

# Inspector Rex's History Snippet #13

**Where is Genghis Khan buried?  
No one knows!**

Genghis Khan (born Temüjin Borjigin, c. 1162 – August 18, 1227 known in Mongolia as Chinggis Khaan) once ruled everything between the Pacific Ocean and the Caspian Sea. **Upon his death he asked to be buried in secret.** A grieving army carried his body home, killing anyone it met to hide the route. When the emperor was finally laid to rest, his soldiers rode 1,000 horses over his grave to destroy any remaining trace.

**In the 800 years since Genghis Khan's death, no-one has found his tomb.**



**Genghis Khan - "If you had not committed great sins,  
God would not have sent a punishment like me upon you"**



Genghis Khan once ruled everything between the Pacific Ocean and the Caspian Sea  
(Credit: Samuel Bergstrom)

Foreign-led expeditions have pursued the grave through historical texts, across the landscape and even from space – National Geographic’s [Valley of the Khans Project](#) used satellite imagery in a mass hunt for the gravesite. But most interest in locating the tomb is international; Mongolians don’t want it found.

It’s not that Genghis Khan isn’t significant in his homeland – quite the reverse. His face is on the money and on the vodka; he probably hasn’t been this popular since his death in 1227. So it can be difficult for outsiders to understand why it’s considered taboo to seek his grave.

### *Genghis Khan did not want to be found*

The reluctance is often romanticised by foreign media as a curse, a belief that the world will end if Genghis Khan’s tomb is discovered. This echoes the legend of Tamarlane, a 14th-Century Turkic-Mongolian king whose tomb was opened in 1941 by Soviet archaeologists. Immediately following the tomb’s disturbance, Nazi soldiers invaded the Soviet Union, launching World War II’s bloody Eastern Front. Superstitious people might call that cause and effect.

But Uelun, my translator, was having none of it. A young Mongolian with a degree in international relations from Buryat State University in Ulan-Ude, Russia, she did not seem superstitious. In her opinion, it is about respect. Genghis Khan did not want to be found.



One thousand horses trampled the grave of Genghis Khan to destroy any trace  
(Credit: Samuel Bergstrom)

“They went through all that effort to hide his tomb,” she pointed out. Opening it now would violate his wishes.

<http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20170717-why-genghis-khans-tomb-cant-be-found>

### **Comments by Inspector Rex**

The word Khan means ‘king’ or ‘leader’.

Tamerlane – Anglicised from Timur – the Lame