Chinese Dynasties

● Necessary Info:
  ○ Mandate of Heaven:
    ■ Chinese Emperor divine right to rule; if things going poorly, Emperor lost favor of
      heaven and people will rebel
  ○ Class system
    ■ Chinese society consisted of 3 main classes (gentry, peasants, merchants)
      with merchants at the bottom
  ○ Confucianism
    ■ Filial Piety is a revered virtue of respect for one's parents, elders, and
      ancestors.
Chinese Dynasties (cont)

- Tang Dynasty
  - Continued civil service exam, entrenching Confucian values into everyday life
  - Built a massive and extensive tributary system of surrounding areas
  - revitalized the Silk Road trading silk, paper, and porcelain with Muslims in Middle East
  - capital of Chang’an was a prosperous city of over 1 million people
  - equal-field system earned loyalty of peasants and weakened wealthy landowners
  - golden age of poetry (Li Bo stressed freedom of spirit, love of nature while Du Fu emphasized social justice and suffering)
  - Empress Wu Zhao
  - monks like Xuanzang (who travelled to India) spread Buddhism in China (Buddhist monasteries grew wealthy and influential)
  - high taxes among farmers led to peasant rebellions and collapse of Tang Dynasty
Chinese Dynasties (cont)

- Song Dynasty
  - Most urban Chinese culture, beginning of modern China, strongest empire in the world at this time, but never successfully united China like the Tang
  - With emergence of rival Liao Dynasty and invasion by nomadic Khitan people the Song moved south to new capital of Hangzhou
  - Introduced rice from Champa (in Vietnam) that quickly ripened and allowed for two crops each year (population soared)
  - Began building junks (ships with four sails, a rudder, and strong enough to make long-distance trips at sea)
  - Effective centralized bureaucracy, elite families important locally, official must pass the Civil Service Exam, the mercantile class grew in power as they became wealthy
  - Confucianism remains the most important official philosophy, Neo-Confucianism added metaphysical answers to many Buddhist questions
  - Empire fell because they stopped emphasizing military and relied on wealth
  - Often hired N. tribes to defend China (Mongols take over)
The Mongols! (I can't seem to type that without an exclamation point)

- A Pastoral Society
- Unified Mongol tribes into the Great Mongol Nation
- Cultural patrons; artisans prized
- Funded advances in medicine and astronomy
- Construction projects promoted science and engineering
- Facilitated networks of exchange across Afro-Eurasian landmass
- Positive outlook on merchants
- Increased paper money backed by precious metals
- Ortogh: merchant associations
- Free use of relay stations
- Religious toleration with tax benefits for holy men
Chinese Dynasties and The Mongols! converge

- Yuan Dynasty (Mongols in China)
  - Eliminated the civil service exam in China
  - Did initiate many policies — especially under the rule of Khubilai Khan — that supported and helped the Chinese economy, as well as social and political life
  - gave strong support to the peasants and peasant economy of China through relief measures, decreased taxes, and a self-help organization comprising about 50 households under the direction of a village leader (like a farmers co-op or labor union)
  - embarked on a series of extraordinary public works projects throughout China, including the extension of the Grand Canal to Daidu (present-day Beijing), a vast postal-station system, and the building of a capital city in Daidu
  - artisanship reached new heights in the Mongol era
  - witnessed a golden age of Chinese theater and arts
Dar-al-Islam

- Cultural and economic unifying force in Eurasia and Africa.
- Islam provided social continuity during and after the rule of the caliphates
- Spread through military conquest, trade and missionary activity - Sufis most active missionaries
- Appealed to the poor due to charity focus and inclusion as spiritual equals
- Merchants influence over trade routes allowed Islam to spread throughout North Africa and the Indian Ocean basin.
- Islam stressed the value of knowledge - House of Wisdom; modern libraries; universities
- Translated Greek works of literature and teachings of Aristotle; other works from the ancient world survived due to Islam
- Art and architecture focus was on geometric patterns and calligraphy
- Period considered the Islamic Golden Age
Medieval Europe

- **Feudalism and Manorialism:**
  - King is well, king and bequeaths fiefs to Lords/Vassals, who in turn do the same thing to “lesser lords” and employ knights for protection and to provide to the king when needed in war.
  - Manorialism describes the relationship between a noble and his peasants in medieval Europe.

- The Crusades began tradition of trade and coexistence

- Economic boom will help growth of Europe through
  - Increasing agricultural technology
  - Increasing urban population
  - Increasing trade of luxury goods

- By the end of the period, movement away from Feudalism towards centralized power in the form of large monarchies.
The Americas

- Absence of large domesticated animals with the exception of the Andean domestication of llamas and alpacas
- No wheeled transport vehicles, hampered trade and cultural diffusion
- Lacked iron technology, though they could work with softer precious metals such as gold and silver
- Mayan
  - Understood astronomy and developed a solar-year calendar
  - Invented the concept of zero and developed the most sophisticated system of writing
  - Maya creation myth Popol Vuh reflected the central role of agriculture
- Aztecs
  - Capital city Tenochtitlan, built on a lake, where they developed the chinampa system
  - Warrior mentality and expansionist policy of exacting heavy taxes and captives
  - Empire built on tributary system
- Incas
  - Large class of bureaucrats with a ruling warrior elite
  - Extensive road system complete with rest areas, storage depots and suspension bridges