

CHINA DURING THE TANG & SONG DYNASTIES

China under Tang dynasty, 700



China under Song dynasty, 1142



○ A. 220 – Han dynasty collapses

- For 350 years afterwards, more than 30 dynasties attempt rule

○ B. 589-618 CE: Sui Dynasty

- Restored centralized government
- Won critical support of neighboring nomadic military commanders
- Lowered taxes, built granaries to ensure reserve food supply
- Construction of Grand Canal – linked northern and southern regions – increased trade/economy within China

I. BEYOND ANCIENT CHINA



CHALLENGE QUESTION #1

Which of the developments under the Sui dynasty most important in terms of bringing China back to prominence?

- Complete sentences!



II. TANG DYNASTY (618-907)

- A. Prevented another long period of instability/chaos
- *Expanded :*
- 1. **Land!** Took back northern and western lands lost since Han, move into central Asia
- 2. **Confucian-based bureaucracy**
 - Expanded civil service exam – established Ministry of Rites to oversee training of bureaucrats
 - Open to all men (only wealthy usually progress)
 - Education/position in gov't more important than nobility
 - Scholar-gentry class more powerful than old aristocratic families

• **B. Empress Wu**

- First/only woman to assume the title of Emperor in China
- Ruling behind the scenes of her husband and sons
- Promoted Buddhism over other belief systems throughout empire
 - After Wu, severe backlash against Buddhism by Confucian and Daoist scholars

• **C. Decline of Tang dynasty**

- Had trouble controlling vast empire
- Nomadic invasions, economic distress, internal rebellions
- Last emperor of Tang dynasty forced to resign in 907 C.E.



CHALLENGE QUESTION #2

Why was Buddhism important to Empress Wu?
Why do you think she choose it as the official religion of her reign?

- Complete sentences!



III. SONG DYNASTY (960-1279)

- A. China divided again after Tang dynasty
- Song dynasty established smaller empire than Tang, no control over western lands, lost northern lands
 - Nomadic peoples of north a constant problem
 - Eventually pushed south of Huanghe (Yellow River)
- Continued focus on Confucianism
 - Neo-Confucians – argued that virtue was obtained through learning
 - Despised foreign belief systems, ex. Buddhism
 - Social harmony arose from keeping place and rank, strictly patriarchal



- B. Slow decline from beginning
 - Northern nomadic invaders, lack of military focus
 - Late 11th century, neo-Confucians gained power in gov't, widespread corruption
 - Economy began to deteriorate, social unrest increased
 - Territory pushed south by northern kingdoms, became known as Southern Song dynasty
 - Lasted another 150 years, but eventually fell to the Mongols




WE ARE ALWAYS

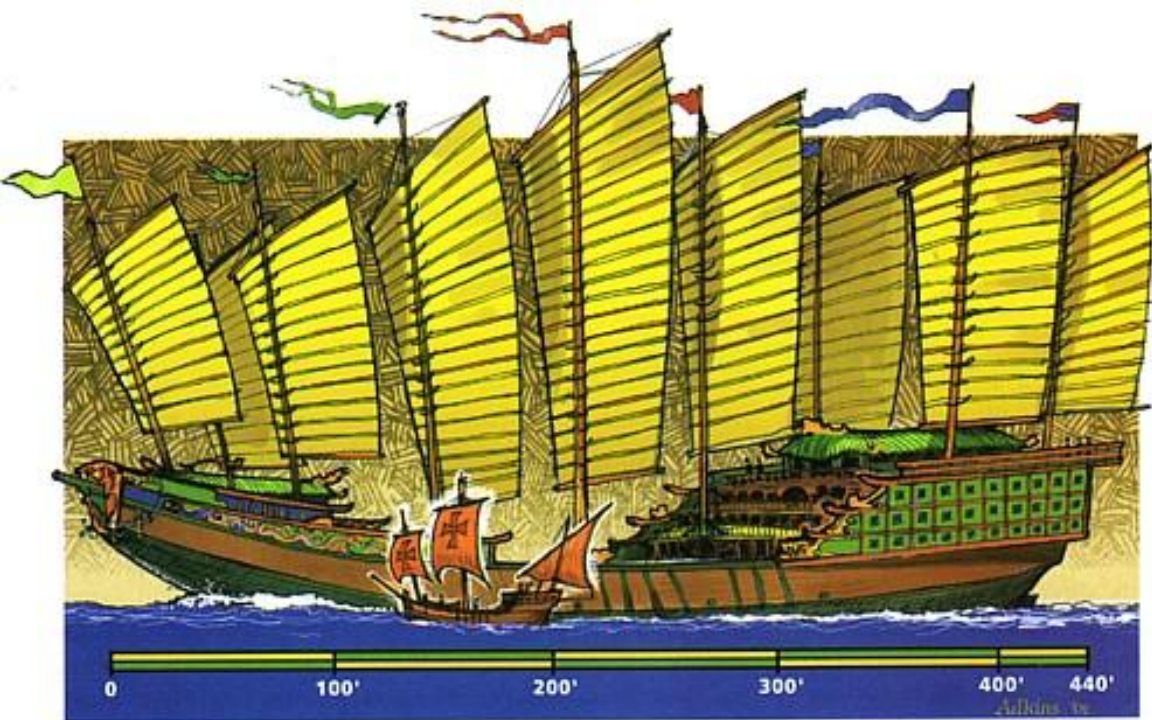
ONE DOES NOT SIMPLY

FIGHT THE MONGOLS

THE EXCEPTION

IV. TECHNOLOGICAL & ECONOMIC ADVANCES

- **Junks** – large ships used for trade, establishing tribute systems
 - **Movable type** – movable, carved blocks for printing
 - **Gun powder** – originally for fireworks, led to bombs, canons, etc.
 - **Improved cultivation** of rice and other agriculture
 - Trade = more prominent in society
 - **Silk Roads, later ocean routes** increase trade
 - **Paper money (flying money)** reduced risk for merchants
 - Helped economy and spread of culture
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CHALLENGE QUESTION #3

Which of the innovations/achievements do you think had the greatest impact on society? Why?

- Complete sentences



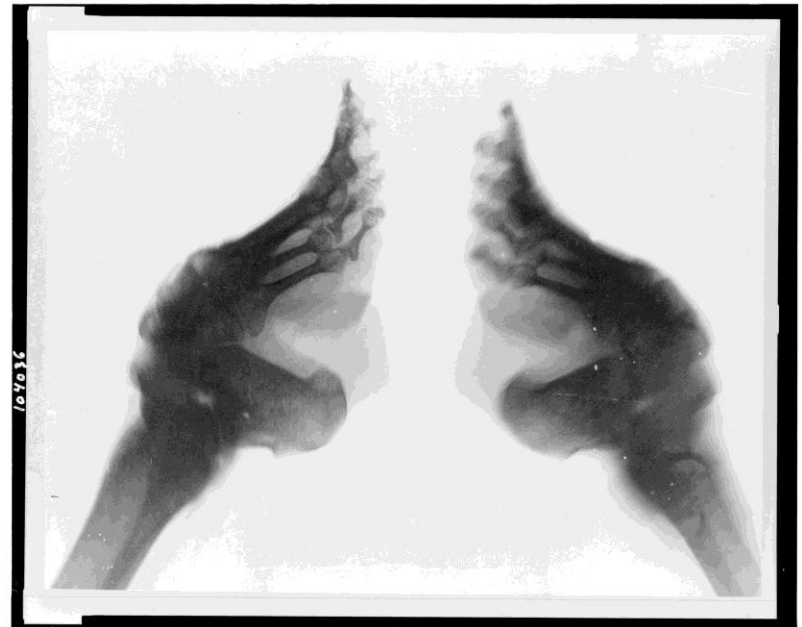
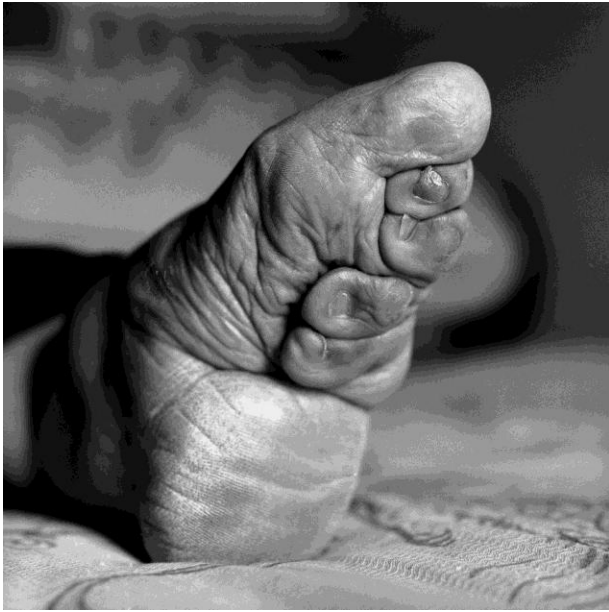
V. BIG SOCIAL CHANGES

- A. China becomes more urban
 - Ten cities with over 1 million people
 - B. Changes to social classes
 - Scholar-gentry – larger upper-class emerges
 - Passing civil service exam = special status (jinshi)
 - Could wear certain clothing, exempt from corporal punishment
 - Family name still influenced positions and success
 - “Middle class” – merchants, skilled artisans, minor officials
 - Peasant farmers represented largest class
- 

V. BIG SOCIAL CHANGES

- C. Status of women declined
 - Neo-Confucians pushed for male dominance of family and society
 - Feet binding – became sign of wealth, prestige





CHALLENGE QUESTION#4

Do any modern-day practices resemble the practice of foot-binding? Is there anything in our own society that mirrors the ideals associated with foot-binding?

- Complete sentences!



