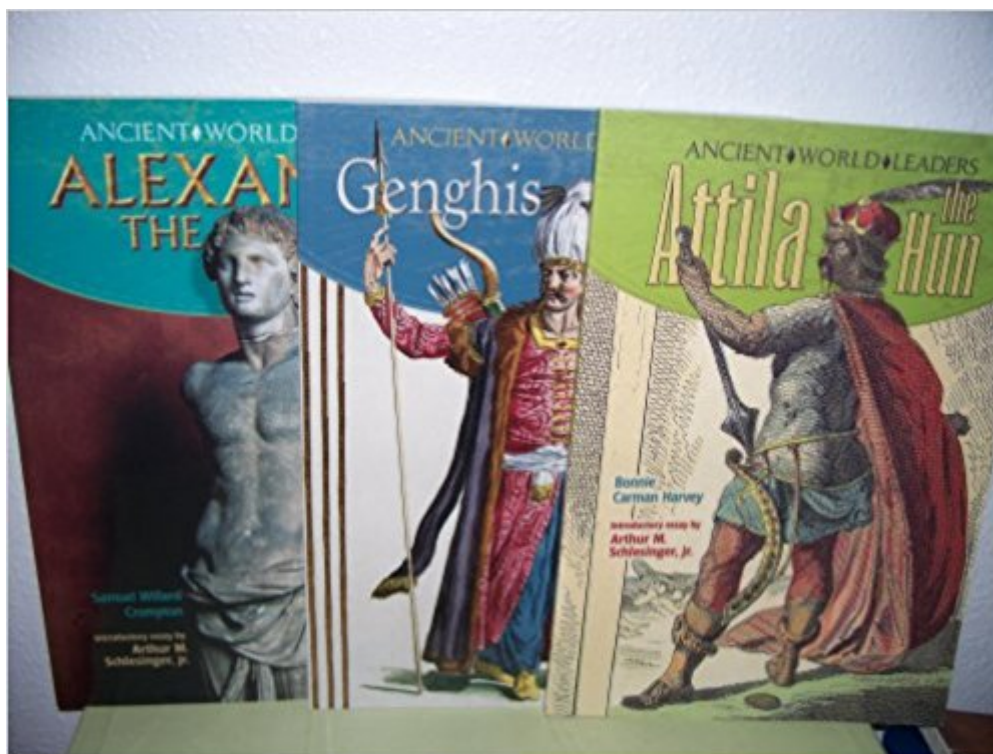


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Genghis Khan (Ancient World Leaders)



Synopsis

Profiles the life of the Mongolian leader known for his ruthless conquering of other lands.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (October 15, 1917-February 28, 2007) was a renowned American historian, social critic, and the prolific author of numerous books including, most recently, "War and the American Presidency," He twice won both the Pulitzer Prize, for "The Age of Jackson" and "A Thousand Days," and the National Book Award, also for "A Thousand Days" as well as "Robert Kennedy and his Times," In 1998 he was awarded the prestigious National Humanities Medal.

--This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"The pleasure and joy of man lies in treading down the rebel and conquering the enemy, in tearing him up by the root, in taking from him all that he has." Genghis Kahn
This biography in the YA (Young Adult) 'World Leaders Past & Present' series is filled with quotations like the above. The histories that I've read over the years describe this Mongol leader's conquests, in phrases like 'pyramids of skulls' and 'complete and utter destruction.' A 13th century Mongol horde could be compared to a 20th century nuclear bomb. Both left long-term devastation in their wake. When the Mongols tore through the Khwarezmian Empire (Greater Iran), "they destroyed the oases that had been so carefully cultivated to sustain orchards, gardens, vineyards, cornfields, and rice paddies. The Mongols demolished dams, reduced palaces to rubble, and burned crops. They knocked down

the carefully placed screens of trees that protected the crops from sandstorms and undid the accomplishments of millennia, turning everything to ruins and barren acreage."The boy who would become Genghis Kahn was born to a Mongol chieftain known as Yesugei the Brave, who fell in love with another man's bride and abducted her on her wedding day. The bride, Hoelun was the mother of Temujin, who entered the world "clutching a huge blood clot in his tiny fist. It shone like a dark jewel, and a wise man of the clan declared it a sign that the handsome baby would grow up to be a heroic warrior."(In part, this biography reads like a medieval romance and I would be interested in knowing what sources the author used when doing the research for her book.)Although the mythology surrounding Temujin, who acquired the title of 'Genghis Kahn' after he united the scattered Mongol tribes and conquered most of China, is quite interesting, I thought the best parts of this biography were the descriptions of how he actually marshalled his troops, and the strategies he used to create the largest empire this world has ever known. It's no wonder that author John Man wrote a book titled "The Leadership Secrets of Genghis Khan." The Mongol 'Kahn of Kahns' wasn't just a blood-thirsty barbarian. He was also a leader of exceptional vision, who knew how to manage both his troops and his conquests."Genghis Kahn" is a quick, interesting read, as are all 100 biographies in this YA (Young Adult) 'World Leaders Past & Present' series. All of the books contain the introductory essay, "On Leadership" by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. This essay alone is worth the price of the book and I wish all world leaders would read it. I think Genghis Kahn would have found it to be quite interesting.

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