

Paths to the East

People on the move could not help becoming discoverers. But, for the most part, they did not find what they went to seek; and they found much they had not imagined.

-Daniel Boorstin, p 119

- Christian Missions vs Muslim Jihad (pp 122-123)

Both religions had the “Great Commission” from their leaders (Jesus and Muhammad) - to spread their religions across the globe

THE SMALL SCALE: “The missions reached out to the stranger even in unknown lands. Outposts of the frontier. Returning crusaders brought back tales of Oriental splendor, along with tastes for damasks, silks, perfumes, and spices which gave Venice the exotic charm still visible.”

THE BIG SCALE: Jihad was the religious duty to spread Islam by waging war, was long the primary authorized way of extending the empire of the Prophet.

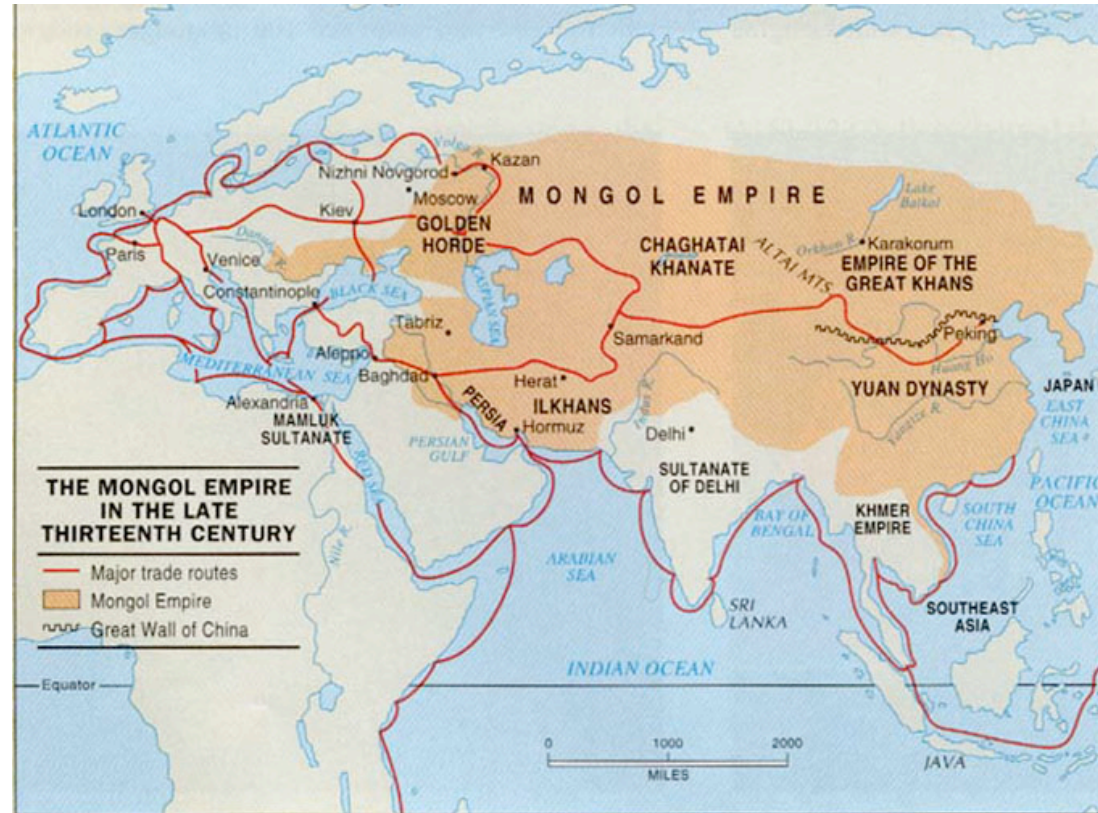
“While Muslim swordmen conquered for the faith, Christian missionaries were willing to explore tentatively on the frontiers of empire, hoping to bring the good news to even a few more souls.”

The Silk Road and the Iron Curtain (p 125)



As it extends westwards from the ancient commercial centers of China, the overland, intercontinental Silk Road divides into the northern and southern routes

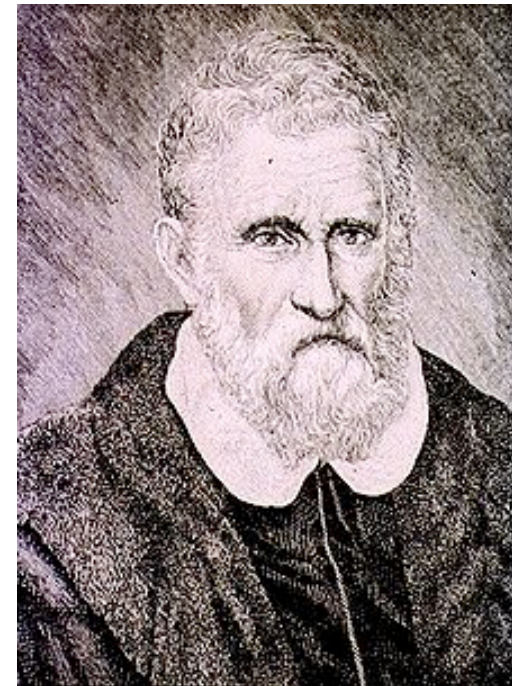
“For a single century, from AD 1250 to 1350, the curtain was lifted, and there was direct human contact between Europe and China.” (p 125; pp 126-127)



The Mongols extended their hegemony over a major part of the Eurasian landmass, from the Danube to the Pacific for the better part of two centuries.

Mongal Empire

Travels of Marco Polo - The Discovery of Asia (pp 134-135)



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The Curtain Comes Back Down (pp 141- 142)

Rebellion under Yuan-Chang (1328-1398 AD)

Messages in cookies- massacre the Mongols on the full moon in August 1368.



Chinese moon cake- the fall of the Mongols!