunited and made a tributary state for China, keeping most of its autonomy in exchange for payments to the Chinese government. Northern Vietnam, Xinjiang, and southern Manchuria were also incorporated into the empire, and Tibet was controlled by the Chinese empire for a time (although that control did not last long). Gaozong set up a frontier-governor's residency to help administer the far-flung territories he had acquired.

As the empire grew, traders came from the West, affording the Chinese the opportunity to acquire goods from the Arab world while also introducing Chinese goods to the West. The Chinese had developed a number of valuable commodities (such as paper, silk, and porcelain) that became highly valued in other parts of the world.

Religious missionaries took advantage of the trade routes to spread their faith. In addition to Buddhism and Christianity, Islam also began to spread along the trade routes and eventually made its way into China in the late 600s.

Wu Zhao

- Concubine of Gaozong
- “Emperor” of a new dynasty
- Backlash against women



Wu Zhao (also known as Wu Zetian) was a concubine of Gaozong who came to have considerable influence over him. When he died, she actually ruled for some time through puppet emperors. She declared a new dynasty and proclaimed herself its first emperor, making her the only female emperor in Chinese history (690–705). Philosophically, she justified her position as emperor by emphasizing Buddhist beliefs in addition to Confucian ones. In other words, she rejected the Confucian teachings about relationships that placed women in a subordinate role and embraced the more inclusive nature of Buddhism. She attempted to make Buddhism the state religion and she commissioned many Buddhist paintings and sculptures. Her “dynasty” did not survive her.

Her use of Buddhism as justification for her rule troubled Confucians, who believed she was trying to upset the current structure in China. Later Tang writers described their great dislike for her, arguing that she violated the basic Confucian principles found in the Five Relationships. Although she seems to have been a fairly effective leader, later writers accused her of all sorts of atrocities. Such criticism is representative of the negative view of women—and especially of powerful women—that many in society adopted.

Class Struggle During the Tang Dynasty



- Class distinctions
- Disagreements within the ruling class

Despite its land-redistribution policies, the government was unable to fully deal with the problems of the peasants. Gradually their dissatisfaction increased, setting the stage for future conflict.

China not only had to deal with the implications of sharp social distinctions but also with conflict within the ruling class. Struggles over imperial influence marked the beginning of the decline of the Tang Dynasty. Various groups contended for power: generals broke away in the hopes of seizing control of the government, rival factions among court bureaucrats fought among themselves for influence, and some officials looked for ways to curb the power of the court eunuchs (men who had been castrated and therefore posed no threat to the women of the court).

An Lushan Rebellion



Xuanzong fleeing to Suchuan

- Rebel leader An Lushan
- Xuanzong fled capital
- Tang dynasty prevailed



Lady Yang, the Princess Consort

- Lady Yang
- Economic and political implications

Forces under the leadership of An Lushan were able to take advantage of the Tang militia, and they managed to capture and sack Chang'an. In light of the collapse of the capital, Emperor Xuanzong, who had come to power in 713, was forced to flee to the south before he could organize a force to recapture the capital. Xuanzong was finally able to muster enough force to defeat the rebels by making alliances with central Asian nomads (Vigors). This would have an effect on politics, as these nomads collected their own taxes, raised their own armies, and did not seek the permission of the Tang court to pass titles to their heirs. An Lushan was later murdered by his own son in 757.

Xuanzong also experienced personal tragedy as a result of the rebellion. He had taken up with his son's concubine, Lady Yang, who attempted to exercise control over the emperor (along with her relatives). The story of Yang Guifei became an important historical-mythological image in Chinese history. When Xuanzong had to abandon the capital in 755, the guards blamed her and strangled her. Xuanzong was overwhelmed by the sorrow he felt at the loss of Lady Yang and he resigned as emperor. This event became a major turning point in the history of the Tang Dynasty and marked the end of the height of its glory.

In addition to causing political turmoil, the rebellion undermined the economy as the cities were looted and trade disrupted.

Tang Government After the Rebellion

- Power of regional administrators
- Power of court eunuchs
- New legal code and administrative procedures
- Backlash against some foreign ideas, especially Buddhism



A Tang-era emperor

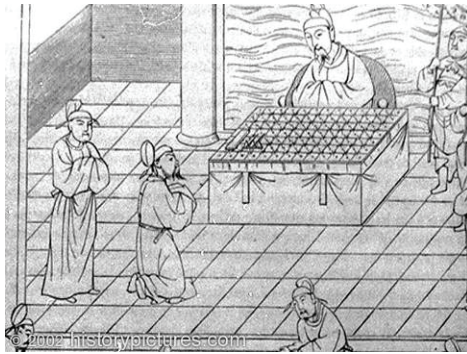
After the rebellion, many military and regional leaders became virtually independent. Instead of helping consolidate Tang rule, the regional administrators actually weakened it as they worked for their own interests. They pocketed state tax money, organized private armies, and established hereditary positions.

At the same time that regional administrators were increasing their own personal power, the government became dominated by court eunuchs, who grabbed political power, controlled the military, and dictated the appointment and dismissal of officials. The eunuchs came to exert so much power that they were able to depose emperors and put new ones into power. For example, the eunuchs picked eight of the nine emperors after Xianzong.

The government did issue a new law code and administrative procedures to try and stabilize the rule of the dynasty. These new codes created an organized set of laws that were divided by category and accompanied by a list of punishments.

A resistance to foreign ideas developed, especially towards Buddhism. Some people were dissatisfied with the amount of land that the Buddhist monasteries controlled, while others disapproved of their influence at court. There was an overall backlash against what some perceived to be the increasingly cosmopolitan nature of the empire. Consequently, Confucianism experienced a resurgence because people saw it as a “native” belief system rather than a foreign one.

The Bureaucracy of Merit



Taking exams in the presence of the emperor

- Competitive exams for government positions
- Altered the class of people who held these positions
- Conflicts between the new and established officials
- “Rule of avoidance”

Rather than choosing men for governmental positions based solely on recommendations from members of the nobility, the government increasingly turned to the use of a set of competitive exams based on a curriculum that focused on the classical Chinese literature and philosophy.

As a result, men from ordinary landholding and merchant families could potentially gain positions in government, a situation which became known as the “bureaucracy of merit.” The exam system, however, did not provide complete equality of opportunity: to pass the exams, a person needed an education that not everyone could afford. The exams also did not determine what sort of governmental position people who passed would receive—in other words, those who did the best on the exams did not necessarily get the best jobs. Finally, the exam system did not fully eliminate the influence and power of the nobles, for many were still able to secure appointments to positions based on family connections.

The exams created a new class of government officials who often found themselves at odds with the old nobles and bureaucrats who had gained their positions by heredity or influence. The old elite officials did not like the idea of having to share power with these new administrators.

The bureaucracy of merit involved something known as the “rule of avoidance,” which prevented an administrator from serving in his native region and also limited an administrator’s term in a given district to three years, after which he would be moved. The rule was designed to get administrators to develop a genuine interest in the area in which they served instead of worrying about a long-term position in that area or becoming too preoccupied with imperial ambitions.

Role of Buddhism

- Spiritual and material influence
- Backlash during the Tang Dynasty
- Government moved against the Buddhists



Buddhist statue from Yungang Rock Temple

Buddhism spread to China from India. The Chinese government initially accepted Buddhism because it stressed a spiritual function for emperors (to bring people to Buddhism) and because it taught that an emperor would receive protection as leader, which could also prevent harm from coming to the people. Chinese leaders looked to Buddhist monasteries for support, and in return, the monasteries were rewarded with land grants and tax exemptions. Buddhist monasteries grew in power and influence.

Buddhist writings called *sutras* were brought to China and translated into Chinese. The religion also proved to be readily adaptable to local ideas, cultures, and languages, helping it spread widely throughout China.

Resistance to Buddhism, which had always existed, increased during the Tang Dynasty, as there was a call to avoid “foreign” things and to support native Chinese ideas—especially Confucianism and its encouragement of morality and focus on life on earth, rather than on theology and the afterlife. The Confucians had also opposed the Buddhist practices of burning the dead and remaining celibate because they violated the Confucian principle of familial continuity.

Some came to see Buddhism as a challenge to the state. Members of the imperial palace began to suggest that the Buddhists caused political unrest within China, and the government attempted to limit the number of monks and monasteries. Though this attempt was unsuccessful, it highlighted resentment over Buddhist wealth and spurred a reassertion of Confucian ideals. Ultimately, the government confiscated and destroyed many monasteries and temple lands in order to weaken Buddhism’s influence and to gain control over lost tax revenue. Buddhist institutions changed as a result of the purge of 845, but Buddhism was, if anything, stronger and more influential during the Song dynasty.

Chang'an's Splendor



Polo, a game from Persia, was a favorite sport in Chang'an

- Cosmopolitan city
- City design demonstrated planning and grandeur
- The marketplace
- Culture and pastimes
- Architecture

The splendor of the Tang Dynasty was most apparent in the capital city of Chang'an. Home to more than a million people within the city walls and a million more outside, Chang'an's architecture and design reflected diffusion and contact with other cultures. Covering 30 square miles and surrounded by massive walls, the carefully planned city consisted of 110 city blocks that each functioned as a separate administrative unit. Within the city, people lived in rectangular wards that were each surrounded by a wall with a gate that was closed at night.

As an economic hub, goods of all types flowed in and out of Chang'an. Roads, caravan routes, sea routes, and the Grand Canal were all integral to the city's commerce. The city's vibrant marketplace contained restaurants and street stalls. Chang'an had a worldly and elegant culture. Open spaces and special theaters were used for various forms of entertainment, including both foreign and Chinese acrobatics, magic shows, dramas, operas, and skits. One favorite pastime in Chang'an was the game of polo, which had come from Persia and permitted both men and women to play.

The architectural golden age that occurred during the first half of the Tang Dynasty could be clearly seen in Chang'an. Reflecting the popularity of Buddhism at the time, the city had many grand Buddhist temples and pagodas. The emperor's palace, designed to inspire awe in those who viewed it, faced south down a 500-foot wide thoroughfare that led to one of the city's major gates. The Japanese capital of Kyoto was later modeled after Chang'an.

Tang Innovations

- Printing
- Papermaking
- Shipbuilding
- A variety of other Chinese inventions



Papermaking

The Chinese invented both block printing with individual characters made of wood, ceramics, or metal. The Chinese also perfected the art of papermaking (*hinise*).

The Chinese did extensive work in shipbuilding. The government's ships were mainly designed for the transport of grain and traveled the Grand Canal and the seas between the coastal cities. The Chinese also built commercial ships with a much larger carrying capacity that were designed to sail to far-off places such as the Philippines for trade.

Other inventions, innovations, and improvements during the Tang dynasty included cast iron, the crossbow, gunpowder, the compass, the use of coal as fuel, the waterwheel, paper currency, the wheelbarrow, wallpaper, silk, and porcelain.

Foreign Interaction



Woodcut of a woman winding silk

- Reestablishment of tributary relationships
- Contact with southwest Asia
- Changes in clothing
- New pastimes
- Diffusion of crops and foodstuffs
- Increasing trade, including silk

The Tang revived the Han practice of creating tributary relationships. In this system, if a foreign nation “acknowledged” the authority of the Chinese and demonstrated submission, they were basically allowed to govern themselves without risk of interference or invasion from the Chinese.

In northern China, clothing styles changed. Working peasants stopped wearing robes and adopted pants like those used by the horse-riding peoples of central Asia. Cotton came to replace hemp as the main fabric for making clothes. China began to produce its own cotton crops, breaking the monopoly held by central Asia. At the same time, however, China lost its monopoly on the silk market as production spread out along trade routes. Nevertheless, Chinese silk remained superior in quality, and silk makers developed increasingly complex styles and patterns.

China became the primary distributor of porcelain because it had an abundance of the type of clay needed to make it. The growing demand for sugar, tea, and spices also served to spur international trade.

Art in the Tang Dynasty

- Wu Daozi, figure painter
- Yang Huizhi, sculptor
- Horses and foreign visitors



Mounted aristocrats in procession

Although he was one of China's greatest painters, all of Wu Daozi's work had been lost; however, his contemporaries told many stories about the greatness of his work. In fact, most painting from the Tang Dynasty has been lost, except for a few pictures on the walls of tombs and work preserved in such places as the cave-temple at Dunhuang in western China.

Yang Huizhi was known for his accuracy to form and expression in his sculptures.

Along with landscapes and figures, Tang artists often painted horses and created portraits of foreigners who visited Chang'an.

Tang Art



Ceramic rider-woman

A Tang-period stone sculpture of the Buddha

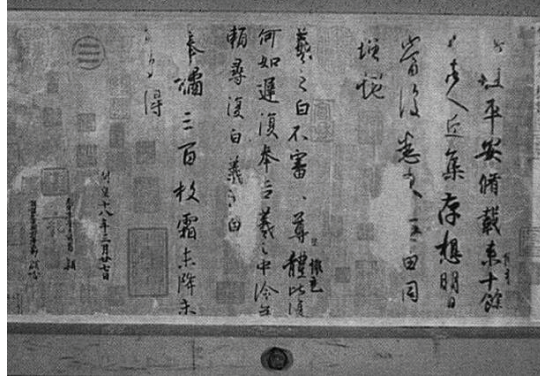


Glazed pottery and figurines were used to furnish tombs and adorn houses and palaces. These figures were the most prevalent pieces of art during the Tang era.

Buddhist art focused on statues and wall painting, and was fairly popular among the people.

Tang Literature

- Poetry
- Han Yu and plain style
- Woodblock printing



Calligraphy

In the *pian* style of Chinese poetry, all sentences run together in pairs. Poet Han Yu advocated the use of a more plain, literary style. He was a pioneer in freestyle poetry and stressed the use of a rational approach. During the Tang dynasty, writers created dictionaries, almanacs, Buddhist scriptures, and the *Nine Classics* of the Confucians—all of which were reproduced by woodblock printing.

Poetry: Li Bo



*"I drink alone with no one
to share.
Raising up my cup, I welcome
the moon...
We frolic in revels suited
to Spring"*

Li Bo

- Wrote over 20,000 poems
- Legend of his death

Among the many great poets of the time, three stand out—Li Bo, Du Fu, and Bai Juyi. Of the more than 20,000 poems that Li Bo wrote, more than 1800 have survived. A fascinating legend surrounds Li Bo's death: The story goes that he drunkenly leaned out of a boat to embrace the reflection of the moon on the water, fell in, and drowned. While it is an intriguing tale, many historians doubt its truth.

Other Poets



Du Fu

- Du Fu
- Bai Juyi

Du Fu focused on the conditions of the peasants and on human troubles. He lived through several rebellions and included some issues associated with the rebellions in his poetry.

Bai Juyi used a popular style and composed poems about contemporary culture and society.

The Great Peasant Uprising

- Scramble for land
- Displaced many peasants
- Heavy taxation
- Peasant revolts in 860 and 874
- Peasants held Chang'an for two years



Depiction of a Chinese peasant revolt

Merchants, nobles, officials, and others all wanted land, as did Buddhist temples and monasteries which wanted to increase their holdings in China. In the scramble to acquire property, more and more peasants ended up losing their lands. This only compounded the unhappiness and anger of the peasants. Corrupt officials already made heavy demands on them and there were also a variety of taxes the peasants had to shoulder.

In 860, several localized revolts broke out; then in 874, a widespread peasant uprising revolt took place. The rebels managed to capture Chang'an and organized their own government. They held the city for more than two years, but were ultimately driven out of the city by Tang government forces.

Tang Decline



Weakened agriculture in the north forced many people to emigrate south

- Population began moving south
- Weakened imperial economy
- Weakened central government
- Decreased position of peasants

Since the north suffered from drought and erosion, the south had to shoulder the burden of crop production for most of China. Many people emigrated to the south because of the better agricultural opportunities there. By the late Tang Dynasty, most of the empire's revenue came from the south.

Local military commanders acquired power as the government gave them more and more authority to do whatever was necessary to hold back foreign invasions and to put down revolts like the An Lushan Rebellion. Local governors thus began to gain power at the expense of the centralized government.

Land grabs by tax-exempt groups meant that peasants and small landowners had to contribute an increasingly larger portion of the tax burden. Consequently, total revenues fell despite new taxes the government placed on households and trade. More and more people turned to banditry to find financial relief.

Collapse of the Tang Dynasty

- An Lushan Rebellion
- Ineffective control over military and court officials
- Huang Chao and other rebellions
- Usurpation of Tang power in 907
- The Ten Kingdoms period



Mounted Khitan noble dressed in Chinese silk

The An Lushan Rebellion had revealed weaknesses in the Tang dynasty. Armies had become increasingly staffed by mercenaries, which cost more money. Troops began to develop regional loyalties, and regional armies increased in power. The Tang army decreased in its overall effectiveness. At the same time, court eunuchs continued to secure more court power.

A series of rebellions began in the north in 874. The most destructive of these later uprisings, known as the Huang Chao, took place in 879–881 and attracted hundreds of thousands of peasants. Though all these rebellions were ultimately put down, they resulted in regional commanders gaining more power. Ultimately, these powerful regional leaders were able to seize control, and in 907 the Tang Dynasty collapsed.

With a centralized Chinese government gone, rulers of the various districts and regions tried to grab more power for themselves. Fighting continued among generals and an era known as the “Ten Kingdoms period” existed until 960. Groups in the north took advantage of the chaos and began to draw off territory from the edges of the provinces. For example, the Khitan, a northern nomadic group, seized control of 16 border provinces. China would not recover from the chaos and the civil war of this period until the establishment of the Song Dynasty.

Discussion Questions

1. One could say that part of the Tang Dynasty's early success was due to the way it copied and improved on some of the Sui Dynasty's best policies. In what ways does this seem to be true?
2. The Tang Dynasty stressed Confucianism as the basis for the exams by which top imperial officials were chosen. What do you know about Confucianism, and why do you think it was given such an important role in the selection of government officials?
3. The Tang Dynasty's dates are always given as 618–906. But some might say this long time span makes the era seem much more unified and stable than it was. How does the An Lushan Rebellion help explain why some historians might say this?

1. It attempted to equalize land holding through the “equal-field” system, it reduced taxes at first, it undertook major irrigation projects, it became involved in key economic activities such as shipbuilding, salt production.
2. Answers will vary and should be discussed. Confucianism stressed careful respect for tradition and ritual, and it focused on preserving a set of hierarchical relationships in which subordinates would defer to superiors in a way that reinforced respect for authority.
3. During this rebellion and at other times, China fell into periods of bitter division and civil war. The entire time span was not one of constant unity and stability.

Discussion Questions (continued)

4. The exam system, or bureaucracy of merit, was seen as a way to stabilize the political order and keep unified central governmental control. Why did China's rulers think it could do this?
5. What evidence is there for seeing the Tang era as one of great economic and industrial growth and innovation?
6. Why do you think China's Tang rulers in the mid-800s came to mistrust Buddhism as strongly as they did?
7. Peasants' difficulties in holding onto their lands and their increasing tax burden fueled uprisings and peasant revolts in the late 800s. These revolts were put down, but they still contributed to the fall of the Tang Dynasty. How?

4. Answers will vary but should stress the way the exam system emphasized conservative Confucian values and the way it created a uniform set of officials whose loyalties were to the imperial government rather than their local regions.
5. The many innovations such as cast-iron production, gunpowder, the compass, the use of coal as fuel, the waterwheel, paper currency, silk, and porcelain; also the growth of the city of Chang'an.
6. Answers may vary. Buddhism put more stress on the individual quest for spiritual enlightenment and less on the need to conform to family and social roles and expectations. In addition, Buddhist monasteries became wealthy and powerful independent institutions potentially threatening to the rulers.
7. The local leaders and military commanders given authority to put down rebellions soon carved out independent bases of power for themselves, challenging the Tang Dynasty's control.

The Song Dynasty



Emperor Taizu

- 960–1279
- Unification
- Prosperity

As the Tang government collapsed in the south, the Song Dynasty arose in the north. Early Song rulers focused on ending the chaos that followed the fall of the Tang. Emperor Taizu saw unification as the most pressing need and subdued many competing factions and peoples. The only group he could not defeat was the Liao Dynasty, which had been created by the nomadic Khitan people and posed a constant threat to the Song.

The Song Dynasty was more centralized than the Tang, with a government organized more strictly along bureaucratic lines in both military and financial affairs. The early Song era was a golden age of good government, prosperity, and creativity.

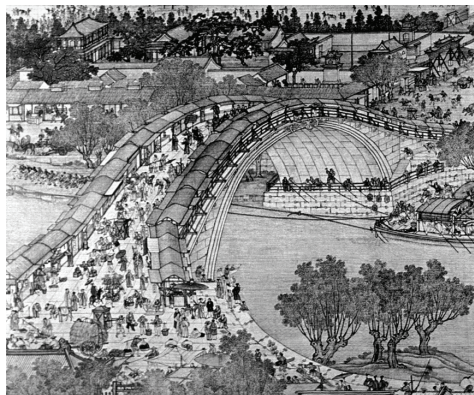
Song Dynasty, Mid-11th Century



The Song alone among the major Chinese dynasties never entered upon an expansionist phase. Song military weakness has often been related to the dynasty's emphasis upon civilian control and centralization of military authority in the capital at the expense of autonomous military commands in the border regions. In reality, the Song military machine was quite formidable—perhaps the most powerful in the world at the time, with some one million men under arms and in possession of that era's most advanced weapons. The Song's inability to expand its empire came largely because it faced an unrelenting succession of vigorous and determined central-Asian mounted armies that were able to quickly grasp and counter Song military techniques.

Reestablishment of Central Control Under the Song

- Economic recovery
- Established capital at Kaifeng
- Population increased
- Cities recovered



Scene from the capital city of Kaifeng

The Song reestablished central control in several ways. The government introduced irrigation and land reclamation efforts, but because the land was still mostly consolidated in the hands of a few nobles and landlords, the peasants did not benefit much from the agricultural recovery that ensued.

The early Song capital was established at Kaifeng, a major commercial and manufacturing center served by the Grand Canal. The prosperity and growing trade of the Song Dynasty resulted in population growth, as China during this era reached more than 100 million people, with an increasing number living in the developing cities.

During the course of the Song Dynasty, cities grew to accommodate the rising population. Though cities became crowded, the government was attentive to the needs of the people and worked to keep them as safe and comfortable as possible by managing the water supply, dealing with waste, working to prevent fires, and building restaurants, shops, theaters, and parks.

Song Governmental Development



Scholar-philosopher Ouyang Xiu

- Recovered power from regional elites and the military
- Rebuilt the scholar-gentry
- Emperor appointed new regional leaders

The Song Dynasty's civil government was based on Confucian principles and looked to consolidate the emperor's power and limit that of the regional elites and the military. The early Song also eliminated the power of the eunuchs and the great landed families in order to avoid conflicts like the ones that had occurred at the end of the Tang Dynasty.

The government rebuilt the core of the administration around the scholar-gentry (those who participated in the examination system) rather than the eunuchs. The civil servants who came to government through the examination system had no power base of their own—therefore, they had to rely on the government for their positions and opportunities. Their loyalty to the government meant that they could serve to check the power of the elites.

The emperor attempted to provide more of a sense of stability and control by appointing a civil administrator (like a magistrate) and a military official to each region. In addition, the emperor appointed a number of other officials (such as tax collectors, imperial censors, and inspectors) who had overlapping jurisdiction so that they could check each other's power. The end result was the creation of a very efficient governmental system.

Age of the Civil Government

- Drew from the best and most educated
- Three levels of advancement in the exam system
- Officials' performance regularly evaluated
- Good government and stability



Exam Hall at Nanjing

During this time period, the government expanded the civil-service exams, recruiting for its highest positions an educated group who had to pass three levels of exams. While in theory the system was open to anyone, in reality it usually drew from the upper classes, because only they could afford the education needed to pass the exams. More men passed the test than ever before, however, and the bureaucracy expanded, offering more and better-paid positions.

To ensure anonymity, students were identified by numbers rather than names, and scribes copied down students' answers. The civil service exam had three levels—about ten percent of the students who took the exam passed the first level and went to the capital to sit for the second level. Passing the first level meant that a person could now be considered a member of the “gentry.” After the second round of tests, another ten percent passed and went to the palace to take a third round of tests. Many students would attempt a test several times in an effort to secure an imperial position. Passing the test could radically improve one's social position, but failure could bankrupt a family and result in social ruin.

Once in office, officials were regularly evaluated on their job performance. Good performance reviews made one eligible for promotions within the system; poor evaluations meant a person would get passed over for other opportunities. Although instances of positions being sold or elites' recommending people for jobs still occurred, the government worked hard to make certain that higher-level positions in the government were filled by people who had passed through the examination system and who had demonstrated competence in their jobs.

The Song and the Economy

- Heavy government investment
- Expansion
- Increased revenues
- Metal and coal mining, shipbuilding



A Chinese coin

The Song's centralized government allowed China to expand its economic ventures and invest in many different industries. Government policies and investments, along with technological improvements and innovations, helped spark an economic recovery.

As the Song economy grew, commercial interests and merchants rose to a prominent position in society, towns and cities grew and offered more economic opportunities to people, and trade with foreign countries increased.

The government, determined to exercise greater control of China's resources, began to crack down on tax evasion by large, rural estates. A finance minister helped collect taxes from these estates and monitor government expenditures. At its height, the Song Dynasty maintained a surplus and for a while took in three times what the Tang had.

Under the Song, gold, silver, copper, iron ore, tin, lead, and coal were mined and used on a large scale. In the 11th century, China probably produced more iron and metal goods than Europe did until the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the mid-18th century.

Shipbuilding flourished and innovations such as human-powered paddlewheels were introduced. The government also became involved in the economic development of the country and hired people to work in a number of industries, including smelting works, cotton mills, and armories.

The Economy and Foreign Contact

- Korea as tributary state
- Trade increased



Cultivation and processing of tea

China allowed states like Korea to become tributary states rather than trying to fully conquer them. This prevented the drain of resources that would have inevitably accompanied military conquest and administration.

Trade continued to expand as China produced metal goods, tea, silk, salt, rice, and other goods. Chinese farmers made use of new crops like fast-ripening rice from Vietnam. New crops and other agricultural improvements (such as harnessing oxen and buffalo, heavy iron plows, etc.) increased the food supply, which in turn caused an increase in population. By 1200, China held about 115 million people.

Paper Money and Finance



Earliest extant paper money printed on woodblock

- Emperor Zhenzong
- Promissory notes
- “Flying cash”
- Taxation and expenditures

The idea of credit had already been used during the Tang Dynasty as a practical element of facilitating long-distance trade, but it became more fully developed under the Song. When Zhenzong became emperor in 998, he saw a need to issue paper money in various forms. The government flooded the market with paper currency, resulting in an inflation which caused the money to lose much of its value.

In addition to government-issued money, the Chinese also used a type of currency called “flying cash”—certificates accepted as guarantees for hard currency that could be collected through established credit networks. Flying cash allowed merchants to deposit money or wares in one location and withdraw the equivalent at a different location. This decreased the chances of getting robbed of large sums while traveling.

Financially, the Song began to experience problems. Inflation forced the government to look for new sources of revenue by increasing taxes, selling monopolies, and providing incentives to merchants. The population probably doubled during this time, but tax revenues did not keep up. Old patterns of elites and landholders’ evading taxes resurfaced, leaving a greater burden on peasants.

Expenditures, especially for defense in the north, increased; the military took up to 80 percent of the government’s budget. In addition, the Song government paid them substantial subsidies of silk and silver in an effort to keep northern threats like the Khitan and the Xi Xia at bay—a further drain on the weakened economy.

Wang Anshi



Wang Anshi

- Internal weakness and foreign threats
- Wang Anshi appointed chief councillor
- Directed reforms against large landholders and merchants
- Financial stability

Chief Councillor Wang Anshi tried to revise governmental policies—especially financial ones—in an effort to stabilize the empire. Heavy tax burdens and tribute demanded of them by groups like the Khitan and the Western Xia pushed many peasants deeper into poverty. To further complicate things, a famine in 1023 led to hunger riots.

Wang Anshi wanted to address these domestic problems to insure that the country would be strong enough to resist external attacks. He introduced reforms directed specifically against the large landholders and merchants in an effort to improve the position of the poor, craftsmen, petty traders, and small landowners.

Military and Civil Reforms



Wang Anshi

Military

- Provisions for organizing and equipping the army
- Troop quotas
- Improved cavalry

Civil

- Expanded the number of governmental schools
- Advocated changes in the nature of the examinations

Laws were enacted to organize the army, equip it with new weapons, and strengthen the defenses of the country. Wang Anshi hoped to increase China's military capability by requiring regions to provide quotas of trained militia; he also pushed to raise the quality of troops by providing more training and better supplies.

Cavalry troops had struggled because they had lost control over chief breeding areas in the north and the northwest to nomads. The government sought to buy up horses for distribution to peasant families in the north, with the understanding that a member of each family should be available if needed for the imperial cavalry.

The government also enacted civil reforms, beginning by aiming to increase the pool of candidates who could hold official positions. One reform expanded the number of governmental educational facilities open to those who otherwise would be excluded from the examination system because they could not afford the cost of attending a private school.

Wang Anshi also wanted to alter the imperial examinations so that they included practical problems that focused on administration abilities and aptitude, rather than just testing applicants on their ability to memorize classic texts.

Fall of the Northern Song



Annual tributes of silk and silver to the Khitan drained Chinese finances

- Foreign appeasement and internal repression
- Ongoing financial strain
- Treaty with the Khitan in 1004
- The Qiang invasion

The Song government had to deal with both internal and external problems. In addition to the threats of peasant rebellion, foreign groups had also begun to attack China's borders.

Chronic overspending and outlays for tribute undermined China's finances. The Song also ceded territory to border tribes to keep them from invading. To try and keep the Khitan from seizing more Chinese territory, the Song signed an agreement with them that required the Chinese to pay 100,000 ounces of silver and 200,000 rolls of silk in annual tribute. The treaty was perceived as a national disgrace and was a huge drain on Chinese finances.

At the same time, the Qiang people invaded and occupied regions of China, establishing the kingdom of the Xi Xia. The Song tried to placate them with silver and silk, further weakening China's financial situation.

Founding of the Jin

- The Jurchen attacked the Khitan in 1114
- The Song cooperated in the attack, hoping to reclaim territory from the Khitan
- Nuzhen of the Jin seized power from the Song



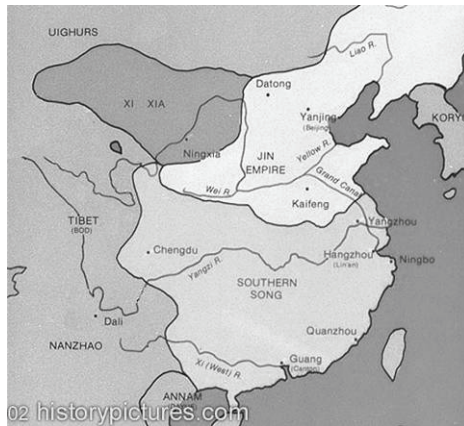
Song governor Hui Zong, credited with weakening the military

The Jurchens, another northern tribe, attacked and conquered the Khitan in 1114. The Song cooperated with them in their attack on the Khitan, hoping that a Jurchen victory would allow the Chinese to reclaim some northern territory, especially the city of Nanjing (Nanking). Instead of working with the Song to reclaim lost territory, however, the Jurchen moved to overthrow the Song, who mistakenly believed that they could take advantage of the Jurchen.

The Song governor Hui Zong had allowed the government to grow weak, devoting resources to the pursuit of luxury rather than military readiness. For example, he had rare flowers planted and designed elaborate palace decoration but did not build up defenses or strengthen the armed forces. The Jurchen sacked the city of Nanjing instead of helping the Song recover it.

The northern portion of the Song empire fell to the Jin, and the Jurchen leader Nuzhen seized power and established the Jin Dynasty in 1115. The northern Song leaders fled and reestablished a power base in the south.

Establishment of the Southern Song



- New government in 1127
- Boundary with the Jin
- The capital, Hangzhou

Map of the Southern Song

The Southern Song dynasty was established in the city of Hangzhou in 1127. An 1142 peace treaty fixed the boundary between the Jin and the Song, and the Song agreed to pay an annual tribute to the Jin.

The Southern Song incorporated many of the same societal expectations that had existed in the north—peasant taxation, land allocation, etc. The government also maintained the same basic structure and institutions.

Hangzhou, the Southern Song capital, along with other cities, became thriving urban centers. A number of towns became relatively prosperous, and port cities like Guangzhou developed to facilitate overseas trade.

Trade and the Song



Silk was a highly traded commodity in the Southern Song

- Sea routes to southeast Asia and India
- Ports
- Navigational technology
- Agriculture
- Foreign and regional trade

The Southern Song developed a network of trade routes and a number of important ports like Guangzhou. These ports came to play a very important role because many traditional trade routes became cut off when the Song lost territory. The Chinese continued to trade paper, silk, and porcelain for items such as Persian rugs and tapestries, aromatic woods, and spices.

Ports developed up and down the southeast coast to cater to this burgeoning ocean trade. As more and more foreign merchants came to China to participate in trade, cities actually developed foreign quarters in which they could live.

Chinese technological advancement also continued. Navigational techniques improved, helping facilitate trade. Larger ships were developed that could hold more than 600 people and cargo, used multiple masts to improve navigability and speed, had separate watertight compartments to protect the cargo, and employed a sternpost rudder for better steering.

Agriculturally, the south was much more productive than the north. The south grew crops like rice, beans, mulberries, cotton, and wheat, and had very high yields. This agricultural production supported a large population, and the success of agriculture allowed more people to take jobs outside of agriculture to pursue urban jobs and professions.

A number of large interprovincial trade networks also arose, exchanging items such as porcelain, lacquerware, iron, metal, sugar, paper, and printed books.

The Song Economy

- Urban centers
- Government revenues
- Wealthier than north
- Corruption, exploitation of peasants
- Shaky currency



Marketplaces were popular in Hangzhou, the Southern Song capital

Many trade goods ended up in the hands of the growing numbers of rich families in the cities, who built grand houses which they decorated lavishly. Cities grew for a variety of reasons: movement from the north, increased food supply, relocation as people sought jobs outside the agricultural sector, and a flourishing economy that benefited from interregional and international trade.

Cities contained a variety of shops, including drugstores, artisans' stalls, bookshops (from the boom in printing), and even pet shops. The Southern Song capital of Hangzhou was a very sophisticated city crisscrossed by canals and bridges. Renowned for its wealth, cleanliness, and diversions, Hangzhou contained marketplaces, parks, gardens, bathhouses, restaurants, and performance venues.

Much of the government's revenue came from taxes on manufactured goods, customs duties on foreign trade, and money generated from state-run monopolies on products like salt, tea, and alcohol.

The Southern Song economy was booming, and the empire experienced overall economic stability—though problems did still exist. Along with new wealth came corruption and exploitation of the poor. Rich landowners continued to slip off the tax rolls, increasing pressure on the peasants. Some peasants turned to banditry as many saw their standard of living decrease; they were also hurt by inflation. While the paper money the government issued was more easily transported, it was not backed by silver, making its value somewhat shaky.

Neo-Confucianism

- A revival of Confucianism
- The five relationships
- Morality and responsibility
- New branches



Han Yu, a Neo-Confucianist

The renewed emphasis on Confucianism that appeared at the end of the Tang Dynasty strengthened during the Song Dynasty. The scholar-gentry helped promote the revitalization of Confucianism and make it the accepted orthodoxy.

Confucianism emphasized five important relationships—ruler-subject, father-son, husband-wife, elder brother-younger brother, and friend-friend—and aimed to create a harmonious society.

Neo-Confucianism stressed morality and responsibility in government and focused on the public service rather than self-interest. Neo-Confucianists strove to apply Confucian principles to everyday life and behavior and to pursue personal morality. They also placed a high value on tradition, rank, obligation, deference, and ritual.

The founder of the movement was Zhu Xi. His commentaries on Confucius became the standard, and thus defined Chinese elite understandings of the tradition down to the present time.

Various branches of Neo-Confucianism also developed and flourished. For example, the “White Deer Grotto” branch urged students to pursue self-cultivation and learning rather than just viewing education as a tool to pass the civil service exam.

Social Structure

- New class of merchants and artisans
- Women's status worsened
 - Laws
 - Education



Women were considered a subordinate class in Song society

Some merchants and artisans became very wealthy, developing into an elite class with an expanding taste for the finer things in life—silk, porcelain, paintings, books, etc. Land ownership no longer provided the only path to social status.

The position of women worsened during this time period, largely because of the revitalization of Confucianism and its emphasis on the subordinate role of women in relationships. Patriarchal attitudes hardened and laws were enacted that transferred a woman's property to her husband upon marriage. Women also could not remarry if their husbands died or divorced them.

Women were given just enough education to read edited Confucian writings that stressed the submissive role of women in society. Only a few women—usually ones from elite families—were allowed to receive a strong education. For the vast majority of women, education was intended only to make them better wives and mothers.

Footbinding

- Widely practiced during the Song Dynasty
- Upper classes bound daughters' feet to indicate status
- Not a widespread practice



An X-ray of feet having undergone severe footbinding

Footbinding originally appeared during the Tang Dynasty and proliferated during the Song Dynasty. The practice attempted to make women more attractive by creating what was known as the “lily-foot.” The process involved bending the toes of a girl underneath her foot towards her heel in order to break the arch. The child’s foot was wrapped in strips of silk that were gradually tightened as she grew. Ultimately, the bones in her foot broke and she lost most of her independent mobility. Girls forced to undergo the procedure had their feet bound very early in their life, usually between five and seven years of age, although it could be done later.

Early on, the practice was most prevalent in the upper classes. Breaking the arch of a girl’s foot made it nearly impossible for her to work. Therefore, if a family wanted to demonstrate their position in the upper echelons of society, they would have their daughter’s feet bound, indicating that they did not need her to work. Footbinding also proved an effective means for confining women and preserving their subordinate status in society. The practice lasted for more than 900 years.

It is important to note that footbinding was not widely done throughout China at this time. Women in the middle and lower classes did not participate, and the practice was relatively unknown in southern China.

Song Technological Innovations



Zhu Xi, founder of Neo-Confucianism

- Neo-Confucianism sparked an interest in science
- Agriculture, manufacturing, transportation advances
- Mathematics and timekeeping

In some ways, technological advances and interest in science during the Song era were fueled by Neo-Confucianism. Even the founder of Neo-Confucianism, Zhu Xi, stressed the importance of studying practical subjects as well as philosophy.

The Song era witnessed a variety of advances in the areas of agriculture, manufacturing, and transport, including innovations in cultivation, threshing, carding, and spinning, and the invention of canal locks, water clocks, and water-powered mills to grind grain. Inventors also refined the compass, making it more appropriate for seafaring by covering the needle in glass and making it smaller.

Song mathematicians were the first to use fractions, which they used to analyze the phases of the moon. From this study of the moon, they constructed an accurate calendar and also did extensive work in timekeeping. For example, Song inventors created a chain-driven clock—the first known chain-driven mechanism in history. The clock told the time of day, the day of the month, and indicated lunar movement.

Military Advances



The Chinese used projectiles to counter tribal cavalries

- Produced strong steel weapons
- Use of iron
- Created body armor
- Began to use projectiles and gunpowder

The Chinese faced near-constant military threats from the northern tribes and looked for ways to improve their battle readiness. As Chinese designers became more advanced in metallurgy, they found ways to produce weapons of incredible strength by using high temperatures in the manufacturing process.

The Chinese also made wide use of iron, which could withstand assaults much better than other materials. Often, bridges and other things would be constructed from iron, as would body armor designed to protect soldiers.

To counter the menacing cavalry of the Khitans and the Jurchens, the Chinese used projectiles propelled by gunpowder, including flaming arrows and exploding shells.

Proliferation of Books



Woodcut from a book on Chinese herbal medicine, compiled by Tang Shenwei of the Song Dynasty

- *Pharmacopoeia*
- *Treatise on Architectural Methods*
- *A Collection of the Most Important Military Technology*
- *The New History of the Five Dynasties and the Mirror of History*

As libraries and private bookshops spread, more and more books became available to people. Writers created anthologies of stories, encyclopedias, and academic treatises on diverse subjects in geography, history, science, medicine, and architecture.

The introduction of printed books led to the creation of thread-sewn volumes in the place of rolled manuscripts, thus allowing easier access to the contents. Books spread rapidly: the Song government at one point had more than 70,000 volumes in its library and many private collections had even more. Some of the most notable books published during this era included:

- *Pharmacopoeia*, a medical encyclopedia that listed 893 medicinal herbs and their properties and uses
- *Treatise on Architectural Methods*, which described different building methods, tools, materials, and techniques
- *A Collection of the Most Important Military Technology*, which discussed different techniques and weapons, including a section on making and using gunpowder
- *The New History of the Five Dynasties and the Mirror of History*, which recounted various elements of Chinese history.

Song-Era Poetry



The poet Su Shi

*“A boat, light as a leaf, two oars
squeaking frighten wild geese*

*Water reflects the clear sky, the
limpid waves are calm.*

*Fish wiggle in the weedy mirror,
herons dot the misty foreshores*

*Across the sandy brook swift, the
frost brook cold,*

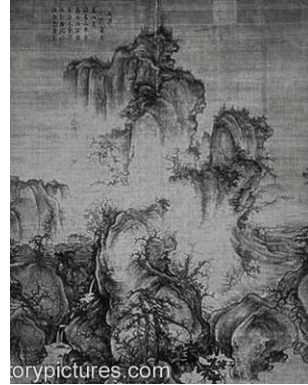
The moon brook bright.”

Ci was an expressive, emotive form of poetry popular during the Song era. While there were many prolific *ci* poets at the time, two of the best-known were Xin Qiji and Li Qingzhao, who was a very forceful and independent woman.

Su Shi (1037–1101), also known as Su Dongpo, was an official court poet and painter who tried to find a way to combine the two media by filling his poems with highly evocative visual imagery.

Song-Era Painting

- Landscapes
- Chinese-style perspective
- Fan Kuan
- Most art created in black-and-white
- Scroll painting



Classical Song landscape

Landscapes were the most popular form of painting during the Song, often with renderings of palaces that focused on architectural elements. The Emperor Huizong was himself a painter and he devoted a great deal of time and money to the arts, even as they became a financial burden on the imperial treasury.

Chinese-style perspective, a Song-era innovation, employed three focuses in painting: mountains in the far distance; lesser hills, forests, and streams in the middle foreground; and a road or path running through the foreground of the picture.

In his works, the painter Fan Kuan placed small human figures alongside mountains, streams, trees, in order to emphasize the relatively small place humans occupied in the natural world.

Most Song-era artists painted in black-and-white, demonstrating their mastery through brushstroke techniques rather than through use of color.

One popular technique involved painting directly onto fans or scrolls. As the scroll was unrolled, viewers would see several related images of successive scenes of a story.

Collapse of the Song

- Mongols: strong cavalry
- Defeated the Jin in 1234
- Defeated the Song
- Established the Yuan Dynasty in 1279



Mongol horsemen hunting with
Kublai Khan

The Mongols, a nomadic people from the steppes of central Asia, conquered China in the 1200s. The Mongols had a strong cavalry made up of exceptional horsemen who were also skilled bowmen. They attacked and overthrew the Jin in northern China in 1234. Once they controlled the north, the Mongols posed a constant threat to the Song. The Mongols turned to a circuitous strategy designed to encircle the Song, moving troops through Tibet and Sichuan. Under the great leader Kublai Khan (grandson of the legendary Genghis Khan), they finally moved on Southern Song territory in 1260.

The Song put up bitter resistance, but the Mongols' military superiority eventually proved too great. In addition, the Mongols were very good at learning and adapting new techniques and technologies (gun foundries, for example) which they then used to defeat the Chinese. Hangzhou surrendered in 1276, marking the end of the Song Dynasty; in 1279, the Mongol-controlled Yuan Dynasty was established.

China, the Mongols, and Beyond



Genghis Khan, Mongol leader and conqueror

- Medieval period ended with collapse of the Song
- Ming restoration
- Impact of developments in medieval China

The collapse of the Southern Song inaugurated a period of foreign domination in China under the Yuan Dynasty. The Chinese would ultimately rise up and overthrow the Mongols, reestablishing Chinese control with the Ming Dynasty.

The events, developments, and innovations of medieval China had a far-reaching impact. Chinese goods such as silks and porcelain became known and highly valued worldwide. Chinese inventions like the compass, gunpowder, and printing had a huge impact both in Asia and Europe. Chinese political innovations like the civil-service exam still exist throughout the world today. Thus in many ways, the legacy of the medieval time period in China extended well after the end of the medieval period, both in China and beyond.

Discussion Questions

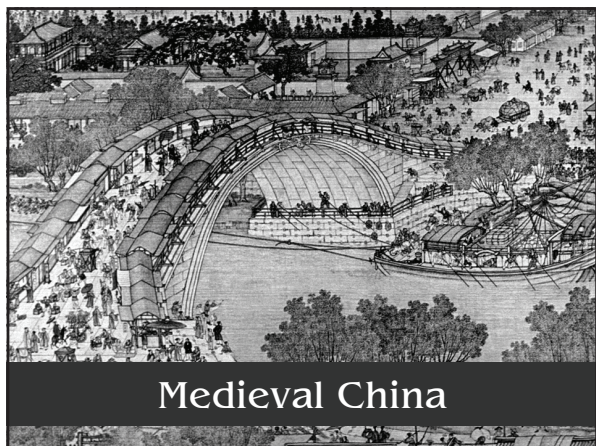
1. The Song's centralized control made the state in some ways stronger and more unified than any earlier dynasty had been able to. What did the Song rulers do to achieve that unity and central control?
2. The complex civil-service exam system was theoretically open to anyone. In reality, it did select people on the basis of merit, but it also allowed an upper class to dominate the official imperial administration. Can you explain how?
3. China steadily increased its food supply during the Song era, and this led to a steady increase in population. What were some factors causing the increase in food supply?

1. Land-reclamation projects, limiting power of eunuchs, expanding the exam system for choosing officials on merit, checking the power of the great landed families, overlapping and mutually checking administrative jurisdictions, etc.
2. The exams were difficult and fairly administered, but only the wealthy could generally provide their children with the education they needed to prepare for the exams in the first place.
3. Fast-growing rice, irrigation and reclamation projects, heavier iron plow, and many other innovations

Discussion Questions (continued)

4. Song rule weakened in the north in the 1000s, in part due to problems along China's northern borders. Can you explain what these problems were, and why they contributed to weakening Song rule?
5. After the fall of the Northern Song, the port cities expanded in importance in the Southern Song Empire. Why was that?
6. In what way might the strengthening of Confucianism in the Song era actually have helped to worsen the place of women in Chinese society?

4. Rising threats from nomadic empires to China's north forced the government to cede some lands to these border tribes, and to raise taxes to spend more on the military and for huge tribute payments to these foreign powers. This tax burden added to growing pressures on the peasants and unrest among them.
5. Trade routes across central Asia were cut off, so a rising merchant class turned to oceanic shipping to engage in foreign trade. Also, shipbuilding and navigational techniques rapidly improved and facilitated long-distance ocean trading. Manufacturing and food supply in southern China flourished in general.
6. Confucianism sought harmony through a hierarchy of relationship pairs (father-son, ruler-subject, etc.). In these relationships of a superior and a subordinate person, women took subordinate roles almost exclusively.



Essential Questions

1. Why has China seen a constant cycle of unifying dynasties separated by times of civil war and chaos?
2. How did problems related to land ownership and the tax burden on the peasantry influence both the rise and the fall of China's medieval dynasties?
3. To what extent did China's imperial exam system bring about the selection of officials based on merit, and how did that exam system help China's rulers promote a more centralized and unified state?
4. Why was Confucianism such a dominant way of thinking among China's educated ruling elites in these centuries?
5. What has been the appeal of Buddhism to many Chinese, and why was it regarded with suspicion at times by some of China's rulers?
6. In what ways was China's "medieval" period a time of dynamic technological and economic change and development?

Before the Medieval Period

- Han Dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE): growth and expansion
- Mandate of Heaven
- Medieval China's three dynasties:
 - Sui (580–618)
 - Tang (618–906)
 - Song (960–1127)
- Recovery and a time of great glory and development



Zhang Qian, explorer during the Han dynasty, travels west

The Collapse of the Han Dynasty

- The Han Dynasty ended in 220 CE
- Strong regional states replaced the Han Dynasty
- “Period of the Three Kingdoms”



Map of the Three Kingdoms

Power Struggles Between the Han and the Sui



Taoist and alchemist Tao Hengjing

- People longed for centralized government
- Taoism
- Political instability did not result in a loss of culture

Discussion Questions

1. Explain the concept of the “Mandate of Heaven.” What sorts of things do you think would have to happen for people to speak of a Chinese dynasty as having lost the Mandate of Heaven?
2. The Han Dynasty is often compared with the Roman Empire, which existed at the same time. In what ways were the fall of these two great empires similar? How did they differ with regard to what followed?

The Sui Dynasty

- After the fall of the Han, warlords ruled China
- In 581, Yang Jian seized power and changed name to Emperor Wendi
- Reunited north and south to restore the empire
- Reestablished Confucianism



Emperor Wendi

Emperor Wendi's Reforms



Portrait of Emperor Wendi

- Land reforms improved position of the peasants
- Higher status for the militia
- Improved currency system
- Unification facilitated trade
- Strengthened governmental centralization

Yang Di's Construction Projects

- Repair projects
- The Grand Canal
- Large labor force
- Costs: financial and in human lives



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The Collapse of the Sui



Yang Di, the last major Sui emperor

- Peasant rebellions
- Failed military campaigns
- Financial problems

Discussion Questions

1. What steps did Emperor Wendi take to restore order and help unify China once again after the Period of the Three Kingdoms?
2. What was the main value of the Grand Canal, which was one of Wendi's major construction projects?
3. The Sui Dynasty collapsed in 618, just 30 years after it began. Why do you think the Sui Dynasty was so short-lived?

The Tang Dynasty

- Li Yuan
- Emperor Tang Taizong
- Successful policies



Li Yuan



Tang Taizong

Gaozong: Domestic Policies

- Restored the feudal order
- Land reform for peasants
- State involvement in economic production
- Other economic endeavors
- Education and governing officials
- Growth of towns and cities

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Gaozong: Foreign Interaction



Buddhist statue

- Expansion: Korea, Northern Vietnam, southern Manchuria, and Tibet
- Trade with central and western Asia
- Spread of Chinese culture
- Religious missionaries

Wu Zhao

- Concubine of Gaozong
- “Emperor” of a new dynasty
- Backlash against women



Class Struggle During the Tang Dynasty



- Class distinctions
- Disagreements within the ruling class

An Lushan Rebellion



Xuanzong fleeing to Sichuan

- Rebel leader An Lushan
- Xuanzong fled capital
- Tang dynasty prevailed



Lady Yang, the Princess Consort

- Lady Yang
- Economic and political implications

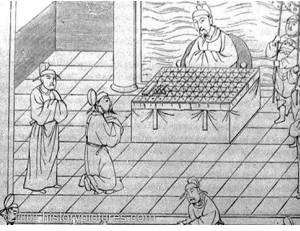
Tang Government After the Rebellion

- Power of regional administrators
- Power of court eunuchs
- New legal code and administrative procedures
- Backlash against some foreign ideas, especially Buddhism



A Tang-era emperor

The Bureaucracy of Merit



Taking exams in the presence of the emperor

- Competitive exams for government positions
- Altered the class of people who held these positions
- Conflicts between the new and established officials
- “Rule of avoidance”

Role of Buddhism

- Spiritual and material influence
- Backlash during the Tang Dynasty
- Government moved against the Buddhists



Buddhist statue from Yungang Rock Temple

Chang'an's Splendor



Polo, a game from Persia, was a favorite sport in Chang'an

- Cosmopolitan city
- City design demonstrated planning and grandeur
- The marketplace
- Culture and pastimes
- Architecture

Tang Innovations

- Printing
- Papermaking
- Shipbuilding
- A variety of other Chinese inventions



Papermaking

Foreign Interaction



Woodcut of a woman winding silk

- Reestablishment of tributary relationships
- Contact with southwest Asia
- Changes in clothing
- New pastimes
- Diffusion of crops and foodstuffs
- Increasing trade, including silk

Art in the Tang Dynasty

- Wu Daozi, figure painter
- Yang Huizhi, sculptor
- Horses and foreign visitors



Mounted aristocrats in procession

Tang Art



Ceramic rider-woman

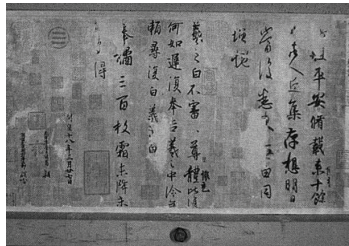
A Tang-period stone sculpture of the Buddha



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Tang Literature

- Poetry
- Han Yu and plain style
- Woodblock printing



Calligraphy

Poetry: Li Bo



- Wrote over 20,000 poems
- Legend of his death

*"I drink alone with no one
to share.
Raising up my cup, I welcome
the moon...
We frolic in revels suited
to Spring"*

Li Bo

Other Poets



Du Fu

- Du Fu
- Bai Juyi

The Great Peasant Uprising

- Scramble for land
- Displaced many peasants
- Heavy taxation
- Peasant revolts in 860 and 874
- Peasants held Chang'an for two years



Depiction of a Chinese peasant revolt

Tang Decline



Weakened agriculture in the north forced many people to emigrate south

- Population began moving south
- Weakened imperial economy
- Weakened central government
- Decreased position of peasants

Collapse of the Tang Dynasty

- An Lushan Rebellion
- Ineffective control over military and court officials
- Huang Chao and other rebellions
- Usurpation of Tang power in 907
- The Ten Kingdoms period



Mounted Khitan noble dressed in Chinese silk

Discussion Questions

1. One could say that part of the Tang Dynasty's early success was due to the way it copied and improved on some of the Sui Dynasty's best policies. In what ways does this seem to be true?
2. The Tang Dynasty stressed Confucianism as the basis for the exams by which top imperial officials were chosen. What do you know about Confucianism, and why do you think it was given such an important role in the selection of government officials?
3. The Tang Dynasty's dates are always given as 618–906. But some might say this long time span makes the era seem much more unified and stable than it was. How does the An Lushan Rebellion help explain why some historians might say this?

Discussion Questions (continued)

4. The exam system, or bureaucracy of merit, was seen as a way to stabilize the political order and keep unified central governmental control. Why did China's rulers think it could do this?
5. What evidence is there for seeing the Tang era as one of great economic and industrial growth and innovation?
6. Why do you think China's Tang rulers in the mid-800s came to mistrust Buddhism as strongly as they did?
7. Peasants' difficulties in holding onto their lands and their increasing tax burden fueled uprisings and peasant revolts in the late 800s. These revolts were put down, but they still contributed to the fall of the Tang Dynasty. How?

The Song Dynasty



Emperor Taizu

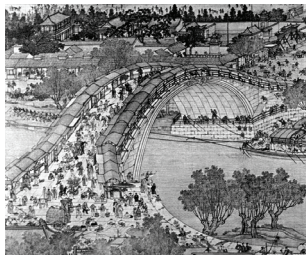
- 960–1279
- Unification
- Prosperity

Song Dynasty, Mid-11th Century



Reestablishment of Central Control Under the Song

- Economic recovery
- Established capital at Kaifeng
- Population increased
- Cities recovered



Scene from the capital city of Kaifeng

Song Governmental Development



Scholar-philosopher Ouyang Xiu

- Recovered power from regional elites and the military
- Rebuilt the scholar-gentry
- Emperor appointed new regional leaders

Age of the Civil Government

- Drew from the best and most educated
- Three levels of advancement in the exam system
- Officials' performance regularly evaluated
- Good government and stability



Exam Hall at Nanjing

The Song and the Economy

- Heavy government investment
- Expansion
- Increased revenues
- Metal and coal mining, shipbuilding



A Chinese coin

The Economy and Foreign Contact

- Korea as tributary state
- Trade increased



Cultivation and processing of tea

Paper Money and Finance



Earliest extant paper money printed on woodblock

- Emperor Zhenzong
- Promissory notes
- “Flying cash”
- Taxation and expenditures

Wang Anshi



Wang Anshi

- Internal weakness and foreign threats
- Wang Anshi appointed chief councillor
- Directed reforms against large landholders and merchants
- Financial stability

Military and Civil Reforms



Wang Anshi

Military

- Provisions for organizing and equipping the army
- Troop quotas
- Improved cavalry

Civil

- Expanded the number of governmental schools
- Advocated changes in the nature of the examinations

Fall of the Northern Song



Annual tributes of silk and silver to the Khitan drained Chinese finances

- Foreign appeasement and internal repression
- Ongoing financial strain
- Treaty with the Khitan in 1004
- The Qiang invasion

Founding of the Jin

- The Jurchen attacked the Khitan in 1114
- The Song cooperated in the attack, hoping to reclaim territory from the Khitan
- Nuzhen of the Jin seized power from the Song



Song governor Hui Zong, credited with weakening the military

Establishment of the Southern Song



Map of the Southern Song

- New government in 1127
- Boundary with the Jin
- The capital, Hangzhou

Trade and the Song



Silk was a highly traded commodity in the Southern Song

- Sea routes to southeast Asia and India
- Ports
- Navigational technology
- Agriculture
- Foreign and regional trade

The Song Economy

- Urban centers
- Government revenues
- Wealthier than north
- Corruption, exploitation of peasants
- Shaky currency



Marketplaces were popular in Hangzhou, the Southern Song capital

Neo-Confucianism

- A revival of Confucianism
- The five relationships
- Morality and responsibility
- New branches



Han Yu, a Neo-Confucianist

Social Structure

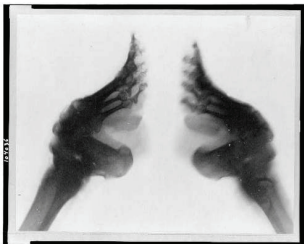
- New class of merchants and artisans
- Women's status worsened
 - Laws
 - Education



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An X-ray of feet having undergone severe footbinding

Song Technological Innovations



Zhu Xi, founder of Neo-Confucianism

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- Mathematics and timekeeping

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- Use of iron
- Created body armor
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Song-Era Painting

- Landscapes
- Chinese-style perspective
- Fan Kuan
- Most art created in black-and-white
- Scroll painting



Classical Song landscape

Collapse of the Song

- Mongols: strong cavalry
- Defeated the Jin in 1234
- Defeated the Song
- Established the Yuan Dynasty in 1279



Mongol horsemen hunting with
Kublai Khan

China, the Mongols, and Beyond



Genghis Khan, Mongol leader and conqueror

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- Ming restoration
- Impact of developments in medieval China

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