Chapter 5: Civilizations of East Asia, 220–1500

Lesson 1: China Reunified

Three Dynasties

I. UNIFICATION UNDER THE SUI
The Sui Dynasty (581–618)

- **Restoration of unity:** The Sui reunified China after several hundred years of disorder and civil war.
- **The building of the Grand Canal:** Emperor Sui Yangdi completed the Grand Canal, which linked the Huang He and Chang Jiang rivers. This facilitated trade between northern and southern China.
- **Cruelty and rebellion:** Sui Yangdi angered his people by using forced labor on the Grand Canal and levying high taxes to fund his lavish court. This led to a rebellion that ended the Sui dynasty.

II. REFORMS UNDER THE TANG
The Tang Dynasty (618–907)

- **Land reform:** The Sui dynasty was followed by the Tang dynasty. Tang rulers weakened the power of large landholders by giving land to peasants.
- **Government reform:** Tang emperors reinstituted civil service examinations to staff the government. The exams were based on the teachings of Confucius.
- **Restoring China's influence:** The Tang established peace in northwestern China and extended China's control into Tibet. They also established diplomatic relations with Southeast Asia.
- **Corruption, rebellion, and collapse:** Toward the end of the Tang dynasty, emperors became unpopular because of government corruption. A series of rebellions ensued, leading to the collapse of the empire.

III. PROSPERITY UNDER THE SONG
The Song Dynasty (960–1279)

- **Internal stability:** As successor to the Tang dynasty, the Song dynasty was notable for the prosperity and rich cultural life that prevailed within China.
- **Invasions from the north:** The Song were unable to contain invasions from China's northern neighbors. One people to the north, the Mongols, overwhelmed Song defenses in the late 1200s and controlled all of China within decades.

Government and the Economy

GUIDING QUESTION

IV. GOVERNMENT, TECHNOLOGY, AND TRADE

**Government and Economy During the Three Dynasties**

- **Monarchy and merit-based bureaucracy:** During the period of the three dynasties, the Chinese developed a mature political system. A civil service examination resulted in a literate and more efficient bureaucracy.
• **Farming:** China's economy grew in size and complexity during this period. In China's predominantly agricultural economy, improved farming techniques and land reform resulted in an increase in food production.

• **Steel, cotton, and gunpowder:** The Tang dynasty saw the development of a steelmaking process that involved blast furnaces. Cotton began to be used to make clothing. The development of gunpowder led to the production of powerful explosives as well as new weapons.

• **Private merchants and guilds:** Beginning with the Song dynasty, the Chinese government loosened its control of long-distance trade and allowed private merchants to become involved. Also during this period, guilds began to appear.

• **Money economy and paper currency:** In the 700s and 800s, paper money began to replace some of the copper coins that had comprised the basic currency in China. A banking system began to develop.

• **Growth of trade and the Silk Road:** During the Tang dynasty, the Silk Road trade network began to revive, thanks in part to the Arab unification of much of Southwest Asia. Along with the exchange of goods, there was an exchange of technology and of ideas, including those involving religions.

### Chinese Society

#### V. CHINESE SOCIETY

**Chinese Society**

- **An age of prosperity:** During the Tang and Song dynasties, economic progress resulted in prosperous cities. Wealthy urban families enjoyed new leisure activities.

- **Peasants and the landed gentry:** The gulf between rich landowners and poor peasants narrowed. The landed gentry remained powerful, however.

- **Role of women:** Women had little power during this time. Parents preferred male children.

### Lesson 2: The Mongols and Chinese Culture

#### The Mongols

##### I. THE MONGOL CONQUEST OF CHINA

**The Mongol Empire**

- **Origins:** The Mongols were clans of nomads in northern Asia who subsisted by raising livestock and traveled and fought primarily on horseback.

- **Genghis Khan:** In the early 1200s, Genghis Khan unified the Mongols and conquered much of Eurasia.

- **Division into khanates:** After the death of Genghis Khan, his empire was divided into regions called khanates.

- **Kublai Khan:** A grandson of Genghis Khan, Kublai Khan, completed the conquest of China and established the Yuan dynasty.

- **Failures in Japan and Southeast Asia:** Mongol efforts to conquer Japan and the Indonesian islands were unsuccessful.

##### II. EXPANSION OF TRADE UNDER MONGOL RULE

**Increased Trade, Prosperity, and Stability**

- **Chinese support for Mongol rule:** The Mongols ruled China by adopting the existing system of government and employing Chinese in the bureaucracy. Many Chinese appreciated the stability of Mongol rule.

- **Prosperity:** As part of the Mongols' vast empire, Chinese merchants benefited from the extensive trade networks under the control of the khan. The trader Marco Polo was a visitor to China at this time.
• **Fall of the Yuan dynasty:** In the mid-1300s, corruption and revolts fatally weakened the Mongols' dynasty in China. The Yuan were replaced by the Ming in 1368.

**Religion and Government**

**III. THE CHANGING INFLUENCE OF RELIGION IN GOVERNMENT**

- **Spread of Buddhism and Daoism:** Buddhism came to China from India in the first century. As the religion gained followers, however, it lost favor with the imperial court as its monasteries gained much land and many serfs.
- **Government reaction against Buddhism:** Emperors during the later part of the Tang dynasty destroyed Buddhist temples and forced tens of thousands of monks and nuns to return to secular work.
- **Official support for Neo-Confucianism:** Beginning with the Song dynasty and continuing for hundreds of years, Chinese leaders supported neo-Confucianism. This system of beliefs emphasized study of moral principles.

**A Golden Age in Literature and Art**

**IV. NEW HEIGHTS OF CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENT**

- **Invention of printing:** Printing was introduced during the Tang dynasty in the form of movable type, and it helped make literature more available to educated people in China.
- **Great age of poetry:** A great flowering of poetry occurred during the Tang dynasty. Famous poets of the time included Li Bo and Du Fu.
- **Daoist influence in painting:** Some of the greatest landscape paintings by Chinese artists were produced during the Song and Yuan dynasties. Daoism influenced painters to focus on nature.
- **The making of porcelain:** Techniques for making porcelain advanced during the Tang dynasty.

**Lesson 3: Early Japan and Korea**

**Early Japan**

**I. UNIFICATION OF JAPAN BY SHŌTOKU TAISHI**

- **Uniting a Diverse Land**
  - Islands, mountains, and shortage of farmable land
  - Isolation helped shape a unique history
  - Shōtoku Taishi, unification, and a supreme ruler

**II. POWER STRUGGLES AFTER SHŌTOKU**

- Fujiwara clan gained power
- Aristocrats sapped tax income from government
• Aristocrats hired samurai as protection

III. THE FIRST SHOGUNATE
Minamoto Yoritomo and the Kamakura Shogunate
• Yoritomo and central government under a shogun
• Failed Mongol attacks
• Overthrow of Kamakura shogunate and civil war

Life in Early Japan
I. LIFE AND RELIGION
Life in Early Japan
• Farming society, with trade slow to develop
• Growth of manufacturing and trade
• Active role of women, despite subordination to men

Early Japanese Religion
• Kami and the development of Shinto
• Buddhism from China and the popularity of Zen

II. FEMALE WRITERS
Early Japanese Culture
• Prolific women writers and The Tale of Genji
• Importance of landscape in art and architecture

The Emergence of Korea
III. THREE KINGDOMS
The Kingdoms of Koguryo, Paekche, and Silla
• A mountainous peninsula
• Three kingdoms emerge
• Introduction of Buddhism

IV. SILLA DOMINANCE AND AFTERWARD
Silla Rule, Invasion, and a New Korean Dynasty
• Silla became dominant with Chinese aid.
• Civil war and Koryo dynasty
Lesson 4: India and Southeast Asia

India After the Guptas

I. DECLINE OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA

Buddhism in India

- **Split among India's Buddhists:** Although Buddhism had been widely accepted in India, differing interpretations of the Buddha's teachings led to a split of Buddhism into two schools—Theravada and Mahayana.
- **Theravada Buddhism:** Believing that they were following the Buddha's original teachings, adherents of Theravada Buddhism saw Buddhism as a way of life, focused on gaining self-knowledge as a way of attaining nirvana.
- **Mahayana Buddhism:** Adherents of Mahayana Buddhism thought that the Theravada teachings were too strict. They viewed Buddhism as a religion rather than a philosophy, with the Buddha as a divine figure, devotion to whom could earn believers salvation after death.
- **Decline of Buddhism in India:** Buddhism failed to retain its popularity in the country of its origin. By the seventh century A.D., the Theravada school had declined, and the Mahayana school had been absorbed into Hinduism. The religion did, however, remain popular in the countries of East Asia and Southeast Asia to which it had been introduced.

II. EXPANSION OF ISLAM IN SOUTH ASIA

Eastward Expansion of Islam

- **Islam's arrival in India:** After the fall of the Gupta Empire, India was politically fragmented, with a number of small states engaging in continual warfare. In the early eighth century, Islamic armies took advantage of this situation to move into frontier regions in the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent.
- **Islamic state of Ghazna:** At the end of the tenth century, a new Islamic state called Ghazna arose in the northwest. One of its rulers, Mahmūd of Ghazna, began attacking neighboring Hindu kingdoms and eventually extended his power in the upper Indus River valley.
- **Resistance by the Rajputs:** Hindu warriors called Rajputs attempted to push back the Islamic invaders but were largely unsuccessful. Mahmūd's successors continued to expand Islamic control in northern India.
- **Consolidation of Muslim power in Delhi:** By the beginning of the thirteenth century, Muslims had taken control of the whole north Indian plain, where they established the sultanate of Delhi. The sultanate was to grow further before beginning to decline in the later fourteenth century.

III. TIMUR LENK ON THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

The Impact of Timur Lenk

- **Invasion of Timur Lenk:** As the Delhi sultanate declined, the Mongol ruler Timur Lenk led an invasion that raided its capital and slaughtered about 100,000 prisoners. Born in Samarqand, Timur Lenk had already conquered a sizeable region of Asia located to the west of India.
- **Calm following Timur Lenk's death:** Timur Lenk's death in 1405 ended a major threat to the states of the Indian subcontinent, but after about a century of relative calm, new threats to stability would appear in the form of the Moguls and Portuguese traders.
Indian Society and Culture

IV. TENSIONS RESULTING FROM MUSLIM RULE IN INDIA

Tensions Between Conquerors and Conquered

- **Muslim rulers and Hindu subjects**: Muslim rulers in India attempted to strictly separate themselves from their Hindu subjects. Although they strove to convert the Hindus to Islam and succeeded in imposing Islamic customs in their domains, most had little choice other than to tolerate religious differences.

- **Life in the countryside and the cities**: Most Indians were peasant farmers who, through their landlords, paid a share of their harvest to their rulers. The landed elite and merchants lived in cities, as did the rulers, who were often very wealthy and enjoyed luxurious lifestyles.

- **Trade in India**: Although trade within India may have declined because of the continual warfare among the various states, India continued to engage in a robust foreign trade, located as it was along traditional routes between Southwest Asia and East Asia.

- **Architecture**: Religious architecture flourished during this period, with magnificent and ornately designed Hindu temples being built.

- **Literature**: Prose fiction was also well established in India at the time, long before it appeared elsewhere in Asia or in the West. A notable example is *The Adventures of the Ten Princes* by Dandin.

Formation of States in Southeast Asia

V. DEVELOPMENT OF DISTINCT CULTURES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Southeast Asian States

- **Geographic barriers**: Southeast Asia consists of a mainland region, which is divided by several mountain ranges, and a vast group of islands. Because of the geographic barriers, it has never been politically unified and has been home to a number of distinct cultures.

- **Vietnam**: Although Vietnam was conquered by China, the Vietnamese maintained their own identity. After overcoming their Chinese rulers, however, they adopted the Chinese system of government in their new state of Dai Viet. Over centuries, Dai Viet expanded southward.

- **Khmer kingdom of Angkor**: In the ninth century, the Khmer people were unified in the kingdom of Angkor, which became the most powerful state in the mainland part of Southeast Asia. Eventually, the capital of Angkor Thom fell to the Thai, and Angkor's rulers established a new capital to the southeast.

- **The Thai people**: Originating on the southern fringe of China, the Thai moved into Southeast Asia. After conquering Angkor, they established a capital of their own and adopted Buddhism and political ideas from India, while retaining a distinctive culture.

- **Burmese kingdom of Pagan**: The Burmese people established the kingdom of Pagan in the eleventh century, also adopting aspects of Indian culture and political practices. Mongol attacks led to the decline of Pagan in the late thirteenth century.

- **Majapahit and Melaka**: The first powerful state to arise among the communities of the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian islands was Majapahit, which eventually came to control most of the archipelago. It was rivaled and then superseded by the Islamic sultanate of Melaka, and the majority of the people in the region converted to Islam.

Life in Southeast Asia

VI. AGRICULTURE AND TRADE ENCOURAGE GROWTH

Life in Southeast Asia
• **Agriculture and trading:** The economies of Southeast Asian states were based either on agriculture, as in Vietnam, Angkor, and Pagan, or on trading, as in the sultanate of Melaka. Trade in the region increased greatly after the emergence of the Southeast Asian states.

• **Characteristics of Southeast Asian societies:** Hereditary aristocrats living in the major cities dominated the politics and economies of most Southeast Asian societies. The majority of the population consisted of poor peasant farmers who, like fishers, artisans, and merchants, lived outside the major cities. Women’s status was somewhat higher than in China and India.

• **Chinese and Indian influences:** Chinese culture had its greatest influence in Vietnam; the other Southeast Asian states were influenced more by Indian culture, especially in their architecture, as seen in the temple complex of Angkor Wat.

• **Religion:** Hinduism and Buddhism spread from India to Southeast Asia, where they became blended with local beliefs. Buddhism became the most prevalent religion in the region.