

four horses and made them run races round the emperor's sepulchre until they could not stir a foot; they next set up close to it a great mast, to which they suspended those horses after driving a wooden stake right through their bodies from tail to mouth. The Kán's kinsfolk also, mentioned above, were placed in subterranean cells, each with his arms and the plate belonging to his house. Adjoining the tombs of the principal men among them to the number of ten they set up empaled horses, three to each, and beside the remaining tombs they impaled one horse a-piece.¹

¹ This appears to be a very correct account of Tartar funeral ceremonies, though Ibn Batuta certainly did not witness those of a defunct emperor. As far back as the days of Herodotus we are told that the Scythians used to bury with their king one of his concubines, his cup-bearer, a cook, groom, lacquey, messenger, several horses, etc., and a year later further ceremonial took place, when fifty selected from his attendants were strangled, and fifty of his finest horses also slain. The bowels were taken out and replaced with chaff. A number of posts were then erected in sets of two pairs each, and on every pair the half felly of a wheel was set arch-wise; "then strong stakes are run lengthwise through the bodies of the horses from tail to neck, and they are mounted on the fellies so that the felly in front supports the shoulders of the horse while that behind sustains the belly and quarters, the legs dangling in mid air; each horse is furnished with a bit and bridle," etc. The fifty strangled slaves were then set astride on the horses, and so on.

When one Valentine was sent on a mission to the Turkish chiefs by the Emperor Tiberius II about 580, it is related that he witnessed a ceremonial at the tomb of a deceased chief when Hun prisoners and horses were sacrificed.

Huc and Gabet assert that like practices are maintained among Tartar tribes to the present day, large amounts of gold and silver, and many slaves of both sexes, being buried with the royal body, the slaves being killed by being made to swallow mercury till choked, which is believed to preserve their colour!

But the most exact corroboration of Ibn Batuta's account is to be found in the (almost) contemporary narrative of Ricold of Monte Croce. After speaking of the general practice of burying food and raiment with the dead, he goes on, "Magni etiam barones omnibus hiis addunt equum bonum. Nam armiger ejus ascendit equum, cum ipsi parant se ad sepeliendum mortuum, et fatigat equum currendo et revolvendo usque ad lassitudinem, et postea lavit equo caput cum vino puro et forti, et equus cadit, et ipse exenterat eum, et evacuat omnia de ventre equi, et implet herba viridi, et postea infigit palum magnum per posteriora, et facit palum