

HMDC Presents... MONGOL 1225: Review Quiz

HMDC Presents... Review Quiz: Historical Crisis: Mongol Empire 1225, Death of Genghis Khan

We take this quiz after we have read the full HMDC research report on the Mongol Empire in 1225. When we finish, we check our answers in the Answer Key at the end. Then we go back and reread the report section named beside every question we missed, so the facts are clear before committee.

PART 1: THE TOPIC

1. According to the report, what is the heart of the crisis when Chinggis Khan dies?

- A. The Mongol army has run out of horses after the Central Asian campaign.
- B. There is no orderly system of succession, and the empire rests on personal loyalty to one man.
- C. The Jin dynasty has invaded the Mongol homeland in eastern Mongolia.
- D. The four sons have already agreed to share the title of Great Khan equally.

2. The report says Chinggis Khan used massacre as a weapon, even at Balkh, which surrendered quickly. What harm does this policy cause for the empire itself after the conquest?

- A. It kills the farmers, craftsmen and taxpayers the empire will later need.
- B. It makes the Tangut king refuse to use his own writing system.
- C. It forces the Mongols to give up the decimal system in the army.
- D. It causes Jochi to move his capital to Karakorum.

3. Major Solution 1 is to confirm Ögedei through a kuriltai. What is the main advantage of this solution, according to the report?

- A. It gives the eldest son, Jochi, the throne, which follows the usual custom.
- B. It ends all disputes over succession for the next one hundred years.
- C. It combines the dying ruler's own choice with the approval of the nobles, which gives the new khan legitimacy.
- D. It removes the need for Ögedei to win the loyalty of the commanders.

4. Major Solution 2 is a regency under Tolui, the youngest son. What is one disadvantage the report gives for a regency?

- A. Tolui had no land of his own and no army to keep order.
- B. A regent with an army may become a rival, and a long delay can let quarrels grow.
- C. Mongol custom did not allow anyone to rule for even one day without a kuriltai.
- D. The regency in 1227-1229 caused the empire to split into four parts at once.

5. Major Solution 3 divides the empire into family domains (ulus). Why does the report mark this solution with a DISADVANTAGE?

- A. The sons refused to accept any land outside eastern Mongolia.
- B. Domains keep peace between brothers today but plant the seeds of separate states tomorrow.
- C. Domains made it impossible to collect any taxes at all.
- D. Britannica says the domains were removed after only one year.

6. In Major Solution 4, what did the adviser Yelü Chucai persuade Ögedei to do, and why?

- A. Destroy the cities of North China so that the land could become pasture for horses.
- B. Move the capital from Karakorum to the Tangut kingdom.
- C. Replace all Muslim tax collectors with Mongol commanders.
- D. Spare the people of northern China so the Mongols could use their wealth and skills.

PART 2: THE UNITED NATIONS

1. Why does the report say the United Nations has no record on the death of Chinggis Khan itself?

- A. The UN refused to study Mongol history because Mongolia was not a member.
- B. The UN was founded in 1945, more than seven hundred years after these events.
- C. The UN destroyed its records on Central Asia in 1961.
- D. The Security Council ruled that historical crises are outside its work.

2. Which pair of UN decisions brought Mongolia into the United Nations in 1961?

- A. The Security Council recommended admission in S/RES/166 (1961), and the General Assembly admitted Mongolia in A/RES/1630 (XVI).
- B. The General Assembly adopted A/RES/260 (III), and UNESCO approved the 1954 Hague Convention.
- C. The Security Council adopted S/RES/2347 (2017), and the General Assembly adopted A/RES/79/30.
- D. The General Assembly adopted A/RES/76/253, and the Security Council accepted it the same day.

3. What did General Assembly resolution A/RES/53/77 D (1998) do?

- A. It declared 2026 the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.
- B. It made the person of a diplomat inviolable.
- C. It welcomed Mongolia's decision to declare its territory free of nuclear weapons.
- D. It placed Mongolian worship of sacred sites on the urgent safeguarding list.

4. Security Council resolution S/RES/2347 (2017) is a modern parallel to the loss of cities, libraries and irrigation works in 1219-1227. What does it say?

- A. It says the Mongol Empire must pay damages to modern Iran and Afghanistan.
- B. It says unlawful attacks on historic monuments and religious sites may in some circumstances be war crimes.
- C. It says only UNESCO, not peacekeepers, may ever protect cultural heritage.
- D. It says cultural heritage is protected in peace but not during armed conflict.

5. Which statement about General Assembly resolution A/RES/76/253 (2022) is correct?

- A. It declared 2026 the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists and invited the FAO to help carry it out.
- B. It admitted Mongolia to the United Nations.
- C. It adopted the Genocide Convention.
- D. It created the UNESCO Silk Roads Programme.

PART 3: INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

1. What event in 1218 triggered the war between the Mongols and the Khwarazmian empire?

- A. Jochi attacked the Volga Bulgars without his father's permission.
- B. The Tangut king refused to lower his tariffs on trade.
- C. The governor of Otrar had a Mongol merchant caravan killed and robbed, and the Khwarazm-shah then executed a Mongol envoy who came to protest.
- D. The Pope sent John of Plano Carpini to convert the Mongols.

2. What did the Mongol relay stations, set up about every 20 miles along major trade routes, provide?

- A. Food, horses and lodging, first for official mail and later for all travellers, including merchants.
- B. Prisons for merchants who refused to pay heavy taxes.
- C. Temples where travellers had to follow Mongol shamanism.
- D. Army camps where every traveller had to join a unit of ten.

3. How did an ortogh, a Mongol merchant partnership, help long-distance trade?

- A. It gave each merchant a free iron safe-conduct pass from the khan.
- B. It allowed merchants to hire soldiers from the commanders of ten thousand men.
- C. It banned foreign merchants from using the roads.
- D. Merchants pooled their money and shared losses, risks and profits, and only ortogh members could get the Mongols' low-interest loans.

4. The report shows that safe roads across Eurasia were a real achievement. What gap or weakness does it point out in this system?

- A. Traders were never safe at any time during Mongol rule.
- B. By the end of the 13th century, the parts of the empire had become independent and were competing for control of the trade routes.
- C. The Mongols refused all foreign travellers whose rulers had not submitted.
- D. The relay stations were closed as soon as Ögedei became Great Khan.

THINK LIKE A DELEGATE

These questions have no single correct answer. A strong answer takes a clear position, uses at least one fact from the report and explains why that fact supports the position.

1. You represent the house of Chagatai. Chagatai is the oldest surviving son, but Chinggis Khan has chosen Ögedei. What would you argue at the kuriltai, and why?

2. You are an adviser from a conquered people, like Yelü Chucai. Should the new khan keep using terror against cities, or should cities that surrender be spared and taxed? Explain your argument.

3. Should the court keep the khan's death secret until the family gathers, or announce it at once? Explain the risks of the choice you reject.

ANSWER KEY

PART 1: THE TOPIC

1. **B.** The report calls the lack of an orderly succession system, with nothing but personal loyalty holding the empire together, "the heart of the crisis" (Part 1, 1A The Harms, "Leaving no succession system").
2. **A.** Terror helped the Mongols win quickly, but it killed the farmers, craftsmen and taxpayers the empire would later need (Part 1, 1A The Harms, "Using terror as a weapon").
3. **C.** The kuriltai joins the dying ruler's wish with the nobles' approval, which gives the new khan legitimacy (Part 1, 1B Major Solution 1, introduction).
4. **B.** The report warns that a regent with an army may become a rival and that a long delay can let quarrels grow (Part 1, 1C Major Solution 2, introduction).
5. **B.** Britannica says further splitting was inevitable, so the report marks domains as keeping peace today but planting separate states tomorrow (Part 1, 1D Major Solution 3, "Dividing the lands among four sons").
6. **D.** Yelü Chucai persuaded Ögedei to spare northern China so the Mongols could use its wealth and skills (Part 1, 1E Major Solution 4, "Sparing North China for taxes").

PART 2: THE UNITED NATIONS

1. **B.** The UN was founded in 1945, more than seven hundred years after the committee's events, so the report uses only modern parallels (Part 2, introduction).
2. **A.** The Security Council recommended admission on October 25, 1961, and the General Assembly admitted Mongolia in resolution 1630 (XVI) (Part 2, 2A Table of UN Resolutions and Instruments; 2B Mongolia at the United Nations).
3. **C.** Resolution 53/77 D welcomed Mongolia's decision to declare its territory free of nuclear weapons (Part 2, 2B Mongolia at the United Nations, "Recognising Mongolia's nuclear-free status").
4. **B.** The Council affirmed that unlawful attacks on religious sites and historic monuments may in some circumstances be war crimes (Part 2, 2C Mass Killing and the Destruction of Cities, "Protecting cultural heritage in war").
5. **A.** Resolution 76/253 declared 2026 the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists and invited the FAO to help (Part 2, 2F Herders and Grasslands Today).

PART 3: INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

1. **C.** The governor of Otrar had the caravan killed and robbed, and the shah executed the Mongol envoy who protested (Part 3, 3A Envoys, Trade Deals and the Road to War, "Killing the caravan at Otrar").
2. **A.** The stations were stocked with food, horses and lodging and became a major help to all travellers, including merchants (Part 3, 3B The Postal Relay Network, "Connecting the empire every twenty miles").
3. **D.** Ortogh members pooled money and shared losses, risks and profits, and the low-interest loans went only to members (Part 3, 3C Pax Mongolica, "Sharing risk in caravan partnerships").
4. **B.** By the end of the 13th century the parts of the empire had become independent and were competing for the trade routes (Part 3, 3C Pax Mongolica, "Travelling safely across Eurasia").

THINK LIKE A DELEGATE: WHAT A STRONG ANSWER INCLUDES

1. **House of Chagatai:** A strong answer notes that the Mongols usually followed the rule that the eldest son inherits, that Jochi is estranged from his father, and that Chagatai is the oldest surviving son who would be passed over (Part 1, 1B, "Electing by traditional custom"; Part 2, 2H). It may argue for Chagatai's claim, or it may accept Ögedei in exchange for clear promises, such as secure control of Chagatai's own domain in Central Asia (Part 1, 1D, "Granting Central Asia to Chagatai"). It explains why the choice helps prevent a war between the brothers.
2. **Terror or taxation:** A strong answer uses the evidence that massacre killed the taxpayers the empire needed and that Khorasan's irrigation channels decayed as farmers fled (Part 1, 1A). It then points to Yelü Chucai sparing North China and Ögedei's first regular tax system as proof that governing brings steady income (Part 1, 1E). A strong answer also admits the other side: traditionalists distrusted settled life and wanted grazing land (Part 1, 1E introduction; Part 2, 2H).
3. **Secrecy or openness:** A strong answer notes that the report calls the hidden funeral a legend, not confirmed fact (Part 1, 1G Lesser Solutions). It explains that secrecy could prevent revolts while the family gathers, but that every succession pulls princes and armies home, so news spreads through the relay network anyway (Part 1, 1A, "Halting the march into Europe"; Part 3, 3B). It names the risk of the rejected choice, for example revolt in the conquered cities if news leaks early, or loss of trust in the court if the secret is discovered.