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**IDX G9 HISTORY S+ STUDY GUIDE ISSUE 6**

**By Isabella Wang and Daniel Zhang**

12.2: The Mongol and Ming Empires

**Mongol Armies Build an Empire**

- Origins and Leadership

- Nomadic people from Central Asian steppes (treeless plains).

- Genghis Khan (c. 1162–1227):

- Unified warring Mongol clans.

- Name means “Universal Ruler.”

- Ruthless in war but tolerant in rule; respected scholars/artisans.

- Military Tactics

- Skilled horsemen and archers (Marco Polo described their mobility).

- Adopted cannons and gunpowder from Chinese/Turkish experts.

- Expansion

- Conquered lands from the Pacific Ocean to Eastern Europe (1220s–1300s).

- Pax Mongolica (“Mongol Peace”):

- Safe trade along Silk Road → cultural exchanges (windmills, papermaking, crops).

- Religious toleration (Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, etc.).

**China Under Mongol Rule (Yuan Dynasty, 1279–1368)**

- Kublai Khan (Genghis’s grandson):

- Completed conquest of Song China (1279).

- Capital: Khanbaliq (Beijing).

- Policies:

- Mongols held top military/government jobs; Chinese officials ruled locally.

- Mixed Chinese/Mongol culture (e.g., Grand Canal extended, Arab-designed palace).

- Foreign Contacts

- Marco Polo (Venetian merchant):

- Served Kublai for 17 years; wrote of China’s wealth (e.g., Hangzhou’s size, efficient mail system).

- Trade: Gunpowder, porcelain, and playing cards reached Europe.

**The Ming Dynasty (1368–1644)**

- Overthrow of Mongols:

- Peasant leader Zhu Yuanzhang rebelled (heavy taxes/corruption under Yuan).

- Founded Ming (“brilliant”) dynasty (1368).

- Restoration of Chinese Rule:

- Revived Confucian civil service exams; censors monitored bureaucracy.

- Capital moved to Nanjing, later back to Beijing.

- Economy & Culture:

- Agricultural advances: terraces, new crops (corn/sweet potatoes from Americas).

- Porcelain, paper, and tools flourished; canal system repaired.

- Literature: Novels (e.g., The Water Margin), detective stories.

**Chinese Exploration (1405–1435)**

- Zheng He’s Voyages:

- Muslim admiral led 7 expeditions (62+ ships, 28,000 crew).

- Goals: Trade, tribute, and show Chinese power (Southeast Asia, India, East Africa).

- Brought back exotic goods (e.g., giraffes).

- End of Exploration:

- 1435: Ming banned seagoing ships (Confucian scholars opposed trade; high costs).

- Contrast: Europe’s Age of Exploration began soon after (e.g., Columbus, 1492).

8.5 A Time of Crisis

* The Black Death: A Global Epidemic
  + - Autumn 1347: a fleet of Genoese trading ships loaded with grain left the Black Sea port of **Caffa** and set sail for **Messina, Sicily.**
    - Sailors started falling sick during the voyage.
    - Town people at Sicily became sick as well after the crew arrived.
    - Soon, the disease was called as Black Death from Italy. Soon reached Spain and France.
  + The Plague Spreads from Asia
    - Black Death: bubonic plague, a disease spread by fleas carried by rats.
      * Once emerged all around the world, but subsided. However, left a strain in Mongolia survived.
      * In 1200s, Mongols conquered Asia, probably set the background for the epidemic.
  + Normal Life Breaks Down
    - The plague brought terror.
      * People turn to magic and witchcrafts for cure.
      * Wild pleasure
      * Beat themselves with nailed whip. (flagellation)
      * Christians blamed Jews for the plague. Thousands of Jews were slaughtered.
  + The Economy Suffers
    - Since workers and employees died, production declined.
    - Inflation broke out.
    - Landowners converted cropland into land for sheep raising.
      * Peasants revolt during 1300s to 1400s, since they scarcely get jobs.
* Upheaval in the Church
  + The Church Splits
    - In 1309, Pope Clement V had moved the papal court to Avignon outside the border of southern France.
    - Pope had lavish court
      * Criticism of this pleasure emerged.
      * Reformers worked for change
    - In 1378, Reformers elected their own Pope in Rome.
    - French church chose a rival pope as respond.
      * Schism occurred at this time.
  + New Heresies
    - People dissatisfied with the church. People started to have new ideas, of following the Bible instead of the church.
* The Hundred Years’ War
  + A destructive war between France and England (1337 to 1453).
  + England and France both rival for control.
    - E.g. the English Channel.
  + English Won Early Victories
    - New invention of weapon: Longbow utilized by English archers
  + Joan Arc Fought for France
    - 17-year-old peasant woman, lead the French to multiple victories.
    - Taken by English allies captives, convicted and burned at the stake.
    - French saw her as a martyr.
    - 1453, French gained victories using cannon.
  + Impact of the Hundred Years’ War
    - Created national feelings
    - French king expand power.
    - English Parliament gained power, which they funded the ruler.