NCERT SOLUTIONS

CLASS - 11th



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Subject : History

Chapter : 5

Chapter Name : Nomadic Empires

Q1 Why was trade so significant to the Mongols?

Answer. Trade was significant to the Mongols because it was the only way to keep them surviving. The place where the Mongols lived i.e the steppe lands had extreme climatic conditions which made it difficult to grow food crops. So, the Mongols traded with their neighbours.

The scant resources of the steppe lands drove Mongols and other Central Asian nomads to trade and barter with their sedentary neighbours in China. This was mutually beneficial to both parties : agricultural produce and iron utensils from China were exchanged for horses, furs and game trapped in the steppe.

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Q2 Why did Genghis Khan feel the need to fragment the Mongol tribes into new social and military groupings?

Answer. Genghis Khan fragmented the Mongol tribes into new social and military groupings to facilitate the success of his future campaigns. He had a vision to create the largest empire in the world, one had ever seen.

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Q3 How do later Mongol reflections on the yasa bring out the uneasy relationship they had with the memory of Genghis Khan.

Answer. Yasa was the code of law that Genghis Khan was supposed to promulgate at the quriltai of 1206. The yasa concerned the administrative regulations : the organisation of the hunt, the army and the postal system. By the middle of the thirteenth century the Mongols had started using the related term yasa in a more general sense to mean 'the legal code of Genghis Khan.' The yasa in all probability was a compilation of the customary traditions of the Mongol tribes but in referring to it as Genghis Khan's code of law, the Mongol people also laid claim to a 'lawgiver' like Moses and Solomon, whose authoritative code could be imposed on their subjects.

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Q4 'If history relies upon written records produced by city-based literati, nomadic societies, will always receive a hostile representation.' Would you agree with this statement? Does it explain the reason why Persian chronicles produced such inflated figures of casualties resulting from Mongol campaigns?

Answer. This statement is absolutely true because :

→ The steppe dwellers themselves usually did not produce any literature. So our knowledge of nomadic societies comes mainly from chronicles, travelogues and documents produced by city-based litterateurs.

→ These authors often produced extremely ignorant and biased reports of nomadic life. These individuals came from different backgrounds - Buddhist, Confucian, Christian, Turkish and Muslim.

→ Although not always familiar with Mongol customs, many of them produced sympathetic accounts - even eulogies- that challenged and complicated the otherwise hostile, city-based tirade against the steppe marauders.

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Q5 Keeping the nomadic element of the Mongol and Bedouin societies in mind, how in opinion, did their respective historical experiences differ? What explanations would you suggest account for these differences?

Answer. The historical experiences differed in the following ways :

→ The Mongols were the steppe dwellers of the Central Asia. Whereas, Bedouins were the Arab tribes who moved from dry to green areas (oases) of the desert in search of food and fodder for camels.

→ In the early decades of the thirteenth century the Mongols were united by Genghis Khan with a political vision that went far beyond the creation of a confederacy of Mongol tribes. Whereas, the Bedouins were I by the belief system i.e Islam which was started by Mohammed.

→They imposed yasa (code of conduct) based on their traditions. Whereas, the guiding principles Bedouins followed the holy Quran.

→ Genghis Khan believed that he had a mandate from God to rule the world. Whereas, Muhammad said himself to be the messenger (rasul) of God.

→ Genghis Khan United the Mongols to form a powerful army. Whereas, Muhammad integrated the people to form a political order known as Umma.

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Q6 How does the following account enlarge upon the character of the Pax Mongolica created by the Mongols by the middle of the thirteenth century?

The Franciscan monk, William of Rubruck, was sent by Louis IX of France …… followed by the Muslim clergy and Buddhist and Taoist monks….

Answer. The account reveals that The Franciscan monk named William of Rubruck was sent by Louis IX of France to the court of Khan Mongke. On reaching Karakoram the capital of Mongke, in 1254, he met a woman called Paquette from Lorraine (in France), she was a Nestorian Christian. She was brought here to serve one of the prince's wives. He also met a Parisian goldsmith named Guillaume Boucher. He also found out that at great court festivals the

Nestorian priests were admitted first,with their regalia, followed by the Muslim clergy and Buddhist and Taoist monks.

Thus , the account tries to highlight the relationship that was created by the middle of the thirteenth century in the peace ushered in by Mongol conquest (Pax Mongolica) trade connections matured.

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