



How is Genghis Khan  
portrayed in video  
games?

# Structure

## Introduction

- Historical background
- Video games
- Relevance of the topic
- Video game
- Heroes and villains

# Structure

## Analysis

- Is Genghis Khan portrayed as a hero or villain
- Was Genghis Khan a hero or villain

## Conclusion

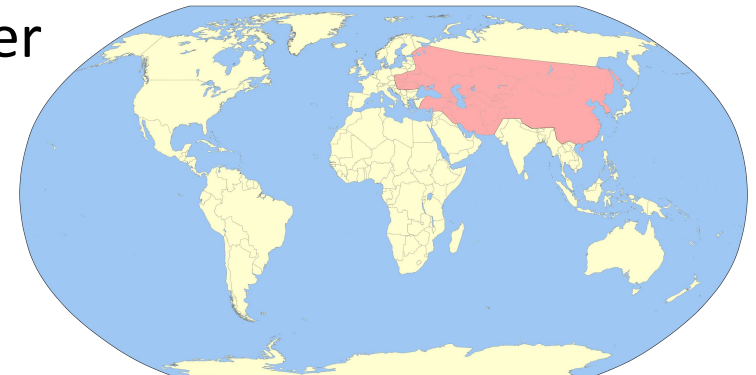
- Is it justified how Genghis Khan is portrayed
- What we can learn from that

## Sources

# Introduction

# The Mongolian Empire

- many groups of mongols lead by Khans
- women played an important role in these tribes
- often fought with each other
- Temujin built an army to conquer most of asia
- by 1260 power split up and the empire collapsed
- some conquering quests continued until a few decades later



[commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Great\\_Mongol\\_Empire\\_map.svg](https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Great_Mongol_Empire_map.svg)

**13th  
Century**

2022

future

# Genghis Khan

- allied with leaders and their armies and united tribes
- made them vote for him
- believed sky goddess Tenggeri wanted him to conquer the world
- used Tenggeri's name to get power
- attacked quickly
- left the villages politically unchanged

— **1162 - 1227** ————— 2022 ————— future —→

# Genghis Khan

- democratic aspects and fair payments
- respected women
- accepted every religion
- created postal- and streetsystems
- introduced the rule of law
- killed more than 40 million people

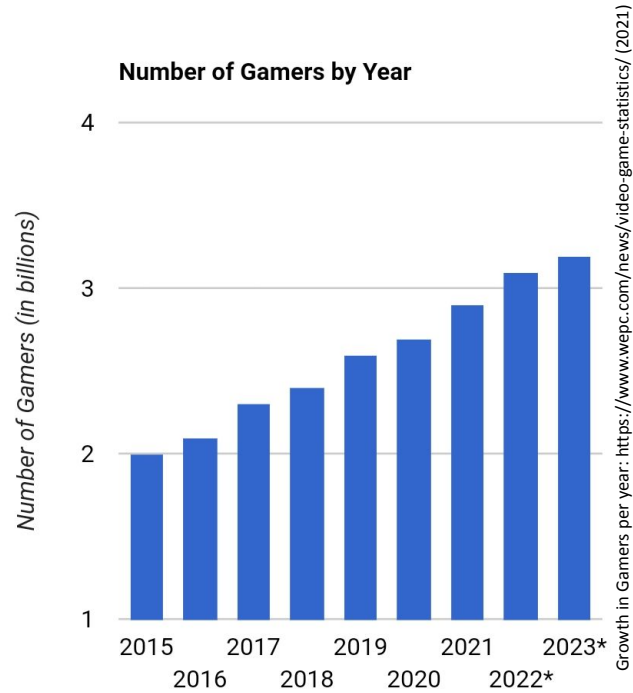


— **1162 - 1227** ————— 2022 ————— future —→

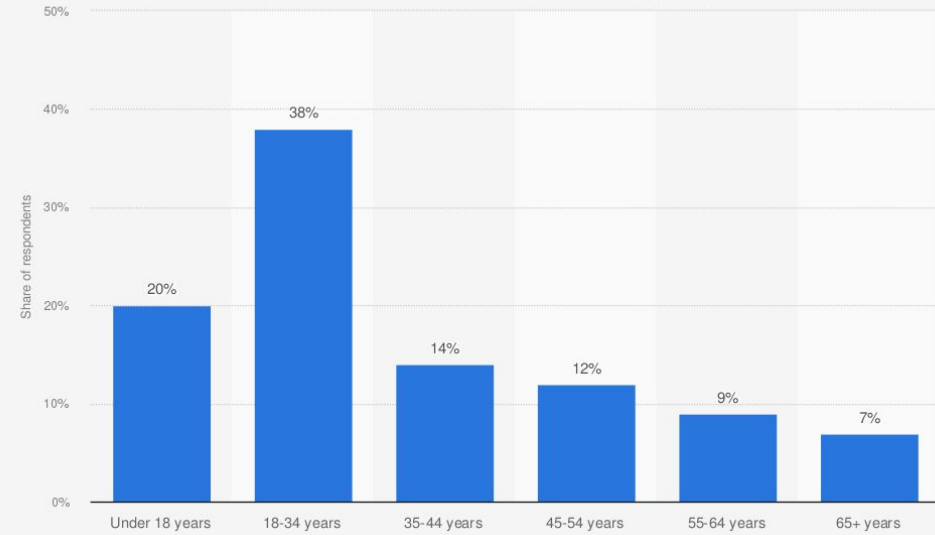


# Video games

Growth in Gamers by Year



Distribution of video gamers in the United States in 2021, by age group



Sources

Entertainment Software Association; Ipsos  
© Statista 2021

Additional Information:

United States; Ipsos; February 2021; 4,000 respondents

Distribution of video gamers in the United States in 2021, by age group:  
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/189582/age-of-us-video-game-players/> (2021)

1200

2022

future →

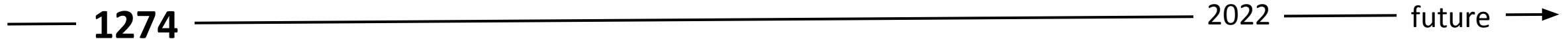
# Why is it important for us?

- video games can be seen as art
  - reflect idea of the creators
  - gaming branch will expand
- => content will have a big influence

— 1200 ————— 2022 ————— **future** →

# Ghost of Tsushima

- created by Sucker Punch Productions
- role-play and action adventure game
- year 1274 during first Mongol invasion of Japan
- Tsushima is an island in Japan
- samurai live by a traditional “code-of-honour“



# Gameplay of Ghost of Tsushima

- you play as a samurai lord of Tsushima Island
- uses stealth techniques to kill mongols
- mongol leader killed => samurai regaining control over Tsushima
- mongol leader Khotun Khan represents Genghis Khan and is the antagonist
- mongol forces on the mainland want him dead => exile for whole life

# What is right and wrong about Ghost of Tsushima

- specific people were fictional characters
- accurate time
- lead by Kublai Khan not Khotun Khan
- accurate fighting techniques
- map in game and real island look similar
- “code-of-honour“ was invented later



# Is Ghost of Tsushima a reliable source

- fictional parts built in for entertainment
- fiction is imaginary
- visually more attractive and easier to understand
- here used to make the story less boring and more realistic
- inspired by history
- made with help of experts
- praised by japanese critics

**it is a reliable and suitable source for our analysis**

# What makes people heroic and evil?

What makes people heroic is unknown

What makes people villains:

- passive tolerance to evil by inaction
- unjust systems/certain circumstances
- power & control
- mindlessly taking the first step

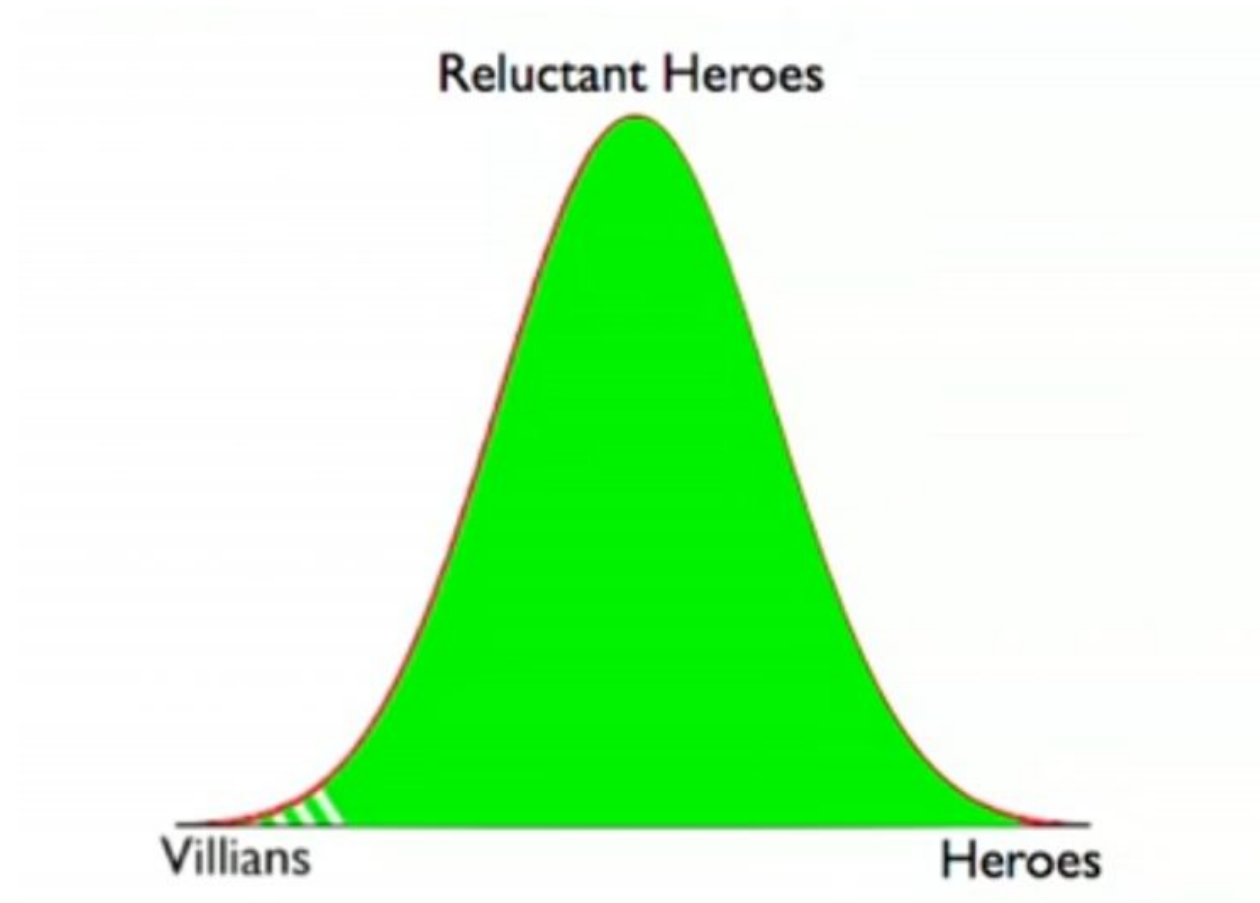
# Heroes and villains

heroes	villains
acting when others are passive	bad use of power
defending others knowing there is a risk	intentional harming, damaging, and destruction
showing extraordinary courage in battles or disasters	positive expectations for the own good
no expectations	opposer of the protagonist
in fiction the protagonist	in fiction the antagonist

heroes and villains are most effective when they get help or build a network



# Heroes, Reluctant Heroes and Villains



Philip Zimbardo: What Makes a Hero? by Greater good Science Center/Philip Zimbardo  
(13.1.2011)

[https://youtu.be/grMHztRm\\_8](https://youtu.be/grMHztRm_8) (last access 28.01.2022)

# Analysis

# Opening scene



Lord Adachi Death Scene | Ghost of Tsushima  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GaOAKw4j\\_QI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GaOAKw4j_QI)

# Is Genghis Khan portrayed as a hero or villain?

- protagonist sees him as a villain
- Khotun Khan representing Genghis Khan is the antagonist
- mongols have no honour
- described as brutal, relentless and unstoppable

**Ghost of Tsushima presents the perspective of attacked countries**

# Was Genghis Khan a villain

- passive tolerance to evil by inaction
- circumstances
- power & control
- taking a first small step
- used his power to expand the Mongolian Empire

**attacked countries saw him as a brutal villain since he killed many people and destroyed many villages**

# Was Genghis Khan a hero

- introduced the rule of law and used women as advisers
- introduced many systems and laws seen in developed democracies today
- mongols today see him as a hero since he “founded” the Mongolian Empire

**To mongolian people today and in the 13th century he was a hero.**

# Was Genghis Khan a hero or villain?

hero	villain
introduced many useful systems	to the destruction of many villages
introduced many democratic laws	killed more than 40 million people
respected every religion	
respected women	
fair payments	

many democratic aspects but a lot of destruction

# Conclusion



# Was Genghis Khan a hero or villain?

- did many good things for the future
  - killing 40 million people did not contribute to that
- => he was a hero and villain

# Was it justified how Genghis Khan was portrayed?

- mostly justified apart from the code-of-honour
- he is portrayed from one perspective
- there are many more perspectives
- one video game can't respect every perspective

# How we can learn from that

- video games' importance will increase more
- usually only one of many perspectives is presented

**If content from video games is used as a source, the different perspectives have to be respected.**

Thank you for  
your attention!

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