Chapter 13

Spread of Civilizations in East Asia (500–1650)
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Section 1: Two Golden Ages of China

Section 2: The Mongol and Ming Empires

Section 3: Korea and Its Traditions

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Two Golden Ages in China

- How did Tang and Song rulers ensure Chinese unity and prosperity?
- How did Chinese society reflect Confucian traditions?
- What were the literary and artistic achievements of Tang and Song China?
The Tang and Song dynasties unified China and restored culture and prosperity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TANG</th>
<th>SONG</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helped restore uniform government</td>
<td>Expanded the Chinese economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recruited Confucian scholars for civil service jobs</td>
<td>Developed new strains of rice and improved irrigation methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developed new code of law</td>
<td>Produced food surpluses, enabling more people to pursue commerce, learning, and the arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instituted <strong>land reform</strong>, which helped to strengthen central government by weakening large landowners</td>
<td>Encouraged foreign trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Built a system of canals, which encouraged internal trade and transportation</td>
<td>Transformed cities into centers of trade</td>
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<tr>
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</table>
Under the Tang and Song dynasties, China was a well-ordered society.

**GENTRY**
- Most scholar-officials were *gentry*, from the wealthy landowning class.
- Song scholar-gentry supported a revival of Confucian thought.
- The ideal Confucian official was a wise, virtuous scholar.

**PEASANTS**
- Most Chinese were peasants who worked the land.
- Peasants could move up in society through education and government service.

**MERCHANDANTS**
- According to Confucian tradition, merchants were an even lower class than peasants because their riches came from the labor of others.
- Confucian attitudes toward merchants affected economic policy.
**Mechanical clock, 700s**
The Chinese learned of water-powered clocks from Middle Easterners. Mechanical clocks used a complex series of wheels, shafts, and pins, turning at a steady rate, to tell exact time.

**Gunpowder, 850**
The earliest form of gunpowder was made from a mixture of saltpeter, sulfur, and charcoal, all found in abundance in China. It was first used in fireworks and later in weapons.

**Block printing, 700s**
Both printing processes were based on earlier techniques, such as seals (first used in the Middle East). In block printing, a full page of characters was carved onto a wooden block. Movable type was made up of precut characters that were combined to form a page.
Art and Literature of the Tang and Song

A prosperous economy supported the rich culture of Tang and Song China.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTS</th>
<th>LITERATURE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artists sought balance and harmony through simple strokes and lines.</td>
<td>Scholars produced works on philosophy, religion, and history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape painters sought to capture the spiritual essence of the natural world.</td>
<td>The first short stories blended fantasy, romance, and adventure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist themes dominated sculpture and architecture.</td>
<td>Among the gentry, poetry was the most respected form of literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chinese perfected skills in making porcelain.</td>
<td>The great Tang poet, Li Bo, wrote 2,000 poems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which of the following was an accomplishment under the Tang?

a) the development of new strains of rice  
b) land reform  
c) the invention of new methods of irrigation  
d) food surpluses

According to Confucian tradition, the lowest social class was that of the

a) peasants.  
b) gentry.  
c) merchants.  
d) nobility.

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Chapter 13, Section 2

The Mongol and Ming Empires

• How did the Mongols conquer and rule a huge empire?

• What were the effects of Mongol rule on China?

• How did the Ming restore Chinese rule?

• What policies did the Ming pursue with regard to the outside world?
Chapter 13, Section 2

Mongol Conquests

In the 1200s, Genghiz Khan united Mongol tribes and conquered a vast empire that stretched from the Pacific Ocean to Eastern Europe.

Genghiz Khan imposed strict military discipline and demanded absolute loyalty. His highly trained armies contained some of the most skilled horsemen in the world.

In their conquest of China, the Mongol armies faced the problem of attacking walled cities. Mongol and Chinese armies used missile weapons against each other.

It took 150 years for the Mongols to complete their conquest of China.
Once a conquest was complete, the Mongols were not oppressive rulers. They often allowed conquered peoples to live much as they had — as long as they paid tribute to the Mongols.

The heirs of Genghiz Khan established peace and order within their domain. Historians today refer to this period as the *Pax Mongolica*, or Mongol Peace.
Only Mongols could serve in the military or hold the highest government jobs.

Chinese officials were allowed to rule in the provinces.

The Chinese despised their foreign conquerors.

A mix of Chinese and foreign customs developed.

Foreigners were welcomed into China and a number of Chinese products, such as gunpowder and porcelain, were introduced in Europe.
Early Ming rulers sought to reassert Chinese greatness after years of foreign rule. To accomplish this, they did the following:

- Restored the civil service system and made the exams more rigorous than ever
- Revived Confucian learning
- Repaired the canal system that linked regions and made trade easier
- Made Chinese cities home to many industries, including porcelain, paper, and tools
- Developed new technologies, which increased output in manufacturing
- Supported a revival of arts and literature
Why did Ming emperors turn their back on overseas exploration?

• Confucian scholars had little interest in overseas ventures. To them, Chinese civilization was superior to all others.

• The Chinese wanted to preserve ancient traditions, which they saw as the source of stability.

• Fleets of seagoing ships were costly and did not produce any profits.
In China under Mongol rule,
   a) foreigners were prohibited from landing on Chinese shores.
   b) only Chinese were allowed to hold the highest government jobs.
   c) only Mongols were allowed to serve in the military.
   d) Chinese were prohibited from ruling the provinces.

In regard to overseas exploration, Ming emperors
   a) prohibited it because they saw Chinese civilization as superior to all others.
   b) encouraged it because they believed Chinese civilization benefited from outside influences.
   c) were indifferent.
   d) produced many fleets of seagoing vessels.

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Chapter 13, Section 3

Korea and Its Traditions

• How did geography affect life in the Korean peninsula?

• How did Korea maintain its unity and independence despite Chinese influence?

• What were the major achievements of the Choson dynasty?
Seventy percent of Korea is mountainous. Because farming is difficult in the mountains, most Koreans live along the western coastal plain, Korea’s major farming area.

Korea has a 5,400 mile coastline with hundreds of good harbors. Since earliest times, Koreans have depended on seafood for protein in their diet.

Korea’s location on China’s doorstep has played a key role in its development.
As early as Han times, China extended its influence to Korea. Although Koreans absorbed many Chinese traditions, Korea was able to preserve its independence and maintain a separate and distinct culture.

Koreans adapted and modified Chinese ideas.

Examples:

- Koreans used the Chinese civil service examination, but adapted it to fit their own system of inherited ranks.

- Koreans learned to make porcelain from China, but then perfected techniques of making **celadon**—a porcelain with an unusual blue-green glaze.
In 1392, the Koreans overthrew their Mongol conquerors and set up the Choson dynasty. Choson rulers made important contributions to Korean culture.

- They reduced Buddhist influence and set up a government based upon Confucian principles. Over time, Confucianism greatly influenced Korean life.

- They developed **hangul** to replace the complex Chinese writing system. The use of hangul led to an extremely high **literacy rate**, or percentage of people who can read and write.
More than half of the Korean peninsula is made up of:

a) mountains.
b) coastal plains.
c) deserts.
d) valleys.

With the development of hangul,

a) Chinese influence in Korea ended.
b) Buddhism spread more quickly through Korea.
c) Korean peasants were allowed to take the civil service examination.
d) the literacy rate in Korea increased.

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The Emergence of Japan

- What geographic features influenced the early development of Japan?
- How did Chinese civilization influence early Japanese traditions?
- What traditions emerged at the Heian court?
Japan is located on an **archipelago**, or chain of islands, about 100 miles off the Asian mainland.

Because four-fifths of Japan is mountainous, most people settled in narrow river valleys and along coastal plains.

The surrounding seas have both protected and isolated Japan. Japan was close enough to the mainland to learn from Korea and China, but too far away for the Chinese to conquer.

The seas also served as trade routes for Japan.
In the early 600s, Japan began sending students, monks, traders, and officials to China. These visitors returned to Japan eager to spread Chinese thought, technology, and the arts. The Japanese adopted:

- Chinese ideas about government
- Chinese fashion
- Chinese language and characters
- Chinese foods
- Confucian ideas and ethics

In time, enthusiasm for everything Chinese died down. The Japanese kept some Chinese ways but discarded or modified others. This process is known as selective borrowing.

Example: Japan never accepted the Chinese civil service exam to choose officials based on merit. Instead, they maintained their tradition of inherited status through family position.
From 794 to 1185, the imperial capital was in Heian, present-day Kyoto.

At the Heian court an elegant and sophisticated culture blossomed. Noblemen and noblewomen lived in a fairy-tale atmosphere. Elaborate rules of etiquette governed court ceremony.

Important literature came out of the Heian period. *The Pillow Book* was a series of anecdotes and observations about court life. *The Tale of Genji* was the world’s first full-length novel. Both were written by women.
The seas surrounding Japan
   a) kept Korean influence out of Japan.
   b) protected and isolated Japan.
   c) served to inhibit trade.
   d) led to repeated Chinese invasions.

Which of the following best describes Chinese influence on Japan?
   a) The Japanese were never interested in things Chinese.
   b) The Japanese engaged in selective borrowing at first, and later began adopting all things Chinese.
   c) The Japanese adopted many Chinese customs at first, and later engaged in selective borrowing.
   d) The Japanese were only interested in adopting Chinese systems of government.

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• How did feudalism develop in Japan?

• What changes took place under the Tokugawa shoguns?

• What cultural and artistic traditions emerged in feudal Japan?
As the emperor presided over the splendid courts of Heian, rival clans battled for control of the countryside. Local warlords formed armed bands loyal to them rather than to the emperor. In this way, Japan evolved a feudal system.

In theory, the emperor stood at the head of Japanese feudal society. In fact, he was powerless. Real power lay in the hands of the shogun, or supreme military commander.

The shogun distributed land to vassal lords who agreed to protect them. These great warrior lords were called daimyo. They, in turn, granted land to lesser warriors called samurai.
Determined to end feudal warfare, the Tokugawa shoguns:

- imposed central government control on all Japan
- created a unified, orderly society
- required the daimyo to live in the shogun’s capital every other year
- created new laws that fixed the social order rigidly in place and upheld a strict moral code
- imposed restrictions on women
- oversaw economic growth, the flourishing of trade, and the emergence of a middle class
Cities such as Edo and Osaka were home to an explosion in the arts and the theater.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEATER</th>
<th>LITERATURE</th>
<th>PAINTING &amp; PRINTMAKING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No plays presented Zen Buddhist themes or recounted fairy tales or power struggles.</td>
<td>Essays expressed Zen values or contained observations about human nature.</td>
<td>Japanese painters were influenced by Chinese landscape paintings, yet developed their own styles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kabuki</strong>, a popular new form of drama, combined drama, dance, and music.</td>
<td>Japanese poets adapted Chinese models, creating miniature poems called <strong>haiku</strong>.</td>
<td>Painters recreated historical events on scrolls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puppet plays, known as <strong>bunraku</strong>, were popular.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Woodblock prints used fresh colors and simple lines to convey town life.</td>
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In feudal Japan, real power lay in the hands of the
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b) shogun.
c) samurai.
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Japanese miniature poems are called
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