

Iranian Folk Music

The Golden Age of Afro-Eurasian Trade

c. 500 CE - c. 1400 CE



Peripheral Empires and Pastoral Confederacies

Comments and questions about Chapter 2?

[An important chapter, but my least favorite — data overload]

Pre-write:

Are there nation-states or ethnic groups today that we consider “barbaric”?

How does barbarism correlate to trade?

Can trade serve justice on a global scale?

A View of Pre-Modern Eurasia

Altitude: 7 mi. Speed: 500 mph. Lens: Big History

Ingredients:

- vast agricultural and pastoral land masses
- increasing human populations; diverse linguistic, cultural, and political traditions
- intensifying resource extraction; agropastoralism

Goldilocks Conditions:

- favorable climate regimes
- advancing technologies (food production, communication, transport, military)
- centralization of political and economic authorities

New Complexity: a dense and tight, hemispheric web of long-distance human exchanges

Sketch for a Mural

Ever-changing contacts between nomadic and settled peoples, ranging from cooperation and union to competition and warfare

Nomads controlling steppes, using trade routes to exchange goods and extort tribute from sedentary states

Tides of imperial power and collapse altering nomadic territories and alliances

Patterns of nomadic raiding and tribute-taking disrupted by two medieval super-powers: Islamic caliphates and Mongol khanates

Steppe- and desert-pastoralists conquering and ruling agrarian empires, integrating Eurasian economic, intellectual, and spiritual systems

Change the Metaphor:

Medieval Eurasian Tapestry

Warp: Ineluctable conditions of time and space

Weft: Vicissitudes of human destinies

Dyes: Blood red, sky blue, jade green;

royal magenta, lapis cyan, saffron yellow

Tight, vivid weave of imperial scenes, alternating with faded and torn patches of vast deserts, unscalable mountains, and infinite steppe horizons

Borders stitched in Chinese, Greek, Indian, Iranian, Arabic, and Altaic scripts

Eras of Nomadic and Agrarian State Formation

300 BCE - 600 CE: Rise and Fall of Macedonian, Han, Roman, Kushan, and Sasanian empires

600 - 1200: Establishment of Muslim Caliphates —

Dar al-Islam ('House of Submission, Peace') v. *Dar al-Harb* ("House of War");

Expansion of Chinese Territory —

Tang to Song dynasties

1200 - 1500: Mongol, Timurid, and Türkic imperialism

Takeaways from Chapter 2

- Periodization of silk road history:

  Early Indo-European nomads (3000 - 300 BCE)

  Classical Silk Road (200s BCE - 200s CE)

  Dark Age (200s - 400s CE)

  Medieval Cosmopolitanism (500s - 900s CE)

  Mongol World Empire (1200s - 1300s CE)

  Enclosure of the Steppe (1500s - 1800s CE)

- **Centralization is key to large-scale trade and travel:** Both sedentary empires and nomadic confederacies provided security of routes and economic regulation.

Quick question for Dr. Millward —

Why the gap from the 10th to the 13th century?

Mahmud Ghaznavi occupies Khurasan and northern Iran (1004 CE)

Seljuk Turks conquer cities of northern Iran

Seljuk Turks occupy Baghdad

Battle of Manzikert: Seljuk sultan defeats Byzantine emperor

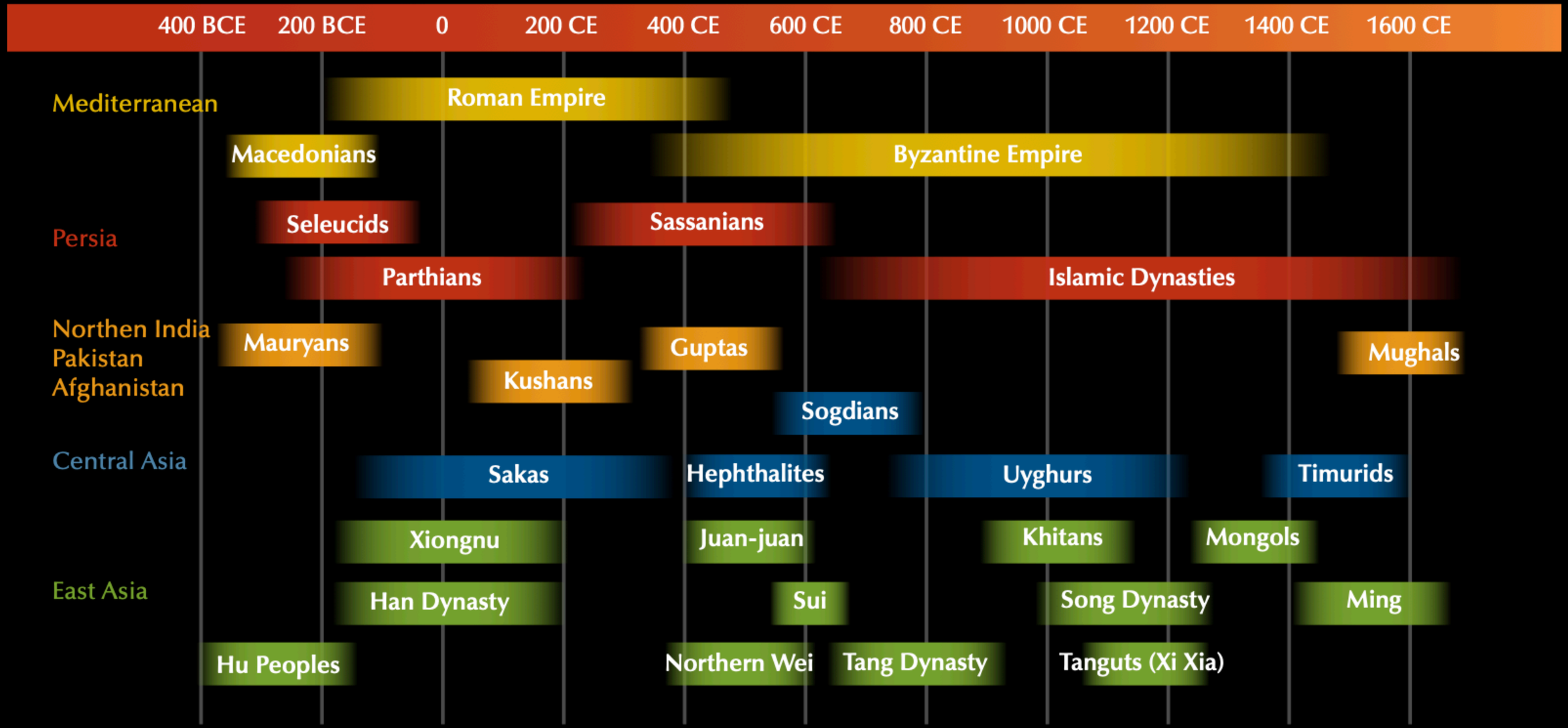
Seljuk Turks overrun Byzantine Anatolia

First Crusade

Collapse of Seljuk sultanate (1194 CE)

(I guess all this was bad for business on the trunk route….)

SILK ROAD TIMELINE



- Horse-drawn chariot warfare and hunting enable Proto-Indo-European (PIE) speakers to spread west into Europe and east into Central Asian lands occupied by non-PEI peoples
- Scythian military and economic power facilitated trade and influenced cultures from the Balkans to Western China
- Xiongnu nomads controlled a vast area from Korea to modern-day Uzbekistan. Having driven the Yuezhi far to the west, they fought the Qin and Han Dynasties for mastery of Northwest China.
- Han Emperor reaches out to the west: the mission of Zhang Qian
- Yuezhi - Kushan Empire blends nomadic, Persian, Indian, and Hellenic cultures

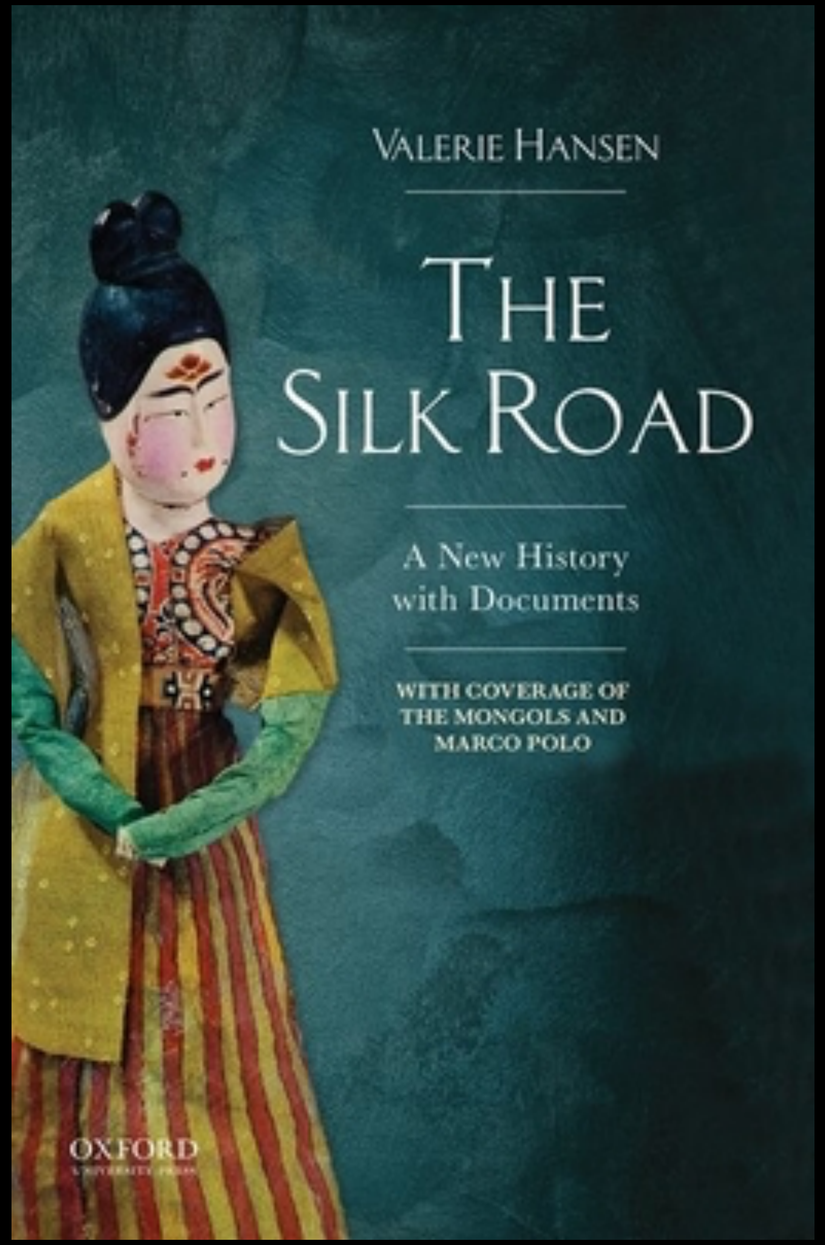
- Westward migrations, driven (in part) by Xiongnu expansion; pressure on Roman and Han Empires
- Spread of Christianity and Buddhism: literacy, translation, monumental carving, religious centers
- Fall of Kushan Empire (Hephthalites)
- Sasanid culture and trade: Afro-Indian maritime routes, overland routes: Korea to Armenia
- Altaic-speaking Türkic Khanates expand west and east, challenge Hephthalites and Tang emperors
- Prolifefation of khanates: Uighur, Qarakhanid, Ghaznavid, Seljuk, Mamluk, Ottoman, Timurid, Mughal

- Linguistic and cultural affinites among Türkic peoples stimulate trade and Afro-Eurasian integration
- Khazar Khanate controls western silk roads (Volga River- Black Sea - Caspian Sea); converts to Judaism; influenced by Byzantine culture
- Byzantine Empire develops its own silk-production industries; purple-dyed garments limited to elites
- Sui and Tang Dynasties unify China (515 - 906); significantly increase agricultural colonies: Xinjiang expands west, almost to Iran
- Tang imperial court (Chang'an): cosmopolitan; welcomes Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Manichaeans, Persians, and Indians; integrates cultures from central, southeast, and northeast Asia

- Arabs expand their territories west and east, converting conquered peoples to Islam
- Direct contact between and among Asian empires: military conflicts, intensified commercial and cultural exchanges
- Mongol world empire: unprecedented violence; Eurasian unity; expedited long-distance travel, trade, and disease transmission; and an incredible sowing of Chinggis's Y-chromosone *

* 16 million men (0.5 % of all males on earth) are genetically linked to Chinggis's clan [https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/mongolia-genghis-khan-dna]

Fasten your seatbelts: Valerie Hansen is creating some turbulence.



“**Trade was not the primary purpose of the Silk Road**, more a network of pathways than a road, in its heyday. Instead, the Silk Road changed history, largely because the people who managed to travel along part or all of the Silk Road planted their cultures like seeds of exotic species carried to distant lands. Thriving in new homes, newcomers mixed with local residents and often absorbed other groups who followed. Sites of sustained economic activity, oasis towns like Turfan, Dunhuang or Khotan, enticed still others to cross over mountains and traverse oceans of sand. While **not much of a commercial route**, the Silk Road became the planet’s most famous cultural artery for the exchange between East and West of religions, art, languages and new technologies.

“**Excavated materials** shed light on the nature of the Silk Road trade. These materials, **written on paper, silk, leather and wood**, survive only in dry locales, places like Niya, Loulan, Kucha, Turfan and Khotan in Xinjiang; Samarkand in Uzbekistan; Chang’an, Dunhuang in Gansu province; and Chang’an, the capital during the Former Han dynasty (206 BC-9 AD) and the Tang (618-907). These documents were recovered not only from tombs, but also from abandoned postal stations, shrines and homes, beneath the dry desert - the perfect environment for the preservation of documents as well as art, clothing, ancient religious texts, ossified food and human remains.”

“We use the term “Silk Road” to refer generally to the exchanges between China and places farther to the west, specifically Iran, India and, on rare occasions, Europe. **Most vigorous before the year 1000, these exchanges were often linked to Buddhism.**

“And that’s why cities of Khotan and Kashgar in Xinjiang, northwestern China, are famous for their Sunday markets, where tourists can buy locally made crafts, naan and grilled mutton on skewers. As visitors watch farmers fiercely bargaining over the price of a donkey, it’s easy to imagine Xinjiang always this way, but that's an illusion. The predominantly non-Chinese crowds in the northwest prompt a similar reaction: Surely these are the direct descendants of the earliest Silk Road settlers.

“In fact, though, a major historic break divides modern **Xinjiang** from its Silk Road past. **The Islamic conquest of the Buddhist kingdom in 1006 brought a dramatic realignment to the region**. Eventually Xinjiang’s inhabitants converted to Islam making that the principal religion in the region today. They also gradually gave up speaking Khotanese, Tocharian, Gandhari and other languages spoken during the first millennium AD for **Uighur**, the language one hears most often in the region today.”

“**Many documents, found by accident, were written by people from all social levels,** not simply the literate rich and powerful. These documents were not composed as histories. Their authors did not expect later generations to read them, yet they offer a glimpse into the past that's often refreshingly personal, factual, anecdotal, and random.

“Documents later recycled as shoes for the dead or in the arms of figurines show that **Silk Road trade was often local and small in scale.** Even the most ardent believer in a high-volume, frequent trade must concede that there is little empirical basis. Scholars offer varying interpretations of these scraps of evidence, but there's no denying that the debates concern scraps, not massive bodies, of evidence.

“**The modern discovery of the Silk Road began in 1895** when the Swedish explorer **Sven Hedin** launched his first expedition into the Taklamakan Desert in search of the source of the Khotan River. After 15 days, he discovered that he was not carrying enough water for himself and the four men with him. He did not turn back, not wanting to admit his expedition had failed. When their supply ran out, he began a desperate search, eventually locating a stream, but not before two men perished.”

“As he made his way out of the desert, **Hedin encountered a caravan of merchants and pack animals, and he purchased three horses, saddles, maize, flour, tea, utensils and boots.** This list, described in his biography, is revealing. Even at the beginning of the 20th century, almost all the goods traded in the Taklamakan were locally made necessities, not foreign imports.

“Similarly, **during the first millennium, markets offered more local goods for sale than foreign-made imports**. At one market in Turfan in 743, local officials recorded prices for 350 items, including typical Silk Road goods like ammonium chloride, used for dyeing cloth and softening leather, as well as aromatics, sugar and brass. Of course, locally grown vegetables, staples and animals, some brought over long distances, were also available.

“Despite the limited trade, cultural exchange between East and West was extensive – first between China and South Asia, and later west Asia, especially Iran. Refugees, artists, craftsmen, missionaries, robbers and envoys traveled along these routes in Central Asia. **The most influential people moving along the Silk Road were refugees**. Waves of immigrants **brought technologies from their respective homelands**, practicing those skills or introducing motifs in their new homes.”

“Frequent migrations of people fleeing war or political conflicts meant that some technologies moved east, others west. As techniques for making **glass** entered China from the Islamic world, the technology for manufacturing **paper** was transported westward. Invented in China during the 3rd century BC, paper moved out of China, first to Samarkand, arriving sometime around the year 700, and then into Europe from the Islamic portals of Sicily and Spain. Paper, the most convenient and affordable material for preserving writing, encouraged great cultural change, including the **printing revolution** in Western Europe. Of course, the Chinese developed woodblock printing much earlier than Gutenberg, starting around 700 AD.

“Cultural transfer took place as the Chinese learned from other societies, specifically India, the home of Buddhism. **Buddhist missionaries** were key translators and worked out a system for **transcribing unfamiliar terms in foreign languages, like Sanskrit**, into Chinese that remains in use today. **Chinese absorbed some 35,000 new words,** including both technical Buddhist terms and common everyday words.”

“People who spoke **different languages** often encountered one another on the Silk Road. Some had learned multiple languages since childhood. Others had to learn foreign languages as adults, a more arduous process than it is today given how few study aids were available. Surviving **phrasebooks** shed light on student identities and reasons for their studies. Used in monasteries throughout the first millennium, **Sanskrit attracted students, but so, too, did Khotanese, Chinese, and Tibetan.**

“**The most important legacy of the Silk Road is the atmosphere of tolerance fostered by rulers of small oasis kingdoms strung along the northern and southern Taklamakan.** Over the centuries these rulers welcomed refugees from foreign lands, granting them permission to practice their own faiths. Buddhism entered China, and so too did Manicheism, Zoroastrianism and the Christianity of the East. Archeological sites and the preserved artifacts offer a glimpse into this once tolerant world. **The new Silk Road is indeed far removed from the legacy of the historic network.”**

Valerie Hansen teaches Chinese history at Yale University. Her most recent book is *The Silk Road: A New History* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

Creation of Scripts for Pre-Literate Societies

Sogdians: Aramaic script < Achaemenid royal court

Kushans: Greek, Karoshthi (Aramaic, Persian, Indian), Brāhmī scripts

Göktürks: ‘Orkhon Runes’ (Old Turkic script) < Sogdian merchants

Tocharians: Northern Turkestan Brāhmī script < Buddhist monks

Kievan Rus’: Cyrillic alphabet < Greek Orthodox missionaries

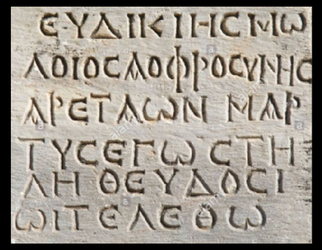
Uyghurs: Old Uyghur alphabet < Sogdian script

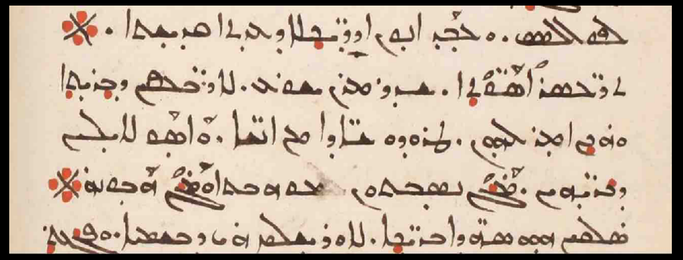
Mongolians: Mongol Bichig script < Old Uyghur alphabet

Scripts Used Along the Silk Roads: West > East

Mediterranean Basin to Mesopotamia

Latin, Greek, Syriac

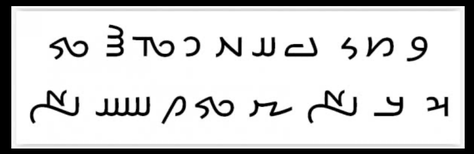


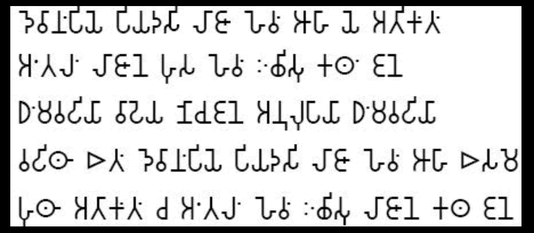


Iranian Plateau to Central Asia

Pahlavi, Sogdian, Brahmi

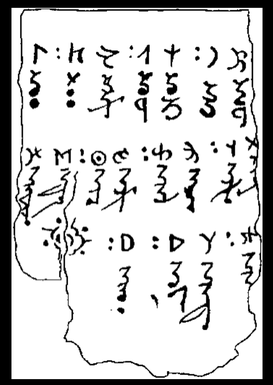


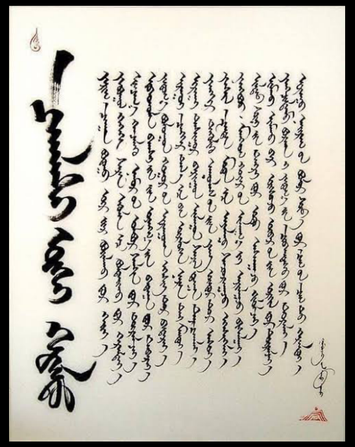




Steppes to Tarim Basin

Orkon (Old Türkic Runes), Old Uyghur, Kharosthi





East Asia

Hanzi (Chinese Characters)

字體設計



https://reconasia.csis.org/historical-atlas/

Brief Comparative Chronology: Europe / Asia

329 BCE Alexander crosses Hindu Kush

215 BCE Rome dominates the Mediterranean

27 BCE Augustus is first Roman emperor

70 CE Romans Crush Jewish revolt

Gospel of Mark composed

101 Rome reaches maximum size

296 Diocletian divides Rome E / W

376 Huns reach borders of Roman empire

441 Attila the Hun invades Roman empire

389 BCE Great Wall System begun in China

206 BCE Han dynasty of China

c. 100 BCE Buddhism into C. Asia

c. 50 CE Sanskrit prevalent in S.E. Asia

c. 60 CE Kushans expand into India

100 Paper communication in China

c. 200 Sasanians conquer Parthian empire

c. 350 Nomads introduce Buddhism to China

c. 483 Nestorians flourish in Persia

c. 400 BCE



https://worldhist.org/

322 BCE


United Kingdom
Беларусь
Deutschland
Scythian Kingdom
Україна
Қазақстан
Монгол
улс
France
Roman Republic
Tyras
Rome
Sinope
O'zbekiston
España
Türkiye
Türkmenistan
Carthage
Knossos (Dorians)
中国
Macedonian Empire
Eastern Zhou
العراق
ایران
پاکستان
الجزائر
ليبيا
Libya
مصر
Maurya Empire
السعودية
India
Mauritanie
موريتانيا
عمان
Kalinga
Văn Lang
Mali
Niger
Tchad تشاد
السودان
Hadhramaut
Việt Nam
Philippines

c. 200 BCE


Sverige
Россия
United Kingdom
Беларусь
Deutschland
Scythian Kingdom
Україна
Қазақстан
Монгол
улс
France
Roman Republic
Tyras
Rome
Sinope
Greco-Bactrian Kingdom
Carthage
Knossos (Dorians)
中国
Japan
日本
Seleucid Empire
Han
Maurya Empire
Libya
India
Nanyue
Mali
Niger
Tchad
Hadhramaut
Việt Nam
Philippines
Nigeria
South Sudan
Pandyan Empire
Leaflet | Open Street

Afro-Eurasia c. 100 CE



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Template:Continental_Asia_in_100_CE

Afro-Eurasia



c. 200 CE

https://www.facebook.com/Uyghursbookshelf/posts/eurasia-and-africa-around-200-cea-striking-snapshot-of-the-old-world-around-the-/1544587594137347/

Pax Kushana: Uncovering the Forgotten Kushan Empire



https://www.ancient-origins.net/ancient-places-asia/kushan-empire-0020245



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Huns_in_Eurasia.png



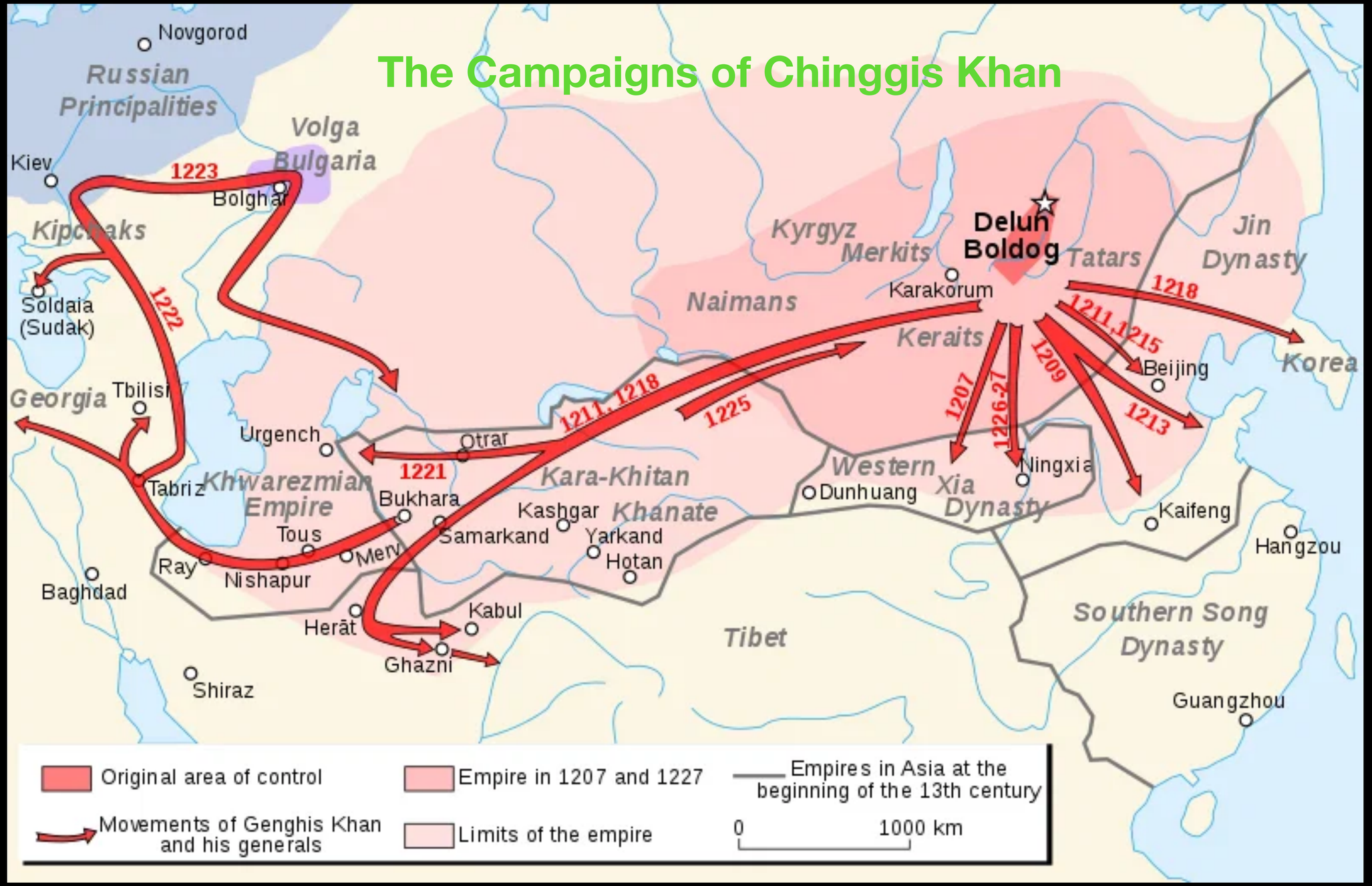
https://reconasia.csis.org/historical-atlas/


East Hemisphere, 700 AD
Created by Thomas A. Lessman
www.WorldHistoryMaps.info
Updated: 8-11-2008
Arctic Marine Mammal Hunters
Paleo - Siberian Tribes
Samoyedic Peoples
Ugrian Peoples
Finnish Peoples
Saami
Tungusic Peoples
Yakuts
Volga Bulgars
Bashkirs
Pechenegs
Oghuz Turks
Khazar Khanate
Magyars
Kimeks
Kipchaks
Kyrgyz
Kurikans
Uyghurs
Eastern Gokturk Khaganate
Tatars
Yu-chih
Shi-wei
Khitans
Balhae
Ainu
Emishi
Silla
Yamato (Japan)
Chinese Empire
(Tang Dynasty)
Tibetan (Tufan) Empire
Arab Empire (Umayyad Caliphate)
Roman Empire
Visigoth Kingdom
Frankish Kingdom
Lombards
Avars
Bulgaria
Swedes
Danes
Saxons
Berber Tribes
Saharan Nomadic Tribes
Zaghawas
Mandes
Nilotic Peoples
Northwestern Bantu Tribes
Eastern Bantu Tribes
Western Bantu Tribes
Khoisan Peoples
Cushites
Axum
Ethiopian Highland Peoples
Chalukyas
Magadha
Pallavas
Pandyas
Cera
Alupa
Vengi (E. Chalukyas)
Kalinga (E. Gangas)
Utkala
Odra
Bana
Arakan
Pyu City-States
Khmers
Chenla
Lâm Ấp (Champa)
Thaton
Langkasuka
Srivijayan Empire
Malays
Papuans
Australian Peoples
Melanesians
Polynesians
Maoris
Numbered Countries:
1. Wessex
2. Sussex
3. Essex
4. Carantanians
5. Slovenes
6. Narentonians
7. Moravians
8. Waag Basin Slavs
9. Crimean Goths
10. Tabaristan
11. Bamiyan
12. Turk-Shahi
13. Udyana
14. Hidambas
15. Harapunchai
16. Dvaravati/Lavo
Red names = Roman Empire
Blue names = Germanic Nations
Green names = Islamic Nations
Italicized names = Slavic Nations
Afro-Eurasia
c. 700 CE

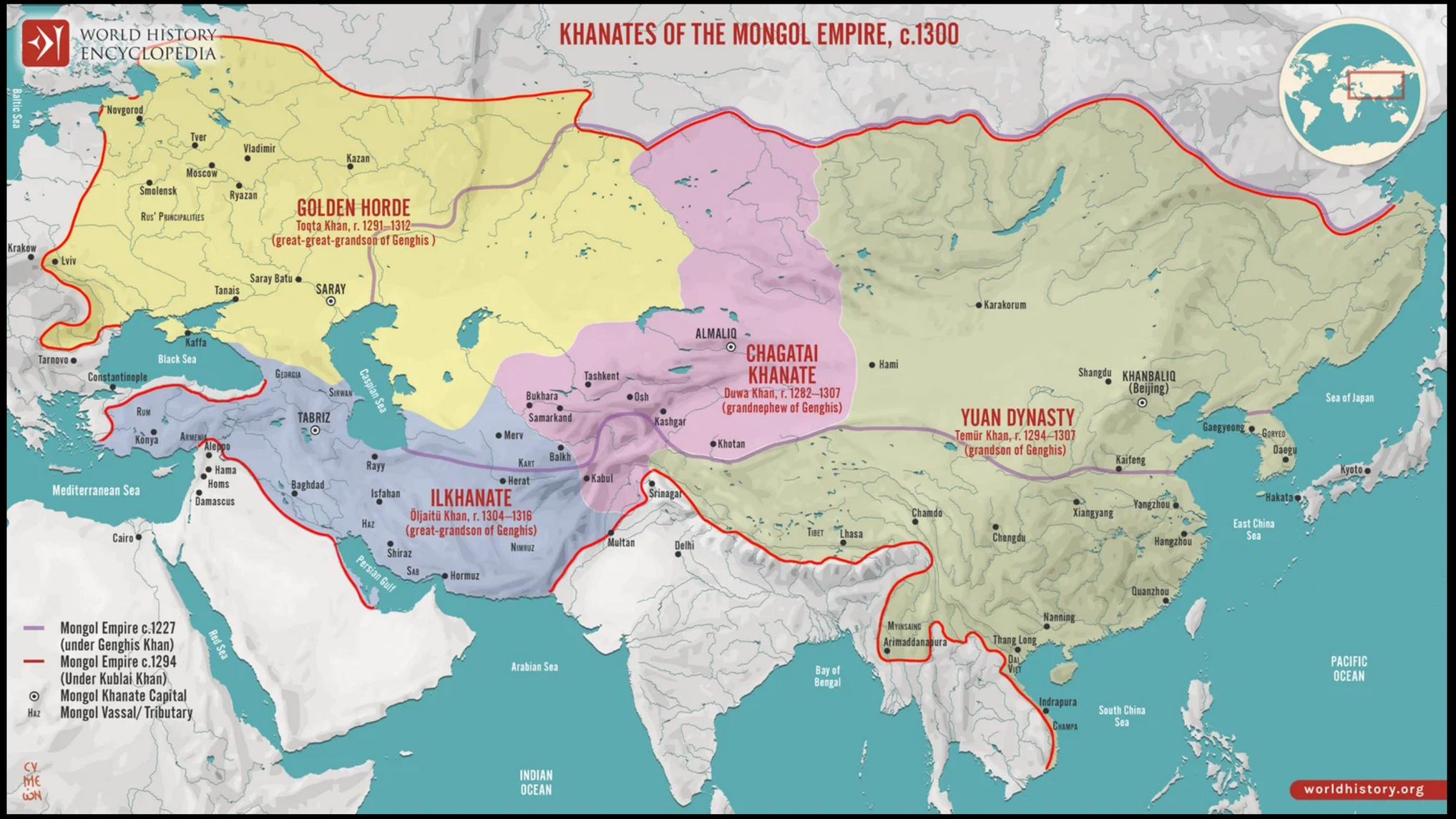


https://reconasia.csis.org/historical-atlas/

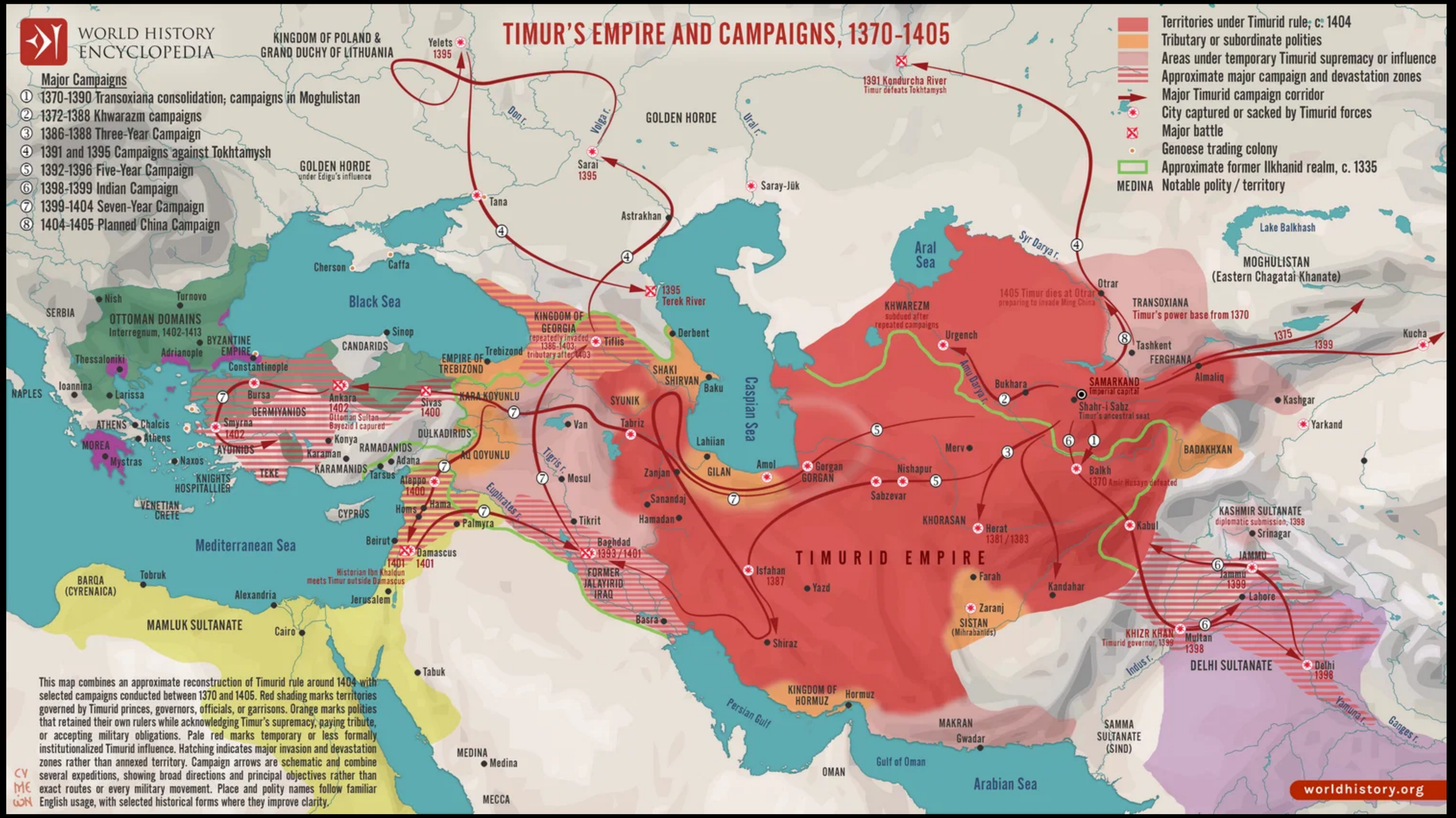
The Campaigns of Chinggis Khan



https://www.worldhistory.org/image/11221/map-of-the-campaigns-of-genghis-khan/



https://www.worldhistory.org/image/20677/map-of-the-four-khanates-of-the-mongol-empire-c-13/



https://www.worldhistory.org/image/17689/map-of-timurs-empire-and-campaigns-1370-1405/