The Byzantine Empire

MOVING ON FROM THE FALL OF ROME
SSWH4 - Analyze impact of the Byzantine and Mongol empires.

a. Describe the relationship between the Roman and Byzantine Empires, include: the importance of Justinian and Empress Theodora.

b. Analyze the impact Byzantium had on Kiev, Moscow, and the Russian Empire.

c. Explain the Great Schism (East-West Schism) of 1054 CE/AD.

d. Explain the decline of Byzantium and the impact of the fall of Constantinople in 1453 CE/AD.

e. Describe the impact of the Mongols on Russia, China, and the Middle East, include: the role of Chinggis (Genghis) Khan in developing the Mongol Empire.
The Early Byzantine

- During the final stages of the Roman Empire, Diocletian enacted reforms.

- These reforms laid the foundation for a successor to the Roman Empire.

- Diocletian felt the Empire had grown too large so he split into East, Byzantine Empire, & West.
  - East – Greek speaking
  - Byzantium - capital
  - West – Latin speaking
The Early Byzantine

- Constantine ruled following Diocletian
  - Reunited the Empire
  - Made Byzantium capital of unified Empire
  - Renamed the capital Constantinople
  - The move of the capital seen as the beginning of the new Empire
The Byzantine Empire

- The Roman Empire (27 BCE to 476 CE) & Byzantine Empires (about 395 to 1453) intersected

- Shared some culture but Byzantine developed into its own unique Empire with its own culture

- Some Roman traditions still remained
  - Roman law
  - Roman government structure (Senate)
The Byzantine Empire

- **Justinian** took over as emperor following Constantine (527 CE)
  - Wanted to reclaim lands lost to the Germanic tribes
    - North Africa
    - Western Europe
  - Successfully regained the majority of the territory lost
    - Hold on lands in Western Europe tenuous
    - Changed hands 6 times over 16 years
The Byzantine Empire

- Justinian instituted major legal reforms
  - Organized, simplified, & standardized Roman law
  - Became known as Justinian’s Code
    - regulated almost all aspects of Byzantine life for the next 900 years
    - served as the foundation of many law codes of Western Europe after the fall of the Empire
The Byzantine Empire

- Justinian also completed massive infrastructure projects that transformed Constantinople into a vibrant & thriving metropolis

- 14 mile long city wall
- public baths
- aqueducts
- law courts
- schools
- hospitals
- churches
Justinian’s most significant architectural legacy was the construction of the Hagia Sophia.

Symbolized partnership between church & state
The Byzantine Empire

- Justianian’s wife, Theodora, was very influential as well
  - Born to a circus family
  - Law had changed in order for Justinian to marry below his status
- She met with foreign envoys, passed laws, built churches, & served as emperor’s backbone during the violent Nika Riots in 532 CE
  - During the Riots, Theodora is credited with convincing Justinian not to abandon the throne
Byzantine Culture

- Greek was the official language
- Christianity was the state religion
  - Eastern Orthodox Church
- Influenced by a variety of cultures including Persia & Islamic cultures
The Impact of the Byzantine Empire on Early Russia
Early Interactions With Russia

- Political unity came to Russia in about 862
  - Scandinavian Vikings, called Varangians, unified Slavic peoples
  - Varangians founded the city of Novgorod
- In 880, the opportunity for trade with Byzantium (Byzantine Empire) arose
  - led the Varangian princes to move the capital south to Kiev
  - Traded along the Dnieper River
  - Led to regular cultural & economic contact between the two
Early Interactions With Russia

- Prince Vladimir (980 to 1015) decided to seek out a new faith for his people
  - Sent out envoys to research different faiths
  - Envoys visited Orthodox Christians of the Byzantine Empire
    - returned with great stories of monumental architecture
    - made them feel that God must dwell among the Byzantines
  - Vladimir ordered mass baptism of his people in 989
    - Mass conversion ushered in a period of close cultural & economic contacts
    - Also led to adoption of Cyrillic alphabet
      - Used by Byzantine missionaries converting Slavic people
Decline of Kiev

- Kiev’s power declined after the Mongol invasion
  - led to rise of Moscow as the new center of political power
  - corresponded to the decline & collapse of the Byzantine Empire in late 1400s
  - The Russian ruler Ivan III used this to his political advantage by announcing publicly that Russia would be the “Third Rome” after reclaiming Russia from Mongols
  - Ivan III claimed the title “Czar” a slavicization of the title “Caesar”
  - This claim became an enduring form of political legitimacy in the Russian Empire.
The Great Schism
THE SPLIT OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Christians in Western Europe became the Roman Catholic Church

Christians in Eastern Europe became the Eastern Orthodox Church
The Great Schism

Roman Catholic Church
- Headquartered in Rome
- Pope - the leader
- Use of idols
  - Statues
  - Paintings
  - etc

Eastern Orthodox Church
- Headquartered in Constantinople
- Patriarch of Constantinople - the leader (Emperor)
- No use of idols
The Great Schism

- Both sides felt they were the single leader of a unified church
- Lack of communication & distance between the two capitals kept the peace for about 300 years
- In 730, differences over leadership led to conflict
  - Byzantine Emperor Leo III banned the use of icons because
  - He believed the use of icons was idolatry
  - Riots ensued & clergy rebelled
  - Pope Leo II (Roman Catholic) backed use of icons
The Great Schism

- 751, Rome invaded & requested help from Byzantine Empire
  - Byzantine refused
- Pope received help from Franks to stop invasion
  - As thanks, Pope named Charlemagne “Holy Roman Emperor”
  - Byzantine Emperor took offense
- In 1054, the controversy led to excommunication of the Patriarch of Constantinople by Pope Leo IX
  - formally severed ties between the Christian Churches of the east & west
  - two independent churches, the Eastern Orthodox Church & Roman Catholic Church
The Fall of the Byzantine Empire
Decline of the Byzantine Empire

- The fall of the Byzantine Empire began with a very slow decline
  - began in the 6th century after the Bubonic Plague struck
  - population gradually shifted away from urban areas
  - population shift led to less centralized leadership & inability to resist growing Muslim power in the region
- During the 7th century, Muslim armies took considerable territory
  - Territories taken: Alexandria, Antioch & Jerusalem
- While dealing with Arab Muslim threat, Byzantines also dealt with attacks from Slavs & Turks
Decline of the Byzantine Empire

- 11th century - Turkic armies united under Seljuk leadership presented a serious threat to Byzantine power & inspired the Western European Crusades

- While the declared target of the majority of Western European Crusades was the Muslim rulers of Jerusalem, the Fourth Crusade in 1204, sacked & destroyed much of the capital of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople

- The reasons for this Christian Crusade against Christians included a desperate need for financing & resentment over the Schism of 1054

- Crusaders sack of Constantinople in 1204 served as the death blow to the empire
Fall of Constantinople

- For the next 200 years, empire struggled with the loss of territory to a new regional power, the Ottoman Turks, civil war, & another outbreak of the plague
- This culminated in the final fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453
- The fall of Constantinople to the Turks opened the door to Turkic Muslim expansion in the Middle East, North Africa and Southeastern Europe
- Turks now controlled Constantinople, now called Istanbul & Bosporus Straits, an essential location for the transport of goods and people between Asia and Europe
- This strategic advantage, along with the military innovations of the Ottoman Sultans allowed the growth of a new powerful Muslim empire
- Additionally, with Constantinople under the control of Muslims, the center of Christian Orthodoxy shifted north to Russia
Rise of the Mongols

- Mongols were a nomadic pastoral society with a homeland on the vast Central Asian steppe
- Mongols began as a loose confederation of tribes
- Mongols became united under Ghengis Khan (Chinggis Khan) in 1206
Rise of the Mongols

- Mongols fighting forces were virtually unstoppable once united
  - Incorporated military technologies
    - Composite bow from Central Asia
      - could shoot one-third farther than any of their rivals
    - Catapult from China
  - Lived a nomadic lifestyle
    - Traveled with virtually all they owned including food & supplies
    - Able to travel long distances
    - Able to fight for extended periods of time
    - expert horsemen
Rise of the Mongols

- Ghengis Khan developed centralized command structure & advanced military tactics that capitalized on the greater mobility.
- Mongol success was rapid.
  - Within 20 years or so, by 1227, the year of Ghengis Khan’s death, the Mongols controlled northern China & most of Central Asia.
- After his death, his sons including Ögödei, continued the conquests.
- By 1279 the Mongol Empire included Russia, China, the Middle East and Central Asia.
The Mongol Empire: Russia

When the Mongols invaded Russia, it was ruled by a loosely unified group of princes with most of the power concentrated in the city of Kiev:

- The Princes did not unify under the threat.
- Princes in the south put up most resistance but were ultimately defeated.
- Princes in the north cooperated & Russian power shifted to Novgorod & Moscow.

  - Princes became agents of the Mongol Khanate of the Golden Horde that now ruled Russia.
  - The Mongol rulers of Russia were mostly concerned with extracting tribute & profiting from trade along the Silk Road so they left much of the administration of the Khanate to Muscovite princes who served as local administrators, tax collectors & census takers.
The Mongol Empire: Russia

- The Mongol tax burden was severe & led to an economic downturn
  - made worse by introduction of paper money to the economy by the Mongol overlords
- To reinforce the power of the Mongols & their agents, Russian princes, the leaders of the Golden Horde provided generous support for the Russian Orthodox Church
- The support of the Russian princes secured Orthodoxy as the dominant faith of Russia
  - also served to centralize political power in the hands of Muscovite princes, which had been divided in the Russian state
- With the centralized power in Moscow, much of the Russian population moved north to Moscow
The Mongol Empire: China

- The Mongols of China thoroughly integrated themselves into Chinese society
- Led to a short lived but impactful dynasty, the Yuan
- The Mongols of China adopted many Chinese cultural traditions including Confucianism & Buddhism, but left a unique cultural imprint as well
  - The best example of this is Mandarin, the dominant spoken language of Northern China is a mix of Mongolian & Chinese
  - Mongol power acted to finally unify China into the state it is today, breaking down old cultural differences & laying the foundations for the modern Chinese Nation-State
The Mongol Empire: China

- Beijing became the capital under the Yuan dynasty & construction on the Forbidden City began

- The Mongols also facilitated intellectual & economic diversification
  - Under Mongol rule the government was largely controlled by Mongol overlords aided by a bureaucracy of Central Asian & Middle Eastern administrators
  - This brought foreign expertise into China aiding scientific advances
  - The exclusion of Chinese nobility from their traditional role as bureaucrats forced many families to become merchants.
  - This facilitated the development of corporate business arrangements & urbanization
The Mongol Empire: China

- The decline of the Mongols in China was caused by harsh, repressive taxes which was made worse by the introduction paper many, like other parts of the Empire.
The Mongol Empire: Middle East

- Mongols of the Il Khan that dominated the Middle East preferred to rule from afar, similar to The Golden Horde of Russia.
- The Il Khan still had a significant cultural impact on the region.
- Mongolian armies tended to assume power by killing much of the local nobility:
  - included the execution of the last Abbasid Caliph.
  - A major blow to Muslim power in the region.
The Mongol Empire: Middle East

- Mongol rule placed Baghdad at the heart of an empire spanning almost all of Asia
  - intellectuals from all over Asia concentrated in the city which led to major developments in the disciplines of history, painting, algebra, trigonometry, & astronomy that led to advances in calendars, predicting eclipses, & navigation
  - over taxation made worse by the introduction of paper money led to economic decline
The Mongol Empire: Silk Road

- All of the regions controlled by the Mongols benefited from a massive expansion in Eurasian trade along the Silk Road.
- Facilitated the diffusion of profoundly important technologies like gunpowder, paper, & movable type.
- Facilitated the spread of religions like Christianity, Islam & Buddhism.
- Vastly improved interregional understanding by facilitating the travels of people like Marco Polo & Ibn Battuta.
- Profoundly transformed the demography of Afro-Eurasia with the spread of the Bubonic Plague.