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Office Hours: M & Tu 1:00 – 2:00 PM, Th 10:00 – 11:00 AM, and by appointment

HISTORY 105.04: The Mongol World Empire

CRN # 10317

MWF, 2:00 – 2:50 PM, Clough 313

Required texts for purchase:

Allsen, Thomas T. *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*
Dawson, Christopher. *Mission to Asia*
Halperin, Charles. *Russia and the Golden Horde*
Kahn, Paul. *The Secret History of the Mongols*
Morgan, David. *The Mongols*

The world's largest contiguous land empire was created by a people whose history is little known and whose way of life would not immediately suggest the likelihood of such an achievement. Yet the Mongol conquest affected most of Eurasia, including China, Japan, Southeast Asia, Inner Asia, Iran, the Middle East, Russia, and Europe. Armies under Mongol leadership battled armored knights in Poland, Japanese samurai on the coast of Kyūshū, and mounted warriors in Palestine. Who were these people, and what caused them to burst out of their remote homeland to overthrow the great states of Eurasia? What factors allowed such a small and thinly-scattered population to conquer much of the known world, and what finally stopped them? This course will examine these questions and more as we seek to understand the Mongol Empire and its impact on world history.

Requirements for the course include:

- Regular class attendance and alert participation
- Evidence of thoughtful, serious reading of assigned materials
- Active involvement in classroom discussion of readings
- A map quiz and a genealogy quiz
- Three short essays (each ca. 1500 words)
- One in-class group presentation
- A final exam

Additional readings, quizzes (including unannounced quizzes) and short writing assignments may also be given. Exams will cover the assigned readings as well as materials presented in lectures, handouts, and audiovisual materials. Papers are due in class at the beginning of the class period. Late work will not be accepted. For papers, correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation are essential. Errors of this type will be penalized. If you use a computer to write

your papers, be certain that you know how to use it before entrusting it with your paper. Always keep a hard copy (a copy on paper) of each draft of your papers. Computer malfunctions are not acceptable excuses for sloppiness or tardiness. Each paper should have a title page with a meaningful title, your name, and the paper's final word count. All papers should include page numbers.

Thoughtful classroom participation is vital to this course, and will constitute a significant portion of the final grade. For this reason, you must bring each day's assigned reading(s) with you to class. If you do not participate in discussions of assigned readings through thoughtful comments based on careful consideration of the assigned texts, your classroom participation grade will suffer. In order to facilitate such discussions, you will be called upon at random to comment on the readings. You should be prepared for this. The best strategy is to make notes on each reading so that you can refer to those notes in class when you are called upon.

Respect for all persons in the classroom is important in the learning process. For that reason, you should avoid disruptive behavior such as arriving late, leaving early, or stepping out of the classroom during class. Cell phones and beepers should be turned off before entering the classroom. Excessive absences and/or disruptive behavior in the classroom will result in a lower grade for classroom participation. Three (3) absences are allowed without penalty; excessive absences (i.e., 9 or more) will result in the student being dropped from the course or in an "F" for the final course grade.

Final grades will be based on the following formula of 1500 points:

- Classroom participation 500 points
- Group presentation 100 points
- Essays 600 points (200 points each)
- Quizzes 100 points (50 points each)
- Final Exam 200 points

Extra credit will not be permitted. Make-up exams will be given only in cases of legitimate, documented reasons; if you are wondering if your reason is legitimate, it probably is not. Failure to complete any graded assignment will result in a failing grade for the course. Note that a "W" (Withdrawal) will be given only when the student has followed official withdrawal procedures by the stated deadlines.

All students are expected to abide by the Rhodes Honor Code. Infractions will be dealt with according to the rules of the college. In your papers, be certain to avoid plagiarism (the use of someone else's information/material/ideas without properly citing the source(s) of the information/material/ideas in question). Plagiarism is a violation of the Honor Code, and will result in a grade of "F" for the course. Consequently, you must indicate the sources of your information and ideas through proper citation, whether a source is quoted directly or not. Also, be certain to avoid the appearance of collusion in written assignments and exams. Extreme instances of similarities in exams or papers may result in a lowering of the grade for that assignment.

SYLLABUS

The syllabus indicates which pages are to be completed PRIOR TO that day's class.

Week 1

Aug. 24 W Introduction to the course and texts

Plan ahead: Your map quiz is on Wednesday, 31 August. To prepare, you will be given a blank map of Eurasia and a list of geographical and political features to learn. Make copies of the blank map that you are given today. Find the geographical and political features from the list in textbooks, atlases, encyclopedias, etc., and place them on one of the copies. Use the other copies to test yourself.

26 F Why are the Mongols important?

Week 2

Aug. 29 M Getting a grasp on Mongol history
READING: Morgan, pp. 1-54

31 W Eurasia on the eve of the Mongol conquest
Map Quiz

Sept. 02 F Who was Chinggis Khan?
READING: Morgan, pp. 55-83

Week 3

Sept. 05 M **LABOR DAY RECESS – NO CLASS**

07 W The oral tradition of *The Secret History of the Mongols*
READING: Kahn, pp. ix-xxvi and 3-39

09 F A Persian source: *The History of the World Conqueror*
READING: Juvaini, pp. xvii-xxvii and 3-48 (handout)

Plan ahead: Your first essay is due on Friday, 19 September. This is to focus on *The Secret History of the Mongols* as a source for the history of Mongolian society in the era of Chinggis Khan. You should consider what important information this source provides concerning the Mongols' social organization and social relationships (i.e., you should consider practices as well as the beliefs and values that informed them). Be certain to provide appropriate examples to illustrate your points.

Week 4

Sept. 12 M Chinggis Khan's rise to power

READING: Kahn, pp. 40-113

14 W The expansion of Chinggis' power
READING: Kahn, pp. 114-165

16 F Wrapping up *The Secret History*
READING: Kahn, pp. 166-190
Paper due

Week 5

Sept. 19 M The organization of the empire
READING: Morgan, pp. 84-111

Plan ahead: You have a genealogy quiz on Monday, 26 September. This will require you to replicate, from memory, the chart that appears on p. 222 of Morgan's book. For the quiz, you will be given a blank sheet of paper on which to put the genealogical chart of the great khans.

21 W The expansion of the Mongol Empire: An overview
READING: Morgan, pp. 112-174

23 F Continued
Film: "World Conquerors"

Week 6

Sept. 26 M The reign of Ögedei Khan
Genealogy quiz

28 W The expansion of the Mongol Empire: Two secondary studies
READING: Fletcher, "The Mongols: Ecological and Social Perspectives" (handout)
Smith, "Mongol Campaign Rations: Milk, Marmots, and Blood" (handout)

30 F The reign of Güyük Khan
READING: Rashid al-Din, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, pp. 174-193 (handout)

Week 7

Oct. 03 M The reign of Möngke Khan

READING: Rashid al-Din, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, pp. 196-237 (handout)

05 W The division and administration of the empire
READING: Jackson, "From *Ulus* to Khanate: The Making of the Mongol States, c. 1220-c. 1290" (handout)

07 F **ACADEMIC SYMPOSIUM – NO CLASS**

Week 8

Oct. 10 M The Mongols and the West:
READING: Morgan, pp. 175-198
The Chronicle of Novgorod (handout)

12 W Continued
Film: "Tartar Crusaders"

14 F John of Plano Carpini
READING: Dawson, pp. vii-xxxv and 2-86

Plan ahead: Your second paper is due on Monday, 24 October. This essay should compare John of Plano Carpini, William of Rubruck, and Marco Polo as informants. How would you compare their accounts of the Mongols and their culture? What can you say about these authors' objectivity, insightfulness, etc.? Through what "filters" are they viewing the Mongols? To what effect? Be certain to give examples to illustrate your points.

Week 9

Oct. 17 M **FALL RECESS – NO CLASS**

19 W William of Rubruck
READING: Dawson, pp. 88-149

21 F Continued
READING: Dawson, pp. 149–237

Week 10

Oct. 24 M The reign of Khubilai Khan
Paper due

	26	W	The Yuan Dynasty and the dissolution of the empire
	28	F	Marco Polo and the discovery of the world READING: Polo, <i>The Travels</i> (handout)
Week 11			
Oct.	31	M	The mystery of Prester John READING: De Rachewiltz, "Prester John and Europe's Discovery of East Asia" (handout)
Nov.	02	W	The Mongol Impact on the West: Two Studies READING: McNeill, "The Impact of the Mongol Empire on Shifting Disease Balances, 1200-1500" (handout) Ryan, "Christian Wives of Mongol Khans: Tartar Queens and Missionary Expectations in Asia" (handout)
	04	F	The Mongols and religion
Week 12			
Nov.	07	M	The Mongols in Russia: A case study
	09	W	Group 1 presentation READING: Halperin, pp. 1-60
	11	F	Group 2 presentation READING: Halperin, pp. 61-130
Week 13			
Nov.	14	M	The Mongols in Iran: A case study
	16	W	Group 3 presentation READING: Allsen, pp. 3-80
	18	F	Group 4 presentation READING: Allsen, pp. 83-211
Week 14			
Nov.	21	M	Comparative approaches to history Group 5 presentation

Plan ahead: Your third essay is due on Friday, 1 December. This is to be a

consideration of Cecilia Holland's "The Death that Saved Europe." In particular, you should examine how Holland portrays the Mongols as well as her assumptions concerning what would have happened had the Mongols penetrated deeper into Europe. From what you have learned about Mongol history, how would you characterize Holland's article in terms of historical accuracy? Why? Be certain to use appropriate examples to illustrate your points.

23 W THANKSGIVING RECESS – NO CLASS

25 F THANKSGIVING RECESS – NO CLASS

Week 15

Nov. 28 M The Mongol Empire today
Film: "The Conqueror"

30 W Continued

Dec. 01 F Continued
Paper due

Week 16

Dec. 05 M Why are the Mongols important?
READING: Morgan, pp. 199-206

07 W Preparation for final exam

Exam Week

Dec. 14 W Final Exam due – 4:00 PM