

## THE POSTCLASSICAL ERA, 500 TO 1000 C.E.



### AP FOCUS ON THEMES

- Theme 1: Interaction Between Humans and the Environment
- Theme 2: Development and Interaction of Cultures
- Theme 3: State Building, Expansion, and Conflict
- Theme 4: Creation, Expansion, and Interaction of Economic Systems
- Theme 5: Development and Transformation of Social Structures

The period ca. 600 to ca. 1450 is often called the “postclassical” era because the themes from the classical era are continued and amplified. The classical empires in Eurasia and the Americas collapsed by ca. 600 C.E. Some were replaced by improved versions of the old classical empires. Many postclassical imperial governments were reassembled along almost the same lines as the classical empires—with social structures, written languages, art forms, and religions remaining relatively the same. These “new-and-improved” postclassical empires came with new technologies, new forms of taxation and other governmental powers, tweaks to religious institutions, and much more trade and contact with other empires and regions.

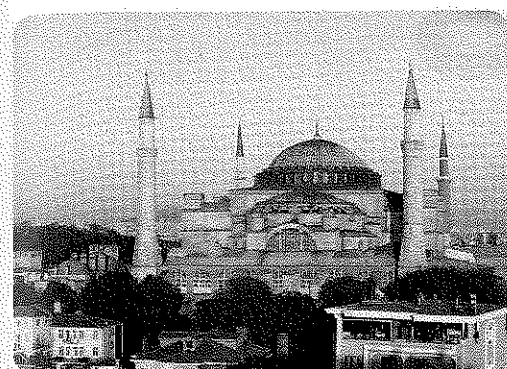
In some places, brand new types of states formed. City-states flourished in the Mediterranean region, on the east coast of Africa, in Mesoamerica, and in southeast Asia. People on the Arabian peninsula launched massive wars of conquest, creating an Arab-speaking, predominantly Muslim world (called *dar al-Islam*) that stretched from the Iberian peninsula to western China—entire areas ruled, for a while, by a caliph. The Mongols (central Asian pastoralists) controlled much of Eurasia for a time, ruled by interrelated khans. Nothing so grand replaced the fallen empires of western Rome and Gupta India. Peoples settled on small kingdoms or principalities

rather than an empire. You will need to know the locations and other specifics of how these states were ruled, as well as the relationships the states had with one another.

Classical trade routes intensify in the postclassical period. Although people in Afro-Eurasia and the Americas remained separate from each other in this period, within each hemisphere many more people and much more merchandise moved along the old, and some new, trade routes. Know the specifics of who and what was moving along these routes, and why, and study the maps. What were the new agricultural and transportation technologies and products? Who were the wealthy consumers with tastes for luxury goods? The innovative merchants and trade organizations? Which governments sponsored commercial policies (minting coins and paper money, for example) and advantageous infrastructure projects, like roads and canals? Scrutinize the roles the invaders—peoples like the Vikings, the Mongols, the Arabs, the Turkic peoples, the European Crusaders, the Mexica/Aztec—played in shaping world history.

It might be useful to think of a spider’s web when you evaluate the effects of massively increasing trade, which are both far-reaching and interconnected. For example, powerful new trading cities were created in which foreign merchants set up communities; therefore, a cross-fertilization of artistic, religious, linguistic, and cultural traditions occurred between

newcomers and inhabitants. Technology and science spread to new lands, creating powerful changes. Mongol conquests through *dar al-Islam* spread gunpowder weapons from China,



and from there into western European militaries. Indian, Persian, Arab and Greek science, math, and technologies from universities and libraries within *dar al-Islam* slowly trickled into western Europe via merchants and scholars and formed the backbone of the Renaissance. Foods, diseases, and animals were transported by merchants from their places of origins to new lands, altering agriculture and often dramatically affecting birth and death rates.

Merchants, missionaries, migrants, and military conquerors (the four Ms) spread religions and languages from their ‘homelands’ to new places where they were synthesized and reinterpreted by the people in the visited or conquered lands. For example, the new language of Swahili was a blend between east African Bantu and Arabic created over centuries because of close trade connections. There are many examples of cultural synthesis in the postclassical period, and AP students are frequently asked to explain the how, why, and significance of these syncretic processes. Wonderfully written architectural, literary, and artistic documents illustrate this blending and are important to AP World History, so watch for them in photographs and text.

It should be clear by now that you need to focus on the reasons for and consequences of increasing trade, contact, and wealth. It’s also important not to forget the people. As you go through these postclassical chapters, make note of what sort of people functioned in which roles: Who were the merchants, the workers, the bankers, the soldiers and sailors, the slaves? Where did these people and their work “fit” into society? How was one’s position on the social ladder determined? How did women fare in these postclassical

societies? What was considered “women’s work,” and how much influence did women of different classes or castes have on “men’s work”? Did newly-introduced religious beliefs improve or suppress the influence of women in a society? And always keep an eye on the pastoralist peoples—the Mongols, the Bantu, the Arabs, and Berbers: they are still big players in wars and trade.

More written documents have survived from the postclassical era than from earlier periods, and those highlighted in AP World History tend to be travelers’ writings. Why? Because travelers in foreign lands commented on the people and their social practices, telling us how much or how little intercultural knowledge and understanding existed.

Another significant pattern highlighted in this period—and critical to your understanding of AP World History and its themes—is the continuing importance of cities and their enormous growth. Why did they rise and fall? Did religious leaders in a region locate themselves in cities, and, if so, why? Who ruled the cities, and were the cities important because they were political centers (capitals), or commercial or religious centers? Who lived in the cities, and where did they come from? Were the cities centers of learning and the arts? You will have to be able to explain the religious, commercial (trade), governmental, and cultural functions of at least two major cities in this period.

The postclassical era of AP World History sees the growth of existing structures and the introduction of some new historical players on the scene. People in the western and eastern hemispheres didn’t know of each other’s existence. This period sets the stage for eastern hemisphere peoples—mostly merchants and governments—to develop the science, technologies, and funding to support more intensive maritime explorations that will lead to the Columbian voyages. This is a good time for you and your AP teacher to review the historical thinking skill “Patterns of Continuity and Change over Time,” because the changes and continuities from Period 3 to Period 4 are extensive.

### AP THINKING ABOUT THEMES

1. What factors contributed to the spread of religious traditions outside their regions of origin in this period?
2. In which specific ways have the legacies of the postclassical era survived to present day?
3. Cite some examples of syncretism that you see in the region, or area, where you live.

# The Resurgence of Empire in East Asia

## chapter 13

### AP KEY CONCEPTS

**2.3.II:** New technologies facilitated long-distance communication and exchange.

**3.1.I:** Improved transportation technologies and commercial practices led to an increased volume of trade, and expanded the geographical range of existing and newly active trade networks.

**3.1.II:** The movement of peoples caused environmental and linguistic effects.

**3.1.III:** Cross-cultural exchanges were fostered by the intensification of existing, or the creation of new, networks of trade and communication.

**3.1.IV:** There was continued diffusion of crops and pathogens, including epidemic diseases like the bubonic plague, throughout the Eastern Hemisphere along the trade routes.

**3.2.I:** Empires collapsed and were reconstituted; in some regions new state forms emerged.

**3.3.I:** Innovations stimulated agricultural and industrial production in many regions.

**3.3.III:** Despite significant continuities in social structures and in methods of production, there were also some important changes in labor management and in the effect of religious conversion on gender relations and family life.

### AP HISTORICAL THINKING

**Creating an Argument** Explain the extent to which the Tang dynasty owed its successes to the Sui dynasty.

**Synthesis** Analyze when, where, and how the expanding Chinese empires facilitate greater interregional economic and cultural opportunities.

**Comparison** Compare the status of Chinese women to that of Japanese and southeast Asian women in this period.

**Contextualization** Explain the extent to which China had a hemispheric economy by the time of the Song dynasty.

**Interpretation and Synthesis** Explain the advantages and disadvantages for the Japanese, Koreans, and Vietnamese of being part of China's tributary empire system.

### AP CHAPTER FOCUS

This is the first chapter of Period 3 in AP World History, commonly called the postclassical period. As you read, compare these new empires to the classical ones that collapsed ca. 600 to see what continued and what changed over time.

China endured 350 years of warlords fighting each other before the Sui dynasty prevailed—beginning almost 700 years of relative stability, peace, and prosperity in China (589–1279 c.e.). Historians study the reasons for this stability, and analyze how China became the driver of the entire Eurasian economy in this period. For the Chinese, the Tang period (ca. 600–ca. 900) represents a historic golden age, so look for cultural highpoints.

Japan and Korea, both part of the east Asian region, and Vietnam, part of the southeast Asian region, fell under tributary control of China in the Tang dynasty. These kingdoms benefited from trade with the powerhouse China while nurturing their own cultures in the shadow of their giant neighbor. Analyze the careful balance each of these countries had with their native and Chinese cultures and economies as the forces of cultural syncretism arrive on their doorsteps.

So much occurs in this time and place that you must sort out the important details. Follow the spread of religions/belief systems, particularly Buddhism out of India into east Asian countries, and Confucian scholarship from China throughout its tributary empire. Buddhism was accepted by some, whereas others merged Buddhist philosophies with Confucian beliefs to create neo-Confucianism, which became a dominant belief for a millennium.

### The Restoration of Centralized Imperial Rule in China

- The Sui Dynasty
- The Tang Dynasty
- The Song Dynasty

### The Economic Development of Tang and Song China

- Agricultural Development
- Technological and Industrial Development
- The Emergence of a Market Economy

### Cultural Change in Tang and Song China

- The Establishment of Buddhism
- Neo-Confucianism

### Development of Complex Societies in Korea, Vietnam, and Japan

- Korea and Vietnam
- Early Japan
- Medieval Japan

### EYEWITNESS:

#### Xuanzang: A Young Monk Hits the Road

Early in the seventh century c.e., the emperor of China issued an order forbidding his subjects to travel beyond Chinese borders into central Asia. In 629, however, in defiance of the emperor, a young Buddhist monk slipped past imperial watchtowers under cover of darkness and made his way west. His name was **Xuanzang**, and his destination was India, homeland of Buddhism. Although educated in Confucian texts as a youth, Xuanzang had followed his older brother into a monastery where he became devoted to Buddhism.

While studying the Sanskrit language, Xuanzang noticed that Chinese writings on Buddhism contained many teachings that were confusing or even contradictory to those of Indian Buddhist texts. He decided to travel to India to study with the most knowledgeable Buddhist teachers and sages to learn about Buddhism from the purest sources.

Xuanzang could not have imagined the difficulties he would face. Immediately after departing from China, his guide abandoned him in the Gobi desert. After losing his water bag, Xuanzang barely made his way to the

**Xuanzang**  
(SHWEN-ZAHNG)



Panels from the twelfth century Qingming scroll, depicting cosmopolitan life in the city of Kaifeng during the Northern Song dynasty.

oasis town of Turpan on the Silk Roads. The Buddhist ruler of Turpan provided the devout pilgrim with travel supplies and rich gifts to support his mission. Among the presents were twenty-four letters of introduction to rulers of lands on the way to India—each one attached to a bolt of silk, with five hundred bolts of silk and two carts of fruit for the most important ruler; thirty horses, twenty-five laborers, another five hundred bolts of silk along with gold and silver to use as travel funds, and silk clothes for Xuanzang. Xuanzang's trek included crossing three of the world's highest mountain ranges—the Tian Shan, Hindu Kush, and Pamir—and losing one-third of his party to exposure and starvation in the Tian Shan. He crossed yawning gorges thousands of meters deep on footbridges fashioned from rope or chains, and faced numerous attacks by bandits.

Xuanzang finally arrived in India in 630. He lived there for more than twelve years, visiting the holy sites of Buddhism and devoting himself to the study of languages and Buddhist doctrine. He also amassed a huge collection of relics and images as well as 657 books, all of which he packed into 527 crates and transported back to China to advance the understanding of Buddhism in his native land.

By the time of his return in 645, Xuanzang had logged more than 16,000 kilometers (10,000 miles) on the road. News of the holy monk's efforts reached the imperial court, and even though Xuanzang had violated the ban on travel, he received a hero's welcome and an audience with the emperor. Until his death in 664, Xuanzang spent his remaining years translating Buddhist treatises into Chinese and clarifying their doctrines. His efforts helped to popularize Buddhism throughout China.

## THE RESTORATION OF CENTRALIZED IMPERIAL RULE IN CHINA

During the centuries following the Han dynasty, several regional kingdoms made bids to assert their authority over all of China, but none possessed the resources to dominate its rivals over the long term. In the late sixth century, however, **Yang Jian**, an ambitious ruler in northern China, embarked on a series of military campaigns that brought all of China once again under centralized imperial rule. Yang Jian's Sui dynasty survived less than thirty years, but the tradition of centralized rule outlived his house. The Tang dynasty replaced the Sui, and the Song succeeded the Tang. The Tang and Song dynasties organized Chinese society so efficiently that China became a center of exceptional agricultural and industrial production. Indeed, much of the eastern hemisphere felt the effects of the powerful Chinese economy of the Tang and Song dynasties.

### The Sui Dynasty

**Establishment of the Dynasty** Like Qin Shihuangdi some eight hundred years earlier, Yang Jian imposed tight political discipline on his state and then extended his rule to the rest of China. Yang Jian began his rise to power when a Turkish ruler appointed him duke of Sui in northern China. In 580 Yang Jian's patron died, leaving a seven-year-old son as his heir. Yang Jian installed the boy as ruler but forced his abdication one year later, claiming the throne and the "mandate of heaven" (chapter 5) for himself. During the next decade Yang Jian sent military expeditions into central Asia and southern China. By 589 the house of Sui ruled all of China.

**Yang Jian** (yahng jyahnh)

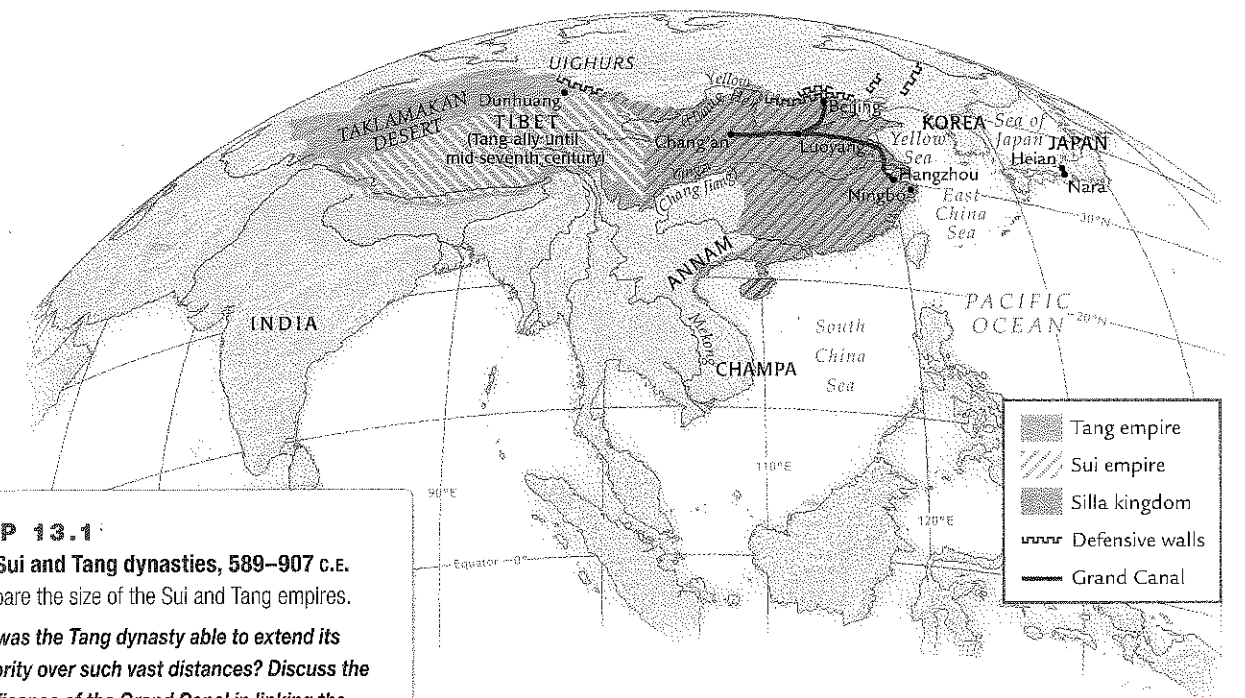
**Sui Yangdi** (sway yahng-dee)

Like the rulers of the Qin dynasty, the emperors of the **Sui dynasty** (589–618 C.E.) placed enormous demands on their subjects in the course of building a strong, centralized government. The Sui emperors ordered the construction of palaces and granaries, carried out extensive repairs on defensive walls, dispatched military forces to central Asia and Korea, levied high taxes, and demanded compulsory labor services.

**The Grand Canal** The most elaborate project undertaken during the Sui dynasty was the construction of the **Grand Canal**, which was one of the world's largest waterworks projects before modern times. The second emperor, **Sui Yangdi** (reigned 604–618 C.E.), completed work on the canal to facilitate trade between northern and southern China, particularly to make the abundant supplies of rice and other food crops from the Yangzi River valley available to residents of northern regions. The only practical and economical way to transport food crops in large quantities was by water. But since Chinese rivers generally flow from west to east, only an artificial waterway could support a large volume of trade between north and south.

The Grand Canal was really a series of artificial waterways that ultimately reached from Hangzhou in the south to the imperial capital of Chang'an in the west to a terminus near modern Beijing in the north. Sui Yangdi used canals dug as early as the Zhou dynasty, but he linked them into a network that served much of China. When completed, the Grand Canal extended almost 2,000 kilometers (1,240 miles) and reportedly was forty paces wide, with roads running parallel to the waterway on either side.

Though expensive to construct, Sui Yangdi's investment in the Grand Canal paid enormous dividends for the future. It integrated the economies of northern and southern China, thereby establishing an economic foundation for political and cultural unity. Until the arrival of railroads in the twentieth



**MAP 13.1**

**The Sui and Tang dynasties, 589–907 C.E.**

Compare the size of the Sui and Tang empires.

*Why was the Tang dynasty able to extend its authority over such vast distances? Discuss the significance of the Grand Canal in linking the various regions of China.*

century, the Grand Canal served as the principal conduit for internal trade. Indeed, the canal continues to function even today, although mechanical transport has diminished its significance as a trade route.

Sui Yangdi's construction projects served China well over a long term, but their dependence on high taxes and forced labor generated hostility toward his rule. The Grand Canal alone required the services of conscripted laborers by the millions. Military reverses in Korea prompted discontented subjects to revolt against Sui rule. During the late 610s, rebellions broke out in northern China when Sui Yangdi sought additional resources for his Korean campaign. In 618 a disgruntled minister assassinated the emperor and brought the dynasty to an end.

### The Tang Dynasty

Soon after Sui Yangdi's death, a rebel leader seized Chang'an and proclaimed himself emperor of a new dynasty that he named **Tang** after his hereditary title. The dynasty survived for almost three hundred years (618–907 C.E.), and Tang rulers organized China into a powerful, productive, and prosperous society.

**Tang Taizong** Much of the Tang's success was due to the energy, ability, and policies of the dynasty's second emperor, **Tang Taizong** (reigned 627–649 C.E.). Taizong was both ambitious and ruthless: in making his way to the imperial throne, he murdered two of his brothers and pushed his father aside. Once on the throne, however, he displayed a high sense of duty and strove conscientiously to provide an effective, stable government. He built a splendid capital at Chang'an, and he

saw himself as a Confucian ruler who heeded the interests of his subjects. Contemporaries reported that banditry ended during his reign, that the price of rice remained low, and that taxes levied on peasants amounted to only one-fortieth of the annual harvest—a 2.5 percent tax rate—although required rent payments and compulsory labor services meant that the effective rate of taxation was somewhat higher. These reports suggest that China enjoyed an era of unusual stability and prosperity during the reign of Tang Taizong.

Three policies in particular help to explain the success of the early Tang dynasty: maintenance of a well-articulated transportation and communications network, distribution of land according to the principles of the equal-field system, and reliance on a bureaucracy based on merit. All three policies originated in the Sui dynasty, but Tang rulers applied them more systematically and effectively than their predecessors had.

**Transportation and Communications** Apart from the Grand Canal, which served as the principal route for long-distance transportation within China, Tang rulers maintained an extensive communications network based on roads, horses, and sometimes human runners. Along the main routes, Tang officials maintained inns, postal stations, and stables, which provided rest and refreshment for travelers, couriers, and their mounts. Using couriers traveling by horse, the Tang court could communicate with the most distant cities in the empire in about eight days. Even human

**Tang Taizong** (TAHNG TEYE-zohng)

Barges make their way through a portion of the Grand Canal near the city of Wuxi in southern China. Built during the Sui dynasty, the waterways of the Grand Canal fostered the economic integration of northern and southern China.



runners provided impressively speedy services: relay teams of some 9,600 runners supplied the Tang court at Chang'an with seafood delivered fresh from Ningbo, more than 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) away.

**The Equal-Field System** The **equal-field system** governed the allocation of agricultural land. Its purpose was to ensure an equitable distribution of land and to avoid the concentration of landed property that had caused social problems during the Han dynasty. The system allotted land to individuals and their families according to the land's fertility and the recipients' needs. About one-fifth of the land became the hereditary possession of the recipients, and the rest remained available for redistribution when the original recipients' needs and circumstances changed.

For about a century, administrators were able to apply the principles of the equal-field system relatively consistently. By the early eighth century, however, the system showed signs of strain. A rapidly rising population placed pressure on the land available for distribution. Meanwhile, through favors, bribery, or intimidation of administrators, influential families found ways to retain land scheduled for redistribution. Furthermore, large parcels of land fell out of the system altogether when Buddhist monasteries acquired them. Nevertheless, during the first half of the Tang dynasty, the system provided a foundation for stability and prosperity in the Chinese countryside.

**Bureaucracy of Merit** The Tang dynasty also relied heavily on a bureaucracy based on merit, as reflected by performance on imperial civil service examinations. Following the example of the Han dynasty, Sui and Tang rulers recruited government officials from the ranks of candidates who had progressed through the Confucian educational system and had mastered a sophisticated curriculum concentrating on the classic works of Chinese literature and philosophy. During the early Tang dynasty, most officeholders were aristocrats. By

the late Tang era, however, when educational opportunities were more widely available, officeholders came largely from the ranks of common families. The Confucian educational system and the related civil service served Chinese governments so well that, with modifications and an occasional interruption, they survived for thirteen centuries, disappearing only after the collapse of the Qing dynasty in the early twentieth century.

**Military Expansion** Soon after its foundation, the powerful and dynamic Tang state began to flex its military muscles. In the north, Tang forces brought Manchuria under imperial authority and forced the Silla kingdom in Korea to acknowledge the Tang emperor as overlord. To the south, Tang armies conquered the northern part of Vietnam. To the west they extended Tang authority almost as far as the Aral Sea and brought a portion of the high plateau of Tibet under Tang control. Territorially, the Tang empire ranks among the largest in Chinese history.

**Tang Foreign Relations** In an effort to fashion a stable diplomatic order, the Tang emperors revived the Han dynasty's practice of maintaining tributary relationships between China and neighboring lands. According to Chinese political theory, China was the Middle Kingdom, a powerful realm with the responsibility to bring order to subordinate lands through a system of tributary relationships. Neighboring lands and peoples would recognize Chinese emperors as their overlords. As tokens of their subordinate status, envoys from those states would regularly deliver gifts to the court of the Middle Kingdom and would perform the kowtow—a ritual prostration in which subordinates knelt before the emperor and touched their foreheads to the ground. In return, tributary states received confirmation of their authority as well as lavish gifts. Because Chinese authorities often had little real influence in these supposedly subordinate lands, there was always something of a fictional quality



In this wall painting from the tomb of a Tang prince, three Chinese officials (at left) receive envoys from foreign lands who pay their respects to representatives of the Middle Kingdom. The envoys probably come from the Byzantine empire, Korea, and Siberia. What features of their personal appearance and dress provide clues to the envoys' lands of origin?

to the system. Nevertheless, it was extremely important throughout east Asia and central Asia because it institutionalized relations between China and neighboring lands, fostering trade and cultural exchanges as well as diplomatic contacts.

**Tang Decline** Under able rulers such as Taizong, the Tang dynasty flourished. During the mid-eighth century, however, casual and careless leadership brought the dynasty to a crisis from which it never fully recovered. In 755, while the emperor neglected public affairs in favor of music and his favorite concubine, one of the dynasty's foremost military commanders, An Lushan, mounted a rebellion and captured the capital at Chang'an, as well as the secondary capital at Luoyang. His revolt was short-lived: in 757 a soldier murdered An Lushan, and by 763 Tang forces had suppressed his army and recovered their capitals. But the rebellion left the dynasty in a gravely weakened state. Tang commanders were unable to defeat rebellious forces by themselves, so they invited a nomadic Turkish people, the **Uighurs**, to bring an army into China. In return for their services, the Uighurs demanded the right to sack Chang'an and Luoyang after the expulsion of the rebels.

The Tang imperial house never regained control of affairs after this crisis. The equal-field system deteriorated, and dwindling tax receipts failed to meet dynastic needs. Imperial armies were unable to resist the encroachments of Turkish peoples in the late eighth century. During the ninth century a series of rebellions devastated the Chinese countryside. One

uprising, led by the military commander Huang Chao, embroiled much of eastern China for almost a decade from 875 to 884. Huang Chao's revolt reflected and fueled popular discontent: he routinely pillaged the wealthy and distributed a portion of his plunder among the poor. In an effort to control the rebels, the Tang emperors granted progressively greater power and authority to regional military commanders, who gradually became the effective rulers of China. In 907 the last Tang emperor abdicated his throne, and the dynasty came to an end.

### The Song Dynasty

Following the Tang collapse, warlords ruled China until the Song dynasty reimposed centralized imperial rule in the late tenth century. Though it survived for more than three centuries, the **Song dynasty** (960–1279 c.e.) never built a very powerful state. Song rulers mistrusted military leaders, and they placed much more emphasis on civil administration, industry, education, and the arts than on military affairs.

**Song Taizu** The first Song emperor, **Song Taizu** (reigned 960–976 c.e.), inaugurated this policy. Song Taizu began his career as a junior military officer serving one of the most powerful warlords in northern China. He had a reputation for honesty and effectiveness, and in 960 his troops proclaimed

**Uighurs** (WEE-goors)  
**Song Taizu** (sawng tahy-zoo)

## Sources from the Past

### The Poet Du Fu on Tang Dynasty Wars

The eighth century was a golden age of Chinese poetry. Among the foremost writers of the era was Du Fu (712–770 C.E.), often considered one of China's two greatest poets. Born into a prominent Confucian family, Du Fu wrote in his early years about the beauty of the natural world. After the rebellion of An Lushan, however, he fell into poverty and experienced difficulties. Not surprisingly, poetry of his later years lamented the chaos of the late eighth century. In the three following poems, Du Fu offered a bitter perspective on the wars that plagued China in the 750s and 760s.

#### The Recruiting Officers at the Village of the Stone Moat

I sought a lodging for the night, at sunset, in the Stone Moat village.

Recruiting officers, who seize people by night, were there. A venerable old man climbed over the wall and fled. An old woman came out of the door and peered. What rage in the shouts of the Recruiting Officers. What bitterness in the weeping of the old woman. I heard the words of the woman as she pled her cause before them:

'My three sons are with the frontier guard at Yeh Cheng, From one son I have received a letter. A little while ago two sons died in battle. He who remains has stolen a temporary lease of life; The dead are finished forever. In the house there is still no grown man; Only my grandson at the breast. The mother of my grandson has not gone; Going out, coming in, she has not a single whole skirt. I am an old, old woman, and my strength is failing, But I beg to go with the Recruiting Officers when they return this night.

I will eagerly agree to act as a servant at Ho Yang; I am still able to prepare the early morning meal'. The sound of words ceased in the long night, It was as though I heard the darkness choke with tears.

At daybreak I went on my way.  
Only the venerable old man was left.

#### Crossing the Frontier I

When bows are bent, they should be bent strongly;  
When arrows are used, they should be long.  
The bowmen should first shoot the horses.  
In taking the enemy prisoner, the leader should be taken first.  
There should be no limit to the killing of men.  
In making a country, there should naturally be a border.  
If it were possible to regulate rebellion,  
Would so many be killed and wounded?

#### Crossing the Frontier II

At dawn, the conscripted soldiers enter the camp outside the Eastern Gate.  
At sunset they cross the bridge at Ho Yang.  
The setting sunlight is reflected on the great flags.  
Horses neigh. The wind whines—whines  
Ten thousand tents are spread across the level sand.  
Officers instruct their companies.  
The bright moon hangs in the middle of the sky.  
The written orders are strict that the night shall be still and empty.  
Sadness everywhere. A few sounds from the nomad flute fill the air.  
The strong soldiers are no longer proud, they quiver with sadness.  
May one ask who is their general?  
Perhaps it is Ho Piao Yao.

#### For Further Reflection

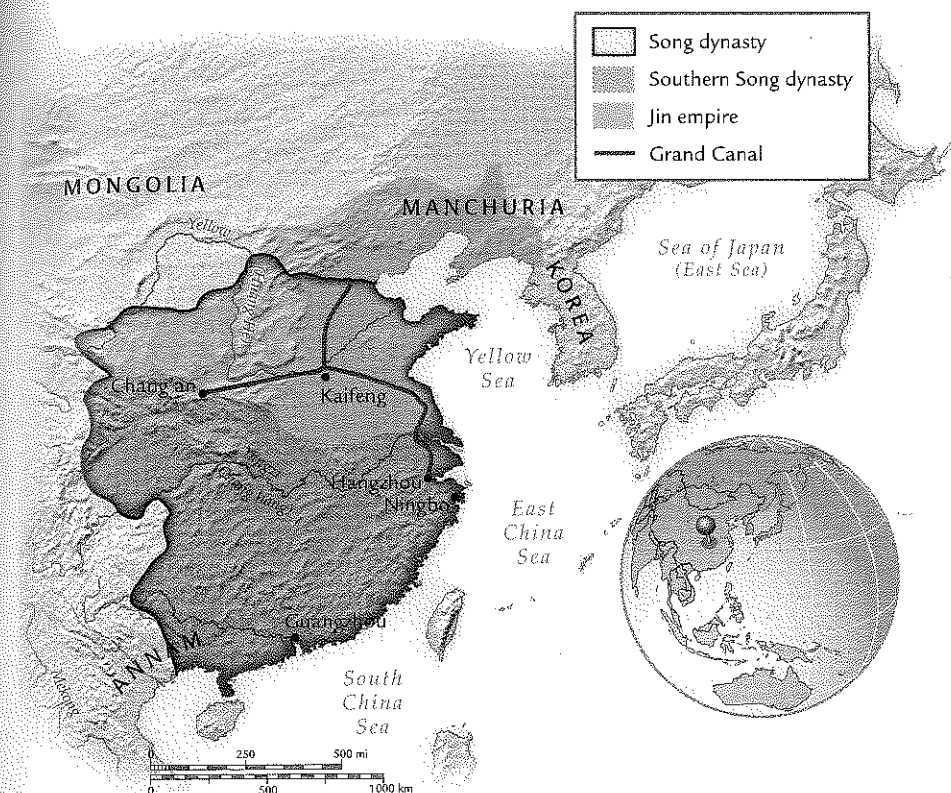
- From your reading of these poems, what was the impact of the Tang wars on the poet Du Fu personally, and on Chinese society in general?

Source: Irving Y. Lo, trans. *Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature*. New York, 1994, p. 214.

him emperor. During the next several years, he and his army subjected the warlords to their authority and consolidated Song control throughout China. He then persuaded his generals to retire honorably to a life of leisure so that they would not seek to displace him, and he set about organizing a centralized administration that placed military forces under tight supervision.

Song Taizu regarded all state officials, even minor functionaries in distant provinces, as servants of the imperial

government. In exchange for their loyalty, Song rulers rewarded these officials handsomely. They vastly expanded the bureaucracy based on merit by creating more opportunities for individuals to seek a Confucian education and take civil service examinations. They accepted many more candidates into the bureaucracy than their Sui and Tang predecessors, and they provided generous salaries for those who qualified for government appointments. They even placed civil bureaucrats in charge of military forces.



MAP 13.2

#### The Song dynasty, 960–1279 C.E.

After the establishment of the Jin empire, the Song dynasty moved its capital from Kaifeng to Hangzhou.

What advantages did Hangzhou offer to the Song rulers?

**Song Weaknesses** The Song approach to administration resulted in a more centralized imperial government than earlier Chinese dynasties had enjoyed. But it caused two big problems that weakened the dynasty and eventually brought about its fall. The first problem was financial: the enormous Song bureaucracy devoured China's surplus production. As the number of bureaucrats and the size of their rewards grew, the imperial treasury came under tremendous pressure. Efforts to raise taxes aggravated the peasants, who mounted two major rebellions in the early twelfth century. By that time, however, bureaucrats dominated the Song administration to the point that it was impossible to reform the system.

The second problem was military. Scholar-bureaucrats generally had little military education and little talent for military affairs, yet they led Song armies in the field and made military decisions. It was no coincidence that nomadic peoples flourished along China's northern border throughout the Song dynasty. From the early tenth through the early twelfth century, the Khitan, a seminomadic people from Manchuria, ruled a vast empire stretching from northern Korea to Mongolia. During the first half of the Song dynasty, the Khitan demanded and received large tribute payments of silk and silver from the Song state to the south. In the early twelfth century, the nomadic Jurchen conquered the Khitan, overran northern China, captured the Song capital at Kaifeng, and proclaimed establishment of the Jin empire. Thereafter the Song dynasty moved its capital to the prosperous port city of **Hangzhou** and survived only in southern China, so that the latter part of the

dynasty is commonly known as the Southern Song. This truncated Southern Song shared a border with the Jin empire about midway between the Yellow River and the Yangzi River until 1279, when Mongol forces ended the dynasty and incorporated southern China into their empire.

### THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF TANG AND SONG CHINA

Although the Song dynasty did not develop a particularly strong military capacity, it benefited from a remarkable series of agricultural, technological, industrial, and commercial developments that transformed China into the economic powerhouse of Eurasia. This economic development originated in the Tang dynasty, but its results became most clear during the Song, which presided over a land of enormous prosperity. The economic surge of Tang and Song times had implications that went well beyond China, since it stimulated trade and production throughout much of the eastern hemisphere for more than half a millennium, from about 600 to 1300 C.E.

#### Agricultural Development

**Fast-Ripening Rice** The foundation of economic development in Tang and Song China was a surge in agricultural production. Sui and Tang armies prepared the way for increased agricultural productivity when they imposed their control

An illustration commissioned by the Song government shows peasants how to go about the laborious task of transplanting rice seedlings into a paddy flooded with water.



over southern China and ventured into Vietnam. In Vietnam they encountered strains of fast-ripening rice that enabled cultivators to harvest two crops per year. When introduced to the fertile fields of southern China, fast-ripening rice quickly resulted in an expanded supply of food. Like the *dar al-Islam*, Tang and Song China benefited enormously from the introduction of new food crops.

**New Agricultural Techniques** Chinese cultivators also increased their productivity by adopting improved agricultural techniques. They made increased use of heavy iron plows, and they harnessed oxen (in the north) and water buffaloes (in the south) to help prepare land for cultivation. They enriched the soil with manure and composted organic matter. They also organized extensive irrigation systems. These included not only reservoirs, dikes, dams, and canals but also pumps and waterwheels, powered by both animals and humans, that moved water into irrigation systems. Artificial irrigation made it possible to extend cultivation to difficult terrain, including terraced mountainsides—a development that vastly expanded China's agricultural potential.

**Population Growth** Increased agricultural production had dramatic results. One was a rapid expansion of the Chinese population. After the fall of the Han dynasty, the population of China reached a low point, about 45 million in 600 C.E.

By 800 it had rebounded to 50 million, and two centuries later to 60 million. By 1127, when the Jurchen conquered the northern half of the Song state, the Chinese population had passed 100 million, and by 1200 it stood at about 115 million. This rapid population growth reflected both the productivity of the agricultural economy and the well-organized distribution of food through transportation networks built during Sui and Tang times.

**Urbanization** Increased food supplies encouraged the growth of cities. During the Tang dynasty the imperial capital of Chang'an was the world's most populous city, with perhaps as many as two million residents. During the Song dynasty, China was the most urbanized land in the world. In the late thirteenth century, Hangzhou, capital of the Southern Song dynasty, had more than one million residents. These cities supported hundreds of restaurants, noodle shops, taverns, teahouses, brothels, music halls, theaters, clubhouses, gardens, markets, craft shops, and specialty stores dealing in silk, gems, porcelain, lacquerware, and other goods. Hangzhou residents, like those in most cities, observed peculiar local customs. Taverns often had several stories, for example, and patrons gravitated to higher or lower stories according to their plans: those desiring only a cup or two of wine sat at street level, whereas those planning an extended evening of revelry sought tables on the higher stories.

As a capital, Hangzhou was something of a special case among cities, but during the Tang and Song eras, scores of Chinese cities boasted populations of one hundred thousand or more. **Li Bai** (701–761 C.E.), who was perhaps the most popular poet of the Tang era, took the social life of these Chinese cities as one of his principal themes. Li Bai mostly wrote light, pleasing verse celebrating life, friendship, and especially wine. (Tradition holds that the drunken poet died by drowning when he fell out of a boat while attempting to embrace the moon's reflection in the water.) The annual spring festival was an occasion dear to the heart of urban residents, who flocked to the streets to shop for new products, have their fortunes told, and eat tasty snacks from food vendors.

Another result of increased food production was the emergence of a commercialized agricultural economy. Because fast-ripening rice yielded bountiful harvests, many cultivators could purchase inexpensive rice and raise vegetables and fruits for sale on the commercial market. Cultivators specialized in crops that grew well in their regions, and they often exported their harvests to distant regions. By the twelfth century, for example, the wealthy southern province of Fujian imported rice and devoted its land to the production of lychees, oranges, and sugarcane, which fetched high prices in northern markets. Indeed, market-oriented cultivation went so far that authorities tried—with only limited success—to require Fujianese to grow rice so as to avoid excessive dependence on imports.

**Patriarchal Social Structures** With increasing wealth and agricultural productivity, Tang and especially Song China experienced a tightening of patriarchal social structures, which perhaps reflected a concern to preserve family fortunes through enhanced family solidarity. During the Song dynasty the veneration of family ancestors became much more elaborate. Instead of simply remembering ancestors and invoking their aid in rituals performed at home, descendants diligently sought the graves of their earliest traceable forefathers and then arranged elaborate graveside rituals in their honor. Whole extended families often traveled great distances to attend annual rituals venerating their ancestors—a practice that strengthened the sense of family identity and cohesiveness.

**Foot Binding** Strengthened patriarchal authority also helps to explain the popularity of foot binding, which spread widely during the Song era. **Foot binding** involved the tight wrapping of young girls' feet with strips of cloth that prevented natural



The great Tang dynasty poet Li Bai chanting a poem, by Song dynasty artist Liang Kai (1140–1210).

growth of the bones and resulted in tiny, malformed, curved feet. Women with bound feet could not walk easily or naturally. Usually, they needed canes to walk by themselves, and sometimes they depended on servants to carry them around in litters. Foot binding never became universal in China, but many wealthy families and sometimes also peasant families bound the feet of their daughters to enhance their attractiveness and gain increased control over the girls' behavior. Like the practice of veiling women in Mediterranean and Muslim lands, foot binding placed women under tight supervision of their husbands or other male guardians, who then managed the women's affairs in the interests of the larger family.

**Wu Zhao: The Lady Emperor** Ironically, this era of strong patriarchal authority produced a rare female ruler. **Wu Zhao** (626–706 C.E.), also known as Wu Zetian, was the daughter of a scholar-official. At the age of thirteen, she became a concubine at the court of Tang Taizong, where she attracted notice because of her intelligence, wit, and beauty. After Taizong's death, Wu Zhao became the concubine and later the wife of his successor. In 660 the emperor suffered a debilitating stroke, and Wu Zhao seized the opportunity to direct affairs as administrator of the court. In 690 she went further and claimed the imperial title for herself.

Confucian principles held that political leadership was a man's duty and that women should obey their fathers, husbands, and sons. Thus it was not surprising that factions emerged to oppose Wu Zhao's rule. The lady emperor, however, was resourceful in garnering support. She organized a secret police force to monitor dissident factions, and she ordered brutal punishment for those who stood in her way. She strengthened the civil service system as a way of undercutting aristocratic families that might attempt to displace her. She also generously patronized Buddhists, who returned the favor by composing treatises seeking to legitimize her rule. Although Confucian scholars reviled her, Wu Zhao was an energetic and effective ruler. She quashed rebellions, organized military campaigns, and opened the imperial administration to talented commoners who rose through the civil service system. She held on to her rule until age eighty, when opponents were finally able to force an ailing Wu Zhao to abdicate in favor of her son. Yet the lady emperor was unique as a woman who publicly and officially wielded power in a rigidly patriarchal society. Other women exercised influence indirectly or even "ruled from behind a screen," but Wu Zhao was the only woman in Chinese history to claim the imperial title and rule as emperor.

## Technological and Industrial Development

**Porcelain** Abundant supplies of food enabled many people to pursue technological and industrial interests. During the Tang and Song dynasties, Chinese crafts workers generated a remarkable range of technological innovations. During Tang times they discovered techniques of producing high-quality **porcelain**, which was lighter, thinner, and adaptable to more uses than earlier pottery. When fired with glazes, porcelain could also become an aesthetically appealing utensil and even a work of art. Porcelain technology gradually diffused to other societies, and Abbasid crafts workers in particular produced porcelain in large quantities. Yet demand for Chinese porcelain remained strong, and the Chinese exported vast quantities of porcelain during the Tang and Song dynasties. Archaeologists have turned up Tang and Song porcelain at sites all along the trade networks of the postclassical era: Chinese porcelain graced the tables of wealthy and refined households in southeast Asia, India, Persia, and the port cities of east Africa. Tang and Song products gained such a reputation that fine porcelain has come to be known generally as *chinaware*.

**Metallurgy** Tang and Song craftsmen also improved metallurgical technologies. Production of iron and steel surged during this era, partly because of techniques that resulted in stronger and more useful metals. Chinese craftsmen discovered that they could use coke instead of coal in their furnaces and produce superior grades of metal. Between the early ninth and the early twelfth centuries, iron production increased almost tenfold according to official records, which understate total production. Most of the increased supply of iron and steel went into weaponry and agricultural tools: during the early Song dynasty, imperial armaments manufacturers produced 16.5 million iron arrowheads per year. Iron and steel

also went into construction projects involving large structures such as bridges and pagodas. As in the case of porcelain technology, metallurgical techniques soon diffused to lands beyond China. Indeed, Song military difficulties stemmed partly from the fact that nomadic peoples quickly learned Chinese techniques and fashioned their own iron weapons for use in campaigns against China.

**Gunpowder** Quite apart from improving existing technologies, Tang and Song craftsmen invented entirely new products, tools, and techniques, most notably **gunpowder**, printing, and naval technologies. Daoist alchemists discovered how to make gunpowder during the Tang dynasty, as they tested the properties of various experimental concoctions while seeking elixirs to prolong life. They soon learned that it was unwise to mix charcoal, saltpeter, sulphur, and arsenic, because the volatile compound often resulted in singed beards and even destroyed buildings. Military officials, however, recognized opportunity in the explosive mixture. By the mid-tenth century, they were using gunpowder in bamboo “fire lances,” a kind of flamethrower, and by the eleventh century they had fashioned primitive bombs.

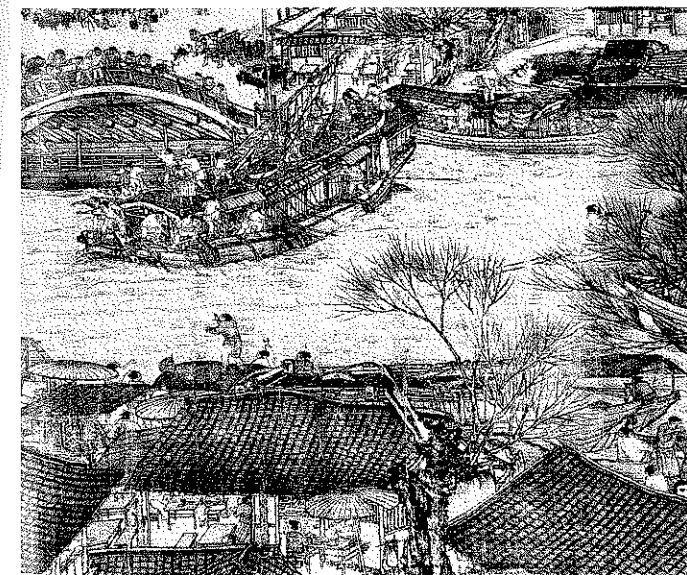
The earliest gunpowder weapons had limited military effectiveness: they probably caused more confusion because of noise and smoke than damage because of their destructive potential. Over time, however, refinements enhanced their effectiveness. Knowledge of gunpowder chemistry quickly diffused through Eurasia, and by the late thirteenth century peoples of southwest Asia and Europe were experimenting with metal-barreled cannons.

**Printing** The precise origins of printing lie obscured in the mists of time. Although some form of printing may have predated the Sui dynasty, only during the Tang era did printing become

common. The earliest printers employed block-printing techniques: they carved a reverse image of an entire page into a wooden block, inked the block, and then pressed a sheet of paper on top. By the mid-eleventh century, printers had begun to experiment with reusable, movable type: instead of carving images into blocks, they fashioned dies in the shape of ideographs, arranged them in a frame, inked them, and pressed the frame over paper sheets. Because formal writing in the Chinese language involved as many as forty thousand characters, printers often found movable type to be unwieldy and inconvenient, so they continued to print from wooden blocks long after movable type became available.

Printing made it possible to produce texts quickly, cheaply, and in huge quantities. By the late ninth century, printed copies of Buddhist texts, Confucian works, calendars, agricultural treatises, and popular works appeared in large quantities, particularly in southwestern China (modern Sichuan province). Song dynasty officials broadly disseminated printed works by visiting the countryside with pamphlets that outlined effective agricultural techniques.

**Naval Technology** Chinese inventiveness extended also to naval technology. Before Tang times, Chinese mariners did not venture far from land. They traveled the sea lanes to Korea, Japan, and the Ryukyu Islands but relied on Persian, Arab, Indian, and Malay mariners for long-distance maritime trade. During the Tang dynasty, however, Chinese consumers developed a taste for the spices and exotic products of southeast Asian islands, and Chinese mariners increasingly visited



A detail from a Song-era painting on silk depicts two sturdy, broad-bottomed junks, the workhorses of the Chinese merchant fleet.

## Thinking about TRADITIONS

### Technology and Society

The Tang and Song dynasties were eras of dramatic technological development. To what extent did technological innovations reinforce the established features of Chinese political and social order? To what extent did they prompt fundamental change in Chinese traditions?

those lands in their own ships. By the time of the Song dynasty, Chinese seafarers sailed ships fastened with iron nails, waterproofed with oils, furnished with watertight bulkheads, driven by canvas and bamboo sails, steered by rudders, and navigated with the aid of the “south-pointing needle”—the magnetic compass. Larger ships sometimes even had small rockets powered by gunpowder. Chinese ships mostly plied the waters between Japan and the Malay peninsula, but some ventured into the Indian Ocean and called at ports in India, Ceylon, Persia, and east Africa. Those long-distance travels helped to diffuse elements of Chinese naval technology, particularly the compass, which soon became the common property of mariners throughout the Indian Ocean basin.

### The Emergence of a Market Economy

Increased agricultural production, improved transportation systems, population growth, urbanization, and industrial production combined to stimulate the Chinese economy. China's various regions increasingly specialized in the cultivation of particular food crops or the production of particular manufactured goods, trading their products for imports from other regions. The market was not the only influence on the Chinese economy: government bureaucracies played a large role in the distribution of staple foods such as rice, wheat, and millet, and dynastic authorities closely watched militarily sensitive enterprises such as the iron industry. Nevertheless, millions of cultivators produced fruits and vegetables for sale on the open market, and manufacturers of silk, porcelain, and other goods supplied both domestic and foreign markets. The Chinese economy became more tightly integrated than ever before, and foreign demand for Chinese products fueled rapid economic expansion.

**Financial Instruments** Indeed, trade grew so rapidly during Tang and Song times that China experienced a shortage of the copper coins that served as money for most transactions. To alleviate the shortage, Chinese merchants developed alternatives to cash that resulted in even more economic growth. Letters of credit came into common use during the early Tang dynasty. Known as “flying cash,” they enabled merchants to deposit goods or cash at one location and draw the equivalent in cash or goods elsewhere in China. Later

A printed book from the twelfth century presents a Chinese translation of a Buddhist text along with a block-printed illustration of the Buddha addressing his followers.



developments included the use of promissory notes, which pledged payment of a given sum of money at a later date, and checks, which entitled the bearer to draw funds against cash deposited with bankers.

**Paper Money** The search for alternatives to cash also led to the invention of paper money. Wealthy merchants pioneered the use of printed paper money during the late ninth century. In return for cash deposits from their clients, they issued printed notes that the clients could redeem for merchandise. In a society short of cash, these notes greatly facilitated commercial transactions. Occasionally, however, because of temporary economic reverses or poor management, merchants were not able to honor their notes. The resulting discontent among creditors often led to disorder and sometimes even to riots.

By the eleventh century, however, the Chinese economy had become so dependent on alternatives to cash that it was impractical to banish paper money altogether. To preserve its convenience while forestalling public disorder, government authorities forbade private parties to issue paper money and reserved that right for the state. The first paper money printed under government auspices appeared in 1024 in Sichuan province, the most active center of early printing. By the end of the century, government authorities throughout most of China issued printed paper money—complete with serial numbers and dire warnings against the printing of counterfeit notes. Rulers of nomadic peoples in central Asia soon began to adopt the practice in their states.

Printed paper money caused serious problems for several centuries after its appearance. Quite apart from contamination of the money supply by counterfeit notes, government authorities frequently printed currency representing more value than they actually possessed in cash reserves—a practice not unknown in more recent times. The result was a partial loss of public confidence in paper money. By the late eleventh century, some notes of paper money would fetch only 95 percent of their face value in cash. Not until the **Qing** dynasty (1644–1911 c.e.) did Chinese authorities place the issuance of printed money under tight fiscal controls. In spite

Qing (ching)



An example of the world's oldest paper money, known as Jiaozi, first printed during the Southern Song dynasty. What economic conditions during the Southern Song demanded the introduction of paper money?

cred 120,000 foreigners when he sacked Guangzhou and subjected it to a reign of terror in 879.

**China and the Hemispheric Economy** Indeed, high productivity and trade brought the Tang and Song economy a dynamism that China's borders could not restrain. Chinese consumers developed a taste for exotic goods that stimulated trade throughout much of the eastern hemisphere. Spices from the islands of southeast Asia made their way to China, along with products as diverse as kingfisher feathers and tortoise shell from Vietnam, pearls and incense from India, and horses and melons from central Asia. Those items became symbols of a refined, elegant lifestyle—in many cases because of attractive qualities inherent in the commodities themselves but sometimes simply because of their scarcity and foreign provenance. In exchange for such exotic items, Chinese sent abroad vast quantities of silk, porcelain, and lacquerware. In central Asia, southeast Asia, India, Persia, and the port cities of east Africa, wealthy merchants and rulers wore Chinese silk and set their tables with Chinese porcelain. China's economic surge during the Tang and Song dynasties thus promoted trade and economic growth throughout much of the eastern hemisphere.

of abuses, however, printed paper money provided a powerful stimulus to the Chinese economy.

**A Cosmopolitan Society** Trade and urbanization transformed Tang and Song China into a prosperous, cosmopolitan society. Trade came to China both by land and by sea. Muslim merchants from the Abbasid empire and central Asia helped to revive the Silk Roads network and flocked to large Chinese trading centers. Even subjects of the Byzantine empire made their way across the Silk Roads to China. Residents of large Chinese cities such as Chang'an and Luoyang became quite accustomed to merchants from foreign lands. Indeed, musicians and dancers from Persia became popular entertainers in the cosmopolitan cities of the Tang dynasty. Meanwhile, Arab, Persian, Indian, and Malay mariners arriving by way of the Indian Ocean and South China Sea established sizable merchant communities in the bustling southern Chinese port cities of Guangzhou and Quanzhou. Contemporary reports said that the rebel general Huang Chao massa-

## Sources from the Past

### The Arab Merchant Suleiman on Business Practices in Tang China

*The Arab merchant Suleiman made several commercial ventures by ship to India and China during the early ninth century c.e. In 851 an Arab geographer wrote an account of Suleiman's travels, describing India and China for Muslim readers in southwest Asia. His report throws particularly interesting light on the economic conditions and business practices of Tang China.*

**Young and old Chinese all** wear silk clothes in both winter and summer, but silk of the best quality is reserved for the kings. . . . During the winter, the men wear two, three, four, five pairs of pants, and even more, according to their means. This practice has the goal of protecting the lower body from the high humidity of the land, which they fear. During the summer, they wear a single shirt of silk or some similar material. They do not wear turbans. . . .

In China, commercial transactions are carried out with the aid of copper coins. The Chinese royal treasury is identical to that of other kings, but only the king of China has a treasury that uses copper coins as a standard. These copper coins serve as the money of the land. The Chinese have gold, silver, fine pearls, fancy silk textiles, raw silk, and all this in large quantities, but they are considered commodities, and only copper coins serve as money.

Imports into China include ivory, incense, copper ingots, shells of sea turtles, and rhinoceros horn, with which the Chinese make ornaments. . . .

The Chinese conduct commercial transactions and business affairs with equity. When someone lends money to another person, he writes up a note documenting the loan. The borrower

writes up another note on which he affixes an imprint of his index finger and middle finger together. Then they put the two notes together, roll them up, and write a formula at the point where one touches the other [so that part of the written formula appears on each note]. Next, they separate the notes and entrust to the lender the one on which the borrower recognizes his debt. If the borrower denies his debt later on, they say to him, "Present the note that the lender gave to you." If the borrower maintains that he has no such note from the lender, and denies that he ever agreed to the note with his fingerprints on it, and if the lender's note has disappeared, they say to him, "Declare in writing that you have not contracted this debt, but if later the lender brings forth proof that you have contracted this debt that you deny, you will receive twenty blows of the cane on the back and you will be ordered to pay a penalty of twenty million copper coins." This sum is equal to about 2,000 dinars [gold coins used in the Abbasid empire]. Twenty blows of the cane brings on death. Thus no one in China dares to make such a declaration for fear of losing at the same time both life and fortune. We have seen no one who has agreed when invited to make such a declaration. The Chinese are thus equitable to each other. No one in China is treated unjustly.

#### For Further Reflection

- In what ways might Chinese policies have encouraged business and trade during the Tang dynasty?

Source: Jean Sauvaget, ed. *Relation de la Chine et de l'Inde*. Paris, 1948, pp. 10–11, 15–16, 19–20. (Translated into English by Jerry H. Bentley.)

## CULTURAL CHANGE IN TANG AND SONG CHINA

Interactions with peoples of other societies encouraged cultural change in postclassical China. The Confucian and Daoist traditions did not disappear. But they made way for a foreign religion—**Mahayana Buddhism**—and they developed along new lines that reflected the conditions of Tang and Song society.

### The Establishment of Buddhism

Buddhist merchants traveling the ancient Silk Roads visited China as early as the second century b.c.e. During the Han dynasty their faith attracted little interest there: Confucianism, Daoism, and cults that honored family ancestors were the most popular cultural alternatives. After the fall of the Han,

however, the Confucian tradition suffered a loss of credibility. The purpose and rationale of **Confucianism** was to maintain public order and provide honest, effective government. But in an age of warlords and nomadic invasions, it seemed that the Confucian tradition had simply failed. Confucian educational and civil service systems went into decline, and rulers sometimes openly scorned Confucian values.

**Foreign Religions in China** During the unsettled centuries following the fall of the Han dynasty, several foreign religions established communities in China. Nestorian Christians and Manichaeans settled in China, followed later by Zoroastrians fleeing the Islamic conquerors of Persia. Nestorians established communities in China by the late sixth century. The emperor Tang Taizong issued a proclamation praising their doctrine, and he allowed them to open monasteries in Chang'an and other cities. By the mid-seventh century, Arab



# Reverberations ●●●●●●●●●●

## The Spread of Religious Traditions

One of the defining characteristics of the postclassical era was that the religions of Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity each won large numbers of converts far beyond their regions of origin. As a result, the values and doctrines of each religion profoundly shaped the societies where it won converts. At the same time, individual societies also shaped the contours of each religion, so that Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity were all at least partially made over in the image of the new societies that adopted them. The consequences of these processes—which in most cases occurred gradually as a result of revived trade networks and the work of missionaries—had deep and long-lasting consequences that can still be seen in the religious distribution of the world's peoples today.

### New Homes for Religious Traditions

In this chapter we have already seen how Buddhism—which originated in India but had already spread along the Silk Roads in Central Asia—began to attract large numbers of converts in China from the seventh to the tenth centuries. Chinese influence, in turn, encouraged the spread of Buddhism to Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. By 1000 C.E., in fact, Buddhism had become a minority religion in its region of origin, but continues to thrive in its adopted region of east Asia up to the present. But Buddhism was only one of several religious traditions to win converts in distant lands in this period. Indeed, from the seventh to the sixteenth centuries, Islam spread far from its origins in the Arabian peninsula, attracting converts in central and southwest Asia, north Africa, Iberia, India, and southeast Asia (chapters 14 and 15). Even as Islam was attracting converts in parts of India, traders and religious figures from India encouraged a variety of states and kingdoms in southeast Asia to adopt either Buddhism or Hinduism between the sixth and fifteenth centuries (chapter 15). Orthodox Christianity, meanwhile, was adopted by Slavic peoples in eastern Europe on a massive scale during the ninth and tenth centuries, largely due to the political influence of Byzantium and the self-conscious efforts of Byzantine missionaries to proselytize among the Slavs (chapter 16). Over the course of the postclassical period, then, the spread of Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity from their regions of origin resulted in dramatic changes in the religious faith of millions of people.

### The Influence of Religious Traditions on Culture and Society

The spread of these religious traditions deeply influenced social, cultural, and political developments in the lands where they were adopted. For example, in China the concerns of Mahayana Buddhism with logical thought and the nature of the soul were so influential on Confucian thought that the two blended to become a new tradition known as neo-Confucianism—which itself influenced societies in east Asia for more than a millennium. In lands where Islam was widely adopted, shared beliefs in the values expressed by the Quran, the system of Islamic law (*sharia*), and the circulation of judges (*qadis*) and legal scholars (*ulama*) qualified to interpret such law contributed to a shared sense of cultural unity across many parts of Eurasia (chapter 14). In southeast Asia, rulers of a variety of states borrowed Indian Hindu notions of political authority by assuming the title of *raja*, adopted the Indian epic story of the *Ramayana* as their own, and built monumental architecture closely modeled on Indian styles (chapter 15). And in eastern Europe, the Cyrillic alphabet devised by Byzantine monks in the ninth century to represent the Slavic language in translations of Christian literature became the primary vehicle for printed works, and continues to be used in Russia and other states of the former Soviet Union in the present (chapter 16).

### The Influence of Societies on Religious Traditions

At the same time, the societies into which new religious traditions spread also had an impact on the shape of the religions themselves. For example, as Islam spread, it was also deeply influenced by Persian literary traditions, Indian scientific and mathematic traditions, Greek philosophy, and patriarchal traditions from the eastern Mediterranean (chapter 14). When Islam spread to southeast Asia, its expression was modified both by Hindu elements that had already shaped the region and by indigenous mystical traditions (chapter 15). Additionally, when Buddhism was adopted on a large scale by Chinese adherents, it was modified in ways that appealed to Chinese Daoist beliefs about spiritual life, and in ways that complemented the primacy of the family in Chinese tradition. As a result of their adoption in lands far from their regions of origin, then, the religions discussed in Part III each took on new forms of expression that remained influential for many centuries and, in some cases, to the present day.

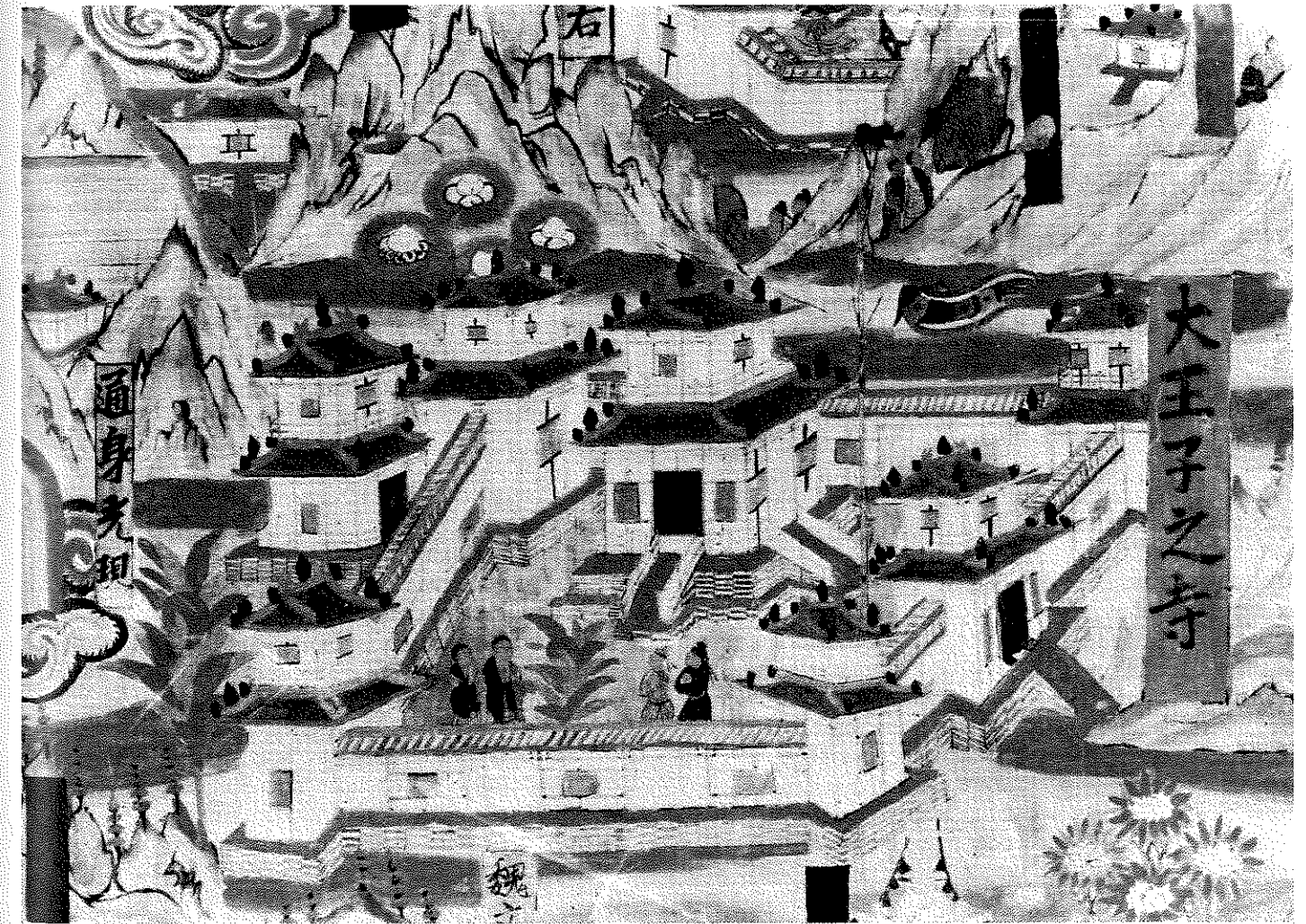
These are only a small sampling of the historical reverberations of the spread of religious traditions in the postclassical era. When reading subsequent chapters, try to identify additional short- and long-term consequences that resulted from these momentous processes.

and Persian merchants had also established Muslim communities in the port cities of south China. Indeed, legend holds that an uncle of Muhammad built a small red mosque in the port city of Guangzhou. These religions of salvation mostly served the needs of foreign merchants trading in China and converts from nomadic societies. Sophisticated residents of Chinese cities appreciated foreign music and dance as well as foreign foods and trade goods, but most foreign religious traditions attracted little interest.

**Dunhuang.** Yet Mahayana Buddhism gradually found a popular following in Tang and Song China. **Buddhism** came to China over the Silk Roads. Residents of oasis cities in central Asia had converted to Buddhism as early as the first or second century B.C.E., and the oases became sites of Buddhist missionary efforts. By the fourth century C.E., a sizable Buddhist community had emerged at **Dunhuang** in western China (modern Gansu province). Between about 600 and 1000 C.E.,

Buddhists built hundreds of cave temples in the vicinity of Dunhuang and decorated them with murals depicting events in the lives of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas who played prominent roles in Mahayana Buddhism. They also assembled libraries of religious literature and operated scriptoria to produce Buddhist texts. Missions supported by establishments such as those at Dunhuang helped Buddhism to establish a foothold in China.

**Buddhism in China** Buddhism attracted Chinese interest partly because of its high standards of morality, its intellectual sophistication, and its promise of salvation. Practical concerns also help to account for its appeal. Buddhists established monastic communities in China and accumulated sizable estates donated by wealthy converts. They cultivated those lands intensively and stored a portion of their harvests for distribution among local residents during times of drought, famine, or other hardship. Some monasteries engaged in banking or

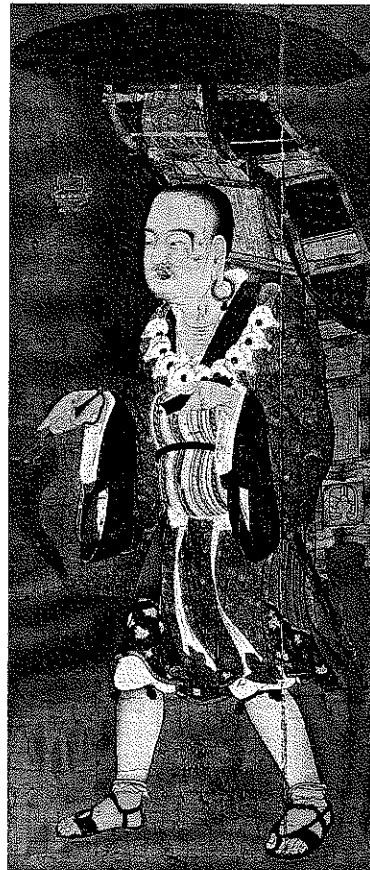


A tenth-century painting in a cave at Dunhuang depicts a monastery on Mt. Wutai in southern China, reputedly the earthly home of an influential bodhisattva and the site of numerous Buddhist monasteries.

money-lending activities, and many others maintained schools that provided a basic education for local populations. Buddhist monasteries thus became important elements in the local economies of Chinese communities. Buddhism even had implications for everyday life in China. Buddhist monks introduced chairs into China: originally a piece of monastic furniture, the chair quickly became popular in secular society and found a place in domestic interiors throughout the land. Buddhist monks also introduced refined sugar into China and thus influenced both diet and cuisine.

In some ways, Buddhism posed a challenge to Chinese cultural and social traditions. Buddhist theologians typically took written texts as points of departure for elaborate, speculative investigations into metaphysical themes such as the nature of the soul. Among Chinese intellectuals, however, only the Confucians placed great emphasis on written texts, and they devoted their energies mostly to practical rather than metaphysical issues. Meanwhile, Daoists had limited interest in written texts of any kind. Buddhist morality called for individuals to strive for perfection by observing an ascetic ideal, and it encouraged serious Buddhists to follow a celibate, monastic lifestyle. In contrast, Chinese morality centered on the family unit and the obligations of filial piety, and it strongly encouraged procreation so that generations of offspring would be available to venerate family ancestors. Some Chinese held that Buddhist monasteries were economically harmful, since they paid no taxes, whereas others scorned Buddhism as an inferior creed because of its foreign origins.

**Buddhism and Daoism** Because of those differences and concerns, Buddhist missionaries sought to tailor their message to Chinese audiences. They explained Buddhist concepts in vocabulary borrowed from Chinese cultural traditions, particularly **Daoism**. They translated the Indian term *dharma* (the basic Buddhist doctrine) as *dao* (“the way” in the Daoist sense of the term), and they translated the Indian term *nirvana* (personal salvation that comes after an individual soul escapes from the cycle of incarnation) as *wuwei* (the Daoist ethic of noncompetition). While encouraging the establishment of monasteries and the observance of celibacy, they also recognized the validity of family life and offered Buddhism as a religion that would benefit the extended Chinese family: one son in the monastery, they taught, would bring salvation for ten generations of his kin.



This scroll painting depicts the return of the monk Xuanzang to China. His baggage included 657 books, mostly Buddhist treatises but also a few works on grammar and logic, as well as hundreds of relics and images.

**Pilgrimage to India** Monks and pilgrims helped popularize Buddhism in China. The monk Xuanzang (602–664 c.e.) was only one among hundreds of Chinese pilgrims who made the dangerous and difficult journey to India to visit holy sites and learn about Buddhism in its homeland. Xuanzang and other pilgrims returned to China with copies of treatises that deepened the understanding of Buddhism, and they were able to relate the teachings of Indian Buddhist masters to Chinese disciples.

**Schools of Buddhism** Over the years, monks and scholars organized several distinctive schools of Buddhism that appealed to Chinese tastes and interests. Buddhists of the Chan school (also known by its Japanese name, Zen) placed little emphasis on written texts but held intuition and sudden flashes of insight in high regard. Thus Chan Buddhists made a place for Daoist values in Chinese Buddhism. Even more popular than **Chan Buddhism** was the Pure Land school, which held out the prospect of personal salvation for those who devoted themselves to the Buddha. The lady emperor Wu Zhao herself followed Pure Land teachings, and she enthusiastically promoted the school—especially after friendly monks circulated a treatise predicting reincarnation of the Buddha as a female ruler. Wu Zhao eventually proclaimed herself the universal ruler and protector of Buddhism, and she sponsored the construction of monasteries and stupas throughout China.

**Hostility to Buddhism** In spite of its popularity, Buddhism met determined resistance from Daoists and Confucians. Daoists resented the popular following that Buddhists attracted, which resulted in diminished resources available for their tradition. Confucians despised Buddhists’ exaltation of celibacy, and they denounced its teachings as alien superstition. They also condemned Buddhist monasteries as wasteful, unproductive burdens on society.

**Persecution** During the late Tang dynasty, Daoist and Confucian critics of Buddhism found allies in the imperial court. Beginning in the 840s the Tang emperors ordered the closure of monasteries and the expulsion of Buddhists as well as Zoroastrians, Nestorian Christians, and Manichaeans. Motivated largely by a desire to seize property belonging to foreign religious establishments, the Tang rulers did not implement their policy in a thorough way. Although it discouraged further expansion, Tang policy did not eradicate foreign



Artist's impression of Japanese Buddhist monk Ippen Shonen arriving at a town in rural Japan. Ippen Shonen popularized a Buddhist ceremonial practice that combined prayer with dance.

faiths from China. Buddhism in particular enjoyed popular support that enabled it to survive. Indeed, it even influenced the development of the Confucian tradition during the Song dynasty.

### Neo-Confucianism

The Song emperors did not persecute Buddhists, but they actively supported native Chinese cultural traditions in hopes of limiting the influence of foreign religions. They contributed particularly generously to the Confucian tradition. They sponsored the studies of Confucian scholars, for example, and subsidized the printing and dissemination of Confucian writings.

**Confucians and Buddhism** Yet the Confucian tradition of the Song dynasty differed from that of earlier times. The earliest Confucians had concentrated resolutely on

practical issues of politics and morality, since they took the organization of a stable social order as their principal concern. Confucians of the Song dynasty studied the classic works of their tradition, but they also became familiar with the writings of Buddhists. They found much to admire in Buddhist thought. Buddhism not only offered a tradition of logical thought and argumentation but also dealt with issues, such as the nature of the soul and the individual’s relationship with the cosmos, not systematically explored by Confucian thinkers. Thus Confucians of the Song dynasty drew a great deal of inspiration from Buddhism. Because their thought reflected the influence of Buddhism as well as original Confucian values, it has come to be known as **neo-Confucianism**.

**Zhu Xi** The most important representative of Song neo-Confucianism was the philosopher **Zhu Xi** (1130–1200 c.e.). A prolific writer, Zhu Xi maintained a deep commitment to Confucian values emphasizing proper personal behavior and social harmony. Among his writings was an influential treatise titled *Family Rituals* that provided detailed instructions for weddings, funerals, veneration of ancestors, and other family ceremonies. As a good Confucian, Zhu Xi considered it a matter of the highest importance that individuals play their proper roles both in their family and in the larger society.

## Thinking about ENCOUNTERS

### Chinese Influence in East and Southeast Asia

The postclassical period in China was a time of intense cultural interaction with societies throughout Asia and beyond. In what ways did this interaction influence the longer-term development of other east Asian societies in Korea, Vietnam, and Japan?

Yet Zhu Xi became fascinated with the philosophical and speculative features of Buddhist thought. He argued in good Confucian fashion for the observance of high moral standards, and he believed that academic and philosophical investigations were important for practical affairs. But he concentrated his efforts on abstract and abstruse issues of more theoretical than practical significance. He wrote extensively on metaphysical themes such as the nature of reality. He argued in a manner reminiscent of Plato that two elements accounted for all physical being: *li*, a principle somewhat similar to Plato's Forms or Ideas that defines the essence of the being, and *qi*, its material form.

**Neo-Confucian Influence** Neo-Confucianism ranks as an important cultural development for two reasons. First, it illustrates the deep influence of Buddhism in Chinese society. Even though the neo-Confucians rejected Buddhist religious teachings, their writings adapted Buddhist themes and reasoning to Confucian interests and values. Second, neo-Confucianism influenced east Asian thought over a very long term. In China, neo-Confucianism enjoyed the status of an officially recognized creed from the Song dynasty until the early twentieth century, and in lands that fell within China's cultural orbit—particularly Korea, Vietnam, and Japan—neo-Confucianism shaped philosophical, political, and moral thought for half a millennium and more.

## DEVELOPMENT OF COMPLEX SOCIETIES IN KOREA, VIETNAM, AND JAPAN

Like the *dar al-Islam*, Chinese society influenced the development of neighboring lands during postclassical times. Chinese armies periodically invaded Korea and Vietnam, and Chinese merchants established commercial relations with Japan as well as with Korea and Vietnam. Chinese techniques of government and administration helped shape public life in Korea, Vietnam, and Japan, and Chinese values and cultural traditions won a prominent place alongside native traditions. By no means did those lands become absorbed into China: all maintained distinctive identities and cultural traditions. Yet they also drew deep inspiration from Chinese examples and built societies that reflected their participation in a larger east Asian society revolving around China.

### Korea and Vietnam

Chinese armies ventured into Korea and Vietnam on campaigns of imperial expansion as early as the Qin and Han dynasties. As the Han dynasty weakened, however, local aristocrats organized movements that ousted Chinese forces from both lands. Only during the powerful Tang dynasty did Chinese resources once again enable military authorities to mount large-scale campaigns. Although the two lands

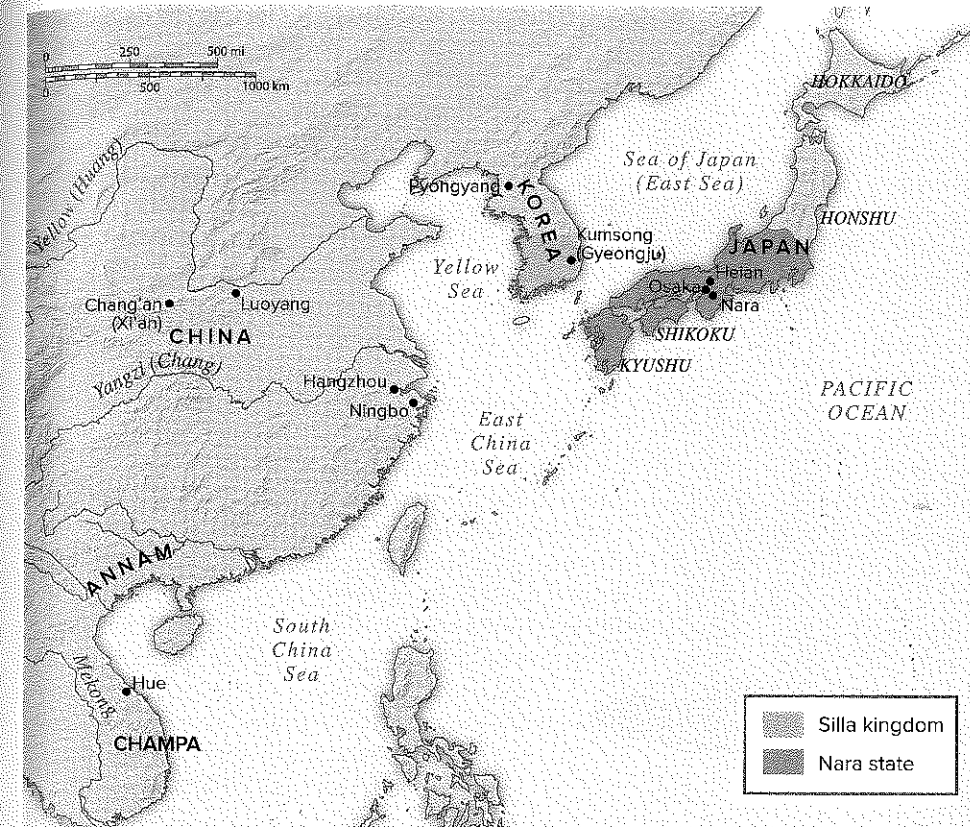
responded differently to Chinese imperial expansion, both borrowed Chinese political and cultural traditions and used them in their societies.

**The Silla Dynasty** During the seventh century, Tang armies conquered much of Korea before the native **Silla dynasty** rallied to prevent Chinese domination of the peninsula. Both Tang and Silla authorities preferred to avoid a long and costly conflict, so they agreed to a political compromise: Chinese forces withdrew from Korea, and the Silla king recognized the Tang emperor as his overlord. In theory, Korea was a vassal state in a vast Chinese empire. In practice, however, Korea was in most respects an independent kingdom, although the ruling dynasty prudently maintained cordial relations with its powerful neighbor.

Thus Korea entered into a tributary relationship with China. Envoys of the Silla kings regularly delivered gifts to Chinese emperors and performed the kowtow, but those concessions brought considerable benefits to the Koreans. In return for their recognition of Chinese supremacy, they received gifts more valuable than the tribute they delivered to China. Moreover, the tributary relationship opened the doors for Korean merchants to trade, and students to study, in China.

**Chinese Influence in Korea** Meanwhile, the tributary relationship facilitated the spread of Chinese political and cultural influences to Korea. Embassies delivering tribute to China included Korean royal officials who observed the workings of the Chinese court and bureaucracy and then organized the Korean court on similar lines. The Silla kings built a lavish new capital at their ancestral town of Kumsong (modern-day Kyongju in southeastern Korea), taking the Tang capital at Chang'an as their model. Silla rulers developed Kumsong from a small walled town with a few hundred families into a major capital with 179,000 households and nearly one million people. Their embassies to China included not only royal officials but also scholars who studied Chinese thought and literature and who took copies of Chinese writings back to Korea. Their efforts helped to build Korean interest in the Confucian tradition, particularly among educated aristocrats. While Korean elite classes turned to Confucius, Chinese schools of Buddhism attracted widespread popular interest. Chan Buddhism, which promised individual salvation, won the allegiance of peasants and commoners.

China and Korea differed in many respects. Most notably, perhaps, aristocrats and royal houses dominated Korean society much more than was the case in China. Although the Korean monarchy sponsored Chinese schools and a Confucian examination system, Korea never established a bureaucracy based on merit such as that of Tang and Song China. Political initiative remained firmly in the hands of the ruling classes. Nevertheless, extensive dealings with its powerful neighbor ensured that Korea reflected the influence of Chinese political and cultural traditions.



**MAP 13.3**  
**Borderlands of postclassical China: Korea, Vietnam, and Japan.**  
Note the geographic relationship of Korea, Vietnam, and Japan to China.  
*What geographic conditions help to account for the varying degrees of Chinese influence in Korea, Vietnam, and Japan?*

**China and Vietnam** Chinese relations with Vietnam were far more tense than with Korea. When Tang armies ventured into the land that Chinese called **Nam Viet**, they encountered spirited resistance on the part of the Viet people, who had settled in the region around the Red River. Tang forces soon won control of Viet towns and cities, and they launched efforts to absorb the Viets into Chinese society, just as their predecessors had absorbed the indigenous peoples of the Yangzi River valley. The Viets readily adopted Chinese agricultural methods and irrigation systems as well as Chinese schools and administrative techniques. Like their Korean counterparts, Viet elites studied Confucian texts and took examinations based on a Chinese-style education, and Viet traders marketed their wares in China. Vietnamese authorities even entered into tributary relationships with the Chinese court. Yet the Viets resented Chinese efforts to dominate the southern land, and they mounted a series of revolts against Tang authorities. As the Tang dynasty fell during the early tenth century, the Viets won their independence and successfully resisted later Chinese efforts at imperial expansion to the south.

Like Korea, Vietnam differed from China in many ways. Many Vietnamese retained their indigenous religions in preference to Chinese cultural traditions. Women played a much more prominent role in Vietnamese society and economy than did their counterparts in China. Southeast Asian women had dominated local and regional markets for centuries, and they

participated actively in business ventures closed to women in the more rigidly patriarchal society of China.

**Chinese Influence in Vietnam** Nevertheless, Chinese traditions found a place in the southern land. Vietnamese authorities established an administrative system and bureaucracy modeled on that of China, and Viet ruling classes prepared for their careers by pursuing a Confucian education. Furthermore, Buddhism came to Vietnam from China as well as India and won a large popular following. Thus, like Korea, Vietnam absorbed political and cultural influence from China and reflected the development of a larger east Asian society centered on China.

### Early Japan

Chinese armies never invaded Japan, but Chinese traditions deeply influenced early Japanese political and cultural development. The earliest inhabitants of Japan were nomadic peoples from northeast Asia who migrated to Japan about thirty-five thousand years ago. Their language, material culture, and religion derived from their parent society in northeast Asia. Later migrants, who arrived in several waves from the Korean peninsula, introduced cultivation of rice, bronze and iron metallurgy, and horses into Japan. As the population of the Japanese islands grew and built a settled agricultural society, small states dominated by aristocratic clans emerged. By the middle of the first millennium c.e., several dozen states ruled small regions.

**Nara Japan** The establishment of the powerful Sui and Tang dynasties in China had repercussions in Japan, where they suggested the value of centralized imperial government. One of the aristocratic clans in Japan insisted on its precedence over the others, although in fact it had never wielded effective authority outside its territory in central Japan. Inspired by the Tang example, this clan claimed imperial authority and introduced a series of reforms designed to centralize Japanese politics. The imperial house established a court modeled on that of the Tang, instituted a Chinese-style bureaucracy, implemented an equal-field system, provided official support for Confucianism and Buddhism, and in the year 710 moved to a new capital city at Nara (near modern Kyoto) that was a replica of the Tang capital at Chang'an. Never was Chinese influence more prominent in Japan than during the **Nara period** (710–794 c.e.).

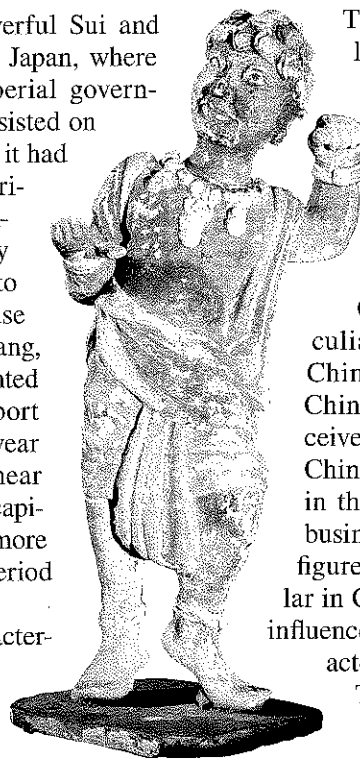
Yet Japan did not lose its distinctive characteristics or become simply a smaller model of Chinese society. While adopting Confucian and Buddhist traditions from China, for example, the Japanese continued to observe the rites of **Shinto**, their indigenous religion, which revolved around the veneration of ancestors and a host of nature spirits and deities. Japanese society reflected the influence of Chinese traditions but still developed along its own lines.

The experiences of the Heian, Kamakura, and Muromachi periods clearly illustrate this point. In 794 the emperor of Japan transferred his court from Nara to a newly constructed capital at nearby Heian (modern Kyoto). During the next four centuries, Heian became the seat of a refined and sophisticated society that drew inspiration from China but also elaborated distinctively Japanese political and cultural traditions.

**Heian Japan** During the **Heian** period (794–1185 c.e.), local rulers on the island of Honshu mostly recognized the emperor as Japan's supreme political authority. Unlike their Chinese counterparts, however, Japanese emperors rarely ruled but, rather, served as ceremonial figureheads and symbols of authority. Effective power lay in the hands of the Fujiwara family, an aristocratic clan that controlled affairs from behind the throne through its influence over the imperial house and manipulation of its members.

After the ninth century the Japanese political order almost continuously featured a split between a publicly recognized imperial authority and a separate agent of effective rule.

**Heian** (HAY-ahn)



Tang dynasty pottery figure of a Vietnamese dancer. Commercial and tributary relationships introduced southeast Asian performers to China, where sophisticated urban communities appreciated their exotic entertainment.

This pattern helps to account for the remarkable longevity of the Japanese imperial house. Because emperors have not ruled, they have not been subject to deposition during times of turmoil: ruling parties and factions have come and gone, but the imperial house has survived.

The cultural development of Heian Japan also reflected both the influence of Chinese traditions and the elaboration of peculiarly Japanese ways. Most literature imitated Chinese models and indeed was written in the Chinese language. Boys and young men who received a formal education in Heian Japan learned Chinese, read the classic works of China, and wrote in the foreign tongue. Officials at court conducted business and kept records in Chinese, and literary figures wrote histories and treatises in the style popular in China. Even Japanese writing reflected Chinese influence, since scholars borrowed many Chinese characters and used them to represent Japanese words. They also adapted some Chinese characters into a Japanese syllabic script, in which symbols represent whole syllables rather than a single sound, as in an alphabetic script.

**The Tale of Genji** Because Japanese women rarely received a formal Chinese-style education, in Heian times aristocratic women made the most notable contributions to literature in the Japanese language. Of the many literary works that have survived from that era, none reflects Heian court life better than *The Tale of Genji*. Composed by Murasaki Shikibu, a lady-in-waiting at the Heian court who wrote in

Japanese syllabic script rather than Chinese characters, this sophisticated work relates the experiences of a fictitious imperial prince named Genji. Living amid gardens and palaces, Genji and his friends devoted themselves to the cultivation of an ultrarefined lifestyle, and they became adept at mixing subtle perfumes, composing splendid verses in fine calligraphic hand, and wooing sophisticated women.

*The Tale of Genji* also offers a meditation on the passing of time and the sorrows that time brings to sensitive humans. As Genji and his friends age, they reflect on past joys and relationships no longer recoverable. Their thoughts suffuse *The Tale of Genji* with a melancholy spirit that presents a subtle contrast to the elegant atmosphere of their surroundings at the Heian court. Because of her limited command of Chinese, Lady Murasaki created one of the most remarkable literary works in the Japanese language.

**Decline of Heian Japan** As the charmed circle of aristocrats and courtiers led elegant lives at the imperial capital,



Samurai depart from a palace in Kyoto after capturing it, murdering the guards, seizing an enemy general there, and setting the structure ablaze. The armor and weaponry of the samurai bespeak the militarism of the Kamakura era.

the Japanese countryside underwent fundamental changes that brought an end to the Heian court and its refined society. The equal-field system gradually fell into disuse in Japan as it had in China, and aristocratic clans accumulated most of the islands' lands into vast estates. By the late eleventh century, two clans in particular—the Taira and the Minamoto—overshadowed the others. During the mid-twelfth century the two engaged in outright war, and in 1185 the Minamoto emerged victorious. The Minamoto did not seek to abolish imperial authority in Japan but, rather, claimed to rule the land in the name of the emperor. They installed the clan leader as **shogun**—a military governor who ruled in place of the emperor—and established the seat of their government at Kamakura, near modern Tokyo, while the imperial court remained at Kyoto. For most of the next four centuries, one branch or another of the Minamoto clan dominated political life in Japan.

## Medieval Japan

Historians refer to the Kamakura and Muromachi periods as Japan's medieval period—a middle era falling between the age of Chinese influence and court domination of political life in Japan, as represented by the Nara and Heian periods, and the modern age, inaugurated by the Tokugawa dynasty in the sixteenth century, when a centralized government unified and ruled all of Japan. During this middle era, Japanese society and culture took on increasingly distinctive characteristics.

**Political Decentralization** In the **Kamakura** (1185–1333 c.e.) and **Muromachi** (1336–1573 c.e.) periods, Japan developed a decentralized political order in which provincial lords wielded effective power and authority in local regions where they controlled land and economic affairs. As these

lords and their clans vied for power and authority in the countryside, they found little use for the Chinese-style bureaucracy that Nara and Heian rulers had instituted in Japan and still less use for the elaborate protocol and refined conduct that prevailed at the courts. In place of etiquette and courtesy, they valued military talent and discipline. The mounted warrior, the *samurai*, thus played the most distinctive role in Japanese political and military affairs.

**The Samurai** The *samurai* were professional warriors, specialists in the use of force and the arts of fighting. They served the provincial lords of Japan, who relied on the samurai both to enforce their authority in their own territories and to extend their claims to other lands. In return for those police and military services, the lords supported the samurai from

the agricultural surplus and labor services of peasants working under their jurisdiction. Freed of obligations to feed, clothe, and house themselves and their families, samurai devoted themselves to hunting, riding, archery, and martial arts.

Thus, although it had taken its original inspiration from the Tang empire in China, the Japanese political order developed along lines different from those of the Middle Kingdom. Yet Japan clearly had a place in the larger east Asian society centered on China. Japan borrowed from China, among other things, Confucian values, Buddhist religion, a system of writing, and the ideal of centralized imperial rule. Though somewhat suppressed during the Kamakura and Muromachi periods, those elements of Chinese society not only survived in Japan but also decisively influenced Japanese development during later periods.

### CHRONOLOGY

589–618	Sui dynasty (China)
602–664	Life of Xuanzang
604–618	Reign of Sui Yangdi
618–907	Tang dynasty (China)
627–649	Reign of Tang Taizong
669–935	Silla dynasty (Korea)
710–794	Nara period (Japan)
755–757	An Lushan's rebellion
794–1185	Heian period (Japan)
875–884	Huang Chao's rebellion
960–1279	Song dynasty (China)
960–976	Reign of Song Taizu
1024	First issuance of government-sponsored paper money
1130–1200	Life of Zhu Xi
1185–1333	Kamakura period (Japan)
1336–1573	Muromachi period (Japan)

## AP CHAPTER SUMMARY

The revival of centralized imperial rule in China had profound implications for all of east Asia and indeed for most of the eastern hemisphere. Aspects of AP World History Theme 3: State-Building, Expansion, and Conflict are evidenced throughout this chapter. When the Sui and Tang dynasties imposed their authority throughout China, they established a powerful state that guided political affairs throughout east Asia. Tang armies extended Chinese influence to Korea, Vietnam, and central Asia. They did not invade Japan, but the impressive political and economic organization of China prompted the islands' rulers to imitate Tang examples (AP Theme 2: Development and Interaction of Cultures). Chinese inventions such as paper, printing, gunpowder, and the magnetic compass found a place in societies throughout the eastern hemisphere as they diffused across the Silk Roads and the sea lanes (AP Theme 4: Creation, Expansion, and Interaction of Economic Systems). The postclassical era was also an age of religious exchanges: Nestorian Christians, Zoroastrians, Manichaeans, and Muslims all maintained communities in Tang China, and Buddhism became the most popular religious tradition in all of east Asia.

## AP TEST PRACTICE

Questions assume cumulative knowledge from this chapter and previous chapters.

**MULTIPLE CHOICE** Use the image on page 274 and your knowledge of world history to answer questions 1–3.

- The development of technology in China, such as printing, was most directly linked to which of the following?
  - The growth of cities and urbanization
  - A rapidly developing market economy
  - The demographic recoveries from epidemic diseases
  - The improvements in agricultural productivity
- The availability of printed material during the Song dynasty most likely resulted in which of the following?
  - Formalization of the Chinese language
  - Increased public access to information
  - A rise in literacy rates among the working classes
  - Government control of publication matters

- The image of the Buddhist text best represents which of the following developments in Chinese culture?
  - The influx of religious beliefs through exchange networks
  - The declining influence of the Confucian tradition
  - The growing cosmopolitan nature of Chinese society
  - The influence of Daoism on Buddhist concepts

**SHORT ANSWER** Use your knowledge of world history to answer questions 4–5.

- Use the map on page 267 and your knowledge of world history to answer parts A, B, and C.
  - Explain ONE way in which the construction of the Grand Canal impacted the economy or politics of China.
  - Identify ONE factor that motivated Tang expansion and subjugation of extensive parts of central Asia.
  - Identify ONE major change in the Chinese imperial bureaucracy in the Tang or Song period.
- Answer parts A, B, and C.
  - Identify ONE way in which Chinese agriculture was revolutionized in the Tang and Song period.
  - Identify and explain the impact of ONE technological development of the Tang and Song period.
  - Explain ONE economic impact of the technological development you cited in part B.

**LONG ESSAY** Develop a thoughtful and thorough historical argument that answers the question below. Begin your essay with a thesis statement and support it with relevant historical evidence.

- Patterns of Continuity and Change over Time** Using specific examples, analyze the extent to which the rise of Chan (Zen) Buddhism and neo-Confucianism represented sources of continuity and change in Chinese society.