What accounts for the magnitude and speed of the Mongol conquests?

The Mongol Empire owed much of its success to the cultural institutions and political traditions of the Eurasian steppes (prairies) and deserts. The pastoral way of life known as nomadism (A way of life, forced by a scarcity of resources, in which groups of people continually or seasonally migrate to find pastures and water.) gives rise to imperial expansion only occasionally, and historians disagree about what triggers these episodes. In the case of the Mongols, a precise assessment of the personal contributions of Chinggis Khan and his successors remains uncertain.