

Geographic Sources



Ming Porcelain

The Chinese first developed porcelain, a type of very fine pottery, during the Han dynasty. Later dynasties created porcelain using new technologies, colors, and methods. The porcelain created during the Ming dynasty became highly valued for its beauty. It was a trade good that was carried to Southwest Asia and Europe.

◀ Porcelain was a luxury item. Blue-and-white porcelain created during the Ming dynasty was valued for its elegance.

Reading and Vocabulary Support

① *Indigenous* means originally from a place.

② To *impose* something means to require it or force it to be.

③ What does this indicate about the reach of the emperor's government?

④ *Eclectic* means diverse, or drawing on many sources.

⑤ What explains the Mongol dynasty's openness to foreign influences?

"The early Ming dynasty was a period of cultural restoration and expansion. The reestablishment of an indigenous ① Chinese ruling house led to the imposition ② of court-dictated styles in the arts ③

Early Ming decorative arts inherited the richly eclectic ④ legacy of the Mongol Yuan dynasty, which included both regional Chinese traditions and foreign influences. ⑤ For example, the fourteenth-century development of blue-and-white ware ... arose, at least in part, in response to lively trade with the Islamic world, and many Ming examples continued to reflect strong West Asian influences. A special court-based Bureau of Design ensured that a uniform standard of decoration was established for imperial production in ceramics, textiles, metalwork, and lacquer."

—Metropolitan Museum of Art, Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History (2002)

Analyzing Geographic Sources

Cite evidence from the primary source—the porcelain vase—and the secondary source—the art history text—to support your answers.

1. **Draw Conclusions** Why do you think porcelain was such a popular luxury trade good?
2. **Vocabulary: Use Context Clues** According to the secondary source, what influenced the style of Ming dynasty porcelain?
3. **Determine Author's Point of View** How does the author of the secondary source view the Ming government?