Hannah Oblak Tang Government

The Tang dynasty was an important period in Chinese history, and had a innovative and successful government. The Tang dynasty began in the year 618 AD, and ended in 907 AD. The Tang dynasty was founded by Chief Officer Li Yuan, who picked up the pieces of the fallen Sui dynasty. The Tang dynasty was often called “A Golden Age of China” based on its many wonderful accomplishments and innovations. The Government of the Tang dynasty was prosperous, and successful, and helped make Tang China the glorious period it is referred to as today.

Part of the Tang governments success can be attributed to its basic government system. The government had an emperor, but was divided into three basic sections because, “A huge country cannot be evenly governed by the emperor alone: the responsibility is too great for one man.”[[1]](#footnote-1) This means that part of governing had to go to the three departments, and within those departments, “The three basic departments created policies and laws. These frameworks of laws were administered by six ministries, which were personnel administration, military, finance, rites, justice, and public works.”[[2]](#footnote-2) This division of power was easy to follow, so the government was very successful. Without this layout, the Tang dynasty would not have had a powerful government, and in turn they would not have been able to achieve many of the incredible accomplishments they are known for today.

The Tang dynasty government kept order in China through its military and the Sui legal code. It had a military system in order to make sure there were no revolts or wars, but the military was not a constant element, as to not frighten the people. The famous   
Emperor Taizong, wrote that, “A warlike country, however huge and safe it may be, will end up declining and endangering it’s populace. Military force cannot be entirely eliminated, nor used all the time.”[[3]](#footnote-3) The Tang dynasty also installed the Sui legal code. This was used to provide security and give citizens freedom to participate in society. “One of the factors of success of the Tang Dynasty governing system, was the reforms it instituted by modifying and building upon the Sui legal code. This was an exacting, complicated, yet simple-to-understand set of laws that were very specific about what was basically allowed in Tang society, what was a crime, and what individual punishments were for violating the legal code.”[[4]](#footnote-4) The Sui legal code made sure the society functioned under the government’s rules and beliefs. The legal code and the military created order for the people. With this order, they had the ability to let Tang China prosper in many subjects.

An important part of a country is the government’s relationships with its people. The government of the Tang dynasty loved and respected its citizens, which helped to build a happy society. “A country cannot be a country without people and a ruler cannot be a ruler without a country”[[5]](#footnote-5) A government needs the support of its people, to stop rebellions and make sure laws are followed. The Tang dynasty supported all people, as shown in many cases. For example, they divided up some land from large landowners, and gave it to the poor, almost like a government Robin Hood. This allowed all people to be able to have property, and to feel like a true citizen and part of society. They also allowed all citizens to take the Imperial Examination, which was a test to determine what citizen should get a bureaucratic post. This meant anyone could contribute and work in government. “Generally, the Imperial Examination System was a progressive examination which allowed intellectuals born in poor families to have the opportunity to become an officer in the court. Speaking from the imperial part, this examination system helped to enhance the centralization of imperial power and to promote the unification of thought.”[[6]](#footnote-6) This was just one example of how the government gave opportunity to all social classes and promoted equality. The great relationship between the Tang government, and its people, helped to promote a peaceful community, creating a successful dynasty.

These aspects created a successful and prosperous government and society, one that could provide safety for it’s people and let them to have freedoms of their own. “The Tang system of government was the model upon which all subsequent dynasties based their own systems, and it was also used by other countries and kingdoms, such as those in Vietnam and Korea.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

1. Emperor Taizong, *Excerpts From Emperor Taizong on Effective Government: Establishing Relatives,* 1-2 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Totally History: Tang Dynasty Government,” <http://totallyhistory.com/tang-dynasty-government/> , (2012) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Emperor Taizong, *Excerpts From Emperor Taizong on Effective Government: Maintaining Military Forces,* 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “Totally History: Tang Dynasty Government,” <http://totallyhistory.com/tang-dynasty-government/> , (2012) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Emperor Taizong, *Excerpts From Emperor Taizong on Effective Government: How a Ruler Should Act,* 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. “Travel China Guide: Political System of China Tang Dynasty”, <http://www.travelchinaguide.com/intro/history/tang.htm> , (2014) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. “Totally History: Tang Dynasty Government,” <http://totallyhistory.com/tang-dynasty-government/> , (2012) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)