

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

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### Introduction

- Ly Van Phuc: a Vietnamese official entered the Chinese city of Beijing to pay tribute to the Chinese emperor. His hostel stated “The Vietnamese Barbarians” which he was deeply offended about after all the Vietnamese people were highly influenced by the Chinese and Phuc could read Chinese. The Chinese were fairly ambivalent to this fact. His vigorous response to the insult by building a camp in the middle of the street until apologized to reflects his awareness of being dominated by the Chinese!
- China dominated Korea, Vietnam, and Japan

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### Imperial Age

- Chinese influence on Japan peaked around 7-8<sup>th</sup> centuries as Japanese rulers sought to build a Chinese style bureaucracy (**Taika** 645-710 and **Heian** 794-857)
- Japanese court at **Nara** flooded by Chinese imports
- **Shinto** remained central to Japanese culture (Religion of early Japanese culture; devotees worshipped numerous gods and spirits associated with the natural worlds; offers of food and prayers made to gods and nature spirits)
- In 646 the emperor and his advisors introduced **Taika reforms** aimed at completely revamping the imperial administration along Chinese lines
- Aristocracy struggled to assimilate (hard language to master and Buddhism hard to master too) while commoners were effected by the large Buddhist temples that started appearing and their duty to respect the Confucian gentry
- Commoners looked to **Buddhism** for cures or magic/ a change of luck. They mixed Buddhism with **kami** or the nature spirits

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### Shift to Heian (Kyoto)

- **Taika reforms** of 646 to make the Japanese monarch a Chinese style emperor, to create a bureaucracy and peasant conscript army
- **Aristocratic families** and **Buddhist** monks resisted changes. (**Empress Koken** and the Buddhist monk who tried to take the throne...women could never rule)
- 794 **emperor Kammu** established a new capital at Heian (Kyoto). Buddhists were forbidden from building monasteries in the city, but built on the outskirts! They started controlling politics!!!
- Soon **Taika reforms abandoned** and the aristocratic families were restored to power. Elaborate system of **rank** which was very rigid. Aristocracy took positions now in the central government and the emperor gave up on his goal of a large peasant conscript army. Instead, local leaders told to organize militia forces.

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### Ultracivilized: Heian Era

- Political power under the Heian weakened, but culture flourished!
- Japanese emperor and courtiers lived in luxury and were focused on beautiful sights
- Complex palaces, gardens, and ponds/ fountains
- Aristocratic classes had strict codes of behavior (polite)
- Writing verse/ poetry very important: *The Tale of Genji*

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### Decline of Imperial Power

- While the emperor and his courtier were admiring nature and obsessed with the latest fashion trends the aristocratic families controlling the bureaucracy got smaller.
- The **Fujiwara** family emerged as the leader over imperial affairs! They sacked administration with their family and also married them off into the imperial family.
- **Buddhist monks** and **aristocratic families** like the Fujiwaras worked together to increase their land holdings and build up large powerful estates around the capital.
- Monks and aristocracy failed to recognize the growing power of local lords and the powers of the emperor decreased

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### Rise of the Provincial Warrior Elite

- Elite families in the provinces controlled labor and denied the court resources and they began ruling themselves as little kingdoms ruled by a "house" government. The mini-state was protected by a small fortress and ditches. Local lords live in the fortress and were alert to neighboring lords who might want to attack. They also collected taxes from the people, but kept it for themselves!
- The **Bushi** were the warrior leaders who administered law and order. The Bushi built up their own armies due to the emperor's failure of creating a large conscripted peasant army.
- **Bushi warrior groups** were soon the most **powerful** forces in the country. Their specialized mounted troops or samurai were loyal to local lords but called upon to protect the emperor and capital.
- 11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> **bandits** roamed freely and monasteries employed armed guards

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- The warriors emerged into their own warrior class to support these various activities. The peasants supported them with food and labor.
- Battles were elaborately negotiated beforehand and each side tried to demonstrate cause. Warriors would yell out their family lineage and exploits, but the other warriors were yelling at the same time so they probably didn't hear them!!
- Warrior code developed-stressed family honor and death over retreat/ defeat. Beaten or disgraced warriors turned to ritual suicide, **seppuku or hara-kiri**, to restore their family's honor. They disemboweled themselves
- Japan moving toward a **feudal** order similar to that of Western Europe during the post classical era
- Peasants lost status as warrior class developed. They turned into **serfs** tied to the land and separated by class. They couldn't ride horses or even carry a sword because of their social position

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### Warrior Dominance!

- 12<sup>th</sup> century onward Japanese dominated by civil wars between various fractions of court aristocrats and local warlords which ended with the rise of **the Tokugawa** warlord family in the 1600's! Chinese influence steadily declined while Japanese art and literature flourished.
- 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries the provincial families started to pack the court bureaucracy with their members and compete for power. Open feud between **Taira** and **Minamoto** families. The Taira and Minamoto families feud lead to warfare in the 1180's (**Gempei Wars**). The Minamoto family won because they had the support of provincial lords and good commanders while the Taira family lost in spite of their control of the emperor and court!

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### Declining Influence of China

- As imperial power declined so too did Chinese influence. Due to the aristocratic families gaining power over Confucian scholars the bureaucracy suffered. Buddhism was a mix of Buddhist idea and Japanese beliefs.
- In China there was a weakening under the Tang dynasty and in 838 Japanese court decided to discontinue their embassies to the Tang court.
- The Japanese were also caught up in the wars between the Minamoto and Taira families (**Gempei Wars**). It was destroying farmlands and killing many peasants.
- In 1185 Minamoto established the **bakufu** (tent) or military government. Moved the capital to **Kamakura**. The emperor continued but power rested with the Minamotos and their samurais

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## The Breakdown of Bakufu Dominance and the Age of Warlords

- **Minamoto** leader, **Yoritomo**, weaken his family in **Kamakura** due to his fear of being overthrown by his own family members (Kamakura regime)
- It was said that he killed his own brother!
- The elite lived under paranoia and were scared of Yoritomo's **shoguns** or military leaders of the **bakufu**. Yoritomo did leave an heir b/c of his paranoia and his death weakened his leadership. The Bushi lords then built up their own power and domains. The **Hojo** (a warrior family) soon dominated the **Kamakura regime**. However they left **Minamoto** family as the formal rulers.
- 3 tiered system developed!

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## Japanese Rule

1. Hojo Family Ruled by
2. Manipulating the Minamoto Shoguns
3. Minamoto shoguns claimed the right to rule from the emperor in Kyoto

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## Japanese Rule

- In the 14<sup>th</sup> century a branch of the **Minamoto** family, **Ashikaga Takuaji**, led a revolt that overthrew the Kamakura regime to establish the **Ashikaga Shogunate!**
- The current emperor refused to recognize the usurper (Ashikaga Shogunate) and tried to revive imperial powers. He was driven from Kyoto and hooked up with some warlords to fight against the Ashikaga and their puppet emperors for the rest of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- Ashikaga successful in destroying imperial authority

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## Japanese Rule

- During the 14<sup>th</sup> century wars civil strife (civil war 1467-1477) set in and eventually the fighting undermined the powers of obviously the imperial government as well as the shogunate. Bushi vassals seized lands of peasants, aristocracy, and other warlords during the time. They quickly grew very powerful and established large estates that were parceled out to their **samurai retainers** who in return pledge their **loyalty** and were expected to provide military **support** whenever needed! (**Feudalism**)
- Soon Japan was divided into 300 little kingdoms by warlord rulers (or **daimyos** now rather than bushi)

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## Military Division and Social Change Civilized life to Barbarism?

- Massive wood and stone castles emerged
- Sneak attacks, spies, betrayals normal
- Poor and poorly trained peasant armies
- Trend toward brutality and destruction to keep down peasants who would rise up from time to time
- Some petty states were ruled by a le daimyos who tried to stabilize village life by collecting taxes, do public works projects, encouraging settlement, new crops, encouraging production of items like silk, hemp, paper, dyes, and vegetable oils
- Over time merchants came to take advantage of markets between especially China and Japan
- Guilds rose up to control artisan standards
- Some artisan and merchant women enjoyed some freedoms but most women's freedoms decreased. Elite women could no longer receive inheritance (primogeniture) and were expected to anticipate their husbands every desire. If raped they needed to kill themselves to protect the family's honor!

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## Artistic Solace for a Troubled Age

- Art was turned by some out of fears of war and troubles of the world
- Zen Buddhism was quite popular for a variety of reasons and soon it began to influence art. Zen monasteries had contact with China so Chinese artistic influence was brought in to Japan
- Beauty of nature: landscapes, gardens, screen and scroll paintings, and architecture to foster contemplation and mediation
- Tea ceremony (grace/ composure/ order)

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## Korea

- Korea isn't part of China!!!
- Korea was settled by different peoples (Siberia and Manchuria)
- 109 BCE the Korean kingdom of **Chosen** was conquered by the Chinese dynasty of the **Han**. Korea was colonized by Chinese settlers afterwards and they began to influence the culture
- Koreans resisted Chinese rule (**Koguryo** of the north). As Chinese rule weakened **Koguryo** established an independent state in the north and was at war with its rivals **Silla** and **Paekche**
- Contacts between northern China and the Koguryo kingdom resulted in the 1<sup>st</sup> wave of **sinification** or extensive adoption of Chinese culture in Korea

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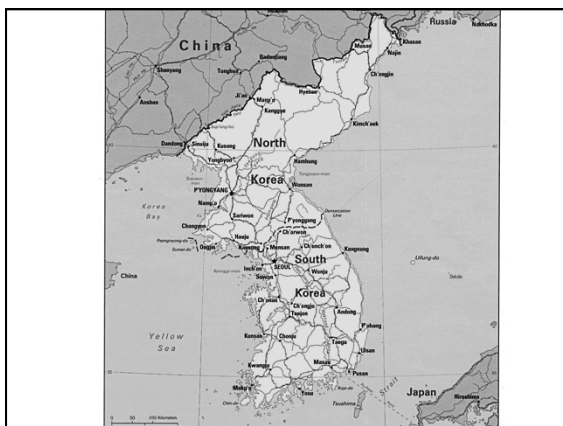
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## Korea

- Buddhism linked Korea and China
- Chinese writing introduced, unified legal code like China, universities, and even tried to introduce Confucian scholars (aristocracy didn't allow this one to happen though)
- Warfare between Koguryo, Silla, and Paekche weaken Korea and the Chinese had their eye on Korea
- The Koguryo in the north bore the main assaults of the Chinese
- Finally the Chinese decided to play on the divisions within Korea and made an alliance with Silla. They destroyed Koguryo and Paekche! Then the Tang realized Silla's real power and decided to make a deal with them. They would allow them to be the independent rulers of Korea if they paid China tribute (668)

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## Sinification

- **Silla** monarchs (668-9<sup>th</sup> century) and the later **Koryo** dynasty (918-1392) Chinese influence over Korea peaked.
- Silla rulers strove to turn their kingdom into a miniature Tang empire! They sent embassies to the Tang court, gathered Chinese text, followed Chinese fashion, participated in the tribute system, and **kowtow** (bowing ceremony to the emperor)
- This guaranteed peace with the Chinese and provided access to Chinese learning and goods
- Chinese tribute system became a channel of trade and intercultural exchange between China and its neighbors

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## Sinification of Korean Culture

- Rebuilt their capital of **Kumsong** to look like the Tang capital, grid pattern with markets, lakes, parks, and imperial housing
- Aristocracy moved to the capital with their families and workers
- **Silla** ruler introduced Confucian examination system, however, most bureaucrats gained their position b/c of family ties rather than the exam
- Favored Buddhism over Confucianism and the aristocracy gave to the monasteries and art
- Many Korean artwork and design was based on Chinese prototypes. Chinese introduced pottery and porcelain as well as the art of printing. With the Koreans took and advanced (glazes and fix type that could be disassembled)

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### Civilization for the Few

- The imperial family and aristocracy were the ones in Korea with the good life and benefited from trade (imported many items like teas, artwork, and scrolls). Everyone else under them and to serve them. Merchants/ artisans not highly valued b/c so many items were imported
- Imperial family, aristocracy, government functionaries, commoners (peasants), near-slaves (low born-miners/ artisans, servants, entertainers)

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### Koryo Collapse, Dynastic Renewal

- Because the commoners and low born fared so poorly in Korea and the aristocracy was more concerned with their own pleasures than with making life better for the poor the commoners and near-slaves rose up from time to time. These rebellions were ruthlessly put down by the armies. However this inner conflict weakened the Silla and Koryo regimes of Korea. Combined the internal conflict with invasions like from the Mongols in 1231 this led to the fall of the Silla and Koryo dynasties.
- The aristocratic families continued to survive and eventually elevated one of their own to the royal throne, Yi family
- The Yi dynasty was established in 1392 and ruled until 1910!!! They restored the dominance of the aristocratic families and links to China

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### Between China and Southeast Asia: Vietnam

- 2<sup>nd</sup> century the Han dynasty conquered the kingdom of Nam Viet, thus beginning to absorb Vietnamese people into Chinese civilization. They borrowed from China, but had a distinct identity and did rebel against China and gained their independence!
- Nam Viet: people in the south (Chinese called them)

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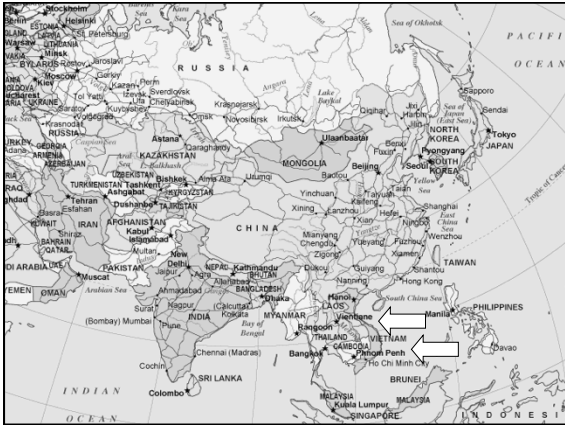
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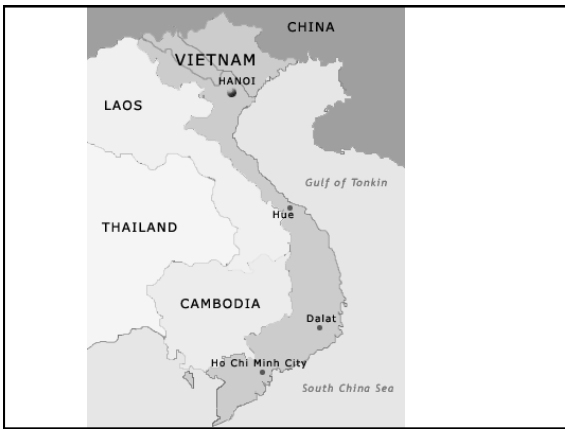
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**Vietnam**

- Viets were aware of the benefits of China, but didn't want to lose their own identity or independence!
- First appeared in Chinese history in the 220 BCE Qin raids and they called them "southern barbarians". They were in southern coastal areas of China today
- Early raids helped to establish trade. Viets traded ivory, tortoise shells, pearls, peacock feathers, aromatic woods for Chinese silk
- After the Qin raids the Viets started to defeat feudal lords that controlled the red river and blended with the Mon-Khmer and Tai-speaking peoples!

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## Vietnam

- The Vietnamese intermarried with Khmers (Cambodians) and Tais. They reflect the culture of southeast Asia. They had a strong tradition of independence (autonomy). They differed culturally in: preference of the nuclear family over the extended family, women having greater freedom, women (peasant) wearing skirts instead of black pants like in China, cockfighting, blackening their teeth!
- Although China conquered they continued to preserve these traditions. Buddhism grew as well as art and literature.

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## Conquest and Sinification

- **Han** rulers settled initially for **Viet** ruler to state that his was a vassal to China and pay tribute. In **111 BCE** the Han decided to conquer the feisty Viets and the govern them via Chinese officials.
- The Chinese set out to work with Viet lords along the Red River. They wanted to share their culture with them. Quickly the Viet elite along the Red River realized they had a great deal to learn and cooperated with the north.
- The Chinese introduced essential elements of their culture to the Viet elite in order to assimilate the "barbarian" peoples.
- Vietnamese elite were drawn into the bureaucracy (**shi** = bureaucrats) Learned Chinese, study at Confucian schools and took civil service exam
- Introduced Chinese cropping techniques, irrigation, and political and military organizations which gave them an edge compared to those in southwest Asia that had adopted Indian kingship and warfare techniques.
- Began adopting extended family model and venerating ancestors in Confucian tradition.
- Chinese began to feel that the Vietnamese were becoming civilized

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## Root of Resistance

- There were revolts led by members of the aristocracy throughout Vietnamese history against the Chinese. They had learned much from them, but didn't want to be ruled over by them. Chinese found Vietnamese was backward and unhealthy and felt they were inferior!
- Chinese writing is filled with self-doubt (pg 295) and even rage to resist the Chinese!
- The Chinese failed to assimilate the Vietnamese because they peasants supported their local lords in rising up and driving off foreign rulers
- 39 CE Trung Sisters-led a revolt due to their father being deposed!
- Women also did not support Confucian codes of male domination nor a family system that confined them or subjected them to male authority. They also didn't like the idea of male polygamy with was favored by Confucian men of China. (pg 295)

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## Winning Independence and Continuing Chinese Influence

- Vietnamese resisted Chinese rule both along class and gender lines!
- The Chinese had a difficult time ruling Vietnam because of the **geography** of southern China. There was great distance between them and imperial controls, mountain barriers, and few Chinese bureaucrats and soldiers in the area of the Red River.
- The Vietnamese also took advantage of the **weakness of Chinese dynasties** and the incursion or invasion by nomads of the north
- After failing a few times the Vietnamese mounted a huge rebellion in **907** after the **Tang dynasty** had fallen and China was in chaos (prior to the development of the Song dynasty)
- **939 Vietnam had won their freedom!**
- Although other attempted Vietnam was independent until the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the French conquered.

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- Chinese culture still played an important role in Vietnam though
- Vietnamese dynasties built Chinese styled **palaces**, built much smaller Chinese styled **bureaucracy** with secretariats, 6 ministries, and a bureau of censors!!! They gave the **civil service exam** and schooled the administrative elite in **Confucian** classics
- The Vietnamese scholars-bureaucrats didn't have as much power as in China. They didn't have as much control of villages and identified more with the peasants than the court. They even became leaders of peasant uprising from time to time.
- Vietnamese Confucian scholars also competed with well-educated Buddhist monks!
- The Vietnamese dynasties never enjoyed the great authority of Chinese dynasties b/c of competing centers of power and influence
- **Le dynasty** (980-1009) started with these traditions

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## Vietnamese Drive South!

- The Chinese influences helped the **Vietnamese** conquer areas. They couldn't go north into China so they went south into the territory of the **Chems** and **Khmers**.
- From the **11<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>** centuries the Vietnamese fought a long series of successful wars against the **Chams** and their Indianized people.
- The next took on the **Khmers** and their Indianized armies and proved no match to their Chinese inspired military forces and weapons!
- By the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Vietnamese occupied much of the upper delta (Mekong Delta) and were beginning to push into Cambodia.

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## Expansion and Division

- As colonists moved further from the capital at **Hanoi** the dynasties found it more difficult to control commanders and peasants in frontier areas!
- As the Vietnamese who settled southern region married Chams and Khmers they adopted their culture too. The northern Vietnamese started to see the **southern Vietnamese** as “slow” like how some northerners in the US view the south!
- They eventually led to a split where military order were slow to be carried out and taxes slowed down.
- This led to an fight in the 16<sup>th</sup> century between the **Nguyen** family of the south who challenged the legitimacy of the **Trinh** family of the north to rule. They fought each other for 2 centuries over this issue. They were so wrapped up in this epic struggle that they failed to notice the growing threat of the French!

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## Orbit of China

- Classical and post classical period very important as China spread products, ideas, organizational models, and material culture to Japan, Korea, and Vietnam
- Spread writing, bureaucracy, religion, and art
- Chinese imports dominated by court
- Chinese thought patterns and social organization copied
- Buddhism spread! Buddhism spread from India to China. It was filtered through China and then spread to Japan, Korea, and Vietnam where it was again filtered.
- Although Japan, Korea, and Vietnam borrowed ideas and concepts from China these influences manifested in different ways and had different results
- Japan-influence of the elites and breakdown of power into bushi (military) and then into feudal states dominated by daimyos. Went back to traditional Japanese ways!
- Korea-direct Chinese rule for a short time and physical threat always there. Submitted to China and adopted many of their ways. Remained independent due to their submissive relationship with China and adoption of their ways.
- Vietnam-influence by being conquered by China for almost 1000 years. They won their independence but continued using Chinese ideas to help conquer Indianized people south of them!

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- Japanese map  
[http://www.wordtravels.com/images/map/Japan\\_map.jpg](http://www.wordtravels.com/images/map/Japan_map.jpg)
- Vietnamese map

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