

# Mongol empire of the 13th and 14th centuries history essay

[History](#), [Empires](#)



According to Prawdin (2005), Mongol Empire was known as the massive empire in the 13th and 14th centuries. The empire started initially in Central Asia and with time it came to stretch from the Peninsula of Korea to Eastern Europe, where it covered northern parts of Siberia and extended southward into the Indian subcontinent, Middle East, and Southeast Asia. In the world history, the Mongol Empire is commonly known as the largest contiguous empire. The greatest extent of the Mongol Empire spanned 9, 700 km covering a total area of 33, 000, 000 km<sup>2</sup> which represents 22% of the total land area of the Earth's surface with a population of about 100 million people. The Mongol Empire came into existence as a merger of Turkic and Mongol tribes which in the modern day is referred to as the Mongolia. This empire was under the leadership of Genghis Khan as he was declared ruler of the Mongols in 1206 which is now over 700 years ago. It was during his leadership that the empire grew rapidly and his descendants sent invasions in all directions. With the Mongols' new technologies, various ideologies and commodities were dispersed and exchanged all over Eurasia (Lockard, 2007).

The Mongolian Empire finally declined and disappeared following the death of its leader Genghis Khan (Honeychurch, Fitzhugh & Rossabi, 2009). The empire divided and split as it was headed for demise. The Mongolians rise was attributed to the fact that they were nomadic horseman. The Mongolians conquered lands and their wealth grew such that they decided to settle down. Because of the change in their lifestyle, they were vulnerable to attacks and they were not able to rule such immense lands. This is a clear indication that the Mongolians were victimized following their own success.

The reason to why they are poor now is due to the fact that the plains the Mongols originally occupied were poor because of inadequate resources. The wealth that brought about the establishment and development of the empire was obtained from the conquered lands as well as the trade routes that passed through these lands (Lane, 2006).

Kublai Khan, the grandson of Genghis Khan, established the Mongol dynasty of China in 1279 (Man, 2007). After few decades, this new dynast faced trouble in regard to the Mandate of Heaven. According to Marshall (2002), the Mandate of Heaven is defined as the ancient China's political theory in which a right to rule from a divine source was given to those in power. Apart from the Chinese workers' conscription, farmers were taxed heavily and there was removal of weapons as well as iron tools and horses from the Chinese farmers. During this time, floods and earthquakes caused discontent. The land was seized with the purpose of pasturing the Mongol animals and this brought about widespread famine. The discontent continued to grow while most of the Mongols had neglected the life of warriors and adopted farming with slaves. The alien lifestyle resulted into weak army and poverty-stricken Mongol plantation owners since they didn't plan effectively on how to work on the available land (Nardo, 2005).

The religious factors accelerated the collapse of the empire as the religious toleration that was advocated by Genghis Khan was washed-up (Hartog, 2004). The pure Mongol culture was deteriorated as Mongols in the Middle East were converted to Islam while the Mongols in China were converted into Buddhism. The religious commitments brought about the conquering of the

Mongols particularly the Chinese who strongly held the Confucian ideals. The traditional Mongol shamanism and the Buddhism in the Middle East were purged along with Christianity as the Islam was given privilege. This deterioration of culture brought about eventual decline of Mongol Empire (Roux, 2003).

The subsequent Mongol rulers led luxurious lives amidst great treasures within heated palaces. Most Mongols failed to get used to dwelling within walls. The average Mongol families established their yurts and dwelled outside capital cities with their cattle, sheep, and horses. Most of the Mongol citizens in the Mongol Empire refused to do farming while the conquered individuals refused to adopt Mongols ways. It was during this time when stagnation was experienced within the Empire as Mongols lost the great desire for military conquest. The Mongol armies were progressively composed of soldiers and mercenaries who were drafted out of the conquered people. In 1260, the events led to the first defeat of the Mongol army. The Egyptian army from the culture that formed the first empire of the world brought about the expansion of the Mongol Empire to an end. Without persistent aggressive military expansion, the world's largest and contiguous empires started to lose its viscosity and eventually declined slowly (Prawdin, 2005).

The Black Death or the Bubonic Plague is another factor that brought about the collapse of Mongolian Empire. The plague originated in China and it spread out by means of trade routes that were under the control of Mongol during that time. The spread of this plague led to the collapse of trade in

1350s. The plague had a frightening impact upon the Mongol Empire especially within the regions that were controlled by Golden Horde. Most of the income in the Mongol Empire was due to commercial endeavors such that the decline of trade due to Bubonic Plague brought about decline in revenue. The cities of Mongol and their vast cavalry-based army were dependant on this revenue that was as a result of trading. In addition to the deterioration of the commercial foundation, the Mongol cities also went through immense population losses as the military leaders and the common citizens succumbed to the deadly disease (Benedictow & Benedictow, 2004).

The combination of Black Death's effects with other factors like civil wars, for instance a large rebellion that was led by Timerlane, led to the weakening of the Mongol Empire and brought about its decline and ultimate collapse. The destruction due to Black Death in the Western Europe brought about new era of discovery and learning. Western Europe was now able to expand both in power and influence. As a result of this, the world power shifted permanently from Eastern Eurasia to Western Eurasia. And therefore, during this time of the world history, the Mongols of the east interlaced with the Western events which shaped the world into its current status. The western events brought about change of culture and therefore decline of the Mongol Empire (Benedictow & Benedictow, 2004).