



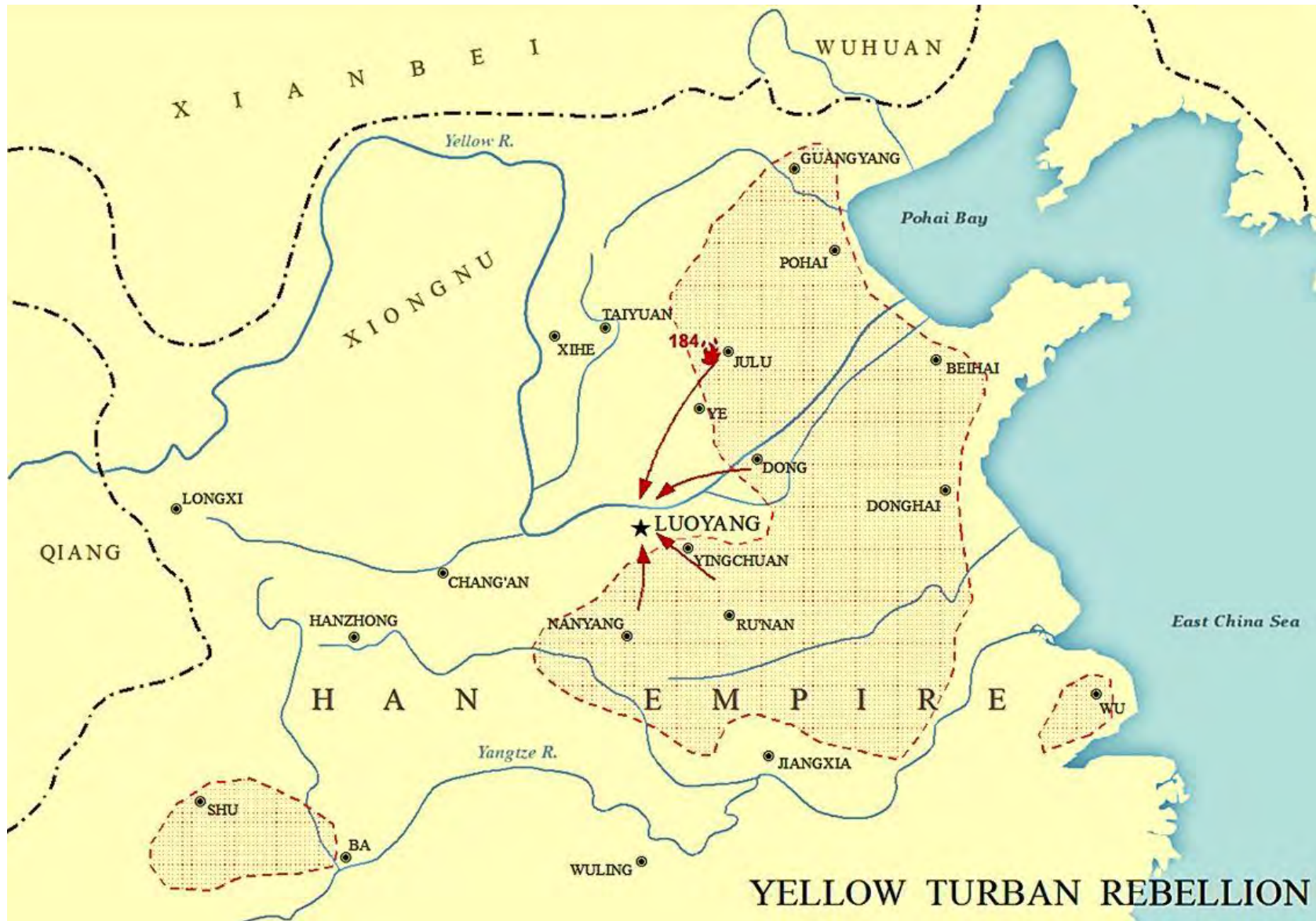
China, from Earliest Times through 20thC

Fall 2025 Marist CLS
Class Four

Eastern Han Faces Multiple Challenges



- Yellow Turban Revolt: 184-5 CE caused great death, destruction and dissent in ruling clique
- It saw a resurgence after initial suppression and inspired peasant revolts in later dynasties
- The Way of the Five Pecks of Rice, founded 142 CE was a Taoist movement
- Five Pecks grew to control parts of Hanzhong Valley and inspired later movements



YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION

Han Dynasty Replaced by “Three Kingdoms”



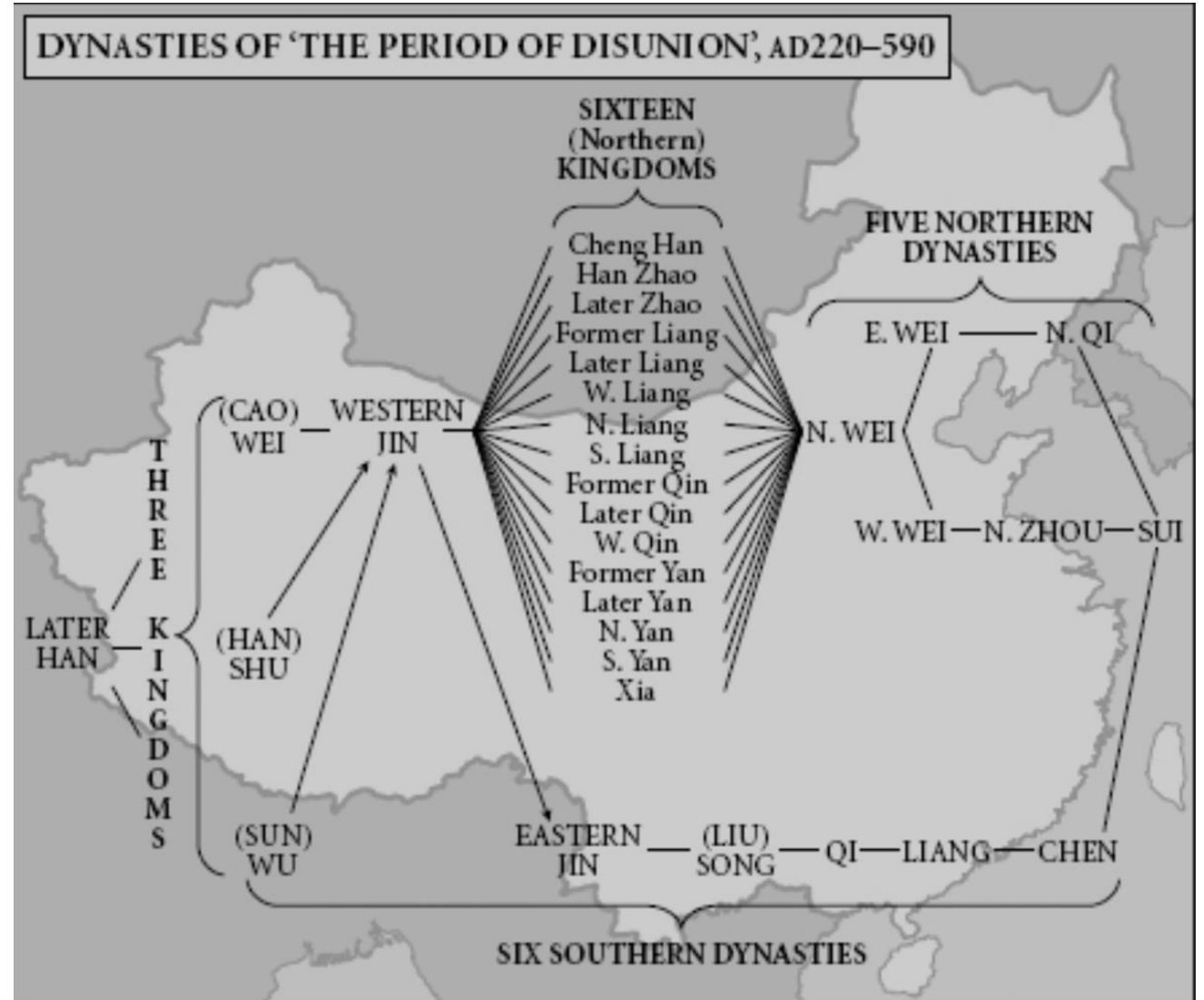
- The Three Kingdoms Period lasted only a few decades, with each of the states born out of the crumbling Han Dynasty claiming to inherit the Mandate of Heaven
- Theoretically the Mandate of Heaven was not divisible, but the emperors of Wei, Shu Han, and Wu clung persistently to the title
- Unlike during the later years of the weak Zhou Dynasty, there was no compromise polity that provided legitimacy to these three states
- Instead, there were three emperors and three imperial courts. This situation had never arisen before

“Romance of the Three Kingdoms:” Novelization of Three Kingdoms Massive Battle



Period Of Disunion

- The Three kingdoms lacked a secure hold on the Central Plain
- Nomadic tribes that had lived for generations in the Central Plain gradually took control
- Millions fled to the south of China, where the population grew rapidly, and the wealthy invested in rice-growing
- Largest city in South China was Jiankang (aka Jianye), population circa one million in Sixth Century



- No strong central government emerged, so wealthy landowners exerted strong influence:
 - Private armies
 - Fortified estates
 - Major investments in terraced rice growing
- The educated no longer working in the emperor's palaces
- Trade through what became known later as "Canton" and through the land portion of the Silk Road flourished
- By time of next unified polity, China had evolved and the "barbarian rulers" with it

The Arts Flourished During "Period of Disunion"



Rice Production and Population Increased in the South

Skilled Rice Cultivation Reaps Rewards



Influence of New Religious Opportunities

- Increased trade, especially in southwest maritime markets brought contact with civilizations already Buddhist
- New temples spurred Daoists to do likewise; both tending to expand in mountainous areas
- Temple investment brought water-powered mills and attracted workers and farmers
- The King/Emperor was no longer at the center of religious rites

Sui Dynasty 581-618 CE

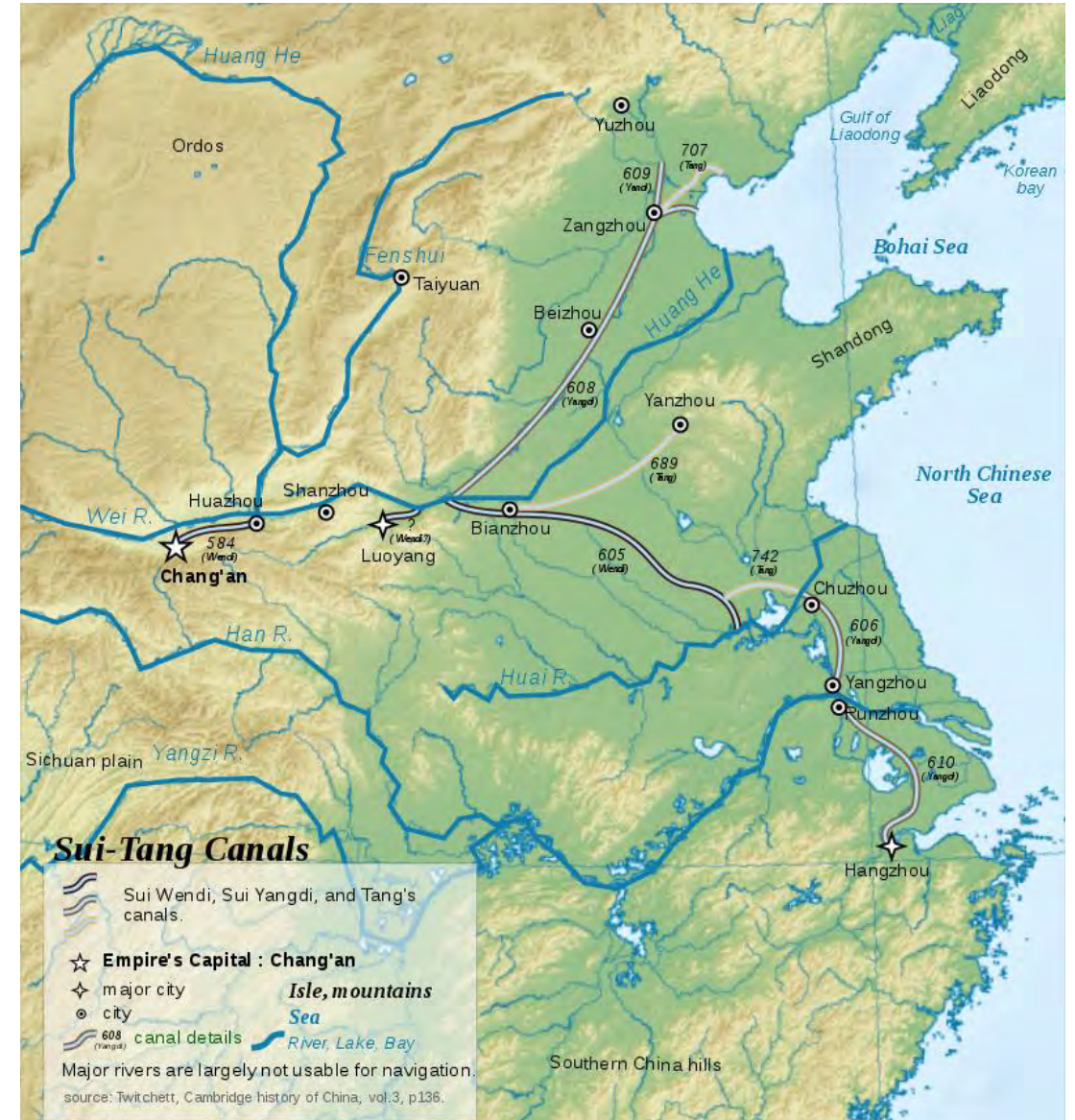


Daxingcheng was known also as "Chang'an"

- Founded by Yang Jian, born in 541 to a mixed nomadic-Chinese family
- Ruling as "Wen Di", he implemented the **equal-field system** of the Northern Wei dynasty throughout the empire.
- The system required one month work for every male commoner, which allowed reconstructed great wall and expanded the **Grand Canal** to a length of 1200 miles, which connected rice production in the south with the north
- Disaster from failed wars in Korea and the weight of massive building projects brought dynasty down

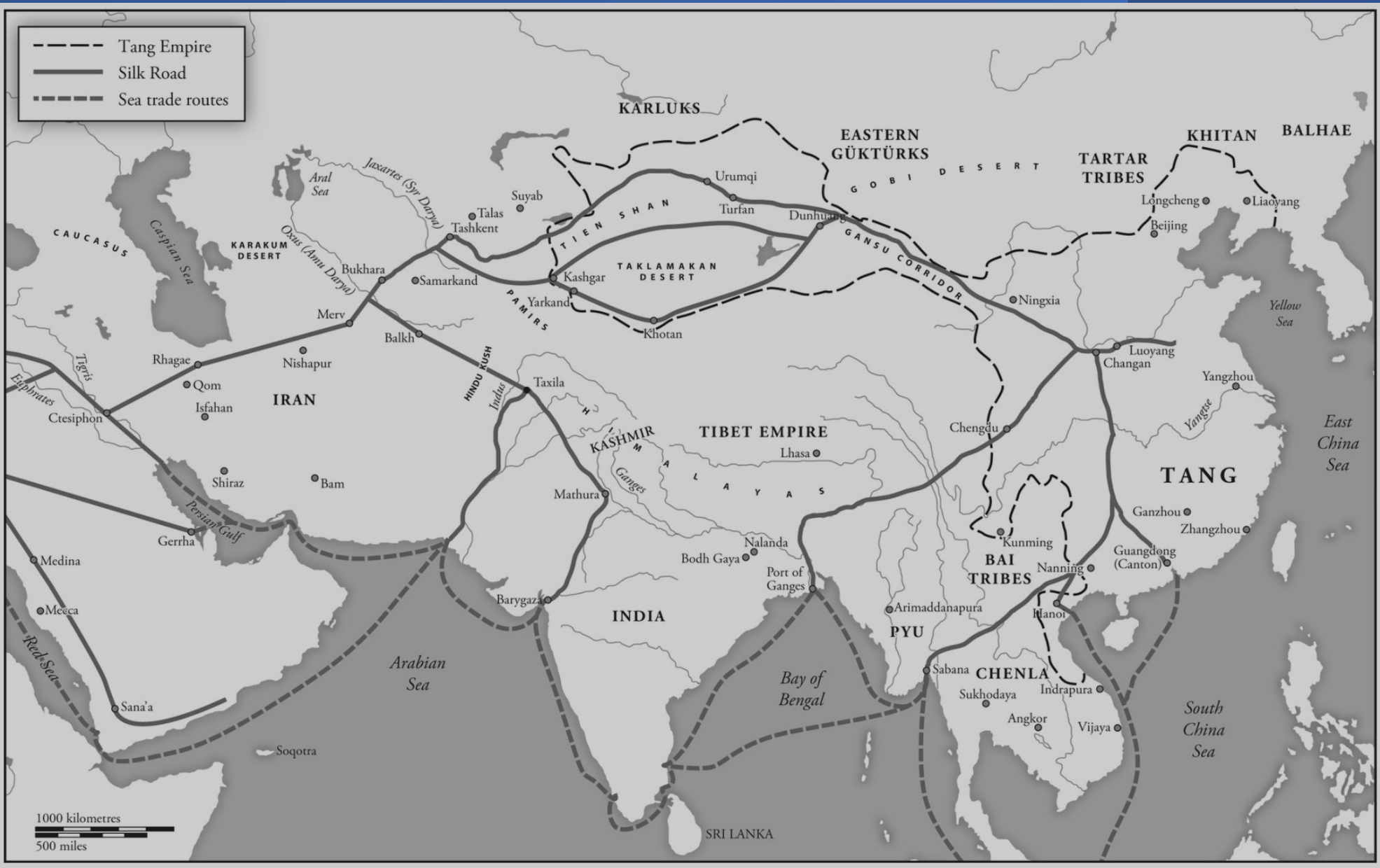
Grand Canal

- Linked the fertile Jiangnan region in the south to the capital at Luoyang in the Central Plain and to armies in the northern frontiers
- Connection of China's major watersheds and population centers proved enormously beneficial during the subsequent Tang dynasty



Tang Dynasty 618- 907 CE

- Built upon the foundation laid the **Sui**, after that dynasty collapsed
- Considered by many as the “Golden Age” of China
- Years during the first half were the most successful
- Weathered an official interregnum by Empress Wu Zetian, who dominated court politics for fifty years by ruling through her sons as well as ruling directly herself during the Wei Dynasty 609-715 CE
- Women during Tang rule achieved higher status than in most Chinese periods; adopted attitudes favored by Nomadic women; depicted in fuller form than later fashion. But their status was again diminished, during subsequent dynasties



- Tang Empire
- Silk Road
- · - Sea trade routes

1000 kilometres
 500 miles

Xue Tao

One Several Successful Female Poets in Tang Era

- Xue Tao (770-832) was a well-known poet, publishing approximately 450, of which one hundred survive.
- Her father was a government official, and she was raised as a scholar. After her father died, however, she became a courtesan in order to support her family.
- Her use of traditional poetic forms inspired later writers in the Song Dynasty



The Tang: Most Cosmopolitan of All Dynasties

- The founders intermarried with the Xianbei and other nomads
- The peace and prosperity of the Tang, made for a period of unprecedented international trade.
- Tang capital of Chang'an, was one of the world's great global crossroads.
- Diverse religious groups and merchants came from many parts of the globe, especially Turks, Uighurs, and Sogdians, as well as Jews, Arabs, and Indians.



Tang Dynasty

- Enlarged territory to the largest empire in the world at that time; nearly Qin size in 18thC
- Trade flourished with travelers, guard and postal stations through empire, including northwest desert links with Silk Road
- High period of poetry, as well as fine art, porcelain and music
- Expanded Sui reliance upon education requirements for government service, maintained Well-field system and “Rule of Avoidance” to limit local power blocks by excluding administrators from their home districts
- A cultural center in SE Asia, Korea and now with Japan, related to Buddhism, trade, government organization, city planning and general learning

The Mogao Caves:

- Along the Silk Road,
- A Recreation of the Exterior;
- A Picture of Some Actual Statues



Buddhism in Tang Era

- The economic consequences of Buddhism were at least as great as the religious and artistic consequences.
- Buddhist monasteries engaged in many economic activities, including sophisticated fund-raising, moneylending, and the running of pawnshops, flour mills, oil presses, and some of the world's first hotels, where travelers could find a hot meal and warm bed for a modest fee.
- Buddhism also stimulated a thriving market for religious icons and other paraphernalia, and Buddhist pilgrimages and festivals stimulated what became a vibrant tourist industry.
- Auctions, savings accounts with compound interest, and the sale of equities and bonds all originated with the entrepreneurship of Buddhist temples and monasteries.

Xuanzong's Journey to the West "Records of the Western Region"

- Much later popularized in an Influential novel
- One of the Great Chinese Classics



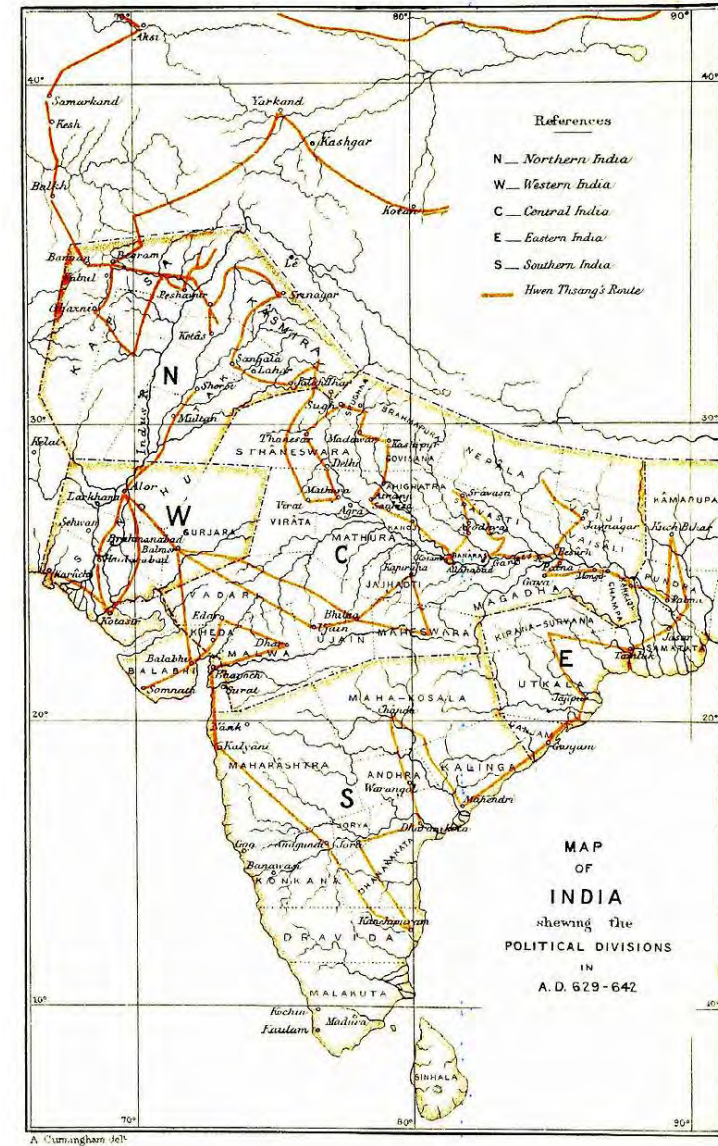
“Records of the Western Region”

- Expanded knowledge of western lands
- Enriched Buddhist scholarship
- Xuanzang’s travelogue delivered detailed accounts of Central and South Asian geography, politics and customs
- Translation bureau he established in Chang’an drew scholars and students from across Asia



Wild Goose Pagoda in Chang'an (now Xi'an)

Map shows **Xuanzang** travels in India



Tang Dynasty Declined After An-Lushan Rebellion that Cost Dearly



- From 907-960 CE, “Five Dynasties, Ten Kingdoms” had replaced the Tang
- The ruling families in three of these successive Five Dynasties had been Shatuo Turks, due in part to their military might and experience in putting down rebellion
- When the **Song Dynasty** was formed, rather than challenge the non-Han neighbors, Song adopted a policy of diplomacy, maintained through costly gifts
- This worked temporarily, and allowed development of an advanced society that generated the necessary wealth
- Warmer climate was coincident with the Song, but by the Yuan Dynasty, centuries later, the Medieval Warm Period ended

SONG DYNASTY:

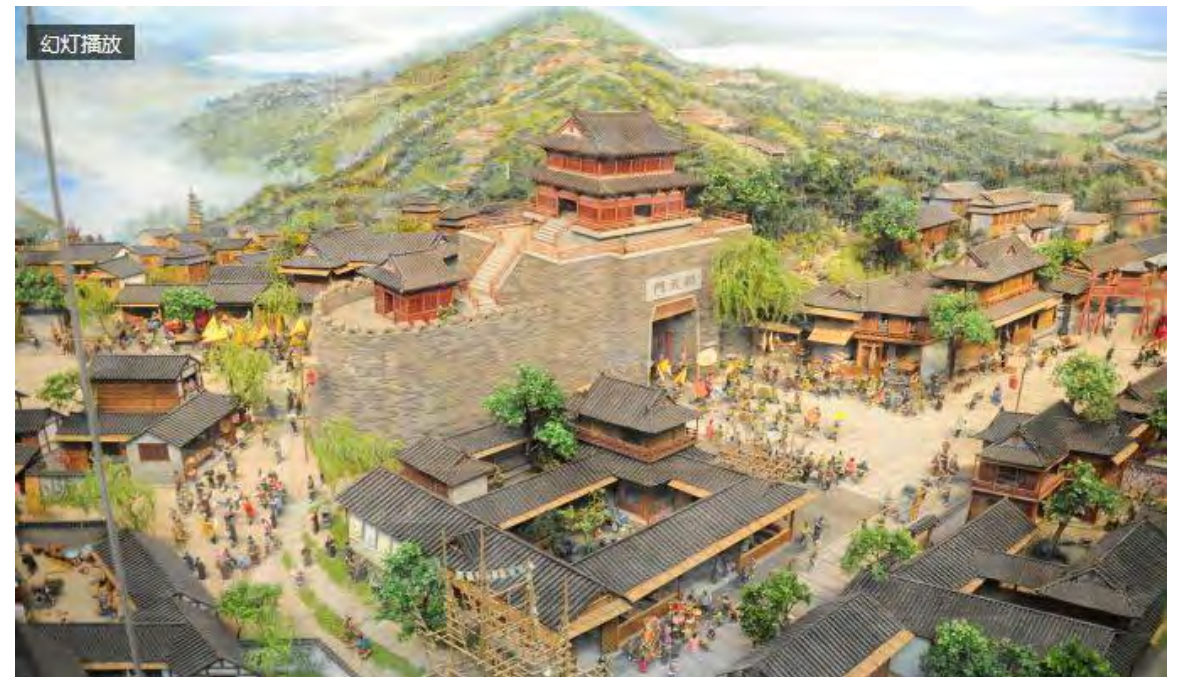
- **Sophisticated Bureaucracy**
- **Vibrant Discussions**
- **Expansion of Commerce**
- **Protections for Small Farmers**

- Song allowed a selected merchants to issue paper certificates for cash deposits in one city that could be redeemed for cash in another city, fostering long-distance trade
- By twelfth century, the government took over the printing and issuing of these certificates, creating the world's first paper money.
- Song merchants organized guilds, formed partnerships, and raised money by selling stocks in their enterprises.
- The Song capitals functioned as commercial centers exceeding earlier dynasties. Kaifeng was the largest city in the world, with perhaps one million inhabitants



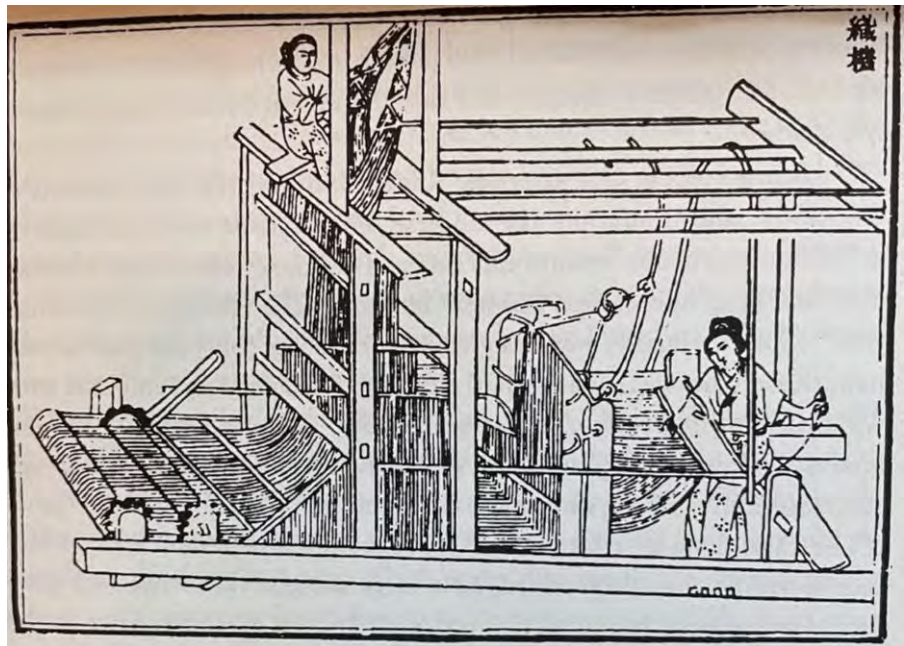
Hangzhou Became Capital of Southern Song Dynasty

- Forced to evacuate the North from Nomadic Attacks
- Song weakness in the North had reduced availability of horse
- Budget reaching 80% on military not enough to compensate for a decline in “Martial Values” and a contempt for “Barbarians”

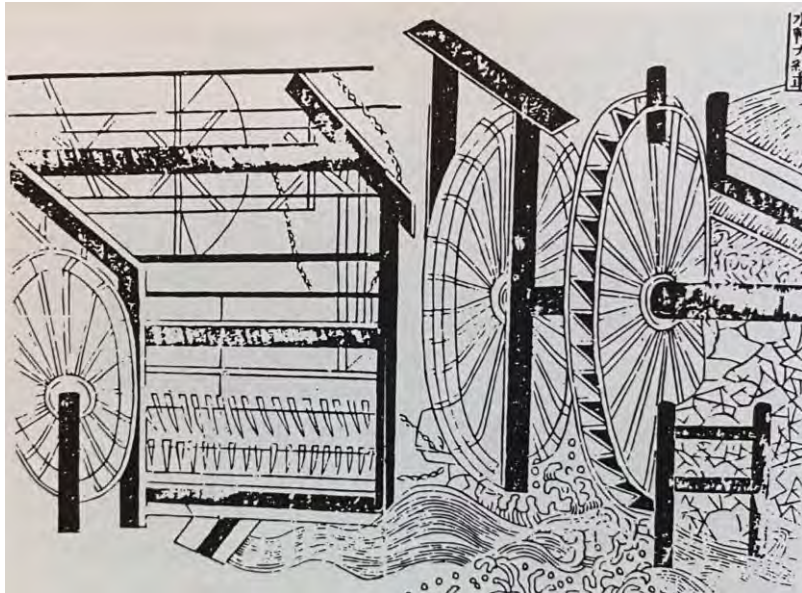


Industry

- Steel improved with explosives used in mining and of hydraulic machinery to power bellows that could generate higher temperatures for smelting iron and steel.
- The Song government sponsored the largest iron-smelting industry in the world, which produced 125,000 tons of iron in 1078 (quantities not reached in Europe for about another eight hundred years).
- Iron was important for making plows, other farm implements, locks, nails, musical instruments, and pans for making salt.
- Chinese peasants probably used as many iron tools in Song times as in the early twentieth century.



Loom for Weaving; Water Power Thread Mill; A Plate for Printing Paper Money





Printing Further Expanded

- Wood Block printing flourished from the sixth century through the Song Dynasty as a cheap alternative to hand work or to invention of:
- Moveable Type, a recreation shown at left of Bi Sheng's innovation between 1041-1048
- Because of the many characters needed, movable type used only for large runs
- One example, still in print, was first issued in 1085, titled
 - ***“How to Make Sure that the Elderly Have Happy, Healthy Retirements”***

End of Formal Presentation