

Urbanization During The Ming Dynasty

During the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), China underwent a number of political and economic transitions. These transitions had a number of different long-lasting effects. One of these was the explosion of **urbanization**, or the growth of cities, across the empire.

A Market Economy

As the economy began to improve following the establishment of the Ming, the number of consumer goods increased as well. Visitors to Chinese cities noted the many types of beads, books, hats, knives, porcelain, and other commodities available in the markets. It was the development of these industries that helped to trigger increased urbanization.

Beijing on the Rise

It was also during the early decades of the Ming dynasty that the capital of the empire was moved back to Beijing. It was during this time that the famous Forbidden City was built as the home of the powerful Ming emperor. The political power of the city also contributed to increasing its economic significance. The important market of Beijing overflowed with goods. As a consequence the city grew in size. By 1553 the city had grown so large that a new outer wall was necessary to protect the swollen city.

A New Age of Urbanization and Manufacture

As it was under the Ming Dynasty, the current capital of the People's Republic of China is Beijing. In Beijing and the many cities that dot the landscape across China, urbanization has reached epic proportions. Currently over 50% of China's approximately 1.3 billion people live in cities. Also, as was the case during the Ming, China is now a powerful commercial center. However, instead of porcelains, books, and hats, China leads much of the world in the manufacture of textiles, toys, and electronic devices like cell phones, tablets, and batteries.



Instructions

In this activity, you will learn about urbanization during the Ming Dynasty. As you read, take notes and then use the information you've gained to analyze the lasting impact urbanization has had in China.

Analysis

As you read about urbanization during the Ming Dynasty, take notes to help inform your analysis.

Urbanization: Taking on the characteristics of a city.	
Common Characteristics of Urbanization: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Growing centralized population• Economic focus• Center of industry• Resources	
Examples of urbanization during Ming Dynasty:	Evidence



Apply and Elaborate

Now, apply what you've learned about urbanization during the Ming Dynasty, analyze the impact that two specific aspects of urbanization in China during that time have had on present day China. Complete the chart below and make sure to provide reasoning to support your analysis.

Aspect of Urbanization	Lasting Impact on China	Evidence or Reasoning

