

Asian Middle Ages Empires: Korea

Background

- Geographically fortunate
 - o Mountainous
 - Easy to defend
 - o Peninsula
 - Easier to defend
 - o East Sea
 - Access to resources
 - o Yalu River
 - Traditional boundary between Korea and China
 - Culturally united yet divided
- Geographically unfortunate
 - o Close to China, Japan, Mongolia, Russia
 - o East Sea
 - Invaders
 - o Mountains
 - Interior 70% Mountains
 - Push people to the coasts
- 108 B.C.E. Han Emperor Wudi establishes Korea as Chinese Military Colony
 - o Led to the introduction of Chinese Culture
 - Writing, Confucian, farming
- Korea spread ideas and own culture on to Japan

Three Kingdoms Period

- 220 – 669 C.E.
- Korea split into three regions
 - o Koguryo (North)
 - Culturally linked to China
 - o Paekche (Southwest)
 - o Silla (Southeast)
- Same language and culture
- Often fought with one another
- Still absorbed Chinese culture
 - o Confucianism
 - o Law/Government
 - o Art
 - o Buddhism



The Imperial Period

Silla

- 668 – 935 C.E.
- Unified by war
 - o Baekje 660 C.E.
 - o Goguryeo 668 C.E.
- Korea and Tang China maintained close ties
 - o Vassals of China
 - o Implementing Chinese Culture, Writing, and Government
- Many cultural Advancements
 - o Development of capital of Kyongju
 - o Arts flourished

- Sculptures and Textiles
 - Academics Flourished
 - Medicine, Astronomy
 - Language
 - Developed spoken and written language
- Fall of Silla
 - Conflicts between peasants and aristocrats
 - Conquered by usurper

Koryo

- 935 – 1218 C.E.
- Moved capital to Kaesong
- Continued importance of Confucianism and Buddhism
- Cultural Achievements
 - Printing press
 - Chinese invention Korean perfected
 - Used printing press to mass produce Buddhist texts
 - Celadon
 - Type of porcelain with blue-green glaze
- Conquered by Mongols 1218 C.E.

Consonants:

ㄱ ㅋ ㆁ ㄷ ㄸ ㄹ ㄴ ㄷ ㄹ ㄴ ㄷ ㄹ ㄴ
k, g n t, d r, l m p, b s, sh ng

ㅈ ㅊ ㅋ ㅌ ㅍ ㅎ
ch, j ch k t p, f h

Vowels:

ㅏ ㅑ ㅓ ㅕ ㅗ ㅛ
a ya eo yeo o yo

ㅜ ㅠ ㅡ ㅣ
u yu eu ee

Mongols

- 1218 – 1392 C.E.
- Forced Koreans to pay heavy tribute
- Forced them into army

Yi

- 1392 – 1910 C.E.
- Yi Song-gye
 - Gained power by fighting off Mongolians and Japanese Pirates
 - Reunified Korea and began Yi Dynasty
 - Moved capital to Hanseong
- Longest lived of the Korean Dynasties
- Used Confucian Ideals to lead society and government
- Golden Age of Korea
- Cultural Achievements
 - Han'gul
 - Implemented by King Sejong in 1443
 - Phonetic pronunciation
 - Much easier to read than Chinese
 - Hated at first but soon embraced
 - Part of Korean identity as separate from Chinese
 - Led to high literacy rate
 - Allowed easy use of printing press
- Japanese Invasion
 - 1592-1598 C.E.
 - Japanese burned their way through Korean Peninsula
 - Defeated with help of Ming
 - Yi Song Shin
 - Used fleet of "Turtle ships" to drive off Japanese
 - Koreans never fully recover and begin "Hermit Kingdom"

