

Nomadic herders populated the steppes of Asia for centuries during the classical & postclassical eras & periodically came into contact & conflict w/ the established states & empires of the Eurasian land mass. It was not until the 11<sup>th</sup> century, however, that the nomadic peoples like the Turks & Mongols began to raid, conquer, rule, & trade w/ the urban-based cultures in a systematic & far-reaching manner. While these resourceful & warlike nomads often left a path of destruction in their wake, they also built vast transregional empires that laid the foundations for the increasing communication & exchange that would characterize the period from 1000 to 1500 in the E hemisphere. The success of these nomadic empires in this era can be attributed to

- Their unmatched skill on horseback. When organized on a large scale these nomads were practically indomitable in warfare. Outstanding cavalry forces, skilled archers, & well-coordinated military strategy gave these peoples an advantage that was difficult for even the most powerful states to counter.
- Their ability to integrate vast territories through secure trade routes, exceptional courier networks, diplomatic missions, missionary efforts, & resettlement programs.

In spite of these successes & the enormous influence of these nomadic peoples, their leaders were, in general, better at warfare than administration. With the exception of the later Ottoman empire, most of these states were relatively short-lived, brought down by both internal & external pressures.

## **1. Turkish Migrations and Imperial Expansion**

### A. Nomadic Economy and Society

- 1) Turkish peoples were nomadic herders; organized into clans w/ related languages
- 2) C Asia's steppes: good for grazing, little rain, few rivers
- 3) Nomads & their animals; few settlements
  - a. Nomads drove their herds in migratory cycles
  - b. Lived mostly on animal products
  - c. produced limited amounts of millet, pottery, leather goods, iron
- 4) Nomads & settled peoples sought trade, were prominent on caravan routes
- 5) Fluidity of classes in nomadic society
  - a. Two social classes: nobles & commoners
  - b. Autonomous clans & tribes
- 6) Religions: shamans, Buddhism, Nestorian Christianity; by 10<sup>th</sup> century, Islam
- 7) Military organization
  - a. Khan ("ruler") organized vast confed of individual tribes for expansion
  - b. Outstanding cavalry forces, formidable military power

**What were the effects of migration in the post-classical era?**

**What pre-existing labor systems continued through the post-classical era?**

**How did social and gender hierarchies develop in the post-classical era?**

**B. Turkish Empires in Persia, Anatolia, and India**

- 1) Saljuq (Seljuk) Turks & the Abbasid empire
  - a. Lived on borders of the Abbasid realm, 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries
  - b. Moved further in & served in Abbasid armies thereafter
  - c. Overshadowed the Abbasid caliphs by mid-11<sup>th</sup> century
  - d. Extended Turkish rule to Syria, Palestine, & other beyond
- 2) Saljuq Turks & the Byzantine empire
  - a. Migrated in large numbers to Anatolia, early 11<sup>th</sup> century
  - b. Defeated Byzantine army at Manzikert in 1071 CE
  - c. Transformed Anatolia into an Islamic society
- 3) Ghaznavid Turks dominated N India via Sultanate of Delhi II.

**2. The Mongol Empires**

**A. Chinggis (Genghis) Khan and the Making of the Mongol Empire**

- 1) Chinggis Khan (“universal ruler”) unified Mongol tribes through alliance & conquests
- 2) Mongol political organization
  - a. Organized new military units & broke up tribal affiliations
  - b. Chose high officials based on talent & loyalty
  - c. Established capital at Karakorum
- 3) Mongol strategy: horsemanship, archers, mobility, psych warfare
- 4) Mongol conquest of N China
  - a. Chinggis Khan, Mongols raided the Jurchen in N China beginning in 1211 CE
  - b. Controlled N China by 1220
  - c. S China was still ruled by the Song dynasty
- 5) Mongol conquest of Persia
  - a. Chinggis Khan tried to open trade & diplomatic relations w/ Saljuq leader Khwarazm shah, the ruler of Persia, 1218
  - b. Upon being rejected, Chinggis Khan led force to pursue the Khwarazm
  - c. Mongol forces destroyed Persian cities & *qanat*
  - d. Chinggis died in 1227, laid foundation for a mighty empire

**What new forms of governance emerged in the post-classical era?**

**B. The Mongol Empires After Chinggis Khan**

- 1) Division of Mongol empires: heirs divide into 4 regional empires
- 2) Khubilai Khan
  - a. Chinggis Khan’s grandson, consolidated Mongol rule in China
  - b. Promoted Buddhism, supported Daoists, Muslims, & Christians
- 3) Conquest of southern China
  - a. Khubilai extended Mongol rule to all of China
  - b. Song capital at Hangzhou fell in 1276 CE, Yuan Dynasty founded in 1279
  - c. Unsuccessful conquests of Vietnam, Burma, Java, & Japan

**How did post-classical trade affect the diffusion of literary, artistic, and cultural traditions?**

- 4) The Golden Horde
  - a. Group of Mongols overran Russia between 1237–1241 CE
  - b. Further overran Poland, Hungary, & E Germany, 1241–42
  - c. Maintained hegemony in Russia until mid-15<sup>th</sup> century
- 5) The ilkhanate of Persia: Khubilai's brother, Hülegü, captured Baghdad in 1258 CE (ending the Abassid Dynasty)
- 6) Mongol rule in Persia
  - a. Persians served as ministers, governors, & local officials
  - b. Mongols only cared about taxes & order
  - c. Ilkhan Ghazan converted to Islam, 1295; massacres of Christians & Jews followed
- 7) Mongol rule in China
  - a. Outlawed intermarriage between Mongols & Chinese
  - b. Forbade Chinese from learning the Mongol language
  - c. Brought foreign administrators into China & put them in charge
  - d. Dismissed Confucian scholars; dismantled civil service examination system
  - e. Tolerated all cultural & religious traditions in China
- 8) Mongol ruling elite favored Tibetan Lamaist Buddhism

C. The Mongols and Eurasian Integration

- 1) The Mongols & trade
  - a. Worked to secure trade routes & ensure merchant safety
  - b. Elaborate courier network w/ relay stations
  - c. Maintained good order for traveling merchants, ambassadors, & missionaries
- 2) Diplomatic missions
  - a. The four Mongol empires maintained close diplomatic communications
  - b. Established diplomatic relations w/ Korea, Vietnam, India, Europe
- 3) Resettlement
  - a. Mongols needed skilled artisans & educated individuals from other places
  - b. Often resettled them in different locations to provide services
  - c. Uighur Turks served as clerks, secretaries, & administrators
  - d. Arab & Persian Muslims also served Mongols
  - e. Skilled artisans often sent to Karakorum; became permanent residents

**How did the physical size of post-Classical trade networks compare to the previous era?**

**What new technologies, governmental policies, and merchant activities accompanied these developments?**

**What role did pastoral and nomadic groups play in these trade networks?**

**What institutions did merchants create to foster both trade and cultural diffusion in the post-classical era?**

**D. Decline of the Mongols in Persia and China**

- 1) Collapse of the Ilkhanate
  - a. In Persia, excessive spending & overexploitation led to reduced revenues
  - b. Failure of the Ilkhan's paper money
  - c. Factional struggle plagued the Mongol leadership
  - d. The last ruler died without an heir; the Ilkhanate collapsed
- 2) Decline of the Yuan dynasty
  - a. Value of paper money issued by the Mongol rulers ↘
  - b. Power struggles, assassinations, & civil war weakened Mongols after 1320s
- 3) Bubonic plague in SW China in 1330s, spread → Asia & Europe
  - a. Depopulation & labor shortage undermined Mongol regime
  - b. By 1368 CE, Chinese drove the Mongols back to the steppes
- 4) Surviving Mongol khanates
  - a. The khanate of Chaghatai continued in C Asia
  - b. The Golden Horde survived until the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century

**What diseases and pathogens spread via post-classical trade networks?**

**3. After the Mongols**

**A. Tamerlane the Whirlwind (1336–1404) Built Central Asian Empire**

- 1) The lame conqueror, (Timur the Lame, aka "Tamerlane") self-made; rose to power in 1360s; established capital in Samarkand
- 2) Tamerlane's conquests
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> conquered Persia & Afghanistan
  - b. Next attacked the Golden Horde
  - c. Invaded N India at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century
  - d. Ruled the empire through tribal leaders who relied on existing bureaucrats to collect taxes
- 3) Tamerlane's heirs struggled & divided empire into four regions

**What new forms of governance emerged in the post-classical era?**

**B. The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire**

- 1) Osman Bey
  - a. Large # of nomadic Turks migrated to Persia & Anatolia
  - b. Osman, a charismatic leader, carved out a small state in NW Anatolia
  - c. Claimed independence from the Saljuq sultan in 1299 CE
- 2) Ottoman conquests in the Balkans, 1350s
  - a. Mehmed II sacked Constantinople, 1453, renamed Istanbul
  - b. Absorbed the remainder of the Byzantine empire
  - c. During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, extended to SW Asia, SE Europe, & N Africa

**What were the effects of migration in the post-classical era?**