Family and Society in Tang and Song Dynasties- Invention, Artistic Creativity, and Scholarly Refinement

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Family Society

Family structure in the Tang and Song dynasty was very similar to the family structures found in earlier time periods.

Main aspects of families in the Tang and Song period

- Improvement in role of women
- Respect and importance of males and elders
- Marriage alliances
- Gender gap present
- Divorce
- Male dominance
Role of Men and Women

As seen in previous areas, men were still perceived as superior to women. Some examples of this include the following:

• Authority- Males held the power in family societies.
• Women’s responsibilities in the home were set by neo-Confucian thinking.
• There was a major difference between the treatment of men and women.
• The position of women began to slowly improve.
• Marriage alliances began forming.
• Divorce became an option.
• Footbinding displayed the constriction women faced.
Children and Importance of Elders

- Like men, elders held a role of authority in families.
- Children were expected to obey men and elders as well. There was severe punishment for hitting parents, grandparents, and siblings.
- Marriages were almost always arranged for children, especially in the Tang dynasty.
Invention

• Although there were considerable political transformations, the Tang and Song eras are thought of as a time of remarkable Chinese accomplishments, in science, technology, literature, and the fine arts.
• Other civilizations were also affected by the spread of these new tools, production techniques, and weapons. These tools helped change human development.
Inventions in Agriculture

Many new innovations had appeared in agriculture during the Tang and Song dynasty.

- Paper money and banks played a major role in economic growth.
- Similarly to the building of the Grand Canal, Tang and Song engineers also made great advances in building dikes and dams.
- The engineers had devised new ways to construct bridges, which include suspension and trussed.
Inventions in Warfare

Inventions in warfare became increasingly important to help defend against enemy attacks, but the effects were not seen immediately.

- The invention of explosive powder was one of the most important inventions in the Tang Era.
- As time went on, explosive powder started advancing into being used in a variety of bombs and grenades.
- Along with explosive powder, flamethrowers, poisonous gases, and rocket launchers were used by Song armies.
Inventions To Help Everyday Life

Although the Song dynasty had fewer inventions than the Tang, many were essential for the future.

- Although not invented during this period, compasses were first used as sea navigation in the Song period.
- Another major invention during this time was the abacus, which is known as the modern calculator.
- Bi Sheng invented block printing, which is now known as stamping.
Domestic Creations

Domestic creations in the Tang and Song dynasty included the following:

• Chairs
• Drinking tea
• Using coal
• The kite
Artistic Creativity

Many new artistic creations began to appear in the Tang and Song dynasties. Landscape paintings became increasingly important, starting in the late Tang and continuing well into the Song.
Landscape Paintings

- The landscape paintings often taught moral lessons or displayed philosophical ideas.
- Beginning in the Tang era, specific colors in the painting began to be symbolic.
- Other objects, such as cranes, pine trees, bamboo, and dragons were often symbolic as well.
- Abstract paintings became more popular during this time.
Scholarly Refinement

The scholar-gentry elite contributed to much of the artistic and literary creativity of the Tang and Song Eras.

- Skillful writing and painting was valued by Confucian thinkers.
- A well-educated man received many degrees and could have success in many fields.
- The story literature focused on the lives of common people.
- The literary tales in the Tang and Song Dynasties have been known as the legendary style by later generations.
- Poetry also became increasingly important.
Bibliography


