CHAPTER 12

Reunification and Renaissance in Chinese Civilization: The Era of the Tang and Song Dynasties

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Basic themes of Chinese civilization underwent vital consolidation during the postclassical period. Less fundamental innovation occurred than in the Americas and Europe. Important developments took place in technology. Political turmoil followed the fall of the Han during the Period of the Six Dynasties (220-589 C.E.), and the empire’s bureaucratic apparatus collapsed. The scholar-gentry class lost ground to landed families. Non-Chinese nomads ruled much of China, and a foreign religion, Buddhism, replaced Confucianism as a primary force in cultural life. There was economic, technological, intellectual, and urban decline. New dynasties, the Sui and Tang, from the end of the 6th century brought a restoration of Chinese civilization. Political unity returned as nomads and nobility were brought under state control and the bureaucracy was rebuilt. Major changes occurred in economic and social life as the focus of a revived civilization shifted from the north to the Yangzi valley and southern and eastern coastal areas. The Song dynasty continued the revival; their era saw the restoration of the scholar-gentry and the Confucian order. It was a time of artistic, literary, and technological flourishing. Male dominance reached new heights.

Rebuilding the Imperial Edifice in the Sui-Tang Eras. A noble, Wendi, with the support of nomadic military leaders, won control of northern China. In 589, he defeated the Chen kingdom, which ruled much of the South, and established the Sui dynasty as ruler of the traditional Chinese core. Wendi won popularity by lowering taxes and establishing granaries to ensure a stable, cheap food supply.

Sui Excesses and Collapse. Wendi’s son Yangdi continued strengthening the state by further conquests and victories over nomads. He reformed the legal code and the Confucian educational system. The scholar-gentry were brought back into the imperial administration. Yangdi undertook extensive and expensive construction projects at a new capital, Loyang, and for a series of canals to link the empire. He attempted unsuccessfully to conquer Korea, and was defeated by Turkic nomads in central Asia in 615. Widespread revolts followed. Imperial rule crumbled and Yangdi was assassinated in 618.

The Emergence of the Tang and the Restoration of the Empire. Imperial unity was saved when Li Yuan, Duke of Tang and a former supporter of the Sui, won control of China and began the Tang dynasty. Tang armies extended the empire’s reach to the borders of Afghanistan and thus dominated the nomads of the frontier borderlands. The Tang used Turkic nomads in their military and tried to assimilate them into Chinese culture. The Great Wall was repaired. The extensive Tang Empire stretched into Tibet, Vietnam, Manchuria, and Korea.

Rebuilding the Bureaucracy. A restored scholar-gentry elite and reworked Confucian ideology helped the Tang to maintain imperial unity. The power of the aristocracy was reduced. Political authority henceforth was shared by imperial families and scholar-gentry bureaucrats. The
bureaucracy, subject to strict controls, reached from the imperial court to district levels of administration. A Bureau of Censors watched all officials.

**The Growing Importance of the Examination System.** Under the Tang and Song, the numbers of scholar-gentry rose far above Han levels. They greatly extended the examination system, and civil service advancement patterns were regularized. Specialized exams were administered by the Ministry of Public Rites. The highest offices went only to individuals able to pass exams based on the Confucian classics and Chinese literature. Additional exams determined their ranking in the pool eligible for office and awarded special social status. Birth and family connections remained important for gaining high office. Intelligent commoners might rise to high positions, but the central administration was dominated by a small number of prominent families.

**State and Religion in the Tang-Song Era.** The Confucian revival threatened Buddhism’s place in Chinese life. Many previous rulers had been strong Buddhist supporters. Chinese monks gave the foreign religion Chinese qualities. Salvationist Mahayana Buddhism won wide mass acceptance during the era of war and turmoil. Elite Chinese accepted Chan Buddhism, or Zen, which stressed meditation and appreciation of natural and artistic beauty. Early Tang rulers continued to patronize Buddhism, especially Empress Wu (690-705). She endowed monasteries, commissioned colossal statues of Buddha, and sought to make Buddhism the state religion. There were about 50,000 monasteries by the middle of the 9th century.

**The Anti-Buddhist Backlash.** Confucians and Daoists opposed Buddhist growth, casting it as an alien faith. Daoists stressed their magical and predictive powers. Confucian scholar-administrators worked to convince the Tang that untaxed Buddhist monasteries posed an economic threat to the empire. Measures to limit land and resources going to Buddhists gave way to open persecution under Emperor Wuzong (841-847). Thousands of monasteries and shrines were destroyed; hundreds of thousands of monks and nuns had to return to secular life. Buddhist lands were taxed or redistributed to taxpaying nobles and peasants. Buddhism survived the persecutions, but in a much reduced condition. Confucianism emerged as the enduring central ideology of Chinese civilization.

**Tang Decline and the Rise of the Song.** The reign of Emperor Xuanzong (713-756) marked the zenith of Tang power. He initially advanced political and economic reform; later he turned to patronizing the arts and the pleasures of the imperial city. Xuanzong became infatuated with an imperial harem woman, Yang Guifei. She filled upper levels of government with her relatives and gained authority in court politics. Rival cliques stimulated unrest, while lack of royal direction caused economic distress and military weakness. A serious revolt occurred in 755. The rebels were defeated, and Yang Guifei was killed, but Xuanzong and succeeding rulers provided weak leadership for the dynasty. Nomadic frontier peoples and regional governors used the disorder to gain virtual independence. Worsening economic conditions in the 9th century caused many revolts, some of them popular movements led by peasants.

**The Founding of the Song Dynasty.** The last Tang emperor resigned in 907, but, after a period of turmoil, a military commander, Zhao Kuangyin, renamed Taizu, in 960 reunited China under one dynasty, the Song. His failure to defeat the Liao dynasty of Manchuria, founded by Khitan nomads in 907, established a lasting precedent for weakness in dealing with northern nomadic
peoples. Ensuing military victories by the Khitans led to the paying of heavy tribute to the Liao, who became very much influenced by Chinese culture.

**Song Politics: Settling for Partial Restoration.** The Song never matched the Tang in political or military strength. To prevent a return of the conditions ending Tang rule, the military was subordinated to scholar-gentry civilians. Song rulers strongly promoted the interests of the Confucian scholar-gentry class over aristocratic and Buddhist rivals. Salaries were increased, civil service exams were made routine, and successful candidates had a better chance for employment.

**The Revival of Confucian Thought.** Confucian ideas and values dominated intellectual life. Long-neglected texts were recovered; new academies for the study of the classics and impressive libraries were founded. Many thinkers labored to produce differing interpretations of Confucian and Daoist thought and to prove the superiority of indigenous thought. The most prominent neo-Confucianist, Zhu Xi, emphasized the importance of applying philosophical principles to everyday life. Neo-Confucians believed that the cultivation of personal morality was the highest human goal. Confucian learning, they argued, produced superior men to govern and teach others. Neo-Confucian thinking had a lasting effect on intellectual life. Hostility to foreign thought prevented the entry of innovations from other societies, while the stress on tradition stifled critical thinking within China. Neo-Confucian emphasis on rank, obligation, deference, and performance of rituals reinforced class, gender, and age distinctions. The authority of the patriarchal family head was strengthened. Social harmony and prosperity, claimed neo-Confucianists, was maintained when men and women performed the tasks appropriate to their status.

**Roots of Decline: Attempts at Reform.** Song weakness before the Khitan encouraged other nomads to carve out kingdoms on the northern borders. The Tangut from Tibet established the kingdom of Xi Xia, southwest of Liao. The Song paid them and other peoples tribute and maintained a large army to protect against invasion, thus draining state resources and burdening the peasantry. Song emphasis on scholar-gentry concerns contributed to military decline. Confucian scholar and chief minister Wang Anshi attempted sweeping reforms in the late 11th century. He used legalist principles and encouraged agricultural expansion through cheap loans and government-assisted irrigation projects. The landlord and scholar-gentry were taxed, and the revenues went for military reform. Wang Anshi even attempted to revitalize the educational system by giving preference to analytical skills.

**Reaction and Disaster: The Flight to the South.** When the emperor supporting Wang Anshi died in 1085, his successor favored conservatives opposing reform. Neo-Confucianists gained power and reversed Wang’s policies. Economic conditions deteriorated, and the military was unable to defend the northern borders. The nomadic Jurchens, after overthrowing Liao, in 1115 established the Qin kingdom. They invaded China and annexed most of the Yellow River basin. The Song fled south and established a capital at Huangzhou in the Yangzi River basin. The small southern Song dynasty ruled from 1127 to 1279.

**Tang and Song Prosperity: The Basis of a Golden Age.** The Sui and Tang had built canals because of a major shift in Chinese population balance. Yangdi’s Grand Canal, eventually more than 1,200 miles long, linked the original civilization centers of the North with the Yangzi River
basin. The rice-growing regions of the South became the major food producers of the empire. By early Song times, the South was the leader in crop production and population. The canal system made government of the South by northern capitals possible. Food from the South could be distributed in the North, while the South was opened to migration and commercial development.

**The World’s Most Splendid Cities.** Urban growth surged during the Tang and Song eras. The 2 million inhabitants of the Tang capital of Changan made it the world’s largest city. Other cities similarly grew; many had more than 100,000 inhabitants. Most preindustrial civilizations had few or no large urban centers, and China’s estimated urban population—10 percent of the total population—surpassed all others. The late Song capital of Huangzhou exceeded all others in beauty, size, and sophistication. Its location near the Yangzi and the seacoast allowed traders and artisans to prosper. Its population of more than 1,500,000 enjoyed well-stocked marketplaces, parks, restaurants, teahouses, and popular entertainment.

**Expanding Agrarian Production and Life in the Country.** Tang and Song rulers pushed agricultural expansion. Peasants were encouraged to migrate to new areas where the state supported military garrisons and provided irrigation and embankment systems. The canals enabled their produce to move through the empire. New crops and technology increased yields. Sui and Tang rulers adopted policies designed to break up aristocratic estates for more equitable distribution among free peasants, the class Confucian scholars held to be essential for a stable and prosperous social order. The scholar-gentry gradually supplanted the aristocracy in rural society.

**Family and Society in the Tang-Song Era.** Family organization resembled that of earlier eras. The status of women was improving under the Tang and early Song but steadily declined during the late Song. Extended-family households were preferred, although only the upper classes could afford them. The Confucianist male-dominated hierarchy was common in all classes. An elaborate process of making marriage alliances was handled by professional female go-betweens. Partners were of the same age; marriage ceremonies did not take place until puberty. Urban classes consummated marriage later than peasants. Upper-class women had increased opportunities for personal expression and career possibilities under the Tang and early Song. The empresses Wu and Wei, and royal concubine Yang Guifei, exercised considerable power. The legal code had provisions supporting women’s rights in divorce arrangements. The practice of wealthy urban women having lovers is an example of female independence.

**The Neo-Confucian Assertion of Male Dominance.** The independence and legal rights of elite minority of women worsened under the influence of neo-Confucian thinkers. They stressed the roles of homemaker and mother; advocated physical confinement of women; and emphasized the importance of bridal virginity, wifely fidelity, and widow chastity. Men were permitted free sexual behavior and remarriage. The decline of the opportunities once open in Buddhism also contributed to the deteriorated status of women. New laws favored men in inheritance and divorce, and women were excluded from the educational system. The painful, mobility-restricting practice of foot binding exemplifies the lowly position imposed on women in late Song times.
In Depth: Artistic Expression and Social Values. Examining artistic creativity is an effective approach for studying the values of a civilization. In preliterate societies, art and architecture provide evidence otherwise lacking. When civilizations have written records, we still can learn about social structure by discovering who produced art, for whom it was created, the technologies and materials used, and the messages it was meant to convey. In Indian and European societies, artistic creations were the work of skilled craftsmen, a role played in China by the scholar-gentry class. Indian, Muslim, and European artisans made anonymous creations for a mass audience. In China, identifiable individuals produced art for the pleasures of the elite.

A Glorious Age: Invention and Artistic Creativity. The Tang and Song periods are most remembered for their accomplishments in science, technology, literature, and the fine arts. Technological and scientific discoveries—new tools, production methods, weapons—passed to other civilizations and altered the course of human development. The arts and literature passed to neighboring regions—central Asia, Japan, and Vietnam. Engineering feats, such as the Grand Canal, dikes and dams, irrigation systems, and bridges, were especially noteworthy. New agricultural implements and innovations, such as banks and paper money, stimulated prosperity. Explosive powder was invented under the Tang; it was used for fireworks until the Song adapted it to military use. Song armies and navies also used naphtha flamethrowers, poisonous gasses, and rocket launchers. On the domestic side, chairs, tea drinking, the use of coal for fuel, and kites were introduced. Compasses were applied to ocean navigation, and the abacus helped numerical figuring. In the 11th century, the artisan Bi Sheng devised printing with movable type. Combined with the Chinese invention of paper, printing allowed a literacy level higher than that in any other preindustrial civilization.

Scholarly Refinement and Artistic Accomplishment. The reinvigorated scholar-gentry class was responsible for art and literary creativity. Well-educated men were supposed to be generalists capable of both official and artistic achievement. As the scholar-gentry replaced Buddhists as major art and literature producers, they turned to portraying daily life and the delights of nature. Literature focused on the doings and beliefs of common people. Poets, such as Li Bo, celebrated the natural world. Under the Song, interest in nature reached artistic fruition in symbolic landscape paintings, many accompanied by poems, that sought to teach moral lessons or explore philosophical ideas.

Global Connections: China’s World Role. The Song dynasty fell to the Mongol invasions inaugurated by Chinggis Khan. Kubilai Khan completed the conquest and founded the Yuan dynasty. The Tang and Song dynasties had a great effect on both Chinese and world history. Centralized administration and the bureaucratic apparatus were restored and strengthened. The scholar-gentry elite triumphed over Buddhist, aristocratic, and nomadic rivals. They defined Chinese civilization for the next six and a half centuries. The area subject to Chinese civilization expanded dramatically, as the South was integrated with the North. The Chinese economy, until the 18th century, was a world leader in market orientation, overseas trade volume, productivity per acre, sophistication of tools, and techniques of craft production. Chinese inventions altered development all over the world. China, as a civilization, retained many traditional patterns, but it also changed dramatically in the balance between regions, in commercial and urban development, and in technology. Outside influences, such as Buddhism, were incorporated into existing patterns.
KEY TERMS

**Period of the Five Dynasties:** Era of continuous warfare (220-589) among the many kingdoms that followed the fall of the Han.

**Wendi:** Member of prominent northern Chinese family during the Period of the Six Dynasties; with support from northern nomadic peoples established Sui dynasty in 589.

**Yangdi:** Second Sui ruler; restored Confucian examination system; constructed canal system; assassinated in 618.

**Li Yuan:** Duke of Tang; minister for Yangdi; took over empire after assassination of Yangdi; first Tang ruler.

**Ministry of Public Rites:** Administered the examinations for state office during the Tang dynasty.

**Jinshi:** Title given students who passed the most difficult examinations; became eligible for high office.

**Chan Buddhism:** Called Zen in Japan; stressed meditation and appreciation of natural and artistic beauty; popular among the elite.

**Mahayana (Pure Land) Buddhism:** Emphasized salvationist aspects of Chinese Buddhism; popular among the masses.

**Wuzong:** Tang emperor (841-847); persecuted Buddhist monasteries and reduced influence of Buddhism in favor of Confucianism.

**Yang Guifei:** Royal concubine of Tang emperor Xuanzong; introduction of relatives into administration led to revolt.

**Khitan nomads:** Founded Liao dynasty of Manchuria in 907; remained a threat to Song; very much influenced by Chinese culture.

**Zhao Kuangyin:** General who founded Song dynasty; took royal name of Taizu.

**Zhu Xi:** Most prominent neo-Confucian scholar during the Song dynasty; stressed importance of applying philosophical principles to everyday life.

**Wang Anshi:** Confucian scholar and chief minister of a Song ruler in 1070s; introduced sweeping reforms based on legalism; advocated greater state intervention in society.

**Southern Song:** Smaller surviving dynasty (1127-1279); presided over one of the greatest cultural reigns in world history.
Jurchens: Founders of Qin kingdom that succeeded the Liao in northern China; annexed most of the Yellow River basin and forced the Song to flee south.

Grand Canal: Great canal system begun by Yangdi; joined the Yellow River region to the Yangzi basin.

Junks: Chinese ships equipped with watertight bulkheads, stern-post rudders, compasses, and bamboo fenders; dominant force in Asian seas east of the Malayan peninsula.

Flying money: Chinese credit instrument that provided vouchers to merchants to be redeemed at the end of a venture; reduced danger of robbery; an early form of currency.

Changan: Capital of Tang dynasty; population of 2 million; larger than any contemporary world city.

Huangzhou: Capital of later Song; location near East China Sea permitted international commerce; population of more than 1,500,000.

Foot binding: Male-imposed practice to mutilate women’s feet in order to reduce size; produced pain and restricted movement; helped to confine women to the household.

Bi Sheng: 11th-century artisan; devised technique of printing with movable type; made it possible for China to be the most literate civilization of its time.

Li Bo: Most famous poet of the Tang era; blended images of the mundane world with philosophical musings.

Empress Wu: (690 – 705 C.E.) Tang ruler who supported Buddhist establishment; tried to elevate Buddhism to state religion; had multistory statues of Buddha created.

Xuanzong: Leading Chinese emperor of the Tang dynasty who reigned from 713 to 755, though he encouraged overexpansion.

Zhao Kuangyin: Founder of the Song dynasty; originally a general following fall of Tang; took title of Taizu; failed to overcome north Liao dynasty that remained independent.

Liao Dynasty: Founded in 907 by nomadic Khitan peoples from Manchuria; maintained independence from Song dynasty in China.

Sinification: Extensive adaptation of Chinese culture in other regions; typical of Korea and Japan, less typical of Vietnam.

Neo-Confucians: Revived ancient Confucian teachings in Song era of China; great impact on the dynasties that followed; their emphasis on tradition and hostility to foreign systems made Chinese rulers and bureaucrats less receptive to outside ideas and influences.
**Tangut tribes**: Rulers of Xi Xia kingdom of northwest China; one of regional kingdoms during period of southern Song; conquered by Mongols in 1226.

**Xi Xia**: Kingdom of the Tangut people, north of Song kingdom, in mid-11th century; collected tribute that drained Song resources and burdened Chinese peasantry.

**Jin kingdom**: Kingdom north of the Song Empire; established by Jurchens in 1115 after overthrowing Liao dynasty; ended 1234.

**LESSON SUGGESTIONS**

- **Peoples Analysis**: Tang-Song China
- **Conflict Analysis**: Buddhists versus Confucians and Daoists
- **Change Analysis**: Tang to Song dynasty
- **Societal Comparison**: Qin-Han and Tang-Song China
- **Document Analysis**: Ties That Bind: Paths to Power
- **Dialectical Journal**: In Depth: Artistic Expression and Social Values

**LECTURE SUGGESTIONS**

**Summarize the effects of the renaissance of Confucianism during the Tang-Song era.** The Confucian renaissance permitted the restoration of imperial government, particularly the establishment of a centralized bureaucracy that was necessary for the maintenance of the examination and education system, the development of public works, and the administration of all levels of local government. But the development of neo-Confucianism occurred at the cost of an effective military: China became increasingly vulnerable to outside attack. Its development also placed an increasing emphasis on traditional Chinese philosophy at the expense of outside influence and innovation. The attack on Buddhism, for one, diminished Chinese willingness to accept foreign ideas. The renaissance had a negative influence on the status of women and also diminished Chinese innovation in commerce with the outside world.

**Generalize the proposition that the Tang-Song era was at the same time both innovative and conservative.** The Chinese followed tradition by restoring the emphasis on an imperial centralized government that relied on a trained scholar-gentry class. Similarly, the restoration of Confucianism as the central ideology of the state was accompanied by the persecution of Buddhism. There also was a heavy emphasis on a social structure of the interlocking hierarchies associated with Confucianism. Among aspects stressed were the role of the scholar-gentry, agricultural reform benefiting the peasantry, male-dominated households in which the position of women deteriorated, lack of status for merchants, and the development of art forms heavily...
dependent on nature and Confucian themes of harmony. Innovation showed in the integration of southern China with northern regions, the development of agricultural productivity in the South, the increasing sophistication in market organization and commercial practices (paper money, credit), and technological sophistication (military use of gunpowder, the compass, movable type, the abacus, new engineering, and agricultural advances).

**CLASS DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

**Trace the Sui rise and fall from power.**

A member of a respected family, Wendi, set up a marriage between his daughter and the powerful Zhou monarch; Wendi then took the throne from his son-in-law. Wendi used nomadic militia to help his conquest of China. He was favored for lowering taxes.

**Correlate the rise of the Tang with the Confucian renaissance.**

Wendi’s son Yangdi continued strengthening the state by further conquests and victories over nomads. He reformed the legal code and the Confucian educational system. The scholar-gentry were brought back into the imperial administration.

**Trace the decline of the Tang dynasty.**

The Tang were beset by internal rebellions; they were also hit with nomadic incursions.

**Compare the strengths of the Song Empire with the Tang.**

The Song Empire did not have the strong emperors that the Tang had. The Tang also conquered a larger area than the Song was able to. The subjects of the Tang favored them more than the Song.

**Describe the aspects of economic prosperity during the Tang-Song era.**

The expansion toward southern China led to an increase in agricultural production. China also tended to export manufactured goods and import luxuries.

**Describe the status of women during the Tang-Song era.**

The status of women showed signs of improving in the Tang and early Song eras but deteriorated in the late Song era.
Appraise the overall effect of the Tang-Song era on Chinese history.

The Tang- Song era restored and strengthened Chinese centralization and bureaucracy. Under the Tang, Southern China was fully incorporated into the empire and emperors of the Tang and Song facilitated the commercial and agricultural expansion that typified China into the 18th century and much innovation and change took place in the Tang- Song Era.

Describe the innovations of the Tang-Song era.

Banks, paper money, new ways to build bridges, dams, explosive powder, and compasses applied to sea navigation, were some innovations made during the Tang-Song era.
MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one alternative that best completes the statement or answers the question.

1. During the political crisis following the fall of the Han, the Great Wall

A) became ineffective as a barrier to invasion because it was held by many small kingdoms.
B) was destroyed and replaced by the Great Canal as a defensive barrier to nomadic peoples.
C) continued to serve as a barrier to the penetration of nomadic peoples.
D) provided the materials from which many Buddhist temples were constructed.
E) became a drain of Chinese resources as the government fought to keep it strong.

2. What made possible the rapid revival of the empire under the Tang?

A) The abandonment of Confucianism in favor of the more widely practiced Buddhism
B) The brevity of the period of political dislocation
C) The willingness of the Tang to abandon traditional approaches to government
D) The preservation in the many kingdoms of the Confucian traditions that had been central to Chinese civilization
E) The government’s focus on using people with practical technical skills as opposed to the scholar-gentry

3. Wendi was the man responsible for the

A) banning of Confucianism.
B) banning of Buddhism.
C) establishment of the Sui dynasty.
D) return to Legalist principles of government.
E) building of an impressive Chinese navy.

4. Under the first Sui emperor

A) the Confucian scholar-gentry gained dominance.
B) the Buddhists were persecuted.
C) the merchant class gained much social prestige.
D) the Grand Canal was constructed.
E) ever-ready granaries were created to relieve the threat of famine.

5. Excessive military expenses and grandiose building projects led to

A) a widespread Buddhist rebellion.
B) the downfall of the second Sui emperor and the collapse of the dynasty.
C) the reunification of China under the Shang dynasty.
D) massive rejection of the Confucian scholar-gentry.
E) a successful peasant revolt.
6. Li Yuan was

A) a Buddhist monk who founded the Song dynasty.
B) the most famous poet of the Tang-Song era.
C) the Duke of Tang, founder of the new dynasty.
D) the second Sui emperor who murdered his father to gain the throne.
E) the most aggressive persecutor of Buddhism.

7. Which of the following statements concerning entry into the Chinese bureaucracy is most accurate?

A) Although a higher percentage of candidates under the Tang received office through the examination system than during the Han dynasty, birth continued to be important in securing high office.
B) Under the Tang, family connections ceased to be of significance.
C) Although the examination system continued to be monitored, almost all officials received positions as a result of family connections.
D) The examination system was eliminated during the Tang dynasty, and only members of the imperial family served in the bureaucracy.
E) The government strove to allow fair access to all people who could demonstrate talent.

8. Pure Land Buddhism

A) appealed to the members of the Chinese elite.
B) only allowed upper-class believers.
C) was rejected by the Chinese peasantry.
D) stressed meditation and the appreciation of natural and artistic beauty.
E) stressed salvation.

9. Which of the following statements concerning the Tang dynasty’s attitude toward Buddhism is most accurate?

A) Under the Tang, Buddhism became the official religion of the state.
B) After initial attempts to suppress Buddhism, later Tang emperors actually resuscitated the Buddhist monasteries, particularly in southern China.
C) Although Empress Wu attempted to have Buddhism recognized as the official religion of the state, later emperors persecuted Buddhism as an economic threat to the state.
D) From the outset, Buddhism was persecuted under the Tang.
E) Although Tang rulers disliked the practice of Buddhism, they adopted a policy of toleration.
10. As a result of imperial suppression,

A) monastic orders continued to exert political influence and control landed wealth as they did in the first decades of Tang rule.
B) Buddhism was restored as the primary religion of the state during the Song dynasty.
C) Buddhism gained much underground support, which eventually led to its becoming the prominent religion of China.
D) Buddhism was eradicated in China.
E) Buddhism survived in a reduced state without much political influence.

SHORT ANSWER. Write the word or phrase that best completes the statement or answers the question.

1. __________ was a member of a prominent northern family following the fall of the Han, who proclaimed himself emperor and established the Sui dynasty.

2. Minister for Yangdi, __________ , the duke of Tang, took over the empire following the assassination of the last emperor of the Sui dynasty.

3. The __________ variant of Buddhism emphasized the salvationist aspects of the faith and appealed to the masses of Chinese society.

4. A general of nomadic origins named __________ led a widely supported revolt to depose the Tang dynasty in 755.

5. The much-reduced state of the Song dynasty from 1127 to 1279 was referred to as the __________.

6. Chinese ships equipped with watertight bulkheads, stern-post rudders, compasses, and bamboo fenders were called __________.

7. __________ was a Chinese credit instrument that provided vouchers to merchants to be redeemed at the end of the voyage.

8. The Chinese counterpart of the Islamic veil and seclusion, __________, produced pain and restricted women’s movement outside the household.

9. The most famous poet of the Tang era, __________, blended images of the mundane world with philosophical musings.

10. The invention of __________ was originally used for entertainment purposes, but by the late Song era was used in military applications as well.
TRUE/FALSE. Write “T” if the statement is true and “F” if the statement is false.

1. Wendi, the first Sui emperor, rapidly restored the position of the Confucian scholar-gentry. **T**

2. The second Sui emperor undertook the enormous building project of the Great Canal, a decision that contributed to the dynasty’s downfall. **T**

3. The bureaucracy during the Tang dynasty was exclusively recruited from those who passed the examination system without regard to family connections. **T**

4. The southern Song dynasty was little more than a rump state carved from the much larger domains ruled by the Tang and northern Song. **T**

5. The capital of the Tang dynasty with a population of 2 million was Beijing. **F**

6. The nomadic Mongols were the founders of the Qin Kingdom that succeeded the Liao in northern China and forced the Song to flee to the South. **F**

7. Originally a general following the fall of the Tang, Zhao Kuangyin was the founder of the Song dynasty. **T**

8. The Chan variant of Buddhism, more attractive to the members of the Chinese elite, stressed meditation and appreciation of natural and artistic beauty. **T**

9. The era between 220 and 589 that featured endless wars fought by the patchwork of regional kingdoms following the fall of the Han in China was referred to as the Era of Division. **T**
ANSWER KEY

Multiple Choice

1. A 6. C
2. D 7. A
3. C 8. E
4. E 9. C
5. B 10. E

Short Answer

1. Answer: Wendi
2. Answer: Li Yuan
3. Answer: Pure Land or Mahayana
4. Answer: An Lushan
5. Answer: Southern Song
6. Answer: junks
7. Answer: flying money
8. Answer: foot binding
9. Answer: Li Bo
10. Answer: gunpowder

True/False

1. F 6. F
2. T 7. F
3. F 8. T
4. T 9. T
5. F
CHAPTER 12

TIMELINE

Insert the following events into the timeline. This should help you to compare important historical events chronologically.

beginning of persecution of Buddhists
founding of Southern Song dynasty
founding of Song dynasty
founding of Tang dynasty
Mongol conquest of Southern Song
founding of Sui dynasty

___ 589
___ 618
___ 840s
___ 960
___ 1127
___ 1279

TERMS, PEOPLE, EVENTS

The following terms, people, and events are important to your understanding of the chapter. Define each one on a separate sheet of paper.

Bureau of Censors  Empress Wu  Empress Wei
Chan Buddhism  Pure Land Buddhism  Wuzong
tea  gunpowder  Wendi
Yangdi  foot binding  Li Bo
Jin kingdom  Qin Empire  champa rice
junks  flying money  Changan
Li Yuan, Duke of Tang  Ministry of Public Rites  jinshi
neo-Confucians  Tangut tribes  Xi Xia
scholar gentry class  Chen kingdom  Loyang
Huangzhou  Liao dynasty  Sinification
Tang Taizong  Kaozong  subprefecture
Sui  Southern Song  Xuanzong
An Lushan  Zhao Kuangyin  Yang Guifei
Zhu Xi  Wang Anshi  Jurchens
Liao  Taizu
MAP EXERCISE

The following exercise is intended to clarify the geophysical environment and the spatial relationships among the important objects and places mentioned in the chapter. Locate the following places on the map.

Huanghe River    Changan
Huangzhou    Grand Canal
boundaries of Tang Empire    Loyang
Yangzi River    boundaries of Song Empire
Huangzhou
boundaries of Southern Song Empire

How did the geographical alignment of major river systems in China affect the development of the empire? How does the political development of China from Tang to Song to Southern Song reflect the geographical significance of the river systems?
Chapter 12
Reunification and Renaissance: The Era of the Tang and Song Dynasties

I. Introduction
A. Vital consolidation – changes less fundamental than elsewhere
B. Though isolated, created “orbit of influence”
C. After Han – nomadic invasions
   1. Regional kingdoms
   2. Landed families with aristocratic backgrounds dominated rulers
   3. Decline
      a. Foreign religion – Buddhism
      b. non-Chinese nomads ruled
      c. Great Wall divided between kingdoms
      d. trade/city life declined
      e. technology stagnated
      f. thought looked for magical cures/immortality
D. Rapid return to height under Tang because of
   1. Preservation of Confucian institutions

II. Rebuilding the Imperial Edifice in the Sui-Tang Eras
A. Introduction
   1. Summary
      a. Sui recentralized control
      b. Under Tang – bureaucracy restored, improved, expanded
      c. Confucian revival
   2. Sui Dynasty – 580 – return to strong dynastic control
      a. Wendi – northern elite family
      b. Secured power through
         1. marriage
         2. support of neighboring nomadi leaders
            a. Reconfirmed titles
            b. Showed no preference for scholar gentry
      c. Won support
         1. lowering taxes
         2. creation of food granaries
B. Sui Excesses and Collapse
   1. Son Yangdi
      a. murdered father
      b. extended father’s conquests
      c. drove back nomads
      d. established milder legal code
      e. restore examination system
   2. Downfall
      a. Programs hurt aristocratic families and nomadic leaders
      b. Built palaces
      c. Build canal links
      d. extensive game park – imported trees
      e. failed in attempt to take Korea
C. The Emergence of the Tang and the Restoration of the Empire
   1. Li Yuan – Duke of Tang took over
      a. Former nomadic leaders forced to submit
      b. Created frontier armies
1. Sons of tribal leaders sent to capital as hostages – eventually assimilated
c. Korea overrun by Chinese armies
1. Kingdom of Silla created as tributary state

D. Rebuilding the Bureaucracy
1. To survive, must rebuild and expand imperial bureaucracy
   a. need for loyal/well-educated officials
   b. offset power of aristocracy
   c. power to ruling families + bureaucrats
d. created ministries
   1. secretariat – drafted decrees
   2. secretariat monitored officials
   3. executive ran ministries – day to day life

E. Growing Importance of the Examination System
1. Numbers of bureaucrats grew far past Han
2. Ministry of Rites – several kinds of examinations
3. Honor to those who passed
   a. Jinshi title
   b. transformed into dignitaries
   c. special social status
      1. certain clothing
      2. exempt from corporal punishment
      3. access to material comfort/pleasures
4. Birth and family connections could still help you get into universities, assist
   a. Bureaucracy still overwhelmingly run by established families
5. Merit and ambition important, but birth and family influence count for more

F. State and Religion the Tang-Song Era
1. State support of Confucian ideas
   a. Threatened Buddhist monastic orders
   b. Threatened old aristocratic families
2. Previous nomadic rulers – mostly Buddhist
   a. Masses believed in Mahayana Buddhism – salvation
   b. Chan/Zen Buddhism for elite
      1. Stress on meditation
      2. appreciation of natural/artistic beauty
3. Empress Wu – 690-705
   a. Tried to make Buddhism state religion
   b. Commissioned Buddhist painting/sculpture
   c. Statues of Buddha carved
   d. Large pagodas built
   e. 50,000 monasteries
4. Reached Height in beginning of Tang empire

G. The Anti-Buddhist Backlash
1. Daoists competed by stressing heir own magical/predictive powers
2. Economic challenge of Buddhists
   1. not taxed
   2. denied labor pool – can’t tax/conscript peasants on monasteries
3. Emperor Wuzong
   1. Thousands of shrines destroyed
   2. monks/nuns forced to abandon monastic life
   3. Lands divided among taxpaying landlords/peasants
4. But…Buddhism already left mark in law, arts, language, heaven, charity
III. Tang Decline and the Rise of the Song

A. Fall of Tang
   1. Empress Wei attempts to take throne for son by poison
   2. Another prince Xuanzong takes over
      a. Initially wanted political/economic reforms
      b. Eventually devoted self to arts, pleasures music
      c. Relation with Yang Guifei – woman from harem of another prince
         1. Famous, ill-fated romance
         2. Focus on Yang Guifei
            a. Power to her family – angered others
            b. neglected economy
            c. military weakness
   3. Military leaders push for revolt
      a. Revolt put down, but emperor has to kill Yang Guifei
      b. Had to make alliances with nomadic leaders/regional kings
      c. Regional lords develop independent armies
         1. Leads to period of revolts

B. The Founding of the Song Dynasty
   1. Just when it seemed like provincial leaders and nomads would again rule…
   2. Zhao Kuangyin – fearless warrior
      a. Can’t overcome Liao dynasty
      b. Precedent set – *** Song dynasty always plagued by pressure from north
         1. Had to pay heavy tribute to north
         2. North militarily dominant
      c. Song empire culturally superior

C. Song Politics: Settling for Partial Restoration
   1. Desire to not have same problems as under Tang
      a. Military subordinated to civilian bureaucrats
         1. Different than Rome/West where military leaders dominate
      b. Civil officials only allowed to be governors
      c. military commanders rotated
      d. promoted interests of Confucian scholar-gentry
         1. Officials’ salaries increased
         2. Civil service exams routinized – every three years at three levels
            e. Led to too many officials, but…bureaucracy saved

D. The Revival of Confucian Thought
   1. Revival of Confucian ideas
      a. Recover long-abandoned texts (like Renaissance in Europe)
      b. decipher ancient inscriptions
   2. Neo-Confucians
      a. Personal morality highest goal
      b. Virtue attained through book learning…and…
      c. Personal observation…and…
      d. Contact with wise people
      e. Hostile to foreign philosophies – aka Buddhism
      f. Focus on tradition
   3. Eventually stifled thought of elite
   4. Reinforced class, age, gender distinctions
      a. If men/women keep to place, you can achieve social harmony

E. Roots of Decline: Attempts at Reform
   1. Problems
      a. Weakness in phase of Khitan from north, encouraged other nomads
b. Tribute paid to north weakening economy
c. Cost of army – 1 million – too expensive
d. Focus on civilian leaders, meant weak leaders often led armies
e. Money not spent on fortifications, but on scholarly pursuits/entertainment

6. Wang Anshi – attempts to reform
   a. Legalist perspective
   b. Cheap loans
   c. Irrigation projects
   d. Taxed landlord/scholarly class
   e. Established trained mercenary force
   f. Tried to reorganize university education

F. Reaction and Disaster: The Flight to the South
   1. Song dynasty survived invasion of Jurchens by moving South
   2. Southern Song dynasty not powerful, but…
      a. Lasted 150 years
      b. One of the most glorious periods of Chinese history – their Golden Age

IV. Tang and Song Prosperity: The Basis of a Golden Age
A. Grand Canal
   1. Movement of people and goods
   2. Population switch made it necessary to improve communications north-south
      a. South producing more food – has larger population
   3. Million forced laborers
B. A New Phase of Commercial Expansion – how does the economy get better
   1. Silk Road expanded and protected
      a. Horses, Persian rugs, tapestries imported
      b. silk textiles, porcelain, paper exported
   2. Junks – as strong quality wise as dhows of the Arabs
      a. watertight bulkheads
      b. sternpost rudders
      c. oars, sails, compasses, bamboo fenders
      d. gunpowder rockets
   3. Governments supervised hours/marketing methods at trade centers
   4. Merchants banded together in guilds
   5. Expanded credit
   6. Deposit shops found throughout empire
   7. paper money – credit vouchers – flying money
      a. Reduced danger of robbery
C. World’s Most Splendid Cities
   1. Surge in Urban Growth
   2. Imperial City – Changan
      a. Palace/audience halls restricted
      b. Elaborate gardens, hunting park
   3. Hangzhou – “most noble city” “best in the world” – Marco Polo
      a. Great marketplaces
      b. entertainment
         1. boating
         2. singing girls
         3. bath houses
         4. restaurants
         5. acrobats
         6. tea houses,
7. opera performances

D. Expanding Agrarian Production and Life in the Country
   1. Agricultural improvements
      a. Encouraged peasant migrations
      b. supported military garrisons in rural areas
      c. state-regulated irrigation/canals
      d. new seeds – Champa rice from Vietnam
      e. great poo – human, animal, fertilizer manure
      f. inventions – wheelbarrow
      g. break up land of aristocracy
         1. Takes power from aristocrats
         2. Promoted position of ordinary citizen
   2. Architecture
      a. Curved roofs meant status
      b. Yellow/green tiles

E. Family and Society in the Tang-Song Era
   1. Women
      a. Showed signs of improving, but then deteriorated
         1. Marriages among same age women/men
         2. Importance of marriage alliances helped with dowry
         3. Upper classes – women could yield considerable power initially
            a. Range of activities – even polo
            b. Divorce by mutual consent
            c. More defense against husband’s negative behavior than in India
            d. Wealthy women even took lovers in Hangzhou
   2. Men permitted to have premarital sex, concubines, remarry after death
      a. Laws favored men for inheritance

F. Neo-Confucian Assertion of Male Dominance
   1. Women, but with the Neo-Confucianists, women put back in their place
      a. Primary role – bearer of sons – patrilineal line
      b. Advocated confining women – fidelity, chastity, virginity
      c. Excluded from education for civil service
      d. Footbinding – equal to veil/seclusion in Islam
         1. Preference for small feet – feminine
         2. Limited mobility – crippling
         3. Can’t be initially accepted by the poor – still need the labor
         4. Eventually, because marriage goal, mothers had to bind daughter’s feet
   2. Men permitted to have premarital sex, concubines, remarry after death
      a. Laws favored men for inheritance

G. Glorious Age: Invention and Artistic Creativity
   1. Inventions
      a. New agricultural tools
      b. Banks and paper money
      c. Engineering feats – Grand Canal, dikes, dams
         1. Bridges – arches, segmented, suspension, trussed – forms used today
      d. Explosive powder
         1. Grenades, flamethrowers, poisonous gases, rocket launchers
         2. Checked nomadic invasions
      e. Domestically
         1. dinking tea, chairs, coal for fule, kite
      f. Key inventions for future civilizations
         1. abacus, compass, printing – movable type

H. Scholarly Refinement and Artistic Accomplishment
   1. Painted landscapes
2. Artists generalists, not specialists – you would be the poet, musician, and painter
3. Confucian influence vs. Buddhist
   1. Landscapes, everyday life replace devotional objects
4. Paintings
   1. Symbolic – philosophical or taught lessons
      a. Crane – pine tree – longevity
      b. Bamboo – scholarly class
   2. Abstract – subtlety and suggestion

I. Global Connections
   1. By moving south, Song could withstand nomadic invaders
   2. More market oriented
      1. Technological improvements taken from surrounding areas
      2. Production of luxury goods desired by wealthy class around the world
   3. Chinese inventions utilized by rest of the world
   4. Until 18th century – political and economic resources unmatched by other civilizations
Chapter 12

Spread of Civilizations in East Asia

After 400 years of fragmentation, China reemerged as a united empire and the most powerful force in East Asia. Although Korea and Japan were heavily influenced by Chinese civilization, each maintained its own identity.
Industrial Innovation in China
Primary Source Documents 1 & 2

Document 1

Document 2

The Granger Collection, New York
The Three Kingdoms, A.D. 220 – 589

- The Han dynasty collapsed in 220.
- China remained divided for 400 years, though starting in 384 the Northern Wei kingdom began to try to reunify China.
- Although they failed to unify the kingdom, they had managed to preserve Chinese culture during the fractious centuries of the Three Kingdoms.
- Chinese scholarship and thought slowly faded into insignificance and in its place arose a widespread growth of two religions: Neo-Taoism and Buddhism, which arrived from India.
- By 543, the Northern Wei faded from view and China fell into a brief period of short-lived kingdoms.
Sui Dynasty, about 610

Sui Dynasty, Sui's Provinces, and border powers (about 610)
## Two Religions of the Three Kingdoms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neo-Taoism</th>
<th>Buddhism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Called “the mysterious learning” in early China</td>
<td>- Entered China in the first century AD and was accepted as another form of Taoism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Existed in two forms: scholarly and popular</td>
<td>- It didn’t become popular until the Han dynasty collapsed and China fell into chaos, primarily among the common people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The scholarly form concentrated on discussing the Taoist classics and searching for immortality.</td>
<td>- Like folk Neo-Taoism, it offered salvation and was a moral religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The popular (folk) form was more popular and was a pantheistic, moral and salvation religion; all human acts both good and evil would be punished or rewarded in the afterlife.</td>
<td>- Some emperors converted to Buddhism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Sui Dynasty

- In 589, a Turkic-Chinese general, Sui Wen-ti, founded a the Sui Dynasty, which lasted from 589 to 618, and reunited northern and southern China.
- He reunited the northern kingdoms, centralized the government, reformed the taxation structure, and conquered the south – all in a single lifetime.
- His government was remarkably stable during his lifetime and he began ambitious building and economic projects.
- He embraced Buddhism and Taoism, rather than Confucianism, and employed Buddhist advisors to unify the country.
- His son, Sui Yang-ti, overextended himself with wars against Korea, eventually bankrupting the government. Combined with a series of unlucky natural disasters, the empire suffered widespread rebellion.
- In the fight for power, Sui Yang-ti, was assassinated by one of his generals, Li Yan, who began a new dynasty, the T’ang, which lasted another three hundred years.
The T’ang Dynasty

- Began in 618, under Li Yuan a former Sui general.
- Later, Li Shih-min, forced his father to abdicate and upon taking the throne, took name T’ang T’ai-tsung.
- He was a brilliant general, government reformer, historian, master of calligraphy.
- He created a bureaucracy with three branches: Council of the State; Military Affairs; and the Censorate.
- He seized all the property of China as his own and redistributed it to “the most able” cultivators, which helped to strengthen central government by weakening large land owners by breaking up large farms & returning to peasants.
- He reinstated the civil service exam, though most bureaucratic positions went to aristocrats.
Emperor Taizong (r. 626-649) receives Ludongzan, ambassador of Tibet, at his court; painted in 641 AD by Yan Liben (600-673)
Empress Wu Zhao was a concubine of the second T’ang emperor.

She removed or killed all of her rivals at court and eventually became his empress.

In 660 when the emperor was debilitated by a stroke, she took control of the government of China.

In 684, when the emperor died she became regent for her son and in 690, she deposed him and ruled as Empress.

She was a strong ruler and the only woman to rule China in her own name.

She oversaw the greatest expansion of T’ang military power during which, Vietnam, Tibet, & Korea to became tributary states.

She recruited heavily from the civil service examinations. She was a devout Buddhist and founded many monasteries.
Hsuan-tsung, 713-756

- Moved the capital to Chang-an.
- Reduced the number of civil-service examination officials.
- Developed new law code.
- Increased the wealth and power of the court.
- Known as the “golden age” of Chinese culture.
- Built a system of canals, including the Great Canal, which encouraged internal trade and transportation.
- Encouraged foreign trade.
- Chang-an became a meeting place of many cultures and religions.
Decline of the T’ang

- Over time the military expansion of the T’ang was pushed back by the Mongols of Manchuria, the Turks to the west, and the Tibetans to the south.

- In 755, An Lu-shan, a general commanding the northern provinces, led a rebellion resulting in the temporary capture of Chang-an.

- A Twice-A-Year Tax fixed taxes levied on each province.

- Civil war with the Nan Chao state in southern China, roving bands of thieves, wars with border territories, and frequent rebellions slowly converted the provinces into autonomous kingdoms under the control of warlords.

- Finally, in 907, the dynasty fell and the country fell into a fifty year period of disunion, known as the period of Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms.
The Song Dynasty

- **Emperor Taizu of Song** (r. 960–976) unified China through conquering other lands during his reign.

- The **Northern Song** (960-1127) with its capital at Kaifeng, ruled for 170 years. They controlled less territory than Tang.

- In 1127, they lost the northern part of China to the Chin, and retreated south of Huang He, relocating their capital at Hangchow.
The Song Dynasty (cont.)

- They ruled another 150 years, known as the Southern Song (1127-1279), but had constant threat of invasion from North.

- During the Song governmental power was reoriented around the emperor, who held absolute power.

- Revived and expanded the bureaucracy, recruiting Confucian scholars, largely from commoners, for civil service jobs.

- Set up schools to prepare male students for exam.

“Four Generals of Zhongxing” by Southern Song Dynasty artist Liu Songnian (1174–1224); the renowned general Yue Fei (1103–1142) is the second person from the left.
Northern Song Dynasty, A.D. 1111

Southern Song Dynasty, A.D. 1142
The Agricultural & Commercial Revolution

- A drop in the aristocracy and its movement from agricultural to urban areas started an agricultural revolution in China.
- Now individual farmers could buy & sell land & pay taxes with money, rather than grain.
- The Sung eliminated labor conscription creating: greater wealth for the general population and for the government, and more freedom for farmers.
- Developed new strains of rice and improved irrigation methods
- Produced food surpluses, enabling more people to pursue commerce, learning, and the arts
- Money in the form of copper and silver coins accelerated trade within China and led to the development of credit transforming cities into centers of trade.
- Encouraged foreign trade with Africa and the Middle East, and all the major trade routes and ports were controlled by Chinese merchants.
The Sui and T’ang dynasties followed Buddhist and Taoist thought, though Confucianism never really died out.

The T’ang restored the civil service exam, however, most appointments to government went to aristocrats – only 10% were products of the civil service examination.

Two civil service exams: 1st involved Confucian studies and the Five (“Confucian”) Classics; 2nd involved Taoism.

During the Sung dynasty, Confucianism was revived and reinstalled as the state philosophy.

The Sung recruited over 50% of government officials from the civil service examination.

Two civil service exams based entirely on Confucian philosophy: 1st was a lengthy regional exam (only a few passed); 2nd was the metropolitan exam taken at the capital city (about 15-20% passed – around 200 per year).
Hu Yüan, one of the principle forces behind the Confucian revival, believed that the Classics were more than repositories of ancient knowledge.

He believed also that they contained universal truths or principles and that it was the job of scholarship to ferret out those universal principles.

One could use those universal truths to solve any moral or political problem—any approach to moral or political problems not grounded in universal principles was doomed to failure.
Neo-Confucianism

- Song scholars founded new academies to study the classics and extensive libraries.
- Rival interpretations developed: the **School of the Mind** or Intuition; and the **School of Principle**.
- They also tried to prove the superiority of Chinese philosophies over imported ones, especially Buddhism.
- Philosopher Zhu Xi stressed the importance of applying philosophical principals to everyday life.
- Neo-Confucianism taught that people are basically good and through education virtue can be obtained.
- Hostility to foreign ideas and influences, like Buddhism, eventually led to a significant decrease in innovations and critical thinking among the elites.
- Instead emphasis was placed on rank, obligation, deference, and rituals reinforced class, age, and gender distinctions.
The Neo-Confucian Assertion of Male Dominance

- Neo-Confucians attacked the Buddhists for promoting career alternatives for women, such as scholarship and the monastic life, at the expense of marriage and raising a family.

- They drafted laws that favored men in inheritance, divorce, and familial interaction.

- Women were excluded from education that would enable them to take the civil service exam or rise to positions of political power.

- **Footbinding** exemplified constriction and subordination of women.
Footbinding in China

A Chinese woman with her feet unwrapped

An X-ray of bound feet

A comparison between a woman with normal feet (left) and a woman with bound feet in 1902
Fan Chung-yen (989-1052), a Confucian military leader and prime minister, instituted a series of sweeping changes to Chinese government including:

- the elimination of bureaucrats
- examination reform
- land reclamation
- the curtailing of conscripted labor

All of these contributed to a massive economic boom in agriculture and commerce.

He also established a public school system which trained the most intelligent and moral boys for government service representing the first public school system in history.
Song Reforms (cont.)

The New Laws of Wang Anshi (1021-1086) chief minister during the reign of Emperor Shenzong (1068-1085) were the most ambitious program of reform and reorganization in Chinese history until the Communist Revolution.

- Introduced cheap loans and government-assisted irrigation projects
- Taxed landlords and scholars, who had excluded themselves from military service and used the new revenue to establish a well-trained mercenary force
- Reorganized university education to emphasize analytical thinking instead of memorization
Chinese Treasure Junks of the T’ang and Sung Dynasties
The Decline and Fall of the Song

- By the mid-11th century, the Song had to pay a tribute to the Tibetan kingdom, Xi Xia, which drained resources.
- Emphasis on civil administration and disdain for the military led to the diversion of military funds to pay for scholarly pursuits & court entertainment.
- In 1127, northern China was forced to pay tribute to the new northern dynasty, the Chin, who were Manchurian.
- To secure their borders, the Song allied themselves with a new northern people, the Mongols, who would prove far more dangerous than the Chin.
- After conquering the Chin, the Mongols quickly overran the Southern Sung and set up a new Mongol dynasty: the Yuan.
Achievements

- Under the Tang, a system of canals, including the **Grand Canal**, encouraged internal trade and transportation, and iron was melded into steel.

- Technology under the Tang & Song included: the mechanical clock; gunpowder; block printing in the 700s and later, movable type in the 1040s.

- Landscape painting and calligraphy were developed displaying balance and harmony.

- Chinese **pagoda** developed from Indian stupa.

- Greatest Tang poet was **Li Bo**.

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The Liuhe Pagoda
(Six Harmonies Pagoda) of Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, China, built in 1165 AD during the Song Dynasty.
Land and Sea Trade Routes

- Tang conquests in central Asia reopened and protected the Silk Road connecting China and Persia.
- Horses, Persian rugs, and tapestries passed to China, while fine silk textiles, porcelain, and paper were exported to Islamic centers.
- China exported manufactured goods to Southeast Asia, while importing luxury goods, such as, aromatic woods and spices.
- In late Tang and Song times, China also used large junks, equipped with watertight bulkheads, sternpost rudders, oars, sails, compasses, bamboo fenders, and gunpowder-propelled rockets, to expand trade by sea.
- Guilds developed to regulate competition, urban areas grew becoming commercial centers that began to issue credit, called flying money, and paper money came into use.
Chinese Inventions

An illustration of a trebuchet catapult from the *Wujing Zongyao* manuscript of 1044. Trebuchets like this were used to launch the earliest type of explosive bombs.

An interior diagram of the astronomical clock tower of Kaifeng featured in Su Song's book, written by 1092 and published in printed form by the year 1094.
Chinese Artwork

*The Broken Balustrade*, early 12th century painting
Song Pottery

Pillow, sandstone with white and brown slip black, incised decoration, Northern Song Dynasty, 12th century