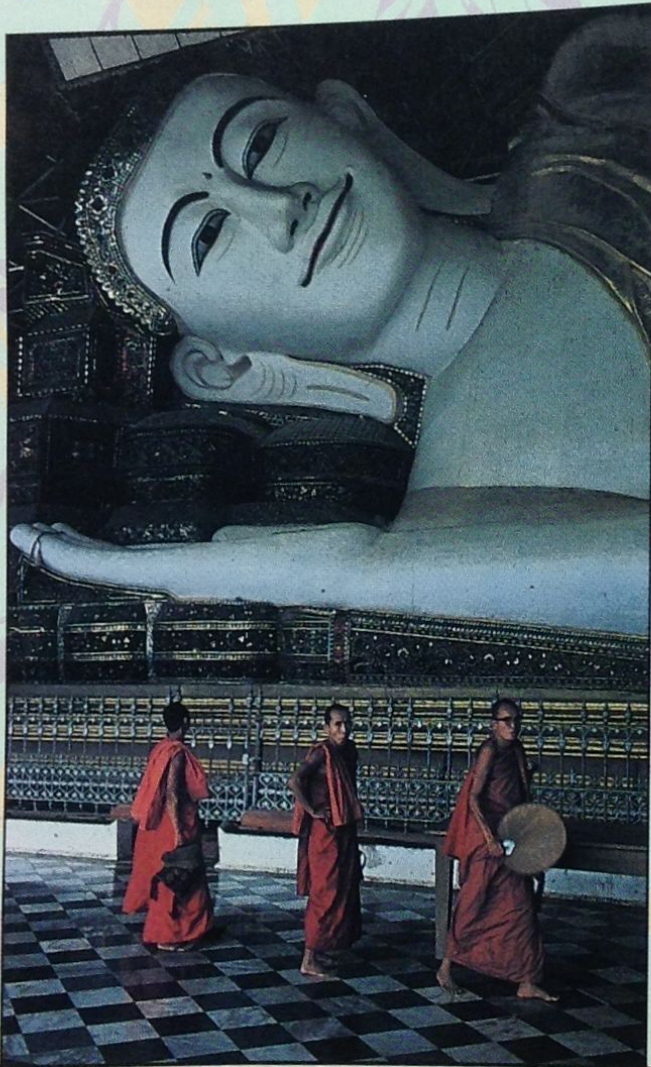


GEOGRAPHY AND HERITAGE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA



Buddha and Monks This smiling head of Buddha is part of a giant reclining figure. Buddhism, an important religion in Southeast Asia, was brought from South Asia by monks like those shown here as well as by merchants. Most parts of Southeast Asia are near major trading routes. **Interdependence** How did Buddhism link the peoples of Southeast Asia and South Asia?

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- 1 The Shape of the Land
- 2 Early Traditions
- 3 Patterns of Life

Pysit Charoenwongsa and Chester Gorman were in a race against time. Farmers at Ban Chiang in Thailand had uncovered ancient pottery, and they were selling pieces to art dealers. Pysit, a Thai museum official, and Gorman, an American professor, went to Ban Chiang to study the findings.

Some scientists said that Thailand had no ancient civilization to compare with those of China and Egypt. Pysit and Gorman, however, found evidence that it had.

They examined jars that were more than 5,000 years old. Embedded in the ancient pottery were rice husks, suggesting that early residents of Ban Chiang were rice farmers. Farming could have spread from Thailand to China rather than the other way around.

Soon, old theories suffered another blow. Pysit and Gorman dug up bronze bracelets dating from about 3600 B.C., before bronze was invented in the Middle East.

The discoveries at Ban Chiang convinced scientists that Thailand was a cradle of ancient civilization.

Local farmers also saw their village in a new light. "The pottery was not just something to sell to rich foreigners," said one farmer. "What was in our soil held great meaning for our country."

CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE

Discoveries like those at Ban Chiang proved that the people of Southeast Asia had developed their own advanced cultures. Much later, they absorbed ideas from India and China and adapted these ideas to fit their own societies.

As you read, look for these chapter themes:

- ▶ Geography has contributed to the immense cultural diversity of Southeast Asia.
- ▶ The ancient kingdoms of Southeast Asia borrowed ideas from other civilizations and adapted them to their own needs.
- ▶ Hinduism, Buddhism, and other religions had a major impact on the cultures of Southeast Asia.
- ▶ Agriculture has helped shape the patterns of life in rural Southeast Asia.

Literature Connections

In this chapter, you will encounter passages from the following works.

"The King and the Poor Boy," Cambodian folk story

"All the Male Heroes Bowed," Vietnamese poem

"A Farmer's Calendar," Vietnamese poem

For other suggestions, see Connections with Literature, pages 804–808.

1

THE SHAPE OF THE LAND

FIND OUT

How have landforms and climate influenced the cultures of Southeast Asia?

What are the major resources of Southeast Asia?

Why is Southeast Asia an ethnically diverse region?

Vocabulary archipelago

“God has made the earth and the seas, has divided the earth among mankind, and given the sea in common. It is a thing unheard of that anyone should be forbidden to sail the seas.”

The ruler of Makassar (muh KAS er), an Indonesian seaport, spoke these words in the 1600s. For many people living among the islands of Southeast Asia, the “common” seas have served as highways for trade and travel. Yet millions of people in this vast region never see the ocean. They spend their lives among the rugged mountains on the mainland. This contrast shows an important division between the two main regions of Southeast Asia: mainland and islands.

Southeast Asia lies east of India and south of China. It consists of a giant peninsula and a mass of islands. For a thousand years or more, the Chinese called the region the Southern Islands. Not until World War II was the region referred to as Southeast Asia.

Mainland Southeast Asia

Mainland Southeast Asia is a peninsula that lies between the South China Sea and



A Lake in Myanmar These people are fishing in the clear, shallow waters of Inle Lake in central Myanmar. They have a special method of moving their boat as they fish. Standing up, they watch for air bubbles that show where fish are. Then, they use one arm and one leg to steer their boat and use the other arm to throw their net into the water. **Environment** How does this way of fishing protect the environment?

the Indian Ocean. Today, it includes five independent nations: Myanmar (MEE uhn mahr), formerly Burma; Cambodia;* Laos; Thailand; and Vietnam.

Mountains cover much of mainland Southeast Asia. Lying among them are highland plateaus that stretch from the Himalayas across southern China. These mountains and plateaus separate Southeast Asia from the rest of Asia. Despite this barrier, invaders and traders from the north have crossed into Southeast Asia since early times.

The mountain ridges run roughly north and south. In between lie a series of valleys. Four vast river systems—the Irrawaddy, Salween, Chao Phraya (CHOW prah YAH), and Mekong—flow south through the valleys. A fifth river, the Red River, flows east into the Gulf of Tonkin.

* In 1975, communist rebels took over the government of Cambodia. They renamed the country Kampuchea. After the rebels were overthrown, most governments returned to using the name Cambodia.

The rivers deposit soil from the mountains across the valleys. As a result, the river valleys and their deltas are fertile farmlands. They have supported large populations for thousands of years.

Island Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia includes a mass of islands scattered across thousands of miles of ocean. In addition to many small island nations, the islands make up five major independent nations: Malaysia, Brunei (bru NĪ), Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

These nations vary greatly in size. Malaysia lies partly on the mainland and partly on the island of Borneo. Tiny Brunei is also on Borneo. Singapore is a small island at the tip of the Malay Peninsula. Indonesia and the Philippines are made up of **archipelagos**, or chains of islands. Indonesia includes more than 13,500 islands, while the Philippines has more than 7,000 islands. (📖 See Connections

With Literature, page 805, "The Ebb-Tide" and "In the South Seas.")

Island Southeast Asia is located on the Ring of Fire, a line of volcanoes around the Pacific Ocean. When volcanoes erupt, they often spread ash over nearby land. Since volcanic ash is rich in minerals, the soil becomes fertile. Because of this fertile soil, many people farm near active volcanoes, especially on the Indonesian island of Java.

The volcanoes pose very real dangers, however. Mount Pinatubo, on the island of Luzon (loo ZAHN) in the Philippines, erupted

in 1991. A thick layer of volcanic ash destroyed crops and caused buildings to collapse. Hundreds of people died. Many more were left homeless.

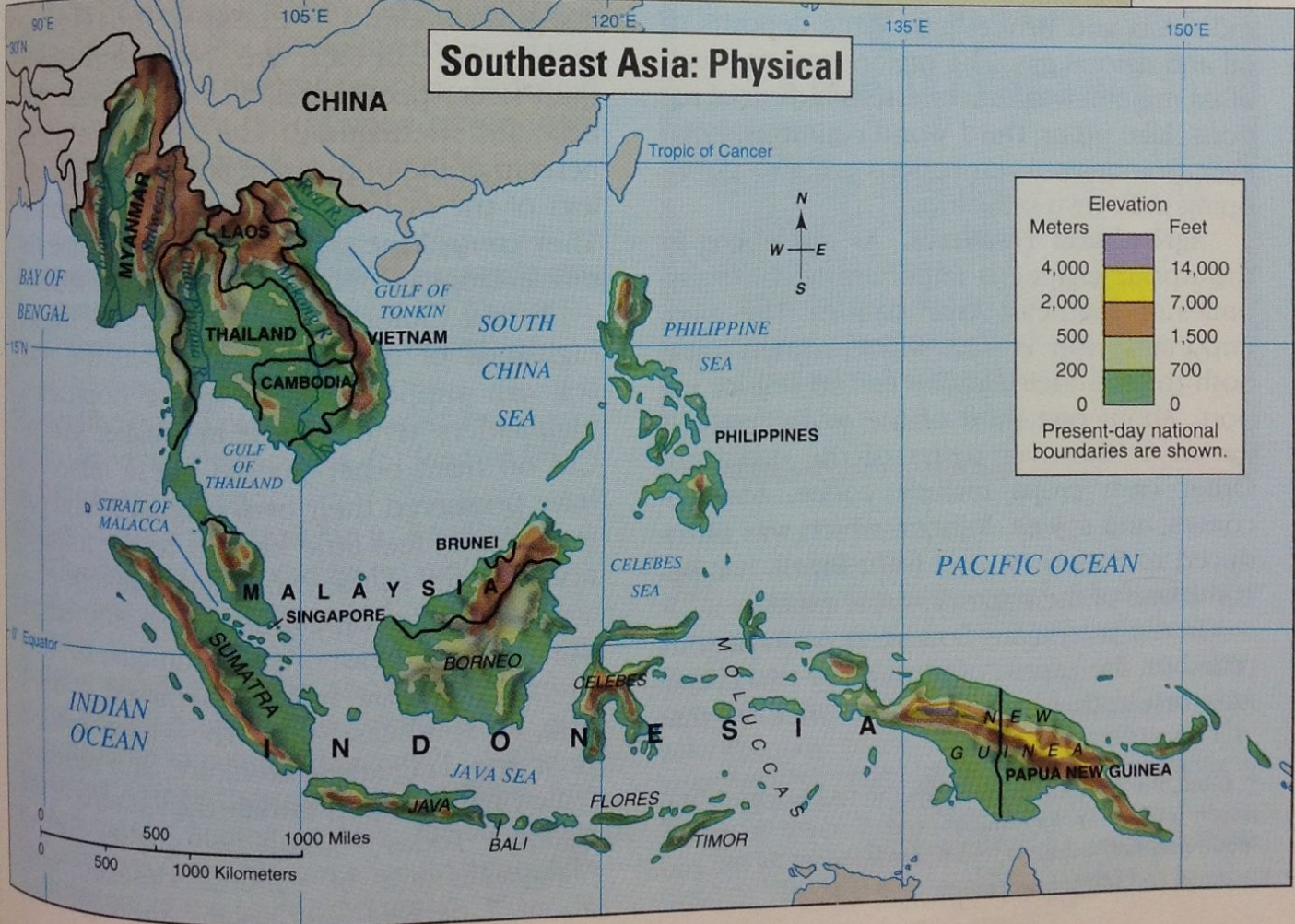
Climates of Southeast Asia

Most of Southeast Asia lies in the tropics. The climate of the region is hot and humid for most of the year. As in South Asia, monsoons affect climate. (See Chapter 7.) From June to September, wet monsoon winds from the southern seas bring heavy rains to the

MAP STUDY

Southeast Asia is a region that includes the large peninsula between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea as well as a large group of island nations.

1. **Region** (a) Name three nations of mainland Southeast Asia. (b) Name three island nations of Southeast Asia.
2. **Location** (a) What is the largest nation of Southeast Asia? (b) What is the relative location of this nation?
3. **Applying Information** What generalization can you make about the landforms of Southeast Asia?



mainland. Later, the winds reverse direction, bringing drier weather, although the temperature remains high.

Monsoons have shaped the patterns of life in Southeast Asia since earliest times. In the 700s, the Malays developed the lateen sail, which allowed sailors to take advantage of the seasonal wind.* Traders planned their voyages to coincide with the expected arrival of the monsoon. Today, as in the past, farmers depend on the wet monsoon to water their crops. Each June, they anxiously watch the skies for signs that the rainy season will begin on time.

Southeast Asia is also subject to typhoons, fierce tropical storms that can strike with little warning. Their high winds often kill many people and cause massive damage, especially in the island regions.

Natural Resources

Southeast Asia is rich in natural resources. It supplies about half of the world's tin, as well as metals such as aluminum and nickel. Indonesia and Brunei have large deposits of oil and natural gas. The region exports much of its mineral wealth to western industrial nations. Like other Third World countries, however, Southeast Asian nations are also developing their own industries.

Agricultural resources. As elsewhere in the world, farming is important to the economies of Southeast Asian nations. The most important crop is rice, which farmers raise both to feed their families and to sell for export. About one third of the world's rice is grown in the river deltas of the mainland. Other cash crops include coffee, tea, coconuts, and spices. Rubber, which was introduced to Southeast Asia from Brazil, has become one of the region's major exports.

In the past, many Southeast Asian nations relied on the export of just one or two crops. As a result, they suffered if the price for that

* Later, the Arabs learned about the technology of the lateen sail from the Malays and brought it to the Mediterranean world, where it was adopted by the Portuguese and other Europeans.

crop fell on the world market. Today, most countries have diversified their economies. They try to export a variety of crops.

Lumber. Parts of both mainland and island Southeast Asia have dense tropical rain forests. These forests contain teak, mahogany, and other trees that are prized for their hardwoods. In many areas, loggers are cutting down the rain forests at a rapid rate.

Like countries around the world, the nations of Southeast Asia face a difficult choice. They need the income from exporting lumber. At the same time, the destruction of the rain forests is taking a huge toll. Logging threatens the environment and destroys the cultures of people who have lived in the forests for centuries.

A Diverse Region

The geography of Southeast Asia has contributed to ethnic and cultural diversity. The mountains cut groups of people off from one another. In many countries, a majority ethnic group controls the rich river valleys as well as the government. For example, Laos is home to Lao, Tai, Hmong, Yao, Mon, and Khmer (kuh MEER) peoples, as well as to many Chinese and Vietnamese. The Lao make up 48 percent of the population and occupy the valleys of the Mekong River and its tributaries. They control the government, determine the official language, and set education policies.

Ethnic minorities often live in the rugged highlands of the mainland. Since the poor soil can support only a sparse population, highlanders tend to live in smaller groups. Cut off from other people, these minorities have preserved their own languages and customs. Many feel little kinship to the lowlanders or loyalty to the central government.

Highland people are not the only minorities in Southeast Asia. Immigrants from China and India have also played a major role in Southeast Asia. They have brought their arts, languages, literature, and religions, which have helped enrich the culture of the region. Today, about a quarter of all Malaysians are of Chinese descent, while about 7 percent are Indian. Although these

In a Malaysian Market The diversity of Malaysia is shown in this market. The two women at left are Malays, the largest ethnic group in Malaysia, which makes up about 58 percent of the population. The woman behind them is Chinese. The Chinese constitute about 25 percent of Malaysia's population.

Diversity The Chinese and Indians have lived in Malaysia since the 1800s. How might this have affected their cultures?



minorities have added to the cultural diversity of Southeast Asia, they have also experienced discrimination.

As in other parts of the world, the nations of Southeast Asia are struggling to create unified nations from diverse peoples. In recent years, governments have gained control over people in remote areas.

SECTION 1 REVIEW

- Locate:** (a) South China Sea, (b) Myanmar, (c) Thailand, (d) Vietnam, (e) Malaysia, (f) Indonesia, (g) the Philippines.
- Identify:** (a) mainland Southeast Asia, (b) island Southeast Asia, (c) Ring of Fire.
- Define:** archipelago.
- Describe one way that life in Southeast Asia has been affected by (a) mountains, (b) rivers, (c) volcanoes, and (d) monsoons.
- Understanding Causes and Effects** How has the geography of Southeast Asia contributed to cultural diversity?
- Writing Across Cultures** List the major resources of Southeast Asia. Jot down a reason why each resource would be important to the United States.

2

EARLY TRADITIONS

FIND OUT

- What effect did geography have on the history of Southeast Asia?
- How did the kingdoms of Southeast Asia differ from one another?
- How did other civilizations influence Southeast Asian kingdoms?

Vocabulary tributary state

A Cambodian folk tale tells of a poor boy who goes to work in the palace of the king. One day, the king comes upon the boy sweeping the floors of the palace. The king asks the boy whether he is rich or poor. The boy replies, "I think that I am as rich as a king."

Surprised, the king asks the boy what he means. The boy explains:

“ Your Majesty, I may receive only six *sen* each month, but I eat from one plate and you also eat from one plate. I sleep for one night and you also sleep for one night. We eat and sleep the same. There is no difference. Now, Your Majesty, do you understand why I say that I am as rich as a king? ”

Like many Southeast Asian folktales, this one carries a Buddhist message. Through such tales, Buddhism influenced both rulers and subjects in Southeast Asia.

River Valley Civilizations

Because of geography, no single ruler could conquer the diverse lands and peoples of Southeast Asia. Instead, most rulers controlled relatively small areas.

Powerful leaders built their kingdoms in fertile river valleys. They organized strong armies and collected taxes from farmers. They also set up the complex irrigation systems that were needed for rice farming. Through warfare, they extended control over neighboring groups.

To the north lay the powerful civilization of China. The Chinese conquered parts of Southeast Asia. With the exception of Vietnam, however, most Southeast Asian regions remained independent from China.

Pagan

An early civilization grew up along the Irrawaddy River in what is today Myanmar. There, in about 849, the Burmans built the kingdom of Pagan (pah GAHN). By controlling the fertile rice-growing lands of the

Pagan Painting Elephants and marching figures enliven this colorful painting from Burma's Pagan kingdom. The most famous Pagan ruler, Anawrata, not only dominated the Irrawaddy Valley, but also led his armies into what are now Bangladesh and Thailand. Anawrata's rule ended when he was killed in a hunting accident in 1077.

Fine Art What does this painting suggest about the riches of the Pagan kingdom?



Irrawaddy, the rulers of Pagan grew rich and powerful.

King Anawrata ruled Pagan during the eleventh century. According to tradition, Anawrata brought Buddhism to his people. Long before, Buddhist missionaries had carried their religion to the Mon, people who lived south of Pagan. When Anawrata invaded the Mon kingdom, he took possession of statues of the Buddha and sacred Buddhist writings. Both Pagan and its neighbors maintained links with Buddhist centers in India and Sri Lanka.

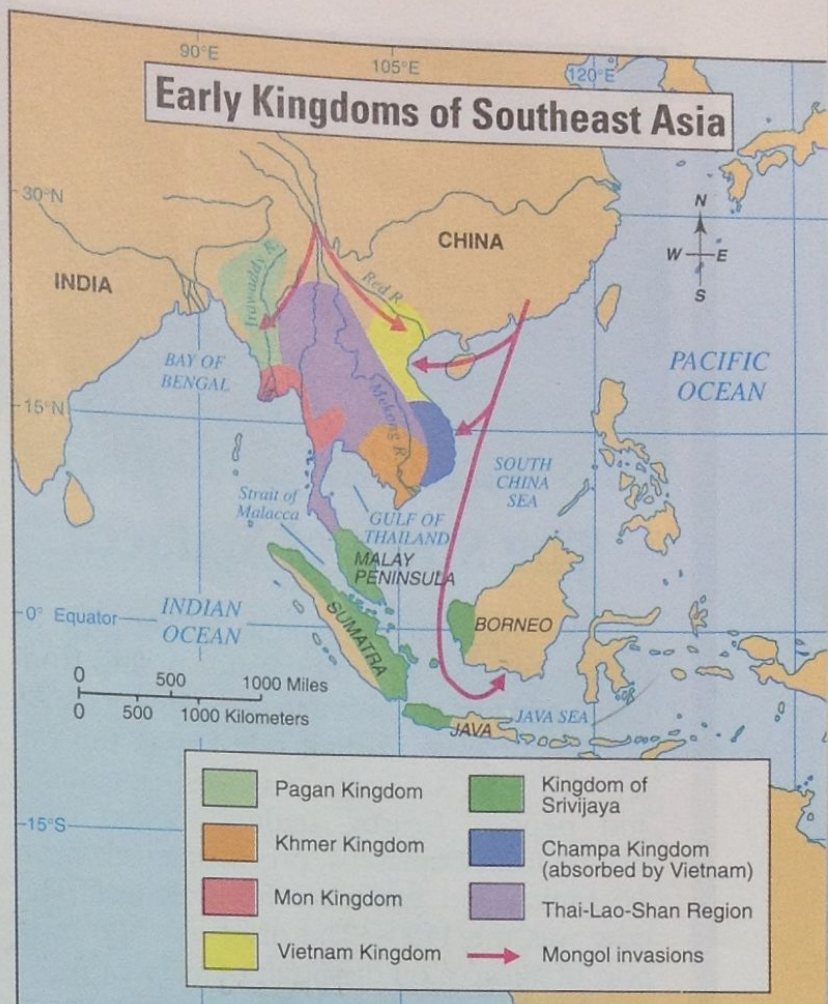
In 1287, Mongol armies from China overran Pagan. As a result, Pagan became a tributary state of China. As a **tributary state**, Pagan recognized the superiority of the Chinese emperor by giving tribute, or gifts, to him. By the 1400s, however, the Burmans had thrown off Chinese rule.

Vietnam

The Vietnam kingdom in the Red River delta also came under Chinese domination. In A.D. 39, the Trung sisters, daughters of a Vietnamese noble, led the struggle against the invaders. Their armies freed 65 towns from Chinese rule. In the end, though, a Chinese general captured and executed the Trung sisters. Ever since, the Vietnamese have celebrated these women for their bravery. As a poet of the 1400s wrote:

“ All the male heroes bowed their heads in submission;
Only the two sisters proudly stood up to avenge their country. ”

The Chinese ruled Vietnam for more than 1,000 years. During that time, Chinese culture greatly influenced the language, art, poetry, and customs of Vietnam. From China, the Vietnamese absorbed Confucian philosophy and Mahayana Buddhism, which you will read about in Chapter 15. The Vietnamese finally regained their independence from China in 939.



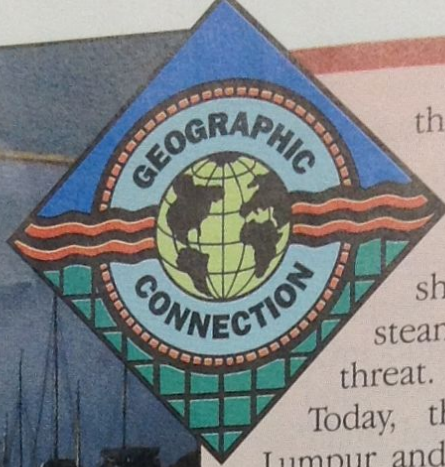
MAP STUDY

In Southeast Asia, as in other regions, early civilizations developed in river valleys. Among these civilizations were the Pagan kingdom in the Irrawaddy River valley and the Vietnam kingdom in the Red River valley.

- 1. Location** What kingdom developed along the Mekong River delta?
- 2. Interaction** What nation attacked several of these early kingdoms of Southeast Asia?
- 3. Drawing Conclusions** Why do you think no kingdom was able to establish an empire to rule most of Southeast Asia?

Khmer Kingdom

Among the most powerful kingdoms of Southeast Asia was the Khmer kingdom. It controlled the Mekong River delta in what is today Cambodia and the southern part of Vietnam. By about A.D. 85, the Khmer had built a prosperous kingdom.



The Strait of Malacca

The pace of bargaining picked up as traders haggled with merchants. A ship from China had just anchored in port. Heavy crates of fine porcelain made it ride low in the water. On shore sat sacks of cloves, cinnamon, and pepper. Nearby, traders looked over swords from Damascus, precious jewels from Sri Lanka, and cashmere from Bengal. The time was the 1400s. The place was the busy port of Malacca on the Strait of Malacca.

Since ancient times, the Strait of Malacca had been a vital waterway because it offered the shortest water route between the Pacific and Indian oceans. (See the map at right.) Through its narrow channel sailed Chinese junks, Arab dhows, and South Sea outriggers. At Malacca, traders exchanged goods from China, India, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and the Mediterranean world.

By the late 1400s, Europeans wanted to find a direct sea route to the rich "Spice Islands" of Southeast Asia. In time, the Portuguese and then the Dutch built huge trading empires among the islands.

Whoever ruled the Strait of Malacca waged constant war with pirates. Lurking in

the coastal mangrove swamps, pirates looked for easy targets. In small, light ships, they attacked and plundered trading ships. Not until the 1800s did steam-powered warships control this threat.

Today, the Malaysian cities of Kuala Lumpur and George Town are major ports on the strait. From there, ships carry rubber, copra, and tin from Malaysia to world markets. Huge oil tankers also sail the strait, cruising between the Middle East and East Asia. Recently, however, the strait has become more than a passage route. Oil companies have begun drilling, hoping to find a new source of wealth under the sea floor.

1. Why did the Strait of Malacca become a well-traveled sea route?
2. **Drawing Conclusions** Why has the Strait of Malacca continued to be important in the modern world?



For centuries, the Khmer had close contact with Indian traders. From these Indians, the Khmer learned much about government and literature. In time, the Khmer created a writing system for their language based on

Indian scripts. Khmer rulers also absorbed Hindu beliefs and built temples to honor Hindu gods.

Successful farming allowed hundreds of thousands of Khmer to live in large cities.

Engineers built water systems with canals and reservoirs. These systems prevented floods during the rainy season. They also stored water for use in farming during the dry months.

In the 1100s, King Suryavarman II built Angkor, a vast capital city dedicated to the Hindu god Vishnu. The ruins of Angkor survive today as a monument to the engineering and artistic skills of the Khmer people. (See page 2.)

The golden age of Angkor was brief. In 1177, the Cham people attacked and looted the rich city. The Cham continued their attacks throughout the next century. Eventually, the Khmer again built a strong kingdom. King Jayavarman VII founded a new capital dedicated to a new protector, the Buddha.

The Khmer conversion to Buddhism was part of a larger movement in which many mainland peoples converted from Hinduism to Buddhism. Elements of Hinduism, however, remained in Cambodian culture.

Tai Kingdoms

The many peoples of Southeast Asia each have their own histories, which have helped to shape the present-day nations of the region. The people of Thailand today have their roots in several early kingdoms. They are descended from the Tai, a group that included the Thai, Lao, Shan, Black Tai, and Red Tai peoples.

By the 1200s, the Tai kingdom of Lanna had become powerful. The Mongols invaded Southeast Asia in 1287. The fighting greatly weakened the Khmer, the Burmans, and the Mon, giving the Tai an opportunity to expand. In 1782, the Chakkri (chahk kree) family set up a new Thai dynasty with Bangkok as their capital. Today, the people of Thailand still recognize the Chakkris as their royal family.

An Island Empire

Many small kingdoms developed on the islands of Southeast Asia. Some island kingdoms profited from the spice trade. The

rulers of Srivijaya (shree vah jī yah) on the island of Sumatra controlled the Strait of Malacca, a vital waterway connecting the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. From there, they controlled a flourishing island empire. (See the feature on page 256.)

The religion of Srivijaya's rulers changed several times, reflecting different outside influences on Southeast Asia. By the 900s, the rulers worshipped Hindu gods. Later, Buddhist missionaries from China won many converts. After the 1200s, Arab and Indian Muslims introduced Islam, which most people throughout the region gradually adopted.

Europeans sailed into the Strait of Malacca in the 1500s. By then, the Srivijaya Empire had collapsed into many rival kingdoms. Through bargaining and force, European traders won the right to set up trading posts in the region. Much later, Europeans would turn these outposts into colonies, as you will read.

SECTION 2 REVIEW

- 1. Locate:** (a) Pagan, (b) Khmer kingdom, (c) Srivijaya, (d) Strait of Malacca.
- 2. Identify:** (a) Anawrata, (b) Trung sisters, (c) Suryavarman II, (d) Angkor, (e) Chakkri family.
- 3. Define:** tributary state.
- 4.** Why was it difficult for Southeast Asian rulers to control large areas?
- 5.** (a) How did Chinese civilization influence Vietnam? (b) Name two kingdoms influenced by Indian civilization.
- 6.** (a) Describe two achievements of the Khmer kingdom. (b) Why was the Tai kingdom able to expand in the late 1200s?
- 7. Synthesizing Information** How did technology help people like the Khmer build a powerful kingdom?
- 8. Writing Across Cultures** Brainstorm a list of American women who have been admired for their courage. Then, write a paragraph comparing one of these women with the Trung sisters.

3

PATTERNS OF LIFE

FIND OUT

What different religious traditions have influenced Southeast Asia?

Why does rice play a major role in Southeast Asian life?

What family patterns are found in Southeast Asia?

Vocabulary animism

The two reporters paddled their dugout canoe toward the remote interior of the island of Borneo. They had traveled there to visit the Iban people and write about how the Iban survived with little or no contact with the modern world. To their surprise, the reporters found the Iban wearing baseball caps and T-shirts with pictures of American rock stars. Iban homes had plastic chairs and pink linoleum floors.

Modern technology and the influence of western culture are rapidly changing life in Southeast Asia, yet many traditions remain strong. Despite their baseball caps and T-shirts, some Iban still live by hunting and food gathering, and they continue to honor traditional spirits.

The Importance of Religion

A plume of steam rises from the crater of Gunung (GYOO nyuhng) Agung, on the island of Bali. Otherwise, the volcano is quiet. The people of Bali believe that Gunung Agung is the center of the world. There, life begins and ends. Like their ancestors, the Balinese bring offerings to the edge of the steaming volcano. They leave rice, fruit, flowers, and eggs to please the spirit that dwells in Gunung Agung.

The practices of these Balinese are based on **animism**, the belief that spirits live in the natural world. Mountains, streams, trees, rocks, and even dreams have spirits. Over the centuries, many elements of animism have blended with religious beliefs that were brought to Southeast Asia.

Hinduism. The earliest world religion to influence Southeast Asia was Hinduism. Indian traders spread Hindu beliefs throughout the region. Many peoples of Southeast Asia blended Hindu gods and goddesses with their own spirits.

They also accepted the Hindu belief in reincarnation, but rejected other ideas such as the rigid caste system. Despite its early influence on Southeast Asia, Hinduism later declined. Today, Hindus are found in Bali and parts of Malaysia.

Buddhism. Buddhism had a far greater impact on Southeast Asia than Hinduism. Buddhist missionaries carried the religion east from India in the early centuries A.D. By then, two schools of Buddhism were emerging.

Theravada Buddhism took root in Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia. Local people built Buddhist monasteries, and Buddhist traditions shaped their culture. Boys entered a monastery at an early age. They learned to read and write and became monks. Most of them left the monastery to marry. Some women also joined Buddhist orders as nuns.

Chinese Buddhists carried Mahayana Buddhism into Vietnam. Mahayana Buddhists place less emphasis on monastic life. They believe that ordinary men can achieve nirvana, the condition of wanting nothing, by meditation. Women, however, cannot reach nirvana.

Buddhist influences remain strong in much of Southeast Asia. In mainland countries, Buddhist monasteries and temples are centers of village life. Farmers turn to Buddhist monks for advice on daily life and sometimes for political leadership.

Local people often blend Buddhist and animist beliefs. A Buddhist farmer in Thailand does not ask the Buddha to help him raise a good crop. Instead, he turns to the *nats*, or spirits in the natural world. He builds a small

Different Religious Traditions

Most Malays are Muslims, like this woman in silent prayer at a mosque. Elsewhere in Southeast Asia, many people believe in spirits known as nats. In the photo below, a family has built a spirit house

dedicated to the nat that protects newly planted rice fields. **Culture** How is animism reflected in the religious practices of some Southeast Asians?



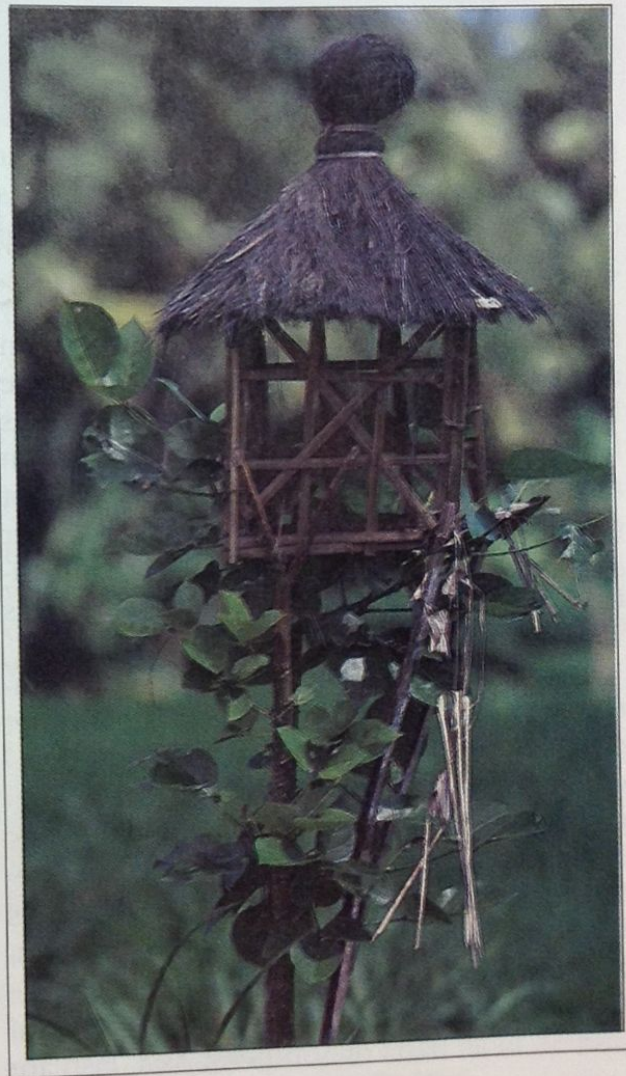
shrine on top of a pole in his rice field. There, he puts food, incense, and other offerings.

Spread of Islam and Christianity

Two other religions have shaped beliefs in parts of Southeast Asia. By 900, Arab traders had brought Islam to the Malay Peninsula and the islands of Sumatra, Java, and Borneo. Many people converted to the new religion. Today, Islam is the official religion of Malaysia, and Indonesia has one of the largest populations of Muslims in the world.

Islam has created strong ties among the peoples of Malaysia, Indonesia, the southern Philippines, and other Muslim lands. Millions of Muslims from Southeast Asia make the pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia. Like all Muslims, they accept the Koran as the holy book of Islam and accept its laws.

During the 1500s, Christian missionaries accompanied European traders to Southeast Asia. When Spain conquered the Philippines, the missionaries set out to convert the people to the Roman Catholic faith. Within 50 years, they had converted most of the Filipinos in the lowlands. In remote highland



areas, however, people kept their local beliefs. Many did not become Catholic until the twentieth century.

Today, most Filipinos are Catholics. Other Southeast Asian countries contain smaller groups of Catholics and Protestants.

Economic Patterns

In most parts of Southeast Asia, people make a living as their ancestors did—by farming the land or by fishing. Most people are subsistence farmers, although an increasing number sell their surplus crops for cash.

Rice. Throughout Southeast Asia, rice is the major food crop. People eat rice at every meal. “Don’t let rice fields lay fallow,” warns a Vietnamese proverb. “An inch of soil is an inch of gold.”

Depending on where they live, farmers in Southeast Asia grow rice in one of two ways. Farmers in the lowlands grow “wet rice.” Wet rice requires flat land and large amounts of water. Farmers soak the rice fields, or paddies, with water before planting the seedlings. The paddies remain covered with water until almost harvest time. Wet-rice farming is difficult work, usually requiring the labor of an entire family.

In drier highland areas, farmers plant “dry rice.” Farmers burn brush and small trees on a few acres of land. They then plant rice. The first year’s crop is usually good because ashes from the burned plants nourish the soil. In most places, however, the soil wears out quickly. Farmers must then move on to other areas while the land renews itself. Governments today are trying to discourage this wasteful “slash-and-burn” agriculture.

Other farm products. Farmers grow other crops, such as corn, peanuts, and sweet potatoes. Coconut trees grow in coastal regions. Copra, or dried coconut meat, is an important source of oil, soap, and margarine. However, demand for coconut oil has decreased as people in industrialized countries have become more concerned about saturated fats in their diet.

Fishing. Fish is an important source of protein in all parts of Southeast Asia. Fish are

especially plentiful in coastal regions and on the islands, where many people depend on fishing for their livelihood. In the interior regions, families fish in rivers and even catch eels in irrigation canals and rice paddies. People eat both fresh and dried fish. They also produce fish sauce to season their food.

Village Life

Most people in Southeast Asia live in villages. Villages dot the banks of rivers and canals. Other villages are found on hillsides and in forests. Homes are often built of bamboo, clay bricks, or concrete blocks. As a protection against monsoon flooding, some homes are built on stilts.

A village might have anywhere from 50 to 200 families. Village leaders may inherit their post or may be elected or appointed. They enforce the law and supervise work on canals and roads. In Buddhist areas, the village leader is also responsible for maintaining the temple.

Today, many forces are affecting village life. Cities are growing, and many young people leave their villages to find jobs in cities. Farmers buy tools and clothing in local stores instead of making them. Farmers who sell their surplus crops for cash also buy televisions or build homes of cement and wood.

Family Life

In much of Southeast Asia, people live in nuclear families. In Vietnam, however, Chinese influences helped shape the culture. Chinese tradition supports the extended family. As a result, in Vietnam the extended family is the ideal. The Vietnamese also adopted the Chinese tradition of reverence for ancestors.

The rights of women. Despite strong Chinese influence, the Vietnamese kept many of their own cultural traditions. Among them was respect for the rights of women. In traditional Chinese culture, women were seen as inferior to men, but in Vietnam, the law code gave women and men nearly equal rights. Women could own property and marry without parental approval.

Today, women in Southeast Asia enjoy many rights that other Asian women have traditionally lacked. "By law and custom," noted a scholar in Myanmar, "Burmese women are equal. We couldn't have one law for women and another for men, could we?" In Thailand, sisters share with their brothers in the inheritance of valuable rice fields. Women run most of the stores in Vietnam.

Division of labor. In farm families, each person has a job. Men plow the paddies, operate rice-planting machinery, and harvest the rice crop, while women plant rice by hand and husk the cut rice. In addition, men build homes and make furniture, pottery, baskets, and fish traps. Women take care of the house and the children. Women also cook, tend the livestock, gather firewood, fetch water, and make clothing.

A Vietnamese folk poem, "A Farmer's Calendar," shows that men and women have worked side by side in the rice fields for centuries.

“ In the third month, we break the land to plant rice in the fourth while the rains are strong.

The man ploughs, the woman plants, and in the fifth: the harvest, and the gods are good—

an acre yields five full baskets this year. . . .

In plenty or in want, there will still be you and me,

always the two of us.

Isn't that better than always prospering, alone? ”

Education. Children begin to help their parents at a young age. Today, most children also go to elementary school at least, if not to high school. In countries where Buddhism is strong, boys learn to read and write at Buddhist temples. In Malaysia and Indonesia, many children attend schools run by Muslim teachers.

Although girls attend elementary school, many leave school when they reach their teens. Their mothers train them at home for



Working Together In Myanmar, villagers pitch in to repair a roof. Their simple, lightweight clothing is common throughout Southeast Asia. Both men and women wear a skirt-like garment called a *longyi*. Sandals are common, and everyone removes footgear before entering a temple or house.

Environment How have these villagers adapted to their environment?

their future roles as wives and mothers. Some women, however, complete high school and even college. Banyen Phimmason of Laos was one of these women.

Up Close

Two Kinds of Healing

Banyen was born in Vientiane, the capital of Laos. Her father, a doctor, had learned "all there was to be known about the art of healing." He knew the properties of medicinal plants and how to use them to cure various diseases. He also knew how to deal

A Nurse in Vietnam This nurse keeps records at a hospital nursery in Ho Chi Minh City. Health care in Vietnam has improved in recent decades. In the 1960s, the average Vietnamese had a life expectancy of 34 years. By the early 1990s, people's life expectancy had increased to about 60 years. **Change** How does this increase in life expectancy affect a nation's population?



with *phipops*, evil spirits whose anger was believed to be one of the causes of disease.

Once, Banyen secretly watched as her father cast a female *phipop* out of a woman in the neighborhood. He demanded that the *phipop* leave, but the *phipop* refused. Banyen recalled:

“Then they brought my father some pepper and he took her hands away from her face and threw the pepper in her eyes. She began to cry. Again he asked her who she was and this time she told him her name. She promised that she would go away and never return. Suddenly the woman sat up. . . . My father uttered certain formulae, breathed on her, and the pain disappeared. It was as if nothing had happened.”

Watching and listening to her father, Banyen came to admire his great knowledge and healing skill. When she went to school, Banyen was an excellent student. At a time when few girls finished elementary school, she and her sisters went on to high school, then to college. Banyen recalled:

“We were the first women students. My mother did not see any reason why I

should waste four more years at college when I might have made myself useful at home and learned to cook and weave.”

However, Banyen had a secret goal. Remembering how her father had healed the sick, she decided to become a doctor. She transferred to a college in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. From there, she won a scholarship to study in Hanoi, Vietnam, and became the first Laotian woman to enroll in medical school. ■

SECTION 3 REVIEW

1. **Define:** animism.
2. Describe how Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity reached Southeast Asia.
3. How does geography affect the ways in which rice is grown?
4. How did Chinese traditions influence family life in Vietnam?
5. **Applying Information** How did the peoples of Southeast Asia adapt ideas from other cultures to their own needs?
6. **Writing Across Cultures** Write a paragraph comparing the life of women in Southeast Asia with that of women in the United States.

CHAPTER 11 REVIEW

Understanding Vocabulary

Match each term at left with the correct definition at right.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. archipelago | a. rice field |
| 2. copra | b. country that recognizes the authority of an overlord |
| 3. tributary state | c. dried coconut meat |
| 4. animism | d. chain of islands |
| 5. paddy | e. belief that a spirit lives in every object |

Reviewing the Main Ideas

- (a) What are the two regions of Southeast Asia? (b) How are they different?
- (a) List two mineral and two agricultural resources of Southeast Asia. (b) Why does the use of forest resources cause problems?
- Why have Southeast Asian nations had difficulty achieving unity?
- (a) Why were river valleys important to the development of kingdoms in Southeast Asia? (b) How did India influence the region?
- (a) How did animist beliefs blend with Hinduism and Buddhism? (b) How did Islam and Christianity arrive in Southeast Asia?

Reviewing Chapter Themes

- Geography has contributed to cultural diversity in Southeast Asia. Explain how two of the following have encouraged this diversity: (a) location, (b) topography, (c) waterways.
- The ancient kingdoms of Southeast Asia were influenced by neighboring civilizations. Describe how outside influences affected two of the kingdoms.
- Many religious traditions have influenced Southeast Asia. Choose two religions and describe: (a) how they were introduced to Southeast Asia, (b) how they were adapted, (c) how they influence life today.
- Most people in Southeast Asia are farmers. Describe how agriculture affects the economies, ethnic makeup, and family life of Southeast Asian nations.

Thinking Critically

- Making Global Connections** (a) Why does cultural diversity pose a challenge to the nations of Southeast Asia? (b) What similar challenges does the United States face?
- Comparing** Compare and contrast the effects of Mongol invasions of Southeast Asia on Pagan and the Tai kingdoms.
- Applying Information** War and trade are two of the common methods of cultural diffusion. Explain how one of these contributed to cultural diffusion in Southeast Asia.
- Making Inferences** Why do women in Southeast Asia have political rights, yet often receive less schooling than men?

Applying Your Skills

- Identifying the Main Idea** Reread "A Diverse Region" on pages 252–253. (a) Which sentence expresses the main idea? (b) List three facts that support the main idea.
- Constructing a Time Line** Use the information in this chapter to construct a time line of events relating to the ancient kingdoms of Southeast Asia. Use different-colored markers to show the periods during which each kingdom was independent.
- Analyzing a Poem** Reread "A Farmer's Calendar" on page 261. (a) Who is speaking? (b) What does the poem say about rural life? (c) What does the poem show you about relationships in farming families? (See Skill Lesson 12 on page 541.)