

History: The Mongol World Empire
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The Mongol army: Military Prowess to Take a Continent

The Mongol *World* Empire is considered as such with thanks almost solely due to its military accomplishments. To have conquered all of Central Asia and Eastern Europe attests to that feat. What had been born from their nomadic society, grew within each facet of the lifestyle to train competent soldiers and even more impressive leaders without even the initial intent for warfare. The competencies needed to survive each day on the road, their hunting, gathering, and herding, all contributed to facing prey bigger than themselves, which became implicitly adaptable towards their greater imperial conquests. Furthermore, their ability on mounts would be their greatest asset towards militaristic success. Their great control throughout their ranks and the flexibility they held within their talents allowed them to become versatile toward whatever adversaries they faced.

Within Mongol society, there was little room for ‘civilians’. They were a nation built from survivors that never slowed down, and every capable person was working towards their shared goals. This seems to have granted them numbers that far surpassed anything that was reasonably sustainable by its counterpart states. This and their multitude of horses gave them extreme mobility and abundant opportunities for reconnaissance, and overall, more travelling stamina than the average army. Because they were capable of living from the land they travelled, they packed light and had extra room for their supply carts and heavier machinery. Their overall way of life had prepared them from youth to face their conquests head-on, not just as armies but as brethren. They grew together and fought together with incomparable efficiency within their ranks, communication, and strategic formation.

The Mongolian cavalry could be considered as the foremost reason for their military advancement. Every Mongol trained on horseback from the moment they were able, and over half their armies would fight from their mounts in battle. Horses were absolutely crucial for survival in the Mongolian lifestyle. Aside from being a means of transportation or a tool for battle, horses were also a necessity for sustainability. Mongols relied on their horses for much more, including milk and meat to consume, and hide and hair for their clothing and tools. Cavalry soldiers would often have more than a single mount, on an average of four to as many as ten, to switch between within their mission, to ensure stamina and speed within their arsenals. Though this sometimes became a downfall to their troops if they were unable to find the grazing resources necessary to sustain such mass herds, the value of said numbers could never be undervalued.

Among the ranks of the standard army array, the group of note was the Imperial Guard only under Chingis Khan himself. This guard was made up of the original and most faithful soldiers and was the starting point of the Mongolian ruling class. An imperial guard’s influence could surpass even that of a commander of thousands. The soldiers under said commanders had not been considered ‘employed’ until after the expansion of the Mongolian army plateaued and were thereafter salaried to keep active living sustainably without consistent plundering. Despite the lack of true hierarchy within the troops, at least compared to those they encountered, the military system thrived. This is due to their incredible communication and discipline. Average soldiers would not need constant supervision as each one could make well-educated tactical

decisions during the spur of battle. Commanders were then able to make any executive decisions with a broader view of the field.

The leadership within their armies conducted their advancements carefully with the use of tactical scouting and psychological warfare. They planned impeccably with detailed mapping, and reconnaissance, and planted seeds of fear within their enemies. The Mongols would often first offer a village the chance to submit before the threat of being pillaged. Using this strategy, if their conquests would reject submission, they would simply annihilate the towns, leaving a handful of survivors to spread the flames of terror to the surrounding areas. This could be one of the reasons we have unreliable figures in terms of army numbers, as exaggeration in rumours spread was inherent. The Mongols often played into those exaggerations to their own benefit. Using flanking strategies within their warfare allowed them to appear larger than actuality and instil uncertainty in their enemies; they were able to do this frequently when they didn't have the numbers to account for their conquests. They would even go as far as using war prisoners on their front lines to halt the enemy troops from attack. They held no shame in manipulating their adversaries' sense of reality for their own gain.

The enormous areas conquered by the Mongols shouldn't have been possible in the eyes of any surrounding army. But the sheer strategic and technical prowess they held led them to surpass all expectations. Mongolian society had been a recipe for the perfect military purely based on survival. From beginning to end, the Mongols had always been a people who prioritized understanding their environment and what it meant for them to persevere, whether that be with brute force or with their minds. With cavalry manoeuvres unmatched and the tactical abilities that each individual soldier held; the Mongol Empire was seemingly inevitable. Under Chingis Khan and his son's Khanates after him, the Mongols could capture more power than this world had ever seen since.