

The Ordos Jinong in *Erdeni-yin Tobči**

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The Ordos Mongols, whose seven banners comprised the League of Yeke Juu in the Ch'ing times, had the origin of their organization in the Four Great Ordos devoted to the posthumous service to Chinggis Khan in the Yüan times.

Toward the end of his reign, 1206–1227, Chinggis reorganized the nomadic groups allied with him into two myriarchies, the Right-Wing in the Altai Mountains and the Left-Wing in the Khingan Mountains, consisting of 38 and 62 chiliarchies respectively. There was only one chiliarchy in the middle, being Chinggis' own personal guards. All the rest of the nomadic population inhabiting Outer Mongolia was Chinggis' personal fief, divided into four Great Ordos, being either his hereditary estate or great tribes overthrown by him in his campaigns. The First Ordo had its seat at Ködege Aral on the Kerülen, governing what used to be the estate of Seche Beki and Tayichu of the Yürkin Clan. The Second Ordo had its seat at Saghari Keger in the Kentei Mountains, being the home of the Kiyān Clan to which Chinggis belonged. The Third Ordo had its seat at Khara Tun on the Tuula, governing the people of the old Kereyid Kingdom. The Fourth Ordo was in the Khangai Mountains, governing the people of the old Naiman Kingdom. Each of the Four Great Ordos was presided over by a queen of Chinggis, the First by Börte Hüjin of the Khunggirad, the Second by Khulan Khatun of the Merkid, the Third by Yesüi Khatun of the Tatar, and the Fourth by Yesüken, Yesüi's sister.

After Chinggis Khan's death in 1227, the Four Great Ordos were inherited by his youngest son Tolui. When Ögedei Khan came on the throne two years later, Tolui relinquished a major part of his possessions in favor of his brother, and the Four Great Ordos too were reduced in size and functioned as a shrine consecrated to the spirit of Chinggis.

In 1292, Khubilai Khan, Tolui's son, conferred on his grandson Kamala the title of Chin Wang, or King of Shansi, and put him in command of the Four Great Ordos of Chinggis Khan and the land and troops of Mongolia. In other words, Kamala was made responsible for worship of Chinggis as a god. Kamala died in 1302 and was succeeded by his son Yesün Temür. In 1323 Siddhipāla Gegen Khan, or Emperor Ying Tsung, was assassinated by his men, leaving no heir. Invited to take over the imperial throne, Chin Wang Yesün Temür

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proclaimed himself Khan on the Kerülen where his camp was, and then marched on Ta-tu or Peking. This title of Chin Wang was preserved in “Jinong”, a title born by the princes of the Ordos Mongols in much later times.¹⁾

The famous pseudo-historical romance, *The Secret History of the Mongols* (*Mongγol-un ni'uča tobča'an*), was most probably composed at the camp of Chin Wang on the Kerülen, for the purpose of exalting the glory of Chinggis Khan as a god whose worship was the charge of the prince. The Mongolian text, which describes Chinggis' career only up to his enthronement in 1206, is full of historical inaccuracies and episodes invented to enhance literary effect. Many of its features indicate that it was not meant to be a chronicle of historical facts about the life of Chinggis Khan as a human being, but a holy scripture narrating the origin of the Chinggis Khan worship, probably to be recited at religious services.²⁾

Although not a chronicle of historical value, *The Secret History of the Mongols* left its mark on later Mongol historiography. When Saghang Sechen Khong Tayiji, a prince of the Ordos Ügüshin Banner, wrote *Erdeni-yin tobči*, or *Jewel History*, in 1662, he included in his account of Chinggis Khan's deeds some episodes peculiar to *The Secret History*. Even larger chunks of quotations from *The Secret History* are found in *Altan tobči*, or *Golden History*, composed by Gūüshi Blo-bzang-bstan-'dzin sometime later than 1669, or, more probably, soon after 1675.

Erdeni-yin tobči was the first and most important of the Mongol chronicles that appeared in a large number in the second half of the seventeenth century and in the eighteenth century, Rashipungsugh's *Bolor erike*, or *Crystal Rosary*, completed in 1775 being the last. The reason why such a literary genre blossomed all of a sudden in the seventeenth century was the Mongols' feeling that the world in which they could be active had come to an end with the death of Lingdan Khutughtu Khan of the Chakhar in 1634 and the subsequent domination of Mongolia by the Manchus.

According to his own *Erdeni-yin tobči*, Saghang Tayiji was born in the year of ga-dragon, or 1604. His great-grandfather Khutughtai Sechen Khong Tayiji, 1540–1586, had been a wise counsellor to Altan Khan of the Tümed. Khutughtai's son Öljei Ildüchi Darkhan Baghatur Sechen Khong Tayiji, 1556–1589, assisted Boshoghtu Jinong in governing the Ordos. Öljei Ildüchi's son Batu Darkhan Baghatur Sechen Khong Tayiji, 1580–?, was the father of Saghang.

Erdeni-yin tobči says:

“Then Boshoghtu Jinong of the Ordos first waged a campaign into Tibet in the West in the year of bing-monkey (1596) at the age of thirty-two and reduced into submission the Shira Uyighur headed by Guru Bsod-nams-rgyal.

1) Okada 1975.

2) Okada 1972; Okada 1970.

How could one talk about all of the worldly work that he did thereafter? Particularly in the year of ding-sheep (1607), he, at the age of forty-three, undertook to build a holy image of Lord Śākyamuni in the form of a twelve-year-old in jewels, gold and silver together with all kinds of sacrificial articles and decorations such as banners, and completely finished the work in the year of güi-ox (1613) at the age of forty-nine. On the full-moon day of the month of Great Miracle (first lunar month) of the year of ga-tiger (1614), he, at the age of fifty, invited Yeke Asaraghchi Mayidari Khutughtu for a consecration ceremony, at which, when flowers were scattered, many good signs such as a rain of flowers appeared. Accordingly to commemorate the occasion, three men, Vchir Tümei Guyeng Güüshi, Ching U-a Naga Güüshi, and Jondulai Üijeng's son Barashi Üijeng Tayiji, were elected to present the title of Yekede Asaraghchi Nom-un Khaghan to the reverend person of Mayidari Khutughtu. A-rig Chos-rje was given the title of Dalai Chos-rje, Guyeng Güüshi the title of Günding Dayi Vang Güüshi, and Naga Güüshi the title of Yogācārya Güüshi; they were enthroned in the same rank as chos-rje's. Other monks were given titles, some higher, some lower, according to their ranks. Thereafter Nom-un Khaghan gave a promise to be born together in every birth, and presented the title of Altan Kürdün-i Ergigülügchi Chagirvar-un Sechen Jinong Khaghan (Wise Jinong King, the Turner of Golden Wheel) to Boshoghtu Sechen Jinong. Dayighal Jönggen Khatun was given the title of Tārā Bodhisattvā Nomchi Dalai Sechen Jönggen Khatun. His uncle Mangghus Chögekür was given the title of Dayi Khong Tayiji. His younger brother Öljei was given the title of Bingtü Khong Tayiji. Of the Left Wing, Brashi was given the title of Üijeng Khong Tayiji, and Engke Khoshighuchi the title of Khoshighuchi Khong Tayiji. Of the Right Wing, Saghang Tayiji, son of Batu Khong Tayiji the grandson of Khutughtai Sechen Khong Tayiji, born in the year of ga-dragon (1604) and eleven-year-old then, was given the title of his great-grandfather to be called Saghang Sechen Khong Tayiji because he was a descendant of the person who had introduced religion and government among the Khans of the six nations. Later he was promoted to the rank of ministers to strengthen the government and treated with great favor at the age of seventeen (in 1620). Mangghus Kholachi was given the title of Erdeni Kholachi Khong Tayiji. Sechen Dayiching's eldest son Sadai Sechen Dayiching was given the title of Güüshi Khong Tayiji, and second son Saji the title of Baghatur Khong Tayiji. Dayibung's grandson Ubashi was given the title of Durar Dayiching. All other lords, royal sons-in-law and ministers were given titles higher and lower according to their ranks. Thus the four great governments were made peaceful, and the entire great nation was made prosperous."³⁾

3) Haenisch, 86r.-86v.

This amazingly generous dispensation of once-exalted titles was the first occasion for the young Saghang Tayiji to be publicly honored. It was also the first time a Jinong styled himself Khan. Or was it?

The earliest reference to the Chinggis shrine, the so-called Eight White Yurts (naiman čaγan ger), found in *Erdeni-yin tobči* concerns Adai Khaghan who fought the Oyirad headed by Toghon Tayishi. The chronicle says that the Khan enthroned himself before the Master (ejen-ü emüne-eče qan oron-a saγuju) in the year of ging-tiger. This date is inconsistent with others in the same chronicle, and should read "bing-horse (1426)" as elsewhere. A-t'ai Wang-tzu is found in the *Ming Veritable Records* fighting Toghon from 1434 on, until he was killed by T'o-t'o-pu-hua Wang, or Tayisung Khaghan, in 1438. Anyway "the Master (ejen)" is a common appellation for Chinggis Khan, and the phrase means that the Khan received his title before the altar of Chinggis.⁴⁾

Then our chronicle makes the Oyirad army of Toghon, but not that of Tayisung Khaghan, surprise Adai Khaghan on a hunting expedition. Deserted by his two Oyirad grooms, the Khan flees and takes refuge in the Ordo of the Master (ejen-ü ordo-da qoroγalan), but, besieged without weapons, is murdered. Toghon rides around the tower-topped pavilion of the Ordo of the Master (ejen-ü ordo-yin čamqay) three times, slashing at it and boasting of his superiority. When, however, he offers sacrifice to the altar in a bid to receive the title of Khan, he is promptly smitten by divine punishment and meets a bleeding death. This incident is placed by our historian in the year of uu-horse (1438), but the Tayishi's death occurred in the following year according to Ming Chinese sources.⁵⁾

The next reference to the Chinggis shrine occurs in relation to Tayisung Khaghan's brother. This Khan was actually put up by Toghon in opposition to Adai Khaghan as we learn from Chinese sources, but our chronicle makes him wage wars leading the Mongol army against the Oyirad forces of Esen Tayishi, son of Toghon. The Khan, together with his younger brothers Aghbarji (Akbar-al-Dīn) Jinong and Mandughulun Tayiji, sets out to fight the Four Oyirad at a place called Dürin-ü Khara. Before the two armies are engaged, they each send forth a champion to find out on which side the luck will rest in the battle. The Oyirad champion is felled by the Mongol champion in a single combat. Greatly afraid, the Oyirad decide to resort to treachery. Abdula Sechen of the Telenggüs sneaks into the Mongol camp at night and succeeds in talking Aghbarji Jinong into deserting his brother the Khan and joining forces with the Oyirad. The Jinong is said to have had a grudge against the Khan on account of having been dispatched to the Right-Wing myriarchies with only one laden one-eyed black male camel when he was made Jinong (urida

4) Haenisch, 53r., 54r., Wada, pp. 233-234.

5) Haenisch, 53v.-54r.; Wada, pp. 272-273; Okada 1966.

namayi jinong bolγaγad: baraγun tümen-e ilegeküi-degen: γaγčayan soqor qara buγuran-dur ačıγulju ilegelüge:). Surprised and routed by the joint forces of the Oyirad and the Jinong, Tayisung Khaghan flees but is murdered by Chabdan of the Ghoorlad, whose daughter Altaghaljin has been divorced by the Khan. This incident is placed in the year of sim-monkey, or 1452. According to Ming Chinese sources, this date is slightly incorrect, in that T'o-t'o-pu-hua Wang fell out with Esen and met his violent death toward the end of the twelfth lunar month of that year, or early in 1453. Anyway this story is the first mention of a Jinong as the head of the three Right-Wing myriarchies, namely the Ordos, the Tümed and the Yöngshiyebü.⁶⁾

Erdeni-yin tobči goes on to tell us that Aghbarji Jinong is enthroned as Khaghan but assassinated by the treachery of the Oyirad who pretend to honor him. His son Kharghuchugh Tayiji escapes to Central Asia to take refuge in the house of a rich man by the name of Agh Möngke of Tokmak, leaving behind his pregnant wife Secheg Biiji, who is a daughter of Esen of the Oyirad. The prince is murdered in his exile. Meanwhile Princess Secheg gives birth to a boy, whom she hides from her father. Four brave men escort the boy, named Bayan Möngke, back to the Mongol land.

Esen becomes Khan of both the Mongols and the Oyirad but is killed in a rebellion. Two sons of the late Tayisung Khaghan, Markörgis and Mulan, are put up on the Mongol throne one after another, but they too are murdered and confusion reigns in Mongolia.

Finally Mandughulun, youngest brother of Tayisung Khaghan, is elected Khan, to whom Bayan Möngke is delivered by the four men. Mandughulun Khaghan names Bayan Möngke Bolkhu Jinong, and they cooperate in governing the Mongols. This is the second Jinong mentioned in *Erdeni-yin tobči*.⁷⁾

Bolkhu Jinong's wife Shikir Tayikhu gives birth to a boy in the year of ga-monkey (1464), who is named Batu Möngke and put out to nurse to Bakhai of the Balghachin. As Bakhai does not take good care of the young prince, Temür Khadagh of the Tanglakhar takes him away by force to bring up. Meanwhile his father Bolkhu Jinong falls out with Mandughulun Khaghan and is driven away by Isman (Ismā'il) Tayishi of the Yöngshiyebü who captures and marries Shikir Tayikhu.

Mandughulun Khaghan dies, leaving no heir. His death is placed by our historian erroneously in the year of ding-pig (1467), which should read gi-pig (1479) as this is the year in which Man-tu-lu's death is reported by the Ming Chinese.

Then *Erdeni-yin tobči* goes into some strange-sounding phrasings:

"Thereupon Bayan Möngke Bolkhu Jinong, after three years had passed

6) Haenisch, 54v.-56v.; Wada, pp. 333-342; Okada 1966.

7) Haenisch, 56r.-60v.; Okada 1966.

after the year of uu-mouse (1468) when he was twenty-nine years old, passed away murdered by five men of the Yöngshiyebü, Keriye, Chaghan, Temür, Möngke and Khara Badai in the year of ging-tiger (1470) at the age of thirty-one (tedüi bayan möngke bolqu jinong qorin yisün-iyen uu quluγuna jil-eče γurban od boluγad: γučin nigen-iyen ging bars jil-e yöngsiyebü-yin keriy-e: čaγan: temür: möngke: qara badai tabuγulada qoroγaγdan qalibai:).”⁸⁾

In this sentence, the clause “after three years had passed after the year of uu-mouse when he was twenty-nine years old” serves no purpose whatsoever as nothing is mentioned as happening in that year. The year, on the other hand, is the one directly after the year of ding-pig in which Mandughulun Khaghan’s death is placed. As it is our historian’s formula to count the reign of a Khan starting from the year next to that of his predecessor’s death, there is a strong suspicion that Bayan Möngke Bolkhu Jinong might have been described as a Khan and Mandughulun’s successor in original sources.

True enough, Blo-bzang-bstan-‘dzin’s *Altan tobči* clearly states: “Later Bayan Möngke Bolkhu Jinong Khaghan sat on the great throne in the year of pig (1479) and reigned for four years (qoyina bayan möngke bolqu jonong qaγan qaγai jil-dür yeke oro dörben jil saγuγsan-dur:),” proving that there was a Mongol tradition that the Jinong had assumed the title of Khan after Mandughulun’s death. It is further corroborated by Chinese sources which call him “Little King (Hsiao wang-tzu)” and reports his death in 1487. Saghang Sechen Khong Tayiji seems reluctant to admit that there was a Jinong who had proclaimed himself Khan as early as the fifteenth century.⁹⁾

It is not the only instance that our historian tries to suppress a precedent of a Jinong-Khan, however. According to *Erdeni-yin tobči*, Prince Batu Möngke marries Mandukhui Sechen Khatun, a widow of Mandughulun, and becomes known as Dayan Khaghan. He has seven sons and a daughter, all in twins, by this queen. When the three Right-Wing myriarchies ask him for a prince to be Jinong over them, Dayan Khaghan sends his second son Ulus Bolad to them. The prince is murdered while worshipping Chinggis in his enthronement ceremony. Dayan Khaghan campaigns to punish them leading the three Left-Wing myriarchies, and installs his third son Barsubolad as new Jinong.

Altan tobči tells us that Dayan Khaghan died after a reign of thirty-seven years, that is, in 1524.

“Thereafter, as Bodi Alagh was still young, his uncle sat on the great throne. Later Bodi Alagh Khaghan, leading the three Left-Wing myriarchies, went to worship at the Eight White Yurts and sit as Khaghan, and sternly reprimanded his uncle, saying: ‘Since you have sat on the

8) Haenisch, 61r.-61v.; Okada 1965.

9) Altan Tobči, Dooradu Debter, p. 154; Wada, pp. 381-396, 439.

throne taking advantage of my young age without a legitimate claim to the Khanship, do homage to me now. If you do not do so to me, your legitimate master, I will make war on you.' Barsu Bolad Jonong Khaghan thought these words right, and spoke, saying: 'I will do homage to you.' Saying: 'If you keep these words it will be all right,' Bodi Alagh was allowed to worship at the Eight White Yurts and sit on the great throne."¹⁰⁾

Bodi Alagh is the son of Törö Bolad, Dayan Khaghan's eldest son who died before his father. This important episode is completely ignored by Saghang Sechen Khong Tayiji, although this Barsubolad Jinong was the great-great-grandfather of his master Boshoghtu Jinong and the great-grandfather of his own great-grandfather Khutughtai Sechen Khong Tayiji. Here again we have an instance of a Jinong's taking over Khanship being suppressed in *Erdeni-yin tobči*.

First, a Jinong, who betrays his brother and becomes Khan himself, is made to meet a violent death. Second, a Jinong has the reference to his Khanship taken out of the account of his reign. Third, a Jinong's usurpation of Khanship is passed over. We have but to conclude that Saghang Sechen Khong Tayiji had a negative attitude against Jinongs assuming the title of Khan. The only exception is his description of the occasion of 1614, on which Boshoghtu Jinong was made Khan by the Tibetan high lama. Why?

We don't know an exact reason, but we may point out that it was also an occasion of personal triumph for our historian, who then was allowed to inherit the title of Sechen Khong Tayiji which had been in his family since the time of his great-grandfather. Had he chosen to ignore this instance of a Jinong becoming Khan, he would never have been able to explain his own exalted title.

This negative attitude of Saghang Sechen Khong Tayiji against Jinongs becoming Khans may well reflect his hidden feelings about the Manchu emperors who were now the Khans of the Mongols as well. After all it was his firm contention that Khanship should only rest on heirs of Chinggis Khan descending in a direct line. In the episode of Aghbarji Jinong's treachery to his brother, our historian makes Kharghuchugh Tayiji counsel the father, saying: "Hovering above are two: the sun and the moon; on earth below are two: the Khaghan and the Jinong; among those who are descendants of Sutai are two: the Tayishi and the Chingsang (degere kögerigčide naran saran qoyar: door-a körösütüde qaγan ĵinong qoyar: sutai-yin ür-e teden-e tayisi: čingsang qoyar bolai:)." Sutai is a hypothetical female ancestor of the Oyirad, while Chinggis Khan is called Sutu, its masculine form. This goes to illustrate how he felt about non-Chinggisids calling themselves Khans.¹¹⁾

10) Altan Tobči, Dooradu Debter, pp. 176-177; Okada 1965.

11) Haenisch, 56v.

Thus we may conclude that Saghang Sechen Khong Tayiji's anti-Manchu feelings were at least part of the reason why he undertook to compose his chronicle in 1662, eighteen years after the Manchu conquest of China.

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