CHAPTER 13

The Spread of Chinese Civilization: Japan, Korea, and Vietnam

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The people on China’s borders naturally emulated their great neighbor. Japan borrowed heavily from China during the 5th and 6th centuries when it began forming its own civilization. To the north and west of China, nomadic people and Tibet were also influenced. Vietnam and Korea were part of the Chinese sphere by the last centuries B.C.E. The agrarian societies of Japan, Korea, and Vietnam blended Chinese influences with their indigenous cultures to produce distinctive patterns of civilized development. In all three regions, Buddhism was a key force in transmitting Chinese civilization.

Japan: The Imperial Age. During the Taika, Nara, and Heian periods, from the 7th to the 9th centuries, Japanese borrowing from China peaked, although Shinto views on the natural and supernatural world remained central. The Taika reforms of 646 aimed at revamping the administration along Chinese lines. Intellectuals and aristocrats absorbed Chinese influences. The common people looked to Buddhist monks for spiritual and secular assistance and meshed Buddhist beliefs with traditional religion. The Taika reforms failed. The aristocracy returned to Japanese traditions; the peasantry reworked Buddhism into a Japanese creed. The emperor lost power to aristocrats and provincial lords.

Crisis at Nara and the Shift to Heian (Kyoto). The Taika effort to remake the Japanese ruler into a Chinese-style absolutist monarch was frustrated by resistance from aristocratic families and Buddhist monks. During the next century, the Buddhists grew so powerful at court that one monk attempted to marry Empress Koken and claim the throne. The emperor fled and established a new capital at Heian (Kyoto). He abandoned the Taika reforms and restored the power of aristocratic families. Despite following Chinese patterns, the Japanese determined aristocratic rank by birth, thus blocking social mobility. The aristocrats dominated the central government and restored their position as landholders. The emperor gave up plans for creating a peasant conscript army and ordered local leaders to form rural militias.

Ultracivilized: Court Life in the Heian era. Although the imperial court had lost power, court culture flourished at Heian. Aristocratic men and women lived according to strict behavioral codes. They lived in a complex of palaces and gardens; the basis of life was the pursuit of aesthetic enjoyment and the avoidance of common, distasteful elements of life. Poetry was a valued art form, and the Japanese simplified the script taken from the Chinese to facilitate expression. An outpouring of distinctively Japanese poetic and literary works followed. At the court, women were expected to be as cultured as men; they were involved in palace intrigues and power struggles. Lady Murasaki’s The Tale of Genji, the first novel in any language, vividly depicts courtly life.
The Decline of Imperial Power. The pleasure-loving emperor lost control of policy to aristocratic court families. By the 9th century, the Fujiwara dominated the administration and married into the imperial family. Aristocratic families used their wealth and influence to buy large estates. Together with Buddhist monasteries, also estate owners, they whittled down imperial authority. Large numbers of peasants and artisans fell under their control. Cooperation between aristocrats and Buddhists was helped by secret texts and ceremonies of esoteric Buddhism, techniques to gain salvation through prayer and meditation. Both groups failed to reckon with the rising power of local lords.

The Rise of the Provincial Warrior Elite. The provincial aristocracy had also gained estates. Some carved out regional states ruled from small fortresses housing the lord and his retainers. The warrior leaders (bushi) governed and taxed for themselves, not the court. The bushi created their own mounted and armed forces (samurai). Imperial control kept declining; by the 11th and 12th centuries, violence was so prevalent that monasteries, the court, and high officials all hired samurai for protection. The disorder resulted in the emergence of a warrior class. The bushi and samurai, supported by peasant dependents, devoted their lives to martial activity. Their combat became man-to-man duels between champions. The warriors developed a code that stressed family honor and death rather than defeat. Disgraced warriors committed ritual suicide (seppuku or hari-kari). The rise of the samurai blocked the development of a free peasantry; they became serfs bound to the land and were treated as the lord’s property. Rigid class barriers separated them from the warrior elite. To counter their degradation, the peasantry turned to the Pure Lands Salvationist Buddhism. Artisans lived at the court and with some of the bushi; they also, despite their skills, possessed little social status.

The Era of Warrior Dominance. By the 11th and 12th centuries, provincial families dominated the declining imperial court. The most powerful families, the Taira and Minamoto, fought for dominance during the 1180s in the Gumpei wars. The peasantry suffered serious losses. The Minamoto were victorious in 1185 and established a military government (bakufu) centered at Kamakura. The emperor and court were preserved, but all power rested with the Minamoto and their samurai. Japanese feudalism was under way.

The Declining Influence of China. Chinese influence waned along with imperial power. Principles of centralized government and a scholar-gentry bureaucracy had little place in a system where local military leaders predominated. Chinese Buddhism was also transformed into a distinctly Japanese religion. The political uncertainty accompanying the decline of the Tang made the Chinese model even less relevant. By 838, the Japanese court discontinued its embassies to the Tang.

The Breakdown of Bakufu Dominance and the Age of the Warlords. The leader of the Minamoto, Yoritomo, because of fears of being overthrown by family members, weakened his regime by assassinating or exiling suspected relatives. His death was followed by a struggle among bushi lords for regional power. The Hojo family soon dominated the Kamakura regime. The Minamoto and the emperor at Kyoto remained as powerless formal rulers. In the 14th century, a Minamoto leader, Ashikaga Takuaji, overthrew the Kamakura regime and established the Ashikaga shogunate. When the emperor refused to recognize the new regime, he was driven from Kyoto; with the support of warlords, he and his heirs fought against the Ashikaga and their puppet emperors. The Ashikaga finally won the struggle, but the contest had undermined imperial and shogunate authority. Japan was divided into regional territories governed by competing warlords. From 1467 to 1477, a civil war between Ashikaga factions contributed to
the collapse of central authority. Japan became divided into 300 small states ruled by warlords (daimyo).

**In Depth: Comparing Feudalisms.** Fully developed feudal systems developed during the postclassical age in Japan and western Europe. They did so when it was not possible to sustain more centralized political forms. Many other societies had similar problems, but they did not develop feudalism. The Japanese and western European feudal systems were set in political values that joined together most of the system’s participants. They included the concept of mutual ties and obligations and embraced elite militaristic values. There were differences between the two approaches to feudalism. Western Europe stressed contractual ideas, while the Japanese relied on group and individual bonds. The shared feudal past may have assisted their successful industrial development and shaped their capacity for running capitalist economies. It may also have contributed to their tendencies for imperialist expansion, frequent resort to war, and the rise of militarist regimes.

**Toward Barbarism? Military Division and Social Change.** The chivalrous qualities of the bushi era deteriorated during the 15th and 16th centuries. Warfare became more scientific, while the presence of large numbers of armed peasants in daimyo armies added to the misery of the common people. Despite the suffering of the warlord period, there was economic and cultural growth. Daimyos attempted to administer their domains through regular tax collection and support for public works. Incentives were offered to settle unoccupied areas, and new crops, tools, and techniques contributed to local well-being. Daimyos competed to attract merchants to their castle towns. A new and wealthy commercial class emerged, and guilds were formed by artisans and merchants. A minority of women found opportunities in commerce and handicraft industries, but the women of the warrior class lost status as primogeniture blocked them from receiving inheritances. Women became appendages of warrior fathers and husbands. As part of this general trend, women lost ritual roles in religion and were replaced in theaters by men.

**Artistic Solace for a Troubled Age.** Zen Buddhism had a key role in maintaining the arts among the elite. Zen monasteries were key locations for renewed contacts with China. Notable achievements were made in painting, architecture, gardens, and the tea ceremony.

**Korea: Between China and Japan.** Korea, because of its proximity to China, was more profoundly influenced over a longer period than any other state. But despite its powerful neighbor, Korea developed its own separate cultural and political identity. Koreans descended from hunting-and-gathering peoples of Siberia and Manchuria. By the 4th century B.C.E., they were acquiring sedentary farming and metalworking techniques from China. In 109 B.C.E., the earliest Korean kingdom, Choson, was conquered by the Han, and parts of the peninsula were colonized by Chinese. Korean resistance to the Chinese led to the founding in the North of an independent state by the Koguryo people; it soon battled the southern states of Silla and Paekche. After the fall of the Han, an extensive adoption of Chinese culture—Sinification—occurred. Buddhism was a key element in the transfer. Chinese writing was adopted, but the Koguryo ruler failed to form a Chinese-style state.

**Tang Alliances and the Conquest of Korea.** Continuing political disunity in Korea allowed the Tang, through alliance with Silla, to defeat Paekche and Koguryo. Silla became a vassal state in 668; the Chinese received tribute and left Silla to govern Korea. The Koreans maintained independence until the early 20th century.
**Sinification: The Tributary Link.** Under the Silla and Koryo (918-1392) dynasties, Chinese influences peaked and Korean culture achieved its first full flowering. The Silla copied Tang ways, and through frequent missions, brought Chinese learning, art, and manufactured items to Korea. The Chinese were content with receiving tribute and allowed Koreans to run their own affairs.

**The Sinification of Korean Elite Culture.** The Silla constructed their capital, Kumsong, on the model of Tang cities. There were markets, parks, lakes, and a separate district for the imperial family. The aristocracy built residences around the imperial palace. Some of them studied in Chinese schools and sat for Confucian exams introduced by the rulers. Most government positions, however, were determined by birth and family connections. The elite favored Buddhism, in Chinese forms, over Confucianism. Korean cultural creativity went into the decoration of the many Buddhist monasteries and temples. Koreans refined techniques of porcelain manufacture, first learned from the Chinese, to produce masterworks.

**Civilization for the Few.** Apart from Buddhist sects that appealed to the common people, Chinese influences were monopolized by a tiny elite, the aristocratic families who dominated Korea’s political, economic, and social life. Trade with China and Japan was intended to serve their desires. Aristocrats controlled manufacturing and commerce, thus hampering the development of artisan and trader classes. All groups beneath the aristocracy in the social scale served them. They included government officials, commoners (mainly peasants), and the low born, who worked as virtual slaves in a wide range of occupations.

**Koryo Collapse, Dynastic Renewal.** The burdens imposed by the aristocracy upon commoners and the low born caused periodic revolts. Most were local affairs and easily suppressed, but, along with aristocratic quarrels and foreign invasions, they helped weaken the Silla and Koryo regimes. More than a century of conflict followed the Mongol invasion of 1231 until the Yi dynasty was established in 1392. The Yi restored aristocratic dominance and tributary links to China. The dynasty lasted until 1910.

**Between China and Southeast Asia: The Making of Vietnam.** The Chinese move southward brought them to the fertile, rice-growing region of the Red River valley. But the indigenous Viets did not suffer the same fate as other, to the Chinese, “Southern barbarians.” Their homeland was far from the main Chinese centers, and the Viets had already formed their own distinct culture. They were prepared to receive the benefits of Chinese civilization but not to lose their identity. The Qin raided Vietnam in the 220s B.C.E. The contact stimulated an already existing commerce. The Viet rulers during this era conquered the Red River feudal lords. They incorporated the territory into their kingdom, and Viets intermarried with the Mon-Khmer and Tai-speaking inhabitants to form a distinct ethnic group. The Viets were part of southeast Asian culture. Their spoken language was not related to Chinese. They had strong village autonomy and favored the nuclear family. Vietnamese women had more freedom and influence than Chinese women did. General customs and cultural forms were very different from those of China.

**Conquest and Sinification.** The expanding Han Empire first secured tribute from Vietnam; later, after 111 B.C.E., the Han conquered and governed directly. Chinese administrators presided over the introduction of Chinese culture. Viets attended Chinese schools, where they learned Chinese script and studied the Confucian classics. They took exams for administrative posts. The incorporation of Chinese techniques made Vietnamese agriculture the most...
productive in Southeast Asia and led to higher population density. The use of Chinese political and military organization gave the Viets a decisive advantage over the Indianized peoples to the west and south.

**Roots of Resistance.** Chinese expectations for absorption of the Viets were frustrated by sporadic aristocratic revolts and the failure of Chinese culture to win the peasantry. Vietnamese women participated in the revolts against the Chinese. The rising led by the Trung sisters in 39 C.E. demonstrates the differing position of Viet and Chinese women. The former were hostile to the male-dominated Confucian codes and family system.

**Winning Independence and Continuing Chinese Influences.** The continuing revolutions were aided by Vietnam’s great distance from China. When political weakness occurred in China, the Viet took advantage of the limited Chinese presence. By 939, Vietnam was independent; it remained so until the 19th century. A succession of dynasties, beginning with the Le (980-1009), ruled Vietnam through a bureaucracy modeled on the Chinese system, but the local scholar-gentry never gained the power that class held in China. Local Viet officials identified with village rulers and the peasantry instead of the ruling dynasty. Buddhist monks also had stronger links with common people, especially women, than did the Confucian bureaucrats.

**The Vietnamese Drive to the South.** The Chinese legacy helped the Viets in their struggles with local rivals. Their main adversaries were the Indianized Khmer and Chams peoples of the southern lowlands. A series of successful wars with them from the 11th to the 18th centuries extended Viet territory into the Mekong delta region.

**Expansion and Division.** The dynasties centered at the northern capital city of Hanoi were unable to control distant frontier areas. Differences in culture developed as the invaders intermarried with the Chams and Khmers. Regional military commanders sought independence. By the end of the 16th century, a rival dynasty, the Nguyen, with a capital at Hue, challenged the northern ruling Trinh family. The dynasties fought for control of Vietnam for the next two centuries.

**Global Connections: In the Orbit of China: The East Asian Corner of the Global System.** During the first millennium C.E., Chinese civilization influenced the formation of three distinct satellite civilizations in Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. Unlike China’s nomadic neighbors, each contained areas suitable for sedentary agriculture—wet rice cultivation—and the development of civilization. Common elements of Chinese culture—writing, bureaucratic organization, religion, art—passed to each new civilization. All the imports, except Buddhism, were monopolized by courts and elites. The civilizations differed because of variations in the process of mixing Chinese and indigenous patterns. China’s nearness to Korea forced symbolic political submission and long-term cultural dependence. In Vietnam, Chinese conquest and control stretched over a thousand years. Although the Viets eventually obtained independence, Chinese culture helped form their civilization and allowed the Viets to counterbalance Indian influences among their southeast Asian rivals. The Japanese escaped direct Chinese rule; Chinese culture was first cultivated by the elite of the imperial court, but rival provincial, militaristic clans opposed Chinese influences. Japanese political patterns became very different from the centralized system of China. The preoccupation with interaction within the east Asian sphere left the region’s inhabitants with limited awareness of larger world currents when compared with global awareness in other major civilizations.
KEY TERMS

**Taika reforms:** Attempt to remake the Japanese monarch into an absolutist Chinese-style emperor; included attempts to create professional bureaucracy and peasant conscript army.

**Heian:** Japanese city later called Kyoto; built to escape influence of Buddhist monks.

**Tale of Genji:** Written by Lady Murasaki; first novel in any language; evidence for mannered style of Japanese society.

**Fujiwara:** Mid-9th-century Japanese aristocratic family; exercised exceptional influence over imperial affairs; aided in decline of imperial power.

**Bushi:** Regional warrior leaders in Japan; ruled small kingdoms from fortresses; administered the law, supervised public works projects, and collected revenues; built up private armies.

**Samurai:** Mounted troops of the bushi; loyal to local lords, not the emperor.

**Seppuku:** Ritual suicide in Japan; also known as hari-kiri; demonstrated courage and was a means to restore family honor.

**Gumpei wars:** Waged for five years from 1180 on Honshu between the Taira and Minamoto families; ended in destruction of the Taira.

**Bakufu:** Military government established by the Minamoto after the Gumpei Wars; centered at Kamakura; retained emperor, but real power resided in military government and samurai.

**Shoguns:** Military leaders of the bakufu.

**Hojo:** A warrior family closely allied with the Minamoto; dominated the Kamakura regime and manipulated Minamoto rulers; ruled in name of emperor.

**Ashikaga Takuaji:** Member of Minamoto family; overthrew Kamakura regime and established Ashikaga Shogunate (1336-1573); drove emperor from Kyoto to Yoshino.

**Onin War:** Struggle between rival heirs of Ashikaga Shogunate (1467-1477); led to warfare between rival headquarters and Kyoto and destruction of old capital.

**Daimyo:** Warlord rulers of small states following Onin War and disruption of Ashikaga Shogunate; holdings consolidated into unified and bounded ministates.

**Choson:** Earliest Korean kingdom; conquered by the Han in 109 B.C.E.

**Koguryo:** Tribal people of northern Korea; established an independent kingdom in the northern half of the peninsula; adopted cultural Sinification.

**Sinification:** Extensive adaptation of Chinese culture in other regions.
**Silla:** Korean kingdom in the Southeast; became a vassal of the Tang and paid tribute; ruled Korea from 668.

**Yi:** Korean dynasty (1392-1910); succeeded Koryo dynasty after Mongol invasions; restored aristocratic dominance and Chinese influence.

**Trung sisters:** Leaders of a rebellion in Vietnam against Chinese rule in 39 C.E.; demonstrates importance of women in Vietnamese society.

**Khmers and Chams:** Indianized Vietnamese peoples defeated by Northern government at Hanoi.

**Nguyen:** Southern Vietnamese dynasty with capital at Hue that challenged northern Trinh dynasty with center at Hanoi.

**Kami:** Nature spirits of Japan.

**Fujiwara:** Japanese aristocratic family in mid-9th century; exercised exceptional influence over imperial affairs; aided in decline of imperial power.

**Taira:** Powerful Japanese family in 11th and 12th centuries; competed with Minamoto family; defeated after Gempei Wars.

**Minamoto:** Defeated the rival Taira family in Gempei Wars and established military government in 12th-century Japan.

**Tribute system:** System in which people surrounding China sent emissaries who offered tribute to the Chinese emperor and acknowledged the superiority of the emperor and China.

**Trinh:** Dynasty that ruled in north Vietnam at Hanoi, 1533 to 1772; rivals of Nguyen family in South.

**LESSON SUGGESTIONS**

**Peoples Analysis**
- Heian Japan

**Change Analysis**
- Taika reforms, from empire to shogunate

**Societal Comparison**
- Japanese and European feudalism, Japan and China, Korea versus China or Japan

**Document Analysis**
- Literature as a Mirror of the Exchanges Between Civilized Centers

**Dialectical Journal**
- In Depth: Comparing Feudalisms

**Inner/Outer Circle**
- To what extent did Japan, Korea, and Vietnam adopt Chinese culture?
LECTURE SUGGESTIONS

Describe the effect of the shifting dynastic fortunes in China on the relationship of China to Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. Which of the three states was the least affected by Chinese political developments? Why? Periods of cultural exchange were strongest during the expansive phase of Chinese dynasties. Satellite civilizations were able to win independence and reject Chinese models during the eras of civil disruption between dynastic governments. The conquests of Vietnam and Korea first occurred during Han times. Korea gained independence in the early Tang period after the collapse of the Sui; Vietnam won independence after the fall of the Tang. Of the three regions, Japan is the least affected by internal Chinese developments; it never was part of the Chinese empire and was able to accept or reject Chinese influences. The growing authority of regional warlords in Japan led to a reduction in Chinese cultural influence, since it was linked to the central government and Confucian bureaucracy.

Compare the degree of Sinification in Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. Korea was the most Sinified, although Chinese influence was limited to the aristocratic elite. The Koreans into the 20th century had to accept Chinese political dominance and pay a tribute; they were heavily influenced by Chinese art, writing, Confucian bureaucracy, and commercial practices and goods. Vietnam was in the middle. It was under Chinese rule from Han times to the 10th century. A Confucian bureaucracy was established that was dominated by the aristocracy; Chinese agricultural and military organization were followed. The effect of Chinese culture separated the Vietnamese from the more Indianized indigenous peoples of southeast Asia. After the 10th century, Chinese influence declined. The scholar-gentry lost influence to local village leaders and Buddhist monks. Japan was the least affected. Many Chinese influences came early—Confucian ideas and bureaucracy, script, art, Buddhism—but because of their political independence, the Japanese were able to select among elements of Chinese culture. Chinese influence declined after the Taika reform failures and the rise of the aristocracy. An end to centralized bureaucracy and a decline in Confucian influence went along with a revival of indigenous culture combining Buddhism with Shintoism.

CLASS DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

Trace the failure of the Taika reforms and its political result.

Japan became too influenced by China so the aristocracy argued for a return to Japanese ways while the peasants also thought the same thing. This resulted in the decline of power for the emperor and his administrators to the aristocrats of courts and local lord of provinces.

Compare the Japanese government between the Gumpei Wars and the Onin War.

The Japanese government became a highly militaristic one that was less focused on culture or religion. The centralized authority was out and small kingdoms were in.

Describe the nature of Japanese society and economy during the period of the daimyos.

Despite all the chaos, there was a great economy boost. New tools, new crops, tax collections,
and more, led to the stabilizing of village life and the building of strong rural communities. A new, wealthy commercial class emerged as well. A few women were given new opportunities, but most were treated as “defenseless appendages.”

**Trace the imposition of Sinification on Korea and its affect on the social development of the country.**

Sinification is the extensive adoption of Chinese culture. The earliest Korean kingdom (Choson) was conquered by the Han emperor Wudi and was further colonized in parts by Chinese settlers. When the Han and Koguryo kingdoms fell, Buddhism supplied the key links between Korea and the successors of the Han dynasty.

**Compare the cultural differences between Vietnamese and Chinese.**

There was large distance between the Red River area of the Viet and the main centers of Chinese political power. There was intermarriage with Khmers and Tais. Vietnamese learned much from the Chinese but refused to assimilate. The Chinese found Vietnamese customs disgusting.

**Describe the Vietnamese government after the expulsion of the Chinese.**

Dynastic bureaucracy that was a much smaller copy of the Chinese administration system.

**Compare the common elements of Chinese culture of all three of the satellite civilizations.**

The Chinese culture, more or less, founded the satellite civilizations’ indigenous cultures; Buddhism ran strong through the satellites and China as a messenger of Chinese civilization, and as a strong link between the satellites themselves. The successes of Chinese civilization prompted Japan to follow, trying to mimic the social and political structure. Korea, for the most part, was culturally independent in its later years, but had found itself upon Chinese knowledge and techniques as a sedentary civilization. Vietnam, likewise, had Chinese roots by being made a satellite country, but developed a distinct culture. Nonetheless, all three civilizations received and copied aspects of China, including thought patterns, modes of social organization, and government and bureaucratic organization.

**Compare east Asian civilization with other postclassical civilizations.**

The Far East differed most prominently from other postclassical civilizations socially. Social structure was focused upon mostly morals and divinity. Technologically, although China was a little more advanced in postclassical times, it was within the same ballpark as the other civilizations. Politically, the Chinese system was more efficient, with bureaucracies and such. The most important difference, besides social reasons, was economically. The self-isolation of China—even though it had superior naval power—may be blamed to have led to the inferiority of China to the rising West. Europe and China defined the two most different major civilizations on opposite sides of the Earth.
MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one alternative that best completes the statement or answers the question.

1. Japan began borrowing heavily from China’s culture
   A) in the 9th century B.C.E.
   B) in the 3rd and 4th centuries B.C.E.
   C) in the 1st century B.C.E.
   D) in the 1st century C.E.
   E) in the 5th and 6th centuries C.E.

2. In what year were the Taika reforms enacted in Japan?
   A) 101 B.C.E.
   B) 111 B.C.E.
   C) 646 C.E.
   D) 989 C.E
   E) 1232 C.E.

3. When the emperor moved his government from Nara to Heian,
   A) Buddhism ceased to play a major role in Japanese society.
   B) the scholar-gentry was able to assert itself through the examination system.
   C) the aristocracy took over most of the positions in the central government.
   D) Shintoism was formally suppressed.
   E) he centralized his power and tightened control over the aristocracy.

4. *The Tale of Genji* described
   A) the military organization of the Bakufu in Kamakura.
   B) the life at the imperial court at Heian.
   C) the structure of society under the Ashikaga Shogunate.
   D) the travels of an imperial emissary in China.
   E) how the Ashikaga Shoguns came to power.

5. Bushi were
   A) warrior leaders in the 10th century who controlled provincial areas of Japan from small fortresses.
   B) mounted troops who served the provincial military elite.
   C) curved swords introduced into Japanese warfare at the time.
   D) aristocrats of the imperial court at Heian who controlled the administration.
   E) people who worked the rice fields.
6. Samurai were
   A) provincial military commanders based in small fortresses.
   B) close advisors to the emperor.
   C) curved swords introduced into Japanese warfare in the 10th century.
   D) mounted troops who served the provincial military elite.
   E) aristocratic families who dominated the central administration at Heian.

7. The Gempei Wars
   A) brought the Naran Empire to a close.
   B) devastated the Ashikaga Shogunate.
   C) damaged the emperor’s prestige.
   D) destroyed the Bakufu at Kamakura.
   E) settled the power struggle between the Taira and Minamoto families.

8. The end of the Gempei Wars signaled the beginning of
   A) the centralized Confucian bureaucracy.
   B) the Japanese feudal age.
   C) the Tokugawa Shogunate.
   D) the Ashikaga Shogunate.
   E) Fujiwara power.

9. In 838, the Japanese
   A) created the Ashikaga Shogunate.
   B) initiated the Confucian examination system typical of Confucian China.
   C) ceased to send official embassies to the Chinese emperor.
   D) ended the Bakufu at Kamakura.
   E) began an armed resistance to Chinese influence.

10. The Korean bureaucracy
    A) admitted members almost exclusively by birth rather than test scores.
    B) did not employ the Confucian examination system found in China.
    C) was modeled exactly on the Chinese Confucian system, with most admissions to the civil service based on tests of classical Chinese literature.
    D) depended on the Buddhist monks for its existence.
    E) although based upon the Chinese system, grew to be much larger than China’s bureaucracy.
SHORT ANSWER. Write the word or phrase that best completes the statement or answers the question.

1. The ________ reforms of 646 represented the culmination of centuries of Japanese borrowing from China and attempted to remake the Japanese monarch into an absolute ruler.

2. Written by Lady Murasaki, ________ was the first Japanese novel.

3. The ________ were aristocratic Japanese of the 9th century, who exercised exceptional influence over imperial affairs.

4. The military government established by the Minamoto following their defeat of the Taira was called the ________.

5. ________ were military leaders of the military government established by the Minamoto.

6. The ________ were warlord rulers of three hundred small states established following the disruption of the Ashikaga Shogunate.

7. The earliest kingdom in Korea, ________, was conquered by the Han emperor Wudi in 109 B.C.E.

8. ________ is the extensive adaptation of Chinese culture in other regions, particularly in Japan and Korea.

9. The Hanoi-based dynasty of the North that ruled during the period of Vietnamese expansion was the ________.

10. The dynasty that emerged in the frontier areas of southern Vietnam and who challenged the Hanoi-based dynasty was the ________.

TRUE/FALSE. Write “T” if the statement is true and “F” if the statement is false.

1. The purpose of the Taika reforms was to create a genuine professional bureaucracy and peasant conscript army in Japan to match those of Han-Tang China.

2. During the period of the bushi, combat frequently hinged on the outcome of man-to-man struggles between champions typical of heroic warfare.

3. Zen Buddhism played a critical role in securing a place for the arts in this era of strife and destruction dominated by the warrior elite.

4. The Silla monarchs of Korea strove to free themselves from the cultural baggage imposed on Korea by the Tang dynasty.

5. The independent dynasties of Vietnam continued to rule through a bureaucracy that was a much smaller copy of the Chinese administrative system.
6. Regional warriors in Japan who ruled small kingdoms from fortresses were called samurai.

7. A full-scale civil war was fought between rival heirs of the Kamakura regime between 1467 and 1477.

8. A kingdom in southeastern Korea, Paekche allied with the Tang emperors of China to defeat their Korean rivals.

9. The Trung sisters led one of the frequent peasant rebellions in Vietnam against Chinese rule in 39 C.E.

10. The capital of the southern dynasty in Vietnam was located at Hue.
ANSWER KEY

Multiple Choice

1. E  
2. C  
3. C  
4. B  
5. A  
6. D  
7. E  
8. B  
9. C  
10. A

Short Answer

1. Answer: Taika
2. Answer: *The Tale of Genji*
3. Answer: Fujiwara
4. Answer: bakufu
5. Answer: Shoguns
6. Answer: daimyos
7. Answer: Choson
8. Answer: Sinification
9. Answer: Trinh
10. Answer: Nguyen

True/False

1. T  
2. T  
3. T  
4. F  
5. T  
6. F  
7. F  
8. F  
9. T  
10. T
CHAPTER 13

TIMELINE

Insert the following events into the timeline. This should help you to compare important historical events chronologically.

last Japanese embassy to China
Kamabura shogunate ends in Japan
Vietnam wins independence from China
start of Gempei Wars in Japan
independent Silla kingdom established
Yi dynasty established in Korea

___ 668
___ 838
___ 939
___ 1180
___ 1336
___ 1392

TERMS, PEOPLE, EVENTS

The following terms, people, and events are important to your understanding of the chapter. Define each one on a separate sheet of paper.

bakufu    shoguns   Minamoto
Emperor Kammu  Fujiwara   Kuya
golden and Silver Pavilions  Ryoanji temple  tea ceremony
Ho Xuan Huong  Hanoi   Trinh
hojo    Ashikaga Shogunate  Choson
Kamakura Shogunate  Onin war  daimyo
kami    Son of Heaven  Empress Koken
Khmers  Chams   Nguyen
Koguryo  Sinification  Silla
Le dynasty  Trinh   Hue
Middle Kingdom  Kumsong  Viets
Nara  Shintoism  Paekche
Koryo dynasty  tribute system  Yi
Trung sisters  samurai  seppuku
Gumpei Wars  Taika reforms  Heian
Nara  Taira  kama kura
Tale of Genji  bushi  Yoritomo
Yoshitsune  Zen monasteries
MAP EXERCISE

The following exercise is intended to clarify the geophysical environment and the spatial relationships among the important objects and places mentioned in the chapter. Locate the following places on the map.

Japan          Korea          Vietnam

Which of the satellite regions could be described as peninsular? Which regions could be described as insular? How does this help to explain the variations in dissemination of Chinese culture among the regions?
I. Introduction
   A. Neighbors of China borrow from Chinese achievements
      1. Influenced North/West nomadic neighbors
      2. Also influenced agrarian Japan, Korea, Vietnam
      3. Buddhism played key role in transmission
         a. Indian ideas filtered through Chinese society/culture

II. Japan: The Imperial Age
   A. Introduction
      1. Overview
         a. 7th and 8th century attempt to borrow from China
            1. army, bureaucracy, etiquette, art
         b. But…emperor’s sheltered
            1. provincial leaders/warlords took over
         c. Plunged into civil wars from 12th to 17th century
      2. Taika Reforms – copying Chinese administration
         a. Chinese characters/language adoption
         b. wrote history in dynastic terms
         c. court etiquette
         d. struggled to master Confucian ways
         e. worshipped Chinese style temples
         f. admired Buddhist art
         g. Buddhism blended with kami – Shinto
   B. Crisis at Nara and the Shift to Heian (Kyoto)
      1. Army/bureaucratic ideas stopped by aristocratic families/Buddhist monks
      2. Emperor can’t control Buddhist monks – influenced government
         a. Moves to Heian – monks just make monasteries in nearby hills
         b. Power given to aristocratic families
         c. Rank determined by birth, not merit
         d. Local leaders organized local militias
   C. Ultracivilized: Court Life in the Heian Era
      1. Hyper structured rules of court
         a. Polite behavior always
         b. Every action known by everyone – put up a façade always
         c. Complex gardens/palaces
      2. Literature
         a. Writing verse prioritized
         b. First novel – prose – Lady Murasaki’s The Tale of Genji
            1. criticizes those who pursue aesthetic enjoyment
            2. Shows how poised/cultured nobility must act
      3. Females played unusually creative roll – avoided full Chinese influence
   D. The Decline of Imperial Power
      1. 9th century – Fujiwara clan influences emperor greatly
         a. Stacked courts
         b. Married into family
         c. Built up large estates
      2. Monks equally build up power and domains
   E. The Rise of the Provincial Warrior Elites
      1. Large landed estates come from
a. aristocratic families
b. Built up power – landowners, estate managers, local officials

2. Mini-kingsdoms – like fiefdoms/manors in Europe
   a. small fortresses
   b. constant threat from neighboring lords
   c. self-sufficient – granaries, blacksmith, wells

3. Warrior leaders – bushi
   a. administered law, public works, collected revenue
   b. maintained armies

4. Samurai armies – loyal to lords
   a. called in to protect emperor
   b. age of danger/bandits – samurai as bodyguards
   c. warrior class
   d. constantly trained in hunting, riding, archery
   e. used longbow and steel swords
   f. warrior code – bushido
      1. courage
      2. seppuku – hari-kari if you dishonor family
      3. prearranged battle locations, proclaimed ancestry, few fatalities

5. Peasants become serfs – bound to land
   a. can’t carry swords, dress like samurai
   b. turned to Buddhism

III. Era of Warrior Dominance
A. Introduction
   1. 12th century on > civil wars
   2. Chinese influence declines
   3. Warrior elite produces impressive Japanese art – ceramics/landscape, poetry

B. Declining influence of China
   1. Emperor – heavenly mandate and centralized power a joke – regional power clear
   2. Refuse to grovel, pay tribute to Chinese Son of Heaven
   3. Gempei Wars – peasants vs. samurai
   4. Minamoto established bakufu – military government
      a. Power with Minamoto family and samurai retainers

C. The Breakdown of Bakufu Dominance and the Age of the Warlords
   1. Warlords – shoguns – military leaders
      a. built up power – enlarged domains
      b. Hojo family – manipulated shoguns who ruled for emperors
   2. Ashikaga Shogunate took power 1336-1573
      a. Emperor flees to hills
      b. Warlord lands passed out to samurai – used to be just military, now leaders
         1. 300 little kingdoms – daimyos – no longer bushis

D. Toward Barbarism? Military Division and Social Change
   1. Chivalrous qualities of Bushi era deteriorate
      a. spying, sneak attacks, betrayals
      b. poorly trained peasant forces
      c. looked like they were reverting to barbarism
   2. Some Daimyos tried to maintain order
      a. tax collection
      b. public works
      c. encourage settlement of unoccupied areas
      d. new tools
e. new crops – soybeans, hemp, paper, dyes, vegetable oil
f. new commercial class emerged
   1. guild organizations started – solidarity/group protection

3. Women
   a. merchant women a bit of independence
   b. noble women used to be able to ride/use bow and arrow
      1. Now primogeniture – oldest son gets everything wins out
      2. given in marriage for alliances
      3. taught to slay selves rather than dishonor – if raped
      4. Japanese theatrical female roles played by men

E. Artistic Solace for a Troubled Age
   1. Focus – simplicity/discipline
   2. Revival of Chinese influence
   3. Monochrome ink sketches
   4. Architecture built to blend with natural setting/meditation
      a. Famous gardens
         1. Volcanic rocks
         2. Raked pebbles
         3. Bansai trees
         4. Tea ceremony

IV. Korea: Between China and Japan
   A. Introduction
      1. Most profoundly influenced, for longest
         a. Extension of mainland
         b. Dwarfed by neighbor
         c. Ruled by indigenous dynasties
      2. Peoples before – hunting and herding peoples
         a. Colonized by Chinese settlers
         b. Koguryo tribe resisted Chinese rule – Sinification…but…
            1. variants of Buddhism
            2. Chinese writing – tough to be adapted
            3. unified law code
            4. established universities
            5. tried to implement Chinese-style bureaucracy
               1. Noble families don’t allow
      3. Divided into three parts during Three Kingdoms
         a. Koguryo
         b. Paekche
         c. Silla
   B. Tang Alliances and the Conquest of Korea
      1. Three kingdoms weakened – Koguryo warriors hurt Tang
      2. China striking alliance – Silla in southeast – became tribute
         a. tribute payments
         b. submission as vassal
         c. Chinese withdraw armies in 668
   C. Sinification: The Tributary Link
      1. Tribute system
         a. Send embassies
         b. Must kowtow – ritual bows – prostrate self
      2. Benefits of tribute system
         a. Continued peace
b. Access to Chinese learning, art, manufactured goods
c. Merchants went with emissaries
d. Scholars study at Chinese academies

3. *** Became major channel of trade/cultural exchange

D. The Sinification of Korean Elite Culture
1. Aristocrats
   a. studied in Chinese schools – some took tests
      1. but family connections still more important than test scores
   b. artistic pursuits/entertainment
   c. favor Buddhism over Confucianism

2. Art
   a. Artwork/monastic designs reproduced Chinese Buddhist work
   b. Outdid teachers for pottery
      1. porcelain/ black stoneware

E. Civilization for the Few
1. Elite attracted to luxury goods
   a. fancy clothes
   b. special teas
   c. scrolls
   d. artwork
2. Korea exported raw materials
   a. forest products and copper
3. Beneath elite class
   a. purpose servicing elites
   b. government workers
   c. commoners
   d. near-slaves – “low born” – like mean people

F. Koryo Collapse, Dynastic Renewal
1. After common people tired of being repressed
2. Yi dynasty established 1392 – ruled until 1910
   a. Restored aristocratic dominance

V. Between China and Southeast Asia: The Making of Vietnam
A. Introduction
1. Vietnam – rice-growing area
2. Viets not as accepting of Chinese influence
   a. farther away
   b. resilient culture
   c. seen as distinct people – fear of losing identity
3. Already received benefits from China
   a. technology
   b. market for their ivory, tortoise shells, pearls, peacock feathers, aromatic woods, exotic products from sea/forest
   b. political organization
   c. ideas
4. Seen as “southern barbarians”
5. Different from China
   a. Different language
   b. Village autonomy
   c. favored nuclear family over extended family
   d. never developed clan networks
   e. women have greater freedom/influence
f. women wear long skirts/not long pants
g. delighted in cockfighting
h. chewed betel nut
i. blackened teeth

B. Conquest and Sinification
   1. 111 BCE Han dynasty conquers Vietnam – elite realized they could benefit
      a. attended Chinese schools
      b. took exams for administration
      c. cropping techniques and irrigation
      d. military organization gave them an edge over neighbors
      e. extended family model to extended family – venerated ancestors

2. Roots of Resistance
   a. Elites like, but peasants annoyed
   b. Chinese didn’t like local customs – disgusted/looked down
   c. Peasants rallied when lords wanted to fight
      1. Trung sisters led 39 CE revolt
         a. Women had a lot to lose with Confucian ideas

3. Winning Independence and Continuing Chinese Influence
   a. Can’t control
      1. Greater distance
      2. Mountain barriers
      3. Small number of Chinese actually moved to Vietnam
      4. Vietnamese took advantage of political turmoil in China
      5. By 939 won independence
   b. Future leaders borrowed from Chinese ideas
      1. Chinese palaces
      2. Administration
         a. Secratriats
         b. Ministries
         c. Civil Service Exams
         d. Civil Service Exams – graft/corruption
      c. But…scholar gentry never arises
         1. local officials identify with peasantry
         2. competition from well-educated Buddhist monks

C. The Vietnamese Drive to the South
   1. Able to defeat Khmer/Cham neighbors – superior military forces/weapons

D. Expansion and Division
   1. North vs. South – South seen as less energetic, slower
   2. Nguyen in South, Trinh in North – civil wars
   3. Unable to unite against foreign threat – eventually French

VI. Global Connections
A. Chinese organization suited to sedentary cultivation
   1. Borrowing from China led to ignoring of outside world

B. Writing, bureaucracy, religious teachings, art spread to Asia
   1. Korea, direct rule brief, but influence great
   2. Japan – emulated China for awhile, aristocratic class took over

C. Imports monopolized by wealthy elites
Chapter 13

The Spread of Chinese Culture: Japan, Korea, and Vietnam

(A.D. 500 – A.D. 1450)
Industrial Innovation in China
Primary Source Document 5

The Granger Collection, New York
Diverse Traditions of Southeast Asia

- The area was influenced by China and India, but the nations of SE Asia retained unique cultural identities.
- The mainland is separated from India & China by mountains.
- 20,000 islands comprise the second part of SE Asia.
- People from Philippines and Indonesia were ancestors of Polynesians, who migrated widely to avoid depleting resources.
## New Kingdoms and Empires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGAN</th>
<th>KHMER EMPIRE</th>
<th>SRIVIJAYA</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| - King Anawrata made Pagan a major Buddhist center.  
- The capital city had many magnificent **stupas**, or dome-shaped shrines.  
- Conquered by the Mongols. | - The Khmer people adapted Indian writing, mathematics, architecture, and art.  
- Khmer rulers became Hindus, while most ordinary people preferred Buddhism.  
- King Suryavarman II built a great temple complex at **Angkor Wat**. | - This trading empire controlled the Strait of Malacca, vital to shipping.  
- Local people blended Indian beliefs into their own forms of worship. |
Angkor Wat, Cambodia
Trade Routes in the SE Seas

- Monsoons affect trading patterns: ships travel NE in summer and SW in winter.
- Southeast Asian ports became centers of trade, supplying markets in East Asia, the Middle East, and East Africa.
- Divergent cultures, languages, and religions developed.
- Ankor rulers of Cambodia were militarily aggressive.
Women is Southeast Asia

- Women had a greater equality than elsewhere in Asia participating as merchants or rulers.
- Also they were a matrilineal society, so inheritance was through mothers.
- Women could participate in choosing or divorcing partners.

Apsara relief at Angkor Wat
Vietnam Emerges

- Centered around Red River Delta.
- Irrigated fertile rice padis provided food.
  - Probably originated in Vietnam
  - Extremely labor intensive
  - Lead to increased yields
- Women often held positions of authority.
- In 111 B.C., Han armies conquered the region and kept control for 1000 years.
- Adopted Chinese civil service, government bureaucracy, Confucian ideas, Chinese language and characters, Theravada Buddhism, Mahayana beliefs, Daoism.
The Making of Vietnam

- The Viets first appear in recorded history as a group of “southern barbarian” mentioned by Chinese scholars of the Qin in the 220s B.C.E.

- Their kingdom was called Nam Viet, “people of the south.”

- The Viets traded ivory, tortoise shells, pearls, peacock feathers, aromatic woods, and other exotic products from the sea and tropical forests in exchange for silk from China.

- They intermarried with the Khmers of Cambodia.
Early Vietnamese Culture was distinct from Chinese Culture

**Vietnamese Culture**
- Had a strong tradition of village autonomy
- Favored nuclear family
- Never developed clan networks
- Women wore long skirts
- Blackened teeth

**Chinese Culture**
- Had a strong tradition of control by kingdoms or regional warlords
- Favored the extended family household
- Developed clan networks
- Women wore black pants
- Found blackened teeth repulsive
- Han rulers made Vietnam a tributary state.
- In 111 B.C.E. the Han decided to conquer the Viets.
- The Vietnamese elites were drawn into the bureaucracy and attended Chinese-style schools, wrote & read Chinese script and learned Confucius texts.
- They adopted Chinese cropping techniques & irrigation technology, which made their agriculture the most successful in SE Asia.
- They adopted Chinese political & military organization, which gave them a decisive edge over peoples to the west and south.
Industrial Innovation in China
Primary Source Document 6

The Granger Collection, New York
The Trung sisters, Trung Trac and Trung Nhi, who were children of a deposed local leader, led a revolt against the Chinese in 30 C.E. and set up a simpler government.

They recruited and trained 80,000 men and women to fight; 36 generals were women.

They successfully held off the Chinese for three years.

They committed suicide and were declared martyrs.
Continued Resistance and the Drive South

- In 907, the Vietnamese mounted a massive rebellion during the period of chaos after the fall of the Tang dynasty.
- By 939 the Vietnamese had won political independence from China.
- From the 11th to the 18th centuries they fought a long series of generally successful wars against the Chams in the south, eventually winning their lowland croplands.
- They then clashed with the Khmers, who had begun to move into the Mekong delta region. Much of the upper delta region was occupied by the Vietnamese by the late 18th century when the French arrived in force.
The Geography of the Korean Peninsula

70% 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.
Korea and Its Traditions

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.

Korea also served as a cultural bridge linking China and Japan.

Between A.D. 300 and 600, powerful local rulers forged three separate kingdoms: Koguryo in north, Paekche in SW, Shilla in SE.

*Amitabha and Eight Great Bodhisattvas*, or “Enlightened Beings,” Goryeo scroll from the 1300s
Korea United

- In 668, with support of Tang empress Wu Zhao, the Shilla kingdom united the Korean peninsula.
- The **Shilla dynasty** ruled from 668 to 918, during which Korea became a tributary state of China.
- Confucian ideas took root and women lost the right to inherit property and hold public roles.
- View developed that Korea was younger brother of China and them respect.
- The **Koryo Dynasty** ruled from 918 to 1392.
- Buddhism reached greatest influence in Korea.
Unified Shilla
Chinese Influences on Korea

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.

Example of celadon porcelain
Choson: The Longest Dynasty

- Mongols occupied Korea until 1350s.
- Then general Yi Song-gyek set up the Choson Dynasty, which ruled from 1392 to 1910.
- They reduced Buddhist influence and set up a government based upon Confucian principles.
- Over time, Confucianism greatly influenced Korean life.
- In 1443, King Sejong replaced China’s complex writing with hangul, an alphabet using symbols to represent sounds of spoken Korean, greatly increasing literacy rates.
The Emergence of Japan

- The seas allowed Japan to preserve its unique culture while selectively borrowing religious, political, and artistic traditions from China.
- Japan is located on an archipelago, or chain of islands, about 100 miles off the Asian coast.
- The mountainous terrain was an obstacle to unity and caused people to settle in river valleys and along the coast.
The Emergence of Japan (cont.)

- The surrounding seas 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.
- Japanese came to fear and respect the sudden tsunamis, killer tidal waves caused by earthquakes.
Mount Fuji, Japan
Early Settlers

- The first people to arrive in Japan probably came from northeast Asia between 30,000 and 10,000 B.C.
- At that time, Japan was connected to the mainland of Asia.
- Wandering groups of people developed the Jomon culture around 5000 B.C.
- The Jomon people settled along the coast of Japan and fished for food.
- Around 300 B.C., the Yayoi people appeared.
- The Yayoi are ancestors of the Japanese people.
- The Yayoi were skilled farmers, potters, and metalworkers.
- Warrior chiefs headed each clan and protected the people in return for a share of the rice harvest each year.
- The Yayoi buried their chiefs in large mounds called kofun.
- According to a Japanese myth, two gods created Japan along with two gods to rule over Earth.
- The children of one of the gods were the first Japanese people.
Early Traditions

- Early Japanese society was divided into uji, or clans. Each clan worshipped their own gods or goddesses.
- Women could also be clan leaders.
- In A.D. 500, the Yamato clan came to dominate a corner of Honshu and set up Japan’s first and only dynasty.
- According to myth, a Yamato leader named Jimmu founded a line of rulers of Japan that has never been broken.
- Yamato clan claimed decent from sun god and chose the Amaterasu, or rising sun, as their symbol.
Korean Bridge

- Japanese language is distantly related to Korean.
- Korean artists & metalworkers settled in Japan bringing new skills and technology.
- **Shinto** is the traditional religion of Japan, which is the worship of nature spirits.
- Korean missionaries introduced Buddhism, Chinese writing and culture.
Japan Looks to China

- Prince Shotoku Yamato (A.D. 573–621) modeled the law code after China & built a new capital at Nara.
- Adopted Chinese title “Heavenly Emperor.”
- As Buddhism spread, the Japanese adopted pagoda architecture.
- Buddhist monasteries grew rich and powerful.

Prince Shotoku, flanked by his younger brother and 1st son.
Chinese Culture Influenced Early 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 & characters
- Chinese foods
- Confucian ideas and ethics

The Horyuji temple built by Prince Shotoku
Chinese Culture Influenced Early Japan

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.

Statue believed to be of Prince Shotoku
The Heian Period

From 794 to 1185, the imperial capital was in Heian, present-day Kyoto and a blending of cultures took place.

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* by Sei Shongon was a series of anecdotes and observations about court life. *The Tale of Genji* by Lady Murasaki Shikibu was the world’s first full-length novel. Both were written by women.
Japan’s Feudal Age

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.

Bushido, “the way of the warrior,” emphasized honor, bravery, loyalty.
In 1192 Minamoto Yoritomo was appointed Shogun, or supreme military commander. Determined to end feudal warfare, the Tokugawa shoguns:

- Imposed central government control on all Japan from the capital at Edo ending constant warfare.
- 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 & upheld a strict moral code
- Imposed restrictions on women
- Oversaw economic growth, the flourishing of trade, and emergence of a middle class
Japan’s Feudal Age (cont.)

- A samurai who betrayed the code of bushido was expected to commit *seppuku*, or ritual suicide.

- In 1281, the Mongols tried to invade Japan, but their fleet was destroyed by a typhoon called *kamikaze*, or divine winds.

- Zen Buddhism taught that people could seek enlightenment, not only through meditation, but through the precise performance of everyday tasks.
Japanese Artistic Traditions

- **Nō plays** were preformed on a square, wooden stage, without scenery. Each movement had special meaning.

- **Kabuki** was less refined and included comedy or melodrama.

- Puppet plays, called **bunraku**, were popular.

A bunraku puppet's head. This particular puppet is a head used in *Sanbaso* performances.
## Culture of Feudal Japan

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>Nō 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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>