**Main Ideas**
- Taiwan and Mongolia have developed in the shadow of their giant neighbor—China.
- The countries of the region include both capitalist and socialist economies.

**Places & Terms**
- economic tiger
- Pacific Rim

**Connect to the Issues**

**TRADE** Trade has helped Taiwan achieve prosperity, while Mongolia has not been as economically successful.

**A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE** The Mongols of the Asian steppe lived their lives on horseback. In 1206, a great leader named Temujin (later called Genghis Khan) united the Mongol clans and led them in conquering much of Asia. He is reported to have said, “Man’s greatest good fortune is to chase and defeat his enemy, seize his total possessions, leave his married women weeping and wailing, and ride his horse.” The Mongols eventually created the largest unified land empire in history, extending from the Pacific coast of China westward into Europe.

**A History of Nomads and Traders**

The histories of Mongolia and Taiwan have been closely connected to that of China.

**THE MONGOLIAN EMPIRE** The Mongols were nomadic herders for thousands of years. Mongol history was changed forever by Genghis Khan, a title that means “supreme conqueror.” Genghis Khan died in 1227, having conquered all of Central Asia and begun the conquest of Asia.

**A Mongol Army on the Move**

A Mongol army was like a moving city. The cavalry of 10,000 was accompanied by an even greater number of family members and by tens of thousands of horses and livestock.

- **A cavalry warrior’s weapons included** leather armor, a lance, a dagger, a bow and arrows, and his stout, sturdy horse.
- **Mongol soldiers were superb horsemen, having spent all their lives in the saddle. Hunting and other activities gave young men a chance to practice skills they would use in battle.**
- **Teams of oxen pulled the mobile yurts of the khan and other leaders.**
China. He was succeeded by his son Ogadai, who continued his policies of conquest and expansion. Mongol armies commanded by other sons and grandsons of Genghis Khan moved east, west, and south out of Mongolia.

The Mongol empire broke up in the 1300s. Eventually the Chinese gained control of Mongolia in the 17th century. The Chinese ruled Mongolia for hundreds of years. Only in 1911 were the Mongolians finally able to push the Chinese out and achieve their independence.

Under the influence of its powerful neighbor Russia, Mongolia became the Mongolian People’s Republic in 1924. For about 72 years, the Communists ruled Mongolia. However, after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, the Communist Party in Mongolia lost its power. The country began moving toward political democracy and a free-enterprise economy.

TAIWAN’S LINK TO CHINA The island of Taiwan experienced many prehistoric migrations from southern China and southeast Asia. Malay and Polynesian peoples also settled there. Over the centuries, other settlers and groups of people from China settled on the island. In the sixth century, for example, some Han Chinese arrived. Later, when famine struck Fujian province in the 17th century, a large number of Chinese migrated from the mainland. That contributed to the large Chinese settlements on the island. The Manchu Dynasty conquered Taiwan in 1683. (See Unit Atlas, page 613.)

The Japanese seized Taiwan (then called Formosa) after winning a war with China in 1895. Japan kept the island until its defeat in World War II. Then Chinese Nationalists took control of the island as part of their fight with the Communists for control of mainland China. When the Nationalists lost to the Communists in 1949, they moved their government to Taiwan. There they established the Republic of China. However, the People’s Republic of China has never recognized Taiwan as a separate country and considers it a province.

Cultures of Mongolia and Taiwan

China is a cultural hearth that has influenced its neighbors. It has been the source for many of the important ideas and inventions that have shaped Mongolia and Taiwan and the rest of the region.

MONGOLIA Mongolia has both ruled and been ruled by China. Kublai Khan was the Mongol emperor of China when Marco Polo visited in the 13th century. In the mid-14th century, the Chinese rose up against their
Mongol rulers and drove them out of China. In the 17th century, the Chinese under the Manchus conquered Mongolia, which they ruled for hundreds of years. This interaction produced a profound cultural influence as the Mongols adopted many aspects of Chinese culture.

The most important festival in Mongolia is the annual Naadam festival of the Three Games of Men. The festival, which dates back 2,300 years, begins each year on July 11. The three games are wrestling, archery, and horse racing. The competitors are highly skilled, and winners receive titles proclaiming their abilities. All of these contests have their roots in the ancient way of life of the Mongolian people.

**TAIWAN** Unlike Mongolia, Taiwan has a population that is almost exclusively Chinese. Thus, the culture of the island is Chinese. The capital city of Taipei includes Buddhist temples as well as museums of Chinese art. The island has many universities and about 30 daily newspapers. The population is well-educated, and most of the people speak the official language of Northern Chinese (also called Mandarin).

The people of Taiwan combine a number of religious and ethical beliefs. More than 90 percent practice a blend of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. A small number are Christian and an even smaller percentage practice other religions.

**Two Very Different Economies**

The economies of Mongolia and Taiwan have roots in the past. Raising livestock, a part of the nomadic life, is at the core of the Mongolian economy. Because Taiwan is an island, trade is key to its economy.

**ECONOMIC PROSPECTS FOR MONGOLIA** A large part of the population of Mongolia still engages in herding and managing livestock. For centuries, the economy was based on the nomadic herding of sheep, goats, camels, horses, and cattle. More goats are being raised to meet the demands of the cashmere industry, which uses soft wool from goats of the region. Of the millions of animals kept in herds in the country, nearly a third are sheep. Animals and animal products are used for domestic consumption as well as for export.

Although livestock remains the basis of the economy, Mongolia is now committed to the development of other industries. Under the Communist government, the state owned and operated most of the factories in the country. The Soviets guided Mongolia’s economy for about 70 years. When the Soviet Union fell
Mongolia and Taiwan

apart, Mongolia was one of the first Communist countries to attempt to shift to a market economy. The transition has been difficult as the country has turned increasingly from a Soviet-style managed economy to a free-market economy.

Mongolia has large deposits of fuels such as coal and petroleum. It also has rich deposits of metals such as copper, gold, and iron. Those resources are used in both manufacturing and construction, industries which are of growing importance to the economy.

**TAIWAN’S ECONOMIC SUCCESS** Taiwan has one of the world’s most successful economies. It has succeeded despite the fact that it has few natural resources. However, it has a highly trained and motivated workforce.

Taiwan’s prosperity is based on its strong manufacturing industries and its trade with other nations. Among the most successful products of its factories are radios, televisions, calculators, and computers. Taiwanese companies sell their products around the world.

Taiwan is considered one of the economic tigers of Asia, along with Singapore and South Korea. An **economic tiger** is a nation that has rapid economic growth due to cheap labor, high technology, and aggressive exports. It is one of the very prosperous economies of the western Pacific. These economies are highly industrialized and trade with nations around the world. They are part of the **Pacific Rim**—the countries surrounding the Pacific Ocean. The Pacific Rim is an economic and social region. It includes the countries of East Asia, Southeast Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Chile, and the west coast of the United States.

**Daily Life in Mongolia and Taiwan**

The daily life of people in Mongolia and Taiwan shows traditional influences as well as modern influences. This blending of old and new can be seen in both work and play.

**HERDING IN MONGOLIA** As you learned earlier in this section, the people of Mongolia were nomads who guided their animals from grassland to grassland. The land through which they traveled has an unpredictable, hostile environment. The climate is extreme. Long, cold winters lasting six months alternate with short, hot summers of only two months. Severe winter weather makes it difficult for livestock to survive. Bad weather can kill animals from intense cold and starvation.

Nomads live in tents called yurts that are made of felt covered with leather. This is the traditional form of shelter in Mongolia. Yurts can even be found in the capital of Ulaanbaatar.

Today, many of the people of Mongolia still spend their days raising sheep, cattle, and goats. Some still follow the nomadic way of life, but most people care for livestock on farms and ranches. Often these farms have small villages in the center, with shops, offices, and houses.
MOBEMENT
Taiwan’s team celebrates winning the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in 1996.

WESTERN INFLUENCES IN TAIWAN Although Mongolia remains relatively isolated from the West, Taiwan has opened itself to many Western influences.

For example, baseball has become popular in Taiwan and in other parts of Asia, particularly Japan. As a part of this general interest in the sport, Little League baseball has also become popular in parts of Asia.

Little League became popular after World War II. In 1974, the United States banned teams from foreign countries from the Little League World Series. In part, that was a response to the success of Taiwan’s teams which, throughout the 1970s, dominated the World Series. However, they were restored to competition in 1976. By the 1980s, there were leagues in the United States and 30 other countries.

In the next section, you will read about two countries that share one peninsula: North Korea and South Korea.

MOVEMENT
Taiwan’s team celebrates winning the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in 1996.

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