

Mystery of genghis khan

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Why is the great warrior and Mongolian icon Genghis Khan perceived as a destructive and genocidal warlord? Why is there a negative perception about him in spite of his achievements and glories?

Genghis Khan was a political and military leader of Mongolia. He is revered as the greatest Mongolian ever born. He is credited with uniting the nomadic Mongol tribes and creating the Mongol empire, the largest contiguous empire in World History.

The chronicler Minhaj al-Siraj Juzjani left a description of Genghis Khan, written when Genghis Khan was in his later years:

“[Genghis Khan was] a man of tall stature, of vigorous build, robust in body, the hair on his face scanty and turned white, with cat's eyes, possessed of dedicated energy, discernment, genius, and understanding, awe-striking, a butcher, just, resolute, an over thrower of enemies, intrepid, sanguinary, and cruel.”

The Mongol Empire ended up ruling, or at least briefly conquering, large parts of modern day China, Mongolia, Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Moldova, South Korea, North Korea, and Kuwait under his military rule.

He was not only a great warrior but also a great ruler. He created the Yassa code which was the military and civil code for Mongolian Empire. The Mongol Empire was one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse empires in history, as befitted its size. There were tax exemptions for religious figures and so to some extent teachers and doctors. The Mongol Empire practiced

religious tolerance to a large degree because it was generally indifferent to religious beliefs.

Genghis Khan had a lot of virtues worthy of a true leader and statesman. Simplicity, honesty and loyalty were the cornerstones of his life.

Yet, accounts of Genghis Khan's life are marked by claims of a series of betrayals and conspiracies. These include rifts with his early allies such as Jamuqa (who also wanted to be a ruler of Mongol tribes) and Wang Khan (his and his father's ally), his son Jochi, and problems with the most important Shaman who was allegedly trying to break him up with brother Qasar who was serving Genghis Khan loyally. Many modern scholars doubt that all of the conspiracies existed and suggest that Genghis Khan was inclined to paranoia.

He was largely tolerant of religions. The exception was when religious groups challenged the state. For example Ismaili Muslims that resisted the Mongols were exterminated.

In Iraq and Iran, he is looked on as a destructive and genocidal warlord who caused enormous damage and destruction. Similarly, in Afghanistan and Pakistan (along with other non-Turkic Muslim countries) he is not looked with favor though some are ambivalent. It is believed that the Hazara of Afghanistan are descendants of a large Mongol garrison stationed therein.

Nevertheless, the invasions of Baghdad and Samarkand caused mass murders, for example, and much of southern Khuzestan was completely destroyed. His descendant Hulagu Khan destroyed much of Iran's northern

part. Among the Iranian peoples he is regarded as one of the most despised conquerors of Iran, along with Alexander and Tamerlane. In much of Russia, Ukraine, Poland and Hungary, Genghis Khan, his descendants and the Mongols and/or Tartars are generally described as causing considerable damage and destruction. Presently Genghis Khan, his descendants, his generals and in general the Mongols are remembered for their ferocious military, toughness, ruthless and destructive conquests in much of the world in history books.

In military strategy, Genghis Khan generally preferred to offer opponents the chance to submit to his rule without a fight and become vassals by sending tribute, accepting residents, contributing troops. He guaranteed them protection only if they abided by the rules under his administration and domain, but his and others' policy was mass destruction and murder if he encountered a resistance.

For example David Nicole states in *The Mongol Warlords*, "terror and mass extermination of anyone opposing them was a well tested Mongol tactic." In such cases he would not give an alternative but ordered massive collective slaughter of the population of resisting cities and destruction of their property, usually by burning it to the ground.

Only the skilled engineers and artists were spared from death and maintained as slaves. Documents written during or just after Genghis Khan's reign say that after a conquest, the Mongol soldiers looted, pillaged, and raped; however, the Khan got the first pick of the beautiful women. Some troops who submitted were incorporated into the Mongol system in order to

expand their manpower; this also allowed the Mongols to absorb new technology, manpower, knowledge and skill for use in military campaigns against other possible opponents.

There also were instances of mass slaughter even where there was no resistance, especially in Northern China where the vast majority of the population had a long history of accepting nomadic rulers. Many ancient sources described Genghis Khan's conquests as wholesale destruction on an unprecedented scale, causing radical changes in the demographics of Asia. For example, over much of Central Asia speakers of Iranian languages were replaced by speakers of Turkic languages.

According to the works of Iranian historian Rashid al-Din, the Mongols killed more than 70,000 people in Merv and more than a million in Nishapur. China suffered a drastic decline in population during 13th and 14th centuries. For instance, before the Mongol invasion, unified China had approximately 120 million inhabitants; after the conquest was completed in 1279, the 1300 census reported roughly 60 million people. How many of these deaths were attributable directly to Genghis Khan and his forces are unclear, as are the highly generalized numbers themselves. In addition, some modern scholars question the validity of such estimates, since the methodology of the 1300 census likely underestimated the population. [citation needed]

His campaigns in Northern China, Central Asia and the Middle East caused massive property destruction for those who resisted his invasion; however, there are no exact factual numbers available at this time. For example, the cities of Ray and Tus, the two largest and most populous cities in Iran at the

time, both centers of literature, culture, trade and commerce, were completely destroyed by order of Genghis Khan. Nishapur, Merv, Baghdad and Samarkand suffered similar destruction. There is a noticeable lack of Chinese literature that has survived from the Jin Dynasty, due to the Mongol conquests.

In Mongolia the topic of Genghis Khan was taboo and was heavily suppressed by the Soviet-backed Mongolian communist government. He was largely described as a bad person and a tyrant. However, after the fall of the communist government and the onset of democracy in Mongolia, the memory of Genghis Khan has been catapulted to legendary status. Mongols today celebrate him as the founding father of Mongolia.

Negative views of Genghis Khan are very persistent with histories written by many different people from various different geographical regions often citing the cruelties and destructions brought upon by Mongol armies, but some historians are looking into positive aspects of Genghis Khan's conquests. Genghis Khan is sometimes credited with bringing the Silk Road under one cohesive political environment.

Theoretically this allowed increased communication and trade between the West, Middle East and Asia by expanding the horizon of all three areas. In more recent times some historians point out that Genghis Khan instituted certain levels of meritocracy in his rule and was quite tolerant of many religions. For instance in much of modern-day Turkey, Genghis Khan is looked on as a great military leader and even many male children are named after him with pride.