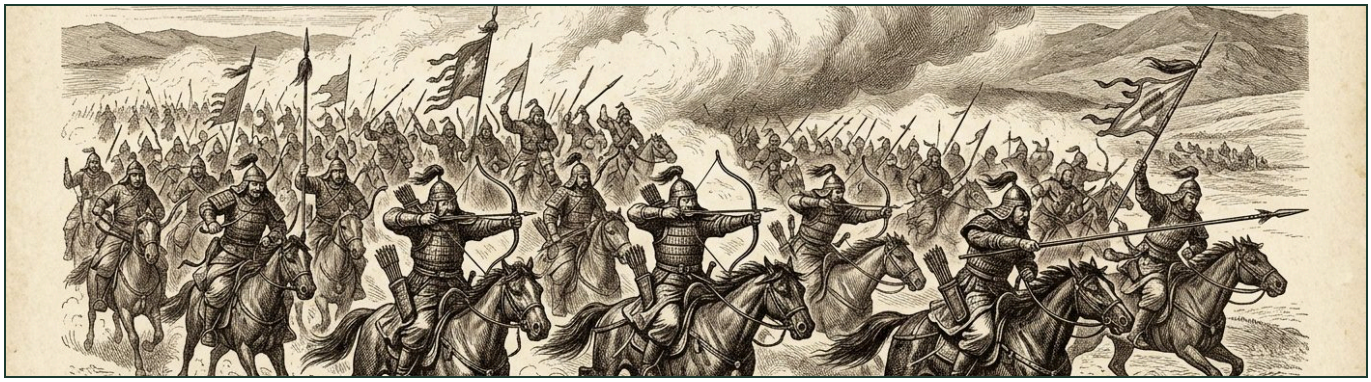


1206 – 1368

Mongol Empire Timeline

The Mongol Empire was the largest contiguous land empire in history — built by Genghis Khan and his descendants in just a few decades, stretching from the Pacific Ocean to Eastern Europe and ruling over a third of the world's population at its peak.

1206

Genghis Khan Unites the Mongols

Temujin, who fought his way to dominance among the nomadic peoples of the Mongolian steppe, is proclaimed Genghis Khan — 'universal ruler' — at a great assembly of tribal leaders.

> **Why it mattered:** *The unification of the Mongol tribes ended generations of inter-tribal warfare and created the most effective cavalry army the world had seen — one that would conquer more territory in 25 years than Rome did in 400.*

1211–15

Invasion of Northern China

Mongol forces breach the Great Wall and invade the Jin Dynasty of northern China, eventually capturing Zhongdu (near modern Beijing) and absorbing Chinese administrative expertise and siege warfare technology.

> **Why it mattered:** *The conquest of China gave the Mongols far more than territory — access to Chinese engineering, administration, and technology (including gunpowder-based siege weapons) that they used to conquer the rest of the world.*

1219–21

Conquest of Central Asia

Genghis Khan leads roughly 200,000 Mongol warriors through the Khwarazmian Empire, destroying the great cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, and Merv and massacring much of their population.

> **Why it mattered:** *The destruction of Central Asia's urban centers devastated one of the world's most advanced civilizations and its agricultural irrigation systems — damage that took centuries to undo, while the Mongol defeat of the Khwarazmian Empire opened the road to Persia and beyond.*

Mongol Empire Timeline *continued*

1241 — **Invasion of Europe**

Mongol armies under generals Batu Khan and Subutai devastate Poland and Hungary, crushing every European army they face, and reach the Adriatic Sea — stopping only when news arrives of the Great Khan's death and the army turns back.

> **Why it mattered:** *Europe had never faced anything like the Mongol cavalry — their victories shocked Christian Europe and showed how vulnerable even fortified kingdoms were; only the death of Ögedei Khan saved Western Europe from further conquest.*

1258 — **Sack of Baghdad**

Mongol forces under Hulagu Khan storm Baghdad, kill the Abbasid Caliph, and destroy the city's libraries, canals, and population — ending the 500-year-old Islamic golden age of the Abbasid Caliphate.

> **Why it mattered:** *The sack of Baghdad was one of history's most consequential catastrophes — the destruction of the Abbasid Caliphate and its cultural treasures was a blow to Islamic civilization from which the region took centuries to recover.*

1260 — **Mongols Defeated at Ain Jalut**

Egyptian Mamluk forces defeat a Mongol army at Ain Jalut in Palestine — the first decisive defeat of Mongol forces in open battle, stopping their advance into North Africa.

> **Why it mattered:** *Ain Jalut proved the Mongols were not invincible and marked the western limit of their expansion — the Mamluk victory saved Egypt, North Africa, and likely much of the Islamic world from Mongol conquest.*

1271–95 — **Kublai Khan and the Pax Mongolica**

Kublai Khan rules China as founder of the Yuan Dynasty; Marco Polo travels from Venice to his court; the stability of Mongol rule across Eurasia allows unprecedented trade and cultural exchange along the Silk Road.

> **Why it mattered:** *The Pax Mongolica — the Mongol Peace — made the Silk Road safe for travel for the first time in generations, enabling the exchange of goods, ideas, technologies, and unfortunately also diseases (including the Black Death) between East and West.*

1368 — **Ming Dynasty Expels the Mongols**

Chinese rebels under Zhu Yuanzhang overthrow the Mongol Yuan Dynasty and found the Ming Dynasty — ending Mongol rule over China, the empire's largest and most populous possession.

> **Why it mattered:** *The Ming expulsion marked the beginning of the end of the unified Mongol Empire — though Mongol successor states survived for centuries, the empire Genghis Khan built was gone, and China turned inward to protect itself from future nomadic invasions.*