Trial of Genghis Khan

Witness Roles

Prosecution
Pope Innocent IV

Italy (born in Genoa)
1195-1254 CE

After receiving my education and studying canon law, I became the Canon at of the Cathedral of Parma, and was considered one of the best canonists of my time. From there I became Vice Chancellor of the Holy Roman Church, Cardinal Priest, and then was elected as the Pope. It then became my duty to ensure the well-being of the church.

For instance, I issued the papal bull *Ad Extirpanda*, which allowed the Inquisition to use torture as a means to get confessions out of heretics. Since I am the Vicar of Christ, it was not only my duty to run the church, but to intervene in secular matters as well. This means that I had to appoint official for states, as well As protect them, which is why the Mongols concerned me.

As the Mongols continued their aggression towards Europe, I thought I, being the Vicar of Christ, could make them accept my dominion and stop their killing. I sent out multiple envoys with letters asking them to become Christian and stop their aggression, but each time they sent back a letter demanding that I, and the other rulers of Europe, submit to them.

*You must say with a sincere heart: "We will be your subjects; we will give you our strength". You must in person come with your kings, all together, without exception, to render us service and pay us homage. Only then will we acknowledge your submission. And if you do not follow the order of God, and go against our orders, we will know you as our enemy.* Khan Guyuk

There was one instance where they even demanded that I come in person to the Mongol Imperial Headquarters to hear every demand of their law. Aside from their refusing to come to an agreement, they also caused much disruption. For example, when I was holding the First Council of Lyon, Mongol invasions prevented many bishops from attending.

The invasion of lands held by Christians shows that the Mongols were not tolerant people, and sadly, I was powerless to stop them!
Qutuz, Mamluk Sultan of Egypt

I was the Sultan of the Mamluk people, where the Mamluk Empire thrived in Egypt, ruled through a theocracy. As a Sultan, I am the king of an Islamic country.

Since the caliphate of the Abbasid Empire was razed and demolished, due to the horrific Mongols, Islam spread to my Empire where it continued to thrive, though my subjects, Allah’s children. Because the Abbasid Empire’s caliphate fell, the Islamic country I controlled was integral to the survival and preservation of Islam; it was essential to the continuation of Islam that I do not let my country fall to any non-Islamic foreigners.

Along with being the ruler of an Islamic country, I was the commander-in-chief of the Mamluk Army, where I was charged with the responsibility of protecting the Mamluk people and protecting Islam against violent, destructive invaders, by strategically commanding and using the Mamluk Army.

During the Battle of Ain Jalut, I was the commander of the Mamluk Army. When Baghdad, the caliphate of the Abbasid Empire, fell to the ruthless Mongols, Islam spread and remained in my region of Egypt. As the Mongols attempted to expand the Mongolian Empire west, the Mongolian Army demanded the submission, control, and subjugation of the Mamluk people. In order to preserve Islamic culture, I refused to submit to the barbarians. During the battle, the Mamluks had numerous generals who grew up near region of the battlefield and were extremely familiar with the territory and landscapes, an advantage that the foreign Mongols did not have.

At the climax of the battle, the Mamluk Army successfully surrounded all flanks the Mongol Army. However, the forceful Mongols eventually broke our left flank and gruesome fighting ensued. The Mamluk and Mongolian armies participated in violent fighting, until the Mongols retreated. Because the Mamluk people prevented the invasion of the Mongols, we prevented the expansion of the Mongolian Empire, preserved Egypt, and preserved Islam.
I was the prince of Novgorod and apart of the Kiev Empire. When the Mongols tried to take over my kingdom, I and seventeen other Kiev princes formed a coalition. Our army of 30,000 men tried to trap the Mongols from all directions, but they feigned retreat with the intention to scatter our forces. Once this was accomplished, the barbaric Mongols turned and attacked our forces with ferocity. Although we surrendered under the agreement that our people would remain safe, the Mongols still slaughtered my men. I barely escaped by cutting the boats on Dniester River. Of the eighteen princes, I was the only known survivor. Out of the 30,000 men, only a mere 10,000 survived while the Mongols suffered little casualties.

The Mongols spent years tormenting my kingdom causing spiritual, political, social, and economic distress. For twenty years raided Kiev Rus with his army of 200,000, looting and razing the cities. Kiev was destroyed. Churches and monasteries were looted, and my people were slaughtered with many being taken as slaves and prisoners. Before the Mongols, the death penalty and long-term imprisonment didn’t exist, but the Mongols introduced this. To keep the Mongols from causing devastation on society, we had to pay tributes. They cut my kingdom off of Europe, which meant we had limited influence with the Constantinople. As a result, when Europe was prospering through the renaissance, Kiev was left behind. For example, while serfdom was disappearing in Europe, we began adopting this concept, and while Europe was overflowing with intellectual findings and social fluidity, we remained traditional and stagnant.
Al-Musta’sim, Caliph of Baghdad

Baghdad, Iraq
1212-1258

I am Al-Musta’sim I lived and ruled in Baghdad (Iraq), in the 13th century. I was the last Caliphate of the Abbasid Caliphate from 1248-1258 the year in which I died. My road to the throne was due to the fact of my father death the second to last Caliphate of the Abbasids. Baghdad is the capital of Iraq and the most important and influential city in the history of Iraq.

Throughout my reign I was constantly being threatened by the Mongols who were armies for the Hulegu Khan empire grandson of Genghis Khan. The khan empire forced me to lend them troops, so they were able to have an enough man to conquer Alamut. I was fed up with these actions and was sick of being pushed around by Khan. I began to send threats thinking it would scare them off yet, they were not intimidated by me at all. They marched into my city of Baghdad and overtook me and the throne.

Although the Abbasids had failed to prepare for the invasion, I believed that Baghdad could not fall to invading forces and refused to surrender. Hulagu subsequently besieged the city, which surrendered after 12 days. During the next week, the Mongols sacked Baghdad, committing numerous atrocities and destroying the Abbasids' vast libraries, including the House of Wisdom. The House of Wisdom had held collections of historical and scientific purposes that will forever be lost!

Khan killed me by wrapping me up in a carpet and stopping me to death with horses. Hulegu went on to expand the Ilkhanate to more of the Middle East.
As a Chinese Confucian Scholar, I perform everyday tasks for the people of China. I work for the emperor and serve as his advisor. I come from a noble family and received a proper education. Before attaining my position, I had to take the civil service examine in order to prove my knowledge. After studying the beliefs of Confucianism, I try guide the general public’s thoughts and actions in a way that aligns with the morals of Confucius. Even though I was never taught any sort of manual labor, such as farming or trading, I work by teaching my morals and ethical values to the landowners, craftsmen, and merchants. A main part of my job is ensuring that what our country is doing as a whole, represents our ethical values that are strongly based off of Confucianism.

Genghis Khan destroyed the Eastern world with his barbaric ways. There is an order than our universe follows and he ruined it by concerning most of Asia and Europe. People in a place of power should portray the moral qualities that reflect well upon Confucian beliefs. In China, we have a civil service exam for this reason, to find those who are most fit to lead. Genghis Khan never proved his worth by taking this test. Through his other actions we can see that he has a poor ethical value as he is more concerned about taking over the world we know, rather than attempting to perfect himself. In addition, he has either murdered or enslaved all of China’s fine scholars so that we can’t guide our people any longer. Not only is he not letting us perfect ourselves as scholars, but he also isn’t letting us perform our duty to our country by advising others.

Under the rule of Genghis Khan, my teachings were shunned. They were not allowed to be taught or practiced. My position that was high in honor and government standings was taken from me. None of us were allowed to have say in anything and were not respected. The government was taken over by his Mongols, and they made the rules in China. Confucianism was no longer taught and they taught their own followings and teachings to our people. We were not allowed to learn. They destroyed our culture and were distrustful of the Chinese influences. They brought destructive influence to our land.
As a Chinese soldier in the 13th and 14th century I’ve experienced many battles against people who want to conquer Chinese land. In my military, we have created many new technologies. Such as the first navy in all of China, fire lances, and rockets. These innovations were key to protect my land from armies that wouldn’t accept our tributes. I rely on gunpowder weapons to fend off attacks by enemies. I travel from location to location with my fellow soldiers. I own very little possessions since I’m always on the road defending China. For most of my life I have tried to hold off central Asian Mongol armies to prevent the fall of land to them.

As a Chinese soldier, I’ve experienced many battles against people who want to conquer Chinese land. Normally we would end up victorious since we had advanced technologies, but then Genghis Khan and his army invaded China. My fellow soldiers and I did our best to hold off the Mongol armies but, it became too much. At one battle, three thousand Song boats came up the Han river and destroyed fifty of our boats and 2,000 Chinese died. The Mongols were more powerful than we were and had better tactics. Countless friends of mine passed away in battles and many of my own family members were slaughtered. On March 19, 1279 the Mongols defeated the last of the Song Dynasty forces at the naval Battle of Yamen. We lost to the Mongol armies and our dynasty that we loved so much crumbled. We had a new ruler. Our military slowly fell apart and soon we had no way to defend ourselves and completely fell to Genghis Kahn.

I wake up every morning under the control of the Mongols. I used to be a member of the Chinese army but then I was forcefully recruited by Mongols and used to fight against my own people. We get no paid and the last guy that deserted was found and executed. We are treated awfully. We are not fed enough. We sleep on the ground in tightly packed tents. Mongols have no care for our well-being and see us as expendable in battle. I was separated from my family in forced to go off with the Mongols.

Under the rule of Genghis Khan, the Mongols forcibly took me and other soldiers from out of our households. In one of every seven households someone was forcibly taken and forced to leave their family behind. Hundreds of thousands to even millions of people and their family had their life destroyed. He made us fight for the Mongols in poor living conditions and for no pay. Genghis Khan separated me from my family and left them in poverty. He made me fight my own people in battle against my will. Genghis Khan destroyed my life.
Muhammad II, sultan of Khwarazm

Khwarazm (Central Asia/ Iran)
1169-1220

I was the shah of Khwarazm, and had control over a large portion of Central Asia. Constant infighting in my nation made me wary of others. Rumors had spread quickly about Genghis Khan, and I had reason to believe that he may have wanted to invade my empire. He had done some ruthless things in order to grow the Mongol empire to the size it was, so I couldn’t have been wrong to be wary of him. I was in a precarious position. I think that Genghis Khan overreacted and that his sacking of my empire was unjust.

I was Shah of the Khwarizmi empire. Genghis Khan sent an envoy to me looking to trade, but after hearing rumors that the Mongols were ruthless and evil, I thought he was going to invade my empire. I told one of my governors to openly accuse the envoy of spying and steal all the goods they wanted to trade. Genghis Khan responded by sending another envoy, asking for the prisoners back. I executed the second envoy, and then the first as well. Genghis Khan retaliated by sending 150,000 men into my empire, annihilating my cities and countless historical records. This was the bloodiest massacre the world had seen before that point.

As the ruler of the Khwarazm kingdom, these barbarians called the Mongols have no right to infiltrate our territory when we have done nothing to disturb the peace of Central Asia! As soon as people under Genghis Khan moved into our local towns disturbing the peace and stability of our people and economy, they were posing a threat to destroy us based on the past history of the Mongol military. So instinctively, I detained the assailants and seized their goods that they were planning to destroy our economy with. Khan then proceeded to send a brigade of military personnel and tried to persuade me to execute my own governor as a cover up to save his reputation! Khan then proceeded to send 200,000 troops from the Mongol military to destroy everything in my empire just to exercise his power.

With Khan’s intense infiltration of the Khwarazm empire, it caused extreme fear from our people, the massive destruction of the empire’s previously excellent economy, and the killing of millions of our own people. This rebellious and juvenile act was very unnecessary, because he was the one who started this minor conflict, but when I attempted to cool the situation with peacefulness, he then responded with extreme violence and actions. For these reasons, I have had a very negative experience with Genghis Khan as he destroyed an entire empire, and ruined an opportunity for commerce and trade within Central Asia.
I became the eighth Regent of Japan when I turned 18, and was similar to my father in the way that I lead the country. I was ruthless and powerful. I practiced Zen Buddhism with my men who were part of Japan’s samurai in order to defeat our fear of the Mongols, and defeat the Mongols. By doing this, I helped spread the practice of Zen Buddhism across Japan.

Genghis Khan’s grandson, Kublai Khan, was the Mongol leader during my time as Regent of Japan. After conquering Goryeo (Korea) the Kublai focused on Japan. At the beginning of my rule, he sent messengers to me with demands to submit to Mongol control. I sent them back to him right away with no answer. Over the next few years, Kublai Khan sent more messengers to me, and I sent them back to him without an answer each time. This led the Mongols to invade Japan in 1274. The Mongol invasions are an early example of gunpowder warfare. One of the most notable technological innovations during the war was the use of explosive bombs. The bombs are known in Chinese as "thunder crash bombs" and were fired from catapults, inflicting damage on enemy soldiers. Their attack was not a success. They were defeated by Japanese warriors, and were stopped by a typhoon. The following year, a total of ten messengers were sent to me by Kublai Khan. Instead of sending them back, I had them executed. Angered by my actions, Kublai Khan launched another Mongol attack on Japan in 1281, which was stopped by the Japanese samurai and another typhoon. This led to beliefs of the Kamikaze and Japan’s infallibility.

"Cherished by the Mandate of Heaven, the Great Mongol emperor sends this letter to the king of Japan. The sovereigns of small countries, sharing borders with each other, have for a long time been concerned to communicate with each other and become friendly. Especially since my ancestor governed at heaven's command, innumerable countries from afar disputed our power and slighted our virtue. Goryeo rendered thanks for my ceasefire and for restoring their land and people when I ascended the throne. Our relation is feudatory like a father and son. We think you already know this. Goryeo is my eastern tributary. Japan was allied with Goryeo and sometimes with China since the founding of your country; however, Japan has never dispatched ambassadors since my ascending the throne. We are afraid that the Kingdom is yet to know this. Hence we dispatched a mission with our letter particularly expressing our wishes. Enter into friendly relations with each other from now on. We think all countries belong to one family. How are we in the right, unless we comprehend this? Nobody would wish to resort to arms.” – Letter from Kublai Khan to Hojo Tokimune

"The only reason a warrior is alive is to fight, and the only reason a warrior fights is to win." – Hōjō Tokimune
9. Balkh Shopkeeper

Northern Afghanistan
1200s

I live in the city of Balkh, which is situated on the Balkab river. Balkh was along a major route on the Silk Road. Since I traded with many travelers along the Silk Road, it greatly influenced trade. Balkh was famous for its great places of worship, and many came from around the world to see the great city. Balkh was home to Persian, Turk, Jew, and Indian traders. Some called my city the “mother of cities” because of my impact in trade. I sold goods like grapes, oranges, water lilies, sugar cane, camels, and melons. I was able to trade these goods because of the many caravans that passed through Balkh.

How did Genghis Khan and/or his descendants impact a Balkh Shopkeeper’s life? In 1220, Genghis Khan and his army raided Balkh. The soldiers destroyed homes, shops, and monuments in the city. When Genghis Khan raided the city, he killed almost everyone that lived there. After the raid, the city never truly recovered. Balkh, along with its shopkeepers, declined in importance after the raid. The Silk Road’s paths no longer passed through Balkh, leading to economic instability and ultimately the fall of the city.

"a noble city and a great seat of learning." – Marco Polo describing Balkh before the conquest

"It is completely dilapidated and uninhabited, but anyone seeing it would think it to be inhabited because of the solidity of its construction (for it was a vast and important city), and its mosques and colleges preserve their outward appearance even now, with the inscriptions on their buildings incised with lapis-blue paints. – Ibn Battuta, 1333