

Secret History of Mongolia

Debasish Das

INTRODUCTION:

A recent study in 2013 (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0002929707605874>) established that 8% of men today in Asia, or 0.5% of world total, carry the gene that originated in Mongolia ~1000 years ago and are the male-line descendants of Genghis Khan. This large spread could not have been because of chance but by selection. In this exhibit, we see how one Empire helped spread it.

Today, Mongolia may be a small land locked country but in the thirteenth and fourteenth century, it was the largest empire, stretching from the Sea of Japan on one side to as far as Central Europe and the Middle East on the other including most of modern-day China.



(Mongolia, 2012 | 850th Birth Anniversary of Genghis Khan | SG MN MS 3245)



(Mongolia, 2017 | The Five Great Khans – Genghis Khan – top left, Ogedei Khan – top right, Guyuk Khan – bottom left, Mongke Khan-bottom left & Kublai Khan – bottom right | SG MN 2615-9)

The Mongol Empire was established by Genghis Khan and the five Great Khans considered as its founding fathers are:

1. Genghis Khan (r. 1206-1227)
2. Ogedei Khan (r. 1229-1241), son of Genghis Khan
3. Guyuk Khan (r. 1246-1248), son of Ogedei Khan
4. Mongke Khan (r. 1251-1259), son of Genghis Khan's son Tolui
5. Kublai Khan (r. 1260-1294), brother of Mongke Khan



(Mongolia, 2016 | The Great Mongolian State, 810th Anniversary | Mi: MN BL429)

During the 1950's, the Mongols based in Persia destroyed Baghdad and were marching towards Egypt when the death of Mongke Khan put a stop to this conquest.



(Mongolia, 2006 | 800th Anniversary of Mongolia & Genghis Khan, printed on Silk | SG MN MS 3093)



(Mongolia, 2017 | Heroes of Genghis Khan | SG MN MS 2618)



(Mongolia | 800th Birth Anniversary of Kublai Khan | Mi: MN BL425)

Under Genghis's successor Ögedei Khan, the Empire pushed into Persia as well as into China, where the war with the Song Dynasty lasted till 1279. In 1941, the Mongols were preparing an all-out attack on Europe, starting with Austria, Germany and Italy, but Ogedai Khan's death that year came as a turning point in world history as they got engrossed with the succession issue.

Kublai Khan moved his base to Beijing and focussed mainly on foreign alliances and trade routes. After his death in 1294, the Mongol Empire fragmented: succession battles in China resulted in the replacement of the Yuan Dynasty by the Ming Dynansty in the 14th Century. The Golden Horde that once spread from Eastern Europe to Siberia too broke apart in the 15th Century.

