

The Tangy Sui Song

By Dighan, Erica, Mikaela, Emina, Lauren, Tony, Sarah, and Becca

Broadcast – Emina and Lauren

In this first segment, Emina and Lauren introduce the fall of the Sui dynasty in a rather sarcastic manner. In reality, the Sui Dynasty's productivity and economy dropped too low, thus causing riots which would destroy the empire. Emperor Kso Tsu indeed developed agricultural reforms and innovations to tools. And, not to be forgotten, the textile industry was also reformed.

In order to save the crumbling empire and bring in the Tang Dynasty, Kso Tsu did utilize a double tax system where the amount you are taxed depends on your income and wealth. Thus, the wealthier members of this eight-part society contributed more, which helped to distribute wealth in the fragile economy.

Tangy TV – Dighan and Erica

The dealings of the ruling family in the Tang dynasty were scandalous, to say the least. So we bring you Erica and Dighan to dish the sass and the REAL gossip. Mostly sass.

So here's the lowdown: Empress Wei killed her husband in order for her son to take the throne. Prince Xuanzong soon caught wind of her shenanigans, and he executed Empress Wei and took over. Eventually, Xuanzong fell in love with Yang Guifei. He gave her flute lessons and when she rose to be a noble concubine, her mean side came out.

Yang Guifei used her power to place members of her own family in the high ranks of government. Their snark, arrogance, and unchecked ambition annoyed other members of government, and Xuanzong once again took action against a lady by killing Yang's family and eventually executing her.

Disaster Report -- Tony

In a breaking news report, the details of the Tang Dynasty's collapse is brought to attention. The collapse is largely because of Xuanzong's preference of the arts over the affairs of state.

Does this remind anyone of a certain Roman emperor?

Anyways, Yang's unpopular rule caused rioting and unrest with civilians and a weak military—which is a dangerous combination. Add in the crumbling economy, and anyone could see what would cause An Lushan, a military general, to lead a revolt that would end the Tang Dynasty once and for all.

Analysis of Disaster – Dighan

This segment offers a closer look at the root of the Tang Dynasty's fall. The army, mostly, is to blame. The ineffective military failed at protecting the empire, causing the government to shell out lots of moolah to the Tangut Tribes for protection.

The Tangut Tribes (say that five times fast) were a Tibetan group of nomads who settled down and established their own kingdom of Xi Xia. In addition to the protection fees, the army was comprised of 11 million soldiers but lacked competent officers. In short, it cost a lot of money. Like, a lot. Seriously.

Obviously, this angered taxpayers, who had to pay for all of this stuff. Society started hating the military and gained a love for education and scholarly pursuits. Horseback riding and hunting lost their following and were replaced with artistic pursuits, like poetry and painting.

Wang Aushi then took over as chief minister. He tried to energize the government as a way to reform the state. He stressed analytical thinking in school systems and life. Plus, this dude taxed the rich, offered cheap loans, and replaced the army with much cheaper, trained mercenaries.

Trading Commercial – Various People

Trading was a big deal, and a huge industry. The spread of ideas, the spread of goods, and the spread of money. Who wouldn't love it?

Neo-Confucianism – Various People

Neo-Confucianism stressed male dominance, tradition, footbinding (ouch), and far more strict forms of Confucianism.

Some say that Neo-Confucianism hindered creative thought and innovation because of its EMPHASIS on old ways, heritage, and family values.