**What Legacy Did the Mongols Leave?**

**Death?**

**Death:** The Mongols caused it on a large scale. In battle, their powerful bows caused heavy enemy casualties. Mass slaughter of defeated enemy soldiers and civilians was used as a policy of terror in order to:

Decrease the enemy’s will to fight.

Encourage cities to surrender without fighting to avoid long sieges, which the Mongol army could not afford because it needed to keep moving to find grazing land for its horses.

Avoid the risk of leaving enemies behind that might be capable of leading a resistance.

Reduce the size of the occupying troops needing to be left behind.

The total death toll directly caused by the Mongols during the period of their conquests, spanning nearly two centuries, may have been several million. This includes the deaths by hunger and disease that were results of Mongol military operations and rule.

**But**:

More urban populations were spared than were massacred. Often spared were artisans, leaders of all religions, scribes, scholars, merchants, young women, and often officers, nobles, and administrators.

By the time of Mongke’s rule (Chinggis Khan’s grandson), the Great Khan insisted that destruction be limited to a minimum and civilians be left alone. To show he was serious, he had a senior Mongol commander of 10,000 publicly executed for killing a Persian civilian.

Kublai Khan’s revision of the Chinese law code reduced the number of offenses that carried the death penalty to half what it had been under the previous dynasties.

National Center for History in the Schools at UCLA. "Landscape Teaching Unit 5.4 Mongol Empire Builders." *World History for Us All.* San Diego State University, n.d. Web. 19 June 2014.