Two Golden Ages of China

In the 600s, Wu Zhao became the only woman to rule China in her own name. Her strong rule helped guide China through one of its most brilliant periods. At a time when Europe was fragmented into many small feudal kingdoms, two powerful dynasties—the Tang and the Song—restored unity in China.

The Tang Dynasty Reunifies China

After the Han dynasty collapsed in 220, China broke apart and remained divided for nearly 400 years. Yet China escaped the decay that disrupted Western Europe after the fall of Rome. Farm production expanded and technology slowly improved. Buddhism spread, while learning and the arts continued to flourish. Even Chinese cities survived.

Although invaders stormed northern China, they often adopted Chinese civilization rather than demolishing it. Meanwhile, various dynasties rose and fell in the south. During the brief Sui (sway) dynasty (581–618), the emperor Sui Wen帝 reunited the north and south. But China was not restored to its earlier glory until the emergence of the Tang dynasty in 618.

The Tang Build an Empire

The first Tang emperor, Li Yuan (lee yoo AHN), was a general under the Sui dynasty. When the Sui began to crumble, Li Yuan’s ambitious 30-year-old son, Li Shimin, urged him to lead a revolt. Father and son crushed all rivals and

Vocabulary Builder

Use the information below and the following resources to teach the high-use word from this section.

High-Use Word | Definition and Sample Sentence
--- | ---
 compel | 51. to force to do something

Wu Zhao compelled her sons to step aside so that she could claim the throne.
established the Tang dynasty. Eight years later, Li Shimin compelled his aging father to step down and mounted the throne himself, taking the name Tang Taizong (ty DZUNG). A brilliant general, government reformer, historian, and master of the calligraphy brush, Tang Taizong would become China’s most admired emperor.

Later Tang rulers carried empire-building to new heights, conquering territories deep into Central Asia. Chinese armies forced the neighboring lands of Vietnam, Tibet, and Korea to become tributary states. That is, while these states remained self-governing, their rulers had to acknowledge Chinese supremacy and send regular tribute to the Tang emperor. At the same time, students from Korea and Japan traveled to the Tang capital to learn about Chinese government, law, and arts.

The Government and Economy Grow Tang rulers, such as Empress Wu Zhen, helped restore the Han system of uniform government throughout China. They rebuilt the bureaucracy and enlarged the civil service system to recruit talented officials trained in Confucian philosophy. They also set up schools to prepare male students for the exams and developed a flexible new law code.

Tang emperors instituted a system of land reform in which they broke up large agricultural holdings and redistributed the land to peasants. This policy strengthened the central government by weakening the power of large landowners. It also increased government revenues, since the peasants who farmed their own land would be able to pay taxes.

The Tang Dynasty Declines Like earlier dynasties, the Tang eventually weakened. Later Tang emperors lost territories in Central Asia to the Arabs. Corruption, high taxes, drought, famine, and rebellions all contributed to the downward swing of the dynastic cycle. In 807, a rebel

Vocabulary Builder

compelled—(kum PELD) v. forced to do something

The Tang Dynasty

Reunifies China

Instruct

■ Introduce: Vocabulary Builder

Have students read the Vocabulary Builder term and definition. Ask What is an example of someone being compelled to do something? (Sample. Egyptian pharaohs compelling subjects to build pyramids)

■ Teach

Outline how Tang rulers reunified China and revived Chinese culture. Ask How did the Tang dynasty compare to the Han in the area it controlled? (The Tang extended Chinese control deep into Central Asia and spread Chinese influence to areas like Vietnam, Tibet, and Korea.) What did Tang rulers do to extend their control over the Chinese people? (They rebuilt the bureaucracy and used land reform to weaken the power of large landowners.)

■ Analyzing the Visuals

Display Color Transparency 74: Map of East Asia and Southeast Asia. Ask a volunteer to identify the location of China as well as Central Asia, Tibet, Vietnam, and Korea. What did Tang rulers do to extend their control over the Chinese people? (They rebuilt the bureaucracy and used land reform to weaken the power of large landowners.)

Independent Practice

Tell students to take the role of an advisor to one of the Tang emperors. Have them choose one of the policies outlined in this section, such as restoring the civil service exam. Tell them to write a report to the emperor recommending that policy and explaining how it would help build imperial power.

Monitor Progress

As students complete their Venn diagrams, circulate to make sure they understand the characteristics of the Tang and Song. For a completed version of the Venn diagram, see Note Taking Transparencies, 96

Answer

Caption Tang emperors lost territories, and the dynasty faced corruption, high taxes, drought, famine, and rebellions.
The Song Dynasty

Instruct

■ Introduce Remind students that skilled generals had united China and created the Han and Tang dynasties. Ask How do you think the Song dynasty was formed? Why? Discuss their responses briefly before assigning the text.

■ Teach Remind students that a strong economy is often linked to cultural growth. Ask What made the Song economy strong? (New strains of rice and improved irrigation methods helped peasants produce two rice crops a year.) What was the result? (Rising productivity created surpluses, which allowed more people to pursue other kinds of work; trade grew.)

■ Analyzing the Visuals Have students look at the examples of Tang and Song technology shown on this page. Ask What would make these inventions appealing to other peoples? Discuss how these inventions could have contributed to the spread of Chinese culture and influence.

Independent Practice

Have students write a one-paragraph summary of the Song dynasty that explains its duration, challenges, and achievements.

Monitor Progress

Have students create timelines that show the duration of the Song and the Southern Song and key events in their history.

Answers

■ Tang rulers: conquered territories, restored a uniform government, and enlarged the civil service system.

■ Caption Sample: block printing and movable type allowed Chinese text to be mass-produced.

The Song Dynasty

The Spread of Civilization in East and Southeast Asia

The Song Dynasty

In 960, a scholarly general named Zhao Kuangyin reunited much of China and founded the Song (sung) dynasty. The Song ruled for 319 years, slightly longer than the Tang, but they controlled less territory than the Tang. The Song also faced the constant threat of invaders in the north. The Song learned of water-powered clocks from Middle Easterners. Mechanical clocks used a complex series of wheels, shafts, and gears, turning at a steady rate, to tell exact time.

Despite military setbacks, the Song period was a time of great achievement. China’s wealth and culture dominated East Asia even when its armies did not. Under the Song, the Chinese economy expanded because of improved farming methods and open border policy. The latter allowed new types of faster-growing rice to be imported from Southeast Asia. Farmers were now able to produce two crops a year, one of rice and one of wheat. The rise in productivity created surpluses, allowing more people to pursue commerce, learning, or the arts.

Through China’s history, a system of canals had been built that encouraged internal trade and transportation. The Grand Canal, completed during the Sui dynasty, linked the Huang River to the Chang River. There, the southern Song continued to rule for another 150 years. As you will learn, however, in the late 1200s invaders from the north called the Mongols attacked and overthrew the Song.

The spread of civilization in East and Southeast Asia was shown below, the Chinese developed a smallpox vaccine, invented a spinning wheel, and pioneered the use of arches in bridge building. In time, many of these developments traveled westward. Modernized versions of most of these inventions are still widely used today. How could one of the inventions shown here have aided the spread of Chinese civilization to other lands?

Link to Science

Mechanical Power In 1076, Chang Ssu-Hsun built a mechanical clock powered by a chain-drive. In 1090, the Chinese inventor Su Sung used a chain-drive to run his enormous astronomical clock tower. He called the chain-drive the "celestial ladder" and described it as "an iron chain with its links joined together to form an endless circuit, hanging down from an upper chain wheel...and passing round a lower chain wheel on the driving shaft." The chain-drive has since been used in countless other pieces of machinery. The most familiar to us is the chain-drive used to power bicycles.

Technology of Tang and Song China

In addition to the advances shown below, the Chinese developed a smallpox vaccine, invented a spinning wheel, and pioneered the use of arches in bridge building. In time, many of these developments traveled westward. Modernized versions of most of these inventions are still widely used today. How could one of the inventions shown here have aided the spread of Chinese civilization to other lands?
China’s Ordered Society

Under the Tang and Song, China was a well-ordered society. At its head was the emperor, whose court was filled with aristocratic families. The court supervised a huge bureaucracy, from which officials fanned out to every part of China. China’s two main social classes were the gentry and the peasantry.

The Gentry Value Education. As in previous dynasties, the scholar-official class formed the top stratum of society. Most scholar-officials at court came from the gentry, or wealthy landowning class. They alone could afford to spend years studying the Confucian classics in order to pass the grueling civil service exam. When not in government service, the gentry often served in the provinces as allies of the emperor’s officials.

The Song scholar-gentry valued learning more than physical labor. They supported a revival of Confucian thought. New schools of Confucian philosophers emphasized social order based on duty, rank, and proper behavior. Although corruption and greed existed among civil servants, the ideal Confucian official was a wise, virtuous scholar who knew how to ensure harmony in society.

Peasants Work the Land. Most Chinese were peasants who worked the land, living on what they produced. Drought and famine were a constant threat, but new tools and crops did improve the lives of many peasants. To add to their income, some families produced handicrafts such as baskets or embroidered items. They carried these products to nearby market towns to sell or trade for salt, tea, or iron tools.

Peasants lived in small, largely self-sufficient villages that managed their own affairs. “Heaven is high,” noted one Chinese saying, “and the emperor far away.” Peasants relied on one another rather than the government. When disputes arose, a village leader and council of elders put pressure on the parties to resolve the problem. Only if such efforts failed did villagers take their disputes to the emperor’s county representative.

In China, even peasants could move up in society through education and government service. If a bright peasant boy received an education and passed the civil service examinations, both he and his family rose in status. Slaves in early China, however, did not have such opportunities. As in many other parts of the world, slavery played a role in early China, though a limited one.

Merchants Have Lowest Status. In market towns and cities, some merchants acquired wealth. Still, according to Confucian tradition, merchants had an even lower social status than peasants since their riches came from the labor of others. An ambitious merchant, therefore, might buy land and educate one son to enter the ranks of the scholar-gentry.

China’s Ordered Society (1)

Instruct

- Introduce: Key Terms. Direct students’ attention to the key term gentry (opportunity to join the civil service). Explain to students that the term comes from a word meaning “noble” or “of gentle birth.” People in this class of society did not have to use their hands to work and were expected to be more genteel, meaning they were polite and fashionable. Discuss whether modern American society has similar social categories.

- Teach. Explain that the gentry and the peasants were closely linked in Chinese society. Ask: What were the levels of Chinese society from highest to lowest? (emperor, gentry, peasants, merchants) Why did members of the gentry have the leisure time to study the Confucian classics? (because the peasants worked their land, producing food) What did they gain through success in their studies? (opportunity to join the civil service)

- Quick Activity. Have students devise an eight-question quiz from the material on Chinese society. Then have them exchange their quizzes with a partner and answer the questions.

Independent Practice

Have students take the role of a Confucian thinker and develop a list of advice for scholar-officials on how to govern people wisely. Invite students to share their ideas with the class.

Monitor Progress

To monitor students’ understanding of Chinese society, have them create a graphic organizer that summarizes key facts about the gentry, peasants, merchants, and women.

History Background

Sunglasses in China. Sunglasses were another technology invented in China, but they were used for a different purpose than they are used today. The Chinese made the lenses for their glasses from clear quartz. To make sunglasses, these lenses were tinted, or darkened, by exposing them to smoke. They became so dark that they prevented other people from seeing the eyes of the person wearing them—which was exactly what the Chinese wanted. These darkened glasses were worn by judges in Chinese courts. The tinted lenses blocked people from reading the expression in the judges’ eyes. That prevented them from talking their statements to try to sway the judges’ decisions.

Answer

Rising productivity in farming created surplus, which allowed more people to pursue commerce, learning, or the arts.

Chapter 12 Section 1 371
The Tang and Song Develop a Rich Culture

Instruct

■ Introduce: Key Terms Have students find the key term pagoda (in blue) in the text. Ask Why do you think pagodas were multistoried? (Students’ answers will vary, but tell them that the main reason was because of the majestic Buddhist relics that were housed there. Multistoried buildings also were considered to be awe inspiring.)

■ Teach Explain that religious ideas helped establish the principles underlying Chinese art in this period. Ask How did Daoism influence painting? (influenced painters to try to capture the spiritual essence of the natural world and to show the harmony between heaven and earth.) How did Buddhism influence art? (Buddhist themes dominated sculpture and influenced architecture.) How can historians analyze art created in these dynasties to learn about Chinese life at the time? (Sample: Artists produced porcelain figures of people and animals, which showed how people lived.)

Answer

Most lived as peasants who worked the land and lived on what they produced.

The Tang and Song Develop a Rich Culture

A prosperous economy supported the rich culture of Tang and Song China. Although their splendid royal palaces were long ago destroyed, many paintings, statues, temples, and ceramics have survived.

Artists Paint Harmony Along with poetry, painting and calligraphy were essential skills for the scholar-gentry. In both of these crafts, artists sought balance and harmony through the mastery of simple strokes and lines. The Song period saw the triumph of Chinese landscape painting. Steeped in the Daoist tradition, painters sought to capture the spiritual essence of the natural world. “When you are planning to paint,” instructed a Song artist, “you must always create a harmonious relationship between heaven and earth.” Misty mountains and delicate bamboo forests dominated Chinese landscapes. Yet Chinese painters also produced realistic, vivid portraits of emperors or lively scenes of city life.

Architecture and Porcelain Buddhist themes dominated sculpture and influenced Chinese architecture. The Indian stupa evolved into the graceful Chinese pagoda, a multistoried temple with eaves that curve up at the corners. Chinese sculptors created striking statues of the Buddha. These statues created such a strong impression that many people today picture the Buddha as a Chinese god rather than an Indian holy man.

The Spread of Civilization in East and Southeast Asia
How does this shown here, what can you say about the exist between home and gardens? Song that a harmonious relationship should compound illustrate the belief of the Tang and Roofs were the most expensive and striking feature of the home. The finest homes had roofs with upturned edges and colorful tiles painted yellow, pale green, or jade green. Colorful tiles made of sloping tiles had terra cotta animals and dragons that adorned the ridges and eaves. Grand gardens with hills, ponds, rare flowers, twisted pine trees, and stones, were an important part of the finest homes. The building and gardens together produced an overall harmonious effect. Most houses included enclosed shaded courtyards. Each pavilion had a special purpose, whether for banquets or for playing music. Trees with grained trunks were common adornments for the home. Houseguests stayed in rooms located along the outer edge of the compound.

Thinking Critically
1. Draw Inferences. According to the images shown here, what can you say about the status of women during this time?
2. Synthesize Information. How does this compound illustrate the belief of the Tang and Song that a harmonious relationship should exist between home and gardens?

Demanding Technique. Western artists often draw preliminary sketches on their canvas and then apply paint. This allows them to change their minds or paint over mistakes. Chinese artists who used ink on silk or paper did not enjoy this luxury, however. They considered a painting to be a philosophical exercise in which the artist fully conceived the subject of his work and the emotional impact it would have before committing a single line to paper. This method demanded a high degree of technical skill and planning.

Answers
Thinking Critically
1. They had a higher status during this time. Women ran family affairs, such as preparing meals and managing finances.
2. Sample: This compound reflects a balance between the buildings and gardens, as trees and gardens are spaced evenly throughout.

Analyzing the Visuals
Direct students' attention to the painting of a Chinese home. Discuss how the social structure inside the home reflects the overall structure of Chinese society. Ask: What groups had the most authority and influence in Chinese society during the Tang and Song dynasties? In the family? In society—the emperor, aristocrats, and government officials; in the family—the mother through whom women gained influence during this time?

Independent Practice
- Have each student select one of the poets mentioned in the text, Li Bo, Du Fu, or Li Qiqiaoz. Have them locate examples of the poet's work and write an explanation of what the poet is saying in the poem. Students should also note how the language, rhythm, and rhymes of the poem help convey the meaning. If possible, allow students time to read their poems aloud to the class.
- Display Color Transparencies 70: Games of Childhood in Ancient China and 71: Pagoda. Have students choose one of the transparencies and describe the qualities of Chinese art that they see in these examples.
- Color transparencies, 70, 71

Monitor Progress
Have students write a summary of Chinese art in the Tang and Song periods that identifies the main materials, themes, and important principles.
Writing About History

Answer

In what ways did the Tang and Song dynasties stay connected to China's past but also introduced change? Have students develop a display that uses text and images to illustrate both of these trends.

Extend

Point out that the Tang and Song dynasties stayed connected to China's past but also introduced change. Have students develop a display that uses text and images to illustrate both of these trends in Tang and Song society and culture.

Assess Progress

- Have students complete the Section Assessment.
- Administer the Section Quiz.
- To further assess student understanding, use Progress Monitoring Transparencies, 48.

Teaching Resources, Unit 2, p. 101

Assess and Reteach

- Spanish Reading and Note Taking Study Guide, p. 108
- Web Code: naa-1211

Section 1 Assessment

1. Sentences should reflect an understanding of each term, person, or place listed in the beginning of the section.
2. Politically, these dynasties achieved the reunification of China and created an ordered society. China prospered, and trade grew. The arts flourished, especially in landscape painting, architecture, porcelain, and poetry.
3. China enjoyed political stability, efficient government, thriving agriculture, expanding trade, and artistic achievements.
4. The Grand Canal allowed the Chinese to ship grain from the south to the north.
5. (a) The top were the emperor and royal family, followed by the gentry, peasants, and merchants. (b) It was a stable social order based on rank and duty. Reflecting Confucian tradition, women were encouraged to remain inside the home.
6.balance, harmony, and the Daoist tradition of seeking the spiritual essence of the natural world.

Writing About History

Quick Write: Make a Cause-Effect Tree

To make a cause-effect tree, choose either the Tang or Song dynasty and write its name in the center of a piece of paper. Above the dynasty's name, write the causes that led to its downfall.

For additional assessment, have students access Progress Monitoring Online at Web Code: naa-1211.

The Chinese perfected techniques in making porcelain, a shiny, hard pottery that was prized as the finest in the world. They developed beautiful glazes to decorate vases, tea sets, vases, and other objects that Westerners would later call "china." Artists also produced porcelain figures of camels, elegant court ladies playing polo, and bearded foreigners newly arrived from their travels on the Silk Road.

Chinese Writing

Poetry and prose flowed from the brushes of Tang and Song writers. Scholars produced works on philosophy, religion, and history. Short stories that often blended fantasy, romance, and adventure made their first appearance in Chinese literature. Among the gentry, poetry was the most respected form of Chinese literature. Confucian scholars were expected to master the skills of poetry. We know the names of some 200 major and 400 minor Tang and Song poets. Their works touched on Buddhist and Daoist themes as well as social issues. Many poems reflected on the brevity of life and the immortality of the universe. Probably the greatest Tang poet was Li Bo (lee boh). A restless lover of life and freedom, he roamed about from one place to another for most of his life. He wrote some 2,000 poems celebrating harmony with nature or lamenting the passage of time. A popular legend says that Li Bo drowned when he tried to embrace the reflection of the moon in a lake. More realistic and less romantic were the poems of Li Bo's friend Du Fu. His verses described the horrors of war or recounted the lives of people in need. A later poet, Li Qingzhao (lee ching jow), described the experience of women left behind when loved ones went off to war. Her poems reflect a time when invasion threatened to bring the brilliant Song dynasty to an end.

Checkpoint: What themes did Tang and Song arts and literature address?

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Checkpoin
Trade routes were established for valued spicas.

Global Trade

Trade involving Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas developed between the 4th century BCE and 1700s AD. To obtain valued spices such as pepper, nutmeg, and cloves, European powers established routes to the east. Merchants sailed around southernmost Africa and across the Indian Ocean to India, China, and Japan. During the same period, a triangular trade developed in the Atlantic. 

E-Commerce

Toward the end of the twentieth century, a revolutionary kind of trading network took shape. Called electronic commerce, or e-commerce, it combined traditional methods of shipping goods with the efficiency of the Internet. Today, even small businesses can advertise in major markets, show their goods in virtual shops, and sell directly to consumers worldwide. Consumers can also receive some services electronically, such as software updates.

E-commerce is also changing the way businesses communicate with each other. More and more companies order supplies and manage transactions via the Internet.

Objectives

- Analyze what factors have led groups of people to trade with one another.

- Explain the growth and changing nature of trade networks.

City-to-City Trade

Long before the establishment of the Silk Road, ancient cities traded with one another. A network of overland and water routes connected Bronze Age urban centers such as Mycenae in Greece with Memphis in Egypt, and Ashur in Mesopotamia with Harappa in the Indus Valley. Long-distance trade helped cities obtain resources not available in the local area. Merchants traveled among these ancient cities, carrying copper and tin, stone for making vases, olive oil, grains and other foods, timber, spices, woolen textiles, ivory, and pearls. Meanwhile, the merchants spoke to each other, exchanging ideas about technology, religion, and culture.

What have been the major trade networks in world history?

As trade increased and lands became safe, merchants crossed Asia along the ancient Silk Road. The main trade in this famous network of trade routes ran from China west to the Mediterranean Sea. Connecting routes brought traders from Southeast Asia, India, Persia, Russia, and southern Europe. For more than a thousand years, this network helped shape the tastes and cultures of people over much of Asia and Europe. Other major trade networks around the world had a similar effect. Consider the following examples.

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Toward the end of the twentieth century, a revolutionary kind of trading network took shape. Called electronic commerce, or e-commerce, it combined traditional methods of shipping goods with the efficiency of the Internet. Today, even small businesses can advertise in major markets, show their goods in virtual shops, and sell directly to consumers worldwide. Consumers can also receive some services electronically, such as software updates.

E-commerce is also changing the way businesses communicate with each other. More and more companies order supplies and manage transactions via the Internet.

Objectives

- Analyze what factors have led groups of people to trade with one another.

- Explain the growth and changing nature of trade networks.

City-to-City Trade

Long before the establishment of the Silk Road, ancient cities traded with one another. A network of overland and water routes connected Bronze Age urban centers such as Mycenae in Greece with Memphis in Egypt, and Ashur in Mesopotamia with Harappa in the Indus Valley. Long-distance trade helped cities obtain resources not available in the local area. Merchants traveled among these ancient cities, carrying copper and tin, stone for making vases, olive oil, grains and other foods, timber, spices, woolen textiles, ivory, and pearls. Meanwhile, the merchants spoke to each other, exchanging ideas about technology, religion, and culture.

What have been the major trade networks in world history?

As trade increased and lands became safe, merchants crossed Asia along the ancient Silk Road. The main trade in this famous network of trade routes ran from China west to the Mediterranean Sea. Connecting routes brought traders from Southeast Asia, India, Persia, Russia, and southern Europe. For more than a thousand years, this network helped shape the tastes and cultures of people over much of Asia and Europe. Other major trade networks around the world had a similar effect. Consider the following examples.

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