

Lesson 9:

Mongol Empire (1206 – 1368 CE)

- Have you ever wondered?
- Grandpa's History Lessons that Matter



Mongol Empire (1206 – 1368 CE)

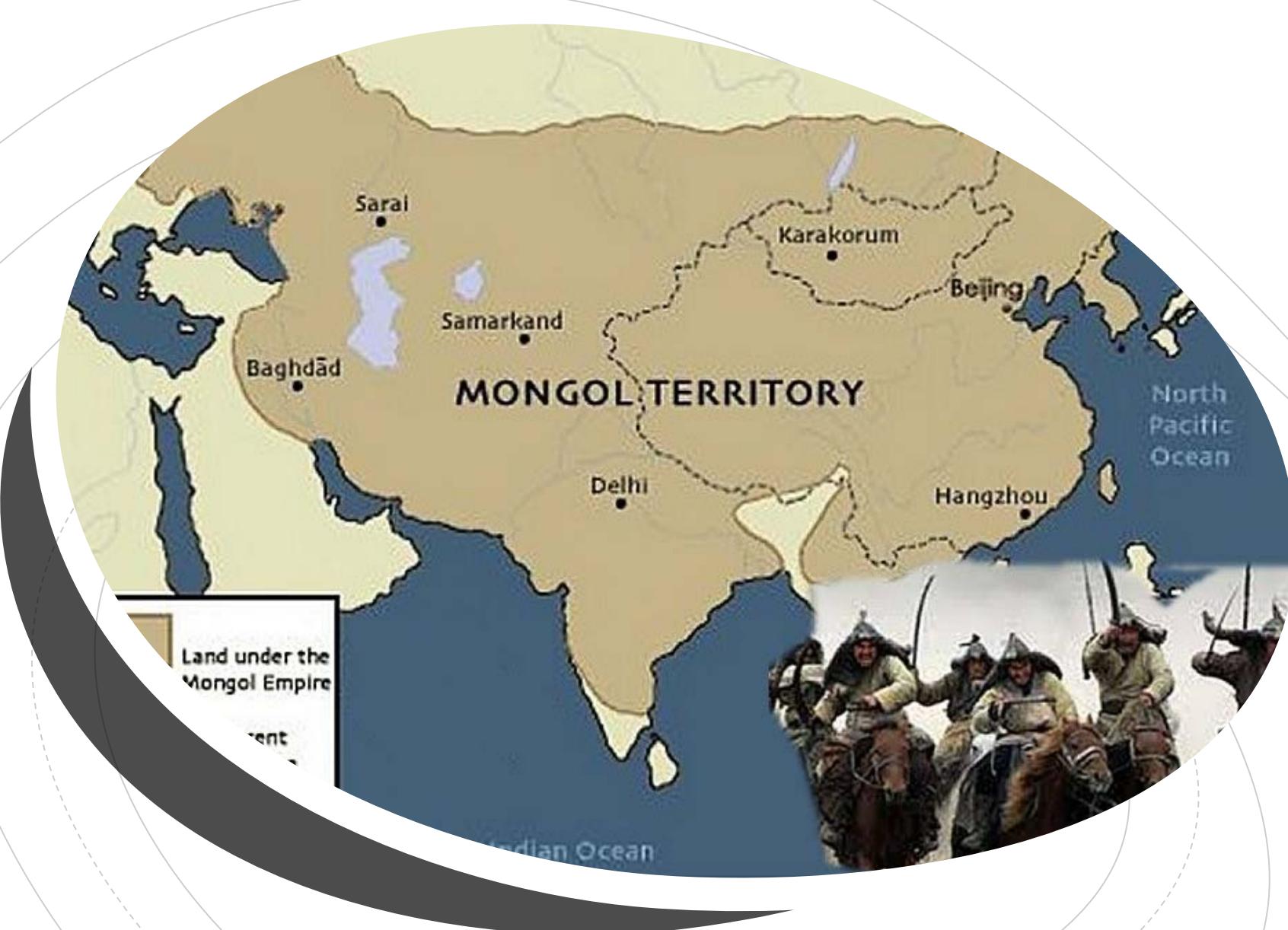
The Exciting Story of GENGHIS KHAN and His Descendants

INTRODUCTION:

- *The Mongol Empire (1206 - 1368), also known as Ikh Mongol Uls, the Great Mongol State, was the largest contiguous land empire in history. It represents the unified conquests of Genghis Khan and his descendants. Although it brought periods of peaceful prosperity to conquered territories, it was also responsible for extremely destructive wars.*
- *“It happens in humans, too. Some behaviors that seem harsh to us now ensured the survival of early man in whatever swamp he was in at the time. Without them, we wouldn’t be here. We still store those instincts in our genes, and they express themselves when certain circumstances prevail. Some parts of us will always be what we were, what we had to be to survive – way back yonder.” – From Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens*
- *“No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.” — Nelson Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom*

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Hardened by a difficult youth, Temujin, the son of a Mongol chieftain, marries Borte at age 16. Borte is kidnapped by the Merkits. Temujin unites rival tribes to free Borte and defeat the Merkits. Then defeating other tribes, he institutes policies supportive of his soldiers, displeasing his aristocratic uncles.

Temujin

1178-1186 CE
1187-1196 CE

Around the year 1197, the Chinese Jin Dynasty initiated an attack against their formal vassal, the Tatars, with help from the Keraites and Mongols. Temüjin commanded part of this attack, and after victory, he and his patron, Toghrul were restored by the Jin to positions of power.

Return to Power

1197 CE

Genghis Khan expands the empire in all directions. In 1221 CE, The Mongols destroy the Khwarzin Dynasty and assume control over their territories (large parts of present-day Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Iran), marking the beginning of the Pax Mongolica.

Pax Mongolica

1206 CE
1206-1227 CE

With setbacks and time-outs to settle internal politics, Genghis descendants continue campaigns to expand into Song China, Iraq, and the Korean Peninsula. Baghdad is captured in 1258. This represents the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate and opens the way for further conquest into the Middle East.

Campaigns and Politics

1227-1241 CE
1241-1258 CE

Jamukha

Threatened by Temujin's rise, Jamukha, his childhood friend, attacks Temujin in 1187 with an army of 30,000 troops. Temüjin gathered his followers but was decisively beaten in the Battle of Dalan Balzhut. Historical records are mostly silent on Temujin's life over the next 10 years.

Genghis Khan

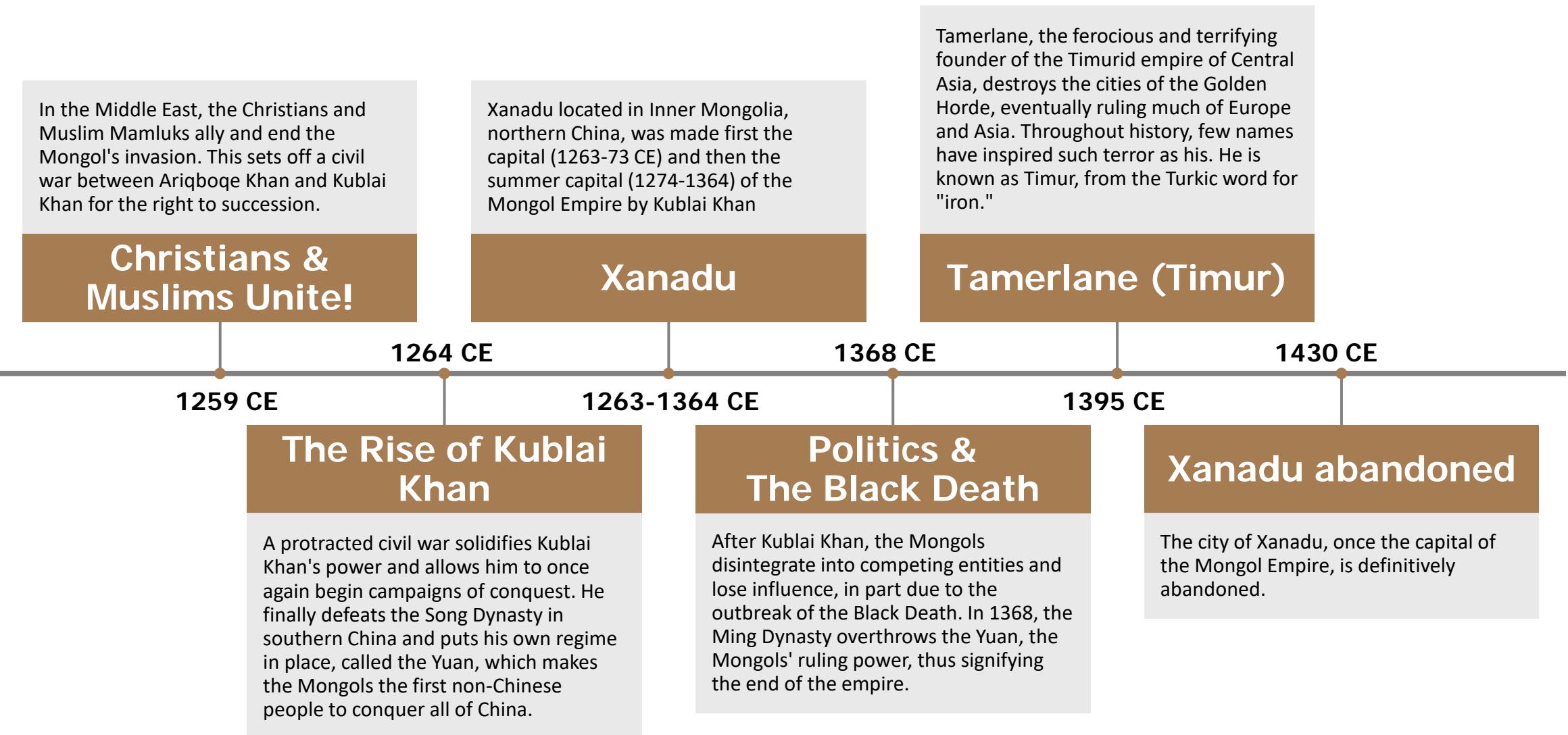
Temujin becomes the ruler of the Ikh Mongol Uls at the kurultai (the general assembly of the tribes) and assumes the name Genghis Khan, which means "universal leader."

Ogedei

Before his death in 1227, Genghis Khan bestows leadership on his third son, Ogedei. Ogedei leads his army against the Jin Dynasty in China, forming an alliance with the Song Dynasty to defeat the Jin. He makes Karakorum the Mongol capital and continues to push into China, Russia, and Eastern Europe.

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Appendix

Action Links

MORE FUN, MORE FACTS

ABOUT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT

PEOPLE AND EVENTS

IN THE MONGOL EMPIRE

The Eurasian Steppe

- The Eurasian Steppe is a vast region of grasslands and savannas, extending thousands of miles east from the mouth of the Danube, nearly to the Pacific Ocean. There's no clearly defined southern boundary, as the land becomes increasingly dry as you move south. To the north are the impenetrable forests of Russia and Siberia.
- The 12th century steppe was a land of inter-tribal rivalry, immersed in a poverty so profound that many of its inhabitants went about clad in the skins of field mice. Ongoing acts of warfare and revenge were carried out between a kaleidoscope of ever-changing tribal confederations, compounded and egged on by the interference of foreign powers such as the Chinese dynasties of the Song and the Jurchen, to the south.
- Into this land was born the son of the Mongol chieftain Yesügei, born with a blood clot grasped in his fist. It was a sign, they said, that this child was destined to become a great leader. By 1197, the boy would unite the nomadic tribes of northeast Asia into the largest contiguous empire in history, extending from Korea in the east, through Baghdad and Syria all the way into eastern Europe. One-fifth of the inhabited land area, of the entire planet.
- His name was Temujin. He is known to history as the Great Leader of the Mongol Empire, Genghis Khan.





Genghis Khan (1162 – 1227 CE) The Mongol warlord who almost conquered the world

- In the early 13th century, Wanyan Yongji, mighty emperor of the Jin, sent a message to an upstart warlord who had had the temerity to invade his territory. “Our empire is as vast as the sea,” it read. “Yours is but a handful of sand. How can we fear you?”
- It was a bold statement, but one that was, on the face of it at least, fully justified. For the Jin dynasty of northern China was perhaps the most powerful polity on the face of the Earth at the time. The Jin had unimaginable wealth, gunpowder and an enormous army equipped with state-of-the-art weaponry, such as catapults. What’s more, they could call upon the protection of one of the foremost engineering feats of all time, the Great Wall of China. So why should they be concerned about a nomad army riding roughshod over their land? But there were a couple of problems.
- The Jin weren’t facing any old bunch of nomads, and the man commanding them wasn’t any old leader. He was Genghis Khan. Over the next two decades, the Mongol ruler would forge a reputation as arguably the greatest military commander in history. And it was at the very heart of Wanyan Yongji’s empire – in the streets of his magnificent capital, Beijing – that he would announce himself to the world.

Pax Mongolica

- The Pax Mongolica (Latin for "Mongol Peace"), is a term modelled after the original phrase Pax Romana which describes the stabilizing effects of the conquests of the Mongol Empire on the social, cultural and economic life of the inhabitants of the vast Eurasian territory that the Mongols conquered in the 13th and 14th centuries. The term is used to describe the eased communication and commerce the unified administration helped to create and the period of relative peace that followed the Mongols' vast conquests.
- The conquests of Genghis Khan (r. 1206–1227) and his successors, spanning from Southeast Asia to Eastern Europe, effectively connected the Eastern world with the Western world. The Silk Road, connecting trade centres across Asia and Europe, came under the sole rule of the Mongol Empire and Mongol law promoted peace by allowing religious freedom and forbidding blood feuds, adultery, theft, bearing false witness, and doing harm to the environment.
- It was commonly said that "a maiden bearing a nugget of gold on her head could wander safely throughout the realm". Despite the political fragmentation of the Mongol Empire into four khanates (Yuan dynasty, Golden Horde, Chagatai Khanate and Ilkhanate), nearly a century of conquest and civil war was followed by relative stability in the early 14th century. The end of the Pax Mongolica was marked by the disintegration of the khanates and the outbreak of the Black Death in Asia which spread along trade routes to much of the world in the mid-14th century.

