

SSWH4: Analyze the impact of Byzantine and Mongol Empires



Element E: Describe the impact of the Mongols on Russia, China, and the Middle East, include: the role of Chinggis (Ghenghis) Khan in developing the Mongol Empire

Ghenghis Khan Develops the Mongol Empire

- The Mongols were a nomadic pastoral society with a homeland on the vast Central Asian steppe. Originally a loose confederation of tribes, they were united by Chinggis Khan in 1206.
- As a united force, the Mongols proved almost unstoppable.
 - Technologies like the Central Asia composite bow which could shoot one-third farther than any of their rivals and the willingness to adopt the technologies of conquered peoples (like the catapult from the Chinese) were one important element of their success.
 - Another was their nomadic lifestyle.
 - Nomadism made the Mongols expert horsemen and incredibly self-sufficient.
 - Unlike the armies of sedentary agricultural societies that required long supply lines to feed and equip soldiers, the Mongols brought virtually their entire society with them on military campaign, including families and livestock.
 - This practice ensured that supply lines remained short and allowed armies to travel vast distances for extended periods of time.



Ghenghis Khan Develops the Mongol Empire

- Additionally the centralized command structure developed by Chinggis Khan and advanced military tactics that capitalized on the greater mobility of Mongol forces contributed to success.
 - This success was rapid, by 1227, the year of Chinggis Khan's death, the Mongols controlled northern China and most of Central Asia.
- After his death, his sons including Ögödei, continued the conquests.
 - By 1279 the Mongol Empire included Russia, China, the Middle East and Central Asia.



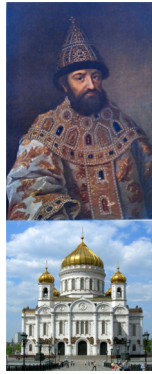
Mongol Impact on Russia

- When the Mongols invaded Russia, it was ruled by a loosely unified group of princes with most of the power concentrated in the city of Kiev.
 - This loose confederation failed to unify in the face of the Mongol threat and as a result it was easily conquered.
 - Southern princes in the city of Kiev offered the strongest resistance and as a result were largely eliminated.
 - Northern princes in and around Moscow and Novgorod were more cooperative with the Mongols and as a result power in the region shifted north to Moscow as the Muscovite princes became agents of the Mongol Khanate of the Golden Horde that now ruled Russia.
 - The Mongol rulers of Russia were mostly concerned with extracting tribute and profiting from trade along the Silk Road so they left much of the administration of the Khanate to Muscovite princes who served as local administrators, tax collectors and census takers.
 - The Mongol tax burden was severe and led to an economic downturn which was made worse by the introduction of paper money to the economy by the Mongol overlords.



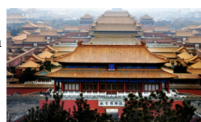
Mongol Impact on Russia

- To reinforce the power of the Mongols and their agents, Russian princes, the leaders of the Golden Horde provided generous support for the Russian Orthodox Church.
 - This patronage secured Orthodoxy as the dominant faith of Russia.
 - Further, the use of Russian princes supported by the Orthodox Church also served to centralize political power in the hands of Muscovite princes, which up till this point had been quite fragmented in the Russian State.
- With centralized political power now in Moscow, the population of Russia began to migrate north leading to the opening of new agricultural lands in the region.




Mongol Impact on China

- Unlike the Mongols of other regions, the Mongols of China thoroughly integrated themselves into Chinese society, establishing a short lived but impactful dynasty, the Yuan.
 - The Mongols of China adopted many Chinese cultural traditions including Confucianism and Buddhism but also left an enduring cultural imprint.
 - For example, Mandarin, the dominant spoken language of Northern China is a hybridization of Mongolian and Chinese.
 - Further, Mongol power acted to finally unify China into the state it is today, breaking down old cultural differences and laying the foundations for the modern Chinese Nation-State.
 - Beijing became the capital under the Yuan dynasty and early construction on the Forbidden City began.



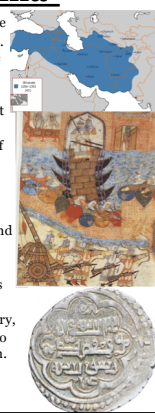
Mongol Impact on China

- ❑ The Mongols also facilitated intellectual and economic diversification.
 - Under Mongol rule the government was largely controlled by Mongol overlords aided by a bureaucracy of Central Asian and Middle Eastern administrators.
 - This brought foreign expertise into China aiding scientific advances.
 - The exclusion of Chinese nobility from their traditional role as bureaucrats forced many families to become merchants.
 - This facilitated the development of corporate business arrangements and urbanization.
- ❑ However, like Mongols in other regions, the Mongols of the Yuan instituted economically repressive taxes on the population made worse by the introduction of paper money which in time led to their decline.



Mongol Impact on China

- ❑ Like the Mongols of the Golden Horde of Russia, the Mongols of the Il Khan that dominated the Middle East preferred to rule from afar.
 - Despite this, the Il Khan had a profound impact on the Middle East.
 - While this would not be the last person to claim the position of Caliph, it would be a major blow to the unifying power of the position in the Muslim world.
 - After this execution, future Caliphs would have little success claiming authority over all of Dar al-Islam.
- ❑ Mongolian armies tended to assume power in a region by killing much of the local nobility, this was certainly true of the Middle East and included the execution of the last Abbasid Caliph.
 - This led to major developments in the disciplines of history, painting, algebra, trigonometry, and astronomy that led to advances in calendars, predicting eclipses, and navigation.
- ❑ But, like all regions controlled by the Mongols, over taxation made worse by the introduction of paper money led to economic decline.



Mongol Impact on Econ., Tech., Religion, & Society

- ❑ All of the regions controlled by the Mongols benefited from a massive expansion in Eurasian trade along the Silk Road.
 - This trade facilitated the diffusion of profoundly important technologies like gunpowder, paper, and movable type.
 - It facilitated the spread of religions like Christianity, Islam and Buddhism.
 - It vastly improved interregional understanding by facilitating the travels of people like Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta and it profoundly transformed the demography of Afro-Eurasia with the spread of the Bubonic Plague.

