

Y.C. According to D'Ohsson, as quoted by Yule, the Kará Khitáy Empire was founded by a Prince of the Leao dynasty, who, on its fall before the Kin, in the beginning of the twelfth century, escaped from North China. He is the Yelin Táshí of the Chinese, and the Fushi Taifu of Rashíduddín. He was well received by the Uighúr and others, subjects of the Khita Empire to the west of the desert, and ultimately, acquiring power and strength, conquered all the country up to Khwáhrizm, and in 1125 A.D. took the title of Gorkhán. His capital was Balásághún, and his religion was Buddhist.

He was succeeded in turn by a son and grandson, and the latter was reigning, when in 1208 A.D. the son of the last Khán of the Christian Náymán sought refuge at the Court of Kará Khitáy, and married the daughter of Gorkhán. He plotted against his benefactor, ultimately captured him, and took possession of most of his country. He abandoned Christianity at the bid of his wife, and in the end was slain in the mountains of Badakhshán by the Moghol under Changiz in 1218 A.D.

According to the French Monk William de Rubruquis, who was sent to Tatory on a mission to Bátú Khan by Louis IX of France when that sovereign was in Palestine, and who extended his travels to the Court of Mangú Khan, and the city of Karákoram, as quoted by the same author, Kará Khitáy was a name used in distinction from the proper Khitay. They dwelt in an alpine country north of Khitá, where in a plain amongst the mountains dwelt the Náymán tribe of Nestorian Christians. Their Chief, on the death of Gorkhán, the Kará Khitáy Ruler, rose to be King in his place, and was called by the Nestorians "King John," the Prester John of Europe. He was known by this name but to few in the time of Rubruquis when Kin Khan held the country.

This King John had a brother, who, like himself, was a great shepherd, and dwelt three weeks journey off on the other side of the Kará Khitáy mountains, where his capital was the small town of Karákoram. His name was Aong Khan, and his people the Karait and Makrit, who were also Christians, though their Lord became an idolator. Beyond his pastures, at from ten to fifteen days' journey, were the Moghol tribe, a poor people, without a leader or religion, except that of soothsayers and sorcerers. Beyond the Moghol or Moal was another poor tribe, the Tártár.

This Aong Khan, or Unc Cham, the Chief of the Karait of Karákoram, is the Tuli of the Chinese writers, and the Toghrol of the Persian. He got the title Unc, or Aong, or Wáng, as it appears in different authors, and which is equivalent to Khán = "Chief," "Lord" from Kin, the sovereign of North China. Aong Khan, on the death of his brother, King John, became Khán, and his flocks spread over the country to the Moghol borders. At this time there was amongst the Moghol tribes a blacksmith, Tamújin or Tamúrchi, who used to lift the cattle of Aong Khan's people; and they complaining to him, he invaded the Moghol lands, and drove Tamújin to refuge amongst the Tártár.

T.N. According to the Tabcáti Násirí, written by Minhájuddín 'Uthman, Jauzjaní in 658 H. = 1259 A.D., Tamúrchi Tártár, Chief of the Moghol tribe, was the father of Changíz. One day out a hunting he got a *toghrol* or "crane" or "crested heron," and stuck its plumes in his cap by way of ornament. From this circumstance he was named Toghruktakin = "Toghrol by name." The Turk tribe had a separate Chief, but both Turk and Moghol were the subjects of Altán Khan of Tamgháj. They were a thieving, adulterous, and reprobate people and altogether wicked.

Such in brief is what is known of the antecedents of Gorkhán, who now, on the decline of the Sanjar rule, appears upon the scene.

R.S. About this period there was at Balásághún, the Kúbalígh of the Moghol, a Khán or Ruler of Afrásyáb descent. His power was declining, and he was constantly harassed by the incursions of the neighbouring predatory tribes of Cárligh, Cánculí, and Kapchák. And in his distress he turned for aid to the Gorkhán of the Kará Khitáy.