Tang Dynasty of China

Key Concept 3.2
Continuity and Innovation of State forms and Their Interactions.
Prior to the Tang-Sui

- 589 – 618 C.E.
- Sui build foundation for Tang Dynasty
Prior to the Tang-Sui

- Repair the great wall
- Improved roads
Prior to the Tang-Su

- The Grand Canal connected northern and eastern China.
THE TANG DYNASTY: Origin

- 618 – 907 CE
- Tang Tsu
- Rebel leader
- proclaimed the Tang Dynasty
THE TANG DYNASTY: Origin

Tang Taizong

- 2nd Tang emperor
- Ruthless but extremely competent.
China enjoyed an era of unusual stability and prosperity.

- Transportation
- Land Distribution
- Educated Bureaucracy
THE TANG DYNASTY

- **Extensive** networks of transportation and communication maintained.
- *Runners/Relay stations*
Tang Dynasty: Political Characteristics
THE TANG DYNASTY

- Bureaucracy of merit
  - Recruited government officials through civil service examinations
THE TANG DYNASTY: Political

Restored Confucianism as state ideology, training for bureaucrats.
THE TANG DYNASTY: Political

Schools were created to train students for the entrance exams
The Tang Dynasty: Political

- Gentry gained status through employment, not birth.
THE TANG DYNASTY

- Career bureaucrats relied on central government, loyal to the dynasty
THE TANG DYNASTY: Political

• Ministries of the Tang
  o Personnel
  o Finance
  o Rites
  o Army
  o Justice
  o Public Works
THE TANG DYNASTY: Politics

- **Foreign relations**
  - China was the Middle Kingdom, or the center of civilization
THE TANG DYNASTY: Politics

- Foreign relations
- Tributary system became diplomatic policy
THE TANG DYNASTY: Political

- Tributary System
- Independence countries acknowledged the supremacy of the emperor.
Tang Dynasty: Economy
The Tang Dynasty - Economic

- Tang create a powerful empire
- improve trade
Financial instruments

- Promissory Notes
- Originated in China.
Financial instruments

A promissory note, sometimes referred to as a note payable, is a *legal instrument* in which one party (the maker or issuer) promises in writing to pay a determinate sum of *money* to the other (the payee), either at a fixed or determinable future time or on demand of the payee.
Financial instruments

- 8th century
- Financial instruments called *fei Qian* for the safe transfer of money over long distances.
Financial instruments

- Banking and credit institution develop.
- “Flying money” were letters of credit
Financial instruments

- Paper money backed by state, treasury
- Led to runaway inflation
The Tang Dynasty: Equal Field System

- Adopted the equal-field system
- Give land to poor
The Tang Dynasty: Equal Field System

• All land belonged to the government and was equally distributed.
The Tang Dynasty: Equal Field System

- 1/5 of land could be kept in the family.
- Remainder distributed as needed.
Tang Dynasty: Cultural Diffusion
Cultural Diffusion
Buddhism Spreads

Believed kings are spiritual agents who bring subjects into the Buddhist realm.
• Buddhist monasteries are allies of Early Tang emperors.
Cultural Diffusion Buddhism

- Mahayana Buddhism
- Bodhisattvas postpone nirvana to help others achieve enlightenment
Cultural Diffusion

- Tang combined Central Asian influences with Chinese culture
• Sinicization
• Nomadic peoples become more Chinese
Cultural Diffusion:

- **New influences**
  - Polo
  - Grape wine
  - Tea
  - Spices
Tang Dynasty
Technological Innovations
Tang Dynasty: Innovations:

- Porcelain
- 700’s
- Bone hard white ceramic.
- Only made in China
Tang Dynasty: Inventions:

- Printing
- Block Printing 700’s
- Moveable Type 1040
Tang Dynasty: Inventions

- Gunpowder
- 800’s
- Explosive powder made from a mixture of saltpeter, sulfur and charcoal
Tang Dynasty: Inventions

- Water Clock
Women in the Tang Dynasty
Buddhism had legitimized women’s participation in politics. For a time.
Tang Dynasty: Women

- **Wu Zhao**
- **690 C.E.**
- **Took control of government**
- **Made herself Emperor.**
Population

- The population jumped from 50 Million to 60 million during the Tang
The Tang Dynasty Loses Power

• Tang Rulers imposed crushing taxes to pay for the government and military expansion
The Tang Dynasty Loses Power

- The Tang could not control their vast empire.
Famines cause peasants left their farms and join roving gangs of bandits.
Tang decline

- Casual and careless leadership led to dynastic crisis
Tang decline

- Rebellion of An Lushan in weakened the dynasty
- The Uighur became de facto rulers
Tang decline

- The equal-field system deteriorated
- 875 to 884
- A large scale peasant rebellion led by Huang Chao.
Tang decline

- Regional commanders gained power, beyond control of the emperor
907

The last Tang emperor abdicated his throne
Tang Decline

- Rebels take the capital and kill the emperor.
- End 300 year reign