The Post Classical East and Southeast Asia

China, Japan, Vietnam, Korea
China/Central Asia
Political

• 581 CE – Sui take over from Han, don’t last.
  – Sui government: organized massive labor projects for the Grand Canal. Organized a modest army. CENTRALIZED. Overtaxation, overextension forced decline of the Sui.

• 618 – Tang take over Sui. Last until 907.
  – Tang government: founded by Li Shimin. DECENTRALIZED. Local autonomy for local officials, religious authorities.
  – Han tributary system: outside kingdoms stay independent, but acknowledge Tang supremacy.
  – Scholar-gentry rose greatly during this period, even above established aristocrats. Scholars received better government jobs even.
  – Wu Zhao – female ruler. Claimed to be a bodhisattva, preferred Daoists/Buddhists in government, upsetting many Confucians

• 960 – Song founded. Last until 1279.
  – Examinations for gov’t jobs. Meritocracy. Best test scores = best jobs. Big deal if you failed your exam.
    • System was expanded, test standards were lowered to allow more people into government bureaucracy.
  – Alternated between war/diplomacy w/immediate neighbors in Korea, Vietnam, Japan
Li Shimin, founder of the Tang

- An emperor continually frustrated with his loose belt.
Wu Zhao, only female emperor in Chinese history.
Founder of the Song: Taizu

- An emperor known mostly for his love of prop-based jokes. China’s Carrot Top.
Economic

- **Sui**: centralized economy w/government controlled industries. Large #s of men needed for military campaigns & domestic building projects.
  - Grand Canal: linked Yellow/Yangtze rivers & aided trade in Central China.
  - Military campaigns in Korea cost $$$
- **Tang**: facilitated the Silk Road (silk/porcelain = main goods). Employed credit for purchases like modern credit cards.
  - Participated heavily in Indian Ocean trade. Maritime experts.
- **Song**: flying money (like travelers checks), printed paper money as well (led to high inflation & was eventually abandoned. Spent most of their money on the military (& printed too much to pay for it).
  - Tax farming: private individuals employed by gov’t to collect taxes. Led to high prices – tax farmers wanted a profit, so charged exorbitant amounts.
  - Champa rice: rice from Vietnam, matured quickly & allowed a 2nd annual harvest.
The Grand Canal
Tang: big on the Silk Road & Indian Ocean

Main trade-products and shipping routes of the Indian Ocean region

- Arabia: coffee, spices
- India & Bengal: tea, sugar, silks, precious metals
- China: porcelain, tea, spices, luxury products, cloth
- Japan: precious metals, lacquer
- Indonesia: pepper, nutmeg, cloves, ivory, mace

Europe from misted silver bars to pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves, mace, cardamom, coffee, sugar, tea, sapphire, jewels
Sri Lanka: cinnamon to cloth, pepper, cardamom, elephants, arecanuts, sappanwood, gems
Tibet: tobacco, tea, silk, indigo
Taklamakan Desert: jade, gold, silver, silver bars, pearls
Lopnor Desert: jade, gold, silver, silver bars, pearls
Mongolia: jade, gold, silver, silver bars, pearls
China: porcelain, tea, spices, luxury products, cloth
Arabia: coffee, spices
India & Bengal: tea, sugar, silks, precious metals
China: porcelain, tea, spices, luxury products, cloth
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Song Currency. ‘Flying Money’ vs. Hard Currency
Religious/Philosophical

• Sui – State Confucianism. Entrance exams for gov’t jobs.

• Tang – Mahayana Buddhism. Mahayana priests helped translate Buddhist texts into local languages. Also helped locals incorporate their gods into Buddhism. Daoism/Confucianism still major players.
  – After Tang were defeated by Arabs @ Talas River, many Buddhists were discriminated against. Viewed as foreigners & against mainstream Confucianism. Buddhist monasteries were crushed, but Buddhism wasn’t stamped out.

• Song: Zen Buddhism (branch of Mahayana). Disciplined meditation.
The Confucian World
(Left: beheaded Bodhisattva) Tang: Mahayana Buddhism. Backlash vs. foreigners & Buddhists near the end.
(Below: Bodhisattva) Song: Zen Buddhism
Giant Buddha of Leshan (Tang dynasty)
Social

• Sui –

• Tang – cosmopolitan capital: Chang’an
  – Tang state combined Central Asian/Chinese culture
  – Trade made the city cosmopolitan
  – Huang Chao & An Lushan rebellions
    • Peasants = unhappy w/ oppressive local lords & taxation. Rebellions spelled end for Tang state. Many foreigners also blamed in rebellions – resulted in massacring of outsiders.
      – Tang struggles in war/rebellions resulted in xenophobia.

• Song: Pop growth due to agricultural/economic prosperity (100+ mil. Ppl).
  – Cities: large wooden, multi-story apts. Closely built together (allowed much crowding, disease – eventually new building codes were adopted)
  – Class structure – non-gov’t workers could become wealthy. Land wasn’t the only thing that made you a profit any more.
  – Women: subjugated. Confucians emphasized women’s traditional roles, did let women read (only to read books that told them to be subservient). Footbinding also became widespread – a visual embodiment of female subjugation. Strangely enough, it became a status symbol amongst the elite.
  – Neo-Confucianism – Zhu Xi. New approach to Confucian texts: Human nature = still essentially good, moral, rational. Universal sagehood = neo-Con; exclusive sagehood = Con. Human ideal = sage = person who could be mentally stable while dealing with troubling social problems.
Interactions

- **Sui** – invaded Korea/Japan/Vietnam, but overextended itself militarily – all fell apart.
- **Tang** – largest empire of the 3 dynasties mentioned. Invaded Korea & had Silla as a vassal state.
- **Song** – massive army of 1.25 million men w/iron & steel.
  - 1st to have a standing navy – maritime expertise.
  - Fought mainly against northern barbarians.
Arts/Intellectual/Technology

- **Sui** – Grand Canal, Yangtze Irrigation canals
- **Tang** – crossbow, armored infantry, stirrup
- **Song** – 1st use of fractions, identified the pole star – lead to correct compasses
  - Junk – flat bottom ship/triangular sail
  - Iron – for warfare, agricultural use
  - Movable type – explosion of printing, led to more reading amongst lower/middle classes.
  - Mass produced body armor for army
  - 1st to use gunpowder – flaming arrows!
Near/Nature

- **Sui** – Northern China. Capital: Chang’an
- **Tang** – Central/East Asia. Capital: Chang’an
- **Song** – Central/Southern/Northern China.
  - Northern Song Capital: Kaifeng.
  - Southern Song Capital: Hangzhou
Significance/Big Ideas

- China was the most dominant state in East Asia during the Post-Classical Age - politically & economically ahead of its rivals. Japan, Vietnam, & Korea will all see Chinese influence exerted upon them & improvise Chinese practices with their own to create a distinct culture.

- The Sui’s biggest contributions will be the reunification of China and the building of the Grand Canal.

- Buddhism, although persecuted in the late Tang dynasty, never died out in China/Central Asia. It was popular (the Mahayana version) in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam.

- Taizu of Tang reunited much of China. The Tang empire would be the largest the earth had seen (much bigger than the later Song empire, but not as big as the Mongols later on). A Uighur invasion from the north aided the fall of the Tang. Regional military commanders gained power at the expense of the emperor. This broke up the former Tang empire into 3 smaller empires.

- The Song dynasty emerged after this short warring period. It was never as big as the Tang dynasty, but improved Tang technology & innovated on its own (commerce, finance, & military).

- In 1127 a rival state, the Jin, conquered the northern regions of the Song state, thus beginning the Southern Song period (new capital @ Hangzhou). In 1279 the Song dynasty came to an end with a defeat at the Battle of Yamen to the Mongols, after which the 8 year old Song emperor committed suicide along with 800 of the royal family.
SE Asia
Korea, Vietnam, Japan
Japan

• Chinese influences reached Japan through Korea, like Confucianism & Buddhism
• Emperors descended from a single lineage (no Mandate of Heaven)
• Fujiwara Family – protected the emperor from 794-1185, civil war unraveling their rule.
• Kamakura (Minamoto)– 1185, est. a shogunate that est. military rule for Japan. Decentralized feudal state (ack. The emperor, but not unified)
• Japanese Feudalism vs. Western Feudalism
  – Western feudalism – emphasis on written contracts. Western Europe would develop parliaments to protect these contracts.
  – Japanese feudalism – emphasis on ideals of honor, not written contracts. Japan developed collective decision-making teams that connected the state.
  – Samurai were given land rights from lords, but didn’t own the land. European knights often received land ownership for service. Result: in Japan, class distinction between lord/samurai was clear. In Europe, lord/knight class distinction was unclear, as knights (warriors) could become lords.
MEDIEVAL JAPAN

- Japanese feudalism
  - Called the Shogunate Period
    - Military dictators ruled, Emperors reigned in splendid isolation
    - Government was centralized feudalism
      - Countryside divided up into fiefs
      - Daimyo appointed by the shoguns
      - Adopted Neo-Confucianism as state philosophy
    - Provincial lords controlled Japan
      - Called Daimyo, vied for power against each other
      - Constant war to increase personal power, wealth, fiefs
  - Kamakura Period (1185-1333 C.E.)
  - Muromachi Period (1336-1573 C.E.)

- The Samurai
  - The lowest class of aristocratic nobility
    - Professional warriors of provincial lords
    - Observed samurai code called bushido
    - Valued loyalty, military talent, and discipline; traded military skills for food
    - To preserve their honor, engaged in ritual suicide called seppuku

- Japanese Women
  - Legendary founder of Japan, Yamato clan was sun goddess, Amaterasu
  - Under Heian
    - They were the cultural elite with elaborate rituals including dress
    - Had great influence, including several empresses
  - Under Shogunate
    - Lost considerable influence as Neo-Confucianism introduced, warfare spread
    - Could still be samurai and fight but patriarchal society
    - Shinto was also male dominated and included ancestor worship
FIEFS OF FEUDAL JAPAN

FEUDAL MAP OF JAPAN BEFORE SEKIGAHARA

- **Red**: Ieyasu's vassals
- **Black**: Ishida's vassals
- **Blue**: Neutrals
- **Yellow**: Deserters
- **Pink**: Towns

Names of Daimyos underlined with figures represent assessed revenue in Edo.
Most of the Daimyos less than 5000 Koku omitted.
Vietnam

• Vietnam gained independence from China in 983. Generally, Chinese influence will remain heavy with the Vietnamese elite & not with the common folk.

• Two rival kingdoms
  – Annam – north. Similar geography/agriculture to southern China, very tied to China beginning w/Tang.
  – Champa – south. Part of Indian Ocean trade, heavily influenced by India/Malaya.
  – Both tributary states to the Song