

## CHAPTER 14

### *The Last Great Nomadic Changes: From Chinggis Khan to Timur*

#### CHAPTER SUMMARY

The nomads of central Asia returned to center stage in world history during the 13th century. The Mongols ended or interrupted the great postclassical empires while extending the world network. Led by Chinggis Khan and his successors, they brought central Asia, China, Persia, Tibet, Iraq, Asia Minor, and southern Russia under their control and dominated most of Asia for one and a half centuries. The Mongols were the most formidable nomadic challenge to the sedentary civilizations since the first century C.E. The Mongols are often portrayed as barbarians and destructive conquerors, but generally in their vast possessions people lived in peace, enjoyed religious tolerance, and had a unified law code. Peaceful contacts over long distances opened. Mongol territory was a bridge between the civilizations of the East as products and ideas moved among civilized and nomadic peoples.

**The Mongol Empire of Chinggis Khan.** The Mongols were nomadic herders of goats and sheep who lived off the products of their animals. Boys and girls learned to ride as soon as they could walk. The basic unit of social organization, the tribe, was divided into kin-related clans. Great confederations were organized for defensive and offensive operations. Men held dominant leadership positions; women held considerable influence within the family. Leaders were elected by free men. They gained their positions through displays of courage and diplomatic skills and maintained power as long as they were successful.

**The Making of a Great Warrior: The Early Career of Chinggis Khan.** Mongolian peoples established kingdoms in north China in the 4th and 10th centuries C.E. In the 12th century, Kabul Khan defeated a Qin army, but Mongol organization declined after his death. His grandson, Chinggis Khan, originally named Temujin, was a member of one of the clans disputing Mongol leadership at the end of the 12th century. Temujin gained strength among the Mongols through alliances with more powerful groups. After defeating his rivals, he was elected supreme ruler (khagan) of all Mongol tribes in 1206.

**Building the Mongol War Machine.** Mongol males were trained from youth to ride, hunt, and fight. Their powerful short bows, fired from horseback, were devastating weapons. The speed and mobility of Mongol armies made them the world's best. The armies, divided into fighting units of 10,000 (tumens), included both heavy and light cavalry. Harsh discipline, enforced through a formal code, brought punishments and rewards for conduct. Another unit, employing spies, secured accurate information for campaigns. New weapons, including gunpowder and cannons, were used.

**Conquest: The Mongol Empire under Chinggis Khan.** Chinggis Khan set forth to conquer the known world. In 1207, the Mongols defeated the northwestern China Tangut kingdom of Xi Xia. They next attacked the Qin Empire established by the Jurchens. In these first campaigns, the Mongols developed new tactics for capturing fortified urban centers. Cities that resisted

were utterly destroyed; their inhabitants were killed or made slaves. Cities that submitted avoided this fate; tribute ensured safety.

**First Assault on the Islamic World.** After China, the Mongols moved westward. Victory over Khwarazm brought many Turkic horsemen into Chinggis Khan's army. The Mongol leader spent the rest of his life fighting in China. The Xi Xia kingdom and the Jin empire were destroyed. At the death of Chinggis Khan in 1227, the Mongols ruled an empire stretching from Persia to the North China Sea.

**Life under the Mongol Imperium.** The Mongols were both fearsome warriors and astute, tolerant rulers. Chinggis Khan, though illiterate, was open to new ideas and wanted to create a peaceful empire. He established a new capital in the steppes at Karakorum and hired talented individuals from all conquered regions. Chinggis followed shamanistic Mongol beliefs but tolerated all religions. He used the knowledge of Muslim and Chinese bureaucrats to build an administrative structure for the empire. A script was devised for the Mongolian language, and a legal code helped end old quarrels. The Mongol conquests brought peace to much of Asia. In urban centers, artisans and scholars freely worked. Commerce flourished along secure trade routes.

**The Death of Chinggis Khan and the Division of the Empire.** When Chinggis died in 1227, the vast territories of the Mongols were divided among three sons and a grandson. His third son, Ogedei, a talented diplomat, was chosen as grand khan. He presided over further Mongol conquests for nearly a decade.

**The Mongol Drive to the West.** The armies of the Golden Horde moved westward. By the 13th century, Kiev was in decline and Russia was divided into many petty kingdoms. They were unable to unite before the Mongols (called Tatars or Tartars by Russians). Batu, Chinggis Khan's grandson, invaded in 1236 and defeated Russian armies one by one. Resisting cities were razed. In 1240, Kiev was taken and ravaged. Novgorod was spared when its ruler, Alexander Nevskii, peacefully submitted, at least temporarily.

**Russia in Bondage.** The Russians became vassals of the khan of the Golden Horde, a domination lasting two and a half centuries. Russian princes paid tribute. Peasants had to meet demands from both their own princes and the Mongols. Many sought protection by becoming serfs. The decision inaugurated a major change in rural social structure: serfdom endured until the middle of the 19th century. Some cities, especially Moscow, benefited from the increased commercial possibilities brought by Mongol rule. It grew at the expense of nearby towns and profited as tribute collector for the khans. When the power of the Golden Horde declined, Moscow led Russian resistance to the Mongols. The Golden Horde was defeated at Kulikova in 1380. Later attacks by Timur broke the Mongol hold on Russia. Mongols remained active in the region through most of the 15th century, but from the end of the 14th century, Moscow was the center of political power in Russia. Although much of their effect was negative, the Mongol occupation was very important in Russian history. Their example influenced military and political organization. Most significantly, the Mongols isolated Russia from developments in western European civilization like the Renaissance and the Reformation.

**Mongol Incursions and the Retreat from Europe.** Christian western Europe initially had been pleased by Mongol successes against Islam. Many in the West thought the Mongol khan was Prester John. When the Mongols moved westward into Hungary, western Europeans had real reason for concern. However, Europe escaped more serious invasions when the death of Ogedei and the resulting succession struggle forced Batu to withdraw. Satisfied with their rich conquests in Asia and the Middle East, the Mongols did not return to Europe.

**The Mongol Assault on the Islamic Heartland.** Hulegu, a grandson of Chinggis Khan, moved westward against Mesopotamia and north Africa. Baghdad was destroyed in 1258. With the fall of the Abbasid dynasty, Islam had lost its central authority; consequently, much of its civilization was devastated. A major Mongol victory over the Seljuk Turks in 1243 opened Asia Minor to conquest by the Ottoman Turks. The Mongol advance halted in 1260 when the Mamluks of Egypt defeated the Mongols. Hulegu, faced with other threats to his rule, including the conversion of the khan of the Golden Horde to Islam, did not resume the campaign.

**The Mongol Interlude in Chinese History.** The Mongol advance into China resumed after Ogedei's election. Kubilai Khan, another grandson of Chinggis Khan, during the middle of the 13th century led the Mongols against the Song. In 1271, Kubilai's dynasty became the Yuan. As his conquests continued, Kubilai attempted to preserve the distinction between Mongols and Chinese. Chinese were forbidden from learning the Mongol script and intermarriage was prohibited. Mongol religious ceremonies and customs were retained. Kubilai refused to reestablish exams for the civil service. Despite the measures protecting Mongol culture, Kubilai was fascinated by Chinese civilization. He adopted much from their culture into his court; the capital at Tatu (Beijing) was in Chinese style. A new social structure emerged in China. The Mongols were at the top; their nomadic and Islamic allies were directly below them. Both groups dominated the highest levels of the administration. Beneath them came first the North Chinese, and then ethnic Chinese and peoples of the South.

**Gender Roles and the Convergence of Mongol and Chinese Culture.** Mongol women remained aloof from Confucian Chinese culture. They refused to adopt foot binding and retained rights to property and control in the household, as well as freedom of movement. Some Mongol women hunted and went to war. Chabi, wife of Kubilai, was an especially influential woman. The Mongol interlude in China was too brief, and Mongol numbers too small, to change Confucian patterns. The freedom of women declined under Kubilai's successors.

**Mongol Tolerance and Foreign Cultural Influence.** The openness of Mongol rulers to outside ideas, and their patronage, drew scholars, artists, artisans, and office seekers from many regions. Muslim lands provided some of the most favored arrivals; they were included in the social order just below the Mongols. They brought much new knowledge into the Chinese world. Kubilai was interested in all religions; Buddhists, Nestorian and Latin Christians, Daoists, and Muslims were all present at court. He welcomed foreign visitors. The most famous was the Venetian Marco Polo.

**In Depth: The Eclipse of the Nomadic War Machine.** The incursions of small numbers of militarily skilled nomads into the civilized cores have had a major effect on world history. Nomads destroyed entire civilizations, stimulated great population movements, caused social

upheavals, and facilitated cultural and economic exchanges. The Mongol and Timurid invasions were the high point of nomadic success. During the 14th century, the effect of the Black Death on nomads gave sedentary peoples numerical superiority. Sedentary civilizations became better able to centralize political power and to mobilize resources for developing superior military organization. With the Industrial Revolution, sedentary dominance became permanent.

**Social Policies and Scholar-Gentry Resistance.** The ethnic Chinese, the vast majority of Kubilai's subjects, were never reconciled to Mongol rule. The scholar-gentry regarded Mongols as uncouth barbarians with policies endangering Chinese traditions. The refusal to reinstate the examination system was especially resented. The Mongols also bolstered the position of artisans and merchants who previously had not received high status. Both prospered as the Mongols improved transportation and expanded the supply of paper money. The Mongols developed a substantial navy that helped conquest and increased commerce. Urban life flourished. Mongol patronage stimulated popular entertainment, especially musical drama, and awarded higher status to formerly despised actors and actresses. Kubilai's policies initially favored the peasantry. Their land was protected from Mongol cavalymen turning it into pasture, and famine relief measures were introduced. Tax and labor burdens were reduced. A revolutionary change was formulated—but not enacted—for establishing elementary education at the village level.

**The Fall of the House of Yuan.** By the time of Kubilai's death, the Yuan dynasty was weakening. Song loyalists in the South revolted. Mongol expeditions of 1274 and 1280 against Japan failed. Other Mongol forces were defeated in Vietnam and Java. Kubilai's successors lacked talent, and the Yuan administration became corrupt. The suffering peasantry was called upon by the scholar-gentry to drive out the "barbarians." By the 1350s, the dynasty was too weak to control all of China. Famines stimulated local risings. Secret societies dedicated to overthrowing the dynasty formed. Rival rebels fought each other. Many Mongols returned to central Asia. Finally, a peasant leader, Ju Yuanzhang, triumphed and founded the Ming dynasty.

**Aftershock: The Brief Ride of Timur.** Just when the peoples of Eurasia began to recover from the effects of Mongol expansion, a new leader, the Turk Timur-i Lang, brought new expansion. Timur, a highly cultured individual from a noble, land-owning clan, moved from his base at Samarkand to conquests in Persia, the Fertile Crescent, India, and southern Russia. Timur is remembered for the barbaric destruction of conquered lands—his campaigns outdid even the Mongols in their ferocity. His rule did not increase commercial expansion, cross-cultural exchanges, or internal peace. After his death in 1405, Timur's empire fell apart, and the last great challenge of the steppe nomads to Eurasian civilizations ended.

**Global Connections: The Mongol Linkages.** The legacy of the Mongol period was both complex and durable. The Mongols brought the Muslim and European worlds new military knowledge, especially the use of gunpowder. Trade and cultural contact between different civilizations throughout Eurasia became much easier. The trading empires established in their dominions by Venetians and Genoese provided experience useful for later European expansion. An unintended consequence was the transmitting of the fleas carrying the bubonic plague—the Black Death—from China and central Asia to the Middle East and Europe.

## KEY TERMS

**Chinggis Khan:** Grandson of Kabul Khan; born in 1170s; elected supreme Mongol ruler (khagan) in 1206; began the Mongols' rise to world power; died 1227.

**Tumens:** Basic fighting units of Mongol forces; made up of 10,000 cavalymen divided into smaller units.

**Tangut:** Rulers of Xi Xia kingdom of northwest China during the Southern Song period; conquered by Mongols in 1226.

**Muhammad Shah II:** Turkic ruler of Muslim Khwarazm; conquered by Mongols in 1220.

**Karakorum:** Capital of Mongol Empire under Chinggis Khan.

**Shamanistic religion:** Mongol beliefs focused on nature spirits.

**Batu:** Grandson of Chinggis Khan and ruler of the Golden Horde; invaded Russia in 1236.

**Ogedei:** Third son of Chinggis Khan; succeeded him as Mongol khagan.

**Golden Horde:** One of four regional subdivisions of the Mongol Empire after the death of Chinggis Khan; conquered and ruled Russia during the 13th and 14th centuries.

**Prestor John:** A mythical Christian monarch whose kingdom supposedly had been cut off from Europe by the Muslim conquests; some thought he was Chinggis Khan.

**Ilkhan khanate:** One of four regional subdivisions of the Mongol Empire after the death of Chinggis Khan; eventually included much of Abbasid Empire.

**Hulegu:** Grandson of Chinggis Khan and ruler of Ilkhan khanate; captured and destroyed Abbasid Baghdad.

**Mamluks:** Muslim slave warriors; established dynasty in Egypt; led by Baibars; defeated Mongols at Ain Jalut in 1260.

**Kubilai Khan:** Grandson of Chinggis Khan; conquered China; established Yuan dynasty in 1271.

**Tatu:** Mongol capital of Yuan dynasty; present-day Beijing.

**Chabi:** Influential wife of Kubilai Khan; demonstrated refusal of Mongol women to adopt restrictive social conventions of Confucian China.

**Nestorians:** Asian Christian sect; cut off from Europe by Muslim invasions.

***Romance of the West Chamber***: Famous Chinese dramatic work written during the Yuan period.

**White Lotus Society**: Secret religious society dedicated to overthrow of Yuan dynasty.

**Ju Yuanzhang**: Chinese peasant who led successful revolt against Yuan; founded Ming dynasty.

**Timur-i Lang**: Last major nomad leader; 14th-century Turkic ruler of Samarkand; launched attacks in Persia, Fertile Crescent, India, southern Russia; empire disintegrated after his death in 1405.

**Kuriltai**: Meeting of all Mongol chieftains at which the supreme ruler of all tribes was selected.

**Khagan**: Title of supreme ruler of the Mongol tribes.

**Khanates**: Four regional Mongol kingdoms that arose following the death of Chinggis Khan.

**Battle of Kulikova**: Russian army victory over the forces of the Golden Horde; helped break Mongol hold over Russia.

**Baibars**: (1223 – 1277) Commander of Mamluk forces at Ain Jalut in 1260; originally enslaved by Mongols and sold to Egyptians.

**Berke**: (1257 – 1266) A ruler of the Golden Horde; converted to Islam; his threat to Hulegu combined with the growing power of Mamluks in Egypt forestalled further Mongol conquests in the Middle East.

**Ming Dynasty**: Succeeded Mongol Yuan dynasty in China in 1368; lasted until 1644; initially mounted huge trade expeditions to southern Asia and elsewhere, but later concentrated efforts on internal development within China.

## LESSON SUGGESTIONS

<b>Leader Analysis</b>	Chinggis Khan
<b>Peoples Analysis</b>	Mongol society
<b>Conflict Analysis</b>	Mongol conquering and occupation of Russia
<b>Change Analysis</b>	Effect of Mongols on Islamic cultures
<b>Societal Comparison</b>	Mongols versus any society they conquered
<b>Document Analysis</b>	European assessment of the virtues and vices of the Mongols
<b>Inner/Outer Circle</b>	Why were the Mongols successful in controlling so much territory?

## LECTURE SUGGESTIONS

**Evaluate how the Mongol conquests can be said to have brought an end to the postclassical civilizations in eastern Europe, western Europe, and Islam.** In eastern Europe, the conquests marked the end of Kievan dominance; the political balance shifted to Moscow as it took up chief resistance to Mongol rule. The religious center also moved to Moscow. The moves marked the beginning of Russian political centralization. For Byzantium, the Mongol conquests meant the opening of Ottoman dominance in Asia Minor and the eventual loss of Constantinople. The Mongol influence in western Europe had a limited direct effect as the conquest was quickly halted. An important indirect effect was facilitating transmission of the Black Death to western Europe. The conquests marked the end of the western European postclassical period: the opening of trade with the East marked the beginning of the aggressive Western commerce typical of the early modern period. For Islam, the conquests ended Abbasid and other minor dynastic rule; they opened the path for the political division of the Islamic heartland between the Ottomans and Mamluks.

**Appraise the proposition that the Mongol era was an extension of the incursions of nomadic peoples into the affairs of sedentary civilizations. In what sense was it a civilization in its own right?** Mongol khanates remained dependent on tribal organization and herding. They attempted to maintain their separateness as a people with nomadic cultural patterns. Even in China under the Yuan dynasty, strict efforts were made to uphold cultural differences. Their control of trade was typical of nomadic incursions; so was the limited period of Yuan rule and use of cities. Chinggis Khan established a uniquely Mongol administration for an empire based on such Islamic and Chinese precedents as a universal legal code, adoption of a Mongol script, maintenance of empire-wide peace, and promotion of commerce and travel.

## CLASS DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

**Describe the nature of the military organization established by Chinggis Khan.**

The military belief of Chinggis Khan was very clever and effective on the battlefield, and each soldier had deep ties of mutualism with the commanding generals. They were less feudal, socially speaking, and in that differed from the many armies Chinggis Khan fought and defeated. All efforts that were once devoted to internal conflict were subdued by loyalty to the khagan. The division of regiments was very effective and mobile, since they were nomads. Disregarding position and highlighting skill, even if they were once foes, was not uncommon. This method filtered out the weak and put those with great leadership skills on top. The armies were greatly divided into special units from messengers and scouting, to archers, to heavy calvary.

**Describe the nature of the administration of the Mongol empire under Chinggis Khan.**

Universal tolerance coupled with hefty tribute comprised the focus of administration in Chinggis Khan's rule; trade, augmented by increasing expansion, whetted an intellectual appetite. Clan ways still existed in the division of land and temporary retreats to bury khagans and family. Religions, art, sciences, culture, and weapons were tolerated, and even desired, to nature. The

Mongol empire led to the exposure of Chinese and Muslim/Arabic influences that Europe otherwise would not be abreast of.

**Trace the effect of the Mongol conquest of Russia and Islamic heartlands.**

Russian peasantry suffered while Russian clergy and nobility prospered from a decreasing Muslim control of tribute, creating the Russian capital of Moscow and the Russian Orthodox church. Muslim trade routes opened and Abbasid caliphate rule disintegrated, leaving room for the Ottomans' and Christians' access to Muslim intelligence and Chinese gunpowder. Also the spread of the bubonic plague to eastern Asia and the economic growth of Italy arose from Mongol presence in Russia and the Muslim heartlands.

**Trace the effect of the Mongol conquest on Chinese society and political structure.**

Mongol language distinction and control was attempted to be secluded from the Chinese society and scholar-gentry; this failed due to growing female influences and neo-Confucian uprising. Additionally, cultural exchanges came that would otherwise not exist. Entrance examinations were restricted. The merchant class grew in influence with Confucian guidance.

**Describe the positive aspects of the Mongol conquests.**

The Mongol conquests brought together many different groups of people. This allowed many different ideas, such as Confucian politics, Muslim siege weapons, and Daoist religious beliefs to mix. Also, the land between eastern Persia and the North China Sea was now relatively safe to live and travel in. All religions were allowed to be practiced and there was a lot of work done to eliminate the previous boundaries between cultures.

**Compare the conquests of Timur-i Lang with those of the Mongols.**

First of all, Timur-i Lang was born to a noble landowning clan instead of a tribal, herding background. Timur-i Lang's empire was much smaller than the Mongols, but the ferocity of Timur-i Lang's conquest was much greater than the Mongols. Timur-i Lang was centered on destruction, and his campaign brought only violence, not the increased trade and internal peace of Mongol conquests.



**MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one alternative that best completes the statement or answers the question.**

1. During what period did the nomads of central Asia impact the other global civilizations of the Eastern Hemisphere in the postclassical era?
  - A) 800 to 1000
  - B) 900 to 1100
  - C) 1100 to 1300
  - D) 1200 to 1400
  - E) 1300 to 1500
  
2. Which of the following statements concerning the nomadic society of the Mongols prior to the establishment of the empire is NOT accurate?
  - A) The Mongols were primarily herders of cattle and horses.
  - B) The basic economic unit of the Mongols was the tribe.
  - C) Mongol leaders were selected by all free males for as long as they could hold power.
  - D) The Mongols were capable of forming tribal confederations in times of war.
  - E) The basic unit of Mongol society was the tribe.
  
3. In 1206, Chinggis Khan
  - A) was born.
  - B) was sold into slavery following his capture by rival tribesmen.
  - C) was elected khagan (supreme ruler) of the Mongol tribes.
  - D) conquered Kiev.
  - E) died.
  
4. Karakorum was
  - A) the consultative assembly of Mongol males used to elect leaders.
  - B) the name for Mongol rule in Russia.
  - C) one of Chinggis Khan's sons who ruled the Golden Horde.
  - D) the battle in which the Mongols were defeated by the Russians.
  - E) the new capital constructed by Chinggis Khan for his empire.
  
5. Which of the following reforms was NOT established by Chinggis Khan to provide for a lasting peace in his domains?
  - A) A script was devised for the Mongolian language to facilitate keeping records.
  - B) A legal code was promulgated to prevent feuds between Mongol clans.
  - C) Chinese and Islamic bureaucrats were strictly banned from service in the Mongol administration.
  - D) Farmers were taxed to support the Mongol courts and military expeditions.
  - E) He tolerated all religions in his empire.

6. The Mongol conquest of Russia is often associated with
- A) the extreme political decentralization of Russia in subsequent centuries.
  - B) the dominance of St. Petersburg in Russian politics.
  - C) the desire of Russian princes to centralize their control and minimize the limitations placed on their power by the landed nobility.
  - D) lack of urbanization in much of eastern Europe.
  - E) the overthrow of the power base in Moscow.
7. Which of the following statements concerning the Mongol conquest of Song China is most accurate?
- A) The Mongols were unable to establish political control over the Song dynasty.
  - B) Song China, because of its relative weakness, capitulated within two years after the initiation of the Mongol conquest.
  - C) The campaigns against the Song were interrupted by power struggles among the Mongols, but took slightly more than five years.
  - D) Due to the difficulty of the campaign, the Mongols abandoned the effort to conquer China.
  - E) Song China proved one of the toughest areas for the Mongols to conquer, taking from 1235 to 1279 to subdue.
8. What was the status of Mongolian women during the Yuan dynasty of China?
- A) Mongolian women lost status as they fell under the social apparatus of the Confucian ideology.
  - B) Mongolian women suffered social and political isolation as Mongol men adopted the preference for women who had undergone foot binding.
  - C) Mongol women were increasingly prevented from participating in hunting and martial activities, although they retained some influence in the household.
  - D) Mongol women embraced the ideology of their new Chinese society.
  - E) Mongol women remained relatively independent, refused to adopt the practice of foot binding, and retained their rights in property.
9. What caused a decline in the military reputation of the Mongol Yuan dynasty in China?
- A) The failure of expeditions against the Japanese
  - B) The demolition of the Great Wall
  - C) The defeat of the Yuan at the hands of the Golden Horde
  - D) The invasion of northern China by the Korean Koryo dynasty
  - E) Infighting among various Mongol groups

10. Who was the Turkic nomadic leader who began a period of conquest beginning in the 1360s?

- A) Muhamman Shah
- B) Ibn Pasha
- C) Timur-i Lang
- D) Ibn Khaldun
- E) Ibn Battuta

**SHORT ANSWER. Write the word or phrase that best completes the statement or answers the question.**

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ was one of the four regional subdivisions of the Mongol Empire after the death of Chinggis Khan and covered much of what is today south-central Russia.
2. One of the four regional subdivisions of the Mongol Empire after Chinggis Khan's death, the \_\_\_\_\_ khanate eventually conquered much of the Abbasid Empire.
3. Prince \_\_\_\_\_ saved the city of Novgorod from the Mongols by submitting to Mongol demands.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ was the name given to a mythical, rich, and powerful Christian monarch whose kingdom had supposedly been cut off from Europe by the Muslim conquests.
5. \_\_\_\_\_, ruler of the Ilkhan khanate, was responsible for the capture and destruction of Baghdad.
6. The Mongols were finally defeated in the Middle East by the armies of the \_\_\_\_\_, a slave dynasty of Egypt.
7. The influential wife of Kubilai Khan, \_\_\_\_\_, promoted the interests of Buddhists in China.
8. The most famous dramatic work of the Yuan period was \_\_\_\_\_, indicative of the continued literary vitality of China during Mongol rule.
9. Secret religious sects, such as the \_\_\_\_\_, were dedicated to the overthrow of the Yuan dynasty.
10. A man from an impoverished peasant family, \_\_\_\_\_, emerged to found the Ming dynasty.

**TRUE/FALSE. Write “T” if the statement is true and “F” if the statement is false.**

1. The Mongol armies incorporated the technological capability to make use of gunpowder and cannons.
2. Chinggis Khan was converted by Buddhist monks from China to the “Pure Lands” Buddhist interpretation.
3. The Mongol invasion of the Islamic heartland resulted in the defeat of the Ottoman Turks, paving the way for the creation of the Seljuk Empire.
4. The Mongol conquest of Song China was so difficult that it required more than 35 years to accomplish.
5. The more rapid recovery of the sedentary agricultural civilizations from the ravages of the Black Death is one of the most important reasons for the subsequent eclipse of nomadic cultures.
6. Chinggis Khan was commander of the Mongol forces responsible for the conquest of China and the founder of the Yuan dynasty.
7. Though the empire was divided after Chinggis Khan’s death in 1227, the four khanates that emerged in the struggles for succession ruled most of Asia.
8. The supreme ruler of the Mongol tribes was chosen by automatic, patrilineal succession.
9. Chinggis Khan refused to live in the cities of conquered peoples and built a new capital at Karakorum on the steppes.
10. Kubilai, the third son of Chinggis Khan, was elected Grand Khan of the Mongols after his father’s death.

## ANSWER KEY

### Multiple Choice

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. D | 6. C  |
| 2. A | 7. E  |
| 3. C | 8. E  |
| 4. E | 9. A  |
| 5. C | 10. C |

### Short Answer

1. Answer: Golden Horde
2. Answer: Ilkhan
3. Answer: Alexander Nevskii
4. Answer: Prester John
5. Answer: Hulegu
6. Answer: Mamluks
7. Answer: Chabi
8. Answer: *Romance of the West Chamber*
9. Answer: White Lotus Society
10. Answer: Ju Yuanzhang

### True/False

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. F  |
| 2. F | 7. T  |
| 3. F | 8. F  |
| 4. T | 9. T  |
| 5. T | 10. F |

## CHAPTER 14

### TIMELINE

*Insert the following events into the timeline. This should help you to compare important historical events chronologically.*

Mongol destruction of Baghdad  
Mongol conquest of Russia completed  
Chinggis Khan elected khagan  
Marco Polo journeys to central Asia  
death of Timur-i Lang  
fall of Yuan dynasty in China

\_\_\_ 1206

\_\_\_ 1240

\_\_\_ 1258

\_\_\_ 1271

\_\_\_ 1368

\_\_\_ 1405

### TERMS, PEOPLE, EVENTS

*The following terms, people, and events are important to your understanding of the chapter. Define each one on a separate sheet of paper.*

Alexander Nevskii  
Baibars  
Berke  
Hulegu  
Ilkhan khanate  
Kara Khitai Empire  
khagan  
khanates  
Ming dynasty  
Mongols  
Muhammad Shah II  
Sarai  
White Lotus Society

Battle of Kulikova  
Kubilai Khan  
Yuan  
Mamluks  
Batu  
Khwarazm Empire  
tumens  
Chinggis Khan  
Samarkund  
kuriltai  
Karakorum  
Ibn al-Athir  
Ju Yuanzhang

King Bela  
Chabi  
Marco Polo  
Berke  
Prester John  
khanates  
Golden Horde  
kuriltai  
Timur-i Lang  
khagan  
Ogedei  
Baibars

## MAP EXERCISE

*The following exercise is intended to clarify the geophysical environment and the spatial relationships among the important objects and places mentioned in the chapter. Locate the following places on the map.*

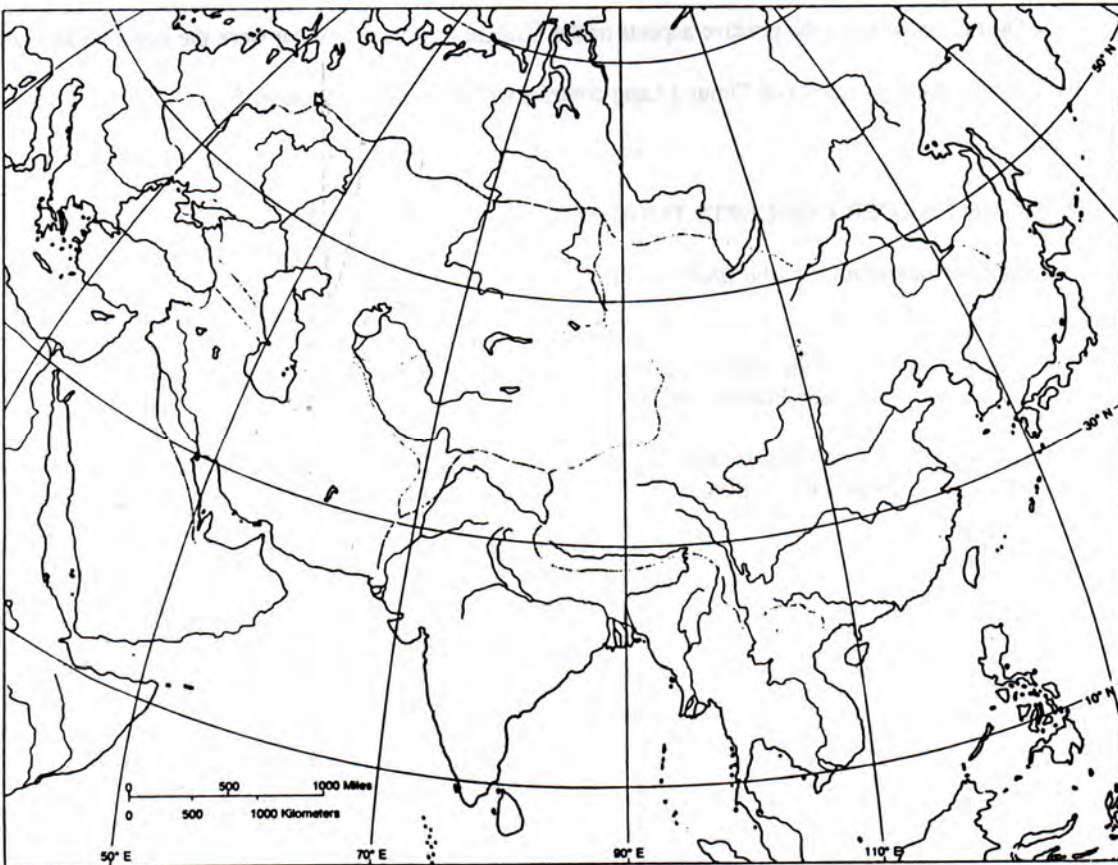
Karakorum

Samarkand

boundaries of early Mongol Empire

boundaries of divided Mongol Empire

Looking at the map, describe how the insertion of the Mongol Empire in regions that had previously been disorganized helped to connect the civilized centers of the postclassical world. What civilizations were on its frontiers?



Chapter 14  
The Last Great Nomadic Challenges: From Chinggis Khan to Timur

- I. Introduction
  - A. Mongols ended/interrupted many great postclassical empires
  - B. Extended world network – foundation for interaction on global scale
  - C. Forged mightiest war machine
  - D. Four khanates – sons divided
    - 1. Ruled for 150 years
    - 2. Last time nomadic peoples dominated sedentary peoples
  - E. Paradox of rule – fierce fighters vs. tolerant/peaceful leaders
  
- II. The Mongol Empire of Chinggis Khan
  - A. Introduction
    - 1. difficult to organize before Chinggis Khan
      - a. divisions/rivalries
      - b. Khan – astute political strategist/brilliant military commander
    - 2. Nomadic world – horse culture
      - a. Lived on herds – meat, milk, traded hides for grain/vegetables
      - b. Tough little ponies
      - c. Children ride from early age
      - d. Could even sleep/eat on horse
        - 1. Animal power/seasonal migrations
        - 2. Movable shelters
      - e. Political organization
        - 1. Like Bedouins – kin/clan based – combined in confederations when needed
        - 2. Men dominated but women could influence tribal meetings/home
        - 3. Leadership qualities – courage, alliance forging ability
  - B. The Making of a Great Warrior: The Early Career of Chinggis Khan
    - 1. Born Temujin to tribal leader, but father poisoned
    - 2. Imprisoned by rival clan, but escapes
      - a. Makes alliance with another clan
    - 3. Reputation as warrior/military commander attracted other clan chiefs
  
    - 4. 1206 at kuriltai meeting – named khagan – extreme ruler
  - C. Building the Mongol War Machine
    - 1. Natural warriors
      - a. trained from youth to ride/hunt
      - b. tough, mobile, accustomed to death
      - c. variety of weapons – lances, hatchets, maces
        - 1. Short bow the best – 400 yard range vs. 250 European
    - 2. Chinggis Khan's leadership
      - a. organization, discipline, unity
      - b. directed fighting spirit toward conquest
      - c. divided groups into tumens – think centurions of Rome
    - 3. Messenger force – tightly bandaged – ride all day/night
    - 4. Military discipline – killed if flee
    - 5. Generosity to brave foes
    - 6. Utilized excellent maps
    - 7. New weapons – flaming arrows, gunpowder, siege weapons
      - a. Willing to adopt from conquered groups



#### D. Conquest: The Mongol Empire Under Chinggis Khan

1. Ruled over ½ million Mongols
2. Greatest pleasure making war – campaigns
  - a. fortified cities – willing to adopt weapons of other nations
    1. developed siege weapons
      - i. rams, catapults, exploding balls
      - ii. bamboo rockets
    - b. threatened terrifying retribution – surrender or else
      1. slaughtered/sold townspeople
      2. buildings turned to rubble
      3. forced to pay tribute

#### E. First Assault on the Islamic World: Conquest in China

1. Defeated Turkik ruler to the west – Muhammad Shah II
  - a. Leader sent back envoys with heads shaved
  - b. Mongols destroyed with authority
2. Battle tactic
  - a. Fight, cavalry runs away, followed by other army, heavy cavalry moves in
3. Defeated Muhammad Shah II and brought in tens of thousands of horsemen

#### F. Life Under the Mongol Imperium

1. Astute and tolerant rulers
  - a. Open to new ideas
  - b. Wanted diverse peoples to live together in peace
2. Interest in arts and learning of conquered people
3. New capital at Karakorum – wise and clever visited as envoys
  - a. Confucian scholars on how to rule China
  - b. Muslims – engineers and trade
  - c. Daoist holy men – elixir for immortality
4. All religions tolerated
5. Mongol script created – mostly illiterate people
6. Effects
  - a. Peace to much of Asia
    1. Towns – handicraft production, scholarship, free expression
  - b. Secure trade routes
  - c. Force for major economic/social development

#### G. The Death of Chinggis Khan and the Division of the Empire

1. 180,000 warriors to conquer China
2. But...got sick and died in 1227
  - a. empire divided among 3 sons and Batu grandson
  - b. Last bit of anger – carried back Khan's body
    1. Hunted/killed every animal/human in sight
3. Mongol successor Ogedei – third son – named grand khan
  - a. Not best warrior, but best diplomat

### III. The Mongol Drive to the West

#### A. Introduction

1. Golden Horde/Tartars (people from hell) – golden tent of early khans
  - a. Assault on Russia side campaign
  - b. Main goals
    1. fine tune war machine
    2. get some money from booty
2. Russia divided into small kingdoms – don't unite
  - a. Only successful winter invasion

1. Good for horse's footing
  2. Access over frozen rivers to enemies
  3. All slaughtered or led into slavery
- B. Russian in Bondage
1. 2 ½ centuries of Russia in bondage
  - 2 Effects
    - a. Peasantry have to give up crops
      - i. Some flee to protection of ruling class – become serfs
    - b. Some Russian towns make profits
      - i. Increased trade
      - ii. Moscow – trade, tribute collector
        1. Rulers made money and annexed other towns
  3. Tribute collectors
    - a. Battle of Kulikova – overthrew Golden Horde
  4. Impact – turning point in Russia history
    - a. Moscow grew
    - b. Orthodox church intensifies control
    - c. changes in Russia's military organization
    - d. princes realize need to centralize control
      1. Reduce limitations put on power by nobility, clergy, merch
    - e. Russia's isolation from Christian lands
      1. Benefit – Russia protected from invasion from Europe
      2. Negative – Cut off from key transformations in w. Europe
- C. Mongol Incursions and the Retreat from Europe
1. W. Europe thought Mongols were Prestor John
    - a. Mythical Christian monarch cut off who would one day return
  2. Mongols wanted to pillage Europe, but...
    - a. Death of khagan Ogedei – forced leader Batu to retreat
      1. Compete for leadership
    - b. Richer lands to plunder in Middle East
- D. The Mongol Assault on the Islamic Heartland
1. 1258 – capture/destruction of Baghdad
    - a. 800,000 killed
    - b. Abbasid caliph
  2. Effects
    - a. ended dynasty that had ruled since 8<sup>th</sup> century
    - b. left faithful without central authority
    - c. devastated focal points/trading centers of Islamic civilization
  3. Eventually defeated by the Mamluk
    - a. Enslaved by Mongols – later defeated them
    - b. With cooperation with Christians

#### IV. The Mongol Interlude in Chinese History

##### A. Introduction

1. Administered very strictly
2. Mongols retained distinct culture
3. Opened China to influences from Persian lands/contacts with Europe
4. Kubliai Khan
  - a. Assumed title of great khan/Yuan
  - b. Changed name of regime to Yuan – Yuan Dynasty
  - c. Denied Chinese influence
    1. distinction between Mongol/Chinese
    2. forbade Chinese scholars from learning Mongol script

3. forbidden to marry ethnic Chinese
  4. women from nomadic families accepted into harem
  5. Mongol religious ceremonies retained
  6. traditional tent encampment set up in capital
  7. Did not embrace civil service exams
  - d. worked with Chinese on some issues
    1. Surrounded self with Chinese advisors – Confucian, Buddhist, Daoist
    2. Capital at Tatu – Beijing
    3. Introduced rituals and classic music into court
  - e. New social structure
    1. Mongols
    2. Nomadic/Muslim allies
    3. North Chinese
    4. Ethnic Chinese/peoples from South
- B. Gender Roles and the Convergence of Mongol and Chinese Culture
1. Women
    - a. Refused to adopt footbinding
    - b. Women retained property rights
    - c. Destroyed vision of women as dainty, to be protected
      1. Rode to hunt
      2. Kubilai's daughter said had to beat wrestling
    - d. Chabi – wife
      1. promoted Buddhist interests
      2. reduced harsh treatment of Song captured
      3. didn't convert nearby farmland to pastureland
- C. Mongol Tolerance and Foreign Cultural Influence
1. Curiosity/cosmopolitan tastes – opened China up
    - a. Brought scholars, artists, artisans
    - b. Muslims second social class
      1. Supervised building of Chinese-style imperial city
      2. Persian astronomers corrected Chinese calendars
      3. Doctors added 36 volumes of Muslim medicine
  2. Welcomed travelers
    - a. Polo family from Venice – Marco Polo
      1. Marco Polo's travel log created extreme interest in Asia
      2. Inspired European efforts in navigation
- D. Social Policies and Scholar-Gentry
1. Completely altered social hierarchy
    - a. Prevented scholar-gentry from taking positions – got rid of test
    - b. Bolstered position of artisans
    - c. Merchants also prospered
      1. Mongols created war fleets/navies
  2. Cities/sedentary lifestyles flourished – ironic
  3. Open to different ideas
    - a. Traditional poetry/essay writing suffers
    - b. popular entertainment – dramas flourish
      1. The Romance of the West Chamber
      2. Actors no longer “mean people”
  4. Help for peasants
    - a. Doesn't turn cropland into pasture land
    - b. Reduces taxes
    - c. Plan to establish elementary education – never goes through

## E. The Fall of the House of Yuan

1. Mongol aura of invincibility falters
  - a. Lost to military lords of Japan
  - b. Song loyalists raised revolts in South
  - c. Frustrated/unsuccessful expeditions to Java/Vietnam
2. Softening of the ruling class
  - a. Stop taking care of day to day work
  - b. Allowed corrupt Chinese/Muslims to run finances
3. Scholar-gentry encouraged revolts
4. Banditry/piracy increases – can't guarantee safety
5. Famine hit many regions
6. Religious Sects – White Lotus Society
  - a. Magical powers to overthrow Mongols
7. Man from poor peasant family – Ju Yuanzhang starts Ming dynasty

## F. Aftershock: The Brief Ride of Timur

1. Timur-I Lang – Timur the Lame
  - a. Highly cultured person
  - b. Ruthless conqueror – atrocities – pyramid of skulls – tens thousands
    1. Spared artisans/scientists to help build capital
2. Upon death, empire falls apart
3. Last great challenge from nomads

## V. Global Connections

### A. Lasting changes

1. new ways of making war
  - a. gunpowder
2. Facilitated trade
  - a. unprecedented trade of foods, tools, ideas
  - b. brought great wealth to traders – think Venice
3. Created urge for overseas expansion

### B. Greatest impact – plagues

1. Fleas on livestock
2. Rats on ships that nibbled grain
3. Economic/social impact – 50% of some regions
  - a. Forced adjustments/change in economic/social roles to deal with

### C. Other exchanges

1. Europeans adapt products and technologies
  - a. Explosive powder/printing
2. After many wanted to maintain contacts
  - a. But...China grew more wary of outsiders
  - b. But...land-based travel became more difficult
    1. Led to the need to focus on improving sea routes/transportation

Chapter

14

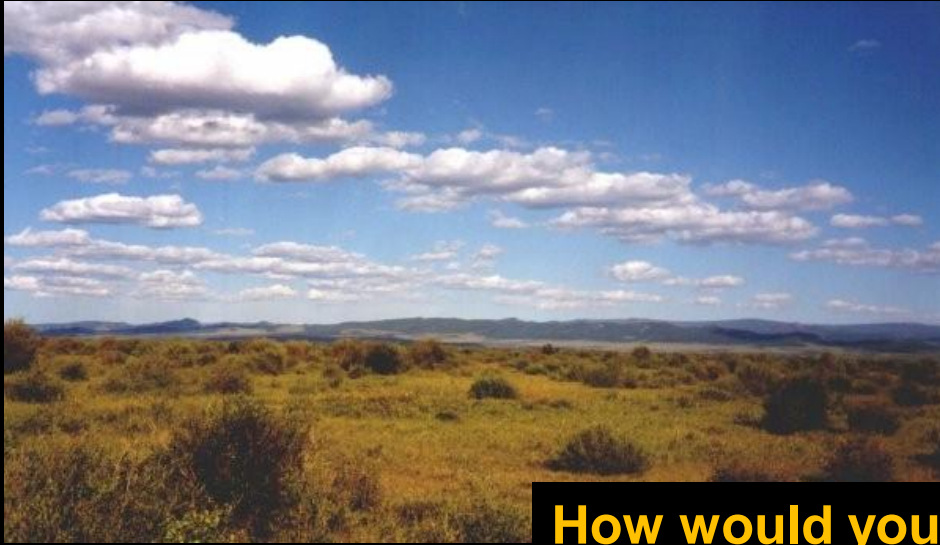
# The Last Great Nomadic Challenges: From Chinggis Khan to Timur

(A.D. 500 – A.D. 1450)

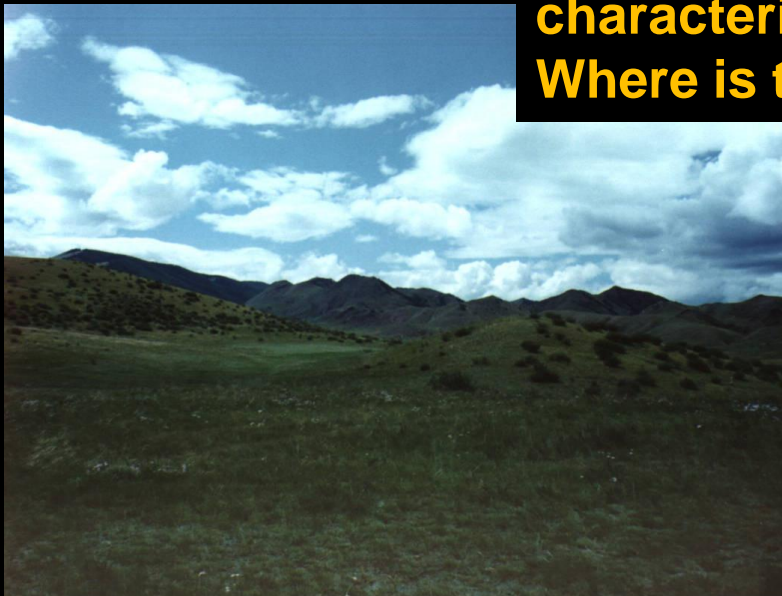




# The Steppe



**How would you characterize this region?  
Where is this?**



# Steppe Culture

- Loyalty to kin/clan
- Courage culture
- Horsemanship
- Mobile (pastoralists & hunters)
- Animists
- Raiding between tribes
- Traded with sedentary peoples for manufactured goods
- Invented stirrups





# Mongols

- Declared themselves to be descendents of Huns who founded the 1<sup>st</sup> steppe empire in late Classical era.
- Called “**Tartars**” especially by Westerners (“people from hell”), though a misnomer: Mongols conquered steppe tribe Tartars, but because so many Tartars rose to prominence in the Mongol Empire, the name became synonymous with Mongols.





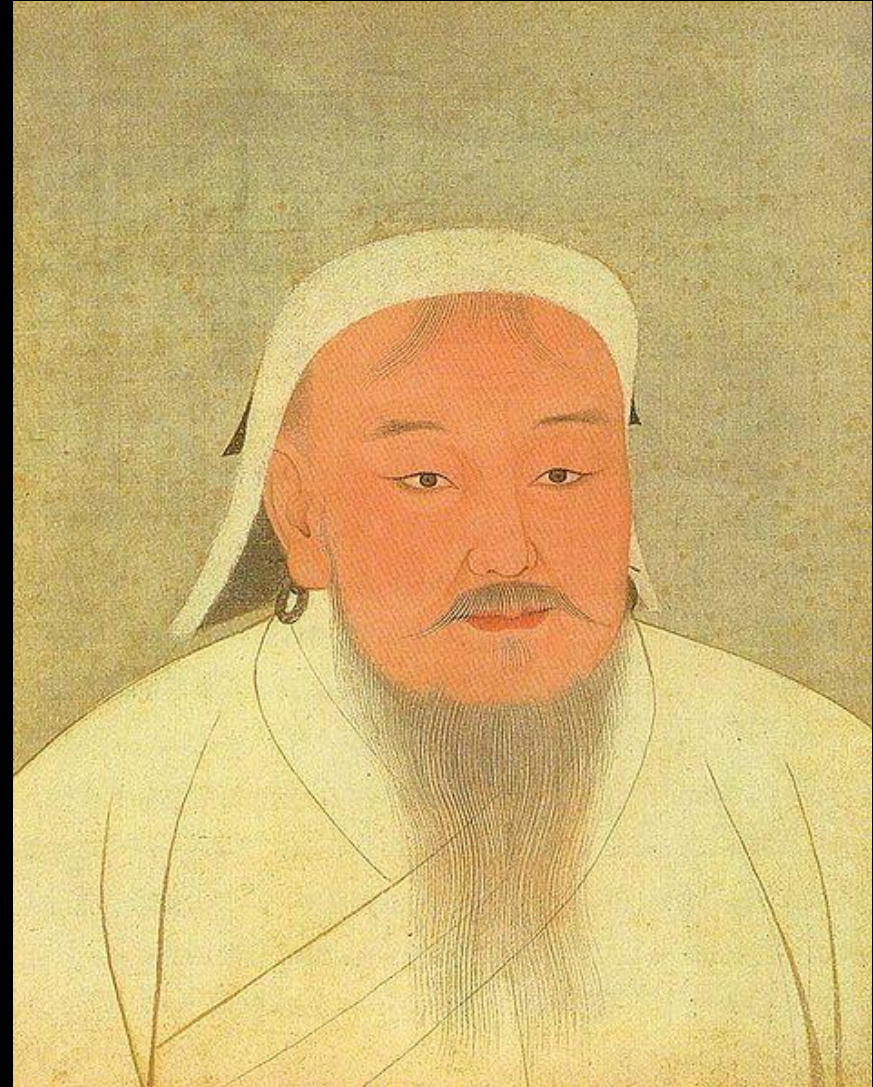
# The Mongols

- The Mongols were well known for their ability to ride horses well and wage war.
- Skilled in shooting short composite bows and arrows from horseback.
- Organized troops effectively and readily adopted new technologies, like gunpowder from China.



# Mongol Conquests

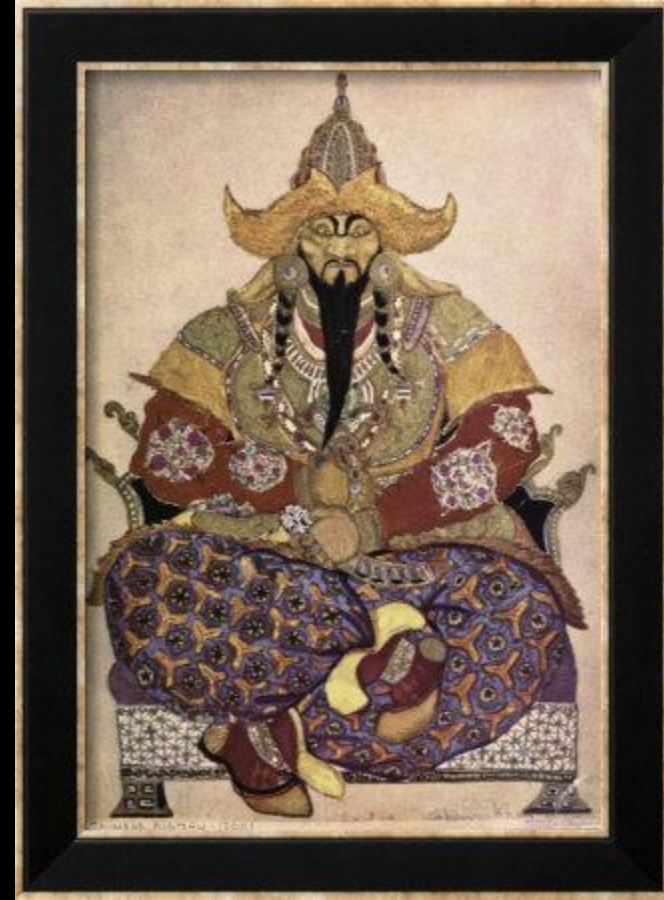
- At a meeting of Mongol leaders in 1206, a man named Temujin was elected **Genghis Khan**, which means strong ruler.
- He united Mongol tribes and conquered a vast empire that stretched from the Pacific Ocean to Eastern Europe.
- Genghis Khan imposed strict military discipline and demanded absolute loyalty. His highly trained armies contained some of the most skilled horsemen in the world.
- In their conquest of China, the Mongol armies faced the problem of attacking walled cities. Mongol and Chinese armies used missile weapons against each other.





# Genghis Khan

- Valued individual merit & loyalty
- Fighting wasn't honorable; winning was. So, used any means necessary to win (trickery, etc.)
- Conscripted peasants: Mongols just didn't understand peasants who seemed like grazing animals rather than *real humans* who ate meat. "They used same terms, precision, & emotion in rounding up yaks as peasants." --ouch!
- Refugees preceded Mongol attack as people from outlying areas fled to cities for protection but overwhelmed the cities & spread fear
- LOVED negative PR: allowed & encouraged true or false stories to be circulated in order instill fear.
- Fought on the move: didn't care if chased or fled (unlike sedentary soldier-farmer), just wanted to kill the enemy.



# The Mongol Empire

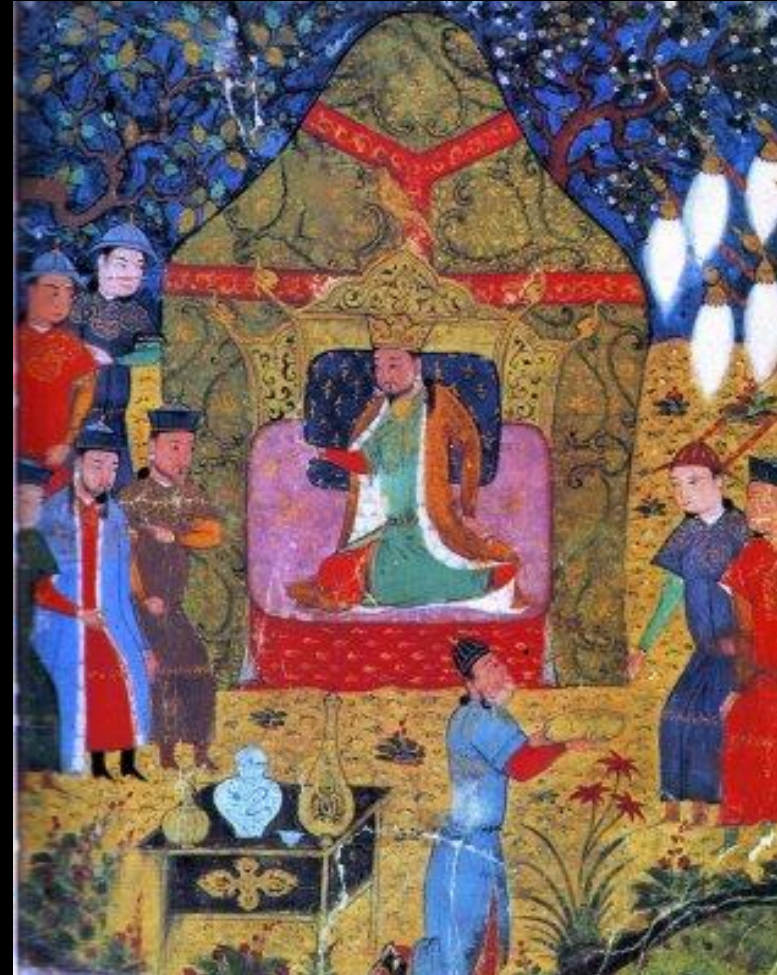


It took 150 years for the Mongols to complete their conquest of China.



# Genghis Khan -- Innovations

- Relied on speed & surprise and perfected siege warfare (not relied on defensive fortifications)
- Used resources of land instead of relying on supply train
- Allocated fallen soldiers' share of loot to go to widow/children (ensured support)
- Reorganized army so each unit had a mix of tribal/ethnic peoples and they had to live & fight together ---transcend kinship, ethnicity, & religion.
- Religious tolerance
- Instituted postal system for communication
- Ordered writing system created
- Abolished torture & insisted on rule of law (to which even the khan was accountable)



# Genghis Khan -- Legacy

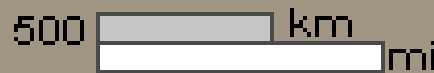


- In 25 years, subjugated more land & people than the Romans did in 400 years.
- Destroyed LOTS of 'less important' cities often along less accessible trade routes to funnel commerce into routes that his army could more easily supervise and control.



→ campaigns of Genghis Khan between 1211 and 1226

■ extent of power of Genghis Khan at the time of his death in 1227



# Death of Genghis Khan

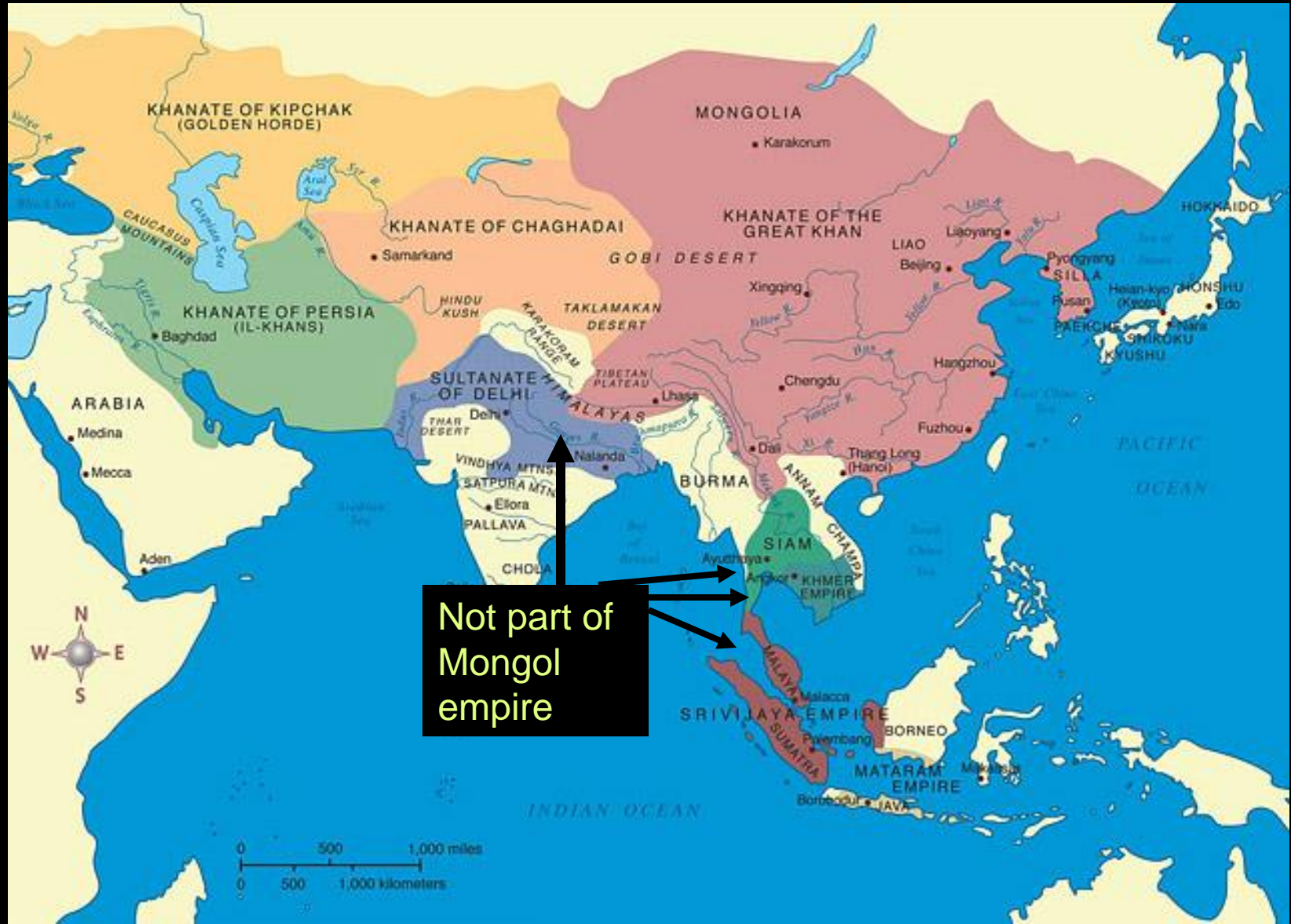
- Even prior to his death, lots of fighting among his sons.
- He kept pursuing new lands because he worried that factionalism within his family would tear apart the empire & also because his peoples had grown dependent on a steady flow of goods --and his empire depended upon constant conquest.
- Died in 1227 **without conquering China**.
- His son established **Karakorum** as a focal point for merchants, pilgrims, & craftsmen.



# Division of the Mongol Empire

- After several decades of power struggles among Genghis Khan's sons, nephews, daughters-in-law, & grandsons, **Kublai Khan** (Genghis' grandson) became leader of the eastern portion of the Mongol Empire which ruled China as the Yuan Dynasty & declared himself as the grand khan.
- Around 1300, the empire would be split into four sections (*khanates*) with each ruled by various descendants of Genghis Khan:
  - **Kublai Khan** ruled China (Yuan Dynasty), Tibet, Manchuria, Korea, & eastern Mongolia
  - The **Golden Horde** ruled the Slavic countries of eastern Europe
  - The **Ilkhanate** ('vassal empire) ruled Afghanistan to Turkey
  - The **Moghulistan** ruled the central steppe including Kazakhstan, Siberia & Turkmenistan.

# Mongol Empire 13<sup>th</sup> c. --the khanates

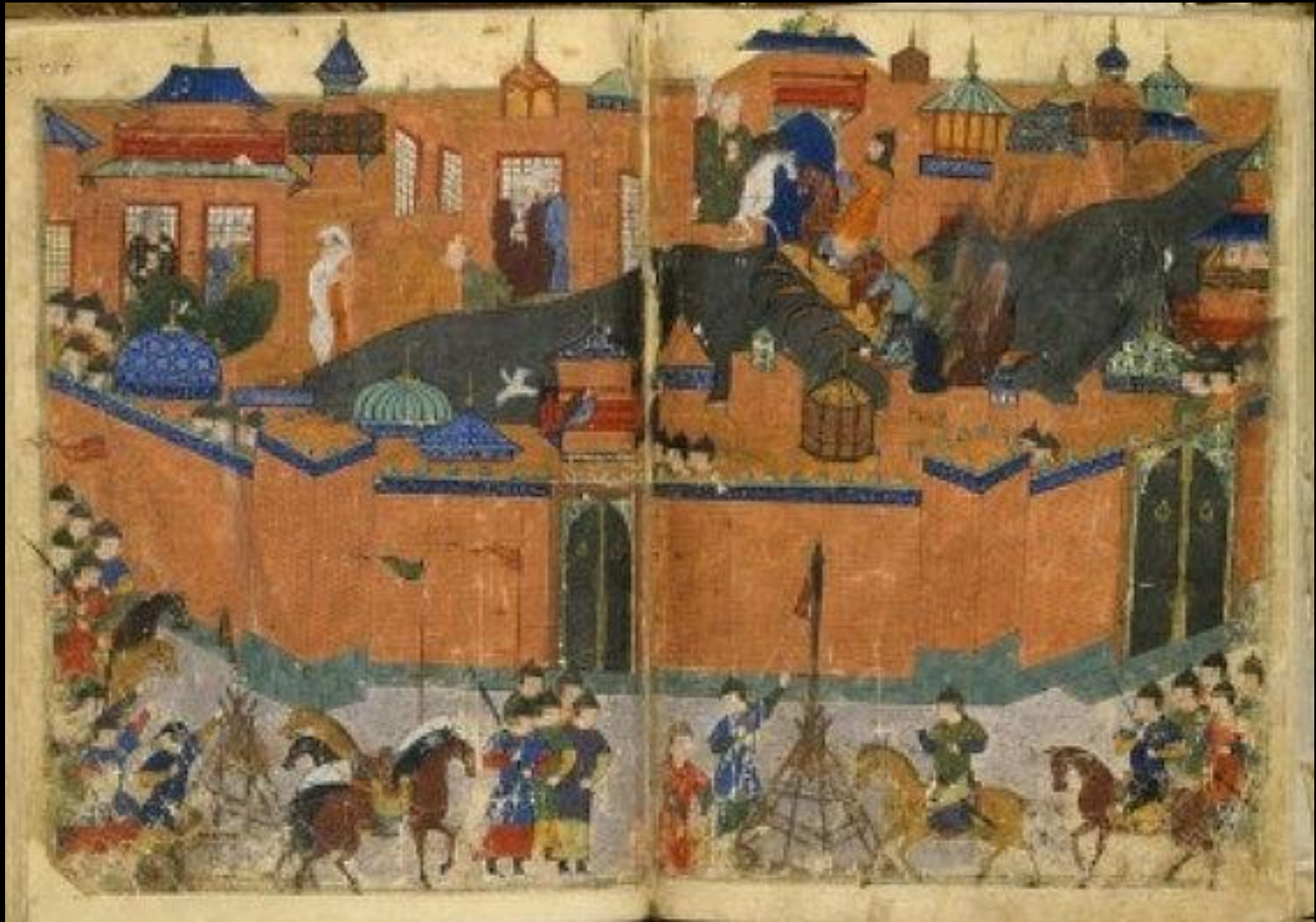


# Mongol Invasions

- In 1216, Genghiz Khan led the Mongols out of central Asia across Persia and Mesopotamia.
- In 1258, Hulagu, grandson of Genghiz, burned and looted Baghdad, killing the last Abbassid caliph.
- In 1260, Kublai Khan became emperor of the Mongol empire and conquered China.
- In the late 1300s, the Muslim Mongol leader, **Timur the Lame**, or Tamerlane, led his troops into the Middle East to conquer Muslim and non-Muslim lands, overrunning Persia, Mesopotamia, Russia, and India.



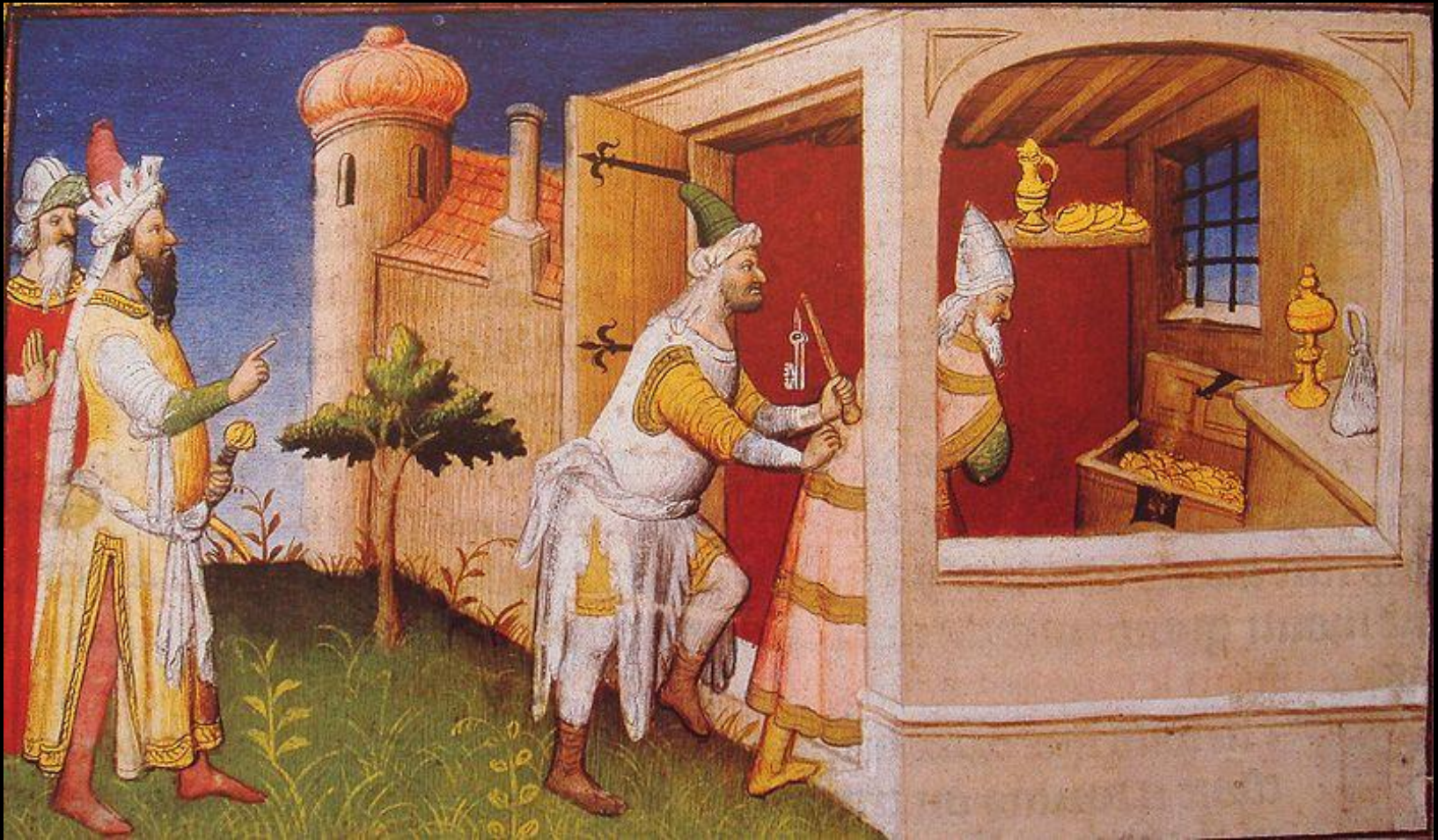
# Mongols Attack Baghdad



(Hulagu Khan's army attacks Baghdad, 1258. From Bibliothèque nationale de France.)



# The Mongol ruler Hulagu in Baghdad interns the Caliph of Baghdad among his treasures.



Hulagu (left) imprisons Caliph Al-Musta'sim among his treasures to starve him to death. Medieval depiction from "Le livre des merveilles", 15th century.



# Mongols in China



- **Kublai Khan** was Genghis Khan's grandson.
- He became the Mongol emperor in 1260.
- Kublai Khan moved the capital of the empire from Karakorum in Mongolia to Khanbaliq in China.
- Today, the city of Beijing stands where Khanbaliq was.
- Under Kublai Khan, the Mongols conquered China and ended the Song dynasty.
- He founded the Yuan dynasty, which ruled for about 100 years.

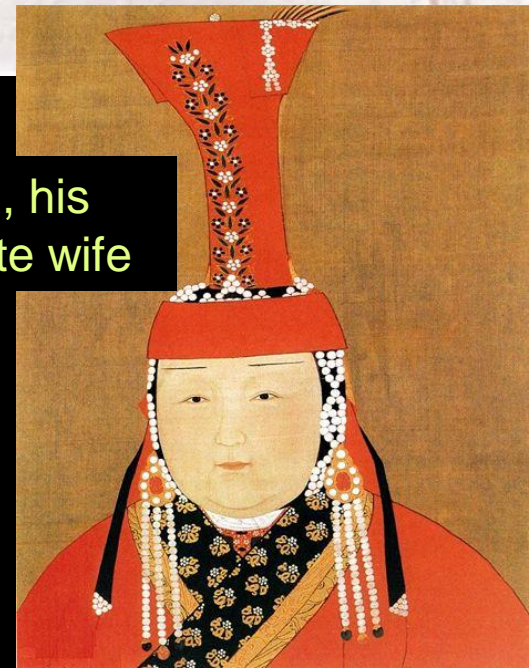
# Kublai Khan

How does this look sinicized?

- Well-educated
- Preferred buildings & cities --not yurts
- Infatuated with Chinese civilization. He wanted to appear more Chinese than the Chinese, so he sought to **sinicize his image**.
- Has lots of Chinese & foreign advisors, including Marco Polo at his court; but the military was all under Mongol control
- ...while in private, he & his family continued to act as Mongols in speech, dress, food, entertainment, etc.



Chabi, his favorite wife



# Yuan Dynasty --what was the extent of its influence geographically?





# China Under Mongol Rule



Kublai Khan was Genghis Khan's grandson

- Kublai Khan, decreed that only Mongols could serve in military and highest government offices, but too few Mongols.
- Chinese officials were allowed to rule in the provinces.
- The Chinese despised their foreign conquerors.
- A mix of Chinese and foreign customs developed.
- Foreigners were welcomed into China and a number of Chinese products, such as gunpowder and porcelain, were introduced in Europe.
- Arab architects designed his palace.
- He rebuilt and extended the Grand Canal at the cost of many lives.

# Kublai's Yuan Dynasty



- Defeated Song dynasty
- Encouraged the movement of paper money (and not just goods) so a standardized unit of account could be used throughout empire
- Promotion of commerce raised merchants' status
- Kept lots of lower level Chinese officials, but **eliminated the civil service exams** until 1315.
- Distrusted Confucian scholar-officials who weren't eligible for some top government positions
- Supported the peasants & peasant economy, believing that the success of the peasant economy would ultimately benefit the Mongols themselves.



*Khubilai Khan and His Advisers*  
Jenghiz Khan Miniatures, Court of Akhbar

# Cultural Changes under the Yuan

- The Mongols created relief measures like reducing some taxes & increasing granaries. BUT, the Mongols used forced labor without pay on public works projects, like rebuilding Grand Canal.
- To protect Mongol identity, they were forbidden to marry Chinese. Chinese were forbidden to learn the Mongol language.
- The Mongols classified the population into a hierarchy of 4 groups — with the native Chinese at the bottom. The Mongols, of course, were at the top; then came the non-Han, mostly Islamic population; and **last the northern & then southern Chinese**.
- Though the Chinese were discriminated against & forbidden to possess arms, but Mongol rule of China was SLOWLY & ultimately very much **sinicized**.

# Cultural Changes under the Yuan

- Fostered closer relations with Christian Europe & many leaders were Christian; however, Mongols ultimately abandoned Christianity in favor of **Buddhism & Islam**.
  - Supported Islam & built mosques. Also recruited & employed Islamic financial administrators.
  - Particularly liked the Tibetan form of Buddhism & recruited a number of Tibetan monks to help them rule China and promote the interests of Buddhism.



- **Mongol women** looked REALLY strange to the Chinese:
  - They rode horses, shot arrows from their bows and commanded both men and women. They **rejected foot binding**, yet, quickly after settling down in their newly conquered lands, Mongol women lost public power. Only in Mongolia did they continue to rule & to fight.



# Pax Mongolica

Mongol  
Passport



- **By the mid 13<sup>th</sup> c**, the family of Genghis Khan controls Asia from China to the Black Sea creating a period of stability during which trade flourishes to new heights along the Silk Routes. Before lots of fighting in East Asia and fighting between Muslims & Christians in the SW Asia, but now stability brings trade in more volume & people who now travel the entire distance.

Marco Polo traveling the Silk Roads

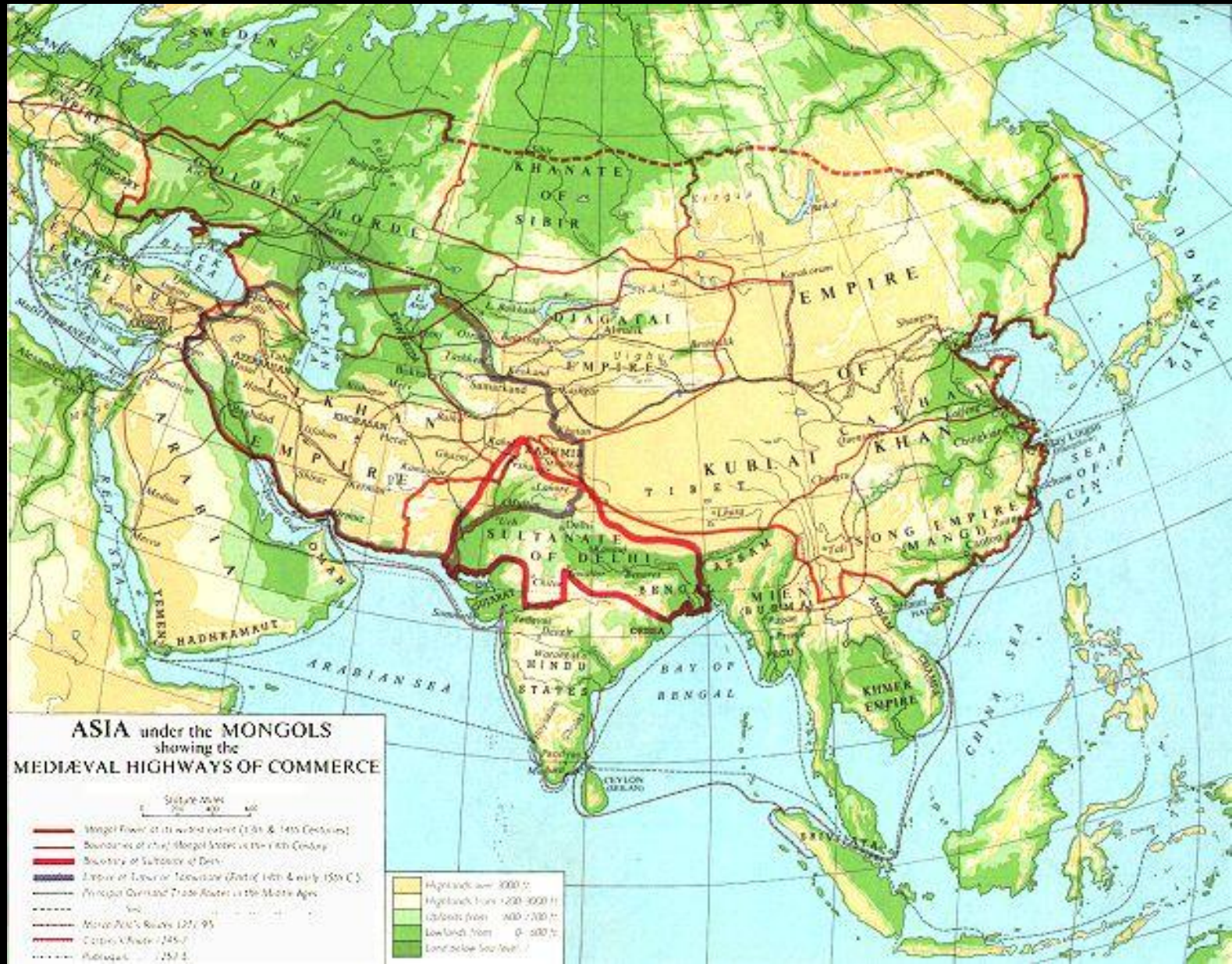


- Encouraged great commercial, religious, intellectual exchange between the East & West.

*“The Mongols **made culture portable**: it was not enough to merely exchange goods, because whole systems of knowledge had to also be transported in order to use many of the new products” (e.g. drugs weren’t profitable trade items unless possessed medical knowledge for their use, so moved Arab doctors to China & vice versa)*



# Pax Mongolica: look at all these routes!



# But..

- No technological breakthroughs
- No new religion
- Wrote few books
- No new crops or methods of agriculture
- No permanent structures (under Genghis) other than bridges; no architectural achievements
- ....but as their army conquered culture after culture, they collected and passed all these skills from one civilization to the next. --**a conduit** [not a creator] **of civilization**



# Mongol Rule in China

- Because China belonged to the large Mongol empire, trade in China increased.
- China's empire grew during this time.
- The Mongols conquered northern Korea and then used Korean-made ships to invade Japan.



Genghis Khan's son and successor, Ögedei Khaghan.



# Marco Polo

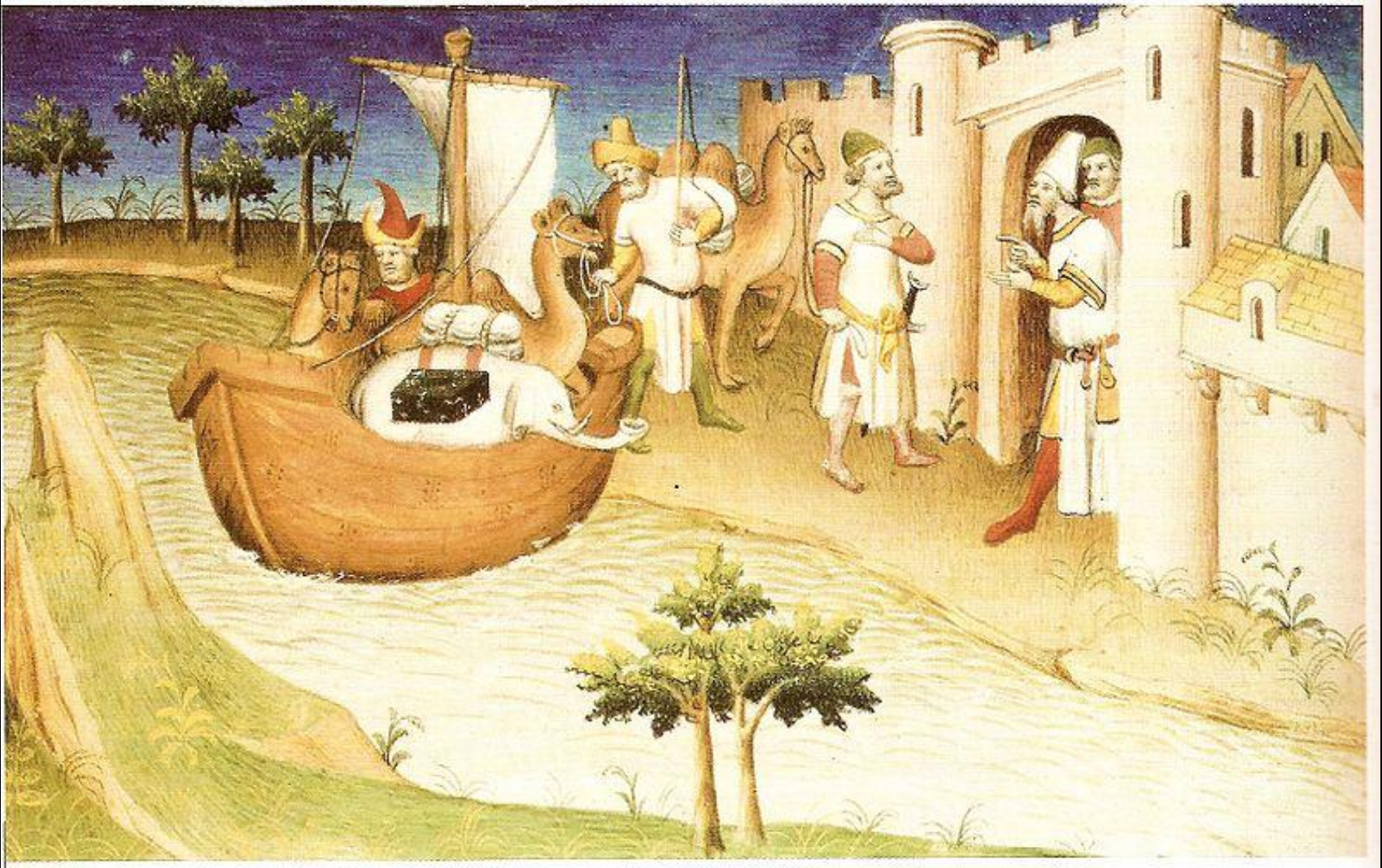
- In 1269, Marco Polo's father, Niccolò, and his uncle, Maffeo, returned to Venice after travelling through Asia and having met Kublai Khan.
- In 1271, they returned with Marco, who was now a teenager.
- Marco spent 24 years in Asia (17 in the service of Kublai Khan).
- Kahn sent Polo on fact-finding adventures.



Français : Marco Polo en costume tartare.



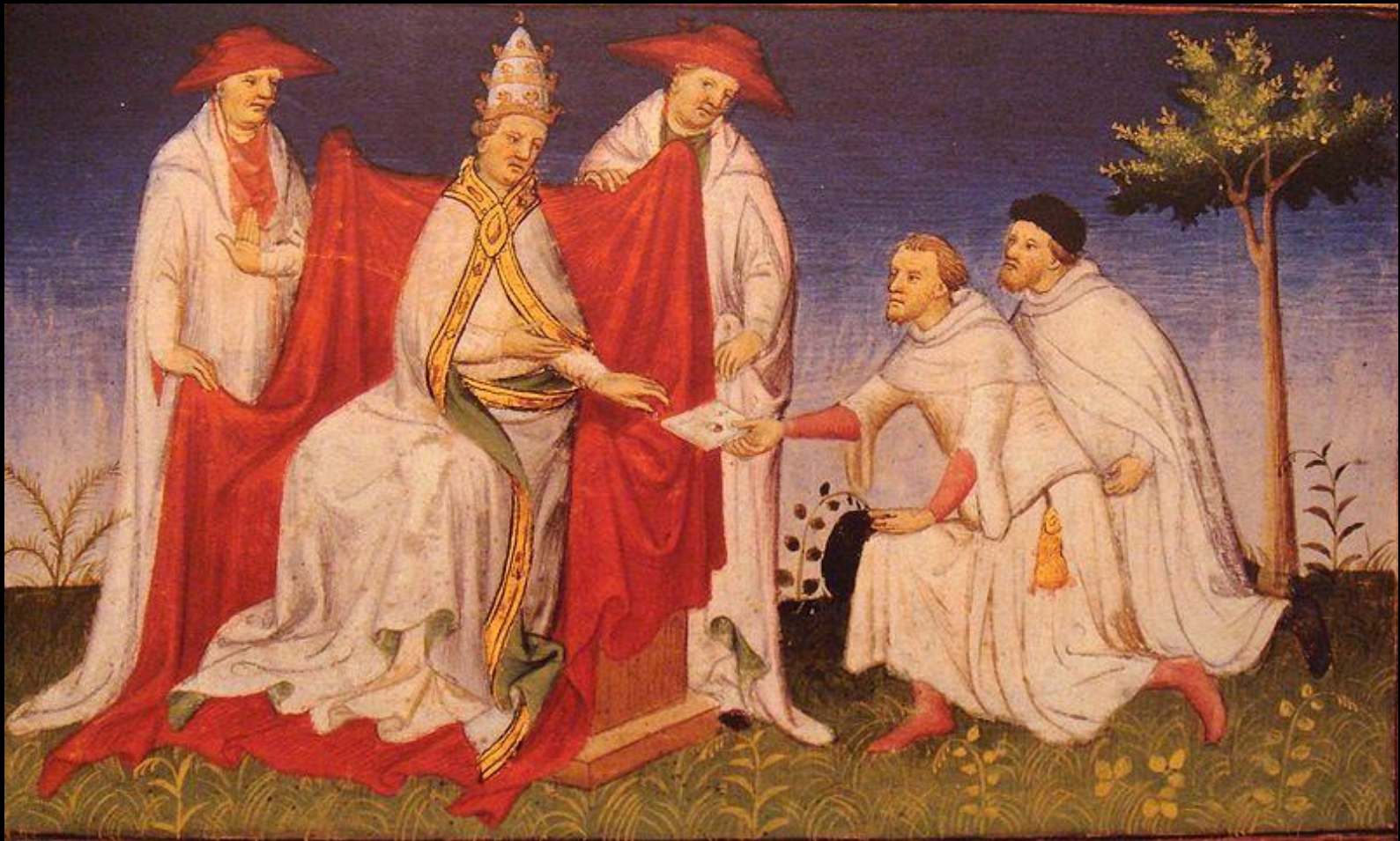
# Marco Polo Travelling



Marco Polo travelling, Miniature from the Book "The Travels of Marco Polo" ("*Il milione*"), originally published during Polos lifetime (c. 1254 - January 8, 1324), but frequently reprinted and translated.

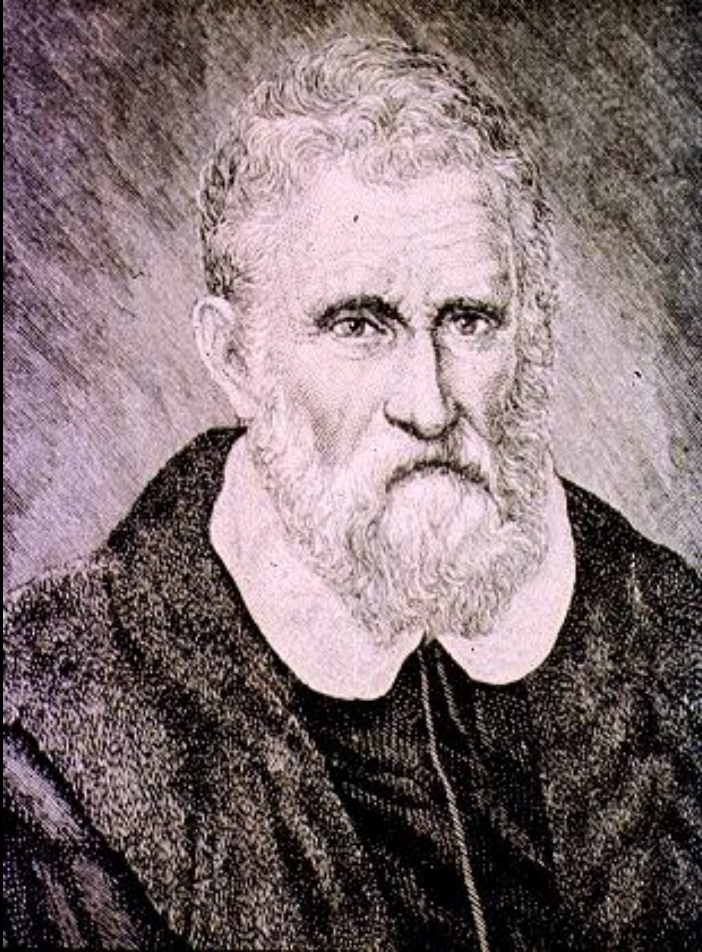


# Marco Returning to Venice



Niccolò and Maffeo Polo remitting a letter from Kublai Khan to Pope Gregory X in 1271.

# Marco Polo (cont.)



Portrait of Marco Polo

Born c. 1254 – died Jan. 8, 1324

- Upon returning to Venice, his cargo was stolen and he was imprisoned, where he dictated stories to his cellmate. He was released in 1299.
- His stories introduced Europeans to Asia.
- Eventually he married and had three children. He died in 1324.