

## SECTION 3

# The Asian World

### Guide to Reading

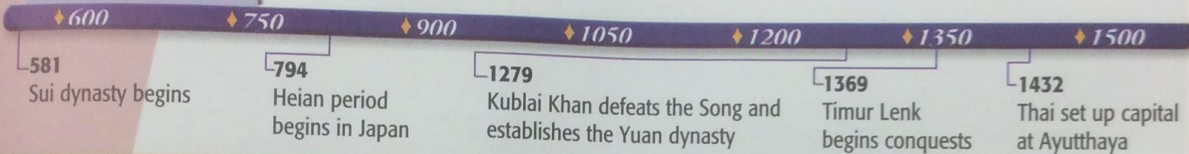
#### Main Ideas

- The Mongols created a vast land empire.
- Rulers and powerful families struggled for control in Japan.
- Muslim power grew in India.
- New Southeast Asian states adapted Chinese and Indian models.

#### Key Terms

khanate, samurai, Bushido, shogun, daimyo, Shinto, archipelago

#### Preview of Events



#### People to Identify

Genghis Khan, Kublai Khan, Li Bo, Shotoku Taishi, Timur Lenk

#### Places to Locate

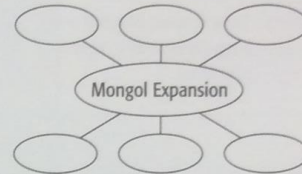
Tibet, Mongolia, Beijing, Nara, Kyoto, Angkor Thom, Malay Peninsula

#### Preview Questions

1. Why did Japan not develop a centralized government like China's?
2. What impact did Muslim rule have on India?

#### Reading Strategy

Using a diagram like the one below, identify all the civilizations that were affected by Mongol expansion.



## Voices from the Past



Mongol horseman

The Mongols were masters of military tactics. John of Plano Carpini, a Franciscan friar, wrote:

“As soon as they discover the enemy they charge and each one unleashes three or four arrows. If they see that they can't break him, they retreat in order to entice the enemy to pursue, thus luring him into an ambush prepared in advance. If they conclude that the enemy army is stronger, they retire for a day or two and ravage neighboring areas. Or they [set up] camp in a well chosen position, and when the enemy army begins to pass by, they appear unexpectedly.”

—*L'Empire des Steppes*, Rene Grousset, 1939

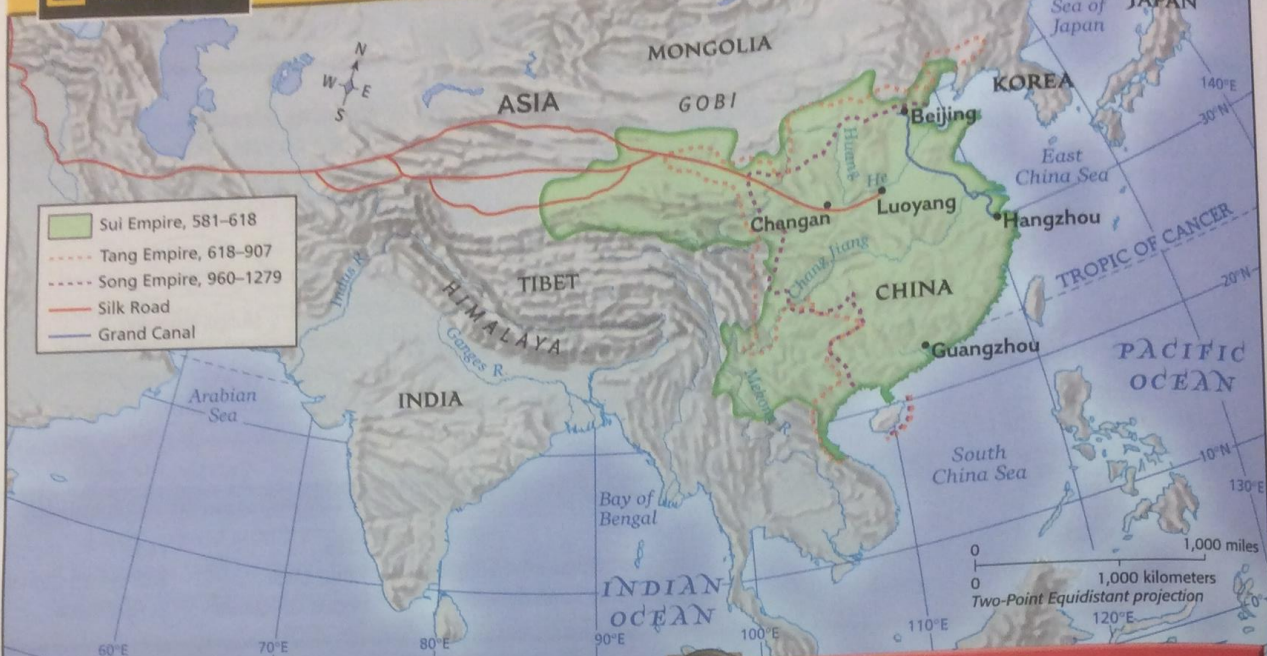
Due in large part to their military prowess, the Mongols rose to power in Asia with stunning speed.

### China Reunified

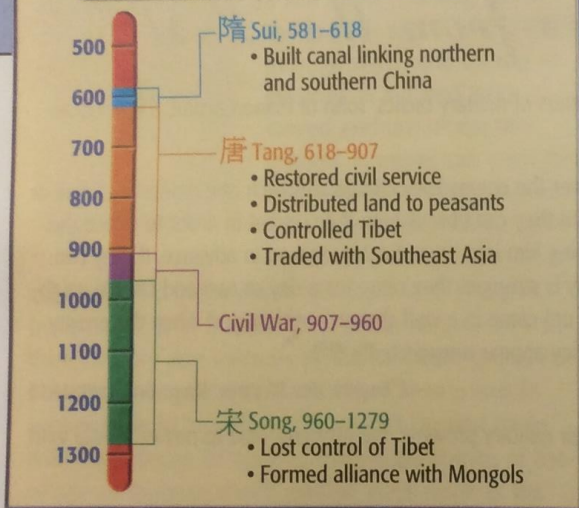
The Han dynasty came to an end in 220, and China fell into chaos. For the next three hundred years, the Chinese suffered through disorder and civil war. Then, in 581, a new Chinese empire was set up under a dynasty known as the Sui (SWAY). The Sui dynasty (581–618) did not last long, but it managed to unify China once again under the emperor's authority.

**The Tang Dynasty** A new dynasty, the Tang (TONG), soon emerged. It would last for almost three hundred years, from 618 until 907. The early Tang rulers began their reigns by instituting reforms, as rulers often did in the early days of new dynasties. They restored the civil service examination started by the Qin

# Sui, Tang, and Song Empires in China, 581–1279



## Dynasties of China, 581–1279



## Geography Skills

The Sui dynasty was the first to reunify China after the fall of the Han dynasty.

- Interpreting Maps** What was the length of the Grand Canal?
- Applying Geography Skills** What do you notice about the western border of each dynasty? What would account for the movement of the border?

During the eighth century, the Tang dynasty weakened and became prey to rebellions. Tang rulers hired Uighurs (WEE•GURZ), a northern tribal group of Turkic-speaking people, to fight for the dynasty. Continued unrest, however, led to the collapse of Tang rule in 907.

**The Song Dynasty** In 960, a new dynasty known as the Song (SOONG) rose to power. The Song ruled during a period of economic prosperity and cultural achievement, from 960 to 1279. From the start, however, the Song also experienced problems, especially from northern neighbors. Song rulers were forced to move the imperial court south to Hangzhou.

The Song dynasty could never overcome the challenge from the north. During the 1200s, the Mongols—a nomadic people from the Gobi—carried out wars of conquest and built a vast empire. Within 70 years, they

dynasty, to serve as the chief method of recruiting officials for the civilian bureaucracy. They also tried to create a more stable economy by giving land to the peasants and breaking up the power of large landowners.

Tang rulers worked hard to restore the power of China in East Asia. They brought peace to northwestern China and expanded their control to the borders of **Tibet**, an area north of the Himalaya. China claimed to be the greatest power in East Asia.

controlled all of China. The Mongols overthrew the Song and created a new Mongol dynasty.

**Government, Economy, and Society** The era from the beginning of the Sui dynasty to the end of the Song dynasty lasted nearly seven hundred years. During that period, a mature political system based on principles first put into practice during the Qin and Han dynasties gradually emerged in China. As in the Han Era, China was a monarchy that employed a relatively large bureaucracy. Beyond the capital, government was centered around provinces, districts, and villages. Confucian ideals were the cement that held the system together.

During the long period between the Sui and Song dynasties, the Chinese economy grew in size and complexity. Agriculture flourished, and manufacturing and trade grew dramatically. In Chinese cities, technological developments added new products and stimulated trade. During the Tang dynasty, for example, the Chinese began to make steel for swords and sickles and invented gunpowder, used for explosives and a flamethrower called a fire-lance.

Long-distance trade had declined between the fourth and sixth centuries as a result of the collapse of both the Han dynasty and the Roman Empire. Trade revived under the Tang dynasty, in part because of the unification of much of Southwest Asia under the Arabs. The Silk Road was renewed and thrived as caravans carried goods between China and the countries of Southwest and South Asia.

Economic changes had an impact on Chinese society. For wealthier city dwellers, the Tang and Song Eras were times of prosperity. The Song capital of Hangzhou, for example, flourished. In the late thirteenth century the Italian merchant Marco Polo described the city to European readers as one of the largest and wealthiest cities on Earth. "So many pleasures may be found," he said, "that one fancies himself to be in Paradise."

The vast majority of the Chinese people still lived off the land in villages. Most peasants never left their villages except for an occasional visit to a nearby market town. Changes were taking place in the countryside, however. Before, there had been a great gulf between wealthy landowners and poor peasants. A more complex mixture of landowners, free peasants, sharecroppers, and landless laborers now emerged.

**Reading Check Describing** Identify one of the broad goals of the Tang dynasty and describe how Tang rulers worked to reach it.

## The Mongol Empire

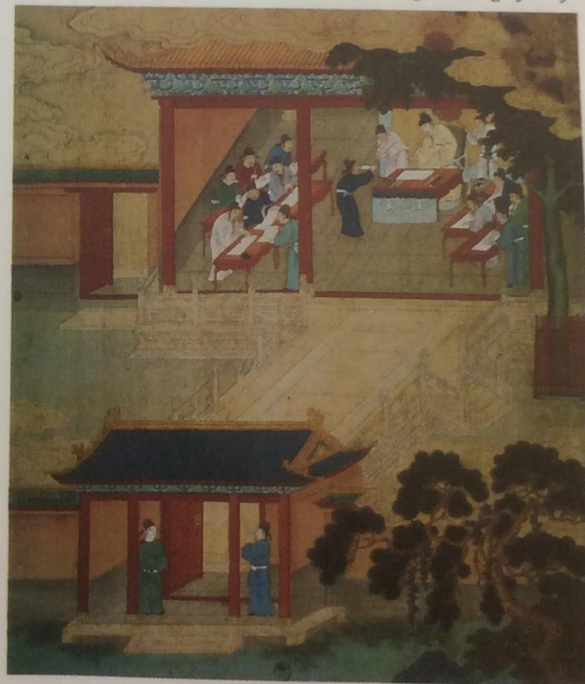
The Mongols were a pastoral people from the region of modern-day Mongolia who were organized loosely into clans. Temujin (teh•MOO•juhn), born during the 1160s, gradually unified the Mongols. In 1206, he was elected Genghis Khan ("strong ruler") at a massive meeting somewhere in the Gobi. From that time on, he devoted himself to conquest.

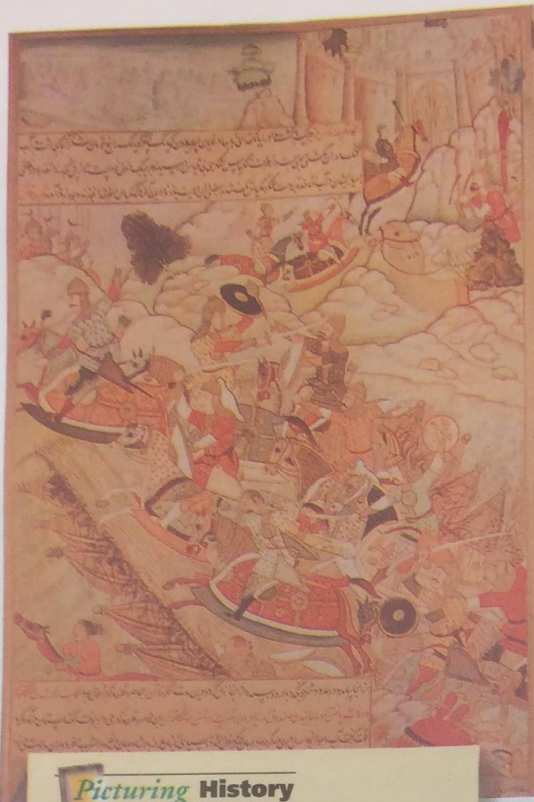
The Mongols brought much of the Eurasian landmass under a single rule, creating the largest land empire in history. To rule the new Mongol Empire, Genghis Khan set up a capital city at Karakorum. Mongol armies traveled both to the west and to the east. Some went as far as central Europe.

After the death of Genghis Khan in 1227, the empire began to change. Following Mongol custom, upon the death of the ruling khan, his heirs divided the territory. The once-united empire of Genghis Khan was thus split into several separate territories called **khanates**, each under the rule of one of his sons.

In 1231, the Mongols attacked Persia and then defeated the Abbasids at Baghdad in 1258. In the 1260s, a new wave of invasion began when Mongol forces attacked the Song in China. In their attack on the Chinese, the Mongols encountered the use of gunpowder and the firelance. By the early fourteenth century, foreigners employed by the Mongol rulers of China had introduced gunpowder and firearms into Europe.

*This silk watercolor shows students taking a civil service examination during the Song dynasty.*





### Picturing History

In the thirteenth-century battle shown above, Mongol troops storm across the Chang Jiang on a bridge made of boats. Which Chinese dynasty do you think the Mongols were attempting to conquer in this battle?

**The Mongol Dynasty in China** In 1279, one of Genghis Khan's grandsons, named **Kublai Khan**, completed the conquest of the Song and established a new Chinese dynasty, the Yuan (YOO•AHN). Kublai Khan, who ruled China until his death in 1294, established his capital at Khanbaliq ("the city of the Khan") in northern China. Later the city would be known by the Chinese name **Beijing**.


Under the leadership of the talented Kublai Khan, the Yuan, or Mongol, dynasty continued to expand the empire. Mongol armies advanced into Vietnam, and Mongol fleets were launched against Java and Sumatra and twice against the islands of Japan. Only Vietnam was conquered, however—and then only for a while.

The Mongols had more success in ruling China. Mongol rulers adapted to the Chinese political system. Over time, the Mongols won the support of many Chinese people. Some came to respect the stability and economic prosperity that the Mongols at first brought to China. The capital at Khanbaliq reflected Mongol prosperity. It was a magnificent

city, and foreign visitors were impressed by its splendor.

The Mongol dynasty eventually fell victim to the same problems that had plagued other dynasties. In 1368, Zhu Yuanzhang (JOO YOO•AHN•JAHNG), the son of a peasant, raised an army, ended the Mongol dynasty, and set up a new dynasty, the Ming dynasty.

**Religion** By the time the Mongols established their dynasty in China, religious preferences in the Chinese court had undergone a number of changes. Confucian principles became the basis for Chinese government during the Han dynasty (202 B.C.–A.D. 220). By the time of the Sui and Tang dynasties, Buddhism and Daoism rivaled the influence of Confucianism. During the Song dynasty, however, Confucianism became dominant at court, a position it retained until the early twentieth century.

 (See page 773 to read excerpts from *The Buddha's Sermon in the Primary Sources Library*.)

**A Golden Age in Art and Literature** The period between the Tang and Ming dynasties was in many ways the great age of Chinese art and literature. During the Song and Mongol dynasties, landscape painting reached its high point. Influenced by Daoism, Chinese artists went into the mountains to paint and find the Dao, or Way, in nature. This practice explains in part the emphasis on nature in traditional Chinese painting. The word for landscape in Chinese means "mountain-water" and reflects the Daoist search for balance between the earth and sky.

Chinese artists tried to reveal the hidden forms of the landscape. Rather than depicting the realistic shape of a specific mountain, for example, they tried to portray the idea of "mountain." Empty spaces were left in the paintings because Daoists believe one cannot know the whole truth.

The invention of printing during the Tang dynasty helped to make literature more readily available and more popular. It was in poetry, above all, that the Chinese of this time best expressed their

Song ink and watercolor drawing on silk



literary talents. Chinese poems celebrated the beauty of nature, the changes of the seasons, and the joys of friendship. They expressed sadness at the shortness of life and the necessity of parting.

**Li Bo** (LEE BWAW) was one of the most popular poets during the Tang Era. Li Bo was a free spirit whose writing often centered on nature. The following is probably the best-known poem in China and has been memorized by schoolchildren for centuries. It is entitled "Quiet Night Thoughts":

“Beside my bed the bright moonbeams bound  
Almost as if there were frost on the ground.  
Raising up, I gaze at the Mountain moon;  
Lying back, I think of my old home town.”

**Reading Check Summarizing** What invention helped make literature both more available and more popular?

## The Rise of the Japanese State

Chinese and Japanese societies have historically been very different. One of the reasons for these differences is geography. Whereas China is on a vast continent, Japan is a chain of many islands. The population is concentrated on four main islands: Hokkaido, the main island of Honshu, and the two smaller islands of Kyushu and Shikoku. Japan's total land area is approximately 146,000 square miles (378,000 sq km)—about the size of the state of Montana.

In the early seventh century, **Shotoku Taishi**, a prince of the Yamato clan, tried to unify the various Japanese clans in order to more effectively resist an invasion by the Chinese. He began to create a new centralized system of government in Japan, based roughly on the structure of the Chinese government.

Prince Shotoku wanted a centralized government under a supreme ruler. His objective was to limit the powers of the small class of aristocrats and enhance the Yamato ruler's (his own) authority. As a result, the ruler was portrayed as a divine figure and the symbol of the Japanese nation.

**The Nara Period** After Shotoku Taishi's death in 622, political power fell into the hands of the Fujiwara clan. A Yamato ruler was still emperor, but he was strongly influenced by the Fujiwara family. In 710, a new capital was established at **Nara**. The emperor began to use the title "son of Heaven."

Though the reforms begun by Prince Shotoku continued during this period, Japan's central government could not overcome the power of the aristocrats. These powerful families were able to keep the taxes from the lands for themselves. Unable



## Geography Skills

The geography of Japan influenced the development of Japanese culture.

- 1. Interpreting Maps** List, from north to south, the four major islands that make up Japan. On which island are the major cities of early Japan located?
- 2. Applying Geography Skills** Heian (Kyoto) and Osaka were important cities in early Japan. Today Tokyo is a major city. What geographic features contributed to Tokyo's importance?

to gain tax revenues, the central government steadily lost power and influence.

**The Heian Period** In 794, the emperor moved the capital from Nara to nearby Heian, on the site of present-day **Kyoto**. At Heian, the emperor continued to rule in name, but actual power remained in the hands of the Fujiwara clan.

In fact, the government was returning to the decentralized system that had existed before the time of Shotoku Taishi. Powerful families whose wealth was based on the ownership of tax-exempt farmland dominated the rural areas. With the decline of central power, local aristocrats tended to take justice into their own hands. They turned increasingly to military force as a means of protecting their interests. A new class of military servants emerged whose purpose was to protect the security and property of their employers.

Called the **samurai** ("those who serve"), these warriors resembled the knights of medieval Europe.

Like knights, the samurai fought on horseback, clad in helmet and armor, although a samurai carried a sword and a bow and arrow rather than a lance and shield. Like knights, the samurai were supposed to live by a strict warrior code, known in Japan as **Bushido** ("the way of the warrior"). Above all, the samurai's code was based on loyalty to his lord.

**The Kamakura Shogunate** By the end of the twelfth century, rivalries among Japanese aristocratic families had led to almost constant civil war. Finally, a powerful noble named Minamoto Yoritomo defeated several rivals and set up his power near the modern city of Tokyo.

To strengthen the state, he created a more centralized government under a powerful military leader known as the **shogun** (general). In this new system—called the shogunate—the emperor remained ruler in name only, and the shogun exercised the actual power. The Kamakura shogunate, founded by Yoritomo, lasted from 1192 to 1333.

At first the system worked well. The Japanese were fortunate that it did, because the government soon faced its most serious challenge yet from the Mongols. In 1281, Kublai Khan sent nearly 150,000 warriors to invade Japan. Fortunately for the

Japanese, most of the Mongol ships were destroyed by a typhoon (violent storm) before the forces could land. Japan would not again face a foreign invader until American troops landed in the summer of 1945. Fighting the Mongols put a heavy strain on the political system. In 1333, the Kamakura shogunate was overthrown by a group of powerful families led by the Ashikaga family.

The power of the local aristocrats grew during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Heads of noble families, now called **daimyo** (DY•mee•OH), "great names," controlled vast landed estates that owed no taxes to the government. By 1500, Japan was close to chaos. A disastrous civil war, which lasted from 1467 to 1477, led to the virtual destruction of the capital city of Kyoto. Armies passed back and forth through the city, burning temples and palaces. Central authority disappeared.

**✓ Reading Check Describing** What difficulties did Japanese rulers encounter in establishing a strong central government?

## Life and Culture in Early Japan

Early Japan was mostly a farming society. Its people took advantage of the limited amount of farmland and abundant rainfall to grow wet rice (rice grown in flooded fields). As we have seen, noble families were able to maintain control over most of the land.

Trade and manufacturing began to develop during the Kamakura period. Markets appeared in the larger towns, and industries such as paper, iron casting, and porcelain emerged. Trade between regions also grew. Foreign trade, mainly with Korea and China, began during the eleventh century. Japan shipped raw materials, paintings, swords, and other manufactured items in return for silk, porcelain, books, and copper coins.

Early Japanese people worshiped spirits, called *kami*, whom the Japanese believed resided in trees, rivers, streams, and mountains. The Japanese also believed that the spirits of their ancestors were present in the air around them. In Japan, these beliefs evolved into a kind of state religion called **Shinto** ("the Sacred Way" or "the Way of the Gods"), which is still practiced today.



### Picturing History

The suit of armor (above) was worn by samurai warriors, such as the warrior in the painting at left. Compare this type of armor to the armor shown on the chapter time line (page 87). **What similarities and differences do you see?**

In Japanese art and architecture, landscape serves as an important means of expression. The landscape surrounding the fourteenth-century Golden Pavilion in Kyoto displays a harmony of garden, water, and architecture that makes it one of the treasures of the world.

**Reading Check Identifying** What industries emerged in Japan during the Kamakura period?

## India after the Guptas

In the early eighth century, Islam became popular in the northwestern corner of the Indian subcontinent. The new religion had a major impact on Indian civilization. This impact is still evident today in the division of the Indian subcontinent into mostly Hindu India and the two Islamic states of Bangladesh and Pakistan.

One reason for Islam's success in South Asia is that it arrived at a time when India was in a state of great political disunity. The Gupta Empire had collapsed, and no central authority had replaced it. India was divided into about seventy states, which fought each other constantly.

When the Arab armies reached India in the early eighth century, they did little more than move into the frontier regions. At the end of the tenth century, however, a new phase of Islamic expansion took place when rebellious Turkish slaves founded a new Islamic state known as Ghazni, located in present-day Afghanistan.

When the founder of the new state died in 997, his son, Mahmud of Ghazni, succeeded him. Mahmud, an ambitious man, began to attack neighboring Hindu kingdoms to the southeast. Before his death in 1030, he was able to extend his rule throughout the upper Indus Valley and as far south as the Indian Ocean.

Resistance against the advances of Mahmud and his successors into northern India was led by the **Rajputs**, who were Hindu warriors. They fought bravely, but their military tactics, based on infantry supported by elephants, were no match for the cavalry of the invaders. Mahmud's successors continued their advances. By 1200, Muslim power had reached over the entire plain of northern India, creating a new Muslim state known as the Sultanate of Delhi. In the fourteenth century, this state extended its power into the Deccan Plateau.



*Indian warrior seated on his elephant*

**The Impact of Timur Lenk** During the latter half of the fourteenth century, the Sultanate of Delhi began to decline. Near the end of the century, a new military force crossed the Indus River from the northwest, raided the capital of Delhi, and then withdrew. As many as 100,000 Hindu prisoners were massacred before the gates of the city. It was India's first meeting with **Timur Lenk** (Tamerlane).

Timur Lenk was the ruler of a Mongol state based in Samarkand, to the north of the Pamir Mountains. Born sometime during the 1330s in Samarkand, Timur Lenk seized power in 1369 and immediately launched a program of conquest. During the 1380s, he placed the entire region east of the Caspian Sea under his authority and then occupied Mesopotamia. After his brief foray into northern India, he turned to the west. He died in 1405 in the midst of a military campaign.



The death of Timur Lenk removed a menace from the various states of the Indian subcontinent, but the calm did not last long. By the early sixteenth century, two new challenges had appeared from beyond the horizon. One came from the north in the form of the Moguls, a newly emerging nomadic power. The other came from Europe, from Portuguese traders arriving by sea in search of gold and spices.

**Islam and Indian Society** The Muslim rulers in India viewed themselves as foreign conquerors. They tried to maintain a strict separation between the Muslim ruling class and the mass of the Hindu population.

Like rulers elsewhere at this time, many Muslim rulers in India were intolerant of other faiths. They generally used peaceful means, however, to encourage people to convert to Islam. Most Muslim rulers realized that there were simply too many Hindus to convert them all. They reluctantly accepted the need to tolerate religious differences. Nevertheless, Muslim rulers did impose many Islamic customs on Hindu society. Overall, the relationship between Muslim and Hindu was that of conqueror and conquered, a relationship marked

by suspicion and dislike rather than friendship and understanding.

**Reading Check Evaluating** What was the relationship between the Muslims and Hindus in India?

## Civilization in Southeast Asia

Between China and India lies the region that today is called Southeast Asia. It has two major parts. One is the mainland region, extending southward from the Chinese border down to the tip of the Malay Peninsula. The other is an extensive **archipelago**, or chain of islands, most of which is part of present-day Indonesia and the Philippines. Located between India and China—two highly advanced and densely populated regions of the world—Southeast Asia is a melting pot of peoples.



### Geography Skills

Southeast Asia is a diverse area, largely due to the region's geographical barriers.

**1. Interpreting Maps** Is the mainland region of Southeast Asia located north or south of the Equator?

**The Formation of States** Between 500 and 1500, a number of organized states developed throughout Southeast Asia. When the peoples of the region began to form states, they used models from China and India. At the same time, they adapted these models to their own needs and created their own unique states.

The Chinese conquered Vietnam in 111 B.C., but the Vietnamese overthrew Chinese rule in the tenth century. Chinese influence remained, though. Vietnamese rulers followed the Chinese model of centralized government, calling themselves emperors and practicing Chinese court rituals. The new Vietnamese state, which called itself Dai Viet (Great Viet), also adopted state Confucianism.

In the ninth century, the kingdom of Angkor arose in the region that is present-day Cambodia. A powerful figure named Jayavarman united the Khmer (kuh•MEHR) people and established a capital at Angkor Thom. For several hundred years, Angkor—or the Khmer Empire—was the most powerful state in mainland Southeast Asia.

In 1432, the Thai from the north destroyed the Angkor capital. They set up their own capital at Ayutthaya (ah•YU•tuh•yuh) on the Chao Phraya (chau PRY•uh) River, where they remained as a major force for the next four hundred years.

The Thai were threatened from the west by the Burman peoples, who had formed their own society in the valleys of the Salween and Irrawaddy (IHR•uh•WAH•dee) Rivers. In the eleventh century, they founded the first great Burman state, the kingdom of Pagan. Like the Thai, they adopted Indian political institutions and culture.

In the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian Archipelago, a different pattern emerged. For centuries, this area had been tied to the trade that passed from East Asia into the Indian Ocean. The area had never been united under a single state, however. The vast majority of the people of the region were of Malay background, but the peoples were divided into numerous separate communities.

**Society and Culture** At the top of the social ladder in most Southeast Asian societies were the hereditary aristocrats. They held both political power and economic wealth. Most aristocrats lived in the major cities. Angkor Thom, for example, was a city with royal palaces, parks, and numerous temples.

Beyond the major cities lived the rest of the population, which consisted of farmers, fishers, artisans, and merchants. In most Southeast Asian societies, the





Angkor Wat, which is encircled by a three-mile (4.8-km) moat, is located in northern Cambodia at the site of the ruins of the old capital city of Angkor Thom.

majority of people were probably rice farmers who lived at a bare level of subsistence and paid heavy rents or taxes to a landlord or local ruler.

Chinese culture made an impact on Vietnam. In many other areas of Southeast Asia, Indian cultural influence prevailed. The most visible example of this influence was in architecture. Of all the existing structures at Angkor Thom, the temple of **Angkor Wat** is the most famous and most beautiful. It combines

Indian architectural techniques with native inspiration in a structure of impressive grace. The construction of Angkor Wat, which took 40 years to complete, required an enormous quantity of stone—as much as it took to build Egypt’s Great Pyramid.

**Reading Check** **Contrasting** How did the development of the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian Archipelago differ from development elsewhere in Southeast Asia?

## SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

- Define** khanate, samurai, Bushido, shogun, daimyo, Shinto, archipelago.
- Identify** Genghis Khan, Kublai Khan, Li Bo, Shotoku Taishi, Rajputs, Timur Lenk, Angkor Wat.
- Locate** Tibet, Mongolia, Beijing, Nara, Kyoto, Angkor Thom, Malay Peninsula.
- Describe** the golden age of literature and art in China.
- List** the religious and philosophical influences on the civilizations mentioned in this section.

### Critical Thinking

- Explain** How did the samurai and shogun affect the government of early Japan?
- Organizing Information** Use a table like the one below to list the achievements of the Sui, Tang, Song, and Mongol dynasties.

Dynasty	Achievements
Sui	
Tang	
Song	
Mongol	

### Analyzing Visuals

- Describe** what you see in the Song landscape drawing shown on page 106 of your text. How do you think the painting reflects the culture in which it was painted? What artistic, philosophical, or cultural ideals are expressed by the artist?

### Writing About History

- Descriptive Writing** Imagine that you are a samurai living in Japan during the fourteenth century. Describe your role and your daily duties.

