

ZIMMERMANN suggested his taking a couple of reliable servants and returning home via Suchow. This plan seemed to appeal to him, and at last he really decided to start out. He chose TO CHIA (DODJA)¹, a Chinese, and the Mongol ÖLJASUNG to accompany him.

The very next day, April 28th, the party set out; but as MA intended to make only a short march of twenty kilometers on the first day he asked ZIMMERMANN to send a messenger after him with any letters that he might not have had time to finish. The work of packing and loading was performed in haste, and finally only an axe was wanting. He would need this to chop fuel for the camp-fires.

ZIMMERMANN accompanied him a bit of the way before taking final leave of him and wishing him a happy journey.

The next day ZIMMERMANN sent a messenger to catch up MA with some letters that were to be posted in Suchow. The man caught up MA before the latter had set out in the morning.

MA sent ÖLJASUNG after the camels. When, half an hour later, the Mongol returned with the animals from pasture MA came rushing out of his tent swinging the axe and frothing at the mouth. He made straight for the camel-man, who saw at once that it was a matter of life or death and bolted. When at a safe distance he turned round, he saw that the madman had halted and was inflicting the most horrible wounds on himself with the axe. ÖLJASUNG thereupon ran back to Tsondol and gasped out what had happened.

Early on the morning of the 30th ZIMMERMANN, ÖLJASUNG and four others set out from Tsondol for MA's camp. On their arrival they found MA's tent reduced to ashes, and in the charred heap they discovered the corpse of TO CHIA with burned clothes. Five meters from the tent lay MA — dead. He had inflicted ghastly wounds on his temples, wrists and chest.

Nothing was touched. The two dead men were left lying just as they had fallen. The servant had received a fatal blow with the axe in the nape of the neck. ZIMMERMANN drew up a report of the state in which he had found the camp and despatched it by express messenger to the Torgut prince, requesting that it might be sent on to the authorities in Suchow.

On May 2nd the two corpses were buried on the site of the tragedy. Everything that was left was packed in chests and sealed. MA's yurt at the station was also sealed.

One naturally asks oneself why the young Chinese student MA suddenly became insane. The medical examination to which he submitted before becoming a member of the expedition revealed no other defect besides a somewhat too rapid pulse, but this was not considered any obstacle to his setting out with the expedition. Shortly before SIU and I left the Edsen-gol, MA had informed SIU that he did not

¹ His real name seems to have been CHAO WAN-WU. F. B.