

## Document-Based Question (DBQ) – Mongol Expansion (55 minutes, timed essay)

**Directions:** The question is based on the accompanying documents. The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise. It is recommended that you spend 15 minutes reading/analyzing/grouping the documents and 40 minutes writing the essay.

- **Thesis:** Present a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to all parts of the question. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences locate in one place, either the introduction or the conclusion.
- **Argument Development:** Develop and support a cohesive argument that recognizes and accounts for historical complexity by explicitly illustrating relationships among historical evidence such as contradiction, corroboration, and/or qualification.
- **Use of the Documents:** Utilize the content of at least six of the documents to support the stated thesis or a relevant argument.
- **Sourcing the Documents:** Explain the significance of the author’s point of view, author’s purpose, historical context, and/or audience for at least four documents.
- **Contextualization:** Situate the argument by explaining the broader historical events, developments, or processes immediately relevant to the question.
- **Outside Evidence:** Provide an example or additional piece of specific evidence beyond those found in the documents to support or qualify the argument.
- **Synthesis:** Extend the argument by explaining the connection between the argument and ONE of the following.
  - A development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area.
  - A course theme and/or approach to history that is not the focus of the essay (such as political, economic, social, cultural, or intellectual history).
  - A different discipline or field of inquiry (such as economics, government and politics, art history, or anthropology).

**Prompt: Evaluate the extent to which Mongol expansion impacted Eurasia during the period 1200-1450.**

### Document 1

**SOURCE:** Marco Polo (through ghostwriter Rustichello), Italian merchant who spent 17 years in the court of Kublai Khan, in his book, *A Description of the World*, 1298.

The grand khan, having obtained this signal victory [over a challenger to his rule], returned to great pomp and triumph to the capital city...[as] was his usual practice [performing rituals for holy books] upon each Christian festivals...he observed the same at the festivals of the Saracens [Muslims], Jews, and idolators....

[After leaving the capital of Beijing] You arrive at the city of Kue-lin-fu...[where] the women...are very handsome, and live in a luxurious state....

Upon leaving the city ...during which you are continually passing towns and castles, of which the inhabitants are idolaters, have silk in abundance, and export it in considerable quantities, you reach the city of Unguen. This place is remarkable for a great manufacture of sugar, which is sent...for the supply of the court. Previously to...being...under the dominion of the grand khan, the natives were unacquainted with the art of manufacturing sugar of a fine quality, and boiled it in such an imperfect manner, that when left to cool it remained in the state of a dark-brown paste.... But at the time when this city became subject to his majesty’s government, there happened to be at the court some persons from Babylon [Cairo, Egypt] who were skilled in the process...instructed the inhabitants in the mode of refining the sugar. ...

[After] five days’ journey, you arrive at the noble city of Zai-tun , which has a port on the seacoast celebrated for...shipping, loaded with merchandise....The quantity of pepper imported there is so considerable that what is carried to Alexandria to supply the demand of the western parts of the world, is trifling in comparison....

### Document 2

**SOURCE:** Friar John of Monte Corvino, a letter sent to fellow Franciscans who were working as missionaries in the Black Sea area, and then later forwarded to Rome, 1305.

I, Friar John of Monte Corvino departed in... 1291...and entered India; and I was...at the Church of St. Thomas the Apostle, for thirteen months, and there I baptized, in different places, about a hundred people.... And I, proceeding further, came to Katag [Cathay, or China] the realm of the Emperor of the Tartars [Mongols] who is called the Great Khan; and him I invited, presenting him the letters of our Lord Pope, to adopt the Catholic faith of our Lord Jesus Christ....but he had grown too old in idolatry. However, he bestows many kindnesses upon the Christians, and for these two years I have been abiding with him...

...As to the route, I many mention that the way through the land of the Goths and of Emperor of the Northern Tartars is the shortest and safes...as far as I ever saw or heard, I believe that no king or prince in the world can be compared to the Lord Kaan [Khan] in respect of the extent of his dominions, the multitude of his people, or the amount of his wealth.

### Document 3

**SOURCE: Selection from the *Novgorod Chronicles*, a collection of histories focused on the church as written by Russian religious authorities of the city-republic of Novgorod, 1238.**

And the Princes ordered, "Give us your numbers for tribute."...the common people would not give their numbers for tribute but said, "Let us die honorably for St. Sophia [the church in Novgorod that represents the symbol of freedom, prosperity and power]"... [but most of] the people were divided... And it was on the morrow, the Prince rode down...and the accursed ones [Mongols] began to ride through the streets writing down the [number of] Christian house[s]; because for our sins God has brought wild beasts out of the desert .....And having numbered them for tribute and taken it, the accursed ones went away...

### Document 4

**SOURCE: Selections from *The History of the World Conqueror*, 13<sup>th</sup> century by 'Ala ad-Din Juvaini's. Juvaini was a Persian who was so impressed by the Mongol capital of Karakorum that he decided to write the history of Mongol conquest. He also serves as governor of Baghdad for his Mongol overlords. In this portion, Juvaini writes of Sorqotani Beki, daughter-in-law of Genghis Khan.**

After Ulugh-Noyan's death, [the Khan] commanded that as long as he lived affairs of state should be administered in accordance to the council of his wife Sorquotani Beki...and [her] sons...[that] the army and the people, great and small, should be under the control of her command and prohibition...

...And her hand was ever open in munificence and benefaction...although she was a follower...of the religion of Jesus she would bestow alms and presents upon *imams* and *shaikhs* and strove also to revive the sacred observances of the faith of Mohammed. ... And as the token and proof of this statement...she gave 1000 silver *balish*...that a *madrasa* [college] might be built in Bokhara...

### Document 5

**SOURCE: Excerpt from Florentine merchant Francis Pegolotti's *Book of Descriptions of Countries*, early 14<sup>th</sup> century. The book was meant to be a travel guide for other merchants travelling east. The part focuses on trade in Yuan China.**

The road you travel from Tana to Cathay is perfectly safe, whether by day or by night...

Whatever silver the merchants may carry with them...the lord of Cathay [China] will take from them and put into his treasury. And to merchants...they give that paper money of theirs in exchange. This is of yellow paper, stamped with the seal of the lord aforesaid...called *balishi*...and with this money you can readily buy silk and all other merchandize that you have a desire to buy. All the people of the country are bound to receive it...you shall not pay a higher price for your goods because your money is of paper....there are three kinds, one being worth more than another, according to the value...established for each by that lord.

### Document 6

**SOURCE: Contemporary Russian chroniclers, 13<sup>th</sup> century.**

It happened in 1237. That winter, the godless Tatars [the Mongols], under the leadership of Batu...encamped at Onuza, which they took and burned. From here they dispatched their emissaries—a woman witch and two men—to the princes of Riazan demanding a tithe [tribute]...the princes of Riazan...did not allow the emissaries to enter the city...

The princes of Riazan...engaged them in a battle. The struggle was fierce but the [Mongols] emerged victorious...Thus angered, the Tatars now began the conquest of the Riazan land with great fury. They destroyed cities, killed people, burned, and took [people] into slavery. On December 6, the cursed strangers approached the capital city of Riazan, besieged it...the Princes of Riazan shut themselves up with the people of the city, fought bravely, but succumbed. On December 21, the Tatars took the city of Riazan, burned it completely, killed Prince Iurii Igorevich, his wife, slaughtered other princes, and of the captured men, women, and children, some they killed with their swords, others they killed with arrows and [then] threw them into the fire; while some they captured they bound, cut, and disemboweled their bodies. The Tatars burned many holy churches, monasteries, and villages, and took their property.

**Document 7**

**SOURCE: *The Siege of Baghdad* (1258), Persian Manuscript, 15<sup>th</sup> century. The image depicts the Mongol assault led by Hülagü on Baghdad after a twelve-day siege. The Abbasids did not surrender to the besieging Mongols and were ultimately defeated. The Mongols sacked the city and executed many. Estimates of deaths have ranged from 80,000 to upwards of 1 million, though the lower estimate appears to have been more likely.**



For a closer view, please go to <http://goo.gl/61qZhQ>

## Document-Based Question (DBQ) – Mongol Expansion – Grading Rubric

**PROMPT:** Using the documents provided and your knowledge of world history, analyze the degree to which the Mongol Empire affected societies of Afro-Eurasia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

*Please note:*

- Each point of the rubric is earned independently (e.g. point can be earned using evidence without earning a point for thesis)
- Unique evidence from the response is required to earn each point (e.g., evidence in the response that is used to earn the contextualization point could not be used to earn the point for synthesis or the point for sourcing the documents.)
- On accuracy: The components of this rubric each require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, the essay may contain errors that do not detract from the overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.
- On clarity: These essays should be considered first drafts and this may contain grammatical errors.

<b>A. THESIS AND ARGUMENT DEVELOPMENT (2 points)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thesis (1 point)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Makes a historically defensible claim that responds to all parts of the question.</li><li>○ Thesis may be one or multiple sentences.</li><li>○ Thesis may be located either in the introduction or conclusion, but not split between the two.</li><li>○ Thesis must be discrete, meaning it cannot be pieced together from multiple places.</li><li>○ The thesis cannot be counted for credit in any other portion of the rubric.</li></ul></li><li>• Argument Development (1 point)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Develops and supports a cohesive argument</b> that recognizes and <b>accounts for historical complexity</b> by explicitly illustrated relationships among historical evidence, such as <b>contradiction, corroboration, and/or qualification</b>.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>B. DOCUMENT ANALYSIS (2 points)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Utilizing Documents as Evidence (1 point)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Utilizes the content from at least <i>six</i> documents to support the stated thesis or a relevant argument.</li><li>○ Cannot earn the point for merely quoting or paraphrasing the documents with no connection to the thesis or an argument.</li></ul></li><li>• Sourcing the Documents (1 point)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Explains the significance of the author's point of view, author's purpose, historical context, and/or audience for at least <i>four</i> documents.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>C. EVIDENCE BEYOND THE DOCUMENTS (2 points)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contextualization (1 point)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Situates the thesis, argument, or parts of the argument by accurately and explicitly connecting the effects of Mongol conquest on Afro-Eurasian societies to larger global historical processes.</li><li>○ Essay <i>explains</i> the broader historical events, developments, or processes <i>immediately relevant</i> to the question</li></ul></li><li>• Evidence Beyond the Documents (1 point)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Provides an example or an additional piece of evidence, beyond those found in the documents to support or qualify the argument regarding the effects of Mongol conquest on Afro-Eurasian societies.</li><li>○ Must explicitly connect the additional evidence to the effects of Mongol conquest on Afro-Eurasian societies.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>D. SYNTHESIS (1 point can be earned for extending the argument in one of the following three ways)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response must <b>extend the argument</b> by explaining the connections between the argument and <u>one</u> of the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Different historical period, situation, era, geographical area:</b> Connecting the effects of Mongol conquest on Afro-Eurasian societies to other historical periods, situations, eras, or geographical areas. Connections must be relevant, plausible, and explained beyond a mere mention.</li><li>○ <b>Different theme:</b> Connecting the effects of Mongol conquest on Afro-Eurasian societies to course themes that are not the main focus of the questions (e.g., environment or economic). Connections must be relevant, plausible, and explained beyond a mere mention.</li><li>○ <b>Different discipline:</b> Using insights from a different discipline or field of inquiry to explain the impact of the effects of Mongol conquest on Afro-Eurasian societies, such as comparative government or art history. Connections must be relevant, plausible, and explained beyond a mere mention.</li></ul></li></ul>