

"Battle of the Kalka: The Mongol Invasion of Russia"

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Abstract

The Mongol invasion of Rus was the most destructive force in medieval Russia. The coming of the Golden Horde's control over Russia would forever alter its history, setting Russia years behind the western world with which it had caught up to just previous to the invasion. It is recognized that the complete invasion which led to total control occurred throughout the years 1237-41, but the actual invasion of Rus started in the year 1223 with the Battle of the Kalka River. Here the Princes of Rus were given a choice to ally themselves with the Mongols in the destruction of their common enemy, the Cumans, or the unite with the Cumans and drive back the advancing Mongols. Unfortunately, the Princes of Rus chose the latter of the two and allied themselves with the Cumans, which in turn led to their defeat by the Mongols. The goal of the paper is two fold, the first part assesses the battle to try to understand how a superior number forces could lose the battle and the second is to bring to light the importance of the battle by speculating as to what could have happened if the Battle had never been fought. This paper asks what

might have happened had History chosen a different path; what would have been the difference for the Rus in the latter invasions by Batu Khan.