

exceptional events; there can be no doubt that the original *Secret History* had no date, and that the whole sentence is a late interpolation.

CHARIGNON says (*Ch*, I, 171) that RAMUSIO gives 1162 as the date of the birth of Chinghiz-khan, but no text of Polo, in RAMUSIO or elsewhere, says anything about his birth. The date of « 1162 » in RAMUSIO is that of Chinghiz-khan's accession to the sovereignty, corresponding to « 1187 » in most mss, « 1287 » in a few others, and « 1172 » in V (« 1172 » for R in Vol. I, 162, n. 3, is a slip). I shall speak of this further on.

THE CLOT OF BLOOD. — According to the *Secret History* (§ 59), Chinghiz-khan was born with a clot of blood (*nödün* > modern Mong. *nöjin*, *nöji*, Kalm. *nödžig*) in the shape of a knuckle-bone (*ši'a*, *ši'ai*, class. Mong. *šiyai*, Kalm. *šayā*) in his right hand; this clot of blood is also mentioned in *Shêng-wu ch'in-chêng lu*, 1 b, in YS, 1, 2 a, and in Rašidu-'d-Dīn (*Ber*, II, 87). Buddhist works of the beginning of our era like the *Aśokāvadāna* (cf. PRZYLUSKI, *La légende de l'Empereur Aśoka*, 400-401) and the *Tsa a-han ching* (ch. 25; Meiji *Tripit.* of Tōkyō, 辰, III, 45 a) have a prophecy about the cruel kings who will destroy the Buddhist Law. The fourth one they say will be a king of Kauśambī, called Mahāsenā. Mahāsenā will have a son who will be born clad in armour, and holding blood in his hand. Five hundred chiefs of families will at that same moment have five hundred sons, who will all be born clad in armour and holding blood in their hands. On that day, a great rain of blood will fall. The diviners will foretell that Mahāsenā's son will reign over the whole world, but that, unfortunately, his victims will be many. The clot of blood in the hand of Chinghiz-khan is interpreted in almost the same terms on the birth of the child in Abū-'l-Ghāzī (cf. DESMAISONS, *Hist. des Mogols*, II, 73). The coincidence is the more striking when we remember that Chinghiz-khan, by the very title he assumed, pretended to be a universal monarch and that later texts of the Mongol period unreservedly call him by the corresponding Indian title of *cakravartin*. Yet, there is no trace of Lamaism, or of Buddhism in general, in the *Secret History*, entirely pervaded as it is with the shamanistic spirit. The probable explanation is that the detail of the clot of blood of the early Buddhist texts was or became an element of folklore which spread among the shamanistic tribes of Upper Asia, and of which we ought to be able to discover other traces.

ERDMANN (*Temudschin*, 255), citing DUBEUX, *La Perse*, 230, says that, in the Iranian tradition, Rustam, like Chinghiz-khan, was born with blood in his hand. The case is not so simple, and I had to turn to my colleague E. BENVENISTE to get a more precise explanation of the facts. The passage relating to Rustam's miraculous birth varies in the different redactions of the *Šāh-nāmāh*. In the editions due to MOHL and to VULLERS, nothing is said of blood in Rustam's hands. But, in the so-called Calcutta text (MACAN ed., I, 163, vv. 11-12), we read: « The hair of his head was all red, and his face like blood. Like the bright sun, he made his appearance. He was born from his mother with both hands full of blood (*dō dast-aš pur az hūn zə-mādar bazād*). Nobody had ever seen such a child. » This mention of the hands full of blood does not occur in the traditional accounts of Rustam, nor has it been commented upon by modern interpreters. It is not easy to decide whether it belongs to Firdaūsi's original text, or is an interpolation prompted by the description given in the preceding lines. But, even if we admit that it is an interpolation,