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	<h1>Foundations of Mongol Military Philosophy: Environment, Belief Systems, Strategic Organization, and Psychological Warfare from Genghis Khan to Hulegu Khan</h1>		
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<h3>Abstract</h3> <p>This study examines the military philosophy of the Mongols as one of the most influential and transformative military models in world history. It seeks to analyze the intellectual, environmental, and organizational foundations that enabled the Mongol army to achieve unprecedented military success across vast geographical spaces during the Middle Ages. The article begins by exploring the origins of the Mongols, their nomadic environment, belief systems, and social structure, highlighting how the harsh steppe ecology shaped the psychological resilience, mobility, and discipline of the Mongol warrior. The study further investigates the strategic principles underpinning Mongol military thought, including centralized command, merit-based leadership, rigorous training, and the codification of military life through the Yassa system. Special attention is given to the Mongols' sophisticated use of intelligence gathering, espionage networks, propaganda, and psychological warfare, which played a decisive role in weakening enemy resistance prior to direct confrontation. By analyzing key historical campaigns—such as the conquest of China, the destruction of the Khwarazmian Empire under Genghis Khan, and the overthrow of the Abbasid Caliphate during the era of Hulegu Khan—the article demonstrates how Mongol military philosophy combined adaptability, speed, terror tactics, and strategic planning into a coherent and highly effective system of warfare. The study concludes that the Mongol military experience represents not merely a phenomenon of brute force, but a complex, rational, and systematic philosophy of war that reshaped medieval military history and influenced later military doctrines.</p>			
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Introduction:

Throughout history, armies have been the backbone of power for all entities that have governed the world. They represent authority, statehood, influence, and dominance from ancient times to the present day. Consequently, states have continuously worked on developing their military tools, war systems, and combat techniques for deterrence,

expanding control, and asserting influence. Among the prominent armies mentioned in history is the Mongol army of the Middle Ages, under the leadership of Genghis Khan. Their empire stretched from the far reaches of China in the east to the borders of Siberia in the west, encompassing vast parts of the ancient world. To be able to overthrow the Islamic Caliphate represented by the Abbasid state in the year 656 AH and they did conquer the Islamic world in 656 AH (1256 AD), marking the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate. Who were the Mongols? What are the foundations of their military philosophy? And to what extent did their military and combat philosophy succeed in achieving military victories? We will discuss this issue and its components and attempt to answer it through this article.

1. The Mongols: Origins, Environment, Beliefs

1.1 Origins:

The ancient history of the Mongols is shrouded in mystery, with various studies, despite their scientific value, failing to provide sufficient evidence to satisfy researchers' curiosity. Consequently, studies in both the East and the West are rife with contradictions regarding their origins and beliefs. Often, strangeness and exaggeration dominate these narratives, to the extent that some lean towards mythology, departing from logic and historical accuracy. Therefore, some historians have likened the ancient history of the Mongols to the pre-Islamic Arab history, which relied more on oral tradition than writing and documentation (Historians point to many myths and oral narratives in the pre-Islamic Arab history, which relied on storytelling and oral tradition. Similarly, ancient Mongol history also relied on storytelling, tradition, and some drawings) (Aldouri, 2000).

It is challenging for researchers to pinpoint the historical origins of the Mongols and distinguish them from the Tartars and Turks. Ancient Chinese writings show significant blending between the nomadic peoples represented by various Mongolian tribes and the civilized Chinese people beyond the Great Wall of China (Jarad, 1987, p. 10). Ancient Chinese documents of an official nature refer to these peoples collectively as "Yuan." However, the peoples who integrated with them were called "Tartars." And this is something we do not find in Islamic sources, that do not clearly differentiate in naming these peoples, often using various appellations that generally refer to one people (Ibn al-Athir uses the term "Tatars" in his book "Al-Kamil" to refer to all Mongol tribes, although the Tatars are a branch of the Mongols. On the other hand, Al-Ramzi considers the Mongols, Tatars, and Turks as one people.) (al-Daqqaq, 2003, p. 333) as they do not distinguish between Mongols and Tartars. This mixing of peoples has led some to consider them as one entity (Abduh Qasim, 1638).

This is confirmed by the words of the historian Al-Dhahabi (Al-Dhahabi trans. Hassan Ismail, 1991, p. 175) in his account of the unifier of the Mongol tribes and the founder of their state, Genghis Khan (Genghis Khan or Temujin, the leader of the Mongols and the unifier of their tribes, was born in 1155 AD. He was credited with establishing the Mongol Empire, which extended from the far reaches of China to the borders of Siberia. His name in history is associated with brutality and legend. He played the greatest role in unifying the Mongol tribes and established the Yasa or Yassa system, a set of social and military regulations followed by the Mongols, which served as the Mongols' constitution. For more information) (Assadullah Safa, 1988), where he states: "Genghis Khan, the tyrant of the Tartars and their first king, devastated the lands and annihilated the people, with no mention of the Tartars before him (Al-Dhahabi trans. Hassan Ismail, 1991, p. 176)." Perhaps the Historian Al-Dhahabi claimed evidence to support this distinction in the previous writings as those of Ibn Khalkhan and Ibn Athir. Along the same lines, Al-Ramzi states: "The Mongols, Turks, and Tartars are of the same origin (Assadullah Safa, 1988, p. 67)". From these examples, it can be inferred that Islamic sources do not clearly define the differences between the components of the Mongolian peoples. As for the Persian historical works, they devoted considerable attention to writing about the Mongols. Notable among these, though not exclusively, is the book *Tārīkh-i-Jahānkushāy* ("Conqueror of the World") by its author 'Aṭā'Allāh al-Juvaynī. (One of the prominent historians who wrote about Mongol history in Persian was Al-Juwaynī, who died in 681 AH (1283 AD)) (Hamdi, 1953, p. 22), who wrote about the Mongols during the period he spent in the Mongol court, concluding his book with events in the year 681 AH (1283 AD) (Abdul Aziz bin Fadlullah, known as Wusaf al-Khudrah, continued recording events until 728 AH (1327 AD)). Rashid al-Din Fadlallah al-Hamdani (Rashid al-Din Fadlallah al-Hamdani, the great Mongol historian, was born in Hamadan in 645 AH (1248 AD). He was a historian and physician who played a significant role in the Mongol court. One of the most famous works about the Ilkhanid Mongols is his book "Jami' al-Tawarikh" (Compendium of Chronicles)). continued the writing journey about the Mongols through the long period he spent in the Ilkhanate court (The title given to rulers of Iran after Hulagu since the time of Ilkhan, which is a compound Turkish word composed of "Ayl" and "Khan," meaning the subordinate Khan, i.e., a ruler of one of the provinces in the state who follows the Khan al-Azam (Great Khan) in Qaraqorum), through his famous work "Jami' al-Tawarikh," providing a somewhat clear depiction of the political and military evolution of the Mongols. Additionally, the Iranian historian Abbas Eqbal wrote about them in his book "The History of Iran After Islam," stating: "Until the emergence of Genghis Khan, this people had no fame in history or impact." (al-Asadi, 1925, p. 346)

The Mongolian tribes lived scattered in various regions until they unified under Genghis Khan (al-Asadi, 1925, p. 347). The most famous of these tribes is the Kayat tribe of Genghis Khan, a smaller Mongolian tribe that played a major role

in uniting the Mongols, situated in the upper reaches of the Amur River to the Qaraqorum Mountains (The Black Sand Mountain Range, also known as Qaraqorum, is one of the mountain ranges of the Himalayas, meaning "black sand" in Turkish. The name gave rise to the capital of the Mongols, Karakorum, which Genghis Khan built and decorated with various treasures brought through military campaigns) (Fahmi, 1981, p. 7). Another tribe, the Oirat tribe (It is one of the Mongol tribes, numerous in number, residing in the area between the Onon River and Lake Baikal) (Fahmi, 1981, p. 13), remained between the Onon River (One of the major rivers in Asia, stretching through Russia and Mongolia for 818 km. The Oirat tribes settled around it) (Fahmi, 1981, p. 13) and Lake Baikal (Also known as Lake Baikal, it is located in southern Siberia, Russia, and is one of the largest and oldest freshwater lakes in the world. Mongol tribes would flock to it during warm periods for rest, water, and grass. For more information about the geography of the region, its rivers, mountains) (W. Levison Ki trans. Bashar Francis, 1954, pp. 476-532), numerous in number and adhering to pagan beliefs. The Naiman tribes (Turkish tribes with a Mongolian character adopted Nestorian Christianity after their contact and mixing with the Uyghur tribes, which are considered among the civilized Mongolian tribes) (Fahmi, 1981, p. 11) were Turkish tribes that lived between the Orkhon River and the Irtysh River, embracing Christianity in the Nestorian denomination (Nestorians: Named after Nestorius of the Eastern Church, their influence reached China and Mongolia through the Silk Road, which is considered a vital passage and a lifeline through which religions and cultures passed. Many Mongolian tribes embraced the Nestorian Christian denomination, including the Naiman and the Kerait), influenced by their neighbors, the Uyghurs, and were among the most civilized Mongolian tribes (Fahmi, 1981, p. 15). In the eastern interior oases near the Gobi Desert and south of Lake Baikal up to the Great Wall of China, the Kereyit tribes lived, Christian tribes since the 10th century AD. On the Selenga River, the Merkit tribes settled, inclined towards turmoil and disturbances. The Tatar tribes, being the most numerous, were known for their strength and dominance, as mentioned by Abdul Salam Abdul Aziz, in addition to Turkish tribes such as the Kyrgyz and Uyghurs, among others (Fahmi, 1981, p. 16). Generally, Mongolian tribes spread across various regions of Central Asia up to the Great Wall of China.

1.2) Environment:

The main habitat of the Mongols is the geographical area located in Central Asia between the Syr Darya (Known as the Darya River, it originates from the northern parts of the Tian Shan Mountains, flowing eastward until it meets the Qaradarya River coming from Fergana, forming a watercourse that traverses Fergana from west to east) (Lesterng, pp. 476-485) and the Amu Darya rivers (The river, which Arabs call "Jihoon," and which Greeks and Armenians refer to as "Oxus," is a renowned river in the region of Turkestan. It originates from the Pamir Mountains and terminates at the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan) (Lesterng, pp. 476-485), extending to the mountainous borders of China from the north. This geographical region includes the Mongolian Plateau and the mountain ranges formed by the Tianshan and Altai Mountains, with vast barren plains interspersed between them until the Gobi Desert. It is characterized by a surface covered by a thick layer of extremely hard gravel, which has kept the region away from maritime influences, resulting in high temperatures in summer and low temperatures in winter. The region has a continental climate, with a wide temperature range between winter and summer, with temperatures exceeding 37 degrees Celsius in summer and dropping to -42 degrees Celsius in winter, along with a significant temperature difference between day and night. The predominant vegetation in the area consists of steppe grasses. As for its inhabitants, they were predominantly nomadic, engaging in pastoralism along the riverbanks when the weather improves to seek grass and practicing the hobby of hunting. This harsh environment contributed to preparing the Mongolian individual to face all risks, engage in horsemanship and hunting. Hence, the Mongolian people are characterized by endurance and patience, traits reflected in the Mongolian soldier during invasions (al-Ta'i, 2019, p. 16).

1.3) Beliefs:

As we noted earlier, the Mongol tribes were divided in terms of religious beliefs, between paganism and Christianity. Yet the Mongolian religion did not become clear. Here, we mention what some historians have written about Mongolian beliefs. Ibn al-Athir wrote about Mongolian religion, stating: "Despite this, they prostrate to the sun when it rises and do not forbid anything, eating whatever dead animals they find. (al-Daqqaq, 2003, p. 401)" On the other hand, the historian Qazaz wrote about their religion as follows: "The official religion of the Mongols was Shamanism (al-Qazzaz, 1970, p. 62)," which is a mixture of paganism and Buddhism, involving the worship of natural phenomena, especially the sun, with its adherents characterized by strict obedience to priests. Arnold wrote, "Shamanism was the ancient religion of the Mongols, where they worshipped the spirits of their ancestors (al, 1970, p. 21)." Al-Areeni, in his writings about Mongolian religion, stated: "According to Shamanistic beliefs, the Mongols worshipped anything that surpassed their understanding and everything that frightened them and struck terror in their hearts. Thus, they had gods in mountains, trees, the sun, the moon, thunder, and lightning." (al-Arini, 1986, p. 43) Genghis Khan, who terrified the world with his conquering armies, managed to unify these scattered Mongolian tribes across Central Asia under one banner and unified leadership, despite differences in origins and beliefs.

2. Military Philosophy of the Mongols:

The readiness for war and conquest has been a defining characteristic of warriors throughout history. Consequently, the psychological and material preparation of the army has always been a key determinant of success in any battle. This was exemplified by the Mongols on the ground, as their armies remained in a state of constant vigilance, relying on a variety of military methods and tools, both material—such as equipping the army with arms and gear—and psychological, including propaganda and psychological warfare.

2.1) Preparation and Equipment:

The harsh nature of the environment played a significant role in endowing the Mongol individual with the qualities of a formidable warrior. The Mongols used hunting grounds as primary spaces for preparation and for cultivating their warrior traits. Hunting expeditions, which were typically carried out at specific times, provided opportunities to train the fighters. Additionally, the harsh environment played a role, as hunting expeditions, usually conducted at specific times, provided an opportunity to train the warrior. Mongol leaders ensured the success of these expeditions and rarely deviated from them without compelling reasons. Thus, the Mongolian warrior was ready for battle, and the hunting grounds served as a battlefield (al-Sayyad, 1980, p. 45). AlSayad quoting from the Mongol historian Juwayni, Mongols were skilled hunters, and these expeditions, which were their favorite and beloved pastime, also served as a means of preparing themselves (al-Sayyad, 1980, p. 46).

Professor Muhammad Al-Sawi states that Mongol hunting maneuvers were similar to modern military maneuvers aimed at ensuring the fighter's full readiness (Al-Sawi, 2012, p. 39). Genghis Khan worked on the philosophy of preparing the army for battle, as did his successors like Möngke Khan (Mengu Khan 1208 CE/1259 CE: Grandson of Genghis Khan from his younger son, the fourth of the Mongol Khans who ruled over the Ilkhanate. One of the major achievements during his reign was the overthrow of the Abbasid Caliphate, after he prepared a large campaign against it led by his brother Hulagu Khan. After his death, his brother Kublai Khan ruled the Ilkhanate). As soon as he ascended the throne, He began arranging the affairs of the kingdom, looking forward to subjugating neighboring regions. He sent his brother Hulegu Khan to subjugate Persia and Iraq. Before doing so, he began preparing the army for this campaign by securing the road from Qaraqorum to Iraq, ensuring it was ready and safe to prevent any disruptions. Hence, the Mongol army reached Persia and Iraq without significant resistance, except for some minor skirmishes (Al-Sawi, 2012, p. 39).

2.2) Propaganda and Psychological Warfare:

Propaganda is one of the most important weapons of psychological warfare and the most dangerous. Its goal is to influence the opponent without using weapons by highlighting factors of victory, preparation, and success to impact the opponent's morale. Genghis Khan and his successors acted according to this plan, as evidenced by the message he sent to the Sultan of the Khwarazmian Empire. This is also evident in his message to the Muslim kings, inviting them to obedience and ordering them to destroy their cities and walls. He says at the beginning of his message: "From the vicegerent of the Lord of Heaven, the ruler of the East and West, the Khan (et, 2006, p. 162)..." This message contained a lot of propaganda about power and strong hints to instill fear in the opponent's psyche.

Similar propaganda about power and fear-mongering can be seen in the message sent by Hulegu Khan to the Abbasid Caliph Al-Musta'sim in 1258 CE where he wrote to him: "Indeed, the Eternal God has elevated Genghis Khan and bestowed upon him dominion over the face of the earth from east to west. So whoever walks with us, obeys us, and remains steadfast... shall retain his wealth, his women, his children, and whoever contemplates discord and dissent shall enjoy none of that..." (al-Hamdani, 1983, p. 54)

Such messages and others carried many propaganda cues, aimed at discouraging the opponent's morale and instilling terror in the psyche of enemy armies. In reality, this was the most important tool of victory because the collapse of a fighter's morale makes them surrender without engaging in battle. There are many historical examples that confirm this (It was said to Imam Ali, may God honor his face and be pleased with him, "How did you manage to defeat your enemies and eliminate all who faced you?" He replied, "I and himself were upon it." This means that the psychological state of the individual makes him submit, and so it is with armies. Do not expect a psychologically defeated leader to achieve victory) (Al-Qarawi, 2002, p. 2321).

2-3) Instilling Terror:

Killing and instilling terror in the psyche of the enemy were the most important factors for Mongol success. Mass killing, indiscriminate targeting of all ages and genders, and the practice of torture were closely associated with the Mongols and their history. These methods were devastating and crippling to resistance. Historians who witnessed those painful events in Muslim history wrote about how terror had a significant impact on the defeat of Muslims, despite their large numbers of soldiers. There are many examples, but we'll mention what was documented by contemporary historian Ibn al-Athir about the city of Samarkand, which had more than fifty thousand soldiers (al-Daqqaq, 2003, p. 333). However, their panic and fear forced the city's residents to fight the Mongols. Lacking experience and proper preparation, they failed to repel them, and the city fell into their hands after its gates were opened to the Mongol army, which wreaked havoc and destruction (One of the important books written about the conflict between the Mongols and the Khwarazmian state is Ahmad al-Nasawi's book, in which he details the events of the conflict between the Mongols and the Khwarazmian state) (Hamdi, 1953). Thus, psychological warfare became a means of destroying everyone

(Noufel, 1979, p. 29). Psychological warfare is a highly effective and impactful weapon in battle, contributing significantly to quickly gaining control of the battlefield with minimal losses. It targets the enemy's morale, distracting their focus and shattering their morale.

Psychological warfare is not only used on the military battlefield but has become multi-purpose. Its goal is to undermine the opponent's confidence in their abilities. It targets the spiritual morale of the opponent. It's widely acknowledged that psychological factors can lead individuals or groups to success or failure in situations requiring courage, steadfastness, and sacrifice. The Mongols understood the importance of weakening the morale of their enemies. Ibn al-Athir expressed this when describing what happened to Muslims in both Samarkand and Bukhara in 1220 CE, considering it one of the most significant events since the time of Adam. He wrote about the horror of those events, saying: "For several years, I refrained from mentioning the incident out of sheer astonishment and aversion to its mention. I would promote one man and denounce another. Who could find it easy to pen an elegy for Islam and Muslims..." (al-Daqqaq, 2003, p. 324). Such events made many Muslims, especially scholars and intellectuals, surrender to their fate, while others surrendered due to fear and terror.

In the letter from Mongke Khan to his brother Hulegu Khan, who was preparing for his campaign against the Abbasid Caliphate, there's a keenness to boost the morale of Hulegu Khan and the Mongol army. There's a golden rule in military doctrine that says a defeated commander cannot achieve victory (The leader is the key to success, as Marshal Montgomery says: "Therefore, a good leader cannot control the events surrounding him. However, if these events deprive him of his control and balance, he will subsequently lose the confidence). The content of the letter confirms strength and victory: "Today, you are at the head of a great army, with countless forces. You must march from Turan to Iran barefoot" (al-Hamdani, 1983, p. 52). Another passage adds: "By the great power of God, you will open the enemy's kingdoms until you have numerous estates and hunting grounds. (al-Hamdani, 1983, p. 52) " These examples demonstrate many tools of psychological warfare. In addition to messages of support, Mongke Khan held a grand celebration in Qaraqorum to raise the morale of the invading armies towards Islamic lands, making them feel powerful and proud.

Hulegu Khan implemented the policy of his predecessors upon entering Baghdad, where he massacred its people. Not even the monks and Christians who sought refuge in the Church of the Martyrs were spared by Hulegu Khan's orders and the Nestorian Patriarch Michael VIII Palaiologos. The latter played a significant role in inciting Hulegu Khan against Muslims in general and the people of Baghdad in particular. Especially since the Islamic-Crusader conflict within the Mongol court had escalated after the Armenians, who were Christian like Hulegu Khan's wife and mother, served faithfully (Murāfihist, p. 80).

As for Sultan Yusuf al-Ayyubi, the ruler of Damascus, when he saw the situation, he hastened to send his son laden with gifts to Hulegu Khan, expressing loyalty and obedience. However, despite this, Hulegu Khan sent a message to al-Nasir Yusuf al-Ayyubi with his son containing many threats and warnings after he heard that some of the soldiers had defected to him. He wrote in it saying, "Answer, the king of the simple-minded, and do not say that my fortresses are obstacles and my armies are fighters, for we have been informed that some of the troops have sought refuge with you, fleeing..." (Al-Dhahabi trans. Hassan Ismail, 1991, p. 272).

Sultan al-Ayyubi initially attempted to encourage people to fight, but as soon as the Mongol armies arrived, terror spread among the princes and leaders, especially after the fall of Aleppo. After his family went to Egypt, the companions of the princes and some of the leaders fled, leaving the city of Damascus at the mercy of the Mongol armies to do what they did in it and in other Islamic cities. Thus, the Muslim army was defeated after being seized by terror, and victory was achieved for the Mongols without engaging in battle.

The implanting of agents and spies:

This method is one of the most important ways to understand the capabilities and characteristics of the enemy. Therefore, the Mongols worked on spreading spies and agents in Islamic countries. The first conflict between the Mongols and the Muslims was due to the incident of the traders or the famous "Atarar (Atararis considered the key to the region of Transoxiana. Its events marked the beginning of the conflict between the Mongols and the Khwarazmian state after the merchants sent by Genghis Khan were killed. Sultan Muhammad Alaaddin Shah of Khwarazm considered them spies disguised as merchants. This incident ignited Genghis Khan's dream of eradicating the Islamic world. The feminist historian holds Atarar's governor responsible for what happened due to his greed and avarice. This incident, also known as the Atarar Incident, led to the outbreak of conflict between the Mongols and the Khwarazmians) (AfafSabri, 2009, p. 195) (Hamdi, 1953, p. 66)." While the Khwarazmian Sultan Muhammad Ala ad-Din considered them spies and agents, Genghis Khan insisted that they were traders. This incident was the first clash between the Mongols and the Muslims. Also, Hulegu Khan recruited agents, and one of the most famous of them was the Persian astronomer Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (Nasir al-Din Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, known as al-Tusi, is one of the most famous astronomers in the Islamic world in general, and in Persia in particular. He was born in Tus on the 11th of Jumada al-Awwal, 597 AH (8th of February, 1201 CE). He was a prominent politician and astronomer whose fame spread during the reign of the Mongol Khan Hulagu Khan. He played a significant role in the capture of the fortified Ismaili strongholds after betraying their governor, Khwar Shah. He also played an active role in the campaign against

Baghdad, which motivated Hulagu Khan to undertake this step. He had a large observatory known as the Maragha Observatory, which was one of the most important astronomical observatories in the Islamic world. Brockelmann mentioned several of his works in his book "History of Arabic Literature." Al-Tusi passed away on the 8th of Dhu al-Hijjah, 672 AH (26th of June, 1284 CE). He lived during the time of the Juwayni brothers (al-Asadi M. T., 1664), who was close to him. The latter played a prominent role in the fall of the fortified Ismaili castles, after al-Tusi deceived their ruler Khur Shah, who surrendered the impregnable Ismaili castles, which his ancestors had ruled for centuries. Without al-Tusi's collaboration, Hulegu Khan would not have been able to capture them. The fall of the impregnable Ismaili castles paved the way for the Mongol hordes to make the capital of the caliphate their target after eliminating the most significant opposing and resisting forces. Moreover, historical sources mention that al-Tusi embellished Hulegu Khan's invasion of Baghdad after Hulegu Khan hesitated a little (al-Amin, 1997, p. 208).

Spreading misinformation (Propaganda):

Misinformation or information warfare is one of the oldest methods used in human conflicts and is among the tools of psychological warfare. Among its victims in ancient times was the famous Greek philosopher Socrates, who was rumored to incite young people and call them to revolt against Athens, and this rumor led to his death. In its simplest definition, misinformation is false or misleading information, or information that contains some truth, depending on the goals desired to be achieved, as it focuses on exaggeration, alarm, exaggeration, and distortion. It aims to confuse the opponent so that he loses the ability to focus and make a response based on accurate information. This is what the Mongols did. Historians have mentioned some of their methods of frightening and intimidating opponents, confusing resistance, and even exploiting many writers and scholars to conduct a promotional campaign for them, whether intentionally or unintentionally (Mahdi, 2005, p. 71).

Spreading misinformation contributed to demoralizing the Muslims, although they were often more numerous and in fortified castles. However, the terror that seized them made them surrender without any reaction (al-Zaghloul, 2008, p. 264). Ibn al-Athir mentioned some details of these conditions, especially the state of humiliation and disgrace that befell the Muslims, where he says, "A Mongol man entered a path among the Muslims with a hundred men, killing them one after the other until he finished them off. No one raised a sword against him, and a Mongol woman entered a house of Muslims in the guise of a man and killed everyone in the house except one man, whom she found when she realized he was a woman..." (al-Daqqaq, 2003, p. 364). Many examples like this led to the collapse of morale, the disappearance of the desire to fight, and the Muslims became between fleeing, terrified, and frightened, surrendering to their fate. Good preparation for the army, propaganda, recruiting agents, spreading misinformation among the enemy ranks, and intimidating the opponent were the most important elements that helped the Mongol army establish itself as a major force. That legacy remains to this day, describing it as one of the most potent armies in human history, embodying their military philosophy throughout history.

3- The Effects of Mongol Military Policy

Through their military methods primarily based on terror and sowing death everywhere, the Mongols were able to achieve military results, including the ascension of Genghis Khan to the throne of the unified Mongol tribes. Afterward, Genghis Khan looked towards expanding at the expense of China after subjugating most of the hostile tribes, especially the Merkits and the Naiman (Fahmi, 1981, p. 13).

Genghis Khan's military ambitions did not stop there; he looked towards the Islamic world after his state's borders reached the boundaries of the Khwarazmian state (Nafi Tawfiq, 1978, pp. 103-106). Although both sides initially used diplomacy and conciliation, it did not last long after the incident of the killing of the merchants (Historical narratives recall that some Mongols disguised themselves as merchants and entered the territory of the Khwarazmian state, which its sultan considered to be spies disguised as traders to gather information. He ordered their execution and sent someone to inform Genghis Khan, who became extremely angry and began preparing to overthrow the Khwarazmian state. Historians differ on the true reasons behind this incident, but the incident of the merchants, also known as the Atarar Incident, resulted in the shedding of Muslim blood) (Al-Dhahabi trans. Hassan Ismail, 1991, p. 401) (al-Arnaut, 1986, p. 118), which Genghis Khan saw as a direct assault on his authority. He decided to invade the Islamic world, unleashing terror, killings, and propaganda wars that struck fear into the Muslims for what happened in Bukhara and Samarkand (Ibn al-Athir wrote in his book *Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh* about the events of 616 AH and 617 AH, expressing his disgust and reluctance to mention the brutality of what happened: "I refrained from mentioning this incident for several years, considering it shocking and abhorrent. I am an old man, and some matters I present early and others late. Who would find it easy to write about the lamentation of Islam and the Muslims, and who would consider it trivial? Oh, if only my mother had not given birth to me..." (al-Daqqaq, 2003, p. 399).

The Mongol military methods did not change after Genghis Khan. His descendants followed the same military approach, especially his grandson Hulegu Khan, who adopted policies of planting spies and recruiting agents, using threatening and intimidating messages, practicing terror, annihilation, and killing. This was evident through the large military campaign that began with the fall of the Fortress of Alamut (A fortified castle belonging to the Assassins sect, a faction of the Ismaili group. Its fall into the hands of Hulagu was a crucial key to the collapse of the Abbasid Caliphate) (al-Amin, 1997, p. 210), and ended with the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate in 656 AH, 1258 CE.

Conclusion:

There is no doubt that the military philosophy adopted by the Mongols had a profound impact on the military successes achieved under the leadership of Genghis Khan and his successors. While preparation and logistical organization form the foundation of any battle, psychological warfare—relying on propaganda, rumor, and instilling terror in the enemy—proved to be the most effective method of undermining opponents, causing them to lose confidence and fall prey to both themselves and their adversaries. This was the strategy employed by Genghis Khan, as many armies facing the Mongols collapsed before even entering the battlefield, regardless of their size. These tactics were clearly reflected in the military triumphs of the Mongols, from their campaigns against the formidable forces of China, to their victories over the powerful Khwarazmian state, and ultimately to their entry into Baghdad and the overthrow of the Abbasid Caliphate in 656 AH (1258 CE).

Ethical Considerations

This study is based exclusively on historical sources, archival materials, and published academic literature. It does not involve human participants, personal data, or experimental procedures. The research adheres to accepted ethical standards in historical scholarship, including accurate citation of sources, respect for intellectual property, and objective interpretation of historical narratives without distortion or ideological bias.

Author Contributions

Dr. Belkhos Derradji contributed to the conceptualization of the study, historical analysis, interpretation of primary and secondary sources, and drafting of the manuscript.

Prof. Boubakeur Larbi contributed to the methodological framework, critical revision of historical arguments, contextual analysis, and overall scholarly supervision.

Both authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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