

tokum.' *Tokum* signifies 'a hollow, a low place,' according to the Chinese translation of the above-mentioned biography, made in 1381; thus Barhuchin tokum undoubtedly corresponds to M. Polo's Plain of Bargu. As to M. Polo's statement that the inhabitants of Bargu were Merkits, it cannot be accepted unconditionally. The Merkits were not indigenous to the country near Baikal, but belonged originally, —according to a division set forth in the Mongol text of the *Yuan ch'ao pi shi*,— to the category of tribes *living in yurts*, i.e. nomad tribes, or tribes of the desert. Meanwhile we find in the same biography of Chingis Khan, mention of a people called Barhun, which belonged to the category of tribes *living in the forests*; and we have therefore reason to suppose that the Barhuns were the aborigines of Barhu. After the time of Chingis Khan, this ethnographic name disappears from Chinese history; it appears again in the middle of the 16th century. The author of the *Yyu* (1543-1544), in enumerating the tribes inhabiting Mongolia and the adjacent countries, mentions the Barhu, as a strong tribe, able to supply up to several tens of thousands (?) of warriors, armed with steel swords; but the country inhabited by them is not indicated. The Mongols, it is added, call them Black Ta-tze (Khara Mongols, i.e. 'Lower Mongols').

"At the close of the 17th century, the Barhus are found inhabiting the western slopes of the interior Hing'an, as well as between Lake Kulon and River Khalkha, and dependent on a prince of eastern Khalkhas, Doro beile. (Manchu title.)

"At the time of Galdan Khan's invasion, a part of them fled to Siberia with the eastern Khalkhas, but afterwards they returned. [*Mung ku yew mu ki* and *Lung sha ki lio*.] After their rebellion in 1696, quelled by a Manchu General, they were included with other petty tribes (regarding which few researches have been made) in the category *butkha*, or hunters, and received a military organisation. They are divided into Old and New Barhu, according to the time when they were brought under Manchu rule. The Barhus belong to the Mongolian, not to the Tungusian race; they are sometimes considered even to have been in relationship with the Khalkhas. (*He lung kiang wai ki* and *Lung sha ki lio*.)

"This is all the substantial information we possess on the Barhu. Is there an affinity to be found between the modern Barhus and the Barhuns of Chingis Khan's biography?—and is it to be supposed, that in the course of time, they spread from Lake Baikal to the Hing'an range? or is it more correct to consider them a branch of the Mongol race indigenous to the Hing'an Mountains, and which received the general archaic name of Bargu, which might have pointed out the physical character of the country they inhabited [*Kin Shi*], just as we find in history the Urianghai of Altai and the Urianghai of Western Manchuria? It is difficult to solve this question for want of historical data."—H. C.]

*Mescript*, or *Mecri*, as in G. T. The *Merkit*, a great tribe to the south-east of the Baikal, were also called *Mekrit*, and sometimes *Megrin*. The *Mekrit* are spoken of also by Carpini and Rubruquis. D'Avezac thinks that the *Kerait*, and not the *Merkit*, are intended by all three travellers. As regards Polo, I see no reason for this view. The name he uses is *Mekrit*, and the position which he assigns to them agrees fairly with that assigned on good authority to the *Merkit* or *Mekrit*. Only, as in other cases, where he is rehearsing hearsay information, it does not follow that the identification of the name involves the correctness of all the circumstances that he connects with that name. We saw in ch. xxx. that under *Pashai* he seemed to lump circumstances belonging to various parts of the region from Badakhshan to the Indus; so here under *Mekrit* he embraces characteristics belonging to tribes extending far beyond the *Mekrit*, and which in fact are appropriate to the Tunguses. Rashiduddin seems to describe the latter under the name of *Uriangkut* of the Woods, a people dwelling beyond the frontier of Barguchin, and in connection with whom he speaks of their Reindeer obscurely, as well as of their tents of birch bark, and their hunting on snow-shoes.

The mention of the Reindeer by Polo in this passage is one of the interesting points which Pauthier's text omits. Marsden objects to the statement that the stags