Global Trade and Asian Empires (1500s-1600s C.E.)

You Mean Asia Had Empires Too?

Empire Building
Europeans were not the only people who created empires. In Asia, the Ottoman Turks, the Mughals, Chinese, and Japanese all developed empires. The empires in Asia both competed and cooperated with European empires. Some of Asian empires were formed before European empires were.

Ottoman Empire
In the 1300s, the Ottoman Turks from Central Asia took control of much of Asia Minor (present-day Turkey). In 1453, the Turks defeated the Byzantine Empire and took over the strategic city Constantinople. The city linked Asia Minor with Europe. Its location between the Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea allowed easy travel. The Ottomans renamed their capital at Constantinople as Istanbul. The Ottomans expanded into the Balkan Peninsula in southeastern Europe. This peninsula includes Greece and some land to the north of Greece. They then moved into southwest Asia, conquering land from the eastern Mediterranean Sea to present-day Iraq. The Ottomans also took over much of North Africa. The empire grew rich from trade in spices, cloth, coffee, and ceramics. The Ottomans used the Islamic religion as a unifying force in its empire. After World War I, the empire broke apart into Turkey and several other countries.

Mughal Empire = Northern India
The Mughals (Mogols) were descendants of the Mongols from northern Asia. By the 1500s, the Mughals took over northern India. The Mughals were Muslims and brought Islam to India. The Mughals also brought new ideas in art and architecture. One of the major examples of Mughal influence was the Taj Mahal. One of the Mughal rulers built the Taj Mahal as a tomb for his wife. The Mughal Empire established trade routes with Europe. Europeans also built trading outposts along the coast. Trade included textiles (cloth), which influenced the British textile industry, spices, and minerals.

Southern India
Unlike north India, much of southern India remained free from the Mughals. But this area, too, developed trade in silks, spices, and gems. Portugal, England, and the Netherlands established coastal ports in southern India and attempted to control all trade in the Indian Ocean.

China
As you know, Europe had traded with China since the time of the Roman Empire. Europeans increasingly desired Chinese goods, including new items such as tea and porcelain. China became concerned about the presence of outsiders and in the 1500s and 1600s, China tried to control foreign influences and trade. Merchants from Europe could only trade in enclaves (special enclosed areas) where the Chinese attempted to restrict the movement of foreigners.
Global Trade and Asian Empires (cont.) WHII 5a, 5b and 5c

Japan

For much of its history, Japan was closed to the outside world. In the 1500s and 1600s, Japan had become a military nation under the control of a military leader called a shogun. Japan’s emperor did not have any real power. Like China, Japan disliked and feared outsiders. The Japanese government adopted a policy of isolation to limit foreign influences. Japan stayed closed off until the United States arrived in 1853 and used its military power to force Japan to begin to trade with other nations. Japan not only opened itself to foreigners but began to develop a strong military and industrial force. It soon became an imperial nation in Asia and by World War I, Japan was a major world power.

Key Vocabulary

Asia Minor: present-day Turkey
Balkan Peninsula: peninsula that includes Greece and some land to the north of Greece
Strategic: having high importance, necessity; usually provides an advantage
Shogun: military leader that controlled Japan
Peninsula: piece of land that juts out into the water and is surrounded by water on three sides
Constantinople: city that the Ottomans took over in 1453 as their capital, renaming it as Istanbul
Enclaves: special enclosed areas in which China required all Europeans to trade

Taj Mahal: beautiful tomb that became an example of art and architecture from the Mughal Empire
Isolation: policy of staying away from foreigners
Porcelain: a ceramic used for making plates and cups

Quick Review

1. Which of the following replaces the question mark?
   A. China
   B. Japan
   C. Mughal Empire
   D. Ottoman Empire

2. Europeans desired the goods in the picture from what place?
   A. China
   B. Japan
   C. Mughal Empire
   D. Ottoman Empire

3. In the 1500s and 1600s, what two nations feared foreigner influence?
   A. China and Japan
   B. Mughal Empire and Southern India
   C. China and Southern India
   D. Mughal Empire and Japan

4. What were some similarities and some differences in the manner in which China and Japan interacted with foreigners?

Connection to Today

There is much more world trade today than in the 1500s and 1600s. What are at least three examples of goods that you use every day that have come from another country?

Resources

Learn 360
- Ottoman Empire: http://goo.gl/ljOcdO
- Taj Mahal: http://goo.gl/ThfEVy