

Chapter 12 Notes – *Mongol Eurasia and Its Aftermath, 1200 – 1500*

Chapter Thesis: During the time period from 1200-1500, many Mongols allied together under Genghis Khan, who famously conquered a significant part of the Eurasian supercontinent and promoted the spread of ideas through trade, cultural exchanges, and politics.

- Genghis Khan was a famous conqueror and an influential historical figure, having led the Mongols through conquest across Poland to northern China
- I. *The Rise of the Mongols, 1200 - 1260:* The Mongols by nature were a nomadic peoples on the Eurasian prairies and deserts who only formed empires occasionally, until the rise of Genghis Khan as a uniting leader.
 - A. Nomadism in Central and Inner Asia: The nomadic way of Mongol life for the people of Central and Inner Asia was not unlike other cultures of the time in social, religious, and political aspects.
 - Mongol groups lived similarly to other cultures of the time, except for their nomadic movement
 - Council of representatives approved the decisions of their leader, or *khan*
 - Menial work was given to slaves, social stratification was in place
 - Marriage linked families and created political alliances; women managed the state between rulers
 - Religious diversity as existent, and many families included two or more religions
 - B. The Mongol Conquests, 1215 - 1283: Beginning with the rise of Genghis Khan to the Great Khan in 1206, the Mongols became aggressive throughout their conquest of Eurasia and began a large campaign of expansion.
 - Genghis Khan became a khan in 1206 and began two decades of Mongol aggression
 - Tangguts of China (in 1209), Jin (in 1215), and Khwarezm (in 1219) were conquered by Genghis Khan and the Mongols
 - Kievan Russia, Poland, Hungary, and Moscow were later conquered by Ögödei as well as northern China by 1234
 - Genghis collected tributes from his united empire, but disunity led to fragmented khanates led by his descendants
 - C. Overland Trade and Disease: The side effects of Mongols leading campaigns of conquest throughout Eurasia were both positive (interconnected trade led to army expansion and political stability of the Mongol empire because of vital trade) and negative (diseases were spread throughout Europe's population and in China).

- Because of the Mongols' movement throughout Eurasia in conquering other territories, they spread diseases such as the bubonic plague, typhus, influenza and smallpox
- However, trade was revitalized on the Silk Road and the military expansion occurred

II. *The Mongols and Islam, 1260 – 1500*: The widespread acceptance of Islam caused political tensions in many khanates and between Mongol kingdoms.

- A. Mongol Rivalry: Mongol kingdoms got into competition partly because of Islam and partly because of political rivalry, and conflicting nobles caused the Mongols to no longer be a united empire.
- B. Islam and the State: Islam spread into Mongol culture through Central Asia, Iran, and Afghanistan, all of which blended elements of cultures from Iran to China.
- C. Culture and Science in Islamic Eurasia: The blending of cultures of Eurasia blended culture and advanced mathematics and astronomy.

III. *Regional Responses in Western Eurasia*: Throughout Western Eurasia, the decline of Mongols' influence led to the rise of new empires within the civilizations they left behind.

- A. Russia and Rule from Afar: Russia and the Ukraine both went through a period of economic depression during the occupation of the Mongols because of heavy taxes and exhausting tributes of precious metals. Ivan "the Great" separated himself from the Mongols in the late 1400s and directed the power to Moscow.
- B. New States in Eastern Europe and Anatolia: In Eastern Europe and the Anatolia region, new states emerged and resisted Mongol influence, establishing new kingdoms.
 - The fall of the Byzantine Empire led to kingdoms in the Balkans
 - Turks conquered Balkan kingdoms after their fall
 - Lithuania, after an alliance with the Mongols, became a great regional power

IV. *Mongol Domination in China, 1271 – 1368*:

- A. The Yuan Empire, 1271 – 1368: In the Yuan Dynasty, which was established by the Mongols, Mongol influence became central to politics and tax collection as well as trade and government.
 - Yuan dynasty was founded by Khubilai Khan who used Chinese traditions and integrated them with Mongol political structures
 - Social structure began with Mongols and ended with the Chinese
 - Trade in the Yuan Empire caused the prosperity of many cities
- B. The Fall of the Yuan Empire: Infighting between Mongols and rival princes caused the loss of influence of the Yuan government and resulted in the collapse of the Yuan Empire, which was succeeded by the Ming Dynasty.

V. *The Early Ming Empire, 1368 – 1500*: The Ming Empire began as a reestablishment of Chinese culture from the remains of the Yuan but limited the development of society and technology as a result of anti-Mongol views.

- A. Ming China on a Mongol Foundation: Beginning from a Mongol foundation, Zhu Yuanzhang took power from 1368 to 1398 and established the capital in Nanjing

and cut off relations with other cultures. However, over time, the Ming adopted policies from the previous Yuan Empire because of economic decline.

- B. Technology and Population: During the Ming Dynasty, technological innovations were slowed because of a cut off of influence from the Middle East and the Mongols. Population, however, grew as staple crops replaced the cash crops previously grown.
 - C. The Ming Achievement: Among the advancements and achievements of the Ming, however, included fictional literature and porcelain, which we find in archaeological remains.
- VI. *Centralization and Militarism in East Asia, 1200 – 1500*: In East Asia, policies of militarism began to form as the government became more centralized from Mongol influence.
- A. Korea from the Mongols to the Yi, 1231 – 1500: The king of the Koryo empire surrendered in the 1200s to the invaders from Mongol tribes, who were succeeded by the Yi who established Seoul as the capital as it is today.
 - B. Political Transformation in Japan, 1274 – 1500: Although the emperor held little political influence in Japan, the shogunate acted as a governing body, which occasionally caused strife with emperors attempting to seize power.
 - C. The Emergence of Vietnam, 1200 – 1500: Two often warring states in the north and south of Vietnam led to a unified state in 1500 of Chinese influence and a Confucian government, which would eventually become modern-day Vietnam.