**ASSIGNMENT 08**

HS150 World Civilizations I

**Directions:** Be sure to save an electronic copy of your answer before submitting it to Ashworth College for grading. Unless otherwise stated, answer in complete sentences, and be sure to use correct English, spelling, and grammar. Sources must be cited in APA format. Your response should be four (4) double‐spaced pages; refer to the “Format Requirementsʺ page for specific format requirements.

What major changes in political structures, and social and economic life, occurred during each of the following?

1. The Sui dynasty
2. The Tang dynasty
3. The Song dynasty

(Refer to chapter 14 of your textbook and additional references.)

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**Lecture Notes**

This week we will focus on early African societies and their development. This is an area of world history that often gets overlooked, but we will focus on how these early African societies interacted with each other and other societies and civilization. We will consider some of their major achievements and the links that they continue to create to this day. The early African societies described in chapter 13 were as varied as the continent’s geography and climate. Despite this diversity, commonalities existed. Bantu migrations connected many African regions. As the Bantu migrations came to an end, Islamic connections spread. Africans adapted their cultures and societies to local topographical and climate conditions. African political life revolved around families, clans, and kingdoms. Most African societies were polytheistic and African religion often affected artistic and cultural expression.

Prior to the arrival of Islam, North Africa remained on the margins of Mediterranean civilization. But when Africa became part of Islamic civilization early in the eighth century, its orientation changed completely. Islam connected North Africa to Southwest Asia. The advent of Umayyad Spain brought into being a vibrant, cosmopolitan Spanish culture. In Egypt, the Fatimids introduced Shi’ite Islam and contributed to the creation of Egypt’s unique Islamic culture. Check out the map on page 249 which shows the conquest of Spain by Islamic armies and the proximity of Spain to North Africa (another stronghold of Islam). What do you think continues to be the legacy of Islam in Spain and Europe today?

Saharan trade accelerated once camels were introduced from Central Asia. Trade was transformed once again by the Islamic conquest of North Africa. Once this happened, Saharan trade became part of a huge commercial and cultural network extending from Persia to Spain. The effects on West Africa were profound. First, it introduced Islam into the region. Second, it created a tremendous potential market for African gold. Third, it stimulated the growth of the slave trade. Finally, it urbanized West Africa and transformed clusters of villages into kingdoms.

The expansion of trade stimulated by the camel caravans enhanced the wealth of West Africa. This wealth was crucial to the foundation of both Ghana and Mali. Gold and salt made Ghana a powerful kingdom, while traders brought Islam. The Almoravids played a key role in the conversion of Ghana to Islam. Ghana’s decline in the twelfth century paved the way for the rise of Mali. Sundiata built a powerful kingdom in Mali. A successor, Mansa Musa, put Mali on the map, forging connections with Southwest Asia during his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. In the fifteenth century, Mali fell to Songhai.

Islamic expansion southward from Egypt and southwestward from Arabia was blocked by Christians in Ethiopia. Ethiopia converted to Christianity between 320 and 340 C.E. Muslim expansion cut Christian Ethiopia off from the Red Sea trade and, after Muslims conquered Egypt in 642, from consistent contact with the Byzantine Empire. Surrounded by Islam, Ethiopia maintained its political independence and its Christian faith.

The confluence of Bantu and Arab settlers created the Bantu-Arab culture of East Africa. Arab traders connected East Africa to the Indian Ocean trading network. East African population centers developed into city-states. While both West and East African societies were influenced by the Bantu, their evolution took them in significantly different directions. While East Africa was oriented towards the Indian Ocean, West Africa was based inland.

Of all the regions of Africa, the central and southern zones were least affected by the outside world before the fifteenth century C.E. The spread of Islam had minimal influence in these regions. Instead, it was the long-enduring Bantu migrations that provided them with some degree of ethnic and linguistic cohesion. The Bantu brought farming and herding to Central Africa and several Bantu states had developed by the thirteenth century. For the most part, Central Africa remained agricultural and maintained only limited contact with peoples and civilizations from other parts of the continent. Likewise, the Bantu societies of southern Africa remained largely isolated until the sixteenth century. Archeological evidence points to the existence of an impressive southern African kingdom called Great Zimbabwe.

Now, let's shift our focus to the evolution and expansion of East Asian societies in chapter 14. The fall of the Han dynasty led to the creation of three kingdoms, none strong enough to defeat the others. The result was a period of endemic warfare, made worse by disease and natural disasters. The Three Kingdoms era (220–280) was followed by the Xiongnu conquest of the north, which brought about another century of chaos and ruin. This era came to an end in 439 when the Toba, a Mongolian nomadic tribe, gained control over the entire northern region. The Toba established a dynasty called the Northern Wei and restored a semblance of stability to northern China. Meanwhile, the turmoil in the north prompted mass migrations to the south and Buddhism began to take hold.

In 589, Yang Jian ended the Age of Disunity by conquering all of China and founding the Sui dynasty. The Sui dynasty lasted only until 618 when the Duke of Tang seized power and ushered in the Tang dynasty (618–907). The Tang era’s most successful ruler was Li Shimin who brought stability to China and added new territory to the empire. In 755 the An Lushan revolt rocked the Tang dynasty. It survived, but never regained its earlier strength. Starting in 907, China entered a new period of disunity, which came to an end in 960 when Zhao Kuangyin reunified China and founded the Song Dynasty. The Song resisted the temptation to conquer new lands, focusing instead on controlling China itself. In this context, the Song initiated a series of important governmental reforms. The Song also promoted commerce, making China an economic giant. Once again, however, China was disrupted by nomadic invasions, this time by the Jurchens in 1114. The Song were driven from the north and forced to regroup in the south. The Song survived and thrived in the south until the Mongol conquest.

The Tang and the Song brought stability and security that strengthened Chinese commerce. Farming advances also contributed to population growth and commercial power. Technological innovations enhanced international trade. Stability and prosperity, in turn, stimulated spiritual, intellectual, and cultural creativity. China’s commercial, cultural, and intellectual life were centered mainly in the cities. China’s peasant population, however, knew little of the splendors of the city. Chinese society, both urban and rural, remained intensely patriarchal.

How did China and Chinese culture impact Vietnam and Korea? For most of the first millennium C.E., Vietnam was ruled by China. Thus, unlike the rest of Southeast Asia, which was heavily influenced by India’s culture, Chinese influences dominated in Vietnam. Nonetheless, the Vietnamese modified Chinese influences to fit traditional Vietnamese culture. In 939 the Vietnamese managed to regain their political autonomy. Vietnam then expanded southward along the Southeast Asian coast.

Like the Vietnamese, the Koreans developed a distinctive language and culture, and then came under Chinese rule in the second century B.C.E. Also like the Vietnamese, the Koreans adapted Chinese ideas and institutions to their local culture. Eventually the Koreans, too, regained their political autonomy, but for centuries they continued to pay tribute to China’s emperors.

Largely isolated, the Japanese were the last of the East Asian peoples to develop a complex culture based on farming settlements. By 300 C.E., Japan was dominated by native warrior clans and, by 500 C.E., one of these clans, the Yamato, had brought most of Japan under its control. The Yamato established itself as the first ruling dynasty, tracing their descent from the Shinto sun goddess. The Korean introduction of Buddhism to Japan in the mid-sixth century ushered in a period of extensive borrowing from China. This was followed by the Heian era (794–1185), during which Japan gradually stopped imitating China, and developed a new culture that blended Japanese and Chinese ways. By the twelfth century, local warlords and samurai armies, who brought an end to the political power of the Heian court, dominated Japan. When the Minamoto defeated the Heian in 1185, they did not put an end to the Yamato dynasty. Instead, they created a new post of shogun that came with all political power, leaving the emperor in a ceremonial position.

The mandatory articles this week talk about the reactions of settled peoples to the invasion of nomadic peoples. The "Tatars" were a group of Central Asian nomads who invaded settled areas and left their permanent mark on those societies. OK, now it's time to shift gears to chapter 15, where we will examine the nomadic tribes of Central Asia and their conquests and impact. By 1000 C.E., agriculture had become the way of life for most people on the planet. Central Asia was one of the notable exceptions. The vast region both isolated neighboring regions and connected them through trade. Herding and horsemanship were at the heart of the life of most Central Asians, and family and society were structured to meet the needs of nomadic life. Gender roles, social status, governance, and religion all showed the stamp of a culture that focused on mobility, resourcefulness, and warfare. Central Asian nomads played pivotal roles in forming, connecting, and challenging settled Eurasian societies. This was especially true in northern China.

In the decade following 1025, the Seljuks entered northeastern Persia. Once there, they overthrew the Ghaznavid rulers of the region, opening southern Asia to waves of Turkish nomads. The Seljuks then drove westward, driving through Persia and into Mesopotamia. Sunni Muslims, the Seljuks, attacked Shi’ites, and in 1055, captured Baghdad. The Seljuks centered their empire in Persia and enthusiastically embraced Persian culture. Renewed conflict between Sunnis and Shi’ites in the Seljuk Empire led to its fragmentation and decline.

Genghis Khan and his heirs terrorized societies from China to central Europe, overrunning realms with far richer resources and many times more people than Mongolia. Although the Mongols did not conquer the whole world, they did conquer much of Eurasia, creating a huge empire that dwarfed all previous realms. In so doing, they forged connections and fostered trade, spreading ideas and technologies that in time enriched and strengthened the conquered societies, fortifying them against further nomadic conquests.

The Mongol drive for power did not end with Genghis Khan. After his death, his sons and grandsons continued to seek world domination, expanding Mongol rule across Eurasia. In the process they established four great khanates, each ruled by a khan descended from Genghis. These realms included the Khanate of the Great Khan, comprising most of East Asia; the Khanate of the Il-Khans, which dominated Persia and Mesopotamia; the Khanate of the Golden Horde, which ruled over Russia; and the Khanate of Jagadai, which controlled Central Asia. In adapting their rule to these regions, however, the Mongols were themselves transformed, taking on many ways and ideas of the peoples they ruled. In time, internal conflict between the khanates led to the unraveling of the Mongol Empire.

The initial impact of the Mongol onslaught was widespread devastation. In the long run, however, the main impact of the Mongol era was increased connections between Eurasian regions. By connecting distant and diverse regions under a common rule, the Mongols promoted trade and travel from one end of Eurasia to the other, vastly enhancing the exchange of goods, ideas, and technologies — as well as the spread of diseases — among Eurasian societies. Check out the two required readings for this week. One is by a Muslim observer and the other is by a European observer, but both discuss the Tatar tribes of Central Asia and their features. Why do you think both of these observers would have been so fascinated by these people?