

**POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS
CHANGE AND CONTINUITY OVER TIME
OLD CHOSŎN 194 BCE- UNIFIED SILLA 935 CE**

GRADES: High School 9-12

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SUBJECT: Korean History

TIME REQUIRED: One to two class periods

OBJECTIVES:

1. Recognize key historical political events of the Old Chosŏn, Three Kingdom Period and Unified Silla Period.
2. Recognize the changing role of religion in Korea.
3. Understand the relationship of China and Korea.
4. Analyze how the political and religious structure of Korea changed over time.

STANDARDS:

Common Core:

RI 1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what text says

RH2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source

W1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

WHST 1 Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content*.

WHST 9 Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, research

WHST 10 Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-related specific tasks

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- Each student will receive three readings. One per time period
- Each students will receive a review matrix
- Each student will receive a brainstorm writing matrix

BACKGROUND:

This curriculum is designed to help students develop an understanding of political and religious

change and continuity over time during the time period of 194 BCE- 935 CE. The activities consist of: three short readings with corresponding reading questions about each time period, a matrix to facilitate further analysis and group discussion and change and continuity over time writing exercise. The first reading begins with the emergence of small kingdoms and discussion about relations with its neighbor China. The reading describes how social structure reflected an aristocratic clan based structure and the religious structure was shamanism. As time continued, three large kingdoms emerged in the south: Paekche Silla, and Kaya and in the north: Koguryo. In the northern kingdoms, a pattern of conflict with China has continued over time. In this time period, Buddhism and Confucianism began spreading from China through the north to the south. The three groups also began competing with each other until the south unified under the Silla dynasty. With Silla unification, the south entered a period of peace and stability. Buddhism and Confucianism began to develop even greater into the political and social structures of Korea during this time. It is in this time that the construction of new temples and important buildings were erected. Due the general peace and lack of war, the people lived a more affluent life than previous years. Today achievements of the unified Silla dynasty are notable tourist attractions and important points in history.

PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce students to the Korean peninsula. Discuss the relationship of Korea in East Asia, where the people originated, and the nations that Korea was most likely to interact with during this time.
2. Distribute the three readings. Have students read each individually. In groups answers the questions at the end of each reading.
3. After all three readings are complete, have students work in groups to continue to build content knowledge on the three periods. Students should create detailed bullet points for each topic.
4. Students work individually using the Change and Continuity Over Time brainstorming matrix and then students write the essay. Prompt: *What changes and continuities emerged in politics and religion in early Korean history?*

EVALUATION:

Students will be assessed on the effort put forth on reading questions, review matrix and participation level in group discussion. The final essay can be graded using an attribution or holistic rubric.

ENRICHMENT:

Students can do online research on important historical locations/artifacts in Korea. Students will use the suggested topics and the given websites to begin research. They will create a typed mini-report that includes an analytical review and visuals. The following questions should be used to write the analytical review: 1. Describe the place/artifact 2. Where and when was it created? 3. Describe the significance of the place/artifact on the time period 4. What does this place/artifact mean to the study of Korean and world history?

Suggested Topics:

- Haeinsa Temple Janggyeong Panjeon, the Depositories for the *Tripitaka Koreana* Woodblocks

- King Muryong's tomb
- Seokguram Grotto and Bulguksa Temple
- Hwaseong Fortress
- Gochang, Hwasun and Ganghwa Dolmen Sites
- Royal Crowns of the Silla kingdom
- Gyeongju Historic Areas
- Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes
- Sculpture: Seated Maitreya, Three Kingdoms period, Gilt Bronze: The National Museum of Korea
- Sculpture: Standing Buddha, Unified Silla kingdom, Gilt Bronze: The National Museum of Korea.

Websites:

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): World Heritage Convention

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list>

National Museum of Korea

<http://www.museum.go.kr/main/index/index002.jsp>

RESOURCES:

Center for Educational Technologies. Wheeling Jesuit University, "Korea enigma" Last modified 4/28/2005. Accessed August 25, 2012.

Korean Overseas Information Service. *The Handbook of Korea*. Seoul, South Korea: Samhwa Printing Co., 1987.

Wright, Chris. *Korea: It's History & Culture*. Seoul, South Korea: Korean Overseas Information Services, 1996.

READING ONE: OLD CHOSŎN PERIOD (194-108 BC)

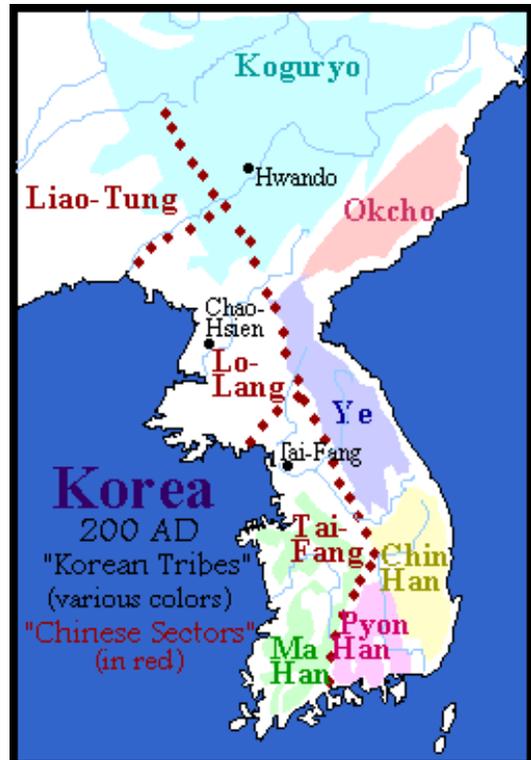
The Koreans are all descended from the same ethnic group most likely from a region North of China. At the time shown on this map, the Koreans were divided into a number of separate tribes, the strongest of which were the migratory hunter Koguryo tribes, which lived in the mountainous northern section of Korea. The three southern tribes, the Ma Han, the Pyon Han and the Chin Han, lived in stable communities dependent on agriculture in the fertile river and coastal plains of the south.

The Chinese conquered the area about 100 BC, and dominated the peoples of the western side of the peninsula. The strength of the Koguryo and the rugged mountainous terrain in which they lived, however, made it impossible for the Chinese to have any real control there. Consequently, the Koguryo developed a strong, independent state that continually challenged the Chinese, and eventually conquered and incorporated the Okcho and Ye tribes.¹

The social structure was led by a group of ruling elite and the kings were appointed by election from 2 or 3, or as many as 5 or 6, aristocratic families. The laws of the time were simple, emphasized patriarchal society and showed a high regard for individual human life and productivity.²

Shamanism was the religious practice and emerged as a way to understand the structure of the world. In Shamanism, all natural objects are thought to possess souls and everything is subject to the action of the spirits. The central role of the Shaman was to control natural events for man's benefit by exercising control over the spirits. They functioned as priests, healers and seers. They performed rituals invoking the gods to ensure rain and a good harvest. They performed exorcisms to drive out evil spirits and attempted to foresee the future of the nations.³

In Europe at this time, the Roman Empire was at its height. Alexander the Great was on his Asian expedition. In China, the Qin dynasty was building the Terra Cotta Warriors.



¹ Center for Educational Technologies. Wheeling Jesuit University, "Old Choson Period." Last modified 4/28/2005. Accessed August 25, 2012. <http://www.cotf.edu/ete/modules/korea/koldchoson.html>.

² Chris Wright, Korea: It's history & Culture, (Seoul, South Korea: Korean Overseas Information Services, 1996), Chap. 1-2.

³ Ibid.

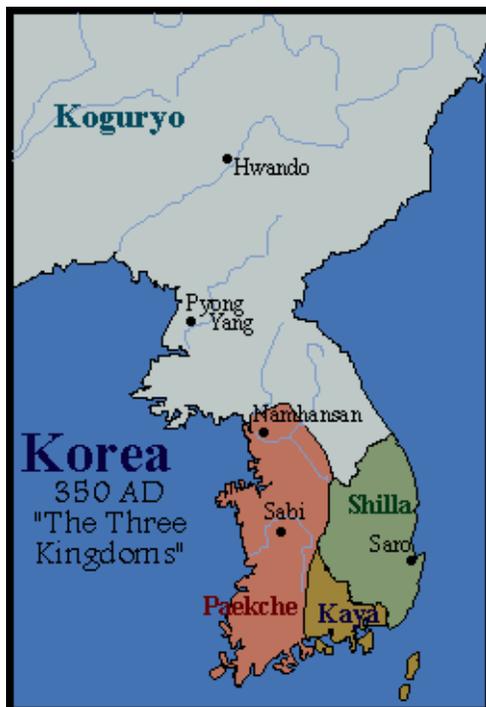
Questions:

1. Where did the Korea People originate?
2. What geographical barrier made Chinese influence on Korea difficult?
3. Describe the social structure of Korea during this time.
4. Describe the role of religion during this time.
5. What else was going on in the world at this time?

READING TWO: THE THREE KINGDOMS (300-57 BC)

The Koguryo tribes grew stronger and continued to fight against the Chinese. Dissolution of the Chinese Empire allowed the Koguryo to defeat the eastern remnants of the Empire around 313 AD. The Koguryo continued to expand westward, eventually conquering half of Manchuria. With the defeat of the Chinese, the Han tribes formed two new independent kingdoms: Paekche and Silla.

Koguryo eventually ran into the old core of the Chinese empire to the west. Unable to make further progress there, Koguryo turned its attention back to the south. Shortly after the time shown on this map, Koguryo pushed the kingdoms of Paekche and Silla down into the lower third of the peninsula.⁴



The administration and military structure of the three kingdoms was also related to the aristocratic system. For example, councils made major political decisions. The capital city was divided into special administrative districts. The countryside was divided into provinces, counties and districts, towns and villages. The governing position of each was determined by official rank.

The aristocratic system determined and reinforced a rigid social hierarchy in which commoner, low-born and slaves labored, with little or no reward, to fill the coffers of an aristocracy that permanently prepared for war. Compared with the overall social system, women of the period fared quite well. In Silla prior to 668 CE, women were accepted as full members of society, though without

opportunity and recognition in all aspects of society. In Silla and Koguryo, love marriages were accepted, though such marriages occurred mostly between commoners. However, in all kingdoms the social position of woman depended upon the status of her father, husband or son.⁵

The Koguryo dynasty was the first to adopt Buddhism in Chinese Translations as royal creed in 372CE; Paekche, the second in 384 CE; and Silla, the last in 528CE. The three states developed a state organization that adopted Confucianist and Buddhist structures placing the king at the top of society. The three kingdoms also began competing with each other for dominance in political and religious power. State leaders often used their Confucian and Buddhist state power in an effort to expand their territory. Later during this period, the Silla expanded and conquered the Kaya state and growing in power and began amassing great wealth.⁶

⁴ Center for Educational Technologies, Wheeling Jesuit University, "The Three Kingdoms." Last modified 4/28/2005. Accessed August 25, 2012. <http://www.cotf.edu/ete/modules/korea/k3kingdo>

⁵ Chris Wright, Korea: It's history & Culture, (Seoul, South Korea: Korean Overseas Information Services, 1996), Chap. 1-2.

⁶ Korean Overseas Information service, The Handbook of Korea, (Seoul, South Korea; Samhwa Printing Co., 1987) , 60.

In Europe at this time, the Roman Empire was struggling with civil conflict, and the first Christian Emperor was crowned. In India, the Gupta empire was in power and in China it was the Han dynasty.

Questions:

1. How did the northern tribe of Koguryo gain power?
2. Name the three new southern kingdoms?
3. How was the government system structured at this time?
4. Why do you think love marriages were accepted between commoners and not aristocratic individuals at this time?
5. What was the relationship between the three southern kingdoms?
6. How did leaders use Confucianism and Buddhism to strengthen their kingdoms?
7. What else was going on in the world at this time?

READING THREE: UNITED SILLA AND PARHAE (698-935 CE)

The resurgence of the Chinese Empire under the T'ang brought the Chinese and the Koreans back into conflict. T'ang armies destroyed the kingdoms of Paekche and Koguryo between 660 and 668 AD. Silla, which had been fighting against both Paekche and Koguryo, joined the T'ang army to help in the conquest. Afterwards, the T'ang wanted to rule the conquered kingdoms as separate military dependencies; Silla wanted to establish an independent unified state including all of Korea. Consequently, Silla and her ally ended up fighting each other. It took six years, but the tough Korean armies drove the Chinese out and incorporated most of the Korean peoples into a single, united nation for the first time. Prior to this unification, the ethnically related Korean tribes had grown apart because of different economic and political conditions. Subsequently, the tribes were united into a single, homogenous people with the same language and customs that, despite some periods of political upheaval, has persisted to modern times. Thus the formation of the Kingdom of Silla, which formally lasted from 668 to 935 AD, was a significant turning point in Korean history.⁷



The first hundred years of Silla's history were largely peaceful, and there was a great flowering of art and science.⁸ With this stability the people enjoyed an affluent life. With no war, there was an emphasis on building structures and learning. Buddhism was now at its height in the middle of the eighth century. The government attempted to establish an ideal Buddhist country by building many temples to promote Buddhism as the state religion. One of the most important construction sites was Seokguram Grotto and Pulguksa Temple. They also began the creation of printing of Buddhist scriptures on woodblocks.⁹ This practice would be refined and continued for many generations.

The northern portions of the old Koguryo domains later became part of the Chinese/Korean kingdom of Parhae. The capital of this nation was near the city of Kirin in Manchuria. Much of the nobility of Parhae derived from the old Koguryo leadership. When Parhae was destroyed in the fall of the T'ang dynasty in the mid 900s AD, most of the people of Korean ancestry and the lands south of the Yalu River joined the new Korean Kingdom of Koryo.

During this time, Europe slipped into the Dark Ages; the Abbasid Empire formed, grew, and invaded Spain and Italy. Feudalism was beginning in Europe with the Carolingian empire and the Tang empire was in power in China.

⁷ Center for Educational Technologies, . Wheeling Jesuit University, "United Silla and Parhae ." Last modified 4/28/2005. Accessed August 25, 2012.

⁸ Chris Wright, Korea: It's history & Culture, (Seoul, South Korea: Korean Overseas Information Services, 1996), Chap. 1-2.

⁹ Korean Overseas Information service, The Handbook of Korea, (Seoul, South Korea; Samhwa Printing Co., 1987) , 60.

Questions:

1. How did the Silla unite southern Korea?
2. Why was the unified Silla period more stable than previous periods?
3. Describe what happened to the Northern Kingdom of Parhae?
4. Why do you think Buddhism was emphasized even more at this time?
5. What else was going on in the world at this time?

REVIEW MATRIX

Take detailed bullet notes in each category.

	Old Chosŏn	The Three Kingdoms	Silla Period
Describe the time period.			
Describe the political structure, outside influences and their significance.			
Describe religious practice.			

Questions:

1. In which time period do you think was the greatest change in political structure?
What factors were responsible for this change?
2. In which time period do you think was the greatest change in religion?
What factors were responsible for this change?

WRITING BRAINSTORM: CHANGE AND CONTINUITY OVER TIME CHART
 Prompt: *What changes and continuities emerged in politics and religion in early Korean history?*

Introduction:		
Topic: identify the topic, the setting, and the era		
Thesis: answers the question and makes an argument		
Change	Early	Late
Political ----- Category		
Analysis		
Change	Early	Late
Religion ----- Category		
Analysis		
Continuity	Early	Late
Political/Religion ----- Category		
Analysis		
Conclusion: Re-state, Re-view, Re-emphasize Topic, Evidence, Thesis, Global/Historical Context		