

**Course:** LSU101E(GD2-HKII-2223)59CTTT.1 - World History

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## **FROM SILK TO SILICON - BRIEF REPORT**

### **BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF THE BOOK**

It is not simple to harness globalization for prosperity, convenience or security, nor is it possible to articulate such aspirations in a few hundred pages. Jeffrey E. Garten, an American economist, former government and professor at the Yale School of Management, examines the possibilities and tactics of globalization by focusing on 10 individuals who broke through traditional barriers and helped to connect the world. Throughout the short history from Genghis Khan to Andrew Grove, *From Silk to Silicon* is an inspiring reminder that by pursuing opportunities in globalization and new technology, people can make a difference, if not for the world then for their own families and communities.

### **FIRST 5 CHAPTERS**

#### **Chapter I: Genghis Khan - The Accidental Empire Builder (1162 - 1227)**

Genghis Khan (1162 - 1227), born in the times of a highly-fragmented Central Asia, who appeared as a charismatic and visionary leader, founded the Mongol Empire by uniting the Mongol tribes. This later became one of the largest empires in history. He soon assumed leadership of the Borjigin at the age of 13 after his father's death and immediately worked to establish alliances with other Mongol tribes.

Genghis Khan and his generals were renowned for their military prowess and strategic thinking which are still emulated up to present. During his lifetime, Genghis Khan encouraged trade along the Silk Road, stimulating economic growth and cultural exchange. Along with that, his leadership style, ideals of unity, discipline and meritocracy joined hands to leave a lasting impact on Mongol culture and society. His empire also embraced diplomatic relations and human rights, which are still relevant nowadays.

#### **Chapter II: Prince Henry - The Explorer Who Made a Science of Discovery (1394 – 1460)**

Prince Henry (1394 - 1460), the 3rd son in his family, came from Portugal - a country that highly appreciated chivalry and heroism. He started his journey by conquering Ceuta, which had a strategic geographical position for trade between Morocco and Europe and had full control of the country.

He soon turned to the Atlantic. Through Madeira, Azores, Cape Bojador, he continued to send ships farther down the African coast, either acquiring new trade ties or entering fierce battles with African tribes. Prince Henry was the 1st European trader to buy or conscript slaves directly from tribes, establishing the 1st seaborne operation of slave export.

After his death, Fernão Gomes continued his exploration while Bartolomeu Dias rounded the last point of Africa, opening a clear path to India.

### **Chapter III: Robert Clive - The Rouge who Captured India for the British Empire (1725 - 1774)**

In the Age of Enlightenment, Robert Clive (1725 - 1774), an Englishman working for the East Indian Company facilitating trade between Britain and India, believed in British superiority.

He solidified British control over large portions of India with his talent in military and political through the victory of many battles, allowing his company to expand its influence and simultaneously, built alliances with local Indian rulers. Clive gained access to valuable resources, became the governor of Bengal and laid the foundation for the British colonial rule through reforms of the governance structure and expansion of the infrastructure. His legacies also consisted of the Dual System of Administration, the exploitation of India and misuse of power.

### **Chapter IV: Mayer Amschel Rothschild - The Godfather of Global Banking (1744 - 1812)**

This chapter discusses the life of Mayer Amschel Rothschild, who grew up in the impoverished and cramped Jewish ghetto of 18th-century Frankfurt and became the most powerful banker in the world, through his ability to grasp the opportunity in the trade and banking system.

Mayer was appointed as the occasional buying agent for Prince William, the ruler of Hanau-Münzenberg, which later created a reputation for him in the war bond trade, working with numerous sides in the political landscape. This also laid a solid foundation for their activities in underwriting military engagements, refinancing debts, and supporting newly independent nations and major industries. He and his five sons developed the most powerful bank in the world, the House of Rothschild, ultimately establishing a true international bank with the capacity to make reliable interest payments in local currencies from their bank branches across the continent. They were also a pioneer in facilitating international finance, especially a bond market to transfer funds across borders with low risks.

### **Chapter V: Cyrus Field - The Tycoon Who Wired the Atlantic (1819 - 1892)**

Cyrus West Field (1819 - 1892) was an American businessman and entrepreneur who played a significant role in the development of the transatlantic telegraph cable. With a passion for communication and technology, he envisioned a transatlantic cable to connect North America and Europe, whose communication took weeks by ship at the time. After the first failed attempts, finally in 1866, the third attempt to lay the cable succeeded, spanning a distance of approximately 2500 miles across the Atlantic Ocean, and the first telegraph message was sent.

The successful establishment of the transatlantic cable by Cyrus Field enabled near-instantaneous transmission of messages and had a profound impact on various sectors, including trade, diplomacy, and news dissemination. It also paved the way for further advancements in global telecommunications and the development of undersea cables, connecting continents and transforming the world into a more interconnected and accessible place.

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## **From Silk to Silicon**

### **1. John D. Rockefeller**

John D. Rockefeller has become the driving force of the world oil industry with his extensive exploration, drilling, and distribution activities. From the very beginning, the oil business was wild, attracting all kinds of investors, including reckless speculators, who easily fall prey to Rockefeller's orderly and strategically gifted type.

Unlike many rivals, Rockefeller manages his company by tough numbers, regularly cutting spending and keeping a large financial reserve. Especially, he viewed the oil industry as an interdependent system—drilling, refining, shipping, distributing, and selling. He built a global company to dominate and unify this fragmented industry. Standard Oil was akin to what we would see in today's best multinational firms. That company has enough influence over the railway companies, the pipeline companies, and the shipping companies to break the competitive pressures and tightly control their prices.

Besides, Rockefeller also used his vast fortune from the oil industry to establish another industry - the global charity industry, a business focused on challenges such as health and education around the world, filling the gap between the international activities of governments and the activities of multinational companies. He professionalized philanthropy, running his fund as a highly focused and competitive business, which contributed to producing groundbreaking research.

### **2. Jean Monnet**

Jean Monnet, a French diplomat and political visionary, played a crucial role in the establishment of the European Union (EU). His early years, with exposure to cultural nuances while taking part in the family business and studying overseas, have shaped his interest in international affairs and economic cooperation.

During World War I, Monnet worked in London and realized the need for supranational cooperation instead of national interests. He advocated for shared benefits and coordinated actions among allies, which led to the establishment of the 'Wheat Executive'. Following World War II, Monnet's efforts strengthened the relationship between the UK and the US and facilitated their cooperation. After the war, he established the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1941, which was the predecessor of the EU with the goal of promoting reduced tariffs, fair competition, and centralized control of key industries.

Monnet's vision for a united Europe included a common capital and a truly unified political entity. Many of his ideas were realized in the following decades, with the creation of the EU, the common market, and the adoption of the Euro. Jean Monnet's contributions have left a lasting impact on the European Union, creating a single market with common laws and regulations. It is not an exaggeration to say that, when Jean Monnet put pressure on what is now the European Union, he built the largest set of multinational globalization in history. The EU is now a worthy counterweight to the US in shaping a global trading system, becoming a model for ASEAN and many other organizations in the world.

### **3. Margaret Thatcher**

Margaret Thatcher, as the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, implemented policies centered on free trade, privatization, and reduced influence of labor unions. Supporters credit her with revitalizing the economy, reducing inflation, and enhancing Britain's global standing. They argue that her focus on entrepreneurship and market competition stimulated economic growth. However, critics contend that her neoliberal agenda exacerbated social inequality, weakened social safety nets, and marginalized marginalized communities.

Thatcher's legacy remains an intense debate. While some praise her for promoting individual freedom and market-driven economic growth, others criticize the negative social consequences of her policies. The ongoing discussions about Thatcher's legacy reflect the tensions between free market principles and the need for social equity and intervention. The impact of her economic policies, such as privatization and labor union reforms, continues to shape the economic and political landscape of the UK.

Thatcher's tenure left a lasting impact on the British economy and society. Her policies and their consequences, both positive and negative, continue to shape economic debates and policy decisions. The legacy of Thatcherism serves as a reminder of the ongoing challenges in balancing market forces, individual freedom, and social well-being in the pursuit of economic growth.

#### **4. Andrew Grove**

Andrew Grove was born in 1936 in Hungary in a Jewish family under the reign of the Nazi regime and a fascist Hungarian dictatorship. Spending his entire childhood constantly hiding from the genocide that killed millions of his people and later the suppression of the Soviet Union, Grove fled to the U.S. where he later joined Intel.

Throughout his long-lasting career at Intel, Grove has led the company to its current position as a high-tech giant. Some of his most remarkable achievements include: solving the disconnection problem between ideas and execution of the computer chip; inventing the management process that enabled Moore's Law; contributing to the invention of the microprocessor; and driving Intel out of various crises through his brilliant strategies.

Grove's management style was characterized by a direct, decisive, result-oriented, and disciplined approach that kept all employees accountable for achieving their specific targets. He was visionary, analytical, and cautious, yet agile and resilient.

Andrew Grove has left an impactful legacy as the "father" of the third industrial revolution, forming the modern world today. His management ideals have forever changed management and strategies for companies in the high-tech industry, and his fierce spirit of competition, individualism, and innovation has inspired the unique corporate culture in Silicon Valley.

#### **5. Deng Xiaoping**

Deng Xiaoping was born in 1904 in a tiny village deep in Sichuan Province. The time spent in France and Moscow, Russia exposed Deng to Marxist ideology and his active involvement in Communist activities.

During the Long March, Deng played a crucial role in the Communist Party's survival. After the Communist victory in China's civil war, Deng became a trusted aide to Mao Zedong, displaying military prowess and initiating pragmatic reforms.

However, Deng also made mistakes in supporting Mao's policies, including the crackdown on intellectuals and the failed Great Leap Forward campaign. To tackle the mistakes, Deng implemented practical measures in 1962 to restore the economy. During the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), he was attacked by radical supporters of Mao but was rehabilitated in 1973. Deng maneuvered to place his supporters in key positions, repudiated the Cultural Revolution without discrediting Mao, and emphasized the need for new ideas and learning from advanced nations.

After Mao's death, Deng emerged as the top leader of China and his policies focused on pragmatic reforms in virtually all aspects of China's political, economic, and social life. Deng opened China to the world economy, normalized relations with major powers, and balanced capitalism with the Communist Party's power. It is undeniable that Deng played a critical role in relaunching China and transforming it into a global economic powerhouse.

#### **6. The Best is Yet to Come**

This captivating exploration unveils the extraordinary journeys of ten exceptional individuals, referred to as "hedgehogs," who possess distinct qualities and notable achievements. These remarkable figures embody an unwavering commitment to a singular significant idea, displaying unwavering faith and resilience when faced with adversities. Rather than being driven by a grand global vision, they became accidental globalists, concentrating on immediate challenges and leveraging prevailing trends and events. By capitalizing on their expertise and taking calculated risks, they seized the opportunities that presented themselves. Gradually building their success over time, they started early and persisted with unwavering determination. Their meticulous attention to detail, remarkable ability to assemble talented teams, and even their inherent flaws contributed to their remarkable accomplishments. The resounding impact of their stories echoes through the ages, serving as a testament to their enduring influence on the world at large. These extraordinary individuals continue to inspire and motivate, reminding us of the transformative power of singular dedication and tenacity.