

Mongolia, The Path of Conquerors.

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Mongolia, the Land.

Today we shall ~~have to~~ transport ourselves to Mongolia, the country of boundless steppes, the mother-country of the greatest conquerors of Asia.

For almost two thousand years wave after wave of indomitable nomad tribes stamped under the hoofs of their horses mighty civilizations and submerged entire nations.

For centuries the ancient nomad route, one of the oldest historical highways of Asia, passing north of the Celestial Mountains or the T'ien Shan, and connecting Mongolia with the steppe country north of the Caspian and the Black Sea, resounded with the trampling of the moving hordes. We are as yet unable to reach the source of this mighty current of nations, who, attracted by the centers of ancient cultures, entered the path of conquest and shook the frontier barriers of China, and those of the Roman Empire. The iron legions of the ancient Romans, and the acute diplomacy of Chinese Statesmen were unable to check the onslaught of nomad tribes.

As in mountain regions the displacement of a single stone often carries down thousands of stones in an avalanche,--so with nomad tribes. In the course of the history of the nomads we see a tribe growing in prosperity and encroaching on the

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grazing grounds of its neighbors. By conquest and raids it collects round itself neighboring tribes who, either conquered or allied, join themselves to their powerful neighbor and recognize him as their overlord. Asia has seen a gain and again the rise of nomad tribes whose impulse sent rolling mighty waves of tribal migrations.

These great upheavals in the heart of Asia, which brought destruction and famine to many countries of Europe and the Near East, and were described by contemporary chroniclers as the Scourge of God, not only marked the downfall of the Classical World but also heralded the dark periods of the early Middle Ages. The violent shock of the Mongol Invasion of the XIII-th century A.D., that terrified the whole of Europe, made a powerful imprint on the mentality of the epoch and paved the way to the coming Renaissance Period.

Mighty nomad empires rose and vanished into the unknown. They did not leave behind them stately monuments or written records. All we know about them is the indelible impression left by their passage on the neighboring countries. Until recently these nomad cultures were a closed book for us and their meteoric brilliance only baffled the curiosity of scholars.

But now we learn to appreciate the historical importance of the nomad path, and the tremendous influence exercised by the nomad culture on its neighboring and conquered nations. The archaeology of nomad Inner Asia is still in its infancy, and

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the hundreds of tumuli or ancient graves that cover the vast expanses of the Asiatic steppe country still await the spades of archaeologists.

A new branch of historical science is coming into being whose object it will be to formulate laws that built up the nomad state, and to study the vestiges of a great forgotten past.

In the past history of nomad Central Asia, Mongolia played a preeminent role. Within its boundaries lay one of the most important centers of nomad expansion. This comparatively little known country is a fascinating subject of study, both for a student of geography and an historian. Even now with its much diminished population, and general impoverishment, the history of modern Mongolia presents great interest for an outside observer and continues to be ruled by strange personalities, prophets and war-lords, who are inspired by the past history of their country.

Before proceeding with a description of the past and present of the country, let us throw a brief glance on the geography of the country.

The inland basin of Mongolia is an upland with an average elevation of some 4000 feet, gradually rising towards the West. The northern boundary of this vast plateau country is formed by the high mountain masses of the Russian Altai, and the Tanu-ula on the north-west, the Sayan Mountains, the mountain

ridges belonging to the Kentei mountain system, and the Yablencoi mounts on the north.

On the East of Mongolia rises the mountain ridge of the present Khingan, that cuts Mongolia from the monsoon country of China. On the west and south-west rise the rugged mountain masses of the Mongolian Altai that stretch in several parallel running ridges far into the Central Gobi, and are often designated by the name of Gobi Altai.

To the south and south-east the country is open, and merges into the great Gobi desert of Inner Asia, which gradually slopes down towards the lowlands of China and its great river valleys.

The whole of Mongolia can be roughly divided into a Northern region, occupied by mountains, and famous for its grass-country lying in the basins of important river systems, most of which belong to the Arctic divide; and the Southern region occupied by the arid portions of that great inland basin, to which we usually give its Mongolian name - "Gobi".

This division of the country roughly corresponds to the political division of the region into Outer and Inner Mongolia, the first of which corresponds to the Autonomous Mongolian Republic, and the second to Chinese Mongolia.

The principal mountain systems of the Greater Mongolia, rise in Outer Mongolia. Here we find the Mongolian Altai, the Tanu-ula, the Khangai massif, the Kentei and Khingan. Many of these mountains are snow-capped. The highest snow-peak of Mongolia is situated in the group of peaks called Tabun Bogdo

or the "Five Holy Ones" and towers in the northern section of the Mongolian Altai to an altitude of some 15,000 feet. An important part of the country is occupied by the Khangai mountain system, which stretches from the eastern offshoots of the Tanu ula towards the basin of the river Tola. The Central mass of this system lies near to the modern city of Uliassutai, and is known under the name of Tarnagatai. Its highest peak, the Ocir Wang, rises to a height of 12,000 feet.

The southern branches of the Khangai stretch far into the desert towards the Gobi ridges of the Mongolian Altai, where they imperceptibly merge into the rugged and mountainous part of the South-Western Gobi.

The Kentei system lies north and north-east of the Tola basin, in which is situated the capital of the country - Urga or Ulan Bator Khoto-to use its modern name. The Khingan Mountains separate the grass lands of north-east Mongolia from Manchuria. In ancient times the Khingan was an important center of nomad movements. The southern slopes of the mountain ridges are, as a rule, rugged and barren, whereas the northern slopes are mostly covered by grass, and sometimes by pine forests.

The most important river basins of Mongolia are those of the Selenga and the Kerulen. The Selenga, which carries its water into the great Siberian lake of Baikal, is formed by two considerable streams; the Eder, rising in the Khangai mountains, and the Telgin Muren, rising in the Tanu-ula mountains.

The most important tributary of the Selenga is the Orkhon and its tributary streams of the Tola and the Iro.

The valley Orkhon is an important center of nomad civilization within the Mongolian border. Numerous stone monuments, sometimes inscribed in old Turkish runnic characters, and tumuli or funeral mounds surmounted by stone cairns or encircled by railings of stone slabs, attest the past of this region - the cradle of many great nomad empires of the past.

The Kerulen, in which basin is said to be situated the forlorn tomb of Cinghiz Khan, the greatest of conquerors, rises in the Kentei mountains, and empties into the lake Dalai nur. The Kerulen belongs to the basin of the Pacific for the lake Dalai nur is connected with the river Arghun, a tributary of the Amur.

Among the other considerable streams of Mongolia we may cite the river Tes, rising in the Khangai mountains, and emptying into the lake Ubsa-nur; the Kobde river, rising in the Mongolian Altai, and carrying its waters into the lake Khara-usu. Both these rivers have been once important centers of nomad life, judging from the stone monuments, which are disseminated along the slopes of the valley hills.

Most of the lakes of Mongolia lie in the north-western part of the country (the Ubsa, the Kirghiz nur, the Airik-nur, Khara usu, and Durga nur). These lakes are probably remains of an ancient water basin. With the continuous dessication of

Inner Asia, the volume of water in the lakes has considerably shrunk. This process continues nowadays. At the present time north of the Tanu ula lies the thickly wooded country of the headwaters of the great Yenissei - Uriangkhai. It is populated by tribes of paleo-asiatic descent, speaking a Turkish dialect strongly tinted with Mongolian. The country was once the center of the Kirghiz expansion in the IX-th century A.D. It is a country fabulous for its mineral wealth, but difficult of access, enclosed as it is by thickly wooded mountain ridges and intersected by river valleys thru which dash mighty mountain torrents that feed the great Yenissei.

The grass country of Mongolia stretches from the Russian border to the headwaters of the Selenga and its tributaries. It is a country of rolling hills, covered with fine pastures during summer months. This region has been always the arena of great nomad migrations. Its hot summers and arctic winters did not prevent the growth of mighty confederations of nomad tribes who frequently devastated the cultivated lands of Western China, and even succeeded in establishing dynasties of nomad descent on the throne of China.

South of the grass-land lies the arid part of the Central Asian plateau with scant desert vegetation and water supply, one of the most forbidding regions of the globe. Centuries of erosion have levelled the country and worn down the mountain ridges that once intersected the desert. Most of Inner Mongolia is covered by this desert of stone and rugged mountains, and only on the outskirts of this desert region, in the country of the Chakhar in the East, the Ordes and Alashan,

is it possible for a scant population of men and animals to exist.

The severe climate of the Mongolian plateau has produced a hardy race of men and their military exploits remain unique in human history.

The Pageant of Nations.

From the dawn of Chinese History, we hear about cattle-breeding nomads, fierce fighting men, inhabiting the Chinese border country, the modern provinces of Shan-si and Shen-si. The earliest mention of native nomad names is found in the Shuching. The passage refers to the period of about 1000-800 B.C. and mentions a nomad country Kuei (). The Chinese Annals give them different names, some of which seem to represent Chinese transcriptions of native nomad tribal names. The Annals state explicitly that all of these tribes were characterized by one mode of living. All of them were living in tents, and bred large herds of horses, sheep and horned cattle. Their splendid military qualities are mentioned again and again on the pages of Chinese Dynastic histories.

The crude nomads, always in a turbulent state of inter-tribal warfare were continuously pushing along the borderland of China. The history of the nomads is the history of strong men, who with a handful of faithful followers succeeded in gathering round themselves mighty hosts, and smote the fortified cities of China, forcing that great Empire to conclude humiliating treaties.

In most cases we are unable to determine as yet the ethnic affinity of the nomad tribes that harassed the border of China. The very few nomad words preserved in Chinese transcription in the Chinese Annals, are mostly words belonging to both Mongolian and Turkish groups of idioms. It seems certain that the great nomad empires were founded by tribal confederacies which united allied tribes of different ethnic affinity under one rule.

In the VI-th century B.C. we hear of nomad tribes of Jong () and Ti (), who wandered with their herds in the northern and north-western part of the modern provinces of Shen-si and Shan-si. During the next century we hear of the same tribes inhabiting the Chinese borderland. Jong and Ti probably represent Chinese names given to the tribes, and not transcriptions of native tribal names. We are unable to ascertain whether these tribes were of Turkish, Mongolian or Tunghuz origin, and for want of a better designation have to call them paleo-asiatics.

The period from the IV-th to the II-nd century B.C. witnessed great tribal movements along the Chinese border. A new, formidable nomad power had arisen somewhere in northern and eastern Mongolia, that of the Hiung-nu, probably a Turkish tribe. The Hiung-nu succeeded in forming a powerful confederacy of nomad tribes, and for the next four centuries severely devastated the Western regions of China proper. These Hiung-nu or Hung-nu were the ancestors of the Huns, who under Attila marched thru Europe.

The region between Tun-huang and Kan-chou, comprising the northern slopes of the Nan-shan mountains and the grazing grounds north of the Kan-su corridor, was occupied by a large and powerful tribe or group of tribes, the Yue-chi of the Chinese Annals. Modern research designates them as Indo-Scythians, the easternmost branch of the great family of nations speaking Indo-European tongues.

Under the year 176 B.C. we read in the Chinese Annals that the ruler of the Hiung-nu, Mao-t'un, had informed the Chinese authorities of his victory over the Yue-chi, who had been crushingly defeated and made to abandon their grazing grounds. The king of the Yue-chi met his death in the conflict and the victor made a drinking cup out of his skull - following the immemorial universal usage of nomads of Inner Asia. This was the first signal victory of the Hiung-nu recorded in history.

The Yue-chi retreated far to the west into the lands north of the Oxus, and from there invaded Bactria and north-western India, establishing there the important Kushana dynasty. A small portion of them retreated under the pressure of the Huns into the higher valleys of the Nan-shan and gradually merged with surrounding Tibetan tribes.

From now on the Hiung-nu became the chief opponents of the Chinese. The strengthening of the Chinese line of defense became an imperative necessity. The great Empire could not tolerate its border being constantly raided by nomads, its trade made impossible and the life of its subjects endangered.

The military superiority of the nomad cavalry over the huge and clumsy armies of foot-soldiers and chariots, mustered by China, was again and again asserted on the battle-fields of the Chinese-Mongolian borderland. The light Hun cavalry armed with bow and arrow, spears, and short swords, mounted on sturdy steppe horses, able to endure the hardships of a winter campaign, and cover enormous distances, defeated the Imperial troops in numerous actions.

The war was accompanied by barbarous treatment of prisoners and peaceful inhabitants. In most cases, we are told, the prisoners were massacred. The reason for such barbarous treatment is found in the character of the war operations of the nomads. The nomad troops consisted exclusively of light cavalry. Their army corps were corps of mobile cavalry with only light baggage-trains, always on the move, harassing the enemy and delivering sharp and short blows that only too often turned the enemy's host into desperate flight.

The chief weapons of the nomad light cavalry have always been its mobility and invulnerability. It was impossible for a mobile force of nomad cavalry to burden itself with war prisoners, hence the necessity of either releasing them or massacring them. It is interesting to note that we find the same principles of war in recent times in Mongolia and other places of Central Asia. During my travels in Inner Asia, I was able to observe tribal warfare on two borders and invariably found the same methods employed - sanctified by centuries of tribal warfare. The nomad tribes of the northeast of Tibet during their

raids use the same tactics of mobile cavalry detachments - inherited from their remote ancestors.

It became necessary for the Chinese Empire to adopt nomad tactics in their struggle with the nomad north. The infantry was of no use in the boundless expanses of Mongolian steppes. Recourse had to be made to cavalry.

The man who introduced new tactics into Chinese arms was General Ho-k'iu-ping (), the great military leader of the reign of the Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty (140-87 A.D.). With his new army corps composed of mobile cavalry, and tactics copied from the nomads, General Ho-k'iu-ping inflicted several crushing defeats on the Huns. In the Chinese Historical Annals he is styled () or O.C. the Light Horse - a style indicating the new departure.

The French Archaeological Mission of 1914 under the leadership of Segalen, Voisin, and Lartigue discovered in the Shan-si Province the General's tomb, surmounted by a huge stone sculpture of a horse trampling under its hoofs the body of a Hun - a fitting memorial of a great cavalry leader.

The successors of Ho-k'iu-ping, who died too young to see his work completed, made frequent and successful use of large bodies of cavalry, able to carry out independent operations at a greater distance from their base.

The vast border-country of China and the nomad north,

roughly marked by the great Chinese wall, has been for centuries a source of anxiety to the Imperial authorities. Troops had to be stationed along its border and watch-towers and forts built in order to prevent nomad raids. In case of danger, beacons were lit at advanced posts and the fire signal was repeated by the nearest stations, thus sending a warning all along the line of frontier garrisons.

The life led by troops stationed at the advanced posts and forts was a hard one, full of continuous danger and far away from the inhabited country. In modern times only two frontier lines can be compared to the Chinese-Mongolian border of the period about the beginning of our Era; these are the Afghan frontier of India and Morocco in French Africa.

The famous Chinese poet, Li-po (705-762 A.D.) of the T'ang Period, expresses in one of his poems the complaints of the frontier guards:

"From the places where the battles have been fought
Never once has a man been seen to return.
The soldiers exiled to keep watch in that distant land
Gaze afar on the prospect of the marches
As they think of their own country
The face of many a one of them is one of suffering:
On the high watchtower, on such a night as this
Their sighs know not how to cease."

a remarkable feat of arms - over a barren and forbidding country. From 104 B.C. to 90 B.C., General Li-kuang-li was active on the Western border of China and by a series of military expeditions, which penetrated far into the depths of Mongolia, he made his name redoubtable to the nomads. His last large expedition of 90 B.C. was disastrous to the Chinese. The Chinese columns were completely routed, and the General himself perished. Some of our sources tell us that he was offered by the victors on their altars.

The Chief aim of Chinese diplomacy has been to put into the field a coalition of Central Asian tribes against the Hiung-nu. In 72 B.C. the Wu-sun, a tribe living between the Ili valley and the lake Issyk-kol, combined with the Chinese in an attack on the Hiung-nu. The operations of the Chinese expeditionary forces were from the first unsuccessful. The Hun troops retreated into the depths of Mongolia and the Imperial troops did not venture to follow the retreating enemy far into the country. During the winter of the same year, the Huns attacked the Wu-sun, but the heavy snows that fell in Jungaria made them lose most of their horses and men. The disaster was intensified by a combined attack on the retreating Hiung-nu by several neighboring tribes. After the winter of 72 B.C. the Huns lost much of their former power.

(From 11 B.C. to 93 A.D., the Huns were again active all along the Chinese border, and many flourishing Chinese settlements on the Shan-si frontier were turned into desert.)

Towards 93 A.D. a mighty coalition of China, the confederacy of Sien-pi tribes and of the kingdoms of the Western region of Chinese Turkestan, inflicted a crushing defeat on the Huns. The Hun hordes decamped and moved far to the West, into the Aralo-Caspian steppes. The beginning of the march of the Huns towards Europe dates from this time.

From the end of the first century A.D. we observe the rise of a new tribal confederacy of the Sien-pi. Professor Paul Pelliot, one of the greatest living authorities on the subject, is of the opinion that the Sien-pi were Mongol tribes (Cf. Pelliot, Notes sur les T'ou-yu-houen et les Sou-p'i, p.326, T'oung Pao, vol. XX, 1921). The following century saw several attacks of the Sien-pi on the Chinese borderland. One of the Sien-pi tribes, the T'o-pa even gained ascendancy in Northern China, and succeeded in establishing an Imperial Dynasty under the Chinese name of Wei (IVth-Vth centuries A.D.).

The great tribal movements continued in Eastern and Northern Mongolia. The beginning of the IV-th century A.D. saw the rise of a new nomad power of the Juan-juan who very soon wrested the whole of northern Mongolia from the Sien-pi confederacy of tribes. The Juan-juan are the Avars of the Western Historians. A western branch of that powerful confederacy attacked Constantinople in the VII-th century A.D. under the Emperor Heraclius.

This whole succession of tribes was characterized by one mode of living, and one style in art. In my lecture on Tibet I have discussed at some length the problem of the so-called "animal style" in art and its spread all over Central Asia. This style, making use of conventionalized animal figures for decorative motives is one of the most important links between the different nomad tribes of Higher Asia. It is this style that permits us to speak about one nomad culture from the steppes of South Russia to the very confines of China. Thanks to the works of Minns, Prof. Rostovtzeff, Borovka and others, we are at present able to appreciate the great influence exercised by this nomad art on the neighboring cultures.

About the middle of the VI-th century A.D. a new nation, the Turks or the T'u-chueh of the Chinese Annals, defeated the Juan-juan confederacy. (T'u-chueh Durkut Turkut, Dwi -k'iu. Cf. Pelliot, L'origine de T'ou-kiue nom Chinois des Turcs, T(oung-Pao, p. 687, vol. XVI, 1915).

For almost two centuries the whole of Northern Mongolia and the steppe country north of the Celestial Mountains was dominated by Turkish speaking tribes.

In the VII-th century A.D. a new power arose among the Turkish tribes of north-western Mongolia, that of the Uighurs in the valley of the Orkhon River, who established one of the greatest Empires of Central Asia. About 760 A.D., the Uighur power spread towards the cultivated areas of the Tarim basin, and established in the region of Turfan a powerful kingdom with its capital, the city of Khojo.

From the recent archaeological discoveries in the Turfan region, and the study of written sources concerning the history of Inner Asia, we know that Buddhism and Manicheism, one of the most surprising syncretic religions of the East, were popular among the Uighurs. In the XIII-th century they became the teachers of the Mongols, for the Mongol Khans had the foresight to declare the Uighur culture the most suited to the crude Mongol tribes.

About 840 A.D. the eastern parts of the Uighur Empire were overwhelmed by Kirghiz tribes, whereas the Uighur kingdom south of the Celestial Mountains continued to exist until the Mongol Period.

The name of the Kirghiz has been known to the Chinese Annals since the II-nd century A.D. Their original habitat was on the upper Yenissei. They were probably driven out of north-western Mongolia by the advance of the Khara-Khitai and the Mongols.

In the X-th century A.D. there appeared a new nomad horde, that of the Khara-Khitai. They were known to the Chinese from the VIII-th century A.D. Their original habitat, according to the Chinese chronicles, was in Southern Manchuria. It is from there that the Khitai entered the path of conquest and expansion. They subdued northern Mongolia and conquered the northern part of China where they founded an Imperial Dynasty, which became known under the Chinese name of Liao (916 A.D.). They quickly adopted Chinese culture, Chinese language and dress.

The Khitai continued to play a preeminent role in Northern China, and Eastern Asia until 1125 A.D. when their empire was destroyed by another ascending tribe of the Jucen. It is the tribal name of the Khitai which became the usual designation for China in the Russian and Persian languages and we know that a number of European travellers had tried to find out the route to the distant and fabulous Cathay.

A portion of the Khitai remained in China, the other portion moved to the west and reached Turkestan, but was crushed by the Mohammedan ruler of Kashgar Arslan Khan in 1129 A.D. Another branch marched from Northern Mongolia across the Mongolian Altai and Jungaria. (After the conquest of the steppe countries north of the T'ien shan, they conquered Kashghar and Khotan. They did not stop their victorious march in the basin of the Tarim and east of the Pamirs, but advanced into Russian Turkestan where they defeated the Khan of Samarqand in 1137 A.D.

(The established realm of the Khara-Khitai stretched from Western Mongolia in the north as far as Balkh in the South-west and from Kharizm in the west to the kingdom of the Uighurs in the East.) The fall of the Khara-Khitai kingdom in 1211 A.D. was brought about by the joint efforts of Mohammedan principalities in the West and the rising Mongol Power.

Central Asia was on the threshold of a new great tribal move, and arms were rattling over the grass country of Mongolia.

The Great Mongol Conquerors.

Now we come to one of the most stupendous feats of human history - the creation of the Great Mongol Empire that surpassed in greatness all the nomad empires of the Past.

The march of the Mongols and allied tribes thrust Europe face to face with the whole of the Middle and Far East. The cultural importance of this invasion is much more significant than the amount of destruction and ruin that accompanied it. It suffices us to remember the Embassies of Papal Legates who braved the dangers of deserts and penetrated to the very confines of China. The descriptions of their adventures still remain one of our best sources for the Period.

The Mongol tribes, who formed the main support of Cinghiz Khan's army have been since the VIII-th century A.D. in contact with the Uighurs, from whom they learned something of the outer world. I feel certain that they gained notions of Buddhism and Manicheism from this contact. At least two powerful Mongol tribes, the Keraites and the Onguts, were Nestorian Christian by religion. The title of their tribal prince, Wang-khan, gave origin to the Legend about the fabulous Prester John of the Middle Ages. Their previous contact with their more civilized neighbors made the Mongols receptive of ideas of a great national expansion and the conquest by Mongol troops of the centers of contemporary culture. These centers lay on the Chinese side of the border and on the south and south-west of the great Gobi desert in the flourishing states of the Tanguts and the Uighurs.

A few Mohammedan traders who penetrated into the wilderness of Mongolia, brought with them tidings of a great civilized world West of the oases of the Tarim basin. The slumbering nomad suddenly awoke to the necessity of a great national movement and in less than a quarter of a century the Grass country of Mongolia resounded with the clash of arms and the trampling of mounted hordes that marched against China and the Mohammedan countries of the West. The Mongol War banners appeared before scores of fortified cities and these had to submit to the dreaded enemy.

The man who was responsible for this irresistible move of his native tribes and who succeeded in creating out of crude nomad horsemen one of the best armies the world had ever known was Cinghiz Khan, a scion of the ancient race of Borjigit.

Cinghiz Khan was born in 1155 A.D. in the district of Dulun Boldaq on the Onon river now in the Transbaikal Province of Russia. It is difficult to explain the name of Cinghiz, which was probably more like a surname. The Mongol tradition says that at the moment of the birth of the great conqueror a bird appeared on a branch of a tree that grew nearby and emitted sounds "Cinghiz, Cinghiz". The father of the boy then gave him the name of Cinghiz, under which name he became known and feared by the world. The same tradition contains the story that the future conqueror of Asia came into the world with a piece of clotted blood in his hand.

After his father's death Cinghiz or Temucin, to use his other

name, and his family were leading a precarious existence. We are told that they had to live upon marmots and field-mice, the staple food of poor Mongols of present days. By continuous exertions Cinghiz succeeded in collecting around himself a body of men who pledged themselves to support their leader.

Under the year 1201 A. D. we read about the first important action fought by Cinghiz who was then allied to the powerful tribe of the Kerait, against the tribal confederacy headed by the popular Mongol Chief, Jamuga, the blood brother (anda) of Cinghiz. This movement has been often described as a war of the masses against the aristocracy of the country. Jamuga suffered a temporary reverse but after allying himself with Wang-khan of the Kerait, he severely pressed his enemies on whose side Cinghiz remained. The latter had to retreat with a band of followers and roam for some time in the wilderness. At this critical moment of his life, Cinghiz fully displayed his military talents, and by an unexpected attack defeated his opponents. Wang Khan and his son, Sangun died in distant lands. This memorable event in the life of Cinghiz is immortalized in a story that strikingly exhibits the character of the conqueror and the great and profound respect in which held the loyalty of a soldier to his chief.

The defeated Sangun was forced to seek security in foreign lands. He fled accompanied by his equerry, Kokcu and the wife of the latter. They were crossing a hot, arid desert looking for some fresh water when Sangun dismounted from his charger and handed the bridle over to his equerry.

Kokcu took advantage of this and galloped away, abandoning his master and his own wife in the desert. His wife tried in vain to bring him back but he disappeared into the steppe. The equerry appeared before Cinghiz Khan and boasted of having abandoned Sangun in the desert. On hearing his story, Cinghiz Khan ordered that a reward be given the equerry's wife and turning himself to the man said: "He has come here having abandoned his legitimate chief. Who will place confidence in such a man?" and ordered him to be beheaded. This sense of discipline and loyalty was one of the outstanding traits in the character of the great khan. He laid the greatest stress on military discipline. A breach of discipline in a military unit was considered a great offense and was even recorded in chronicles.

Cinghiz Khan not only demanded from his officers and men loyalty, iron discipline and a scrupulous execution of his orders, but put the same demands upon himself. The severe conditions of life in his early youth had no doubt accustomed him to the austere surroundings of a military camp. Even at the summit of his glory, Cinghiz Khan remained the same nomad horseman, conscious of the iron discipline imposed by the will of Heaven on himself and his army.

During the lifetime of the first great Khan, the great Empire was a huge military camp ruled by rigid discipline. Tradition has preserved for us one of the sayings of the great Khan: "He who is able to keep his own house in order, is also

able to create order in an Empire; he who is able to command ten men in proper fashion, may also be entrusted with the command over 1000 and 10,000 men". Such was the great Khan's order to posterity. The sayings of the great Khan were embodied in a Yasa or commandment, which was made the foundation of the Mongol Empire. Extracts from this collection have come down to us.

After this brief characterization of the great Khan's personality, let us return to the story of his conquests.

(By the year 1203 A.D. all the tribes of north-eastern Mongolia had to recognize Cinghiz as their ruler.)

In 1206 A.D. the whole of western Mongolia was conquered and the first qurultai or assembly of Mongol princes and chiefs summoned, by which Cinghiz was proclaimed great Khan, and ~~as~~ as a symbol of his power a banner with nine white horsetails was raised in his Camp. Until recently the Mongol tribesmen worshipped the banner of their first, great Khan and in modern Mongolia under greatly changed conditions of life, the name of Bodgo Cinghiz Khan is still pronounced with awe and pride.

From 1206 A.D. dates a series of victorious campaigns against the Si-hsia, the Kin dynasty of China and the Uighur kingdom, which was subdued in 1209 A.D. In 1215 A.D. Peking fell and the Mongol rule gained a firm footing in Northern China.

Cinghiz Khan employed Mohammedan traders in his commercial and diplomatic relations with the Mohammedan countries of

Western Turkestan.

The great western march of the Mongols was brought about by an action of the ruler of Khwarizm, who massacred a caravan of Mohammedan traders employed by the Mongol Emperor. (In the year 1218 A.D. Mohammed Khwarizmshah ordered the massacre near Otrar of a whole caravan of Mohammedan traders sent by the Mongolian Khan to establish trade relations with the Mohammedan countries.) In the face of this open challenge, Cinghiz Khan moved his troops westwards and in a short time his victorious cavalry overran Persia, Turkestan and even watered its horses in the Indus, and the distant Volga. So began the historical march of the Mongols that inspired awe and apprehension throughout Medieval Europe and the countries of the Near East.

In 1225 A.D. Cinghiz Khan set out on his last campaign against the Tengtut kingdom, the capital of which, the ruined city of Khara-khoto situated near the Etsing-gol in South Mongolia, has been excavated by General P.K. Kozlov and Sir Aurel Stein.

Cinghiz Khan died during this campaign in 1227 A.D. and according to the Persian historian of the XIV-th century A.D., Rasid-ud Din, his body was carried back to Mongolia and buried somewhere on the mount Burkhan-Khaldun in the country round the headwaters of the Onon and the Kerulun.

Very unfortunately the Mongols had the custom of destroying all traces of a princely burial and even used to level the spot

where the body of the chief was buried by driving over it several thousands of horses. We are as yet unable to ascertain the exact spot of the Great Khan's tomb. A South-Mongolian tradition asserts that the Great Khan was buried in the country of the Ordes. At present there exists a regular cult of Cinghiz Khan in a place called Bayan Conkhuk in the Ordos, where several relics of the great Khan are preserved, his shirt, his saddle, etc. The tradition that the Great Khan's burial took place somewhere at the headwaters of the Onon River seems to be the better one, (and we hope that future archaeological explorations conducted by the Scientific Committee of Mongolia will reveal the exact spot of the royal tomb).

For the present day Mongols, Cinghiz Khan is more than a great Emperor, with whose name is connected the finest page of Mongol history. He is the Mongol Prometheus for he is the first to bring fire on earth and teach the men its use. In the prayer books of the ancient Mongolian fire-cult, he is often mentioned as the "bringer of fire", and his race, the Borjigit, are often referred to as "keepers of the secret of fire".

Cinghiz Khan's conquests were continued by his successors until the time when the House of Cinghiz became a fully pledged Imperial dynasty of China and assumed the Chinese style Yuan, under which name it is known to history.

Under Ogodai (1229-1241), the son and immediate successor of Cinghiz, the Mongol troops fought victoriously against the Kin of China and advanced and devastated Eastern Europe. It was at the qurultai of 1235 A.D. that the Great Khan decided to begin the great advance west of the Volga. During this campaign, the Mongol troops overran the feudal states of Russia and on several occasions attacked and devastated Cracow in Poland and Hungary. All the attempts of Poland's knighthood to stop the invasion proved to be in vain and in the spring of 1241 A.D. the Mongol horsemen appeared in the vicinity of Breslau in Silesia. At Wahlstatt on the 9th of April 1241 A.D., the invaders were met by the Duc of Silesia, Henry the Pious, who stood at the head of a force of some 30,000 men. The European army suffered a crushing defeat and their commander met his death in the battle. Medieval Europe was horrified by the tales of Mongol atrocities and by the invincible character of their advance. Emperor Frederick II, the Holy Roman Emperor, addressed a fervent appeal to Christendom, calling the European countries to resist the Scourge of God.

Matthew Paris, one of the earliest European writers on the Mongol Invasion, gives the following colorful description of the Mongol horde and the horror that they inspired:

"That the joys of men be not enduring, nor worldly happiness long lasting without lamentations, in this same year (i.e. 1240-41) a detestable native of Satan, to-wit, the countless army of Tartars, broke loose from its mountain-environed

home -- Swarming like locusts over the face of the earth, they have wrought terrible devastation in the eastern parts (of Europe) laying it waste with fire and carnage. They are inhuman and beastly, rather monsters than men, thirsting for and drinking blood, tearing and devouring the flesh of dogs and men, dressed in ox-hides, armed with plates of iron, short and stout, thick-set, strong, invincible, indefatigable, their backs unprotected, their breasts covered with armour; drinking with delight the pure blood of their flocks, with big and strong horses, which eat branches and even trees, and which they have to mount by the help of three steps on account of the shortness of their thighs. They are without human laws, know no comforts and are more ferocious than lions or bears..... They spare neither age, sex nor condition. They know no other language than their own, which no one else knows; for until now there has been no access to them, nor did they go forth; so there could be no knowledge of their customs or persons thru the common intercourse of men. They wander about with their flocks and their wives who are taught to fight like men. And so they came with the swiftness of lightning to the confines of Christendom, ravaging and slaughtering, striking everyone with terror and incomparable horror".

(Matthew Paris in the Hourney of William Rubruck, ed. by the Haklyut Society).

This awestruck outpouring of the Medieval writer is an interesting historical document on the Invasion, for it clearly

shows that the "incomparable horror" which filled the hearts of Europe and unsteadied the arms of its fightingmen, was the best ally of the invaders.

Strangely enough, the Mongols did not take advantage of their crushing victory at Wahlstatt but retired eastwards towards their base. The death of the Great Khan in 1241 A.D. probably necessitated this retreat.

In 1245 A.D. the Pope Innocent IV-th opened at Lyon a Council, whose object it was to find means to protect Christendom from the imminent peril. The Papal legate, Plano Carpini, was entrusted with a mission to the Court of the Great Khan. Saint Louis, King of France, also despatched embassies to the Mongol Khans with the object of regulating interstate relations.

Under Og odai, and his successor, Kuyuk (1246-1248), the Mongol capital Qara-qorum in the valley of the Orkhon, became an important center of Far-Eastern politics. Within its city walls the Western friars met with the statesmen of China and other countries of Asia; the Western artisans with the craftsmen of the East.

William Rubruck has left us a description of the Mongol capital. It did not strike him as a great city, but he underlines the cosmopolitan character of its population and the continuous movement of foreign embassies. Like most of the cities of nomad Central Asia, it consisted of two principal streets along which were situated the commercial quarters of the town.

No doubt it had a large, moving population living in felt tents pitched outside the city walls - a feature of all Mongol towns.

Under the fourth successor of Ginghiz, Khublai, (1260-1294 A.D.) the Mongols became the masters of China and accepted the Imperial Style. A great change took place in the national character of the ruling house of the Mongols. The warlike nomads had become masters of a great civilized Empire, the century-old culture of which profoundly influenced their character. In 1264 A.D., Khublai Khan transferred the capital from Qaraqorum to Ta-tu or Peking. It was a change from the steppe, with its stern surroundings, for the city and the glamour of an Imperial Capital. It was a decisive move, which indicated the new orientation of Imperial policy.

Khublai was the last great Khan of the House of Ginghiz and during his reign new victories glorified the Mongol banners.

The great Venetian traveller, Marco Polo, who twice visited the Court of the Great Khan (1261-1275) and during the long period of his employment in the Mongol service had acquired unique knowledge of the country and its people, has given us a portrait of Khublai Khan.

After the death of the Great Khan in 1294 A.D., began the rapid disintegration of the colossal empire. The great men of the House of Ginghiz were dead and their feeble successors were unable to exercise iron control over their vast dominions.

In 1368 A.D. the Yuan Dynasty of the Mongols fell and

the throne of China was occupied by the national dynasty of the Ming (1368-1644).

The great chapter in the history of Mongolia closed forever, and the nomads of the steppes continued to be ruled by tribal chiefs vainly dreaming about the restoration of past glories.

Mongolia under Chinese rule:
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Under the Ming and Manchu dynasties the lands of the Mongols came more and more under the control of China. In the XVII-th century the Western Mongols passed thru a new period of expansion which recalled their great national past. This time it was the confederacy of the Oirat tribes who were established north of the T'ien shan, a river that spread far and wide over Inner Asia, reaching the distant Volga in the far west, and the forbidding country of Tibet in the south.

About the year 1636 A.D., Turu-baihu, Gu-shi Khan, chief of the Khoshut tribes, conquered the Tsaidam basin and penetrated as far as Lhasa. He became one of the protectors of The Yellow Faith, and handed over the secular government of the country to the great Fifth Dalai Lama of Tibet.

By the end of the XVII-th century, the Oirat expansion under an energetic chief, Galdan, forced the Imperial Government of China to take action to safeguard Imperial interests on the Western border.

The great Manchu Emperor K'ang-hsi in person, led a military expedition into Mongolia and defeated Galdan in 1696 A.D. The danger of the Oirat expansion was by no means removed after this first defeat. In 1716 A.D. the Jungar Khan Tsewang rap-ten marched to Lhasa past Lob-nur and Charklik. His rapid cavalry raid met with signal success and the holy city surrendered to his troops. In 1719 A.D. the combined efforts of Manchu and Khoshut Troops from the Tsaidam recovered Lhasa and defeated the Jungar forces.

In the XVIII-th century a new impetuous ruler arose among the Oirat tribes of Jungaria - Amursana. His campaigns against Outer Mongolia forced the Manchu Emperor, Ch'ien Lung, to muster a large military expedition against the Oirat confederacy. In 1759 A.D. the Oirat power was finally crushed and the whole of Jungaria and the lands south of the T'ien shan mountains brought under the direct control of China and Chinese Imperial Residents were stationed at important centers.

The name of this last great Oirat chief is still found among the Oirat tribes of Jungaria and the Kobdo district of Western Mongolia. An old prophecy told that an incarnation of the famous chief will reappear in Mongolia at a critical hour of struggle and will liberate the native land of Mongolia from the oppressing enemies.

We shall have occasion to speak about this reincarnation of Amursana who has played a mysterious and prominent role in Mongolian life for the past thirty years.

During the second half of the XVIII-th century A.D. and the whole of the XIX-th century A.D. the grip of China over the vast land of Mongolia tightened itself considerably.

The Mongol princes received honorary titles from the Emperor and annual grants in money, silk and other costly articles. Immediately after the defeat of Amursana and the crushing of the Oirat power, the Imperial Government created an Imperial Resident at Urga who was intrusted with all frontier affairs and had to assist Mongol civil officials in administrating Urga and the provinces of Outer Mongolia.

(From the beginning this post was occupied by a Mongol dignitary but after 1761 A.D. a Manchu officer was appointed to assist the Resident and later on the post of Resident was occupied by Manchu officials appointed from Peking. In 1786 A.D. an Imperial Decree conferred upon the Imperial Commissioner in Urga the right of final decision in the administration of the Tushetu-khan and Setsen khan aimaks - the two central provinces of Outer Mongolia.)

Mongolia became a province of China and the Mongol princes looked upon the Manchu Emperor of China as their legitimate sovereign. They recognized the overlordship of the Manchu dynasty but not of China as a country. This was subsequently proved in 1911-1912 when after the Chinese Revolution and the downfall of the monarchy, Mongolia severed its connection with China and proclaimed its independence.

Buddhism, in its Tibetan form, which had established a firm stand in the country, contributed a great deal in bringing about a change in the national character. A nation of invincible warriors became a religion-loving nation. The warrior exchanged his armour and sword for the reddish-brown garb and beads of the monk. Buddhism, which had spread rapidly among the Mongols since the reign of Khublai, was gaining ground continuously during the Ming and Manchu dynasties.

The Manchu Emperors persistently tried to foster friendship and goodwill between the Chinese Government and the Dalai Lama of Tibet in order to foster the powerful spiritual influence exercised by the latter over the Mongol tribes - hence the patronizing policy of China towards Tibet in the second half of the XVIII-th century A.D. This artificial support of the spiritual authority of the Dalai Lama contributed a great deal toward the establishment of a halo of sanctity and mystery that surrounds Tibet in the eyes of Eastern and Western people.

The first historical Hutuhtu or Incarnate Lama of Mongolia, the famous Undur Gegen, died in 1723 A.D. at Peking and since that date an uninterrupted line of Incarnate Lamas occupied the pontifical throne of Mongolia.

In 1741 A.D. the present city of Urga, then a large lamasery or Ikhe-kuren, became the official residence of the Mongol Pontiff, and some twenty years later, the residence of the Manchu Commissioner in charge of the large province. This state of things continued until the year 1911, when the grave events in China precipitated the liberation movement of the Mongols.