**Unit 7A Vocabulary: Muslim Gunpowder Empires**

**Akbar the Great** –a Mughal ruler and grandson of Babur who ruled from 1542 to 1605. He united Northern India by conquering neighboring Muslim and Hindu states. He is noted for his effective governing, support of the intellectual arts, promoting religious tolerance, halting the persecution of Hindus, and permitting Hindus to work in the government.

**janissaries** – originally slaves of the sultan and drawn from the people of conquered Christian territories, members of an elite force of soldiers in the Ottoman Empire that became a powerful political force within the Ottoman state.

**Mughal Empire** (“Mongols” Empire) - a Muslim-Indian Empire originally established by Asian nomads who, taking advantage of the growing weakness of the Gupta Empire, invaded the Indian subcontinent in the 16th century and established an empire that would last from 1526 to 1837. It would eventually become one of the so-called “Gunpowder Empires” of the era.

**Ottoman Empire** - one of the largest and longest lasting empires in history (623 years), it lasted from 1299 until the monarchy was abolished in 1922 and the nation of Turkey was established the following year. It was one of the “Gunpowder Empires” and it blocked all land routes to Europe by conquering the Byzantine capital at Constantinople. Europeans then had to find other ways to trade with Eastern countries.

**Safavid Empire** - one of the Islamic "gunpowder empires," along with the Ottoman and Mughal empires. They established the school of Shiite Islam as the official religion of their empire, marking one of the most important turning points in Muslim history. The Safavids ruled from 1501 to 1722 and at their height, expanded their control over all of modern Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and beyond.

**Shah** (“king” in Persian) - the title of the ruler of certain South Asian and Central Asian countries, especially [Persia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persia) (modern Iran).

**Sikhism** – a nonviolent religious ideology that blends elements of Buddhism, Hinduism and Sufism. The belief system is predominant in the Punjab region of India that straddles the border between Pakistan and India.

**Suleiman the Magnificent** -Sultan of the Ottoman Empire from 1520 to 1566 who presided over the apex of the Ottoman Empire’s military, political, and economic power. He is also known as "The Lawgiver" for his complete reconstruction of the Ottoman legal system. He annexed most of the Middle East in his conflict with the Safavids, as well as most of North Africa. Under his rule, the Ottoman fleet dominated the seas from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. In Eastern Europe, however, he failed to take Vienna, Austria during his siege of that city in 1529.

**Sultan -** the title of certain Muslim rulers who claimed almost full sovereignty without claiming the overall title of caliphate; a powerful governor of a Turkish-Muslim province within the caliphate.

**Sultanates** -Turkish-Muslim provinces ruled by a sultanate.

**Taj Mahal** -considered to be one of the most beautiful tombs in the world, 22 years in the making and located in Agra, India, it was built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan for his wife.

**Tamerlane (or Timur) -** a 14th century Muslim-Mongol conqueror who briefly restored the Mongol Empire established by Genghis Khan. He referred to himself as “the sword of Islam” and **c**laimed to be a descendent of Genghis Khan (he was probably a mix of Turkish and Mongolian ancestry). He conquered both Russia and Persia, burned Baghdad to the ground, and swept through northern India (butchering the inhabitants of Delhi and making a pyramid of their skulls). He then crushed the Ottomans at the Battle of Ankara, Anatolia in 1402, in which he briefly halted the expansion of their empire. His empire did not long survive after his death in 1405 because he rarely bothered to put any governmental structure in place after he destroyed the existing order.

**vizier –** a prime minister in a Muslim kingdom or empire.

**Unit 7B Vocabulary: Chinese Renaissance**

**foot-binding -** the custom of binding the feet of young girls painfully tight to prevent further growth. The tiny narrow feet were considered beautiful and thought to make a woman's movements more feminine and dainty. It was not until the early 20th century that the practice of foot-binding began dying out.

**Grand Canal** – located in China, the longest [canal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canal) or artificial [river](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River) in the world, reaching a total length of 1,104 miles. It helped further the economic market in China's urban centers throughout the ages.

**scholar-gentry –** a class of powerful, well-to-do people who enjoy a high social status, especially, civil servants appointed by the emperor of China to perform day-to-day governance of the Empire.

**Song Dynasty** – a Chinese dynasty that succeeded the Tang, lasting from 960 to 1279, that continued the Golden Age of Chinese culture. The period was marked by significant social and economic progress, including the first use of paper currency, standardized coins, the compass, gunpowder, and typography and noted for its outstanding scholars and poets.

**Tang Dynasty –** a Chinese dynasty that lasted from A.D. 618 – 907 and brought forth a period of peace and prosperity referred to as a Golden Age. The Tang restored order to China after the disunity earlier created because of the earlier Hun invasions that brought about the collapse of the Han dynasty. Under the Tang, China was reunited as peasant uprisings were put down and traditional feudal relationships were restored. The Tang expanded into Korea, Manchuria and parts of Central Asia, restored Confucian texts and civil service exams, established a census, and build public works.

**Unit 7C Vocabulary: Japan Reflects Chinese Culture**

**bushido** – the strict code of behavior followed by samurai warriors in Japan. Loosely analogous to the concept of [chivalry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chivalry) amongst the Medieval European knights of the Middle Ages.

**daimyo –** a Japanese feudal lord who commanded a private army of samurai.

**samurai –** professional warriors who served Japanese feudal lords.

**Shogun –** in feudal Japan, a supreme military commander who ruled in the name of the emperor.

 **Unit 7D Vocabulary: Mongol Empire - Yuan to Ming Dynasty**

**Chinggis Khan** – a Mongol leader who united the various Mongol tribes in the 13th century, made himself master of Mongolia, and then set out on a path of conquest, capturing Northern China, the city of Beijing and the Muslim states of Central Asia. His successors, including his grandson Kublai Kahn, would continue this military expansion, eventually establishing the largest uninterrupted land empire in all of world history.

**Kublai Khan** –a Mongol ruler and grandson of Ghengis Khan who reunited Northern and Southern China and established the Mongolian Yuan Dynasty over China.

**Ming Dynasty** – a Chinese dynasty that overthrew the Yuan Dynasty (Mongols) in 1368 and ruled until 1644, a 300 year period marked by peace and prosperity. Notable accomplishments during Ming rule were geographic expansion into Korea, Burma and Vietnam, the construction of the Forbidden City in Beijing, the explorations of Zheng He, and the beginning of early trade with Europeans along China’s coastal ports.

**Mongol Empire** – from their homeland in the steppes of eastern Central Asia, the nomadic Mongols established the largest uninterrupted land empire in history during the 13th and 14th centuries. It stretched from the Pacific Ocean to the Black Sea. Under the “Pax Mongolia,” people safely traded from one end of the empire to the other. The Mongols established their foreign rule over China under the Yuan dynasty and would rule China for about a century. The Mongols would also control Russia for 200 years, and assume control over much of the Middle East.

**Polo, Marco** – a European merchant from Venice who, in the 1270’s, journeyed along the Silk Road and visited China. The descriptions he wrote of his travels would inspire great curiosity among Europeans about Chinese culture and wealth.

**Yuan Dynasty** - a Mongol dynasty in China formally established by Kublai Khan in 1271 and lasting until 1368 when the Ming dynasty would finally restore Chinese control. It was the only foreign dynasty to rule over all of China (with key help from Chinese officials).

**Zheng He** – Chinese explorer who, beginning in 1405 (before Europeans began sailing beyond their borders), sailed to India and as far as Arabia and eastern Africa in order to expand China’s tribute system. His expeditions were notable for the sheer size of the fleets and the lengthy distances traveled. In 1433, after seven voyages, the Ming government would halt further