



China: The Glorious Tang and Song Dynasties

A WORKSHOP FOR EDUCATORS
MAY 7, 2006

Asian | Education

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Special thanks to Michael Knight, Ph.D, Senior Curator of Chinese Art, Asian Art Museum, and Forrest McGill, Ph.D, Chief Curator, Asian Art Museum for the valuable input and suggestions.

The Asian Art Museum's school programs are supported by the Citigroup Foundation. The museum's educational programs and activities are also supported by a major grant from the Freeman Foundation, as well as by support from the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, Stanley S. Langendorf Foundation, Joseph R. McMicking Foundation, and the Mary Tanenbaum Fund. Major support for AsiaAlive has been provided by The Wallace Foundation, Wells Fargo, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services by an Act of Congress.

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**An Introduction to the
Tang and Song Dynasties**
By Martin Backstrom

An Introduction to the Tang and Song Dynasties

The following pages explore aspects of two of the greatest periods of Chinese civilization, often referred to by Western authors as the “medieval” period of China. However the term medieval, sometimes understood to mean “backwards” or “unenlightened,” in no way applies to the civilizations of the Tang (618–907) and Song (960–1279) dynasties, cultures that were among the most advanced civilizations in the world at the time. Discoveries in the realms of science, art, philosophy, and technology—combined with a curiosity about the world around them—provided the men and women of medieval China with a worldview and level of sophistication that in many ways were unrivalled until much later times, even in China itself.

When the rulers of the Tang dynasty (618–907) unified China in the early seventh century, the energies and wealth of the nation proved strong enough not only to ensure internal peace for the first time in centuries, but also to expand the Chinese realm to include large portions of neighboring lands such as Korea, Vietnam, northeast, central, and southeast Asia. The Tang became a great empire, the most powerful and influential of its time any place in the world. Flourishing trade and communication transformed China into the cultural center of an international age. Tang cities such as the capital of Chang’an (modern Xi’an), the eastern terminus of the great Silk Road, were global hubs of banking and trade as well as of religious, scholarly, and artistic life. Their inhabitants, from all parts of China and as far away as India and Persia, were urbane and sophisticated. Tang society was liberal and largely tolerant of alien views and ideas; in fact the royal family of Tang, surnamed Li, was of non-Han Chinese origin (perhaps originally from a Turkish-speaking area of Central Asia), and leaders of government were drawn from many parts of the region. Government was powerful, but not oppressive; education was encouraged, with the accomplished and learned well rewarded. Great wealth was accumulated by a few, but the Tang rulers saw that lands were redistributed, and all had some measure of opportunity for material advancement. This was also a time when many women attained higher status at court, and a greater degree of freedom in society.

This dynamic, affluent, liberal, and culturally diverse environment produced a great efflorescence of culture unparalleled in Chinese history. Buddhism, originally imported from India, thrived to such an extent that China itself became a major center of Buddhist learning, attracting students and pilgrims from other countries. In East Asia, Chinese, rather than Sanskrit, became the “church language” of Buddhism, and Chinese Buddhist texts served to transmit Chinese culture, ideas, and philosophy abroad. Significantly, Buddhist influence also resulted in the compilation of huge encyclopedias of knowledge during the Tang, preserving much earlier Chinese cultural material for posterity, and inspiring advances in mathematics and the applied sciences such as engineering and medicine. The Tang was also an age of great figure painters, whose religious frescoes filled caves along the Silk Road through central Asia, and covered the walls of royal tombs. New styles of ceramics, bold and colorful with variegated glazes, embraced Indian, Persian, and Greek forms.

Above all poetry flourished during the Tang, and indeed the Chinese think of Tang poetry as the greatest of all literary achievements. Tang poets like Du Fu, Li Bo, Wang Wei, and Bo Juyi created works of art that powerfully explored the relationships between sounds, images, and philosophy. Tang poets aimed to capture the fleeting and profound, influencing Chinese writers until the present day. Together with the surviving examples of painting and sculpture, Tang poetry manifests a

Chinese inner vision and view of the world and cosmos in a way that more abstract scholarly works did not; these creative works express what might otherwise remain theoretical or ethereal into palpable, understandable, and immediate terms.

The most magnificent urban center in the world at the time, the capital of Tang China, Chang'an (literally "Everlasting Peace"), was a walled city built in alignment with the stars to symbolize its role as the world in miniature. The city witnessed the most splendid cultural achievements during the eighth century. As home to the most accomplished artists and thinkers of the day, it played much the same role as Florence did in fifteenth-century Europe. Just as it was witness to the height of Tang culture in the eighth century, it also was destined to be the focal point of the dynasty's decline: when a rogue general decided to rebel in 756, not only was the emperor sent temporarily into exile, but the artists, poets, and priests of the city also fled. Although the political structure of the Tang remained in place for another 150 years (until 907), the city and state, with resources scattered, were weakened. Pretenders to the throne began to emerge, warlords began to consolidate authority, and nomadic peoples on the northern and western borders of the country also competed for political power. But it was a gentle decline: overall the three hundred years of the Tang were marked by impressive advances in all aspects of art, science, and philosophy.

By the early tenth century, the Tang ruling house fell, and a period of chaos ensued. China was divided into at least fifteen different independent political regimes, and peoples on the border areas set up their own states. The cultural glory of Tang was eclipsed, surviving only among tiny warring states. However in the year 960, another unified empire arose, the Song.

The Song dynasty was the second great "medieval" period of China. But unlike the Tang, it coexisted uneasily with powerful rivals to the north. These rivals were the Khitan Tartars of Manchuria and Mongolia, kept at bay only through costly bribes, and the Jurchen people of Central Asia, who were intent on conquering China but could not be influenced by payoffs. While the Song dynasty managed to recapture—and develop—much of the glory of the Tang, it did suffer a blow in 1127 when the Jurchen took the capital of Kaifeng, and sent the Song Chinese administration southward, to establish the Southern Song capital at Hangzhou, near modern Shanghai. Still the Northern Song (while it lasted) and the Southern Song (from 1127 until 1279) achieved incredible feats of learning, science, art, and philosophy. To the Chinese, the Song was a period certainly as great as the Tang. International trade and exchange of ideas continued to flourish, although (during the later Song) primarily through expanding networks of southern sea ports and ocean-going argosies.

Song intellectuals reacted to the threatened existence of their dynasty by developing a defensive, inward-looking strategy: a belief that the Chinese and only the Chinese were capable of true greatness. Some closed their minds to the world outside China and set about the task of defining Chinese canons of proper behavior, government, and arts. Most Buddhist doctrines (judged to be non-Chinese) were largely purged during the Song, and the native Chinese philosophies of Confucianism (in particular) and Daoism saw a resurgence. In fact the great philosopher Zhu Xi taught hopeful students a new and "purer" version of Confucianism that came to be called "Neo-Confucianism." This philosophy tried to recapture the Confucianism of the past, while integrating other philosophical ideas that had since come into existence. Neo-Confucianism taught people proper Chinese views of the cosmos and of behavior, and provided answers for other "big questions"

of life. Most of its ideas and practices survive to the present day, and have also had a notable impact on later societies in Korea and Japan.

During the Song, great advances were also made in science and technology. Hydraulic engineering, from canal and bridge building to the construction of enormous seafaring vessels, was perfected. Chemical science, pursued in the secret laboratories of Daoist scholars, helped to produce important compounds and chemicals, including gunpowder—and by the year 1000, bombs and grenades became available to Song armies. Biology too made enormous strides: famous physicians conducted well-documented experiments, and many of their efforts helped to codify and improve what was already known in the healing arts of acupuncture and traditional medicine. Perhaps the most significant advance, however, was the invention of movable type printing, achieved around the year 1040, four hundred years before Gutenberg's printing innovations in Europe. Song printed editions of texts—previously transmitted as handwritten manuscripts—helped to spread literacy and knowledge throughout the realm. Many books survive to this day; they are technological marvels that are highly prized as some of the most beautiful books ever produced.

Song dynasty artists explored new themes and techniques in painting and ceramics. The Song interest in science and minute observation of the world resulted, somewhat paradoxically, in large-scale grand landscape paintings that explore the world in fine detail. New glazes and porcelain techniques flourished. Song artists were interested in both the monumental and the delicate; in the functional and the mysterious, all of which they recognized as intrinsic natural phenomenon of the world. Ordinary and educated people alike were exposed to art and literature through the new invention of printing, which encouraged the development of drama and fiction. Creative pursuits were unified by a cultural inclination to connoisseurship: the wealthy and even not-so-wealthy shared an interest in art, literature, and science, and cultivated good taste in their patronage of the arts. The Song love of the refined extended to relics and antiques, which helped to foster the nascent science of archaeology, as well as the older art of forgery. Connoisseurs embraced even cuisine and gardening, which were transformed into gentlemanly concerns for the first time.

As with the Tang, Song poetry is held in high esteem by the Chinese, but it is different from the Tang varieties. Whereas Tang poets tried to capture fleeting moments and transcendent thoughts, Song masters enjoyed using poetry to explore all aspects of the world around them, including the mundane. Song poetry is thus filled with interesting, sometime humorous, accounts of picnics, travel, wine drinking, and even such quotidian events as going to the dentist or suffering in the summer heat. Nothing was off limits to the writers of Song, and with printing freely available, everything seemed to get published. While the surviving poems of the Tang might number in the tens of thousands, no one has inventoried how many poems survive from the Song; they could number as many as half a million.

The rule of the Song ended in 1279 when Mongol leader Khubilai Khan, having conquered the Jurchen regime in northern China, swept through southern China and brought the Song territories entirely within the fold of the newly proclaimed Yuan dynasty. But that begins another story. The Tang and Song dynasties, fraternal twin dynasties of China's medieval period, stand out as among the most accomplished of all civilizations in global history: they gave the world many contributions and helped to shape Chinese civilization into what it is today.



**Tang and Song Religion
and Philosophy**
By Zhaoyang Zhang

Tang and Song Religion and Philosophy

INTRODUCTION: INTRODUCING THE FOREIGN AND REVIVING THE NATIVE

The Tang and Song dynasties were periods of dynamic religious transformation and revival in China, as well as profound philosophical inquiry. The religious landscape was varied and colorful. Along with the ancient indigenous religion, Daoism, Tang dynasty China enthusiastically embraced major religions imported from abroad: Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. During the Song period, Christianity disappeared from China, but Daoism and Buddhism continued to flourish and Islam began to take root. The popularity of these religions challenged the longstanding supremacy of Confucianism as the most influential philosophy in social and political life. In response, Song Confucian scholars developed a revised theory of Confucianism that assimilated certain Buddhist and Daoist elements. This philosophy became known as Neo-Confucianism and eventually reclaimed for Confucianism its role as the most influential social ideology in China. Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism were the three major influences on Chinese life and art during the Tang and Song dynasties—sometimes competing with each other but often synthesizing and evolving together in ways that were uniquely Chinese.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism was founded in northern India in the sixth century BCE. Most historians believe it was introduced to China in approximately the second century by means of monks and traders along the Silk Road. By the time of its golden age in the Tang dynasty, Buddhism had been practiced in China for over 500 years. Unlike native Confucianism that stressed social obligations and duties to family and society, Buddhism offered a doctrine of individual salvation from suffering release from the cycle of reincarnation.

Early in the Tang dynasty, a Chinese monk named Xuanzang traveled to India and brought back Buddhist sutras. His travels were dramatized in the famous Ming dynasty novel *Journey to the West*. Even today, these historical accounts and their related legends are popular sources for everything from drama to comic books, examining the monk's heroic travels and often exploring the adventures of Xuanzang's heroic bodyguard and traveling companion, Monkey.

During the Tang dynasty Buddhist monasteries were established throughout the empire, and monks engaged in many kinds of activities to spread the teachings of the Buddha. Many Tang emperors enthusiastically patronized Buddhism: they granted large amount of lands to Buddhist monasteries, endowed expensive gifts to monks, and patronized the construction of monumental Buddhist caves. The story of Wu Zetian (690–705) illustrates imperial support for Buddhism in the Tang.

Wu Zetian was the only official female imperial ruler in Chinese history. She was the concubine of the emperor Gaozong (r. 649–683), who was a weak ruler and often unhealthy. Wu Zetian took advantage of her influence over the ineffectual emperor to have herself promoted to empress. After the emperor died, Wu Zetian dethroned her son and assumed the title of emperor herself, changing the name of the dynasty from Tang to Zhou. She was not only a successful ruler, but also an enthusiastic patron of Buddhism.

Perhaps because Confucian dogma did not approve of female rulers, or even because she had once lived in a Buddhist convent, Wu Zetian turned to Buddhism to legitimize her rule. Her followers claimed that Wu Zetian was the incarnation of Maitreya Buddha, the Buddha of the glorious future age. She promoted gifted Buddhist scholars and patronized the construction of splendid Buddhist temples and sculptures. Testimonies to her patronage are the rock-cut cave and sculptural constructions at Longmen, famous for its colossal Buddhist carvings. The caves are located near Luoyang, the eastern capital of Tang. At this extensive site, more than 2000 caves and 100,000 sculptures have survived. The history of construction at this site began in the last decade of the fifth century. However, the majority of the cave excavations and sculptures were created during Tang dynasty, and among the Tang caves, most were crafted during the reign of Wu Zetian under her sponsorship. In fact, the largest and most celebrated colossal rock-cut sculpture was financed by Wu Zetian. From her own personal budget, she contributed about 20,000 guan, and she participated in the consecration ceremony when the statue was complete. Many scholars suspect the image of this Buddha was modeled on the image of Wu Zetian. (See slide no. 14c in the art section)

Under the patronage of emperors like Wu Zetian, Buddhism flourished in China. However, Buddhism's relationship with the native culture was not always harmonious. Basic Buddhist teachings advocating abandoning family and retreating into monasteries directly conflicted with Confucian dogma, which put emphasis on family duties and harmony among kinships. Buddhism was also in a competing position with a native religion, Daoism, for followers and patronage. In addition, Buddhists could not always count on the favor of the emperors. For example, emperor Wuzong of the Tang (840–846) banned Buddhism as a corrupting foreign influence, confiscated the wealth accumulated by monasteries and shrines, and engineered widespread destruction of Buddhist temples and sites particularly in southern China.

The tensions between Buddhism and native culture made Buddhists realize that in order to flourish in China, they needed to adapt to the indigenous cultural context. Gradually, Chinese Buddhists reconciled Indian teachings with native values and socio-political ideas such as filial piety, ancestor worship, and social discipline. The most distinctive development in this Chinese adaptation of Buddhism was the rise of Chan Buddhism (known as Zen Buddhism in Japan). Chan Buddhism, whose name is derived from the Sanskrit word *dhyana* meaning meditation, emphasized the practice of meditation and value of monastic discipline over the study of sutras and ritual. Eventually its practice spread into Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

According to tradition, an Indian monk named Bodhidharma came to China during the fifth century and established Chan Buddhism in the Shaolin monastery, an institution that is world famous today for its martial arts. However, the most important figure for the history of Chan Buddhism in China was the sixth patriarch, Huineng (638–713) who lived during the Tang. According to the standard Chan account, Huineng grew up in Guangdong and traveled to Hubei to pursue religious enlightenment with the fifth patriarch of Chan school, Hongren. Huineng worked as a humble rice pounder in the monastery. However, when Hongren was looking for his religious successor, he was greatly impressed by the following stanza Huineng composed:

*Enlightenment is not a tree to begin with,
Nor is the mind a mirror stand,
Since originally there was nothing, whereon would the dust fall?*
(translated by Hesig and Knitter, from
Zen Buddhism: A History by Heinrich Dumoulin)

This stanza expresses Huineng's understanding of how to pursue individual enlightenment. The verses express the Chan ideal that the potential for achieving enlightenment is innate to every person. There is no need to tediously cultivate it. It is possible by simple means to bring out this potential and achieve immediate enlightenment.

Hongren was deeply impressed by these verses. Thus he chose Huineng as the sixth patriarch of the Chan school. However, due to persecution by his rivals, Huineng was forced to flee to the south. There he established the Southern School of Chan. Huineng's teachings are preserved in the Platform Sutra, which became one of major canonical texts of Chan Buddhism. The Southern School prospered and flourished.

The Chan school represents a Chinese transformation of Buddhism. It renounced many monastic rituals. It espoused that everyone has an intrinsic Buddha nature, and that through the direct experience of meditation, it is possible to realize this and achieve enlightenment. The doctrine of the Southern School established by Huineng even denounced the authority of sutras and urged its believers to pursue sudden enlightenment. This significant aspect of the teaching made Chan appealing to both commoners and elites in China and helped integrate Buddhism with Chinese the culture as a whole.

With this support, Chan Buddhism continued flourishing into the Song. During the Song, the number of Chan monks and monasteries grew rapidly. Chan monks established good relationships with the court and at times exerted significant influence in politics. Today, Chan Buddhism is still one of the major religions in China, and has also made its way into America.

DAOISM

Daoism is an indigenous Chinese religion. Dao is often translated as "way" or "path." The teachings of Daoism advocate following the Way and integrating with the natural world. Its legendary founder was Laozi, who lived in the sixth century BCE. However, most scholars believed that the real history of Daoism is rooted in indigenous religion of the second century and that it developed rapidly along with the advancement of Buddhism. Daoism developed its own unique meditation techniques. Daoists also had a particular interest in the pursuit of immortality and alchemy. As in the West, experiments in these pursuits led to unanticipated advances in chemistry and physics.

Chinese symbols and concepts commonly encountered in the West associated with Daoism are *yin* and *yang*, representing the balance of opposites and the concept of *qi* as a natural energy running through all existence. The popularity and familiarity of philosophical Taoism in the West in recent decades can even be observed in the plot device of "the force" in the film *Star Wars*.

During the Tang, Daoism enjoyed special patronage. Because Laozi's surname is Li, identical to that of the Tang ruling house, the emperors revered Laozi as one of their ancestors and supported

the development of Daoism. This support included building Daoist temples and establishing schools to enroll students studying Daoist canons. Under the patronage of the emperors, Daoism flourished in the Tang. Nonetheless, Daoism had to compete with Buddhism for converts. Such competition is reflected in a passage written by Han Yu entitled “The Girl of Mt. Hua.” It relates how a female Daoist priest, in rivalry with Buddhists, used her charm and eloquence to attract an audience:

In streets east, streets west, they expound the Buddhist canon, clanging bells, sounding conches, till the din invades the palace. The girl of Mount Hua, child of a Daoist home, longed to expel the foreign faith, win men back to the Immortals; she washed off her powder, wiped her face, put on cap and shawl. With white throat, crimson cheeks, long eyebrows of gray, she came at last to ascend the chair, unfolding the secrets of Truth.

(Translated by Burton Watson, from the *Columbia Book of Chinese Poetry*)

From this text, we learned that monks customarily traveled far and wide to preach their doctrines, causing unease among Daoists. In this instance, a female Daoist engaged herself among the field of proselytizers and won over the monks. However, generally speaking, during the Tang dynasty Buddhism was more influential than Daoism.

In the waning years of the Tang, Daoism experienced a setback. However, in the Song, Daoism recovered and reached the height of its popularity during the reign of Emperor Huizong (1100–1125). Emperor Huizong invited Daoist priests to his court to teach him Daoist alchemy. He appointed famous Daoist teachers to high positions in the government. He established Daoist temples across the empire. He also constantly performed Daoist rituals in his palace. The emperor went so far as to declare himself to be the personal protector of Daoism. To defeat Daoism's rivals, he at one point used his authority to ban Buddhism. The emperor's zeal influenced his ministers, and many of the high officials at court likewise showed an interest in Daoism. The reign of Huizong was the heyday of Daoism in China. Daoism persists as an important religion in contemporary China.

CHRISTIANITY

Nestorianism was the first branch of Christianity brought to China. After breaking from the Western church during the Council of Ephesus in 431 over differences concerning the nature of the Holy Trinity, Nestorians took refuge in Persia and dispersed widely through Asia. The record of the 781 Nestorian Monument (discovered in 1623, during the Ming dynasty) in the Tang capital has been translated as follows:

“In 635, during the reign of Emperor Taizong [627–649], a Nestorian missionary A-lo-bun came to the capital of China, Chang’an. He was received by the prime minister Fang Xuanling. A-lo-bun stayed in the capital and translated Nestorian scriptures there. In 638, Emperor Taizong issued an edict concerning Nestorianism. In the edict, Taizong considered that the teachings of Nestorianism were helpful to human beings, and he permitted the Nestorians to teach their doc-

trines freely throughout the empire.” From that time on, Nestorians established churches and attracted followers. The next emperor, Gaozong (r. 649-683) seemed very interested in the Nestorians. He granted A-lo-bun the title Great Conservator of Doctrine for the Preservation of the State and established churches in many prefectures. After the death of the emperor Gaozong, Nestorians continued enjoying imperial patronage. In one typical case, emperor Xuanzong (712–755) gave the Nestorian monks elegant pictures and silks as gifts.

It was characteristic of Nestorians to adopt many Buddhist and Daoist terms in interpreting and explaining their faith. For instance, the missionaries adopted both the Daoist term “the Way” and the Buddhist term “the Law” in their writings.

Nestorianism persisted in China until 845 when the emperor Wuzong banned Buddhism and Nestorianism. Buddhism rapidly recovered after the ban was lifted. However, the ban virtually ended the Nestorians’ history during the Tang. It was not until the Yuan (1271–1368) that Nestorians returned to China.

ISLAM

“Seek knowledge even unto China,” the Hadith quotes the Prophet Mohammed as saying. About two decades after the death of the Prophet, the third Caliph of Islam dispatched a deputation to visit the Tang court of Emperor Gaozong. This event in 651 marked the beginning of Islam in China. Consistent with the Tang policy of tolerance of various religions, Emperor Gaozong permitted the practice and teaching of Islam in China and ordered the construction of a mosque. Due to the good relations between the Tang and the Arab empires, many Muslim merchants came to China to do business, and they played a major role in spreading Islam in China.

By the time of the Song dynasty, Islam was firmly established in China. Muslim merchants immigrated to China and gradually settled in commercial centers such as Quanzhou, Guangzhou, Yangzhou, and Huangzhou. In these cities, Muslims built their communities and mosques. One surviving example is the Shengyou Mosque at Quanzhou. The mosque was built in 1009 with a distinctive medieval Arabic minaret. Muslim merchants mingled with the local people and acquired influence in the locale. For example, a descendent of Arab Muslims named Pu Shougeng was appointed as an official in charge of the international trade in Quanzhou in the late 13th century. Even though during the course of Tang and Song, Islam was primarily the religion of Arab immigrants and their descendents, it went on to flourish in China during the Yuan dynasty. Today, China has more than ten million Muslims.

NEO-CONFUCIANISM

Generally speaking, Confucianism had been the dominate ideology and philosophy in China since the Han dynasty. It was founded by an ancient Chinese philosopher, Confucius (551–479 BCE). His philosophy and teachings were constantly developed, reinterpreted, and refined by his followers throughout the course of Chinese history. The predominant theme of Confucianism is its emphasis on social ties and duties as designated in the proper behavior for "five relationships": sovereign-subject; husband-wife; parent-child; elder brother-younger brother; and friend-friend.

In the middle of the second century BCE, Confucianism was established as the official state ideology. However, during the Tang and Song dynasties influences from Daoism and Buddhism significantly challenged the dominant status of Confucian ideology. Confucian scholars met this challenge by integrating elements of both Daoist and other native philosophies into a single integrative ideology known as Neo-Confucianism. Neo-Confucianism can be described as the culmination of an effort to integrate and harmonize several different religious and philosophical traditions that had developed in China over the preceding thousand years, and as a way of making sense of several diverse and sometimes competing philosophies. The Confucian emphasis on principles such as “humaneness,” “filial piety,” and “ritual” was integrated with more abstract Daoist notions of a “the Way” (Dao) that governed all existence, as well numerous Buddhist principles.

Neo-Confucianism is perhaps an expression of the Chinese tendency to seek “harmony” in all things—in this case, to try to synthesize complex religious and philosophical views. What resulted was a highly syncretic philosophy that was often very technical in nature; some ancient texts even present what might be described as flowcharts for their readers! Yet seemingly opposed ideas were unified by the notion of *li*, literally meaning “pattern,” or more specifically the “patterned markings of a stone,” but usually translated as “principle.” Neo-Confucians sought to uncover the “pattern” of all things, and firmly believed that all phenomena, including life, nature, destiny, indeed the entirety of existence, were essentially a “pattern” that could be discerned if closely examined. This fundamental premise, many people believe, underlay the Song interest in all things “scientific,” minute, and even trivial—since even the smallest entity had the potential to reveal the underlying pattern or *li* of all things.

The forerunner of the Neo-Confucist movement was an orthodox Confucian named Han Yu, who also authored “The Girl of Mt. Hua” passage quoted above. In the later Tang, Han Yu unsuccessfully protested the emperor’s zealous commitment to Buddhism. Han Yu’s protest failed but his ideas inspired Song Confucian thinkers. Song philosophers assimilated certain elements of Buddhism and Daoism in order to revitalize Confucianism. Their efforts gradually restored the supremacy of Confucianism in China. The most important of these Song scholars were the Cheng brothers and Zhu Xi.

CHENG HAO (1032–1085) AND CHENG YI (1033–1107)

Cheng Hao was one of the most successful and renowned Confucian philosophers in China. When he was young, Cheng Hao studied with a Confucian scholar named Zhou Dunyi, under whose tutelage Cheng attempted to acquire all knowledge available to him: not only Confucian but also Daoist and Buddhist teachings. He was an individual of great ambition. He passed the civil service exam in 1057 and enjoyed a successful official career. His younger brother, Cheng Yi, failed the civil service exam and for most of his life rejected Confucian court service in favor of contemplation of “the Way” (Dao). Together the two brothers formulated metaphysical theories concerning the relationship between *li* (the Confucian principle of social order) and *qi* (the Daoist principle of vital energies). Simply put, the Cheng brothers conceived of *li* and *qi* as the two fundamental elements constituting a single metaphysical entity. This syncretic theory became the foundation for the rise of Neo-Confucianism.

ZHU XI (1130–1200)

The intellectual heir to the Cheng brothers was Zhu Xi, the scholar credited with formalizing Neo-Confucian ideology, and considered by many to be the most important thinker in medieval and late imperial China. Zhu Xi lived in the Southern Song period, after the Song had lost its northern territory to nomadic invaders. From a poor family, Zhu Xi was nevertheless brilliant: he passed the civil service exam when he was only nineteen years old. However, being an independent thinker, he declined many high appointments from the court choosing instead to serve as a humble local official. Seeking a coherent transmission of ancient Chinese philosophy, Zhu Xi elaborated the Confucian theory of li (principle) and integrated it with innate knowledge of “the Way” (Dao), also synthesizing some Buddhist ideas. Like the Cheng brothers, Zhu believed that all things possessed a “principle” or “pattern” that could be discerned, a pattern that transcended any one particular religion or philosophy but integrated them all simultaneously. Thus, this universal pattern expressed the truths of Confucianism: harmony in social interactions connected to harmony in the universe; the authentically filial nature of sons and family members; the veracity of the Golden Rule. Likewise upheld were fundamental ideas of Daoism: action that harmonizes with the Way is essential and eternal. Zhu Xi developed an integrated, coherent structure to these syncretic Neo-Confucian ideas expanding upon ideas the Cheng brothers. His synthesis brought order and coherence to various philosophical traditions that had arisen by the Song period.

Zhu Xi was a man of action. He wrote commentaries on almost all of the Confucian classics and established academies to promote his theories. His commentaries on *Four Books* (*Great Learning*, *Doctrine of the Mean*, *Analects* and *Mencius*) were officially adopted as the textbook for candidates taking the civil service exams in the fourteenth century; in fact this textual requirement was only abolished in the first decade of the twentieth century, along with the old system of civil service exams. Through the channel of the civil service exam, Neo-Confucianism quickly came to dominate the intellectual world in China. Zhu Xi was revered as Master Zhu (Zhu Zi), the same title accorded Confucius, due to his achievements. The syncretic formulation of Neo-Confucianism may be understood as the basis for the Chinese willingness to combine different aspects of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism in religious and social life.

CONCLUSION

During the Tang and Song dynasties, the most conspicuous features of the religious landscape were the open rivalries as well as the relatively peaceful coexistence among different religions. Thus, the boundaries between different religions were fluid in two senses. First, through competition, different religions interacted with and influenced each other. Thus, while Buddhism and Daoism competed constantly for converts, they never excluded each other. For instance, early Buddhists frequently adopted Daoist terminology when they translated Indian sutras from Sanskrit. Daoists, for their part, also incorporated many Buddhist practices into their philosophical system. A notable example is the celibacy of the Daoist priests. Originally, Daoism did not require its priests to be celibate. However, as part of its interaction with Buddhism, a Daoist movement emerged during the Song which stressed priestly celibacy. As a result, today some branches of Daoism mandate clerical

celibacy, while others do not. This tendency toward competitive religious interaction is likewise seen in the Nestorian adoption of Daoist and Buddhist concepts to facilitate the spread of Christian doctrine. Even Neo-Confucianism, which was in some ways a Confucian reaction against theistic religion, drew a great deal from Daoism and Buddhism in order to rejuvenate itself.

The boundaries among religions were also fluid because common believers had the freedom to choose and change their religions at will. In the Tang and Song, if the boundary between different religions existed, it mostly existed as a practical matter for priests. These priests had to compete for the support of the emperors, for numbers of converts, and for financial patronage. However, for a common believer, the boundary was not particularly important. An individual could participate in many different religious activities simultaneously. He could go to a Buddhist temple in the morning and offer sacrifice to a Daoist deity in the evening. She might worship Buddha and the Daoist deities side by side in her house. One chose a particular religion according to personal needs or taste.



Tang and Song Literature
By Zhaoyang Zhang

Tang and Song Literature

1. INTRODUCTION

THE FLOURISHING OF POETRY IN THE TANG (618–906) AND SONG (960–1279) DYNASTIES

The Tang and Song dynasties were the golden ages of Chinese classical literature in general, and poetry in particular. Poets of these periods, including Li Bo, Du Fu, and Su Shi, are well known throughout East Asia and are still regarded as revered models for later generations of poets. However, Tang and Song poets clearly had different literary orientations, reflecting differences between Tang and Song societies. During the Tang period, China was open to the outside world and embraced the new and exotic, whereas Song China was a comparatively closed society that became introspective and philosophical. Tang poets were concerned with frontier adventures, embraced foreign elements, and celebrated spontaneous feelings. By contrast, Song poets tended to write about the more domestic moments of daily life, social duty, and the contemplation of philosophy in their poems. Consequently, Tang and Song poetry express contrasting sensibilities: Tang poems might be described as stimulating and intoxicating, while Song poems are delicate and contemplative.

2. TANG POETRY

The Tang dynasty was particularly renowned for its poetry. Almost all educated people during that period wrote poems—not simply as private pursuits but also on social occasions, to honor visitors, to flatter a host, or even as a general means of communication. In total, about 50,000 poems by 2,200 poets have survived. In China, Tang poems have been traditionally revered as the model for all later generations to emulate. Broadly speaking, three themes distinguish Tang poems from that of other dynasties: the experience of frontier adventures, the fondness for foreign and exotic things, and the celebration of unbridled spontaneous feelings and fleeting momentary emotions.

A. Spontaneous feelings: “Bring the Wine” by Li Bo

Tang culture was open to foreign influence and looked outward for inspiration. The strength of the expansionist Tang government was reflected in the self-confidence of its poets and their celebration of strong emotional expressions. Poets allowed spontaneous emotion to triumph over self-control and fully experienced moments of joy and sorrow. When they expressed happiness, it was ecstatic. When they expressed sorrow, it was close to desperation. The most beloved master of spontaneous poetic expression was Li Bo.

Li Bo (701–762) was born in a Tang colony in Central Asia and grew up in Sichuan. Being proud of his talent, he refused to take the civil service exams as other educated men did. Despite this rebelliousness, he established himself as an excellent poet and his fame attracted the attention of the emperor. Summoned by the emperor, Li Bo served the court for a time during the middle of the eighth century. However, the restricted atmosphere of the court frustrated his independent spirit and finally he left the court never to return. Indeed, Li Bo was too unique a character to be a

bureaucrat; he loved wine and travel and was also fond of Daoist mediation. When he was drinking, poetic inspiration seemed to flow abundantly and he translated his spontaneous feelings into beautiful poems. The following is a good example.

Bring the Wine

*Have you never seen
The yellow river waters descending from the sky,
Racing restless toward the ocean, never to return?
Have you never seen
Bright mirrors in high hall, the white-haired ones lamenting, their black silk [hair] of
morning by evening turned to snow?
If life is to have meaning, seize every joy you can;
Do not let the golden cask sit idle in the moonlight!
Heaven gave me talents and meant them to be used;
Gold scattered by the thousand comes home to me again.
Boil the mutton, roast the ox—we will be merry.
At one bout no less than three hundred cups.
Master T'sen!
Scholar Tan-ch'iu!
Bring wine and no delay!
For you I'll sing a song—
Be pleased to bend your ears and hear.*

Translated by Burton Watson; abridged adaptation

This masterpiece interweaves joy with desperation. However, the poet does not trouble to reconcile the conflicting feelings. He expresses them spontaneously as they come. In his imagination, the poet examines the Yellow River flowing toward the sea and his mother's hair turning white to express the observations that time passes quickly and life is short. Then the poet's desire to enjoy every moment takes off and he does not want to let this moment go. However, the poet's heart suddenly sinks: he realizes that he has not fulfilled his worldly ambitions. Then he forgets his disappointment, because his self-confidence tells him that one day he will accomplish his goals. At this moment, he just wants to drink wine and sing for his friends.

B. Frontiers: "On the Border, First Series (the Fourth)" by Du Fu

The Tang was an expansive empire. It extended its territory deep into Central Asia. The frontier landscape of Central Asia with its mysterious and fearsome desert, huge mountains, and vehement winds inspired Tang poets. Frontier adventures became a major literary theme. Usually, the poems praised the bravery of Tang generals or the unique landscape of Central Asia. However, one of the greatest poets of China, Du Fu (712–770) told another side of the story in his poems.

Du Fu was born in Gongxian, close to the eastern Tang capital. His youth was spent in education for the civil service exams. Beginning around 735, he took the exam several times, but he failed repeatedly. Finally he gave up. He eventually became an official, but his political career was a failure. Instead, Du Fu devoted himself to poetry; he claimed never to be satisfied until the magic of his words struck his readers, leaving a lasting impression. He became a master craftsman of words, and few poets could equal his skill. Du Fu also had penetrating social insight. For instance, in the poems he wrote about the frontier, he unmasked hidden problems beneath the glory of victory—for example, the suffering of soldiers.

On the Border, First Series (the Fourth)

*We recruits have our commanders to send us off,
But, bound for distant duty, we're people too!
From here we go out to face life of death—
No cause for the officers to scowl at us so!
Along the route we come on someone we know,
Give him a letter to hand to close kin.
Sad as it is, we and they are parted now,
No longer to share the same troubles and pain.*

Translated by Burton Watson

This poem narrates the often miserable lives of recruits sent to frontiers to fight wars and face death. Despite their acceptance of dangerous duties they are abused by commanders. Separated from family and friends they are lonely and homesick. Their cold comfort is to send letters home with acquaintances they meet by chance along a road.

C. The appeal of the exotic: “The Girl Who Danced the Whirl” by Bai Juyi

The culture of the Tang was truly cosmopolitan. Tang society confidently explored all things new and foreign. Persians, Indians, Syrians, and people from all over Asia arrived daily into Chang’an, the Tang capital. Tang people actively sought out foreign lands for cultural and economic exchanges, and they welcomed foreign fashions, amusements, products, and immigrant peoples. For instance, the game of polo, originally a foreign amusement, gained wide popularity among the elite; the Whirl, originally a foreign dance, became the favorite entertainment for the Chinese; and the image of Arabic or Persian camels and their non-Chinese grooms occurred everywhere in ceramic artifacts. All these exotic entities inspired the fascination of Tang poets. Descriptions of foreign customs, fashions, and entertainment became conspicuous themes in Tang poetry. One good example is “The Girl Who Dances the Whirl” by Bai Juyi.

Bai Juyi (772–846) was as famous as Li Bo and Du Fu. Born into a poor scholarly family at Xinzhen, Bai Juyi spent his youth in education for civil service exams. Compared to many other Tang poets, Bai Juyi had much greater luck in successful entry to the civil service. He passed the civil service exam when he was very young. He experienced dramatic ups and downs in his official

career and eventually retired to pursue spiritual endeavors. As a poet, Bai Juyi was most celebrated for the simplicity and clarity of his language, and his poems reached every corner of the empire. Even though he sometimes disapproved of the indulgence in foreign fashions among his contemporaries, he was once greatly delighted by the excellent performance of a foreign dancing girl. He thus wrote the following poem, which perhaps ironically concludes with a seemingly nationalistic observation.

The Girl Who Dances the Whirl

*Whirling girl,
Whirling girl,
Heart answers strings,
Hands answer drum,
When strings and drums sound together,
Both of her sleeves lift high,
And she drifts in twirls like circling snow,
And dances the spinning tumbleweed.*

*She whirls to the left, spins to the right,
Never growing weary,
Thousands of rings and revolutions
Seeming never to end.
No class of thing in this mortal world
Can be compared to her:
Sluggish, the wheels of a speeding coach,
And hurricanes are slow.
When the tune is done, she makes her bows,
Thanking the emperor,
And for her sake the emperor
Faintly shows his teeth.*

*Whirling girl
From Sogdiana—
For nothing you've had to come east
These ten thousand leagues and more. For the Central Plain [a metaphor for the heart-
land of China] has its own
People who know the Whirl;
And contesting finesse and skill,
You are no match for them.*

Translated by Stephen Owen; abridged adaptation

The poem describes the performance of a dancing girl from Sogdiana, which was a state in Central Asia. The poet is impressed by the dynamic movements of the girl, who spins according to the rhythm of drum sound. The poet enjoys her excellent performance and greatly praises her dancing skills. However, the poet also laments, perhaps with compassion or simply with native pride, that the girl is not in the right place to sell her skill because the dance is already so familiar to the Chinese. In his opinion, many Chinese dancers could dance just as well as, if not better than, the Sogdiana girl!

3. SONG POETRY

The achievements of Song poetry were as great as those of Tang. The Song dynasty actually produced more poets and more poems than the Tang because of the general expansion of literacy at that time. Song poets admired the excellence of Tang poetry, while at the same time Song poets explored directions which were ignored by their Tang predecessors. In contrast to the Tang, Song poets narrated more details of their daily lives, exhibited a deeper sense of social and political involvement, and enthusiastically discussed philosophy in their poems.

The concerns of daily life: “Children” by Su Shi

Unlike Tang society, the Song people lived under a weak dynasty whose borders were threatened, and political life was full of partisan strife. Consequently, society adopted a more defensive outlook regarding foreign ideas and frontiers, turning inward and taking a more cautious approach to unbri-dled emotion. Reflecting this inclination, Song poets were fond of observing their environment no matter how trivial and routine it might appear. They consciously examined their daily lives and they believed that routine details deserved to be noticed. Song poets sincerely embraced many mundane matters as appropriate themes in poetry, expressing feelings closer to home than those of the Tang poets. A good example is the poem “Children” of Su Shi.

Su Shi (1037–1101; also known by literary name Su Dongpo) is considered by many to be the greatest of the Song poets. He was born in a famous literati family at Meishan, Sichuan. Like most other Song elites, he passed the civil service exam and started a career in politics. However, his major achievements were in liberal arts. He established himself as a painter, calligrapher, essayist, and above all a poet. In total, he wrote about 2,700 poems. Like his Tang predecessor Li Bo, he was a person endowed with an innate freedom of spirit; he was also fond of wine, though he was not as prolific as his Tang predecessor in its consumption. He was also very interested in Chan (later known in Japan as Zen) meditation. However, the following poem shows that even though Su Shi was spiritual, free person, he also was attentive to daily life.

Children

*Children don't know what worry means!
Stand up to go and they hang on my clothes.
I'm about to scold them,
But my wife eggs them on in their silliness:
What good does all this worrying do?
Stung by her words, I go back to my seat;
She rinses a wine cup to put before me.
How much better than Liu Ling's wife
Grumbling at the cost of her husband's drinking!*

Translated by Burton Watson

This poem was written in 1075 when Su Shi was the governor of Mizhou in Shandong. He was thirty-nine and he had two younger sons; one was three and the other five. In the poem, Su Shi vividly gives his audience a snapshot of his daily life. As the story goes, Su Shi is worried about something important, perhaps governmental policy or other major issues of the day. However, his children do not understand his concerns and won't allow him to ruminate in peace. They seek his attention by hanging on his clothing. The poet is at first irritated, so he scolds his sons. However, his wife immediately protects the children and argues with the father on their behalf. The poet is apparently convinced by the wife's argument and praises her virtue. This lovely domestic story would be too insignificant a theme for a Tang author preoccupied with gaining honors on frontiers or in court, and who would be more likely to leave children and wife behind in order to engage in adventure. This poem by Su Shi illustrates the contrasting Song outlook in its commemoration of domestic details in everyday life.

The sense of political involvement: "To Show to My Son" by Lu You

Despite its great wealth and cultural sophistication, the Song was never a strong state. From the outset, the dynasty was under constant threats from nomads on its borders. This situation made Song people aware of the perilous existence of their nation, and this consciousness produced a general spirit of political and social involvement. Such a spirit produced a renowned poet named Lu You.

Lu You (1125–1209) lived in an age when the Song had lost its northern territory to nomadic groups, and the administration was forced to move the capital to the south. (Historians call this period, 1127–1279, the Southern Song.) Lu was above all an individual with great patriotic passion. He passed the civil service examination and pursued a governmental career. As an official, Lu enthusiastically urged the government to launch full-scale attacks to bring the war into the realm of the enemy and regain the northern territory. His proposals were seldom taken seriously and his political career was full of frustration. However, as a poet, Lu was extremely prolific and successful; he left more than 10,000 poems and all of them possess artistic quality. Poetry was an avenue for Lu to express his passion for warfare and recovering lost empire. His poems were meant to stir his contemporaries into action. In 1209, on his deathbed, Lu composed the following poem for his sons:

To Show to My Sons

*In death I know well enough all things end in emptiness;
still I grieve that I never saw the Nine Provinces [a metaphor for China] made one.
On the day the king's armies march north to take the heartland,
At the family sacrifice don't forget to let your father know.*

Translated by Burton Watson

This powerful poem shows that the poet placed his social duty above everything else. At the last moment of his life, the poet is not concerned with anything, including his advancing death. He only regrets that he did not live to see the government recover its lost territory. He hopes that, one day, the government will adopt his plan to launch an all-out attack on its adversaries and win the war. As his last wish, he requires his sons to inform him posthumously of the expected victory. History tells us that Lu's wish never came true. However, Lu's poems inspired Chinese people to fulfill their social and patriotic duties.

Philosophical engagement: a poem by Yang Wanli

In addition to the close observation of everyday life and concern with social improvement, Song writers and intellectuals are also known for their vigorous philosophical debates. Unlike many Tang poets, Song poets generally preferred reason over unbridled emotion. This is reflected in the studied, scientific way they contemplated nature, human life, and even the cosmos in their writing. Song poets have a reputation for having highly developed skills in philosophical argumentation. A master in this arena was Yang Wanli.

Yang Wanli (1127–1206) was born into a poor but scholarly family at Jiangxi. He was successful in the civil service exam and his political career was impressive. However it was in his nature to love poetry more than anything else. He confessed that whether abroad or at home, sleeping or eating, he was always occupied by poetry. He was a clear, lucid thinker and his poems are full of philosophical inquiries. The following poem shows how he employs philosophical reasoning to overcome sorrow.

*I shut the door but I can't sit down;
Opening the window, I stand in a breath of cool.
A grove of trees shades the bright sun;
The ink stone on my desk gives off a jade-green glow.
I let my hand wander over scrolls of poems.
Softly humming three or four verses.
The first scroll I pick up pleases me greatly
The second suddenly makes my spirits sink
Throw it aside—I can't go on reading!
I sit up and wander around the armchair.
The ancients—they had their mountains of grief,*

*But my mind is clearer than the river
They are no concern of mine
Why should I break my heart over them?
The mood is over and instead I laugh.
One cicada urges on the evening sun.*

Translated by Burton Watson

Using poetic language, this passage describes a philosophical battle against sorrow. Like Li Bo's poem "Bring the Wine," the poet is pulled between joy and sorrow by elements in his environment—first the lovely afternoon setting and then by the alternately inspiring and discouraging scrolls he reads. But unlike the Tang poet, who abandons himself to the emotions of the moment, Yang Wanli stops to examine the nature and source of his emotions and dismisses the moment of sorrow with a cheery laugh. He debates with himself: the ancients are gone and they had their own places. I am a clear-minded person. Why should I experience heartbreak over these distant people? They are not my concern. After this internal dialogue, the poet feels a satisfied self-awareness. He then acknowledges the fleeting nature of time. This emotional self-control and intellectual optimism are characteristic of the Song.

4. CONCLUSION

WHY WAS THERE A FLOURISHING OF LITERATURE DURING TANG AND SONG PERIODS?

The answer to this question lies primarily in the fact that civil service exams instituted during the Tang and Song demanded significant literary skills. Poetry was considered the most refined and elevated means of expression, and was believed to be relevant to many professional arenas, including diplomacy, communication, reasoning, and philosophy. Civil service exams were used to identify capable people for government service and were the most important avenue for people from different social backgrounds to achieve political ambitions and gain prestige. Although the practice of the exams originated in the sixth century, it was not widely established until the Tang and significantly expanded during the Song. During the Tang, exam candidates were tested on poetry composition. This meant that if a person in the Tang wanted to achieve his social ambition or simply live a better life, he needed to be able to write poems. Even though by the middle of the Song, the exam requirement for poetry was replaced by essays, essays demanded no less literary skill. During the Song, along with the increase in the national literacy rate, the government increased exam enrollment among people of all classes. This development in turn prompted more people to acquire literary skills. Besides the great significance and widespread pursuit of the civil service exams, the invention and development of printing in the Tang and Song made the circulation of poems easier than before, and facilitated the study of poetry. All this contributed to the flourishing of poetry during the Tang and Song dynasties.

Why do Tang and Song poems reflect different perspectives?

The answer to this lies in the contrasting cultural orientations and experiences of life during the two eras. By most measures, the Tang was the most successful dynasty in Chinese history. It expanded its territory into Central Asia, and by means of the Silk Road actively exchanged commodities and culture with other civilizations. Consequently, the people of the Tang were very open to the outside world. Reflecting this cultural atmosphere, Tang poets were preoccupied by the excitement of far-away adventures and the fascination of exotic things, sometimes overlooking the details of their immediate everyday lives. At the same time, an overall feeling of national confidence was reflected in the poets' confidence in their own senses. Poets celebrated spontaneous feelings.

By contrast to the Tang, the Song was a weak dynasty. Threatened by fierce nomads on their borders and lacking the political ambitions of the Tang, the people of the Song looked inward. They observed the world close to them with discerning, scientific eyes. With a stronger appreciation for the details of their daily lives, the Song poets engaged in philosophical thinking based on their habits of close observation. Ongoing political strife during the Song also encouraged a stronger sense of political involvement among the educated people than was found in the Tang. All these factors contributed to the distinctive character of Song and Tang poetry.



**Science in the Tang
and Song Dynasties**

By Chris Yingchun Yuan

Science in the Tang and Song Dynasties

Clocks, waterwheels, moveable type, floating compasses, explosives—these are among some of the celebrated inventions of the medieval era in China. As with art, literature, and philosophy, the Tang dynasty nurtured a Golden Age of development and innovation in science and technology that culminated in the Song. The expansive exchange of foreign goods and information during the Tang, together with the high value placed upon close observation and analysis that characterized the Song, set the stage for vigorous scientific innovations. Important advances were made in astronomy, agriculture, industry, medicine, and military technologies.

ASTRONOMY

China was among the earliest countries to highly value astronomical research, including celestial observations and investigation of various methods for determining date and time. Astronomical records made by Chinese observers date back four thousand years. During the Tang and Song dynasties, the development of astronomical instruments and other tools for observation and measurement developed rapidly.

In the early Tang dynasty (around 633), Li Chun Feng expanded the ancient concept of an armillary sphere for mapping the heavens to include three intersecting rings—a red ring illustrating the sun path, a white ring for the moon path, and a yellow ring for the star path. One hundred years later, Tang astronomical administrator Yi Xing created you can a planetary model consisting of a copper armillary sphere, driven by water to complete one circular rotation daily. During the course of this rotation, two wooden mannequins that were part of the model would respectively strike a ring or a drum to indicate the time. As astronomical administrator, Yi Xing also led a national project to observe, identify, and locate stars. Based on the resulting data, he calculated the length of a degree of the meridian—the first astronomer in the world to measure the imaginary great circle around the earth.

By the time of the Song dynasty, Chinese astronomers had constructed extensive star maps and an array of complex and beautiful astronomical instruments for measuring the precise movement and location of heavenly bodies. Five armillary spheres, each using more than 10,000 kilograms of copper, were cast in one century during the Song. A star map made between 1094 and 1096 by Su Song, the prime minister, displayed 1464 stars.

Su Song was also responsible for what is probably the most colorful invention of the Song dynasty: an astronomical water clock-tower constructed in 1088. The clock tower stood thirty-five-foot tall and included a celestial globe on the third floor, as well as an armillary sphere on the roof. Wooden mannequins emerged from the tower doors beating drums and gongs and displaying tablets announcing the time of day. One legend holds that Su Song spent seven years building the clock-tower after being embarrassed by the inaccuracy of a Chinese calendar that caused him to deliver birthday greetings on a diplomatic mission one day too early.

The technology for creating escapement mechanisms, developed for accurately adjusting and regulating timepieces in Tang and Song China, was exported to Europe, where clocks with escapement mechanisms appeared two hundred years later.



Above: Ming dynasty armillary sphere. Two-thirds scale replica. China. Courtesy Chabot Space & Science Center, Steven dos Remedios.



Left and Above Detail: Su Song's water clock-tower from the Song dynasty (960–1279). One-third scale replica. Oakland, California. Courtesy Chabot Space & Science Center, Steven dos Remedios.

CALENDARS

Probably the most important goal in mapping the heavens was the development of an accurate calendar for use in activities such as farming, navigation, rituals, and astrology. Advances in celestial observation during the Tang and Song led to the compilation of remarkably precise calendars. It is believed that the first systematic Chinese calendars appeared in the third and second centuries BCE. Early calendars were based on the phase changes of the sun and moon, as well consideration of five visible planets (Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, and Saturn), all used to plot out years, months, and days. During the Tang dynasty, astronomical administrator Yi Xing published the most comprehensive and influential calendar in Chinese history: the Da Yan calendar. It was based on a sophisticated understanding of the sun's orbit, and calculated the new moon, full moon, twenty-four solar terms, and the ongoing movements of the sun and moon. After the Da Yan calendar was issued in 728, it was adopted in other parts of Asia and used in China without major modification until seventeenth century. Around 1090, an alternative calendar was compiled using twelve *jieqi*, or half of the earlier twenty-four solar terms (a system consistent with the Gregorian calendar developed in the West nine hundred years later); however, it was not adopted during the Song dynasty.

AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

Tang and Song official support for scientific research and development was also evident in domain of agricultural engineering and technology. The Tang administration completed 1,088 large irrigation projects, 40 flood-control projects, and 27 waterway transportation projects across the country. An official bureau was established for effective management of these types of projects. Peasants were encouraged with ownership incentives and tax waivers to bring over two million hectares of extra farming land into production during the first century of the Song.

Agricultural engineering innovations included specific types of equipment such as the Tang-dynasty East River plough, which had eleven parts and allowed for flexibility in the depth of furrowing. The human-operated waterwheel was invented and widely employed in irrigation, enabling water to be transported from lower to higher elevations. During the Song the capacity of the waterwheel was substantially enhanced with animal power.

Technological advances in rice growing supported a population explosion during the Southern Song, when northern invasions drove much of the Chinese population from the wheat-growing area of northern China to the rice-growing south below the Yangtze River. Superior seed varieties were imported from Vietnam and Korea. To bring wetlands into production, dams were built up, and the water subsequently drained out to produce cultivable land. In deep-water areas, people employed "floating farmland" for planting. This floating farmland was either formed naturally through long-term deposition of soil on the roots of masses of floating Feng grass, or artificially constructed by planting Feng grass in a wooden frame and then depositing soil on the roots.

Farming innovations also brought hillsides into agricultural production. When arable land was exhausted on the plain, people turned their efforts to creating hillside terraces for expanded planting. Agricultural terraces appeared during the Tang dynasty and were in relatively widespread use during the Song dynasty, mainly in Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Sichuan with their extensive hilly areas.

PRINTING

Among the most globally significant innovations of the Tang and Song dynasties were the inventions of woodblock printing and moveable type, enabling widespread publishing of a variety of texts, and the dissemination of knowledge and literacy. Scholars believe that woodblock printing first appeared in China around 600, probably inspired by the much older use of bronze or stone seals to make impressions on clay and silk, and the practice of taking inked rubbings of inscribed texts from bronze and stone reliefs. The process for block printing on paper was perfected by the end of Tang dynasty. Once printing became widespread, it also stimulated the development of a sophisticated paper industry with many different specialized papers created for different purposes.

Wood for printing blocks usually came from date or pear trees. Text to be printed was first written on a sheet of paper. The paper was then glued face-down to the wood block and, using a knife, the characters on the paper were carefully engraved on the wood. The surface of wood block was then inked and covered with a sheet of paper. By gently brushing the paper over the engraved characters, the text was printed.

At first, woodblock printing was mainly used for printing books on agriculture and medicine, as well as for printing calendars, calligraphy, and auspicious charms. In 762, the first commercially printed books were sold in the markets of Chang'an, the Tang capital. In 782, printed papers were available in the marketplace as receipts for business transactions and tax payments.

Although woodblock printing played an important role in the spread of information and commercial transactions in China, it was a time-consuming technology. For example, in 971, at the beginning of Song dynasty, the monk Zhang Tuxin began a project to print the Tripitaka (a collection of essential Buddhist scriptures) using wood blocks. It took him twelve years to finish printing the 1076 volumes. The limitations of woodblock printing led to the invention of moveable-type printing during the Song dynasty.

Moveable-type printing was invented between 1041 and 1048 by Bi Sheng, a common man who was highly experienced in woodblock printing. Song dynasty scientist Shen Kuo described the invention of moveable type in his book *Dream Stream Essays*. According to Shen Kuo, Bi Sheng made one clay type for each linguistic character, then had them fired for hardness. A layer of resin, wax, and paper ash mixture was placed on the bottom of an open iron box to hold the type with characters facing up. The bottom of the box was heated to melt the wax mixture, and simultaneously all the typeface was pressed down with a wood board to ensure that the types were level. Finally the tops of the clay types were inked, and the mechanism would then be ready for printing just like a wood block. Afterward the clay types could be disassembled and reused.

The moveable-type printing process substantially reduced the time for printing from several days to a matter of hours. Nevertheless, because of the thousands of ideograms required for written Chinese, moveable type was not as efficient as it would be four hundred years later in Western Europe. In fact, woodblock printing still remained popular in China for several centuries. Nevertheless, the diffusion of Tang and Song printing technology throughout East Asia, to the Middle East, and finally to Western Europe had a significant impact on the development of world history.

THE PORCELAIN INDUSTRY

As with the industries of printing and paper making, the Tang and Song dynasties supported important industrial advances in pottery manufacture. The origin of porcelain pottery-making technology dates back 6000 years to the Neolithic period, and the related technologies and skills were continuously developed throughout early Chinese history. During the Tang, a systematic approach to the industry of pottery making marked a spectacular increase in quantity and quality of work. Porcelain kilns were constructed all over the country and improvements were instituted in nearly every aspect of production. By the time the industry had matured during the Song, porcelain was an indispensable item for daily use in all sectors of society and was exported by land and sea. By the eleventh century, it was being shipped to Japan, India, Arabia, Turkey, and Africa. The Portuguese began exporting porcelain directly to Western Europe in the sixteenth century, and by the late seventeenth century Europeans had developed a passion for porcelain “china.” Chinese artisans succeeded in keeping the technology for porcelain production secret from Europeans for two hundred years. Even after successful industrial espionage led to the rise of a European porcelain industry in the early eighteenth century, Chinese porcelain remained a popular import item.

PORCELAIN MANUFACTURE

Porcelain base is made from a combination of porcelain clay, orthoclase, and quartz. The external surface of a porcelain base is coated with vitreous glaze and the base is baked in a porcelain kiln at 1200°C. The finished porcelain, after the baking process, has a very low water absorption coefficient (below 0.004) and is extremely hard. In addition to these practical strengths, porcelain is highly valued because of its beautiful glaze. Glazing is divided into two groups: underglaze and overglaze. Underglaze is applied to the porcelain base before it is baked. Overglaze is applied after the porcelain base is baked, when it is then rebaked with the glaze.

Glaze created from a combination of mineral substances was originally invented in the Shang and Zhou dynasties (eleventh to tenth centuries BCE). The glazes produced in ancient China were generally green in color, until the Sui dynasty (581–618) when white glaze was first created. Manipulation of minerals to produce various colors can be observed in the use of iron in glaze production. Iron has two oxides: ferrous oxide (green color) and ferric oxide (dark brown or terracotta color). Iron in the glaze transforms into ferrous oxide when the baking process is a reduction reaction, and into ferric oxide when the baking process is an oxidization reaction. The final color of finished porcelain is determined by the percentage of iron in the glaze. The finished glaze is light green if the content of iron in the glaze is below 0.8%, and dark green if the iron is over 0.8%. When iron content exceeds 5%, the glaze will be dark brown or nearly black. The same principle applies similarly to other color agents. In the Tang dynasty, the porcelain industry was classified into green porcelains, mainly in north China, and white porcelains, mainly in south China.

During the Song dynasty, comprehensive improvements were achieved in almost every aspect of the porcelain production cycle. The whole manufacturing process was standardized into several working procedures including base-making, glazing, ingredient control, and temperature maintenance. Each procedure was supervised by a specialist. In addition the industry was divided into five

types of kilns: Ding Kiln, Ru Kiln, Guan Kiln, Ge Kiln, and Jun Kiln. Each kiln had distinguishing features for glaze coloring and pattern design.

MEDICINE

The Tang and Song interest in standardization and scientific observation also contributed to advances in the field of medicine. In 659, during the Tang dynasty, ancient traditions of Chinese herbal medicine were compiled into an imperial pharmacopeia called the *Revised Materia Medica*, the first recorded pharmacopeia in the world. It listed 844 medicines in nine categories with illustrations made from real specimens. About seventy years after this official standardization, Chen Zangqi compiled the *Supplements of the Materia Medica*, which introduced an additional 692 medicines.

The advent of moveable type in the Song dynasty contributed to a rapid spread of medical knowledge and further advances. An official bureau of medicine was established for compilation and correction of medical publications. Several national medical surveys were conducted and a medicine factory constructed.

ACUPUNCTURE

The healing art and science known as acupuncture was invented in China. Acupuncture takes two forms: one employs long, thin needles to puncture certain points on the human body; the other involves heating up certain locations on the body. Conducting either type of procedure requires intensive training, and they are sometimes combined. Usually, acupuncture is also combined with Chinese herbal medicine. Acupuncture originated in the Neolithic China and, as with herbal medicine, was systematically recorded and taught as a science during the Tang and Song.

In the Tang dynasty, acupuncture was described in detail by many publications and widely taught in official medical institutions. The famous doctor, Sun Simiao (581–682) discussed acupuncture in extensive detail in his well-known medical book, *The Thousand Golden Formulae*. In the Tang dynasty, people began to use acupuncture charts to teach and practice. In the Song dynasty, the imperial physician Wang Weiyi compiled a specialized acupuncture book, *Illustrated Manual of Acupuncture Points on a Copper Puppet*, using two copper puppets clearly indicating acupuncture points on the body for the purposes of teaching and practicing. The publication of manuals during the Tang contributed to a spread of acupuncture practice to Japan and Korea. In the Song dynasty, acupuncture was introduced to even more countries including England and France.

EXPLOSIVES

One of the most influential Tang dynasty inventions was perhaps produced by accident. Black powder, an explosive mixture of saltpeter, sulphur, and charcoal, is generally believed to have been an unintended discovery made by alchemists. These creative investigators frequently conducted chemistry experiments in a search for the elixir of immortality. The earliest written record concerning gunpowder is *Optimization of Alchemical Processes by Sulphuric Method*, a book written by Sun Simiao, the most famous doctor in Tang history.

During the Song dynasty, gunpowder technology was further refined for military purposes and many kinds of firearms were invented. In the year 1000, Tang Fu designed and manufactured a gunpowder arrow, gunpowder ball, and barbed gunpowder packages and donated them to the Song emperor. In 1132, the fire lance was introduced with gunpowder in a long bamboo tube. When fired, flames were projected on the enemy. In 1259, a fire-spitting lance was enhanced with bullets. When fired, bullets were ejected with the flames. Fire-spitting lances are regarded as the prototype of the musket or gun. At the end of the Song dynasty, a primitive rocket weapon was invented by using gunpowder to propel an arrow, which is similar in principle to the modern rocket.

Song firearm weapons were produced in massive quantities. It was recorded that the weapons bureau had eleven large workshops and hired over 40,000 workers. On a daily basis they produced 7,000 ordinary gunpowder arrows, 10,000 cross-bow gunpowder arrows, 3,000 barbed gunpowder packages, and 20,000 ordinary gunpowder packages.

WIDESPREAD USE OF GUNPOWDER

During the Tang dynasty, saltpeter, the most important ingredient for producing gunpowder, was introduced to India and Iran. In the Song, gunpowder itself reached these two countries. By 1255, gunpowder was introduced to the Arab world, and through Arab-controlled Spain to Europe. Firearms were introduced to Central Asia, the Middle East, and Europe by Mongolian expeditionary forces during the Song and Yuan dynasties. Europeans learned gunpowder and firearms-making techniques from the Arabs and produced their own guns in fourteenth century.

CONCLUSION

The Tang and Song dynasties were a Golden Age for Chinese science, just as they were for art, literature, and philosophy. Astronomical and medical research was officially supported and systematically recorded. All significant arenas of infrastructure, commerce, and manufacture, including agriculture, printing, pottery, and firearms underwent organized, rapid growth. The scientific and technological advances made during the Tang-Song period exerted significant influence on developments abroad as well as at home for centuries to come.

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Personal Connections
By Linda Chang

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Confucianism Today, in a Nutshell

If you are Chinese, it doesn't really matter what religion you subscribe to, you are still Confucian. What does this mean? It means that the most important value in life is respecting and honoring your parents. This is part of the fundamental Confucian concept of *xiao*, or "filial piety," which not only means respecting parents, but grandparents and deceased ancestors.

Parents are everything to Chinese people. What you do with your life and how you behave are all centered on your relationship to your parents—how to honor their efforts, their concerns, whether or not you are going to do exactly as they tell you or whether they give you the latitude to make your own decisions. If you decide to go against your parents' wishes on anything, it is a very big deal. The consequences can be small to very great, but one thing is certain—there are consequences.

This attitude trickles outward to influence how you handle all other relationships in your family, and how you interact with all other extended family members as well. This is also true for your parents themselves. The circle of relationships radiates from them in the same way. Moreover, how their kids behave toward family members then becomes a reflection on them, how well they have raised their kids, how well the grandparents have raised their children who are now parents, etc., continuing back in time from generation to generation. Chinese people are always aware of the many links in time that have played out through their own family relations.

Because of all these linked relationships, your actions are then more broadly read as reflecting upon your family name. Doing well brings honor to your family and your family name, while doing bad things brings shame upon your family. Since Confucius's "Golden Rule" is "Do not do unto others that which you would not have done to you," more emphasis is placed on not shaming your family. Bringing honor is considered a given, whether you just live an ordinary life and do what you are supposed to do, or you do something extraordinary that reflects positively on the family. But by all means, don't bring shame.

Confucianism is sometimes described as involving the practice of "ancestor worship." Honorable conduct is understood to bring positive benefits to ancestors. Some people also believe that virtuous behavior in your own lifetime will help usher one's ancestors into reincarnation. In very ancient times, ancestors were viewed as disembodied spirits who had the capacity to help or harm the living. Later, the Buddhist idea of reincarnation infused the Confucian idea of proper conduct and veneration of ancestors. Today, reverence for ancestors persists strongly, while beliefs and rituals vary.

Beliefs may differ widely among different families. Some may continue to believe that the ancestors' spirits are very much alive and with them, with every member of the family, all the time, watching over, waiting, and expecting the most appropriate behavior. The belief may stop there, or for some it continues with a belief that what they do conditions the possibility of reincarnation for their ancestors. Reincarnation is often considered a great reward for honorable deeds. For others, a more general and abstract expectation of doing right by the family name is the sole expression of the belief in reverence for ancestors. For many families, however, the pressures of "the ancestors" only come into play during major life events, such as marriage, having children, and when someone dies.

This sense of "filial duty" is then not limited to family, but expands to encompass an ever-growing network of interactions that dictate one's behavior toward other people in general. After all, everyone is a member of someone's family. Therefore, you must treat them with the appropriate respect relevant to their generational position.

CONFUCIAN PRECEPTS

My parents always talked about *li-mao* and *zuo-ren*. *Li* refers to one of the central tenets of Confucian teachings, having respect, or "propriety/proper duty." Having respect for someone leads to knowing proper behavior. The idea of "propriety" is very, very important to Chinese. It is not enough to be "right," honest, or true. Having integrity means not only being "right" and honest, but also behaving appropriately, that is, your righteousness must also be expressed in a righteous manner.

These expectations are suggested by *ren*, another central Confucian tenet. *Zuo-ren* literally translates into "being or making a person" and means things like being courteous, kind, compassionate, hospitable, dignified, and even "humane."

In order to achieve proper *li* and know how to conduct oneself according to *zuo-ren*, education is essential—and not just any education. Education is about those very basic Confucian tenets illuminated in what is known as the *Da-xueh*, the tenets of "cultivating the person," "rectifying the mind," "making intentions sincere," "extending knowledge," and "investigating things," in order to bring harmony to the household and to society at large.

All of these tenets are circular in relationship to one another. For example, only through study and discipline, which rectify the mind, can one make intentions sincere, thereby cultivating one's self. Only by investigating things can one extend knowledge, thereby serving society. And through sincere service to society, one rectifies minds, extends knowledge, and cultivates one's person all over again.

This means that studying is very important to the average ABC (American Born Chinese) kid. We also have to "cultivate" ourselves by learning art and music, minimizing small talk, and always showing respect for our elders, regardless of whether or not they are Chinese. As a child growing up in this culture, life was a pretty serious existence.

When it came to social and political issues, however, we were discouraged from getting too involved. From my parents' perspective, the violent political turmoil China had suffered over the last century was a result of not enough individuals having followed through with cultivating themselves, investigating things, and extending knowledge. Similar to their counterparts in the Song dynasty, their generation was particularly concerned with making progress in the material disciplines, the sciences and technology. They were particularly wary of religion and the supernatural, believing that China's absorption into these areas had caused her to fall behind in science and technology, thus becoming vulnerable to invasion and foreign occupation. Hence, just like their Song counterparts, my parents and others of their generation were particularly secular in their interpretation of Confucian teachings. It was all about school and science. Only through school and science could you be any good to society.

The role of the teacher in Chinese culture is paramount. Confucius being the patriarch of teachers and his teachings having become the core of the belief system, to be a teacher is to attain the most honorable position in society.

Teachers do not have to be those who work in a school, however. They could be someone else who has mastery over a set of knowledge from whom you learn or with whom you apprentice. Everyone owes their well-being to the teachers who have educated them, whether in school, on the job, or in daily life.

GENERATIONS OF NEO-CONFUCIAN EFFORTS PAY OFF

From an immigration perspective, there are, in general, four groups of Chinese in the U.S. Three of those groups were able to enter before and after the 1965 Immigration Reform Act that cancelled quotas against specific ethnic groups and created new ones based on hemispheres and broader regions of the globe: those who came as migrant workers before the Chinese Exclusion Act and their direct relations before 1965, those who came as sponsored students, and those who came as merchants doing business. The fourth group entered after the 1965 law as family members with sponsorship from family who were already here.

My parents were members of the student class. They came in 1959 and went to graduate school at UC Berkeley. As a group, they didn't realize they were the beginning of a trend, a wave of similar folks who would cross the Pacific and eventually become a phenomenon.

Though many of these people would hardly term themselves Neo-Confucian, the roots of their philosophical mindset can be found in both the long history of Confucianism and in the Neo-Confucianism of the Sung period.

Confucius and his early followers believed it was possible for government systems to act with virtue only if their agents understood and practiced his teachings. During the Song period, under Fan Chung-yen and Wang An-shih (1021–1086), the central government assumed responsibility for the total well-being of all Chinese and asserted regulatory authority over all aspects of Chinese life. From this time forward, we see that Chinese people, right up until today, are the products of big systems and big bureaucracies. Students coming out of the universities have a particular faith in large institutions, and this faith is readily transferred to government agencies and corporations. That faith is fueled by the promise of an objective meritocracy that equitably rewards hard work and excellence, in which a system, as opposed to a person, is supposed to deliver. This is a world where rigorous standardized tests are the norm. This practice, well-established during Song times for entrance into the civil service, has formed the foundation for the modern university systems that exist today.

Americans have wondered why Asian students do so well in this country when it comes to education in particular, scoring well on standardized tests and excelling in the fields of science and technology. Much of the answer comes back to one man—Confucius—and his influence on the long history of government practices in China. Chinese people have been tackling standardized tests for a long, long time. In fact, you could say that the Chinese have a particular reverence for them. And since so many Chinese immigrants came out of such systems, they would naturally seek them out and want their children to go through them as well.

The viewpoint of these generations of students who have made their way to America is also colored by China's tragic history of the last century. Science is seen as the discipline that can adequately host a revival of those Neo-Confucian ideals and pull China out of a dark age of civilizational decay. New generations have committed themselves to improve, first, themselves, and then China, particularly in the fields of science because this is where it is possible to investigate things, extend knowledge, and thereby dedicate oneself to the social welfare of society.

As we can all see, these values have created a phenomenon—indeed, several social phenomena in the United States. Waves of overseas Chinese students fill spots in graduate science programs in just about every university across the country. Those graduates have then been filling teaching and research positions in those same institutions. Still more have found their way to Silicon Valley to start technology businesses, while their children born and raised here continue to file into the scientific and technical professions.

And finally, those first waves of students who had initially committed themselves to this personal and philosophical program are witnessing the fruits of their efforts. Having cultivated their own persons through investigating things and enhancing knowledge, their efforts are resulting in real progress for China. Today, China's future in science and technology is more promising than ever.

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Floating on Clouds in Tang China

The movie *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* was a huge success in the United States. In fact, it was a sensation. It ushered in a new era in American understanding of Chinese culture on a popular level. I was amazed at people's reactions to it. Audiences loved it, the critics loved it; but I wondered, did people "get it"? I could tell that people were thoroughly impressed with the visuals, the martial arts, costumes, and the charisma of the main characters. Michelle Yeoh had been a Bond Girl, Chow-Yun Fat already had a huge following among Hong Kong cinema fans, and Zhang Ziyi's beauty and grace were undeniable. But wasn't all that floating and flying around a little weird?

For me, the movie brought back a rush of memories... fond memories locked away in my childhood, that I had not revisited since being an adult. I had never been a fan of those Bruce Lee-type martial arts films. And while I appreciated Jackie Chan, mostly because he brought so much humor into fighting, I found the high jinks too deliberate, too forced and overly laden with machismo. *Crouching Tiger*, however, delivered the missing pieces—elegance, magic, and a code of honor that is distinctly Chinese.

The floating around that audiences either found to be weird or utterly fascinating made me think of one thing—the mythical hero Sun Wu Kong flying on clouds. The flipping and scuttling in midair conjured up images of Sun Wu Kong doing somersaults across the skies traversing hundreds of miles in the blink of an eye. In addition to being a true masterpiece, masterful in a very Chinese sort of way, *Crouching Tiger* reminded me of one of China's most important and timeless set of stories—stories that tied me to my family, my heritage, my sense of self, and my imagination.

In 1975, my father went back to China for the first time since the Revolution as a guest lecturer touring several universities. He was there for a month and came back with fun and exotic gifts for the family: colorful handmade paper kites, delicate and intricate paper cutouts, and a giant yo-yo that could be tossed into the air, among other things. One of the items wasn't really a toy; it was a ceramic figurine of a monkey-like being holding a thin brass rod that could be slipped out of its hands. The Monkey was Sun Wu Kong. He was dressed in yellow, had a very white painted face and something like a mask in red around his eyes. One leg was kicked up as he stood confidently on a colorful pedestal, decorated with turquoise and sea green curlicues on white representing a cloud. The Monkey had a wild and eager look on his face.

My father read us stories about the adventures of Sun Wu Kong from a Chinese comic strip book. We would follow the pictures as my father read and explained each frame. Though the pictures were all black and white, they teemed with lively activity and, when matched with my imagination, they seemed just as dynamically colorful as some of today's Disney or Pixar animation films. On my own, I would go back to the ceramic figurine, slip out that little brass rod, and twirling it about, imagining Sun Wu Kong's enthralling escapades all over again.

Sun Wu Kong was the Monkey King. The story of his adventures comes from the epic novel *Journey to the West*. Although written during the Ming dynasty about 1000 years later, the novel takes place in the Tang period. The story is based on the real-life journey of a monk named Xuan Zang (known as Monk Tang in the novel) who traveled to India from 629–645 CE on a long and arduous quest for Buddhist scriptures. Going from China to India—or any long journey at that

time—was a perilous expedition, fraught with unknown dangers. In the novel, Buddha, with the help of the compassionate bodhisattva Guanyin, helps Monk Tang acquire three escorts for his treacherous journey: Sun Wu Kong and his sidekicks Zhu Ba Jie and Sa He San. Together, they make it to India and return to the Tang court to present the precious scrolls—scrolls that can still be seen today on a visit to Xi'an (ancient Chang'an), the former Tang capital city.

Along the way, the heroes meet up with countless obstacles—demons, bandits, and even greedy monks. Monkey is supreme in his efforts to protect his charge, battling one evil character after another. With a flip and twirl of his golden rod, which he can also shrink and put behind his ear for safe keeping, he can transform himself into numerous manifestations—an army of thousands of little monkeys, a tiger, a fish, a temple, even a mountain. And all along the way, he keeps us laughing with his wisecracks and playful arrogance.

Monkey is the universal trickster. But he must learn to use his special powers—his magic, his intelligence, and his tricks—for doing what is truly good. Monkey is like any one of us. We are fascinated by his impulse to quip and fool, to outsmart and challenge the powers that be. His appetite for exciting new toys or just following his fancy needs to be harnessed and refined by wisdom.

His own mischief sometimes results in Monkey stumbling upon wisdom while trying to be audacious. His insolence is a stark contrast to the norms of behavior learned in a Confucian upbringing (likely one of his key attractions to Chinese children). He begins the Journey not showing proper respect to his elders, or to the community of wise ones, the Immortals, not even to the Buddha. And although he is successful in fooling everyone else in Heaven, he does not actually fool the Buddha. Sun Wu Kong, although clever and powerful, has to be taught a lesson.

Jiao Long (Zhang Ziyi's character) of *Crouching Tiger* has to learn a similar lesson—to use her powers in service of the greater good, not just as a vehicle to escape the confines of her family's expectations. Without the proper education, and without appropriate deference to the right kind of teaching and wisdom, her ambitions allow her to become a pawn in someone else's nefarious agenda. Her own selfish and small-minded desires have tragic consequences for the lives of those around her, while bringing shame upon her own family.

Journey to the West opens with Sun Wu Kong's emergence as king of the monkeys of Flower Fruit Mountain. His curiosity about the world and his desire to be a more powerful leader inspire him to study under a sage who teaches him many skills and tricks, but he is dismissed when he shows too much disrespect. Monkey then makes his way to Heaven and through all his mischief, wreaks chaos and confusion among the daily lives of the Immortals. He is challenged by a succession of lesser immortals, but ultimately it is the Buddha who must intervene. The Buddha exiles Monkey to imprisonment at Five Element Mountain to suffer the elements and eat iron and copper. There, Sun Wu Kong must wait for a monk who is traveling westward to India in search of Buddhist scriptures. This is the only person who can free Monkey, for once freed, Monkey's mission is to accompany the monk on his very important journey and protect him from all dangers.

The monk, Monk Tang, will teach Sun Wu Kong the wisdom he needs in order to reach enlightenment. He must learn that killing is bad, that he may injure or chase away any of the evil entities they meet along their perilous journey, but not kill them. (Incidentally, Jackie Chan's movies and many others respect this code of honor and philosophy, too.) Monkey's voyage is a journey to enlightenment. When he stays true to the mission of protecting and serving Monk Tang, he

advances in his learning and spiritual refinement. Of course, he finds many ways to stray and get into trouble, which makes the story so much fun.

Journey to the West gives readers a window into the world during the Tang dynasty, showing popular beliefs in action. The story reflects the rich and particularly Chinese synthesis of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. These three major philosophical currents and sets of ideas coexisted and influenced each other from the Tang period onward.

During the Tang period, various spiritual and philosophical ideas proliferated, and scholarship flourished. The spiritual world was very present and integrated into the material world. Rulers, and not just philosophers, were interested in the connections between the soul, the quality of one's inner self, and society and government. Although other religions were allowed their freedom, ultimately Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism—sometimes called “The Chinese Trinity”—prevailed and remained dominant.

Through *Journey to the West*, we can see how Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism are integrated to coalesce in Chinese thought. Monkey must learn to behave with humility and deferential courteousness, which are the valued modes of conduct passed down from Confucius.

Monkey must also learn a few very important Daoist principles. He must learn to recognize that there is both good and evil in the universe and to be careful—one must think before acting on impulse, lest one end up serving evil instead of good. Moreover, balance and harmony are better than the extremes. There must be harmony in the heavens, in the spiritual world, in order to have harmony on earth, and vice versa. This is “the Way,” the nature of things, the nature of the universe.

The Buddhist lessons in the story focus on the ideas of quelling worldly desires in order to serve a greater good. Monkey must also learn to purify his intentions and not to seek outdoing others or showing off. He must relinquish his vanity, which he often finds hard to do.

Journey to the West, though full of fancy and fantasy, has remained popular because it captures and gives life to the cultural landscape of the Tang dynasty, a period which defined core aspects of Chinese culture that endure today. Like the *Star Wars* movies, *Lord of the Rings*, or *Harry Potter*, we follow archetypal characters within whom we see ourselves and with whom we even fall in love. Their adventures inspire our imagination to think larger and feel life's greater purpose. Employing distinctly Chinese symbols and meanings, this epic tale reveals the valued beliefs and ideas within Chinese culture persisting to the present day. That this beloved story takes place in Tang times is yet another nod to the period's significance in solidifying the foundations of Chinese culture.

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

A Poetic Link to the Past

Quiet Night Thoughts

*In front of the bed, the moonlight shines
Outside, frost is on the ground
Raising my head, I look towards the moon
Lowering my head, I think of my homeland*
—Li Bo, approx 700–762

Li Bo's "Quiet Night Thoughts" is the one of the most well-known classical Chinese poems. Striking in its simplicity and elegance, it expresses a very common private moment in a person's life and the feeling of missing home.

I first learned Li Bo's poem "Quiet Night Thoughts," in Chinese school. Each student had to memorize it and then recite it in front of the class. We were told that Li Bo was China's most famous and most beloved poet of all times. He lived during the Tang dynasty. Learning that something great had emerged from the Tang dynasty was nothing new. It often seemed that much of China's cultural heritage originated during that time. Largely based on this assumption, most people would attribute just about any aspect of Chinese culture, such as a particular style of painting, music, dance, or literature, as having originated during this glorious cultural era.

My first independent confirmation of Li Bo's importance occurred on a trip to Disney's Epcot Center. This new theme park featured a compilation of town replicas from around the world that allowed you to "travel" the globe without leaving the confines of the park. It was a version of what Las Vegas looks like today, but without the gambling and opulence, of course. One could visit England, France, Mexico, Japan, China, and more. Rides, performances, or other forms of entertainment would highlight each country's culture. Separate food courts contributed to the experience by serving the respective cuisines. Traveling without much travel—this was before globalization hit Main Street America.

The China exhibition featured an IMAX movie that was in 360-degree panoramic view. The audience had to stand in order to watch it. It was a journey through China, seeing such wonders as the Forbidden Palace, visiting panda bears in bamboo forests, and gliding down the Li Jiang River to view the hump-shaped mountains of Guilin. And our guide through this journey was none other than Li Bo, himself. There he was (well, a costumed actor pretending to be him) on the big screen—serving as China's cultural ambassador.

Further confirmation that Li Bo's poem "Quiet Night Thoughts" was truly famous came about when I studied in Paris for a summer. I took language classes at one of the local institutes for foreign students. My classmates had come from all over the world and we struggled to understand one another through broken French laden with the accents of our mother tongues. One day, the teacher asked everyone to get together with our fellow countrymen and share a folk song from our homeland. I was in an awkward position. Should I huddle with the Americans, or try to figure something out with the one other Chinese student in the class, a young woman from Taiwan? Interestingly

enough, everyone in the class assumed I would be clustered with the Taiwanese student, especially since she was by herself and there were several other non-Asian Americans who could work together.

I was baffled at first, however. I remembered only a few stupid kid songs in Chinese. I never learned any true folk songs. So she and I sat there for a short time not knowing how to proceed. Then, I remembered the one classical poem I had learned in Chinese school. As I started to recite it, she immediately jumped in. Wow—who knew? Well, obviously my Chinese school teacher (a.k.a. my mother) knew. And obviously, as I have since learned, many, many Chinese all around the world know this poem very well. It seems to be the one that we all learn and somehow it stays with us.

More recently, I came to learn about the poems inscribed on the walls at the Immigration Station on Angel Island in the San Francisco Bay. Now a National Historic Landmark, the station received Asian immigrants from 1910 to 1940. At that time, in addition to several other laws restricting immigration from Asia, the U.S. government was enforcing the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. This legislation specifically banned Chinese from immigrating, unless they were direct relatives of citizens who immigrated before the enactment of the law, or else merchants conducting trade, or students sponsored by a university. It was the first in a series of laws that began to curtail the open immigration that had taken place previously, and it was the first to target a particular ethnic group. Situated on a picturesque island in the bay overlooking San Francisco, the building on Angel Island housed many hopeful arrivals from China who expressed their feelings about their journeys in the form of poems etched on walls. The poems tell their story of hope, desperation, and the agony of awaiting their unknown fate.

Though immigrants have passed through other portals into this country, Angel Island Immigration Station is unique in that the numerous poems carved onto its walls by hopeful and despairing Chinese immigrants capture the very moment of immigration, a process so seminal to the history of America. Further study of the poems has revealed that most were written in the same classical forms that had originated during the Tang dynasty—a style that has been sustained by the legacy of the most well known Tang poets, Li Bo, Tu Fu, and Wang Wei.

This style took the shape of five or seven characters per line, with each poem having four or eight lines total. Li Bo's "Quiet Night Thoughts" is a five-character per line, four-line poem. Another distinguishing feature of this poetic style is that it primarily expressed very personal thoughts. The court poets who had come before focused more on extolling the virtues of their emperor or expressing a moment in nature. This new literary movement in the Tang period saw a more personal voice emerge while depicting musings on the natural world.

In the same way, this style of poetry served as a vehicle for the profound outpouring of personal feelings at Angel Island. Just as Li Bo—a court poet serving far from home—yearned for his homeland under the shining moon in the quiet of the night, so too those lonely immigrants must have had the same experience under the light of the very same moon, in a land even farther from home, and in a very different time. To this day, that poem conveys the same message and evokes the same longings. For immigrants like my parents, the meaning of missing home rang true when the easiest way to travel back to China was a trip to Epcot Center in Florida. "Quiet Night Thoughts" provides a direct link back in time, whether to connect with those lonely immigrants on Angel Island, or further back to the Tang dynasty period, into Li Bo's bedroom, with frost on the ground, and the moon shining through the window.



**Introduction to the Arts of
the Tang and Song Dynasties**
By Brian Hogarth

Introduction to the Arts of the Tang and Song Dynasties

Enclosed in this packet is a CD with art images dating from the Tang (618–906) and Song (960–1279) dynasties in China. The images are drawn primarily from the collections of the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco. The art images can be used to discuss themes of trade and commerce, technology, burial practices, and religious ideas, as well as arts associated with the scholar or literary class working at court during the Tang and Song. They can also be examined as individual works of art, and discussed in terms of art production, subject matter, and aesthetics. The art section of this packet includes this introduction, and a section describing the art images.

This introduction includes:

1. Some advice for teachers trying to form a picture of Tang-Song China through surviving works of art.
2. Defining the roles of artists and the different markets that they served.
3. Brief background on developments in Chinese ceramics, Buddhist arts, and calligraphy and painting.

1. FORMING A PICTURE OF TANG-SONG DYNASTIES IN CHINA THROUGH ART OBJECTS

When discussing with students the enclosed images of Tang and Song dynasty objects from China, teachers are advised to consider the following:

- What has been collected from the past—particularly in Western museums—represents only a fragment of what was produced. The things that survive are generally durable objects from elite tombs or objects collected over the centuries by wealthy patrons and their families, which have survived many wars, social upheavals, and natural disasters.
- What has been collected reflects the particular tastes of the collector. The Asian Art Museum, for example, has a strong collection of Chinese ceramics; however it has very little in the way of paintings and calligraphy from the Tang-Song periods. Therefore we have included a few examples of paintings from other collections so that this important subject is not overlooked.
- Objects in most art museum environments are displayed largely for their artistic or aesthetic value. It's easy to overlook the context of how these objects were originally used. Almost all the images in this packet had practical functions beyond their aesthetic appeal. Many were used for eating or drinking. Others were bought, sold, traded, or commissioned by different patrons from various levels of society. Some were intended to be part of an architectural environment; others were placed in tombs alongside their owners.
- The idea of collecting objects from the past became quite popular during the Tang and particularly the Song dynasty. Systematic archaeological research began and illustrated catalogues were compiled during these centuries. Connoisseurship became a mark of distinction among the elite classes. An appreciation of the past found its way into new styles of art. Works of art that included references to the past carried additional layers of meaning.

- Copying works of art was an accepted practice during the Tang and Song dynasties. It was considered an important means of learning. Valuable writings were engraved on stone blocks (stele) and these could be copied again using ink rubbings. Artists also copied earlier paintings; in fact, we know about many Tang artists only through later copies. (One might compare this to our knowledge of ancient Greek statues through later Roman copies.)

2. DEFINING THE ROLE OF THE ARTIST AND THE DIFFERENT MARKETS THAT THEY SERVED

What can be said about artists during the Tang and Song dynasties? The vast majority of people who created the works that have survived were anonymous artisans and tradesmen (or in some cases women). They may have moved around from place to place seeking employment. Some may have been farmers, who became part-time craftsmen when they were not needed in the fields harvesting or planting crops. Some were specialized stone carvers or bronze workers. Others specialized in clay, how to fire kilns, or how to raise silk worms. These workers were responding, just like today's workers, to issues of trade, competition, taste and fashion, marketplace dictates, and new ideas from elsewhere. As we shall see from the many examples of ceramic wares, tastes changed frequently, and styles fell in and out of favor. Workers had to be inventive; they had to be willing to adjust, to experiment, and to learn new skills in order to survive.

During the Tang-Song periods, there was a class of educated artists—initially working at court, but later working in their own private domains—who began to produce works of art that were judged more for their aesthetic criteria than their economic or utilitarian value. These scholar-artists, sometimes referred to as *literati*, or *wen-ren* (cultured person) developed their own criteria, their own art criticism, even their own art history. We know very few artists' names before the Tang dynasty, but from the Tang and Song dynasties onward, we know the names of many, even if only a few reliable works of art by these artists have survived. We know about these artists names because the scholar-artists began to write about them, and many of their writings have come down to us.

Tang- and Song-dynasty calligraphers and painters were educated through a rigorous system of examinations based largely on knowledge of classic literature, set down by the followers of Confucius and institutionalized during the Han dynasty. During the Tang dynasty, the intervening Five Kingdoms period, and the Song, talented painters became part of official court academies. These academies had demanding and rigorous standards, and put artists in close proximity to the emperor himself. The painting and calligraphy examples in this packet were produced by scholar-artists working mostly at court. It should be noted that trained artists would have been expected to be proficient in a number of art forms—painting, calligraphy, poetry, and so on. The principal tool of such artists was brush and ink.

By the Song dynasty, some artists began to question the kinds of standards developed at court academies, rejecting "professional" values in favor of highly personal or "amateur" values. (This dichotomy became a defining theme for painting in the following period, the Yuan dynasty.) In a parallel development, the Tang and Song witnessed the rise of calligraphy as a high art form, through the adoption of past masters as models of orthodox style; some more progressive and idiosyncratic calligraphers began to reject these official styles championing instead very personal forms of calligraphic expression. The proliferation of new styles of painting and calligraphy—whether

based on court styles or through individual “amateur” styles—was frequently justified through reference to past masters. For example, one reads about this artist following in the tradition of that artist from the past. Another artist goes to great lengths to describe how some past artists are to be held in high regard while others should be disregarded. By now, it should be apparent that a notable feature of Chinese art is its constant reflection and reinterpretation of the past.

In summary, during the Tang and Song dynasties, we see a proliferation of many different types of manufactured goods, principally (for our purposes) ceramics, but also metal work, textiles, lacquer objects, religious objects, burial goods, and trade goods produced by anonymous craftsmen, and “fine” art—mostly paintings and calligraphies—produced by highly educated individuals, either formally at court or informally in the company of friends and other like-minded “literary” persons.

We ought to speak of many different kinds of Chinese arts during the Tang and Song dynasties, rather a single form of art.

Art for different markets

The art objects included in this packet can be grouped according to several distinct art “markets”:

- **Art objects for the tomb:** These objects were produced in quantity and type according to the status of the tomb occupant. Tomb objects addressed spiritual needs such as provisions for the afterlife, and were part of the overall tomb decoration, layout, and surroundings. At various times, attempts were made to regulate the production of tomb objects, to avoid the extravagant use of essential resources. Many tomb objects were produced during the century-long height of the Tang dynasty (600–700); however after the An Lushan rebellion in the late 750s (which had a devastating effect on the whole economy) there was a noticeable decline. Tomb objects also declined during the Song because of changes in funerary ritual practices, including the introduction of burning of paper objects. The famous three-color (*sancai*) wares used by the upper classes during the Tang continued to be popular among the common classes during the Song.
- **Art for the religious practices of the living:** This included ritual objects, religious statuary and images, inscriptions, paintings, banners, and texts. Most were commissioned by individuals or groups of patrons with hopes that such patronage would enhance their spiritual welfare and that of their families (living and deceased, as well as offspring). In addition, rulers commissioned religious art and architecture to confer benefits on the whole realm, or to convey spiritual, political, or moral messages to a wide public audience. The religious art objects illustrated in this packet are mostly Buddhist figures from both Tang and Song dynasties.
- **Art for trade or domestic use:** This ranged from high-end products used by wealthy patrons, to everyday objects used by all classes of people, as well as utilitarian objects traded regionally, nationally, and abroad in exchange for other goods. During the Tang-Song period, Chinese goods reached as far as Egypt, Southeast Asia, and Japan.
- **Art for the court:** This included any type of art produced specifically for court use and that served to glorify the reign of the current ruler and his court. It also included objects sent as tribute to the court (a gift honoring the superior status of the recipient). Court arts were often

highly symbolic—images conveying messages about abundance, harmony, fecundity, heroism, stability, and strength. Some rulers emphasized military prowess and authority through the arts. Others preferred images of refinement and championed visual art that was very delicate or austere.

- Art by and for the educated elite: Scholarly forms of art that conveyed knowledge of the past, demonstrating the artist-author's achievement and education through "quotations" from past masters; an art that ran contrary to professional art (theoretically not exchanged for wages), beginning in the Tang-Song period, but more developed in later periods.

There was of course overlap among these product categories. For example, an object might have been produced locally, given as tribute to court, used at court, and then buried as a prized possession in the tomb.

We often think of art as something exceptional or extraordinary, and might ask why very ordinary, utilitarian objects would be considered alongside exceptionally unique paintings or sculptures. Yet many Chinese products, especially those for export such as certain ceramic wares, silk, lacquer, printed books, and tea, were finely produced and virtually unsurpassed anywhere else in the world. To the local Chinese producer, such products might have seemed "stock in trade," but elsewhere they were highly sought after and indeed probably viewed as prized possessions. In fact, during the Tang-Song period, fine objects such as silk were often used as currency or bribes to keep foreign powers from attacking China.

Even the most prized possessions, such as the collections amassed by both Tang and Song emperors, were never completely secure. The Tang capital of Chang'an (modern day Xi'an) and the Northern Song capital at Kaifeng were both overrun and in large part demolished at different times. Works of art were frequently confiscated or destroyed. We can only imagine the full extent of what once existed during these glorious eras of Chinese culture.

3. BRIEF BACKGROUND ON: A) CHINESE CERAMICS, B) BUDDHIST ARTS, AND C) PAINTING AND CALLIGRAPHY.

3a) Chinese ceramics

We should begin by asking what some students probably ask—why bother studying ceramics? In the West, we traditionally look on ceramics as a kind of folk art or humble utilitarian ware. That is hardly true of ceramics in China, where the very name "china" is historically derived from its association with fine dinnerware. Still, why should study these objects? What's so special about "china" and why is it important during the Tang and Song dynasties?

It's important to remember that for almost 1,000 years, roughly beginning with the Tang dynasty and continuing till about the 1700s, the Chinese produced the world's best high-fired ceramics. Chinese potters were exceptionally creative and technically inventive. They also had important resources at their disposal: clays, wood, and coal for heating kilns. High-fired wares were often more durable than low-fired wares, and their glazes were less likely to flake. High-fired ceramics were also highly sought after by non-Chinese peoples. Such ceramics often replaced, or supple-

mented the use of hammered metal cups, palm leaves, or slices of thick bread for eating and drinking. During the Tang dynasty some Chinese ceramics were being traded as far away as Egypt, Southeast Asia, and West Asia. Centuries later, Chinese ceramics would make their way even further to Europe and America.

Why were high-fired wares such an important development in ceramics? Most of the world's cultures already produced simple potteries or earthenwares. The Chinese themselves produced many low-fired earthenwares, the most famous examples probably being the massive quantities of life-size terracotta soldiers for the First Emperor's mausoleum near Xi'an, produced in the third century BCE. The first few examples of artworks illustrated in this packet and CD are Tang ceramics made of earthenware.

High-fired wares were an important technological breakthrough, and brought a new level of sophistication to the art of ceramics. (In the West, we describe them as either stonewares or porcelains, but in China both are described as high-fired wares, *ciqi*.) High-fired wares were the result of numerous techniques—fine-tuned over many centuries—for combining various clays, glazes, firing temperatures, and kiln conditions to produce lighter, stronger, more durable objects and vessels that made excellent cooking, eating, drinking, and storage wares. Along the way, Chinese potters had to overcome many technological hurdles, such as finding colorants that could withstand high temperatures of the kiln, maintaining kiln temperatures, producing massive quantities of ceramics with minimal defects, producing ceramics economically, and producing beautiful designs and colors that would attract users and patrons. These ceramics could be easily cleaned, and they held liquids without leaking. They were desirable, practical, durable, beautiful objects. High-fired ceramics were one of the great achievements of the Tang and Song period.

It should be noted that many excellent high-fired wares were also developed in Korea, Japan, and parts of Southeast Asia, especially during the Song dynasty and after. Chinese ceramics, however, continued to be regarded by most producers as the technological leader, and the standard against which all others would be measured.

We can divide most Tang and Song ceramics into five main categories. These are:

- Low-fired (and sometimes high-fired) ceramics used for burial goods—a practice that continued from ancient times.
- White wares, objects made of clay that fires white or covered with white slip. During the Tang, white wares were first associated with northern kilns, but by the end of the Song, began to flourish in the south at Jingdezhen. (This famous kiln site would eventually produce the most highly sought after pure white porcelain in the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties.)
- Greenish-grey wares, popularly called celadons. Greenish-grey wares were often decorated in subtle ways giving them a cool, elegant, soft appearance that resembled jade. Green wares were generally, but not exclusively, associated with kilns in the south.
- Brown and black wares, most of which have strong associations with tea drinking and tea culture.
- Popular wares, often copying other more expensive wares of the types listed here using more economical techniques.

Here are some of the technical terms associated with discussion of Tang and Song ceramics:

- Celadon: Wares that have a greenish-grey, olive, or greenish-blue colored glaze; the color is achieved by adding small amounts of iron-oxide (about 1–3%) to the glaze, then firing in a kiln atmosphere that is deprived of oxygen (a reduction firing). Celadons can also be yellow or brownish in appearance. (The term *celadon* is a Western term that, according to some sources, refers to the color of ribbons worn by a shepherd named Celadon in a seventeenth-century French play.)
- Crackle: The tiny lines appearing on glazes, that occur naturally as a result of the glaze and clay body expanding and contracting at different rates when the vessel cools after firing. Sometimes crackle appears intentionally as part of the design, and sometimes not. On some vessels lines of crackle appear dark. These dark lines are caused by iron in the clay.
- Earthenware: Basic pottery, fired at low temperatures (700–1150 °C), through which liquids can seep.
- Glaze: Liquid clay/mineral mixture that coats the surface of ceramic vessels, becoming glassy when fired. Glaze makes the vessel impervious to liquids and also provides an additional surface for decorative effects.
- Iron oxide: An impurity found in clay that, when heated, can alter the color of clay bodies and glazes; the most common colorant used in Chinese ceramics up until the 1300s. Iron generally produces green, amber, brown, and brown-black colors, depending on the level of concentration and the kiln atmosphere. Iron oxide can also be brushed on as a pigment.
- Kaolin (from the Chinese *gaoling*, meaning high ridge): A clay that fires white and can withstand high temperatures; one of the main ingredients in white wares and porcelains.
- Kilns: Chambers, usually made of bricks, used to fire quantities of ceramics; generally of two types during Tang-Song: *mantou* kilns, upright kilns generally used in the north; and long (dragon) kilns, kilns built on the slope of a hill and used in the south. (see illustration p. 62).
- Lead glaze: A material (flux) added to earthenware that helps to lower the firing temperature, therefore using less fuel making the process more economical; used extensively from the Han to Tang dynasties to cover and color burial ceramics.
- Pentunze: (from the Chinese *baidunci* meaning "little white bricks"): Feldspathic stone that when added to kaolin, allows for greater plasticity of forms as well as translucency; one of the main ingredients in porcelains.
- Porcelain: White-bodied wares that are hard and translucent when thinly potted; higher fired than stonewares, around 1400 °C; the body and glaze vitrify (or melt together as one). First produced in the 500–600, they came to dominate Chinese ceramic production in the later imperial dynasties (Yuan, Ming, and Qing, from the late 1200s to early 1900s). Porcelain was first produced in the West in the 1700s. (The Western term porcelain is from the Portuguese word for a small seashell that resembles the white-bodied ceramic).
- Saggar: A ceramic container for holding unfired ceramics in the kiln, which protects the ceramics from kiln debris and ensures a more even firing; also allows economical stacking of wares in the kiln.

- **Sancai:** Literally “three colors” in Chinese, but can allude to many colors, usually consisting of green, amber, cream, (and sometimes blue) glaze applied to burial ceramics of the Tang dynasty; a technique that persisted some time after that, notably among ceramics produced in the north under the Liao dynasty.
- **Slip:** Diluted clay applied to the surface of a vessel before glazing to smooth the surface or hide the color of the clay body.
- **Stoneware:** A term for high-fired ceramics whose hardness is greater than earthenware, but less than porcelain (generally in the 1200–1300 °C range). The Chinese term *ciqi* encompasses both stoneware and porcelain as high-fired wares, whether or not the body and glaze are totally or partially vitrified (fused together). Most Song ceramics were made of stoneware, mixed from clay composed of alumina, silica, and lime in varying degrees.
- **Spurs:** One of several techniques used to keep ceramic vessels from adhering to the surface of the *saggur* or kiln floor during firing. Spurs are small bits of clay applied to the foot of the vessel or made in the shape of rings and then knocked away after firing.

3b. Buddhist arts

How did Buddhism develop in China up until the Tang-Song dynasties? What forms were most prevalent during the Tang and Song? How did art serve Chinese Buddhist practice?

Buddhism is a general term for a variety of practices that stem from the life and teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, who lived and taught in what is now the region of northeastern India and Nepal in approximately the fifth century BCE. Deeply moved by the problems of suffering that he observed in the world, Prince Siddhartha renounced royal life as well as conventional religious asceticism. To resolve the dilemmas of human suffering, he engaged in a several-year spiritual quest, which culminated with meditating under a bodhi tree. Here he achieved enlightenment and became a Buddha: an enlightened one. He spent the rest of his life teaching the Four Noble Truths, which describe the causes of suffering, and announce the possibility of release from suffering through overcoming one’s desires or cravings. Commitment to the Eightfold Path, involving proper conduct, speech, livelihood, meditation, and mindfulness among other things can lead to enlightenment. Enlightenment may be understood as a state of realization that can eventually culminate in nirvana, an extinguishing of the self, when one ceases to be part of the endless cycle of death and rebirth.

After the Buddha’s death (and his attainment of nirvana), his followers formed monastic communities and preserved his relics in various stupas or reliquary mounds. His teachings were dispersed through the efforts of traveling monks, along with the patronage of merchants and in some cases by the support of kings and local rulers.

Buddhism entered China overland from the west along the multiple Silk Road routes opened up during the Han dynasty, and by sea routes through coastal ports and other regions. Buddhism entered China as the Han dynasty was ending, during a period of warfare and strife. During times of hardship and uncertainty, people often gravitate to new beliefs and ideas. Buddhism also found support among nomadic tribes who conquered northern China in the late 300s. Descendants of these tribal peoples formed some of the ruling clans in the early Tang dynasty.

Early Buddhist art in China survives in the form of cave shrines, particularly at remote sites along the Silk Road such as Kizil, Dunhuang, Binglingsi, and Majishan. Visitors to these sites can see some of the earliest surviving murals in their entirety, and how early painters visualized Buddhist texts. We can also see patterns of patronage, how Buddhist priests advised rulers, and how rulers used Buddhism to enhance political power. Buddhist art also survives in the form of small, portable shrines and figures. Early Chinese Buddhist figures, such as the bronze Buddha dated 338 in the collections of the Asian Art Museum, were initially based on foreign (usually Central Asian) features and stylistic models. Gradually, however, such figures began to acquire increasingly Chinese characteristics.

When the foreign Wei rulers built a series of cave shrines at Yungang (near present-day Datong) in the middle of the fifth century, a new monumental scale of figurative art was introduced into China. For centuries after that, sculpture in China would be dominated by the depiction of Buddhist figures.

WHAT CHARACTERIZED BUDDHIST PRACTICE DURING THE TANG AND SONG DYNASTIES IN CHINA?

Buddhism was essentially a foreign religion in a culture with many well-established philosophical and religious traditions, notably Daoism and Confucianism. These three belief systems coexisted to varying degrees during both the Tang and Song dynasties. Confucianism guided the social realm—governance, education, family life, relationships among levels of society. It provided ethical guidelines for maintaining social order. Daoism offered mystical, proto-scientific ideas about one's health, well-being, procreation, and longevity. In the Chinese context, Buddhism dealt mainly with the afterlife, the effects of good and bad deeds; addressing life's misfortunes; it also promised release from suffering.

By the Tang dynasty, Buddhist temples and shrines had spread across the country. Buddhism enjoyed a great deal of state support. Then as now, lay people made donations to monks and temples to secure earthly and spiritual rewards. More specifically, they could accrue merit (positive actions resulting in spiritual and practical benefits) through charity, the support of public works (such as refurbishing a local temple), the donation of property, or the commissioning of artworks (a statue, or cave shrine, or production of a set of Buddhist texts). Individuals entering monastic life as monks or nuns still aroused suspicion from some members of society, particularly strict adherents of Confucianism. Sacrificing one's family name, the possibility of offspring, cutting of one's hair (a defilement of the body), and embracing poverty ran counter to many time-honored Chinese beliefs.

In a Buddhist context, grand celebrations were often held in honor of rulers, on festival days, in honor of new public works, and to protect the nation from famine or invasion. Some festivals involving the parade of sacred relics were criticized by various members of the court, in particular for arousing hysteria and for lavish expenditures. Buddhism was severely persecuted in 845 and again in the 900s during the Five Dynasties period between the Tang and the Song. Many of the reasons for this suppression were economic. Thousands of temples were destroyed and metal objects melted down for hard currency. Many monks and nuns were forced to return to lay life, where they could contribute to the general tax base.

Despite these persecutions and continuing difficulties accommodating itself on foreign soil, Buddhism for most part thrived among the Chinese population, in particular during the Song when it moved out of the realm of official state sponsorship and into the mainstream of popular religion. In the artistic realm, Buddhism not only contributed to the development of sculpture during the Tang and Song period, it furthered the development of printed books and religious architecture in China. Scholar John Kieschnick has suggested that the unique combination of Buddhism and Chinese culture also helped further develop the use of the chair, and the popularization of tea in China during this time.

The predominant forms of Buddhism in China were drawn from Mahayana Buddhism, a branch of Buddhism that espoused the possibility of enlightenment for all sentient beings, with the help of bodhisattvas, compassionate, enlightened beings who had postponed their own entry into nirvana in order to help others along the path to enlightenment. These bodhisattvas would become increasingly important figures in Chinese Buddhist arts as time progressed.

The main forms of Buddhism present in China during the Tang and Song period (some unique to China) included:

- *Tiantai* (“heavenly terrace”) Buddhism: A school of Buddhism that aimed to synthesize various existing Buddhist practices; its principle text was the “Sutra of the Lotus of the True Law” (the “Lotus Sutra”—one of the most popular Buddhist texts during the Tang-Song period); it appealed mainly to the literate, ruling classes.
- *Avatamsaka* (*Huayan*, “flower garland”) Buddhism: After text of the same name; followed concept of two worlds, *li* (ultimate principle) and *shi* (phenomena); this school was supported by Empress Wu of the Tang.
- Pure Land (*Jingtu*) Buddhism: After text of the same name; described a Western Paradise where believers could be reborn; a very popular school among the mainstream population, a set of beliefs that helped to inspire landscape painting.
- Chan Buddhism: Began in the Tang dynasty but became more popular in Song; founded by legendary Indian monk Bodhidharma in fifth century CE, involved intense physical and mental exercises to gain enlightenment; greatly influenced the arts, including representations of spiritually advanced hermits called arhats (Chinese: *luohan*).
- Esoteric Buddhism: A more elaborate form of Buddhism involving numerous male and female deities, rituals, incantations, gestures and visualizations; established in the border regions of China in the later Tang; some overlap with practices in Tiantai and Huayan forms of Buddhism.

Buddhist art images of the Tang and Song adorned temples and cave shrines, and were used in private worship and in court-sponsored activities. Many of the objects that have survived consist of stone steles, and freestanding statues of marble, sandstone, and less frequently wood or lacquered wood. Most bronze statues that have survived are generally rather small objects.

Tang religious architecture had a lasting impact on Buddhist architecture throughout East Asia. The wooden structures at Horyuji outside of Nara, Japan have been largely preserved since the 700s. They were modeled after a Tang-dynasty Chinese temple and give us a reasonably good idea

of temple layout and construction of that time, since very little survives intact in China. The oldest surviving wooden temple building in China dates from the Tang: Nanchansi at Wutaishan. An image of the exterior of the temple is included in this packet.

Recently, Buddhist reliquary and ritual objects have been found in a secret crypt below a pagoda at Famensi west of Xi'an, and a cache of intentionally broken and buried Buddhist statues (mostly dating from before the Tang) have been uncovered from the remains of temple grounds in Shandong province. These objects give us new insights into particular moments in Chinese Buddhist art and material culture at various times in the past.

3c. Calligraphy and Painting

Why is calligraphy so important in Chinese culture? What role did it play during the Tang and Song dynasties? Why did the figure and the landscape painting become important subjects of painting at this time?

CALLIGRAPHY

Calligraphy is considered to be one of the most important art forms in Chinese culture. Only in Islamic art does calligraphy also rank so highly. Why? In both cases, beautiful writing constitutes what is most precious and sacred to the culture. In China, calligraphy represents not just writing and art, but beliefs, education, literature, performance, and social values. Calligraphy can be large or small in scale and execution; it can be produced very quickly or very slowly and carefully. It can be created with relatively few materials, and it is easily transportable. It is, along with painting and poetry, the most personal and expressive of Chinese art forms. It is no wonder that calligraphy, painting, and poetry in China are referred to as the "Three Perfections."

Naturally there is a close relationship between calligraphy and painting, since both were produced by the skillful use of brush and ink. Which art form came first? It appears that in China writing first developed through the use of pictographs, so from a very early time, writing and making pictures were closely intertwined.

Chinese characters trace their origins to sacred writing on ancient oracle bones and bronze vessels nearly four thousand years ago. Writing on oracle bones served the purpose of ritual divination. Inscriptions on bronze vessels consisted of dedications accompanying some event, not unlike later dedications inscribed on Buddhist artworks. Soon, scribes began to record important events and royal decrees on wood and bamboo slips. By the Han dynasty, new script styles began to be written on silk and paper. Beautiful writing began to be collected as an art form and was transferred to stone monuments to be used like libraries as archives and historical markers. Some of the most ancient writings to be collected and revered as works of art were fragments of letters, particularly the writings of Wang Xizhi and his son, who lived in the 300s during the Jin dynasty. This was the beginning of cursive script styles, written with more rapidity and with greater freedom of expression. At about the same time, standard script styles began to replace the earlier clerical scripts of the Han dynasty. This standardized fourth-century script is the basis for standard forms of calligraphy that are used today.

The importance of calligraphy is undoubtedly related to the Confucian-based education system which placed such a high value on writing and knowledge. Scholars were expected to demonstrate skillful calligraphy as a component of their qualifying exams, in addition to knowing the content of classical texts. A famous exercise was developed during the Liang dynasty (late 400s) that involved writing one thousand different characters (*qian zi wen*) made up of 250 sentences, all rhyming, with each sentence containing four characters, and none of the characters repeated. This exercise formed a critical part of the curriculum for scores of aspiring calligraphers by the Tang and Song and for centuries thereafter.

Originality and individuality do not play the same role in much of Chinese art as in familiar examples of post-Renaissance Western art, where artists are appreciated for striking out in entirely new directions. Chinese calligraphers often studied former masters for decades before reaching a point where their calligraphy could be identified by any sort of personal style. In fact, for many Chinese artists it could be said that originality was how one interpreted the works of others more than how one's art differentiated itself from everyone else's.

During the Tang and Song dynasties, a number of emperors took a great personal interest in calligraphy. Both dynasties had Imperial Academies of Calligraphy. The top calligrapher was permitted to wear a golden girdle over a purple gown, indicating that his court position was at the highest level. Tang Taizong (reigned 626–649) was impassioned by the works of Wang Xizhi. The emperor composed texts and then had court calligraphers create the calligraphy using individual characters traced from the work of Wang Xizhi. This new work was engraved and adopted as the official style in 670. It was said that Taizong was buried with the calligrapher's most famous work, the Preface to the Orchid Pavilion or *Lanting Xu*. Indeed, Tang court catalogues list over two thousand works by Wang Xizhi, but by the Song that number had decreased to only 243, and the Orchid Pavilion was not listed among them. Song Huizong (reigned 1101–1125) added an Imperial College of Calligraphy in 1104 and appointed Mi Fu as its first Dean (Mi Fu is described in more detail in the entry describing the two works of calligraphy included in this packet). Huizong himself practiced a very elegant form of calligraphy using very thin strokes. His paintings of natural subjects and those of his court artists were equally meticulous.

By the Song, appreciation of calligraphy—and painting—had reached very sophisticated levels. Artists looked for specific, but subtle qualities in each other's work. They wanted to see dynamic energy or *qi* that captured the essence of life, breath, vitality. They wanted works to project the artist's innate humanity, the nature and character of the person, or *xing*. They even appreciated a deliberate awkwardness, or the ability to overcome the desire to show off, called *cho*. Many of these same principles applied to theories about painting.

PAINTING

Space does not permit a full exploration of all types of painting that emerged during the Tang and Song period. We briefly explore two main arenas of painting—figure painting and landscape painting,

Very few paintings survive from before the Tang dynasty. The closest we get to early paintings of any kind are images on tomb tiles, painted images on either plastered walls or lacquered objects, or

engraved images on coffins. There are several painted banners that have survived from tombs showing figures appearing in a spiritual realm or the journey of the deceased's soul after death. The long-standing tradition of small statues in the tomb indicates that the human figure had been a principal subject matter for Chinese artists long before the Tang dynasty began.

Artists writing after the Tang dynasty speak of the Tang as a golden age for figure painting. Few Tang figure paintings survive. We can get an idea what Tang figure paintings must have been like from a number of important later copies (even though the dates and closeness of these copies to Tang originals are still debated by experts). The best evidence of Tang figure painting survives in tomb murals. A number of examples have been excavated from the Tang tombs around the ancient capital of Chang'an (present-day Xi'an) and are now displayed at the provincial museum there. Figures dominate the picture surface. They are typically engaged in real activities: playing games, taking part in a procession, prancing about in the latest fashions, enjoying each other's company and so on. History records one figure painter whose work was so lifelike that he apparently didn't need to use color. A set of hell scenes in a temple were painted so realistically that butchers and fishmongers (who were guilty of killing living beings) were scared into abandoning their professions after seeing it. Unfortunately, none of his work survives.

Tang figurative art can be seen in many of the niches and walls of cave shrines at Dunhuang in Gansu province, a principal stop along the Silk Road on the western edge of China. Paintings on silk also survive from a secret library at Dunhuang that was discovered by Western explorers early in the twentieth century. Buddhist figures on these paintings are, like their tomb mural counterparts, richly attired, colorfully rendered, full of vigor and energy.

How did this rich tradition of figure painting in the Tang gradually shift to an interest in landscape painting during the Song? Figure painting did not disappear as an independent genre during the Song (official portraits continued to be painted for example; see also slide no. 18 in this packet); however, once landscape became an independent subject, the human figure often became a tiny part of a much larger realm of towering mountains, valleys, lakes, and streams. It is interesting to note that landscape painting developed much earlier in China than in Europe.

An interest in landscape painting first developed during the Tang dynasty, as artists, poets, and philosophers began to see in nature a place where one could go for self-cultivation, reflection, and oneness with the universe. By the Song dynasty, interest in landscape may have also been a response to growing urbanization. Nature became a place of potent spiritual value. For centuries, Daoism had championed the view of nature as interplay between *yin* and *yang* forces, outward forms of *qi*, or the quintessential energy that underlies and animates the world (the same *qi* that is said to be discernible in good calligraphy). This constant change or transformation could be observed in mountains and streams, or mountains and water, hence the Chinese term for landscape painting: *shan-shui* (literally mountain-water). Landscape painting became an exercise of the mind, an abstraction signifying something deeper than mere observation of outward appearances. The growth of landscape painting therefore was more than a mere change in artistic taste. It probably also signified a change in how people thought about the world, and how they constructed new realities to deal with it.

It is not clear exactly how landscape painting began in China. One source can be found in the backgrounds of Buddhist or Daoist figure paintings. These early landscapes could be quite elabo-

rate, and painted in colorful washes. They often loom behind the central figures like a stage backdrop. There was some recession in space but not yet a strong sense of atmosphere. Individual forms were not yet closely observed from nature.

Gradually landscape began to emerge as a subject of personal expression. This development was identified with several named artists. One was Wang Wei (699–759) a scholar, poet, musician, painter, courtier, and later a devout Buddhist. Later artists credited him with inventing monochrome landscape painting (painting primarily through tonalities of black ink), and as the founder of “amateur” or literary painting traditions. No single reliable painting by Wang Wei survives, but his poetry and writing have been passed down. In one instance he comments, “In this life, I have mistakenly become a man of letters; in a former life, I must have been a painting master!”

What later artists found inspirational about Wang Wei and several others of his time was the ability to make full use of the expressive potential of brush and ink. From the Tang dynasty on, brush and ink became the essential tools of both landscape painting and calligraphy. Even more, brushwork began to be appreciated as much as the subject of the painting itself. Two general trends emerged in terms of brush technique—one very meticulous, using brushwork to describe closely observed details, and the other more expressive, with the intention of sketching ideas (*xieyi*). Later painters would revive another format they believe originated in the Tang dynasty—landscapes painted in blue and green, and sometimes gold and silver. Eventually, a whole vocabulary of strokes would develop, often around elements of a particular artist. One reads about the way this artist uses such and such a stroke to depict trees, another that uses such and such a stroke to depict rocks, and so on. Artists then become free to use different strokes by different artists in different parts of their compositions.

Between the Tang and Song dynasties there was a period of division called the Five Dynasties period (907–960). This was a short but crucial period in the history of Chinese painting. Painting academies were established that would continue in the Song, and landscape established itself as an independent genre of painting. The stage was set for a full flowering of monumental landscape painting during the Northern Song, a confident new style that combined closely observed details of nature in large-scale compositions with new concepts about space and atmosphere.

Some painting-related terms and concepts are listed as follows:

The “four treasures” of the scholar’s study are:

- Brush (*bi*): Made in various sizes with animal hairs bound together and glued to the inside of a bamboo stick. The compact inner hairs hold the ink and the outer hairs move freely to allow for different painterly effects.
- Ink (*mo*): Black ink made from a mixture of pine soot and glue that is traditionally formed into ink sticks and then ground into ink with water just before use.
- Inkstone (*yan*): A stone with a shallow depression in which the ink is prepared for use.
- Paper (*zhi*): made from a variety of pounded plant fibers that are then set to dry on screens. Paper was invented in the first century during the Eastern Han dynasty.

FORMATS OF CHINESE PAINTING

Wall paintings: In Chinese temples, palaces, and tombs, interior and some exterior walls were often finished with very fine clay, which was then decorated with paintings. Because of such factors as political upheaval and the effects of natural forces, wall paintings survive in relatively small numbers.

Screens: A common painting format for much of China's history. Screens consisted of a single painting or multiple panels. For a number of reasons, few screens have survived in their original form: they were difficult to store, were on display for long periods of time, were discarded with changes in fashion, or suffered fates similar to those of wall paintings. Some screens, however, have been remounted and preserved as hanging scrolls.

Hanging scrolls: The majority of large-scale Chinese paintings survive as hanging scrolls. Created singly, in pairs, and occasionally in large sets, these paintings were displayed only for short periods of time. They were often hung to honor the season, or some festive event, a guest or patron. The rest of the time they were rolled up for storage, allowing fragile works on paper and silk to survive for a thousand years or more.

Handscrolls: Paintings in a horizontal format, meant to be viewed by an individual or a small group. Among the more intimate formats of Chinese painting, they were unrolled from right to left in lengths that one person could hold comfortably. Owners of handscrolls could add sections as needed to either side of an original painting or calligraphy, in which comments (called colophons) were added, such as words of appreciation. Personal seals added a further dimension and an element of bright color.

Albums: A collection of multiple leaves (pages) of approximately the same size. Each leaf is a painting that can stand on its own but is usually related to the other leaves. For convenience of storage and display, collectors sometimes combined groups of otherwise unrelated paintings into an album.

Fans: Small hand-held paper or silk fans often painted in an informal or even playful fashion. Many were painted by famous artists or professional painters for presentation as gifts on auspicious occasions. Many fans were preserved by being mounted in albums or on hanging scrolls.

STYLE AND SUBJECT MATTER

At the Northern Song painting Academy, records show that painters were expected to be proficient in 1) copying using a tracing technique, 2) engraving on stone and wood, 3) mounting scrolls, 4) flying white (Chinese *fei bai*; see below) 5) architectural drawing, and 6) ornament.

Emperor Song Huizong's (reigned 1101-25) catalogue (the Xuanhe collection of 6,396 works by 231 artists) lists the following subject categories of paintings: architecture, barbarians, dragons, landscapes, animals, birds and flowers, ink-bamboo, vegetables, and fruit.

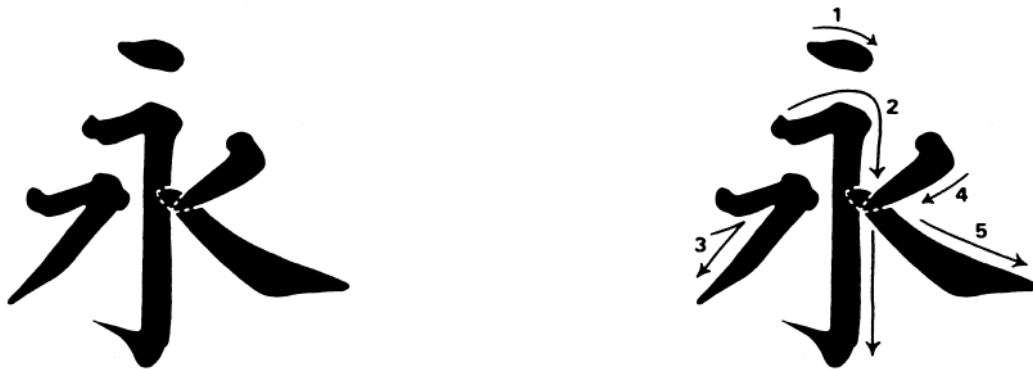
CHARACTER STROKES

All Chinese characters are made up of a number of strokes. These strokes are painted in a prescribed order, depending on the script. Generally, strokes move from top to bottom and from left to right. In more cursive styles of calligraphy, strokes can vary in length and width, depending on the speed of execution, and the personality of the artist. Strokes are meant to have the appearance of life, like well-articulated human limbs, and movement, like the human body when it dances. Sometimes, the calligraphy is meant to reflect the mood of the content of the writing. At other times, the style runs counter to the mood of the content of the writing.

The brush is held upright in the hand. The calligrapher can create a heavier stroke by pressing down and a lighter stroke by lifting the brush up from the paper. Lightness and darkness also vary as the amount of ink in the brush is used up. This creates visual interest through variation in line, thickness, and perceived motion. Chinese calligraphers often employ many poetic terms or phrases to describe particular strokes or styles.

The character *yong*

The character *yong* (which means eternity) contains eight strokes and dots that beginning calligraphy students learn as the basis for many other strokes.



Other brush and ink stroke terms:

Axe-cut strokes: Sharp angled strokes made with the side of the brush like the effect of an axe chopping into wood; associated with an artist from the Northern Song.

***Fei bai* “flying white”:** An effect seen in brushstrokes when the drier tips of the brush begin to separate, causing the stroke to appear as a set of thin parallel black lines against a white background.

***Gong bi*:** Finely detailed brushwork, typically seen on academic paintings of birds, animals, and flowers on silk.

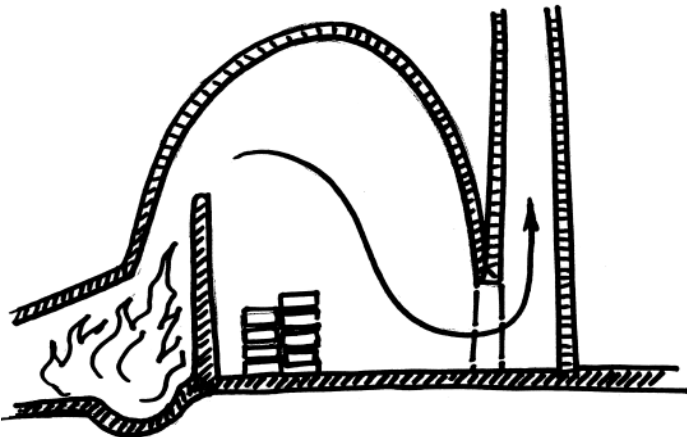
Hemp fiber strokes: Brushstrokes used in landscape paintings that resemble long, slightly wavy lines of fiber; associated with several artists from the Five Dynasties.

***Jiehua* “ruled-line painting”:** very straight, parallel strokes used on detailed paintings of buildings, ships, mechanical devices, street scenes.

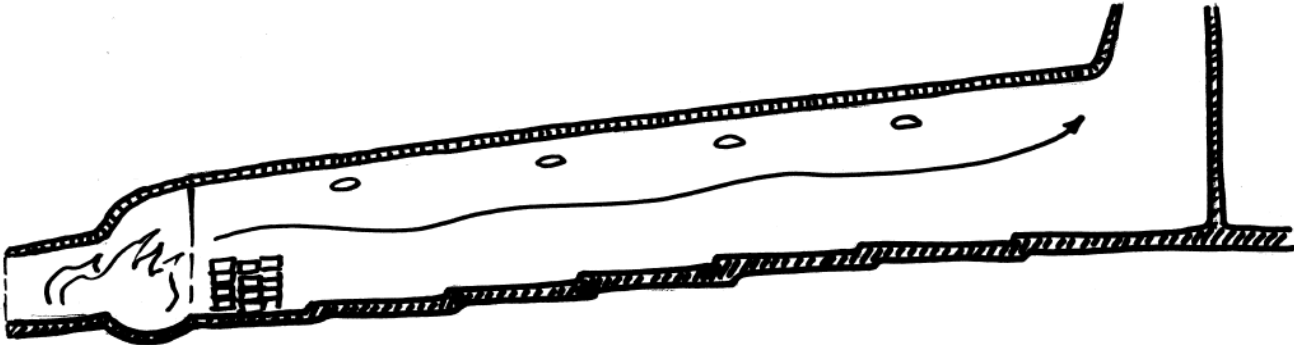


Kiln Types

Mantou (northern) Kiln



Long (southern) Climbing Kiln





Art object descriptions

By Brian Hogarth

All art objects, unless otherwise indicated, are from the collections of the Asian Art Museum, Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture in San Francisco.

Images have been arranged in groups of two or three objects to facilitate easy comparison.

SLIDE 1A



Camel, approx. 690–750
China, Shaanxi or Henan province
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Glazed earthenware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60S95

SLIDE 1B



Central Asian wine peddler, approx. 618–906
China, Henan province
Molded and sculpted earthenware figure with three-color glaze
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P521

What are these objects?

One is a Bactrian camel, used to haul trade goods along the silk roads leading out of China across the western regions into Central Asia and beyond. The figure is a Central Asian wine merchant holding a large sack of wine. Both objects were made to be placed in tombs of the elite during the middle period of the Tang dynasty. Tang tomb figures are of principal interest to us because of their subject matter and the lively and spirited way that they have been created and decorated.

How were they made?

Both objects were made from light-colored earthenware clays, partly using molds with added sections that were joined together. The insides were often hollow or had holes to prevent unwanted distortion of the object when fired. The polychrome (multicolored) glaze is called *sancai* (literally "three colors"), typically made from a lead glaze with mineral pigments of copper (for green), iron (for brown and amber), and cobalt (for blue), and fired at a temperature of about 800–1000 C°. The production of *sancai* wares flourished between the late 600s and mid-700s, mainly in northern China. Before this period, colors on most ceramics were limited to a relatively finite range of green and brown glazed wares.

How were they used?

Both objects were placed in tombs for the wealthy located in the northern regions of China. Tang tombs of this type were multichambered constructions, often with passageways and niches where such objects would have been placed after the tomb owner's body had been interred and funerary rituals completed. Because of the lead glaze, which could be toxic if used in daily activities, such objects would not have been used by the living, but prepared especially for burial.

How do these objects reflect the life and times when they were made?

Objects such as these, even though they were intended for burial, give us a colorful view of life during the high Tang dynasty. They make specific reference to the trade routes. Camels were used to transport goods across the arid regions of the northwestern part of the Tang empire. Called the "ships of the desert," these hardy animals could travel long stretches without water, and their padded feet were adapted to traversing the many sand dunes along the way. This camel carries a cushion between its two humps along with mixed cargo (note the small white vessel below the front hump). The cushion is decorated with a comical face. Many similar glazed earthenware objects have been found in Tang tombs. Some have musicians or travelers perched atop the camel. Other figures of camels are stacked with bolts of silk. Silk was the primary export commodity in demand outside of China. The Tang capital of Chang-an (modern Xi'an) was transformed into one of the largest and most cosmopolitan cities in the world at that time. It was a magnet for trade and commerce.

The wine merchant holds a leather wine container. Foreigners, especially Central Asian traders, entertainers, and grooms of horses and camels were frequently depicted in tomb figurines, even before the Tang dynasty. (Interestingly, tomb occupants were not depicted in such figures, but might have appeared on wall paintings). This merchant wears non-Chinese garments, including a small cap, a sleeveless tunic, and boots.

The painted and sculptural decoration for both the wine merchant and the camel give them a lively, animated appearance. These objects reflect the exuberance of the Tang dynasty, its confidence, its receptiveness toward foreign peoples and ideas, and its prosperous foreign trade network.

SLIDE 2A



Dancer, probably 618–700
China
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Painted earthenware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P305

SLIDE 2B



Four seated musicians, 700–750
China
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Earthenware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P316, B60P317,
B60P3186, and B60P319

What are these objects?

The single lady with raised fingers and elaborate costume and the four female musicians are earthenware figures produced for tombs during the Tang dynasty. They attest to the wealth and lively spirit of the times, and to various types of entertainment practiced.

How were they made?

These figures are different from the camel and wine merchant vessels because they do not employ the running three-color glazes, but rather are decorated with colored pigments applied after firing. Since the paint colors did not have to withstand firing, a wider assortment of colors could be used. However these colors are not bound to the ceramic, and are therefore susceptible to flaking. The three-colored glaze technique (*sancai*) did not lend itself to creating skin tone colors, and the maker of these figures may have preferred the wider palette of colors offered by painting directly on the low-fired earthenware.

What is the figure wearing and what instruments are the musicians playing?

Men and women of the Tang dynasty were very interested in all things foreign. They often dressed in foreign fashions, and welcomed foreign dance and music at their parties and court entertainments. The single female figure has her hair tied in two large loops. Her upper garment has elaborate winged shoulders and a raised collar leading to a V-shaped front. Her shoes have elaborate, up-turned toes. Her elongated sleeves are representative of the court fashions at that time.

The musicians also wear upturned hair in loops. They most likely represent teenagers, with tight-sleeved shirts and long skirts tied at the waist. Two musicians play cymbals, while the other musicians play a flute and a zither or *qin*. (The latter is a wooden instrument with plucked strings, a forerunner of the guzheng and the Japanese koto.)

See also slide 6, which shows a painting of women at a drinking party, and women from a tomb mural painting, to see Tang-dynasty women in comparable costumes and hairstyles, performing similar activities.

SLIDE 3A



Plate in the shape of a flower
China
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Glazed earthenware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P524

SLIDE 3B



Lamp
China
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Glazed earthenware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P535

SLIDE 3C



Bird-headed ewer
China; Henan or Shaanxi province
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Glazed earthenware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P214

What are these objects?

Sancai (three-colored) decoration was not limited to figures, but was also used on plates, bottles, bowls and other wares made for the tomb. The piece with the lobed edges is a dish. The long tall object is a lamp. The piece with a handle is a ewer or pouring vessel.

How were they made? What is unique about these pieces?

These objects were made of low-fired earthenware that resulted in a fairly light body, providing an excellent ground for the three-color decoration. The decoration on all three objects is more controlled and manipulated than the expressive colors that run down the figures of the camel and the wine merchant.

The six-lobed plate is a rare example of its type, raised on three curved legs (almost hidden underneath), creating a tripod form. The lobes are meant to resemble lotus or melon leaves. The colors have been prevented from running freely by carving design patterns in the plate, so that the colors pool in the desired areas. Being a flat surface, the colors were more likely to stay in place than glaze colors on vertical objects. The shape of the plate with its contoured edges reflects hammered metal shapes, many of which were produced by foreign merchants using gold and silver techniques from West Asia.

The tall necked lamp is unusual in its elegant proportions and decoration. A small tray area is set beneath the bowl section at the top for holding the lamp. There is a gradual flare in proportions toward the bottom of the lamp, providing a secure base. Glaze colors have been controlled through ribbing up and down the neck, with only small amounts of running glaze visible near the bottom of the lamp. The glaze pools around circular areas on the base, suggesting the use of a resist material. The patterned appearance of the lamp may be related to designs found on silk textiles of the time.

The ewer (vessel with handle) is known as a chicken or phoenix-headed ewer. This shape can be found in other types of Chinese ceramics from approximately the same era. Like the plate, the ewer design also reflects West Asian models, usually metal wares that were traded extensively during the Tang. (A similar piece can be seen hanging from the camel's pouch in slide 1.) This particular object has been molded in two halves, and then joined together to form the body, with the head and handle attached afterward. The central panel contains another phoenix embellished with floral scrolls, giving the piece a lively, exuberant feel.

Metal objects do not often appear in Western collections of Tang Chinese art but they were very popular at that time. Caches of buried treasure such as the Hejia village hoard found in the western market section of the old capital Chang'an in 1970 reveal a high concentration of metal objects, including 38 gold items and 216 silver items, mostly bowls, plates, and cups. Lead-glazed ceramics for the tomb often copied these more expensive metal wares used by the living. The lead-glazed ceramics were more economical as tomb provisions, but they could not be used in daily life, since lead was poisonous. Metal objects of gold and silver, by contrast, were believed to confer health benefits on those who used them.

SLIDES 4A



Pair of tomb guardians
China
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Glazed earthenware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60S155+, B60S156+

SLIDES 4B



What are these objects?

These two ferocious looking figures were created for a tomb to stand guard near the entrance passageways leading into the tomb chambers. They are called Heavenly Kings (*tianwang*) and are made of earthenware decorated with *sancai* glazes like the objects in images 1 and 3. Each figure stands with one foot on a demon dwarf figure. The guardians are protected with helmets, breastplates, shin guards, and boots.

How were they made?

The pair was made in the same fashion as the camel in slide 1, from molded sections joined together with added sculpted sections, and then decorated with *sancai* (three-color) lead glazes. With these figures, areas of skin were left unglazed and then painted with pigments directly on the ceramic after firing. Each figure stands with its weight on one foot, causing the body to bend slightly. The two figures mirror each other's position, supporting the notion that they were created as a pair.

How were these objects used?

Large ceramic figures made for tombs in the Tang dynasty were usually displayed on carts outside the entrance to the tomb where funeral rituals took place, and then processed into the tomb where they were placed in their final positions. Typically such figures formed part of an assemblage that would have included mythical beasts, as well as ceramic figures in the form of scholar-officials. Musicians, entertainers, soldiers on horseback, and other animals also formed part of the ceramic entourage.

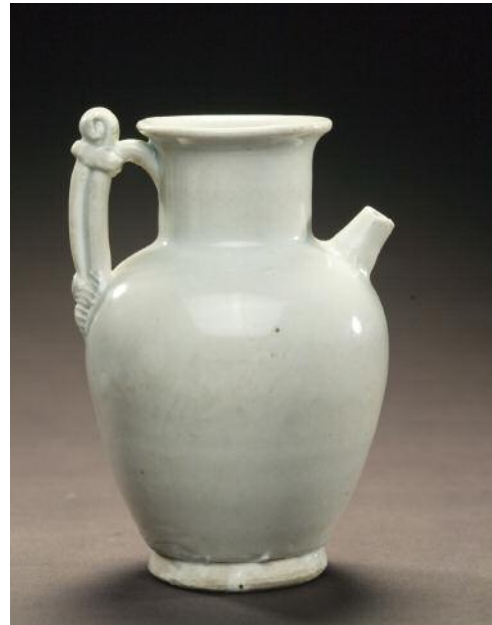
The precise art historical and functional origins of Heavenly King figures such as these are unclear. The figures appear to have originated with Indian Buddhist traditions, where four guardians protected the four cardinal directions at the entrance gates to temple compounds. However, in a secular Chinese tomb setting, the figures usually appear only in pairs, rather than in sets of four. Their appearance in Chinese tombs of the sixth and seventh centuries may represent a blending of several traditions that also included esoteric forms of Buddhism. Similar figures appear on a monumental scale among the central group of carved stone statues in the Fengxiansi Buddhist cave shrine at Longmen (slide 14). It is possible that the creation of Heavenly King guardian figures for important tombs was also inspired by this large-scale, royally commissioned cave shrine.

SLIDE 5A



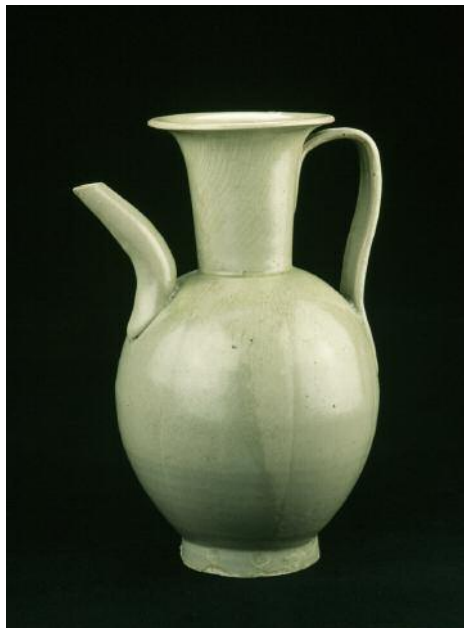
Vase with broad mouth
China; Xing kilns, Hebei province
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Porcelain
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P394

SLIDE 5B



Ewer, probably late 800s–mid-900s
China; Ding kilns, Hebei province
Tang dynasty (618–906) or Five Dynasties period (906–960)
Porcelain
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P1587

SLIDE 5C



Ewer, 900–1000
China; Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Five Dynasties period (906–960) or Northern Song dynasty
(960–1127)
Glazed high-fired ceramic
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P373

What are these objects?

These three objects date to the late Tang or Five Dynasties period, roughly the 800s–900s. The white vase with four very small handles is associated with the northern *xing* kilns, which produced many white wares. The small white ewer (pouring vessel) with handle and spout is associated with the northern *ding* kilns, which also produced white wares. The third object is a larger pouring vessel with a greenish-grey glaze (what we popularly refer to as celadon) that comes from the southern *yue* kilns. All three objects are examples of early porcelain or high-fired wares, and were produced for use by the living rather than for tomb burial.

How were these objects made?

The whiteness of the two smaller porcelains derives from kaolin clay, which was prevalent in the north, and the addition of a white clay slip. Kaolin has a low percentage of iron, and produces a hard white body when fired at high temperatures in an oxygen-rich kiln environment. The greenish color on the *yue* ware is made by adding more iron to the glaze, and high-firing in an oxygen-reduced kiln atmosphere.

Why are these objects important?

These objects are among the earliest types of porcelains produced in China. They also exemplify the two great traditions of white wares and greenish-grey wares, which often competed for marketplace and collector attention during the Tang and Song periods. Xing kilns produced some of the earliest white porcelains, which were lovingly described as resembling ice and snow. Ding kilns appear to have developed later (in the same region around Hebei province, not far from present-day Beijing) and gradually overtook the xing kilns to produce many of the white wares that were popular in the early Northern Song dynasty (see slide 7). Sometimes it is difficult to tell them apart, but ding wares typically have tear drops (where the glaze pools) in the glaze—seen here near the bottom of the vessel.

The greenish-grey *yue* ware was made in Zhejiang province (*yue* is the old name for Zhejiang region) near the coast not far from present day Hangzhou. This region is famous for producing the first proto-celadons (greenish-grey colored wares) during the eastern Jin dynasty, about a century before the Tang. Green wares were compared to jade, and their name may have also reflected the more lush greenery of the eastern coastal regions. *Yue* kilns were probably the most sophisticated in the world at that time because of their ability to produce very high temperatures and reduction atmospheres. *Yue* potters are credited with the development of dragon kilns, long kilns built on the slopes of a hill. The success of *yue* wares probably inspired the production of northern celadons at the *yaozhou* kilns during the Northern Song. By the Southern Song, *yue* wares had declined. But they were exported in quantity, and their influence was particularly strong in Korea, where potters developed a unique Korean type of celadon during the Goryeo dynasty (918–1392).

Why are kiln sites so important when talking about ceramics?

Art historians are interested in the kiln sites where such objects come from because they help us understand how and when new ceramic forms and styles came into existence. Research has also revealed details about the production process and the range of items produced at each site. Kiln sites are also important in studying the history of trade and local economies from these areas.

What were these vessels used for?

These vessels, especially the spouted ewers, were mostly likely associated with tea drinking, and perhaps for pouring water or wine (which could be served warm or cold). One of the advantages of porcelain is that it can hold the temperature of food and drink inside the vessel for a long period of time without conducting that temperature to the outer surface, in contrast to metal for example, therefore making it very easy to use.

In the first treatise written about tea, the *Chajing* or Classic of Tea, Lu Yu (733–804) wrote that *yue* ware was superior to fine *xing* ware from the north, because it accentuated the natural color of tea. In addition, *xing* ware was likened to silver, whereas *yue* ware was likened to jade, which was considered a more precious material.

SLIDES 6A



Court Ladies (drinking party)
China
Tang dynasty? (618–906)
Colors on silk
National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China

SLIDES 6B



SLIDES 6C



Court ladies (copy of a tomb mural)
China
Tang dynasty (618–906)
*Original unearthed in 1960 from tomb of Princess Yong Tai
Qian County, Shaanxi province. Shaanxi Provincial Museum*

What are these paintings?

Both paintings depict upper-class women of the Tang dynasty. One painting shows a group of court ladies enjoying music while drinking wine and tea. This painting is a hanging scroll painted on silk, in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei, Republic of China (Taiwan). The other painting shows palace women from a wall mural (this is a modern copy of the original) in the tomb of Imperial Princess Yong Tai, a site discovered in 1960.

We know more about the context of the wall painting, because it was discovered in situ (in its original location). The tomb is located about fifty miles west of present-day Xi'an, the ancient Tang capital. It was built in 706 to rebury the remains of Princess Tai, who had been murdered (along with her husband) by Empress Wu in 701 (Empress Wu was ruthless in removing members of her extended family who threatened her rule). The tomb consists of a long passageway leading to a front chamber and a back chamber. This painting was originally located on the eastern wall close to the doorway in the front chamber. Other mural paintings in the tomb show soldiers, grooms with horses, the Tiger of the West and Dragon of the East, and painted architectural elements. It would seem that the ladies shown here were meant to be attendants to the princess.

We don't know the original context for the painting of the drinking party. It is uncertain whether it is in fact a Tang painting or a later copy. There is no artist's name or seal on the painting. Records at the National Palace Museum, however, point to details of the fashion and furniture in the painting that would support the contention that it is from the Tang. According to the museum's information, "close examination of the hairstyles shows that some are combed in one direction on top (so-called "falling top-knots"), while others are combed in two directions and tied into knots by the ears ("side knots"). One of the figures wears a floral headdress. These details all correlate with ladies' fashions of the Tang dynasty. The woven bamboo table top, crescent stools, winged wine cups, and the way the lute is being played with a large pick are all in accord with Tang customs."

What is important about these works?

Based on surviving paintings such as these, we can see that upper-class Tang dynasty women were preoccupied with many details of their appearance. Hair was considered an extremely important part of the body. It was believed that hair contained part of the vital essence of a person, so women grew their hair long and wore it in hundreds of different complex styles. Long bunches or coils of hair needed elaborate hairpins, decorated with gems, or combs. Textiles combined native Chinese designs and patterns with foreign motifs, such as the front-opening gowns worn by the women in the wall painting. There appears to be one man in the wall painting, but this figure may also be a woman dressing up as a man, which was sometimes fashionable during this period. Body types vary from lean and slender to full-figured with plump faces. The ladies at this drinking party fall into the more plump category, a figural trend said to be inspired by the famous courtesan Yang Gui Fei, whose affairs were linked to the An Lushan rebellions in 756. Plunging necklines, scarves, shoes, elaborate make-up (for example the white faces), and the presence of pets—all point to particular fashion trends of the Tang dynasty.

Both paintings show an emphasis on outline and color technique typical of Tang dynasty figure paintings. A sense of movement is created with dynamic painted lines, filled in with flat sections of color. Backgrounds are generally devoid of any setting. Spatial depth is portrayed by overlapping figures. The table gives some sense of receding space in the drinking party scene.

The group enjoying music, tea, and wine appears to be slightly intoxicated, based on their facial expressions. Drinks are being freely distributed from a large bowl with ladle. The group in the tomb mural appears engaged and interactive, in contrast to the formal and solemn figures in the other painting. Both images give us an intimate peek into the lives of women at court, at a time when at least some women were free to stroll beyond the palace walls, ride horses, engage in sport, and enjoy themselves.

SLIDE 7A



Pillow in the form of a boy and a lotus leaf,
China; Hebei province
Northern Song Dynasty (960–1126)
Ding ware, glazed high-fired ceramic
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P1351

SLIDE 7B



Dish with peacock and flowers,
China; Hebei province
Jin dynasty (1206–1234)
Ding ware, glazed porcelain with molded and incised decoration
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P1404

SLIDE 7C



Flowerpot, approx. 1100
China; Henan province
Northern Song dynasty (960–1126)
Jun ware, glazed stoneware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P95

SLIDE 7D



Dish with narrow ledge and flat bottom,
China; Henan province
Northern Song dynasty (960–1126)
Jun ware, glazed stoneware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P124

SLIDE 7E



Ewer with chrysanthemum scroll,
China; Shaanxi province
Northern Song dynasty (960–1126)
Yaozhou ware, glazed high-fired ceramic with carved decoration
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P1233

What are these objects?

These are three different types of ceramics made in the north of China. The first two are examples of white porcelains known as *ding* wares. The first *ding* ware is a ceramic pillow in the shape of a boy holding up a lotus flower, from the Northern Song dynasty (960–1126). The second *ding* ware is a plate, made during the Jin dynasty (which ruled northern China from 1206–1234). The six-sided purple flower pot and the plate with splashes of purple color on it are both *jun* wares made during the Northern Song dynasty. A single example of *yaozhou* ware is also shown: a ewer with handle and spout, with an olive, greenish-yellow glaze. This was also made during the Northern Song dynasty.

All the ceramics in this group were created for use by the living rather than for tomb burial.

Why are these ceramics important?

Chinese art historians and collectors of Chinese ceramics consider Song ceramics to be among the best in the world. In contrast to some of the Tang dynasty burial ceramics, they appear on first viewing to be rather uninteresting—no brightly colored figures in dynamic poses, the very opposite of the Heavenly King figures for example. Song ceramics are noted for their cool, quiet elegance, in

particular the beauty of the interaction between the body of the vessel and its glaze. Song ceramics are generally monochromatic in color. Their subtle qualities appear gradually to the viewer with repeated viewings, just as some forms of classical music grow on the listener who takes time to listen carefully.

During the Song, many kilns proliferated across China producing a variety of wares. Some of these were favored by the court. During the Northern Song, the court was located in the present-day city of Kaifeng, and imperial taste naturally favored many of the wares produced in the north. Among these, white porcelains produced by the *ding* kilns were especially in demand. *Ding* wares fell out of favor and for awhile were replaced by an interest in *yaozhou* wares. When the court moved south as a result of the Jurchen invasion in 1126, many of these northern kilns fell under control of the newly formed Jin dynasty, and continued under their patronage. *Jun* wares were particularly favored by the Northern Song emperor Huizong, who was famous for his patronage of the arts, and was himself a noted painter and calligrapher (see also next slide).

How were they made and what makes them unique?

***Ding* wares:** *Ding* wares began by imitating xing wares during the Tang dynasty (see slide 4). The peak of their production was during the eleventh century. Designs and shapes were often based on those of metal wares. *Ding* wares are typically an ivory white color, with a transparent glaze over a porcelain body. They were fired in an oxidizing kiln environment in the temperature a range of 1280–1350 C°. Firing took place in upright mantou kilns, first using wood, and later coal. As porcelains, they were not yet fully translucent, yet they are among the lightest (in weight) of all ceramics. This type of ceramic is difficult to photograph because the decoration is often very subtle.

Two great innovations of *ding* wares were the technique of firing sets of plates upside down in saggars to increase production, and the use of mold-impressed decorations using increasingly complex designs, especially during the 1100s–1200s. *Ding* wares frequently have unglazed rims and bases. The rims would have been covered with metal, but sometimes these additions are lost over time. *Ding* wares can also be identified through tiny tear-drop formations of glaze, a characteristic that became disadvantageous when it was declared that this detail was no longer desirable at court.

The *ding* pillow showing the boy holding a lotus probably represents a wish for male heirs. It is a much more sculptural piece than the other vessels shown here. The peacock in the well seen in the center of the *ding* plate suggests a play on words symbolizing the desire to civilize the world, since the peacock was felt to have a virtuous, lofty disposition.

***Jun* wares:** *Jun* wares were produced from the tenth to the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. They were generally made with stoneware bodies and fired in reduction kilns at lower temperatures than the *ding* porcelains. Some have bright blue glazes. The examples shown here feature splashes of purple color that were produced by the addition of copper pigments applied to the dry glaze before firing. Both the bodies and glazes of *jun* wares tend to be thick. Their aesthetic interest often lies mainly in their color. This type of ceramic did not feature incised, carved, or molded decorations like the other examples in this image group. The all-over glaze was achieved by adding spurs to the bottom of the vessel, which were later removed. The flower pot has a number 7 mark engraved on the base, probably a reference to its size within a range of sizes. The inside has a more bluish tinge

than the outside, which is closer to the typical purple one sees on *jun* wares. The plate is closer to porcelain, meaning it was probably fired at slightly higher temperature than the pot.

***Yaozhou* wares:** *Yaozhou* wares were produced in Shaanxi province and used domestically as well as for export between the Tang and the Yuan dynasties. Song sources indicate that they were favored by court around the years 1078–1106, between periods of interest in *ding* and *ru* wares. *Yaozhou* wares are considered to be northern celadons (greenish-grey wares) and their production may have replaced the *yue* kilns from the southeast coast (see image 5). They were fired in a reduction kiln atmosphere using mantou upright kilns. The bottoms are unglazed. Their distinctiveness comes from relatively deeply carved decoration where the glaze pools allow variation in the shading of color. This effect was first achieved by hand incising, and then later with molding techniques. The example shown here has incised floral scrolls on the shoulder of the vessel, and carved low relief floral scrolls on the main part of the body. The greenish glaze has an olive, or sometimes yellow or brown hue. This was described once as resembling the color of "mutton fat" jade. Lu You, writing in the Southern Song, wrote that "*yaozhou* wares were very coarse and used only by restaurants because they are very durable." By that time, undoubtedly, *yaozhou* wares had fallen from their exalted position and were used as practical everyday wares.

SLIDES 8A



SLIDES 8B



SLIDES 8C



SLIDES 8D



SLIDES 8E



Recreating production of *Ru* wares
Conservation studios
National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of
China
Photo by B. Hogarth, 2005

What is shown here?

This is a sequence of photos taken at the conservation studios at the National Palace Museum in Taipei. The ceramicist is demonstrating the steps in making a *ru* ware of the type produced during the Northern Song.

The potter has already prepared the clay by removing air bubbles and is shown forming the vessel on the wheel. The vessel is initially potted fairly thickly and then manipulated into its final shape. Part of the process involves inverting the pot and gradually shaving down the walls to the desired thickness. Glaze is applied first by dipping the pot in a wet glaze mixture, and then spraying further layers on. In a modern setting, a gas kiln is used, as opposed to the wood or coal-fired kilns of the Song dynasty. Original *ru* wares were fired in mantou- shaped kilns at a temperature of between 1220–1240 C°. The final photograph shows several finished pieces that resemble the original *ru* ware. The few surviving *ru* ware pieces are found in collections on mainland China and at the National Palace Museum in Taipei, with a few additional pieces in London.

What was *ru* ware and why is it important?

Less than a hundred *ru* ware pieces have survived from the Northern Song dynasty. They were already rare by the time of the Southern Song. *Ru* wares were commissioned by a single emperor—Huizong of the Northern Song (reigned 1101–1125) for exclusive use at court. In addition to their rarity, *ru* wares are also famous for their small, elegant shapes with restrained glazes. The body was described as having the color of incense ash, and the glaze a sky-blue color. Small crackle patterns on the glaze were described as “crab’s claw” or “ice-crackle.”

The origin and production of *ru* wares were still somewhat mysterious until remains of a kiln site were identified in Henan province in 1986, followed by additional discoveries in 2000. They remain among the rarest, most beautiful, and sought after of the Song ceramics.

SLIDE 9A



Ewer with eight-sided spout, approx. 618–906
China; Hunan province
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Porcelaneous ware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P1807

SLIDE 9B



Vase with peony scrolls,
Northern China
Northern Song dynasty (960–1126),
Cizhou ware, stoneware with sgraffito decoration
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P161

SLIDE 9C



Pillow, approx. 1115–1400
China; Hebei province
Jin (1206–1234) or Yuan dynasty (1279–1368)
Cizhou ware, high-fired ceramic with overglaze painted
decoration
The Avery Brundage Collection, B65P51

What are these objects?

These objects represent several wares used during the Tang and Song dynasties among the general population (most of what has been seen in previous slides is associated with the upper classes). The small ewer with handle was made during the Tang dynasty near Changsha in Hunan province in the south of China. The tall vase is a *cizhou* ware made in northern China during the Northern Song dynasty. The ceramic pillow with painted decoration is also a *cizhou* ware, but made several hundred years later under the Jin or early Yuan dynasty.

Changsha wares and *cizhou* wares were among the most widely produced (within China) and exported ceramics during the Tang and Song, along with *yue* and *longquan* wares (see next slide).

How were these ceramics made? What is unique about them?

Changsha wares were the first to employ painting under the glaze, a technique that would be used again in some Song dynasty wares and eventually become widespread in Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasty ceramics. These ceramics were fired in dragon kilns in the temperature range of 1170–1220 C° using copper and iron as colorants. This particular ewer has an applied grapevine motif underneath the spout and each of the handles, which is accentuated by brown glaze. The whole piece is covered with a clear lime glaze. *Changsha* kilns also produced numerous small animals and figures that were used as toys.

A recent discovery of a shipwreck off the east coast of Sumatra in 1998 (later acquired and exhibited by a private Singaporean company) revealed a full array of Tang ceramics sent from a Chinese port to an unknown destination. Among the 65,000 items, over 60,000 were *Changsha* ceramics. Also included were *yue* wares, and northern white and green-splashed wares, as well as some high quality silver and gold objects.

The *cizhou* wares illustrated here demonstrate two different techniques. The tall vase—called a *meiping* (prunus vase)—is made of stoneware covered with several additional layers of pigment and glaze. The first layer was white slip. On this, the potter drew decorative patterns with black pigment. After this, the potter incised lines and removed parts of the design to reveal the white slip underneath. Then a clear glaze was added. The technique is called sgraffito. Because this was a time-consuming process, sgraffito *cizhou* wares are relatively rare. The categorical designation “prunus vase” is a bit of a misnomer. The vase probably actually held alcohol or other liquids.

The *cizhou* pillow is in the shape of a leaf, and raised on a high, hollow foot. The pillow is contoured to fit the head and decorated with a black band around the edge. Ceramic pillows were used to relieve summer heat and were also placed in tombs. The image of the deer amid five clouds probably symbolizes a wish for long life and professional advancement. The decorative techniques used on this piece demonstrate how *cizhou* potters abandoned the more laborious techniques of incising the slip to create designs and paint directly on the ceramic under the glaze.

Cizhou wares were an important development within the range of Song ceramics. They were produced at many different kiln sites. Working outside the restraints of court-sponsored wares, artisans were free to experiment. They innovatively copied more expensive wares by adding white slip

to create the appearance of porcelains. Such vessels most often featured contrasting designs in black and white, a stylistic development that foreshadowed the blue and white designs that dominated Chinese ceramics in the succeeding Yuan and Ming dynasties.

SLIDE 10A



Vase, approx. 1000–1368
China; probably Zhejiang province
Song (960–1279) or Yuan dynasty (1279–1368)
Ge ware, porcelainous ware with crackled glaze
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P1308

SLIDE 10B



Tea bowl with lotus petals,
China; Longquan, Zhejiang province
Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279)
Glazed high-fired ceramic with relief decoration
The Avery Brundage Collection, B62P121

SLIDE 10C



Covered jar with applied dragon and finial in the form of
a tiger,
China; Longquan, Zhejiang province
Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279)
Porcelain with sculpted and applied decorations and
glaze
The Avery Brundage Collection, B62P147

What are these objects?

The objects illustrated here are all *longquan* wares, a popular ceramic that developed in Zhejiang province (just north of the border with Fujian) over a long period of time, from the Three Kingdoms period (mid-200s) through the Ming and Qing dynasties. Its high point was during the 1100s–1200s. *Longquan* wares were used domestically and were heavily exported, especially to Korea and Japan.

The grayish piece with the heavy lower form is modeled after an ancient bronze hu vessel, and features a distinctive crackle. It dates from the Five Dynasties period or early Northern Song dynasty. The other two pieces both date from the late Southern Song dynasty. The first is a small tea bowl. The second is a covered jar with a dragon writhing about its neck, and a small tiger on the lid. The dragon and tiger represent the directions of east and west in traditional Chinese cosmology. This piece was most probably used as a funerary jar.

How were they made? What is unique about them?

Longquan ceramics were made in a reduced kiln atmosphere using wood fires in very long, multi-chambered dragon-type kilns capable of producing up to 10,000 pieces in a single firing. These ceramics were made in many shapes with thick, semiopaque glazes that had a bluish-jade like quality and a matte finish. *Longquan* wares rely mostly on subtle color hues and interesting forms modeled after ancient bronzes for their appeal.

Many questions remain unresolved about the differences between *longquan* and two other Southern Song official wares, *guan* and *ge*. (Some “official” wares once believed to have dated to the Song dynasty are now understood to be later copies.) The grayish *hu*-shaped ceramic may be a *ge* ware. There are many similarities with *longquan* ceramics in the use of multiple thick monochrome glazes. *Ge* wares are characterized by their heavy crackle.

The tea bowl indicates that *longquan* wares were also used in tea drinking. However the most popular tea bowls were the brown and black wares (see next slide). This tea bowl is decorated with molded and incised lotus petal designs, barely visible on the surface. The form may have been influenced by metal wares.

Longquan wares, although produced in large quantities, are not mentioned among the “official” wares by later writers and collectors. They turn up in more common places, including tombs. They were probably used by the official scholar class or as altar wares in temples. They may have appealed to several classes of society as imitations of the Northern Song *ru* wares or more expensive official wares. The use of ancient bronze shapes reflects a Southern Song nostalgia for a more secure, imagined culture of the past.

SLIDE 11A



Bowl with plum blossoms, approx. 1100–1300
China; Jiangxi province
Song dynasty (960–1279)
Jizhou ware, glazed stoneware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P1731

SLIDE 11B



Bowl with brown mottling, approx. 1100–1279
China; Jiangxi province
Song dynasty (960–1279)
Jizhou ware, glazed stoneware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P1452

SLIDE 11C



Bowl with golden-brown streaks, approx. 1100–1300
China; Fujian province
Song dynasty (960–1279)
Jian ware, dark brown stoneware
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60P1737

What are these objects?

Illustrated here is a range of tea-related wares generally described as “brown and black” wares. These dark wares were produced at a number of kiln sites (including the *cizhou* kilns relating to image 9) from the Han through the Tang and Song dynasties. The most famous Song dynasty brown and black wares were produced at the *jizhou* and *jian* kilns in Jiangxi and Fujian provinces in the south of China. Some of the larger pieces may have held wine, but the smaller bowls shown here were used to sip tea. They were used widely by a variety of social classes, from emperors to common people and monks. *Jizhou* wares were used domestically, while *jian* wares were both used domestically and exported. In Japan, *jian* wares were known as *temmoku* wares.

How were they made and what is unique about them?

Brown and black wares were relatively easy to make. The dark color came from concentrations of iron oxide in the glaze. The decoration was not easy to create however, because of the opaque dark color of the glaze. A variety of innovative techniques were developed. The amber-colored bowl has prunus blossoms that were placed under the glaze and carbonized during firing, leaving a darker motif that contrasts with the lighter body. Similar techniques involved the use of paper cut-outs, or other types of leaves.

The second bowl shown here has mottled yellowish-brown spots meant to resemble a “hawkbill tortoise shell” and said to be a pleasing color that accentuates the color of tea as it is drunk. The effect was achieved by splashing ash-rich overglaze on a raw brown glaze. The third example in this group displays a technique described as “hare’s fur,” produced by the application of tiny particles of iron that run down as fine, hair-like streaks. These bowls were admired by emperor Huizong (reigned 1101–1125) of the Northern Song as the most desirable of tea wares.

How was tea consumed during the Song?

At the time these tea bowls were made, Chinese tea was generally prepared from a powdered form and whisked into a white foam whose color contrasted well with the dark bowls. Contests were even held to see who could create interesting cloud patterns of tea foam. Previously, green wares had been preferred for tea, and after this period, white porcelains came into vogue, and eventually the brown and black wares declined in use.

Tea grows in the southern provinces of China. It was celebrated for its medicinal uses since ancient times, but the practice of drinking tea as a beverage spread during the Tang and Song dynasties with the help of monks, especially with the rise of Chan Buddhism. Chan emphasized meditation. Tea naturally helped monks maintain the mental concentration conducive to meditative practice. In addition, tea grows well at higher altitudes, where many temples were located. In the Southern Song capital at Hangzhou, for example, temples were located in the surrounding hills.

During the Tang, there was a period of prohibition against the consumption of alcohol (to conserve grain production). This legislation served to encourage the further enjoyment of tea, which was less expensive to produce. Tea was produced as loose leaves, tea dust, and tea cakes. For con-

sumption, it was usually boiled like soup. During the Song, tea cakes were a relative luxury, reserved for tribute or the highest officials. Tea dust would have been used in the bowls illustrated here. Boiling water would have been poured over the tea dust to produce the desired foam. The practice of brewing tea in pots developed later during the Yuan and Ming dynasties. A number of books were written about tea—for example Lu Yu's *Book of Tea* (Tang dynasty) and Emperor Huizong's *Grand View on Tea* (Northern Song). Poets began to write about the beauty of drinking tea, and scholars gathered to enjoy tea together while composing poems and practicing brushwork.

SLIDE 12A



Silver tea basket
China
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Gilt silver
Famensi museum, Fufeng, Shaanxi Province
(made in Guangxi province)

SLIDE 12B



Tea bowl stand,
Southern China
Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279)
Brown lacquer on wood and fabric
Gift of the Asian Art Museum Foundation, B76M3

What are these objects and what is their significance?

The silver basket is a lidded container meant to hold tea cakes. During the ninth century, tea leaves were steamed and then dried into bricks and cakes, and strung together. The basket was donated to the Famen temple by emperor Xizong in 874. It is a superb example of luxury open metalwork. The bulk of the basket is made up of circles with square holes resembling Chinese coins. Flying geese or possibly ducks are superimposed on the surface. The four feet are designed to resemble flower stamens. A thin handle is connected to the lid with a tiny chain.

An inscription tells us this vessel was sent from Guizhou in southwestern China as tribute. It was then given by the emperor to the temple to be ritually deposited in a crypt along with other treasures under the temple's pagoda. This secret crypt was discovered only recently when the pagoda collapsed after a huge rainfall. The crypt contained not only tea-related luxury items such as this, but also relics of the Buddha stored in a set of nesting metal containers. This object is now in the collection of the temple museum in Fufeng, Shaanxi province. It was displayed at the Asian Art Museum during the Golden Age of Chinese Archaeology exhibition in 2000.

The tea bowl stand is in the collection of the Asian Art Museum and is displayed along with tea-related wares such as the bowls shown in slide 11. It is believed the shape was invented during the Tang dynasty, when a lady burned her fingers holding a tea cup, placed the cup on a plate, and

insisted that a cup stand be fashioned out of lacquer in the same shape. In Song literature the shape is described as *tuó*, meaning to lift or support.

Lacquer products date back to Neolithic times, and have been for the most part luxury items because of the laborious methods required to produce them. Lacquer is a resin extracted from a tree that grows in southern China. It is poisonous to the touch, like poison oak, and must be carefully applied in layers, usually over a base material like wood. In this case the lacquer has been applied on fabric over paper-thin layers of wood and meticulously built up into its present form. The stylized lotus flower form in the middle of the stand echoes many of the designs seen in Song dynasty ceramics. The monochrome color also echoes the Song dynasty preference for understated elegance, in contrast to the Tang silver tea basket, in which design and technique are showy and pronounced.

SLIDE 13A



Great Wild Goose Pagoda, 652
Xian, Shaanxi Province, People's Republic of China
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Photo by Brian Hogarth

SLIDE 13B



Image hall, Nanchan monastery, 782
Mount Wutai, Shanxi province
Tang dynasty (618–906)
*Courtesy of John C. and Susan L. Huntington,
Photographic Archive of Buddhist & Related Arts, Ohio
State University*

SLIDE 13C



Great Pagoda at Fogang (Buddha's Palace) temple, 1056
Yinxian, Shanxi province
Liao dynasty (907–1101)
From Chinese Architecture

What are these buildings?

The first two buildings shown are rare surviving examples of Tang Buddhist architecture in China. The second, a wooden pagoda, dates from the Liao dynasty, during the Northern Song period.

The stone pagoda structure is called the Great Wild Goose Pagoda (*Da Yan Ta*) enclosed within the Ci'en (Temple of Mercy) monastery in present-day Xi'an. It was erected in 652 to commemorate the return of the temple's abbot, the celebrated monk Xuanzang. This heroic figure to Chinese Buddhist history traveled west across the silk roads and throughout India for sixteen years, exploring the homeland of Buddhism before returning with hundreds of sutras (Buddhist texts). His monumental journey formed the basis of the popular Ming-dynasty novel *Journey to the West* (see "Journey to the West" in this packet for further exploration of the subject).

The contemporary structure has been restored a number of times, although many of these restorations took place during the Tang, so overall the building remains essentially a Tang structure. Visitors can still climb the interior staircase to appreciate the surrounding view.

The small wooden temple building is an image hall from Nanchan monastery located at Mount Wutai in Shanxi province. It is the oldest surviving wooden temple structure in China, dated to 782. Its remote location may have helped it survive the Buddhist persecutions of 845. In fact, it was only "rediscovered" by Chinese art historians in the 1950s. Although the building is small, its interior shows the increasing tendency in Buddhist practice toward placing an assemblage of many large figures on raised altar platforms in a central image hall. There are sixteen figures inside the Nanchan hall, taking up most of the interior space.

The taller wooden pagoda is the Great Pagoda at Fogang (Buddha's Palace) temple, located at Yinxian, in Shanxi province not far from Mount Wutai. It is dated to 1056 during the Liao dynasty that ruled this part of northern China contemporaneously with the Northern Song. It remains to this day one of the tallest wooden structures in the world and its construction is still a famous work of engineering. Liao builders were masters of wood joinery and ceiling construction. Two columns support the interior, allowing for a central corridor in which Buddhist images could be placed for worship. The exterior shows five stories, but another four are hidden inside, bringing the actual total to nine.

What is a pagoda?

Pagodas are Chinese architectural versions of Indian stupas, whose original purpose was to contain relics of the historical Buddha or other important holy persons. The Indian stupa was originally a hemispherical mound, meant to be worshipped by circumambulation in a clockwise direction. However, when the stupa form entered China along with Buddhist practice, it was influenced by Han dynasty-era wooden watchtowers, and evolved to become a tower-like structure with differentiated square floors. Early pagodas in China tended to be at the center of the monastic compound, but as the forms of Buddhist images became more complex, the pagoda became a subsidiary structure, and larger image halls stood at the center of temple compounds. Most pagodas that survive from the Tang and Song are made of brick or stone, such as the example from Xi'an. Wooden pagodas are much rarer. Only a handful of wooden structures survive from the Tang dynasty in China.

The construction techniques used in Buddhist temple architecture in China and throughout East Asia are based on timber frames and bracketing systems that support large overhanging tiled roofs. The ingenuity of this system is that the size of the building can be altered by adding and repositioning the various posts that support the size of the roof, thus determining how tall and how wide the building is. Because the posts and beams are not nailed or screwed together, they can be easily dismantled and are frequently restored. In addition, they move freely in earthquakes, making them less susceptible to damage. The only danger is fire, and related to this drawback, older Chinese buildings have tended to survive less often than their stone Western counterparts.

SLIDE 14A



SLIDE 14B



SLIDE 14C



SLIDE 14D



Buddhist cave shrines at Longmen
Longmen caves, near Luoyang,
Henan province
Black and white photo by Brian Hogarth
Color photos by M. Teng Hogarth

What is this site? Who is portrayed here?

The long horizontal photo shows the expanse of hundreds of caves excavated from the limestone cliffs at a site known as Longmen (Dragon Gates) near the present city of Luoyang. It is now a popular tourist site, and is one of several major Buddhist cave shrine locations where one can see many sculptural art works in their original setting.

The caves were begun just after the Northern Wei rulers—a Turkic people of non-Chinese extraction—moved their capital south to Luoyang in 494 in order to affiliate themselves more closely with the Han Chinese people that they ruled. Several important cave constructions were produced under their supervision at Longmen. During the Tang dynasty, the large central cave seen in the photo was excavated. (The other photos show details of the main figures in that cave).

Emperor Gaozong (reigned 650–685) and his consort Wu Zetian, who later enthroned herself as empress (reigned 684–704), patronized Buddhist establishments and encouraged the efforts of monks to acquire and translate Buddhist texts from India. One text that arrived during the Empress Wu's reign was the *Avatamsaka* (Flower Garland) sutra, one of the longest and most complex of all Buddhist texts. The central figure in that text is the Buddha Vairochana, one of three “bodies of the Buddha” that does not exist in time or space, but transcends all others. The large stone statue of Vairochana Buddha at Longmen was undoubtedly inspired by this text, newly translated into Chinese. It is also believed to represent the Empress Wu herself, who in 672 had donated 20,000 strings of cash to begin the project, which would take another twenty plus years to complete. Part of one inscription reads “the true doctrine has flown over the east for over seven hundred years, yet this large Buddha niche is the greatest meritorious deed ever offered.”

The temple is commonly referred to as Fengxiansi, after another temple that has since disappeared, and it has also been referred to by one of its inscriptions as the Great Image Niche (*Da Xiang Kan*). An enormous amount of rock was removed from the rock face, and the resulting statues tower over the viewer. The central Vairochana figure stands about fifty-five feet high, and attendant figures about thirty-five or forty feet high. The guardian figures standing in more dynamic poses on the outer edge (seen in the additional photograph here) can be compared to the ceramic guardian figures seen in slide 4 in this packet. On either side of the main Buddha are disciples and richly attired bodhisattva figures. The entire structure was at one time covered with wooden beams and a roof structure, but all that remains of these constructions are the support holes on the surface of the cliff wall.

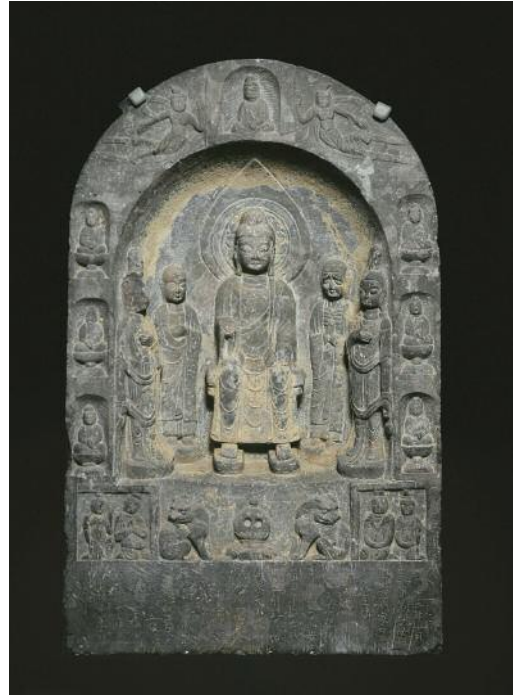
The central cave at Longmen, built in the late 600s, vividly asserts the union of the concept of Buddha as universal sovereign with the concept of the emperor (or empress) as the living representation on earth of that principal. The pairing of religious and military figures on either side of a large central Buddha may have, for many worshippers, symbolized the religious and military factions that together supported a strong central throne.

SLIDE 15A



Stele with the Buddha Shakyamuni and Prabhutaratna, a Buddha of the past, dated 595
China
Sui dynasty (589–618)
Marble with gilding and pigment
The Avery Brundage Collection, B62S1+

SLIDE 15B



Stele of the Buddha Maitreya, dated 687
China
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Limestone
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60S36+

What are these objects?

These are two stone steles with Buddhist images on them. The first is dated earlier than the Tang dynasty, to the year 595 during the short-lived Sui dynasty. It shows two Buddha figures sitting side by side. These figures represent the Buddha Shakyamuni (the historical Buddha) and Prabhutaratna (a Buddha of the past) flanked by two monks, with rows of dragons supporting a stupa, and heavenly beings called apsaras holding garlands. At the bottom, two lions face a central incense burner. This stele is made of marble and has some surviving traces of pigment. There are several inscribed dedications on the stele.

The second stele is dated 687, during the Tang dynasty, and depicts the future Buddha Maitreya in a niche flanked by two monks and two bodhisattvas. Seven Buddhas of the past frame the central niche. Two lions sit astride an incense burner. The donative dedication of the sculpture can be seen in inscribed characters in the lower register on the front.

What are steles?

Buddhist steles are stone monuments bearing images and inscriptions, commissioned for installation in temples or monastic compounds, courtyards, or in rock-cut cave shrines. They probably

developed from pre-Buddhist memorial stones used since the Han dynasty. They thrived as a sculptural form between the 400s and the 600s. These two steles are rather small, later examples. Larger steles were generally leaf-shaped mandorlas, or rectangular blocks with curved tops crowned by dragons. Typically, the main figures in a stele sit or stand, directly facing the viewer.

Steles were usually commissioned by families or groups of individuals in the hopes of accruing spiritual merit for themselves, for the benefit of the current rulers, and for their ancestors and extended family. In this way, they satisfied the demands of a Confucian society, with its emphasis on family ties, and Buddhism, with its emphasis on spiritual salvation. The inscription on the second stele typifies this type of dedication, and mentions the Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu, the same rulers who supported the large cave shrine shown in the previous image:

“The Buddhist disciple Muqiu Hashen prays for peace (health and happiness?) for all the members of his family. Reverently this image of the Buddha Maitreya is (offered for the) purpose that the Heavenly Emperor and the Heavenly Empress control all the myriad states, may deceased parents be incarnated in the Pure Land, and may the deceased souls of the last seven generations be free from sorrows and miseries. The image is worshipped with the whole heart by the entire family (including) the elders and young, close and distant (relatives).” (The inscription then goes on to list many personal names.)

What other religious beliefs are represented by these steles?

The belief in Maitreya was strong in the 500s–600s, approximately a millennium after the foundation of Buddhism, because it was widely believed that the first major era of Buddhism would end 1000 years after the lifetime of the historical Buddha. This millennial event would give rise to chaos and the eventual return of a future Buddha called Maitreya, who would lead the faithful to a paradise in the Pure Land. Furthermore, during this time, the Empress Wu promoted herself as the embodiment of a female Buddhist deity reborn as a universal monarch similar to Maitreya that had been “discovered” in a newly translated text called the Great Cloud Sutra.

The image of the two Buddhas on the marble stele from the Sui dynasty is a direct reference to an episode in the popular Lotus Sutra concerning a stupa that appears when the historical Buddha Shakyamuni is preaching. From this “many treasures” stupa comes the voice of Prabhutaratna, a Buddha of the past who preceded the historical Buddha as a teacher, and who has promised to appear whenever the Lotus Sutra is preached. The subject of these two Buddhist figures displayed together was particularly popular in Chinese Buddhism, where lineage and succession among teachers were highly esteemed in a Confucian context.

SLIDE 16A



The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara,
(Chinese: Guanyin)
China
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Gilt bronze
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60B795

SLIDE 16B



Torso of a bodhisattva, approx. 700–750
China; cave XXI, Tianlongshan, Shanxi Province
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Sandstone
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60S6+

SLIDE 16C



Arhat, dated 1180
(Chinese: luohan)
China
Jin dynasty (1206–1234)
Marble
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60S208

SLIDE 16D



The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara
(Chinese: Guanyin)
China
Song dynasty (960–1279)
Wood
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60S24+

What are these objects?

The small bronze statue, the headless stone statue, and the seated wooden statue with outstretched arm are all images of the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, known in Chinese as Guanyin. The standing marble figure with a tilted head is known as an arhat (a Sanskrit term), referred to in Chinese as a *luohan*.

Who is Avalokiteshvara/Guanyin?

Guanyin is the Chinese form of the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. Bodhisattvas are enlightened, compassionate beings who assist the spiritual goals of others. They are often distinguished from Buddhas by their princely adornments, indicating their continued presence in the human world. The figure of Avalokiteshvara can be traced back to India. His name means “the lord who looks down with compassion.” In China, Guanyin is believed to hear the sorrows of humanity and respond to the sound of repeated name recitation. The bodhisattva is strongly associated with a chapter of the Lotus Sutra, a popular Buddhist text that lists 33 manifestations that the deity can assume in order to help people in their time of need. The worship of Guanyin in China began around the fifth or sixth century, accompanied by an increased concern with Buddhist paradises.

How do the statues of Guanyin differ?

The small bronze statue of Guanyin is slender and curvaceous. The body is portrayed in *tribhanga* (“S-curve”) position, a style derived from Indian figural sculptures. There is an elaborate coiffure on top of the head. The figure is adorned with long necklaces and jewelry, with a long scarf that hangs down, accentuating the princely and luxurious nature of the image. Standing Guanyin figures often hold a vase in one hand and a lotus flower with the other.

The headless but still graceful stone figure of Guanyin echoes many of the same features of the small bronze figure—the same “S-curve” to the body, the modeled belly, the relaxed sensuous feel, detailed jewelry, and loosely hanging scarves. The figure’s garment is an Indian-style dhoti, tied around the waist. This figure is part of a triad of images once standing in a cave shrine at Tianlongshan, in Shanxi province, dating from the early 700s. The shrine suffered significant damage during the upheavals of the middle of the twentieth century, and only isolated pieces from this site now survive, some outside of China. The wooden image of Guanyin relaxes in a position of royal ease. It contains traces of the bright colors that once covered the statue.

Guanyin eventually became one of the most popular Buddhist deities in China. Originally a foreign, male deity from India, this essential Buddhist divinity was eventually transformed, by at least the Ming dynasty, into many forms (often with feminine features) with pronounced Chinese characteristics. The images illustrated here, while perhaps appearing slightly androgynous by Western standards, are male in gender and reflect the ethereal, transcendent figure type of many early Buddhist images.

What is an arhat/*luohan*?

The *luohan* is the Chinese term for the Indian *arhat*, a disciple of the historical Buddha who rigorously follows the teachings and attains enlightenment. In China, the figure of the *arhat* was conflated with a variation of the Daoist sage, who lives in seclusion in the mountains, gaining spiritual power and seemingly living forever. Because the *luohan* was derived from a foreign prototype, Chinese artists felt they had license to depict them as strange, sometimes grotesque figures with highly individual features such as twisted bodies, protruding noses, long beards, and eyebrows. These depictions gave such figures an otherworldly appearance. The marble figure here has an emaciated appearance and an intense gaze, a sign of his spiritual concentration and complete commitment to Buddhist monasticism and renunciation. The figure has a brief inscription that mentions a date of 1180.

Like the figure of Guanyin, *luohan* figures became sinicized (more Chinese) as time passed. Chan Buddhism, with its emphasis on meditation, lent itself to the depiction of *luohans* with their deep concentration and spiritual intensity. Famous monks were incorporated into a growing retinue of *luohans* in temples, so that the worshipper could see strong lineage connections between the temple and the original followers of the Buddha stretching back through Chinese history all the way to India. Today it is not uncommon to see halls devoted to as many as 500 *luohans* in numerous Chinese temples.

SLIDE 17A



Two Liao tomb paintings
Liao dynasty (907–1101)
Photos from Tsao, Hsingyuan, Differences Preserved
(catalogue), Douglas F. Looley Memorial Art Gallery, Reed
College, Oregon

SLIDE 17B



What is Liao? Who were the Qidan people?

Liao is the name of a dynasty that ruled the north of China and a vast section of what is now the Mongolian region and Manchuria roughly about the same time as the Northern Song. As we have seen in some earlier examples, the Liao supported Buddhism and patronized some of the largest wooden temple structures still standing in China today. The Liao dynasty was established by the seminomadic Qidan people, who moved among several capitals depending on the season. Since there was a great deal of interaction between the Qidan and northern Chinese living along the border regions, Liao culture is a hybrid mix of Chinese and Inner and Central Asian traditions. For example, Liao administrators used both Chinese and Qidan written scripts. Liao dynasty officials had enjoyed close diplomatic ties with the former Tang, and to some extent, felt that they were carrying on Tang traditions.

What are these images?

These two wall paintings come from two different Liao tombs in northern China. They are part of a series of eight tombs belonging to five generations of the Zhang family dated between 1093 and 1117. They are located in Xuanhua, about eighty miles northwest of present-day Beijing. At that

time, this was Liao territory. One painting shows the preparation of tea. The other shows preparations for reading Buddhist sutras.

The Zhang tombs consisted of brick structures, usually one or two chambers, covered by mounds. The ashes of the deceased were laid in wooden coffins, placed on a pedestal table. In one tomb, food offerings in ceramic and lacquer containers had been laid out on tables in front of the coffin. For art historians, the main interest at these sites lies in the colorful murals that were painted over hemp and plaster surfaces on the brick walls of the chambers.

What is going on in the pictures?

Tea preparation scene: We see several men, with partially shaved heads in the Qidan style, preparing tea, while two elegantly dressed women stand upright holding tea bowls on top of tea stands (similar to the tea stand shown in slide 11). The women wear Qidan-style robes, indicated by full skirts and upper garments, as opposed to the more tight-fitting clothes worn by women of the Song. On the table is a tall basket container that probably held the serving bottles (known as ox's leg bottles). Also on the table is a tiny whisk. An upright stove is being prepared to heat the water. A child grinds tea with a metal tea grinder (a similar object was found in the crypt along with the tea basket shown in slide 11). Prepared tea leaves are stacked in containers behind the group. Two small dogs play in the lower right-hand corner.

Sutra reading scene: The figures are all attendants facing into the tomb chamber to serve the tomb occupant. Sutras may have been contained in the wooden trunks shown on the table. An attendant enters with another trunk through a doorway, which is painted in the corner of the chamber to resemble a real opening. The door is decorated with phoenix designs. On the table is a text identified as a Buddhist sutra, as well as a small incense burner. The men wear white boots, dark hats, and thick coats. Above them is a row of real niches in the wall that would have held small statues. Near the ceiling are painted beams, to give the illusion of a real wood framed enclosure.

What can we learn from these tomb images?

Buddhism was the state religion of the Liao dynasty. The Zhang family was ethnic Chinese. Yet they served in the Liao bureaucracy and depicted themselves and their attendants in Qidan fashions. This illustrates the high degree of interaction among northern Chinese cultures at that time.

The relationship between tea and burial practice may have something to do with the belief that one should enter the afterlife refreshed and sober. The placement of food servings as well as actual tea objects may also reflect the general popularity of tea. It was undoubtedly considered an essential part of a well-appointed tomb at this time.

The artistic style of the paintings follows the Tang style with outline and color technique, and with groupings of figures as the main compositional arrangement.

SLIDE 18A



SLIDE 18B



SLIDE 18C



Festival on the River, (three details)
Attributed to Zhang Zeduan, (active early 12th century)
Northern Song dynasty (960–1126)
Handscroll, ink and colors on silk
Palace Museum, Beijing, People's Republic of China

What is this painting?

Illustrated here are some details from a long (about 17-foot) handscroll thought to depict life along the river in the Northern Song capital of Kaifeng, attributed to the artist Zhang Zeduan, and probably painted in the early 1100s. The artist was a member of the Imperial Academy and was known for his "ruled line" (*jiehua*) paintings. This technique lends itself to detailed renderings of cityscapes, machinery, and buildings.

The painting unfolds from right to left, beginning in the countryside, as the viewer passes by various boats on their way to the capital. In central part of the scroll (often reproduced) a crew on a boat quickly lowers the central mast before passing under a bridge. Beyond the bridge, we see various shops and restaurants, as the river turns away from our gaze. Soon there is a military gate, which a procession of camels is about to pass through, followed by further shops and businesses lining the main thoroughfare. Our view is from slightly above the rooftops, allowing us to see along the river, down alleyways, into building windows and storefront openings, and into the distance. This is called an oblique or parallel perspective.

What are some of the details?

A succession of junks can be seen lining up and unloading sacks of grain along the river's edge. A crowd of onlookers rushes to the edge of the bridge to see whether the boat in the center of the painting will clear the arch of the bridge. Under the corner of one building a storyteller draws a crowd of onlookers. A scholar with a wide brimmed hat rides by on a donkey, accompanied by several servants. Restaurants are busy serving customers. There are fortune tellers, archers, iron workers, even a calligrapher at work. A doctor's sign indicates he can cure hangovers, one of several references to wine in the painting.

Among the market items at that time would have been lichis, plums, loquats, oranges, apricots, leeks, turnips, eggplants, cattle, fish, and pigs, as well as cane sugar, oil, and hemp. Taxes were collected from grains, salt, and tea. Copper coins were the common currency, although paper money was also beginning to be used.

What is the significance of this painting?

The painting offers an intimate glimpse into Song urban life. Many later painters copied the same scene, but none with as much vividness and charm as this original. Some scholars interpret this painting as an ideological set piece, a statement about the healthy economy of the time, when boats filled the capital with a steady stream of goods from across the country. Others see in it a nostalgic view of life in the Northern Song capital just before it was overrun by Jurchen forces in 1126 CE. Whatever the case, the artist has done a convincing job of drawing us into a busy, multifaceted world. The attention to details of daily life, and the inner workings and complexity of the human and natural worlds, reveal an aspect of Song painting that concerns itself with the descriptive, foreshadowing the scientific analysis that would fascinate European painters several hundred years later.

The original painting resides in the collection of the Palace Museum in Beijing, and only rarely comes on display. It was featured in a recent exhibition in Shanghai, where thousands lined up to see it, among other famous paintings.

SLIDE 19A



Solitary Temple amid Clearing Peaks
By Li Cheng, 919–967
Northern Song (960–1126)
Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri
Purchase: Nelson Trust

SLIDE 19B



Travelers among Mountains and Streams
Fan Kuan, approx. 960–1030
Northern Song (960–1126)
National Palace Museum, Taipei
Taiwan, Republic of China

SLIDE 19C



Travelers among Mountains and Streams (detail)
Fan Kuan, approx. 960–1030
Northern Song (960–1126)
National Palace Museum, Taipei
Taiwan, Republic of China

What are these paintings?

The first painting is called *Solitary Temple amid Clearing Peaks*, attributed to Li Cheng (919–967). It is in the collection of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri. It is a large hanging scroll on silk, 111.8 cm high. The second painting is called *Travelers among Mountains and Streams*, by Fan Kuan (approx. 960–1030). It is in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei. It is also a large hanging scroll measuring 206.3 cm high, made from two joined pieces of silk. Both are very famous landscape paintings from the Northern Song dynasty.

Who were the artists who painted these pictures?

Li Cheng, the elder of the two painters, came from an aristocratic family that had escaped the turmoil at the end of the Tang dynasty. He was raised as a scholar and artist, and soon established himself as master painter at the Northern Song court. Li would have been aware of the recent trends among painters of the Five Dynasties (some of whom also joined the new Song academy) that incorporated tall vertical mountains or mountain ranges as a central element in landscape painting. Contemporary and later writers spoke of Li's ability to create fine details that resembled real scenery, and recounted that he excelled at wintry scenes and trees. There are no signatures or seals on this painting that definitively assign this work to Li Cheng, nor do many other works of his survive.

Fan Kuan apparently studied the works of Li Cheng, and was undoubtedly influenced by him. It is reported that he enjoyed observing the effects of light and atmosphere in the hills and valleys around Mount Chongnan and Mount Hua (Shanxi province), and also dressing up in heavy old-fashioned clothing. In that sense, he epitomized the artist as wondering hermit, rather than the urbane court artist that Li Cheng may have been. Fan Kuan is known primarily for this large painting. His two character signature was discovered only in the last century, hidden among the trees in the lower right-hand corner of the painting.

How do these paintings compare? How do they differ from other earlier and later paintings?

Both paintings exemplify a relatively new trend in Chinese painting at that time: the depiction of massive central peaks separated from the foreground by misty waterfalls and other atmospheric effects. The viewer is offered what art historians call a floating perspective. The eye moves up and down the painting with a shifting perspective, not unlike the feeling one gets riding up a mountain on a cable car. In such a painting, one's eye can travel up to the mountain and observe its peaks at the same time.

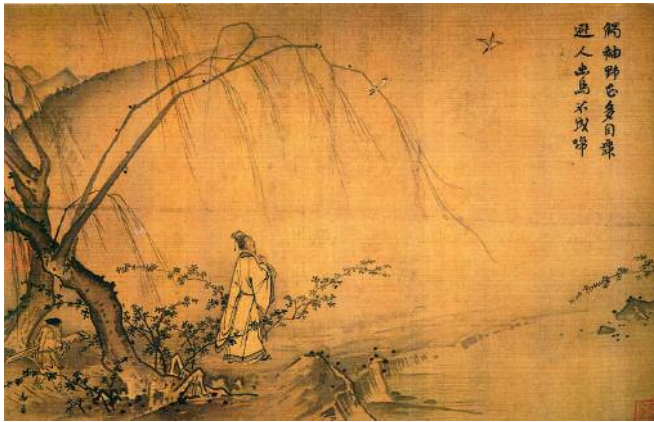
The human presence—indicated by a few buildings or rooftops, a bridge, a person or two—plays a minor role compared to the towering presence of nature. In both paintings, buildings seem to function like observatories from which to view the spectacle. In the Li Cheng painting, a central pagoda stands firmly in the middle of the painting, pointing upward in a way that mirrors the larger mountain peak. This sense of a man-made form echoing natural grandeur has been interpreted by art historians as symbolic of the newly formed Song dynasty, its power and authority consolidated like the mountain, its people content and well nourished beneath a benevolent gaze.

One writer commented that Li Cheng's paintings open up like windows on a distant vista, whereas Fan Kuan's paintings close in on us like solid walls. Indeed, Fan Kuan's singular mountain peak seems darker and more ominous than the earlier artist's work, and the size of the painting alone projects a feeling of monumentality. Both paintings were probably originally displayed in large rooms in palace settings. The subdued tone of both silk paintings is a natural effect caused by aging.

In terms of techniques, both artists outline forms and build up textures with repeated brushstrokes and washes. Most of the work has gone into creating the rocky forms, foliage, and trees. Water is represented by blank spaces. The middle ground in Li Cheng's painting seems sharp and delicate. He became famous for his "crab-claw" trees, which in this painting seem to lead the eye inward and upward. Fan Kuan's mountain appears to have been created with a comparatively damper brush. One can almost feel the cool moisture that settles on the shrubs on the top of the mountain. The foreground rocks, trees, and waterfall fall into sharp focus, separating the foreground and background even more (see detail). Art historians have interpreted the impenetrability of Fan Kuan's mountain as symbolic of difficult but not unreachable spiritual goals.

There is no text inscribed on these paintings—such inscriptions would become an important part of landscape painting in later generations. The brushwork on these two paintings mainly serves to create a sense of real natural scenery. These two hanging scrolls would become legendary for future generations of artists; for example, innumerable copies were made of the Fan Kuan painting. However, the general trend among Chinese painters going forward would be to move away from these detailed vistas in favor of more imaginary, conceptual, and self-conscious landscapes, where different types of canonical brushwork and explicit references to masters of the past became predominant concerns.

SLIDE 20A



On a Mountain Path in Spring
By Ma Yuan, approx. 1190–1225
Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279)
National Palace Museum, Taipei
Taiwan, Republic of China

SLIDE 20B



Apricot Blossoms
By Ma Yuan, approx. 1190–1225
Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279)
National Palace Museum, Taipei
Taiwan, Republic of China

What are these paintings?

These are two paintings by an artist working at the Southern Song court, Ma Yuan (approx. 1190–1225). The first (rectangular-shaped) painting is an album leaf on silk entitled *On a Mountain Path in Spring* and is in the collection of the National Palace Museum in Taipei. The second (square-shaped) painting is a silk fan mounted as an album leaf, entitled *Apricot Blossoms*, also in the collections of the National Palace Museum.

Who was Ma Yuan?

Ma Yuan came from a family of painters. His grandfather and father had held important painting positions at court, and his son Ma Lin also became a noted painter. Ma Yuan came along after a generation of artists had already reestablished the Imperial Painting Academy after the fall of Kaifeng in 1126. Several court artists escaped from the northern capital to the new capital at present-day Hangzhou, so there was a degree of continuity with prior traditions. Nevertheless, the new atmosphere of Hangzhou, with its many canals, lakes, rivers, rolling hills, and warmer climate produced a different style of painting, much of it on a more intimate scale.

Ma Yuan, and a contemporary artist named Xia Gui (both later referred to as Ma-Xia for short) developed a new style that featured asymmetrical compositions, branches hanging overhead, abrupt cliffs or peaks, and angular brushstrokes rather than soft curving lines. Artists began to move away from large-scale scenery to more intimate partial views of nature, emphasizing mood and feeling. In Ma Yuan's paintings, most of the painting is concentrated in one corner (hence the expression "one-corner Ma"). The viewer's eye travels from one side to the other toward an empty space. The mood in both of Ma Yuan's paintings is quiet, soft and lyrical.

What is the subject of each painting?

The horizontal album-leaf painting depicts a gentleman strolling along a path that opens on to a vista shrouded in mist. A willow tree branch arches out as though to frame the solitary walker. A servant follows carrying a musical instrument, perhaps for his master to play along the way. A bird flutters near the upper edge of the painting, near a short poem that reads, "Brushed by his sleeve, wild flowers dance in the wind. Fleeing from him, hidden birds cut short their songs." This poem was perhaps written by the emperor Ningzong (reigned 1194–1224); although one scholar has suggested that it was ghost-written by his wife the empress Yang (1162–1232) due to the emperor's ill health. The poem metaphorically alludes to the effect that the emperor's presence has on women of the court, represented here by the scholar strolling amidst flowers and birds.

The painting of apricot blossoms might seem straightforward enough, until we read the poem in the upper right-hand corner (this time definitely written by Empress Yang) which reads, "Meeting the wind, they offer their artful charm; wet from the dew, they boast their pink beauty." Here the blossoms function as an invitation, a promise of erotic pleasure.

The intimate study of a natural subject such as birds, flowers, and animals amidst foliage, executed in soft, delicate brushstrokes against a plain background harkens back to the Northern Song Academy style promoted by Emperor Huizong. The presence of the imperial hand and intimate subject matter speaks to the close relationship between court painters and patrons at this time.

SLIDE 21A



Xi'an Forest of Stone Steles Museum,
Xi'an, Shaanxi Province,
People's Republic of China
Photo by B. Hogarth, 1982

SLIDE 21B



Painting of Eighteen Scholars (one of a series)
Ming dynasty (1368-1644)
Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk
National Palace Museum, Taipei
Taiwan, Republic of China

What are these images?

The first is a photograph taken inside the Forest of Steles Museum in Xi'an. A man is looking at rows of stone steles that contain historic inscriptions carved over many centuries and preserved here.

The history of the collection begins in the Tang dynasty when various emperors began to order copies of famous works of literature to be engraved on stone, partly for preservation and security, because works on paper could easily be lost or destroyed. Written records had been committed to stone and bronze before, but not systematically collected. For students learning the classics, the stone steles functioned like libraries. Copies could be made of individual works by placing moist paper against the stone and then dabbing the stone with an ink-soaked pad of silk filled with cotton. In some cases, these ink rubbings are all that remain of some stones that have been lost or destroyed.

During the Song dynasty, the present Confucian temple that houses the collection was built and the first stone stele was moved inside. This is a typical practice in many Confucian temples where walls are filled with memorial stones and stone inscriptions. The present stele museum is one of the largest of its kind in East Asia. Among its many treasures are works or copies of original works by Wang Xizhi, the famous Jin dynasty calligrapher, famous works of the Tang dynasty including a version of the Classic of Filial Piety by Tang emperor Xuanzong, and a work by Tang emperor Taizong

in the style of Wang Xizhi (mentioned in the introduction to art of Tang and Song overview section of this packet). The museum also contains works by Chu Suiliang, whose calligraphy is featured in the next and final image. The collection also includes a famous tablet that describes how Nestorian Christianity was introduced to China during the Tang dynasty.

The second image is a painting from a series of paintings known as the *Eighteen Scholars* by an anonymous artist of the Song dynasty, in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei. The actual painting is from the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) but is based on a Song model. We know it dates from the Ming because of particular details such as the furniture that came into fashion during the Ming: the yoke-back chair to the left, and the scroll motifs under the large table, for example.

The story of the eighteen scholars also relates back to the Tang dynasty, when Emperor Taizong (reigned 629–649) appointed a group of eighteen scholars to join the Imperial Academy. A court artist was ordered to paint their portrait, and the calligrapher Chu Suiliang (whose calligraphy is featured in the next image) was ordered to provide the inscriptions listing names and rank. As is common throughout Chinese culture, various figures from the past become models of behavior and were described through poetry, novels, and paintings. The image of the scholars here is somewhat idealistic, framing them in gardens with plants, objects, and activities to engage their interests. In this particular painting from the series, one scholar has taken up a brush and is about to paint or write on paper, while another looks on with great interest. Another scholar reads a book while servants bring out other items of potential curiosity. At the back of the scene another servant unpacks various treasures for viewing. The large tabletop is made of marble and itself resembles a painting. Behind the two main figures is another painting that has been framed in a standing screen, a common format at that time. The painting within a painting is a common device that the artist employs to add visual interest and play with our perception of space and what is real and imagined.

These two examples remind us of the pervasive nature of scholarly pursuits in Tang and Song China, but also the tendency of that tradition to become somewhat clichéd in later times.

SLIDE 22A



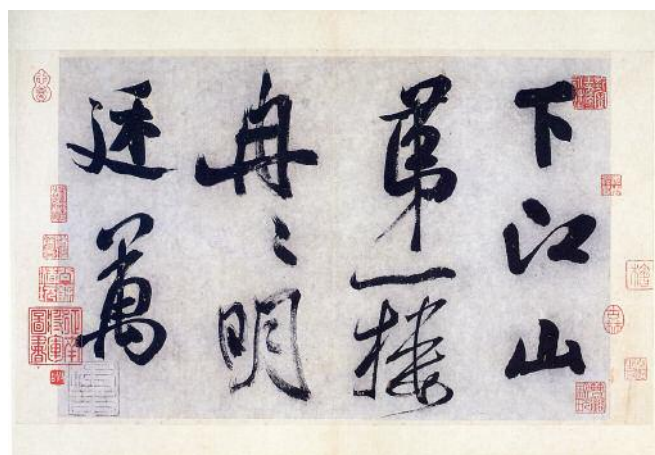
"Scripture of the Hidden Talisman" (*Yinfu jing*), in standard script (*kaishu*)
Characters of the signature of Chu Suiliang, 596–658
Tang dynasty (618–906)
Album, ink on paper
Gift of the Yeh Family Collection, F2002.49.1

SLIDE 22B



Poem concerning the "Pavilion with Various Views" (*Duojing lou*), in semicursive script (*xingshu*)
Attributed to Mi Fu, 1051–1107
Northern Song dynasty (960–1126)
Album, ink on paper
Gift of the Yeh Family Collection, 2004.31

SLIDE 22C



Poem concerning the "Pavilion with Various Views" (*Duojing lou*), in semicursive script (*xingshu*)
Attributed to Mi Fu, 1051–1107
Northern Song dynasty (960–1126)
Album, ink on paper
Gift of the Yeh Family Collection, 2004.31

What are these images?

Each image includes two open pages from an album leaf that contains writing by two master calligraphers: Chu Suiliang from the Tang dynasty and Mi Fu from the Song dynasty. Both of these works have been recently acquired by the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco as a gift from the Yeh family.

Who were the calligraphers?

Chu Suiliang (596–658) was one of a group of Tang dynasty calligraphers who worked at court. Among the elder members of this group were Ou-yang Xun and Yu Shi-nan. Ou-yang (557–641) had served at the Sui court (the Sui dynasty had unified China before the Tang, after several centuries of division) and was knighted by Tang emperor Taizong at the age of 85. His works survive through copies on stone steles (see previous slide). He is known for his solid, firm style of calligraphy. Yu's (558–638) work also survives through stone copies. He was curator of the imperial collections and was praised by the emperor for demonstrating five virtues: faithfulness to the court, loyalty to friends, breadth in scholarship, elegance in literary composition, and excellence in calligraphy. Another famous Tang calligrapher was Yan Zhenqing, who remained loyal to the throne throughout the turbulence of the An Lushan rebellion in the mid-8th century. He was captured and killed by rebels for refusing to change sides, an act that equated him with the concept of the "upright brush," or unswerving moral character. These Tang court calligraphers saw themselves as keepers of tradition, and exemplars of moral character through their mastery of writing.

After Yu Shi-nan died, the emperor lamented his loss, and therefore was grateful when he was introduced to the younger Chu Suiliang whose work pleased him. The emperor instructed Chu to become an expert on the Jin dynasty calligrapher Wang Xizhi (303–361), to authenticate works, and to direct the making of copies (Taizong was very interested in the work of Wang Xizhi, and by this time thousands of copies were in circulation claiming to be authentic works). He was also asked to write out the emperor's preface for the newly released translations of Buddhist texts that the monk Xuanzang had brought back from India (see slide 13).

The work seen here is typical of Chu's style, characterized by delicate strokes that start thinly before ending with more emphasis and weight. One writer described his writing as a "frail lady who appears unable to bear the weight of her own silk garments." Chu's characters are written in standard script, as befits an official document. Despite the regular script style, there is still room for individual expression. Chu was very familiar with the cursive or running script made famous by Wang Xizhi. His writing can be viewed as an amalgamation of Wang's fluid brushwork with the more angular, hard-edge style associated with official carvings on stone monuments, temples, and tombs. His work is both profound and yet graceful at the same time.

The actual content of Chu's writing here is the *Yinfu jing*, or Scripture of the Hidden Talisman, a work describing the workings of the cosmos as revealed to the legendary Yellow Emperor. The whole composition covers 24 leaves with 461 characters. Northern Song emperor Huizong is said to have imitated Chu's style of calligraphy and particularly appreciated this work.

Like Chu Suiliang, Mi Fu (1052–1107, also called Mi Fei) was part of a circle of scholar-painters and calligraphers who worked at various times for the Northern Song court. This group included Su Shi (1036–1101), Huang Tingjian (1045–1105), and Mi Fu. Their fortunes as a group were less glorious than that of the Tang calligraphers—they frequently fell out of favor and several were exiled more than once. For that reason, and for artistic reasons, this group of calligraphers is often considered to be the first of the true literati (*wenren*), cultured men who moved freely between painting, poetry, and calligraphy, and who did some of their best work away from the official court environment. Another element of this literati trend is the ideal of painting (or writing) that captures the inner essence of a subject rather than its outward appearance. In the case of calligraphy, this meant choosing whether or not to let the brushwork openly express the content of the writing, or whether to conceal one's personal feelings and write in a more opaque manner.

Su Shi and Huang Tingjian both admired the work of Tang calligrapher Yan Zhenqing (mentioned above). Su Shi, a scholar, statesman, poet, and calligrapher, claimed that he learned from the work of masters represented on stone steles. He was frequently called into civil service positions and then relocated. Huang Tingjian claimed that his own style came into being after watching the oars of a boat on the Yangzi River. He spent the last eleven years of his life in exile. Mi Fu, unlike the others, never took the civil service examinations that were the normal prerequisite for any kind of secure government position. His ancestors were military men, originally Turkic or Sogdian people. Mi set about establishing himself as an expert on painting and calligraphy, and a connoisseur of collections. He moved about through a variety of lowly positions—although for a brief time he was appointed by Emperor Huizong to be the Dean of the Imperial College of Calligraphy—and this gave him exposure to many works in private hands.

Mi Fu did not appreciate the regularity of standard script, even though he claimed to like the work of Chu Suiliang. Chu, in his opinion, was to be admired, because he allowed not only direct tracing of famous calligraphers like Wang Xizhi, but also freely interpreted them. He liked the notion that more complicated characters could be written large, and simple characters small. Mi also allowed his writing to be affected by mood, unlike Huang Tingjian, who could write strong characters even while complaining about his health. Mi had a proud and often outspoken personality. Like the Yuan dynasty artist Ni Zan, he was apparently obsessed with his own cleanliness, allowed no one else but himself to touch his pictures, and went around in Tang-dynasty robes. He claimed that he alone could use “all four sides of a brush.” He wrote his own history of calligraphy and knew how to mount his own scrolls. “Written words must have bone structure,” He once wrote, “flesh in modulation and lustrous muscle.”

Mi Fu's calligraphy shown here is from a poem concerning a “pavilion with various views” (*Duoqing lou*) executed in semicursive script (*xingshu*). The whole work consists of 95 characters on 11 pages. The first two sentences consisting of fourteen characters (reading from top to bottom and right to left) are “Hua xu dou shuai meng ceng you” and “Tian xia jiang shan di yi lou” which roughly translated means, “The elite once traveled there (to the doujinglou), led by a dream. This is the number one pavilion under heaven (or in the world).” One can see all the qualities of Mi's writing in these few characters. Strong, deliberate strokes of varying width and depth of ink reveal an artist of strong opinions and beliefs and yet of great artistry and sophistication. Su Shi described Mi's work, “like sailing in the wind, and riding a horse into battle, his writing is exhilarating!”

These two works are about a thousand years old, a remarkable fact considering they are made on paper. In addition, they have survived many political and social upheavals over the centuries. Attached to the original works are extra written sections called colophons that include the comments of later, appreciative collectors. They speak to the many layers of tradition that are now embodied in such works and the longstanding interest that persists in collecting Tang and Song dynasty calligraphies as works of art.



Classroom Applications
By Michele Delattre

Classroom Applications

The purpose of this packet is to provide educators with classroom tools that can be used in conjunction with the other materials in the workshop for integrating Tang and Song China across the State of California history-social science, visual arts, and language arts curriculum. The classroom materials are targeted for the 7th grade and were developed by middle school teachers Carolyn Rinetti, Kay Corcoran, and Donna Kasprowicz.

The first section, History and Social Science Connections, developed by Carolyn Rinetti, offers a framework for middle-school history teachers, and related student assignments covering historical literacy, social science, and exercises in historical evaluation and analysis. The standard addressed is:

History Standard:

- 7.3 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of China in the Middle Ages.

The second section, Fine Arts Connections, developed by Kay Corcoran, integrates art practice into the history curriculum with a studio art project exploring the importance of painting, calligraphy, and poetry in the scholar-official's life. The standards addressed are:

History Standard:

- 7.3.6 Describe the development of the imperial state and the scholar-official class.

Visual Art Standards:

- 7.3.0 Historical and Cultural Context: Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of the Visual Arts
- 7.2.0 Creative Expression: Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Visual Arts

The third section, Language Arts Connections, developed by Donna Kasprowicz, integrates language and fine arts to the Tang/Song curriculum through the travels of Tang-dynasty Buddhist monk Xuanzang, and his folk hero disciple Monkey. The standards addressed are:

History Standard:

- 7.3.1 Describe the reunification of China under the Tang dynasty and reasons for the spread of Buddhism in Tang China, Korea, and Japan.

Language Arts Standards:

- 7.1.0 Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development
- 7.3.0 Literary Response and Analysis

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History and Social Science Connections

By Carolyn Rinetti

History and Social Science Connections

Tang and Song China are taught in 7th grade world history. This part of the packet, developed by history teacher Carolyn Rinetti, offers an overview and suggested activities for approaching the unit through skill sets applied across world history studies.

A. Historical Literacy: What key terms, people, places, dates, and events do students need to know?

Handout A1: Tang and Song dynasties overview with study questions prompts.

Handout A2: Discussion points for some Tang and Song emperors.

Handout A3: Discussion points for comparing the Tang and Song dynasties. This may be formatted as an overhead for class discussion.

B. Social Science: What was life like? How did daily life in the Tang and Song dynasties compare with student life today in the United States?

Handout B1: Poetry activity

C. Historical Evaluation: What were some key events and decisions? How could the outcomes have been different? On what criteria did people base their decisions?

Handout C1: Science and technology connections

D. Historical Significance: How did the Tang and Song civilizations influence the modern world?

Handout D: Final writing assignments

HISTORICAL LITERACY: HANDOUT A1

Tang and Song Dynasties: An Overview

TANG DYNASTY

The Tang (618–906) and Song (960–1279) dynasties are sometimes referred to in textbooks as Medieval China because they coincided in time with the Early and High Middle Ages of Western Europe. But life was very different in the refined empires of Tang and Song China than it was in the struggling Frankish kingdom of Charlemagne or England during the Norman invasion. By the time two Chinese military leaders rebelled against the Sui imperial family and established the Tang Dynasty in 618, Chinese administrations already had hundreds of years of experience building and maintaining empires. The Tang and Song dynasties spanned more than 600 years (from 618 to 1279) and witnessed astonishing advances in science, technology, arts, and philosophy. The Tang empire was noted as a center for foreign exchange in goods and ideas, a powerful expansionist military, a capable civil service and system of education, and an explosion of arts and culture. The Song dynasty built on many of the Tang's accomplishments but life for the Chinese in this period was different. The security of the Song empire was threatened by invaders on its northern and western borders making foreign interaction in the Song more dangerous. Many Chinese responded to these invasions by often turning away from foreign goods and ideas and focusing instead on philosophies and experiences closer to home.

When the Tang dynasty came to power the empire instituted many changes in Chinese government and society to strengthen and further unify China. The second Tang emperor, Taizong, revived and expanded the practice of choosing government officials through rigorous written examinations that emphasized Confucian values of loyalty and service. In this way, the emperors could be sure of placing loyal and hard-working officials all over the empire. This would be especially important as the empire expanded, making it necessary for officials to serve far from the capital city of Chang'an. The Tang rulers tried to expand their holdings as far as possible by placing military bases along the Silk Road. These outposts brought new products and ideas into China from as far away as Persia and Byzantium.

In order to feed the growing population, the Tang emperors also started a policy of land reform with the goal of putting more land into the hands of farmers. This policy significantly increased farm production. More rice was shipped from the fields in the south to the centers of power in northern China along the Grand Canal.

Increased trade and contact with foreign cultures led to the introduction of religions and philosophies from abroad. In addition to the native religious philosophies of Daoism and Confucianism, some foreign religions also became popular. The most important of these was Buddhism which spread along the Silk Road into China from India. Emperor Taizong who was a supporter of Buddhism ordered the building of a special pagoda in Chang'an to house important sutras brought from India by the famous monk, Xuanzang. It was through the desire to create large numbers of copies of Buddhist scriptures that the development of simple printing technology became widespread during Tang times.

During the tenth century, Tang rule was weakened as a result of invasions of nomadic peoples on their northern and western borders and internal political struggles. Further, China's government began to lose control of the Silk Road. Heavy taxes and imperial and administrative corruption finally caused rebellion, and in 907 the last Tang emperor was overthrown.

SONG DYNASTY

In 960, after a half century of fighting and disorder, a military leader named Zhao Kuangyin established the Song dynasty. The Song dynasty was the second great medieval period in China. Unlike the Tang period, however, the Song dynasty constantly faced the threat of invasion. Song emperors kept peace with the threatening northern kingdoms of the Qidan and the Tangut by sending them large amounts of silk, silver, and tea. Instead of expanding and controlling a far-flung empire like the Tang, the Song focused on increasing prosperity and stability at home.

The Song dynasty placed great value on diplomacy and civilian-controlled government. Examination as a means to obtaining official government positions became even more important during the Song dynasty. Only ten percent of the test candidates were allowed to pass at each level. Wealthy families spent large sums of money on books, schools, and tutors so their sons would have better chances of passing the civil service examination that included memorizing passages from Confucian classics and composing complex poems on given themes.

But the Song dynasty suffered a blow in 1127 when neither bribes nor military defenses could prevent the Jurchen peoples of Central Asia from invading the northern Song capital of Kaifeng. The Song administration and many of the Chinese people retreated to southern China and established a new capital at Hangzhou. The dynasty after this relocation has come to be referred to by historians as the Southern Song. But even after this defeat, scholars, artists, scientists, and engineers continued to thrive in the Southern Song period.

Cut off from the Silk Road in the north, China turned to ocean-going trade. Shipbuilders made crafts with several masts and stern post rudders replaced oars. The magnetic compass allowed mariners to sail out of sight of land for longer distances. Constantly on the defense from outside attack, the Song developed gunpowder technology to create flame-throwers and explosive rockets. The influx of people to southern China meant more mouths to feed in the rice-growing region of the south. Song scientists with the Ministry of Agriculture developed faster growing rice through selective breeding, thereby increasing the number of harvests.

The ever-present threat of invaders from the outside made many Song Chinese turn away from Buddhism—now considered a foreign religion—and focus on reviving the native values of Confucianism. One result of this was the weakening of women's autonomy and rights due to Confucius' philosophy that stressed women's obedience and dependency on men.

Intellectual life grew along with urban life. More and more people moved to urban centers of the Song to participate in manufacturing and trade. An increasing demand for books on many subjects spurred tremendous growth in publishing, and booksellers could be found in all major Song cities. Southern Song urban centers flourished until 1276, when the last Song regent surrendered to the Mongol forces of Khublai Khan rather than put up a futile resistance and ultimately see his people and cities destroyed.

1. What actions, goals and accomplishments do the Tang and Song dynasties share?

2. In what ways are the Tang and Song dynasties different in their actions, goals, and accomplishments?

HISTORICAL LITERACY: HANDOUT A2

Some Important Chinese Emperors During the Tang and Song Dynasties

DISCUSSION SHEET

TANG DYNASTY RULERS

Taizong (reigned 626–649)

- Excellent scholar and calligrapher
- Emphasized Confucian ideas; but supported Daoism and Buddhism when practical
- Expanded power and trade through military force and diplomacy
- Limited public works projects and thereby reduced forced labor; lowered taxes

Wu Zeitan (reigned 690–705)

- Only woman to rule China in her own name
- Eliminated most of the extended imperial family and used secret informants to gain power
- Strongly supported Buddhism
- Generous to lower classes and gained their support
- Continued to expand Chinese power abroad

Xuanzong (reigned 713–756)

- Poet and musician
- Extended examination system to more commoners
- Established standard equal measures for silver, grain, and silk to help merchants
- Became obsessed with favorite concubine Yang Guifei and fell from power in rebellion led by General An Lushan

SONG DYNASTY RULERS

Taizu, first emperor of Song (reigned 960–976)

- Replaced military governors with civilian governors
- Created Council of State to freely debate policy
- Board of Censors controlled abuses and centralized power

Huizong (reigned 1100–1125)

- Painter and poet
- Developed "imperial style" of calligraphy
- Established first Academy of Painting
- Devout Daoist
- Captured by the Jurchen, his former allies, and imprisoned along with several thousand imperial relatives. He died a captive.

Xiaozong, emperor of Southern Song (reigned 1162–1189)

- Extended sea trade to India and Persian Gulf
- Oversaw growth of urban merchant class and increased tax revenue from trade
- Paper money system created under his administration

HISTORICAL LITERACY: HANDOUT A3
Comparing Elite Culture in the Tang and Song Dynasties
DISCUSSION SHEET

TANG DYNASTY	SONG DYNASTY
<p>Looking outward</p> <p>Open to foreign ideas</p> <p>Rise of Buddhism</p> <p>Women enjoy some freedoms</p> <p>Trade along the Silk Road</p> <p>White porcelain prized by Arab merchants</p> <p>Territorial expansion through military conflict</p>	<p>Looking inward</p> <p>Foreign ideas are feared or rejected</p> <p>Revival of Confucianism</p> <p>Women's rights become more restricted</p> <p>Trade by sea route</p> <p>Green glazed porcelain fired in "dragon kilns"</p> <p>Territorial defense through diplomacy and appeasement with goods and money</p>

SOCIAL SCIENCE: HANDOUT B1

Poetry Activity

What did life in Tang and Song China share with life in California today?

Students write poems that reflect either Tang or Song influences.

A. Tang poem: Tang poetry was noted for its expression of personal emotions.

Many Tang scholar officials and soldiers wrote poems about their homesickness when duty called them to outlying regions of the empire. *Write a poem expressing the emotion of homesickness.*

B. Song poem: Song poets were noted for their interest in everyday observations.

As Song dynasty rulers turned away from the expansionist policies seen in the Tang to focus on strengthening China's security at home, poets of the period similarly began to look carefully at the world close to home and celebrate the details of Chinese daily life. *Write a poem about something you see or do every day and concentrate on the details of the experience.*

HISTORICAL EVALUATION: HANDOUT C1
Science and Technology Connections
ASTRONOMY

The Chinese used armillary spheres to measure the positions of the stars. An armillary sphere is like a protractor for the sky or a set of star rulers. In the early Tang dynasty Li Chun Feng upgraded the armillary sphere to include three color-coded intersecting rings: red for the sun's path, white for the moon's path, and yellow for the stars' paths. One hundred years later, Tang Astronomical Administrator, Yi Xing, created an armillary sphere that was driven by water and had two wooden mannequins that struck a drum to indicate the time. Yi Xing was also the first astronomer to calculate the length of the Prime Meridian—the imaginary line that circles the earth.

During the Song dynasty astronomers constructed extensive star maps and made many complex instruments for measuring the movement and location of stars and planets. One star map made by the Prime Minister Su Song displayed over a thousand stars. Su Song also invented a 35-foot tall astronomical water-clock tower. According to legend Song spent seven years perfecting this device because an inaccurate Chinese calendar had caused him to deliver a birthday greeting one day too early and he had been very embarrassed by his mistake.

1. List an important Tang idea or invention.

2. List an important Song idea or invention.

3. What was one idea both dynasties shared?

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE: HANDOUT D1

Final Writing Assignments

1. RANKING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Students select ten of the Tang and Song accomplishments in science, technology, literature, or philosophy and rank them in order of greatest importance and influence on both China and the outside world. Students then select the three accomplishments they have ranked as most important and write a paragraph giving their reasons for their choices.

2. COMPARE AND CONTRAST THE TANG AND SONG DYNASTIES

DIRECTIONS FOR WRITING: Using the information you have read and analyzed about the accomplishments of the Tang and Song dynasties, you will write a comparison of the two dynasties. Use the following outline to organize your ideas.

PARAGRAPH 1: Describe three to four ideas or accomplishments that the Tang and Song dynasties shared. Give a brief description of the idea or accomplishment and how it helped those dynasties rule China.

PARAGRAPH 2: Describe three to four ways in which the Tang and Song dynasties were different or how the Song dynasty further developed ideas that started with the Tang.

PARAGRAPH 3: Summarize what you think was the most important idea or accomplishment that the Tang and Song dynasties shared. Tell how this idea helped to make China one of the most highly developed civilizations of the time.



Fine Arts Connections
By Kay Corcoran

FINE ARTS CONNECTIONS

Literati Painting and Calligraphy of the Song Dynasty

BACKGROUND:

During the Song dynasty, Chinese painters and calligraphers were educated men. By this period, China was governed by a centralized bureaucracy of scholar-officials under the office of the emperor rather than by hereditary aristocrats as in the earlier Tang dynasty. These scholar-officials were members of the “literati” class and had gained their unique status through a national examination process that required a formal education in classic Chinese literary, historical, and philosophical texts. In addition, they needed to be adept at the “Three Perfections”: calligraphy, painting, and poetry. Their knowledge made them highly respected members of society. Once they had passed the difficult government examinations, these scholar-officials continued to collect and create many art forms.

PAINTING AND CALLIGRAPHY

Both painting and calligraphy required the skilled use of brush and ink. Many of the most talented painters and calligraphers became part of official court academies where they received rigorous professional training and worked for the emperor himself. Certain scholar/artists began to reject the official court style and came to believe that calligraphy should reflect the personal, expressive qualities of the individual artist. These two styles are referred to as the “professional” court style and the “amateur” personal style.

The same argument was applied to painting. Some literati argued that landscapes or objects, painted in nature, reflected the personal mood of the artist in the moment. Their works were vehicles for spontaneous self-expression. Like calligraphy, landscape painting was often done in only black ink, emphasizing expressive brushwork. This school of painting came to be known as the *wen ren hua*, which means “literati painting.” A central figure of this movement was Su Shi, the poet/scholar/painter/art critic, who was often known by his pen name Su Dungpo. It is not certain whether any of Su Dungpo’s paintings have survived. His favorite subjects were bamboo and old trees. However his essay “Essay on the Bamboo Paintings of Wen Tong” clearly expresses the value he placed on the artist’s interpretation of his image: “The painter must get the bamboo beforehand in his heart...and it is completed with a flourish of the brush...like a falcon swooping down on a bounding hare.”

Followers of the *wen ren hua* movement emphasized the “amateur” nature of their work by making paintings for themselves, giving paintings as gifts to each other, and even refusing to sell them. They pursued painting and calligraphy for their own pleasure and self-expression.

CONNOISSEURSHIP AND COLLECTIONS

Song dynasty literati often gathered together to read poetry, view paintings and calligraphy, play music, and discuss the arts. Connoisseurship—that is, having the knowledge to judge and appreciate art—became an important quality for members of the elite class. In addition to fine arts, the literati class began to avidly collect other objects of aesthetic value such as ancient bronze vessels, jade, ceramics, and archaeological discoveries. The idea of collecting objects from the past also became quite popular and replicas of ancient objects were created and collected. It was during the Song dynasty that painters began to apply their own seals and signatures to their paintings, calligraphy and books—both those they created and those they collected. These seals added value to the art, because they showed who the previous owners were and provided a sense of the past.

The Tang and Song Dynasties: Art Activity for the Middle School Classroom

TITLE: SCHOLAR/LITERATI SCROLL PROJECT

Students will become members of the “literati/scholar” class by demonstrating their understanding of Chinese history, philosophy, and poetry. They will also display high achievement in the “Three Perfections”: calligraphy, painting, and poetry.

GRADE: 7TH GRADE

Subject Area: Language Arts, History/Social Science, Fine Art

OBJECTIVE:

This project is designed to be a creative alternative to daily or weekly assignments which might otherwise be assembled in a notebook or binder at the end of the 7th-grade Medieval China unit.

MATERIALS:

- Asian Art Museum CD of images from Tang & Song Dynasties in this packet
- Suggested books (see bibliography)
- Websites (see bibliography)
- Handouts below
- Scroll materials: butcher paper, rice paper, dowels, bamboo, glue
- Accumulated student work from the study of China

HANDOUTS:

- A. Scholar/Literati Scroll Project
- B. Writing Poetry in the Golden Age
- C. Confucian Sayings
- D. Daoist Sayings: In the Words of Laozi and Zhuangzi

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

This unit was adapted from a curriculum unit "The Imperial Examination" by Jan Coleman-Knight, 7th-grade teacher at Thornton Junior High, Fremont, California.

FINE ARTS ACTIVITY: HANDOUT A

Scholar/Literati Scroll Project

In order to become a member of the “scholar/literati” class you must demonstrate your understanding of Chinese history, philosophy, and poetry. To bring honor and prestige to your family you need to display your talents in painting and calligraphy.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE SCROLL:

- The scroll can be of any length but should not exceed 20” wide.
- The scroll should be made of paper or cloth.
- The scroll must be rolled, tied with cordage, and respectfully presented to the government official who presides over your classroom.
- Your scroll should include evidence of your knowledge and artistry. You may demonstrate “flair” by the way you embellish your scroll.

EVIDENCE OF SCHOLARLY ACHIEVEMENT:

1. The scroll must include this information on the Tang dynasty, Northern and Southern Song dynasties:
 - Beginning and ending dates of each dynasty
 - Two scientific or technological achievements of the Tang dynasty
 - Two scientific or technological achievements of the Song dynasty
2. A map of China which clearly shows:
 - The largest extent of the Tang dynasty and capital city of Chang’an (present day Xi’an)
 - The boundaries of the Northern Song dynasty and capital city of Kaifeng
 - The boundaries of the Southern Song dynasty and capital city of Hangzhou
 - The Huang He and Chang Jiang Rivers
 - The Silk Road
 - The Grand Canal

EVIDENCE OF ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT:

1. Using a black pen, copy a Confucian, Daoist, or Buddhist “saying” in your most beautiful cursive or calligraphy.
2. Copy a Tang or Song dynasty poem. Again, use your most beautiful cursive in black ink.
3. Write your own free verse in one of the Tang dynasty styles. Your subject should reflect one of the fourteen subject categories listed in the “Writing Poetry in the Golden Age” handout.
4. Write a Chinese character using black ink with brush.
http://www.usc.edu/dept/ealc/chinese/newweb/character_page.html
5. Make a painting of bamboo (use watercolor on rice paper).
<http://www.brushpaintings.com/lesson/>

EVIDENCE OF CONNOISSEURSHIP:

1. Write the name of one painter, calligrapher, or poet from the Shang, Zhou, Han, or Tang dynasties. Include an example of this artist’s work.
2. Display three art objects from the Tang or Song dynasty that you have acquired. Be sure to identify each object. What is special about it? What dynasty does it date from?

NOTE: Ownership of bronze and ceramic objects shows that you are of the “scholar/ literati” class.

If you have a “chop” you can stamp each piece you’ve included on your scroll. Demonstrate your connoisseurship by studying the scrolls created by other literati in your class. See if a classmate will let you stamp his/her artwork.

All scrolls will be evaluated for accuracy, completeness, and presentation.

The most beautiful scrolls will be displayed to bring honor upon you and your families.

FINE ARTS ACTIVITY: HANDOUT B

Writing Poetry in the Golden Age

During the Tang (618–906) and Song (960–1278) dynasties, the writing of poetry reached its greatest flowering. Later, this period was regarded as the Golden Age of Poetry in China. During the Song Dynasty, due to the invention of printing, poetry became widely known and studied. Almost all educated people during this period wrote poems. They wrote to express themselves and observe the world around them and also on social occasions, to honor visitors, to flatter a host, or even just send a message. In total, about 50,000 poems by 2,200 poets have survived from the Tang dynasty and even more from the Song. Poems from Tang and Song China have been studied and memorized around the world for more than 1,000 years since they were first written.

The subject of these poems can be classified in various ways. They fall into one of fourteen categories:

- flowers
- palace life
- animals
- daily events
- bamboo
- weather
- insects
- human character
- the sky
- tools
- seasons
- the earth
- music
- festivals

Though they were written in Chinese characters, these poems have been translated into English. Two of the most well-known poets are Li Bo and Du Fu who lived during the Tang dynasty. Here is a poem called “Fighting South of the Wall” by Li Bo:

*Yesterday's man on top of the wall
Beneath the wall is a ghost today.
Still the banners are like an array of stars;
And the war drums' sound is not yet done;
And out of my family, husbands and sons,
All are there in the sound of the drums.*
from *The Asian World, 600–1500*
(*The Medieval and Early Modern World*),
Des Forges and Major, 2006.

There are several parts to your assignment:

1. Select and read one poem from the Golden Age. Read the poem several times to understand the beauty of the poem. In what subject category does it fall?
2. Write a short reflection about what you think of this poem. Why has it survived for more than 1,000 years?
3. Using your best cursive writing and a black pen, copy the poem for display on your scroll.
4. Read the poem of one of your classmates. Discuss your insights.
5. Review the fourteen subject categories; write a poem that is inspired by one. The most popular poetic form in the Tang dynasty used four or eight lines. “Craft” your poem so that the form uses only four or eight lines.

FINE ARTS ACTIVITY: HANDOUT C

The Sayings of Confucius

“Do not do unto others that which you do not wish them to do unto you.”

“Listening to music brings harmony to the mind. Right conduct brings harmony of existence.”

“Archery shows us how to find the Path. When an archer misses his aim, he blames no one but looks for the fault in himself.”

“Learn as if you could never have enough of learning, as if you might miss something.”

“A state needs three things: sufficient food, sufficient military equipment, and the confidence of the people in their government.” A student asked, “If you had to eliminate one, which would you give up first?” The master replied, “Military equipment.” The student asked, “And next?” Confucius replied, “Food. Because everyone must die, and life is not worth much unless people have confidence in their government.”

“Your parents gave you bodies, hair, and skin, every bit of you. Take care of them.”

“The superior man thinks of what is right; the small man thinks of what is profitable.”

“The superior man is watchful of these things: his eyes, so that he may observe; his ears, that he may learn; his face, that it may reflect kindness always; his manners, that they might show respect for others; his words, that they may be true; his business dealings, that they may be fair; his doubts, that he may resolve them; his emotions, that he may control them; his money, that he may earn it honestly.”

“Be considerate of your elders, open-hearted with friends, and treat the young ones tenderly.”

“When people are educated, the distinction between classes disappears.”

“The educational and transforming power of manners is most subtle. They check depravity before it has taken form. They cause a man daily to tend toward the good and keep him from wrongdoing without his even being conscious of it. That is why the ancient kings valued manners so highly.”

Kelen, Betty. *Confucius*. Camden, NJ: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1971.

FINE ARTS ACTIVITY: HANDOUT D

Daoist Sayings: In the Words of Laozi and Zhuangzi

“The supreme good is like water, which nourishes all things without trying to. It is content to take the low places that people scorn. Thus it is like the *dao*.”

Laozi

“Make your needs few, and lessen your wishes. Then you may get along even without rations.”

Zhuangzi

“Water is the softest and meekest thing in the world. Yet it is best able to overcome that which is strong and solid.”

Laozi

“Therefore, it is said that the ultimate man has no self, the spiritual person has no accomplishment, and the wise person no name.”

Zhuangzi

“To learn, one accumulates day by day. To study *dao*, one reduces day by day.”

Laozi

“If I think well of life, then for the same reason I must think well of my death.”

Zhuangzi

“The *dao* is like an empty bowl. That may be drawn from without ever needing to be filled. It has no bottom; (it is) the very ancestor from which all things in the world come.”

Laozi

“A path (*dao*) becomes a path by people walking it. A thing being called something becomes it. Why is it so? It is so because it is so. Why is it not something other than what it is? It is not because it is not.”

Zhuangzi

Pretend that you are a student of Daoism. Select one of the above quotations to help explain your understanding of this philosophy.

Copy the words here:

What do you think this means? Use your own words. Can you give an example from “real life” to explain?



Language Arts Connections
By Donna Kasprowicz

LANGUAGE ARTS CONNECTIONS

Xuanzang and the Journey to the West

One of the greatest contributors to the spread of Buddhism in Tang China was the traveler, scholar-monk, and translator Xuanzang. The life of Xuanzang is also a colorful example of Tang interaction with foreign cultures and the source of folk legends, literature, art, and performance right up to the present day. Early in the Tang dynasty the young Chinese monk traveled over 10,000 miles to India and back in order to study with Buddhist masters and bring back Sanskrit sutras containing Buddhist teachings to China. His travels took him across incredibly dangerous and rugged terrain along the Silk Road through what is now Afghanistan, through much of India, and back. His journey lasted fourteen years and he returned to China with 657 scrolls, many Buddhist relics, and a knowledge of Sanskrit that would allow him to become an important translator of Buddhist texts into Chinese. But in addition to contributing to the spread of Buddhism in China, the stories of his exotic travels through dangerous and foreign territory fired the popular imagination. He chronicled his adventures abroad in a travelogue published in 646 which inspired popular legends, and in the Ming dynasty was mythologized in the classical novel, *Journey to the West*. In the Ming novel, Xuanzang is protected on his pilgrimage by three disciples and a magical horse. The disciples and horse are all minor deities sent on the pilgrimage by the compassionate bodhisattva Guanyin (Indian: Avalokiteshvara) to atone for various crimes in Heaven. All of these characters have continued to find life in art and performance throughout East Asia. The most popular of the disciples, Monkey or Sun Wu Kong, continues to be an important folk hero in Chinese opera and popular culture including Japanese manga, video games, and cartoons, and even appeared as the Microsoft “Office Assistant” (the annoying talking paperclip) in the Asian versions of Office software.

Donna Kasprovicz integrates the mythologized story of Monkey’s adventures with Xuanzang into the Language Arts curriculum using the two locally-available inexpensive texts below. She also offers a fine arts extension with a hands-on puppet project.

Jiang, Ji-Li. *The Magical Monkey King: Mischief in Heaven*. Fremont: Shen’s Books, 2004.

Kherdian, David. *Monkey: A Journey to the West*. Boston: Shambhala, 2000.

Several story summaries are also available on the Web. One good teacher-created site for 6th grade is:

<http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/curriculum/monkey/journey/index.asp>

LANGUAGE ARTS CONNECTIONS DEVELOPED BY DONNA KASPROWICZ:

A. Cloze Activity

“Cloze” is a reading comprehension activity similar to “mad-libs.” Students demonstrate mastery of narrative content and develop vocabulary by supplying words deleted from a text. The Cloze activity using Ji-Li Jiang’s text is for lower-level readers. The Cloze activity using David Kherdian’s text is for advanced readers.

A1. Story Background for Cloze Activities

A2. Ji-Li Jiang Cloze Handout

A3. Ji-Li Jiang Cloze Key

A4. David Kherdian Cloze Handout

A5. David Kherdian Cloze Key

B. Expository Writing: Summary of Monkey King Story

B1. Instructions

B2. Rubric

B3. Student Sample

C. Story Analysis

C1. Analysis Handout

C2. Analysis Key

D. Hands-on Visual and Performing Arts Extension Activity: Shadow Puppets

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT A1
Story Background for Cloze Activities
MONKEY AND THE JOURNEY TO THE WEST

The Monkey legends, like Arthurian legends in the West, comprise a large collection of different adventures which have accumulated around the characters who accompany Xuanzang (or Tripitaka) on his mythologized journey to retrieve sutras from the Western Paradise. In addition to the pilgrimage adventures, Monkey has a set of stories focusing on his birth and early life.

MONKEY'S EARLY LIFE:

Like many heroes, Monkey (or Sun Wu Kong) had an unusual birth, in his case springing from an egg-shaped stone. He was clever and strong and quickly became the king of the monkeys. But mere mortal life was not enough for him.

The Cloze activity for the Ji-Li Jiang's story takes place at the moment when Monkey sets off in search of new powers and the secret of immortality.

THE JOURNEY TO THE WEST:

Buddha asks the bodhisattva Guanyin (Indian: Avalokiteshvara) to help a virtuous pilgrim (Xuanzang) travel from China to the Western Paradise in order to receive Buddhist scriptures and carry them to eastern lands. On Guanyin's journey to Ch'ang-an to find the pilgrim, she overcomes two monsters in battle and delivers both a dragon and the Monkey King from punishment. These figures form a group of disciples who are assigned the duty of protecting Xuanzang on his dangerous journey.

The first monster Guanyin battles was formerly a minor god who accidentally broke a crystal cup while serving the Jade Emperor in Heaven. His monster shape and banishment were punishments for this crime. Guanyin offers to return him to his heavenly position if he helps and protects Xuanzang on his pilgrimage. The monster agrees to become the pilgrim's disciple and is dubbed Sandy Priest.

The second monster Guanyin encounters is also a minor god doing penance for minor crimes in heaven and likewise becomes a disciple on the pilgrimage. Because of his pig-like appearance and voracious appetite, Guanyin gives him the name, Pigsy.

The third creature Guanyin encounters is a dragon who has been suspended in the air as punishment for setting fire to his father's palace and destroying his magic pearls. Guanyin frees the dragon and in exchange he agrees to turn himself into a white horse for the pilgrim's journey.

Finally Guanyin arrives at the mountain where the Monkey King has been imprisoned for five hundred years after continually misbehaving in Heaven. Monkey agrees to mend his ways and become the pilgrim's disciple in exchange for his freedom. Monkey is extremely clever, brave, and strong. He carries a magical staff, has the power to transform himself into seventy-two different shapes, and can leap from cloud to cloud traveling 108,000 miles in a single somersault. But he remains monkey-like in his inability to control his mind and behavior. In order to help Xuanzang teach Monkey self-control, Guanyin gives the pilgrim a magical headband that will tighten painfully on Monkey's head when he loses control.

Xuanzang is given the religious name Tripitaka and sets out on his quest for the Buddhist sutras. With Monkey, Sandy Priest, Pigsy, and White Horse as protectors he encounters many adventures on his long trip to the Western Paradise. When the pilgrim and his disciples finally arrive, the Buddha gives them his sacred sutras to take back to China. Their self-cultivation on the journey and merit earned through good works are rewarded with immortal life and happiness.

The excerpt in the Cloze activity from David Kherdian's text recounts events early in the pilgrimage. Monkey has deserted Xuanzang after being scolded for losing his temper and killing a bandit. When he is finally convinced by the Dragon King of the Eastern Ocean to return to his duties, Xuanzang fits him with the magical headband, or "cap of discipline."

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT A2

Cloze handout for *The Magical Monkey King: Mischief in Heaven* retold by Ji-Li Jiang

Year after year, Magnificent Monkey King and his monkey clan enjoyed carefree lives in the Cave of the Water Curtain. They spent their days in perfect happiness, _____ from vines and trees, eating fruits, and playing all sorts of monkey games. It now seemed that they would be _____ forever in their new home.

But one day, something _____. It was during a birthday party for the king. All the monkeys had brought him _____ flowers and _____ fruits—especially _____, his favorite. Sitting on his _____ throne, surrounded by his beloved monkeys, Monkey should have had the happiest day of his life. _____, in the middle of the celebration, he burst into _____.

The monkeys were _____. They had never seen their king _____ before. And now he was crying!

It was the _____ monkey who stood up and said, “What is wrong?”

Monkey wiped away his _____. “Dear monkeys, we are happy today, but with each birthday we grow older and older. I just _____ that one day we shall all die, and our _____ shall end.” He cried even harder.

The monkeys thought about what he had said. They _____ their heads and started to cry, too.

Grandmother Monkey stood up. “Magnificent King,” she said, “if that is what is making you _____, I have an idea. I learned from my grandmother, who learned from her _____, that there are three types of beings who never die. Why don’t you go and learn _____ secrets?”

Monkey jumped up on his throne. “Who are these three types of _____?”

“First are the _____. They are the wise teachers. They study the secret of life and learn to stay young forever. Second are the _____, like Jade Emperor, who know the secret of life and so can live forever. Finally there are the Buddhas, such as the great Buddha and Goddess Guanyin. Since they have achieved complete _____, they *live* the secret of life.”

Monkey was so excited that he did a _____ in the air. “What a brilliant idea, Grandmother,” he said. “I will seek out a _____ and learn the secret of living forever. Then I’ll come back and _____ it to all of you so we can enjoy our lives together _____.”

Monkey was so enthusiastic that he said his goodbyes _____. Before an hour had passed, he started off in search of a sage who could teach him the secret of _____ life.

Monkey traveled hundreds of leagues to countless far-off lands. He met with people of all sorts. He even learned to dress and speak like them, but in all of his travels he _____ that most people were more interested in money and fame than in the _____ of life. Even after nine years of searching, not a single worthy _____ did he find. He was beginning to think he would never find one.

Then, one day, he was walking in a deep, dark forest far from the Mountain of Flowers and Fruits. Here the leaves were so _____ that no sunlight came through. A peaceful silence filled the air.

In the middle of this forest he heard a man singing:

I chase no glory, I pursue no coin.
Fame and wealth are passing clouds to me.
A simple life prolongs my days.
And those I meet upon my way
Are sages one and all,
Are sages one and all.

“At last!” cried Monkey. “I have found a _____!” He ran toward the sound of the voice.

A man was cutting branches from the _____.

“Reverend sage,” Monkey cried, bowing deeply. “Consider me your student.”

At these words the woodcutter looked up, _____, and dropped his axe. “But I am not a _____, sir,” he said. “I’m just a humble woodcutter. You mustn’t bow to me.

“If you are not a sage, why did you sing that song?” _____ Monkey.

The _____ looked alarmed. “I – I didn’t intend to mislead anyone,” he _____ . “That song was taught to me by a great sage who lives over the hills from here.”

“What is his name?”

“Master Subhodi.”

Monkey _____. “Well, well. Then you must show me where this sage lives.” The woodcutter, who was a little frightened of Monkey, led the way along a path in the woods. It grew darker and darker. When it grew too dark to see, the _____ stopped. “I can go no _____,” he said. “Follow this path over nine hills and nine streams, and you will come to Master Subhodi’s cave.”

The forest was _____-black, but Monkey was _____. His bright eyes lit the way for him. Monkey followed the path up the hills and across the streams, just as the woodcutter told him. After a day of _____, the forest grew a little less dark, and by the second day it was lighter still. At last Monkey came to a cave with huge stone doors. He tried them, but they were _____.

As Monkey King stood there, a _____ sensation came over him. He felt that something _____ was about to happen. Nervously, he jumped into a tree. The whole world grew still. The only sound Monkey heard was the beating of his own _____.

Then he heard a _____. Crreeeaak! Slowly, very _____, the great stone _____ began to swing open.

From *The Magical Monkey King: Mischief in Heaven* retold by Ji-Li Jiang; © 2004. Reprinted by arrangement with Shen Books, www.shens.com.

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT A3

Cloze Key for *The Magical Monkey King: Mischief in Heaven* retold by Ji-Li Jiang

The first word written in ***bold italics*** is the one in the book. The rest are appropriate choices.

Year after year, Magnificent Monkey King and his monkey clan enjoyed carefree lives in the Cave of the Water Curtain. They spent their days in perfect happiness, ***swinging***, *swaying, dangling, hanging, lurching, reeling* from vines and trees, eating fruits, and playing all sorts of monkey games. It now seemed that they would be ***happy***, *content, cheerful, blissful, joyful* forever in their new home.

But one day, something ***changed***, *deviated*. It was during a birthday party for the king. All the monkeys had brought him ***beautiful***, *pretty, attractive, lovely* flowers and ***delicious***, *tasty, savory, luscious* fruits—especially ***peaches***, his favorite. Sitting on his ***jeweled***, *ornate* throne, surrounded by his beloved monkeys, Monkey should have had the happiest day of his life. ***Instead***, in the middle of the celebration, he burst into ***tears***.

The monkeys were ***shocked***, *startled, horrified, appalled, frightened*. They had never seen their king ***sad***, *unhappy, depressed, downcast, discouraged, gloomy, somber, glum, miserable, forlorn, blue, sorrowful* before. And now he was crying!

It was the ***curious***, *inquisitive* monkey who stood up and said, “What is wrong?”

Monkey wiped away his ***tears***. “Dear monkeys, we are happy today, but with each birthday we grow older and older. I just ***realized***, *conceived, comprehended* that one day we shall all die, and our ***joy***, *happiness, bliss* shall end.” He cried even harder.

The monkeys thought about what he had said. They ***hung***, *drooped* their heads and started to cry, too.

Grandmother Monkey stood up. “Magnificent King,” she said, “if that is what is making you ***sad***, *unhappy, depressed, downcast, discouraged, gloomy, somber, glum, miserable, forlorn, blue, sorrowful*, I have an idea. I learned from my grandmother, who learned from her ***grandmother***, that there are three types of beings who never die. Why don’t you go and learn ***their*** secrets?”

Monkey jumped up on his throne. “Who are these three types of ***beings***?”

“First are the ***sages***. They are the wise teachers. They study the secret of life and learn to stay young forever. Second are the ***immortals***, like Jade Emperor, who know the secret of life and so can live forever. Finally there are the Buddhas, such as the great Buddha and Goddess Guanyin. Since they have achieved complete ***enlightenment***, they *live* the secret of life.”

Monkey was so excited that he did a *somersault* in the air. “What a brilliant idea, Grandmother,” he said. “I will seek out a *sage* and learn the secret of living forever. Then I’ll come back and *teach, instruct, show* it to all of you so we can enjoy our lives together *forever*.”

Monkey was so enthusiastic that he said his goodbyes *immediately, instantly, promptly, quickly, directly*. Before an hour had passed, he started off in search of a sage who could teach him the secret of *eternal* life.

Monkey traveled hundreds of leagues to countless far-off lands. He met with people of all sorts. He even learned to dress and speak like them, but in all of his travels he *discovered, learned, noticed, observed, saw* that most people were more interested in money and fame than in the *secret, mystery* of life. Even after nine years of searching, not a single worthy *sage* did he find. He was beginning to think he would never find one.

Then, one day, he was walking in a deep, dark forest far from the Mountain of Flowers and Fruits. Here the leaves were so *thick, dense, numerous, crowded* that no sunlight came through. A peaceful silence filled the air.

In the middle of this forest he heard a man singing:

I chase no glory, I pursue no coin.
Fame and wealth are passing clouds to me.
A simple life prolongs my days.
And those I meet upon my way
Are sages one and all,
Are sages one and all.

“At last!” cried Monkey. “I have found a *sage!*” He ran toward the sound of the voice.

A man was cutting branches from the *trees*.

“Reverend sage,” Monkey cried, bowing deeply. “Consider me your student.”

At these words the woodcutter looked up, *astonished, surprised, astounded, amazed*, and dropped his axe. “But I am not a *sage*, sir,” he said. “I’m just a humble woodcutter. You mustn’t bow to me. “If you are not a sage, why did you sing that song?” *demanded* Monkey.

The *woodcutter* looked alarmed. “I – I didn’t intend to mislead anyone,” he *stammered, stuttered, faltered*. “That song was taught to me by a great sage who lives over the hills from here.”

“What is his name?”

“Master Subhodi.”

Monkey *grinned, smiled, beamed*. “Well, well. Then you must show me where this sage lives.”

The woodcutter, who was a little frightened of Monkey, led the way along a path in the woods. It

grew darker and darker. When it grew too dark to see, the **woodcutter** stopped. "I can go no **farther**," he said. "Follow this path over nine hills and nine streams, and you will come to Master Subhodi's cave."

The forest was **pitch**-black, but Monkey was **untroubled**, *calm, unconcerned*. His bright eyes lit the way for him. Monkey followed the path up the hills and across the streams, just as the woodcutter told him. After a day of **walking**, *hiking*, the forest grew a little less dark, and by the second day it was lighter still. At last Monkey came to a cave with huge stone doors. He tried them, but they were **locked**, *sealed, latched*.

As Monkey King stood there, a **prickling**, *sharp, stinging, tingly* sensation came over him. He felt that something **strange**, *unusual, peculiar, odd, unfamiliar, curious* was about to happen. Nervously, he jumped into a tree. The whole world grew still. The only sound Monkey heard was the beating of his own **heart**.

Then he heard a **noise**, *sound*. Crreeeeaaak! Slowly, very **slowly**, the great stone **doors** began to swing open.

From *The Magical Monkey King: Mischief in Heaven* retold by Ji-Li Jiang; © 2004. Reprinted by arrangement with Shen Books, www.shens.com.

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT A4

Cloze Handout for Monkey: A Journey to the West retold by David Kherdian

This section follows the scene whereby Tripitaka [the monk also known as Xuanzang] is given the cap of discipline for Monkey by the bodhisattva Kuan-yin [Guanyin] disguised as an old woman. The irony here is that Monkey is supposed to follow the Buddhist practice of self-control, and instead he needs to be controlled by someone else.

Monkey returned to find Tripitaka sitting by the side of the road. "Why are you looking so dejected?" Monkey asked his master.

"Don't you know, you grievous monkey? I lost heart momentarily. But never mind that! Why did you leave so _____, and what has brought you back?"

"I just went to visit the Dragon King in the Eastern Ocean, to have some tea."

"Priests should not lie," Tripitaka said. "You've only been gone an hour, and you claim you've gone as far as the _____."

"That's not so hard as it sounds," Monkey replied. "With a single _____ on my cloud trapeze I can travel 108,000 miles."

"Just because I spoke to you a little _____ you picked yourself up and left in a _____. With your talents you can just dash off for a spot of _____, leaving me behind to hunger and _____ and struggle for myself."

"Master, if that's the case, I'll go beg some food for you."

"There's no need to _____," Tripitaka said, "there are some dried _____ in my bag."

When Monkey opened his Master's pack his eyes were dazzled by the sight of the tunic and cap. "Did you bring these with you from the East?" Monkey asked.

Thinking quickly, Tripitaka replied, "I used to wear them when I was young. By wearing the cap you can recite scriptures without having to learn them, and by putting on the coat you can perform ceremonies without having to practice them."

"Dear Master," Monkey _____, "how about letting me try them on?"

"Go ahead. If they fit you, you can wear them."

_____ pretended to be eating, but under his _____ he was _____ the spell, and Monkey was soon _____ on the ground, _____ in pain. He began _____ at the cap in an attempt to tear it free.

Fearing that the _____ would come loose, Tripitaka _____ reciting, and when he did, Monkey's _____ instantly stopped. Monkey tried again to _____ the cap, but it seemed to be _____ to his skull. Next he took the Needle from behind his ear and tried to pry it loose. But it was no use.

Tripitaka began _____ once again, and this time the pain was so _____ that Monkey's face turned _____ and his eyes

began to _____ out of his head. At the sight of his agonizing pain Tripitaka took pity on him and stopped the _____, and again Monkey's pain disappeared.

"You put a _____ on me," Monkey cried.

"Not at all," Tripitaka said, "I was just reciting the Headband Scripture. There's no spell in that."

Monkey said, "Recite it again and see what _____." Tripitaka began _____ and again the pain _____. "Stop! Stop!" Monkey _____. "Now I know it's the cause of the _____, so don't try to tell me you're not causing it."

"Now will you listen to my instructions?"

"I will," Monkey said, "and I won't cause any more _____, or go flying off, or be unruly!"

"You'd better not," Tripitaka said, "or I will _____ the spell."

"I wouldn't dare," Monkey said, "I wouldn't dare." But in his heart Monkey was not _____. When Tripitaka turned away, he slipped out his _____ and turned it into an iron cudgel. He was about to bring it down on his Master's _____, when Tripitaka turned in time and began the magic _____. Once again Monkey fell to the ground, _____ in pain. "I give up," he cried, "please, I give up."

"You wicked Monkey! Is it possible that you were about to strike me down?"

"No, no, no," Monkey chanted, "I wouldn't dare." Monkey was still groaning when he got to his feet. "Master," he said "who taught you that spell?"

"An old woman gave it to me."

"That's all I needed to know," Monkey said. "You can't fool me, it was the _____ Kuan-yin. How dare she cause me such suffering? Just you wait, I'm off to the Southern Ocean to give her a thrashing!"

"Not so brash, you foolish monkey. If she taught me the spell, then she knows it herself, and a lot more besides. She'll make quick work of you if you _____ confront her."

Once again Monkey was overwhelmed with contrition. He _____ before Tripitaka and said, "Master, this is all too much for me. I'll go with you to _____, and you needn't be so quick to use the _____. I promise to follow you faithfully until we achieve our _____."

"In that case, help me mount my _____, and let's be on our way." Monkey tucked in his shirt and tightened his belt. He gathered the luggage together and put on his best smile as he fell in beside his master.

From *Monkey: A Journey to the West* retold by David Kheridan; © 1992. Reprinted by arrangement with Shambhala Publications, Inc., www.shambhala.com.

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT A5

Cloze Key for Monkey: A Journey to the West retold by David Kherdian

This section follows the scene whereby Tripitaka [The monk also known as Xuanzang] is given the cap of discipline for monkey by the bodhisattva Kuan-yin [Guanyin] disguised as an old woman. The irony here is that Monkey is supposed to follow the Buddhist practice of self-control, and instead he needs to be controlled by someone else.

The first word in ***bold italics*** is the one found in the book. The rest are appropriate choices.

Monkey returned to find Tripitaka sitting by the side of the road. “Why are you looking so dejected?” Monkey asked his master.

“Don’t you know, you grievous monkey? I lost heart momentarily. But never mind that! Why did you leave so, ***abruptly, soon, early, fast, quickly, suddenly, hastily*** and what has brought you back?”

“I just went to visit the Dragon King in the Eastern Ocean, to have some tea.”

“Priests should not lie,” Tripitaka said. “You’ve only been gone an hour, and you claim you’ve gone as far as the ***Eastern Ocean (Sea)***.”

“That’s not so hard as it sounds,” Monkey replied. “With a single ***somersault*** on my cloud trapeze I can travel 108,000 miles.”

“Just because I spoke to you a little ***sharply, angrily, harshly, strictly, cruelly, firmly*** you picked yourself up and left in a ***buff***. With your talents you can just dash off for a spot of ***tea***, leaving me behind to hunger and ***thirst*** and struggle for myself.”

“Master, if that’s the case, I’ll go beg some food for you.”

“There’s no need to ***beg***,” Tripitaka said, “there are some dried ***provisions, food*** in my bag.”

When Monkey opened his Master’s pack his eyes were dazzled by the sight of the tunic and cap. “Did you bring these with you from the East?” Monkey asked.

Thinking quickly, Tripitaka replied, “I used to wear them when I was young. By wearing the cap you can recite scriptures without having to learn them, and by putting on the coat you can perform ceremonies without having to practice them.”

“Dear Master,” Monkey ***implored, pleaded, begged***, “how about letting me try them on?”

“Go ahead. If they fit you, you can wear them.”

Tripitaka pretended to be eating, but under his ***breath*** he was ***reciting, casting, muttering, saying*** the spell, and Monkey was soon ***rolling*** on the ground, ***writhing, shouting, howling, crying, screeching, screaming, yelling, struggling*** in pain. He began ***clutching, tugging, grabbing, pulling, prying*** at the cap in an attempt to tear it free.

Fearing that the ***cap*** would come loose, Tripitaka ***stopped, halted*** reciting, and when he did, Monkey’s ***pain*** instantly stopped. Monkey tried again to ***remove, free, tear, pull, loosen, release*** the cap, but it seemed to be ***rooted, stuck, glued, attached, sewn*** to his skull. Next he took the Needle from behind his ear and tried to pry it loose. But it was no use.

Tripitaka began ***reciting, chanting*** once again, and this time the pain was so ***intense, enormous, bad, great, huge, unbearable, painful, treacherous*** that Monkey’s face turned ***red, purple*** and his

eyes began to *bulge, pop, burst* out of his head. At the sight of his agonizing pain Tripitaka took pity on him and stopped the *spell, chant*, and again Monkey's pain disappeared.

"You put a *spell, curse* on me," Monkey cried.

"Not at all," Tripitaka said, "I was just reciting the Headband Scripture. There's no spell in that."

Monkey said, "Recite it again and see what *happens.*" Tripitaka began *reciting* and again the pain *returned, came, began, grew, started.* "Stop! Stop!" Monkey *pleaded, screamed, demanded, cried, shouted, yelled, begged.* "Now I know it's the cause of the *spell, curse*, so don't try to tell me you're not causing it."

"Now will you listen to my instructions?"

"I will," Monkey said, "and I won't cause any more *trouble, mischief, havoc*, or go flying off, or be unruly!"

"You'd better not," Tripitaka said, "or I will *recite, say, activate* the spell."

"I wouldn't dare," Monkey said, "I wouldn't dare." But in his heart Monkey was not *repentant*. When Tripitaka turned away, he slipped out his *needle* and turned it into an iron cudgel. He was about to bring it down on his Master's *head*, when Tripitaka turned in time and began the magic *recitation, spell*. Once again Monkey fell to the ground, *writhing, wiggling, crying, curled, howling, rolling, yelling, screaming, twitching* in pain. "I give up," he cried, "please, I give up."

"You wicked Monkey! Is it possible that you were about to strike me down?"

"No, no, no," Monkey chanted, "I wouldn't dare." Monkey was still groaning when he got to his feet. "Master," he said "who taught you that spell?"

"An old woman gave it to me."

"That's all I needed to know," Monkey said. "You can't fool me, it was the *Bodhisattva* Kuan-yin. How dare she cause me such suffering? Just you wait, I'm off to the Southern Ocean to give her a thrashing!"

"Not so brash, you foolish monkey. If she taught me the spell, then she knows it herself, and a lot more besides. She'll make quick work of you if you *dare, boldly* confront her."

Once again Monkey was overwhelmed with contrition. He *knelt, bowed, kowtowed* before Tripitaka and said, "Master, this is all too much for me. I'll go with you to *India*, and you needn't be so quick to use the *spell*. I promise to follow you faithfully until we achieve our *goal, duty.*"

"In that case, help me mount my *horse, steed, stallion*, and let's be on our way." Monkey tucked in his shirt and tightened his belt. He gathered the luggage together and put on his best smile as he fell in beside his master.

From *Monkey: A Journey to the West* retold by David Kheridan; © 1992. Reprinted by arrangement with Shambhala Publications, Inc., www.shambhala.com.

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT B1

Expository Writing

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MONKEY KING STORY SUMMARY:

Write a summary of the Monkey King story whereby you give the reader a brief description of the plot, characters, and setting. Before you write you must create an outline of the main ideas you want to include, the significant details, and your topic sentence. You must show me the outline before you begin your first draft.

YOU NEED TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR SUMMARY:

1. Write a clear, concise topic sentence. Try to capture the reader's attention.
2. Your summary must be well organized, focused, insightful, and logical.
3. Content: You need to paraphrase the main ideas and provide ONLY significant/relevant details. Include Monkey's problem as well as the obstacles he faces. Your conclusion must be logical.
4. Use transitions when needed.
5. Your voice must be authoritative and enthusiastic.
6. After your first draft, check for CONTENT and any errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar, and sentence structure. Your sentences should be varied and complex.

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT B2
Summary Rubric

Competency Level	Focus/Organization/Support	Development	Conventions
Excellent 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgment: Topic sentence, clear, concise, specific • Presentation: Well organized, focused, logical, clear understanding of the purpose and audience, and concludes logically • Is characterized by paraphrasing of the main idea(s) and significant/relevant details • Transitions: excellent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of literary work: Clear and insightful • Voice: Authoritative, lively, interesting, enthusiastic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes few, if any, errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar, and sentence structure • Sentences: Varied and complex
Good 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgment: Topic sentence clear, specific, concrete • Presentation: Well organized, focused, logical, concludes in a satisfactory way • Is characterized by paraphrasing of the main idea(s) with mostly significant/relevant details/facts, and/or explanations • Transitions: effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of literary work: Clear and insightful • Voice: Appropriate and convincing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes infrequent errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar, and sentence structure • Sentences: Varied
Developing 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgment: Topic sentence is vaguely clear. • Presentation: Some organization, minimally focused, general understanding of purpose and audience, concludes in a somewhat satisfactory way • Is characterized by paraphrasing the main idea(s) with mostly relevant facts, with minimum details and/or explanations • Transitions: limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of literary work: Minimally clear • Voice: Minimally appropriate and convincing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes frequent errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar, and sentence structure • Sentences: Simple and unvaried • Errors cause some confusion and ambiguity
Hard to Understand 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgment: Topic sentence is not clear • Presentation: Shaky organization, rambling focus, little understanding of purpose and audience, confusing conclusion • Is characterized by substantial copying of key phrases and minimal paraphrasing, with limited facts, details, and/or explanations. • Transitions: Ineffective or awkward transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of literary work: Confusing • Voice: Not present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes many errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar, and sentence structure so that essay is hard to read and understand
Not Understandable 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgment: Topic sentence not clear • Presentation: No organization, lacks a central idea, rambling focus, no understanding of purpose and audience, confusing, if any, conclusion • Is characterized by substantial copying of indiscriminately selected phrases or sentences, and marginally related facts, details, and/or explanations • Transitions: Rare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of literary work: Unclear • Voice: Not present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors repeated over and over again so that the essay is unreadable
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off topic • Expository essay not written 		

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT B3

Summary of *Monkey, A Journey to the West*

STUDENT SAMPLE

Monkey, A Journey to the West is a satirical story written in sixteenth century China. The story is about Monkey—an irreverent, audacious, greedy, arrogant, mischievous, self-centered, and supernatural monkey. In the first part of the story, Monkey becomes king of Flower and Fruit Mountain. After many years, he decides to try to achieve immortality, but does more, learning the art of magic as well. Still not content, he steals a magical iron pillar, which he turns into a cudgel. The Jade Emperor of Heaven notices Monkey's rise to power and decides to give him a job in the Celestial Palace in order to keep an eye on him. Eventually Monkey realizes this and the Jade Emperor, to resume his vigil, gives Monkey a higher ranked job: tending the heavenly peaches. Monkey, however, eats all the peaches and flees. He is pursued, but he defeats the armies sent after him, and wreaks destruction on the Celestial Palace. Monkey causes so much havoc that the Great Buddha is compelled to interfere, and imprisons Monkey under the Mountain of Five Elements.

The second part of the story begins five hundred years later, when Monkey is given a chance to repent by Guanyin, the bodhisattva of compassion. He was to accompany the monk Xuanzang on his quest to recover Buddhist scriptures from India. Two other repenting persons, Pigsy and Sandy, also journey with them. The four face many challenges, but prevail. At the end of their adventure, they are received by the Great Buddha, and Xuanzang and Monkey are made buddhas, while Pigsy is made the Altar Cleaner and Sandy is made the Golden-Bodied Arhat. Monkey and Xuanzang read the sacred texts and gain enlightenment. Xuanzang returns to China and preaches from the scriptures.

Written by Ryan Goulden, a sixth grader 2004–05, Corte Madera Middle School, Portola Valley, California.

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT C1
Story Analysis Handout

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Title _____

2. Author _____

3. Hero or heroine (protagonist) _____

4. Protagonist’s character traits (What is he/she like?)

5. Other main characters and their traits (For each one list their name and one word that describes them. Instead of general descriptions like “nice” and “bad,” try to find words that really describe the characters, such as “hardworking” or disrespectful.)

6. Central problem (What does the main character face?)

7. Obstacles (things to overcome in order to solve problem mentioned above). What prevents the main character from accomplishing his/her goal?
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

8. Setting

9. How does the protagonist solve the problem?

10. Plot line (no more than 5 sentences).

11. Major theme (author's message). Why did the author write the story?

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT C2

Story Analysis Key

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Title *Monkey, A Journey to the West*
2. Author *retold by David Kherdian*
3. Hero or heroine (protagonist) *Monkey*
4. Protagonist's character traits (What is he/she like?)
obstinate, insatiable, renegade, instructor, cunning, aggressive, rogue, irreverent, mischievous, protector, impatient, audacious, impudent, insolent, cocky, stubborn, prankster, impulsive
5. Other main characters and their traits (For each one list their name and one word that describes them. Instead of general descriptions like "nice" and "bad," try to find words that really describe the characters, such as "hardworking" or "disrespectful.")
Xuanzang (Pilgrim, Tripitaka, Hsuan Tsang): indolent, humorless, fictive, joyless, peevish, frail, fallible, fearful, whiner, bumbling, irritable, timid
Pigsy: jealous, grumbler, lustful, nag, complainer
Sandy: humble, repentant, zealous, caretaker, follower, obedient
6. Central problem (What does the main character face?)
Part 1: Monkey is insatiable, irreverent, and mischievous.
Part 2: Monkey needs to provide assistance to Tripitaka in obtaining the scriptures.
Monkey wants immortality since he is worried that his life of pleasure will end.
(Daoists believe that Monkey is struggling with the forces of nature to reach a goal of balance.)
Overall problem: bridling the mind and will. Monkey needs to rid himself of his bad karma.
7. Obstacles (things to overcome in order to solve problem mentioned above). What prevents the main character from accomplishing his/her goal?
 1. *Monkey needs to learn patience.*
 2. *Monkey needs to think before he acts.*
 3. *Monkey needs to make alliances with Pigsy and Sandy.*
 4. *Monkey must accept Xuanzang's limitations.*
 5. *Monkey needs to obtain the fan and in order to do this he needs to overcome Bull Demon and his wife.*
 6. *Monkey must defeat bandits.*
 7. *Monkey must defeat demons.*

8. Setting: *7th century, China and India*
9. How does the protagonist solve the problem?
Monkey remains mischievous and partly controlled. He succeeds in ridding himself of his bad karma and achieves enlightenment. Thanks to Monkey, Xuanzang brings back the sutras from India.
10. Plot line (no more than 5 sentences).
11. Major theme (author's message). Why did the author write the story?
Mutual dependence, communal effort, virtue of self-control, necessity of humbling oneself in order to serve good rather than evil

LANGUAGE ARTS: HANDOUT D

Hands-on Visual and Performing Arts Extension Activity: Shadow Puppets

CHINESE SHADOW PUPPETS

Legend has it that shadow puppetry in China originated more than two thousand years ago. The emperor of that time is said to have been mesmerized by a performance with puppets lit from behind that featured an image of his favorite concubine. Often, there were musical scores for the plays, which also featured elaborate architectural and landscape sets; myriad animals, both real and imaginary; and a cast of human characters drawn from legend, popular novels, operas, daily life, and many other sources. Xuanzang's disciples, and Monkey in particular, are still popular figures for Chinese shadow puppet-makers.

The templates provided here can be used by students to construct their own puppets for class dramas out of tag board or manila folders.

Donna Kasprovicz has also used the shadow puppet project for her 6th grade India unit where students perform adventures of Monkey's South Asian "cousin"—the Indian monkey god Hanuman. Detailed construction steps and images from this project are available at:

<http://ias.berkeley.edu/orias/SEArama/WayangActivity.htm>

Although popularly known as "shadow" puppets, the Chinese puppets are actually backlit during performances. Because the puppets must be thin enough to be translucent yet rigid enough to be handled effectively, they are made of thin cured hide, most often donkey skin, though ox skin and sheepskin are sometimes used. Specially designed knives are used to cut the hide into the desired shapes; each figure is made of several pieces joined so it can be made to move in various ways. For instance, sections of limbs are tied together to create bendable joints. Heads, made separately, are usually attached through a slot at the neck. The finished figures are brightly painted with colors that serve both decorative and symbolic purposes. Rods with wires at the ends are used to manipulate the figures. The puppets range in size from individual figures only a few inches tall to complex sets of figures two or more feet wide and tall.

Monkey is a living folk hero and students can be encouraged to write their own adventures for a puppet script. A student script adaptation from the Ming novel, *Journey to the West*, is also available from Primary Source for a modest price:

Holmes, Meg. *Journey to the West: A Silk Road Play for Grades 4–12*. Watertown: Primary Source, 2003. <http://www.primarysource.org> (\$12)



Monkey King, 2005. China. Shadow puppet, pigments on hide, *Donna Kasprowicz Collection*



Xuanzang, 2005. China. Shadow puppet, pigments on hide, *Donna Kasprowicz Collection*



Sandy, 2005. China. Shadow puppet, pigments on hide, *Donna Kasprowicz Collection*



Pigsy, 2005. China. Shadow puppet, pigments on hide, *Donna Kasprowicz Collection*



Xuanzang's Horse, 2005. China. Shadow puppet, pigments on hide, *Donna Kasproicz Collection*

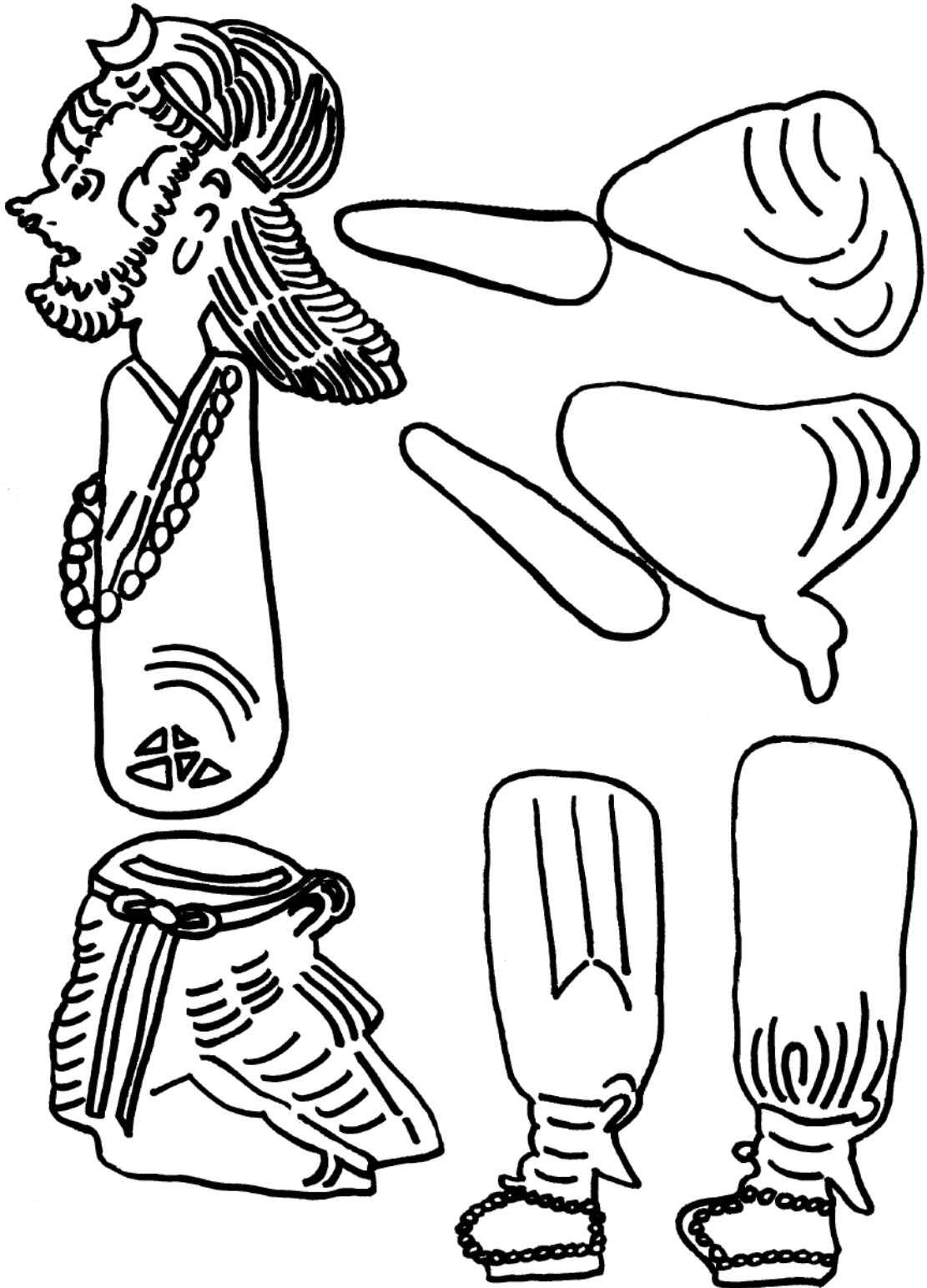
Monkey King



Xuanzang

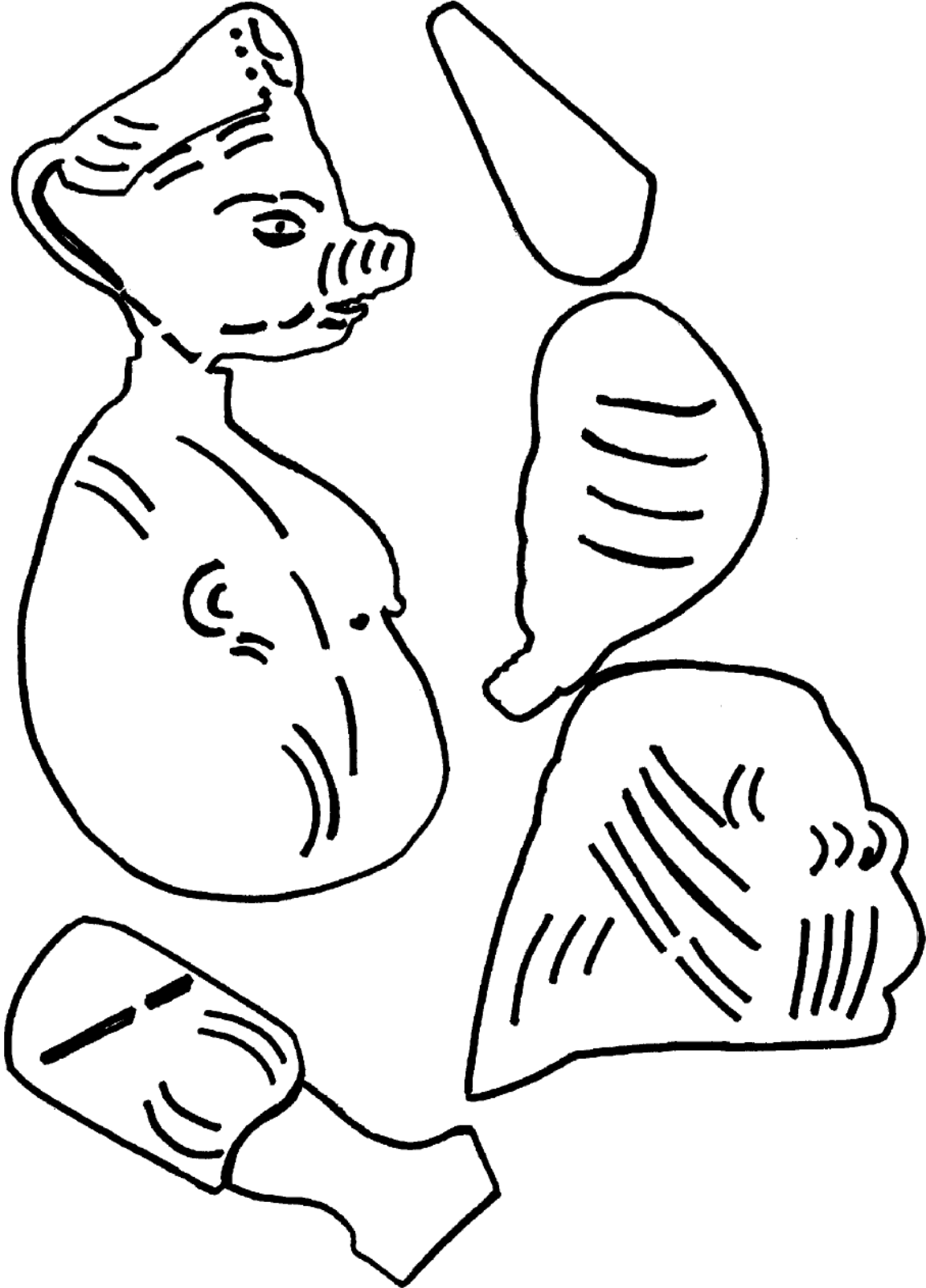


Sandy

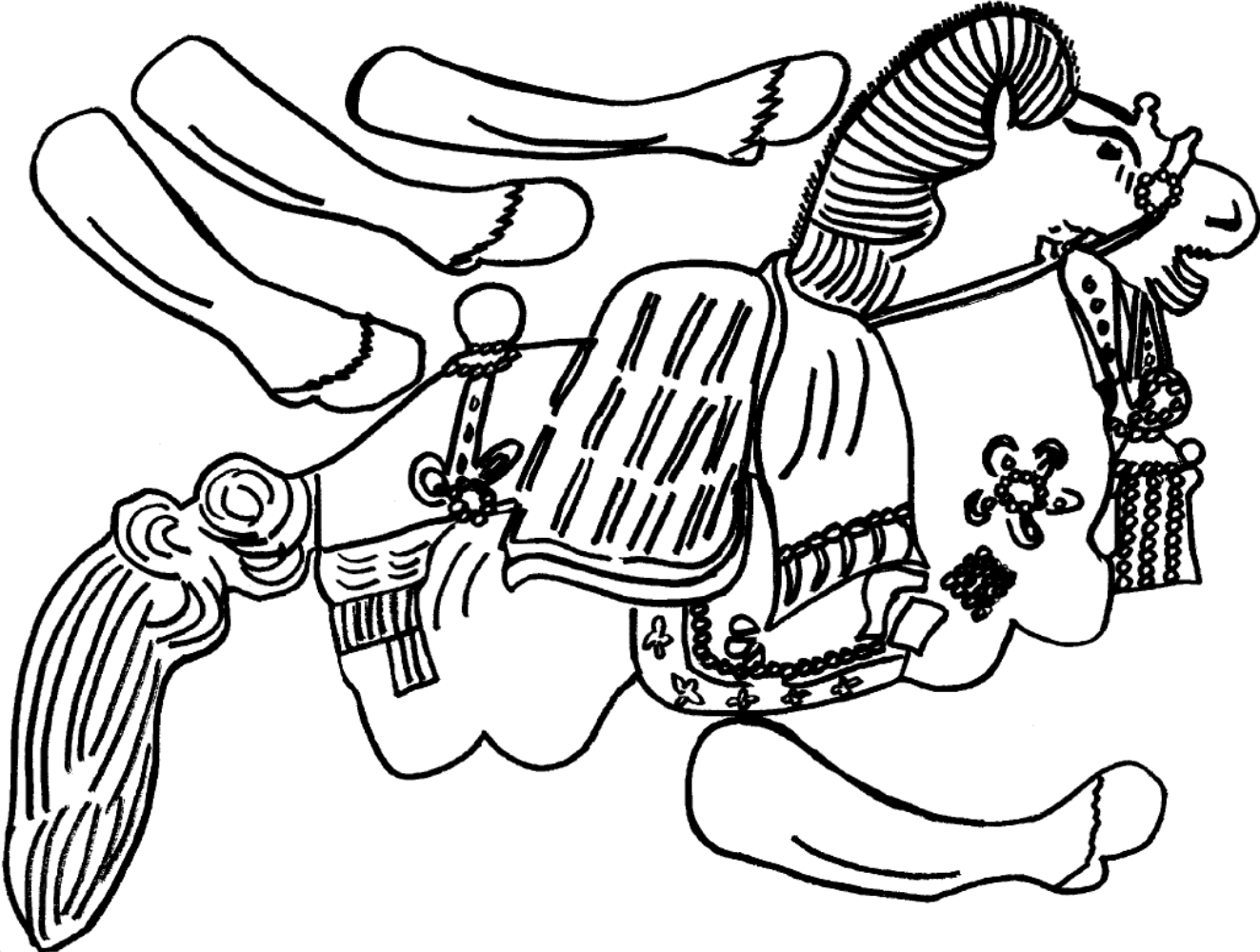


Pigsy

Instructions: Make two legs and two arms.



Xuanzang's Horse





**Classroom Connections,
Bibliography**

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

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WEBSITES:

“A Look at Chinese Painting/Explore and Learn.” Metropolitan Museum of Art.
http://www.metmuseum.org/explore/Chinese/html_pages/nsw1.htm

“Wayang Activity.” Office of Resources for International and Area Studies.
<http://ias.berkeley.edu/orias/SEArama/WayangActivity.htm>



Further Reading

Further Reading

GENERAL BOOKS ON CHINESE HISTORY AND CULTURE:

Benn, Charles. *China's Golden Age. Everyday Life in the Tang Dynasty*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004

Dersin, Denise (ed). *What Life was Like in the Land of the Dragon. Imperial China 960-1368*. Richmond, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1998

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RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

Websites:

Visual Sourcebook of Chinese Civilization. Prepared by Patricia Buckley Ebrey
<http://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/index.htm>

Asia for Educators, prepared at Columbia University by the East Asian Curriculum Project and the Project on Asia in the Core Curriculum
<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/>

Curriculum units:

Cingcade, Mary and Bernson, Mary Hammond. *Song China (960-1279): Splendor and Change: A Humanities Approach to Chinese History Part I*. East Asia Resource Center at the University of Washington.
SSEC Publications, Box 212700, Boulder, CO, 80308-4270
ISBN: 0-89994-411-6

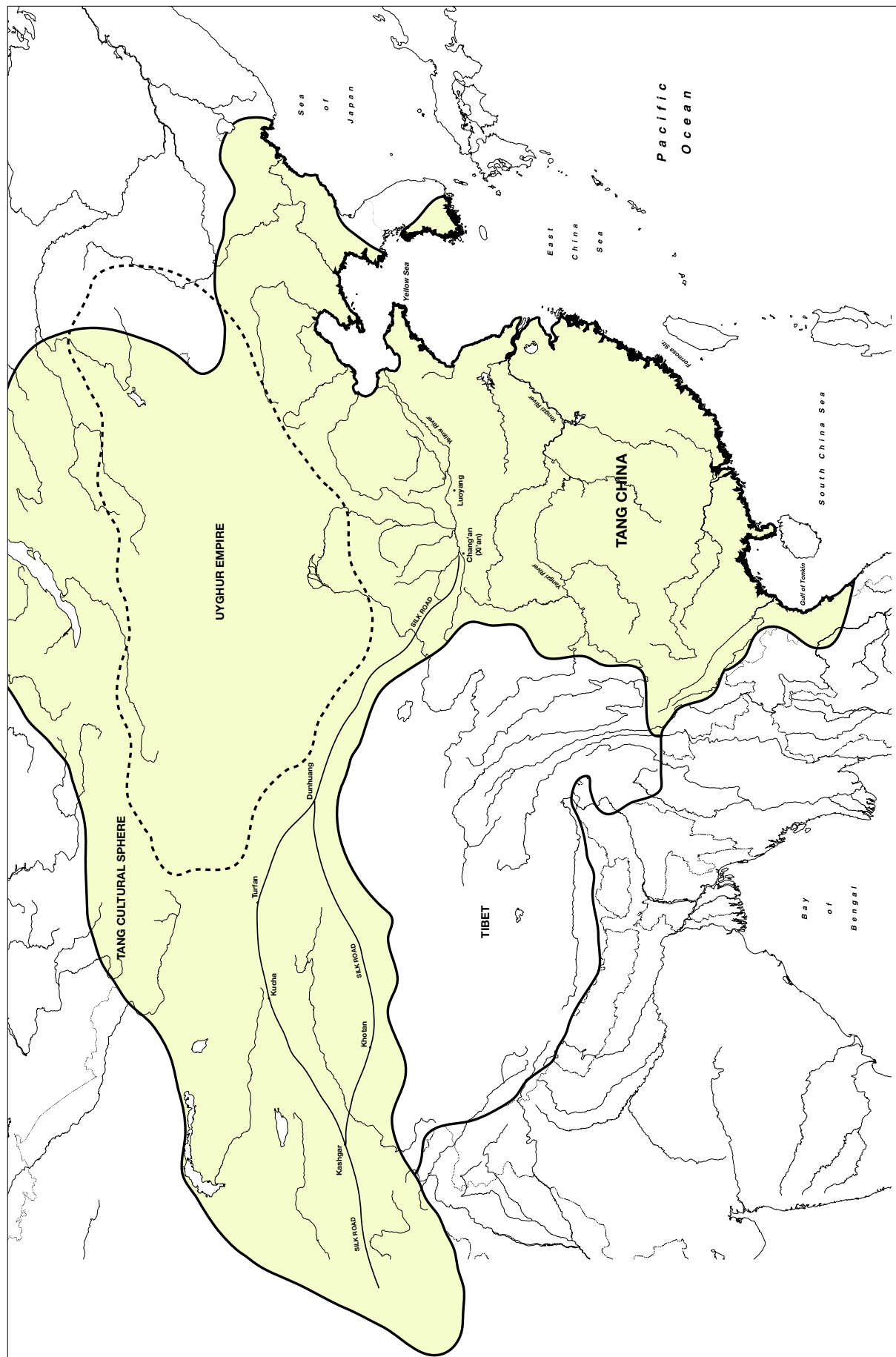
Cone, Joanna. *Medieval China (Power Point Presentations in World History)*. By Social Studies School Service
10200 Jefferson Blvd. P.O. Box 802, Culver City, CA 90232
<http://socialstudies.com>

The authors acknowledge lectures given by Angela Howard, Eugene Wang, Melissa Abbe, Hsingyuan Tsao and Robert Mowry as additional sources for the information contained in this packet.

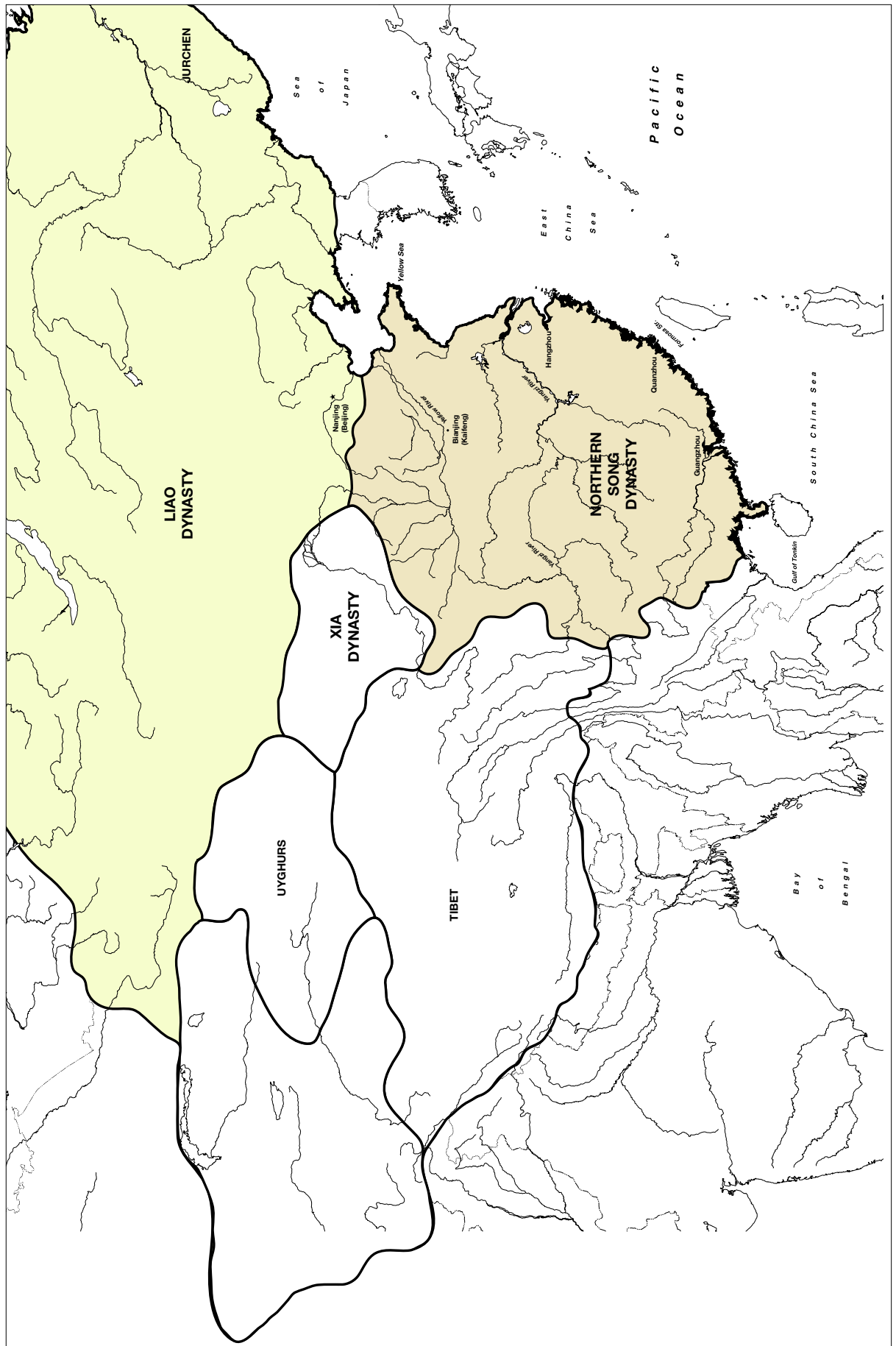


Maps

Tang Dynasty



Northern Song and Liao Dynasties



Southern Song and Jin Dynasties

