

# Later Chinese Dynasties

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Sui, Tang, Song, and Yuan  
(ca. 581 to 1450 CE)

# Sui Dynasty

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(581 to 618 CE)

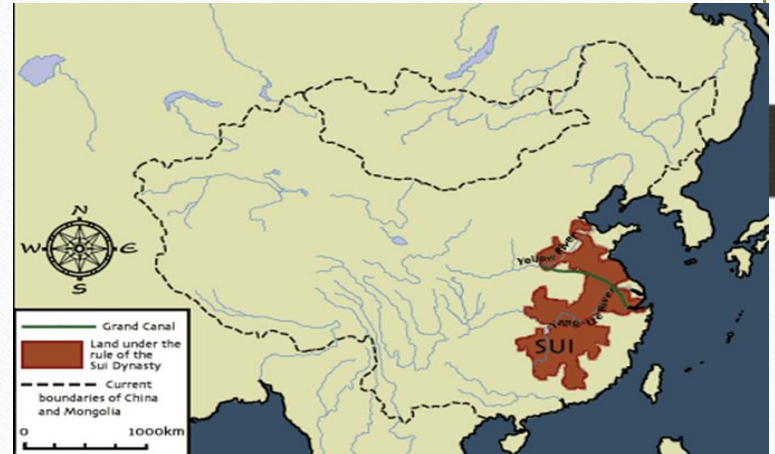
# Reunification Period

## I. Sui Dynasty (581 – 618 CE)

A. Beginnings of Reunification of China under one ruling family

B. Famous Emperor – **Sui Yangdi** (last of only two Sui Emperors)

1. Used forced peasant labor to complete a **1400 mile canal** linking the Huang He and Yangtze Rivers
2. His brutal rule caused him to be murdered and founding of the **Tang Dynasty**







*Left:* Sui Yang, the second emperor of the Sui, with two courtiers.



*Above:* Painting on silk of the Grand Canal during the Sui dynasty.



# Tang Dynasty

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(618 to 907 CE)

# Tang Dynasty

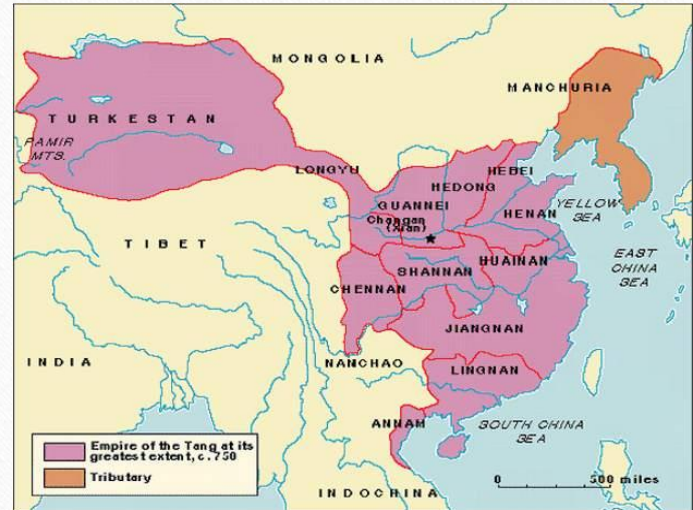
## II. Tang Dynasty (618 – 907 CE)

### A. Return of organized government

1. Merit-based civil service system (with **examinations**) brought back and strengthened
2. Restoration of the capital, **Changa'an**

### B. Economic Reforms

1. Large estates broken up– **land given to peasants**
2. **Trading increased** with many areas – SE Asia, India, Japan, Middle East





# Tang Dynasty

## C. Cultural Elements

1. **Poetry and Painting** (printing) become elaborate
2. **Buddhism** is accepted and practiced in China

## D. Increase in Territory

1. Re-unification of Han controlled areas (“inner China”)
2. Inclusion of lands now located in Mongolia, Turkestan, Vietnam and Korea

## E. Factors Leading to the End of the Tang Dynasty

1. Same sorts of infighting and excess as with other dynasties
2. **Revolts of Turkic peoples** between the 8th and early 10th centuries CE







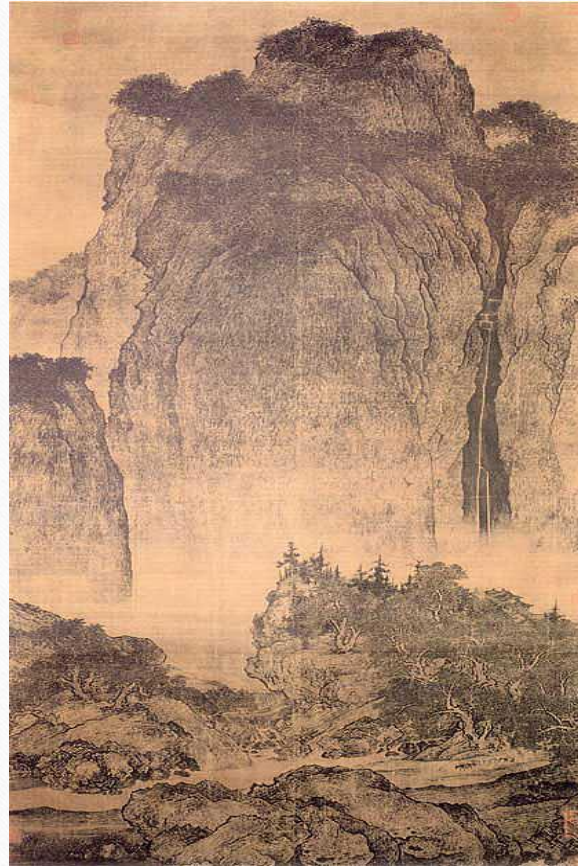


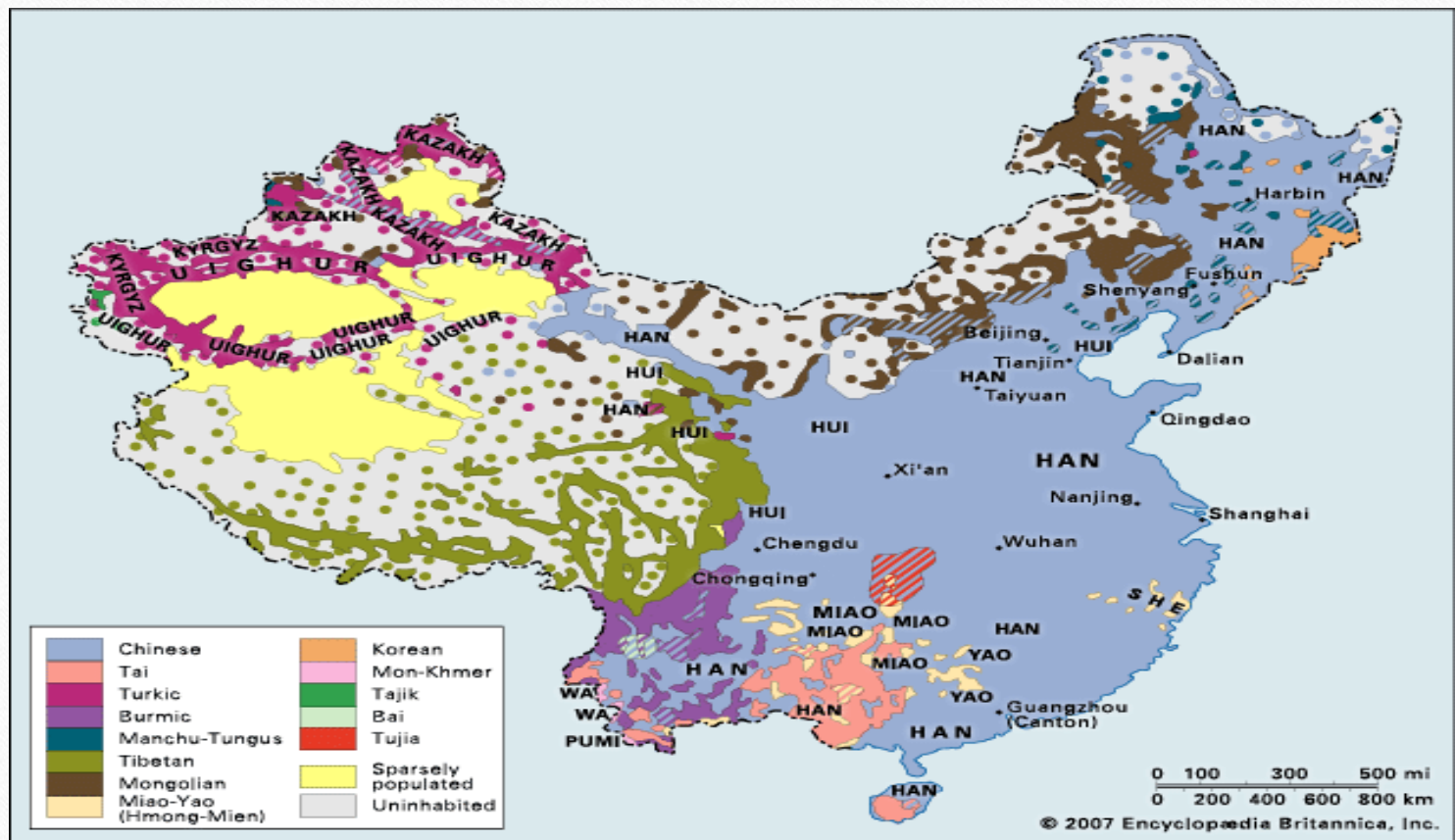






*The pagoda, rising abruptly from earth,  
Reaches to the very Palace of Heaven....  
Climbing, we seem to have left the world behind us,  
With the steps we look down on hung from space.  
It overtops a holy land  
And can only have been built by toil of the spirit.  
Its four sides darken the bright sun,  
Its seven stories cut the grey clouds;  
Birds fly down beyond our sight,  
And the rapid wind below our hearing;  
Mountain-ranges, toward the east,  
Appear to be curving and flowing like rivers;  
Far green locust-trees line broad roads  
Toward clustered palaces and mansions;  
Colours of autumn, out of the west,  
Enter advancing through the city;  
And northward there lie, in five graveyards,  
Calm forever under dewy green grass,  
Those who know life's final meaning  
Which all humankind must learn.  
...Henceforth I put my official hat aside.  
To find the Eternal Way is the only happiness.*





# Song Dynasty

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(960 to 1269 CE)



# Song Dynasty

## III. Song Dynasty (960 – 1269 CE)

### A. Rise of the Song Dynasty

1. Collapse of the Tang dynasty in 907 CE resulted in nearly **50 years of political fragmentation** and civil war

\*. Simultaneously, a group of nomadic peoples (the Khitan) create their own empire (the Liao Empire) north of China

2. In 960, a powerful and popular general, **Zhao Kuangyin** establishes the Song Dynasty (becomes the emperor and changes name to **Taizu**)

a. Leads successful military campaigns to re-unify much of eastern China under his control

b. Early problem – Taizu's forces are defeated by those of the Liao Empire in early stages of his reign

1. China forced to **pay tribute to the Liao Empire** so that the Liao armies won't attack or raid China

2. Song military never becomes as strong as that of the previous Chinese dynasties









# Song Dynasty

B. Size of Empire – much **smaller area of control than that of previous Chinese dynasties**

C. Government Bureaucracy re-established and strengthened

1. Continuation of government practices of previous dynasties
  - a. Emperor
  - b. Bureaucracy based on merit
  - c. civil-service exams to select those who would serve (**still based on Confucian ideals**)
  - d. division of empire into provinces (ruled by the same types of royal governors and the censorate)
  - e. unified legal code





# Song Dynasty

2. Changes in government under the Song
    - a. Increase in the number of bureaucrats serving in the government
- \*. They were paid more, as well!
- b. **Two-tiered testing system**
    1. Basic qualifying exam given every year
    2. Exams for posts in different levels of the government (Imperial, Provincial, and District) were given every three years
  - c. Only worthy and experienced government bureaucrats could become royal governors of the provinces
- \*. **Military leaders were now forbidden to serve in these roles (in order to prevent revolts)**
- d. Military leaders were rotated to different posts (also to prevent revolts)

# Song Dynasty

## D. Economics

### 1. Agricultural reforms continue

a. **break-up of large estates** so that more people could own land – this had been done by earlier dynasties, too

1. This worked well (**increased agricultural surplus**)

2. Also done in order to prevent local aristocrats from gaining too much power (and then revolting against the government)

b. government-funded construction of **more irrigation canals**

### 2. Trade

a. Continuation of **trade with Persia** (over land) – but this was **VERY dangerous**

b. Development of **sea trading routes with India and SE Asia** – much safer and faster

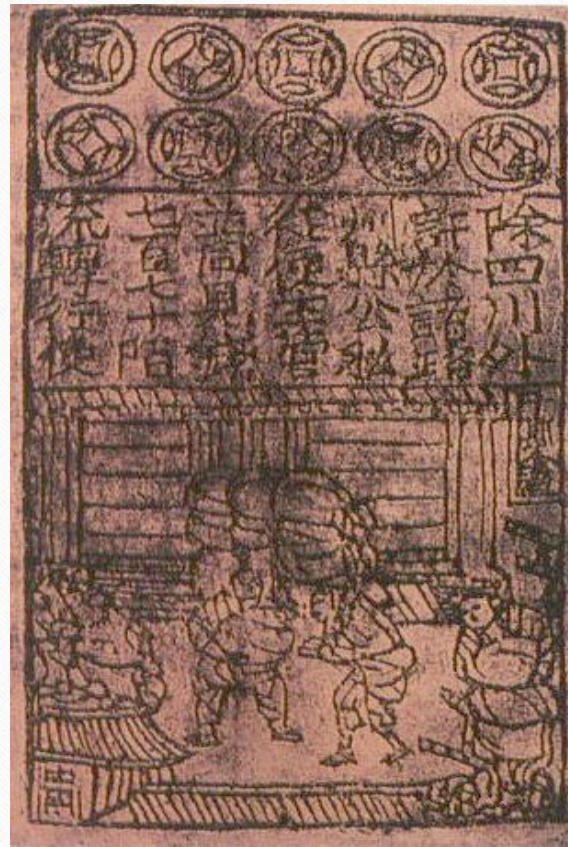
c. Development of **paper money** and “deposit shops” (i.e. **banks**) – make trade even safer





*Above:* Bronze coins from the early Song dynasty.

*Right:* Example of paper money from mid-Song dynasty.



# Song Dynasty

## E. Culture

1. “**Neo-Confucianism**” (began in late Tang Dynasty)

- a. Return to values of Confucianism
- b. Stress on **native Chinese religion** and philosophy (including Daoism)

**\*. Buddhism was now not supported by the Chinese government** – seen as an outside influence that challenged traditional Chinese culture (i.e. Confucian ideals)

- c. Stress on Chinese Tradition



# Song Dynasty

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2. Development of a “**Scholar-Gentry**” (based on Neo-Confucian ideals)

a. Social status based on

1. Education

2. Adherence to Confucian values

b. Most of these people served in the government as bureaucrats



# Song Dynasty

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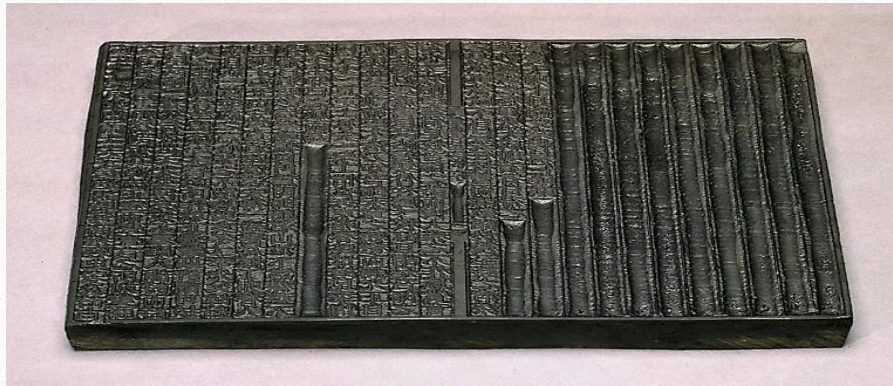
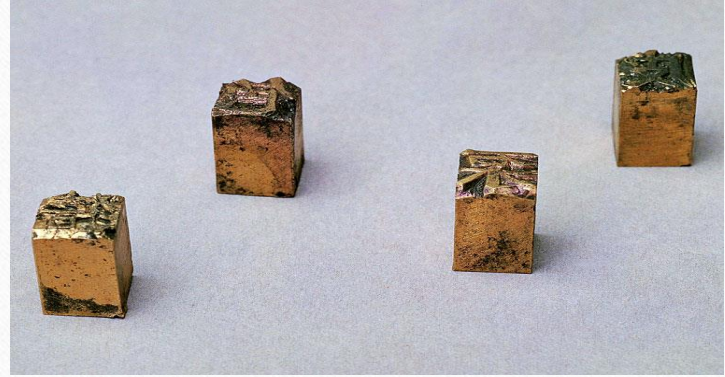
## 3. Technological Advances

- a. Better weapons – utilization of **gunpowder and steel** (actually developed during the Tang Dynasty)
- b. The **Junk** – well made, sturdy ships used for sea trade
- c. **Wheelbarrow** – makes farming easier



*Right:* Bronze character  
moveable type blocks from the  
Song dynasty.

*Below:* Printing tray with  
moveable type.



# Song Dynasty

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## 4. Family and Gender structure

### a. Family still **patriarchal**

1. based on traditional, Confucian ideals
2. analogy – The Emperor is to China as the father is to the family

### b. **Decline in the status of women**

1. Neo-Confucianism stresses male dominance of family and society
  - a. Women's importance only as **caretaker of the home and the bearer of sons**
  - b. Stressed the importance of sexual virtue in women, yet men could pretty much do as they pleased

\*. During the Tang dynasty, such restrictions were often relaxed for women



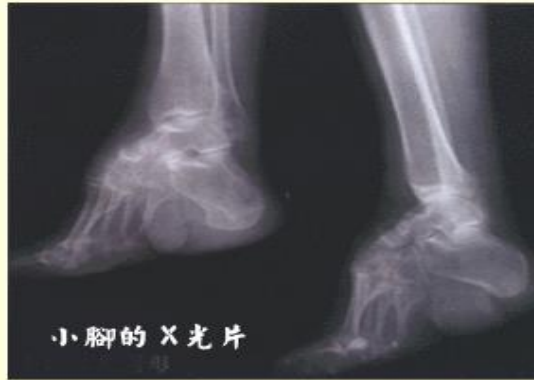
# Song Dynasty

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- c. Women not allowed to train or test for civil service jobs
  - d. Divorce and inheritance laws made more favorable for men (another change from the Tang dynasty)
2. The practice of **footbinding** for upper-class women -- symbolizes male control of women:
- a. limits the mobility of women
  - b. based on male ideals of beauty







*Bottom:* Normal human foot.

*Top left:* Alignment of bones after footbinding.

*Top right:* X-Ray of woman's foot after footbinding.







# Song Dynasty

## F. Factors leading to the end of the Song Dynasty

1. Economic problems
2. Some Peasant Unrest
3. **Weak military** – Song dynasty not really able to defend itself (due to stress on Neo-Confucian distrust of the military and constant fear of military revolt)

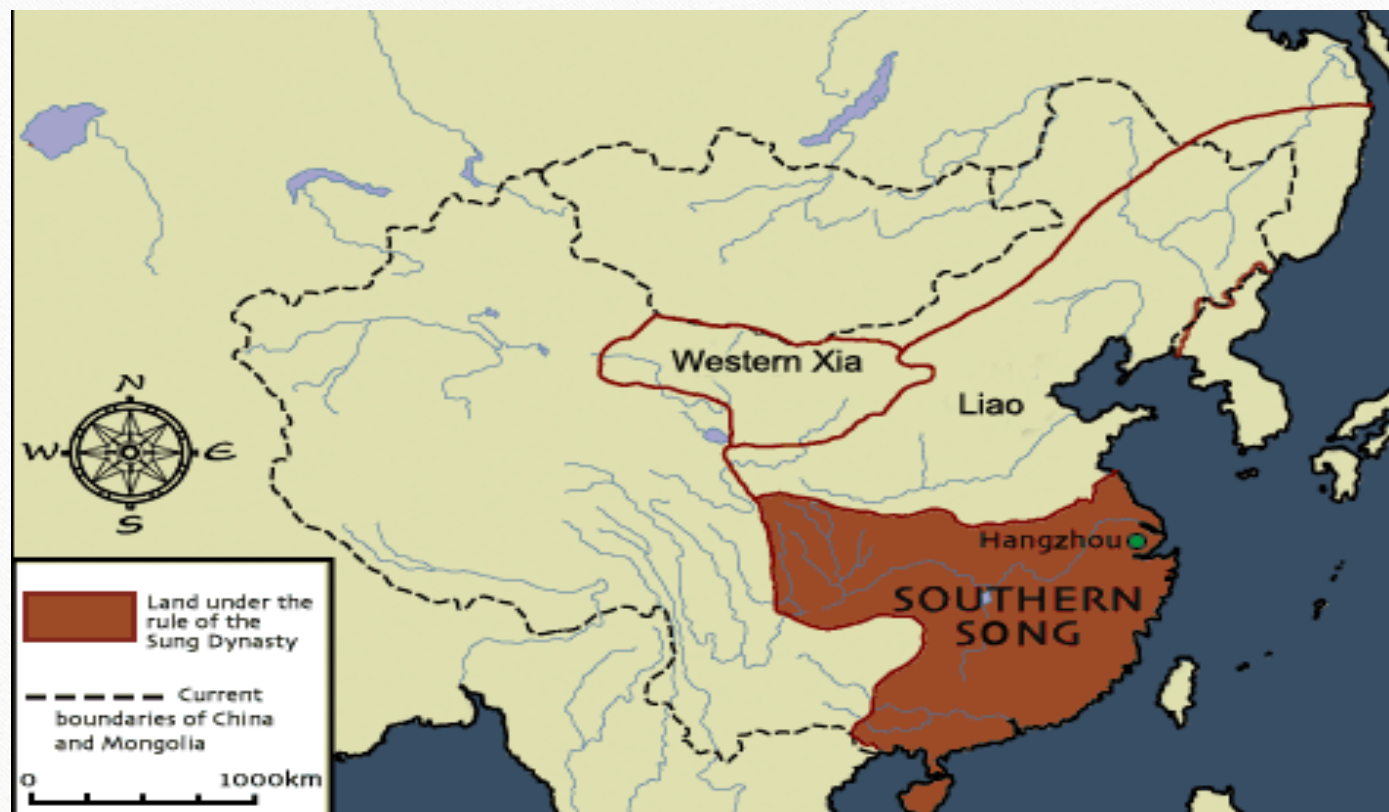


# Song Dynasty

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4. Song China faced with new threats from the north in 11th and early 12th centuries CE
  - a. **Xi Xia Empire** – formed by nomadic **Tengut tribes** from Tibet
  - b. **Chin Empire** – formed by nomadic **Jurchen** peoples when they conquered the Liao Empire in 1115 CE
5. Song Territory shrinks by 1127 – becomes the **Southern Song**
  - a. loss of territory in the north to the Chin Empire
  - b. capital moved from Changa'an to Hangzhou
6. The (wait for it!) **Mongols take over China** in the 1260s and 1270s – ending the Song Dynasty (as well as the Chin and Xi Xia Empires) – establishment of the **Yuan Dynasty**







# Yuan Dynasty

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(1279 to 1369 CE)

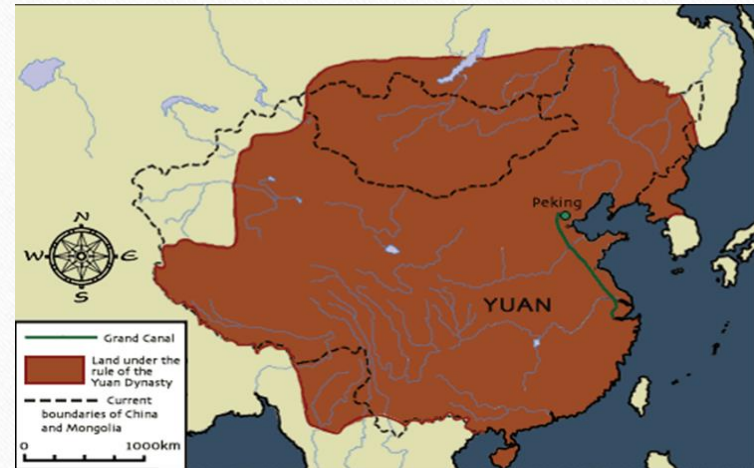


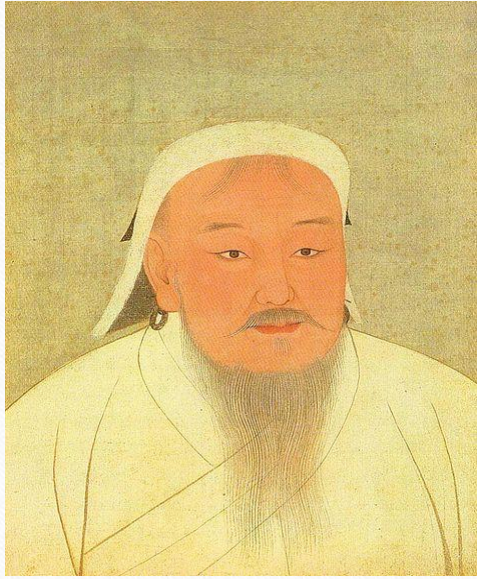
# Yuan Dynasty

## IV. The Yuan Dynasty (1279 – 1369 CE)

A. Famous Emperor – **Kublai Khan** (r. 1279 – 1294 CE) – grandson of **Genghis (Chinggis) Khan**

1. Completes the takeover of China and removal of the Song from power
2. Under the guidance of some of his Chinese advisors Kublai Khan changes the name of his regime to the Yuan Dynasty (a Chinese name)





Above: A Yuan dynasty portrait of Chinggis Khan (Ghengis Khan).

Right: A 15<sup>th</sup> century illustration of Chinggis Khan dividing his empire, seated beside his wife. This illustration is in the style of the Mughal court.







*Above:* Kublai Khan on a hunting expedition.

*Right:* Imperial portrait of Kublai Khan.





# Yuan Dynasty

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B. Government (basic form of Chinese government system retained but some changes are made)

1. The Mongol **Khan serves as the Emperor**
2. Capital city moved to **Khanbaliq** (which is now the city of **Beijing**)
3. Chinese bureaucratic system retained, but
  - a. **Civil service exams not used** during Yuan Dynasty
  - b. Mongols served in the upper levels of the bureaucracy
  - c. Muslim allies (e.g. Persians, Turks) served at the middle levels of the bureaucracy
  - d. Chinese bureaucrats served at the lowest levels in government

# Yuan Dynasty

## C. Economics

1. **Trade along the Silk Road increased** – made much safer and profitable due to Mongol control of Asia
2. Sea routes continued
3. An overall period of **great economic prosperity**

## D. Attempts at Expansion through the use of the military

1. Northern Vietnam – only temporarily successful
2. Indonesia – not successful
3. Japan – not successful [two attempts to sail fleets to Japan were thwarted by storms – the Japanese called these “Kamikaze (“divine wind”)].

# Yuan Dynasty

## E. Culture

1. Early in his rule, Kublai Khan passes **laws to segregate Chinese and Mongols**

a. Chinese scholars forbidden from using the Mongol's writing system

\*. Mongol script now used as official writing system of the Imperial level of the government

b. Mongol peoples not allowed to marry Chinese people

c. Mongol and Chinese military units kept separately

d. Friendships between Mongol and Chinese people were even discouraged!



道高果の心  
久遠の美の心  
美の心  
美の心  
美の心  
美の心  
美の心

# Yuan Dynasty

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2. Kublai Khan is fascinated with Chinese culture and adopts some of its ways for himself and his people (because he was taught as a child by Chinese teachers)
  - a. Retains Chinese advisors (Buddhist, Confucian and Daoist)
  - b. Adopts Chinese rituals and music in his court
  - c. Lives in a Chinese-style palace





*In Xanadu did Kubla Khan*

*A stately pleasure dome decree:*

*Where Alph, the sacred river, ran*

*Through caverns measureless to man*

*Down to a sunless sea.*



# Yuan Dynasty

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3. **Status of Mongol women better than that of Chinese women** (due to the different traditions in these cultures) – in other words, Mongols do not adopt Chinese gender systems
  - a. **Mongol women do not engage in footbinding**
  - b. Mongol women, unlike their Chinese counterparts, had the right to:
    1. own some of their own property
    2. travel around towns and countryside
4. Mongols impose a social class system (in order from highest to lowest in status):
  - a. Mongols
  - b. Muslim allies (such as Persians, Turks, etc.)
  - c. Northern Chinese Peoples (descendants of other nomadic peoples)
  - d. Southern (ethnically) Chinese Peoples

# Yuan Dynasty

## F. End of the Yuan Dynasty

### 1. Mongol control weakens

- a. The successors of Kublai Khan are poor rulers
- b. **Corruption** of government bureaucrats
- c. Too much time and resources spent on foiled invasions of other parts of Asia
- d. Overall **decline in population** in China

### 2. Chinese people fed-up with Mongol rule

- a. Scholar-Gentry called for a removal of the “barbarian” Mongols
- b. Local **peasant uprisings due to famine**
  1. Under the leadership of **Ju Yuanzhang** (from a poor peasant family), the Chinese people remove the Mongols from power in 1369 CE
  2. Ju Yuanzhang becomes the first Ming Emperor, **Hongwu**

