

NAME : Shagupta Tasnim

ID : 22201852

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RELIGIOUS EXCHANGE

The artwork given below is a beautiful illustration of religious exchange throughout the mongol empire. The picture, which dates back to the Ilkhanid period shows a number of significant figures standing inside a lovely pavilion. “The Mongols neither preached nor tried to force their indigenous faith – a complex polytheistic religion featuring Tengri, the sky God, and shamanic practices – on their subjects” (Allsen, 2018). In fact, they made it possible for different religions to peacefully live together and interact which led to important religious exchanges throughout Eurasia.



Figure 1: Persian miniature showing Ghazan's conversion from Buddhism to Islam

This encounter is perfectly captured by the artwork's style. The art reflects Persian inscription practices, but it also incorporates Chinese and Buddhist artistic features such as bright shades, flat empty space, extravagant clothes and architectural frame. This varied style reflects how the Mongol monarchs recruited religious leaders, intellectuals and craftsmen from across the world. Religion and art both influenced and interacted with one another. Islamic, Buddhist, Christian and East Asian faiths converged and mixed in the Mongol court. The individuals in the artwork appear to be holding an official meeting where Ghazan is converting to Islam. This demonstrates how Mongol kings frequently invited religious leaders from other faiths to their courts. Daoist priests, Buddhist monks, Muslim Intellectual and Christian missionaries had all been encouraged to contribute to the empire. "Spiritual leaders who impressed Chinggis Khan, such as Changchun (1148–1227), the Daoist priest he summoned to reveal the secret of longevity – received tax exemptions and other privileges, in return for which they were supposed to pray for the leader's well-being" (Allsen, 2018). The painting's quiet, courteous atmosphere visually symbolizes the Mongols' stance on tolerance for religion which allowed them to rule over a wide range of people. The painting also represents the expansion of Islam during Mongol reign. Many Ilkhanid writings incorporated illustrations to describe religious tales, an approach that comes from Buddhist and Christian traditions. "For the first and last time in the history of Muslim art, we find visual representations of Muhammad (and other prophets)" (Allsen, 2018). Islamic art during the Mongol era started incorporating storytelling through images for religious aims. By utilizing familiar creative techniques, Muslim scholars and monarchs might make Islam more accessible to Mongol nobles and diverse populations.

In conclusion, this painting reflects inter-civilizational interchange since it displays the religion, art and politics that were linked under the Mongols. Religions, according to Mongols, were not enemies but rather different routes to an identical greater force. The varied artistic approach, respectful portrayal of authority and manuscript format all demonstrated how Mongols' religious tolerance facilitated civilization interchange.

CULTURAL EXCHANGES

The illustration below is a lively visual portrayal of cross cultural contact under the Mongol Empire. It represents a vast landscape packed with people, animals, shelters, preparing food, traveling and everyday tasks all taking place simultaneously. This symbolizes the Mongol world where many distinct cultures, trades and modes of life were united under a single huge empire. The Mongols governed the largest land kingdom in history, reaching from East Asia to Eastern Europe and this illustration shows the ongoing movement of people, products and ideas between countries. Nomads, producers, craftsmen, traders, warriors and bureaucrats all featured side by side demonstrating how the Mongols linked steppe societies to civilized societies.



Figure 2 : One day in Mongolia (B. Sharav)

The importance of animals like horses, sheep and cattle highlights the nomadic origins of Mongol culture which had the impact on intercultural interactions. Horses enabled long distance travel and the Mongols to rapidly transport people and materials across Eurasia. “Since the Chinggisids regarded skilled individuals as a form of booty to be distributed across the empire and amongst the family, myriads of people were transferred across Eurasia to provide for the

empire's needs – military, administrative and cultural” (Allsen,2018). The illustration contains scenes of cooking, animal farming and artisan labor all of which represent a blending of talents and cultures. Herdsmen and farmers from many cultural backgrounds have been brought together to rebuild destroyed territories and service the ruler's purpose. The tent in the illustration represents another key indicator of inter civilizational interchange. Mongol monarchs liked movable courtly life and even while they governed cities, they frequently built palaces that resembled tents. This nomadic lifestyle shaped aristocratic culture throughout Eurasia. “Tent furnishings such as rugs and tapestries, which the Mongols used to make their palaces resemble tents, became high fashion among ruling elites from the Pacific to the Adriatic” (Allsen,2018). The artwork promotes cultural integration rather than division by illustrating how nomadic lives coexisted with more stable ones. The different characters in the picture also symbolize people traveling throughout the empire. Mongol army operations, trade routes and government all involved irregular travel by armed forces, refugees, traders and bureaucrats. Competent people were spread around the realm by the Mongols who viewed them as valuable resources. These movements helped in spreading of information, art, food, medicine and technological advancements. The vibrant, dense scenes in the painting portray the continuous flow of life across national borders.

To sum up, by portraying an interconnected Mongol world where nomadic and stable cultures regularly interact, this artwork emphasizes cross cultural interchanges. It visually supports the idea that the Mongols were active cultural interchange promoters rather than just passive rulers. They created an atmosphere that allowed ideas, people and tangible products to spread throughout Eurasia on a new scale through their growth, leadership and travel.

ECONOMIC EXCHANGE

The picture below displays a packed marketplace with merchants, camels, goods and people from various areas. This demonstrates how the Mongol Empire used trade to link huge areas of Eurasia. Throughout Mongol reign, such markets grew widespread because the empire offered safety, reliable roads and transportation systems that enabled businessmen to travel faraway

places safely. The camels seen in the illustration represent long distance caravan trade, particularly along the Silk Roads that connected China, Central Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

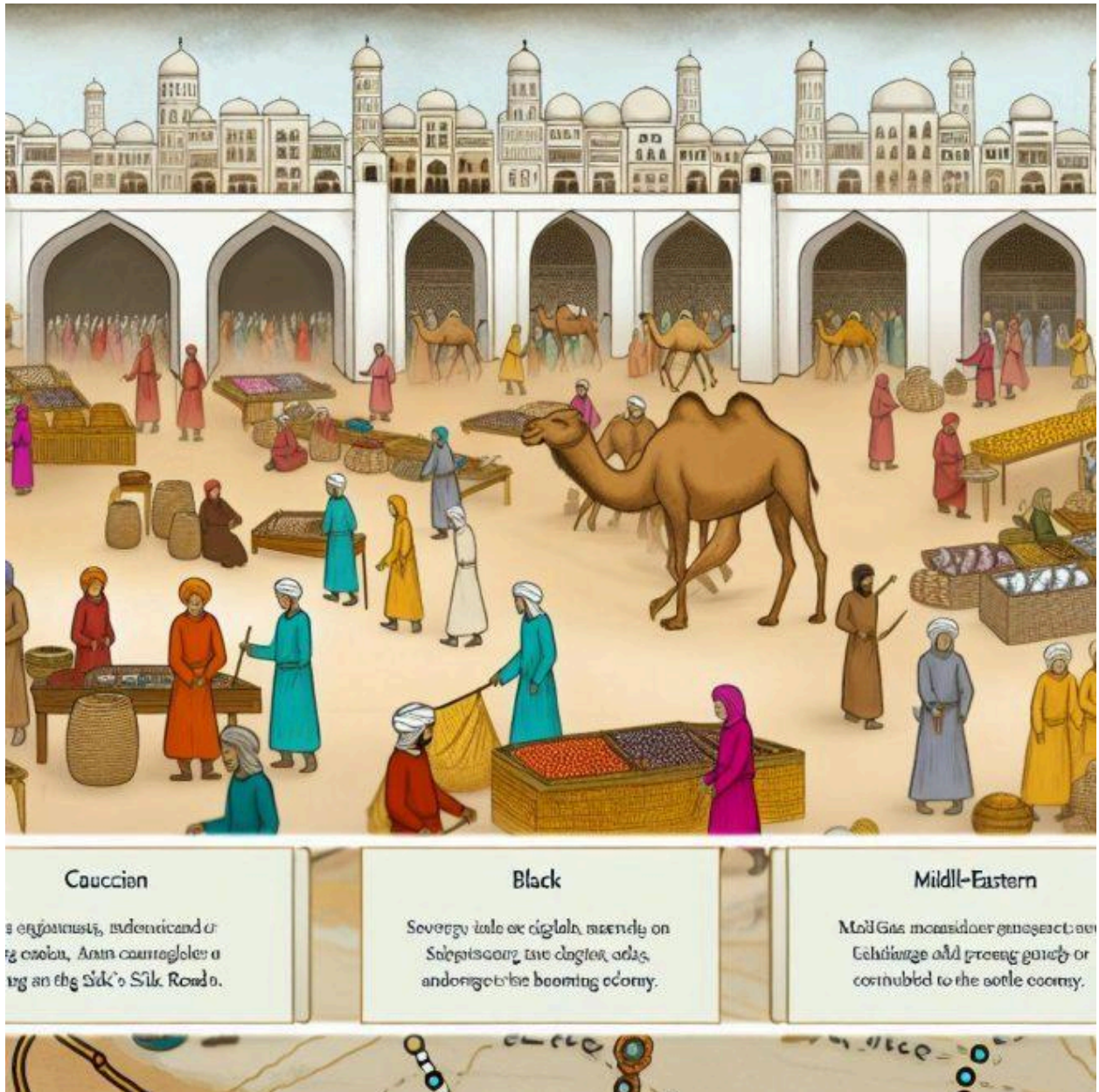


Figure 03: The Mongol Empire and The Silk Road Economy

“As the empire grew, systemic plunder was the major source of luxury goods. Redistributed among the Mongol elite, the khans and princes often chose to invest these considerable fortunes in international trade” (Allsen,2018). So, the Mongol kings not only enforced trade, but also

actively engaged in it as capitalists and users. The picture's busy commercial scene is consistent with the concept of the ortoq system where Mongol elites spent their riches in trading partnerships. "The ortoq was a trader (or trading company) acting on behalf of or financed by a Mongol or other notable, in return for a share of the profits" (Allsen,2018). Many of the products displayed textiles, groceries and luxurious items represent the types of items demanded by Mongol kings to demonstrate dominance and disperse riches to their subjects. The building in the background resembles a downtown commerce hub, demonstrating how Mongol rulers and communities became the centres of global trade. Qara Qorum, Tabriz and later Yuan cities in China relied significantly on imported products because the steppe soil was unable to sustain big urban populations. The Mongols had been prepared to pay a premium amount for the fine fabric, herbs, precious metals and expensive goods, enticing merchants to journey across continents. The picture illustrates the mutual benefits and economic reliance between passive population and nomadic kings. The picture also shows how trade routes changed and developed during the Mongol era. Both overland and maritime routes are indicated by the presence of camels and large marketplaces. Allsen claims that trading became even more crucial after Mongol expansion was discontinued and taxes replaced plunder. Trade between South China, India, the Persian Gulf, the Black Sea and Europe was made easier by markets like the one shown. Through these networks, silk, silver and Chinese spices were transported, creating what amounted to a global economy.

To conclude, by showing how the Mongol Empire turned trade into an anchor for unity across Eurasia, this picture illustrates intercivilization interchange. It represents the Mongols' functions as financial contributors, protectors of vendors and facilitators of trade in an artistic manner. The Mongols created one of the most integrated economies in the world by fusing nomadic traditions with urban marketplaces and global trading routes.

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