

CHAPTER

2

States and Civilizations

A Global Tapestry

1200–1450

The Worlds of East Asia: China and Its Neighbors, 70

China before the Mongol Takeover, 70
Korea and Japan: Creating New Civilizations, 76

The Worlds of Southeast Asia, 79

Vietnam: Living in the Shadow of China, 79
Maritime Southeast Asia: Commerce, Religion, and State Building, 80

The Worlds of Islam: Fragmented and Expanding, 82

The Islamic Heartland, 83
On the Peripheries of the Islamic World: India and Spain, 86

Emerging Civilizations in Africa, 88

The Making of an East African Civilization, 88
The Making of a West African Civilization, 90

The Worlds of Christendom, 92

The Eastern Orthodox World: A Declining Byzantium and an Emerging Rus, 93
The Roman Catholic World: A Fragmented Political Landscape, 96
Society, Economy, and Culture in the West, 99

Civilizations of the Americas, 104

The Emergence of the Aztecs in Mesoamerica, 104
The Emergence of the Incas in the Andes, 107

Conclusions and Reflections: "Civilization": What's in a Word?, 110

CONNECTING PAST AND PRESENT

"Sometimes the weight of civilization can be overwhelming. The fast pace, the burdens of relationships, the political strife, the technological complexity—it's enough to make you

dream of escaping to a simpler life more in touch with nature."¹ This expression of discontent with modernity, written in 2019, reflects an urge to "escape from civilization" that has long been a feature of modern life. Nor has this impulse been limited to recent societies and the Western world. The ancient Chinese teachers of Daoism likewise urged their followers to abandon the structured and demanding world of urban and civilized life and to immerse themselves in the eternal patterns of the natural order. It is a strange paradox that we count the creation of civilizations among the major achievements of humankind and yet people within them have often sought to escape the constraints, artificiality, hierarchies, and other discontents of civilized living. ■

Despite these discontents, by 1200 civilizations with their substantial cities, stratified societies, and powerful states had long been home to most of the world's peoples, extending their reach through time at the expense of those who lived in gathering and hunting societies, independent farming villages, or pastoral communities. This chapter presents a kind of global tour of the world's civilizations during the several centuries after 1200. Many of them had begun long before 1200, and all of them were constantly evolving, spreading, or shrinking.

In East Asia, an ancient Chinese civilization continued to thrive even as newer civilizations in Korea, Japan, and Vietnam borrowed from it as they created distinctive civilizations of

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CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE IN SOURCES

Based on the evidence in this image, what can you infer about the lives of elite women in Japan in this period?

their own. The heartland of a politically fragmented Islamic civilization stretched from the Atlantic Ocean across North Africa and the Middle East to India, while its frontiers extended to sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southeast Asia, where new civilizations were emerging. In the worlds of Christendom, Byzantium was in a state of terminal decline, even as other Christian civilizations were emerging in Russia and Western Europe. Meanwhile, in the Western Hemisphere new civilizations flourished in Mesoamerica and the Andes that were completely separated from those of Afro-Eurasia.

The Worlds of East Asia: China and Its Neighbors

Finding the Main Point: What accounts for China's political and economic vitality in this era? What impact did China have on its neighbors?

Around 1200, East Asia was among the most sophisticated and dynamic regions of the world. At its core was the enormous Chinese civilization, which for centuries had experienced a powerful and relatively stable state, cultural, and intellectual flowering, and remarkable technological innovation and economic growth. East Asian civilization was also expanding elsewhere. Between roughly 600 and 1600, the new states and civilizations of Korea, Japan, and Vietnam had emerged along China's borders. Proximity to their giant Chinese neighbor decisively shaped the histories of these new East Asian civilizations, for all of them borrowed major elements of Chinese culture and entered, at least for a time, into tributary relationships with China. But none were fully incorporated into the Chinese state or society. Instead they created new distinct forms of East Asian civilization.

China before the Mongol Takeover

In 1200 the **Song dynasty** (960–1279) ruled over large parts of an ancient Chinese civilization that could trace its origins back thousands of years (see Map 2.1). Since the late seventh century, China had experienced, with a few exceptions, a period of relatively stable political rule. Successive dynasties drew on much older cultural and political traditions that in turn outlasted even the Song, enduring into the twentieth century. Culturally, the Song dynasty was a “golden age” of arts and literature, setting standards of excellence in poetry, landscape painting, and ceramics, even as its scholars debated new forms of Confucian philosophy.

Politically, the Song dynasty built on earlier precedents to create an elaborate bureaucratic state structure that endured into the twentieth century. To staff this bureaucracy, an examination system first established by the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) was revived and made more elaborate, facilitated by the ability to print

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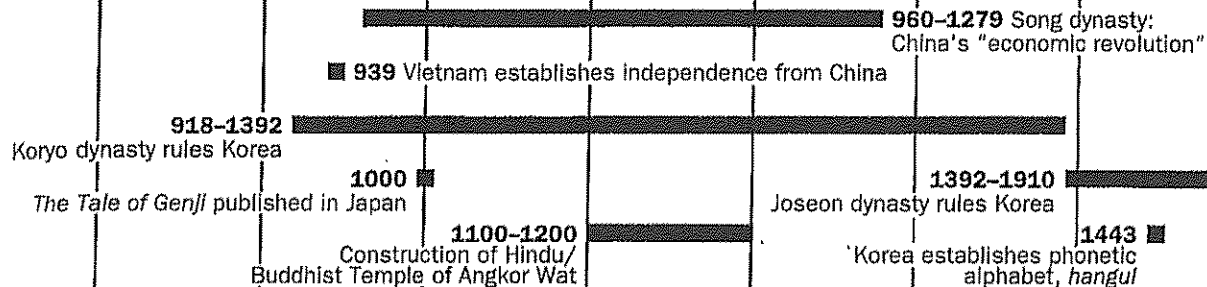
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Why are the centuries of the Song dynasty in China sometimes regarded as a high point in Chinese history?

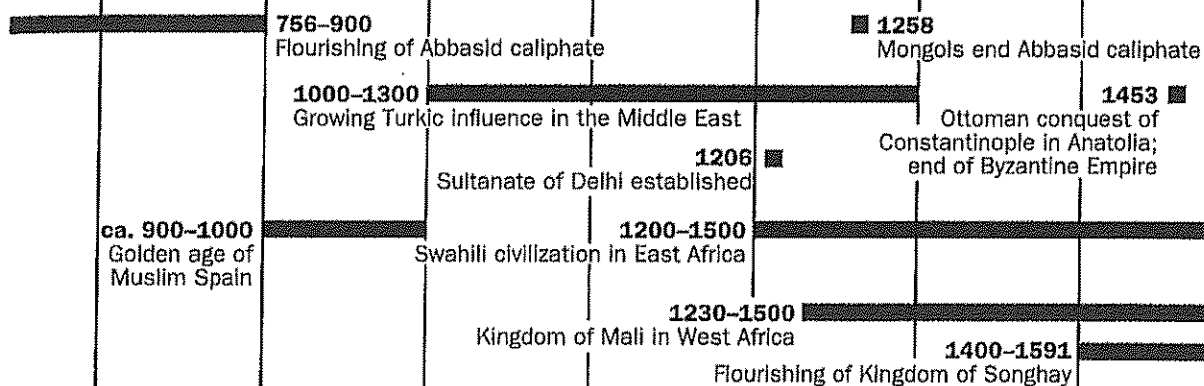
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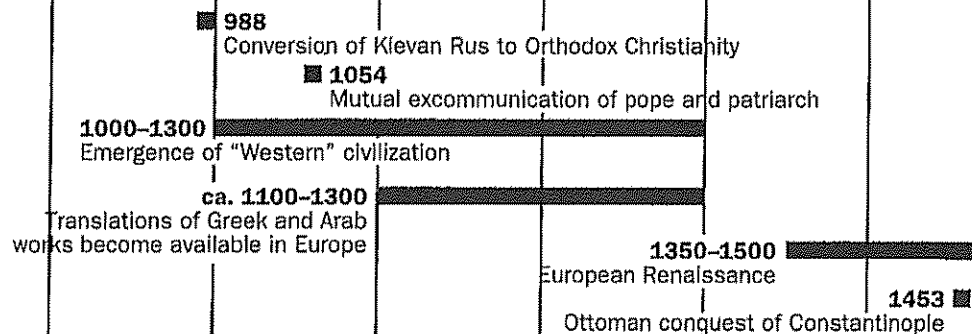
EAST ASIA



THE ISLAMIC WORLD

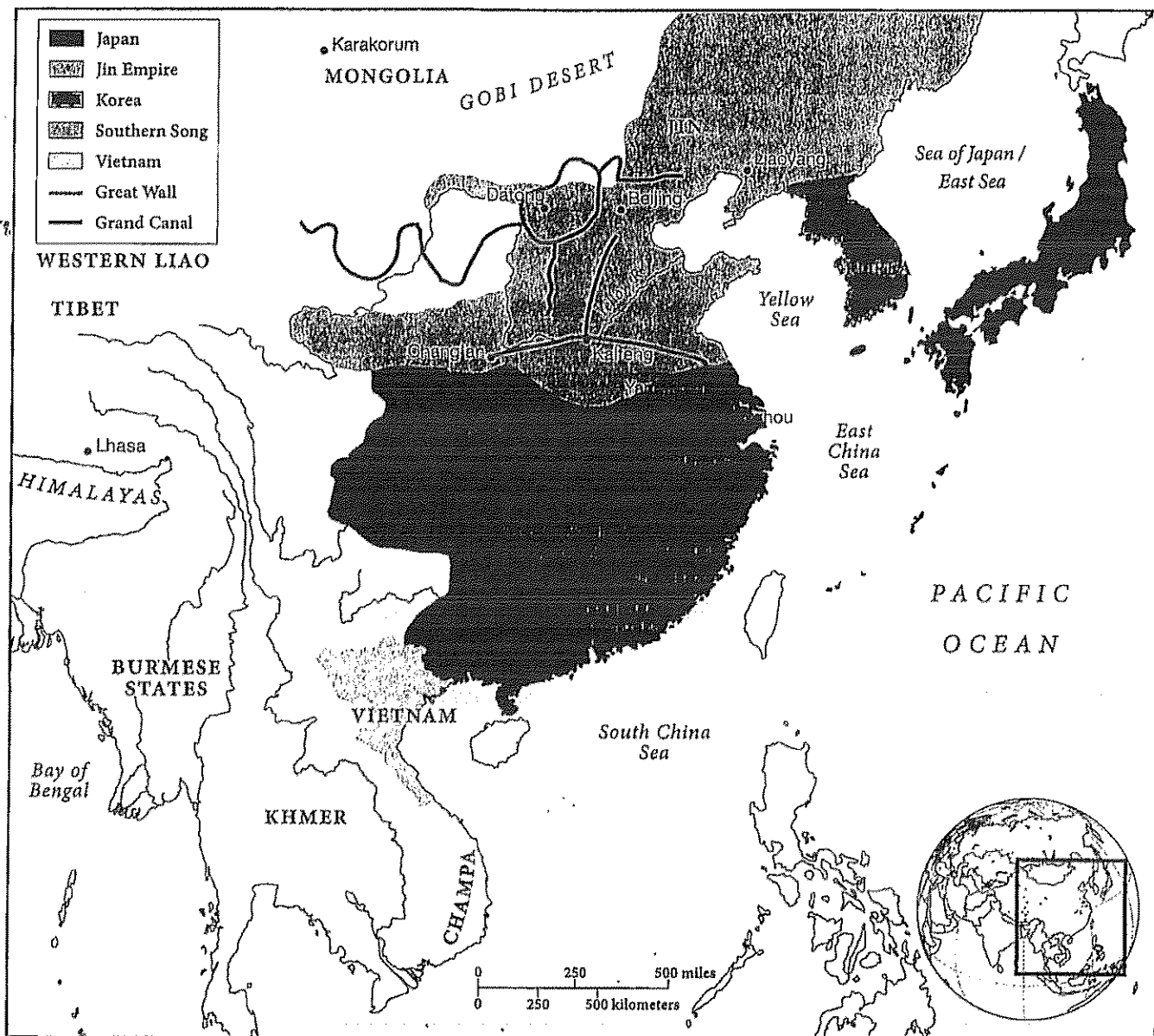


WORLDS OF EUROPEAN CHRISTENDOM



THE AMERICAS





▲ AP

CONTEXTUALIZATION

What does this map suggest about China's relationship with the nomadic peoples to the north?

Map 2.1 Song Dynasty China and Its Neighbors

In the twelfth century nomadic Jurchen peoples conquered much of northern China, giving rise to two states—the native Chinese Song in the south and the Jin in the north. Rulers of both states claimed to be heirs to the earlier Tang dynasty and thus the true emperors of China. At the same time, distinct new East Asian civilizations continued to develop in Korea, Japan, and Vietnam, all of which were decisively shaped by their proximity to their giant Chinese neighbor.

books for the first time in world history. Schools proliferated to prepare candidates for the rigorous exams, which allowed entry into the high elite for upper-class men. While candidates from privileged backgrounds were better able to access

the education needed to pass exams, village communities or a local landowner sometimes sponsored the education of a bright young man from a commoner background, enabling him to enter the charmed circle of officialdom while also bringing prestige and perhaps more concrete benefits to those who sponsored him. Thus the examination system provided a modest measure of social mobility in an otherwise quite hierarchical society.

Underlying these cultural and political achievements was **China's economic revolution**, which made Song dynasty China "by far the richest, most skilled, and most populous country on earth."² The most obvious sign of China's prosperity was its rapid growth in population, which jumped from about 50 million or 60 million in the ninth century to 120 million by 1200. Behind this doubling of the population were remarkable achievements in agricultural production, particularly the adoption from Vietnam of a fast-ripening and drought-resistant strain of rice, known as Champa rice.

As many people found their way to the cities, China became the most urbanized country in the world. Dozens of Chinese cities numbered over 100,000, while the Song dynasty capital of **Hangzhou** was home to more than a million people. For the thirteenth-century Italian visitor Marco Polo, Hangzhou was "beyond dispute the finest and noblest [city] in the world."³ (See Working with Evidence, Chapter 3, page 178, for a fuller description of Marco Polo's impressions of Hangzhou.)

Industrial production likewise soared. In both large-scale enterprises employing hundreds of workers and in smaller backyard furnaces, China's metallurgy industry increased its output dramatically. By the eleventh century, it was providing the government with 32,000 suits of armor and 16 million iron arrowheads annually, in addition to supplying metal for coins, tools, construction, and bells in Buddhist monasteries. This industrial growth was fueled almost entirely by coal, which also came to provide most of the energy for heating homes and cooking, and no doubt generated considerable air pollution. Technological innovation in other fields also flourished. Inventions in printing, both woodblock and movable type, led to the world's first printed books, and by 1000 relatively cheap books had become widely available in China. Chinese navigational and shipbuilding technologies led the world, and the Chinese invention of gunpowder created, within a few centuries, a revolution in military affairs that had global dimensions.

These innovations occurred within the world's most highly commercialized society, in which producing for the market, rather than for local consumption, became a very widespread phenomenon. An immense network of internal waterways (canals, rivers, and lakes), described by one scholar as "an engineering feat without parallel in the world of its time," stretched around 30,000 miles, including a Grand Canal of over 1,000 miles linking the Yellow River in the north to the Yangzi River in the south.⁴ (See Map 2.1.) These waterways facilitated the cheap

AP**CONTINUITY AND CHANGE**

What did the Song dynasty borrow from previous dynasties to build an enduring state?

AP EXAM TIP

You should know that for much of history China has had the world's highest population and the greatest number of urban areas with large populations.

AP EXAM TIP

Understand the uses and spread of gunpowder after 1200.



▲ **AP**

CAUSATION

What developments in China led to the intense urbanization depicted in this image?

AP EXAM TIP

China had the world's leading economy around 1200, and you should know its features, such as paper money.

AP

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

In what ways did women's lives change during the Song dynasty?

Chinese Cities This detail comes from a huge watercolor scroll, titled *Along the River during the Qingming Festival*, originally painted during the Song dynasty. It illustrates the urban sophistication of Chinese cities at that time and has been frequently imitated and copied since then. (Werner Forman/Getty Images)

movement of goods, allowing peasants to grow specialized crops for sale while they purchased rice or other staples on the market. In addition, government demands for taxes paid in cash rather than in goods required peasants to sell something—their products or their labor—in order to meet their obligations. The growing use of paper money, which the Chinese pioneered, as well as financial instruments such as letters of credit and promissory notes, further contributed to the commercialization of society. Two prominent scholars have described the outcome: “Output increased, population grew, skills multiplied, and a burst of inventiveness made Song China far wealthier than ever before—or than any of its contemporaries.”⁵

However, the “golden age” of Song dynasty China was perhaps less than “golden” for many of its women. Confucian writers emphasized the subordination of women to men and the need to keep males and females separate in every domain of life. The Song dynasty historian and scholar Sima Guang (1019–1086) summed up the prevailing view: “The boy leads the girl, the girl follows the boy; the duty of husbands to be resolute and wives to be docile begins with this.”⁶ For elite men, masculinity came to be defined less in terms of horseback riding, athleticism, and warrior values and more in terms of the refined pursuits of calligraphy, scholarship, painting, and poetry. Corresponding views of feminine qualities emphasized women’s weakness, reticence, and delicacy.

Furthermore, a rapidly commercializing economy undermined the position of women in the textile industry. Urban workshops and state factories, run by men, increasingly took over the skilled tasks of weaving textiles, especially silk, which had previously been the work of rural women in their homes. Although these women

continued to tend silkworms and spin silk thread, they had lost the more lucrative income-generating work of weaving silk fabrics.

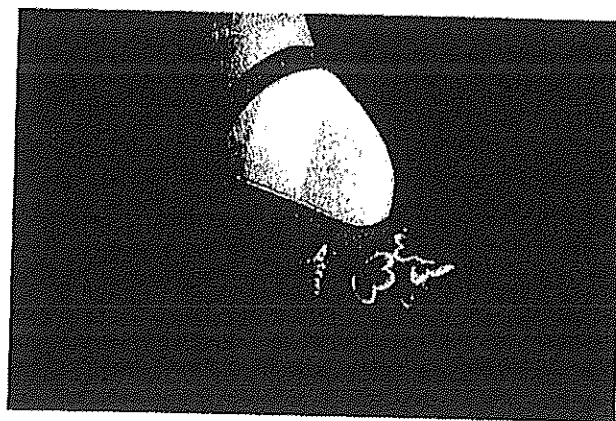
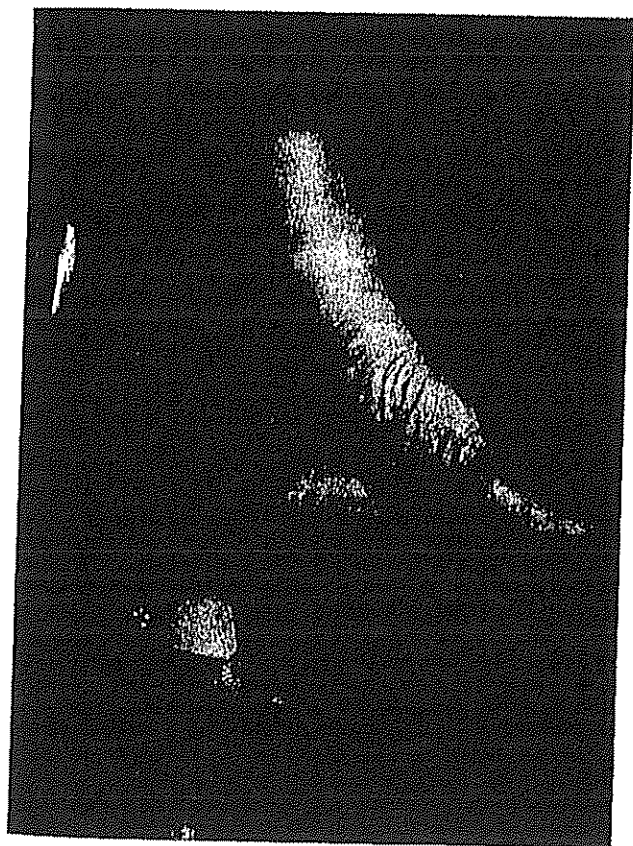
The most compelling expression of a tightening patriarchy among elite women lay in **foot binding**. Apparently beginning among dancers and courtesans in the tenth or eleventh century C.E., this practice involved the tight wrapping of young girls' feet, usually breaking the bones of the foot and causing intense pain. During and after the Song dynasty, foot binding found general acceptance among elite families and later became even more widespread in Chinese society. It was associated with new images of female beauty and eroticism that emphasized small size, frailty, and deference and served to keep women restricted to the "inner quarters," where Confucian tradition asserted that they belonged. For many women, it became a rite of passage, and their tiny feet and the beautiful slippers that encased them became a source of some pride, even a topic of poetry for some literate women.

In other ways, though, there were more positive trends in the lives of women during the Song dynasty. Their property rights expanded, allowing women to control their own dowries and to inherit property from their families. "Neither in earlier nor in later periods," writes one scholar, "did as much property pass through women's hands" as during the Song dynasty.⁷ Furthermore, lower-ranking but ambitious officials strongly urged the education of women, so that they might more effectively raise their sons and increase the family's fortune. Song dynasty China, in short, offered a mixture of tightening restrictions and new opportunities to its women.

AP

CONTEXTUALIZATION

How does the Chinese practice of foot binding illustrate social and gender changes during the Song dynasty?



Foot Binding While the practice of foot binding painfully deformed the feet of young girls and women, it was also associated aesthetically with feminine beauty, particularly in the delicate and elaborately decorated shoes that encased their bound feet. (foot: MARK RALSTON/AFP/Getty Images; shoe: ClassicStock/Masterfile)

AP EXAM TIP

Be aware of the interactions between major empires and the states near them, such as China with Korea and Japan.

AP**COMPARISON**

Evaluate the similarities and differences in the influence China had on Korea and Japan. In what ways was that influence resisted?

AP**CONTINUITY AND CHANGE**

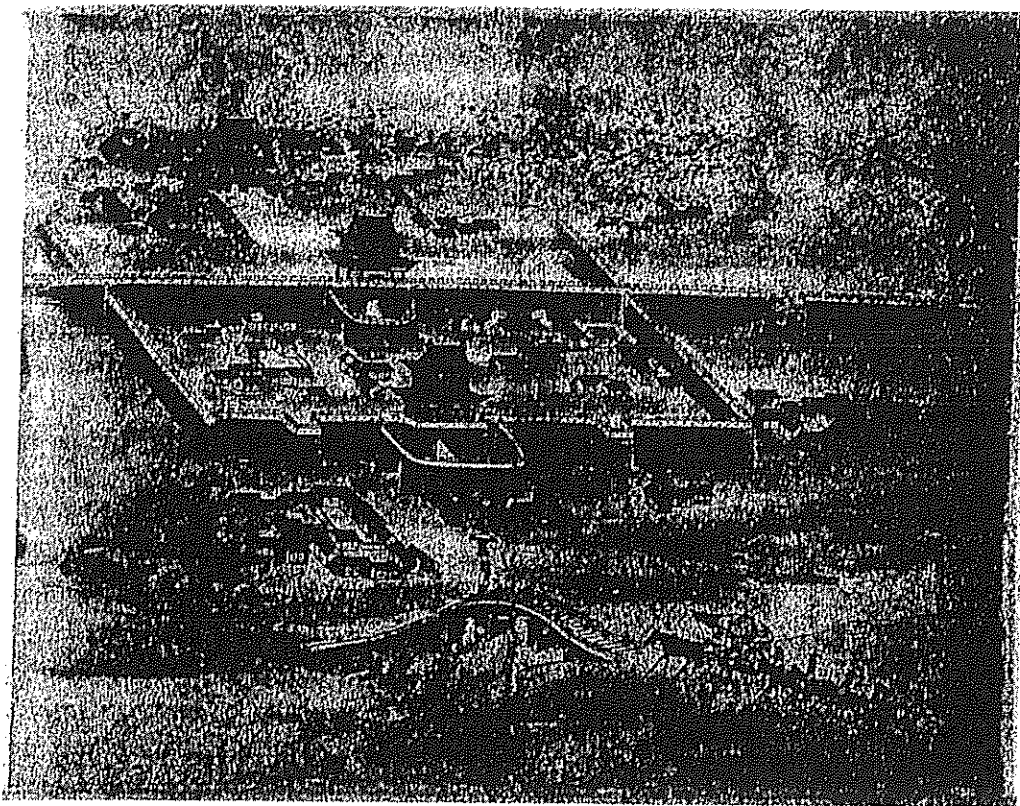
What cultural changes occurred in Korea in response to Chinese influence?

Korea and Japan: Creating New Civilizations

Immediately adjacent to northeastern China, the Korean people have long lived in close proximity to their much larger neighbor. Under a succession of dynasties—the Unified Silla (688–900), Koryo (918–1392), and Joseon (1392–1910)—Korea generally maintained its political independence while participating in a tributary relationship with China. During regular missions to the Chinese imperial court, Korean emissaries acknowledged China's preeminent position in East Asia by presenting tribute—products of value produced in Korea—and performing rituals of submission that included *kowtowing* or prostration before the emperor while touching the ground with their heads. In return Chinese emperors gave their Korean visitors gifts or “bestowals” to take back to Korea, reaffirmed peaceful relations, and allowed both official and personal trade.

Chinese culture had a pervasive influence on Korean political and cultural life in many ways (see “Religion and the Silk Roads” in Chapter 3). For instance, efforts to plant Confucian values and Chinese culture in Korea had what one scholar has called an “overwhelmingly negative” impact on Korean women, particularly after 1300.⁸ Early Chinese observers noticed, and strongly disapproved of, free choice marriages in Korea, as well as the practice of women singing and dancing together late at night. With the support of the Korean court, Chinese models of family life and female behavior based on the Confucian concept of filial piety gradually replaced the more flexible Korean patterns, especially among the elite. Korean customs—women giving birth and raising their young children in their parents’ home, funeral rites in which a husband was buried in the sacred plot of his wife’s family, the remarriage of widowed or divorced women, and female inheritance of property—eroded under the pressure of Confucian orthodoxy. Korean restrictions on elite women, especially widows, came to exceed even those in China itself.

Still, Korea remained Korean. Despite periodic threats, after 688 the country largely maintained its political independence from China. Chinese cultural influence, except for Buddhism, had little impact beyond the aristocracy and certainly did not penetrate the lives of Korea’s serf-like peasants. Nor did it register among Korea’s many enslaved people, who amounted to about one-third of the country’s population by 1100. A Chinese-style examination system to recruit government officials, though encouraged by some Korean rulers, never assumed the prominence that it gained in Song dynasty China. Korea’s aristocratic class was able to maintain an even stronger monopoly on bureaucratic office than its Chinese counterpart did. And in the mid-1400s, Korea moved toward greater cultural independence by developing a phonetic alphabet, known as *hangul* (HAHN-gool), for writing the Korean language. Although resisted by conservative male elites, who were long accustomed to using the more prestigious Chinese characters to write Korean, this new form of writing gradually took hold, especially in private correspondence, in popular fiction, and among women. Clearly part of the Chinese world order, Korea nonetheless retained a distinctive culture as well as a separate political existence.



The Tribute System This eighteenth-century Korean painting depicts a Korean diplomatic mission to Qing China approaching the city of Sanhaegwan on its way to offer tribute to the emperor in Beijing, 190 miles away. Such tribute missions offered opportunities for the Korean delegation to see something of China. According to diaries of Korean envoys, they categorized sites along the route to Beijing under such titles as historical, curiosity, or spectacle. (© Copyright The Korean Christian Museum at Soongsil University)

Unlike Korea, the Japanese islands were physically separated from China by 100 miles or more of ocean and were never successfully invaded or conquered by their giant mainland neighbor. Thus Japan's very extensive borrowing from Chinese civilization was wholly voluntary, rather than occurring under conditions of direct military threat or outright occupation. The high point of that borrowing took place during the seventh to the ninth centuries C.E., as the first more or less unified Japanese state began to emerge from dozens of small clan-based aristocratic chiefdoms. That state found much that was useful in China and set out, deliberately and systematically, to transform Japan into a centralized bureaucratic state on the Chinese model. Chinese culture, no less than its political practices, also found favor in Japan. Various schools of Chinese Buddhism took root, first among the educated and literate classes and later more broadly in Japanese society. Buddhism deeply affected Japanese art, architecture, education, medicine, views of the afterlife, and attitudes toward suffering and the impermanence of life. The Chinese writing system—and with it an interest in historical writing, calligraphy, and poetry—likewise proved attractive among the elite.

But the absence of any compelling threat from China made it possible for the Japanese to be selective in their borrowing. By the tenth century, deliberate efforts to

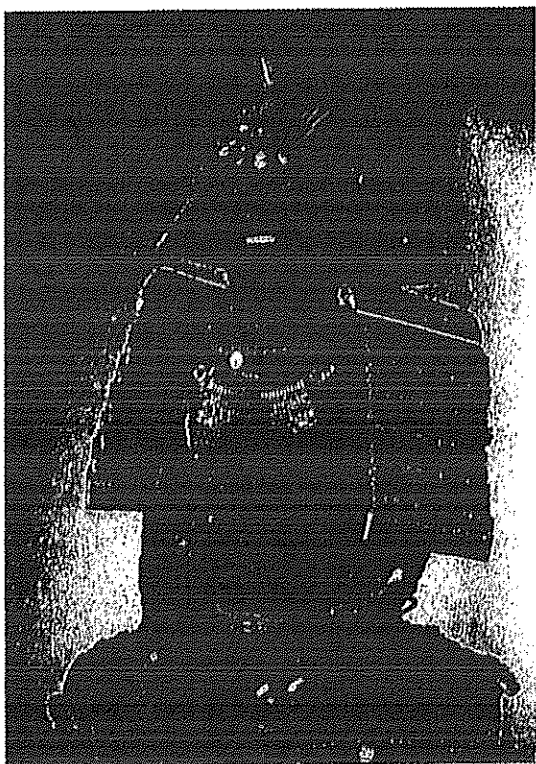
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CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE IN SOURCES

Using this image as evidence, describe where the Chinese placed themselves in the tributary relationship with other states. What was the role of tribute in Chinese relations with outside powers?

AP EXAM TIP

Note the differences between the ways Chinese culture was introduced into Japan compared to Korea.



The Samurai of Japan This thirteenth-century suit of armor with horned helmet is typical of that worn by samurai, the professional warrior class of Japan. Comprising hundreds of small metal plates laced together in an overlapping pattern, samurai armor was strong but still flexible enough to allow a warrior to fight on horseback. The prominence of martial values in Japanese culture was one of the ways in which Japan differed from its Chinese neighbor, despite much borrowing. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

▲ AP

CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE IN SOURCES

What does this image tell us about the social status of warriors in Japan?

AP

COMPARISON

In what different ways did Japanese and Korean women experience the pressures of traditional Confucian teachings?

absorb additional elements of Chinese culture diminished, and formal tribute missions to China stopped, although private traders and Buddhist monks continued to make the difficult journey to the mainland. Over many centuries, the Japanese combined what they had assimilated from China with elements of their own tradition into a distinctive Japanese civilization.

In the political realm, for example, the Japanese never succeeded in creating an effective centralized and bureaucratic state to match that of China. Although the court and the emperor retained an important ceremonial and cultural role, their real political authority over the country gradually diminished in favor of competing aristocratic families, both at court and in the provinces. As political power became increasingly decentralized, local authorities developed their own military forces, the famous *samurai* warrior class of Japanese society (see AP® Looking Again: Japanese Samurai Culture, page 116). Bearing their exquisite curved swords, the samurai developed a distinctive set of values featuring bravery, loyalty, endurance, honor, great skill in martial arts, and a preference for death over surrender. This was *bushido* (boo-shee-doh), the way of the warrior. Japan's celebration of the samurai and of military virtues contrasted sharply with China's emphasis on intellectual achievements and political office holding, which were accorded higher prestige than bearing arms. "The educated men of the land," wrote a Chinese minister in the eleventh century, "regard the carrying of arms as a disgrace."⁹ The Japanese, clearly, did not agree.

Religiously as well, Japan remained distinctive. Although Buddhism in many forms took hold in the country, it never completely replaced the native beliefs and practices, which focused attention on numerous *kami*, sacred spirits associated with human ancestors and various natural phenomena. Much later referred to as Shinto, this tradition provided legitimacy to the imperial family, based on claims of descent from the sun goddess. Because veneration of the kami lacked an elaborate philosophy or ritual, it conflicted very little with Buddhism. In fact, numerous kami were assimilated into Japanese Buddhism as local expressions of Buddhist deities or principles.

Japanese literary and artistic culture likewise evolved in distinctive ways, despite much borrowing from China. As in Korea, a unique writing system emerged that combined Chinese characters with a series of phonetic symbols. A highly refined aesthetic culture found expression at the imperial court, even as the court's real political authority melted away. Court aristocrats and their ladies lived in splendor, composed poems, arranged flowers, and conducted their love affairs. "What counted," wrote one scholar, "was the proper costume, the right ceremonial act, the successful turn of phrase in a poem, and the appropriate expression of refined taste."¹⁰ *The Tale of Genji*, a Japanese novel written by the author Murasaki Shikibu,

a lady-in-waiting at the imperial court around 1000, provides an intimate picture of the intrigues and romances of court life.

At this level of society, Japanese women, unlike Korean women, largely escaped the more oppressive features of Chinese Confucian culture, such as the prohibition of remarriage for widows and seclusion within the home. Japanese women continued to inherit property; Japanese married couples often lived apart or with the wife's family; and marriages were made and broken easily. None of this corresponded to Confucian values. When Japanese women did begin to lose status in the twelfth century and later, it had less to do with Confucian pressures than with the rise of a warrior culture.

The Worlds of Southeast Asia

Finding the Main Point: What were the cultural and political effects of Southeast Asia's encounters with other civilizations?

As a geographical and cultural region, Southeast Asia is often divided into two parts. Mainland Southeast Asia encompasses the modern countries of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar. Maritime Southeast Asia refers to the Philippine and Indonesian islands as well as New Guinea. During the centuries between 600 and 1500, this linguistically diverse region gave rise to a series of cities and states or kingdoms, all of them connected in various ways to the growing commercial network of the Indian Ocean (see Chapter 3). At the same time, the traders and sailors of that network introduced three major religious traditions to the region—Buddhism, Hinduism, and later, Islam. Located between the major civilizations of China and India, the new civilizations of Southeast Asia were shaped by their interactions with both of them.

Vietnam: Living in the Shadow of China

At the southeastern fringe of the Chinese cultural world, the people who eventually came to be called Vietnamese were shaped by their historical encounter with China. As in Korea, the elite culture of Vietnam borrowed heavily from China—adopting Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, administrative techniques, the examination system, and artistic and literary styles—even as its popular culture remained distinctive. And, like Korea, Vietnam achieved political independence while participating fully in the **tribute system** as a vassal state.

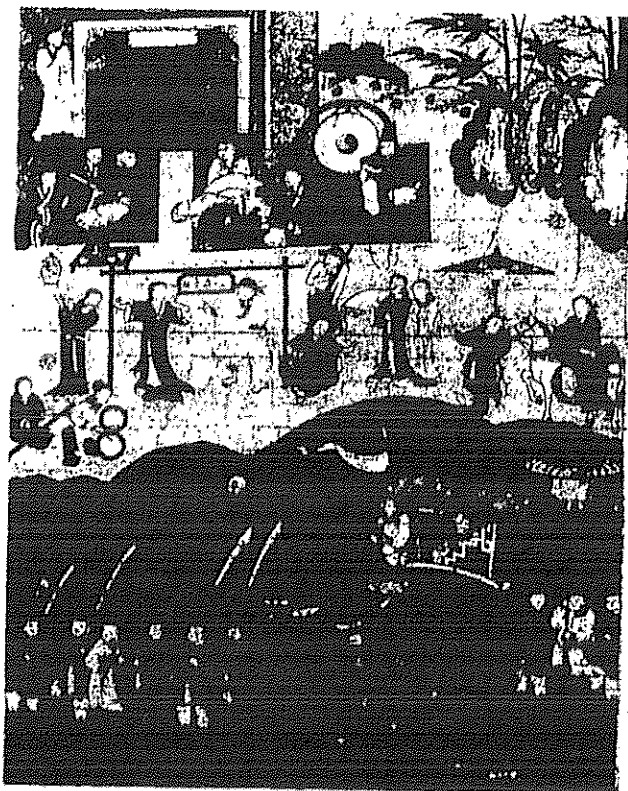
Unlike Korea, however, the cultural heartland of Vietnam in the Red River valley had been fully incorporated into the Chinese state for more than a thousand years (111 B.C.E.–939 C.E.). Even in 1200, centuries after securing their independence, Vietnamese rulers carefully maintained Vietnam's tributary role, sending repeated missions to do homage at the Chinese court.

Successive Vietnamese dynasties found the Chinese approach to government useful, styling their rulers as emperors, claiming the Mandate of Heaven, and making use of Chinese court rituals. More so than in Korea, a Chinese-based examination system in Vietnam functioned to undermine an established aristocracy, to provide some measure of social mobility for commoners, and to create a merit-based scholar-gentry class to staff the bureaucracy. Furthermore, members of the Vietnamese elite class remained

AP

COMPARISON

Compare China's influence on Vietnam with its influence on Korea and Japan.



Chinese Influence in Vietnam This painted scroll in the Chinese style was created in Vietnam and dates from the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. It depicts the triumphant return of a government official to his native village after passing his civil service exams. He rides atop an elephant, while people gather to play instruments to welcome him. Both the painting's style and its subject, the passing of civil service exams, reflect the deep influence of Chinese cultural and political traditions on Vietnamese society.

(Werner Forman Archive/Bridgeman Images)

AP

CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE IN SOURCES

How does this image reflect the political influence of China on Vietnam?

deeply committed to Chinese culture, viewing their own country less as a separate nation than as a southern extension of a universal civilization, the only one they knew.

Beyond the elite, however, there remained much that was uniquely Vietnamese, such as a distinctive language, a fondness for cockfighting, and the habit of chewing betel nuts. More importantly, Vietnam long retained a greater role for women in social and economic life, despite heavy Chinese influence. In the third century C.E., Lady Triệu led an anti-Chinese resistance movement, declaring: "I want to drive away the enemy to save our people. I will not resign myself to the usual lot of women who bow their heads and become concubines." Female nature deities and a "female Buddha" continued to be part of Vietnamese popular religion, even as Confucian-based ideas took root among the elite.

In the centuries following independence from China, as Vietnam expanded to the south, northern officials tried in vain to impose more orthodox Confucian gender practices in place of local customs that allowed women to choose their own husbands and married men to live in the households of their wives. So persistent were these practices that a seventeenth-century Chinese visitor commented, with disgust, that Vietnamese preferred the birth of a girl to that of a boy. These features of Vietnamese life reflected larger patterns of Southeast Asian culture that distinguished it from China. And like the Koreans and the Japanese, the Vietnamese developed a variation of Chinese writing called *chu nom* ("southern script"), which provided the basis for an independent national literature and a vehicle for the writing of most educated women.

Maritime Southeast Asia: Commerce, Religion, and State Building

While Chinese culture shaped Vietnam, Indian cultural influences—both Hindu and Buddhist—were more prominent in the islands of Southeast Asia (see Map 2.2). In a region shaped by Indian Ocean trade, the case of **Srivijaya** (SREE-vih-juh-yuh) provides an early example of the connection between commerce, state building, and religious change. When Malay sailors, long active in the waters around Southeast Asia, opened an all-sea route between India and China through the Strait of Melaka, the many small ports along the Malay Peninsula and the coast of Sumatra began to compete intensely to attract the growing number of traders and travelers making their way through the strait. From this competition emerged the Malay kingdom of

Srivijaya, which dominated this critical choke point of Indian Ocean trade from 670 to 1025. A number of factors—Srivijaya's plentiful supply of gold; its access to the source of highly sought-after spices, such as cloves, nutmeg, and mace; and the taxes levied on passing ships—provided resources to attract supporters, to fund an embryonic bureaucracy, and to create the military and naval forces that brought some security to the area.

Srivijayan monarchs employed Indians as advisers, clerks, or officials and assigned Sanskrit titles to their subordinates. The capital city of Palembang was a cosmopolitan place, where even the parrots were said to speak four languages. While these rulers continued to draw on indigenous beliefs that chiefs possessed magical powers and were responsible for the prosperity of their people, they also made use of imported Indian political ideas and Buddhist religious concepts, which provided a “higher level of magic” for rulers as well as the prestige of association with Indian civilization.¹¹ They also sponsored the creation of images of the Buddha and of various bodhisattvas whose faces resembled those of deceased kings and were inscribed with traditional curses against anyone who would destroy them. Srivijaya grew into a major center of Buddhist observance and teaching, attracting thousands of monks and students from throughout the Buddhist world.

Elsewhere as well, elements of Indian culture took hold in maritime Southeast Asia. On the island of Java a number of states emerged, heavily influenced by Hindu religious ideas, giving rise to a distinctive Hindu-Javanese cultural blend. Among the largest of these states was the kingdom of **Madjapahit**, which at the peak of its power in the mid-1300s dominated much of what is now Indonesia and Malaya. In 1365, a local poet extravagantly praised its ruler, Hayam Wuruk: “His retinue, treasures, chariots, elephants, horses are (immeasurable) like the sea. The island of Java is becoming more and more famous for its blessed state throughout the world.”¹² Indian cultural influences found further expression in what is now Indonesia through widely popular shadow puppet performances based on Hindu epics such as the *Ramayana*, though mixed with local material as well. Hinduism was also well established by 1000 in the Champa kingdom in what is now southern Vietnam, where Shiva was worshipped, cows were honored, and phallic imagery was prominent. A little later it took root further inland, where during the twelfth century, the prosperous and powerful Khmer kingdom of Angkor constructed the most stunning architectural expression of Hinduism in the temple complex known as **Angkor Wat**. The largest religious structure in the world of its time, it sought to express a Hindu understanding of the cosmos centered on a mythical Mount Meru, the home of the gods. Later, it was used by Buddhists as well, with little sense of contradiction.

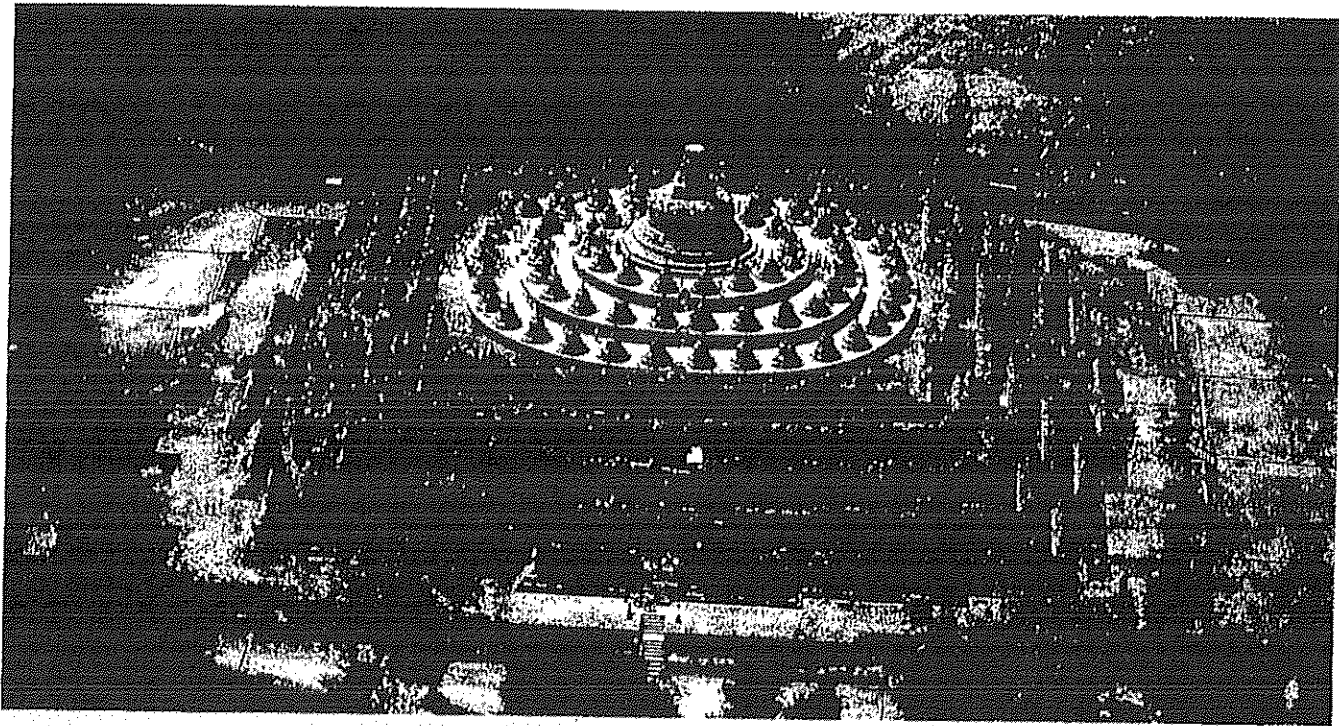


Map 2.2 Southeast Asia, ca. 1200 C.E.

Both mainland and island Southeast Asia were centrally involved in the commerce of the Indian Ocean basin, and both were transformed by that experience.

AP EXAM TIP

Angkor Wat and the temple of Borobudur are examples of architecture influenced by religion.



▲ **AP**

**CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE
IN SOURCES**

What does this image suggest about the function of monumental architecture in a civilization?

Borobudur This huge Buddhist monument in Java, constructed probably in the ninth century c.e., was later abandoned and covered with layers of volcanic ash and vegetation as Java came under Islamic influence. A mountain-shaped structure, it contained a three-mile walkway portraying the spiritual journey from ignorance to enlightenment and represented the grounding of Buddhism in a distinctively Javanese form. (robertharding/Alamy)

The Worlds of Islam: Fragmented and Expanding

Finding the Main Point: What political and intellectual transformations took place in Islamic civilization as it spread?

▲ **AP**

CAUSATION

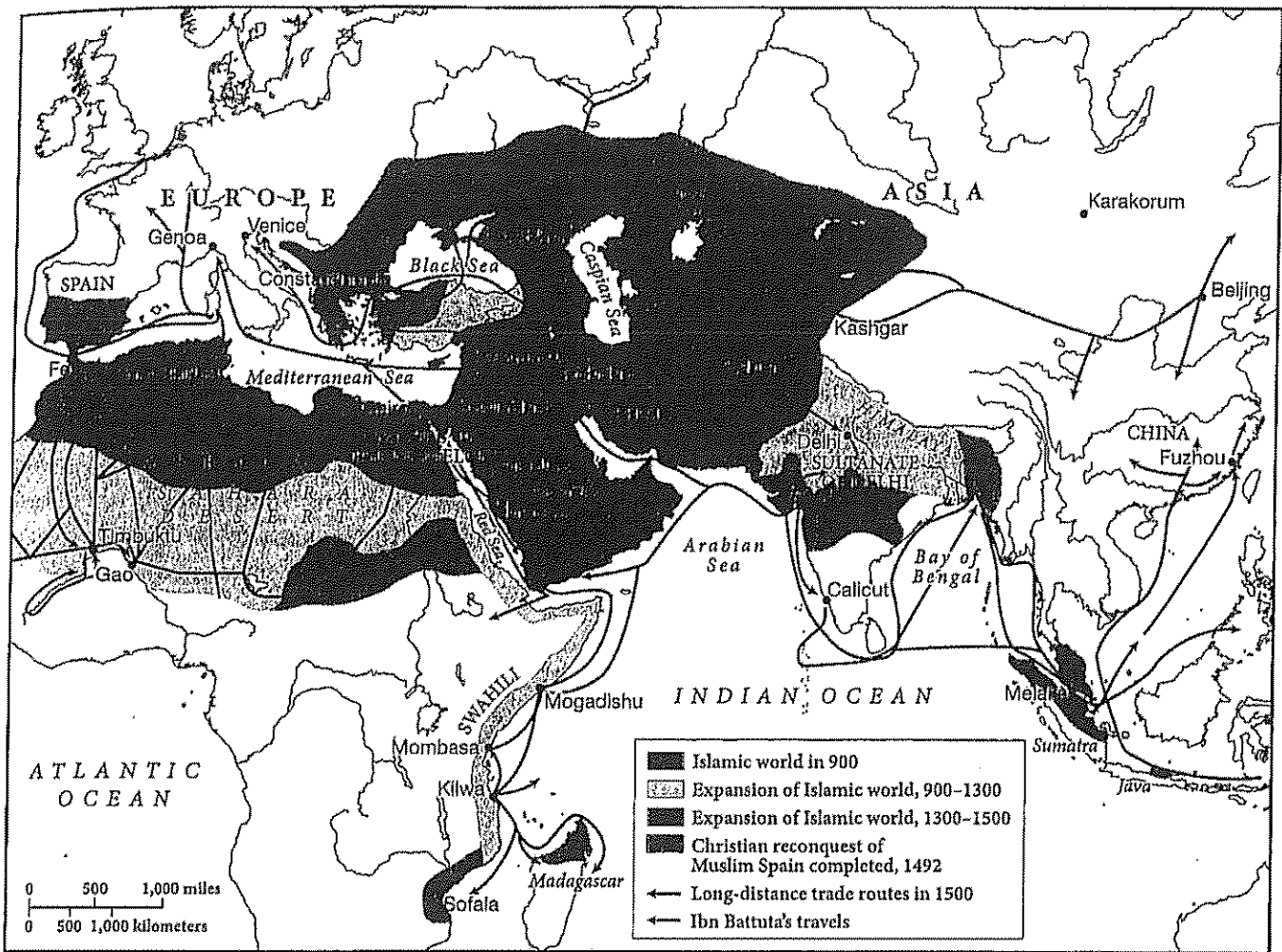
What features of the Muslim faith would account for the appeal of the religion across such diverse populations (see Chapter 1)?

By around 1200, what Muslims called the Dar al-Islam or the House of Islam was firmly established along a vast and continuous expanse of Afro-Eurasia, stretching from Spain and Morocco in the west to northern India in the east, with its heartland in the Middle East and Egypt. Many of these territories had been incorporated into the Islamic world through the construction of the Arab Empire in the century and a half following Muhammad's death in 632, even if wide-scale conversion of subject peoples to the faith took considerably longer (see Chapter 1). From around 1000, a second major expansion by conquest brought India, Anatolia, and a little later the Balkans into the world of Islam, spearheaded by Turkic-speaking groups who had recently converted to the Muslim faith. By 1200, Islam was also spreading far beyond these regions of conquest into Southeast and Central Asia and sub-Saharan Africa through the activities of Muslim merchants and missionaries (see Map 2.3; see Chapter 3). Between 1200 and 1450, the Islamic world was politically fragmented, but Islamic culture and religion remained vibrant in the Middle

▲ **AP EXAM TIP**

Understand the extent of the spread of Islam.

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MAPPING HISTORY Map 2.3 The Growing World of Islam, 900–1500

Islam as a religion, a civilization, and an arena of commerce continued to grow even as the Arab Empire fragmented. The journeys made during the fourteenth century by Ibn Battuta, an Arab scholar, merchant, and public official, reveal how long-distance trade routes linked the Islamic heartland in southwest Asia, North Africa, and Spain to its frontiers and regions beyond.

Reading the Map: To what extent did Ibn Battuta rely upon established long-distance trade routes during his travels? At what point in his journeys did he travel far beyond the borders of the worlds of Islam?

AP Making Connections: Between 900 and 1500, Islam primarily spread along trade routes. To what extent does the map support this statement?

East, while the continuing spread of the faith gave rise to cultural encounters with Hindu, Christian, and African civilizations.

The Islamic Heartland

In 1200, the **Abbasid caliphate**, an Arab dynasty that had ruled the Islamic world in theory if not practice since 750, was a shadow of its former self. At the start of their rule, the Abbasids built a splendid new capital in Baghdad, from which the

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CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

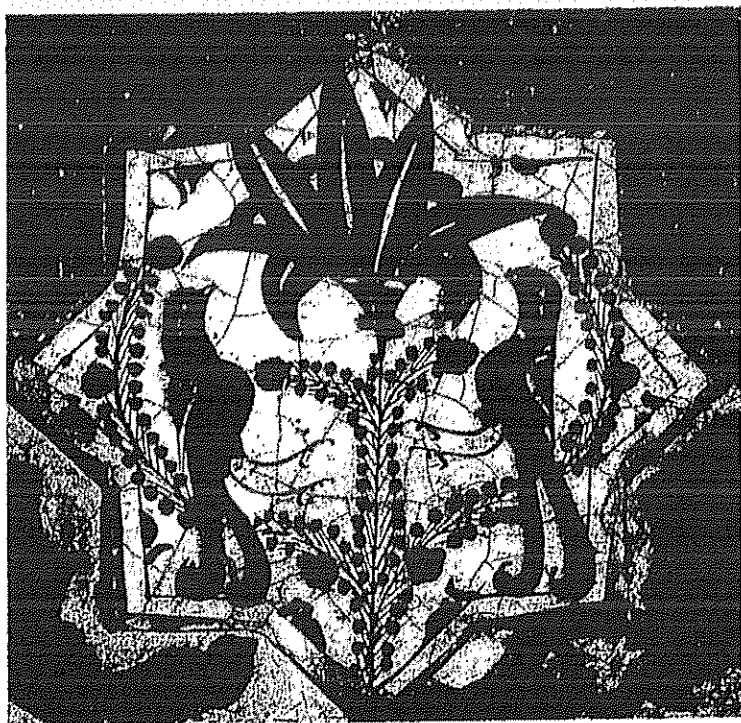
How did the rise of Islam affect the role of the pastoral Turkic peoples in world history?

AP EXAM TIP

Be aware of the Ottoman Empire's economic, cultural, and political significance.

AP**CAUSATION**

What does this tile reveal about Turkish culture after settlement in Anatolia?



Seljuk Tiles Among the artistic achievements of Turkic Muslims were lovely ceramic tiles used to decorate mosques, minarets, palaces, and other public spaces. They contained intricate geometric designs, images of trees and birds, and inscriptions from the Quran. This one, dating from the thirteenth century, was used in a Seljuk palace, built as a summer residence for the sultan in the city of Konya in what is now central Turkey. (Images & Stories/Alamy)

dynasty presided over a flourishing and prosperous Islamic civilization. But for all its accomplishments, the Abbasid dynasty's political grip on the vast Arab Empire slipped away quickly. Beginning in the mid-ninth century, many local governors or military commanders asserted the autonomy of their regions, while still giving formal allegiance to the caliph in Baghdad.

A major turning point in both the political and cultural history of the Islamic Middle East was the arrival, starting around 1000, of Turkic-speaking pastoralists from the steppes of Central Asia into the fragmenting political landscape of the Abbasid Empire. At first, they served as slave soldiers within the Abbasid caliphate, and then, as the caliphate declined, they increasingly took political and military power themselves. In the **Seljuk Turkic Empire** of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, for instance, rulers began to claim the Muslim title of *sultan* (ruler) rather than the Turkic *kaghan* as they became major players in the Islamic Middle East. Even as their political power grew, the Turks were themselves experiencing a major turning point in their history as ever more groups of Turkic-speaking warriors converted to Islam between the tenth and fourteenth centuries. This extended process represented a significant expansion of the faith and launched the Turks into a new role as a major sustainer of Islam and carrier of the faith to new regions.

By 1200, the Islamic heartland had fractured politically into a series of "sultanates," many ruled by Persian or Turkish military dynasties. In the thirteenth century, the Mongols, another pastoral people, invaded the region, put an official end to the Abbasid caliphate in 1258, and ruled much of Persia for a time. In the long run, though, it was the **Ottoman Empire**, a creation of one of the many Turkic warrior groups that had migrated into Anatolia (what is now Turkey), that brought greater long-term political unity to the Islamic Middle East and North Africa. By the mid-fifteenth century, the Ottoman Turks had already carved out a state that encompassed much of the Anatolian peninsula and had pushed deep into southeastern Europe (the Balkans), acquiring in the process a substantial Christian population and a capital city in **Constantinople**. (See Zooming In: 1453 in Constantinople.) During the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire extended its control to much of the Middle East, Egypt, coastal North Africa, the lands surrounding the Black Sea, and even

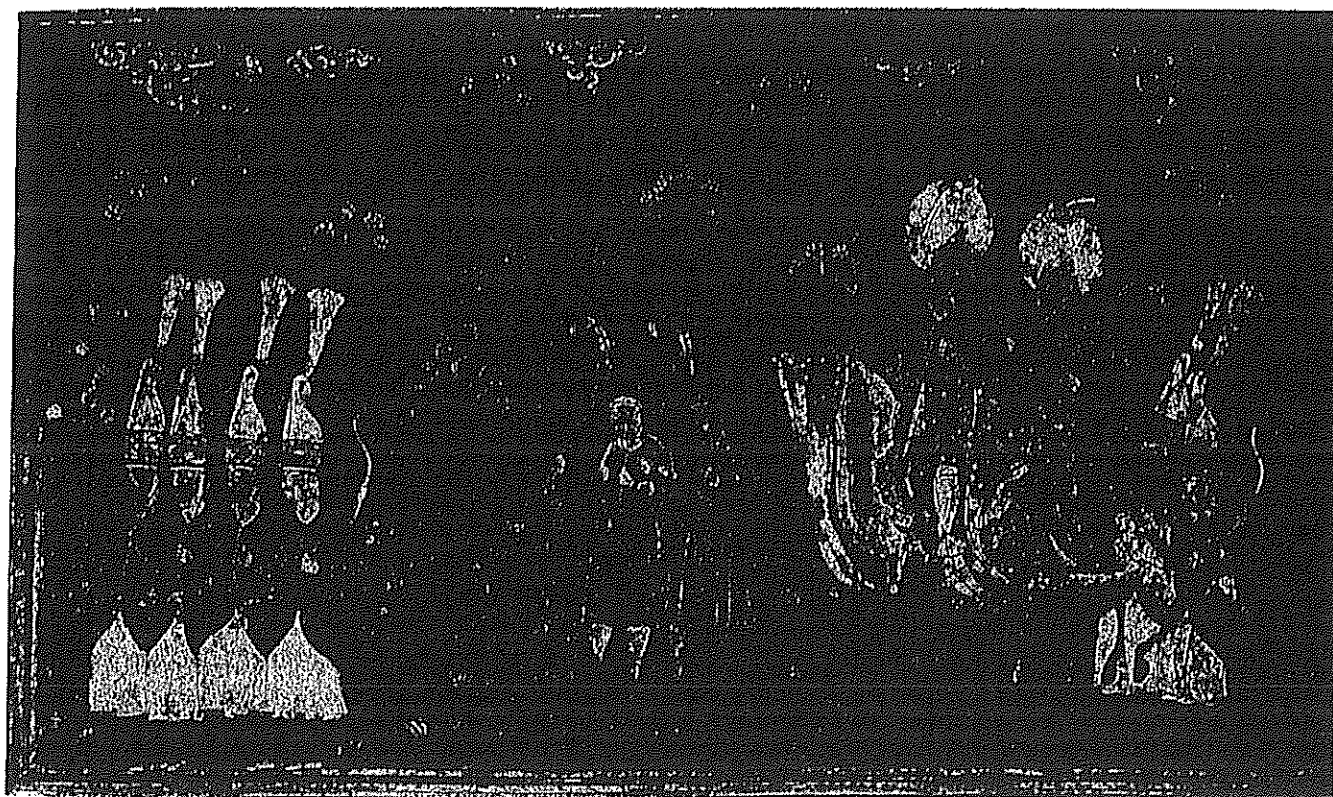
farther into Eastern Europe. This impressive and enduring new empire lasted in one form or another from the fourteenth to the early twentieth century.

The Ottoman Empire was a state of enormous significance in the world of the fifteenth century and beyond. In its huge territory, long duration, incorporation of many diverse peoples, and economic and cultural sophistication, it was one of the great empires of world history. In the fifteenth century, only Ming dynasty China and the Incas matched it in terms of wealth, power, and splendor. That empire represented the emergence of the Turks as the dominant people of the Islamic world, ruling now over many Arabs, who had initiated this new faith more than 800 years before. In adding “caliph” (successor to the Prophet) to their other titles, Ottoman sultans claimed the legacy of the earlier Abbasid Empire. They sought to bring a renewed unity to the Islamic world, while also serving as protector of the faith, the “strong sword of Islam.” Along with the Safavid dynasty that emerged to the east in Persia in the sixteenth century, the Ottomans brought to the Islamic Middle East a greater measure of political coherence, military power, economic prosperity, and cultural brilliance than it had known since the early centuries of Islam. (See “In the Islamic Heartland: The Ottoman and Persian Safavid Empires” in Chapter 4.)

AP

COMPARISON

What does this image reveal about the characteristics of the Ottoman Janissaries as a military force?



Ottoman Janissaries Originating in the fourteenth century, the Janissaries became the elite infantry force of the Ottoman Empire. Complete with uniforms, cash salaries, and marching music, they were the first standing army in the region since the days of the Roman Empire. When gunpowder technology became available, Janissary forces soon were armed with muskets, grenades, and handheld cannons. This Turkish miniature painting dates from the sixteenth century. (Topkapı Palace Museum, Istanbul, Turkey/Album/Art Resource, NY)

AP EXAM TIP

Understand the political and cultural features of states such as the Delhi sultanate.

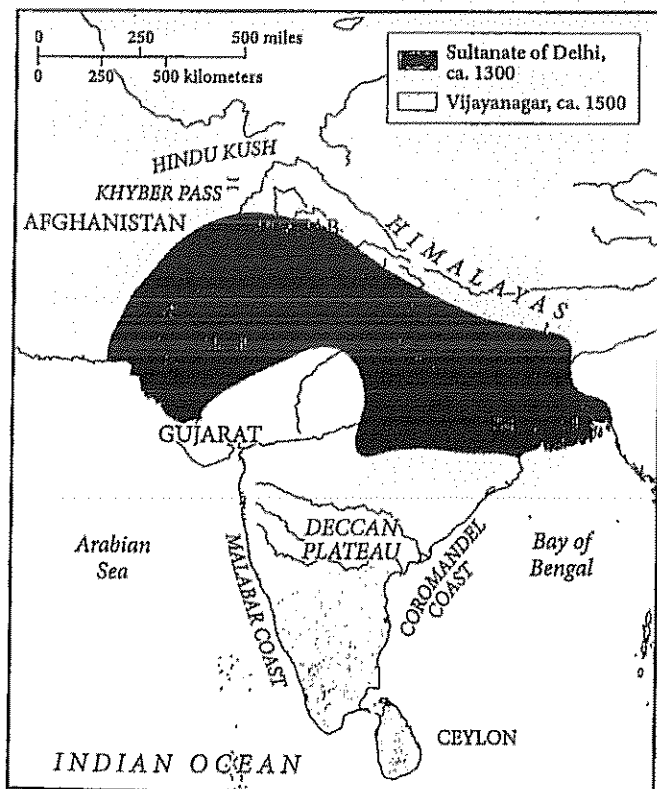
On the Peripheries of the Islamic World: India and Spain

Even as Turkish political and cultural influence increased in the Islamic heartland, Turkic-speaking warrior groups were also spreading the Muslim faith into India, initiating an enduring encounter with an ancient Hindu civilization. Beginning around 1000, those conquests gave rise to a series of Islamic regimes that governed much of India into the nineteenth century. The early centuries of this encounter were violent indeed, as the invaders smashed Hindu and Buddhist temples and carried off vast quantities of Indian treasure. With the establishment of the Sultanate of Delhi in 1206 (see Map 2.4), Turkic rule became more systematic, although the Turks' small numbers and internal conflicts allowed only a very modest penetration of Indian society.

In the centuries that followed, substantial Muslim communities emerged in northern India, particularly in regions less tightly integrated into the dominant Hindu culture. Aside from the spiritual attractions of the faith, the egalitarian aspects of Islam attracted some disillusioned Buddhists, low-caste Hindus, and untouchables (people considered beneath even the lowest caste), along with those just beginning to make the transition to settled agriculture. Others benefited from converting to Islam by avoiding the *jizya*, a tax imposed on non-Muslims. Muslim holy men, known as Sufis, were particularly important in facilitating conversion, for India had always valued “god-filled men” who were detached from worldly affairs.

Unlike the earlier experience of Islam in the Middle East and North Africa, where it rapidly became the dominant faith, in India it was never able to claim more than 20 to 25 percent of the total population. Furthermore, Muslim communities were especially concentrated in the Punjab and Sind regions of northwestern India and in Bengal to the east. The core regions of Hindu culture in the northern Indian plain were not seriously challenged by the new faith, despite centuries of Muslim rule. Muslims usually lived quite separately, remaining a distinctive minority within an ancient Indian civilization, which they now largely governed but which they proved unable to completely transform. However, these religious and cultural boundaries proved permeable in at least some contexts. Many prominent Hindus, for instance, willingly served in the political and military structures of a Muslim-ruled India.

Further south, well beyond the boundaries of the Delhi sultanate and its successors, several Hindu states flourished. Perhaps the most impressive was the powerful Vijayanagar empire (1336–1646), which at its height controlled nearly all of southern India from a thriving capital city of perhaps half a million people, described by one sixteenth-century European visitor as “the best



Map 2.4 The Sultanate of Delhi and Vijayanagar Empire

Between 1206 and 1526, a number of Muslim dynasties ruled northern India as the Delhi sultanate, while an explicitly Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar arose in the south in 1336. It drew on north Indian Muslim architectural features and made use of Muslim mercenaries for its military forces.

provided city in the world . . . as large as Rome and very beautiful to the sight.”¹³ Formed in part to resist Muslim incursions from the north, the Vijayanagar empire was also a site of sustained and more peaceful Hindu-Muslim encounters. Muslim merchants were a prominent presence in many trading ports, and a scholar has recently described a Muslim district of the capital as being “as vibrant as the Hindu precincts of the city.”¹⁴ As in northern India, the Hindu faith predominated, but a permanent Muslim presence in the south fostered an ongoing encounter between the two faiths and cultures.

In the far west of the Islamic world, Spain, called **al-Andalus** by Muslims, was also the site of a sustained cross-cultural encounter, this time with Christian Western Europe. Muslims, Christians, and Jews mixed more freely in Spain than Muslims and Hindus did in India, though there were still waves of religious persecution. Conquered by Muslim forces in the early eighth century during the first wave of Islamic expansion, Muslim Spain became a vibrant civilization by the 900s. Its agricultural economy was the most prosperous in Europe during this time, and its capital of Córdoba was among the largest and most splendid cities in the world. Muslims, Christians, and Jews alike contributed to a brilliant high culture in which astronomy, medicine, the arts, architecture, and literature flourished. Furthermore, social relationships among upper-class members of different faiths were easy and frequent. By 1000, perhaps 75 percent of the population had converted to Islam. Many of the remaining Christians learned Arabic, veiled their women, stopped eating pork, appreciated Arabic music and poetry, and sometimes married Muslims. During the reign of Abd al-Rahman III (r. 912–961), freedom of worship was declared, as well as the opportunity for all to rise in the state bureaucracy.

But this so-called “golden age” of Muslim Spain was both limited and brief. Even assimilated or Arabized Christians remained religious infidels and second-class citizens in the eyes of their Muslim counterparts, and by the late tenth century toleration began to erode. The Córdoba-based Muslim regime fragmented into numerous rival states. Warfare with the remaining Christian kingdoms in northern Spain picked up in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and more puritanical and rigid forms of Islam entered Spain from North Africa. Tolerance turned to overt persecution against Christians and Jews. Social life also changed. Devout Muslims increasingly avoided contact with members of other faiths, and Arabized Christians were permitted to live only in particular places. Thus, writes

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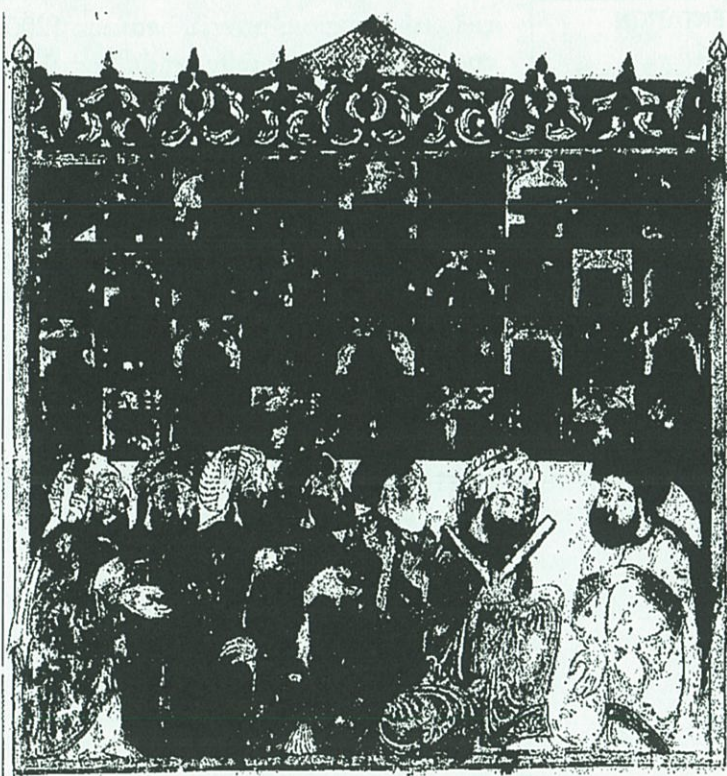
COMPARISON

How did the experience of Islam in India and Spain differ? In what ways was it similar?

AP

CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE IN SOURCES

What can one learn about the transmission of knowledge in the Muslim world from this image?



Islamic Scholars at Work Islamic learning flourished in Spain, where, after 1000, it was increasingly transmitted to Christian Western Europe. This twelfth-century miniature depicts scholars listening intently to the figure reading from a book, while numerous texts lie stacked on shelves in the background. It was environments like this where learning was preserved and disseminated throughout the Islamic world. (De Agostini Picture Library/Bridgeman Images)

AP EXAM TIP

The ways that dominant cultures treat outsiders or “others” are frequent topics on the AP® Exam.

one scholar, “the era of harmonious interaction between Muslim and Christian in Spain came to an end, replaced by intolerance, prejudice, and mutual suspicion.”¹⁵

That intolerance intensified as the Christian reconquest of Spain gained ground after 1200. The end came in 1492, when Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic monarchs of a unified Spain, took Granada, the last Muslim stronghold on the Iberian Peninsula. Despite initial promises to maintain the freedom of Muslims to worship, in the opening decades of the sixteenth century the Spanish monarchy issued a series of edicts outlawing Islam in its various territories, forcing Muslims to choose between conversion or exile. Many Muslims were thus required to emigrate, often to North Africa or the Ottoman Empire, along with some 200,000 Jews expelled from Spain because they too refused to convert. In the early seventeenth century, Muslim converts to Christianity were also banished from Spain. And yet cultural interchange persisted for a time. The translation of Arab texts into Latin continued under Christian rule, while Muslim palaces and mosques were often converted to Christian uses and new Christian buildings incorporated Islamic artistic and architectural features.

Thus Spain, unlike most other regions incorporated into the Islamic world, experienced a religious reversal between 1200 and 1450 as Christian rule was reestablished and Islam was painfully eradicated from the Iberian Peninsula. In world historical terms, perhaps the chief significance of Muslim Spain was its role in making the rich heritage of Islamic learning available to Christian Europe. As a cross-cultural encounter, it was largely a one-way street. European scholars wanted the secular knowledge—Greek as well as Arab—that had accumulated in the Islamic world, and they flocked to Spain to acquire it. That knowledge of philosophy, mathematics, medicine, optics, astronomy, botany, and more played a major role in the making of a new European civilization in the thirteenth century and beyond. Muslim Spain remained only as a memory (see “Society, Economy, and Culture in the West.”)

Emerging Civilizations in Africa

Finding the Main Point: How might you compare the emerging civilizations of East and West Africa?

Africa too was a significant arena of the Islamic world. North Africa had been incorporated into the early Arab Empire during the seventh century C.E., and conversion to Islam was widespread in the centuries that followed. After 1000, Islam likewise took hold in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, even as new states and civilizations emerged in these regions.

The Making of an East African Civilization

One of these, known as **Swahili civilization**, emerged in the eighth century C.E. as a set of commercial city-states stretching all along the East African coast, from present-day Somalia to Mozambique. The earlier ancestors of the Swahili lived in small farming and fishing communities, spoke African Bantu languages, and traded with the Arabian, Greek, and Roman merchants who occasionally visited the coast in ancient times. But what stimulated the development of Swahili civilization was

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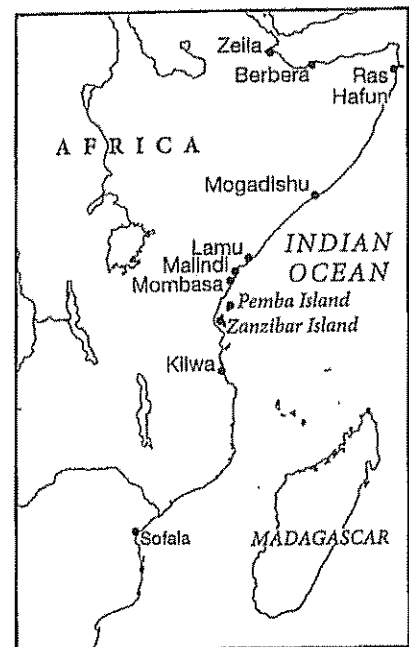
the region's growing involvement with the world of Indian Ocean trade. Local people and aspiring rulers found opportunity for wealth and power in the growing demand for East African products that were associated with an expanding Indian Ocean commerce. Gold, ivory, quartz, leopard skins, and sometimes enslaved people acquired from interior societies, as well as iron and processed timber manufactured along the coast, found a ready market in Arabia, Persia, India, and beyond. And so an African merchant class developed, villages turned into sizable towns, and clan chiefs became kings.

By 1200, the Swahili civilization was flourishing along the coast, and it was a very different kind of society from the farming and pastoral cultures of the East African interior. It was thoroughly urban, centered in cities of 15,000 to 18,000 people, such as Lamu, Mombasa, Kilwa, Sofala, and many others. (See the map The Swahili Coast of East Africa.) These cities were commercial centers that accumulated goods from the interior and exchanged them for the products of distant civilizations, such as Chinese porcelain and silk, Persian rugs, and Indian cottons. While the transoceanic journeys occurred largely in Arab vessels, Swahili craft navigated the coastal waterways, concentrating goods for shipment abroad.

Like the city-states of ancient Greece, each Swahili city was politically independent, was generally governed by its own king, and was in sharp competition with other cities. No imperial system or larger territorial states unified the world of Swahili civilization. But like all civilizations, it featured class-stratified urban societies with sharp distinctions between a mercantile elite and commoners.

Culturally as well as economically, Swahili civilization participated in the interacting Indian Ocean world. Arab, Indian, and Persian merchants were welcome visitors, and some settled permanently as diasporic communities, much as Chinese merchants did in Southeast Asian commercial cities. Certainly, many ruling families of Swahili cities claimed Arab or Persian origins as a way of bolstering their prestige, even while they dined from Chinese porcelain and dressed in Indian cottons. The Swahili language, widely spoken in East Africa today, was grammatically an African tongue within the larger Bantu family of languages, but it was written in Arabic script and contained a number of Arabic loan words.

Furthermore, Swahili civilization rapidly became Islamic. Introduced by Arab traders, Islam was voluntarily and widely adopted within the Swahili world. Like Buddhism in Southeast Asia, Islam linked Swahili cities to the larger Indian Ocean world, and these East African cities were soon dotted with substantial mosques. When Ibn Battuta (IH-buhn ba-TOO-tuh), a widely traveled Arab scholar, merchant, and public official, visited the Swahili coast in the early fourteenth century, he found Muslim societies in which religious leaders often spoke Arabic, and all were eager to welcome a learned Islamic visitor. But these were African Muslims, not colonies of transplanted Arabs. As one prominent historian commented, "The rulers, scholars, officials, and big merchants as well as the port workers, farmers, craftsmen, and slaves, were dark-skinned people speaking African tongues in everyday life."¹⁶

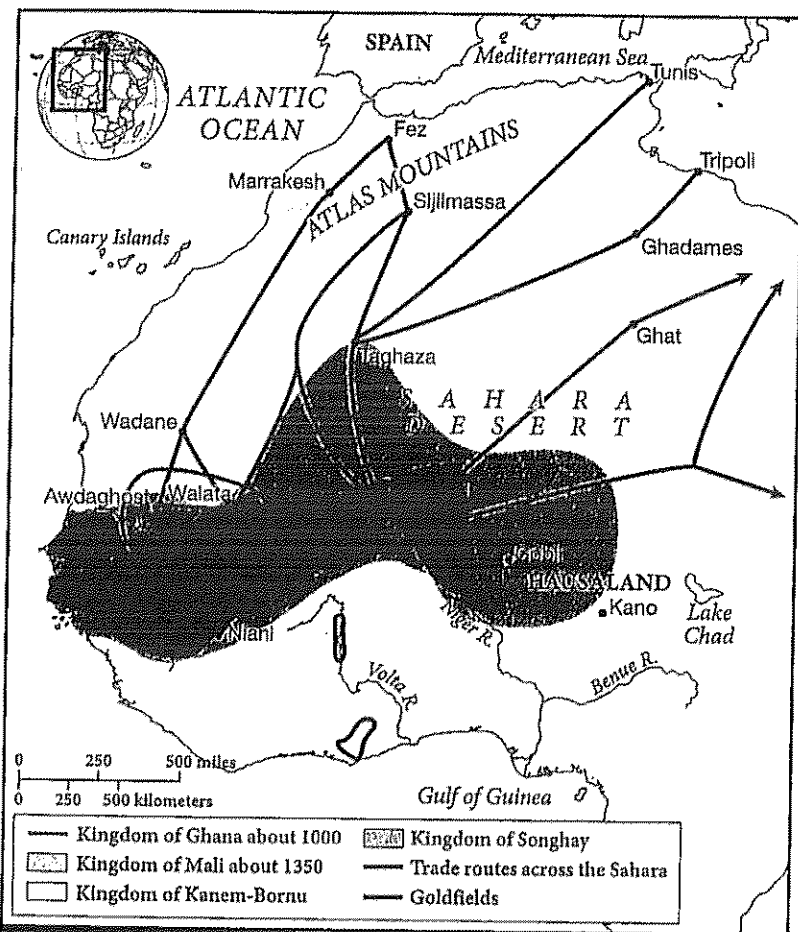


The Swahili Coast of East Africa

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CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

What changes did trans-Saharan trade bring to West Africa?



MAPPING HISTORY Map 2.5 The Sand Roads

For a thousand years or more, the Sahara was an ocean of sand that linked the interior of West Africa with the world of North Africa and the Mediterranean but separated them as well.

Reading the Map: Which cities were built at points where the Sand Road trade routes arrived at the Niger River?

AP Making Connections: The Kingdom of Mali was much larger than the earlier Kingdom of Ghana. What might you infer from the map about the motives for Mali's westward expansion?

AP EXAM TIP

Features of West African kingdoms such as Ghana and Mali are important information for the AP® Exam.

The Making of a West African Civilization

On the other side of the continent, a West African civilization also emerged, likewise driven by commercial exchange and the penetration of Islam. Stretching from the Atlantic coast to Lake Chad, this new **West African civilization** included the large states or empires of Ghana (ca. 700–1200), Mali (ca. 1230–1500), Songhay (1430–1591), and Kanem-Bornu (at its height 1571–1603), as well as numerous towns and cities within them, such as Kumbi Saleh, Jenne, Timbuktu, and Gao (see Map 2.5). In contrast to these large territorial empires, the Hausa-speaking people of what is now northern Nigeria created a substantial number of independent city-states—among them Kano, Katsina, and Gobir—that broadly resembled the Swahili city-states of the East African coast. Beginning in the eleventh century, these Hausa cities created a flourishing urban and commercial culture and acted as middlemen in West African commerce, obtaining kola nuts, for example, from the forest region and sending them north into the trans-Saharan trade. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, one of those states, Kano, had become famous for the production of beautifully dyed cotton textiles, which entered the circuits of West African and trans-Saharan trade.

All of these states were monarchies with an elaborate court life and varying degrees of administrative complexity and military forces at their disposal. All drew on the wealth of trans-Saharan trade, taxing the merchants who conducted it. In the wider world, these states soon acquired a reputation for great riches. An Arab traveler in the tenth century C.E. described the ruler of Ghana as “the wealthiest king on the face of the earth because of his treasures and stocks of gold.”¹⁷ At its high point in the fourteenth century, the rulers of Mali monopolized the import of strategic goods such as horses and metals; levied duties on salt, copper, and other merchandise; and reserved large nuggets of gold for themselves while permitting the free export of gold dust. (See Working with

Evidence, Chapter 3, Document 5, for an early sixteenth-century account of Timbuktu in Mali.)

This growing integration with the world of international commerce generated the social complexity and hierarchy characteristic of all civilizations. Royal families and elite classes, mercantile and artisan groups, military and religious officials, free peasants and enslaved people—all of these were represented in this emerging West African civilization. So too were gender hierarchies, although without the rigidity of more established Eurasian civilizations. Rulers, merchants, and public officials were almost always male, and by 1200 earlier matrilineal descent patterns had been largely replaced by those tracing descent through the male line. Male bards, the repositories for their communities' history, often viewed powerful women as dangerous, not to be trusted, and a seductive distraction for men. But ordinary women were central to agricultural production and weaving; royal women played important political roles in many places; and oral traditions and mythologies frequently portrayed a complementary rather than hierarchal relationship between the sexes. According to a recent scholar:

Men [in West African civilization] derive[d] their power and authority by releasing and accumulating *nyama* [a pervasive vital power] through acts of transforming one thing into another—making a living animal dead in hunting, making a lump of metal into a fine bracelet at the smithy. Women derive[d] their power from similar acts of transformation—turning clay into pots or turning the bodily fluids of sex into a baby.¹⁸

Certainly, the famous Muslim traveler Ibn Battuta, visiting Mali in the mid-fourteenth century, was surprised, and appalled, at the casual intimacy of unmarried men and women, despite their evident commitment to Islam (see AP[®] Looking Again: Islamic Practice in West Africa through the Eyes of a Foreign Traveler, page 50).

As in all civilizations, slavery found a place in West Africa. Early on, most enslaved people had been women, working as domestic servants and concubines. As West African civilization crystallized, however, enslaved men were put to work as state officials, porters, craftsmen, miners harvesting salt from desert deposits, and especially agricultural laborers producing for the royal granaries on large estates or plantations. Most came from non-Islamic and stateless societies farther south, which were raided during the dry season by cavalry-based forces of West African states. A song in honor of one eleventh-century ruler of Kanem-Bornu boasted of his slave-raiding achievements: "The best you took (and sent home) as the first fruits of battle. The children crying on their mothers you snatched away from their mothers. You took the slave wife from a slave, and set them in lands far removed from one another."¹⁹ Most of these enslaved people were used within this emerging West African civilization, but a **trans-Saharan slave trade** also developed. Between 1100 and 1400, perhaps 5,500 enslaved people per year made the perilous trek across the desert, where most were put to work in the homes of the wealthy in Islamic North Africa.

The states of this West African civilization developed substantial urban and commercial centers where traders congregated and goods were exchanged. Some of these cities also became centers of manufacturing, creating finely wrought beads, iron tools,



Manuscripts of Timbuktu The West African city of Timbuktu, a terminus of the Sand Road commercial network, became an intellectual center of Islamic learning—both scientific and religious. Its libraries were stocked with books and manuscripts, often transported across the Sahara from the heartland of Islam. Many of these have been preserved and are now being studied once again. (Alex Dissanayake/Getty Images)

or cotton textiles, some of which entered the circuits of commerce. Visitors described them as cosmopolitan places where court officials, artisans, scholars, students, and local and foreign merchants all rubbed elbows. One of the major trading cities, **Timbuktu**, was described in 1525 by a North African traveler:

Here are great numbers of [Muslim] religious teachers, judges, scholars, and other learned persons who are bountifully maintained at the king's expense. Here too are brought various manuscripts or written books from Barbary [North Africa] which are sold for more money than any other merchandise. . . . Here are very rich merchants and to here journey continually large numbers of negroes who purchase here cloth from Barbary and Europe. . . . It is a wonder to see the quality of merchandise that is daily brought here and how costly and sumptuous everything is.²⁰

Like the trade of the Indian Ocean basin, this trans-Saharan commerce was also facilitated by diasporic communities (see AP® Looking Again: Islamic Practice in West Africa through the Eyes of a Foreign Traveler, page 50). By the mid-fourteenth century and no doubt much earlier, settled communities of North African merchants lived in the kingdom of Mali. And Hausa merchants established permanent settlements in many parts of the West African commercial network. Thus the growth of long-distance trade had stimulated the development of a West African civilization, which was linked to the wider networks of exchange in the Eastern Hemisphere.

The Worlds of Christendom

Finding the Main Point: What role did Christianity play in the development of states and civilization in both Eastern and Western Europe?

AP EXAM TIP

It is important to understand the spread and contraction of Christianity over time.

AP EXAM TIP

Know how belief systems were used to legitimize political power between 1200 and 1450.

Much like the worlds of Islam, between 1200 and 1450 the worlds of Christendom were both spreading and contracting. Since 600 C.E. the Christian faith had expanded dramatically in Europe even as it contracted sharply in Asia and Africa, where many had converted to Islam. The **Byzantine Empire**, or Byzantium (bihz-ANN-tee-hum), which for centuries had been the most sophisticated and powerful Christian empire and civilization, entered a state of terminal decline around 1200. But even as this ancient Christian state disappeared, its religious, political, and cultural traditions profoundly influenced Rus, an emerging civilization in Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, the trajectory of civilization in Western Europe traced an opposite path to that of Byzantium, for by 1200 that region was emerging as an especially dynamic, expansive, and innovative

civilization, combining elements of its Greco-Roman-Christian past with the culture of Germanic and Celtic peoples to produce a distinctive hybrid or blended civilization.

The Eastern Orthodox World: A Declining Byzantium and an Emerging Rus

For most people, the Byzantine Empire was simply a continuation of the Roman Empire, and they viewed themselves as “Romans.” It initially encompassed large parts of the eastern Roman Empire, including Egypt, Greece, Syria, and Anatolia. Much that was late Roman—its roads, taxation system, military structures, centralized administration, imperial court, laws, Christian Church—persisted in Byzantium for many centuries as the empire consciously sought to preserve the legacy of classical Greco-Roman civilization. Despite major territorial losses to the Arab Islamic Empire, until roughly 1200, a more compact and resilient Byzantine Empire remained a major force in the eastern Mediterranean, controlling Greece, much of the Balkans (Southeastern Europe), and Anatolia (see Map 2.6). From that territorial base, the empire’s naval and merchant vessels were active in both the Mediterranean and Black seas.

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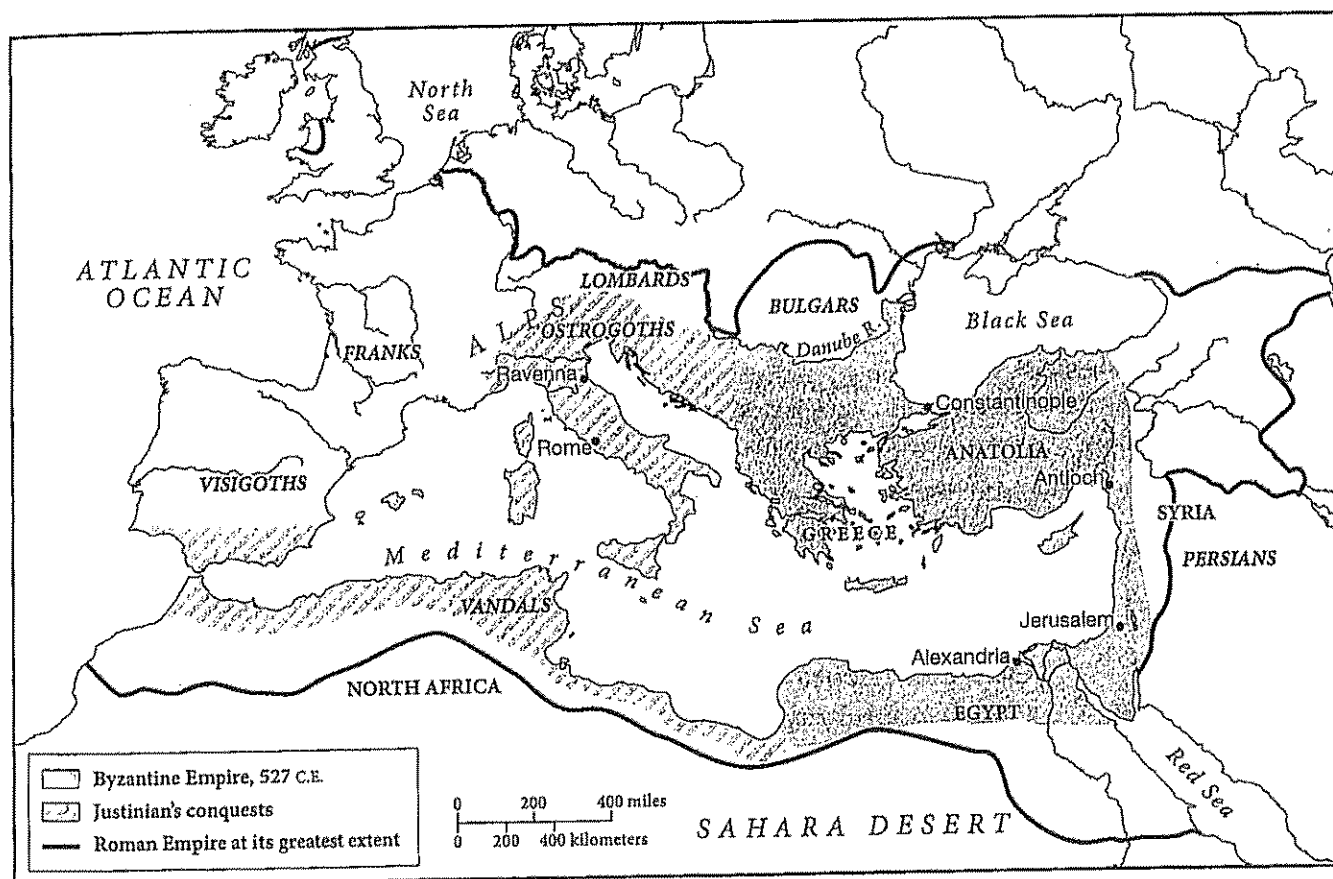
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

How did belief systems change as they took root in different areas? Pay particular attention to the changing role of Christianity in both Eastern and Western Europe.

AP

CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE IN SOURCES

What does this map suggest about the motivation for Justinian’s conquests?



Map 2.6 The Byzantine Empire

The Byzantine Empire reached its greatest extent under Emperor Justinian in the mid-sixth century c.e. It later lost considerable territory to various Christian European powers as well as to Muslim Arab and Turkic invaders.

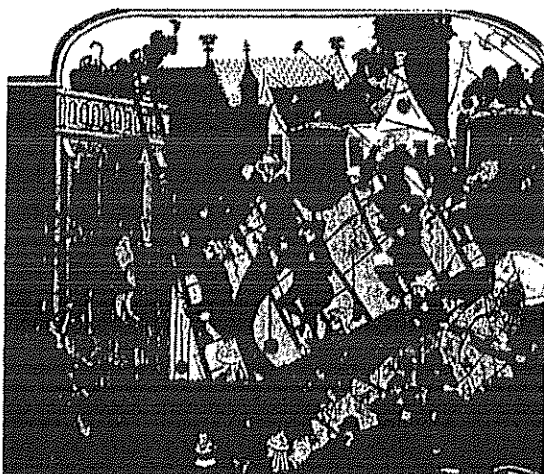
Zooming In

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1453 in Constantinople

On May 29, 1453, forces of the Muslim Ottoman sultan Mehmed II seized control of the great Christian city of Constantinople, an event that marked the final end of the Roman/Byzantine Empire and the ascendancy of the Ottoman Empire. In retrospect, this event acquired a certain air of inevitability about it, for the Byzantine Empire had been retreating for almost two centuries before the steady advance of the Ottomans. By 1453, that once-great empire, heir to all things Roman, had shrunk to little more than the city itself, with only some 50,000 inhabitants and 8,000 active defenders compared to a vast Ottoman army of 60,000 soldiers. Little was left of the fabled wealth of the city. But what later observers see as inevitable generally occurs only with great human effort and amid vast uncertainty about the outcome. So it was in Constantinople in 1453.

Constantine XI, the last Byzantine emperor, was well aware of the odds he faced. Yet his great city, protected by water on two sides and a great wall on a third, had repeatedly withstood many attacks and sieges. Furthermore, until



Ottoman Turks storm the walls of Constantinople in 1453.

no assurance of success. In 1451, a new sultan came to the throne of the Ottoman Empire, Mehmed II, only nineteen years old and widely regarded as not very promising. Furthermore, some among the court officials had reservations about an attack on Constantinople. But the young sultan seemed determined to gain the honor promised in Islamic prophesies, going back to Muhammad himself, to the one who conquered the city. Doing so could also rid him of a potential rival to the Ottoman throne, who had taken refuge in Constantinople.

photo: © ullstein bild Dtl./Getty Images

the very end, he had hoped for assistance from Western Christians, even promising union with the Roman Church to obtain it. But no such help arrived, at least not in sufficient quantities to make a difference, though rumors of a fleet from Venice persisted. The internal problems of the Western powers as well as the long-standing hostility between Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism ensured that Constantinople would meet its end alone.

On the Ottoman side, enormous effort was expended with

But destabilizing civil wars and incursions by aggressive Western Europeans and Turks continued to shrink Byzantine territory. The end came in 1453 in the **Ottoman seizure of Constantinople**, when the Turkic Ottoman Empire finally took the capital city, and an empire that had survived over 1,000 years passed into history. (See Zooming In: 1453 in Constantinople.)

But the heritage of the Byzantine Empire persisted among the Rus, Slavic peoples of what is now Ukraine and western Russia. In this culturally diverse region, which also included Finnic and Baltic peoples as well as Viking traders, a modest state known as **Kievan Rus** (KEE-yehv-ihn ROOS)—named after

AP

CAUSATION

How did links to Byzantium contribute to the development of the new civilization in Kievan Rus?

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And so preparations began for an assault on the once-great city. The Ottomans assembled a huge fleet, gathered men and materials, and constructed a fortress to control access to Constantinople by water. In late 1452, Mehmed secured the services of a Hungarian master cannon builder named Orban, who constructed a number of huge cannons, one of which could hurl a 600-pound stone ball over a mile. These weapons later had a devastating effect on the walls surrounding Constantinople. Interestingly enough, Orban had first offered his services to the Byzantine emperor, who simply could not afford to pay for this very expensive project.

In early April of 1453, the siege began, and it lasted for fifty-seven days. As required by Islamic law, Mehmed offered three times to spare the emperor and his people if they surrendered. Constantine apparently considered the offer seriously, but he finally refused, declaring, "We have all decided to die with our own free will." After weeks of furious bombardment, an ominous silence descended on May 28. Mehmed had declared a day of rest and prayer before the final assault the next day. That evening, the Byzantine emperor ordered a procession of icons and relics about the city and then entered the ancient Christian church of Hagia Sophia, seeking forgiveness for his sins and receiving Holy Communion.

And then, early the next day, the final assault began as Ottoman forces breached the walls of Constantinople and took the city. The Christians bravely defended their

city, and Constantine discarded his royal regalia and died fighting like a common soldier. A later legend suggested that angels turned Constantine into marble and buried him in a nearby cave from which he would eventually reappear to retake the city for Christendom.

Islamic law required that soldiers be permitted three days of plundering the spoils, but Mehmed was reluctant, eager to spare the city he longed for as his capital. So he limited plundering to one day. Even so, the aftermath was terrible. According to a Christian eyewitness, "The enraged Turkish soldiers . . . gave no quarter. When they had massacred and there was no longer any resistance, they were intent on pillage and roamed through the town stealing, disrobing, pillaging, killing, raping, taking captive men, women, children, monks, priests."²¹ When Mehmed himself entered the city, praying at the Christian altar of Hagia Sophia, he reportedly wept at seeing the destruction that had occurred.

Constantinople was now a Muslim city, capital of the Ottoman Empire, and Hagia Sophia became a mosque. The long and often contentious relationship between the world of Islam and that of Christendom had entered a new phase.

QUESTIONS

What factors contributed to Mehmed's victory? Under what circumstances might a different outcome have been possible?

the most prominent city, Kiev—emerged in the ninth century. Loosely led by various princes, Rus was a society of freemen and enslaved peoples, privileged people and commoners, dominant men and subordinate women. This stratification marked it as a civilization in the making. In 988, a decisive turning point occurred. The growing interaction of Rus with the larger world prompted Prince Vladimir of Kiev to affiliate with the **Eastern Orthodox Christianity** of the Byzantine Empire. The prince was searching for a religion that would unify the diverse peoples of his region while linking Rus into wider networks of communication and exchange.



The Conversion of the Kievan Rus The conversion of Prince Vladimir of Kiev in 988 had profound long-term implications for Russian history, for it brought this fledgling civilization firmly into the world of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. This image from a fifteenth-century chronicle depicts the baptism of Vladimir, the ceremony that officially made him a member of the Church. (Heritage Images/Getty Images)

▲ AP

CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE IN SOURCES

What does this image tell us about the relationship between politics and religion in Russian civilization?

AP

COMPARISON

How was Christian civilization in Western Europe different from that in Eastern Europe?

As elsewhere in Europe, the coming of Christianity to Rus was a top-down development in which ordinary people followed their rulers into the church. It was a slow process with elements of traditional religious sensibility (ancestral spirits, household deities, nature gods) lingering among those who defined themselves as Christian. Nonetheless, it was a fateful choice with long-term implications for Russian history, for it brought this fledgling civilization firmly into the world of Orthodox Christianity, separating it from both the realm of Islam and the Roman Catholic West. Like many new civilizations, Rus borrowed extensively from its older and more sophisticated Byzantine

neighbor. Among these borrowings were Byzantine architectural styles, the Cyrillic alphabet based on its Greek counterpart, the extensive use of religious images known as icons, a monastic tradition stressing prayer and service, and political ideals of imperial control of the church, all of which became part of a transformed Rus. Orthodoxy also provided a more unified identity for this emerging civilization and religious legitimacy for its rulers.

The Roman Catholic World: A Fragmented Political Landscape

The western half of the European Christian world followed a rather different path from that of the Byzantine Empire. Unlike Byzantium, which sat at the crossroads of several long-distance trade networks, **Western Christendom** was distinctly on the margins of world history until around 1000 C.E. Its geographic location at the far western end of the Eurasian landmass was at a distance from the growing routes of world trade—by sea in the Indian Ocean and by land across the Silk Roads to China and the Sand Roads to West Africa (see Chapter 3). Internally, Western Europe's geography made political unity difficult, for population centers were divided by mountain ranges and dense forests as well as by five major peninsulas and two large islands (Britain and Ireland). However, its extensive coastlines and interior river systems facilitated exchange, while a moderate climate, plentiful rainfall, and fertile soils enabled a productive agriculture that could support a growing population.

Unlike the large centralized states of Byzantium, the Islamic world, and China, this new European civilization never achieved political unity. In the political chaos of the ninth and tenth centuries, a highly fragmented and decentralized society

emerged in a variety of local expressions and persisted in some regions into the fifteenth century. In a practice widely known as **feudalism**, lesser lords and knights swore allegiance to greater lords or kings and thus became their vassals, frequently receiving lands and plunder in return for military service. Meanwhile, on thousands of independent, self-sufficient, and largely isolated landed estates or manors, power—political, economic, and social—was exercised by landowning lords in a system known as manorialism.

Within feudal Europe, Roman-style slavery gradually gave way to serfdom. Unlike enslaved people, serfs were not the personal property of their masters, could not be arbitrarily thrown off their land, and were allowed to live in families. However, they were bound to their masters' estates as peasant laborers and owed various payments and services to the lord of the manor. In return, the serf family received a small farm and such protection as the lord could provide. In a violent and insecure world, the only security available to many individuals or families lay in these communities, where the ties to kin, manor, lord, and church constituted the primary human loyalties.

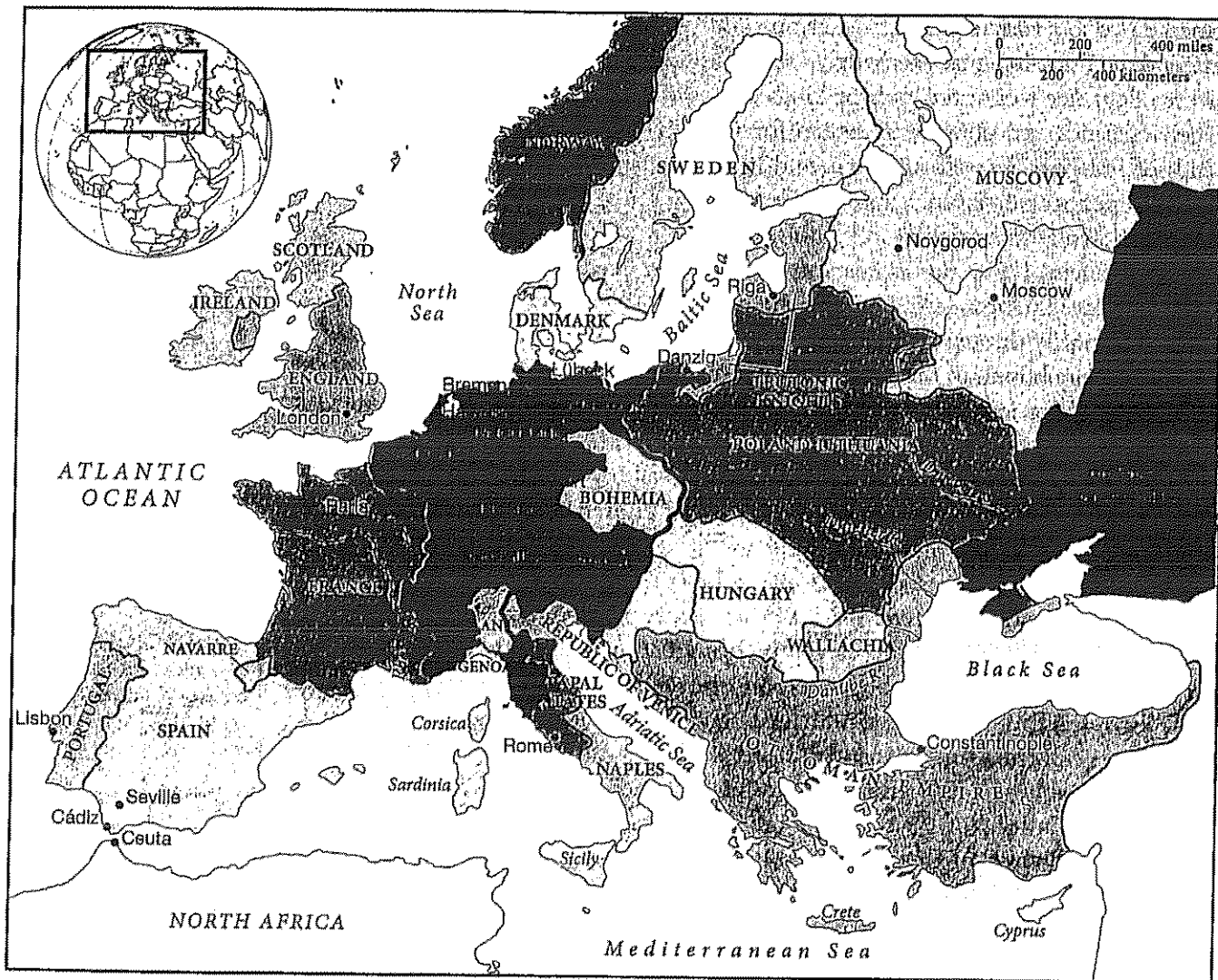
But after 1000, European political life began to crystallize into a system of competing states that has persisted into the twenty-first century. In many regions of Western Europe during the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries, monarchs gradually and painfully began to consolidate their authority, and the outlines of French, English, Spanish, Scandinavian, and other states began to appear, each with its own distinct language and culture. Royal courts and fledgling bureaucracies were established, and groups of professional administrators appeared. More effective institutions of government increasingly commanded the loyalty, or at least the obedience, of their subjects. In other regions, smaller states predominated. In Italy, for instance, city-states flourished as urban areas grew wealthy and powerful, while the Germans also remained divided among numerous small principalities within the Holy Roman Empire (see Map 2.7). Europe's multicentered political system shaped the emerging civilization of the West in many ways. It gave rise to frequent wars that brought death, destruction, and disruption to many communities. These same conflicts enhanced the role and status of military men, and thus European elite society and values were far more militarized than in China, which gave greater prominence to scholars and bureaucrats. Intense interstate rivalry, combined with a willingness to borrow, also stimulated European technological development. By 1450, Europeans had gone a long way toward catching up with their more advanced Asian counterparts. Gunpowder, for instance, was invented in China; but Europeans were probably the first to use it in cannons, in the early fourteenth century, and by 1500 they had the most advanced arsenals in the world. Advances in shipbuilding and navigational techniques provided the foundation for European mastery of the seas. These included the magnetic compass and sternpost rudder from China and adaptations of the Mediterranean or Arab lateen sail, which enabled vessels to sail against the wind.

AP EXAM TIP

Be able to identify periods of political unity and those of division in the history of the European/Mediterranean world.

AP**COMPARISON**

Why was Europe unable to achieve the same level of political unity that China experienced in this era?



▲ AP

CAUSATION

Based on this map, what factors account for the relative political and social fragmentation of Europe?

Map 2.7 Europe in 1500

By the end of the fifteenth century, Christian Europe had assumed its early modern political shape as a system of competing states threatened by an expanding Muslim Ottoman Empire.

European rulers generally were weaker than their counterparts in Asian civilizations, for they had to contend with competing sources of power such as the nobility and the church. By 1450, nearly all of Western Europe had embraced a distinctive version of Christianity referred to as Roman Catholic to distinguish it from Eastern Orthodoxy and other Christian traditions, and the **Roman Catholic Church** had become the one organization that linked the entire region. Its hierarchical organization of popes, bishops, priests, and monasteries meant that the church had a representative in nearly every community in Europe, and Latin provided a shared language among churchmen, even as it gave way to various vernacular languages in common speech. Over the centuries, the church grew quite wealthy, possessing large amounts of land, the proceeds of which gave it great power and influence within states and funded its many religious, charitable, and educational initiatives.

The wealth also funded the lavish lifestyles and political aspirations of many leading churchmen, causing reformers to accuse it of forgetting its spiritual mission.

Church authorities, rulers, and nobles often competed against each other, for they were rival centers of power, but they also reinforced each other. Rulers, for instance, provided protection for the papacy and strong encouragement for the faith. In return, the church offered religious legitimacy for the powerful and the prosperous. “It is the will of the Creator,” declared the teaching of the church, “that the higher shall always rule over the lower. Each individual and class should stay in its place [and] perform its tasks.”²²

The relative weakness of European rulers provided room for urban-based merchants in Europe to achieve an unusual independence from political authority. Many cities, where wealthy merchants exercised local power, won the right to make and enforce their own laws and appoint their own officials. Some of them—Venice, Genoa, Florence, and Milan, for example—became almost completely independent city-states. Elsewhere, kings, often in search of allies and resources for their struggles with aristocrats and the church, granted charters that allowed cities to have their own courts, laws, and governments, while paying their own kind of taxes to the king. By contrast, Chinese cities, which were far larger than those of Europe, were simply part of the empire and enjoyed few special privileges. Although commerce was far more extensive in China than in the emerging European civilization, the powerful Chinese state favored the landowners over merchants and actively controlled and limited merchant activity far more than the new and weaker royal authorities of Europe were able to do.

According to some historians, the greater freedom of Europe’s merchants opened the way to a more thorough development of capitalism in later centuries. In Spain, Portugal, France, and England, it also led to the creation of representative institutions or parliaments from the late twelfth through the early fourteenth centuries. Intended to strengthen royal authority by consulting with major social groups, these embryonic parliaments did not represent the “people” or the “nation” but instead embodied the three great “estates of the realm”—the clergy (the first estate), the landowning nobility (the second estate), and urban merchants (the third estate).

Society, Economy, and Culture in the West

In the several centuries after 1000, a favorable climate, along with greater security and stability, initiated what is commonly called the European High Middle Ages (1000–1300). An acceleration in the tempo of economic and social change in Western and Central Europe represented the making of a new Western civilization.

The population of this civilization grew from perhaps 35 million in 1000 to about 80 million in 1340. Great lords, bishops, and religious orders organized new villages on what had recently been forest, marshes, or wasteland. As expansion brought new opportunities for settlement, many peasants were able to loosen the shackles of serfdom, a trend facilitated by greater stability and the power of states over local lords. This trend accelerated after 1350, as the terrible loss of life caused by the Black Death (the plague) created shortages of labor across much of Europe and those who were still alive could demand lower rents and better wages and conditions.

AP EXAM TIP

Note the similarities and differences in the functions of cities in various civilizations of Eurasia.

AP

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

In what ways did European civilization change after 1000?

Technological breakthroughs in agriculture underpinned this expansion as Europeans brought new lands under cultivation. They developed a heavy wheeled plow that could handle the dense soils of Northern Europe. They also began to rely increasingly on horses rather than oxen to pull the plow and to use iron horseshoes and a more efficient collar, which probably originated in China or Central Asia (see Snapshot: European Borrowing). In addition, Europeans developed a new three-field system of crop rotation, which allowed considerably more land to be planted at any one time. These were the technological foundations for a more productive agriculture that could support the growing population of European civilization, especially in its urban centers, far more securely than before. But these developments also took a heavy toll on the environment. For instance, deforestation and the tilling of fields, overfishing, human waste, and the proliferation of new water mills and their associated ponds damaged freshwater ecosystems in many places. Lamenting the declining availability of fish, the French king Philip IV declared in 1289: "Today each and every river and waterside of our realm, large and small, yields nothing."²³

SNAPSHOT European Borrowing

Like people in other emerging civilizations, Europeans borrowed extensively from their near and more distant counterparts. They adapted these imports, both technological and cultural, to their own circumstances and generated distinctive innovations as well.

Borrowing	Source	Significance
Horse collar	China / Central Asia via Tunisia	Enabled heavy plowing and contributed to European agricultural development
Stirrup	India/Afghanistan	Revolutionized warfare by enhancing cavalry forces
Gunpowder	China	Enhanced the destructiveness of warfare
Paper	China	Enabled bureaucracy; fostered literacy; prerequisite for printing
Spinning wheel	India	Sped up production of yarn, usually by women at home
Wheelbarrow	China	Labor-saving device for farm and construction work
Aristotle	Byzantium / Islamic Spain	Recovery of classical Greek thought
Medical knowledge/treatments	Islamic world	Sedatives, antiseptics, surgical techniques, optics, and knowledge of contagious diseases enriched European medicine
Christian mysticism	Muslim Spain	Mutual influence of Sufi, Jewish, and Christian mysticism
Music/poetry	Muslim Spain	Contributed to tradition of troubadour poetry about chivalry and courtly love
Mathematics	India / Islamic world	Foundation for European algebra
Chess	India/Persia	A game of prestige associated with European nobility

After 1000, Europeans also began to tap mechanical sources of energy in a major way, revolutionizing production in many industries and breaking with the ancient tradition of depending almost wholly on animal or human muscle as sources of energy. Devices such as cranks, flywheels, camshafts, and complex gearing mechanisms, when combined with windmills and especially water mills, provided power for grinding grain, sieving flour, tanning hides, making beer, sawing wood, manufacturing iron, and producing paper. The increased production associated with agricultural expansion and new sources of energy stimulated a considerable growth in long-distance trade, both within Europe and with the more established civilizations of Byzantium and Islam. Thus the self-sufficient communities of earlier centuries increasingly forged commercial bonds among themselves and with more distant peoples.

The population of towns and cities likewise grew. In the early 1300s, London had about 40,000 people, Paris had approximately 80,000, and Venice by the end of the fourteenth century could boast perhaps 150,000. To keep these figures in perspective, Constantinople housed some 400,000 people in 1000, Córdoba in Muslim Spain about 500,000 at about the same time, and the Song dynasty capital of Hangzhou more than 1 million in the thirteenth century. European towns gave rise to and attracted new groups of people, particularly merchants, bankers, artisans, and university-trained professionals such as lawyers, doctors, and scholars. Thus, from the rural social order of lord and peasant, a new, more productive, and complex division of labor took shape in European society.

These changes, which together represented the making of a new civilization, had implications for the lives of countless women and men. Economic growth and urbanization initially offered European women substantial new opportunities. Women were active in a number of urban professions, such as weaving, brewing, milling grain, midwifery, small-scale retailing, laundering, spinning, and prostitution. However, much as economic and technological change in China had eroded female silk production during the Song dynasty, so too in Europe were women increasingly restricted or banned from working in many trades by the fifteenth century.

The church had long offered some women an alternative to home, marriage, family, and rural life. Substantial numbers of women, particularly from aristocratic families, were attracted to the secluded monastic life of poverty, chastity, and obedience within a convent, in part for the relative freedom from male control that it offered. Here was one of the few places where women might exercise authority as leaders in their orders and obtain a measure of education. But by 1300, much of the independence that such abbesses and their nuns had enjoyed was curtailed, and male control tightened as older ideas of women's intellectual inferiority, the



European Technology Europeans' fascination with technology and their religious motivation for investigating the world are apparent in this thirteenth-century portrayal of God as a divine engineer, laying out the world with a huge compass. (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Austria/Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY)

AP

CONTEXTUALIZATION

How does this image of God using a compass to lay out the world reflect Western European understandings of science and religion in the thirteenth century?

AP

COMPARISON

How was the development of technologies in Western Europe similar to that in Song China?

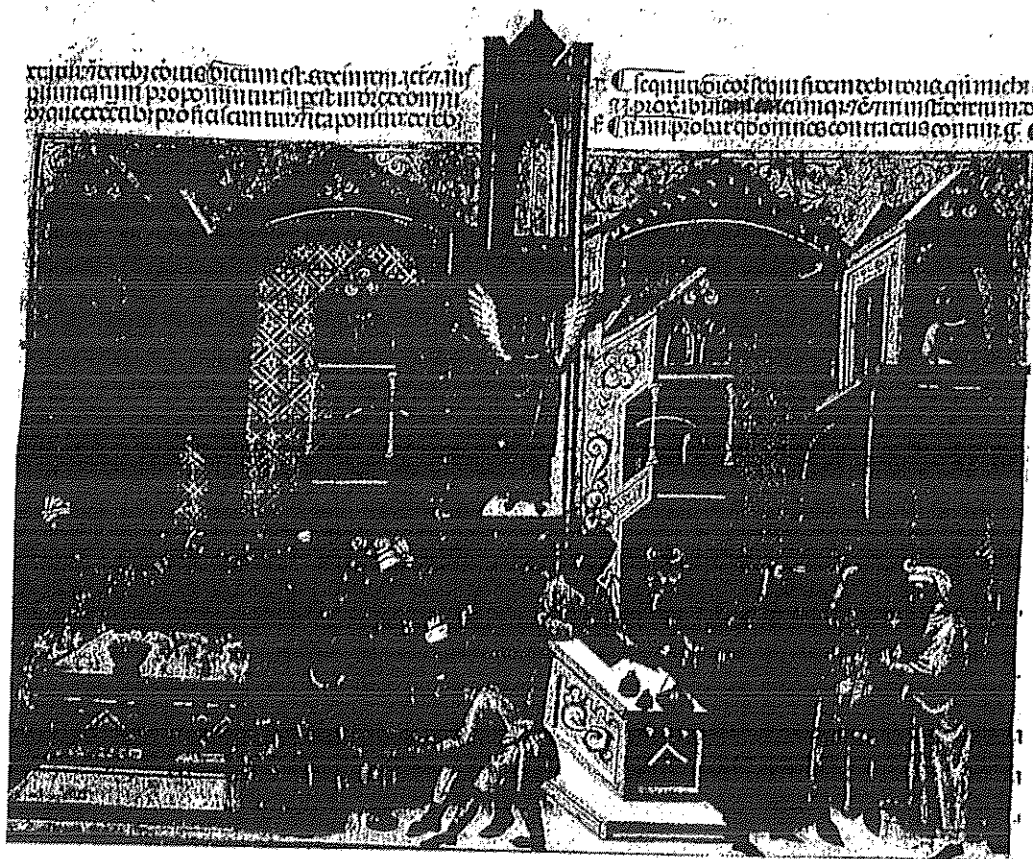
AP EXAM TIP

Be prepared for questions about cultural borrowing in world history.

A European Urban Market

This image from a fourteenth-century Italian illuminated manuscript depicts a market scene in an urban setting. It illustrates two major elements of an emerging Western European civilization—urbanization and commercialization.

(Mondadori Fortfollo/Electa/Paolo Manuardi/Bridgeman Images)



AP

CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE IN SOURCES

What does this image illustrate about commercial life and gender roles in Western European urban centers?

impurity of menstruation, and their role as sexual temptresses were mobilized to explain why women must operate under male control.

Intellectual life in Europe also changed dramatically in the several centuries after 1000, amid a rising population, a quickening commercial life, emerging towns and cities, and contact with Islamic learning. A legal system developed during the period that provided a measure of independence for a variety of institutions—towns and cities, guilds, professional associations, and especially universities. An outgrowth of earlier cathedral schools, these European universities—in Paris, Bologna, Oxford, Cambridge, Salamanca—became “zones of intellectual autonomy” in which scholars could pursue their studies with some freedom from the dictates of religious or political authorities, although that freedom was never complete and was frequently contested.²⁴

This was the setting in which a small group of literate churchmen began to emphasize the ability of human reason to penetrate divine mysteries and to grasp the operation of the natural order. The new interest in rational thought was applied first to theology, the “queen of the sciences” to European thinkers. Logic, philosophy, and rationality would operate in service to Christ. Through time, European intellectuals also applied their newly discovered confidence in human reason to law, medicine, and the world of nature, exploring optics, magnetism, astronomy, and alchemy. Slowly and never completely, the scientific study of nature, known as “natural philosophy,” began to separate itself from theology. This mounting enthusiasm for rational inquiry

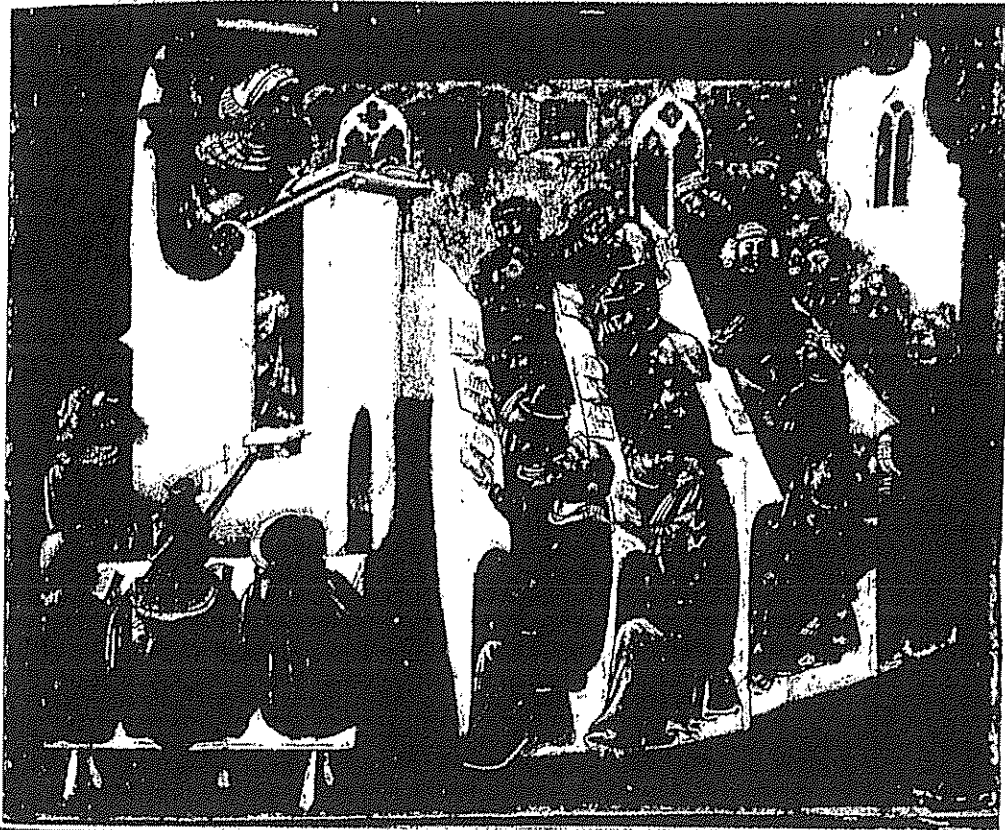
AP

CAUSATION

What ways did the discovery of Greek philosophy and science affect European Christianity?

stimulated European scholars to seek out original Greek texts, particularly those of Aristotle. They found them in the Greek-speaking world of Byzantium and in the Islamic world, where they had long ago been translated into Arabic. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, an explosion of translations from Greek and Arabic into Latin, many of them undertaken in Spain, gave European scholars direct access to the works of ancient Greeks and to the remarkable results of Arab scholarship in astronomy, optics, medicine, pharmacology, and more. One of these translators, Adelard of Bath (1080–1142), remarked that he had learned, “under the guidance of reason from Arabic teachers,” not to trust established authority.²⁵

Beginning in the vibrant commercial cities of Italy between roughly 1350 and 1500, the **European Renaissance** also turned to the ancient past for inspiration. But its agenda reflected the belief of the wealthy male elite that they were living in a wholly new era, far removed from the confined religious world of feudal Europe. First in the cities of Italy and later across much of Europe, educated citizens sought inspiration in the art and literature of ancient Greece and Rome; they were “returning to the sources,” as they put it. Their purpose was not so much to reconcile these works with the ideas of Christianity but to use them as a cultural standard to imitate and then to surpass. The elite patronized great Renaissance artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael, whose paintings and sculptures



European University Life in the Middle Ages This fourteenth-century manuscript painting shows a classroom scene from the University of Bologna in Italy. Notice the sleeping and disruptive students. Some things apparently never change. (bpk Bildagentur/Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Germany/Photo: Joerg P. Anders/Art Resource, NY)

AP

COMPARISON

What comparisons can you make between this image and the image of Muslim scholars on page 87?

were far more naturalistic, particularly in portraying the human body, than those of their medieval counterparts. Although religious themes remained prominent, Renaissance artists now included portraits and busts of well-known contemporary figures and scenes from ancient mythology.

In its focus on the affairs of this world, Renaissance culture reflected the urban bustle and commercial preoccupations of Italian cities. Its secular elements challenged the otherworldliness of Christian culture, and its individualism signaled the dawning of a more capitalist economy of private entrepreneurs. By 1450, a new Europe was in the making, one very different from its own recent past.

Civilizations of the Americas

Finding the Main Point: What were the political and cultural differences in states that developed in the Americas between 1200 and 1450?

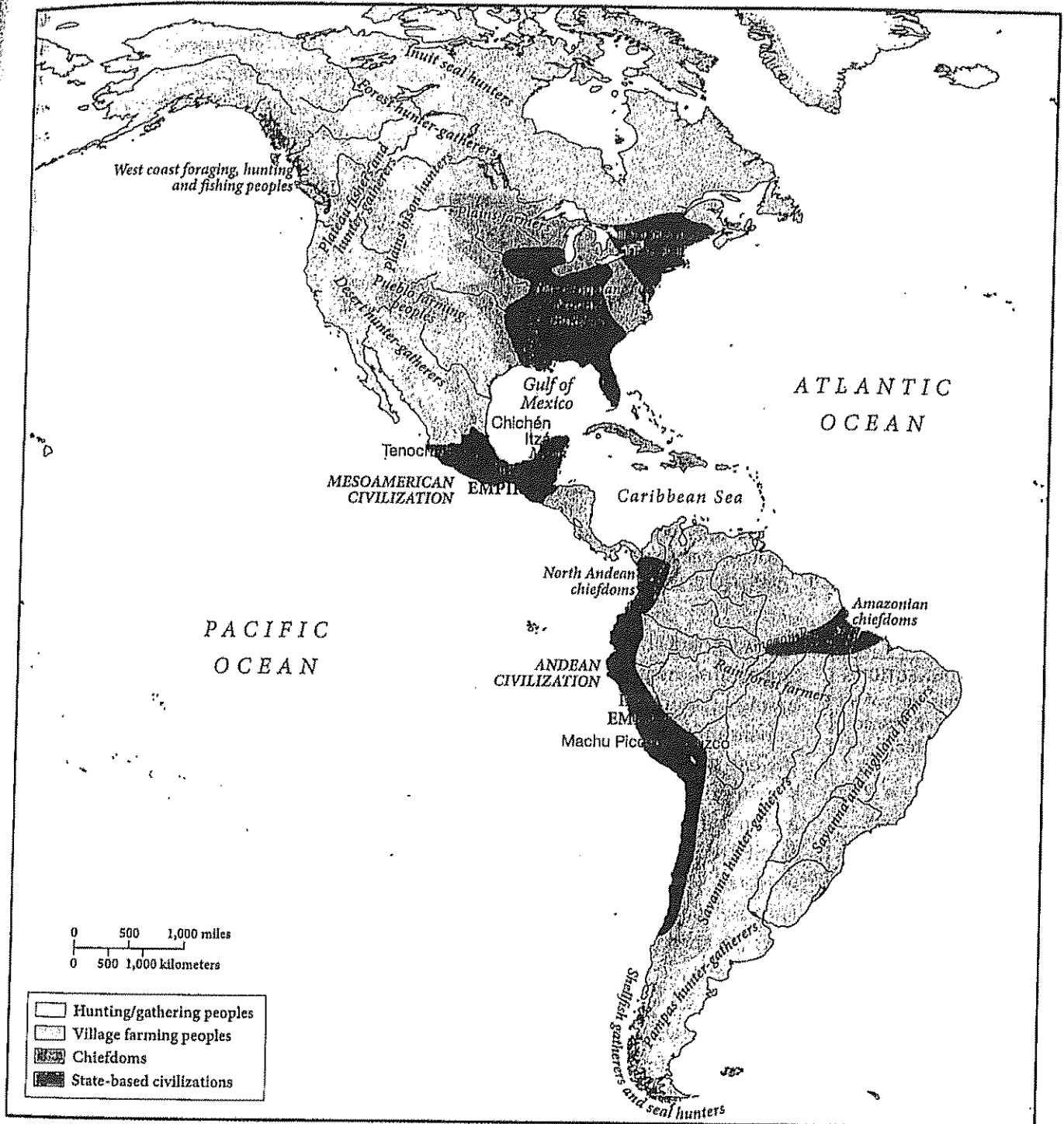
AP EXAM TIP

Pay close attention to these explanations of differences between the rise of civilizations in Afro-Eurasia and the Americas.

Separated from Afro-Eurasia by the Pacific and Atlantic oceans lay the altogether separate world, later known as the Americas, that housed two major and long-established centers of civilization in this era—Mesoamerica and the Andes. Together, they were home to a majority of the population of the Americas by 1200. But unlike the civilizations of Africa and Eurasia, Mesoamerica and the Andes had little if any direct contact with each other. They shared, however, a rugged mountainous terrain with an enormous range of microclimates as well as great ecological and biological diversity. Arid coastal environments, steamy lowland rain forests, cold and windy highland plateaus cut by numerous mountains and valleys—all of this was often encompassed in a relatively small area. Such conditions contributed to substantial linguistic and ethnic diversity. By 1200, both regions had witnessed the rise and decline of a series of increasingly sophisticated states, a trend that culminated in the fifteenth century with the emergence of the Aztec and Inca empires. Both were the work of previously marginal peoples who had forcibly taken over and absorbed older cultures, thus gaining new energy. Both were also decimated in the sixteenth century at the hands of Spanish conquistadores and their diseases (see Map 2.8).

The Emergence of the Aztecs in Mesoamerica

The Aztec Empire inherited an ancient set of cultural, religious, and political traditions associated with civilizations centered on a region stretching from central Mexico to northern Central America. Despite its environmental and ethnic diversity, Mesoamerica was also a distinct region, bound together by a common culture. Its many peoples shared an intensive agricultural technology devoted to raising maize, beans, chili peppers, and squash and based their economies on market exchange. They practiced religions featuring a similar pantheon of male and female deities, understood time as a cosmic cycle of creation and destruction, practiced human sacrifice, and constructed monumental ceremonial centers. Furthermore, they employed a common ritual calendar and hieroglyphic writing.



Map 2.8 The Americas in the Fifteenth Century

The Aztec and Inca empires dominated two civilizational zones in the Americas during the century before Columbus's voyage in 1492 brought these two "old worlds" into contact with one another. But the Aztec and Inca states had little, if any, direct contact with each other.



Aztec Double-Headed Serpent Sixteen inches long and composed of around 2,000 pieces of blue-green turquoise for the body and rare red and white shells for its nostrils, gums, and terrifying fangs, this remarkable sculpture of a snake with one body and two heads was likely for ritual use. The important Aztec god Quetzalcóatl is often depicted as a serpent, and some scholars have argued that this sculpture represents him. (Werner Forman/Getty Images)

AP

MAKING CONNECTIONS

How does this work of art suggest the importance of religion in Aztec society?

AP

CAUSATION

What different kinds of societies inhabited the Americas in the fifteenth century? How might you explain their distribution?

Starting with the Olmec around 1200 B.C.E., civilizations regularly emerged, flourished, and declined in the region. None has attracted more attention than the **Maya civilization**, which dominated a region centered on modern-day Guatemala and the Yucatán region of Mexico between 250 and 900 C.E. Maya artistic and intellectual accomplishments were impressive. Builders and artists created substantial urban centers dominated by temples, pyramids, palaces, and public plazas, all graced with painted murals and endless stone carvings. Intellectuals developed the most elaborate writing system in the Americas, which used both pictographs and phonetic or syllabic elements, and a mathematical system that included the concept of zero and place notation that made complex calculations possible. Organized into a highly frag-

mented political system of city-states, local lords, and regional kingdoms with no central authority and frequent warfare, this dynamic culture thrived before collapsing by around 900 with a completeness and finality rare in world history. (See “Civilizations and the Environment” in Chapter 1.)

The state known to history as the **Aztec Empire** (1345–1528) was the last and largest of the Mesoamerican states to emerge before the Spanish conquered the region in the early sixteenth century. It was largely the work of the Mexica (meh-SHEEH-kah) people, a semi-nomadic group from northern Mexico who had migrated southward and by 1325 had established themselves on a small island in Lake Texcoco. Over the next century, the Mexica developed their military capacity, served as mercenaries for more powerful people, negotiated elite marriage alliances with those people, and built up their own capital city of Tenochtitlán (te-nawch-tee-tlahn). In 1428, a Triple Alliance between the Mexica and two nearby city-states launched a highly aggressive program of military conquest that in less than 100 years brought more of Mesoamerica within a single political framework than ever before. Aztec authorities, eager to shed their rather undistinguished past, now claimed descent from earlier Mesoamerican peoples, emphasizing the continuity of Mesoamerican civilization.

With a core population recently estimated at 5 to 6 million people, the Aztec Empire was a loosely structured and unstable conquest state that witnessed frequent rebellions by its subject peoples. Conquered peoples and cities were required to provide labor for Aztec projects and to regularly deliver goods to their Aztec rulers,

such as impressive quantities of textiles and clothing, military supplies, jewelry and other luxuries, various foodstuffs, animal products, building materials, rubber balls, paper, and more. The process was overseen by local imperial tribute collectors, who sent the required goods on to Tenochtitlán, a metropolis of 150,000 to 200,000 people, where they were meticulously recorded.

That city featured numerous canals, dikes, causeways, and bridges. A central walled area of palaces and temples included a pyramid almost 200 feet high. Surrounding the city were *chinampas* or “floating gardens,” artificial islands of fertile soil created from swamplands that supported a highly productive agriculture. Vast marketplaces reflected the commercialization of the economy. A young Spanish soldier who beheld the city in 1519 declared, “Gazing on such wonderful sights, we did not know what to say, or whether what appeared before us was real.”²⁶

Enslaved people, especially those captured in war, played a prominent role in Aztec society, for they were often destined for sacrifice in the bloody rituals so central to Aztec religious life. Long a part of Mesoamerican and many other world cultures, human sacrifice assumed an unusually prominent role in Aztec public life and thought during the fifteenth century. Tlacaélel (1398–1480), who was for more than half a century a prominent official of the Aztec Empire, is often credited with crystallizing the ideology of state that gave human sacrifice such great importance.

In the Aztecs’ understanding of the world, the sun, central to all life and identified with the Aztec patron deity Huitzilopochtli (wee-tsee-loh-pockt-lee), tended to lose its energy in a constant battle against encroaching darkness. Thus the Aztec world hovered always on the edge of catastrophe. To replenish its energy and thus postpone the descent into endless darkness, the sun required the life-giving force found in human blood. Because the gods had shed their blood ages ago in creating humankind, it was wholly proper for people to offer their own blood to nourish the gods in the present. The high calling of the Aztec state was to supply this blood, largely through its wars of expansion. Enslaved prisoners of war were “those who have died for the god.” The growth of the Aztec Empire therefore became the means for maintaining cosmic order and avoiding utter catastrophe. This ideology also shaped the techniques of Aztec warfare, which put a premium on capturing prisoners rather than on killing the enemy. As the empire grew, priests and rulers became mutually dependent, and “human sacrifices were carried out in the service of politics.”²⁷ Massive sacrificial rituals, together with a display of great wealth, impressed enemies, allies, and subjects with the immense power of the Aztecs and their gods.

The Emergence of the Incas in the Andes

Yet another and quite separate center of civilization in the Americas lay in the dramatic landscape of the Andes. Bleak deserts along the coast supported human habitation only because they were cut by dozens of rivers flowing down from the mountains, offering the possibility of irrigation and cultivation. The offshore waters

of the Pacific Ocean also provided an enormously rich marine environment with an endless supply of seabirds and fish. The Andes themselves, a towering mountain chain with many highland valleys, afforded numerous distinct ecological niches, depending on altitude. Andean societies generally sought access to the resources of these various environments through colonization, conquest, or trade—seafood from the coastal regions; maize and cotton from lower-altitude valleys; potatoes, quinoa, and pastureland for their llamas from the high plains; tropical fruits and coca leaves from the moist eastern slope of the Andes.

Over thousands of years, many small civilizations had flourished in the Andes region. But in the early 1400s, a relatively small community of Quechua-speaking people, known to us as the Incas, built a huge empire along almost the entire spine of the Andes Mountains. Much as the Aztecs drew on the traditions of the earlier Mesoamerican societies, the Incas incorporated the lands and cultures of earlier Andean civilizations. The **Inca Empire** (1438–1533), however, was much larger than the Aztec state; it stretched some 2,500 miles along the Andes and contained perhaps 10 million subjects during its short life in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Both the Aztec and Inca empires represent rags-to-riches stories in which quite modest and remotely located people very quickly created by military conquest the largest states ever witnessed in their respective regions, but the empires themselves were quite different. In the Aztec realm, the Mexica rulers largely left their conquered people alone if the required tribute was forthcoming. The Incas, on the other hand, erected a more bureaucratic and intrusive empire. At the top reigned the emperor, an absolute ruler regarded as divine, a descendant of the creator god Viracocha and the son of the sun god Inti. Each of the some eighty provinces in the empire had an Inca governor. In theory, the state owned all land and resources, though in practice state lands, known as “lands of the sun,” existed alongside properties owned by temples, elites, and traditional communities. At least in the central regions of the empire, local officials were incorporated into the Inca administration, supervised by an Inca governor or the emperor. A separate set of “inspectors” provided the imperial center with an independent check on these provincial officials.

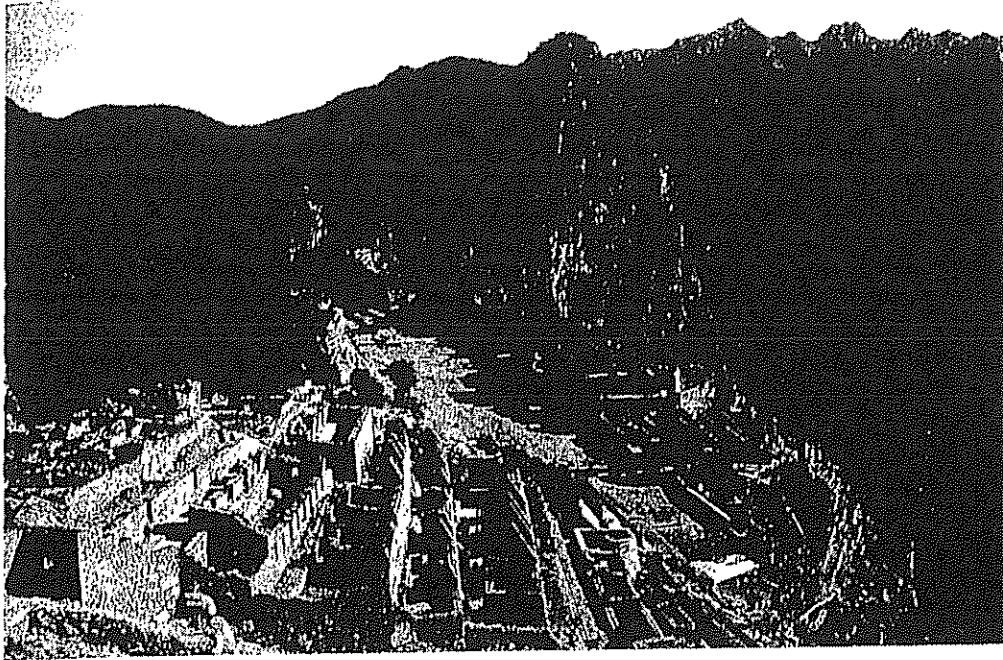
Births, deaths, marriages, and other population data were carefully recorded on *quipus*, the knotted cords that served as an accounting device. A resettlement program moved one-quarter or more of the population to new locations, in part to disperse conquered and no doubt resentful people and sometimes to reward loyal followers with promising opportunities. Efforts at cultural integration required the leaders of conquered peoples to learn Quechua (keh-choo-wah). Their sons were removed to the capital of Cuzco for instruction in Inca culture and language. While the Incas required their subject peoples to acknowledge major Inca deities, these peoples were then largely free to carry on their own religious traditions. Thus the Inca Empire was a fluid system that varied greatly from place to place and over time.

AP**COMPARISON**

What distinguished the Aztec and Inca empires from each other?

AP**COMPARISON**

How does the Inca employment of bureaucrats compare to that of other societies, such as China?



Machu Picchu Machu Picchu, high in the Andes Mountains, was constructed by the Incas in the fifteenth century on a spot long held sacred by local people. Its 200 buildings stand at some 8,000 feet above sea level, making it a “city in the sky.” It was probably a royal retreat or religious center, rather than a location serving administrative, commercial, or military purposes. The outside world became aware of Machu Picchu only in 1911, when it was popularized by a Yale University archeologist. (iStock/Superstock)

Inca demands on their conquered people were expressed, not so much in terms of tribute, as in the Aztec realms, but as labor service, known as *mita*, which was required periodically of every household. What people produced at home usually stayed at home, but almost everyone also had to work for the state. Some labored on large state farms or on “sun farms,” which supported temples and religious institutions; others herded, mined, served in the military, or toiled on state-directed construction projects.

Those with particular skills were put to work manufacturing textiles, metal goods, ceramics, and stonework. The most well known of these specialists were the “chosen women,” who were removed from their homes as young girls, trained in Inca ideology, and set to producing corn beer and cloth at state centers. Later they were given as wives to men of distinction or sent to serve as priestesses in various temples, where they were known as “wives of the Sun.” In return for such labor services, Inca ideology, expressed in terms of family relationships, required the state to arrange elaborate feasts at which large quantities of food and drink were consumed and to provide food and other necessities when disaster struck. Thus the authority of the state penetrated and directed Inca society and economy far more than did that of the Aztecs. (See AP® Working with Evidence, Chapter 4, Document 1, page 247, for an early Spanish account of Inca governing practices.)

AP®

CAUSATION

What can you infer from this image about how the massive building projects of the Inca Empire reflected the power of the state?

AP® EXAM TIP

Know the meaning and significance of the *mita* (or *mit'a*) system.

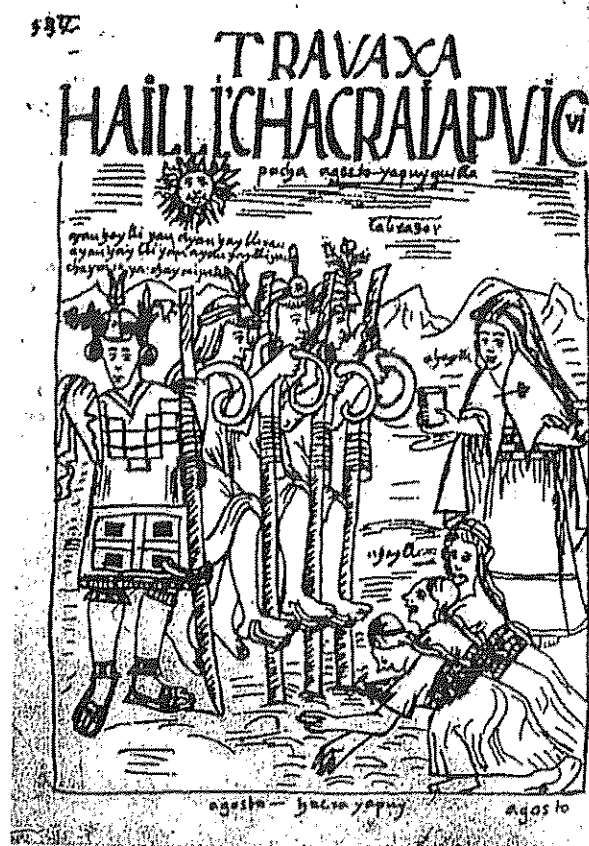
AP® EXAM TIP

The AP® Exam frequently includes questions about the Inca economic system.

AP®

COMPARISON

How do gender relations in Aztec society compare to gender relations in Inca society?



Inca Agricultural Practice This sixteenth-century drawing by Felipe Guaman Poma, an Inca nobleman, illustrates the cooperation of Inca men and women in agriculture. The men are loosening the soil with a “foot-plow,” while the women plant the seeds. (Werner Forman/Getty Images)

▲ AP CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE IN SOURCES

How does this image portray the respective roles of men and women in Inca agricultural life?

If the Inca and Aztec civilizations differed sharply in their political and economic arrangements, they resembled each other more closely in their gender systems. Both societies practiced what scholars call “gender parallelism,” in which “women and men operate in two separate but equivalent spheres, each gender enjoying autonomy in its own sphere.”²⁸ In both Mesoamerican and Andean societies, such systems had emerged long before their incorporation into the Aztec and Inca empires. In the Andes, men reckoned their descent from their fathers and women from their mothers, while Mesoamericans had long viewed children as belonging equally to their mothers and fathers. Parallel religious cults for women and men likewise flourished in both societies. Inca men venerated the sun, while women worshipped the moon, with matching religious officials. In Aztec temples, both male and female priests presided over rituals dedicated to deities of both sexes. Particularly among the Incas, parallel hierarchies of male and female political officials governed the empire, while in Aztec society, women officials exercised local authority under a title that meant “female person in charge of people.” Social roles were clearly defined and different for men and women, but the domestic concerns of women—childbirth, cooking, weaving, cleaning—were not regarded as inferior to the activities of men. Among the Aztecs, for example, sweeping was a powerful and sacred act with symbolic significance as

“an act of purification and a preventative against evil elements penetrating the center of the Aztec universe, the home.”²⁹ In the Andes, men broke the ground, women sowed, and both took part in the harvest.

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

“Civilization”: What’s in a Word?

Finding the Main Point: What problems arise in defining the word “civilization”?

By 1200, most of the world’s population lived in civilizations, which had over the centuries incorporated many of the gathering and hunting peoples of the world as well as independent agricultural village communities and pastoral societies. These civilizations shared a number of common features: cities, states, sharp class inequalities, patriarchy, and writing.

But they also differed in many ways. Some of these civilizations, such as Chinese, Indian, and Byzantine civilizations, had their origins in ancient times. Others were more recent, such as those in Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, East and West Africa, Russia, and Western Europe. The Aztec and Inca civilizations in the Americas, which emerged in the fifteenth century, built upon much earlier Mesoamerican and Andean precedents.

The size and influence among civilizations likewise differed greatly. China was a huge East Asian civilization with an extensive impact in Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and elsewhere. Islamic civilization began in the seventh century in Arabia and soon encompassed many other civilizations in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. Southeast Asian and East African civilizations, by contrast, had a smaller cultural footprint.

Politically, too, civilizations varied. Large empires prevailed in Chinese, Inca, West African, and, for a time, Islamic civilizations. In contrast, Hausa and Swahili civilizations were organized in a series of small city-states, and a fragmented Western European civilization found expression primarily in an emerging system of rival kingdoms.

In examining civilizations, we are worlds away from life in agricultural villages or gathering and hunting societies. Historians have been somewhat uncertain as to how to refer to these more complex forms of society, despite their central and ever-growing place in the human story. Following common practice, we have called them “civilizations,” but scholars have reservations about the term for two reasons. The first is its implication of superiority. In popular usage, “civilization” suggests refined behavior, a “higher” form of society, something unreservedly positive. The opposite of “civilized”—“barbarian,” “savage,” or “uncivilized”—is normally understood as an insult implying inferiority. That, of course, is precisely how the inhabitants of many civilizations have viewed outsiders, particularly those neighboring peoples living without the alleged benefit of cities and states.

Modern assessments of earlier civilizations reveal a profound ambiguity about these new, larger, and more complex societies. On the one hand, these civilizations have given us inspiring art, profound reflections on the meaning of life, more productive technologies, increased control over nature, and the art of writing—all of which have been cause for celebration. On the other hand, as anthropologist Marvin Harris noted, “human beings learned for the first time how to bow, grovel, kneel, and kowtow.”³⁰ Massive inequalities, state oppression, slavery, large-scale warfare, the subordination of women, and epidemic disease also accompanied the rise of civilization, generating discontent, rebellion, and sometimes the urge to escape.

A second reservation about using the term “civilization” derives from its implication of solidity—the idea that civilizations represent distinct and widely shared identities with clear boundaries that mark them off from other such units. It is unlikely, however, that many people living in China, the Islamic world, or Latin Christendom felt themselves primarily part of these larger units. Local identities defined by occupation, clan affiliation, village, city, or region were surely more important for most people than those of some larger civilization. At best, members

AP**COMPARISON**

What is the main disagreement in point of view among historians regarding the word “civilization”?

of an educated upper class who shared a common literary tradition may have felt themselves part of some more inclusive civilization, but that left out most of the population. Moreover, unlike modern nations, none of the earlier civilizations had definite borders. Any identification with a civilization surely faded as distance from its core region increased. Finally, the line between civilizations and other kinds of societies is not always clear. Just when does a village or town become a city? At what point does a chiefdom become a state?

Despite these reservations, this book continues to use the term “civilization,” both because it is so deeply embedded in our way of thinking about the world and because no alternative concept has achieved widespread acceptance. For historians, however, “civilization” is a purely descriptive term, referring to a distinctive type of human society—one with cities and states—without consciously implying any judgment or assessment, any sense of superiority or inferiority. You may want to assess whether we have been successful in this effort or not.

CHAPTER REVIEW

AP Key Terms

Song dynasty, 70	Swahili civilization, 88
China's economic revolution, 73	West African civilization, 90
Hangzhou, 73	Mali, 90
foot binding, 75	trans-Saharan slave trade, 91
<i>hangul</i> , 76	Timbuktu, 92
<i>bushido</i> , 78	Byzantine Empire, 92
tribute system, 79	Ottoman seizure of Constantinople, 94
<i>chu nom</i> , 80	Kievan Rus, 94
Srivijaya, 80	Eastern Orthodox Christianity, 95
Madjapahit, 81	Western Christendom, 96
Angkor Wat, 81	feudalism, 97
Abbasid caliphate, 83	Roman Catholic Church, 98
Seljuk Turkic Empire, 84	European Renaissance, 103
Ottoman Empire, 84	Maya civilization, 106
Constantinople, 84	Aztec Empire, 106
<i>Jizya</i> , 86	Inca Empire, 108
al-Andalus, 87	