

## DBQ - Impact of the Mongols

### Document 1

...In the period from 1180–1220, Mongolia experienced a drop in the mean annual temperature, which meant that the growing season for grass was cut short. Less grass meant a real danger to the Mongols' animals, and, since the animals were truly the basis of the Mongols' pastoral-nomadic life, this ecological threat may have prompted them to move out of Mongolia.

A second reason often mentioned is the attempt by Mongolia's neighbors in north and northwest China to reduce the amount of trade with the Mongols. Since the Mongols depended on trade for goods that they desperately needed—such as grain, craft, and manufactured articles—cessation [halting] of trade, or at least the diminution [reduction] of trade, could have been catastrophic for them. The attempts by the Jin dynasty, which controlled North China, and the Xia dynasty, which controlled Northwest China, to reduce the level of trade that the Mongols could expect, created a crisis for the Mongols. Unable to obtain goods that they so desperately needed, the Mongols' response was to initiate raids, attacks, and finally invasions against these two dynasties....

Source: "The Mongols in World History," Asian Topics in World History online, Columbia University (adapted)

- 1 According to this excerpt from "The Mongols in World History," what are **two** reasons the Mongols began conquering new lands? [2]

### Document 2

...Organization was the key to the success of the great Mongol armies. The cavalry, first devised by Genghis Khan, consisted of 10 squadrons. Ten squadrons formed a *quran* of 1,000 men. Daily drills taught the warriors to move as units and respond quickly. In combat, bowmen formed a front line to unleash a hail of arrows at the enemy. The archers would then fall to the rear to allow well-armed units to charge and overrun the enemy.

As Kublai Khan turned his sights on the heavily fortified Chinese empire, he drew on another of Genghis' strategies: siege warfare using catapults. The Mongols applied these techniques with greater force and in greater numbers than ever before in history. This approach would prove useful in overpowering the great Chinese cities in the years ahead....

Source: Duane Damon, "From Genghis to Kublai," *Calliope*, A Cobblestone Publication

- 2 According to Duane Damon, what were **two** methods of conquest used by the Mongols? [2]

### Document 3

A common misconception is that the semiliterate Mongols came out of the steppes of Mongolia, quickly conquered far more advanced civilizations, and left the government in each area in the hands of the conquered. While Chinese bureaucrats still did their jobs and the local Persian rulers stayed in power as long as they did not cause the Mongols any trouble, the situation was much more complex....

The Mongols used qualified people wherever they were needed. It was not unusual to have Arabs serving in Russia or Persians in China. Still, the Mongols preferred not to tinker too much with systems that worked well. When Yelu Qucai (1189–1243), the great minister and governor of northern China, demonstrated how much wealth the region could produce for Ögödei Khan, the Mongols kept his system in place....

In smaller provincial territories, many local rulers maintained their position, serving as the local *daruqachi* or *shahna* [governor]. As long as they paid tribute, provided troops when called upon, came before the khan to pledge their loyalty, and kept good order in their territories, they remained in their positions. For the Mongols, it made good sense, as the local rulers knew the customs of their people....

Source: Timothy May, "Taking Control," *Calliope*, A Cobblestone Publication

- 3 According to Timothy May, what was **one** action taken by the Mongols to control the territory they conquered? [1]

### Document 4

...The Mongol impact, assert the Eurasian historians, proved highly beneficial to the Russians. "The Tatars [Mongols] defended Russia from Europe," sparing it from conquest by the West. After the conquest Mongols and the people of Rus [Russia] coexisted in harmony and peace. From their conquerors the Rus adopted typical Turanian [Asian] character traits: steadiness, conviction, strength, and religiosity, all of which promoted the development of the Muscovite state. The Mongols assured to Rus secure commercial and cultural relations with the Orient; they enhanced the position of the Orthodox church. In the mid-13th century Alexander Nevskii prince of Novgorod, faced with a fateful choice, wisely chose the East over the West: "Alexander saw in the Mongols a friendly force in a cultural sense that could assist him to preserve and consolidate Russian cultural identity from the Latin West..."

Source: MacKenzie and Curran, *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, Wadsworth/Thomson Learning

- 4 Based on this document, state **two** changes that occurred in Russia as a result of Mongol rule. [2]

## Document 5

By the time of his death in 1227, Genghis Khan controlled most of northern China, but the swampy lands to the south stopped his cavalry from further advances. His sons expanded Mongol control farther by conquering lands to the east and west. They divided the empire into four large khanates, in Persia, Central Asia, Russia, & East Asia...

Kublai Khan was a vigorous and capable ruler. He carried on large warlike hunts to show that he kept Mongol tradition, but he also showed some appreciation for Chinese culture. He acted to restore some of the devastation in North China. He began a vast renovation of the Grand Canal, which was so important to the wealth and unity of the country. He directed the building of water-control projects, such as dams and dikes, along the Yellow River...

During the Mongol rule, trade revived with Central Asia and the Middle East. Both of these areas were ruled by relatives of the khan. The vast lands controlled by the Mongols experienced general peace, called the *Pax Mongolica*. It was said that "a maiden bearing a nugget of gold on her head could wander safely throughout the realm." Camel caravans once more carried Chinese products such as porcelain, tea, medicines, silk, and playing cards to the Middle East and into Europe.

Source: Dorothy Hoobler et al., *China*, Globe Book

5 Based on this document, identify **two** ways China was changed by Mongol rule. [2]

## Document 6

One woman will drive twenty or thirty wagons, since the terrain is level.... It is the women's task to drive the wagons, to load the dwellings on them and to unload again, to milk the cows, to make butter and grut [curds or cheese], and to dress the skins and stitch them together, which they do with a thread made from sinew...

The men make bows and arrows, manufacture stirrups and bits, fashion saddles, construct the dwellings and the wagons, tend the horses and mares, churn the comas [that is, the mare's milk], produce the skins in which it is stored, and tend and load the camels...

Source: *A Report on Gender Relations*, William of Rubruck, a Franciscan friar who visited the Mongols in 1250's on behalf of the King of France.

6 Based on this document, identify **two** responsibilities of women in Mongol society. [2]

7 Based on this document, identify **two** responsibilities of men in Mongol society. [2]

## Document 7

Their arms are bows, iron maces, and in some instances, spears; but the first is the weapon at which they are the most expert, being accustomed, from children, to employ it in their sports. They wear defensive armor made from buffalo and hides of other beasts, dried by the fire, and thus rendered extremely hard and strong. They are brave in battle, almost to desperation, setting little value upon their lives, and exposing themselves without hesitation to all manner of danger. Their disposition is cruel.

They are capable of supporting every kind of privation, and when there is a necessity for it, can live for a month on the milk of their mares, and upon such wild animals as they may chance to catch. Their horses are fed upon grass alone, and do not require barley or other grain. The men are trained to remain on horseback during two days and two nights, without dismounting.... No people on earth can surpass them in fortitude under difficulties, nor show greater patience under wants of every kind. They are most obedient to their chiefs, and are maintained at small expense.

Source: *Travels*, Marco Polo, Written in 1298 based on his travels from 1274 to 1290

8 Based on this document, identify **two** observations Marco Polo made regarding the Mongols? [2]

9 How might these observations contribute to the success the Mongols had in their conquests? [1]