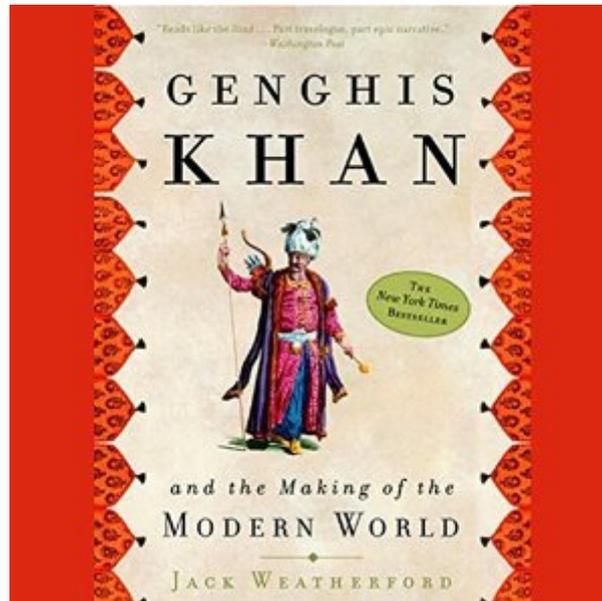


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# Genghis Khan And The Making Of The Modern World



## Synopsis

The Mongol army led by Genghis Khan subjugated more lands and people in 25 years than the Romans did in 400. In nearly every country the Mongols conquered, they brought an unprecedented rise in cultural communication, expanded trade, and a blossoming of civilization. Vastly more progressive than his European or Asian counterparts, Genghis Khan abolished torture, granted universal religious freedom, and smashed feudal systems of aristocratic privilege. From the story of his rise through the tribal culture to the explosion of civilization that the Mongol Empire unleashed, this brilliant work of revisionist history is nothing less than the epic story of how the modern world was made.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When Genghis Khan and his armies exploded out of the steppe in the early thirteenth century, no one on the Eurasian continent was prepared for his innovative style of warfare. Through years of what was essentially civil war, the Mongols of that period, as well as the surrounding tribes, had already refined various elements of shock warfare. But Temujin - Genghis Khan's birth name - added much to the Mongols' arsenal that was previously missing. He integrated surrounding tribes into his Mongol army; he ensured looting was strictly controlled and that shares of it were divided on a pre-assigned basis; he killed off the aristocracies of the tribes, cities, and empires he defeated, thereby ensuring they would not rally their people to turn on him at a later time; he organized his armies, and even his society, through a decimal system that smoothed the functioning of his eventual empire; he instituted laws that even he, a great khan, must obey. What resulted from these

innovations was unprecedented: an army with the same benefits of speed and maneuver that had always been a part of the traditional tactics of the tribes of the steppe melded together with an effective bureaucratic leadership that was very different from the typical kin-based and ad hoc tribal relationships. This was Temujin's creation, and he perfected it in numerous battles to unify Mongolia under his leadership. In 1206, two years after the final battle to assume control of all Mongolia, he took the name Genghis Khan, and prepared to take his army out into the world. Jack Weatherford's remarkable narrative of these events captures the creativity of Genghis Khan and the Mongols in a way that no book I've read before ever has.

For the most part, I enjoyed this book. I discovered a great deal about the Mongols and I believe that the author proves his basic case that the Mongol Empire provided an unprecedented flow of goods and ideas between East and West. Unfortunately, the author is so enthusiastic about promoting the achievements of the Mongols that he often ventures into hyperbole, and worse, miss-statements of fact, especially about the histories of the nations he is comparing to the Mongols. This undercuts his credibility. Some examples: The author's claims that the Mongol invasions introduced wearing trousers in battle to the West. In fact, trousers were popular among the Celts (including the Britons) for thousands of years, as they were among invading "barbarians" such as Goths and the Parthians. The Greeks and Romans wore kilts, but many of their neighbors wore trousers long before the Mongols. The author says that in World War II, the Red Army was imitating the Mongol tactic of feigned retreat when they "lured" the German army deep into Russia to destroy it. In fact, Stalin repeatedly ordered his generals to stand fast and not give an inch. The reason the Red Army repeatedly fell back was because they were repeatedly beaten. This is not an esoteric point. How could a professor writing history on a global scale not know this? The author says that the last Mogul Emperor's sons were executed in India so that Queen Victoria could take the Imperial title. This is just plain silly. The Emperor himself was sent into exile with other family members. His sons were executed for their purported roles in the Sepoy Rebellion as part of a bloody reprisal.

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