

only for health of mind and body. But] they have [also] a certain [other] god of theirs called NATIGAY, and they say he is the god of the Earth, who watches over their children, cattle, and crops. They show him great worship and honour, and every man hath a figure of him in his house, made of felt and cloth; and they also make in the same manner images of his wife and children. The wife they put on the left hand, and the children in front. And when they eat, they take the fat of the meat and grease the god's mouth withal, as well as the mouths of his wife and children. Then they take of the broth and sprinkle it before the door of the house; and that done, they deem that their god and his family have had their share of the dinner.¹

Their drink is mare's milk, prepared in such a way that you would take it for white wine; and a right good drink it is, called by them *Kemiz*.²

The clothes of the wealthy Tartars are for the most part of gold and silk stuffs, lined with costly furs, such as sable and ermine, vair and fox-skin, in the richest fashion.

NOTE I.—There is no reference here to Buddhism, which was then of recent introduction among the Mongols; indeed, at the end of the chapter, Polo speaks of their new adoption of the Chinese idolatry, *i.e.* Buddhism. We may add here that the Buddhism of the Mongols decayed and became practically extinct after their expulsion from China (1368-1369). The old Shamanism then apparently revived; nor was it till 1577 that the great reconversion of Mongolia to Lamaism began. This reconversion is the most prominent event in the Mongol history of Sanang Setzen, whose great-grandfather Khutuktai Setzen, Prince of the Ordos, was a chief agent in the movement.

The Supreme Good Spirit appears to have been called by the Mongols *Tengri* (Heaven), and *Khormuzda*, and is identified by Schmidt with the Persian Hormuzd. In Buddhist times he became identified with Indra.

Plano Carpini's account of this matter is very like Marco's: "They believe in one God, the Maker of all things, visible and invisible, and the Distributor of good and evil in this world; but they worship Him not with prayers or praises or any kind of service. Natheless, they have certain idols of felt, imitating the human face, and having underneath the face something resembling teats; these they place on either side of the door. These they believe to be the guardians of the flocks, from whom they have the boons of milk and increase. Others they fabricate of bits of silk, and these are highly honoured; . . . and whenever they begin to eat or drink, they first offer these idols a portion of their food or drink."