

EAST ASIA – Part 1

Defining the Realm

A world map with a red rectangle highlighting the East Asia region, including China, Korea, and Japan.

Locator - East Asia
World Regional Geography, Fourth Edition
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Places and Names...

- European colonists and phonetic errors:
 - Wade-Giles System: Peking, Canton, Tientsin
- Communist regime's replacement of foreign version of place names with *pinyin* system:
 - Based on Chinese character pronunciation in Northern Mandarin
 - Became the standard: Beijing, Guangzhou, Tianjin
- Chinese linguistic diversity: many languages and dialects

A Geopolitical Realm

- Dominant China: area, population, economically and politically:
 - Chinese borders a legacy of external forces
 - Imperial past as unfinished business
- Other *political entities*:
 - Statehood is contested in some cases:
 - Taiwan: sovereignty recognized by most of the world, but not China
 - North Korea: as *failed state*

Environment and Population

- Tectonic risks to populations
 - Tectonics and earthquakes:
 - Himalayan interior
 - Pacific Ring of Fire
 - Japan's earthquake and *tsunami*, or seismic sea wave:
 - Destroyed densely populated coastal plains



Concept Caching:
Volcanic Mt. Fuji



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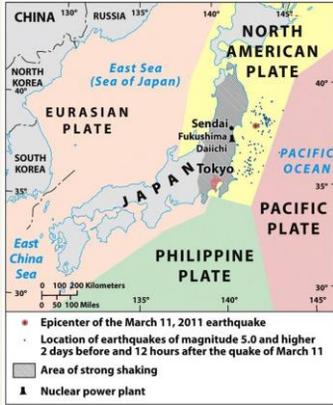


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Gambling with Nature...

- Frequency of earthquakes in the realm:
 - Pacific plate subducting beneath the North American Plate.
 - Japan sits atop the tip of the Pacific Plate.
 - Earthquake in the subduction zone released an enormous amount of energy that lifted seawater into a tsunami.
- Coast of Japan: danger zone
 - Vulnerability: presence of important economic and population clusters.

Environment and Population

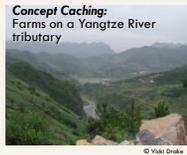
- Climate and population:
 - Western and northern sectors do not support substantial population clusters.
 - Most of East Asia's people found in easternmost third of the realm's territory:
 - Most densely populated cluster on Earth



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Environment and Population: *The Great Rivers*

- China is the product of four great river systems:
 - *Huang He and Yangzi/Chang Jiang*
 - Historic core area
 - *Pearl/Xi*
 - Hub of globalization
 - *Liao*
 - Mining and industry more than agriculture



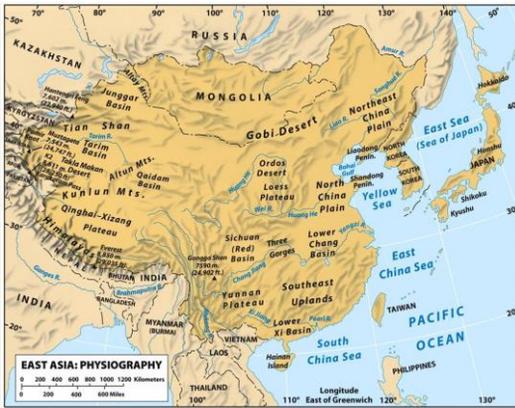


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Environment and Population: *Along the Coast*

- Pacific margin:
 - Peninsulas
 - Korean Peninsula as near-bridge
 - Liaodong and Shandong peninsulas of China
 - Islands
 - Japan
 - Environmental range of its islands
 - Taiwan
 - China's Hainan
 - Myriad smaller islands of East and South China Seas

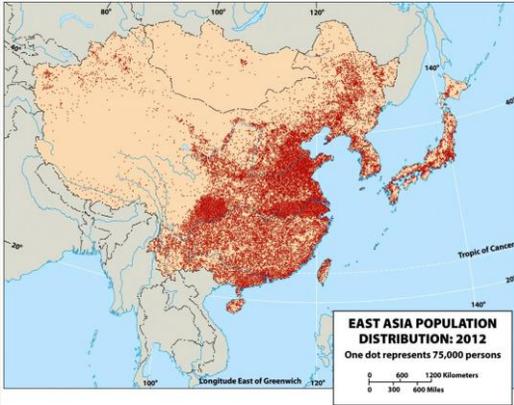


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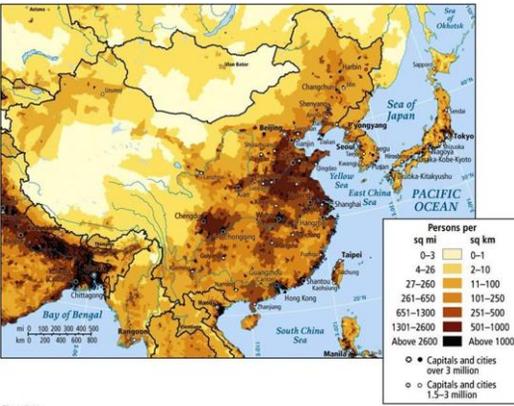


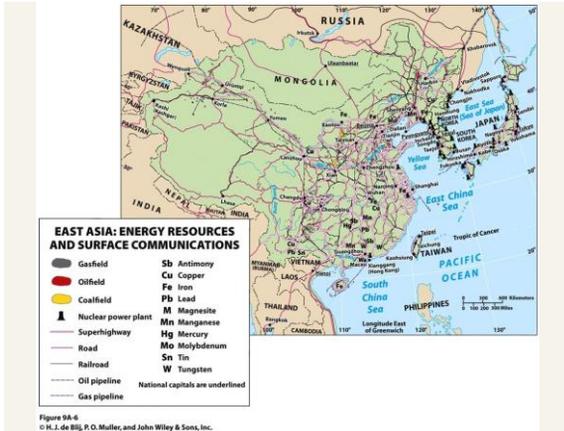
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Environment and Population: Resources of East Asia

- Scale of population and its demands on resources:
- Demand and the global marketplace:
 - Commodity booms all over the world
 - Biggest customers: Japan and China:
 - Driven by their economic development of industry and energy
- Environmental costs



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Unfolding the Cultural Map: Ancient China

- An independent culture hearth and location of *state formation*:
- Ancient China: its plains and rivers:
 - Political history of *dynasties*, as rulers came from same line of male descent
 - Not the product of one dominant culture, but forged from numerous cultures in several areas
 - *Neolithic* period cultures specialized in skills and arts that diffused

Unfolding the Cultural Map: *Beyond the River Basins*

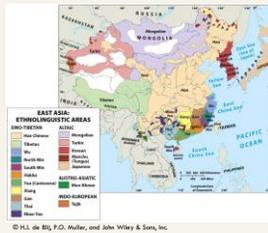
- North China Plain: diffusion of influence
 - Korean Peninsula
 - Chinese and Korean formed political partnership.
 - But, also China imposed its regional supremacy.
 - Authority was undermined by European and Japanese interests.
 - Japan
 - Borrowed heavily from Chinese culture:
 - Architectural styles, planning, legal and writing systems came from China.
 - Buddhism and *Confucianism* matured in China.

Confucius...

- Influential philosopher and teacher
- Revolutionary ideas extended to all levels of society
- Became a spiritual leader after his death
- Confucian Classics: Chinese civilization guide:
 - ▣ Education system, civil service, and respect for elders
 - ▣ Ideas were not well-suited for a China open to the world:
 - Communist attack, but post-Mao resurgence

Unfolding the Cultural Map: Peoples of the East Asian Realm

- Cultural diversity of the realm:
 - ▣ Shaped by expansion and contractions of empire
 - ▣ Chinese core, surrounded by numerous others
 - Some links to other realms
 - ▣ Misleading Mandarin:
 - Language of the elites and educated
 - United by standard Chinese writing



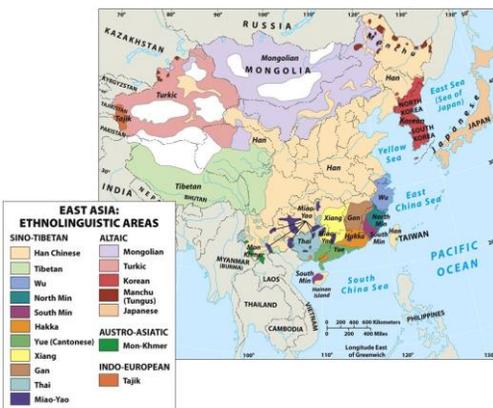


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China's Historical Role in East Asia: China in Disarray

- Arrival of colonial powers:
 - Economic disintegration via cheap European goods
 - Destruction of Chinese cultural life with opium
 - Forced concessions and leases for Europeans
 - **Extraterritoriality** in effect
- Boxer Rebellion: roaming revolutionaries killed foreigners and collaborators.



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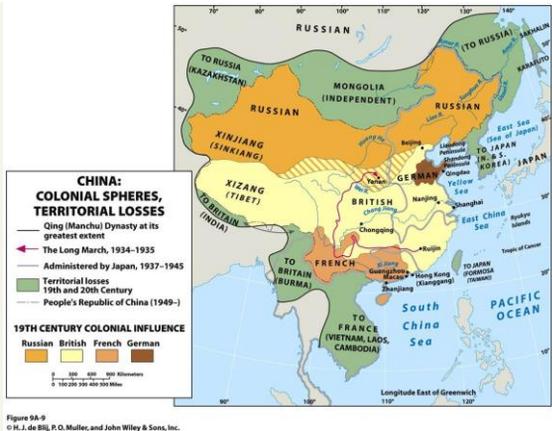


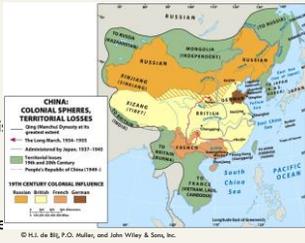
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Extraterritoriality...

- European forced China to accept European doctrine of international law: **extraterritoriality**:
 - Foreign states and representatives are immune from the jurisdiction of the country they are based in.
- European, Russian, and Japanese invaders established treaty ports:
 - Extraterritorial enclaves under unequal treaties enforced by gunboat diplomacy and exempt from Chinese law.
 - Best areas were made inaccessible to Chinese citizens.

China's Historical Role in East Asia: *Revolutionary China*

- Nationalist movement:
 - Overthrow the weak Qing Dynasty
 - Difficulty in imposing new order on chaos
- Cooperation with communists in 1920s:
 - Turned against one another
 - Long March: formative event in communist Chinese memory

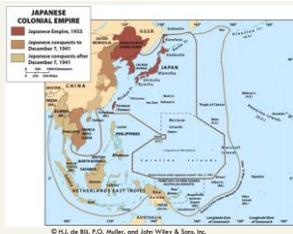


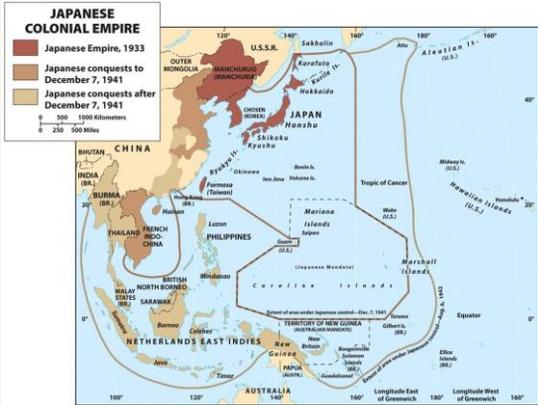
Japan's Historical Role in East Asia: *From Isolationism to Imperialism*

- Japan's *isolationism* policy:
 - No foreign influence, no foreign travel, and no foreigners
- Meiji Restoration and change in foreign policy:
 - Aimed at rapid modernization of Western model
 - Looked to Britain for guidance:
 - Changed capital to Edo, renamed Tokyo
 - **Modernization** built on Japanese cultural traditions with new technologies, not **Westernization** exactly

Japan's Historical Role in East Asia: *Japan in China*

- Japanese Imperialism followed modernization:
 - Territorial expansion and annexation until its height in World War II
- East Asian imperial struggles:
 - Japan exposed Chinese weakness, which fueled a drive for change within
 - Led to war with China, which split it further





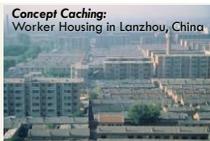
Postwar East Asia: Communist China

- Post-WWII: resumption of Chinese civil war:
 - Eventually, Nationalists fled to Taiwan and Communists “won.”
- Communist overhaul:
 - Targeted weaknesses: built dams and levees; reduced hunger; improved health; encouraged literacy
 - Great Leap Forward: colossal error
 - Labor-intensive industrialization led to mass starvations, murders or forced labor exhaustion.
 - Lack of population policy led to population explosion.

Postwar East Asia: Communist China

- Communist overhaul:
 - Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution: calamity
 - Campaign against elitism
 - Youth organized into Red Guards:
 - Ordered to attack “bourgeois” elements and “opponents” of the system

Concept Caching:
Worker Housing in Lanzhou, China



- Led to anarchy, terror, and economic paralysis
- China’s intellectuals, elderly, moderate leaders, teachers, and older revolutionaries were killed or tortured

Postwar East Asia: *Japan's Defeat and Recovery*

- WWII expansion stopped by U.S. nuclear bombs.
- Japanese surrender:
 - Japan forced to accept a new constitution.
 - Emperor had to step down.
- Efforts to constrain Japanese expansion urges:
 - Territorial adjustments imposed.
 - Could not spend more than 1% of GDP on military.
 - Japan forced to accept U.S. troops on its soil.
- Constraints induced a shift in focus to economic prowess.

East Asia's Economic Transformation: *Japan's Economic Miracle*

- Accelerated economy recovery:
 - Industrial giant, technological pacesetter
 - Fully urbanized and affluent society
 - Political power
- Stalled economy:
 - Lost its dynamism and momentum



- Adept at emulating the West:
 - Automobiles, consumer electronics, and high-technology products

East Asia's Economic Transformation: *The Asian Tigers*

- **Asian Tigers:** Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore
 - Similar strategies as Japan:
 - Rapid industrialization, foreign investment, and export processing zones for **high value-added goods**
- Became trading nations oriented to rich Western markets and now have some of world's largest ports

East Asia's Economic Transformation: The Chinese Economic Miracle

- Pragmatists: politically and administratively communist but open economically to free-market forces:
 - Foreign investment, manufacturing and exports, low wages, and workforce training
 - Political stability with tight government control
- Remarkable growth with a country of more than 1 billion people



Geopolitics in East Asia: Sino-Japanese Relations

- Diplomatic relations strained by clashing interests, historical memory, and cultural friction
- Flashpoint:
 - Senkaku Islands in East China Sea
 - Seized by Japan, claimed by both China and Taiwan
 - Matter of national pride, but also of access to territorial waters that may include oil and gas deposits





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Geopolitics in East Asia: *The Korea Factor*

- Cold War division into North and South:
 - Different sides that grew apart over the intervening years
- Wider dimensions:
 - North Korea's nuclear capability
 - Japan and South Korea opposed to North Korean regime
 - China's neutrality as convenient strategy against Japan or U.S.
 - Also used by North Korea at times



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Geopolitics in East Asia *Taiwan: The Other China*

- "Republic of China" as China's "legitimate" government:
 - Received aid from the United States and a seat in the UN.
 - Achieved economic growth.
- Political changes:
 - U.S.-China relations affected by Taiwan's status.
 - Countries have made pragmatist economic moves.
- Contentious integration:
 - Growth and geographic adjacency need cooperation.
 - Many Taiwanese live and work in China for Taiwanese businesses.
