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Acronyms

ADIZ	Air Defense Identification Zone
AWF	Asian Women's Fund
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone (the 4 km wide strip of land between North and South Korea)
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea or North Korea
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
GDP	Gross Domestic Product (the value of goods and services produced in a country in a year)
KMT	Kuomintang or Nationalist Party (in China between 1912 and 1949 and in Taiwan from 1949)
MITI/METI	Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry, which became the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
OECD	Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation
PCA	Permanent Court of Arbitration
PLA	People's Liberation Army (the armed forces of the People's Republic of China)
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRC	People's Republic of China
MRT	Mass Transport Railway (Hong Kong's transit system)
ROC	Republic of China (Taiwan)
ROK	Republic of Korea or South Korea
SAR	Special Administrative Region of China—Hong Kong and Macau
SCAP	Supreme Command of Allied Powers
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SME	Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SOE	State-Owned Enterprises
STDM	Sociedade de Turismo e Diversões de Macau or Macau Travel and Amusement Company
TEAM	Traditional East Asian Medicine
TRA	Taiwan Relations Act
THAAD	Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense system
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WHO	World Health Organization

1 Introduction

Introducing East Asia: History, Politics, Economy and Society seeks to introduce readers to one of the most exciting and important regions in the world. The Chinese, Korean and Japanese cultures are among the oldest in the world, dating back over 3,000 years. For centuries, China was the world's most innovative country, responsible for one-quarter of estimated global GDP in the decades before the arrival of Europeans in the region. The Chinese introduced the world to gun powder, the rudder, moveable type, the compass and paper making, to name just a few Chinese inventions. Korean early contributions include the *ondol*, a famous underground heating system created 2,500 years ago and still in use today, green celadon pottery, moveable metal-type printing and one of the world's first astronomical observatories. A Japanese noblewoman wrote the world's first novel (*The Tale of Genji* by Murasaki Shikibu in around A.D. 1000). Japanese martial arts, including karate, judo, jujitsu, kendo and aikido, all began during Japanese medieval times when the samurai had to be prepared to fight.

East Asia is home to several of the world's dominant religions. Buddhism began in India but later took root in all the countries of East Asia. Confucianism, based on the writings of Confucius, a Chinese philosopher from 6th century B.C., is an ethical philosophy that remains dominant across the entire East Asian region. Daoism, founded by the Chinese philosopher Laozi, who was a contemporary of Confucius, has 20 million followers across China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau. Socially and culturally, East Asia is diverse and rich. Understanding the interaction of many influences and forces, perceiving the historical and cultural roots of contemporary East Asia and recognizing the complex interactions between the peoples and the nations are, as the book shows, fundamental to making sense of 21st-century East Asia.

China, Japan and South Korea have complicated and interwoven histories. Their societies have intersected over the centuries in peace and in war, resulting in both cultural closeness and outrage and anger. The ascendancy of Japanese imperialism in the late 19th century damaged established relationships, and World War II effectively ended them. Japan's dreams of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (an imperialist Japanese concept promoting a self-sufficient group of Asian countries led by Japan) died at the end of World War II, when East Asia was in ruins. Japan, the regional military and industrial superpower, had been ravaged by a disastrous and losing war. Citizens struggled to survive on the streets of cities destroyed by Allied bombs, including the only nuclear weapons ever exploded in wartime. China collapsed into political chaos and civil war. The Chinese Communist Party drove the Nationalist forces to a final fortress on the island of Taiwan while in 1949 establishing the People's Republic of China on the mainland. Korea, finally freed from Japanese control, soon stood occupied by American and Allied troops in the South and by the Soviet soldiers in the North. The Korean peninsula became the front line of the most frightening and dangerous

conflict on the planet: the nuclear-based Cold War standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Hong Kong, the United Kingdom's commercial jewel in the Far East and Europe's primary entrance point to China, had been overrun by Japanese forces in 1941–1942. Liberated, it raced to rebuild during the political and economic uncertainties of the post-war period. The Japanese threat had been beaten back, and in most of the world, East Asia faded into the background. Based on fanciful notions of Asian exoticism and pre-modern cultures, the uniqueness of the Far East intrigued Westerners, but these images created false impressions about the reality of economic, social and cultural development in the region.

Skip forward to the early decades of the 21st century. With two of the world's three largest economies, East Asia is now the globe's most economically powerful region, producing much of the hardware and software that sustains the global digital economy. China's industrial machinery has a huge demand for natural resources; its manufacturers fill stores, homes and industrial plants around the world. Taiwan, a struggling agrarian state only 40 years ago, is an electronics powerhouse with an increasingly prosperous population, while Japan, having flirted in the 1980s with the possibility of becoming the world's largest economy, remains one of the most technologically innovative places on the planet. Japan is also leading the industrial nations through the uncertain transition to the realities of the post-industrial, environmentally aware and rapidly ageing world. China now has the world's second largest economy to go with the world's largest population (although India's population is growing fast and due to overtake China's by 2030). With its growing middle class now offsetting the persistent poverty of the country's declining rural population, China's economic and political presence is expanding across Asia and Africa as the country competes with the United States to be the world's most dominant economic power. Like China, South Korea is enjoying the prosperity of a creative and globally competitive economy.

Post-World War II transformations propelled East Asia into global prominence, but the transformation has been far from flawless and remains incomplete. After prospering for two decades from the economic resurgence of China, the city-state of Hong Kong is struggling to maintain a modicum of autonomy in the face of Chinese control; the streets of the city have become the front lines of the global pro-democracy movement. The Korean peninsula remains locked in the painful legacy of the Cold War, with North Korea a rogue pariah state in the grasp of a brutal dictatorship. Although intensive economic integration is slowly offsetting decades of ill-will and animosity in the region, historical memories run deep and strong, and East Asia has wrestled with the challenge of setting aside the tensions of the immediate post-World War II era. Tensions between South Korea and China with Japan continue to flare up regularly.

In spite of these challenges, the world has slowly started to appreciate the region's massive investments that now drive numerous resource and industrial economies, influence international public affairs, share popular culture through exports of food, animation, video games and clothing styles and exert powerful influences over the lives of people around the planet.

Today, East Asia is no longer hidden behind a wall of mystery and intrigue. While some areas are inaccessible—breaching the intricacies of China's political system and the nature of internal opposition forces remains a formidable challenge—Japan, North Korea, South Korea, China (including Hong Kong and Macau) and Taiwan have attracted increasing academic, business and government interest. Western popular culture flows into the region, and East Asian influence filters out internationally.

Despite the West's growing appreciation and increasing interest in East Asia, global understanding of the region remains woefully weak. The international appetite for Chinese

food, sushi and, now, Korean food has created a culinary fascination with the region that, sadly, does not penetrate deeply into the global consciousness. The region remains off the beaten track for Western tourists and student travellers. Although interest is growing, only a small number of outsiders have visited the area. Few people of non-East Asian ancestry can speak Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese or Korean—even as over half a billion regional residents are actively learning English. Conversely, the vast Asian diaspora, particularly from China, has an outsized economic impact on countries around the world. Indeed, if the Chinese population outside mainland China was a single national economy, it would be the third largest and one of the most dynamic in the world.

Westerners know little about the nuances of East Asian national politics, business and society. Even a long-standing leader, such as former Prime Minister Abe of Japan, is not well known internationally. The strong man of China, Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the President of the People's Republic of China (PRC), is better known, and increasingly feared, but he remains a global enigma. Commercially, core East Asian brands are now ubiquitous (e.g. Huawei, Toyota, Alibaba, Samsung, Toshiba, Hyundai, Taiwan Semiconductor, LG Electronics, Alibaba, Tencent and Sony). Yet the complex interactions between East Nations countries and the ebbs and flows of East Asian business and technological innovation are typically understood only superficially. Other dimensions of East Asian society are also little understood outside the region: striking demographic transitions like the dramatic ageing of Japan and China, the rise of East Asia's world-class cities, rapid cultural evolution and the area's swiftly changing role in global affairs. East Asia is a major international force. Developing an understanding of the foundations of East Asia—the area's history, cultures, politics, economics

Introducing East Asia: History, Politics, Economy and Society explores three core and interrelated elements: the evolution and character of the individual nations and regions of East Asia (China, Japan, South Korea, North Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau), the connections and conflicts within the East Asian region and the emergence of the region as a global powerhouse. The interplay of culture, nation, region and global force is crucial to the understanding of the region and, more broadly, to the global dynamics of the 21st century.

Exploring East Asia is fascinating and important on its own merits. This is a dynamic and culturally rich region with complex national histories, but it is also a region of immense and growing global significance, certain to be at the centre of major political, diplomatic, economic and social developments for the next 50 years and beyond. It is important, finally, to approach East Asia on its own terms, not as a region defined, experienced and shaped by Western influences but as a network of cultures, nations and histories that only rather late in its evolution intersected with European and North American empires. This volume seeks to explain the region from the inside out, understanding culture and histories that shaped the peoples of the area and the interplay of nations that created the diversity, intensity and creativity of contemporary East Asia.

Learning about and from East Asia begins with human settlement and with the establishment of regions with unique cultures that, long before outsiders arrived, developed, fought, conquered and shaped each other. Studying East Asia requires, intellectually, a mental shift of the globe, moving Europe and North America from the centre of the map and restoring East Asia to its long prominent role as the most dynamic and creative force in the world. This shift does not diminish the importance or impact of Europe's colonial powers or American economic and military expansion. Rather it allows this region to be seen as part of a complex process of social, political and economic change. East Asia has evolved a great deal over the past centuries, and it is changing still. As the world moves into a century of technological, demographic, economic and social uncertainty, it is abundantly clear that East Asia will feature prominently in the transitions and transformations that lie ahead.

2 China (People's Republic of China)

Introduction

Over the past 40 years, China has transformed itself from a developing country to one of the world's greatest economies. The shift towards state-managed capitalism brought about a dramatic increase in the size of the Chinese middle class, a rise in per capita incomes and an improvement in people's quality of life, particularly in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and the coastal cities. The country raised 400 million people out of abject poverty, one of the fastest such transformations in world history. China's economic rise sparked a global economic boom, as the country produced manufactured goods for international consumers and purchased minerals, lumber, foodstuffs, oil and gas and other supplies from around the world. The re-integration of China into the global economy has had transformative effects both inside the country and internationally, upsetting the global order. This profound change in China represented not the standard transition from a developing to a developed country but the re-emergence of the country as a global superpower. As this chapter demonstrates, for most of its long history, China was, in fact, the world's largest economy and one of the most advanced and sophisticated civilizations. China brought the world major developments in science and technology, art, architecture, literature, writing systems, government systems, philosophy and religion.

China, officially the People's Republic of China (PRC), has a land area of 9.6 million km², making it slightly bigger than the United States and the third largest country in the world after Russia and Canada. With about 7 percent of the world's land area, China is home to 20 percent of the world's population. Its population of almost 1.4 billion people is the largest in the world but will soon slide into second place behind India. The vast majority of that population lives in the eastern plains and along China's coastline. The country is geographically diverse and mountainous, particularly in the west, with high plateaus and desert areas. China's rivers, including the Yellow and Yangzi rivers, flow eastward from the high mountains into the plains and on to the China Sea. China shares a land border with 14 different countries: Mongolia to the north; North Korea to the east; Russia to the northeast; Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to the northwest; Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal and Bhutan to the west and southwest; and Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar to the south. China has 23 provinces, which are shown in Figure 2.1.



Figure 2.1 Administrative map of China.

Early Chinese history: 1600 B.C.–A.D. 1368

Chinese history reaches back to the Neolithic period, over 5,000 years ago. See Textbox 2.1 for a list of dynasties that ruled China from 1600 B.C. to 1911. The first dynasty for which there is archaeological and documentary evidence was the Shang dynasty, which ruled from approximately 1600 to 1046 B.C. Long before anywhere else in the world, the Shang fashioned weapons and containers from bronze and used a formal writing system. In the intellectual ferment of the Zhou dynasty (1047–221 B.C.) that followed the Shang, two major thinkers emerged: Laozi, a philosopher and founder of Daoism, and Confucius

(see Chapter 8), a philosopher whose system of ethics for government and moral code for society still influence thought and behaviour across East Asia.

Textbox 2.1 Different periods in Chinese history

- Shang dynasty (1600–1046 B.C.)
- Zhou dynasty (1047–221 B.C.)
- Qin dynasty (221–206 B.C.)
- Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220)
- Jin dynasty (265–420)
 - Sixteen Kingdoms or dynasties (304–409)
- Southern and Northern Dynasties (420–589)
- Sui dynasty (581–618)
- Tang dynasty (618–907)
- Five dynasties and 10 kingdoms (907–960)
- Song dynasty (960–1279)
 - Jin dynasty in the north (1115–1234)
- Yuan dynasty (1279–1368) (Mongol)
- Ming dynasty (1368–1644)
- Qing dynasty (1644–1911) (Manchu)

The kings of the Zhou dynasty were the first to use the political and religious doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven, the belief that a just ruler is given a blessing to rule directly from heaven. If a ruler is overthrown, he loses that mandate; if natural disasters occur, heaven must be displeased with the ruler. This belief in the Mandate of Heaven explains why public revolts occurred after natural disasters. People believed that the ruler had lost his mandate, an approach that continued for the next two millennia over various dynasties.

The short-lived Qin dynasty (221–206 B.C.) marked the beginning of China's imperial (relating to an empire or emperor) system, which, remarkably, lasted until 1912. Under Qin Shi Huangdi, the first emperor, China was united and authority centralized. The newly created central government developed infrastructure such as roads, canals and the beginnings of what would become the Great Wall of China. The Qin also introduced a standard currency and standardized weights and measures. The equally significant and longer lasting Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220) followed. These four centuries witnessed enhanced economic growth and prosperity. Education, literature and philosophy flourished. Major progress was made in science and technology in fields as diverse as papermaking, the development of the rudder to steer ships and the creation of a basic seismometer to measure earthquakes. Exploration and trade also expanded. The Han built trade networks throughout what is now Central Asia, India and Pakistan, all the

Three Kingdoms was extremely violent, with each kingdom's emperor claiming control over the rest of China and willing to fight battles to maintain or extend that control.

China was eventually briefly reunified under the Jin dynasty (266–420), China's second imperial dynasty, but the reunification did not last long. A series of rebellions led by ethnic tribal groups, referred to as the Uprising of the Five Barbarians, overthrew the Jin dynasty and established their own kingdoms in the north. Leaders of four of these ethnic groups would divide northern China into a number of independent kingdoms, named the Sixteen Kingdoms. Despite losing much of its northern territory, the Jin maintained control of southern China, with their capital near modern day Nanjing, for another century.

After the end of the Jin dynasty in A.D. 420, China was divided in an era known as the Southern and Northern Dynasties period (420–589). The south was ruled by four brief dynasties (Song, Zi, Liang and Chen), while the north's 16 small kingdoms were separately unified by the Tuoba, a northern ethnic group, under the North Wei dynasty, which lasted until 534. Although this was a time of great turmoil, war and chaos, it was also one of technological and scientific advancement in medicine, mathematics, cartography and astronomy. The stirrup, invented in the Jin dynasty, made the use of cavalry in war possible. Buddhism and Daoism spread throughout the north and south.

In 589, Emperor Wen of the Sui dynasty united China again. Other than a short time under the Jin, this was the first time China had been unified after centuries of internal warfare. Although the Sui dynasty lasted less than 40 years, it was of considerable importance. The Sui put ethnic Chinese back in control of the whole of China and *sinicized* (made Chinese), the ethnic minorities in the north. Under Sui rule, numerous initiatives were made to reduce economic inequality by improving agriculture and developing infrastructure, resulting in increased population growth. The Sui undertook mega projects such as building the city of Luoyang as an eastern capital, extending the Great Wall and constructing the Grand Canal, the oldest artificial river in the world. Built to move grain from agricultural areas to Beijing and to facilitate military movements, the Grand Canal transported goods and people for hundreds of years. Now a UNESCO world heritage site, the Grand Canal stretches 1,776 km from Beijing through Tianjin and four provinces to Hangzhou (see Figure 2.2). Although impressive, the reforms and construction projects, along with ongoing military campaigns to consolidate the country, eventually exceeded what the country could support. Reeling from revolts against heavy taxes and labour conscription and defeated after invading the Goguryeo, one of the Three Kingdoms of Korea, the dynasty finally fell.

As the Sui empire collapsed, the Li family seized power, founding the Tang dynasty (618–907), which was to become an important Chinese dynasty. (Interestingly, the rule was interrupted by a brief inter-regnum between 690 and 705, when Empress Wu Zetian took the throne, becoming the only female monarch.) The first half of the Tang dynasty was generally a time of peace and prosperity. Scholar-officials were recruited through civil service exams, creating a stable civil service, a new legal code was implemented, attempts were made at obtaining an accurate census and a new tax system was put in place. Buddhism, which had grown in popularity under the Sui dynasty, became a significant force in Chinese culture until it was banned by Emperor Wuzong in the 840s. Art, literature and poetry flourished, and many famous Chinese poets and painters lived during the Tang dynasty. Wood block printing was also developed at this time. Sometimes referred to as a golden age of Chinese culture, the Tang dynasty had influence beyond that of previous Chinese dynasties, extending further west and expanding to Japan, Korea and India. Using the Silk trade routes, China traded silk, spices and jade for ivory, gold and other treasures from the Middle East, India, Persia and Central Asia. In the second half of the Tang dynasty, centralized authority declined,

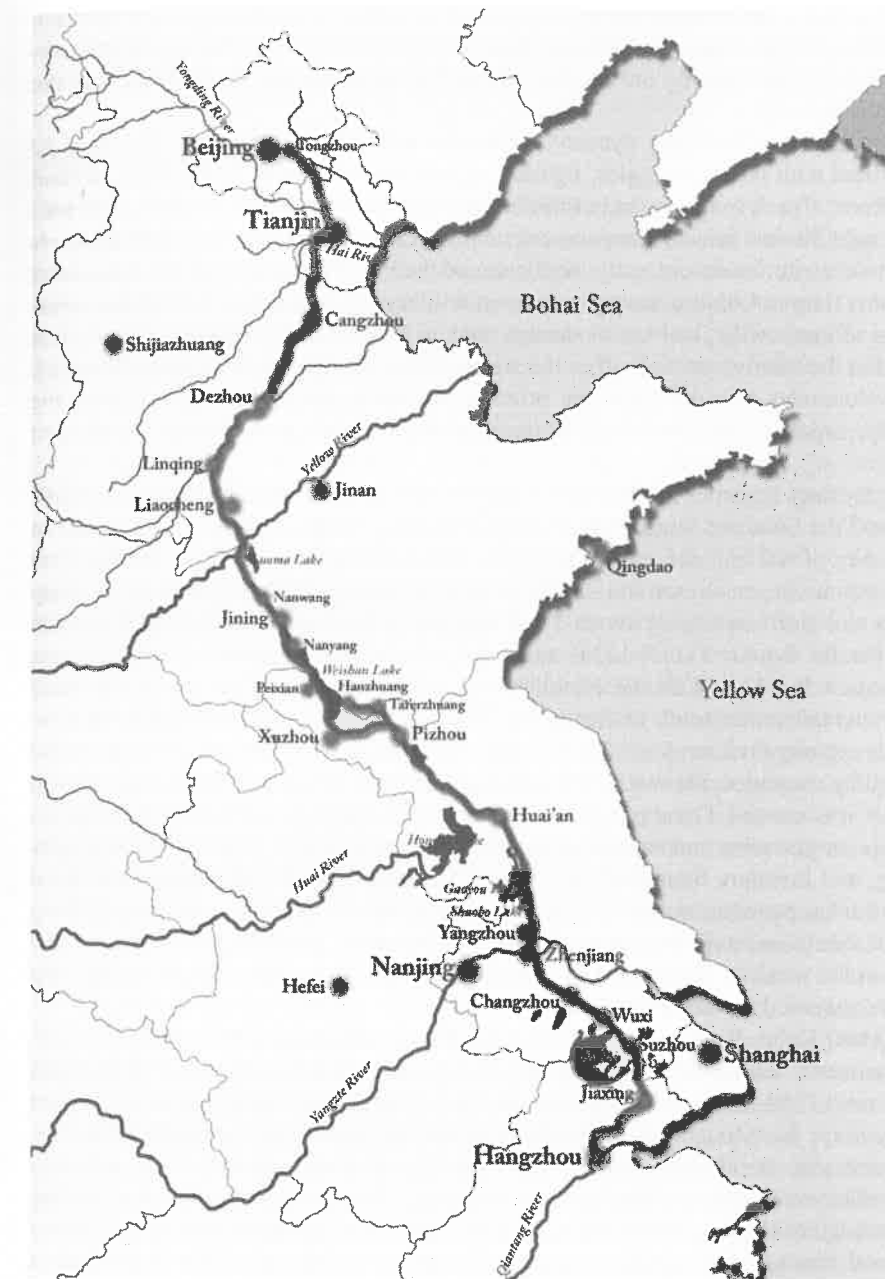


Figure 2.2 Modern course of the Grand Canal of China.

