



Chinggis Khan & The Mongol Empire



I. Beginnings

- Mongol people roamed eastern steppe (vast stretch of dry grassland across Eurasia), north of the Gobi Desert, in loosely organized clans
 - Nomadic, pastoralist (herd domesticated animals)
 - Horseback riding an essential part of life

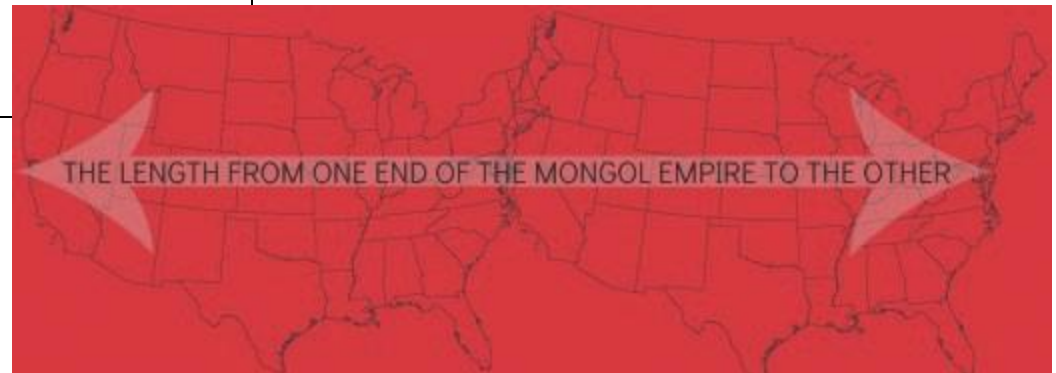




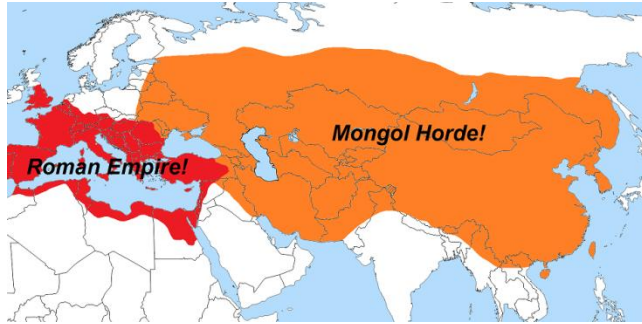
- 1200 – Temujin, a young clan leader, sought to unite Mongols under one leadership
 - Fought and defeated rival clans
 - 1206 – at kuriltai (meeting of all clan chieftains), elected supreme khan
 - accepted title “Chinggis (or Genghis) Khan”, meaning “universal leader”

II. Early Conquests

- First went after northern China in 1211
 - Weakened kingdoms and
 - Forced them into demanding systems of tribute
- Turned attention to Central Asia, conquers region by 1225
 - Angered by the murder of Mongol traders and ambassador



II. Early Conquests



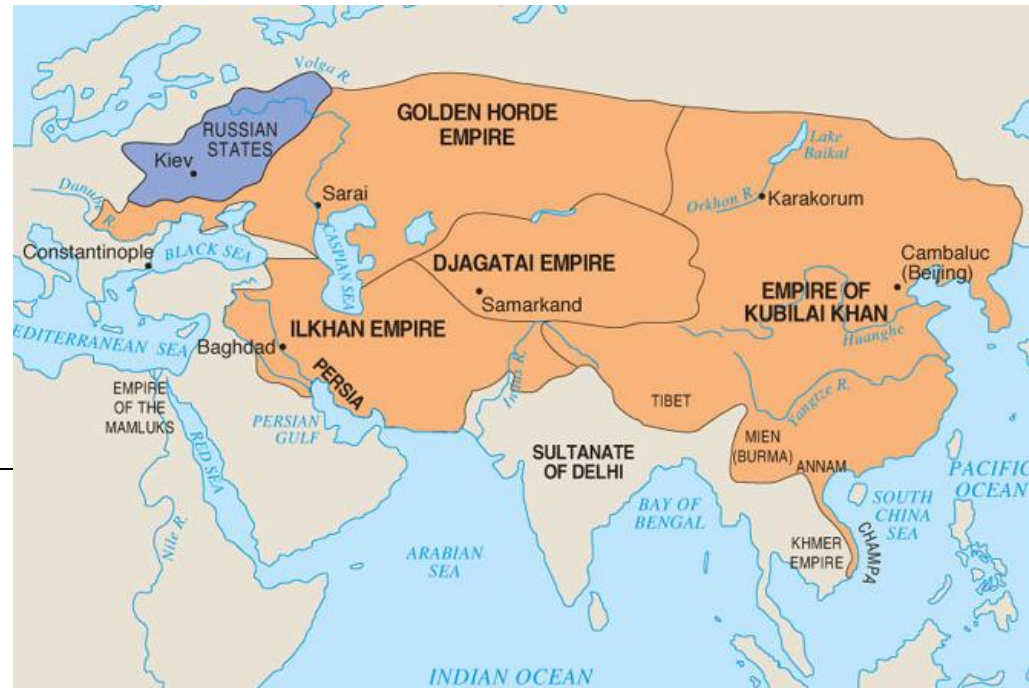
- Why so successful?
 - Highly organized and trained
 - Fighting units, called tumens, consisted of 10,000 soldiers, most on horseback
 - Gifted strategist – would often trickery/surprise enemy
 - Cruelty as a weapon – believed in terrifying enemies into surrendering
 - If city fought back, would be destroyed, people killed/sold into slavery

III. Mongol Empire

- Capital established at Karakorum on steppes north of China
 - Summoned scholars from all corners of empire
 - Created government framework based on both Muslim and Chinese ideas/traditions
 - Creation of written Mongol language (recordkeeping and standardization of laws)
 - Mongol rule helped to stabilize some areas – production and trade flourished between East and West
 - *Period from mid-13th to mid-14th century called Pax Mongolica (Mongol Peace)*



- Chinggis died in 1227, third son, Ogedei, elected grand khan
 - Expands empire to include Russia, much of the Islamic world, and China
- Divided and conquered
 - Mongol empire divided into four regions, or Khanates, each ruled by a descendant of Chinggis
 - Khanate of the Great Khan (Mongolia and China)
 - Khanate of Chagatai (Central Asia)
 - The Il Khanate (Persia)
 - Khanate of the Golden Horde (Russia)



CHALLENGE
QUESTION!

IV. Russia Under the Mongols

- 13th century – Russia divided into many warring kingdoms
 - Refused to unite to fight Mongols – easily defeated individually
 - Mongols called Tatars (or tartars), meaning “people from hell”
- Russian nobility became vassals of the khan of Golden Horde
 - Russian people began centuries of demanding feudalism
 - Feudalism in Russia lasts longer, more severe than in West
- The good and bad of Mongol rule
 - Trade with Asia increases and economy grows
 - Mongol rule led to isolation from West and the Renaissance
 - Distinct culture – mix of Asian and Western beliefs/traditions

V. The Islamic Heartlands



CHALLENGE
QUESTION!

- Captured and destroyed Baghdad in 1258
 - Removed last Abbasid caliph, devastated the city, disrupted trade
 - Left Muslim empire without a centralized authority
 - Eventually led to 3-way split: Ottomans, Mughals, Safavids
- Mongols controlled vast territory
 - From edges of Byzantium to Oxus River in central Asia
 - Enculturated themselves into local society:
 - Most Mongols in region converted to Islam
 - Depended on Persian political officials to run kingdom

VI. Kublai Khan and China



- 1260 – grandson of Chinggis accepts title of “Great Khan”
 - Succeeded in conquering all of China in 1279
- Founded the Yuan Dynasty, lasted less than 100 years
 - Reunited all of China (including western and northern regions)
 - Opened China up to more trade/foreign contact
 - Tolerated Chinese culture, made few changes to government
 - But, kept Chinese out of higher offices
 - Believed outsiders were more trustworthy, because no local loyalties

VI. Continued...

- Changes in Chinese society
 - Mongol women refused to adopt policies and practices of Chinese women
 - Ended bureaucratic examination system (*but it will return...*)
 - Merchants and artisans experienced increase in status
 - Reduced peasant taxes, restored granary (food storage) system



CHALLENGE
QUESTION!

VII. End of Mongol Rule

- Decline begins in China
 - After death of Kublai Khan (1294), Mongols never had as strong of leader
 - Suffered many defeats in Southeast Asia in later years
 - Began to overtax population due to military expenditures
 - Rebellions broke out across China, succeeded in overthrowing Yuan in 1368
 - Led by secret societies, such as White Lotus Society
- Most of Mongol Empire fell apart throughout Eurasia in late 1300s, 1400s for similar reasons
 - Could never expand past Baghdad or into South Asia
 - Russian leaders eventually revolted against Golden Horde - but would remain the longest, have greatest impact

CHALLENGE QUESTION #1

Evaluate these two statements from Chinggis Khan:

- "A man's greatest work is to break his enemies, to drive them before him, to take from them all the things that have been theirs, to hear the weeping of those who cherished them."
- "I will rule them by fixed laws [so] that rest and happiness shall prevail in the world."

What do these two statements tell us about Chinggis Khan and the Mongol Empire?

- 3-4 sentences



CHALLENGE QUESTION #2

Document: Russian Chronicles on Mongol Conquests.

It happened in 1237. That winter, the godless Tatars [Mongols], under the leadership of Batu, came to the Riazan principality [Russian city-state] from the East through the forests. Upon arriving they encamped at Onuza [Russian city-state], which they took and burned. From here they dispatched their emissaries – a woman witch and two men – to the princes of Riazan demanding a tithe from the princes and complete armor and horses from the people. The princes of Riazan, Iurii Igorevich and his brother Oleg, did not allow the emissaries to enter the city...

Thus angered, the Tatars now began the conquest of the Riazan land with great fury. They destroyed cities, killed people, burned, and took (people) into slavery.... they killed with their swords,... threw them into the fire; while some of the captured they bound, cut, and disemboweled their bodies. The Tatars burned many holy churches, monasteries, and villages, and took their property.

How does this document help us understand the growth of the Mongol Empire?

What is the point of view of this document?

CHALLENGE QUESTION #3

Evaluate the changes that the Mongols made to Chinese society. Where they positive or negative?



Exit Ticket!

Describe the positive and negative aspects of Mongol conquest and rule.
Describe at least three examples altogether.

