MÉLANGES CHINOIS ET BOUDDHIQUES

VOLUME XVII

HENRY SERRUYS, C.I.C.M.

SINO-MONGOL RELATIONS DURING THE MING

III

TRADE RELATIONS: THE HORSE FAIRS

(1400-1600)

Publié avec l'aide financière du Ministère de l'Education Nationale et de la Culture Française

INSTITUT BELGE DES HAUTES ETUDES CHINOISES

10, PARC DU CINQUANTENAIRE

1040 BRUXELLES

1975

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PREFACE

This study of trade relations of the Mongols with Ming China is but a complementary part of my previous research into the tribute system of the same period, and for practical considerations should have been treated together with it. In fact the two studies are largely based on the same materials, and invitably a certain amount of duplication or repetition proved to be necessary if the matter of trade was to be treated fully and independently. Unfortunately for various reasons the publication of the Trade Relations has been repeatedly delayed.

As I have explained in my volume on the Tribute, most of the information regarding tribute and trade comes from the *Ming Shih-lu*. Most of the pertinent material will be found in the *Mindai Mammô shiryô, Minjitsuroku-shô, Môkohen* 10 vols., and *Manshû hen* 6 vols. published by the late Haneda Toru and continued by Professor Tamura Jitsuzô. These handsome volumes contain virtually everything worthwhile regarding the Mongols and the Jürčen-Manchus in the *Ming shih-lu*. At that time no complete edition of the *Ming shih-lu* was available to me, except for occasional visits to the Chinese section of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Later I obtained a copy of the *Ming shih-lu* published by the Academia Sinica, Taipei (1961-1966). By that time my text was already completed in its present form, but I did check all references against this new edition for the convenience of readers who do not possess the Haneda-Tamura excerpts. Only in a few cases was I unable to find the relevant passages : either the new edition of the *Ming shih-lu* does not contain them, or perhaps lists them under another date.

This history of tribute and trade of the Mongols throws considerable light on life in Mongolia in those days : the needs and possibilities, and the resulting influence upon the question of peace and war with China. Although factors operating in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries have changed considerably in later times, an understanding of their interplay in earlier centuries may yet contribute towards a better evaluation of modern events.

For the sake of accuracy and completeness I wish to list a new book that came to my attention long after I had finished my manuscript of the study of Sino-Mongol trade : Sechen Jagchid (Cha-ch'i Ssu-ch'in 札奇斯欽), *Pei-Ya yu-mu min-tsu yü Chung-yüan nung-yeh min-tsu chien-ti ho-p'ing, chan-cheng, yü mao-i chih kuan-hsi* 北亞游牧民族與中原農業民族間的和平戰爭與貿易之關係 (Peace, War, and Trade Relations between Northern Asian Nomadic Peoples and China's Agricultural people), Taipei, 1972, 584 pp. As the title indicates, Mr. Jagchid investigates much more than the question of trade, and moreover, he covers the whole history from the Ch'in and the Han down to the Ming period. While one might question some of Jagchid's minor conclusions, his book is a remarkable study, a major contribution with many illuminating insights.

Henry Serruys, c.i.c.m.
Arlington, Virginia.

SIGLA

MSCSPM : *Ming-shih chi-shih pen-mo*
Mok. : *Mindai... Môkohen.*
Man. : *Mindai... Manshûhen.*
SYCTK : *San-Yün ch'ou-tsu k'ao*
TMHT : *Ta-Ming hui-tien*
WLWKL : *Wan-li wu-kung lu*

I

PRE-MING

Not too much is known about trade between China and the Northern tribes in pre-Ming times. As an introduction to a study of Sino-Mongol trade of the Ming period we need do no more than present a few facts to contrast them with the Mongol trade of the Ming Dynasty. Under both the Sui and the T'ang dynasties, there existed an Inspectorate of Markets (*Hu-shih chien* 互市監) where the T'u-chüeh (Turks) could sell horses, camels, donkeys, and cattle[1]. In 594, a T'u-chüeh delegation arrived with a large tribute of horses, sheep, and camels, and presented a request that markets be established along the borders to trade with the Chinese. It should be noted from the outset that tribute itself was a form of trade no matter how much the Chinese traditionally stressed the ceremonial aspect of the tribute : tribute articles presented at the Court were generously remunerated, and every tribute mission, in addition to tribute articles, carried goods for sale to the Chinese. The 594 request was granted by the emperor[2]. Freedom to trade on the Chinese market, however, could not be taken for granted, and there were periods when all trade with northern and north-western tribes was forbidden[3].

In the biography of P'ei Chü 裴矩 in the *Sui-shu* we read that many Barbarians from the Western Regions used to come to

[1] *Sui-shu* 28.13b; *Chiu T'ang-shu* 44.15b; *T'ang-shu* 48.12a, 13a. Liu 58. 454; des Rotours 47. 459, 475.

[2] *Sui-shu* 84. 4b; Liu 58. 56.

[3] *Sui-shu* 85. 1b. Liu 58. 454.

Chang-i 張掖 in Kansu to trade with the Chinese; but the same biography also shows how the Chinese exploited this desire of the T'u-chüeh to trade to influence intertribal politics. For example, at one time this P'ei Chü sent a message to a certain chieftain that the emperor was at Ma-i 馬邑 in Shansi and had brought many valuables intended for sale to anyone who would care to come; without consulting others, this chieftain at the head of his own subjects hurried to Ma-i with his herds and fell into an ambush set for just such an eventuality[4].

The chapter on the T'u-chüeh in the *(Hsin) T'ang-shu*[5] relates that when in 624 a T'u-chüeh chieftain sent envoys to Pei-lou-kuan 北樓關 with a request to trade, the emperor thought it in advisable to reject the request. Pei-lou-kuan must be the same as Pei-lou-k'ou 北口 in Northern Shansi repeatedly referred to in Ming times, although by this time it was no longer a market place for the Mongols[6].

Another trading center of the T'ang was T'ai-yüan 太原, also in Shansi province. Liu Mautsai quotes a long passage from the *Ta-T'ang ch'uang-yeh ch'i-chü-chu* 大唐創業起居注 by Wen Ta-ya 溫大雅 in which appears a reference to trading at T'ai-yüan : the T'u-chüeh brought one thousand horses but the emperor consented to buy the best horses only, about one half of the total amount, and when soldiers expressed their desire to purchase the other half, he advised against it because the horses were too small, and, besides, he was afraid that if the Chinese showed too much eagerness to buy, the T'u-chüeh might reach the conclusion that China was badly in need of horses[7]. During the first half of the Ming Dynasty need for Korean, Mongol, and Central Asian horses is often mentioned, and the same need may well have existed at earlier times.

[4] *Sui-shu* 67.5a; 6b. Liu 58. 86, 88.

[5] *T'ang-shu* 215A. 4b. Liu 58. 186, 454.

[6] For Pei-lou-k'ou, see the *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao*, ch. 40, 1714; ch. 44, p. 1867.

[7] Liu 58. 367-368.

The T'u-chüeh also went to the T'ang capital to trade[8], but in 727, Western Shou-hsiang-ch'eng 受降城 (City for the Reception of Surrendered [Barbarians]), situated north of the great bend of the Yellow River, was designated as a trading place and some one hundred thousand bolts of silk were sent annually by the government to pay for the horses, cattle, etc.[9]. There were a few other markets along the Northern borders.

T'u-chüeh horses were paid for with silk and gold[10], and probably also other goods. Although silk must have been the more common means of exchange, at one time, according to Po Chü-i, fifty pieces of silk were the price of one horse, but with the increasing demand for silk, its quality fell so low and the pieces were so short that foreigners demanded partial payment in gold[11].

Liu Mautsai speaking of the T'ang period, says that the T'u-chüeh were too simple and unsophisticated to satisfy their needs through peaceful trade with China; instead, they chose the "easier" way of plunder[12]. One finds it hard to accept this view. It is more probable that the situation was far more complicated, and more likely than not the T'u-chüeh felt more or less like the Mongol Altan-qan who in 1542 had his envoys explain to border officials that the Mongol princes fascinated as they were with Chinese satins and silks knew of only two ways of getting them : either through legitimate tribute and trade, or through plunder raids. Trade, however, was not always possible, and razzias of the northern country side yielded some prisoners of war, animals, and other loot, but very little satin or silk. In other words, according to the Altan-qan, plunder raids were less profitable to the nomads than is usually believed. Not only were raids a poor substitute for tribute and trade relations but also involved a certain amount of danger[13]. One reason, not necessarily the only one, why the T'u-chüeh continued to violate the Chinese borders

[8] *T'ang-shu* 46. 7a. des Rotours 47. 95; Liu 58. 455.
[9] *Chiu T'ang-shu* 194A. 11b; *T'ang-shu* 50. 7b; 215B. 2a. Liu 58. 179.
[10] *T'ang-shu* 50. 7b. Liu 58. 454.
[11] Liu 58. 453. Waley 49. 55. Schafer 63. 63-64.
[12] Liu 58. 426.
[13] *Mok.* 6. 270; *Shih SL* (82) 5209.

may have been that the volume of trade allowed by the T'ang was not sufficient to satisfy their need for Chinese luxury goods and daily commodities either for their own use or for trade with other nations.

By the time of the Sung Dynasty, China faced in the Ch'i-tan (Liao) and the Jurčen (Chin) enemies far more dangerous and aggressive than the Mongols of the Ming period. Whereas the Mongols of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries most of the time limited themselves to border raids, the Sung had to defend themselves against continued aggression for conquest. What transactions there were between the Sung and their Northern neighbors seem to have consisted mainly of payment of tribute by Chinese to placate the enemy. Not that there was no trade between Sung China and the Liao and Chin empires : the Liao imported medicines, incense, rhinoceros horns, ivory, tea, sapan wood, lacquered objects, pearls, sulphur, niter, porcelain ware, books, and of course, silk; they exported skins, wool, and even live sheep; also such large quantities of salt that the Sung finances became greatly overstrained[14].

Since the Liao and Chin empires occupied large sections of North China, there must have been a good deal of trade between tribes and Chinese within the borders independently of relations with the Sung.

The nature of most of the goods imported from Sung China indicated that the purchases were destined for people far more influenced by Chinese culture than the Mongols of the Ming era.

In addition to trade between the Southern and Northern halves of the Liao and Chin empires, and between the Liao and the Chin on the one hand and the Sung on the other, there was also trade between all those countries and Central Asia, but little seems to be known about the manner it was conducted. Prof. Yang has pointed out that the Uighurs exported large amounts of gold and silver from Sung China, and the government tried to stop this outflow of gold[15].

[14] Wittfogel-Feng 49.174.
[15] Yang 5o. 224.

Uighur traders were also active, if not more so, under the Yüan Dynasty which united all of China and Mongolia into one empire. The Sung travelers P'eng Ta-ya and Hsü T'ing in the 1230s state that the Mongols as a rule concerned themselves very little with trade but lent their silver to Mohammedan traders, the ortaq associations, and collected high interests from them[16]. Rašid al Dîn tells us how Xwarezm traders were very much attracted by the profits to be made in Mongolia, and Činggis himself was greatly interested in this trade[17]. The *Secret History of the Mongols* relates that the Sartaγ Asan drove a thousand sheep and a white camel all the way from Önggüd territory in Southern Mongolia to the Ergüne river in the northeast to buy sables and squirrels[18]. During his travels through Northern Mongolia on his way to Činggis-qan's headquarters in 1221, the Taoist Ch'ang-ch'un learned that flour was extremely expensive in Mongolia because it had to be imported by foreign traders from the Western lands[19]. As is well known, the ortaq associations monopolizing most of the trade in China under the Yüan enjoyed extensive privileges and grossly misused their power. They traded in China, but also peddled their wares in Mongolia, and so did Chinese traders. What the Mongols wanted mostly was silks, iron tripods, probably here meaning pots in general, and "color-wood" (*se-mu* 色 木); the Mongols paid with sheep and horses[20].

These few facts are recalled only as an indication that trade with the Northern neighbors goes back to pre-Ming times and it was quite natural that it should continue once the Ming emperors had established themselves in Peking.

16 *Hei-Ta shih-lüeh* 79.

17 Rašid al Dîn 52. 187-188.

18 *Yüan-ch'ao pi-shih* 6. 44a. Later on Mohammedan merchants continued to conduct business in Mongolia; at the time of the Ming expedition into Northeastern Mongolia and the battle near Buyur Lake in 1388, "several hundreds" of Samarqand traders fell into the hands of the Chinese. At first brought to China, they were sent back to their own country three years later (*T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 3132, 3141; (8) 3612).

19 Waley 31. 71.

20 *Hei-Ta shih-lüeh* 79.

II

TRADE OUTSIDE OF THE HORSE FAIRS

When studying Sino-Mongol trade of the Ming period, we find two different types of trade which may better be considered separately. First there are the many forms of trade conducted by tribute missions and independent traders in a large variety of exchanges carried out at the capital, as well as on the journey to and from there. Secondly there is the more formal trade centered on the Horse Fairs of Liaotung from the early days of the fifteenth century, and from 1570 on also in a number of border towns of Shansi and Shensi provinces. Since the trade along the borders came first, and in a way the Horse Fairs were a formalization and localization of the border trade, the latter will be discussed first. In this chapter we shall examine the several forms of trade outside the Horse Fairs. The history and the organization of the Horse Fairs will be dealt with in later chapters.

INFORMATION ABOUT TRADE IN GENERAL

The difficulty of studying "foreign trade" in such Chinese sources as the *Ming Shih-lu* is that trade is rarely considered for its own sake, but almost always within the framework of tribute relations and secundary to the tribute; in other words, in the official thinking of the Chinese, trade was but a secundary aspect of tribute relations. In the eyes of most Chinese officials trade was not important since China needed nothing from the Barbarians

abroad; yet it was unavoidable for the Barbarians, always in need of Chinese goods, became restless, even dangerous, if they could not obtain them in sufficient quantities. What the foreign tribes, the Mongols among them, needed were mainly foodstuffs, textiles such as cotton for the common people, silks and silk garments for the nobility, some household implements, drugs, and other Chinese manufactures. For this reason, foreign tribes willing to send tribute, give homage to the emperor and thereby declare themselves vassals and acknowledge Chinese suzerainty (at least theoretically) were also entitled to a certain amount of trade : a tribute mission arriving from Mongolia or Central Asia was entitled to trade not only at the borders when they first crossed into China, but all along the road to the capital, and finally at the capital itself after the official presentation of the tribute.

The view that Chinese needed nothing is, of course, questionable, and, as we shall see, at all times much was imported from Mongolia even during periods when no contact was officially allowed. Geographical and climatic conditions in Mongolia produced a way of life different from that of the Chinese; economic specialization of the nomads forced them to look to China for some commodities, but Mongolia too had something to offer : horses, cattle, meat, wool,hair, hides, etc.[1].

Whenever tribute relations broke down, as was the case in the sixteenth century, when the Ming for decades consistently refused tribute from the Mongols, trade opportunities also disappeared (at least officially), and as a rule border raids ensued. Indeed, the Mongols and the Jürčen in present-day Manchuria were determined to obtain the needed manufactures by raid and plunder if necessary.

As I have tried to show in my study of the Mongol tribute under the Ming, however much the Chinese flattered themselves with the expressed or implied vassalship of the Mongol princes or Jürčen tribal chiefs, the fact is that the Barbarians hardly

[1] Krader 52, 169-172.

considered themselves subjects of the Ming; secondly the Chinese return gifts for their tribute were of greater value than the tribute articles presented; the Barbarians even considered Chinese return gifts as a tax, an obligation, due to them for keeping the peace on the borders. The main, if not the only, reason for the Mongols to pay the tribute, was that they liked some Chinese manufactures, and even more luxury goods and that it was easier, less dangerous, and certainly more profitable to obtain them through tribute exchange and through trade. The whole situation can be reduced to the simple formula : tribute and trade or raids. I say "raids" on purpose. "War," I think, would be too strong a term. Speaking of the Ming period, forays and border violations, did not stem from a desire of conquest but from interruption of the flow of goods. Those border raids which the Ming never were in a position to prevent effectively, were annoying enough, often bitterly humiliating, and sometimes very destructive, but cannot be called "war".

L. Krader describes tribute exchange in general as "not one-way affairs, but actual exchanges, in vast quantities, in order to supply one's needs."[2] This statement, however, correct, needs qualification. Judging from the Ming sources, the Chinese reciprocated to tribute offerings almost exclusicely with textiles and clothes, mostly luxuries, apparently intended for conspicuous consumption by the chieftains and the nobility[3]. Commodities needed in every day life came mostly from trade : cotton, foodstuffs, iron kettles, agricultural tools, household implements, etc. Tribute exchange alone would not have provided the Mongols with these articles of daily use. But as we shall see, part of the luxury articles received as return presents for the tribute were used to pay for

[2] Krader 52. 174

[3] For conspicuous consumption, the employment of wealth for the purpose of status symbol, among the Tibetans, both sedentary and nomads, see Ekvall's remarks : Ekvall 64.155.

more ordinary goods. This way, at least part of the luxury goods did not serve for conspicuous consumption of the princes alone. In other words if the tribute ceremonial itself constituted a form of exchange of goods, trade carried on by tribute missions concerned a far wider range of goods. And of course the same is true of trade by traders who did not even pretend to present tribute. Yet the Chinese persisted in considering trade only within the framework of the tribute, and as a rule allowed trade only to those duly recognized as tributary vassals. From such a point of view trade needed rarely be mentioned : if one was a tributary, he was also entitled to some trade. It follows that the Ming sources will be exceedingly sparing in details regarding trade between China and her Northern neighbors : the kinds of goods exported and imported, prices, time and places of transactions, and the manner in which deals were concluded, etc., if mentioned at all, are mentioned only incidentally to other problems. It would seem that this sort of information was not worth the attention of scholar-officials, or at least of the compilers of the *Ming Shih-lu*, since this will be our main source. What details we are able to gather come largely from complaints about excesses and abuses by Chinese officials as well as by foreigners, and from measures intended to correct abuses and malpractices. Since trade was viewed as secundary, it is not surprising that our information is incidental, fragmentary, widely scattered, and in addition its interpretation often uncertain.

Needless to say that such information is liable to present a somewhat distorted view : by calling too much attention to what was out of joint, it gives the impression that nothing was properly done or working effectively. If from this point of view, our information is somewhat onesided, protests against malpractices and corruption at least tell us something of how things were supposed to be done, and how things may well have been conducted most of the time.

Another important factor which makes our information one-sided is that it comes from Chinese sources exclusively. Mongol

records, as far as I know, tell us nothing about trade with China during the Ming period, and Jürčen have left us no records at all.

With these reservations in mind, we shall make here a few observations on trade especially with the North, Central Asia, and Korea.

Trading caravans from Central Asia probably carrying as a cover some tribute to be forwarded to the Court are regularly mentioned from the very beginning of the Ming Dynasty. In 1380, the general P'u Ying 濮英[4] requested permission to send a military force westward in order to open the trade route to Qamil (Ha-mei-li)[5]; and since it appears that there were many more Central Asians coming to China than Chinese pushing into the northwest, this measure benefitted foreign traders most. Traders from abroad, however, were always more or less under suspicion of spying out the land, and in 1392, Kansu authorities were told that Mohammedan traders must not be allowed to come within 30 *li* of the city walls (of Su-chou, Kan-chou ?), and might enter no towns[6]. The emperor dispatched a letter to the king of Beš-baliq in 1397, protesting the detention of a Ming ambassador by the name of Könčeg (no doubt he was not Chinese) sent to Qamil, Beš-baliq, and Samarqand; in his letter the emperor said among other things that ever since his accession to the throne, Central Asian traders had been coming to China, had never been molested by border officials and made great profits[7].

References to trade become more numerous during the Yung-lo era and in most cases a connection with tribute relations is implied. In 1402, in an address to officials of the Ministry of Rites, the emperor stated that during the reign of his predecessor, *T'ai-tsu*, foreign countries used to send envoys to come to Court and these

[4] Biography in *Ming-shih* 133. III. 1692b-93a.
[5] *T'ai-tsu SL* (5) 2078.
[6] *T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 3180.
[7] *T'ai-tsu SL* (8) 3611-12.

were always treated with utmost courtesy; those who had native products to sell were free to do so[8]. The emperor seems to be speaking of Southeast Asian countries in particular, but his statement applies to Central Asia as well. In 1403, speaking of Southeast Asian countries, the emperor said that as their tribute missions carried goods for sale, he wanted appropriate Offices set up in Chechiang, Fuchien, and Kuangtung to control the trade; a little later in the same year, the emperor called attention to the fact that foreign missions, and here he seems to have had Japan in mind in particular, must not import weapons for sale to the populace[9]. An interesting text from 1405 shows that some foreign countries considered the tribute sent to the Ming Court as a regular trade outlet : a tribute mission from the Uighurs of An-ting 安定 (in westernmost Kansu, then not under direct Ming control) asked and obtained permission "according to the regulations" to send annually one tenth of their animals[10]. This seems also to imply that a sort of maximum quota of tribute was imposed. From 1403 to 1413, we find a number of imperial rescripts addressed to the military authorities in Kansu from which we are able to gather some facts relative to Central Asian, or "Mohammedan" merchants : tribute missions were free to sell horses in Shensi, and must not be molested[11]; from every group of merchants a few men might be forwarded to the Court (presumably to trade at the capital)[12]; traders came regularly to Liang-chou and other towns[13]; sometimes they bought women and girls to take with them across the borders, a crime punishable by death[14]. In 1407, a thousand soldiers were to accompagny on their way home, as far as north of Qamil, a group of Mohammedan

[8] *T'ai SL* (9) 205.
[9] *T'ai SL* (10) 409, 426-427.
[10] *T'ai SL* (10) 658.
[11] *T'ai SL* (10) 444.
[12] *T'ai SL* (11) 853.
[13] *T'ai SL* (11) 929.
[14] *T'ai SL* (11) 935.

traders who had come to sell horses; the purpose of this order was to spy out what was going on in Mongolia[15]; in 1408, the emperor reminded the military in Kansu that certain types of silk could not be used to trade with foreigners : he had learned that both the military and the common people made clothes out of those forbidden stuffs to trade them for horses with the Mohammedans[16]; a mission from Beš-baliq in 1413 was given permission to trade in Kansu[17]. In 1414, as the Yung-lo emperor was setting out on a campaign in Mongolia against the Oyirad, an Oyirad tribute mission on its way home was prevented from leaving Kansu; the same order applied to some Mohammedan traders who happened to be in Kansu at that time[18]. The purpose of this measure of course was to prevent information on military movements being divulged.

Tribute missions, whether from Mongolia, from the Jurčen in the Northeast, or from Central Asia, comprising, besides the regular envoys, traders and an assortment of followers, often totaling hundreds of men, caused considerable expenses to the Chinese government, and plenty of trouble for officials and the common people along the road to the capital, Their manner of travel has been described in my study of the Tribute System, and one or two references will suffice for our present purpose. Under the date of December 26, 1424, the *Ming Shih-lu*[19] has the following text with regard to so called tribute envoys from Central Asia : "Huang Chi 黃 驥[20], supervising secretary of the Ministry

15 *T'ai SL* (11) 1022.
16 *T'ai SL* (11) 1072.
17 *T'ai SL* (13) 1696.
18 *T'ai SL* (13) 1740.
19 *Jen SL* (15) 160-161.
20 Huang Chi has a short biographical notice in the *Ming-shih* 164. III. 1962-63. He was a native of Ch'üan-chou 全州 near the Sira-müren in modern Jehol province, and during the Yung-lo period he served in three embassies to Central Asian kingdoms. Being a native of Southern Mongolia, he may have known the language and this may have been the reason why he was

of Rites stated : 'many of the envoy-guests from the Western Regions are Barbarian traders who under the pretext of presenting tribute and with official power[21] work for private profit; among them there are also poor people without means of subsistence who join the company as followers. Some borrow[22] other people's horses to bring them as tribute. Since they have the name of tribute envoys they travel over the postal stations and they burden the people with the transportation of their tribute articles. Expenses for wine and food, fodder and beans provided by the postal stations from Kansu to be capital are not insignificant. When these men arrive at the capital we grant them rewards and the price of their goods, and they make multiple profit. Since Barbarians are so eager for profit no month goes by without some coming or going to present the tribute, and soldiers and common people along the road, no fewer than thirty of forty men from one hamlet, have to escort them and wait on them at the lodging houses[23], so that for many months they must neglect agricultural work : nothing could be graver. All those envoys when they return, exchange (what presents) they have received against goods to take home, and all along the road officials issue carriages, sometimes as many as over one hundred, to transport them. If there are not enough men (to serve them), the corvée is also extended to women. Everywhere they arrive the effect is like that of a storm or a fire : they scream insults at the postal officials or beat the people and personnel. Officials and common people, mindful that the Court invites and cherishes foreigners, dare not resist, and the nuisance caused is beyond telling. I beg the Emperor

selected to serve in those embassies. There were many Mongols and Central Asians, or men of Mongol, Turkish, etc. ancestry, in the Chinese service at that time, many of whom go hidden under regular Chinese names, but I have found no indication that Huang Chi was of foreign descent. His memorial is also summarized in the *Ming-shih*.

21 As envoys having official status and entitled to various services and privileges, as Huang explains in his memorial.

22 A variant reading has "buy".

23 Reading *kuan* 館 instead of 官.

to issue a rescript to the military authorities in Shensi that when[24] the Chung-shun wang 忠順王[25] of Qamil or the *Fan* kings of Ili-baliq, Samarqand, and other places dispatch envoys to come to Court and present the tribute, they [i.e. the authorities in Shensi] are allowed to escort only ten or twenty men to the capital; the chief envoys may be given horses from the postal stations; the other envoys, mules[26], so that the people of Shensi (living) along the road can have a little peace. It is also (Your Majesty's) subject's unworthy opinion that the Western Regions produce only horses and such articles as *kang-sha* 硇砂[27] and *wu-t'ung* saltpetre (梧桐鹹)[28]; but (our country) needs only horses while those other objects are of no use. I beg that from now on, if any offer horses as tribute, these be distributed in Kansu to the soldiers, and that no other articles be accepted, but that (the envoys) be allowed to trade with the people, in order to conserve the governmental treasury.' The Emperor praised (him) and accepted his advice..." Huang in other words wanted to allow trade but to reduce participation by the government in it.

There are also abundant evidences that the Mohammedan traders from Central Asia deliberately slowed down their pace of travel to and from the capital, delayed their departure from Peking or other places, in order to trade more. For example, in April, 1437, the Minister of the Army called the attention of the Court upon the fact that tribute missions on their way home stayed for

[24] This sentence begins with character *ch'u* 除 "unless..., except for..." which does not make good sense here; the *Ming-shih* reads "*only* Qamil and other countries...".

[25] Chung-shun wang "Loyal and Obedient Prince" was the title of the kings of Qamil granted by the Ming. Ili-baliq was a recent appellation for the kingdom of Beš-baliq.

[26] A variant reads *lü* "donkey".

[27] *Kang-sha* is a misspelling for *nao-sha* 砮砂, 硇砂. a loan word deriving from the Persian. Laufer 19. 503-508 : sal ammoniac *Nao-sha* is mentioned as a tribute from Qamil in 1432 : Hsüan SL (20) 2063; also in TMHT 112.2b (1653b).

[28] *Wu-t'ung-chien* is one word; it is listed with other tribute articles from Qamil in the TMHT 112. 3a (1654a).

years in Kansu to trade, under the pretext that the roads were not safe, and continued all the while to draw the daily rations issued to foreign missions : orders were issued to investigate the matter and if the roads were open to send them home immediately; if any wanted to stay longer no more rations were to be issued[29]. On November 19, 1523, the Ministry of Rites memorialized that envoys from Samarqand and other countries traveled so slowly (to and from Peking) that it took them more than a year to complete the trip ! In Peking, too, they delayed their departure with the result that supplies ran out and the escorting personnel were unnecessarily inconvenienced. The Ministry wanted to reinstate a regulation from the Ch'eng-hua period (1465-1487) whereby food rations would be stopped if they stayed more than one day at any relay station; and the military or common people associating with them would be punished with the cangue[30]. At first glance this measure seems to rule out all trade whatsoever, but this was not the intention. Rather it was the delay, the excess of trade, the additional expenses, and the perennial danger, real or imaginary, of espionage and treason which were objected to. Six years later, on May 11, 1529, a memorial by the governor of Kansu confirmed this habit of the Central Asians and incidentally also shows that the complaint of 1523 had had but little effect : tribute envoys from Qamil and other kingdoms traveled as slowly as possible to make more profit so that it took them more than a year to reach the borders, and then, instead of leaving the country, they joined newly arrived missions under assumed names. As a result expenses became excessive and such practices were considered dangerous for the country[31]. Once more it was not so much the trade itself as the many excesses and abuses that the Chinese officials objected to and tried to circumscribe. We shall notice similar abuses when speaking of the trade at the Hui-t'ung-kuan in Peking.

[29] *Ying SL* (23) 559.
[30] *Shih SL* (72) 838-839.
[31] *Shih SL* (76) 2366.

If in most cases, trade was grafted on the tribute system, there is no doubt that a sizable volume existed independently of the tribute. In fact of the many Central Asians who came to trade on the Kansu borders, many must have acted on their own initiative without official introduction, and as we shall see later on, there was also quite a bit of clandestine trade. Mention is made occasionally of independent Mohammedan traders. For example, in 1430, we hear of two Mohammedans Sha-pa-ssu and Ma-erh-ting living at Kan-chou and trading in salt from the Two Che, Shantung, the Two Huai, Ho-chien, and Ch'ang-lu. Ma-erh-ting must be the same person as Che-ma-erh-ting "from K'un-ch'eng" (土魯 城) who a little later brought 16,760 *shih* (石) of rice to the capital to trade for salt, but as no salt was just then available he declared he wanted to present the rice to the government. The emperor noted that the Mohammedans were sharp traders for whom tribute was no more than a pretext, and ordered 8000 bolts of cotton and 4000 bolts of coarse silk to be paid for the rice[32]. In July, 1446, one Mahmud used to bring horses to Ning-hsia and as payment got permission to haul salt from Yünnan. This business was objected to, not on account of the trade itself, but because it gave Mahmud an opportunity to familiarize himself with the country[33].

HORSES

Many of the *Shih-lu* passages mentioning trade, like our long quotation from 1424, clearly indicate that horses were the Ming government's primary interest. It is especially during the first sixty or seventy years of the Ming Dynasty that we see how eager the government was to buy horses from any source, and it is very

[32] *Hsüan SL* (19) 1543, 1578. K'un-ch'eng : *Ming-shih* 332 V.3834b.
[33] *Mok.* 3. 141; *Ying SL* (28) 2820.

interesting that the *Shih-lu* recording this importation of horses now and then plainly speaks of buying not of "tribute presented".

The most important source of importation of horses before 1400 was Korea : in 1385, a "tribute" from that country comprised 5000 horses, 500 pounds of gold, 50,000 ounces of silver, and 50,000 bolts of cotton[34]. The very amounts, however, clearly signify that this could not be a tribute, but that it was a commercial transaction. Late in 1386, an envoy was sent to Korea to purchase horses, and his return with 3040 horses was announced in the spring of the following year[35]. A little later, 5000 more horses were purchased[36]. In 1391, orders were issued to purchase 10,000 horses, and two batches of 1500 and 2500 arriving in Liaotung during the same year may well be the first partial deliveries of this order. In March, 1393, 9880 more arrived.

Another regions which exported many horses to China was the Sino-Tibetan border area in Southern Shensi and Kansu, the region of Hsi-ning, Ho-chou, Min-chou, etc. Tibetan horses were mostly paid for with tea. In 1375, a eunuch was sent to Ho-chou to purchase Tibetan horses and pay with textiles and tea; no figures are available[38]. From 1377 to 1384, the Ministry of the Army reported the following figures of horses purchased : 171, 294, 403, 686, 2050 and 560[39]. In 1386, a Tibetan monk brought 782 horses to Ho-chou[40], and in the same year, a total of 6729 was purchased in Southern Shensi and in Southwest China[41]. Still in 1386, a messenger dispatched to Shensi acquired 2807 horses, and in 1390 a figure of 7060 is reported from the same area[42].

[34] *T'ai-tsu SL* (6) 2584.
[35] *T'ai-tsu SL* (6) 2715,2731.
[36] *T'ai-tsu SL* (6) 2757.
[37] *T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 3093, 3135, 3138; (8) 3298.
[38] *T'ai-tsu SL* (4) 1694.
[39] *T'ai-tsu SL* (5) 1836, 1965, 2113; (6) 2570.
[40] *T'ai-tsu SL* (6) 2672.
[41] *T'ai-tsu SL* (6) 2674.
[42] *T'ai-tsu SL* (6) 2710; (7) 3058.

A rather unexpected place for the Chinese to purchase horses in 1375 and 1376, was the Liu-ch'iu Islands; the horses were paid for with silks, but especially iron cooking pots and pottery *(t'ao-ch'i)*[43].

Strange as it may sound, before 1400 Mongolia is mentioned only once as a source of supply of horses : in 1390, a large amount of silk clothes were made to serve as payment for horses from Mongolia *(mo-pei)*, but no figures are available[44]. As for other countries of Central Asia, traders are referred to regularly, as has been shown, and horses must have been their main article of importation, but definite figures are extremely rare. For example, in 1378, we read that an official was dispatched to Han-tung (in Western Kansu, near Tun-huang or Sha-chou, then outside of Ming control) with tea, paper, and clothes to buy horses; he acquired 469[45]. In 1390, traders from Samarqand arrived in Liang-chou with 670 horses, and were ordered to proceed to the capital (then Nanking) where they might sell them. The reason for this order may have been that the Chinese thought them to be spies to be kept away from border areas; at any rate this reason was set forth in 1391 in connection with traders who had brought horses from Qamil, but this time no figure is supplied[46].

During the Yung-lo era, Korea remained an important supplier : for example we read that the Chinese purchased 2600 horses in in 1402, and the following year, 1000 more[47]. In 1407, the Koreans sent a "tribute" of 3000 horses, duly paid for with textiles[48]. Later, in 1423, China ordered 20,000 horses in Korea,

[43] *T'ai-tsu SL* (4) 1645-46, 1754.
[44] *T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 2981.
[45] *T'ai-tsu SL* (5) 1940.
[46] *T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 2983, 3087.
[47] *T'ai SL* (9) 187; (10) 372.
[48] *T'ai SL* (11) 1023. The "order" is recorded in the *Yijo sillok* at a much earlier date : it arrived at the Korean capital on the 15th day of the 7th month of the 5th Yung-lo year : August 17, 1407; and it was recorded under the date of October 10, probably as the order was being carried out (*Yijo-sillok* III. 129). Delivery in batches of 300 to 400 was made in Liaotung

but it took a few years to have them delivered, apparently because there was not enough cotton and silk on hand in Liaotung to pay for them immediately[49].

Like during the Hung-wu period, importation of horses from the Northwest took place mostly in Kansu. In 1404, the military commander of Ning-hsia speaking of some arrangements regarding Mongol troops under his command, noted that many horses were bred in the Ho-chou region, and he thought it advisable to purchase them in order to strengthen the border defenses. The emperor's reply does not mention Ho-chou, but merely says that if Mohammedan traders brought horses to Ning-hsia, they must be bought at government expense. The emperor's rescript must also have approved, or at least implied approval of the purchase of horses in Ho-chou, for in 1404, the same commander of Ning-hsia reported that during the preceding year a good number of horses had been purchased there and paid for with tea[50].

In addition to Ho-chou and other areas in the south, that considerable numbers of horses continued to arrive from the West, appears from such facts as the following : in 1403, Ming envoys had been sent to Qamil to invite traders to bring horses, and as a result a tribute mission presented 190 horses as tribute and sold 4740 more[51]. The next year, An-ting sent 500 "tax" horses, but, instead of tea, the customary payment for horses from that area,

in the following month (a total of 2500; some deliveries may have been omitted from the records). Announcement of the completion of the deliveries was made on April 11, 1408. In addition to the payment, the king was presented with 1000 taels of silver and a large amount of silk (*Yijo-sillok* III. 150-219.

[49] *Hsüan SL* (17) 727. For many years thereafter, Korea remained a source of supply of horses; at any rate in 1449, when Peking was threatened by the Oyirad, China requested 30,000 horses from Korea. *Ying SL* (30) 3678

[50] *T'ai SL* (9) 242; (10) 512.

[51] *T'ai SL* (10) 455.

the horses this time were paid for with textiles[52]. The commander of Ning-hsia was ordered in 1408 to send a mission to Qamil to buy horses and at the same time spy out what was going on in Mongolia[53]. During those years, horses from Central Asia must have been coming regularly in batches of hundreds : in the spring of 1408, the emperor wrote to Kansu that if Mohammedans or Tatars brought 300 to 500 horses, they might sell them in such places as Kan-chou and Liang-chou; if they brought a thousand horses, they could go to Lan-chou, Ning-hsia, and other places west of the Yellow River, but not east[54]. As the government was mobilizing its armies against the Oyirad in 1413, the emperor wrote that if Mohammedans and Tatars brought good horses, they must be bought and sent to the capital[55]. In 1419, a group of 250 men, including a tribute mission from Qamil and merchants, presented 3546 horses, which were of course immediately acquired[56].

It is evident that the government also acquired horses from the people in China, and very soon through such governmental agencies as the *T'ai-p'u-ssu* or Court of Imperial Stud, and the *Yüan-ma-ssu*, or Pasturage Office, bred large numbers of horses. Several governmental pasturages were located in Kansu and Liaotung. The emperor repeatedly stressed the need of breeding more war horses, of selecting convenient places to feed them and take care of them[57] : from those horses imported from abroad

52 *T'ai SL* (10) 522. The horses were collected as tax by the princes from their subjects. In 1425, a chieftain of Han-tung notified the Ming Court that 1500 of his subjects yielding a revenue of 250 horses as tax had recently fled and lived with his neighbors the Čigil Mongols.*Hsüan SL* (16) 311.

53 *T'ai SL* (11) 1031.

54 *Mok.* 1. 337; *T'ai SL* (11) 1046-47.

55 *T'ai SL* (13) 1694. Here we have an example of the terms *kung* "to present the tribute" and *shih* "to buy" appearing side by side in one sentence, showing that horses brought for sale were also considered "tribute".

56 *T'ai SL* (14) 2159.

57 For example, *Mok.*1. 314-315; *T'ai SL* (11) 847, 856. The organization and operation of the T'ai-p'u-ssu and Yüan-ma-ssu are described in such works as the *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi* and the TMHT.

the best ones must be picked out for breeding purposes[58]. In 1412, orders went out to find experts among the Mongols settled in a number of places of North China to teach the Chinese how to breed horses [59].

MONGOL TRADE

The reader will have noticed that thus far very little has been said about Mongolia. One reason why Mongolia is so seldom referred to during the early decades of the Ming era may well be that the Mongols as a result of the incessant civil wars before and after 1400 had relatively few horses to sell. And secondly, once they began to import horses into China, they were usually recorded as tribute regardless of whether they were presented to the Court, or bought by the army on the borders as soon as they arrived, or purchased by private buyers. This may well be the result of the fact that there were no or very few professional traders among them operating independently of the tribute system. It is also possible that the Central Asian "Mohammedan traders" so often referred to above acquired horses in Mongolia for resale on the Chinese market; in other words that many Mongol horses were imported by Mohammedan traders and were recorded as coming from Mohammedan countries. If Mongol and Jürčen trade was less developed, it was not entirely lacking even in the early fifteenth century as the following references taken at random will prove.

An imperial rescript from December 17, 1402, informed the "Uriyangqad" (i.e. the commanderies of Döen, T'ai-ning and Fu-yü), the Tatar, and the Wild Tribes (i.e. the Jürčen) of the

[58] *T'ai SL* (11) 1103.
[59] *T'ai SL* (12) 1607-08; (12) 1616; (13) 1667, 1688.

emperor's accession to the throne, enjoined them to live peacefully on the borders, to trade at their convenience, and present the tribute[60]. Six months later, on June 8, 1403, another rescript informed the "Uriyangqad" that those who came to Court would be granted ranks, would be permitted to live in their own territory, present the tribute at the appropriate time and trade at their convenience[61]. A rescript to the military commander of Liaotung in 1407 declared that "Tatars" and Jürčen living along the borders must be allowed to come to Court and trade, and soldiers must not annoy them[62]. By this time horse fairs were regularly held at Kuang-ning and K'ai-yüan, attended by both Mongols and Jürčen, but it is not to this "official" trade alone that the imperial rescript refers; a good deal of exchange continued to take place along the borders. Moreover, as we shall see, Uriyangqad and Jürčen tribute missions also traded at the capital, in Chinese border towns, and even in several towns along the road to the capital.

The *Shih-lu* entry of December 19, 1429, records a presentation of tribute horses by one Adûči sent by the prince of Ho-ning ([Qara-] Qorum) Aruγtai; as after the tribute presentation, the envoys requested permission to sell horses, the emperor remarked that since these men had come to allegiance, the Court granted the necessary permission, provided no disturbances were caused by the envoy's followers[63]

In March of 1431 the commander-in-chief of Kansu reported that Caitiffs from both the west and the north had arrived in large numbers to sell horses; he wanted to give them 100.000 bolts of cotton in various colors as payment, but the emperor

60 *Mok.* 1. 267; *T'ai SL* (9) 262. One might be tempted to read "the Uriyangqad Tatar, and the Wild Tribes," but the *Shih-lu* often uses the term "Ta-ta" where Jürčen rather than Mongols are intended. The word "Ta-ta" when used for the Northeast causes considerable confusion.

61 *Mok.* 1. 276; *T'ai SL* (10) 369.

62 *Man.* 1. 216; *T'ai SL* (11) 910.

63 *Mok.* 2. 180; *Hsüan SL* (19) 1420.

decided upon half that amount[64]. Unfortunately we are not told how many horses were purchased for that price. And in August of the same year, the princes of the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies received permission to come to Court and trade "both coming and going" *(wang-lai)*[65]. The Ministry of the Army in 1437 noted that "the Uriyangqad and Tatar-Jürčen" sent 30 or 40 men to present three or five horses, and everywhere behaved themselves in an exceedingly disgraceful manner[66]. Although nothing is said explicitly of trade in this context, as we shall see, many other indications suggest that trade opportunity was a major factor to make the trip to Peking so attractive. In December, 1442, an officer of the Metropolitan Police *(Chin-i-wei)* presented an eight-point memorial on various questions dealing with the Mongols in particular; among other things he stated that the main reason why Mongol tribute missions came to China was to trade, and he complained also about their disgraceful behavior and the laxity with which Chinese officials, with the permission of the Court, dealt with them. In his views, trade caused far too much trouble, and to overlook the Mongols' disorderly conduct made them lose all respect for China[67].

These repeated permissions, however, must not be understood as exceptional measures, departures from current procedures. Trade was very much taken for granted by tribute missions, although the Ming government may have liked to stress to the Barbarians that if they were able at all to come to Court and trade in order to secure a livelihood they owed it to the emperor's gracious favors. That the Chinese, too, got something out of this intercourse was unthinkable for an official and the Court, or at least unmentionable. One benefit the Chinese envisaged was that trade opportunities would draw Barbarians into China's orbit and influence them both culturally and politically. In October, 1406,

[64] *Mok.* 2. 218; *Hsüan SL* (20) 1744.
[65] *Mok.* 2. 233; *Hsüan SL* (20) 1881.
[66] *Man.* 2. 41; *Ying SL* (23) 692.
[67] *Mok.* 3. 19; *Ying SL (26) 1979.*

a rescript to the commander-in-chief of Kansu told him that if men from the Northwestern kingdoms or from the tribes, this last expression apparently meaning the Mongols, came to trade, he might dispatch a few men, according to the size of the group, to Court, and the emperor would personally instruct them so that when they went back to their own country they would proclaim the favors they had received[68]. And in 1430, when the Jürčen of Chien-chou wanted to trade with Korea but got no response, the emperor wrote that the Koreans as loyal vassals sought no relations abroad; so, too, the Jürčen should seek no relations abroad and must not allow their people to cross their borders, but could freely trade on the Liaotung borders[69].

How much the Mongols took trade for granted appears from their complaints of 1439, that the return gifts for tribute articles had grown smaller than they used to be and trade had become less profitable than during the Yung-lo era! The emperor reminded the Mongol princes of the regulations to be observed; as to trade, it was they who wanted it, and their present complaints were inspired by greed[70] ! Another passage in the *Shih-lu* from only a few weeks later shows that the Chinese felt that the Jürčen came to Court more with the purpose of buying and selling and attending to their private affairs than to do homage to the emperor : they came too often causing too great expenses and many inconveniences to the military and the common people who had to escort them. As a result a few rules were laid down : if the Jürčen had information to communicate they might come to the capital at any time; otherwise they could come only once a year to present the tribute and arrange matters of succession. If in the meantime they wanted to trade to insure their livelihood, instead of coming to the capital, they might always go to the fair at K'ai-yüan[71].

68 *T'ai SL* (11) 853.
69 *Man.* 1. 438; *Hsüan SL* (19) 1533.
70 *Mok.* 2. 575; *Ying SL* (24) 1066.
71 *Man.* 2. 64; *Ying SL* (24) 1117-18.

Yet under particular circumstances, special permission was needed. A case in point seems to have been one from May, 1404, when a Ming embassy came back from the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies, accompanied by tribute missions from those same three tribes. The Court was then still at Nanking, and Torγočar of Döen declared that he had left 800 horses in Peking which he wished to sell for clothes. No reason for this request is indicated, but we may assume that Torγočar or his people were in particular need of clothing. At any rate, the emperor ordered the military and the Court of Imperial Stud to rate the horses into categories and pay them accordingly[72].

As I have indicated in my study of the tribute, Mongolia suffered regularly from famine due to drought or other causes. As may be expected, the Mongols heavily depended on China for relief, usually through trade, and indeed, a number of passages in the *Shih-lu* prove it : the entry of February 6, 1407, relates that the Uriyangqad and other territories were suffering from famine and had expressed the desire to sell horses for rice. Usually horses were paid for in cotton cloth, silk, and clothes, but this time prices were fixed partly in rice[73].

In December, 1412, it was the Jürčen of Chien-chou who lacked food, and relief was ordered to be sent in from Liaotung[74]. How badly the Mongols and Jürčen at times needed food appears from the case of 1417 : first the military commander of Liaotung reported that he had learned that the Mongols lacked food and that border raids must be expected. In a subsequent report he informed the government that the T'ai-ning commandery had exchanged one thousand horses against rice. He stated that on previous occasions he had sold some rice, but not too much; in fact the Mongols had been able to transport it on packhorses and

[72] *Mok.* 1. 287; *T'ai SL* (10) 550.
[73] *Mok.* 1. 319-320; *T'ai SL* (11) 898. For the rates see below.
[74] *Man.* 1. 265; *T'ai SL* (12) 1642-43.

camels, but this time T'ai-ning alone needed 300 carriages to transport the rice, and he was sure that the other two commanderies, Döen and Fu-yû, would want to buy, too, and there would not be enough provisions left for the army. The commander suggested that in order to conserve, the "old" rate of exchange (presumably that of 1407 followed until now) be substantially reduced and more textiles than rice be used to pay for the horses. In fact, a new rate of exchange was prescribed[75].

In August, 1433, the prince of Fu-yü reported famine or near-famine conditions in his territory; every year the poor lacked food, and consequently he requested permission for them to trade in (Chinese) border towns; he requested further that the tax (*k'o-ch'eng* 課 程) on the sale of horses be remitted for one year. The emperor granted the request[76].

In the winter of 1434, famine conditions were reported once more among the Jürčen : on December 6, a Court official just back from Liaotung reported that the Jürčen were selling their children, boys and girls, to Liaotung soldiers for food. What bothered the official was the danger that this intercourse might result in divulgation of secrets regarding border defenses, and he wanted the traffic stopped. The emperor, taking a more lenient view, remarked that the Jürčen must be hard pressed by hunger and cold. Apparently, he saw no other way to assist them than by letting the traffic go on, but he ordered the commander-in-chief to buy up all the children who had been purchased and forward them to Peking[77], but no other relief or trade is mentioned at this time.

Whether famine conditions still existed in 1435 is not clear, yet in a letter to Fu-yü Commandery from July 10, 1435, to exhort

[75] *Man.* 1. 290-291; *T'ai SL* (13) 2027, 2037-38, 2039.

[76] *Mok.* 2. 298; *Hsüan SL* (21) 2311. The famine of 1433 must have been widespread for the following year an official in Ta-t'ung reported that recently the lack of clothing and food had forced many Mongols to cross into China. *Mok.* 2. 305-306; *Hsüan SL* (21) 2423-24.

[77] *Man.* 1. 522; *Hsüan SL* (21) 2566.

the Mongols to abstain from border raids, the emperor reminded them that the original purpose of the creation of the Three Commanderies in 1389 was to make it possible for them to avoid starvation. This was certainly an overstatement yet it served to remind the Mongols of an ever-present possibility[78].

Finally let us mention that in August, 1437, a Ming embassy to a troublesome prince reported that the prince had sought refuge on China's northwestern borders in the hope of avoiding famine and that he had requested assistance in the form of grain[79]. No mention is made, however, that any food had been sent or that horses had been bought on that occasion, and this makes it doubtful that requests for trade in order to alleviate food shortages were always favorably considered. In the 1440s, Esen-tayiši of the Oyirad was gradually and steadily expanding his dominion over all of Mongolia exerting considerable pressure upon the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies in Eastern Mongolia, and even upon the Jürčen. The *Shih-lu* entry of August 31, 1447, records that a number of people from T'ai-ning and other places in flight before Esen-tayiši, needed food : they were ready to trade "native products" probably horses, cattle, and sheep, for rice and grain. The military commander of Liaotung wanted to give them such an opportunity in a small locality in the vicinity of Kuang-ning where they could do no spying. The emperor's reply, however, mentions no trade, and indeed seems to exclude it : those who wanted to come over and settle in Ming territory might do so; those who did not want to do so, might graze at a safe distance from the borders, but must not be allowed to come near![80]

[78] *Mok.* 2. 350; *Ying SL* (22) 125.

[79] *Mok.* 2. 472; *Ying SL* (23) 630.

[80] *Man.* 2. 208; *Ying SL* (29) 3046. In 1445, the Oyirad themselves experienced famine, or at least alleged famine as a reason for hunting near the Chinese borders. There is no mention of assistance. *Mok.* 3. 119; *Ying SL* (28) 2671. It may be interesting to note that China was a source of food supply for other tribes as well having a fairly well developed agriculture : Han-tung

Trade is also often referred to in connection with tribute embassies from the Oyirad in Western Mongolia or from Northern Mongolia entering the country in the vicinity of Ta-t'ung, and from there traveling to Peking. Like every other tribute mission, they were entitled to trade. We can do no more than mention a few general references to this trade. On September 27, 1436, after the presentation of the tribute and the official banquet, the Oyirad envoys requested and received permission to sell private horses *(ssu-ma)*[81]. The Chinese often had reason for complaint about the disorderly conduct of the foreign embassies, especially all sorts of followers and traders traveling in their company, and now and then orders had to be issued to keep most of them on the borders; such orders were seldom very effective. On October 26, 1442, the government felt that the Oyirad envoys and traders *(mao-i-jen)* were too numerous and disorderly, but as a special favor all were allowed to proceed to Peking anyhow[82]. A similar permission was given to a tribute mission in November, 1445[83]. The same mission is mentioned again in the entry of January 14, 1446 : it brought 800 horses, 13,000 squirrel pelts, 16,000 ermine, and 200 sable as tribute; the government found this too much and

in the northwest had a bad harvest in 1427 and borrowed *100 shih* of seed grain to be repaid after the next harvest. *Hsüan SL* (17) 657; in 1432, Sha-chou, neighboring on Han-tung, reported famine conditions, but no relief was granted : *Hsüan SL* (20) 1975; again in 1444, Sha-chou and its neighbors the Čigil Mongols wanted to borrow grain from the Chinese in Kansu : although the Ministry of Revenue noted that there was no such precedent, the emperor overruled the Ministry and ordered to "give" grain which seems to indicate that this was an outright gift, not a loan or sale : *Ying SL* (27) 2318. There was famine again among the Čigil Mongols in 1445 : the Court ordered the Kansu authorities to make grain available but the Mongols would have to take care of transportation : *Ying SL* (27) 2489. In August of the following year, a quantity or rice was granted to Sha-chou to alleviate famine conditions. It should be noted, however, that the emperor had just ordered the Sha-chou population to be removed to Kansu : *Ying SL* (28) 2831, 2834.

[81] *Mok.* 2. 421; *Ying SL* (23) 415.

[82] *Mok.* 3. 13; *Ying SL* (26) 1933.

[83] *Mok.* 3. 122; *Ying SL* (28) 2678.

accepted only the best horses — number undetermined — and the 200 sable together with 10,000 each squirrel and ermine, and let the Oyirad sell the rest themselves[84]. On November 13, 1446, the Cheng-t'ung emperor in a rescript to Esen-tayiši wrote that trade *(mai-mai)* was the main preoccupation of the Oyirad embassies, although no professional traders are mentioned explicitly[85]. Trade by Oyirad envoys is referred to twice in 1451, and again in 1453.[86].

The Oyirad embassy arriving towards the end of 1453, carried 5900 pounds of jade, which was refused as tribute and was sold privately[87].

In the entry of July 13, 1488, when a tribute mission from Dayan-qan was about to arrive at the capital, we read how out of fear of spies and corruption, some advised against admitting the tribute mission, but the Ministry of the Army stated that warnings had been posted for the military and the common people not to cheat or insult the Mongols but to trade with them according to justice; and the emperor said that all precedents were for permission to trade, but that no illicit intercourse and no leakage of information must occur[88].

Trade was carried on both at the capital, and in the border districts. This is clear from the many references to Kansu quoted above. The tribute envoys also traded all along the road to and from the capital. The Ming always wanted to exercise strict supervision over the trade; at the capital supervision, though relatively easy, was not always effective; but away from the capital, limitation and supervision were immensely more difficult. All communications between Chinese and foreigners were looked upon with suspicion.

[84] *Mok.* 3. 127; *Ying SL* (28) 2704.
[85] *Mok.* 3. 151; *Ying SL* (28) 2880.
[86] *Mok.* 3. 365, 384; *Ying SL* (32) 4221, 4326; (33) 4918.
[87] *Mok.* 3. 485; *Ying SL* (34) 5122.
[88] *Mok.* 3. 601; *Hsiao SL* (57) 365.

With regard to the Mongols we have ample evidence of trade on the borders and before reaching the capital. A few examples : on January 28, 1438, we read that a decision was made to allow the chief Oyirad envoys to proceed to Peking; the other members of the embassy and their followers would have to remain in Ta-t'ung, but they would be provided with all the necessary provisions, and they would be allowed to trade with the local population[89]. A memorial from October 11, 1442, by the military commander of Ta-t'ung and the vice-Minister of Revenue, clearly implies that the Oyirad tribute envoys' main purpose was to sell horses, but the tribute embassies by this time had grown so large, with the number of horses probably growing accordingly, that the expenses for food and other necessities had become so heavy that the Chinese sought means to force the Oyirad to reduce the size of their embassies. The military commander proposed to abolish rations of hay and fodder : the result would be that horses to be sold either in Ta-t'ung or along the road would soon emaciate and lose their value; and if the traders lost money they would soon come in smaller number[90]. It should be noted that the objective of this proposal was not to reduce the number of horses imported (we know how badly the Chinese needed the horses) but to reduce the number of envoys and traders. Any way, there is no evidence that the measure here proposed was ever tried.

Inevitable as contact was between local population and Mongols, the government was caught on the dilemma of allowing trade while guarding against the danger of espionage and sale of forbidden goods. This problem is reflected in an interesting passage from November 6, 1454 : an official of the military district of Hsüan-fu reported that the early practice was to let northern tribute envoys trade with military and common people all along the road

[89] *Mok.* 2. 503; *Ying SL* (17) 731.
[90] *Mok.* 3. 11; *Ying SL* (34) 5340.

to the capital : only weapons and other forbidden articles could not be sold. In those days, the Mongols often purchased their food, hay, and fodder on the market at Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu. Now, however, all intercourse between Mongols and Chinese had become strictly forbidden and punishable by exile to Hai-nan in South China with the result that when the Mongols came to attend the border markets *(pien-shih)* soldiers and common people alike avoided them ! The reporter concluded that the regulations at first too lax now suddenly were too strict, which was only apt to make the Mongols suspicious, and he proposed to repeal the prohibitions. The proposal was approved[91]. It is not clear what exactly was repealed : I assume that temporary restrictions on contacts between Mongols and Chinese were relaxed enough to make trade possible again. One last example : when the tayiši Bolai sent an embassy of 300 men in June, 1462, only the main envoys were granted permission to proceed to Peking, but it was made clear to the others that they would have the opportunity to trade in Ta-t'ung and that food would also be supplied to them[92].

If there are abundant indications that the Mongols could and did trade from the time they crossed into China to go to Peking until they left the country, I have found no direct evidence that the Mongols deliberately slowed down their progress to or from the capital, delayed their departure from Peking or other places in order to trade longer, as the Mohammedans from Central Asia were inclined to do.

By far the most important article of import from Mongolia was horses; and we have seen that this precisely met the need for horses in China. In a recent publication the Soviet historian I.Y. Zlatkin has argued that during the Ming period, Sino-Mongol relations always foundered on China's inability and unwillingness to accept and pay for all the horses and cattle which the Mongol,

91 *Mok*, 3. 513-514; *Ying SL* (34) 5340.
92 *Mok*. 3. 672; *Ying SL* (38) 6915.

both Eastern and Western, wanted to sell[93]. First there si no indication in Chinese sources that many cattle were sold in China. Moreover as far as my knowledge goes, there is no evidence that the Chinese ever rejected any horses. Some facts mentioned in the foregoing pages seem to contradict this : the Chinese needed the horses and if at times they devised means to reduce the volume of the trade, it was only in order to reduce the size of the embassies and the number of traders involved in this business. In spite of those measures, I know of no case where Mongol horses were rejected even when they were allegedly in very poor condition. Let us just mention a couple of typical cases.

In 1418, soldiers in Liaotung were crossing into Mongolia to buy horses[94]. In 1441, the eunuch Išiqa (a J̌ürčen by birth) favored selling oxen for J̌ürčen horses in order to make up for the lack of horses in the army[95]. An even more telling example : in November, 1452, the Oyirad sent a "tribute" of over 40.000 horses (along with a few camels); of course most were not for presentation at the Court, but for sale, and no objection was made against this large number; indeed, a high official proposed to raise the price of Mongol horses and buy as many as possible in order to deprive the Mongols of their war potential. His plan was rejected because allegedly Mongol horses were in too poor condition to warrant a higher price[96]. We may observe at this point that it is hard to make out to what extent the regular complaint about the poor condition of the horses was a standard cliché reflecting the Chinese contempt for anything connected with Barbarians.

Zlatkin, quoting Pokotilov[97], refers to the humiliating character of this horse trade, as if the Oyirad forced their horses upon

93 Zlatkin 64. 42, 54, 61, et passim.
94 *Man.* 1. 298; *T'ai SL* (14) 2103.
95 *Man.* 2. 100; *Ying SL* (26) 1664.
96 *Mok.* 3. 442; *Ying SL* (33) 4797.
97 Pokotilov 47. 75-76.

China and exacted the highest price. Yet the fact is that it was the Chinese who set the prices. True, they had to take many factors into consideration. If we may oversimplify a complex situation. for the Chinese to buy Mongols horses was tantamount to buy peace on the borders; and since the Chinese needed the horses for the army, there was no real contradiction. The problem was not so much in the number of horses, but in making no greater expenses than was necessary to satisfy minimum requirements of the Mongols and thus secure peace on the northern frontiers.

As we shall see furtheron, at a later period all relations with the Mongols became forbidden, yet Chinese officers in contravention of their orders continued to purchase horses from the Mongols in order to replenish their losses.

PROFESSIONAL TRADERS

Trade and tribute are not sharply divided. Professional traders have already been mentioned, coming either as members of tribute missions, or totally independent of the tribute. In this section we shall say a few words of professional traders in Mongol tribute missions in particular.

When Shah-Rukh's embassy of 1420-1421 arrived at the borders in the vicinity of Su-chou, Chinese officials were dispatched to meet them and check the membership of the embassy. A number of merchants who had traveled in the company of the official ambassadors succeeded in passing for servants of the ambassadors and as such were admitted to go all the way to Peking[98]. Unfortunately, in his subsequent narrative the recorder of the Persian embassy supplies no further information about the activities of those traders. Matteo Ricci who insists that around 1600 foreign embassies were just trading missions under the cover

[98] Maitra 34. 17.

of tribute, tells us that traders paid large sums of money to their princes for the privilege of accompanying embassies to China[99], and other non-Chinese observers agree with him.

Whereas Central Asian tribute missions evidently consisted mostly of professional traders, Mongol professional traders seem to have been a rarity : as under the Yüan, this function largely remained in the hands of "Mohammedan traders" who followed Mongol, particularly Oyirad, tribute missions to China.

To what extent professional traders accompanied Oyirad tribute missions is not easy to determine. The many references to Mongol trade in general tell us little about the persons involved. Sometimes the texts speak of "traders" (*chiao-i chih jen* 交易之人[100] or *mao-i-jen* 貿易人[101]) without further indication as to origin or status of the men thus engaged. But there are also a few references to Mohammedan traders (*mai-mai hui-hui*) : the first occurs in 1414[102], and from 1441 to 1449 there are several more.

If there were non-Mongol traders among the Oyirad tribute envoys, as certainly there were on many occasions, we can but speculate about the relationship between the Mongols and the traders. Did they pay a fee or a percentage of the profits to the princes as Ricci says ? or did the Oyirad princes invest in this Mohammedan trade ? What cannot be doubted is that the princes profited from the trade. At least on two occasions in 1447, the *Shih-lu* states that Esen-tayiši had induced Mohammedan traders to accompany his envoys to China[103].

The kinds of goods these men brought for sale in China no doubt were the same they presented as tribute : horses, mules, sheep, furs, jade, and the same which later were sold on the horsefairs in the Ta-t'ung region and in Liaotung. These will be discussed in more detail in the sections dealing with those fairs.

99 Ricci 53. 515.
100 *Mok.* 3. 1; *Ying SL* (26) 1765.
101 *Mok.* 3. 13; *Ying SL* (26) 1933.
102 *Mok.* 1. 438; *T'ai SL* (13) 1740.
103 *Mok.* 3. 156, 172; *Ying SL* (29) 2928, 3086-87.

That the Mohammedan traders constituted a distinct group within the tribute missions appears from many a text where the "envoys" and the "traders" are mentioned separately. The clearest example, perhaps, is a text from January 2, 1449, where we find the exact numbers of envoys and traders. As has been indicated a moment ago with regard to the Persian embassy of 1420-1421, when a tribute mission arrived at the borders, officials were dispatched to meet them and draw up lists of the names of the men and of the goods they carried. During the 1440s, the Oyirad more than once succeeded, probably with the connivance of border officials, in having much higher figures reported than persons, envoys and traders, actually present. The *Shih-lu* passage of January 2, 1449, is a protest by the Ministry of Rites against such inflated lists and corrects the figures reported for the latest Oyirad embassy to arrive at the capital : whereas the lists drawn up on the borders reported 471 envoys from the qaγan Toγtô-buqa, 2257 envoys from Esen-tayiši, and 870 Mohammedan traders, there were actually only 414 and 1358 envoys, and 752 traders. The corrections are confirmed – approximately – a few days later when 1701 envoys and 742 Mahommedan traders attended the customary state banquet given to foreign envoys on such occasions[104]. Traders, although known as such, always attended those banquets and were thus treated as regular members of the tribute missions; sometimes, a separate banquet was given for traders, because of overcrowding : on February 11, 1449, a banquet was tendered to 1799 envoys – i.e. roughly the same group as the 1701 mentioned above – and two days later a second banquet was given tot 666 traders[105]. In the 1440s more than one Oyirad tribute mission numbered between 2000 and 3000 men, but

104 *Mok.* 3. 196, 198; *Ying SL* (29) 3326,3335.

105 *Mok.* 3. 200; *Ying SL* (30) 3350, 3351. Overcrowding, of course, was due first to numbers. Mongol embassies often comprised as many as two or three thousand men. But even regardless of the large numbers, the Chinese sometimes lacked adequate facilities. In 1429, the Ministry of Works wanted the housing facilities of the Hui-t'ung-kuan expanded in order to accomodate visiting tributaries, but the emperor pointed out that repairs of

whether the proportion of traders originating from Central Asia and Oyirad envoys remained in the same proportion as in 1449, we have no way of knowing.

In 1446, 1447, and 1449, a certain Soltan, or Soltan-Ali, is mentioned as head of the Mohammedan traders. On February 16, 1446, the "Hui-hui Soltan" is described as a "Northern envoy" who came to Court together with a certain Daula-hôǰa from Ibir-Sibir : the whole company numbering 1809 men[106] . In this passage mention is made of a banquet only, no tribute, and I suspect that the "Northern envoy" Soltan belonged to an Oyirad mission erroneously described here as coming from Ibir-Sibir : indeed at that time there was an Oyirad tribute mission at the capital numbering 1900 men under the leadership of one Pir-Muhammad[107]. Furthermore it should be noted that if the Mohammedans in those embassies were professionals, the Oyirad, too, did some buying and selling.

It is a little surprising that the expression *mai-mai hui-hui* is used in the *Shih-lu* for traders in Oyirad missions only, never, as far as I know, in connection with the Central Asian traders who regularly visited Kansu and Shensi as we have seen in the foregoing pages.

After 1449, Mohammedan traders are no longer mentioned as accompanying the Oyirad, or other Mongol, tribute missions. Whether this means that they no longer came; or whether the Mongol princes were no longer eager to avail themselves of their

decaying building would take care of the situation; this way no unbearable burdens would be imposed on the people. *Hsüan SL* (19) 1403. There were two Hui-t'ung-kuan compounds in Peking, one southern, one northern. A memorial of March 7, 1470, concerns itself also with the question of accommodations : by this time there was no longer a banquet hall in the Southern Hui-t'ung-kuan, and banquets had to be held in cramped lateral buildings, which gave an unfavorable impression, and a request was made to have the situation rectified. *Hsiao SL* (52) 759-60. Also in Pelliot 48.254.

106 *Mok.* 3. 134; *Ying SL* (28) 2727. For (Ali-) Soltan, see also *Mok.* 3. 172, 196, 200; *Ying SL* (29) 3087, 3326; (30) 3351.

107 *Mok.* 3. 133; *Ying SL* (28) 2725.

services, it is impossible to tell.

As we have seen, as a rule tributaries officially recognized as such were per se entitled to some trade; and no trade was allowed to those who were not tributaries. Yet there were exceptions to this rule, and here we find another form of separation of tribute and trade. Such a case is reported in the *Shih-lu* in 1495 : three princes of the Wild Mekrid in flight before the "Great Tatars of the North" arrived on the Kansu borders near Su-chou and requested permission to settle in the vicinity as tributaries. After some deliberations, it was decided not to accept them as tributaries yet to let them attend a market held at Su-chou four times a year for the Čigil Mongols and the people of Han-tung. The *Shih-lu* gives no information regarding the identity of those Wild Mekrid princes, but from other sources we learn that two of them were grandsons of Esen-tayiši who in the 1440s had sent so many tribute missions[108].

As I have explained in my work on the Mongol tribute system, from around 1540 on, Southern Mongols repeatedly asked for tribute relations and trade opportunities, but their overtures were rejected every time by the Ming government. Yet the *Shih-lu* entry of April 5, 1547, records that a Mongol chieftain by the name of Daitung in Köke-nuur requested trade facilities, and on this occasion it is said that for sixteen years Daitung had been sending horses, apparently without being recognized as a tributary. It is interesting that no protest is voiced against the practice, but only great circumspection is urged in these dealings[109]. In September, 1549, a case occurred on the Kansu borders strongly resembling the one from 1495 : a group of 3400 men and women who had fled from Central Asia and settled in the neighborhood of Su-chou,

[108] *Mok.* 4. 678 (incomplete); *Hsiao SL* (55) 1847-48. *Ming-Shih* 182. III. 2136. For the identity of these Mekrid princes, see Serruys 63a. 439-445. When this Su-chou market had been established is not known, but in 1444 the Čigil Mongols complained that they had been prevented from attending. *Ying SL* (27) 2382.

[109] *Mok.* 6. 485; *Shih SL* (84) 5963-64.

were given permission to attend a biweekly market, but on other days all intercourse with Chinese remained forbidden[110].

[110] *Shih SL* (85) 6346-47. A comparison of the two cases from 1495 and 1549 would seem to lead to the conclusion that there were two sorts of markets at Su-chou, one held twice a month for nearby settlements, and one perhaps of greater importance held four times a year attended by such larger tribes as Čigil and Han-tung and some other tribes living at a greater distance from Su-chou; or perhaps after 1495, the quarterly market was expanded into a biweekly affair.

III

TRADE OUTSIDE OF THE HORSE FAIRS (Continued)

TRADE AT THE HUI-T'UNG-KUAN

If tribute envoys as we have seen traded in a variety of places, the official place for them to buy and sell goods was at the Hui-t'ung-kuan, or lodgings for tribute envoys in the capital. In my study of the tribute relations I have dwelled at some length upon various aspects of the Hui-t'ung-kuan, such as lodgings, food rations, etc. Only matters related to trade will be discussed here.

Trade at the Hui-t'ung-kuan is referred to now and then but very little can be concluded from those sporadic references. We have to wait until 1500 for a systematic collection of regulations: after a fight had broken out between two Jurčen at the Hui-t'ung-kuan and one had been fatally wounded, a set of regulations was drawn up and recorded in the *Shih-lu* under the date of March 14, 1500[1]. Three of them touching upon trade read as follows :

"6. From now on, those who in violation of the regulations sell weapons to the Barbarians shall upon investigation (and conviction) be punished by death. If the military or common people, whether in or outside of the capital, maintain illegal (*ssu* 私 "private") relations with the Barbarians who come to Court to present the tribute, or trade in their behalf (*t'ou-t'o* 投托), or incite (the Barbarians) to harm the people, or leak information (to them), they shall be exiled to frontier guard duty, and their military functions shall be transferred to border garrisons. Interpreters and escorts who violate these regulations, if they are military, shall be dealt with according to military rules; if they have civilian positions, their names shall be stri-

[1] *Man.* 3. 95-96; *Hsiao SL* (57) 2858-61.

cken (off the registers)[2].

"7. When Barbarians come to the capital to present the tribute, according to the regulations, they are permitted to trade for five days; officials shall asssemble merchants, and have them bring in their wares, and, provided these are not forbidden goods, trade at prices fair to both parties *(liang-p'ing chiao-i* 兩平交易*)*. If their original escort, or personnel of the (Hui-t'ung-) kuan, or interpreters, or commoners, bring the Barbarians secretly into the people's houses to make illegal *(ssu)* transactions, both the illegal goods and the price paid for them shall be confiscated. And if the Barbarians have not yet received the rewards [i.e. the return gifts for the tribute], a proportionate reduction shall be considered. All border officers shall be instructed not to escort (to the capital) Barbarians who have been found guilty of such violations. The gate watch (of the Hui-t'ung-kuan) and merchants who in violation have illegally bought or sold shall be punished with the cangue as a warning to the public.

"8. Any official who should dare whether at the capital or along the road, to induce the Barbarians to buy forbidden goods, or to frequent prostitutes, shall be punished on the spot with the cangue as a warning to the public. When Barbarians return home, the Ministries of Rites and Army shall deputize officials to inspect their luggage and make sure that they carry no prohibited articles. Only thereafter shall they be permitted to proceed."

Between 1500 and the compilation of the 1587 edition of the *Ta-Ming hui-tien*, these regulations may have been revised and new articles may have been added as circumstances required. If substantial changes were introduced we find little evidence of them in the *Ta-Ming hui-tien*. In fact the *Collected Statutes* of 1587 does not treat the question of trade in a

2 The TMHT 108.30a (1625b) repeats much of this articles almost in identical words without making it clear that trade at the Hui-t'ung-kuan was concerned.

systematic manner, but in a rather haphazard way lists a number of regulations both from prior to and later than 1500. Indeed, the compilers of the *Collected Statutes* seem concerned almost exclusively with the question of restriction of trade and various prohibitions, and very little with the more positive aspects of trade.

First with regard to the five days of trade allowed by section Seven of the regulations from 1500, the *Ta-Ming hui-tien* begins by stating that after the distribution of the tribute rewards, trade will be allowed for from three to five days at the Hui-t'ung-kuan. But Koreans and natives of the Liu-ch'iu Islands were not bound by this time limit[3]. In another section dealing with the return presents for Oyirad envoys, and certainly dating from the first part of the fifteenth century, the *Collected Statutes* states that the Oyirad were entitled to buy satins, coarse silk, and cottons from officials, soldiers, and common people in the streets, probably adjoining the Hui-t'ung-kuan. This regulation is not dated, but the next one, dating from 1445, limits their trade to five days.

In the early days, the regular market place may well have been in the streets rather than within the precincts of the Hui-t'ung-kuan as prescribed in 1500. Indeed a *Shih-lu* passage from 1440 states that envoys from Qamil may trade in a just manner in the streets[4].

Another ruling in the *Ta-Ming hui-tien* from 1447 stipulates that the Oyirad may sell horses. Indeed, we have seen that the Oyirad (like others) sometimes brought horses all the way to Peking to be sold there, although most of their horses were disposed of on the borders. Finally a ruling from 1450 states that they could buy copper "soup jars", kettles, red-tasseled saddles, bridles, scissors, etc.[5] all articles which were usually strictly forbidden.

[3] TMHT 108. 29a (1625a).
[4] *Ying SL* (25) 1375.
[5] TMHT 112. 12b, 13a (1648b, 1649a).

In two undated rulings, the Mongols of the Three Commanderies and the Jürčen had their period of trading limited to three days[6]; as we shall see in the next section when discussing some particular aspect of the trade of the Three Mongol Commanderies there is an important additional note that on their way home they were entitled to buy some goods, and oxen, kettles, plows, etc. in various places under the jurisdiction of Shun-t'ien-fu (Peking) and Chi-chou. No such allowance is made for the Jürčen, but there is no doubt that in practice the Jürčen enjoyed the same privilege.

Tribute envoys from Qamil and other Central Asian kingdoms were entitled to five days of trade : two days before and three days after the distribution of the return presents. This according to the *Collected Statutes* of 1587[7]. Whether the Chinese were able to enforce this regulation is rather doubtful : a complaint never heard about the Mongols or the Jürčen is that the Central Asians were reluctant to leave Peking. There is an interesting memorial from March 7, 1490[8], in which the author suggests the building of a banquet hall in the Southern Hui-t'ung-kuan, and then goes on as follows : "Envoys from the various regions are very cunning and often have intercourse with the personnel of the (Hui-t'ung-) kuan, and (Chinese) merchants do not wait for the Ministry of Rites to assign a period for trade, but ahead of time they bring in forbidden articles to sell illegally [lit. : privately] (to the foreign envoys). Recently, Barbarians from Qamil and other countries have brought jade and other articles which were bought[9] on credit by treacherous people who for a long time did not pay, so that the Barbarians stayed over one year. They also go outside (the Hui-t'ung-kuan[10]) to drink and commit evil. Interpreters repeatedly

6 TMHT 111. 15b, 17a (1650a, 1651a).
7 TMHT 112. 4b (1654a).
8 *Hsiao SL* (52) 759-60.
9 Reading 買 for 賣.
10 Theoretically foreign envoys were not supposed to leave the premises of the Hui-t'ung-kuan; a guard was stationed at the gates, but the regulation seems not to have been strictly enforced.

urge them to set out on the (home) journey, but they incite them[11] to commit crimes : even though prohibitions are posted, they despise them and know no fear. I beg the Emperor to issue a rescript to the Ministry of Rites strictly to promulgate the prohibitions and to let the Police investigate and arrest : if the interpreters or the personnel of the (Hui-t'ung-) kuan are at fault, they must be severely dealt with; if the Barbarians are at fault, the prohibited articles must be confiscated so that they learn discipline." In July, 1521, we read that envoys from Turfan, Samarqand, and Qamil carried on trade under the pretext of presenting tribute, and some stayed three or four years at the Hui-t'ung-kuan : an imperial decree ordered the Ministry of Rites to enforce the old regulations forbidding to leave the premises; to make them go back at the proper time, and to punish all those guilty of trading illegally [lit. : privately] with them, or those giving them too much freedom; furthermore, foreigners who had previously been guilty of any transgressions might no longer be admitted by border official[12].

Trading opportunities must have been great and the abuses many, and the regulation found in the *Ta-Ming hui-tien* could well have been an attempt at correcting the situation. Even if Central Asians were more eager than the Mongols or the Jürčen to exploit every opportunity, it is difficult to admit that the Chinese were able to limit the latter to a five-day, let alone a three-day, period, especially once they had acquired some experience through repeated visits to Peking. We must bear in mind that the Mongols, too, sometimes stayed several weeks, or months, in Peking, and freely associated with tribute missions from other countries. Banquets, audiences, and other ceremonial activities may have

11 *Po-chih* 搏 扡 is an expression regularly met with in the *Shih-lu* and in the TMHT. The dictionary *Hsiao-shuo tz'u-yü hui-shih* by Lu Tan-an (Peking 1964, p.730) explains it as "to incite, to induce, to stir up trouble" and quotes an example from the *Shui-hu chuan.*

12 *Shih SL* (70) 142.

taken up some of their time, but it is evident that it was impossible to prevent all intercourse with the Chinese during the rest of the time. It is very unlikely that the government was better able to restrict the time of trade than to enforce the regulations regarding the place where trade was legally conducted. All foreigners were theoretically confined to the premises of the Hui-t'ung-kuan but numerous complaints show that the Chinese were unable to enforce this regulation, so that it is no surprise that the regulations listed in the *Ta-Ming hui-tien* speak of transactions in the streets, or, what was even worse, in private homes.

With regard to the manner in which business was conducted, how transactions were made, what mediums of exchange were employed, we have only the vaguest information. Later something will be said about the price of horses. Since the Mongols very often received paper currency as part of the return gifts for their tribute articles, we may assume that part of their purchases were paid for with this paper money. We shall see that the Mongols of the Three Commanderies and the Jürčen often traded some of their silks or other valuables received from the Court for Chinese commodities. This must have been the common practice, as Huang Chi also stated in 1424. If we know little about the price the Mongols received for horses, furs, etc., we know even less about the purchases of Chinese manufactures.

We find repeated warnings that all transactions between Chinese and foreigners must be done according to justice, not only at the Hui-t'ung-kuan but at all other places. For example in 1426, the people of Su-chou in Kansu were warned that horses and sheep brought from outside the borders must not be bought up below the just price so as not to hurt the feelings of the Barbarians[13]; in 1439, a warning was issued against overcharging the Oyirad[14]; and in 1488, in order not to hurt the feelings of the Mongols,

13 *Hsüan SL* (17) 473.
14 *Mok.* 2. 583; *Ying SL* (24) 1137.

the people were told not to insult them and to trade in all fairness[15]. The regulations of the Hui-t'ung-kuan of 1500 also prescribed that transactions be made in all justice. However, these repeated warnings strongly suggest that on this score things were not always as they should have been.

In a memorial from 1612, the secretary of the Ministry of Rites, Kao Chi-yüan 高維元, proposed to take all trade out of the hands of the foreign envoys and entrust it to officials especially appointed by the Ministries of Rites and Army, but it is doubtful that any non-Chinese would have considered such an arrangement acceptable[16].

Commercial transactions whether at the Hui-t'ung-kuan or at the Horse Fairs were subject to taxation, but there seems to be even less information available about duties than about other aspects of the trade. A set of rules from 1379 for tribute missions has this to say regarding trade : "if in addition (to tribute articles, Barbarian tribute missions) bring foreign goods which they wish to sell to the Chinese, the Government will take six percent (六分)[17] of them and pay the price, but will continue to deduct the taxes"[18]. Another regulation from 1384 abolished duties on "private goods" imported by tribute missions[19]. A *Shih-lu* passage from 1403 seems to imply that as a rule foreign traders paid no taxes : when a Mohammedan mission from Tz'u-ni in the Western Ocean wanted to sell pepper and officials intended to levy the customary tax, the emperor objected on the ground that taxes on goods imported by foreign vassals would not yield very much, but to the contrary might impair China's prestige[20]. It is to be assumed that these were only temporary measures and that

[15] *Mok.* 4. 601; *Hsiao SL* (52) 365.
[16] *Man.* 4. 411.
[17] A variant reads 2 %.
[18] *T'ai-tsu SL* (3) 903.
[19] *T'ai-tsu SL* (6) 2459-60.
[20] *T'ai SL* (10) 447-448.

generally speaking taxes were duly collected. Indeed, as we have already noted, in 1433, the Mongol prince of Fu-yü made a special request to be exempted from the regular duties.

AGRICULTURAL TOOLS, CATTLE, HOUSEHOLD IMPLEMENTS, ETC.

If we have only the vagues indications as to Mongol imports in the fifteenth century, we know even less of Mongol purchases in China. Yet from the 1440s on we find regular references to purchases by tribute missions from the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies and sometimes from the Jürčen of oxen, donkeys, agricultural tools, seeds, and other suchlike articles. At this time horse fairs existed already in Liaotung for the Three Uriyangqad and the Jürčen, and no doubt those same articles could be purchased there; but our best information in this connection comes from passages dealing with the tribute and the trade by tribute missions.

The Three Uriyangqad Commanderies must have had some form of agriculture, rudimentary by Chinese standards to be sure, yet far advanced compared with other Mongol tribes [21].

In 1448 and 1449, tribute missions from Döen were granted permission to trade the return presents received for the tribute against cattle and donkeys needed for breeding purposes[22]. In 1455, the T'ai-ning Commandery requested seeds and agricultural tools : 38 *shih* of seeds were granted, and a few days later permission was granted to purchase plowing oxen; and a similar permission was granted one year later.[23] In 1465, T'ai-ning received permission to buy oxen and agricultural tools on the

[21] This passage from 1432 in the *Shih-lu* perhaps contains an indication relative to agriculture in the Three Commanderies : the Uriyangqad had unsuccessfully attacked their neighbor Aruγtai who carried the war into their own territory and took their baggage train, horses, cattle, and harvest. *Man.* 1. 483; *Hsüan SL* (20) 2145.

[22] *Mok.* 3. 186-187; *Ying SL* (29) 3236; (30) 3370.

[23] *Mok.* 3. 518, 520, 546; *Ying SL* (34) 5392, 5398; (35) 5700.

borders, probably at Hsi-feng-k'ou 喜峰口, their point of entry[24]. T'ai-ning and Döen Commanderies made three requests in 1468 and 1469 to purchase not only oxen and agricultural implements but bridles, saddles, tents, and other equipment as well : permission was granted only for plowing oxen and agricultural tools[25]. Early in 1470, however, the Ministry of Rites which was responsible for relations with foreign countries, became worried about those repeated purchases which indeed may have been even more numerous than we know from the *Ming Shih-lu*, and complained that the Three Commanderies had of late been buying too many oxen, agricultural tools, and "other implements" (not specified) in Chi-chou territory between Peking and Hsi-feng-k'ou, and wanted closer inspection[26]. The reason for the Minister's worries are not further explained, but they must have been the age-old fear of espionage by the Mongols, treason by Chinese dealing with them, and the suspicion that along with legitimate goods, weapons and other forbidden articles fell into the hands of the Mongols. Nor are we told what concrete measures the Ministry proposed to take to prevent abuses of this sort.

On the Horse Fairs in Liaotung the Chinese faced the same problem. Early in 1503, a supervising secretary of the Ministry of Personnel presented a lengthy protest against what he considered gross abuses at the Horse Fairs. Among other things he maintained that instead of good horses, as in the beginning, the Mongols now sold only poor and weak horses and were able to buy weapons; he also stated that he had heard that pots and plowshares purchased on the markets were broken and melted down immediately they returned to Mongolia. The "old regulations", it seems, provided for a group of 5 to 10 men to buy one pot; the supervising

[24] *Mok.* 4. 31; *Hsien SL* (40) 462.
[25] *Mok.* 4. 110, 126-127, 146; *Hsien SL* (41) 1011; (42) 1219, 1411.
[26] *Mok.* 4. 148; *Hsien SL* (42) 1422.

secretary proposed that pots should be sold to the Mongols only once every two or three years, and that the same limitation should apply to tribute missions going to Peking. A few months later, the military of Liaotung who had been consulted with regard to these matters replied that under no circomstances the horse fairs could be abolished; such a decision would do more harm than good, but as a corrective measure they suggested better surveillance of the soldiers and common people dealing with the Mongols or the Jürčen : officials in charge of the fairs should see to it that on the market days only cotton, silks, rice and salt were sold to them; no pots, plowshares, and iron tools in general could be sold "privately". If, however, on their own initiative the Mongols asked to buy pots and plowshares, then it should be the rule to sell them only once every three years[27]! Most probably very little could be done to prevent the sale of agricultural tools and household equipment. At any rate, in 1505 and 1509, the Mongols of the Three Commanderies received permission to buy oxen, agricultural tools, plowshares and iron pots, but on the second occasion, the Ministry of Rites recommended that an interpreter accompany the tribute missions on the way home to make the necessary purchases for them "in all justice". Furthermore, orders were issued to military officials to maintain order during business transactions, and to see to it that no forbidden articles (not specified) were sold[28].

In November, 1516, the Three Commanderies were again granted what looks like a routine permission to trade their return gifts

[27] *Man.* 3. 145-146, 160; *Hsiao SL* (59) 3601, 3704.

[28] *Mok.* 5. 197, 264; *Wu SL* (61) 227; (63) 1023. With regard to interpreters, it should be noted that all tribute missions were supposed to be escorted by a number of soldiers and one or two interpreters from the moment they crossed into China until they left the country again, but since the convoy system never worked satisfactorily, it was reorganized from time to time. The Ministry's proposal seems to imply that at this particular time no interpreters accompanied tribute missions from the Three Commanderies.

for oxen and agricultural tools[29]. The same permission was repeated in February, 1525, except that this time "cooking pots and other utensils" were explicitly excluded[30]; and in December, 1540, the same permission was granted to buy oxen, plows, and iron implements, things usually on the forbidden list. What is of significance in this case is that the permission was granted "according to precedent" but it was added that the Mongols must not buy those articles in too great quantities[31]. It is clear that the Mongols of the Three Commanderies had been buying them regularly and that the "permission" recorded in the above cases was no more than a formality with little significance.

That the Mongols depended on China for such things as plows and other agricultural tools, as well as cooking pots and various household equipment, and even donkeys, is not so difficult to understand; but why the Mongols should turn to China for draft animals, and for cattle for breeding purposes is something of a mystery.

About half of the aforementioned purchases are said to be made along the road (between Peking and the borders : Hsi-feng-k'ou); the other half were made on the borders, at Hsi-feng-k'ou, where they crossed into China and reentered Mongolia; and perhaps at any other point along the borders where the Mongols could come in contact with Chinese soldiers, farmers, and merchants. The *Ta-Ming hui-tien*, speaking of the customary three days' trade at the Hui-t'ung-kuan, says that tribute missions from the Three Commanderies enjoyed trading facilities at such places as Chi-chou, Tsun-hua, etc. between Peking and Hsi-feng-k'ou, and every man was entitled to buy one ox, one plow, and one kettle, but no "forbidden goods"[32].

Although much less frequently, the same kind of transactions

[29] *Mok.* 5. 454; *Wu SL* (67) 2805.
[30] *Mok.* 5. 595; *Shih SL* (73) 1219.
[31] *Mok.* 6. 198; *Shih SL* (82) 4897.
[32] TMHT 111. 15b-16a (1650ab).

are reported for the Jürčen, especially the Chien-chou commanderies : they must have practiced some sort of agriculture, too, probably even less developed than that of the Eastern Mongols. The *Shih-lu* entry of May 24, 1439, summarizes a memorial according to which "Tatars and Wild Jürčen from Hai-hsi 海西[33] on their way home from the capital, trade their satins and silks (i.e) the return presents) and worn out horses for plowing oxen and copper and iron implements; plowing oxen are needed by the border population to make a living, and copper and iron tools are useful to the foreign Barbarians, and therefore everything (including oxen) should be forbidden." This proposal was approved and strict sanctions ordered[34]. But there is little evidence that the recommendation was put into effect, or was enforceable. In October, 1441, the eunuch Išiqa, famous for his expeditions into Jürčen land, reported that the Wild Jürčen from Hai-hsi and other places every year came to trade and wanted to sell horses for oxen. He noted that since the army was lacking horses, it would be profitable to take advantage of those opportunities. Išiqa's idea was adopted[35]. Shortly thereafter, on March 24, 1442, an imperial rescript to the Jürčen chieftain of the Right Commandery of Chien-chou, stated that if the Jürčen lacked plowing oxen and agricultural tools, they were entitled to buy them "as usual"[36], again clearly implying that such purchases had been made quite regularly. In March, 1459, a tribute embassy from Chien-chou received permission to purchase oxen on the way home "in order to plow and thereby meet their military needs"[37]. But in September, 1447, the governor of Liaotung reported that on every tribute journey to China, Jürčen and Mongols from the Three

33 *Hai-hsi* "West of the sea" first indicated Jürčen territory in general, but during the second half of the Ming Dynasty it was used to indicate an area exclusive of the Chien-chou and Mao-lien commanderies, home of the Manchus.

34 *Man.* 2. 61; *Ying SL* (24) 1039.

35 *Man.* 2. 100; *Ying SL* (26) 1664.

36 *Man.* 2. 110; *Ying SL* (26) 1792.

37 *Man.* 2. 345; *Ying SL* (37) 6374 (four characters missing).

Commanderies bought forbidden articles; as a result stricter measures of surveillance were introduced to prevent this abuse, but then the Jürčen complained that they could no longer buy plows and spades for the men, or needles and scissors for the women, and this in turn led to border clashes[38].

Finally that the Jürčen, like the Mongols of the Three Commanderies traded both on the borders and all along the road to Peking, is confirmed by Kao Chi-yüan's long memorial from 1612 : Kao tells us how through some oversight there was no convoy system between Peking and T'ung-chou and naturally the Jürčen took advantage of the opportunity to trade without any supervision[39]. What Kao wanted to have corrected was not the trade, but the inadequate convoying system. There is no doubt that the Jürčen traded also at other points beyond T'ung-chou.

Restrictions and Prohibited Articles

From early in the Hung-wu period, we find references to restrictions and prohibitions regarding export of goods or sale to foreigners. In 1387, it was forbidden for tribute envoys to take hemp and iron (*ma-t'ieh* 麻鉄) out of the country[40]. As we have seen in the section on the Hui-t'ung-kuan, the Oyirad could acquire kettles, red-tasseled saddles, bridles, etc. at the Hui-t'ung-kuan. Kettles, at least iron ones, were usually forbidden, or their sale was closely supervised. This we have learned from the trade relations of the Jürčen and the Mongols of

[38] *Man.* 2. 561, 565, 572-573; *Hsien SL* (46) 3067, 3112, 3174.

[39] *Man.* 4. 412; *Shen SL* (118) 9322.

[40] *T'ai-tsu SL* (6) 2735. In 1445, we learn from the *Shih-lu* that hemp, iron, and other articles supplied to Oyirad tribute envoys caused considerable expenses to the population of Ta-t'ung and neighboring areas. *Mok.* 3. 118; *Ying SL* (28) 2666. The hemp and iron in this case, however, were not for export but for horses just arriving from Mongolia.

the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies. Bridles were also forbidden, and so were red tassels, innocuous as this article may seem! Indeed, in 1391, red tassels were forbidden to officials, as ornamentations on saddles and horse trappings[41]. Whether this ruling meant a prohibition to export red tassels is not said, but a few years later we read that the Tibetans sometimes took red tassels instead of tea as payment for horses[42].

The *Ta-Ming lü* promulgated in 1397 forbids the export of the following articles : horses, oxen, weapons, iron ware, copper cash[43], various satins and silks, and cotton[44]. In 1405, an official of Ssuch'uan called attention to the fact that export of tea, cotton, "blue" (*ch'ing* 青) paper, etc. was forbidden, but since the Tibetans were used to this trade and China profited from it, too, it was not to be stopped[45]. In 1408, the military commander of Kansu was informed that it had come to the ears of the government that the people made clothes of fine silk 紵 絲 and gauze 紗 羅 which could not be sold to foreigners, for sale to Mohammedan traders[46]. The same governor of Kansu was warned again the following year that gauze *(lo)* and thin silk *(ch'i)* were being exported[47]. In 1410, we are told that as a result of the prohibition to sell cotton on the Ssuch'uan-Tibetan borders, even the soldiers of some districts had difficulty in securing enough of it for themselves[48]. It is not clear why silks, satin, and clothing

41 *T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 3118.
42 *T'ai-tsu SL* (8) 3630.
43 In 1390 it was noted that ever since former dynasties it had been forbidden to export gold, silver, copper coins, silks, and weapons, yet people of the Two Kuang, Chechiang, and Fuchien continued to export those articles. *T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 3067. And when the Europeans advanced into the Indian Ocean and further east in the sixteenth century they discovered that Chinese cash was the accepted medium of exchange in many countries. Lach. 65. 589, 601, 829.
44 *Ta-Ming lü* 15. 20ab.
45 *T'ai SL* (10) 658.
46 *T'ai SL* (11) 1072.
47 *T'ai SL* (11) 1188.
48 *T'ai SL* (12) 1305.

were forbidden, especially since the same silks or clothes were regularly given by the Court either as return presents for tribute articles, or as outright gifts.

Here follow a few regulations, or restrictions on trade, listed in the *Collected Statutes* : "(When trading is about to begin), the Bureau of Receptions (*chu-k'o-ssu* 主客司 of the Ministry of Rites) issues a proclamation to be posted at the gate of the (Hui-t'ung-)kuan declaring that it is forbidden to buy history books and dark, yellow, purple, black, large-flowered satins, and satin with the Tibetan Lotus 玄黃紫皂大花西番蓮段疋[49] and other prohibited articles 違禁雜物. Merchants bring their wares inside the (Hui-t'ung-)kuan to sell them at prices fair to both parties *(liang-p'ing)*. Dyed cotton, coarse silk and other such articles 染作布絹) may be sold only in limited quantities[50]. Those who buy on credit (from foreign envoys) and deliberately postpone (payment) to cheat the foreigners and cause them to wait (payment) and delay their departure; or those who trade illegally (*ssu* 私, i.e. sell forbidden articles) shall be punished with the cangue for one month in front of the (Hui-t'ung-)kuan[51]. If

[49] My translation of this line is only tentative. Several sentences of this section of the *Ta-Ming hui-tien* have been incorporated into the *Ta-Ch'ing hui-tien*, and Fairbank and Teng translate this particular sentence a little differently : "black, yellow, purple-black, large-flowered, Tibetan, or lotus-satin" (Fairbank-Teng 60. 139). We should note, however, that instead of character *hsüan*, the *Ta-Ch'ing hui-tien* reads *hei* 黑 "black". The *Ming-shih* 67.11. 70a states that in 1458, it became forbidden for both officials and military officers to wear clothes "with the Great Tibetan Lotus and the Great Cloud (patterns)" or in such colors as "dark (*yüan* 元 = 玄 *hsüan)*, yellow, purple...". These prohibitions could well be due to the influence of Tibetan Lamaism at the Ming Court. Some types of materials and patterns were also forbidden for ordinary citizens. Thus in March, 1449, the governor-general of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu noted that the officers and soldiers of those border districts wore clothes with various patterns forbidden to them, and on the other hand wore other pieces of clothing which were reminiscent of the Mongol occupation of a century ago. *Mok.* 3. 206; *Ying SL* (30) 3371.

[50] This is a tentative translation, Fairbank and Teng translate differently (Fairbank-Teng 60. 139).

[51] For delays of payment see the above text from March 7, 1490 (n.8). Fairbank-Teng 60. 140 : "in front of their shops" is certainly not correct. *Kuan* refers to the Hui-t'ung-kuan, not to a private house or shop.

foreigners in violation of the law deliberately enter the people's houses to trade, prohibited goods (sold in such transactions) shall be confiscated, and if they have not yet received the rewards, a proportionate reduction will be contemplated; and border officials will be notified not to forward to the capital such foreigners as have been found guilty of such misdemeanor. Those in or out of the (Hui-t'ung-) kuan, and the military population and common people around the (Hui-t'ung-) kuan who buy prohibited articles in behalf of *(tai-t'i* 代 替 *)* the foreigners shall be found guilty and wear the cangue for one month and be sent into exile in frontier commanderies."[52]

The reader will have noticed that this law is essentially based on the 1500 regulations for the Hui-t'ung-kuan, but this *Ta-Ming hui-tien* regulation is not dated. Then under the date Hung-chih 10 (1497) follow several more rules, but it is quite possible that the date of 1497 applies to the first rule only : "When envoys of the Northern Little King [i.e. the Mongol qaγan] come to Court with the tribute, officials, military population, and commoners who trade with them are allowed (to sell) them only such goods as clothes of plain undyed (? 光 素) fine or coarse silk or cotton; no weapons or copper and iron ware are allowed. Those who transgress (this law) will be severely punished. Also : a memorial was approved : those who illegally *(ssu)* sell weapons, which must be prohibited, to foreigners for a profit, will be punished, according to the law on export of weapons and divulgation of military secrets, with the death penalty; and the heads of the main guilty will be exposed as a warning to the public."[53]

One article which, according to the *Ta-Ming hui-tien*[54], could not be sold to the Jürčen was "flower-patterned" *(hua-yang)* clothes. These particular clothes are never mentioned in connection with the Mongols. The Jürčen must have been very fond of

[52] TMHT 108. 29ab (1625a).
[53] TMHT 108. 29b (1625a).
[54] TMHT 111. 17a (1651a).

them, and the Court now and then sent them as presents. It was also forbidden to sell "flower-patterned" silks and other special varieties to the Central Asian kingdoms : "During the five days' trade at the (Hui-t'ung-) kuan, – except for forbidden articles such as saddles, bridles, swords, and arrows – officials, common people, traders from every kind of shop may bring for equitable sale at the (Hui-t'ung-)kuan such textiles as satins, gauze, etc., if they are not yellow or purple-colored, and with the dragon and the phoenix designs, or with the flower-pattern."[55] This regulation, however, is not dated.

During the 1430s and 1440s, the Ming used to present Mongol princes with a wide variety of silks and clothes with gold-woven or embroidered designs. These must have been very expensive, and it is doubtful that any Mongol prince would have been able to purchase them, in case such costly textiles were on the market.

Apart from the aforementioned regulation in the *Ta-Ming hui-tien* from 1497 regarding the Little King, Chinese sources rarely refer to textiles forbidden to the Mongols, and we have only the vaguest information on this embargo of silks and textiles. In December, 1452, to a request by the Oyirad, the Ming Court replied that yellow, purple, crimson gold-brocade with the nine dragons, and garments in red and varicolored satin, and gold vessels, and silver inlaid cups, were reserved for the exclusive use of the emperor, and thus could not be sent to Mongolia[56]. Yet prior to 1449 the Ming had sent many presents to the Mongols consisting of silks and garments in colors and with the very designs here forbidden. But that was during the Cheng-t'ung reign. In 1452 it was the Ching-t'ai emperor who refused, apparently because he disliked the Mongols much more than his predecessor, and therefore applied the traditional restriction more rigorously.

In 1498-1499 several horse fairs were held at Ta-t'ung and in

[55] TMHT 112. 4b (1654b).
[56] *Mok.* 3. 445; *Ying SL* (33) 4819.

September, 1498, officers of the military district of Ta-t'ung were accused of permitting the sale of varicolored satin clothes and iron implements to the Mongols. But the sources do not indicate the precise nature of the forbidden satins. A little later, however, we are told that the horse fairs had been created with a view to exchanging satins and cotton for Mongol horses, and the aforementioned officers were accused of selling forbidden satins with "flowers and clouds" (or flowery clouds?) and iron implements[57].

This brings us to the question of iron and "iron implements". Export of metals to the north had always been something of a problem even before the advent of the Mongols. During the T'ang, some iron was exported to the T'u-chüeh[58]. The early Mongols according to Hsü T'ing 徐霆 (in his commentary on P'eng Ta-ya's 彭大雅 *Hei-Ta shih-lüeh*) got their iron from the Mohammedans in Central Asia; in a further comment, Wang Kuo-wei 王國維 asserts that the Liao strictly forbade all export of iron, but the Chin relaxed the restriction, with the result that a large amount of iron coins were exported to the Mongols who melted them down to manufacture weapons, and this became an important factor in the rise of the Mongols[59]. It is understandable that with their little developed craftmanship, the Mongols largely depended on China for all sorts of equipment[60].

[57] *Mok.* 5. 37; *Hsiao SL* (57) 2652.

[58] For ex. Liu 58. 216, 457, 462; (Hsin) *T'ang-shu* 315A. 11b.

[59] *Hei-Ta shih-lüeh* 90; Yang 52. 110 (3.35); also Wittfogel-Feng 49. 174, 178 and n., 184, 188 et passim. D. Martin, *The Rise of Chingis Khan and His Conquest of North China*, Baltimore, 1950, 20-21, attributes the *Hei-Ta shih-lüeh* statement to Meng Hung (better Chao Hung), author of the *Meng-Ta pei-lu*.

[60] In the sixteenth century and probably much earlier too, the Mongols of Northwest Mongolia obtained iron from the Kuznetsk area in Siberia; its modern name is an allusion to the ores found there. The Jürčen in the east suffered from the same lack of iron : for their need of iron and weapons see the *Man-chou yüan-liu k'ao* 16. 6b7a. Hatada Takashi's 旗田巍 article "Mindai Joshinjin no tekki ni tsuite" 明代女眞人の鐵器について (on the iron ware of the Jurchens during the Ming Dynasty) in *Tôhô Gakuhô* 11, No. 1, was

In the section on the Hui-t'ung-kuan we have seen that the *Collected Statutes* quotes a regulation from 1450 whereby the Oyirad were permitted to buy copper "soup jars", kettles, red-tasseled saddles, bridles, scissors, and other such articles. The question of red tassels need not be repeated here. The 1450 ruling at least implies that the other articles were also considered forbidden. At any rate, the *Collected Statutes* says (no date) that envoys from Qamil and other Central Asian kingdoms were not entitled to purchase saddles, bridles, swords, scissors, etc., precisely those objects which the Oyirad could obtain, at least after 1450. But Central Asian tribute missions could purchase five copper and tin "soup jars", and on their way home they were allowed to purchase plows, kettles, etc. in Lin-t'ao, Lan-chou, and other towns of Kansu, provided they did not buy too many. However, wrought iron *(shou-t'ieh)* too easy to convert into weapons, and of course weapons themselves, remained specifically excluded[61].

"Iron implements" in general are regularly referred to in the *Shih-lu*, sometimes together with weapons, sometimes alone, which would seem to indicate that the term *t'ieh-ch'i* refers to tools other than weapons. We shall review some of the passages of the *Shih-lu* relating to the illegal sale of iron and copper ware. On December 3, 1413, an officer of the garrison of K'ai-p'ing, the former Shang-tu, was reprimanded for sending men with iron implements across the borders[62]. The idea presumably was to sell them to the Mongols. We have already mentioned how the Jürčen used to buy oxen and copper and iron implements on their way home from Peking : on May 24, 1439, it was decided to

not available to me. Shirokogoroff 35. 197a says that circa 1912 Manchus little affected by Chinese culture still had "their metallic implements and weapons usually made by the Chinese".

61 TMHT 112. 4b

62 *Mok.* 1. 432; *T'ai SL* (13) 1715-16. K'ai-p'ing was soon to be abandoned by the Ming garrison, which was stationed at Tu-shih-k'ou on the Great Wall but kept its name unchanged.

forbid this sale because "iron and copper were useful to the Barbarians", presumably for the manufacture of weapons[63]. A passage from January 15, 1444, says that the people used to sell iron implements to the Oyirad envoys and made great profits, and the Metropolitan Police *(Chin-i wei)* were instructed to investigate and arrest the guilty[64]. On September 30, 1477, the governor of Liaotung reported that Jürčen and Uriyangqad tribute missions used to export forbidden articles, not further specified. After new prohibitions were put into effect, on December 30, the Jürčen complained that the men could no longer obtain plows and shovels, and the women, needles and scissors. Two months later, March 12, 1478, we learn that the new measures had led to border incidents. Since on December 30 and on March 12, nothing is said about the Uriyangqad Mongols, it could well be that on September 30, the governor had included them in his report merely in routine fashion : it was almost standard practice to enumerate the Three Mongol Commanderies along with the Jürčen commanderies. At any rate, the debate as to what to sell the Jürčen and what not, continued for a while. It is interesting that in October, 1479, the Minister of the Army himself favored a rather liberal policy : the Jürčen of Chien-chou are of dubious allegiance, and the Court has opened horse fairs in order to forestall the forming of alliances and permits the sale of iron implements in order to win their allegiance; the purpose is to control them and the policy is no sign of weakness. In other words, trade, including such strategic goods as iron was the best way to pacify the Barbarians[66].

On September 3, 1498, as we have seen, it was reported that Ta-t'ung officials in need of horses, permitted their own troops and rich families to sell satin and iron implements, and a little later, on November 8, 1498, the Ta-t'ung officers were accused of

[63] *Man.* 2. 61; *Ying SL* (24) 1039.
[64] *Mok.* 3. 57; *Ying SL* (27) 2243.
[65] *Man.* 2. 561, 565, 572-73; *Hsien SL* (46) 3067, 3112, 3174.
[66] *Man.* 2. 603; *Hsien SL* (47) 3437-38.

selling iron implements to the Mongols for horses[67]. Moreover as has already been mentioned in connection with the prohibited flowers-and-clouds satins, satins and iron tools were sold to the Mongols on the short-lived market of Ta-t'ung of 1498-1499. Mongols and Chinese traders from far and near used to congregate on the borders and many metal implements were sold to the Mongols[68]. This clearly indicates that illegal trading activities were not a feature of the market of Ta-t'ung alone but had become normal along the borders as well.

This outflow of metal prompted measures to stem it which in turn adversely affected the army of Ta-t'ung : two years later, on October 8, 1501, we find this interesting passage on the situation in the Ta-t'ung area : the army of Ta-t'ung depended on Lu-chou 遼州 for its iron tools and agricultural implements, but because of this illegal export of iron from Ta-t'ung to Mongolia, controls and inspection of the movement of iron and weapons became so strict at the passes that even weapons destined for the army could not reach Ta-t'ung, and restrictions had to be relaxed somewhat in order to accommodate the Ta-t'ung garrisons[69].

As has already been suggested, the question of iron in final analysis is a question of weapons since much of the iron, or the iron tools, taken to Mongolia was used for the manufacture of weapons. At any rate, this is what the Chinese feared. We have seen how the Chinese always tried, although without much success, to limit the sale of agricultural tools to the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies; in February, 1503, an official stated that he had heard that as soon as they had crossed the borders, the Mongols broke and melted down the plows and pots bought in China, and that copper implements taken on raids were sold to their eastern

[67] *Mok.* 5. 28-30; *Hsiao SL* (56) 2431, 2459-60.
[68] *Mok.* 5. 37; *Hsiao SL* (57) 2652.
[69] *Mok.* 5. 108; *Hsiao SL* (58) 3288.

neighbors, the Jürčen[70], but the fact seems doubtful. In 1570, when the creation of horse fairs in Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung was being discussed, the danger of melting iron kettles and tools into weapons again gave rise to controversy, which was however settled in favor of the Mongols. We shall revert to this question later.

The possibility of manufacture of weapons out of metal bought or stolen in China becomes less important when seen against the numerous cases of outright sale of ready made weapons. Such sales are mentioned so often, and warnings are issued on so many occasions that one strongly doubts if the Ming government had effective means of preventing weapons from falling in large amounts into the hands of the Mongols. Here follow the most important texts : an imperial rescript from November 11, 1407, to the commander-in-chief of Kansu reminded him of the "old regulations" forbidding the sale of weapons : there is recent information that some soldiers sell them to foreigners[71]. One year later, on September 3, 1408, a report from Kansu stated that soldiers going into Mongolia often threw their weapons away[72]! There is no mention here of army clashes with the Mongols, and the passage seems to refer to military expeditions or parades across the borders in order to impress the enemy. This raises the question why on such parades, the soldiers should throw their equipment away. It seems more probable that the soldiers traded their weapons for Mongol horses, sheep skins, or other utilities (see below). However, the throwing away of weapons is not entirely excluded. Indeed, a list of army regulations from April 25, 1414, says among other things that those who willfully throw away their weapons, lose them, or sell them, will be severely punished[73].

During the 1430s and 1440s when the Oyirad were gradually

[70] *Man.* 3. 145; *Hsiao SL* (59) 3601.
[71] *Mok.* 1. 330; *T'ai SL* (11) 1004.
[72] *T'ai SL* (11) 1103.
[73] *Mok.* 1. 445; *T'ai SL* (13) 1748.

expanding their authority over all of Mongolia and large sections of Central Asia, the Ming thought it advisable to send them huge amounts of presents to keep them well disposed toward China. The Chinese do not seem to have been very consistent in their policy of forbidding export of weapons. For example, under the date of May 17, 1430, the *Shih-lu* relates that the ruling prince of the Oyirad, Toγon, requested bows, arrows, swords, and other such tools, and received them[74].

Whatever the official policy of the government, officers and soldiers do not seem to have been averse to trading with the enemy. For example, in 1434, a high-ranking officer in Ta-t'ung was accused of trading helmets, harnesses, bows and arrows with Mongol tribute envoys for camels; the officer tried to defend himself, yet the fact that such accusations could be leveled at all is very significant[75].

When the opening of a horse fair in Ta-t'ung was first proposed on May 23, 1438, the plan was accepted but it was explicitly forbidden to sell weapons, iron, and copper[76]. If this plan was put into effect, we do not know how well the prohibitions were observed. But we do know that the Oyirad envoys continued to obtain all sorts of weapons, including fire arms! In October, 1439, the military and the common people (apart from a warning against insulting, stealing, overcharging, and private conversations) were told once more that they could trade with the Oyirad, but not sell them any weapons, and the penalty for contravention was exile to Hai-nan in South China, itself an indication of the grave concern of the government[77]; in November, 1442, a report by the governor of Ta-t'ung said that bows were being sold by the thousands to the Oyirad who smuggled them out concealed in their luggage. The governor proposed an extra inspection at Chü-

[74] *Mok.* 2. 195; *Hsüan SL* (19) 1542.
[75] *Mok.* 2. 307, 309; *Hsüan SL* (21) 2433, 2442, 2448.
[76] *Mok.* 2. 521; *Ying SL* (24) 812.
[77] *Mok.* 2. 583; *Ying SL* (24) 1137.

yung-kuan, but the emperor, apparently afraid of irritating the Oyirad, preferred for the time being not to be too strict[78]. Every year protests were heard and new warnings were issued : in October, 1443, an official wanted to prohibit all relations between Mongol envoys and Mongols in the Ming service residing at the capital, and simultaneously the sale of weapons, copper and iron along the road to and from the capital[79]. On January 8, 1444, the emperor himself wrote to the military in charge at Ta-t'ung, Hsüan-fu, and Tu-shih-k'ou that the supervision was far too lax : that year the Oyirad carried helmets, armor, swords, arrows, and other prohibited iron ware[80]; and in December of the following year, the emperor called the attention of the military to the same state of affairs : the Oyirad were in possession of armor, bows, "copper" (brass?) guns (*t'ung-ch'ung* 銅銃, a kind of fire arms) sold to them by greedy and irresponsible individuals[81].

How widespread the malpractices must have been appears from a rescript from February 15, 1446, to the Metropolitan Police, in which the emperor called attention to the illegal manufacture of weapons both in Peking and in the area "beyond the passes" (*k'ou-wai* 口外)[82] for sale to the Oyirad; weapons issued by the government were also sold. We read further that officials had put arrow heads in wine jars, and wrapped bows in other goods for presentation to the Oyirad[83]. The custom of hiding arrow heads in wine jars must have been a favored one : on February 8,

[78] *Mok.* 3. 16; *Ying SL* (26) 1957.
[79] *Mok.* 3. 44; *Ying SL* (27) 2194.
[80] *Mok.* 3. 56; *Ying SL* (27) 2240.
[81] *Mok.* 3. 125; *Ying SL* (28) 2689.
[82] *K'ou-wai*, or *k'ou-pei* 口北, now indicates Mongolia, i.e. the region north of the Great Wall. During the Ming this term referred to the area beyond Chü-yung-kuan, in other words the area between the "inner" wall running north of Peking in a direction from southwest to northeast, and the Great Wall line on the rim of the Mongolian Plateau. This *k'ou-wai* of the Ming included the two military border districts of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu. During the Ch'ing, Hsüan-fu, now called Hsüan-hua, was still within K'ou-wai-tao (*Ch'ing-shih* 55.II. 838b; 117.II.1393a; Hsiao I-shan, *Ch'ing-tai t'ung-shih* I, 526).
[83] *Mok.* 3. 133; *Ying SL* (28) 2725.

1447, we are told that a eunuch in Ta-t'ung had tried to cover up the fact that an underling of his had been caught red-handed just as he was about the sell helmets and armor to the Mongols. At this time, the eunuch was pardoned, but in September, 1449, he was again arrested and put in jail : the charge this time was that under the protection of the notorious eunuch Wang Chen 王振 [84] he had for years been manufacturing iron and steel arrow heads, storing them in jars for presentation to the Oyirad who reciprocated with good horses[85]. The reader should bear in mind that the eunuch's arrest took place after the Ming defeat at T'u-mu where the Cheng-t'ung emperor was taken prisoner, and Wang Chen's fall from power.

In February, 1448, the death penalty was decreed for the sale of bows, arrows, and military equipment in general in the area (關)[86] "outside the passes", and one year later, in February, 1449, the Metropolitan Police was ordered to arrest those guilty of such sales between Peking, and Hsüan-fu or Ta-t'ung[87].

Esen-tayiši in 1452 requested a long list of goods including silks and silk garments, paper, medicines, and also iron anvils, tongs, awls, daggers, etc. As has already been mentioned, on December 13, 1452, the Ming government replied that some of the requested articles were being sent to him, but that some silks and garments could not be sent because they were reserved for the emperor's use, and such things as iron anvils, daggers, etc. were prohibited articles[88]. Foreign embassies lodging at the Hui-t'ung-kuan were not supposed to carry weapons, but this ruling, too, was honored more in the breach than in the observance : on January 1, 1453, the Oyirad embassy was found to be in the

[84] Biogr. in *Ming-shih* 304.V. 3407-09.

[85] *Mok.* 3. 157, 235; *Ying SL* (29) 2931; (30) 3567.

[86] *Lu* is the technical name of a subdivision of a military border district *(chen)* but on occasion *lu* is also used to indicate an "area" as in this case where the whole region "outside of the inner wall" seems to be meant.

[87] *Mok.* 3. 180; 204-206; *Ying SL* (29) 3145; (30) 3358.

[88] *Mok.* 3. 445; *Ying SL* (33) 4819.

possession of large quantities of helmets, armor, daggers, bows and arrows, and even a kind of fire arm called *pa-ch'ung* 把銃 "hand-gun": it was believed that these weapons had been sold to them by the military population along the road[89].

We find more references to weapons in 1455, 1457, 1498, etc.[90], and in 1500, the regulations of the Hui-t'ung-kuan once more forbade the sale of weapons and threatened transgressors with severe penalties, all indications that in spite of every effort sales continued to take place. Fire arms have been mentioned a couple of times in the foregoing pages. We do not know what knowledge the Mongols had either of the manufacture of fire arms, or gun powder, and their practical use, but a text from February 11, 1545, seems to reflect a growing concern that fire arms might fall into the hands of the Mongols : when the Ta-t'ung district notified the Central Government that it needed weapons, the Ministry of Works stated that as a rule the Central Government issued no such weapons as helmets, armor, bows, and arrows to border districts; presumably they had to provide their own. Then the Ministry went on to say that along the borders, "rapid guns" *(shen-ch'iang)* and "rapid cannon" *(shen-p'ao)* must not be lightly made, but should be issued (by the Central Government)[91]. This was a period of tension on the borders and although the Mongols are not mentioned here, the implication is clear enough.

ILLEGAL INTERCOURSE WITH FOREIGNERS

In view of China's perpetual fear of spies and ever recurring

89 *Mok.* 3. 451; *Ying SL* (33) 4839.

90 *Mok.* 3. 533,574; *Mok.* 4. 396; *Mok.* 5. 31; *Ying SL* (35) 5470; (36) 6067; *Hsien SL* (46) 2904, 2915; *Hsiao SL* (56) 2514.

91 *Mok.* 6. 392; *Shih SL* (83) 5635. The Koreans at times were entitled to purchase 50 bows a year in order to defend themselves against aggression. In 1481, upon request and in view of special circumstances, they received permission to buy 150 bows. *Man.* 2. 630; *Hsiao SL* (47) 3693.

cases of weapons and strategic metals passing into the hands of the enemy, it is no surprise that the Chinese always were very suspicious of every kind of relations with foreigners. Many of the passages referred to above show this official concern, and some additional information on this question will be presented here because of the trade relations implied.

We must mention first the declaration of 1388, already referred to, that the people of Chechiang were permitted to trade with Southeastern tribute missions, although intercourse with foreigners as such was forbidden[92]. Not only did the arrival of tribute missions pose a problem of security, but Chinese merchants were going overseas too. In 1394, the Court forbade the importation of foreign (Fan) incense and foreign goods : only the Liu-ch'iu Islands, Cambodia, and Siam were allowed to continue to send tribute, and the people living along the South China coast were no longer permitted to go overseas to purchase exotic wares; not only must such things as "foreign incense" no longer be sold, but even incense from the Kuangtung area could not be transported to other provinces : the people were supposed to burn incense sticks made of local wood[93]. It does not seem, however, that this ruling resulted in fewer tribute missions from the South. In any event, the Ming code of 1397 forbids travel abroad, export of various goods, and divulgation of military secrets[94]. How effective the prohibition was is another matter : in 1402, we are told once more that the people living along the seaboard had in recent years been going abroad in violation of the regulations promulgated by the Hung-wu emperor; and a little later we read that Chinese "who had taken refuge abroad" must return[95]. Two years later, the government declared that many people from Fuchien province went abroad and became pirates; it was ordered that seagoing vessels

92 *T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 2815.
93 *T'ai-tsu SL* (8) 3373-74.
94 *Ta-Ming lü* 15. 20ab.
95 *T'ai SL* (9) 149, 210.

must be rebuilt[96].

So much for the South. What was the situation on the Northern frontier ? A small-scale trade by Chinese peddlers sellings their wares in Mongolia may well have existed under the Ming as it existed under the Ch'ing and the Republic. If it existed, the Ming Government tried hard to curtail it, but the land frontier was as difficult to control as the sea coast, and repeated warnings strongly suggest that the prohibitions remained largely a dead letter. When in November, 1402, the emperor wrote to the military commander of Ning-hsia to buy horses from the Mohammedan traders at government expense, he added that nobody was allowed to cross the border and leave the country *(ch'u-ching* 出境*)*[97]; and in May, 1407, a rescript to the military in Kansu reminded them that it was strictly forbidden to have intercourse with foreign barbarians, yet every time Mohammedan traders visited Kansu, soldiers and common people escorted them back across the borders; some had gone as far as Beš-baliq and Qara-qočo, had stayed there for quite a while and leaked out defense secrets[98].

All this does not mean that no provision was made for legitimate business across the borders, but those entitled to enter Mongolia needed credentials. Even officials needed special credentials to cross Chü-yung-kuan, Shan-hai-kuan, and other passes north of Peking, even though these did not lead directly into Mongolia or Jürčen territory[99]. A rescript from March, 1406, addressed to the military authorities of Liaotung declared that according to the Directorate of Astronomy *(Ch'in-t'ien-chien)* signs in the sky indicated danger of war on the borders, and the emperor ordered the authorities to be extra careful : all papers stamped with the

96 *T'ai SL* (10) 498.
97 *T'ai SL* (9) 242-43.
98 *T'ai SL* (11) 929.
99 *T'ai SL* (11) 1188. The *Hsüan SL* (18) 1121 records a case from 1428 in which an official had to bribe his way through Shan-hai-kuan in spite of the fact that he was in legitimate possession of proper credentials.

imperial seal and all papers issued by various offices must be carefully examined[100]. True, in this passage there is no reference to merchants or even to crossings of the borders, but such an implication becomes probable from a comparison with a similar rescript from October 14, 1413 : "border defenses are intended to make a clear distinction between inner and outer territories, and according to the Institutes of the Ancient Kings, one may not be careless in this matter. From now on, no one may cross the borders (into Mongolia, etc.) without papers stamped with the imperial seal; even if one claims to have Our oral permission, but not papers stamped with the imperial seal, he may not be allowed (to leave the country) : merchants and 'agents' 使 幹 [i.e. Ming ambassadors] holding credentials (*yen* 驗) must be allowed (to cross borders)!"[101]. A further reference to traders visiting Jürčen lands appears in the *Shih-lu* entry of October 1, 1414. In this passage the emperor orders that a town be constructed in Fu-t'i commandery for its soldiers and people to live in; these would engage in hunting and breeding, but "traders from every place" were also permitted to settle in it[102]. Traders going to Fu-t'i, however, needed credentials to leave the country, as indicated in the above passages from 1406 and 1413, and confirmed once more on September 30, 1418 : "Liaotung troops stationed along the borders cross the borders in great numbers to buy horses and annoy the Barbarians; this must be strictly forbidden. From now on all those crossing the borders 'privately' without papers issued by the Court, shall be severely punished... But Wild Jürčen and Tatars settled at An-lo and Tzu-tsai wishing to cross the borders to trade, do not come under this regulations."[103].

100 *Man.* 1. 202-203; *T'ai SL* (10) 767.

101 *Man.* 1. 267; *T'ai SL* (13) 1706.

102 *Man.* 1. 272; *T'ai SL* (13) 1795.

103 *Man.* 1. 298; *T'ai SL* (14) 2103. An-lo and Tzu-tsai were two localities in K'ai-yüan in the northernmost part of Chinese Liaotung; large numbers of Jürčen came to settle there, largely at the expense of the Ming, and once settled there many entered the Ming service.

These passages show that not only Chinese merchants could and did go to Mongolia and Jürčen territory, but that even those Jürčen settled at An-lo and Tzu-tsai did some business, consisting, no doubt, in taking Chinese goods across the borders and bringing back cattle, horses, furs, and other native products to sell in China.

I have shown elsewhere that during the 1430s and 1440s, Ming ambassadors or their followers, used to buy horses in Mongolia and probably other things as well. This trade seems to have been entirely legitimate, and it has to be mentioned here in connection with traders going to the Mongols and the Jürčen. There is an interesting instance of a Ming envoy trading with the Jürčen in 1462. The *Shih-lu*, under the date of April 20, 1462, relates that Ma Chien 馬鑑 and his party were sent to the Jürčen of Fu-t'i to inform the tribes of Hei-lung-chiang, Nurgal, Chi-lieh-mi, etc., that they might come to trade with them. Gerfalcons and other such "tribute" would be paid for immediately by Ma Chien and his party (without the people having to go to Peking)[104].

How suspicious the government remained of anyone crossing into Mongolia appears further from the following typical cases : in August, 1426, border officials were reminded that control of border passes was essential not only to keep aggressors out, but also to keep irresponsible people from provoking the Mongols[105], and an officer in Ning-hsia was accused of letting his soldiers cross the borders to chase wild horses[106]; in June, 1430, officers in Hsüan-fu district were accused of laxity because some of their men had gone into Mongolia to hunt deer, and one soldier had been wounded by the Mongols who not only chased them back but attacked a border settlement[107].

All along the borders the gathering of fuel was always a pressing problem, and much of it came from Mongolia. Firewood in Peking

104 *Man.* 2. 380-381; also 382-383; *Ying SL* (38) 6893, 6927.
105 *Hsüan SL* (17) 494.
106 *Hsüan SL* (17) 510-11.
107 *Hsüan SL* (19) 1573.

mostly came from the forests in the Jehol region, but in 1439, orders were issued that all passes without gates had to be stopped up while those having gates had to be closed at night, and anyone entering or leaving the country needed papers (文 [illegible])[108].

Under the circumstances we may expect that the government would be extremely suspicious of all contacts with Mongol tribute envoys, even if commercial relations were allowed. At times the sole fact that one had spoken to foreigners was enough to make him suspected! In May, 1406, the Metropolitan Police wanted to arrest a man who had bought a felt coat from the Mongols and had talked with them too long! The emperor, however, intervened and warned against too great severity. In 1439, when the people were warned against stealing or overcharging the Oyirad, they were also told not to speak with them "privately"[109].

All the while, as has already been indicated, the armies lacked horses and the need became more pressing as time went on. Very often officers and soldiers tried to alleviate the situation on their own initiative by buying horses from the Mongols; sometimes the government would approve, but most of the time there were enough officials around to condemn the practice as being against the accepted ways of doing. Undoubtedly, those deals involved more than horses, and with the Ming administrations's obsession with espionage and treason. all exchanges and every form of intercourse was basically fraught with danger. The very term "private relations" *(ssu-t'ung* [illegible]*)* has a pejorative connotation. Several cases of governmental disapproval of such "private" or illegal intercourse have already been referred to. We may list here a few having to do with trade in general and horses in particular. In September, 1441, a chiliarch of Wan-ch'üan [illegible] (Kalgan region) accused one of his superiors in the military district of Hsüan-fu of various malpractices one being trading with the

[108] *Ying SL* (24) 1045.
[109] *T'ai SL* (11) 795; *Mok.* 2. 583; *Ying SL* (24) 1137.

Tatars[110]. In 1444, an officer in Ta-t'ung was accused of "privately" acquiring animals from Oyirad envoys[111]. Malfeasance and abuse of power was wide spread in the army, and on January 22, 1453, an officer of Hsüan-fu was accused of appropriating Mongol "tribute" horses bought by his soldiers and forcibly taking goods from Mongol missions[112]. In April, 1454, it was discovered that soldiers in Kansu had been lending money to Mongols going to Peking : once there the Mongols purchased various goods which were carried back by the governmental transport system and thus caused extra inconvenience and expenses[113]. In 1498, there are three passages showing that the armies in Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu lacked horses and individual soldiers had been buying them privately from the Mongols : in July it was stated that all horses brought by the Mongols must be reported to the government which would purchase them; privately acquired horses would be confiscated[114]. In September, we are told that in order to cover up the need for horses in their commands, local officers had given permission to the military population and rich families to trade clothes of varicolored satin, and iron ware for Mongol horses[115]; and in November, officers were accused of trading iron ware for Mongol horses[116]. We have already mentioned how in 1523, the military population stationed along the road from Kansu to Peking were threatened with the cangue if they dealt "privately" with Central Asian tribute missions longer than was permissible.

The situation showed no signs of improvement : in October, 1532, officers and men along the border were warned that those who traded privately with the Mongols or crossed the border to steal horses were punishable with exile to malaria-infested regions,

110 *Mok.* 2. 647; *Ying SL* (25) 1647.
111 *Mok.* 3. 82; *Ying SL* (27) 2424.
112 *Mok.* 3. 458; *Ying SL* (33) 4870.
113 *Mok.* 3. 502; *Ying SL* (34) 5222.
114 *Mok.* 5. 23; *Hsiao SL* (56) 2405.
115 *Mok.* 5. 28; *Hsiao SL* (56) 2431.
116 *Mok.* 5. 29-30; *Hsiao SL* (56) 2459-60.

just like those who "hooked" leopards, caught deer, cut trees, or dug up "rats"[117]. A warning was issued in April, 1538, against the Chinese crossing the borders illegally at Hsi-feng-k'ou to buy wood in Mongolia (from the forests in Jehol)[118]. In 1541, soldiers from Ch'ang-ch'eng 長城 and Hsi-hsiang 西鄉, and in 1542, soldiers from Yang-ho 陽和 had crossed into Mongolia to trade and in both cases men sent to investigate were murdered in order to destroy the evidence[119].

The most revealing testimony regarding illegal dealings along the borders came from a report by Ch'iu Luan 仇鸞 commander of the army of Ta-t'ung; the report was presented on September 26, 1550, at the time the Altan-qan of the Tümed was crossing the Great Wall north of Peking to invade the Metropolitan Area. At this point, we should observe that for ten years, the Altan-qan and his relatives of Ordos had been requesting permission to present

[117] *Mok.* 6. 41; *Shih SL* (78) 3321. It is not sure that the soldiers were actually stealing the horses; they may well have bought them. Inside the borders, though, horses were sometimes stolen from Mongol envoys : in 1445, a soldier of So-chou (Ta-t'ung) was beheaded for such a misdeed. *Mok.* 3. 102; *Ying SL* (28) 2512; and in 1446, an imperial rescript to the commander-in-chief of Ta-t'ung reminded him of repeated warnings to select carrefully the soldiers who were to escort the Mongol envoys in order to forestall stealing of horses from them : *Mok.* 3. 132; *Ying SL* (28) 2724. However Chinese troops soon began to organize forays into Mongolia to steal horses, but in contemporary documents this is never called "stealing" or "robbing" but *kan-ma* "to drive away horses", and this sort of activity was not objected to by the Central Government. It cannot be doubted that there always were actual and would-be horse-thieves, but thieves venturing into Mongolia ran considerable risks. The Mongols had drastic ways of dealing with horse-thieves : one method was to cripple them and leave them to die in the steppe of hunger and thirst. Such a prospect may have had a restraining effect. Radloff too states that horse-thieves did not venture to enter the Altai because the natives gave short shrift to them if they were caught. Radloff 93. II. 279.

[118] *Mok.* 6. 161; *Shih SL* (80) 4336.

[119] *Mok.* 6. 209, 296; *Shih SL* (82) 4926, 5266. Yang-ho (Yang-kao) is northeast of Ta-t'ung. Ch'ang-ch'eng, I believe, is the ancient Ch'ang-ch'eng, northwest of P'ing-liang, Kansu, mentioned in the *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao* 58. 2539 (under Pai-ch'üan-ch'eng); Hsi-hsiang is near Han-chung, Shensi (*Ming-shih* 42. I. 464b).

the tribute and to trade, and lately had threatened to intensify their forays in order to secure some Chinese manufactures, especially textiles and iron implements. But the Ming had always been adamant in their refusal. Ch'iu Luan now precisely argued the Mongol point of view : the Mongols needed a minimum of Chinese manufactures, and peace could never be achieved until they could legally buy them in sufficient quantities; moreover, he went on to say, the prohibition to trade with the Mongols could never be enforced : all along the northern frontier, soldiers in forward positions and watchtowers dealt with the Mongols every day. What's more, Ch'iu pointed out, the former commander in-chief of the army of Ta-t'ung, Chou Shang-wen 周尚文, encouraged his troops the trade with the Mongols in order to avoid armed clashes[120].

The 1550 "invasion" left the Central Government no alternative but to grant the Altan-qan tribute and trade relations, but these were soon broken off again. By 1551, as we shall see in another chapter, tribute and trade were forbidden, and it was even forbidden for officials to discuss the matter or to propose new measures. The result was that between 1550 and 1570, the Mongols raided the borders more than ever, and frontier soldiers helpless as they were to put up effective resistance, felt more than ever inclined to trade with the enemy rather than to fight him. On November 24, 1563, a supervising secretary of the Ministry of the Army, describing a number of irregularities and abuses on the frontier, said that some soldiers needlessly killed Mongols ready to surrender and come over to China, while others

120 *Mok.* 6. 622-623; *Shih SL* (85) 6483-84. WLWKL 7. 51. Ch'iu Luan himself was posthumously condemned for bribing the Altan-qan so he would not attack the Ta-t'ung region; instead he turned against the Metropolitan Area. *Mok.* 7. 33; *Shih SL* (86) 6824, 6826-27. *Ming shih chi-shih pen-mo* 60. 1. Chou Shang-wen's biography in the *Ming-shih* (211. IV. 2452) makes no mention of Ch'iu Luan's accusation; quite to the contrary in maintains that while in Ta-t'ung Chou organized the defenses so effectively that the people had a few years' peace.

manning the watchtowers exchanged goods with the enemy[121]. The *Shih-lu* under the date of November 1, 1565, records the summary of a memorial regarding border affairs by a regional inspector (*hsün-an*) of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu; at one point he says : "governmental troops of Ta-t'ung trade with the Mongols and leak out defense secrets"[122], and on November 4, 1566, the commander-in-chief of Ta-t'ung was exiled to a far-away place for having permitted the Mongols to trade (*hu-shih* 互 市) and it was believed that a subsequent attack on So-chou 朔 was the direct result of his permission[123].

Su Shih-kao 蘇 士 皐 in his *I-yü* describes more in detail the customary transactions of that period between soldiers on watchtowers and first line defense and the Mongols : "one could not make an exhaustive list of crimes committed on the borders : it is so bad that (the soldiers) trade with individual robbers : for a hatchet they obtain a fur coat; for [a piece of] iron they get a leg of mutton; for filigree earrings, horse hair; for flint stones (mined below Yü-t'ai-ling 虞 臺 嶺[124] : if one strikes the flint stone with a piece of iron sparks fly off, and if one holds it against tinder [*huo-ko* 火 萼] it catches fire) they obtain a lamb skin; (the soldiers on the watchtowers value their possessions and, afraid that the Mongols might attack their towers, they fail to give the warning signals : [when the Mongols] enter [the defense area, the soldiers] pretend not to know; only after they have left do they fire their cannon as warning! "[125]

As is well known, the Ming army on the northern frontier was very poorly organized, and soldiers in advanced positions were

121 *Mok.* 7. 41; *Shih SL* (90) 8596.
122 *Mok.* 7. 455; *Shih SL* (91) *8872-73.*
123 *Mok.* 7. 476; *Shih SL* (91) 9026.
124 Slightly west of Chang-chia-k'ou (Kalgan).
125 *I-yü* 26ab : words between parentheses are texts in small characters; words between square brackets are inserted by me. In my article "Chinese in Southern Mongolia during the Sixteenth Century", *Mon. Ser.* 19, 1959, p. 50, I have mistranslated several words of this passage.

often left to their own devices. The result was that just as the Mongols needed Chinese commodities, Chinese soldiers defended themselves more effectively by trading and by so doing they supplied themselves with necessities they were unable to get through regular army channels.

If the repetition of the prohibition of "private" relations suggests that the law was not enforceable, the clandestine nature of this unofficial trade is also the reason why so few details have come down to us. The volume of contraband may have been very important, but it seems unlikely that we will be able to evaluate it.

Fr. Teggart[126] has argued that it was interruption of trade between East and West that caused intertribal wars, Barbarian uprisings and attacks upon the borders of the Roman empire. I do not know to what extent interruption of trade with China affected intertribal relations in Mongolia and regions beyond. As we have seen, refusal to accept tribute from Mongol tribes and refusal to trade with them inevitably led to raids upon the Chinese borders. This fact was stated more than once during the sixteenth century by the Mongol princes and was readily believed by experienced officials serving along the borders. The Central Government in Peking, too far away from the scene, was not convinced and for many years refused to accept the tribute offered by the Southern Mongols. What we do not know is how the lack of trade of one tribe affected its relations with other tribes having tribute relations and trade with China : for example, it what way were relations between the Tümed and the Three Uriyangqad in the middle of the sixteenth century influenced by the fact that the Three Uriyangqad tribes had tribute relations while the Tümed remained excluded ? It is my impression that the Chinese paid no attention to this problem or simply dismissed it. Only on a rare occasion do we learn that intertribal trade existed. Thus in 1444, in connection

126 Teggart 39. 120, 171, 217, 240-241.

with an armed clash between the Mongols of the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies and the Jürčen, we are told that Jürčen traders from the Wu-che tribe on their way to other tribes and been robbed of their wares by the Mongols[127]. Moreover the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies were often under attack by the Northern Mongols, and as such attacks were always interpreted by the Chinese as attempts to unify all Mongolia, the Ming could not afford to be too strict with the Three Commanderies in order to keep them within the Chinese orbit; but whether there existed also trade contacts between the Three Commanderies and Mongols farther north we are not told, although a minimum of trade may well be taken for granted. Indeed in connection with the horse fairs we shall find a few vague references implying some form of intertribal trade.

A Note on Tea

At this point a few words should be said about tea. Some writers have assumed that along with textiles, foodstuffs, tools, etc., also quantities of tea were exported to Mongolia during the Ming era[128]. Yet there is no evidence that tea either was sent to Mongolia as payment for their tribute presented to the Court or that the Mongols bought it from the Chinese in border areas; nor is tea ever mentioned in the lists of goods at times requested from the Court. Of course, this does not mean that tea was not known, and that none was imported: but it would be strange if large

[127] *Man.* 2. 163-164; *Ying SL* (27) 2441. Heissig quotes a phrase from a Mongol chronicle stating that in 1581 (the year is not certain) traders from the Tümed arrived among the Qalqa in Northern Mongolia. Heissig 65. ix. This would make it certain that trade existed, but it is by no means sure that the traders were Mongols; they could well have been Chinese traveling through Mongolia. There were enough Chinese living in Tümed territory.

[128] For example Reischauer-Fairbank 60. 247, 329.

quantities were exported to Mongolia, to find no trace in the records. If during the fifteenth century, tea was known at all, it could not yet have become the popular drink it was to become during the Ch'ing period[129].

Likewise, as far as I know, tea is never mentioned in connection with the Jürčen. Yet other neighbors of the Mongols knew tea. As we have already mentioned, as early as 1378, a Chinese agent was sent with tea, paper, and clothing to buy horses in Han-tung[130]. In 1404, when a native of An-ting sold 500 horses at Ho-chou, an officer of Ho-chou remarked that horses from Pi-li (on the Kansu-Tibetan borders), Han-tung, and other places were always paid for with tea, but since An-ting was so far away, this time he wanted to pay with textiles. The emperor replied that indeed it was the rule to pay with tea for horses, but since this was the first tribute from An-ting, he agreed to pay with textiles[131]. This decision does not mean that the people of Han-tung drank tea and those of An-ting not.

The Chinese did not just wait for the Western tribesmen to bring their horses; they actively sought them and at times even went out to buy them : a memorial from the end of 1432 indicates that certain quantities of horses to be paid for with tea had been levied (*cheng* 徵) from Tibetan tribes in the neighborhood of Ho-chou, Pi-li, and Hsi-ning in Kansu as well as from the commanderies of An-ting and Han-tung[132]; and in 1446 a Chinese mission was sent to An-ting with tea to buy horses but met with disaster[133].

How much tea An-ting needed appears from the following case : in 1444, a lama from An-ting with the title of teacher of the Empire (*kuo-shih*) and others presented a tribute at the capital; each one of them, number not indicated, purchased 2000 pounds

129 See my note in "Tribute ..." Ch. XI, n. 76.

130 *T'ai-tsu SL* (5) 1940.

131 *T'ai SL* (10) 522. This was not the first tribute presented by An-ting; perhaps it was the first time this particular individual sent horses.

132 *Hsüan SL* (21) 2185.

133 *Ying SL* (29) 3024-25.

of tea. The lama declared that the prince of An-ting wanted him to purchase 3000 pounds more for him; moreover, he requested transportation by the government for all their merchandise. The emperor considered the amount too large and decided that the prince could have 500 pounds for which the Chinese government was to provide transportation; the Teacher of the Empire could have 200 pounds, and his followers (each, or in globo?) 100 pounds, but they would have to provide their own transportation, and this would be the rule from now on[134], which implies that An-ting could continue to buy substantial amounts of tea regularly.

Qamil, too, was a regular buyer of tea : in September, 1440, Qamil envoys wanted to exchange their tribute rewards for tea, foodstuffs, textiles, etc., but they were told that tea could not be exported : the other goods could be freely purchased on the street market[135]. This is one of the rare passages where tea is said not to be an article for export. Since we know that much tea was sold or given away, it can only mean that China wanted to keep a certain control over the export of tea and that permission was needed to purchase extra quantities. The *Ta-Ming hui-tien* quotes a regulation from 1460 according to which tribute missions from Qamil were to receive 30 pounds of fine tea, in addition to many other things. Another regulation says that every tribute envoy, that is practically every member of a mission, was entitled to buy 50 pounds of (ordinary?) tea[136]. But despite government control, much contraband seems to have existed. Two examples involving people from Qamil are reported from 1471 and 1476. In the first case, two tribute missions, one from the Oyirad, the other from Qamil, had been detained in Kansu : the commander-in-chief of Kansu complained that the Oyirad had refused to comply with

134 *Mok.* 10, Suppl. Tibet, 158; *Ying SL* (27) 2269.

135 *Ying SL* (25) 1375.

136 TMHT 112. 4a. These rules applied to some 38 Central Asian kingdoms.

instructions that only one out of every ten men could proceed to Peking; the Oyirad claimed that they had been forcibly detained, beaten, and insulted. When the Ministry of Rites looked into the matter, the commander of Kansu revealed that Mohammedans (*hui-hui*) in the Chinese service privately communicated with the annual tribute missions and induced them to demand tea in order to make a profit[137]. The reader should bear in mind that Oyirad missions rarely entered through Kansu, and the annual tribute missions referred to here must be missions from Qamil. If the Mohammedans in the Chinese service connived with the Qamil envoys to extract extra tea from the government, it is clearly implied that the men from Qamil were used under one pretext or other to get tea both for themselves and their friends. In the second case from 1476, an officer of Liang-chou, Kansu, was found guilty of letting his relatives sell contraband tea to men from Qamil[138].

Tea was even better known and liked by the Tibetans who, it seems cared for little else but tea! The Chinese used to think that the Tibetans could not live without this beverage and very early in the Hung-wu period, the Ming established offices of the Tea-for-Horses trade in a number of towns along the borders of Ssuch'uan and Shensi : Hsi-ning, Ho-chou, T'ao-chou, Min-chou, etc. This exchange of tea for Tibetan horses was a state monopoly, but from the outset the government had to struggle against smuggling. The prohibition to cross the borders applied to the Tibetan borders too, but was never successfully enforced. As early as 1376, it was forbidden for soldiers and common people of Ch'in (i.e. Shensi and Kansu) to enter Tibet to trade[139] , and the prohibition was to be repeated many a time thereafter. The result of this contraband was that the government had difficulty in securing enough horses,

[137] *Mok.* 4. 213-214; *Hsien SL* (43) 1756.
[138] *Mok.* 4. 389; *Hsien SL* (45) 2852.
[139] *Mok.* 10, Suppl. Tibet, 16; *T'ai-tsu* (4) 1763.

especially good ones, from the Tibetans[140]. The importance of this tea market for China's armies appears for example from this item from February, 1435 : 13,000 horses presented by Tibetan tribes in the neighborhood of T'ao-chou were paid for with 1,097,000 pounds of tea[141].

Besides this exchange of tea for horses either at border fairs, or in Tibet itself, Tibetan tribute missions too bought large quantities either in border regions or at the capital, and as a rule all goods carried by tribute missions both to and from the capital were transported by means provided by the government. Why the Tibetans purchased so much tea at the capital when plenty was available in West China is not clear; perhaps the tea of the capital was of better quality. Any way, the question of transportation often caused grave difficulties : protests were registered more than once, and now and then the Tibetans were told to provide their own transportation. We may mention a few examples: in 1440, a group of Tibetan lamas wanted to buy 6000 pounds of tea, but the Ministry of Rites did not want to sell against the regulations. The emperor solved the problem by deciding to sell them only half the amount asked for and having the lamas provide their own transportation; he explained his decision on the ground that the lamas lived far away and were not subject to Chinese law; a refusal to sell them anything would hurt their feelings, but to let them buy the full amount would be detrimental to the people[142]. We read in the *Ying-tsung Shih-lu* that in March of 1443, a lamaist temple in the vicinity of Hsi-ning wanted to purchase 15,000 pounds of tea at the capital, but the Court allowed only 5000 pounds[143].

[140] For a summary of the Tea-for-horses markets see *Ming-shih* 80. II. 843-847; 92.II.971. For a notorious case of contraband in tea, horses, and various other goods on the Shensi-Tibetan borders in 1432-1433, see *Mok.* 10, Suppl. Tibet, 121; *Hsüan SL* 2207-08.

[141] *Ying SL* (22) 28.

[142] *Mok.* 10, Suppl. Tibet, 140; *Ying SL* (24) 1057.

[143] *Ying SL* (26) 2047.

A Ssuch'uan official complained in 1449 that the Tibetans brought nothing of value and waited until the very day of their departure to buy contraband tea and caused difficulties in the matter of transportation and convoy[144]; in 1454, the governor-general of Hukuang memorialized that the Tibetans when they came with tribute bought up to 10,000 or more pounds of tea in addition to iron, copper, china ware[145], tin, and on top of all demanded transportation; he proposed that the Chinese who illegally *(ssu)* sold tea, copper cash, china ware to Tibetan lamas, and those who entrusted their children to the lamas to become

144 *Mok.* 10, Suppl. Tibet, 186; *Ying SL* (30) 3407-08.

145 China (porcelain) was sometimes a forbidden article for export. Late in 1373, an ambassador to the Liu-ch'iu Islands carried silks and earthenware *(t'ao-ch'i)* to buy horses; when the ambassador was back in 1376, he pointed out that the Liu-Ch'iu Islanders prized porcelain *(tz'u-ch'i)* very highly, along with other goods, and that porcelain should be sent as payment for horses : *T'ai-tsu SL* (4) 1645-46; 1754. In 1404, however, the Minister of Rites accused the tribute envoys from Liu-ch'iu of having bought porcelain and wanted to arrest them for questioning; the emperor decided to let the incident pass because foreigners were out for gain and did not understand prohibitions! *T'ai SL* (10) 556. Porcelain was also exported to Central Asia to pay for horses : in 1424, the new Hung-hsi emperor, Jen-tsung, ordered all embassies going abroad stopped, and explicitly mentioned embassies taking porcelain, silks, etc. to Samarqand, Shiraz, etc. *Jen SL* (15) 16. There are some more references to porcelain being exported to Central Asia and to attempts by the government to control both the manufacture and the export. An order from October 18, 1447 (*Mok.* 3. 169; *Ying SL* (29) 3074) forbade merchants, the military, personnel of postal stations, etc. in the two capitals, in Shensi, Hukuang, Kansu, Ta-t'ung, and Liaotung, to sell "privately" porcelain with azure flowers on white ground (白地青花) to foreign envoys. But it is not clear whether under certain circumstances this type of porcelain could legally be sold; or that other types could be sold. In 1448 restrictions were put on the manufacture of porcelain in Chianghsi (*Ying SL* (29) 3132). In his memorial from March 7, 1612 (*Man.* 4. 413; *Shen SL* (118) 9324) Kao Chi-yüan states that "cotton, coarse silk, and porcelain" were the only things wanted by the Mongols of the Three Commanderies, the Jürčen, and the Hui (-hui) Barbarians. The fact, however, is that porcelain is never mentioned in connection with the Mongols or the Jürčen, but that it was exported to Central Asia appears further from the *Collected Statutes* : every envoy from Qamil (and other Central Asian kingdoms) was entitled to buy 50 sets *(fu)* of porcelain with azure flowers (TMHT 112. 4a : 1654b).

monks and serve as interpreters, be sent into exile in *K'ou-wai* "beyond the passes"[146]. Later, in 1476, a dignitary of a Lamaist temple in Peking bought 20,700 pounds of tea and over 1500 bolts of varicolored satin, coarse silk, cotton cloth, and asked the government for transportation to Kansu to distribute these goods to lamas in Lin-t'ao, Ho-chou, Hsi-ning, and other places; the request was granted[145]. In 1516, only a few days apart, both the Ministries of Rites and Revenue called attention to the fact that also officials in high position must observe the "tea laws" in their dealings with Tibetans[148].

As may be expected, Tibetan tribesmen were no match for Chinese traders and very often got the short end of the deal, so much so that the government repeatedly ordered to deal fairly with them. In 1474, the governor of Kansu warned the government in Peking that in the Hsi-ning area, the Tibetans were so grievously fleeced by Chinese soldiers and common people that serious disturbances could be expected to break out at any moment[149].

Much of the tea purchased by the Tibetans was for use during Lamaist religious services, and it was for this purpose, too, that the Mongols began to purchase tea after 1570. This was a period of expansion of Lamaism in Mongolia and once the Southern Mongols of Tümed and Ordos had regularized their relations with China, if some of the leaders took to drinking tea, we have no evidence for it, but there are indications that the Mongols bought tea for the Tibetan lamas coming to them either directly from Tibetan or from China[150]. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* mentions tea in 1572 : this work quotes one Liu Ying-ch'i 劉應箕 who after describing the poverty of the Mongols proposed to grant them aid in the form of satin, cotton, rice, needles and thread, tea, fruits,

146 *Mok.* 10, Suppl. Tibet, 200; *Ying SL* (34) 5079. For *k'ou-wai* see above note 82.

147 *Mok.* 10, Suppl. Tibet, 269; *Hsien SL* (45) 2741.

148 *Mok.* 10, Suppl. Tibet, 348-349; *Wu SL* (66) 2431,2434.

149 *Mok.* 10, Suppl. Tibet, 265; *Hsien SL* (45) 2479.

150 For this question see my article Serruys 63.

and other such items[151]. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu*, however, is not always accurate : according to the *Shih-lu* it was Wang Ch'ung-ku 王崇古 who wanted to open monthly minor markets and proposed aid to alleviate the poverty of the Mongols[152], and no mention is made of tea at this time. Ch'ü Chiu-ssu mentions tea a second time in 1572, but here in connection with the dispatch of monks to Mongolia : along with religious articles to be taken to Mongolia, he lists rice, flour, tea, fruits, vegetables, etc.[153], probably intended for consumption by the monks. Tea was "officially" sold for the first time to the Mongols in the fall of 1577, but for religious purposes. Tha Altan-qan of the Tümed was in Köke-nuur region to meet the Third Dalai-lama, and in the *Shih-lu* entry of October 16, 1577, we read that he sent a letter to the military commander of Kansu requesting a tea market. A censor argued that the Tibetans could not do without tea and were dependent on China for it and therefore entirely at China's mercy. The Mongols on the other hand needed no tea (another indication that little tea, if any, was used by the Mongols) but if they could buy it, they would free the Tibetans from their dependency on China and achieve a rapprochement with them! The Ministry of the Army, however, felt that the Mongol request could hardly be rejected since the tea requested was destined for use in the temples during religious services; while the request was granted, the volume of tea to be sold was limited[154].

The *Shih-lu* under the date of March 14,1579, records another request by the Altan-qan to exchange 500 horses for tea at T'ao-chou; Shensi officials protested and the matter was referred to the Ministry of the Army. The *Shih-lu*, however, does not indicate what decision was taken in this case[155].

The Altan-qan's trip to Köke-nuur in 1577-1578 did not last

151 WLWKL 8. 151.
152 *Mok.* 8. 73 (June 30, 1572); *Mu SL* (95) 1686-87.
153 WLWKL 8. 153.
154 *Mok.* 8. 333-334; *Shen SL* (99) 1459-60.
155 *Mok.* 8. 389; *Shen SL* (100) 1769.

too long, but even before that some Mongol princes had been going to Köke-nuur regularly and sometimes for considerable lengths of time, some staying permanently. According to the *Shih-lu* entry of March 5, 1576, the Altan-qan's son Bingtü (Ping-t'u) then in Köke-nuur wanted to trade horses for tea as the Tibetans were used to. It is not impossible that as soon as the Mongols came into closer contact with the Tibetans of Amdo and adjacent regions, they also adopted the custom of drinking tea; at any rate, in Bingtü's case, Lamaist services are not referred to, and his request was rejected on the ground that tea in the hands of the Mongols could profoundly affect Sino-Tibetan relations : it was decided not to let Bingtü have his tea but to pay for his horses with textiles and grain[156].

[156] *Mok.* 8. 265: *Shen SL* (98) 1058. The same decision was made with regard to Mongols of Köke-nuur on other occasions, e.g. *Mok.* 8. 339-355; *Shen SL* (99) 1521, (100) 1605.

IV

THE HORSE FAIRS : LIAOTUNG

HISTORICAL SURVEY

After our survey of Sino-Mongol trade from a more general point of view, we shall now proceed to examine trade centered around the horse fairs in Liaotung, and along the Northern borders of Shansi and Shensi. First in Liaotung.

The name *ma-shih* 馬市 "Horse Fair" does not mean that only horses were sold and bought; all kinds of goods were exchanged, but the main interest of the government centered around the purchase of Mongol horses for the army; hence the official name. The *Liao-tung chih* describes the state of affairs before the opening of the fairs in these terms : "On all sides Liao (-tung) borders on the Caitiffs, and the region beyond the borders produced many articles such as sable pelts, ginseng, wood, fish, etc., and many people eager to make a profit from them crossed the borders to get them, and many came to grief at the hands of the Caitiffs. When Emperor T'ai-tsu compiled the *Ta-Ming lü* he added a special article regarding illegal crossings of the borders and going overseas in violation of the prohibitions : soldiers and common people violating this regulation, and border officials who deliberately let them do so were severely punished."[1].

The horse fairs of Liaotung were mainly held in two places, namely K'ai-yüan 開原 and Kuang-ning 廣寧. K'ai-yüan was strategically important : situated east of the Liao River, north of Shen-yang (later Mukden), just within the "Great Wall" defenses, it covered the Chinese settled territories of Liaotung. Although less so than K'ai-yüan, Kuang-ning was still an important

[1] *Liao-tung chih* 3. 29b.

center situated west of the Liao River, north of Chin-chou and close to the Great Wall. At times the governor of Liaotung resided at Kuang-ning.

In its chapter on economic history, the *Ming-shih* says that three horse fairs were created during the Yung-lo period : one in the southern suburb *(kuan* 關*)* of K'ai-yüan for the benefit of the people of Hai-hsi, i.e. the Jürčen; one, *five li* east of K'ai-yüan, to accommodate the Mongols of the Three Commanderies of Döen, T'ai-ning, and Fu-yü, and a third one, at Kuang-ning, for the same Mongols[2]. According to this text, from the outset the Mongols had two markets, while the Jürčen had only one clearly separated from those of the Mongols. Things may not have been so neatly distinguished at the beginning. The *Ming-shih* does not indicate its sources, but there is no doubt that the text is taken from the *Shih-lu* entry of April 26, 1478, after the horse fairs had gone through a long and complicated history; they had even been partially abolished and were re-established in 1478. It was on that occasion that the governor of Liaotung said something about what he believed to be the origin of the horse fairs. The situation as he describes it was in fact the result of a slow development.

The earliest reference to horse markets seems to be from April 6, 1405 : Nam-buqa, prince of Fu-yü, wanted to send a number of horses for sale to the capital (then Nanking) : it was estimated that it would take two months to drive the horses to the capital but by that time summer would have arrived, and the Mongols were believed to be unable to stand the heat[3]. It was decided to have the horses directed towards K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning, where places with good grass and water would be selected to hold

[2] *Ming-shih* 81. II. 857a. Also in the *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi*, but with different distances.

[3] This idea that the Mongols were unable to bear the heat of Central and South China is repeated from time to time although many Mongols were living in those very regions. It is true that the majority of Mongols or Jürčen in the Ming service remained in North China, but the heat can be very intense there, too.

fairs; as soon as the horses arrived, the government would pay for them[4]. On April 17, the *Shih-lu* notes that horses from the Uriyangqad had arrived on the Liaotung market, and prices were fixed for various grades of horses[5].

On the surface this seems to have been nothing more than a one-time measure to accommodate the Mongols, but one year later, on March 23, 1406, the fairs were made a permanent institution : *two* horse fairs were created at K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning. The *Shih-lu* goes on to explain that these were not the first commercial contacts between Chinese and Mongols, or Jürčen : the Barbarians were used to sell horses on the borders, and officials were under orders to pay a good price for them. But now that the Barbarians were coming in growing numbers, the two horse fairs were created to accommodate them, and a certain chiliarch with the name of Današiri, a Mongol (or a Jürčen?) to judge by his name, was put in charge of the administration of the two new horse fairs[6]. It would seem that by its measures of 1405 and 1406, the government wanted to concentrate in two places the trade that up to now had been carried on all along the borders, and the purpose may well have been to be better able to supervise the trade, and to make sure that the government could buy all the horses it needed.

The reader will have noted that the *Shih-lu* so far speaks only of *two* horse fairs, and that there is no indication whatsoever that Mongols and Jürčen had to attend separate fairs. Nor is there any indication as to time and frequency of the fairs. Later, as we shall see, the fairs were regularly held once or twice a month, but this too may well have been the result of slow growth. At any rate, it is doubtful that the two original horse fairs were held at regular

[4] *Man.* 1. 194; *T'ai SL* (10) 663.
[5] *Man.* 1. 195; *T'ai SL* (10) 667.
[6] *Man.* 2. 204; *T'ai SL* (10) 776. The *Ta-Ming hui-tien* (153. 16a : 2138) without further details dates the creation of the fairs from 1405

intervals from the very outset.

The fairs were held outside of the walls of the towns of K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning. In April, 1405, officials had been instructed to look for convenient places with abundant grass and water to take care of the horses, which could easily be a good ways from both towns. But apart from this consideration, we have the following additional information relative to the horse fair of Kuang-ning : in May, 1412, the horse fair of Kuang-ning was moved from the Iron Mountain to the T'uan Mountain "because grass and water were better there"[7]. There is a T'uan-shan-p'u "Village of the T'uan-Mountain" indicated on the general map of the *Huang-Ming chiu-pien k'ao* (vol. 1) : it is located to be northwest of Kuang-ning, but not too much can be concluded from these sketchy maps with regard to directions or distances[8]. On the map of Liaotung, section "Shan-hai-kuan to Kuang-ning", of the *Ch'ou-Liao shih-hua* (vol. 1), is indicated a *Ta-ma-shih* "Great Horse Fair" between T'uan-shan-p'u and Chen-yüan-kuan "Pass for subduing the Far-away" north of Kuang-ning-chen 鎮. From 1412 on, the horse fair must have been held in T'uan-shan-p'u or Ma-shih-p'u, as indicated on the map of the *Ch'ou-Liao shih-hua*[9].

[7] *Man.* 1. 261; *T'ai SL* (12) 1584. One may wonder if the fact that there was a horse fair in the neighborhood had anything to do with the enlargement of the walls of Kuang-ning : in 1425, as there was not enough space inside the walls for the four commanderies *(wei)* stationed there, a new eastern and southern earthen wall were constructed, and in 1427, the old walls which had become unnecessary were torn down and the bricks thus salvaged were used to cover the new walls. *Man.* 1. 386; *Hsüan SL* (17) 786. The walls of K'ai-yüan had to be enlarged at an earlier date, mainly because of the "Tatars" (i.e. the Jürčen) settled there : in May, 1412, an earthen wall was constructed at the west gate to accommodate them. *T'ai SL* (12) 1586. In *Man.* 1. 261, 四 *ssu-men* is a misprint for 西 *hsi-men*. In the 1940 "Liang" edition of the *Yung-lo shih-lu* (82. 8a) 二 *erh-ch'eng* is an error for 土 *t'u-ch'eng*.

[8] Besides Kuang-ning-ch'eng, the same map indicates also a Kuang-ning-wei-ch'eng more to the south, close to the sea and not too far from Shan-hai-kuan.

[9] Prof. Wada Sei (Wada 57. 911, n.6) says that T'uan-shan-p'u was on the south side of the Ma-shih river, and that the horse fair was transferred to Ma-

If the fairs themselves were held in the open country outside of the Chinese towns, some Mongols must have taken advantage of the occasion to visit the towns, but this was explicitly forbidden in February, 1425, by an imperial order sent to the military commander of Liaotung : "the Barbarians are very wily and have a hundred tricks; they cannot be lightly trusted; neither can they be abruptly rebuked. If they really want to sell horses, they must follow the rules adopted during the Yung-lo period and do all transactions at the horse fairs without entering the towns; prices must be fair to both parties without cheating. After the transactions, they must be sent away without delay..."[10].

Most of the horses bought at K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning were destined to the Liaotung army. The *Collected Statutes* states that in 1412 Liaotung troops who lacked horses were ordered to buy them at the fairs "according to precedent"[11]. In July, 1414, the commander-in-chief proposed that all horses purchased at K'ai-yüan be distributed to various garrisons (instead of being forwarded to Peking); similarly, in 1424, 537 horses recently acquired at K'ai-yüan were ordered to be given to the army[12]. Of two batches of horses bought at K'ai-yüan in 1425, one was ordered to be distributed to the garrisons, the other to be turned over to the Yüan-ma-ssu, in spite of the fact that the military of K'ai-yüan had wanted to send the first batch to Peking[13]. Horses handed over to various pasturages of the Yüan-ma-ssu were, of course, eventually also turned over to the army. It is less clear

shih-p'u in 1478. This statement, apparently based on the *Liao-tung chih* (2. 12b), is not quite accurate. What the latter book says is something different : "The horse fair of Kuang-ning was created in 1404 (a misprint for 1405?) north of the town, on the south side of the Ma-shih river; in 1475 it was moved to the southwest of T'a-erh 塔兒 Mountain, and in 1478, to the north of T'uan-shan-p'u." This can only mean that after 1412, the horse fair was removed once more from T'uan-shan, to come back in 1478. Besides, since there was no fair in 1475, the whole text is a little suspicious.

10 *Man.* 1. 332; *Mok.* 2. 20; *Jen SL* (15) 230.

11 TMHT 153.16b (2138b).

12 *Man.* 1. 271, 327; *T'ai SL* (13) 1771; *Jen SL* (15) 146.

13 *Man.* 1. 334, 338; *Jen SL* (15) 255, 296.

why horses and other purchases were now and then forwarded to Peking. For example, in July, 1425, 80 horses bought at the Kuang-ning fair were "offered" (*chin* 進, the term regularly used to describe the presentation of the tribute) by the commander-in-chief; in August, a non-Chinese chiliarch (to judge by his name) in the position of "official of the horse fairs" of Kuang-ning "offered" 465 horses, and again in December, 1431, the commander-in-chief "offered" (*shang* 上) horses and oxen bought from the Mongols of Fu-yü at the Kuang-ning fair[14].

Even without such formal "presentation" horses sometimes had to be sent to the capital. For example, an imperial rescript from June 3, 1432, ordered that all mares bought at Kuang-ning and K'ai-yüan be delivered to the Yüan-ma-ssu for breeding purposes; that cattle be turned over to the military agricultural colonies of Ning-yüan 寧遠 and other places, and that all other horses and camels be forwarded to the capital[15]. No particular reason is indicated, nor is there in the following case from May, 1435 : the emperor approved a proposal made by the commander-in-chief of Liaotung whereby first grade horses *(shang-teng)* purchased at the two fairs be forwarded to the capital; medium grade and low grade horses would be handed over to the army, and "no good" (*pu-chung* 不中) horses would be put in the pastures of agricultural colonies, but stallions would be given to the Yüan-ma-

[14] *Man.* 1. 343, 344, 469; *Jen SL* (15) 82, 116; *Hsüan SL* (20) 1948. The last two passages contain the strange expression Ta-kuan-ma "Tatar-official horses."

[15] *Man.* 1. 477; *Hsüan SL* (20) 2056. Ning-yüan is a town near the coast between Shan-hai-kuan and Chin-chou. In the preceding chapter we have seen that the Mongols sometimes purchased cattle from the Chinese. Here we see the Chinese buying from the Mongols. At the same time, the Chinese were also buying from Korea : in 1404 and 1432, Korea sent 10,000 plowing oxen to Liaotung for use in military agricultural colonies; the first time, the oxen were paid one bolt of coarse silk and four bolts of cotton per head : *T'ai SL* (10) 571; the second time, we know only the total : 50,000 bolts of coarse silk and cotton, probably in the same proportion as in 1404. *Hsüan SL* (20) 2024.

ssu[16].

The passage from December, 1431, referred to in the above lines, in also the first time a particular tribe is mentioned with regard to one horse fair : Fu-yü at Kuang-ning. But this does not mean, of course, that the Mongols of Fu-yü could trade at Kuang-ning only. It may be no more than a coincidence that the tribe of Fu-yü is mentioned by name here. The passage from July, 1414, about K'ai-yüan is found in a context relating to Jürčen affairs, and it would appear that the horses bought at K'ai-yüan in 1414 came from the Jürčen. In a previous chapter we have also referred to a text from 1439 in which the Jürčen were told that if they wanted to trade, they need not come to Peking but had better go to K'ai-yüan. This horse fair being located so far to the north relatively close to Jürčen territory, it would seem the normal place for the Jürčen to go to. But even if this supposition is true, it does not follow that the Mongols did not trade at K'ai-yüan. We shall have something to say about this question later on.

The creation of two official fairs under government control does not seem to mean that all private contacts along the borders came to an end : we have already mentioned how in May, 1430 the Jürčen of Chien-chou were told that they must not seek to trade with the Koreans but could freely trade on the (Chinese) borders[17]. In the passage from 1439, already referred to, we read that if the Jürčen wanted to trade they need not come to Peking to do so : they had better go to K'ai-yüan, and one might be inclined to interpret the expression "on the borders" in the passage from 1430 as referring to the two markets of K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning exclusive of any other contacts. But there is no proof for such a restriction. We have seen how often soldiers and private traders crossed the borders sometimes with the necessary permission and armed with credentials, sometimes in violation of

16 *Man.* 1. 537; *Ying SL* (22) 99. The *Shih-lu* reading Kuang p'ing is a mistake for Kuang-ning.

17 *Man.* 1. 438; *Hsüan SL* (19) 1533.

standing orders. If this was possible, all forms of trade were equally possible all along the borders, and the *Shih-lu* passage from 1430 seems to confirm this.

If a certain amount of private transactions continued outside the official horse fairs, we should add that private citizens and traders could also attend the fairs. The biography of Li Hua-lung 李化龍 in the *Ming-shih*, speaking of the horse fairs during the last quarter of the sixteenth century, says that common people and merchants might attend and that trading was profitable[18]. No doubt the same was true in the first quarter of the fifteenth century when the fairs were first organized. The Ministry of the Army wrote in a memorial to the throne in November, 1434, that the horse fairs had been created, and officials appointed to head them, in order to accommodate the Barbarians, and that (so far) nobody had dared to interfere or annoy them. Horses brought to the fair were purchased by the government; the remaining (after the government had taken its pick; or anything else apart from horses?) private citizens could buy. The Minister, however, went on to explain that recently shady characters *(hsiao-jen)* had gone ahead to meet the Mongols on the way to the fairs, and with artful speeches and bribes in the form of wine, meats, and clothes, had persuaded the Mongols to sell (their horses, or the better ones) to them, and in this way had gravely affected the Mongols' desire to come to allegiance[19].

In order to appreciate the full significance of this last remark it has to be considered together with an earlier *Shih-lu* passage from December, 1431, part of which has already been referred to. The emperor stated that the reason for granting markets was not that China lacked horses or cattle and thus had to buy them from the Barbarians (a statement largely contradicted by the facts!); quite to the contrary, it was the Barbarians who in all matters

[18] *Ming-shih* 228. IV. 2626b.
[19] *Man.* 1. 521; *Hsüan SL* (21) 2550.

relating to clothing and utensils (*fu-yung* 服 用) depended on China, and if the markets were cut off, they would become resentful; if the emperors had permitted trade it was out of compassion for the Barbarians[20]. The passages of 1431 and 1434 reveal the Court's official thinking on the question of trade and fairs. First, there is a core of truth in the emperor's statement : China was immeasurably superior to Mongolia in material wealth, and the Mongols needing many commodities which they could not, or could not well, manufacture themselves, naturally turned to China. In this sense, there is no doubt that China rendered a service to her neighbors. But in official Chinese thinking, the markets, just like the tribute system itself, had meaning only in so far as they were able to influence, pacify, "bring to allegiance" the Mongols, the Jürčen, and the other peoples living across the borders; therefore it was necessary that the Mongols and Jürčen remained under the impression that by opening the horse markets the Ming Government, the Court, and in final analysis, the Emperor, was doing them a great favor; in other words, as long as it was the government that bought their horses, or most of them, the Mongols would remain submissive. According to this way of thinking, private trade, always present at the fairs, threatened to undermine the Mongols' impression that what they derived from the horse fairs was a favor of the Court. It was imperative, therefore, that the fairs remained under government supervision, and that private interests, if they could not be eliminated entirely, were kept limited as far as possible. For if the Mongols could trade in an unrestricted way anywhere with any private merchant, they could do without the government's

20 *Man.* 1. 469; *Hsüan SL* (20) 1948. Pokotilov, to whom the *Ming shih-lu* was not available, dated this passage from 1429, instead of 1431 (Pokotilov 47. 76). The mistake is to be traced to the *Wu-pien tien-tse* 1. 5b6a. Zlatkin, repeating the same erroneous date, quotes this text in support of his view that the Mongols had many more horses and cattle to offer than China was able to buy (Zlatkin 64. 61). No such conclusion can be drawn from this passage.

favors, and thus their "allegiance" would no longer go to the Court.

The Court, however, never intended to carry this reasoning to its extreme logical conclusion and drive out all private interests. After all we have seen in the preceding chapter, it is very doubtful that it could have done so. Any way the thinking in government circles goes a long way to explaining why so little attention is paid in our sources to private business, and why the purchase of horses by the government is almost the exclusive concern of the compilers of the *Shih-lu*.

Prof. Ejima Hisao thinks that what the *Shih-lu* records under the date of September 27, 1439, was a permission for private trade at the horse fairs[21]. In my opinion, this is not what the *Shih-lu* says. In order to put the passage of 1439 in better perspective we have to examine first another passage from November, 1437 : here the Ministry of the Army is said to be annoyed at the frequency of Uriyangqad and Tatar-Jürčen tribute missions coming to the capital, and secondly that they came in numbers much larger than was necessary and desirable; it took 30 to 40 men to bring 3 or 4 horses to the capital for presentation as tribute, and they gravely inconvenienced everybody along the way[22]. These complaints are repeated on September 27, 1439 : they come too often, and their intention is not so much to offer homage to the emperor as one would expect from "tribute missions", as to attend to their private affairs (營 私) under the pretext of presenting the tribute; since this is their main concern they better go to K'ai-yüan. Seen in this way, the text of September, 1439. contains no new permission with regard to the horse fairs. It is obvious that the reference to private affairs at the capital is a reference to the trade open to them at the Hui-t'ung-kuan, and as we have seen in the preceding chapter, trade at and around the Hui-t'ung-kuan was not a government monopoly, nor was it

21 Ejima 57. 34. *Man.* 2. 64; *Ying SL* (24) 1117-18.
22 *Man.* 2. 41; *Ying SL* (23) 692.

strictly supervised by the government. The same opportunity existed at K'ai-yüan. What the government was interested in was to have fewer Jürčen come to Peking.

A similar injunction from July 29, 1443, to the Mongols of the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies tells them that not many people are needed for the tribute presentation : if it is trade they are looking for, they can freely trade at the border fairs *(pien-shih)*[23].

If such trade opportunities existed at the horse fairs in Liaotung, one may ask why the Mongols and the Jürčen were so eager to go to Peking. Perhaps trading conditions were better at the capital, more goods available at lower prices, etc. In addition we must not forget that all tribute envoys received gifts from the Court.

We know as little about the manner in which trade, whether governmental or private, was conducted at Kuang-ning and K'ai-yüan, as about the way it was carried on at the Hui-t'ung-kuan or on the borders. From the *Shih-lu* entry of May 13, 1445, we learn that the government had laid up a supply of black, red, blue, and green cotton cloth and coarse and fine silk at Kuang-ning, to be traded for Mongol horses and camels; it was the Ministry of Work and the provincial government of Shantung, with Liaotung under its jurisdiction, who were responsible for this supply of goods. However by 1445, we are told, a large part of those supplies stored at Kuang-ning was old and spoiled, and upon recommendation by a number of officials, including the eunuch Išiqa, the government ordered everything to be sold and the proceeds converted into rice for the army[24]. Although nothing is said explicitly to that effect, we may safely assume that after the old supplies were disposed of, fresh stores were laid up for exchange on the horse fairs. It would seem that no such supplies were stored at K'ai-yüan, at least in the sixteenth century, but that the Kuang-ning supplies served the horse fair of K'ai-yüan as well. Indeed in 1571, we read that in view of the many requests

[23] *Mok.* 3. 37; *Ying SL* (27) 2149.
[24] *Man.* 2. 174; *Ying SL* (28) 2555.

by Jürčen from Hai-hsi for clothes and food, a proposal was approved whereby the proceeds from sales taxes and prison taxes of the San-wan Storage 三萬庫 were no longer forwarded to Kuan-ning[25]. San-wan was the name of the administration and garrison stationed at K'ai-yüan, but the San-wan Storage was kept at Kuang-ning. The text says nothing about horse fairs, but we must bear in mind that by this time both Mongols and Jürčen used to present requests for food and clothes at the time of the horse fairs, and if supplies needed for those "subsidies" were kept up to 1571 at Kuang-ning, it is quite probable that the supplies for the purchase of horses were left at Kuang-ning too, and only moved to K'ai-yüan as they were needed there.

Private trading firms must have had branch offices at Kuang-ning and K'ai-yüan, the main shops remaining in more centrally located towns such as Shen-yang; this is the way merchants used to operate in Inner Mongolia : in Chinese towns of Inner Mongolia usually were only branch offices of firms established at Peking, Tientsin, Kalgan, etc.

Whereas the *Ming-shih*, as we have seen, speaks of *three* horse fairs, the *Shih-lu* in the early years never mentions more than *two*. The *Huang-Ming chiu-pien k'ao*, published in 1541, also speaks of *two* horse fairs, Kuang-ning and K'ai-yüan[26]; but this applies to the origin of the fairs, not to the middle of the sixteenth century. In the mean time, the situation had not remained static, but the information on changes and developments is very incomplete. In fact the *Ming Shih-lu* from 1445 to 1459 has nothing to say about the horse fairs at all, yet during those fourteen years important developments took place. The author of the *Huang-Ming chiu-pien k'ao* limits himself to stating that "later (the horse fair of) Kuang-ning was discontinued; in 1459, the *tu-tu* Gegen-temür of T'ai-ning requested that it be reopened"; and the *Shih-lu* is hardly more informative : in the entry of December

[25] *Man.* 3. 584; *Mu SL* (95) 1466.
[26] HMCPK 2. 12b13a.

22, 1459, we read that the Tatars of the Three Commanderies, T'ai-ning (Döen, and Fu-yü) requested that the trade of the town of Kuang-ning be resumed, but the authorities of Liaotung, when consulted, were of the opinion that a resumption would be inconvenient; consequently a decree rejected the request[27]. Neither work tells us why the horse fairs of Kuang-ning had been abolished, or what were the objections to a restoration in 1459. Another request, equally unsuccessful, is recorded on August 14, 1475 : "The Barbarians of the Three Commanderies, Döen, etc. requested the opening of a horse fair, but the permission was refused." The *Shih-lu* then goes on to explain that the military commander of Liaotung Ou Hsin 歐信[28] reported that the Mongols had come to the borders to make the request that the Kuang-ning fair be opened as before; the matter was sent to the Ministry of the Army for deliberation and from their report we learn the reason for the Mongol request : compelled by the "Northern Caitiff" Mandûl (i.e. Mandaγul) to leave their habitat, they had moved southward towards the Chinese borders, and in order to relieve their poverty they asked for trade. Ou Hsin was instructed to tell them that the request could not be granted and that they should return to their former habitat. The emperor, as a final thought, added that as the horse fair (of Kuang-ning) had been suspended for so long, permission could not be granted to reopen it; but if the Mongols of the Three Commanderies were really too hard pressed by the Northern Mongols they might settle some 300 or 400 *li* away from the borders, and later, once conditions had improved, return to their original territory[29].

[27] *Mok.* 3. 625; *Man.* 2. 351; *Ying SL* (37) 6503.

[28] Biogr. in *Ming-shih* 174.III.2050ab. After assuming office in 1471, he had defeated the Mongols in several encounters. Indeed, this was a period of border raids, of interrupted trade, but not of interrupted tribute relations.

[29] *Mok.* 4. 373; *Hsien SL* (45) 2650-51. The solution proposed by the Court hardly helped the Mongols since they did not live that far north any way! In fact the Mongols of the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies steadily moved southwards, if not much closer to Liaotung, yet ever closer to modern Hopei-Jehol borders.

The events of those years clearly show that resumption of trade would have meant more stable conditions on the borders, and that the prospect of trade with China was apt to bring or keep Mongol tribes within the Chinese orbit. Yet in spite of their own theories that trade must serve the purpose of bringing the Mongols to allegiance, the Chinese sometimes missed an opportunity to put their theories into effect. At any rate, the Mongols repeated their request in October and December of the following year, to be rejected every time. The first time, on October 19, 1476, we read that the Three Uriyangqad delivered a letter allegedly written to them by the "Northern Caitiffs" proposing an alliance. The Three Uriyangqad declared themselves unwilling to enter into such an alliance, and instead proposed the reopening of the horse fair[30]. The implication seems obvious, that if no horse fair was granted, the only alternative open to them was an alliance with the Mongol qaγan. Yet the Chinese reply was the same as in 1475 : the horse fair of Kuang-ning had been closed too long to be reopened now; on the other hand, the Mongols were praised for their "loyalty" to China : if they were too hard pressed by their Northern neighbors they might temporarily move a little closer to the Chinese borders; yet at the same time orders went out to all border commanders to strengthen their defenses. When the Mongols of T'ai-ning, etc. repeated the same request later in the year, they were curtly told to stop bothering the Court![31]

These requests always regarded Kuang-ning, while the horse fair of K'ai-yüan was never referred to and presumably was never seriously interrupted. Any way, after the many refusals of the previous years, the decision of April 26, 1478, to reopen the fair of Kuang-ning comes somewhat as a surprise. It is on this occasion that we learn why it had been closed in the first place. On that date, the *Shih-lu* informs us that the governor of Liaotung, Ch'en Yüeh 陳鉞 had memorialized that *three* horse fairs had

[30] *Mok.* 4. 392; *Hsien SL* (46) 2885-86.
[31] *Mok.* 4. 397-398; *Hsien SL* (46) 2912.

been created during the Yung-lo period, two near K'ai-yüan, one for the Jürčen the other for the Mongols of the Three Commanderies, and a third one near Kuang-ning, also for the Mongols; but the two Mongol fairs had been closed during the Cheng-t'ung era because of "leakage of information regarding the borders" (漏泄邊事) so that only the Jürčen fair in the southern suburb of K'ai-yüan remained. Ch'en noted further that the many refusals of recent years to reopen the fairs had resulted in closer cooperation between Döen (and the two other Uriyangqad Commanderies) and the Jürčen of Hai-hsi, so that the Mongols succeeded in trading with the Chinese through these intermediaries, and the Jürčen with the help of Mongol cavalry had violated the Chinese borders on several occasions. This was quite the opposite of what the Ming Court had expected from the closing of the Kuang-ning fairs; Ch'en thought that the reopening of the horse fairs would recapture the sympathy of the Mongols and break up their alliance with the Jürčen, and the profits of the renewed trade with the Mongols would accrue to China not to the Jürčen. After due deliberations at the Court, Ch'en's plan was approved with only a general warning strictly to supervise all activities at the fairs[32].

This *Shih-lu* passage, summarized in the *Ming-shih*, raises as many questions as it solves. First it is strange that Ch'en Yüeh does not even provide such an important date as that on which the "two horse fairs" had been closed. The *Collected Statutes*[33] supplies the date : 1449. In the fall of that year, the Oyirad invaded North China and after defeating a Ming army, succeeded

32 *Man.* 2. 574; *Hsien SL* (46) 3183. The *Hsü wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao* (1) 31. 20b records the reopening of the fair of K'ai-yüan in 1478, not Kuang-ning, but this seems to be a mistake. Indeed the author goes on to indicate the days on which twice a month the Kuang-ning fair was open. Wang Ch'i further repeats the usual warnings against cheating, stealing, bringing the Mongols inside the towns, and divulging information. Infractions would be punished by exile to malaria-infested regions of Kuangtung and Kuanghsi.

33 TMHT 153. 16b : 2138b.

even in capturing the Cheng-t'ung emperor. If the Ming knew, or suspected, that the Oyirad had obtained vital information on military conditions in China through the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies, and took away their trading privileges at Kuang-ning and K'ai-yüan, it is extremely strange that they left the Mongol tribute relations intact during those same years! It was far easier to pick up valuable information on the way to the capital, or in Peking itself, than at a horse fair near a border town like Kuang-ning; this alone makes it rather doubtful that "espionage" in 1449 was the real reason for closing the Kuang-ning fair. Moreover, anyone could have known that the closing of the Mongols' fair would not be effective as long as the Jürčen fair of K'ai-yüan remained open. The Jürčen were no experts at horse breeding and most of their horses came from Mongolia[34], so that to close the Mongols' fair was tantamount to giving the Jürčen a virtual monopoly on the sale of Mongol horses. Ou Hsin in 1475 already seems to have understood that the policy of excluding the Mongols from the horse fairs could not have the intended effect, but it was Ch'en Yüeh who first brought the problem into sharper focus. The surprising thing is that it took so long before anyone grasped the real significance of the situation and drew appropriate conclusions.

Apparently the decision of April, 1478, was not immediately acted upon. Indeed more than one year later, on August 3, 1479, the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies, reporting that the princes of the Northern Mongols, Mandûl and Beg-arslan had died, requested permission to follow a convenient route to present the tribute and asked for the opening of a market[35]. The Mongols of Döen, T'ai-ning, and Fu-yü had been sending tribute missions every year and their point of entry was Hsi-feng-k'ou on the Great Wall. Why they should want to follow a "convenient route" apparently other than Hsi-feng-k'ou, is hard to understand. But if at the same time

[34] Ejima 54. Engl. summary p. 4.
[35] *Mok.* 4. 432; *Hsien SL* (47) 3409.

they asked for a market, it definitely means that there still was no horse fair open to them. The Ministry of the Army noted that the Mongols claimed to have some merit, probably in resisting the pressure of Mandûl and other northerners, and hoped to be rewarded for their efforts : it was suggested that the governor of Liaotung present them with some rewards on the borders in order to tie them to China. Not a word about the tribute route or the horse fair they had requested. Probably no market was held. It would even seem that the Jürčen fair of K'ai-yüan had temporarily been suspended, too. Such seems to be the significance of a *Shih-lu* passage from October 19, 1479, already referred to in the previous chapter : upon the advice of the governor of Liaotung, Ch'en Yüeh and others, an expedition was being readied against the Jürčen of Chien-chou and other places who in recent years had caused considerable trouble and let it be known that they intended to attack the borders; the Minister of the Army, Yü Tzu-chün 余子俊[36] saw things differently and pointed out that although defense was an essential factor in controling the Barbarians, yet in order to cope with their unreliable nature, the Court had sometimes opened horse fairs so as to prevent formation of alliances, or had sometimes permitted the sale of iron in order to win their sympathies; both were means of controling them, and neither were signs of weakness[37]. Given the circumstances it would seem that no fairs were open at that time, although it is quite possible that private traders had not remained idle.

Shortly after 1479, the horse fairs of K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning must have been reopened, but contrary to expectation were something less than a success, and, what was rarely admitted, not the "unpredictable" Barbarians were blamed, but the interpreters in the Ming service : on October 30, 1481, we read that when the fairs were reestablished on Ch'en Yüeh's advice and held twice a month at Kuang-ning and K'ai-yüan, interpreters

[36] Biogr. in *Ming-shih* 178.III. 2091-93.
[37] *Man.* 2. 603; *Hsien SL* (47) 3437-38.

defrauded the Mongols who out of resentment attacked the Kuang-ning region and stayed away from the fair. Ch'en Yüeh who in the meantime had become Minister of the Army, afraid that these developments might reflect on his role in the affair, memorialized that it had never been the original purpose of the horse fairs to rely on the supply of Mongol horses but to win the sympathy of the Mongols and to prevent their alliance with the Jürčen. He recommended that a military and a civilian official supervise the fairs, and the laws be applied more strictly to prevent a recurrence of malpractices. The guilty interpreters were punished for their crimes; all bear Chinese names, and we cannot know whether they were Chinese or Mongols[38].

According to Wang Ch'i, in 1481 the rule was approved that from now on interpreters in K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning must be replaced every three years[38a]. It is evident that grave abuses had come to light.

Apparently these irregularities were not so easily corrected, or, if at first corrected, soon cropped up again. On July 9, 1488, we read in a memorial by Ma Wen-sheng 馬文升[39], that when horses were purchased in Liaotung, it was the rule to dispatch interpreters from the capital, but local officials found this impractical and appointed their own confidants instead, which led to new malpractices. Ma proposed that the Ministry of the Army appoint two interpreters to supervise the Liaotung horse fairs, but should they become involved in corrupt dealings, the governor and the provincial inspector be authorized to profer charges against them. This proposal was accepted, but if implemented, the results were again not very satisfactory. On October 21, 1490, the Ministry of Revenue again requested that the interpreters supervising the horse fairs of K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning be recalled and that the

[38] *Man.* 2. 635-636; *Hsien SL* (48) 3806. As the *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi* 5. 4b indicates from the very beginning there was a danger that misunderstandings would occur due to the lack of qualified interpreters.

[38a] *Hsü wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao* (1) 31. 21a.

[39] Biogr. in *Ming-shih* 182.III. 2135-38. Ma had served in Liaotung shortly before.

direction of the fairs be left to the military[40]. Yet even this new measure did not improve the situation. The *Shih-lu* entry of October 24, 1499, comprises a long discussion of malpractices : every time the Barbarians bring their horses, sable pelts, or other goods, the military authorities or influential families buy them up at one third of the regular price, or even less! This practice has been going on for so long that the Barbarians have become extremely resentful and many a border violations is directly traceable to their discontent. New officials were appointed to manage the horse fairs and penalties provided for infractions[41]. Their resentment, however, did not keep the Jürčen away from the markets : in January, 1501, we read that a number of Jürčen chieftains had lately stopped sending the tribute and had even prevented others from doing so, because they had been refused higher ranks; in the mean time, however, they had continued to attend the fairs. Now, 130 Jürčen took advantage of a visit to the fair of K'ai-yüan to express their desire to start sending tribute again[42].

Number of Horse Fairs

To establish the number and location of the fairs created at one time or another in Liaotung is a rather complex problem. At least the available information must be reviewed.

The *Shih-lu* entry of April 26, 1478, summarizing Ch'en Yüeh's memorial regarding the reopening of the horse fairs is rather disturbing and raises a number of questions. Ch'en states that in 1404-1406, *three* horse fairs had been created : one in the southern suburb of K'ai-yüan for the Jürčen, one five *li* east of K'ai-yüan for the Mongols of the Three Commanderies, and one

40 *Man.* 3. 8-9, 21; *Hsiao SL* (52) 359; (53) 875.
41 *Man.* 3. 85; *Hsiao SL* (57) 2745.
42 *Man.* 3. 102-103; *Hsiao SL* (58) 3074.

near Kuang-ning for the same Three Commanderies. Yet, before 1478, there never is mention of more than *two* fairs. Ch'en further states that in 1449 *two* fairs were closed (Kuang-ning and the one east of K'ai-yüan) to penalize the Mongols, yet from 1459 to 1478, the Mongols never asked for more than the reopening of Kuang-ning. With Ejima Hisao, I believe that originally there was only one fair at K'ai-yüan[43]. If originally only two fairs had been created, one at Kuang-ning, and one at K'ai-yüan, a third one may have been added some time before 1449, and Ch'en Yüeh seems to have believed that it had existed from the very first and in 1478 he arranged for the reopening of all three horse markets.

If sometime between 1405 and 1449, a third horse fair (the second one of K'ai-yüan) had been added, we do not know under what circumstances, for what reasons, and when, this had been done. Ejima thinks that the "permission" of September 22, 1439, was the origin of the market in the southern suburb of K'ai-yüan[44]. However, as I have already indicated, in September, 1439, nothing new was granted to the Jürčen; they were only told they need not come too often to the capital : they could buy and sell just as well at K'ai-yüan[45]. This text by no means proves that from now on there were two horse fairs at K'ai-yüan. Ejima's opinion that the old K'ai-yüan fair was a government fair and the presumably new one was for private trade is, in my view, totally unfounded. As we have seen, every fair was government controled and to a certain extent a government monopoly as far as horses were concerned, but private trade was never excluded. Therefore, if a second fair was opened near K'ai-yüan before 1449, we know nothing about its origin.

Ch'en Yüeh's memorial states that of the two fairs of K'ai-

[43] Ejima 56. In the English summary of his article (pp. 1-2) Ejima says : "there was only one, not two, market at (the) east side of K'ai-yüan-cheng. Moreover, it was not exclusive for (the) Djurchi nor (the) Urianghai, but opened for both". (Also Ejima 57. 34).

[44] Ejima 57. 34; also Ejima 56.

[45] *Man.* 2. 63-64; *Ying SL* (24) 1117-18.

yüan, the one in the southern suburb was for the Jürčen, and the one five *li* east of the town was for the Mongols. Yet when the Mongols after 1449 were deprived of the old trading facilities they always asked for resumption of the horse fair of Kuang-ning, and never mention the fair they were supposed to have had near K'ai-yüan. This throws some doubt upon Ch'en's statement that the second fair of K'ai-yüan, if it existed at all before 1449, was attended by the Mongols. The Kuang-ning fair must have been large enough to take care of their needs, and K'ai-yüan of the needs of the Jürčen; Kuang-ning being so much nearer and K'ai-yüan so much farther away, it is much more natural to assume that the Mongols attended the Kuang-ning fair. If another fair existed near K'ai-yüan, it may have been abolished in 1449 not because it was a fair attended by Mongols, but for some other reasons. We should add, however, that if the Mongols found it more convenient to attend the Kuang-ning fair because it was so much closer to home, they were not excluded from K'ai-yüan either. In fact, there are indications that Fu-yü men went to K'ai-yüan, at least in later years : in 1560, we find them at K'ai-yüan, and in 1576 men of Fu-yü attended a fair at Ch'ing-yün-p'u 慶雲堡 west of K'ai-yüan. This is easy to explain : of the Three Commanderies, Fu-yü lived closest to the Jürčen and seems have been partly of Jürčen ancestry.

As to the exact location of the early K'ai-yüan fair, or fairs, the confusion is just as great. Ch'en Yüeh's memorial puts one fair in the southern suburb, and the other five *li* east of the town. The *Ta-Ming hui-tien*[46] published much later of course, namely in 1587, repeats most of Ch'en Yüeh's information but gives different distances : all fairs were 40 *li* away in their respective directions. These discrepancies suggest that between their original foundation and 1587, the fairs were held in various places, and the *Ta-Ming hui-tien* reflects the latest situation.

46 TMHT 153. 16b (2138b). The same distances in the *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi* 5.4b.

The *Ch'üan-Liao chih* and the *Liao-tung chih* list two horse fairs at or near K'ai-yüan, one called *Nu-chih ma-shih*, or Jürčen horse fair, the other *Ta-ta ma-shih*, or Tatar horse fair[47]. The Jürčen fair was located in the Yung-lo period at Ch'ü-huan-t'un 屈換屯, to the east of K'ai-yüan; during the Ch'eng-hua period (1465-1487) it was moved to the west side of the southern suburb; every year, the Barbarians came here to trade.

The "Tatar" fair was established as an addition to the Jürčen fair south of Ku-ch'eng-p'u 古城堡, west of K'ai-yüan; in 1524, it was moved to the north of Ch'ing-yün-p'u; every year, the Barbarians from the commanderies of Hai-hsi and Hei-lung-chiang (Amur) area came here to trade.

This information is completely different from that found in the *Shih-lu* and the *Ming-shih*. Unfortunately, the name Ch'ü-huan-t'un does not seem to have survived. There is no mention of an eastern fair for the Mongols. According to the two Liaotung gazeteers, the original fair of K'ai-yüan, established east of the town for the Jürčen, was the same one that was later moved to the southern suburb. Secondly, the "Tatar" horse fair was not a "Mongol" fair; it was another Jürčen fair. As has already been explained, the term "Ta-ta" when used for the northeast usually indicates the Jürčen, or some Jürčen, not the Mongols. Any way, in this case there can be no doubt who was meant : the "Barbarians from Hai-hsi and the Hei-lung-chiang region". We are also told that this "Tatar horse fair" was a later addition *(t'ien)* first established in the Ch'eng-hua period near Ku-ch'eng and moved to Ch'ing-yün-p'u in 1524.

Since the first K'ai-yüan fair was established in the Yung-lo period east of K'ai-yüan and in 1465-1487 moved to the southern suburb; and the "Ta-ta" horse fair was added in the same Ch'eng-hua period, one is tempted to conclude that what happened in 1478-1481 was almost a complete reorganization : the original

[47] *Ch'üan-Liao chih* 1. 35a; *Liao-tung chih* 2. 14b15a.

eastern fair of Ch'ü-huan-t'un was abolished and replaced by one in the southern suburb, and another market was added at Ku-ch'eng, west of K'ai-yüan. In other words, if there ever were two fairs prior to 1449, one must have been suppressed in 1449 when Kuang-ning was abolished; after 1481, (apart from Kuang-ning) there still were only two fairs : namely one in the southern suburb and at Ku-ch'eng.

The horse fair of Ku-ch'eng-tzu "west of K'ai-yüan" is incidentally referred to in the *Shih-lu* on the date of February 2, 1516, with reference to an armed clash that took place there between Jürčen and Chinese soldiers occupied at that time with repair work on the walls[48]. According to the *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao*, Ku-ch'eng was 45 *li* from K'ai-yüan in a southwesterly direction[49]. The fact that by 1516 the walls of Ku-ch'eng needed extensive repairs coupled with the incident described in the *Ming Shih-lu* may well have been the reason why the authorities in 1524 decided to move the horse fair from Ku-ch'eng to Ch'ing-yün-p'u. We shall revert to Ch'ing-yün-p'u later.

Other markets came into being. Under the date of March 27, 1487, the *Shih-lu* relates an event which at first sight is a little puzzling : the governor of Liaotung reported that the Pu-lan-han commandery together with the (Mongol) T'ai-ning commandery had informed him that the "Little King" (i.e. the qaγan of the Northern Mongols) had died, and that Pu-lan-han intended to send tribute over Hsi-feng-k'ou (point of entry of the Three Uriyangqad) and trade at the horse fair together with T'ai-ning. When this matter was referred to the Ministry of the Army, it noted that Pu-lan-han had always been on the best of terms with the Oyirad Mandûl[50] and for more than ten years had failed to

[48] *Man.* 3. 258; *WU SL* (67) 2635.

[49] *Tu-Shih fang-yü chi-yao* 37. 1611 : "South of the *wei* were the buildings of the old horse fair." Ejima thinks that "south of the *wei*, e.i. K'ai-yüan" could well be a mistake for "south of Ku-ch'eng". Ejima 54. 16; Ejima 57.27.

[50] If the "Little King" whose death is referred to here was Mandûl, let us remind the reader that Mandûl's death had already been announced by the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies in 1479 (see above n. 35). According

present the tribute. This sudden willingness on the part of Pu-lan-han commandery seemed like a trick to lull the Chinese into a false sense of peace; therefore the governor of Liaotung was instructed to present them with some gifts, but make it clear to them that horse fairs existed exclusively for the benefit of the Three Commanderies and that other tribes had no right to attend. Furthermore, if the Pu-lan-han commandery intended to present the tribute, its tribute mission ought to cross the border at Ta-t'ung, traditionally the point of entry for both Western and Northern Mongols[51]. It is evident that Pu-lan-han commandery had not presented the tribute for quite some time, and that the Ministry of the Army mistakenly thought that the Pu-lan-han people were Mongols, perhaps even Western Mongols, or Oyirad. In order to see how such a mistake was possible, we should note that a few years ago, a Pu-lan-han mission had entered over Ta-t'ung. On March 1, 1470, we read that a certain Toγtô-qan, not further identified, sent a tribute mission which wanted to cross the border at the Yeh-hu Pass (west of Kalgan) near Hsüan-fu. The Chinese, not knowing the identity of this tribute mission, pointed out that the Yeh-hu Pass was not a regular point of entry : the Three Uriyangqad entered by Hsi-feng-k'ou, the "Northern Mongol" envoys from of old entered by Ta-t'ung. The implication seems to be that Toγtô-qan's envoys, since they did not come from the Three Uriyangqad, had to direct themselves towards Ta-t'ung. And indeed this is what they did : two weeks later, the commander-in-chief of Ta-t'ung reported their arrival. They brought some 700 horses and mules; the best horses were picked out for presentation at the Court; the next best were turned over to the army, the remaining ones being left to the envoys who could sell them privately. One month later, this mission is referred to again, and this time the *Shih-lu* indicates that Toγtô-qan was a

to the Mongol Chronicler Saγang-sečen, Mandaγul qaγan died in 1467 (Schmidt 29. 155, 175, 177). Information found in Mongol sources is always hard to reconcile with that of the Ming sources.

[51] *Mok.* 4. 584-585; *Hsien SL* (50) 4863-64.

chieftain of the Pu-la-han commandery[52].

Pu-la-han commandery was a Jürčen commandery created back in 1406, and Pu-lan-han is either a scribal error, or possibly a variant pronunciation. It is a little surprising that the Ministry of the Army admitted to its ignorance with regard to the identity of the Pu-la(n)-han commandery, but this problem need not detain us here. At any rate, if in 1487 this Pu-lan-han mission was ordered to cross the border in the Ta-t'ung area, there was a precedent for this : it had been done in 1470. But what interests us here, of course, is the horse fair requested in 1487. Neither Kuang-ning nor K'ai-yüan can come into consideration : both the T'ai-ning and Pu-lan-han envoys were on their way to the capital and intended to pass through Hsi-feng-k'ou. The market they referred to must have been held at or in the neighborhood of Hsi-feng-k'ou for the convenience of tribute missions going to or returning from Peking. This way the Chinese had an excuse for excluding the Pu-la(n)-han envoys who had no business at Hsi-feng-k'ou. I have no positive information regarding this horsefair at Hsi-feng-k'ou, except that much later, in September, 1550, there is an indirect reference to it. At that time, the Altan-qan had for years been pressing for tribute relations and trade opportunities and when in the fall of 1550 he invaded the Metropolitan Area, the general Ch'iu Luan argued that it might be better to grant him a market such as existed already in Liaotung, in Kansu, and at Hsi-feng-k'ou in Chi-chou territory[53]. Possibly Hsi-feng-k'ou was only a minor fair, held irregularly, and therefore rarely mentioned. It is probable that it came into being, like the fairs of K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning, as a means to regulate and control the sale of horses carried on along the borders, especially at the time the tribute missions of the Three Commanderies passed through Hsi-feng-k'ou.

[52] *Mok.* 4. 157-158; 163-164; *Man.* 2. 499-500; *Hsien SL* (42) 1456, 1460, 1495.

[53] *Mok.* 6. 623; *Shih SL* 6484

By 1499, we find references to a horse fair held in yet another place, namely Fu-shun 撫順, east of Shen-yang (Mukden) : the *Shih-lu* entry of October 24, 1499, comprises a long discussion of the many abuses currently practiced at the fairs of Kuang-ning, K'ai-yüan, and Fu-shun[54], but I have found no indication as to when the Fu-shun fair had started. As at Kuang-ning and K'ai-yüan, the horse fair was held outside of the walls of the town : the *Ch'üan-Liao chih* states that it was held at a place 30 *li* to the east, and that is was attended most by the Jürčen of Chien-chou[55]; according to the *Liao-tung chih*, it was located only one *li* from the east gate, and was known as "Ta-ta" — Tatar — horse fair[56]. In this context, as has already been observed, "Ta-ta" does not mean "Mongol". If the figures 30 and *one* in the two gazetters are correct, they mean of course that the fair was not always held at the same place, a fact already noticed with regard to the K'ai-yüan fairs.

Besides the fairs of Kuang-ning, K'ai-yüan, and Fu-shun (not to mention here Hsi-feng-k'ou, which strictly speaking was not in Liaotung but fell within the administration of Northern Chih-li) other fairs were organized from time to time, some perhaps on a temporary basis only. A memorial from September 20, 1567, speaks of a horse fair which at one time had existed at Ch'ang-an 長安 but had been abolished because of disturbances, and the author of this memorial, a supervising secretary of the Ministry of Personnel, recommended its reopening[57]. The general map of the *Huang-Ming chiu-pien k'ao* and the map of the *Ch'ou-Liao shih-hua* indicate Ch'ang-an as one of a series of fortified villages built along the borders; it must have been located to the west of Liao-tung chen 遼東鎮 or Liao-yang. In December, 1570, Wang Ch'ung-ku, strongly in favor of organizing horse fairs along the

[54] *Man.* 3. 85; *Hsiao SL* (57) 2745.

[55] *Ch'üan-Liao chih* 1. 35a. According to the *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao* 37. 1605, the market was held at the Fu-shun Pass, 20 *li* east of Fu-shun.

[56] *Liao-tung chih* 2. 15b.

[57] *Man.* 3.549; *Mu SL* (93) 310.

Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung borders, referred to markets in existence at K'ai-yüan and Chien-ch'ang 建昌 in Liaotung[58]. I think that Chien-ch'ang is but another name for either the Kuang-ning fair or the Ch'ang-an fair. I have found no other reference to this Chien-ch'ang fair.

A horse fair may well have been opened at Ning-ch'ien 寧前 in 1571; at any rate, such a possibility was definitely envisaged on May 16 of that year by the governor of Liaotung who while protesting that his troops had been restricted to purely defensive positions in order not to upset the precarious peace only recently achieved on the Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu borders, at the same time proposed to open a horse fair at Ning-ch'ien along the same lines as at Kuang-ning, if the Mongols should ask for a new market[59]. The governor's suggestion clearly implies that the need or advisability of another fair in the vicinity of Kuang-ning had lately been felt. Ning-ch'ien, I guess, is the same as Ch'ien-t'un-wei 前屯衛 indicated on the map of the *Ch'ou-Liao shih-hua* between Shan-hai-kuan and Ning-yüan.

The reader will remember how difficult it was to establish how many horse fairs existed and where, when they were restored in 1478. One hundred years later, in 1576, we read that besides the Kuang-ning fair attended by the two Mongol Commanderies Döen and T'ai-ning, and Fu-shun fair attended by the Jürčen of Chien-chou, there were three fairs around K'ai-yüan : Tung-kuo-yüan 東果園 "Eastern Fruit Garden", 15 *li* from the town; Ma-shih-p'u 馬市堡, 20 *li* away, and Ch'ing-yün-p'u, 40 *li* away. The first two markets, Tung-kuo-yüan and Ma-shih-p'u were attended by various Jürčen tribes; the third one, Ch'ing-yün-p'u, by the people of Fu-yü[60]. This passage supplies only the respective distances from K'ai-yüan without indication of direction. The name Tung-kuo-yüan leaves no doubt that this was a place 15 *li* to

[58] *Mok.* 7. 712; *Mu SL* (95) 1277.
[59] *Man.* 3. 582; *Mu SL* (95) 1392.
[60] *Man.* 3. 656-657; *Shen SL* (98) 1031-32.

the east. Ma-shih-p'u still exists, 20 *li* to the northeast[61]. Either one of Tung-kuo-yüan of Ma-shih-p'u may well be the direct successor of the fair first established at Ch'ü-huan-t'un. Ch'ing-yün-p'u was 40 *li* west of K'ai-yüan[62].

What is of interest in this passage is that the Fu-yü commandery is said to attend the Ch'ing-yün fair. The same is asserted in a passage from March, 1579[63]. We have seen that originally no fairs had ever been assigned to any particular tribes, and that the men of Fu-yü used to go to Kuang-ning, at least early in the fifteenth century. Here we are told that the commander of Fu-yü used to go to Ch'ing-yün-p'u. The *Liao-tung chih*[64] states that Kuang-ning was the market of Döen en T'ai-ning, but has nothing about Fu-yü. This may mean that Fu-yü, the most northerly of the Three Commanderies and probably comprising substantial Jürčen elements, at some point in time had started going to Ch'ing-yün instead of Kuang-ning. But even so, attendance of the Kuang-ning fair is not to be wholly excluded.

New places continue to be mentioned : early in the 1570s, the Ming began the construction of a series of strongholds southeast of Shen-yang, running towards the Ya-lu River, as a defense against the growing threat of the Jürčen (the Manchus in particular). One of those new fortifications was called Yung-tien-p'u 永甸(堡), and on April 5, 1576, the governor-general of Liaotung and Chi-chou, proposed to establish a trading post north of Yung-tien-p'u. The idea, of course, was that if the new fortresses

[61] Gibert 34. 585; The map of the *Ch'ou-Liao shih-hua* indicates a *Ta-ma-shih* "Great Horse Fair" to the northeast of K'ai-yüan.

[62] Gibert 34. 500; *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao* 37. 1606. A *Shih-lu* passage from 1579 (*Man.* 4. 4; *Shen SL* (100) 1770) speaks of the market *west* of Ch'ing-yün-p'u. The map of the *Ch'ou-Liao shih-hua* indicates a Ta ma-shih "Great Horse Fair" *east* of Ch'ing-yün, but, as has been pointed out, on those sketchy maps both distances and directions are far from accurate. Therefore the map does not necessarily contradict the *Shih-lu* information from the 1579 passage.

[63] *Man.* 4. 4; *Shen SL* (100) 1770.

[64] *Liao-tung chih* 1. 35a.

were needed to secure Chinese control over the area, a market would serve as an instrument of pacification. The governor-general stated that only rice, cotton, pigs, and salt would be sold; no horses or other prohibited articles. This latter specification is especially interesting in that it implies that the markets, or at least some markets, served no longer to import horses, but at times, to export them! The governor-general goes on to explain that the income from duties collected at the market would serve to pay for subsidies regularly distributed to Jürčen chieftains : this way 30 % of the profits would go to the Jürčen, and 70 % to China[65]. The *Mindai ..., Manshû hen 3* here includes an additional text from another *Shih-lu* copy explaining that when the Ming started building the new fortresses, and the Jürčen protested the occupation of land that was theirs, the governor-general afraid that the Jürčen might interfere with the works, promised them a market, and this was the origin of the Fu-shun market (*shih-k'ou* 市 口)[66]. If this was the name of the new market of Yung-tien, it would mean that the Fu-shun fair already in existence before 1500, for some reason had been abolished. It is not likely that two fairs, even so wide apart, bore the same name.

Yet Fu-shun itself, if it ever ceased to be a market, soon became a center of trade again, and new markets were established besides : the *Man-chou shih-lu,* speaking of the relations of the early Manchus with the Ming dynasty in the 1580s, mentions, in addition to Fu-shun, the following border markets : Ch'ing-ho 清河, K'uan-tien 寬甸, and Ai-yang 靉陽, where Nurhaci and his people used to sell various products[67]. Ch'ing-ho, Ai-yang, and K'uan-tien are in the same area as Yung-tien-p'u, southeast

[65] *Man.* 3. 662; *Shen SL* (98) 1094. Gibert does not list Yung-tien-p'u, but mentions it under K'uan-tien (Gibert 34. 518). Hsiao I-shan (*Ch'ing-tai t'ung-shih* I, 16) believes that the markets of Fu-shun and Yung-tien were started only in 1584-1585, obviously an error.

[66] The term *shih-k'ou* is also used for the fairs on the Shansi and Shensi borders : *Mok.* 9. 420, 476, 503, 513, etc.

[67] *Man-chou shih-lu* 2. 40ab (Chinese text).

of Shen-yang[68].

A memorial of February, 1503, referred to above, mentions the sale of pine wood (*chen-sung* 椿 松) at the border market (*kuan-shih* 關 市) without any further explanation[69]; wood is no more mentioned for almost one hundred years, yet there is no doubt that the Chinese must have relied heavily on wood supply from Eastern Mongolia, especially from what is now Jehol Province. In fact by the end of the sixteenth century, in addition to the fairs discussed in the foregoing pages, a series of so called wood-markets (*mu-shih* 木 市) were in operation in the Shan-hai-kuan and Kuang-ning area. The map of the *Ch'ou-Liao shih-hua* indicates several of them : one to the north or the northwest of Kuang-ning, close to the border; there is another one to the northwest of I-chou 義 州, near the village of Ta-k'ang-p'u 大康堡[70]; there are two more in the vicinity of Ning-yüan, one to the north, the other in a more westerly direction; and farther south there is still another one about half way between Shan-hai-kuan and (Ning-) Ch'ien-t'un-wei. According to the *Ming-shih*, a wood market must have existed as early as the 1540s; when or why it has been created is not stated, but we are told that in 1543, after repeated border incursions by the Mongols of Döen, the horse fairs of the Three Commanderies were closed along with the newly created wood market[71]. I have found no trace in the *Shih-lu* of this closing of either horse fairs or a wood market at that time. Perhaps the *Ming-shih* is in error here. Little as we know about the origin and history of the wood markets what appears to be better version, can be found in the biography of Li Hua-lung : in 1595, the Döen prince, Little Dayičing, who lived in the vicinity

[68] Gibert 34. 85,518,922. *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao* 37. 1576.

[69] *Man.* 3. 145; *Hsiao SL* (59) 3601.

[70] The wood market of Ta-k'ang is mentioned in *Man.* 4. 250; *Shen SL* (112) 6847. The *Liao-tung chih* 2. 3a lists two markets in the vicinity of I-chou : one 25 *li* to the southeast, the other just east of the town, at San-k'o-liu 三科柳. These two fairs seem to be in addition to the wood market of Ta-k'ang but no time period is indicated so that not too much can be concluded from this information.

of I-chou, requested that a wood market be opened at I-chou; Li Hua-lung presented a memorial to the Court explaining possible advantages of such a market : the area west of the Liao River lacked wood which had to be imported either from the east of the Liao, too far away, or from the Mongols much closer by; such a market would bring a profitable business to the local population, and would improve relations with the Mongols. Since, as we are told, this proposal was approved, we may presume that some sort of wood market was organized in the vicinity of I-chou. Later, when Li took ill, the market was suspended. This suspension is not dated, nor do we know exactly for what reason it came about, The *Ming-shih* goes on to say that later the commander-in-chief Ma Lin 馬 林 requested that the market be reopened; but no decision was made, and as a result Little Dayičing reverted to raiding[72]. Ma Lin's intervention is not dated either, but elsewhere we read that Ma became commander-in-chief of Liaotung in 1599[73], so that his attempt to have the wood market reopened must be dated either from that year or shortly thereafter. We shall later revert to this matter. In the mean time, we must turn our attention to information found in the *Shih-lu*. A report from July 11, 1600, by a supervising secretary stated that the horse fairs of Liaotung were an old institution, but that on account of the growing expenses the governor Chang Ssu-chung 張思忠 had proposed to abolish them. As to the wood market of I-chou, the reporter said that it had been created on Li Hua-lung's recommendation, but had been abolished shortly afterwards. He further maintained that the policy of the border markets had had no beneficial effect : the Mongols had continued to raid the borders, while the military posture of China had steadily deteriorated[74]! In the entries of August 6 and 12, 1600, we read that some officials were against the reopening of both horse fairs and wood markets of Kuang-ning

71 *Ming-shih* 328.V.3778b.
72 *Ming-shih* 228.IV.2626b.
73 *Ming-shih* 211.IV.2454a.
74 *Man.* 4. 232-233; *Shen SL* (111) 6490.

and I-chou because they gave a false sense of security; others were in favor in order to improve agriculture and cattle breeding and provide some rest to the soldiers[75]! The section on economics and finance of the *Ming-shih* states that the wood market was closed in 1598 on the advice of Chang Ssu-chung, and that the horse fairs were closed at the same time[76]. In fact not all horse fairs were closed in 1598, but only those attended by the Mongols of Döen, who were blamed for all the recent difficulties; and that was at least one horse fair and two wood markets : when they were reestablished we read that "the horse fair and the wood market for the Döen Barbarians were reopened together with the wood market of Ning-ch'ien". This was on December 31, 1601[77]. On this occasion the *Shih-lu* repeats how back in 1595, Little Dayičing desired a wood market at Ta-k'ang-p'u near I-chou : upon a letter by Li Hua-ling the request was granted, and Little Dayičing was allowed to float wood down the river. The suspension of 1598 had nothing to do with Li's sickness, but was the result of a report by Chang Ssu-chung : Čečen-qan[78] who had no tribute relations with the Ming not only took advantage of his friendship with Little Dayičing to obtain subsidies at the markets, and demanded more and more of them, while at the same time carrying out border raids as usual. The suspension of the markets, intended to strike at Čečen-qan, resulted only in an intensification of the border raids. The reopening of 1601 is not credited to an intervention by Ma Lin, as we read in Li Hua-lung's biography, but to Li Ch'eng-liang 李成梁[79] whose long career was intimately

[75] *Man.* 4. 235, 237; *Shen SL* (111) 6512, 6522.

[76] *Ming-shih* 81.II. 857b. The *Ming hui-yao*, p. 1107, says that the wood market of I-chou was created in 1595, and abolished in 1596 on Chang Ssu-chung's request.

[77] *Man.* 4. 250; *Shen SL* (112) 6847. The *Ming-shih* 81.II.857b dates the reopening of the markets from the "thirty-ninth Wan-li year" (1611), but, as Prof. Wada points out (Wada 57. 923, n.6), this is an error for the twenty-ninth year. Wada adds that the *Ming-shih-kao* has the correct reading. In *Ming-shih* 328.V.3778b, the reopening is correctly dated from 1601.

[78] Buyan-tayiji, born 1555, reigned from 1593 to 1603 under the title Sečen ∿ Čečen-qaγan. Schmidt 29. 201-203

[79] Biogr. in *Ming-shih* 238.IV. 2713-16.

interwoven with the history of Liaotung and who had come to the conclusion that in any event, without trade, relations with the Mongols would get ever more difficult. At the same time, three other Mongol princes, Ch'ang-an, Tung-hu-li, and Lao-ssu-hai-tzu (also referred to in *Ming-shih* 328.V. 3778b) requested the reopening of the wood market of Ning-ch'ien, and several officials declared themselves in favor of such a decision. Then the governor-general of Chi-chou and Liaotung made this realistic appraisal of the nature of the markets in Liaotung : "they are not like the markets of other districts (he means, Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung), where only tributary Caitiffs attend the fairs : those guilty of border raids are not admitted to the fairs; if there are fairs, they strictly refrain from raiding, and every year China spends several tens of thousands (of taels of silver) on them, evidently intended as inducement; those tributary Caitiffs are so hankering after Chinese wealth and goods that they dare not make a (hostile) move. As to the two (sorts of) markets (i.e. horse fairs and wood markets) of Liaotung, they can only be compared to the people's markets of other districts : the people make a profit, and so whether the Caitiffs are submissive or rebellious, we cannot abolish the markets. Moreover, one cannot know the Caitiffs' feelings : even during the Chia-ching and Lung-ch'ing periods (1522-1566; 1507-1572) when the fairs were held every year, there always occurred serious incidents. The whole situation boils down to this : on the one side (exert a measure of) control (over the Barbarians through trade), and on the other hand, always be militarily prepared. Can we refuse to make a responsible decision because in former years the Caitiffs sometimes traded and sometimes raided, and because we fear that some people will criticize the results (of our decision)? There is no situation in this world absolutely safe and without risk. If advantages are greater than the risks, we act. As to advantages without risks, to hold on to extreme positions and do nothing, would that be effective planning of the pacification of the border areas? ..."

The Ministry of the Army reported favorably on the governor-general's recommendation, and the wood markets were restored[80]. The *Ming-shih* adds that from hereon the wood markets became a regular event.

In 1612, Kao Chi-yüan of the Ministry of Rites lists only the markets of K'ai-yüan and Yung-tien, but it is evident that at that time there were more than two fairs. Kao mentions only two as representative of the rest[81].

MARKET PERIODS. GOODS BOUGHT. REGULATIONS

For the whole duration of the fifteenth century, not once does the *Ming Shih-lu* supply any information regarding the frequency of the horse fairs. At first glance this may be surprising, but after all, the *Shih-lu* was not a compilation intended to contain that sort of detailed information. Yet a memorial on border affairs from February 4, 1502, incidentally remarks that horse fairs held once every three months should be enough for the Mongols and Jürčen to trade, and that the Mongols must not be permitted to acquire salt or rice from Chinese soldiers on duty on watch and signal towers along the borders[82]. This reporter is mainly concerned with the Mongols' needs, but it is not clear whether he means that the fairs were held once every third month, or whether he believed that four fairs a year would take care of the Mongols' needs.

A few months later, the same official, more or less reversing his position, noted that the Mongols had never held to any rules for buying foodstuffs, and to restrict them now to a three-month

[80] *Man.* 4. 250-252; *Shen SL* (112) 6847-49. Ma Lin is not even mentioned in this review. The essentials of these deliberations are repeated in *Man.* 4. 260-262; *Shen SL* (113) 7042-44, and it is obvious that many officials were involved, and Ma Lin's role does not seem to have been the decisive one.

[81] *Man.* 4. 413; *Shen SL* (118) 9324.

[82] *Man.* 3. 126; *Hsiao SL* (58) 3365-66.

rule was apt to cause much discontent, unless a certain latitude was left for the Mongols to obtain salt and rice along the borders[83].

Perhaps he was not speaking of the horse fairs, but only of purchases of food outside of the fairs. At any rate, a review of the horse fairs from December 31, 1601, states that when the horse fairs were reopened in 1478, the Kuang-ning fair was held twice a month, and the K'ai-yüan fair once a month[84]. The *Liao-tung chih* indicates the days on which the fairs were held : K'ai-yüan, from the first to the fifth of the (lunar) month; Kuang-ning, from the first to the fifth, and from the sixteenth to the twentieth[85]. What is not clear is whether this arrangement had been the rule from the very beginning. The *Liao-tung chih* goes on to explain that upon arrival, the Mongols and the Jürčen had to have their horses and wares inspected before they were allowed unto the markets. Interpreters and other officials must not insult the foreigners or cheat them on the price of the horses, or steal their wares; nor must they incite the Mongols to demand compensation for allegedly lost goods; nor allow the Barbarians to enter the towns, nor allow men without goods to enter the fairs; nor let such as have goods stay overnight inside in order to make a little profit, nor divulge border affairs; those guilty of such transgressions were sentenced to exile and military duty in southern regions infested with malaria.

The Mongols and Jürčen imported horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, sheep, and a wide veriety of furs : sable, leopard, bear,

83 *Man.* 3. 134; (59) 3467.

84 *Man.* 4. 250; *Shen SL* (112) 6847. Also in *Ming-shih* 81.II. 857a.

85 *Liao-tung chih* 3. 29b. As indicated above, the days of the "K'ai-yüan" fair listed in the *Hsü wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao* (1) 31. 20b in fact are the days of the Kuang-ning market. The *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi* 5.6a gives the correct dates for both fairs. In 1571, when Wang Ch'ung-ku was accused of trying to expand unduly the newly created fairs of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu, he replied that he only intended to organize the fairs after the pattern established in Liaotung, once every month (*Mok.* 8. 52; *Mu SL* (95) 1544). He did not succeed.

tiger, deer, roebuck, fox, lynx, otter; further more : horse hair, ginseng, wax, honey, mushrooms, pine wood, etc.[86]. The *Man-chou shih-lu* speaking of the 1580s, lists the following articles regularly sold by the Manchus : pearls, ginseng, black fox, red fox, and a kind of fox called *yüan-hu* 元 狐, sable, lynx, leopard, sea otter and common otter, squirrel and ermine[87].

Duties were collected on all or most of these items. The *Liao-tung chih* lists the following rates : a gelding : 0.6 tael of silver; a colt : 0.5 tl; a mare : 0.4 tl; a head of cattle : 0.2 tl; a sheep : 0.01 tl; a sable fur : 0.02 tl; leopard : 0.4 tl; deer : 0.04 tl; roebuck : 0.04 tl; bear, tiger : 0.03 tl; fox : 0.01 tl; wax : 10 % in kind; ginseng : 10 %; pine wood : 5 %[88]. Unfortunately the date of these rates is not indicated.

Tributary Mongols and Jürčen regularly received a sort of subsidy called "rewards" and the proceeds from the taxes collected at the fairs served to cover the expenses. These subsidies are referred to in innumerable passages of the *Ming Shih-lu* but it is sometimes difficult to visualize what they consisted of, and how the system operated. A memorial from February 12, 1576, complained that the revenues had drastically gone down while expenses for subsidies had sharply risen : "In former days, when (the Mongols, etc.) brought horses and camels there was a profit for China; if part (of the proceeds) was used to pay for the comfort-rewards (*fu-shang* : subsidies) there still was a surplus; but now they deliberately bring only low quality goods and demand excessive prices; some go so far as to come empty handed and insist on a reward ..."[89] Probably things were not quite that bad since in April of the same year, Liaotung officials could

[86] *Liao-tung chih* 3. 30ab. Ejima 57. 19; Franke 49. 20. Ejima mentions one item which may seem a little strange : pine seeds (木公 子). Indeed the *Man-chou yüan-liu k'ao* 19. 3a lists seeds from the tall pine trees of Manchuria as one of the "native" products.

[87] *Man-chou shih-lu* 2. 40 ab; Serruys 60a. 77-78.

[88] *Liao-tung chih* 3. 30a.

[89] *Man.* 3.656; *Shen SL* (98) 1032.

state with regard to the newly created fair of Yung-tien that if duties were collected only 30 % of the profits would go to the Mongols of Jürčen, and 70 % to the border Chinese[90]. And again in 1601, the *Shih-lu* passage on the reopening of the horse fairs and wood market, notes that sales taxes served "to reward the market Barbarians", and then goes on to note that Li Hua-lung, too, in 1595 had stated that taxes on wood were used for subsidies for the market Barbarians[91].

The "rewards" or subsidies distributed at the fairs, no doubt, were of the same nature as the subsidies granted to tributary Mongols along other sectors of the northern borders. In fact these were an outgrowth of the tribute relations : whenever Mongols or Jürčen went to the capital to present the tribute, they received not only presents in return for the horses or other articles presented, but also other outright gifts. After 1500, however, the Mongols began to ask for more such gifts but did this on the borders. In order to avoid being annoyed, or worse, having to fight off raiders, local commanders usually preferred to accommodate the Mongols with "rewards". In other words, they bought them off. Those "rewards" seem to have consisted mainly of clothing, cotton goods, silks, and foodstuffs. Every single case did not involve too much, but the yearly total must have been impressive, and kept growing all the time. In fact military commanders all along the borders felt compelled to set apart special funds to pay for those so called rewards. When "rewards" began to be handed out at the fairs is not clear, but once the practice was started of distributing "rewards" in border posts, the door was open for doing the same at the horse fairs.

Here follow a few rates of the "subsidiés" *(fu-shang)* according to the *Liao-tung chih* : "Tatar merchants of the Three Commanderies : every big chief receives one robe, one kettle, one pair each of bootsand stockings, 3 bolts of black and red cotton, 3 pecks

[90] *Man.* 3. 662; *Shen SL* (98) 1094.
[91] *Man.* 4, 250; *Shen SL* (112) 6847.

of rice, and one half 'big' fruit-table *(cho-mien* 桌 麵). Individual Tatars of the Three Commanderies : every man receives one bolt of cotton, one peck of rice, one pair of *γudus* (boots : *wu-tu-su*)[92], one pair of boots, one kettle, and one 'table' per four men." The rates must have been the same for the Jürčen. The *Liao-tung chih* gazeteer goes on to explain that apart from the 'subsidies' *(fu-shang)* there was the old custom of giving salt and rice, or wine and food to Barbarians who came to the borders with information, or who tended their herds close to the borders. The rate of rewards for information was as follows : 2 bolts of white 'medium' cotton *(chung-pu)*, 2 'tables' (of food) with two jars of wine[93].

On the date of October 2, 1516, we read that a certain Noqai and three thousand men from Fu-yü "knocked at the barriers" and "asked for rewards"; the matter went all the way to Peking and upon recommendation by the Ministry of the Army, the Mongols were told that they would receive the customary rewards *(shang-k'ao)* at the market if they took off their armor[94].

Before long the rewards became as important as the trade itself. In November, 1546, a censor reported that some officials had reduced the rewards and caused serious discontent resulting in armed clashes[95]. In February, 1560, some Fu-yü Mongols demanded rewards at the K'ai-yüan fair, but were rebuked and an armed clash ensued[96]. The governor of Liaotung who on May 16, 1571, complained about restrictions imposed upon military activities, also had a word to say about subsidies *(fu-shang)* : "year after year the Caitiff chieftains have been asking for

[92] *Wu-tu-su* is the same as *bu-tu-su* and *bu-tu-sun* of the *Yüan-ch'ao pi-shih* § 114 (3.22b), § 145 (4.39b), and *ku-tu-su* of the *Wu-pei-chih* 227. 11ab. In modern Mongol : *γutul*~*γutusu(n)* : leather boot.

[93] *Liao-tung chih* 3. 29b-30b. This gazeteer also lists the following subsidies for Hai-hsi (i.e. Jürčen) chieftains going to Court : a *tu-tu* received one ox (?!), and a big fruit table; one with the rank of a *tu-chih-hui* received one sheep and one big fruit table.

[94] *Man.* 3. 266; *Wu-SL* (67) 2779.

[95] *Man.* 3. 436; *Shih SL* (84) 5907.

[96] *Mok.* 7. 308; *Shih SL* (89) 8021.

rewards, and the military have no fixed policy. As I see it, if we grant them those rewards, there will be no end to their demands; if we rebuke them, calamity will follow swiftly!... Should the Caitiffs come to request a fair, it should be granted at Ning-ch'ien, with the same 'rewards' as in Kuang-ning. We must not rebuke them..."[97].

During the sixteenth century many Chinese immigrants were settling in Southern Mongolia and some also with the Jürčen; some had left China on their own accord, some were prisoners kidnaped on border raids. Some eventually came back to China, but the greater part, it would seem, remained. All were viewed with extreme suspicion by the Ming government. On December 29, 1571, after deliberations at the Ministry of the Army, approval was given to a plan proposed by the governor-general of Liaotung : among other things he noted that among the Barbarians attending the fairs of K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning, there were many Chinese prisoners, and he proposed to distribute generous subsidies in order to induce them to come back[98]. The text does not make clear, however, how this plan was to be put into effect : how the Chinese would be recognized, and prevailed upon to return to China, and how those generous gifts would be kept from falling into the hands of the Mongols or the Jürčen.

The memorial of February 12, 1576, mentioned above, speaks of "big rewards" and "small rewards" on the fairs, but it does not explain what the difference was between those two kinds.

During the market days some provision had to be made to feed those attending the fairs. The Liao-tung gazeteer lists the following rations : "Every Hai-hsi trader with the rank of a *tu-tu* receives one sheep, and, in addition, every day three 'tables' and three jars of wine; every *tu-chih-hui* receives one sheep, and, in addition, every day one 'table', and one jar of wine."[99] It is not indicated

[97] *Man.* 3. 581-582; *Mu SL* (95) 1392.
[98] *Man.* 3. 587; *Mu SL* (95) 1593.
[99] *Liao-tung chih* 3. 29b.

from what particular time this information on rations dates : rations probably did no more remain unchanged than anything else connected with the horse fairs. Changes and increases both of food rations and subsidies are alluded at in the memorial from April 12, 1576 : "During the last few decades abuses have piled up : ... in former years, the chieftains received a remuneration (subsidies : *k'ao-shang*) in the form of salt and cotton cloth; the others were only given a meal (lit. wine and meat); now they all demand salt and cotton, and want them increased by the voucher and the bolt! In former years, the chieftains would now and then request clothes, satins, kettles, and oxen, and considered these extraordinary gifts, but now they consider them as regular dues and they tell each other to demand them!..."[100].

Since officially the main purpose of the horse fairs was the purchase of horses for the government, it is evident that some regular funds had to be provided to the governor of Liaotung or other officials responsible for this operation. The information available regarding the financing of the governmental section of the horse fairs is far from complete, but the few facts known to us may at least serve to illustrate in a general way how this was done.

Funds for the purchase of horses by the government came from a variety of sources : for example : in 1568, the Court of Imperial Stud issued 5000 taels of silver to buy horses and fill the needs of government troops in Liaotung[101]; In December, 1571, the Ministry of the Army approved a request by the governor to supplement goods destined for the fairs with ten-thousand taels of "horse money" stored in the Liaotung district and various other surpluses, in order to buy more "Barbarian" horses[102]; in March, 1585, the Court of Imperial Stud issued 50,000 taels from the "horse money" of the Storage of Perpetual Abundance

100 *Man.* 3. 656; *Shen SL* (98) 1031-32.
101 *Man.* 3. 560; *Mu SL* (93) 616.
102 *Man.* 3. 587; *Mu SL* (95) 1593.

(常盈庫)[103]; in November, 1586, 42,600 taels[104]; in April, 1591, an issue was made of 117,075 taels from the Storage of Perpetual Abundance[105]. "Horse money" or "Horse Fund" *(Ma-chia* 馬價) was a fund entrusted to the T'ai-p'u-ssu for the purchase of horses. Nowhere is it said explicitly that those moneys were for purchases of horses at the fairs. Chinese farmers, too, may occasionally have sold horses to the army, but there is little doubt that most horses purchased in Liaotung came from the Mongols and the Jürčen.

In my study of the tribute relations, I have shown that the funds allocated to the military for subsidies were often maladministered, and the same seems to be true of the funds allocated to the horse fairs. For example, two passages from August, 1591, and May, 1592, clearly indicate that officers in the army and well-to-do merchants manipulated the prices of the horses to the detriment of both the government and individual soldiers[106]. And the following quotation from a report by a regional inspector of Liaotung from February 10, 1608, implies extensive malpractices : "Fix the market rewards [meaning here funds allocated for purchases on the market] in order to forestall embezzlement : formerly the Court of Imperial Stud yearly forwarded a sum of money for the purchase of horses *(ma-chia)* to make up various losses, but in recent years, the governor-general initiated the rule of horse interests *(ma-tzu-yin)*[107] so that the money for the horses served to comfort the Barbarians *(fu-I)*, and the Barbarian horses were given to the army, but in the course of time, malpractices cropped up : year after year, horse dealers *(ma-hu)* paid bribes to

[103] *Mok.* 8. 529; *Shen SL* (103) 2911.
[104] *Man.* 4. 98; *Shen SL* (104) 3325.
[105] *Man.* 4. 147; *Shen SL* (106) 4338-39.
[106] *Man.* 4. 152, 163; *Shen SL* (106) 4414,4587.
[107] *Tzu-yin*, I take to mean the same as *tzu-ch'ien*, or *tzu-chin* "interest", although I do not know what is exactly meant by the expression "horse interest". The memorial from August 31, 1591, says that "the more horses we buy, the more interest *(tzu-yin)* we accumulate". Possibly, the natural increase of the herds is meant.

get hold of the 'comfort money' *(fu-yin)* which amounted to thousands and ten thousands of taels, but they did not buy any horses immediately! Now and then they would turn over (to the army) one or two thin and weak nags which died after a short time. We propose to revert to the old regulation concerning the market rewards and fix the date of import and the number of men (allowed to enter), to limit the amount of the rewards (*shang-e* : i.e. the sum allocated for the purchase of horses), so that the market fund *(shih-pen)* and the horse money can be checked separately; the horse moneys brought from the capital should also be divided equally between the five circuits *(tao* 道*)*[108] so that the soldiers can select and try the horses and pay the price immediately to the owners, and thus avoid the annoyance of the additional demands for the brand *(yin-lo)*[109], so that (the horses) become really available for exercise and combat."[110].

ADMINISTRATION

It is almost impossible to have a clear idea of the chain of command and form of administration of the Liaotung horse fairs, so little do the sources contain with regard to this matter. Our information comprises only the barest facts. Since, however, the horse fairs loomed so large in Chinese border policy, and were intended in official thinking as the main means of importation of horses for the army, it is understandable that the military had much, if not most, to say in the management of the fairs. Some of the facts mentioned in an incidental way in the foregoing pages will be briefly repeated here.

In 1406, a chiliarch with the name of Današiri, and others, were appointed to administer the horse affairs; in 1425, a chiliarch with the name of Wang Yao-na 王咬納 is said to be in

[108] It is not clear which circuits are meant.
[109] I do not know what additional payment is referred to here.
[110] *Man.* 4. 303-304; *Shen SL* (116) 8391-92.

charge (*ma-shih-kuan* 馬市官) of Kuang-ning. Današiri is not a Chinese name; Yao-na, too, is a name borne by several non-Chinese in the early Ming. Most probably, Današiri, Wang Yao-na, and others appointed together with them, were chosen with an eye on their linguistic capabilities. They could also serve as interpreters.

During the early years the administration must have been fairly simple, but whoever was in charge at Kuang-ning and K'ai-yüan, the overall authority rested with the commander-in-chief of Liao-tung. Kuang-ning was the residence of the military commander and it was his duty to keep the city walls, the border wall, and the watch towers in good repair, to manage the barriers and the horse fairs, to treat the Barbarians generously, and to defend the territory. At K'ai-yüan there was a local commander who at the same time was "in charge of management of the horse fairs (*ma-shih-kuan*)"; and with regard to his duties we read that all horses purchased on the fairs had to be delivered to the army; he was warned against oppressive measures only apt to antagonize the Barbarians, and against bribes; if private traders broke the law, he could be indicted by the governor or other officials and held for questioning; his subordinates, such as interpreters, were forbidden to stir up trouble, and sell goods to the Barbarians illegally (*ssu* : privately!)[111].

If the commander-in-chief and local commanders remained responsible, it is obvious that someone had to be appointed to handle routine matters. Our passage from November 14, 1434, says that when the horse fairs were first established "officials were appointed to manage (*chu* 主) them". Probably Današiri's and Wang Yao-na's positions were just secundary ones.

When the horse fairs were restored shortly after 1478, and various malpractices by interpreters came to light, the Minister of the Army who shortly before was still governor of Liaotung, recommended that the local military commanders and an official of the Provincial surveillance office (*an-ch'a-ssu*) supervise opera-

111 HMCPK 2. 3b4a, 5b6a.

tions. Local authorities in Liaotung may often have viewed things differently than the Central Government at Peking : in 1488, Ma Wen-sheng wrote that interpreters sent from Peking were replaced with men better acceptable to the military in Liaotung, and he wanted two interpreters sent by the Ministry of the Army to have exclusive supervision *(chuan-li)* over the horse fairs. Again 1490, the Ministry of Revenue wanted the interpreters in charge of the horse fairs ar Kuang-ning and K'ai-yüan recalled and the supervision left to two military officers. These various changes clearly indicate that the measures adopted in 1488 had not satisfied the parties involved nor resolved the problem of efficiently administering the fairs.

CONFLICTS

Neither Chinese nor Mongols or Jürčen were entirely satisfied with the way the horse fairs operated : on the one hand the behavior of the Mongols, always a mystery and a cause of irritation for the Chinese, and on the other hand all too frequent cases of injustice and graft by Chinese officials, soldiers, interpreters, as well as private merchants, always remained potential sources of conflict. In judging those difficulties, however, it is good to remember that only the Chinese records are available and thus we see things only from the Chinese point of view. What the Mongols or the Jürčen thought in any given case may well have been something quite different. Secondly we must remember that the *Shih-lu* itself, our most important source of information, is not a systematic treatise of the origin and the development of the horse fairs, but a day-to-day account of some events or a record of decrees deemed necessary to correct a situation. When everything was orderly, the *Shih-lu* was not likely to mention anything; but the discovery of an abuse, charges of corruption, corrective measures, are more likely to be recorded. In other words, the *Shih-lu* most of the time relates what was not working

properly, and this is apt to give us the impression that everything was out of order most of the time. This most certainly would be a false impression. The very fact that the Liaotung fairs remained in operation for so long goes a long way to proving that generally speaking both Mongols and Chinese wanted the fairs, even if some aspects were displeasing to one side or the other, and conflicts broke out from time to time. With this reservation in mind, we may review some of the Chinese complaints recorded in the *Shih-lu*. In fact some have already been touched upon in the foregoing pages.

At the end of 1478, when the horse fairs were just being re-established, the Ministry of the Army ordered that soldiers be sent to the fairs to maintain order, and that the Mongols attending them must carry no bows or arrows or any other weapon[112]. Essentially the same rule applied to tribute missions going to the capital; but rare were the Chinese soldiers or officials who dared insist on its strict application.

If the Mongols and the Jürčen wanted more trading facilities, Chinese officialdom, always afraid that trade worked against Chinese superiority was rather inclined to limit the horse fairs to a strict minimum. What Chinese private traders thought is nowhere explicitly stated in official documents but from what we have seen above it is clear that they too favored an expansion of trade. A long memorial on border affairs by a supervising secretary of the Ministry of Personnel, and entered in the *Shih-lu* under the date of February 22, 1503, lists a few objections against border markets *(kuan-shih)*. We have already referred to it several times and we may quote a few more passages from this text : "In former years, because the Three Commanderies gave their allegiance in Liaotung, and the Eastern Barbarians submitted, a memorial requested the creation of horse fairs at K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning for trade. At that time, the Caitiff chieftains were submissive and traded horses for 'salt and rice' : they acquired

112 After Wada 57. 916, whose source I was not able to examine.

food and commodities and we, tools for war (i.e. horses). Lately, in their wiliness, the Robber-Caitiffs, instead of selling usable horses, have brought only pine wood, sable pelts, and weak and thin horses and cattle. Moreover, they take advantage of this business to spy out our strategic weaknesses and strength, and Chinese individuals bent on profit work with them, so much so that they stealthily sell them weapons and leak out military information. Although there are supervisors at the markets and military officers, they are unable to check these developments. I have heard that as soon as the Caitiffs cross the borders they smash the pots and plows that they have bought to bits and melt them down (to make weapons); the beans and fodder that they have acquired they use especially to feed their horses, and it is not hard to guess their intention (namely border violations!). I have also heard that after border violations, all bronze bells *(t'ung-niao* 銅 鐃*)* and other stolen objects are sold to the chieftains of the Eastern Barbarians; and the men and women whom they have kidnaped are held prisoner and they cunningly say that they were captured in the Three Commanderies' territory, and they want their relatives to ransom them; governmental troops not only dare ask no question, but they send them presents in the form of wine and food, salt and rice : would lending weapons to robbers and giving food to thieves be any worse? I beg to abolish the border markets : if we gave to poor soldiers the 'salt and rice' granted (to the Mongols or Jürčen) and reward meritorious deeds with the wine and food (usually) presented (to the Mongols), then we would get a dedicated effort from our soldiers. If it is argued that the markets have been created long ago and that it is not desirable to change them, we still must strictly enjoin the supervisors of the markets and other officials that when the Barbarians enter the borders they may buy only 'salt and rice'; they may not illegally buy iron tools, beans and fodder. According to the old regulations, every 5 or 10 men were allowed collectively to buy one pot; now we must impose a yearly limit : they might purchase pots and plows every second or third year. Those

Barbarians who bring the tribute and on their way home buy pots and plows, should come under the same rule. If the Robber Caitiffs do not immediately return men and objects captured on their raids, but continue to sell them (abroad) or ask for ransom, then local commanders must be allowed to capture their wicked leaders. Chinese who maintain relations with the Barbarians and illegally sell them weapons or reveal military information will be punished according to the law. This way, on the one hand we will not lose profits, and on the other hand we will not lose prestige, and the Caitiffs will remain ignorant of our plans[113]".

The text just quoted repeats more or less the numberless protests against the Mongols, or other Northern and Central Asians bringing the tribute and receiving more in return than they presented. In spite of such protests and recriminations, the government let tribute and trade relations continue : a limited amount of trouble was better than interruption of relations and intensified border violations, and, in the long run, less expensive. But that the markets left officials with a sense of frustration and much to worry about is clear : in September, 1513, the Ministry of the Army recommended a number of measures proposed by a supervising secretary : "in former days the horse fairs of K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning were created as a means to control the Barbarians; on the market days, prohibitions must be strictly enforced; Barbarians who request subsidies *(shang)* in the jurisdiction of the various towns must be made to pasture more than 100 *li* away; if they come closer to the borders, they must be chased away; this way we will avoid conflicts and they will understand that it is forbidden to sneak in". An imperial decree of approval further added that the Barbarians must be examined before being allowed to the horse fairs and leave the country again at the appointed time; that it was forbidden to carry such weapons as bows and arrows, and that outside of the market days, they must not come close to the borders; if officials in charge

[113] *Man.* 3. 145-146; *Hsiao SL* (59) 3600-02.

of the horse fairs or military should cheat the Barbarians out of their goods, permit them to enter the country, entertain private (i.e. illegal) relations and reveal anything, their crimes would not be forgiven[114].

In 1516, we are told that a thousand Barbarians (it is not said whether they were Mongols or Jürčen) had come to the fair of Ku-ch'eng-p'u, west of K'ai-yüan, and after the fair had gone back across the borders, but then had suddenly come back to attack and defeat the local garrison of 3000 men : several officers were punished for negligence and lack of preparedness[115]. On August 2, 1521, the *Shih-lu* relates that the fair of K'ai-yüan was often the scene of rioting and violence, and merchants were regularly killed. Some time earlier, the Jürčen had rioted and Chinese soldiers had killed over 200 of them! Some officials wanted the soldiers rewarded, but others accused their officers : an investigation revealed that the soldiers were poorly provided for, their officers were not capable men, fortifications had fallen in an state of disrepair, and the soldiers had very poor discipline and many deserted[116]. It is obvious that such conditions made for low morale and were only apt to contribute to the causes of clashes and riots. The situation did not improve, as we see from this case from 1535 : the soldiers of Fu-shun rebelled against their officer who was arrested. It was discovered that some time ago several of his men had been captured by the Jürčen and when they were ransomed and returned, he failed to report the fact, which seems to have made him suspected of collaboration with the Jürčen; what is more, he was also accused of mistreating his own men and of arbitrary behavior towards the Jürčen on the market. The officer was condemned to death[117].

Even entertainments provided at the fairs were apt to become

[114] *Man.* 3. 243-244; *Wu SL* (66) 2133-34.
[115] *Man.* 3. 258; *Wu SL* (67) 2635.
[116] *Man.* 3. 300; *Shih SL* (70) 156.
[117] *Man.* 3. 385-386. This text is not in the Taipei edition of the *Shih-lu*, but see Variants, vol.17, p. 1115 : September 1, 1535.

a cause of conflict, as has already been noticed. In 1547, the officers of Kuang-ning decided to economize on the entertainments but the Mongols protested and soldiers began to beat them with the result that seven men died of their wounds. The Mongols retaliated by attacking a watchtower in the I-chou area : they killed thirteen men and six more were burned to death[118]. The governor of Liaotung in a memorial from February 12, 1576, part of which has already been quoted, described how difficult it had become to satisfy the Mongols and even more the Jürčen : "during the last few decades abuses have piled up. Formerly, they observed the time regulations; now they band together; the various tribes circulate arrows[119] and arrive incessantly... Formerly they called themselves vassals, but now relying on the Great Caitiffs[120] and their own power, they extract heavy bribes from us. Formerly they brought goods (loaded) on horses and camels and there was a profit for China; part (of the profits) was used to pay them subsidies, and there still was a surplus; now they deliberately bring shoddy goods and they insist on a high price. Things have come to such a pass that some coming empty handed repeatedly demand rewards. The market of Kuang-ning is near the governor's residence[121] and there is an important garrison to maintain order, so that there is a minimum of control. At Fu-shun since the capture of (the Jürčen chieftain) Wang-kao, all other tribes are weak and are under Wang-t'ai so that for the time being there is little to worry about. K'ai-yüan is isolated and on three sides surrounded by neighboring Barbarians : they come from three directions, east, north, and west, to the fairs of Tung-kuo-yüan, Ma-shih-p'u, and Ch'ing-yün-p'u, and recently Wang-t'ai and others

118 *Man.* 3. 436-437; 441-442; *Shih SL* (84) 5907, 6056-57.

119 To appoint a time and summon the men. Arrows were credentials of authority.

120 *Ta-Lu* "Great Caitiffs" indicated the Northern Mongols. This expression recalls the name Great Mongols *(Yeke Monγol / Ta Meng-ku)* used by the Mongols themselves during the Yüan period.

121 The governor *(hsün-fu)* of Liaotung first resided at Liao-yang, later at Kuang-ning, Shan-hai-kuan, or Ning-yüan *(Ming-shih* 73. I. 760a).

have come up to the southern wall of K'ai-yüan to display wares and trade : there hardly is any boundary left! Barbarians who live to the northwest trade inside Ch'ing-yün-p'u; as soon as they are summoned by circulating arrows, they rush to the market place drawing bows and holding bags, bent on getting what they want; when they have got what they want, they present milk and kumiss and force every official to drink, to show their contempt; at the slightest offense they begin to shout, or jump on their horses and start shooting; or steal and carry off everything they find... In the Kuang-ning region there is a semblance of order because there are walls and barriers, fortified villages and troops; the military situation in K'ai-yüan is so poor that no one can afford to resist their extravagant demands. A better disposition of soldiers is needed, especially in and around Ch'ing-yün-p'u, and officials must strictly hold to the market days, and the determined amounts of the subsidies. If they come (i.e. Mongols and Jürčen) at the appointed time they must be counted before subsidies are given out, and they will receive their subsidies while their names are called off. If they refuse to behave, the barriers must be closed. The office of the governor must carefully report on which days the fairs are open; how much trade is transacted every month on every fair, how much in big subsidies and small subsidies is issued at the fairs, how much seasonal and yearly surplus there is at every fair to make up possible deficits. Officials must resist extravagant demands so that the chieftains stop being unreasonable[122]".

The case of the milk and kumiss is a telling example of how easy it was to misunderstand each other. Chinese officials seem to have been offended by the Mongols and Jürčen pressing their gifts of milk and kumiss upon them; they thought it below their dignity to accept the gifts. Yet it is certain that the Mongols meant it all as a sign of good will and a refusal to accept the gifts or a show of displeasure could not but offend them in turn.

[122] *Man.* 3. 656-658; *Shen SL* (98) 1031-33 (summarized).

Furthermore exhortations to observe prescribed rules had but little effect : in March and August, 1579, we read again that the Mongols going to Ch'ing-yün-p'u carried weapons, extorted gifts, and at the least provocation started to riot and loot[123].

Very often causes of irritation were real enough and under the stress many an official was liable to mistake trade relations for the cause of the trouble. Others were clear sighted enough to make the necessary distinction between the good effects of trade and irritating side effects; no matter how real the irritation, lack of trade relations would have made matters infinitely worse. In this connection we may quote what a provincial judge of Shantung wrote on May 17, 1615, with regard to Nurhaci who by that time had become a most serious threat to Chinese power in the northeast : the Eastern Barbarian Nurhaci monopolizes (*? shan-ts'an* 搧 餐) the profits, and officials of the said circuit intend to reduce the volume of the market and have fewer merchants go to the fair with fewer wares for sale. In their opinion, if his source of wealth dries up, Nurhaci will be forced to beg for leniency. In such an eventuality, the Caitiff (i.e. Nurhaci) will kidnap our people, find out who are the clever and intelligent ones, induce them with heavy bribes to give him their allegiance and serve him; they will reveal all weak and strong points of our country, and our Liaotung people, with corvees and taxes as heavy as they are, will have no other alternative but to accept his offer, and future difficulties will become even more serious."[124] By this time, however, Nurhaci and his Manchus had become so powerful that a little more or less trade could no longer affect the outcome of events, and on June 9, 1618, Nurhaci's soldiers captured Fu-shun under the pretext of coming to the fair : the day before,the Manchus had declared at Fu-shun *shih-k'ou* that they were coming to Fu-shun with 3000 men for a big fair. On the appointed day, they induced merchants and

123 *Man.* 4. 4, 14; *Shen SL* 1770, 1846.
124 *Man.* 4. 470; *Shen SL* (120) 10003.

military population to come out of the town to trade, and taking advantage of the inevitable confusion, the Manchus occupied it[125].

Apart from the Jürčen and the Mongols of the Three Commanderies Döen, T'ai-ning, and Fu-yü, no other Mongols were recognized as tributaries and consequently excluded from the Liaotung fairs. We may mention here that around 1500, the Mongols for a variety of reasons had gradually ceased to send the tribute to China, and when around 1540, the Southern Mongols, namely the Tümed and the Ordos, living north of Shansi and Shensi Provinces, made overtures to the Ming Court to send tribute as their ancestors had done, they were rejected by the Chinese. The result was that border raids became more and more a substitute for normal trade relations. With their territory bordering in the east on the Three Commanderies, the Tümed Mongols knew very well how the Three Commanderies profited from the trade. The Mongol tribes farther north probably were equally well informed, and it is quite possible that through the intermediary of the Three Commanderies, they had some share in the trade with China. When the Tümed and Ordos in 1570-1571 succeeded in reopening tribute relations with China, a number of horse fairs were established along the border for them; these will be discussed in the following two chapters. Other neighbors of the Three Commanderies, particularly the great-qaγans abstained from participating in these new relations; Tümen-qaγan of the Eastern Mongols could have joined the Tümed and make a similar agreement with China, but for some reason he refused to do so, and so did his successor. Officially, they never were accepted as tributaries and border raids continued to plague Liaotung. Gradually, however, the qaγans without ever sending tribute began to seek more direct participation in the markets. Officially all trade rights were refused to them as border violations were interpreted as signs of bad faith, nevertheless as the Manchus became far more dangerous enemies than the Mongols, even the qaγans

[125] *Man.* 4. 505-506; *Shen SL* (121) 10685-86. Ejima 57. 29-30.

were allowed to trade more and more, and were granted subsidies in now way different from the Mongols of the Three Commanderies.

V

HORSE FAIRS : TA-T'UNG AND HSUAN-FU (1438-1552)

The main period of the Ta-t'ung fairs began in 1571 when the Altan-qan of the Tümed after many requests was finally admitted as a tributary. Important as this turning point was in the history of Sino-Mongol trade relations, we must not forget that during the fifteenth century, horse fairs were held at least from time to time in the Ta-t'ung area; our information unfortunately is too fragmentary for a full treatment. The three decades from 1540 to 1570 were a period of practically uninterrupted border raids, except for a brief interlude in 1551-1552 when a half hearted attempt was made to regularize trade relations with the Mongols. These are the events which we shall examine in this chapter.

As far as I was able to determine, the first mention of horse fairs in this sector of the northern border was made on May 17, 1438 : as the Oyirad had sent an embassy with tribute horses, the Minister of Justice, referring to the practice followed in Liaotung, proposed to establish a horse fair in order to select tribute horses; with this in view, he wanted interpreters and brokers (*ya-hang* 牙行) appointed. The emperor however, refused to approve this proposal, because horse fairs would be a burden to the military and the common people; then he went on to say that foreigners must be treated very generously, and that no selection must be made from the "tribute" horses; instead all horses must be paid for by the treasury, so that no inconvenience should result for the people[1].

In spite of the emperor's refusal, only a few days later, the governor of the military district of Ta-t'ung also proposed the establishment of a horse fair : on May 23, he stated that a horse fair should be opened so that the military and the people could

[1] *Mok.* 2. 520-521; *Ying SL* (24) 809.

buy Mongol horses and camels; he suggested the appointment of such "Tatar officers" *(Ta-kuan)* as Li Yüan 李 源 and others as interpreters, but he excluded the sale of all weapons, and copper and iron tools. This time, the emperor accepted[2].

We may draw the reader's attention to the words "tribute horses". It is evident that the Minister would have liked to select only the best horses for the government and let the Oyirad envoys sell the rest with the help of interpreters and brokers to private buyers. The emperor seems to have found it much more advantageous for the government's political purposes to let the government buy all the Oyirad horses. This passage makes it once more clear that all horses brought by the Mongols, whether for formal presentation at the Court or for sale, were labeled "tribute". The fact that the Minister wanted brokers appointed suggests that such brokers were also employed in Liaotung when private traders were involved although they are never mentioned; in other words, the Minister took it for granted that if a horse fair was opened, private buyers would as a matter of course be admitted. The two proposals of May, 1438, in fact comprised little new; as we have seen in Chapters Two and Three, tribute missions always traded on the borders before and after their trip to the capital. What the Minister and the governor had in mind in 1438, was, it seems, to let private merchants take on a larger share of the trade with the Mongols, but to channel this increase of trade through official horse fairs where the government too would have its share and at the same time keep all private transactions under supervision. What is not so clear is why the emperor in his first refusal maintained that horse fairs would constitute an additional burden for the soldiers and the populace. The implication seems to be that a large share of the expenses, food rations, would fall directly on the people.

If horse fairs were held in 1438, they are no more mentioned thereafter, which does not necessarily mean that they were no

[2] *Mok.* 2. 521; *Ying SL* (24) 812. Summarized in *Ming Shih* 81. II. 857a.

longer held. Yet they were essentially different from the Liaotung fairs in that they were not held once or twice a month, but only when Mongol (or Oyirad) tribute missions arrived with horses for sale; of these a small number would be selected to be forwarded to Peking, the rest would be sold, some to the army of Ta-t'ung, or other governmental agencies, some to private purchasers. That those fairs continued to be held seems probable from an event which was later interpreted as the cause of the Oyirad invasion of 1449. The *Ming-shih* says that Esen-tayiši regularly sent horses both as tribute and for sale at the fairs, but the eunuch Wang Chen 王振 slashed the prices of the horses which prompted Esen-tayiši to open hostilities and invade the country[3]. It is doubtful that Wang Chen's action was the real cause of the war, but what is of interest here is that markets were held at the time of the tribute presentation. It should be noted, however, that the *Shih-lu* is much less specific about this affair than the statement of the *Ming-shih*. First, before 1449, when the Oyirad established their supremacy over all of Mongolia and became a definite threat on the northern frontier, no difficulty is ever referred to, except that the Oyirad tribute missions grew ever larger and caused great expenses to the Ming government. It was only much later, shortly before the release of the captive Cheng-t'ung emperor that the new emperor in a letter to the qaγan Toγtô-buqa admitted that corrupt officials without authorization had reduced the "rewards" of the Oyirad envoys; and in a conversation with Ming ambassadors, Esen-tayiši complained of the same reduction of the rewards[4]. These references to "rewards" in general do not contradict the *Ming-shih* statement about horse fairs and prices of horses. The expression "rewards" can very well be understood as signifying every kind of revenue the Oyirad derived from their tribute relations with China.

We hear no more of markets of any kind until 1454, when we learn that some sort of fairs had been held regularly. On November

[3] *Ming-shih* 81. II. 857a. Wang Chen's biography in *Ming-shih* 304. V. 3408a, although referring to the reduction of prices of horses, makes no explicit mention of horse fairs.

[4] *Mok.* 3. 333, 345; *Ying SL* (31) 4069, 4104.

6, 1454, an official of Hsüan-fu wrote that up to now it had been all right for the military population and the common people along the road to the capital to trade with Oyirad tribute envoys; only such articles as weapons were forbidden. Recently, however, some new restrictions had been put into effect and punishment for violations was so severe – exile to Hai-nan for the whole family of the guilty – that everybody was scared away from the *border markets (pien-shih)*. The reporter feared that too great severity was only apt to make the Oyirad suspicious and bring on unfortunate results. The latest restrictions were relaxed[5]. This passage clearly implies a difference between casual trade carried on during the trip to Peking, and more formal trading fairs on the borders.

After 1454 follows another long period of silence, which again is no proof that the horse fairs of Ta-t'ung were no longer held. As we have mentioned in a previous chapter, on July 23, 1498, the Ministry of the Army called the attention of the Court to a strange situation in the Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu districts : the local armies needed horses badly inspite of the fact that the Mongols continued to bring large numbers of them. But all those horses were bought up privately and ended up in the hands of wealthy families who made huge profits on the trade. Army officers, too, were involved in this trade, not to meet the needs of the soldiers, but for their own profit. On July 1, 1499, the *Shih-lu* says : "Formerly, *fairs* were opened in Ta-t'ung with a view to purchasing horses", and then goes on to repeat the same and other similar charges. All this seems to mean that the Ta-t'ung fair had remained in existence, but that the government had been largely crowded out by private interests of enterprising officers and rich merchants. Such a situation would also explain why we hear practically nothing of the fairs during all those years : the reader will have remembered that the Liaotung fairs

[5] *Mok.* 3. 513-514; *Ying SL* (34) 5340.
[6] *Mok.* 5. 23, 28, 29-30; *Hsiao SL* (56) 2405, 2431, 2459; (57) 2652.

are also mentioned in the records only in so far as the government was involved, and since in the case of the Ta-t'ung fairs the government's interests had practically been reduced to nothing, to all practical purposes the fairs did no longer exist as far as the government was concerned.

Whether as a result of the abuses revealed in 1498 and 1499, the fair was reorganized, or abolished altogether, is not known. Although on July 23, 1498 the Minister of the Army noted that the Mongols still imported (lit. brought tribute) many horses, and in September, spoke of "last spring's tribute missions", it should be noted that by this time very few tribute missions are recorded, and from 1500 on none are recorded at all from Mongolia other than those of the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies. Yet not every contact can have ceased at this time; later, when all contact had been broken off and the Altan-qan of the Tümed wished to renew them (in 1541), he once referred to regular tribute presentation and trade by his father during the Cheng-te era (1506-1521)[7]. No doubt, the Altan-qan exaggerated some what when speaking of regular *(ch'ang 常)* relations. On this occasion the governor of Ta-t'ung made the remark that for the last forty years the Mongols had presented no tribute. But this statement may be overdrawn, too. Had tribute missions come so regularly from Mongolia as the qan claimed we would expect to find at least some recorded. Yet the qan's assertion cannot have been devoid of all truth; under the circumstances to make a groundless statement would have hurt rather than promoted his aims. I think we must accept that tribute had been presented from time to time after 1500, and that on those occasions fairs were held, too.

The point here is that by 1530 all tribute and trade relations had ceased, the fairs had been abolished, and all overtures by the Tümed prince were invariably rejected. The argument that a minimum of trade would be needed to restore the peace and to preserve it was no longer accepted at the Court; the inconsistency

[7] *Mok.* 6. 216; *Shih SL* (82) 5030.

of this new policy of allowing trade to the Three Commanderies and the Jürčen in spite of many border incidents and refusing the same privileges to the other Mongols because of similar border incidents was pointed out by some officials with experience of border affairs, but they remained unable to convince the Court to change its course : no fairs were reopened, no trade was allowed; but as has been explained, plenty of clandestine trade continued to be carried on. However the events of 1550 were about to force the Ming government to revise its official stand on the question of trade, but only for a short while.

In the fall of 1550, the Altan-qan who hitherto had mainly limited his raids to the Shansi and Shensi Provinces, suddenly turned eastward and in September, after crossing the Great Wall near Ku-pei-k'ou, north of Peking, swept down into the Metropolitan Area. This invasion resembled too much Esen-tayiši's invasion of one hundred years ago not to frighten the Court thoroughly. The Altan-qan never laid siege to the capital, an enterprise certainly beyond his power, which probably he never intended to attempt anyway; but the Chinese armies gave such a poor account of themselves that the Court however reluctantly came to see that it would be impossible to ignore any longer the Mongol prince's demand for a minimum of trade. On September 26, Ch'iu Luan, commander-in-chief of Ta-t'ung and soon to become generalissimo of all the armies assembled for the defense of Peking, wrote that all the trouble on the Mongol frontiers stemmed from the single fact that the Mongols needed a number of commodities and goods which only China could supply, and since the fairs already existed in Liaotung, in Kansu, and at Hsi-feng-k'ou, he saw no objection to the opening of similar trading centers : if the Altan-qan could sell horses, buy the commodities he needed, and if he received suitable rewards, all under close supervision, he would be grateful for the Court's generosity and readily declare himself a vassal. Such a policy would be far more effective than a purely military and defensive

approach[8].

While in the neighborhood of Peking, the Altan-qan continued to make known his desires for tribute relations : a Chinese official who had been taken prisoner was sent to Peking with a letter, but in order to gain time the Court rejected the letter on the pretext that it was not written in Mongol and therefore its authenticity could not be established. But the Court replied telling the qan to withdraw his troops across the Great Wall and then present a new formal petition, which he did : on January 29, 1551, he presented a request to offer tribute on the Hsüan-fu borders. The Chinese still thought they could avoid the issue : in a meeting of high officials, the need was stressed of mobilizing more armies and in the meantime finding out if the qan was sincere in his desire to present the tribute, and if he was, there would be time enough left to consider appropriate action[9]. Other officials with a better grasp of the significance of the Altan-qan's latest moves than the strategists and sycophants at the Court possessed, thought that a decision could no longer be postponed.

According to the *Shih-lu* entry of April 9, 1551, during the winter and spring the Altan-qan had made repeated requests on the borders of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu, all without any success; then his son Toγtô swore an oath on the Hsüan-fu borders in the presence of an interpreter (presumably promising to respect the

[8] *Mok.* 6. 622-623; *Shih SL* (85) 6483-84. Ch'iu was not the first to express this idea. For example, in 1542, or shortly thereafter, Yang Shou-ch'ien 楊守謙 (biogr. in *Ming-shih* 204. IV. 2371-72) wrote that it made little sense to exclude the Tümed and Ordos from tributary relations while regularly accepting the tribute from the Three Commanderies and the Jürčen, and various Central Asian kingdoms much farther away. True, Yang was speaking of tribute relations specifically, but as has been indicated, tribute relations as a matter of course comprised trade as well, and Yang pointed out that all relations with northern tribes hinged on this basic fact that the tribes needed some Chinese manufactures which they were determined to get by other means. Yang Shou-ch'ien's "Record of the Request to present the Tribute" is in the *San-Yün ch'ou-tsu k'ao* 1. 29b-30b. See my *Sino-Mongol Relations* II, Chapt. IV.

[9] *Mok.* 6. 632, 636, 660; *Shih SL* (85) 6494, 6499; (86) 6589-90.

borders) and again requested permission to present the tribute and to trade; Toγtô further presented the interpreter with two horses and left four Mongols as hostages in Chinese hands. As an additional proof of good faith and sincerity, he later extradited two Chinese refugees. The governor-general of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu, Su Yu 蘇 祐 then stated several reasons why the Mongol request could no longer be ignored : in his opinion, the Mongols needed Chinese goods and manufactures for their subsistence and would insist on trading facilities; if they could attend markets in Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, Yen-an, and Ning-hsia districts, acquire cotton fabrics, silks, rice, and grains in exchange for cattle, sheep, mules, and horses, they would be satisfied, and China could strengthen her defenses. Ch'iu Luan, the Ministers of the Army and Personnel and others expressed the opinion that in view of the latest proofs of sincerity on the part of the Mongols, border fairs should be opened similar to those created in Liaotung long ago[10]; according to them, the Ministry of the Army should allocate 100,000 taels of silver from the Horse Fund to buy silks and other goods to be used as payment at the fairs; the markets should be held four times a year, but the number of horses bought should be limited, and appropriate measures of security taken. The Grand-secretary Yen Sung 嚴 嵩[11] considered four fairs a year, each at an expense of one-hundred thousand taels, excessive : the Mongols might become too greedy; so he proposed to hold the fairs only twice a year. The emperor concurred : the fairs would be opened twice a year at an expense of 100,000 each time. Other measures concerned the appointment of a military and a civilian official to supervise the fairs, each of whom was to make his report afterwards; further the commanders of the armies would take measures to prevent spying, "private" relations, greediness apt to cause incidents, and leakage of information

[10] No reference seems to have been made to the Ta-t'ung fairs of the fifteenth century.

[11] Biogr. in *Ming-shih* 308. V. 3485-90.

regarding the borders. Shih Tao 史道, a retired vice-minister of Personnel was recalled and sent to Ta-t'ung to assume overall control[12].

An official of the Ministry of the Army, Yang Chi-sheng 楊繼盛, wrote a violent protest on April 20, against the proposed markets. One of his points was that up to now "private", that is illegal, intercourse could not be entirely prevented, and if markets were officially established, there would be no restraint at all to illegal relations; another argument was that it would become apparent to the whole country that the government was unable to impose its will upon the Mongols, and internal trouble was likely to ensue; it would be impossible to conduct orderly business on the fairs, etc. Yang conveniently ignored the experience of the Liaotung fairs; but so did almost everybody in the government. At any rate, Yang was arrested for his pains and given a small post in Kansu; in other words, he was sent into exile[13]. Yang Chi-sheng's protests nevertheless resulted in new deliberations on April 21, and it was finally decided to allow only two fairs a year[14].

[12] *Mok.* 6. 664-668; *Ying SL* (86) 6621-25. Shih Tao has no biography in the *Ming-shih* and this may well be owing to his failure in the mission of 1551. He had been governor of the military district of Ta-t'ung from 1539 to 1542. The *Ming-shih chi-shih pen-mo* 60. 14 makes him a vice-minister of the Army. According to the same work (60. 13), Toγtô acted on Ch'iu Luan's advice. Indeed, Ch'iu was later to be posthumously condemned for collaboration with the enemy, but the history of the two decades before 1550 makes it rather doubtful that any instigation was needed.

[13] *Mok.* 6. 668-672; *Shih-SL* (86) 6629-33. Summarized in the *Ming-shih chi-shih pen-mo* 60. 13-14, and *Ming-shih* 209. IV. 2431b-2433.

[14] *Mok.* 6. 673-674; *Shih SL* (86) 6633-35. The TMHT (130. 5ab : 1849a) has this to say : "in 1551, the Northern Caitiffs' request to open fairs was approved : they were to be held twice a year, and all district authorities were enjoined to insure strict security; treacherous characters who under any pretext took advantage of the fairs to establish secret contacts (with the Mongols) were to be arrested and interrogated. If anyone presumed to open fairs without authorization or crossed the borders illegally *(ssu)* and established relations with the Caitiffs, the regional inspector was to make a truthful report".

The fair of the Ta-t'ung district was held near Chen-ch'iang-p'u 鎮羌堡 from May 30 to June 2, 1551, during which time the Chinese purchased over 2700 horses. Afterwards the four hostages sent by Toγtô were properly rewarded and sent home. This fair was mainly attended by immediate subjects of the Altan-qan and his son Toγtô. The fair of the Hsüan-fu district held at Hsin-k'ai-k'ou 新開口 was concluded on June 26. It was attended by subjects of the five princes Bâtur, Sengge (the qan's eldest son), Bayaud, Pu-lang tayiǰi, and Uyiγurčin tayiǰi. Over 2000 horses were purchased from them. After the Ta-t'ung fair, Shih Tao reported that not all the horses brought by the Mongols could be taken because he had run out of cotton and satin used as payment; but otherwise the whole affair had come off in very orderly fashion[15]. At the opening of the Chen-ch'iang fair, a little ceremony was held at which the Altan-qan apologized for his past conduct and promised to respect the borders; he also warned his men to bring only big horses of proper age and color. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* which relates the same events with a little more details than Shih Tao's report, adds that a little banquet was tendered to the Mongols attending the fairs. Before the date had been set for the Hsin-k'ai-k'ou fair, the Mongols presented the interpreters with ten jugs of kumiss, ten boiled sheep (*šigüsü*), and a bay gelding, so as to induce them to ask the government to set a date. The first day of the market over 300 horses were bought. One hundred thousand taels had been allocated for the two markets : 60,000 for Ta-t'ung and the rest for Hsüan-fu. 44,032 taels were spent as payment of the horses (total : 4771); the rest was used for entertainments and rewards[16].

The reader will have remembered that Toγtô had extradited two

15 *Mok.* 6. 678-681; *Shih SL* (86) 6654, 6660-61, 1663.

16 WLWKL 7. 67-68. Judging from the figures available in 1571 and thereafter, it seems impossible that as much as 55,000 taels should have been needed for entertainments and subsidies. It is more probable that most of the remaining money was used to lay up new supplies of goods to purchase horses on the next occasion.

Chinese deserters as proof of the good faith of the Mongol princes. At that time there were quite a number of Chinese in Southern Mongolia, mostly living peaceful lives and attending to their business, but some were active as advisers of the Mongol princes. It is interesting that while many Chinese officials remained dead set against any compromise with the Mongols, those Chinese escapers and advisors of the Mongols were equally concerned with the recent turn of events, and warned the Mongols against the dangers that might result from a rapprochement with the Ming. Obviously it was their own position and safety they were mostly concerned with.

In addition to the fairs of the Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu districts, another one was held for the Mongols of Ordos on the borders between the Yen-sui and Ning-hsia district. On August 2, 1551, the governor of Yen-sui recommended to have one fair for the two districts, and hold it at Hua-ma-ch'ih, near the southern tip of the Ordos territory, because it was more or less centrally located. He proposed that the governor-general of Shensi and the two governors of Yen-sui and Ning-hsia all be present with enough troops to insure order[17], and that otherwise the same rules be followed as at Ta-t'ung. The Court allocated 40,000 ounces of silver[18]. On December 27, 1551, the governor-general reported that the fair had been successfully concluded : over 5000 horses had been purchased from the Mongols, of whom only one Lang tayiji is mentioned by name. Everything had been done in extremely orderly fashion, and it was noted that for the first time in many a year there was peace all along the Sino-Mongol borders, and many officials were granted rewards by the Court[19]. The

[17] The governor-general of Shensi and Kansu usually resided at Ku-yüan, but in fall used to move temporarily to Hua-ma-ch'ih near the Great Wall because this was the most likely time for border raids. The governor of the district of Yen (-an)-Sui (-te) resided at Yü-lin, the governor of the district of Ning-hsia resided at Ning-hsia. *Ming-shih* 73. I. 758b, 759a, 760a.

[18] *Mok.* 6. 686-687; *Shih SL* (86) 6679.

[19] *Mok.* 6. 701; *Shih SL* (86) 6731, 6747.

major Mongol princes of both Ordos and Tümed were also richly rewarded[20].

But before even the Hua-ma-ch'ih fair was held, difficulties arose, and the old suspicions were revived. Under the date of September 6, the *Ming Shih-lu* summarizes a series of events which, of course, occurred much earlier. A brief review of these events has its interest for the light they throw on the Mongols' needs and on the thinking of many Chinese officials as well. When the horse fairs were first discussed, the understanding was that the Chinese would pay with satin *(tuan)*, cotton fabrics *(pu)*, rice *(mi)*, and grain (or wheat? *mai*) for Mongol cattle, sheep, and horses. At the time of the fairs (of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu) the princes were eager to sell horses, and the Chinese paid them with satins and cottons. After the fairs, however, Toγtô took advantage of the extradition of yet another group of Chinese deserters to explain that while the rich princes were able to sell horses for satins, the poor had only sheep and cattle, and liked beans *(shu* 菽*)* and millet *(su* 粟*)* in return. When the Court was not agreeable to such a suggestion, Shih Tao wrote a memorial in support of Toγtô's proposition : the Barbarians were greedy, strong, and very poor at the same time; they needed lots of things which they could not get except through plunder, and the Chinese were unable to stop them. Now that the Barbarians were willing to trade horses, cattle, and sheep for beans, millet, cotton, and silk, both sides would exchange their surplus for something they lacked; this way both the common people and the princes, poor as well as rich, would benefit from China's generosity; and on China's side, the whole population of the border areas would profit. A few years of peace would give time to reorganize the defenses and prepare for any eventuality. There were two main current objections against this course of action : 1. Since the Mongols did not eat grain (?!) it was clear that they intended to feed the Chinese deserters living among them;

[20] *Mok.* 6. 680; *Shih SL* (86) 6662, 6745-46.

2. the Mongol cavalry would soon be strong enough to take advantage of the fairs to penetrate deeply into Chinese territory. To the first point Shih answered as follows : the amount of grain the Mongols could get for their sheep and cattle would never suffice to feed the crowd of deserters, and besides did the Mongols love those deserters so much as to sacrifice their sheep and cattle for them? (Neither Shih nor any other official seems to have considered the possibility that the Chinese immigrants in Mongolia raised their own crops and already contributed considerably to the Mongol economy). To the second point he answered very aptly : the Mongols had always been able to invade the country at time; they needed not wait for the fairs! Shih Tao went on to explain his own views : "if we trade silks for horses, only the rich will profit, because the poor have mostly cattle and sheep; but the rich constitute only 20 % of the population; the other 80 % are poor, and if we don't treat them equitably, they might be driven to desperation!" In the meantime, the Altan-qan had held the Mongol tribes under strict control, but at the same time he was pressing for a date for the next fair; at the Court, too, some people became impatient : first silks, now grains; before long the qan would make totally unacceptable demands! Shih Tao wrote again to recommend a broadening of the markets in order to favor a climate of peace : an exchange of grains for sheep and cattle would be to China's advantage, and would please the Mongols at the same time. Several officials disagreed; among them was Su Yu who had first been in favor of opening the horse fairs : they reckoned that the Mongols had far too many sheep and cattle for sale; more than China was able to pay for with grains and in the long run this arrangement would lead to conflict. Ch'iu Luan himself who at first had recommended trade relations now hesitated to support Shih Tao's views. The Minister of the Army sided with Su Yu, and when the emperor asked Yen Sung's advice, he spoke out against Shih Tao. The final result was that the Mongol request was rejected and Shih Tao was recalled in disgrace. The *Shih-lu* passage ends with a reflection on later developments : the

Mongols no longer trusted Chinese promises, and resumed border raids while border officials continued illegal trade relations in order to keep the dangers of war to a minimum[21].

After Shih Tao's recall trade relations were not broken off altogether. On November 12, 1551, Ch'iu Luan wrote that horse fairs and military preparedness were two complementary factors. Noting that the horse fair policy had suddenly become uncertain, he wanted to provide for the purchase of horses in China; but he did not say that the horse fairs had been discontinued[22].

In the entry of January 29, 1552, we read that during the last weeks of the previous year, the Mongols had resumed their customary border violations. The Altan-qan declared to interpreters sent to ask for an explanation that he could not restrain his people if they had no opportunity to buy beans and grains. A brother-in-law of the Altan-qan who was away in the north at the time of the horse fairs of June, 1551, wanted a fair after his return, and the qan, hoping to share in the profits, encouraged him to try. His plea was rejected in the Shan-hsi district, but on their own initiative the authorities of Ta-t'ung opened a fair at Ta-sha-kou 大沙溝 : the Mongols sold 400 horses, and made a gift of 18 more, but immediately thereafter carried out a raid, took back the (gift?) horses, captured a number of people and stripped them of their clothes. Several officials were punished for having permitted this fair and failed to take adequate precautions. At this juncture, the qan sent a gift of nine horses,

21 *Mok.* 6. 688-692; *Shih SL* (86) 6689-93. *San-Yün ch'ou-tsu k'ao* 1. 42a. WLWKL 7. 72 : "Shih Tao wanted to acceed to Toγtô's wishes : he estimated that five pecks of millet (*su*; or grain in general?) could buy one head of cattle; one peck or so, one sheep; and according to his calculations, this would be very profitable. Others argued that of old, the Caitiffs ate no grain, and their only reason for wanting grain was to feed our run-aways; if we supplied them with millet (the run-aways) would never think of coming back. (Shih Tao) thought this reasoning wide off the mark, and he wanted superior minds to examine the situation, but Su Yu thought it was not off the mark : 'several pecks for one head of cattle, and several hatchets for a sheep; rice is as valuable as gems, and the Caitiffs are going to pile up mountains of it, and even if we exhaust the treasury, we will not be able to satisfy them'!".

22 *Mok.* 6. 698; *Shih SL* (86) 6715.

and dispatched 300 more horses with a petition for a fair, but this was refused. By now everybody at the Court was of the opinion that the market policy was a mistake. Ch'iu Luan then reported that from the start his plan had been to use the horse fairs as a means to improve his military posture, but some officials out to harm him had deliberately neglected essential precautions in order to invite failure and let the blame fall on him[23]! In order to justify himself, Ch'iu now proposed a military expedition into Mongolia, but this plan was not approved[24].

In spite of all the proposals, counterproposals, and mutual recriminations, the horse fairs were still not dead. On February 18, 1552, the Mongols living north of Hsüan-fu, requested a fair, and since the Hsüan-fu borders had remained peaceful, the governor was very much in favor; he even proposed to hold a continuous (*lo-i* 絡繹) fair instead of the two fairs a year previously decided upon. His idea was approved, provided the yearly quota of horses did not exceed 5000, and the money 50,000 taels[25]. "Continuous" fairs probably meant fairs held a short intervals. if not every month as in Liaotung. It should be noted that in June, 1551, the Chinese had bought 2000 horses at the Hsüan-fu fair : at this rate, two fairs a year would have yielded some 4000 horses. Now they yearly quota was slightly increased.

After the horse fairs had practically been abolished on the Ta-t'ung borders, the Mongols continued to make the customary requests, always to be rejected. One Mongol envoy by the name of Adûči was treacherously captured by an interpreter with whom he had made friends, and publicly executed in Ta-t'ung on March 22, 1552[26].

[23] *Mok.* 7. 1-2; *Shih SL* (86) 6741-42.
[24] *Mok.* 7. 5-6; *Shih SL* (86) 6748.
[25] *Mok.* 7. 6; *Shih SL* (86) 6750-51.
[26] *Mok.* 7. 13; *Shih SL* (86) 6767. In this text, the 1551 fair of Ta-t'ung is said to have been held at Hung-tz'u-p'u 紅慈堡. I guess the fair was held neither within the walls of Chen-ch'iang-p'u nor inside Hung-tz'u-p'u, but somewhere in the open country in the neighborhood.

On March 29, an imperial prince by the name of Ch'ung-chi 充 [illegible][27], after an exposition of the mismanagement by Ta-t'ung officers, added that so far no untoward incident had marred the situation on the Hsüan-fu borders; and that the Hsüan-fu horse fairs would soon be held for the sixth or seventh time without the least incident[28]. This seems to be a reference to both the horse market of 1551, and the "continuous fairs" proposed in February, 1552. Nevertheless it is interesting that one month later, an official charged that many watch and signal towers of the Great Wall had been destroyed by Mongols going to the horse fairs; the text does not state where this happened, but the reporter strongly urged to spare no expenses to restore the towers and equip them with fire arms[29].

Besides the Hsüan-fu fair held at Hsin-k'ai-k'ou, fairs may also have been held in other places. Lung-men-so 龍門所 to the northeast of Hsüan-fu must have been one of the places proposed by officials (or by the Mongols) as a possible site, but it was specifically excluded as a fair because it was located in an area very much exposed to Mongol raids[30].

Further developments are rather unclear : a report by the Ministry of the Army from May 25, 1552, seems to imply that the horse fairs were by then already abolished[31], but probably he was speaking of the Ta-t'ung fairs only.

The final abolition of the horse fairs is mentioned in the *Shih-lu* under the date of October 11, 1552 : an official requested that the Hsüan-fu fairs be discontinued : those of Ta-t'ung had been suspended some time ago, and the Mongols had become increasingly arrogant on the Hsüan-fu borders, too; recently, after a fair held at Chang-chia-k'ou 張家口 (Kalgan, meaning the Hsin-k'ai-

27 *Ming-shih* 101. II. 1149.

28 *Mok.* 7. 14-15; *Shih SL* (86) 6772. WLWKL 7. 76-77.

29 *Mok.* 7. 21; *Shih SL* (86) 6783. If the disturbances referred to a few days later are an indication, it was on the Ta-t'ung borders that they took place : *Mok.* 7. 25; *Shih SL* (86) 6791.

30 TMHT 130. 2b3a (1847-48a).

31 *Mok.* 7. 27; *Shih SL* (86) 6795.

k'ou fair?), the borders had been attacked. Taking these events into consideration, the emperor ordered the horse fairs abolished, and forbade even to bring the matter up again for discussion[32].

There is another interesting incident connected with the end of the fairs. On February 20, 1553, we read that before the fairs were definitely suspended, the Altan-qan and his son Qung-tayiǰi (Sengge) sent six envoys to present a tribute of horses and request a market. All six were arrested on the Ta-t'ung borders : The governor-general wanted to execute them immediately, but the emperor forbade this, and instead ordered to keep them in custody; it was decided to hold them as hostages until the Mongols refrained from raiding the borders for one full year[33]. Out of the six men, four were to die in captivity, and two survivors were eventually to be released twenty years later, on January 18, 1573, after the troublesome Mongol question had finally been settled[34].

What could well have been the last attempt at this time on the part of the Mongols to have trade fairs was made by the Altan-qan's brother, the Old Bâtur, who attached a letter to an arrow and had it shot into the town of Hsüan-fu to ask for a market. The request was, of course, rejected. This occurred in July, 1554[35].

[32] *Shih SL* (86) 6845-46. Strangely enough, this important text is not in the *Mindai...* excerpts (*Mok.* 7). The *pen-chi* of the *Ming-shih* 18.I. 127b has the correct date, but in the monograph on the Mongols (*Ming-shih* 327. V.3764a) the imperial decision is put under the year 1551. Chapt. 81. II. 857a gives the correct year : 1552.

[33] *Mok.* 7. 51; *Shih SL* (86) 6930.

[34] *Mok.* 8. 125; *Shen SL* (96) 286.

[35] *Mok.* 6. 109; *Shih SL* (87) 7165.

VI

HORSE FAIRS : TA-T'UNG, HSUAN-FU, SHAN-HSI, SHENSI, 1571-1600

ORIGIN OF THE MARKETS

In the fall of 1571, a quarrel between the Altan-qan and his grandson Baγa-ači followed by the latter's flight to China became the occasion for the Ming to renew relations with the Southern Mongols : after first contacts had been hesitantly established between Wang Ch'ung-ku 王崇古[1], governor-general of the three military districts of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi, and the Altan-qan, long and difficult exchanges of views were needed between the governor-general and the Court. Many officials at the capital laboring under the old prejudices against any concession to the enemy strongly opposed granting tribute and trade relations to the Mongols. In Chapter V of my study of the Tribute System I have reviewed the main phases of these developments and only such events will be mentioned here as are relevant to the new policy regarding the horse fairs[2]. Secondly it should be noted that now as in 1551, the Shensi fairs held after 1571 for the Ordos

[1] Biogr. in the *Ming-shih* 222.IV. 2560b-63a. Because governors-general will have to be mentioned frequently as we go along, it may be useful to list them here after Wu T'ing-hsieh 吳廷燮 *Ming tu-fu nien-pao* (*Erh-shih-wu shih pu-pien*. K'ai-ming ed. pp. 8620-27) : Lung-ch'ing 5 : 1571 : Wang Ch'ung-ku; Wan-li 1 : 1573, ninth month : Fang Feng-shih 方逢時; Wan-li 5 : 1577 : Wu Tui 吳兌; Wan-li 7 : 1579 : Cheng Lo 鄭洛(雒) ; Wan-li 18 : 1590 : Hsiao Ta-heng 蕭大亨. However, Wang Ch'ung-ku who first held the post of governor-general of Shensi, was appointed governor-general of Ta-t'ung, etc. in the middle of 1570.

[2] The story is told in detail by Hou Jen-chih. Hou makes it clear that the first idea of taking advantage of Baγa-ači's surrender came from Fang Feng-shih, then governor of the district of Ta-t'ung. (Biogr. in the *Ming-shih* 222. IV. 2563b-64b), and was adopted and put into effect by Wang Ch'ung-ku.

Mongols were a direct result of the creation of the Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung fairs and for this reason the markets of Shensi and Kansu can be treated together with those of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi.

After Wang Ch'ung-ku was satisfied that the Altan-qan was really interested in a peaceful solution and in cessation of the war-like situation that had prevailed for so long, he sent an emissary to Mongolia to sound out the qan. This emissary is called a "translator"; probably he was a Mongol : indeed, as the *Shih-lu* indicates, he was able to speak privately with the qan. The latter reciprocated by sending five envoys of his own to accompany Wang Ch'ung-ku's emissary, and convey the Mongol ruler's wishes. These, among other things, comprised the desire to sell horses for iron kettles, cottons, and silks. In a report to the throne from December 10, 1570, Wang pointed out, as had been done many a time before, that for many articles the Mongols absolutely depended on China. He reminded the Court that on their raids, the Mongols never left a piece of iron or a bit of cloth behind! Therefore, he concluded that to accept tribute would not really solve the problem as long as there was no opportunity for trade : why not follow the same policy as had been in effect for so long in Liaotung and Kansu[3]? Without stating it in so many words, Wang suggested that so far the Ming policy towards the Mongols had been far from consistent and logical, and in addition rather ineffective.

Baγa-ači's return to Mongolia presented a new occasion for the Mongol princes of the various tribes to express their desire to have tribute and trade relations and their intention to respect the borders. Under the date of January 16, 1571, the *Shih-lu* records another of Wang Ch'ung-ku's reports, but the Ministry

[3] *Mok.* 7. 711-712; *Mu SL* (95) 1276-77. Hsiao Ta-heng in his *Pei-Lu feng-su* (1594) also noted that before the markets were established the Mongols had been able to steal huge amounts of such critical materials as iron. *Pei-Lu feng-su* 25; Serruys 45. 155.

of the Army pointed out that horse fairs had been explicitly forbidden by the previous emperor and that it would not be so easy to repeal that prohibition[4]. In a long memorial from March 7, 1571, Wang Ch'ung-ku discussed at great length the matter of tribute and trade, and took pains to explain that the situation of 1570 and 1571 was in no way comparable to that of 1550 and 1551. Apparently, he wanted to protect himself against possible charges that his views and proposals went against the decree of 1552 in which the Chia-ching emperor not only abolished the horse fairs of Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung, but also forbade to discuss the matter any further. Wang stated that in 1550, the commander-in-chief of the Chinese armies, Ch'iu Luan after being unsuccessful in his operations against the Mongols, sent them bribes and persuaded them to desist from further attacks and promised them horse fairs. Wang continued "the Mongols of that time were very powerful and the idea of horse fairs did not originate with them but with Ch'iu Luan and that is why the Mongols soon reverted to raiding". In the light of what has been explained in the preceding chapter, Wang's reasoning sounds extremely unconvincing, but he goes on to say that the situation was now very different : "the Mongols have caused much harm, but have also suffered many casualties; they have also suffered from Chinese armies going out to attack their camps and drive off their horses. If now they ask to open tribute and trade relations, it means that now they see an advantage in respecting the borders". What they asked for was not to reopen the old horse fairs, but a permission to trade after the presentation of the tribute, as was being done at K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning : even the Chia-ching emperor would not have objected to that! All this sounds like a play of words, but Wang had to be careful and could not leave himself open to attacks from Court officials who saw things in a different light[5]. After a fairly long introduction, Wang Ch'ung-ku expounds

[4] *Mok.* 7. 716-717; *Mu SL* (95) 1302-03.

[5] Chang Chü-cheng 張居正, at the capital, agreed with Wang that the

his own plans in eight points, the fourth of which deals directly with the fairs and is entitled : *Li Hu-shih* 立互市 : *Establish Barter Markets* : "The Northern Caitiffs live scattered in the Northern Desert; they do not plow or weave and the land produces nothing (but animals). For such articles as metal pots, clothes, and silks, they are entirely dependent on China. Now they have sworn to discontinue raids and violations; therefore, the Caitiff envoys have requested markets *(hu-shih)* in order to avoid (having to resort to) theft and robbery. One cannot call this a request to open horse fairs. As for the rules of the markets, we ought to follow the precedent of the early Hung-chih (1488-1505) period when the Northern Caitiffs presented three tributes[6], and let the Caitiffs trade such articles as gold, silver, cattle, horses, hides, horse hair, etc., for satin and silk, iron pots and other goods. When a time is set and the markets open, the Caitiff chieftains will be allowed to stay outside the border with three hundred men, while 500 of our soldiers are stationed at the market place where they can trade in turns. The duration of the markets must be for one month

situation of 1570 could not be compared with that of 1550, and that now positive advantage could reasonably be expected. Hou 38. 219-220. Kao Kung 高 拱 agreed with Wang that the 1552 prohibition could be no obstacle to a reexamination of the problem : after all what was being considered was already being practiced in Liaotung; nor was an agreement with the Altan-qan comparable with the agreements between the Sung on the one hand and the Liao and the Chin dynasties on the other, when the Sung had no alternative but to bow to superior military power. *Fu-Jung chi-shih* 43. Kao's biography in the *Ming-shih* 213.IV.2476-78. In spite of many external discrepancies, the situation of 1571 was not so much different from that of Sung times.

6 Cheng Hsiao in his *Huang-Ming pei-Lu k'ao* (p. 48) tells us that in the beginning of the Hung-chih period, the new qaγan Bayan-möngke together with his chieftains and those of the Oyirad presented horses as tribute. It came about in this way : the governor of Ta-t'ung, Hsü Chin 許 進 had reported several times on border affairs and with the approval of some people at Court in a letter to the "Little King" (Bayan-möngke) he explained the possible profits to be derived from the tribute presentation, whereupon Bayan-möngke sent three tributes in three years (also Cheng's introduction p. 12). In Wang Ch'ung-ku's biography in the *Ming-shih* (2562b) we read "three tributes in three years" and the *Ming-chi* (390.3) repeats this. These must be the three tribute presentations referred to by Wang Ch'ung-ku.

only. If any military district lacks merchants for the necessary transactions, permission will be given to have merchants sent in from various circuits *(tao)*. Horses purchased (on the markets) will be either taken and paid for by the various military camps or they will be resold on the markets in the military districts. In the three districts of Shensi (i.e. Yün-lin, Ning-hsia, and Ku-yüan)[7] there are market places of former periods; in Ta-t'ung (district, the market) should be outside the border of Wei-lu-p'u 威虜堡 north of the Left Commandery *(Tso-wei)*; in (the district of) Hsüan-fu, it should be outside the border of Chang-chia-k'ou (Kalgan) of the Right Commandery of Wan-ch'üan 萬全; in (the district of) Shan-hsi, it should be outside the border of Shui-ch'üan-ying 水泉營. The generals and military commanders of the circuits will be left in control. During the market periods, merchants and governmental troops may not illegally export forbidden articles; neither must they establish (illicit) relations for profit, nor cause border incidents. After the markets have been concluded, if Caitiff horsemen should come near the borders to present demands and cause trouble, the Alta(n-qan) and the various chieftains shall be told to investigate. But if they carry Mongol [lit. *Fan*] letters from the chieftains asking for goods, these requests will be considered. Should Barbarian attitude change, the military will discuss punitive and defensive measures. The military districts will severely punish those who continue such malpractices as maintaining (illicit) relations with the Caitiffs or coddling the Caitiffs"[8].

[7] Yü-lin is the same district as Yen(-an)-Sui(-te). The governor resided at Yü-lin.

[8] *Mok.* 8. 2-3, 6-7; *Mu SL* (95) 1332-33; 1336-37. Wang's memorial appears also in the *K'ou-pei san-t'ing chih* 13. 13b-19b, the *Wu-pien tien-tse* 10. 55a-63b, and the *Ch'a-ha-erh sheng t'ung-chih* 20. 7a-11a, with only negligible variants. In the *Wan-li wu-kung lu*, however, we find a considerably longer text, but with little additional information. Whether this is an elaboration of Ch'ü Chiu-ssu's, or whether he took his text from a longer version than the one copied into the *Shih-lu*, I cannot say. At the time of Wang's writing, it was still taken for granted that while horse fairs were held on the borders, the tribute envoys would go to the capital for the formal presentation of the tribute, as had always been the case. Ch'ü's text says "if the

It is evident from Wang's plan, that if the horse fairs were mainly intended as a source of supply of horses for the army, there would also be ample room for private business, as subsequent events would confirm.

At the capital there was no general consensus as to what course of action to take. In a Court council held on March 27, 1571, twenty members agreed to adopt Wang's plan; seventeen opposed it, and five were in favor of tribute relations but without markets. The Minister of the Army whose opinion as a matter of course carried much weight in all decisions regarding Mongol affairs, showed little enthusiasm and proposed to have only one market during the current year on an experimental basis, but metal pots would be excluded together with saltpetre, and all iron and steel articles[9].

After new deliberations, the Ministry of the Army on April 2, finally recommended to implement Wang Ch'ung-ku's eight-point plan, with only very minor changes. As far as the markets were concerned, the Ministry wanted the number of horses to be purchased fixed in advance in order to prevent quarrels; and iron kettles would remain excluded together with other prohibited articles (not further specified). This question of pots would remain an object of controversy for some time to come : the reader will have remembered how in Liaotung, too, some officials regularly objected to the sale of pots. This recommendation of April 2, however, affected only the Tümed Mongols living to the north of the military districts of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi. Matters concerning the Ordos Mongols facing Shensi province were left to the discretion of the governor-general of Shensi[10]. Wang

tribute envoys return (from the capital) before the markets have been concluded, in order to show our sincerity, the Caitiff chieftains [i.e. the envoys?] will be allowed to stay ten more days on the borders, until the markets have been terminated and then depart altogether". Ch'ü at this time has also something to say about taxes, not found in the *Shih-lu* version : "Taxes must be levied on all transactions of Barbarian horses for (Chinese) goods, like at the fairs of K'ai-yüan in Liaotung, in order to cover expenses of comforting the Barbarians." WLWKL 7. 128-129.

[9] *Mok.* 8. 11-12; *Mu SL* (95) 1355-56.

[10] *Mok.* 8. 13; *Mu SL* (95) 1361-62.

Ch'ung-ku immediately pointed out that the Tümed problem could not be solved independently of the Ordos : if the latter had no trading facilities, who could prevent them from attending the Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu fairs with the result that the amount of Chinese goods available would not suffice; moreover, as long as their affairs were not formally settled, the Ordos would have a pretext for continuing their border raids and who could prevent Tümed men from joining their raiding parties[11]? Wang Ch'ung-ku continued : "Like the Eastern Caitiffs, what they need from China are satins, cottons, kettles, and similar articles; if we do not allow them to buy those commodities, will the chieftains willingly accept to submit and cease all raids? Not to allow trade is to cause them to break the agreements, and to force them to violate the borders. Besides, they need iron pots for cooking; if we give them clothes but no utensils, how is the Caitiff population going to support itself? Those who contend that we cannot give them pots because they make weapons out of them, are ignorant of the fact that the Caitiffs are unable to melt iron even if they have the kettles. Were they able to do so, we still could sell them 'broad kettles' *(kuang-kuo)* as we do at K'ai-yüan and Chien-ning 建寧[12] in Liaotung because the cast iron of the 'broad kettles' cannot be purified."[13] Ch'ü Chiu-ssu quotes Wang's reference to broad kettles after mentioning the markets held from June to July of that year, and he adds : "if the Mongols break an iron kettle they are so helpless that they have to boil meat in leather containers[14]".

On July 5, 1571, the governor-general of Shensi seemed more than ever determined to have nothing to do with the new Mongol policy : he wrote that the tribute of the Ordos Mongols should be made part of that of the Tümed to be presented by the latter at

11 This need to settle the Mongol question as a whole seems to have been suggested by Kao Kung who states that he wrote a letter to call Wang Ch'ung-ku's attention to those implications. *Fu-Jung chi-shih* 45.

12 Obviously, Chien-ning here refers to Kuang-ning. On December 10, 1570. Wang had written Chien-ch'ang.

13 *Mok.* 8. 15-17; *Mu SL* (95) 1374-77.

14 WLWKL 8. 146.

Ta-t'ung; further that the long standing fairs in Kansu for Tibetans and Central Asians should not be attended by the Ordos. To let them do so could only lead to confusion and conflict. Instead, he reasoned, the Ordos Mongols should attend the Ta-t'ung fairs[15]. But under the date of September 1, the *Shih-lu* relates that the governor-general had reported that the Ordos Mongols wanted to present a tribute of 200 horses in addition to the 500 horses already presented by the Altan-qan and the other princes of the Tümed, and wanted two fairs in the districts of Yen-sui (Yü-lin) and Ning-hsia. The Ministry of the Army decided to permit this arrangement on a temporary basis, whereupon the governor-general proposed the market *(shih-ch'ang* 市 廠 *)*[16] of Yen-sui to be moved outside the "hidden gate" *(an-men)* in the Great Wall near Hung-shan 紅 山[17], and restore the old market *(chiu ch'ang)* of Ch'ing-shui-ying 清水營[17] near Ning-hsia. He further recommended to station troops there on the market days to forestall any untoward event; he also requested

[15] *Mok.* 8. 22-23; *Mu SL* (95) 1421-22.

[16] Hsiao 60. 20, 565 n.37, notes that in West China, especially Ssuch'uan and Yünnan, *ch'ang* 廠 is the customary name for "market". From the *Shih-lu* it would appear that the same term was also used in Shensi and Kansu.

[17] Hung-shan and Ch'ing-shui-ying were located south of the Great Wall, between Hua-ma-ch'ih and the Yellow River (Ning-hsia). See maps in *HM Pien-cheng k'ao* 3.2a; *HM Chiu-pien k'ao* map in front of ch. 8. Originally, there had been a relay station at Hung-shan (*Mok.* 1. 413; *T'ai SL* (12) 1559), and in 1612, Kao Chi-yüan speaking of the fair of Hung-shan, calls it Hung-shan-tun "watchtower" (*Man.* 4. 413; *Shen SL* (118) 9324). According to the *Ta-Ch'ing i-t'ung chih* (204.5b) Hung-shan is 60 *li* northeast of Ling-chou, and one *li* away from the Great Wall where there was a "hidden gate" (also *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao* 62. 2694, under Heng-ch'eng-p'u). Neither of these works mentions the horse fairs once held there. Later it came to be known as Hung-shan *shih-k'ou* 市 口. From a proposal from 1602, to be discussed later, we learn that the market itself located just outside the Great Wall was in due time surrounded by a wall, eight or nine feet high, which however soon fell into disrepair. In 1608, there is mention of a high watch tower to be constructed in order to insure its defense. (*Mok.* 9. 542; *Shen SL* (116) 8522). Locally "Hung-shan" must have been pronounced "Hung-shan-erh" (*Mok.* 5. 542; *Shih SL* (71) 387) which became the Mongol pronunciation *Qungšar qota* (Mostaert 41. 404a). Ming maps indicate many "hidden gates" which seem to have been blocked up openings in the Great Wall, and in more than one case gave rise to place names.
Ch'ing-shui-ying was only a few *li* east of Hung-shan, and also one *li* from the Great Wall. Both the *Ta-Ch'ing i-t'ung chih (ibid.)* and the *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao (ibid.)* note that there was a horse fair.

an allowance of 10.000 taels of silver from the Stake-and-Stable Funds, and from the Land-funds[18] of the two districts of Yen-sui and Ning-hsia, and from the salt taxes levied at the two lakes[19]; and a sum of 5000 taels from the Stake-and-Stable Fund of the military district of Shensi. These two sums would serve to buy goods to entertain the Mongols who came to the fairs, In addition, the governor-general requested that 20.000 taels from the Horse Fund of the Court of Imperial Stud be forwarded to Yen-sui and Ning-hsia to purchase horses. All these proposal were accepted[20].

In the course of time, the horse fairs were to develop quite differently from the narrow base conceived by Wang Ch'ung-ku. But under the circumstances, Wang's plan was the best one could do, and at the time nobody was able to see what the future held.

In the meantime fairs were held for the first time in the Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi districts : on October 12, 1571, Wang Ch'ung-ku reported on business transacted at Te-sheng-p'u 得勝 (Ta-t'ung) from June 20 to July 5 (attended by the Altan-qan's men); at Hsin-p'ing-p'u 新平 (Ta-t'ung) from July 24 to August 4 (attended by the qan's sons : Qung-tayiǰi and Bayaud, and a nephew, Uüšin); at Chang-chia-k'ou 張家口 (Kalgan : Hsüan-fu) from July 4 to 17 (attended by the subjects of the qan's brother Kündüli-qan, al. the Old Bâtur, and a nephew Dayičing of the Yüngsiyebü); at Shui-ch'üan-ying 水泉營[21] (Shan-hsi) from

[18] The Stake-and-Stable Fund and the Land Fund were only two of several funds established during the Ming for the purchase of horses for the army. The Stake-and-Stable Fund was essentially a tax levied on soldiers. See Tani 62.

[19] The two lakes referred to here are two salt producing lakes near Ling-chou. See *Ta-Ch'ing i-t'ung chih* 204. 3b, and *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao* 62. 2599.

[20] *Mok.* 8. 35-36; *Mu SL* (95) 1463.

[21] Te-sheng-p'u, very close to the Great Wall, is north of Ta-t'ung. The fair was first scheduled to open at another place called Wei-lu-p'u 威虜 "Overawe the Caitiffs" and a plan was submitted to have an enclosure constructed similar to the one called I-ma-p'u 易馬 "Purchase of Horse" near Yü-lin 榆林. However, because of lack of water, Wei-lu-p'u did not seem to be a suitable location, and the fair was moved to Te-sheng (WLWKL 8. 122; *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao* 44. 1841, 1857). Such enclosures as the one referred to here, and the one near Hung-shan, together with the many *ma-shih*'s within walls indicated on Ming maps strongly suggest that it was the policy of the

August 23 to September 7 (attended by the subjects of the Altan-qan and a nephew Dolo-tümen and Uyiγurčin). The report clearly

Ming to hold the fairs in special walled enclosures for easier patroling and surveillance. Te-shih was very close to Chen-ch'iang-p'u where the fair had been held in 1551. The fair of 1551 may very well have been held on exactly the same place as in 1571, where the map of SYCTK 3. 3b indicates a horse fair.

The Yü-lin mentioned here is not the town Yü-lin (same characters) in Shensi Province, but a locality northeast of Ta-t'ung (see SYCTK 3.2b). Contrary to what I have said in my work on the tribute system, it is not the same as Yü-lin 玉林, to the northwest of Ta-t'ung (SYCTK 3.5a; *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao* 44. 1841). The I-ma-p'u of Yü-lin could well be one of those place where fairs were held in the fifteenth century.

The *Ta-Ming hui-tien* (130. 6a : 1849b) places Hsin-p'ing in Shuo-chou territory northwest of Ta-t'ung, but this seems to be an error. The maps of the SYCTK put it in the jurisdiction of the regional commander of Yang-ho, and the maps of the TMHT (133. 7b : 1884a) clearly put it northeast of Ta-t'ung.

Kalgan. The strategic importance of Kalgan as the natural gateway to Mongolia must have determined the Ming to hold the fairs there. The modern development of Kalgan is to be traced directly to the Ming horse fairs. In 1613-1614, a small enclosure was constructed north of Chang-chia-k'ou, against the southern side of the Great Wall, and called Lai-yüan 來遠 "Invite the Far-away". The enclosure had towers on its walls, and comprised buildings for troops, administration, etc., but it was much too small for the horse fairs to have been held inside, and trading must have been done outside the Lai-yüan enclosure, probably on both sides of the Great Wall. There is a gate in the Great Wall (called Ta-ching men 大境) right next to the Lai-yüan enclosure. A stèle dated 1616 was still extant in 1945-1946 in the little Kuan-ti shrine on top of the northern wall of the enclosure. The text of this stèle is in the *Wan-ch'üan hsien chih* 8.6a-10a, and the *Ch'a-ha-erh sheng t'ung-chih* 20. 45a-47b. It describes the circumstances of the construction of Lai-yüan-p'u. The *Wan-ch'üan hsien chih* contains a sketch of the enclosure as it was under the Ch'ing. The original Chang-chia-k'ou, the walls of which are still extant, is called Hsia-p'u 下堡, and is only a small part of the present Chang-chia-k'ou, or Kalgan; the old Lai-yüan-p'u and surroundings are known as Shang-p'u 上. The two are about 5 *li* apart. Hou Jen-chih (Hou 38. 226) thinks that at one time the Mongol trade was moved from the Hsia-p'u to the Shang-p'u, but this is rather unlikely. Most probably from the very first the horse fairs were held at the Great Wall where later the Lai-yüan-p'u was built. Throughout the Manchu period and under the Republic, Kalgan remained an important center of Mongol trade.

Shui-ch'üan-ying is in the northwestern corner of Shansi Province, near the Yellow River, and just south of the Great Wall. Near Shui-ch'üan-ying was erected a construction more or less similar to that of Hung-shan, at a place called Hung-men 紅門 "Red Gate" in the Great Wall. (Cf. *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao* 40.1697).

indicates that the Mongols of the various tribes attended the fairs nearest to their own territories. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* confirms this : they were not supposed to attend any fairs indiscriminately; this work further adds that every group, clan, tribe, etc. was assigned a number of days of trading, and that their respective princes or noblemen were responsible for their conduct. The Mongols were not supposed to enter Chinese towns (or cross the Great Wall?)[22].

On December 23, 1571, reviewing the situation of the Mongol borders, Wang Ch'ung-ku pointed out that large numbers of horses could be purchased from the Mongols at little expense and he requested an allowance for next year of 10,000 taels of silver for each of the armies of his three districts to achieve this end. Wang's recommendations, including his request for funds, were accepted[23], but even at this late hour the new policy regarding the Mongols officially approved by the Court was not without opponents. On December 30, a certain Liu Liang-pi 劉良弼 pointed to six inherents dangers, one of which in his opinion was the inevitable growth of wasteful expenses; another was that the number of market places would grown. Liu's letter was shown to Wang Ch'ung-ku who replied that the Mongol fairs were to bring trade to the border districts and thus revive the economy of those depressed areas; the Mongol horses alone once

22 *Mok.* 8. 41-42; *Mu SL* (95) 1492-93; WLWKL 8. 144. Some of the dates are also in the *Hsü wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao* 31. As early as 1551-1552, provisions were made that every tribe should attend only one specified market. In 1550, Su Yu recommended that the various tribes should attend separate markets (Hou 38. 198-199; *Hsü wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao* (1) 31. 23b24a; *Hsü wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao* (2) 26. 3028b). Su Yu's text is summarized in the WLWKL 7. 65; it has been misunderstood by E-tu Zen Sun and J. deFrancis "let them gather the people of various tribes at..." should read "keep the tribes separated" (Sun-deFrancis 56. 316). The various tribes attending the fairs of Hsin-k'ai and Chen-ch'iang-p'u respectively in 1551, if the fairs had continued, would have had to attend the same fairs every time. The TMHT (130. 5b-6a : 1849) also notes that the tribes attended their own fairs in 1571, and the same appears from later indications (e.g. WLWKL 8. 164-165). The Genealogical Tables of the Mongols also indicate which fair every branch of the princely family attended. Serruys 58, passim.

23 *Mok.* 8. 50; *Mu SL* (95) 1532-33.

they began to multiply would constitute an economic asset. From this point of view, the new policy would not entail a waste of ressources. As to the number of markets, Wang took a position exactly opposite to Liu Liang-pi's : the fairs should be held not once a year, but, as was done in Liaotung, every month[24], so as to have "continuous" *(lo-i)* markets which would make it possible to avoid large crowds congregating at any one time. Wang's remarks were forwarded to the Ministry of the Army for discussion and comment, and the Ministry declared itself against an increase of the number of market places as well as against monthly fairs[25].

Although Wang Ch'ung-ku's proposal for monthly fairs was peremptorily rejected, before long they would be established any how, and it is interesting to have a closer look at Wang's plan. First of all, the reader will have remembered that back in February, 1552, the governor of Hsüan-fu had made a similar request for "continuous" fairs. We have also seen that immediately after the 1551 fairs, the Mongols complained that the fairs, as they were then organized, greatly favored the nobility and the well-to-do, and gave little opportunity to the poor. The *Shih-lu* does not explain why Wang in December of 1571 wanted monthly fairs. His concern with too large crowds assembling at the yearly fairs cannot have been his only worry. In the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* we find some additional information that reminds us of the Mongol complaints of 1551 and 1552. "(Wang) Ch'ung-ku dispatched messengers to distribute the calendar (*ta-t'ung li* 大統曆 for the following year to the Mongols),[26] but the masses requested to

[24] As we have seen, some Liaotung fairs like some in Kansu, were held twice a month.

[25] *Mok.* 8. 51-53; *Mu SL* 1543-45.

[26] Since the Altan-qan and the other nobility had declared themselves "vassals" they were supposed from now on to follow the Ming calendar which would be supplied to them every year. In the biography of the qan's eldest son, Sengge, we are told that both the qan and Sengge received a copy of the calendar. WLWKL 8. 186. I have found no indication that in the fifteenth century, Mongol tributaries received the Ming calendar; yet we have every reason to believe that this was the custom. Indeed the *Ming Shih-lu* on more than one occasion records that the calendar was sent to Japan, Korea, Badakshan, Siam, the Liu-ch'iu Islands, Cambodia, Palembang, Champa, Sumatra,

extend the fairs : the rich traded horses for satins and silks, while the poor traded cattle, sheep, felt cloaks for cotton fabrics, needles and thread; although they did not consider this unprofitable, they thought that a few days a year would not be sufficient (to satisfy their needs). Ch'ung-ku requested to adopt the rule of the monthly fair followed at K'ai-yüan and Hai-hsi[27] : every month let the Barbarians who patrol the borders and those Barbarians desiring to trade announce the number of cattle, sheep, hides (they wish to sell) to the (local) commanding officer who will allow them to approach the outward side of the 'hidden gate', so that the military and the common people will have an opportunity to trade their cottons and other goods. China will levy a tax on those transactions in order to cover entertainment (and subsidy) expenses. Those fairs will last no more than one or two days, and the commanding officer will always attend them."[28]. However vague

etc. On one occasion it states explicitly that Korea received the calendar every year (*T'ai-tsu SL* (8) 3379) which may well have been true for all the tributaries. Not only are we told that Korea received its copy every year, but we are also told that 100 copies were sent to that country of the 1440, 1442, 1443, and 1446 calendars, this probably being the regular quota (*Ying SL* (24) 1162, (26) 1702, 1996, (28) 2682). For the importance attached to the calendar see Needham 59. 152; Rogers 59. 16, and Wittfogel-Feng 49. 318-319, 325b, 353 n.

[27] Hai-hsi, of course, is an error for Kuang-ning.

[28] WLWKL 8. 147. The mention of "hidden gates" in this passage probably is no more than a literary cliché to indicate places near the Great Wall where fairs could be opened conveniently. In a description of the poverty of the Mongols and their eagerness to trade, Ch'ü Chiu-ssu, quoting Liu Ying-ch'i, although he must have changed the words considerably, has this to say : "Ying-ch'i remarked that among the Caitiffs grain and silk are food and clothing; that is why in forays and raids they are fearless and disregard all danger to their lives. It is the custom among the Caitiffs to consider their children like themselves and therefore clothing and food always belong to all without stinginess. Alta(n-qan) and (Sengge) Qung-tayiji in a letter said that they all had fathers-in-law and sons-in-law, sisters, sister's children, and relatives : a great chief, one or two thousand; a little chief, several hundred. Now that (the chieftains of) all branches have been granted honorary ranks and receive 'rewards' (i.e. subsidies), and only their relatives and subjects do not receive them, it is a great source of shame and resentment for the latter. Thereupon Ying-ch'i instructed the Shun-i wang (i.e. the Altan-qan). At present there are a thousand *ch'ing*

Chinese sources are in this respect, it is evident that those monthly fairs met a Mongol need, and at the same time constituted a commercial opportunity for the Chinese. The Court, however, persisted in its suspicion of trade as a necessary evil to be held at a minimum, but it is doubtful that official restrictions could now be more effective than they had been before the horse fairs were officially opened. On February 19, 1572, the governor of the military district of Shan-hsi wrote that when the next fairs came around, it would be difficult to limit the number of horses imported by the Mongols; if the Mongols were left with unsold horses, it would adversely affect their feelings. He wanted the government to buy up all horses left over and turn them over to the Court of Imperial Stud[29]. The governor's proposal seems to imply that an attempt had been made to set a maximum quota of horses to be imported on any given occasion. As we shall see, similar attempts were to be repeated from time to time in later years, yet the number of horses brought to the fairs continued to grow. Moreover, the observations by the governor of Shan-hsi show that it would not have been wise to antagonize the Mongols on this score; moreover as we are able to gather from numerous testimonies, including a report by the governor of

of land cultivated near Pan-sheng (Bayising : the Altan-qan's residence) and the people are selfsufficient every year. The two tribes of the Old (Bâtur) and Yüng(siyebü) live too far from the borders (to be of immediate concern). There is only (Sengge) Qung-tayiji who is always poor and without livelihood. During winter (his men) come hunting close to the borders. When spring comes round, they often importune our patrols to buy animals or cattle for a peck or a bushel or so of rice; sheep for a few pecks of grain. If they have no animals (to offer), they will sometimes exchange a few pecks of salt for one or two pecks of rice or beans; or a load of firewood for two or three pints or rice; or worse, they will take off their fur coats or bring hides and horse hair in the hope of staving off hunger for a day. If you ask the reason : formerly they robbed and plundered for a livelihood; now that they dare no longer violate the borders, they can only sit still and wait for death." (8. 150-151). This reasoning, certainly overdrawn, was adduced as a ground to grant the Mongols subsidies and greater facilities for trade.

[29] 8. 59; *Mu SL* (95) 1584.

Ning-hsia entered in the *Shih-lu* under the very same date, the Chinese armies were badly in need of Mongol horses.

NEW MARKETS

As Liu Liang-pi had feared new markets soon came into being. "Minor markets" to be held every month, as we have seen, had been mentioned from time to time as a distinct possibility with some opinions favoring them and others opposing them. On February 10, 1573, we learn for the first time that such minor markets were actually held after the fifteenth of every month at every important pass[30]. This seems to mean that in addition to the few official fairs held on a yearly basis several minor trading posts had come into being; unfortunately we are not told how many there were, nor where they were.

When the horse fairs opened for the first time in 1571, only six places were mentioned : Chang-chia-k'ou in Hsüan-fu district; Hsin-p'ing and Te-sheng in Ta-t'ung district; Shui-ch'üan-ying in Shan-hsi district; and Ch'ing-shui-ying and Hung-shan in Shensi (Yen-sui, and Ning-hsia districts). But one year later, in 1572, the *Wan-li wu-kung lu*[31] lists a new place : Shou-k'ou-p'u 守口堡 This is a place right on the Great Wall to the north of Yang-ho 陽和 (Yang-kao 陽, northeast of Ta-t'ung). It is indicated on most Ming maps, for example in the *San-Yün ch'ou-tsu k'ao*. How and why the Shou-k'ou fair came to be added to the original list is, to my knowledge, nowhere explained. As time went on

[30] *Mok.* 8. 131; *Shen SL* (97) 320. Ch'ü Chiu-ssu ends his description of the plight of the poor Mongols (note 28) with a plea to open minor markets outside the passes.

[31] WLWKL 8; 156, 164, 165, 172, etc. It is surprising that the WLWKL mentions Shou-k'ou-p'u as a market place in 1572 : on November 2 of that same year, it was stressed that no new fairs must be opened in addition to the three existing ones (in Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung) : Te-sheng, Hsin-p'ing, and Chang-chia-k'ou. *Mok.* 8. 109; *Shen SL* (96) 199.

other fairs were opened for a variety of reasons. Thus on February 28, 1574, a certain Pin-t'u (Bingtü), on his way through the Kansu panhandle to attack the Tibetans, requested a fair at Liang-chou, Kansu. There were several Bingtüs whose names are written with a variety of Chinese characters, and it is not certain which one is referred to here; I am inclined to think that he was from Ordos, but that is of little importance to our problem at hand. It does not seem, however, that Bingtü got satisfaction, at least at this time; the Chinese even got in touch with the Altan-qan and urged him to restrain Bingtü[32]. Yet towards the end of the year, a new market was established in Kansu for the benefit of Bingtü of the Ordos, most probably the same one as the Bingtü just mentioned. We are told that his habitat was in the Big and Small Pine Mountains, too far away from Ch'ing-shui-ying for easy access and a special fair was organized for him at Chung-wei 中衛 on the Yellow River, south of Ning-hsia[33]. A few weeks later, on December 24, 1574, in a reply to an official in Shensi, the Ministry of the Army confirmed the establishment of a horse fair at Chung-wei, but noted that west of the Yellow River there was no room for more fairs, and besides, there was nothing to sell there[34]. This latter remark probably means that west of the Yellow River, Kansu was too thinly populated to support a market and too few Chinese manufactures could be acquired.

Almost one year later, on November 9, 1575, the governor-general of Shensi himself stated that it was too far and too inconvenient for Mongols living outside of the borders of Kansu to go to

32 *Mok.* 8. 187; *Shen SL* (97) 578.

33 *Mok.* 8. 212-213; *Shen SL* (98) 737. The two Pine Mountains, outside and west of Ordos territory, are over 200 *li* north of Lan-chou (*Ta-Ch'ing i-t'ung chih* 198. 2a; *Tu-shih fang-yü chi-yao* 62. 2706). Although Bingtü actually lived outside of Ordos, it should be noted that at this particular time, the Mongols ruled by the Ordos nobility occupied an area much larger than under the Ch'ing, taking in a considerable stretch of land west of the bend of the Yellow River.

34 *Mok.* 8. 217; *Shen SL* (98) 755.

the fairs of Ning-hsia district, and he proposed to open a "Barbarian market" *(i-ch'ang)* outside the borders; this fair would serve Bingtü (Ping-t'u) of Köke-nuur[35]. This remark indicates that it was the southern borders of Kansu the governor had in mind. This market on the Kansu borders must be the one later known as Pien-tu-k'ou. At the same time, the governor-general proposed a "minor market" at Chuang-lang 莊浪 for Bingtü of the Pine Mountains. Both fairs would be held once a year at the same time as the horse fairs of the Ning-hsia and Yen-sui districts. The two markets are mentioned again the following year and by this time we already notice a tendency to expand these new facilities : on July 7, 1576, the governor-general reported that the two markets had been held after some delay, but that the Mongols wanted them to count for last year's fairs and new fairs to be held in autumn to count for the current year. This, the governor-general reflected, would be difficult to grant. The Court merely repeated the order to hold the fairs at the same time as those in Ning-hsia and rejected the idea of having second fairs in one single year[36].

On August 17, 1576, the Ministry of the Army, in reply to a report from the district of Shan-hsi, noted that the Mongols almost daily requested trading opportunities, and that the minor markets must remain limited to once a month[37], but the Ministry did not specify where these minor markets were held. All this seems to mean that what was called "minor market" in Ta-t'ung and Shan-hsi was a monthly market, while in Shensi and Kansu, the "minor markets" of Chuang-lang and Pien-tu-k'ou were held no more than once a year.

In 1577, the Altan-qan decided to go to Köke-nuur to meet the Dalai-lama coming from Tibet. Before leaving his camp for the

35 *Mok.* 8. 255; *Shen SL* (98) 967; TMHT 130. 17ab (1855a). This Bingtü was the Altan-qan's fourth son. His subjects were mostly of the Uyiγurčin clan, and he is the Uyiγurčin-tayiji referred to above. By this time he had moved to Köke-nuur and often caused considerable worries to Chinese officials in Shensi, Kansu, and Ssuch'uan.

36 *Mok.* 8. 293; *Shen SL* (99) 1184-85.

37 *Mok.* 8. 299; *Shen SL* (99) 1229-30.

west, the qan made the necessary arrangements for the yearly tribute presentation and horse fairs at the regular places, and requested a big fair at Hsi-ning, Kansu, where he intended to purchase large quantities of tea and pay with horses. Some officials took a dim view of the qan's travels and their suspicion was not in the least allayed by this new request for tea looking as it did like a desire to interfere in Sino-Tibetan relations. Wang Ch'ung-ku, then Minister of the Army, pointed out that the Altan-qan probably had no military action in mind by going to the west, and that tea would be needed for the Lamaist ceremonies planned for his meeting with the Dalai-lama. Wang recommended to let him buy one hundred chest (*pi* 篦) or so, which was approved[38].

In March, 1578, the Ministry of the Army recommended to move the minor fair of Chuang-lang (Bingtu of the Pine Mountains) alternately to Kao-kou-chai 高溝寨 and Hua-chien-t'un 鏵头屯, the reason being that the area was too thinly settled and resources were too few in one single place[39]. At about the same time, Bingtü of Köke-nuur wanted a fair on the borders of T'ao-chou 洮州 to exchange horses against tea like on the regular Tibetan fairs of that area; it is none too clear whether Bingtü wanted this fair as a one-time opportunity, or a permanent arrangement. Any way the request was rejected[40]. One year later, the Altan-qan himself requested a "tea-market" at T'ao-chou : he wanted to exchange 500 horses for tea. Again it is not clear from the *Shih-lu* whether the request was granted[41]. Obviously the Chinese were more than a little suspicious of these new requests especially since they concerned the sensitive Tibetan border area. It should be noted, however, that the latest request must have been made much earlier than March 14, 1579, date under which it is recorded in the *Shih-lu*.

Instead of the original two horse fairs of Shensi, by March,

[38] *Mok.* 8. 320, 326, 333-334; *Shen SL* (99) 1375-76, 1442, 1459.
[39] *Mok.* 8. 255, 293, 344; *Shen SL* (98) 967, 1184-85; (99) 1545.
[40] *Mok.* 8. 355; *Shen SL* (100) 1605.
[41] *Mok.* 8. 389; *Shen SL* (100) 1769.

1380, the governor-general spoke of "the four fairs" in his three military districts : in addition to the original ones of Hung-shan and Ch'ing-shui-ying, there were the fairs of Chung-wei and Kao-kou-chai or Hua-chien-t'un[42]. Apparently he did not yet count the "Barbarian market" (of Pien-tu-k'ou) granted the first time in 1575.

In August, 1583, the governor-general of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi, speaking of the finances of the fairs, mentions a fair at Lao-ying-p'u 老 營 堡 in Shan-hsi district[43]. Since Lao-ying-p'u and Shui-ch'üan-ying were close together, and the fairs were in fact held at the "Red Gate", it would appear that Lao-ying. is no new market but a new name for the fair of Shui-ch'üan-ying.

We have seen that the first fair of the district of Ning-hsia was at Ch'ing-shui-ying; then one had been added at Chung-wei, south of Ning-hsia. By January, 1583, a third one was located at P'ing-lu 平 虜, north of Ning-hsia, and west of the Yellow River, facing the Ordos territory like Ning-hsia itself[44]. By this time other Ordos princes used to migrate now and then to Köke-nuur and stay there for some length of time. On February 5, the governor of Kansu, meeting with the governor-general of Shensi, noted that a certain Qulači after causing considerable damage, had promised to return to his native habitat by next year. In the meantime this Qulači requested trade, and the two officials proposed to follow the precedent set with regard to Bingtü of the Pine Mountains : one minor market a year for cattle and sheep.

[42] *Mok.* 8. 410; *Shen SL* (100) 1936.

[43] *Mok.* 8. 436; *Shen SL* (101) 2167.

[44] *Mok.* 8. 465; *Shen SL* (102) 2439. P'ing-lu originally was the seat of a chiliarchy under Ning-shia (*Ming-shih* 42.1. 468a). Under the Ch'ing the name "Pacification of the Caitiffs" was spelled with *lo* 羅 and so lost its original meaning. This change, of course, was prompted by the desire of the Manchus to avoid all references to their own Barbarian origin and to disparaging allusions to the Mongols to whom they felt related. The creation of the P'ing-lu fair is mentioned in the TMHT 130. 14a (1853b) : it is hard to believe that only 100 horses could be imported in any one year as is stated there. P'ing-lo remained a horse fair attended by the Ordos Mongols until late in the nineteenth century.

The *Shih-lu* does not indicate where they intended to hold such a fair, but the two men wanted an allowance of 10,000 taels of silver to purchase the necessary goods for the fair. They hoped that it would be possible to discontinue this fair as soon as Qulači left. On March 8, however, a supervising secretary of the Ministry of the Army spoke out against this new fair and the subsidy applied for, and probably the fair was never held[45].

In the foregoing pages I have stated as probable that the fair opened in 1575 on the southern borders of Kansu for Bingtü (Köke-nuur) was the fair later known as Pien-tu-k'ou 扁(匾)都口. In November of 1584, the governor-general of Shensi wrote to the Ministry of the Army that a fair at Pien-tu-k'ou was extremely unpractical[46], which is an indication that it was still being held. Pien-tu-k'ou can be none other than Pien-tu-erh-shan-k'ou, a pass in the mountains between Kansu and the Köke-nuur and Amdo regions. The name Pien-tu-erh most certainly is not Chinese[47]. The reason for my supposition that Bingtü's fair of 1575 was at, or near to, Pien-tu-k'ou, is that the Mongol Genealogical Tables indicate Pien-tu-k'ou as Bingtü's only fair[48]. Bingtü who had a fair at Pien-tu-k'ou, around the same time wanted a second one at T'ao-chou or Ho-chou, and this prompted the authorities to take measures to strengthen the defenses of those areas[49]; however whether the market was granted as requested by Bingtü is not indicated. Pien-tu-k'ou served also for others than Bingtü : a

[45] *Mok.* 8. 468, 470; *Shen SL* (102) 2456, 2481.

[46] *Mok.* 8. 522; *Shen SL* (103) 2850. The TMHT 130. 17b (1855a) has a little differently that the Ning-hsia fairs were not practical for the three tribes of Čouqur tayiǰi, K'o-t'ai abuγai, and Laba, but that a fair at Pien-tu-k'ou in Kansu district would be more suitable. The Genealogical Tables list a Čouqur, but K'o-t'ai certainly is a misreading for K'o-teng (Ködeng) or K'o-ch'ou (Qači'u, Qačiγu). See Serruys 58. 137. Laba is unknown to me.

[47] *HM Pien-cheng k'ao* 4.44b; on the map 4.40b, Pien-tu-erh-shui is southeast of Hung-shui 洪水, the modern Min-lo 民樂. In *Mok.* 9. 103; *Shen SL* (106) 4428 (1591) it is referred to as the road the Mongols used to follow to return to Mongolia from the Köke-nuur region.

[48] Serruys 58. 74.

[49] *Mok.* 8. 523.

certain Čouqur and one Čing-bâtur who used to attend the three fairs of Ning-hsia district some time before, traveled to Kökenuur in order to worship the Buddha; once there, the markets of Ning-hsia being too far away, they had been allowed to attend the fair of Pien-tu-k'ou. A report from November 12, 1585, stated that Čouqur and Čing-bâtur had finally gone back to Ordos and the fairs of Ning-hsia[50]. This does not mean that the fair of Pien-tu-k'ou was abolished : it is more probable that Bingtü continued to attend it as long as he lived. At any rate, Pien-tu-k'ou is still mentioned as a fair in 1587, and even as late as 1612[51] (see below).

When the Pien-tu-k'ou fair was first mentioned in 1575, the *Shih-lu* called it a "Barbarian market" *(i-ch'ang)*. We find the same expression applied to other places : a report from September 3, 1586, on various border matters and military affairs, speaks of repairs on the Great Wall over a length of 300 *li* near the "Great Wall town of the Barbarian market" in the Ning-hsia district; but the exact location is not indicated. The same report, speaking of the district of Ku-yüan, mentions the repair of 730 rooms *(chien)* in the camp of the "Barbarian market" *(Fan-ch'ang)*. Once more, the location of this market is not further indicated[52].

By 1586 a fair was held at Yü-lin, Shensi. At least the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* makes mention of it twice[53].

In January, 1587, a number of Mongols from the Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung borders were in the vicinity or Su-chou, Kansu, and wanted a fair in that town. It will be remembered from an earlier chapter that Su-chou had had some sort of fairs for non-Chinese for a very long time, so that this request cannot have appeared too strange. The governor-general of Shensi after some hesitation

50 *Mok.* 8. 538; *Shen SL* (103) 3015.

51 *Mok.* 8.613; *Man.* 4. 413; *Shen SL* (104) 3446; (118) 9324.

52 *Mok.* 8. 578-579; *Shen SL* (103) 3250. Nor do I know who attended this *Fan-ch'ang*, Mongols or Tibetans. During this period, the Mongols were also sometimes called *Fan*.

53 WLWKL 14. 134,157.

was inclined the grant a small reward and a minor market on a temporary basis. The proposal was approved, but soon a supervising secretary of the Ministry of Revenue thought such a measure dangerous in view of the military weakness of the area[54]. What was finally decided is not recorded.

When the third Dalai-lama died in Mongolia in 1588, the Altan-qan's grandson and successor Čürüke, together with a number of Mongol princes and Tibetan lamas escorted his remains as far as Köke-nuur on the way back to Tibet, just as the Altan-qan himself had gone to Köke-nuur in 1577 to meet him when he first arrived from Tibet. In 1577, as we have seen, the qan requested horse fairs at Hsi-ning and other places in order to purchase tea for ceremonial purposes and other commodities. Čürüke was to do the same now in 1589 and he specifically referred to the precedent set in 1577. First on February 6, we read in a report by the Ministry of the Army that the governor-general of Shensi had memorialized that Čürüke had requested "fairs and rewards", but no particular places are indicated at this time[55]. Apparently the Mongols had not yet left for the west when they made this request : much later, on December 31, the *Shih-lu* relates that the Shun-i-wang Čečen-qan[56], with many princes and several ten-thousand men, traveling in a westerly direction north of the Ho-lan Mountains (Alašan) sent a letter to the governor-general referring to a market held for the Altan-qan at Ch'ih-mu-k'ou 赤木口,[57] and requested a similar fair to sell[58] horses. After long

[54] *Mok.* 8. 603,605; *Shen SL* (104) 3383-84; 3389-90.

[55] *Mok.* 8. 680; *Shen SL* (105) 3857.

[56] The Altan-qan and his successors all bore the title of Shun-i-wang. Čečen ∿ Sečen-qan was the title of Čürüke's father, Sengge qung-tayiǰi. I am not aware that Čürüke himself bore this title; yet there can be no doubt that Čürüke is meant here : Sengge indeed was dead.

[57] Ch'ih-mu-k'ou is indicated on the maps of the *HM Pien-cheng k'ao* 3. 3a, 5b; also in *Ta-Ch'ing i-t'ung chih* 204. 5a : southwest of Ning-hsia in the Ho-lan mountains and leading into Alašan territory. The name is spelled differently in *Mok.* 2. 600; *Ying SL* (25) 1230 : Ch'e-mu-hsia 扯木峽; in the *Ming-shih* 42. I. 469b (Liang-chou) : Tsa-mu-k'ou 雜. Obviously the name is not Chinese. The *Shuo-fang tao chih* mentions Ch'ih-mu-k'ou together

hesitation, the governor-general decided to accede to their wishes and estimated that a sum of 8000 taels of silver would be needed to finance this fair, one thousand taels less than in the Altan-qan's time[59]. From this passage it is evident that in 1577 a fair had been held at Ch'ih-mu-k'ou when the Altan-qan and his men passed through Alašan territory on their way to Köke-nuur; but it was no more than a one-time affair. And the same was true of the fair held there at the end of 1589 or early in 1590.

In the meantime, minor markets continued to exist along the Sino-Mongol borders of the Yen-sui (Yü-lin) district. Whether these minor markets are the same as the Yü-lin markets mentioned by the *Wu-kung lu;* or whether these markets were held in more than one place is not clear, but apparently they were monthly affairs, and some *Shih-lu* passages give us to understand that at times they were followed by border violations in the neighborhood of Shen-mu-hsien 神木 in Shensi, so that we may conclude that one or more of those monthly fairs may have been held in that neighborhood[60].

In its entry of October 10, 1596, the *Shih-lu*, speaking of savings made by the governor of the military district of Shan-hsi, mentions a market of K'o-lan 哥嵐, never referred to before[61].

with other fairs, such as Heng-ch'eng, Hua-ma-ch'ih, Shih-tsuei-tzu, Ning-t'iao-liang, etc. created during the Manchu period (2. 22b; 24b). Mongols attending those fairs needed passes issued by their respective banners (2. 25a). At Ch'ih-mu-k'ou there was an inscription dating from the Ming (25. 17b).

58 The text has *mai* "to buy", but one cannot see why the Mongols would want a fair to buy horses. I assume that *mai* "to sell" is the correct reading.

59 *Mok.* 8. 709; *Shen SL* (105) 4062.

60 *Mok.* 8. 684, 699; *Shen SL* (105) 3873, 3967. At the end of the sixteenth century, the *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi* 5. 7b lists only eleven markets : Hsüan-fu district : Chang-chia-k'ou (Kalgan); Ta-t'ung district : Hsin-p'ing, Shou-k'ou, and Te-sheng; Shan-hsi district : Shui-ch'üan-ying; Yen-sui district : Hung-shan; Ning-hsia district : Chung-wei, Ch'ing-shui-ying, P'ing-lu; Kansu : Kao-kou-chai, and Hung-shui-pien-tu-k'ou, and adds that the fairs were held for two days (a year) and that every month there was a minor market.

61 *Mok.* 9. 307; *Shen SL* (109) 5650.

K'o-lan was the seat of a circuit *(tao)*, and its market probably was not a market recently established, but that of Shui-ch'üan-ying or Lao-ying-p'u, within the jurisdiction of the circuit officers. Finally, Kao Chi-yüan's report of June 7, 1612, on problems of tribute and trade, lists the following fairs : K'ai-yüan and Yung-tien in Liaotung; in Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung districts : Hsin-p'ing, Te-Sheng, and Chang-chia-k'ou; in Yen-sui and Ning-hsia districts : Hung-shan-t'un, Ch'ing-shui, and P'ing-lu; in Kansu : Pien-tu-k'ou and Chuang-lang[62], but as has been pointed out in a previous chapter, this is not an exhaustive list of markets in existence at the time. Kao lists only a few examples of the many fairs then in operation.

The fair of Sha-ku-k'ou 殺胡口 is not mentioned in the *Shih-lu*, I believe, until 1610, and the name appears in the Sino-Mongol agreement of July 26, 1613[63].

The general map of the *San-Yün ch'ou-tsu k'ao* indicates several more "horse fairs" than we have listed so far : outside the Great Wall and facing Pao-an-p'u 保安, Ning-lu-p'u 寧虜, and Ying-en-p'u 迎恩, all west of Ta-t'ung; the sectional map (ch.3. 50b) indicates one outside Yün-shih-p'u 雲石. Hou Jen-chih lists two more : a minor market at Chu-ma-p'u 助馬, and one at Mieh-hu-p'u 滅胡[64]. Hayashi lists them, too and mentions even one more[65]. The number of fair that have been opened at

[62] *Man.* 4. 413; *Shen SL* (118) 9324.

[63] *Mok.* 9. 591; *Shen SL* (117) 8880. SYCTK 2. 15b. Serruys 60. 43, and *Sino-Mongol Relations* II, App. III (p. 602). The general map of the SYCTK (vol. 2, ch. 3) p. 5b indeed indicates a horse fair outside the Great Wall facing Sha-hu-p'u. Sha-hu was still a horse fair in the early Ch'ing. The Jesuit Jean-François Gerbillon passed through Sha-hu-k'ou in December, 1696, in the retinue of the emperor, and noted that the Mongols came to trade not at a horse fair outside the Great Wall, but at the town of Sha-hu itself. He describes the town in the following terms : "Il y a bien trois-ou-quatre-cens maisons, & quantité de boutiques. C'est un lieu de commerce. Les *Mongous* y viennent vendre leurs denrées, & acheter les choses dont ils ont besoin. Il y a environ mille soldats Chinois, cavalerie & infanterie, à la garde de la ville & de la porte de la grande muraille, commandez par un *Fou-tsiang*, ou Lieutenant-Colonel" (Du Halde 36.IV. 443).

[64] Hou 38. 230, 231.

[65] Hayashi 52. 215.

one time or another may even be larger.

THE FAIRS IN CHINESE POLICY

It is not easy to assess accurately the results of the horse fairs for Sino-Mongol relations, and judging from the conflicting statements made time and again between 1570 and 1600, it must not have been simple even for contemporary Chinese to make abstraction of incidental affairs, local conflicts, and evaluate the overall situation and the effects of the restoration of tribute and trade upon both China and Mongolia.

In the preceding sections we have seen that while horse fairs and trade with the Jürčen and the Three Commanderies had been standard procedures in Liaotung ever since 1400, and also with some tribes in Kansu, the Chinese government in the middle of the sixteenth century consistently refused to grant the Southern Mongols to same facilities. A turning point finally came in the fall of 1570 and the early part of 1571, when such men as Wang Ch'ung-ku, Chang Chü-cheng, Fang Feng-shih, Kao Kung, and others succeeded in persuading the Court that the time had come to revise its policy towards the Mongol tribes of Tümed and Ordos. But many officials disagreed and opposed any change, and even after the new policy was inaugurated and horse fairs were held on a regular basis, opposition never entirely ceased. From 1570 to 1600, when a reversal had practically become impossible, voices continued to be heard regularly protesting either the horse fairs as such (but never those in Liaotung) or one or other aspect of the new trade relations. It would be an impossible task to go into all the ramifications of this controversy, the more so as opinions on Mongolia and the market policy were largely determined by views held with regard to other aspects of foreign and domestic policies. We shall review only a few of the opinions expressed, complaints heard, or measures proposed during that period, as representative of various ways of thinking current at

the time.

In his memorials from March and April, 1571, Wang Ch'ung-ku made it clear that he considered the horse fairs primarily not as a commercial enterprise, but as a political measure which if judiciously applied could bring peace on the northern borders at a substantial saving to the treasury. Tribute relations comprising return presents in excess of what the Mongol, Jürčen, or other tributary tribes presented to the Court, of course, involved major expenses, yet cost far less that war would have cost to keep those same tributaries at bay had they become enemies. Horse fairs or any other form of trade relations essentially worked along the same lines : the purchase of horses and some other articles from Mongolia and the sale of Chinese manufactures and foodstuffs would meet a real need of the Mongol tribes. It was this very need which had always been the cause of the numerous border violations during the five or six decades when tribute relations were not allowed. Wang estimated that the defense of the borders, the maintenance of troops, purchase and transport of supplies, etc., were far more expensive that it would take to satisfy basic Mongol needs through tribute relations and normal trade. Meeting the Mongol needs would do away with the major cause of border conflict and the main reason for excessive military expenses. In his memorial of March 7, Wang figured that funds regularly allocated to the army for a variety of special services could safely be diverted to the horse fairs. For example, special funds or taxes used to pay spies or reward special feats of arms : these would largely become unnecessary. Every military border district (*chiu-pien* : the Nine Border Districts) had a regular army, called *chu-ping* "host army", but every year, especially in fall, when the Mongols were most likely to stage their border raids, or at other times of emergency, the high command used to call in auxiliary troops, known as *k'o-ping* "guest army". It was Wang's opinion that if some sort of understanding could be reached with the Mongols, the need for those guest troops or auxiliaries would be greatly reduced and consequently a substantial part of the funds

spent on them could safely be used to finance the horse fairs and other expenses attendant to them[66].

This plan was so novel, so contrary to the traditional way of thinking that some gained the impression that Wang was ready to dismantle the border defenses on a vague promise by the Mongols to stop raiding if they could trade. Who could trust unpredictable Barbarians ? Wang replied to this objection that a distinction must be maintained between on the one hand the regular army, by no means to be weakened, and on the other hand the auxiliaries whose usefulness would be greatly reduced[67].

In a way it is understandable that after long years of warfare, many Chinese remained deeply suspicious that peace could be restored by such simple means. Yet subsequent events proved Wang Ch'ung-ku right on all major points : that the tribute and trade policy was on the whole successful is regularly, if at times somewhat reluctantly, attested to. In 1576, the Ministry of the Army estimated that the profits made by the Mongols through trade were five times as large as the booty they were able to capture before 1570, and that they would not be inclined to "rebel" and forfeit those easy gains[68]. Two years later, a censor from Chih-li stated that peace had reigned for eight years thanks to the new policy, something unheard of for a long time, and he concluded that as long the Mongols could count on a certain profit they would not dare disturb the present order of things[69]. Cheng Lo 鄭洛 (洛)[70] who succeeded Wang Ch'ung-ku and Fang Feng-shih as governor-general, noted on December 11, 1583, that the fact that the Mongols could buy and sell was of primary political importance; more important than the quality of their horses or the price paid for them[71]. A few years later, in 1588,

[66] *Mok.* 8. 7: *Mu SL* (95) 1337-38.
[67] *Mok.* 8. 17; *Mu SL* (95) 1376.
[68] *Mok.* 8. 296; *Shen SL* (99) 1207-08.
[69] *Mok.* 8. 372; *Shen SL* (100) 1701.
[70] Biogr. in the *Ming-shih* 222. IV. 2565-67.
[71] *Mok.* 8. 498; *Shen SL* (102) 2664-65.

Cheng Lo made the remark that the opportunity to trade offered to the Mongols and military preparedness were two complementary factors equally necessary for peace : one could not succeed without the other, but he insisted that a ceiling must be kept on the importation of horses in order to limit expenses. True, the Mongols needed trade, but once trade was made possible, a limit strictly enforced by border officials would not provoke the Mongols into starting incidents[72]. Another censor stated in 1587, that since the surrender of the Altan-qan in 1571, in addition to enormous savings made on defenses as compared to the years prior to 1571, the border areas had achieved a measure of prosperity in spite of the fact that the Mongols had tried to sell more and more horses and extract ever greater advantages from China[73]. There is even a statement from 1590 by the Grand Secretary Shen Shih-hsing 申時行[74] declaring that, disregarding a number of minor incidents, no military action had been necessary for twenty years all along the northern borders from Liaotung to Kansu, and the emperor himself agreed with this opinion[75].

Chinese evaluations of the situation were always based on the assumption that the Mongols made such handsome profits that they would never be so foolish as to do something rash at the risk of losing them, and as a rule, this was correct; but the very profits also incited them to seek more, and, as has already been noted in connection with the "rewards" or subsidies in Liaotung, it was felt that border officials all too easily gave in to new demands. To mention only one instance, not one of the first but one of the last, the Ministry of the Army in 1603 mentioned this tendency in a comment on a letter by the governor of the district of Ta-t'ung[76]. We shall revert to this question later on. Yet in spite of this development, it is obvious that the Mongols wanted as little to forfeit China's favors, as the Chinese Govern-

[72] *Mok*, 8. 661-662; *Shen SL* (105) 3752.
[73] *Mok*. 8. 624; *Shen SL* (104) 3460.
[74] Biogr. in the *Ming-shih* 218. IV. 2525-26.
[75] *Mok*. 9. 9, 15, 17; *Shen SL* (106) 4173, 4181, 4185.
[76] *Mok*. 9. 411-412; *Shen SL* (113) 7207.

ment wanted to go back to the old days of constant border raids, as someone stated in August, 1590[77].

Wang Ch'ung-ku had made it very clear that he did not foresee a situation where military preparedness would be superfluous. The experience of Liaotung taught that not all minor incidents could be eliminated, and Wang no doubt was practical enough to realize that the lesson must not be lightly dismissed. Wu Tui 吳兌[78] who was governor-general of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu in 1578, stated the same view more explicitly, and he recommended closing the borders and suspending the markets if things got out of hand[79]. Such measures indeed had to be taken from time to time as we shall see, but it was a measure that could only be applied with utmost discretion if a repetition of the situation existing before 1570 was to be avoided.

In sum, in spite of recurrent difficulties, at one point or another, the results were greatly satisfying and the policy of the horse fairs constituted a marked advance upon previous decades, yet there always were a number of officials, especially at the capital, who could only see the difficulties and considered the horse fairs an unnecessary concession to the enemy. In their opinion, all expenses for return presents to the Mongol princes, all subsidies and market funds were moneys taken from the army. Not only did they stress the need for greater military expenses, but they also concluded from local incidents that tribute and trade relations were totally ineffective as a means to control the Mongols, and, what could even be worse, tended to give a false sense of security and led to deterioration of morale and discipline in the army[80]. These men had never learned anything and instead of using the threat of suspension of some particular fair as a weapon to coerce a recalcitrant troublemaker, they advocated outright abolition of all horse fairs, as for instance a supervising

[77] *Mok.* 9. 28-29; *Shen SL* (106) 4198.
[78] Biogr. in the *Ming-shih* 222. IV. 2565.
[79] *Mok.* 8. 354; *Shen SL* (100) 1604.
[80] E.g. *Mok.* 8. 665-666; *Shen SL* (105) 3757.

secretary of the Ministry of the Army did in 1584[81].

Others thought that tribute and trade relations could be useful for a while under particular circumstances, in order to buy time and improve the military situation until the balance of power had shifted back to China, but could never serve as a long-range policy[82]. Many blamed the desintegration of the border defenses on the horse fairs, forgetting that long before 1571, the armies along the Mongol borders had grown so inefficient that Mongol raiders always could cross the borders at any given point they chose, even if they were never able to occupy any territory permanently. A censor from Shansi wrote in April, 1583, that the Mongols were stronger than ever, while in the Chinese armies officers and men grew lazy and negligent, the reason being – in his opinion – that such a large part of the funds originally allocated to the army now served to finance the fairs[83]. A little later, a supervising secretary of the Ministry of Work maintained that the troops suffered from the fact that large amounts of supplies were diverted to the fairs where the Mongols only sold low quality horses[84]. In January, 1585, the Minister of the Army stressed the need to stop the growth of expenses for the horse fairs : he noted that back in 1570-1571, the tribute and trade policy had been adopted in order to secure a measure of peace and give a breathing spell to the army, but over the years expenses had grown considerably and the military situation had continued to deteriorate[85]. These few instances will suffice to give the reader an idea of the wide range of opinions voiced on the subject.

[81] *Man.* 4. 77; *Shen SL* (102) 2838.
[82] E.g. *Mok.* 9. 90; *Shen SL* (106) 4388.
[83] *Man.* 4.55; *Shen SL* (102) 2512. For a brief exposition of the reasons for this deterioration in the army see Ho 62. 59-61.
[84] *Mok.* 8. 495; *Shen SL* (102) 2641.
[85] *Mok.* 8. 525; *Shen SL* (103) 2886.

SUSPENSION OF HORSE FAIRS

Since the Mongols derived sizable profits from the sale of horses and cattle and the presentation of the tribute, it is extremely difficult to account for the fact that there always were Mongols disturbing the peace. As has been indicated in the previous chapters, this was true of the eastern end of the borders as well : both Jürčen and Mongols of the Three Commanderies regularly caused trouble. The same phenomenon occurred also after 1571 along the borders of Shansi, Shensi, and Kansu. In my study of the tribute relations I have attempted an explanation of this phenomenon and I do not intend now to go into this disturbing problem beyond a few general observations. The problem involves a seeming contradiction : the whole question basically hinged upon the possibility of the Jürčen or the Mongols to acquire Chinese manufactures; after these were made available, border raids should have stopped, yet they never completely did come to an end. The Chinese sources are of little help in solving the contradiction : Chinese contemporary historians indeed limit themselves to statements of fact, and usually blame the trouble upon the very nature of the Barbarians : uncivilized and unreliable they do not act logically and responsibly. The question was never asked whether the structure of Mongol society, rivalry between the princes, or tribes, could explain this continued tendency to violate the borders. Perhaps the age-long tradition of enmity between nomad and settled farmer could not disappear overnight. However, Chinese sources do state that Chinese officers or irresponsible soldiers at times provoked the Mongols into retaliation through border raids[86]. One important observation which has already

[86] One of the provocations but by far not the only one was cheating on prices. In a previous chapter we have pointed to repeated warnings by the Court to deal with the Mongols according to principles of justice. When the question of horse fairs came up in 1571, Kao Kung strongly urged to make sure that Chinese merchants did not cheat the Mongols : a good profit must

been made must be repeated in this connection : the *Shih-lu* is liable to tell us more about what went wrong with the horse fairs than about uneventful cooperation and harmony.

Given the Chinese official thinking that on the whole the Mongols derived enough from their relations with China to be interested in their continuation, one obvious way for the Chinese to enforce the peace was to suspend the market privileges and subsidies of any guilty party, which they did in fact on numerous occasions. This, too, was a seeming contradiction since the horse fairs had been initiated on the theory that the lack of trade ultimately was the origin of the incessant border raids. But it remained true that it was far easier for the Mongols to sell horses and cattle and purchase Chinese commodities than to acquire them by raiding border villages; and we note that the Ming used much restraint in suspending a Mongol prince's trading privileges; and moreover, suspensions were never maintained for long. It seems that after a while, under the prodding and even penalties imposed by other Mongols more interested in continued peaceful relations, the culprits soon returned to allegiance, as the Chinese liked to put it. We may mention a few instances of suspension of trade.

Under the date of July 22, 1581, the governor-general of Shensi reported that in the fall of 1580, Bingtü of Köke-nuur had attacked several Chinese villages and Tibetan settlements : a few persons had been killed and a goodly number had been taken into captivity; then upon a remonstrance by the Chinese and an urgent admonition of the Altan-qan, Bingtü returned the prisoners, made amends and restitution for the harm he had done, and paid a fine in horses, cattle, and sheep, whereupon the governor-general recommended not to suspend Bingtü's market privileges and subsidies[87]. A few days later, Cheng Lo reported that subjects

be allowed the Mongols to make them feel that the government cared for their well-being, and cheating, as had happened so often before, would surely make them resentful. *Fu-Jung chi-shih* 41, 42. 45.

[87] *Mok.* 8. 432; *Shen SL* (101) 2158-59.

of Mang'udai and Čing-batu had killed some soldiers and kidnaped a few people in the neighborhood of Tu-shih-k'ou; he recommended to suspend for a time the fairs of Mang'udai and Čing-batu until they returned the prisoners and punished the guilty; should Mang'udai and Čing-batu refuse to comply, the governor-general wanted their fairs abolished for good. The Altan-qan again used his influence and towards the end of the year, the Chinese got satisfaction and the market privileges were restored[88].

In 1584, a certain Ha-pu-shen, Čing-batu's younger brother, living north of Hsüan-fu, had lent his soldiers to Ch'ang-ang of Döen to raid Chinese villages in Liaotung. He lost his market privileges with the result, according to the *Shih-lu*, that he also lost face with the other princes. His privileges were restored only in 1586 after intervention of other Mongol princes and a solemn ceremony during which Ha-pu-shen promised from now on to respect the borders[89].

As we have seen in the foregoing pages, the third Shun-i-wang, Čürüke, went to Köke-nuur in 1589; soon he became involved in border clashes, or at least the Chinese believed that he did not do enough to stop the trouble. Upon request by the governor-general of Shensi, Čürüke's market privileges on the Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu borders were suspended and remained so for two years[90]. Since the Shun-i-wang was technically responsible for both the Tümed and the Ordos Mongols, it would seem that suspension or abolition of Čürüke's trading rights set the clock back to 1570 when there was neither tribute nor trade. But things had developed too far for such a drastic reversal : the Chinese carefully noted that only the "tribe" of Čürüke was affected, not those who had remained in their own territories and had given no reason for

[88] *Mok.* 8. 434, 442, 443; *Shen SL* (101) 2161, 2202, 2214.

[89] *Mok.* 8. 518, 520, 534, 549; *Man.* 4. 82; *Shen SL* (102) 2829, 2835; (103) 2929, 2989-90, 3061. A biographical note in WLWKL 8. 28-29 relates many events in detail.

[90] *Mok.* 9. 27, 29; *Shen SL* (106) 4197, 4199.

complaint[91]. Čürüke's privileges were restored in the summer of 1592 : after returning from Köke-nuur, he won back Chinese favor by extraditing some Mongols who for years had been living within the borders of the Ming empire and then for some reasons that are not too clear, had fled back to Mongolia[92].

During the 1590s, the Ordos Mongols, or at least some of them, were a constant source of irritation for Chinese border officials, with the result that subsidies and market rights were repeatedly abolished and restored, although there is considerable confusion regarding the details of events. When in the spring of 1590, two chieftains, Ming'ai and Üijeng, after many years of exemplary behavior began to harass the borders, the Ministry of the Army upon reports from Shensi, recommended to cut off their market privileges until they came to their senses again. It is not clear if this measure was put into effect. At any rate, towards the end of the year, the Ministry wrote that the governor of Yen-sui district had reported that the supreme leader of Ordos Bušuγtu and two other chieftains Jongtulai and Ming'ai had declared themselves ready to pay fines, and return Chinese prisoners, and had presented a petition to have their markets and rewards restored, which the Ministry recommended to grant. In the second half of 1591, we learn that upon request by the governor-general of Shensi, Jongtulai's and Ming'ai's subsidies were suspended once more in retaliation for excessive demands and border violations. This suspension no doubt also included all market privileges[93].

Early in 1592, we hear of new disturbances in the vicinity of Yü-lin, Shensi, caused by Ming'an, Tümei, and others; but during Chinese counterattacks the Ordos suffered heavy losses and Ming'an himself was killed. A little later, new raids by Jongtulai were reported and his markets must have been suspended again, for in July, 1592, we read that a Mongol princess by the

[91] *Mok.* 9. 37, 102, et passim; *Shen SL* (106) 4215, 4425.

[92] *Mok.* 9. 143, 157-158; *Shen SL* (107) 4582, 4610. Serruys 59. 273-274.

[93] *Mok.* 9. 3-4, 51, 125; *Shen SL* (106) 4134, 4247, 4501.

name of Sayiqan-ǰu, J̌ongtulai's and "Ming's" privileges were once more restored. The Chinese had every reason for doing so for in the meantime a mutiny had broken out in Ning-hsia the leader of which, an officer of Mongol ancestry, eagerly tried to enlist the support of the Ordos Mongols[94]. The Ordos, however, remained faithful to the Ming, at least in the sense that they failed to ally themselves with the rebellious garrison of Ning-hsia, but it is evident that the Ming Court in its decisions regarding the Ordos Mongols could not dismiss the possibility of such an alliance.

Surprisingly many Mongol ladies were very influential in political affairs, and it is interesting to note that the ladies mostly favored peaceful relations with the Chinese. We have just mentioned princess Sayiqan-ǰu. Several influential princesses of the Tümed were equally "pro-Chinese". Another princess of the Ordos with the name of Čečen-beyiǰi was instrumental in withholding Ordos support from the rebels of Ning-hsia[95]. She was the widow of Čečen-qung tayiǰi, the leading nobleman of the Ordos who had done so much to propagate Lamaism in Southern Mongolia. Čečen-beyiǰi is mentioned again in the *Shih-lu* under the date of February 28, 1593 : she interceded for a number of princes of Ordos, including the aforementioned J̌ongtulai when they apologized for border violations and hoped that the fairs would be restored. At least two of the princes listed had shown sympathy for and given support to the Ning-hsia rebels, at least indirectly, by carrying out raids of their own. The petition put the Chinese in a dilemma, and they decided to restore the market and tribute privileges only after some rebels, who apparently had fled to their territories, were handed over[96].

[94] *Mok.* 9. 136, 138, 152, 160, 171; *Shen SL* (107) 4542, 4551, 4556, 4596, 4613-14, 4637. Ming'an ∿ Mingγan who was killed by the Chinese is called Ming'ai ∿ Mingγai by Saγang-sečen (Schmidt 29. 208-209) and also in the WLWKL 14. 188-190. There may have been more persons bearing these names, resulting in a certain confusion. Serruys 58. 58. Since a Mingγan or Mingγai had been killed, the "Ming" of July, 1592, must be another Mingγan or Mingγai.

[95] *Mok.* 9. 159; *Shen SL* (107) 4611-12.

[96] *Mok.* 9. 200-201; *Shen SL* (107) 4771.

In spite of various pressures and interventions no permanent peace came to the Shensi and Kansu borders : the Ordos alternately raided them and wanted peaceful relations. Early in 1597, the government deliberated whether to trust them and readmit them or not. And again in 1601[97]. In March 1602 we read once more that the Ordos Mongols had been readmitted after then years of suspension of the fairs. The meaning apparently is that for ten years no lasting solution had been found. As the emperor had ordered as early as 1597, it was decided to accept tribute and open fairs on a year to year basis, and only those who had caused no trouble would be admitted[98].

The situation of the southern borders of Kansu most of the time was equally confused : fairs were regularly suspended but to be restored soon thereafter. However suspension was not always a very effective weapon since local border officials often prefered to connive at continuation of trade rather than face intensified trouble[99]. Needless to say that with the growing might of the Manchus in the northeast, the Ming Court could not but pay less and less attention to those problems of far away regions; yet one gains the impression that in Liaotung the Chinese suspended the fairs less frequently and for shorter periods than along the Sino-Mongol borders; for example, K'ai-yüan markets were still in operation in 1603 despite serious difficulties with Nurhaci[100], and, as has already been indicated, the markets of K'ai-yüan and Yung-tien are still listed in the report from June 1612.

MARKET PERIODS

In 1571, Wang Ch'ung-ku insisted that the tribute be presented

[97] *Mok.* 9. 311-312, 378-379; *Shen SL* (109) 5705, 5706; (112) 6758-59.
[98] *Mok.* 9. 381, 382, 385, 397, 446; *Shen SL* (112) 6900-01, 6911, 7007; (114) 7692.
[99] *Mok.* 9. 227, 285, 296; *Shen SL* (108) 5111-12; (109) 5464, 5509.
[100] *Mok.* 9. 421; *Shen SL* (113) 7345.

as early as possible in spring when Mongol horses, which were not stable fed, were at their weakest and as a result presented less danger of an armed attack; the fairs were to be held on the occasion of the presentation of the tribute[101]. That year, however, it was inevitable that an exception should be made, and in fact, as we have seen, the first horse fairs in Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu were held between the last days of the fifth lunar month and the first half of the eighth lunar month, or in western reckoning between the end of June and the first days of September; and those of Shensi Province, a little later. This regulation that the Mongols bring their horses before the new grass began to grow in the steppe contradicts somewhat another principle that they bring only strong and well fed horses to the fairs.

As a matter of fact, the fairs were never held that early : in the summer (August 18) of 1572 there were complaints that the Mongols were late coming to the fairs, and Chinese officials, suspicious as always, thought they discovered disturbing signs in those delays. We are told that the qan's son Sengge qung-tayiǰi, from the sixth to the ninth day of the sixth lunar month (July 15-18) sold 410 horses at Hsin-p'ing-p'u, which was not as early as expected, but neither was it later than the previous year. The qan himself failed to send his men to the Ta-t'ung fair at Te-sheng-p'u at the prearranged time; but he, together with Dolô-tümen, Uyiγurčin, and others, sent men to the Shui-ch'üan fair, which according to the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* was held from June 9

101 The WLWKL presents the facts a little differently : according to this work, the tribute presentation was to be made at the end of the second lunar month and the markets were to be held during the first days of the fifth lunar month, but should the Mongols not arrive in time, a further opportunity must not be given them. Then follows the reason for this rule : "generally speaking, early in spring the new grass has not yet started to grow and Mongol horses are weak. In our country, the land is bare for a distance of a thousand *li* and the Caitiffs can find nothing to steal. But in summer, the Mongols would suffer too much from the heat, while on our borders the water has begun to flow, the grass is green, and if we have the horses by that time we have something to feed them with". WLWKL 8. 159-160.

to 18. The Te-sheng fair was postponed until October 5 – 15. In the meantime, another fair was also held at Shou-k'ou-p'u during the seventh lunar month (August 8 – September 6)[102]. On October 6, 1572, a supervising secretary of the Ministry of the Army noted that originally the fairs had been scheduled for the third lunar month but had been delayed until the eighth month, an ominous sign in his eyes not to be lightly dismissed[103]! Similar warnings were to be made regularly later on. We do not know when the Shensi fairs were held, but the governor-general on September 12 reported on business transacted at the Yen-sui (Hung-shan) and Ning-hsia (Ch'ing-shui-ying) fairs[104]. The reports on the Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu fairs were not made until much later, namely November 2 and December 27[105]. It is interesting to note, however, that the report from November 2 again urged that the fairs not be held later than the end of spring.

The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* introducing events of 1574, states that whereas in 1572, the Hsin-p'ing fair took place during the seventh lunar month (August 8 – September 6; we have seen that according to the *Shih-lu*, the fair was held from July 15 to 18, but it is not impossible that a second fair was held later), in 1573 it took place during the eighth lunar month (August 27 – September 25); the Chang-chia-k'ou fair in 1572 took place in the ninth lunar month (October 7 – November 5), but in 1573, in the tenth lunar month (October 26 – November 23). Then the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* goes on with a quotation from a memorial by Ch'en Wen-sui 陳文遂 in which we read the following lines : "The Great Caitiffs have succeeded in delaying business until fall when their horses are fat and their bows strong, while our fields, covered with harvest, present something the Caitiffs could profit

102 *Mok.* 8. 87, 91; *Shen SL* (96) 67, 83; WLWKL 8. 151, 156. The complaints of August 12, 1572, seem to be the same as those recorded in the WLWKL 8. 157-158, under the year 1573. Only the name of the author is written with a different character.

103 *Man.* 3. 600; *Shen SL* (96) 182.

104 *Mok.* 8. 100; *Shen SL* (96) 141.

105 *Mok.* 8. 108-109, 122; *Shen SL* (96) 199,266.

from! So much so that under various pretexts they ask for delays; and they get postponements until winter when our soldiers lose their fingers (from frost bite) while the Caitiffs are exceedingly able to withstand the cold. With much insistence they request markets and mostly get their wishes; when the horses enter China (during winter time) when there is no green grass, many die. Why do we always fall into the Caitiff's trap without ever waking up (to the real situation)? At this time, the fourth lunar has already drawn to an end, yet the tribute horses have not arrived: an order should be issued telling the Alta(n-qan) to command the various Chieftains that the tribute must not be later then this (fifth) lunar month; as to the fairs, we want them to be concluded by the sixth lunar month."[106] Ch'en's statements about the cold, and its effect upon the soldiers, etc., are much overdrawn, but his memorial is a clear proof that he took a dim view of the Mongol horse fairs.

All this does not indicate when the fairs were actually held in 1574, but a few pages later, the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* comes back to the same problem and supplies the following dates : Hsin-p'ing opened on the twenty-eighth of the fifth lunar month (June 16, 1574); Shou-k'ou opened on the twenty-ninth of the fifth lunar month and lasted until the ninth of the following month (June 17 - 27); Chang-chia-k'ou opened on the fourth day of the seventh month (July 21), and a second fair ran from the fourteenth to the twenty-sixth of the eighth month (August 29 – September 10); Shui-ch'üan opened on the thirteenth of the ninth month and ran until the seventeenth (September 27 – October 1); finally, the Te-sheng fair opened on the first of the tenth month (October 15)[107].

In 1575, the fairs of Shou-k'ou, Hsin-p'ing, and Chang-chia-k'ou

[106] WLWKL 8. 160. The summary of Ch'en's memorial "in seven points" (the WLWKL says "eight points") may be found in the *Shih-lu* under the date of June 3, 1574 (*Mok.* 8. 195-196; *Shen SL* (197) 632-633). The last point reads "Fix the dates for tribute and fairs. In the fifth lunar month the tribute horses must be presented; the fairs must be finished by the sixth month."

[107] WLWKL 8. 164.

were held during the sixth lunar month (July 8 – August 5), each, of course, lasting only a few days; Shui-ch'üan was held during the ninth lunar month (October 4 – November 1), and Te-sheng, during the tenth month (November 2 – December 1). The following year, the four fairs of Hsin-p'ing, Shou-k'ou, Shui-ch'üan, and Te-Sheng were held in the seventh and eighth lunar months (July 26 – September 21)[108]. Chang-chia-k'ou is not mentioned.

In 1577 all fairs were held in the fifth lunar month (May 18 – June 15)[109]. We have no information for 1578, but in 1579, all fairs : Chang-chia-k'ou, Te-sheng, Shou-k'ou, Hsin-p'ing, and Shui-ch'üan were held in the fifth lunar month (May 25 – June 23)[110]. It should be noted that the author of the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* is in this connection concerned only with the Tümed Mongols; it does not follow that the Shensi fairs for the Ordos took place at the same time, nor is there evidence that the Ordos fairs were held much later, at least during those years. In another passage, however, the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* refers to the 1586 fair of Hung-shan as held in the eleventh lunar month (December 10, 1586 – January 8, 1587)[111].

From the above information it appears that the Mongols did not come to the fairs as early and as regularly as the Chinese

[108] WLWKL 8. 165.
[109] WLWKL 8. 167.
[110] WLWKL 8. 172.
[111] WLWKL 14. 140. It was at this particular fair that a number of Ordos Mongols contracted smallpox and shortly afterwards died. The matter had its implications since many Mongols suspected the Chinese of having poisoned the men with wine. The author of the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* makes the remark that small pox was unknown in Mongolia until a number of them contracted the disease in 1550 during their invasion of Shih-chou 石 in Southern Shansi. We find the same statement in the *Ming-shih* (239.IV.2726b). But 1550 obviously is a mistake. The great invasions of Southern Shansi took place in 1541 and 1542 (WLWKL 14. 135, 136, 140, 153, 157). Whether Mongols ever contracted the disease at other fairs is not known. It is a fact that Mongols were particularly susceptible to the disease whenever they came in contact with the Chinese. Under the Manchu dynasty this was also recognized, and princes who had not had the disease were excused from their customary visits to the Court at Peking.

would have wished. A *Shih-lu* passage in the entry of April 21, 1587, exposing Chinese malpractices, speaks of the Mongols assembling at the fairs in fall and in winter, which seems to indicate that the tendency to postpone the fairs until the second half of the year, and even towards the very end of the year, became more pronounced as time went on[112]. However one should also add that the evil effects of those delays so gloomily foretold by some officials did not materialize[113].

GOODS BOUGHT AND SOLD

We can have no accurate idea of the importance of trade relations without a discussion of the kinds and the amounts of goods bought and sold on the Mongol fairs. As has been pointed out, the name *Ma-shih* "Horse Fair" indicates only what from the official point of view was the main article : horses bought from the Mongols to supply the Chinese armies. No doubt, horses purchased either by the government or private traders constituted the most important item, but Chinese purchases were not confined to horses. Unfortunately since the government was solely interested in horses, official records are practically silent on all other things; we find very little information on other items imported from Mongolia, or on articles purchased by the Mongols.

112 *Mok.* 8. 611-612; *Shen SL* (104) 3417-18.

113 Almost every year, the *Shih-lu* records reports by governors-general or governors on the fairs held during the year but rarely do these reports contain clear indications as to the time itself. In July, 1591, Hsiao Ta-heng, then governor-general of Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung, speaks of the "fifth lunar month" as the regular time for the fairs (*Mok.* 9. 91; *Shen SL* (106) 4389). Still in 1591, in order to prevent the Mongols from going westwards to Kökenuur region, an official of Ning-hsia recommended not to hold the (Shensi?) fairs before the tenth month because the Mongols were likely to start on their trip in the seventh or eighth month and prospects of profits from the fairs might possibly make them change their minds (*Mok.* 9. 103; *Shen SL* (106) 4428). From another passage from July, 1608, we learn that the Hsüan-fu fairs were held in fall (*Mok.* 9. 535; *Shen SL* (116) 8465).

At Te-sheng in 1571, the government purchased 1370 horses for a total value of 10,545 taels of silver; private buyers purchased a total of 6000 head of horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, and sheep, but no breakdown of this figure is supplied nor are prices indicated. The "comfort" moneys for presents and entertainment amounted to 981 taels. At Hsin-p'ing, the government purchased 726 horses for 4253 taels, and private buyers purchased 3000 horses, mules, cattle, and sheep. The expenses for entertainment, etc. amounted to 561 taels. At Chang-chia-k'ou, the government bought 1993 horses for 15,277 taels of silver; private merchants bought 9000 horses, mules, cattle, and sheep. Entertainment cost 800 taels. At Shui-ch'üan-ying, the government purchased 2941 horses at a cost of 26,400 taels. Private merchants bought a total of 4000 horses, mules, cattle, and sheep. Entertainment cost 1500 taels[114]. In another list of goods offered by the Mongols, besides

[114] *Mok.* 8. 41-42; *Mu SL* (95) 1492. Ch'ü Chiu-ssu in his WLWKL 8. 142-143 has slightly different figures : Te-sheng : 1370 horses purchased by the government; 6784 horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, and sheep purchased by local officers and private merchants; total : 8154 head. The 6784 possibly represent the total of the 6000 head bought by private traders plus 784 bought by the officers. Hsin-p'ing : 726 horses bought by the government, and 3233 horses, mules, etc. purchased by local officers and private traders; total : 3959 head (the text reads 3559, evidently a misprint). Again, the 3233 may represent the total of 3000 horses bought by private merchants and 233 by the officers. Chang-chia-k'ou : 1993 horses purchased by the government; 72 oxen (屯 主 牛) for agricultural colonies, 772 horses purchased by governmental troops, 6912 horses, donkeys, etc., bought by private traders. Total : 9749 head. Here the discrepancy between the *Shih-lu* figures and the WLWKL figures is not easy to explain. We should mention, however, that according to the WLWKL *(ibid.)* after the conclusion, Kündüli-qan (i.e. the qan's younger brother, known as the Old-Bâtur) and Sengge qung-tayiǰi requested an additional fair at Tu-shih-k'ou, which was refused on account of its isolation but they were given permission to go to their original fairs of Hsin-p'ing and Chang-chia-k'ou, where they sold 700 more horses. This may partly account for the higher figures in the WLWKL than in the *Shih-lu.* Shui-ch'üan-ying : 2941 horses bought by the government, and 4451 horses, mules, etc., bought by private traders; total : 7392 head (7391 in the text is a misprint). We shall come back to these figures later when discussing prices.

The fact that mules were regularly sold on the fairs disposes of the theory that the Mongols bred no mules. Yet it remains true that mules were only now and then presented as tribute either by the Mongols or by the Jürčen,

horses, cattle, sheep, mules, and donkeys, we find : horse hair *(ma-i)*, sheep skins, fur coats (and other things)[115].

At the horse fair of Shui-ch'üan-ying in 1572, apart from 2378 horses bought by the government, private traders acquired 2209 horses, donkeys, mules cattle, and sheep, 114 fur coats, and 1490 pounds of horse hair. At Te-sheng, in addition to 3562 horses acquired by the government, private merchants bought a total of 1198 horses cattle, donkeys, and sheep, and 591 pounds of horse hair[116]. In other words, the Ordos and Tümed Mongols sold more or less the same sort of goods as the Eastern Mongols and the Jürčen on the Liaotung horse fairs, except that there was very little fur and no wood.

What did the Mongols get from China ? As I have indicated, Chinese payments for Mongol tribute horses, and the return presents sent to tributary princes consisted mainly of luxury articles : silks, satins, costly garments, etc. Articles of daily use are rarely mentioned in connection with the tribute. On the horse fairs, however, foodstuffs, cheap textiles, ordinary manufactures, and various articles of daily use are more in evidence. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* describing preparations being made for the first fairs of 1571, quotes from a report by army commanders; these officers state that saltpetre *(hsiao-huang)*, copper and iron, helmets, and armor, and all cutting weapons are prohibited articles; they also insist that Mongols coming to the fairs may carry no weapons or armor, then they list the articles which the Chinese can offer to them : satin and thin silk, cotton cloth, and coarse silk,

which suggests that there never were many of them. Saγang-sečen in his chronicle (Schmidt 29. 72-73) relates how Činggis-qan, in order to teach his brothers a lesson, through magic changed himself into an old man riding a grey mule. This does not necessarily mean that the Mongols of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries bred mules, but it certainly means that Saγang-sečen had seen them in Mongolia. It remains strange that the Mongols never had a native word for "mule" but used the Chinese loanword *la'usa*, *laγusa*, and so did the Jürčen.

115 WLWKL 8. 122.

116 WLWKL 8. 151-152, 156.

(raw) cotton, needles and thread, changed-shuttle *(kai-chi)* (cloth), combs, rice and salt, preserved fruit, (three-) shuttle cloth, otter skins *(shui-tai)*, and *yang-p'i-chin* 羊皮金[117]. Two shorter lists also incorporated in the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* include iron pots[118], but a list in the *Ta-Ming hui-tien* excludes them along with saltpetre, iron, steel, and "other forbidden articles"[119]. Such contradictions reflect a state of indecision prevailing at first; as we shall see shortly, after a brief period of hesitation, pots were sold here as regularly as in Liaotung. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* further tells us how Wang Ch'ung-ku had a list of goods drawn up in preparation of the fairs : afraid that not enough merchants would attend the first fairs with the result that not enough goods would be available to meet the needs of the Mongols, Wang wanted money from various governmental agencies and army funds to be set aside to pay for 2000 horses at 12 taels of silver apiece : this sum would serve to buy such articles as silk, (three-) shuttle cloth, otter furs, and *yang-p'i-chin*, to pay for the horses. But along with saltpetre, steel and iron, clothes with the *mang*-dragon design are listed as forbidden[120]. A report from 1606 from Ning-hsia which we shall have to refer to again later on mentions hides, preserved fruit, and *p'i-chin*[121]. Since Mongolia itself exported hides[122], something one could expect of a nation of horse and cattle breeders, it would seem to follow that the hides resold to the Mongols were finished products, tanned or dressed in a way not usually followed in Mongolia. The *p'i-chin* of this passage must be the same thing as the *yang-p'i-chin* mentioned above, but I am not so sure as to the nature of this article, probably some sort of gold leaf appliqué on sheepskin[123].

117 WLWKL 8. 122.
118 WLWKL 8. 124.
119 TMHT 130. 5b (1849a).
120 WLWKL 8. 144
121 *Mok.* 9. 387; *Shen SL* (112) 6913.
122 WLWKL 8. 123.
123 This was suggested to me by Mrs. E-tu Zen Sun in a letter from September 27, 1965. It may be interesting to note that gold and silver

Chinese preserves seem to have been a delicacy very much appreciated by non-Chinese. The narrative of the Persian embassy to China of 1420-1421 mentions preserves several times, and all the members of this embassy seem to have liked them.

It is a sort of a surprise that otter skins were sold to the Mongols. As we have seen in a previous chapter, otter was imported from Manchuria and Eastern Mongolia. As I have indicated elsewhere, the Western Mongols (Oyirad) imported quite a lot of furs either as tribute or to be sold on the Chinese market, but as far as I know, otter is never mentioned, The fact that the term *qaliγu* "otter ' is regularly found in Southern Mongolia in place names, and that otter fur was used to adorn their clothing[124], shows that otter was not unknown, though not numerous enough to allow a sizable export to China. But as in the case of the hides, what the Mongols wanted from China was not plain otter fur but furs dressed or dyed in a special manner. We may mention here that "otter skins with red tassels" had been sent to the Mongol "king" Beg-arslan in July, 1463; it was Beg-arslan who had requested them[125]. Those otter skins and *yang-p'i-chin* were products of Shantung, the modern Hopei region, and South China : according to the *Wan-li wu-kung lu*, in the spring of 1572, the authorities of Ta-t'ung sent agents to purchase them at Lin-ch'ing (Shantung) and Ho-hsi-wu (Hopei)[126]; and in July, 1589, a *Shih-lu* passage speaks of satins, shuttle-cloth, otter skins, and fox purchased in Hukuang for the markets of Shan-hsi[127]. Finally let

appliqué is mentioned several times in Japanese sumptuary regulations : Shively 65. 130, 132. Morohashi, *Dai Kanwa Jiten* 9. 54a explains *yang-p'i-chin as* 切 ナ 蒔 *nashiji*, a kind of lacquer technique (see K. Herbert, *Oriental Lacquer, Art and Technique*, London, 1962, 336) but it is very doubtful that any sort of lacquer objects were sent to Mongolia, Radloff mentions gold plate on clothing found in graves in Siberia (Radliff 93.II. 137).

124 Hsiao Ta-heng, speaking of the Tümed of the latter part of the sixteenth century, mentions such ornamentations (*Pei-Lu feng-su* 15; Serruys 45. 145, and Mostaert 41.329a).

125 *Mok.* 3. 691; *Ying SL* (38) 7076. We may also mention that dyed or painted ermine has been found in Siberia, Radloff 93.II. 136.

126 WLWKL 8. 147.

127 *Mok.* 8. 700; *Shen SL* (105) 3972.

us note here in passing that the *San-Yün ch'ou-tsu k'ao* lists otter as one of the articles to be used as payment for Mongol horses on the Ta-t'ung fairs. Indeed this work notes that horses were rated in categories according to the articles used to pay for them : silver, *mang*-satin (forbidden in Wang Ch'ung-ku's time), gold (-woven?) satin, tiger skins, leopard skins, shuttle-cloth, *chen-yüan-ch'ien-yü-fen* satin (真遠錢羽分), and *chung-lu-ch'ou* (中路紬)[128].

After what has been said in the foregoing pages, there can be no doubt about private business being heavily engaged in the horse fairs. According to the *Wan-li wu-kung lu,* the censor of Ta-t'ung, Liu Ying-ch'i writing to the Altan-qan in 1571, told him that in previous times purchases of horses had been (mostly?) financed by the government, but that now purchases would be made by the people and on a strictly private basis; as a result, should Mongol horses prove to be of too poor quality to allow a profit, nobody would purchase anything in coming years[129]. There seems to have been little danger that the horse fairs might collapse through lack of interest on the part of traders. Indeed, the same author a little later notes that the common people who traded with the Mongols made substantial profits, and he gives the following examples : for one bolt of shuttle cloth one got a sheep, and for a cotton dress, a fur coat; they traded old clothes and a variety of goods for horses and cattle[130]. In Sengge's biography, we read a little differently : "Qung-tayiji (i.e. Sengge) went to Hsin-p'ing-p'u to trade with the people and sold several hundred of head of cattle and sheep : for one sheep, as a rule he got two bolts of Chinese cotton cloth; for one head of cattle, as a rule he got two taels' worth of cotton and other goods. In sum, we issued a negligible amount of cotton cloth, while (a goodly number of)

128 SYCTK 2. 19ab. Actually there are only seven categories listed. The sixth category seems to comprise a sub-division of black cloth; the text is not very clear.

129 WLWKL 8. 133.

130 WLWKL 8. 144.

cattle and sheep reverted to the Chinese who realized handsome profits (lit. double and five-fold."[131]

Liu Ying-ch'i proposed that traders desiring to attend the fairs registered in advance with the authorities. The Mongols, probably, had to do the same and report the number of animals and the amount of other goods they had for sale, We have seen that they had to make such a report in Liaotung. Liu also wanted brokers (*k'uai-jen* 侩 人) to set prices without cheating the Mongols or showing any contempt for them[132]. The reader will have rembered that back in 1438, brokers were also used in Ta-t'ung, and most probably their services were needed everywhere.

The problem of whether or not to sell iron kettles to the Mongols has been mentioned several times. If at the horse fairs of 1571 some iron kettles had been sold, as late as June, 1572, the Chinese still seem to have had no definite policy in this matter. On June 30, Wang Ch'ung-ku forwarded four requests of the Altan-qan, the third one of which was that the Chinese sell him iron pots. Wang noted that "broad kettles" *(kuang-kuo)* when melted down yielded only half their original weight in metal which even so could not be reshaped into weapons; Lu 滷 kettles[133] were crudely made and when melted down only three tenths of the original iron could be recovered. Wang was of the opinion that these two varieties, "broad kettles" and "Lu kettles", might be safely sold to the Mongols on condition, however, that broken pots be returned before new ones were issued to them. Wang further proposed that all along the borders and at any time small quantities of cotton, silk, rice, beans, and other products be sold to the Mongols. This seems to be essentially the idea of the "continuous markets" mentioned above. Liang Wen-meng, a supervising secretary of the Ministry of the Army who on previous occasions had not favored the new policy regarding the Mongol

131 WLWKL 8. 186.

132 WLWKL 8. 145.

133 In Chapter III (note 69) we have seen that the Ta-t'ung army depended on Lu-chou (Lu-an in Southern Shansi) for its iron implements and weapons. No doubt, these Lu-kettles came from the same area.

fairs, now commenting on Wang's proposals, observed that since the Mongols needed pots for cooking, it would do no harm to sell them. But after deliberations with the Ministries of Rites and Revenue, the Ministry of the Army decided that both "broad kettles" and "Lu kettles", no matter how crudely fashioned, remained prohibited articles; the prohibition however would not apply to copper kettles : "indeed, formerly, the Caitiffs of Kansu had been observed to cook in copper pots, which were also used to sound the alarm during the night"[134].

On October 28, 1574, Fang Feng-shih memorialized that the Mongols had presented the regular tribute and on that occasion had presented a petition that the tribute envoys be permitted to travel to the capital (a privilege never granted before and apparently rejected now; at least the request was ignored); and secondly that they be allowed to buy iron kettles and agricultural tools. The Ministry of Revenue replied that agricultural tools could not be exported but that following the regulations applying to the Three Commanderies, a certain amount of iron pots might be sold. The Mongol request and the Ministry's reply seem to imply that the question of iron kettles had not yet been solved satisfactorily. But I do not think that this was the case. First, copper kettles mentioned in the foregoing lines are never again

134 *Mok.* 8. 73-75, 97; *Mu SL* (95) 1686-88; *Shen SL* (96) 127. According to the WLWKL 8. 149-150, it was first decided to let the Mongols have "broad kettles" like the ones sold at Chi-chou and in Liaotung, but some objected that these were too expensive and sold below the price. Then some one proposed to sell the Mongols a kind of kettles called *sha-kuo* "sand-kettles" (In Inner Mongolia, the Chinese farmers used to call *sha-kuo* little tea pots in very thin and brittle pottery). The Minister of the Army, Yang Po 楊博, proposed to sell copper kettles, since from his experience in Kansu, he knew that the Mongols used much copper any way. Finally, if I understand the WLWKL passage correctly, the decision was reached to sell the Mongols Lu-kettles any way, for the very reason that they were difficult to smelt and yielded little metal. In a letter written to Wang Ch'ung-ku, Kao Kung recommended to sell "broad kettles" instead of Lu-kettles, but on a very limited basis. *Fu-Jung chi-shih* 38-39; *K'ou-pei san-t'ing chih* 12. 37ab; *Ch'a-ha-erh sheng t'ung-chih* 20. 14b.

referred to and do not seem to have been sold regularly or in appreciable numbers. In my opinion, the 1574 request was not made because up till now no kettles had been sold but because the Mongols wanted agricultural tools to be included in the permission. In the official thinking of the Ming Government, agriculture did not convey a notion of economic and political stability, but was associated with the many Chinese "deserters", or "traitors" settled in Southern Mongolia – an intolerable situation in official eyes – and therefore the Ministry carefully separated the two issues : that of iron kettles which had been sold before, and that of agricultural implements which could not be permitted to go to Mongolia[135].

The conclusion of the 1574 fairs is reported by the governor-general Fang Feng-shih, and entered in the *Shih-lu* under the date of December 19[136]. In his report, the governor-general again touches upon the Mongol request for iron kettles and agricultural tools, but taking a slightly different position, he maintains that the Mongols knew very well that these articles were on the forbidden list and that they persisted in their requests in order to embarrass the Chinese. This reflection of the governor-general's probably is to be taken with a grain of salt. At any rate, he states himself that with the emperor's permission, the horse fairs of the two districts of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu had acquired several

[135] *Mok.* 8. 209; *Shen SL* (97) 727. According to the WLWKL 8. 164, the tribute of that year was presented in the eleventh lunar month, evidently an error. In the *Shih-lu*, Fang's memorial is entered under the date of the 14th day of the tenth month, probably the date of its arrival at the capital. That the Ministry of Revenue had nothing to say regarding the tribute envoys was because that question was beyond its competency. Only the Ministries of the Army and Rites could rule on this. I have found no indications that plows and other agricultural tools were sold in later years. As we know, the Mongols of the Three Commanderies and the Jürčen were able to buy them regularly. It would be surprising if the Tümed could not do the same. At any rate, the Chinese farmers in southern Mongolia in the second half of the sixteenth century most certainly had ways of getting such tools from China as they were unable to manufacture themselves.

[136] *Mok.* 8. 216; *Shen SL* (98) 750.

hundred kettles to be sold to the Mongols as part of the payment of their horses; but he adds that the Mongols still preferred payment in the form of silks and cottons, so that on the two fairs of Te-sheng and Shui-ch'üan only a total of less than three hundred kettles had been disposed of. Fang has nothing to say in his report on agricultural tools being sold, which is not surprising since we know that these had been explicitly ruled out by the Ministry of Revenue. Moreover, it should be noted, when Fang Feng-shih states that the Mongols preferred silks and cottons to kettles, he is speaking of two fairs in particular : at Te-sheng and Shui-ch'üan the Mongols had not purchased as many kettles as the Chinese had anticipated. But the Mongols certainly had purchased kettles at other fairs, and as the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* seems to say, in larger amounts. Indeed, this work furnishes interesting additional information concerning rates of exchange and other matters : the Mongols requested iron kettles and agricultural tools with such instance that the governor-general, considering that the Altan-qan was getting on in years and had become tired of war[137], following the regulations applying to the Three Commanderies and Qamil,[138] sold kettles as part of the payment of the horses : one big kettle was the equivalent of one bolt of fine silk; one medium-sized kettle, of four bolts of shuttle-cloth; one small kettle, of two bolts of shuttle-cloth. The author of the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* then confirms that at Te-sheng and Shui-ch'üan, the Mongols preferred textiles and took only 300 kettles, with the result that a maximum was set of 500 kettles a year[139]. Whether this maximum quota is for the two fairs only, or for all the fairs, is not clear.

[137] The Altan-qan was born in 1507, and thus was 67 in 1574;

[138] As has already been mentioned, tribute missions from Qamil, on their way home were entitled to buy a small amount of cattle, sheep, iron kettles, and plowshares in Kansu. TMHT 112. 4b (1654b). It must be this rule Fang Feng-shih is referring to here.

[139] WLWKL 8. 164.

HORSES BOUGHT

As has already been indicated, horses were the most important item purchased at the Mongol fairs, at least from the point of view of the government, and most of the information found in the *Shih-lu* concerns horses. From the point of view of the Mongols, too, horses were the most valuable item they could offer for Chinese manufactured goods. Since the Chinese needed horses, and the Mongols had horses to offer, one would expect that here was an opportunity for useful collaboration between the two nations, yet many Chinese soon became alarmed at the growing volume of the horse trade. Often the opinion was voiced that a ceiling should be put on the import of horses, and indeed attempts seem to have been made from time to time to impose such a limitation, but with very little success. Some Chinese documents give the impression that the Mongols tried to unload as many horses as they possibly could and thus threatened to exhaust the treasury. Yet at the same time other documents expose the poor state of the armies and the sore lack of horses. There are also indications that the government resold a number of horses at a profit. At the same time, we are frequently told that the Mongol horses were of extremely low quality and many soon died. Were these disparaging remarks based on fact, or were they owing to a facile attitude of contempt for anything Barbarian ? If, as claimed, so many Mongol horses died, to what extent was this unfortunate situation due to maladministration in the army ? Indeed, it seem that the horses were poorly taken care of and most of the time losses had to be made up by the common soldiers who often found themselves in a hopeless situation. The facts being too complicated, we must limit ourselves to the increase of horses sold by the Mongols at the fairs without going into every possible ramification.

In 1571, the government purchased 1370, 726, 1993, and 2941 horses respectively at the four fairs of Te-sheng, Hsin-p'ing,

Chang-chia-k'ou, and Shui-ch'üan : a total of 7030 horses in the three districts of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi. As we have seen, private traders also bought large numbers of horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, and sheep, but we do not know the number of horses specifically. Our information about the horse fairs of Shensi Province is in every respect less complete than about those east of the Yellow River. The *Shih-lu*, although mentioning the conclusion of the horse fairs of 1571 in the districts of Yen-sui and Ning-hsia, gives no figures, but perhaps the figures of the fairs of 1572 may serve as an indicator : under the date of September 12, 1572, the *Shih-lu* records a report on the Shensi fairs : at the Yen-sui fair (Hung-shan) the government purchased over 1500 horses, while private traders bought a total of 1800 horses and mules; at the Ning-hsia fair (Ch'ing-shui-ying), the government acquired over 1500 horses and cattle, and private merchants, 600 horses[140]. Probably these figures from 1572 represent a small increase over the figures of 1571, at least judging from what happened in the other districts. Indeed, a report entered under the date of November 2, 1572, on the Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu fairs of that year, states that the fairs had been conducted in a peaceful way, although all had been held a little later than anticipated, and the volume of trade had slightly increased from last year; and some irregularities had occurred. The reporting official wanted orders to be issued to border officials to urge the Mongols to come to the markets no later than the end of spring, and that no new fairs must be opened over and above the existing ones of Te-sheng, Hsin-p'ing, and Chang-chia-k'ou[141]. The report, however, comprises no direct information as to the number of horses acquired in 1572. For

[140] *Mok.* 8. 100; *Shen SL* (96) 141.

[141] *Mok.* 8. 108-109; *Shen SL* (96) 199. The reporter seems to be speaking of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu only; that is why he does not mention the Shui-ch'üan-ying fair in Shan-hsi district.

this we have to turn to a comment from December 27, by the Ministry of the Army, on the November 2 report, or on a following one. This official comment tells us that the government bought a total of 8242 horses at the four markets of the three districts, an increase of 1212 horses for the government alone[142]. The ***Wan-li wu-kung lu***, referring to a later memorial presented by Fang Feng-shih, has different figures : at the Hsüan-fu fair (Chang-chia-k'ou) : 902 horses; at the two Ta-t'ung fairs (Hsin-p'ing and Te-sheng) : 4565; and at the Shan-hsi fair (Shui-ch'üan) : 2378[143]. The total is 7845, that is 937 less than the *Shih-lu* figure. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* contains more information : at Te-sheng alone, the government purchased 3562 horses. If we subtract this figure from the total of Ta-t'ung, we have 1003 bought at Hsin-p'ing, and Shou-k'ou. Of the 2378 horses bought at Shui-ch'üan, 700 "superior" horses were sent to the Court of Imperial Stud; the remaining 1678 were distributed to the various military camps[144]These are figures of 1572.

Fang Feng-shih's memorial also comprises the figures for 1573 and 1574 : according to him, in 1573, the government purchased 7505 horses on the Ta-t'ung fairs, 7810 at Chang-chia-k'ou, and 3988 at Shui-ch'üan-ying,[145], making a total of 19,303 horses. In 1574, the figures are as follows : 7670 for Ta-t'ung, 14,500 for Chang-chia-k'ou, and 5000 for Shui-ch'üan-ying, totaling 27,170[146]. This last figure is confirmed in general terms by the censor Ch'en Wen-sui who under the date of September 27, 1574, wrote that the number of horses had reached 30,000. Ch'en's figure could be no more than an approximation calculated on preliminary data; indeed at the time of his writing not all the fairs had been

142 *Mok.* 8. 122; *Shen SL* (96) 266.

143 WLWKL 8. 160-161.

144 WLWKL 8. 151, 156.

145 The TMHT 153. 17a (2139a) seems to say that from 1573 on only 1900 horses would be purchased in the Shan-hsi district for distribution to postal stations, but in the light of Fang Feng-shih's information, the TMHT statement probably is to be interpreted in this sense that of the horses bought in Shan-hsi district, every year 1900 would be distributed to the postal stations of that district.

146 WLWKL 8. 161. Since the author used the expression "*yu-ch'i*" and odd" for the three figures of 1573, the exact figures may be a little higher.

concluded (see above : Market Periods). However, Ch'en was of the opinion that the number of horses had grown too fast : there was difficulty in the distribution of the horses over the various military garrisons, and in the payments, and he wanted the importation of horses drastically limited to 20,000 per year for the three districts[147].

In four years, from 1571 to 1574, the number of horses imported by the government alone through the five horse fairs (Chang-chia-k'ou, Hsin-p'ing, Shou-k'ou, Te-sheng, and Shui-ch'üan-ying) of the three districts had grown from a mere 7030 to 27,170. Ch'en Wen-sui was not alone to become alarmed at this sharp increase. On January 12, 1575, a certain Ch'ai Hsiang 柴 祥 while stating that ever since 1570 there had been peace on the borders, something unheard of before, noted that the number of "tribute horses" had grown by leaps and bounds. It is especially the Hsüan-fu district that he had in mind, where the yearly import had increased to "over 10,000", costing China more than 100.000 taels of silver in silks; since, in addition, the horses (at least this is what he claimed) were of very low quality to the detriment of the common soldiers, who often had to make up for the losses of the same horses, he urged that a maximum quota be set beyond which border officials could not go even should the Mongols insist![148]!

On August 6 of the same year, the Minister of the Army recommended approval of a proposal made by Fang Feng-shih who wanted to freeze the number of horses as well as the prices at the following level : district of Hsüan-fu : 18,000 horses at 120,000 taels; district of Ta-t'ung : 10,000 horses at 70,000 taels; district of Shan-hsi : 6000 horses at 40,000 taels[149]. It is evident that Fang's proposal was presented at the Court much earlier than August 6, even before the fairs held that year between July and

147 *Mok.* 8. 205; *Shen SL* (97) 709.
148 *Mok.* 8. 220; *Shen SL* (98) 770.
149 *Mok.* 8. 249; *Shen SL* (98) 919; TMHT 153.17b (2139a).

December. In other words, Fang must have known in advance that the figures of 1575 would again exceed those of 1574. But how many horses were actually imported in 1575 is not indicated. Yet we have information from a much later date, namely 1591, that in 1575 Hsüan-fu district indeed purchased 18,000 horses at a cost of 120,000 taels[150], and thus we may presume that Ta-t'ung and Shan-hsi, too, reached or came close to the figures set by Fang-Feng-shih. Yet that even after that the danger of uncontroled growth remained real appears from a passage from March, 1576 : a supervising secretary of the Ministry of Revenue wrote that inspite of Fang Feng-shih's quota, the governor of the district of Shan-hsi had requested permission to spend an additional 5000 taels of silver; he figured that if this permission was granted, the districts of Ta-t'ung and Hsüan-fu would soon follow suit and ask for even larger sums of money[151]!

We have mentioned the horse fairs of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi only. What was the situation in Shensi Province ? Information is very scarce, but the same trends do not appear here; at least not in the early years. In 1572, at the Yen-sui fair, the government had bought 1500 odd horses, and private traders, 1800 odd horses and mules; at the Ning-hsia fair, the government had bought some 1500 horses and cattle, and private traders, 600 or so horses[152]. It is interesting that the government also purchased mules and cattle, but the total cannot have been high, and we may disregard them for the moment, and for the sake of convenience put the total of government purchases at 3000 horses. The *Shih-lu* entry of January 12, 1576, contains the following information regarding the 1575 (same lunar year) fairs : the government purchased a total of 2100 odd horses, and 50 head of cattle and sheep, while private individuals purchased a total of 22,000 odd horses, mules, cattle, and sheep[153]. Government

150 *Mok.* 9. 97; *Shen SL* (106) 4407.
151 *Mok.* 8. 266-267; *Shen SL* (98) 1072-73.
152 *Mok.* 8. 100; *Shen SL* (96) 141.
153 *Mok.* 8. 260; *Shen SL* (98) 1013.

purchases had fallen, but private purchases had grown.

Judging from repeated warnings and occasional figures, we reach the conclusion that over the years a steady increase was noticeable; this increase was due on the one hand to insistence by the Mongols who were after the profits, and on the other hand to reluctance of border officials to hold to a maximum figure: it seems to have been far easier to give in to Mongol demands than to argue with them! This unwillingness of local commanders to follow instructions from above and take a strong stand must be seen within the larger framework of the subsidies passed out by local officers to Mongol princes : these subsidies were only partly financed with funds from the central government; a large part came from funds raised locally and spent directly by officers on the scene as they saw fit, and they found it more convenient to let the subsidies slowly grow than to suffer the annoyance of persistent and importune demands, if not worse, We shall here review a few typical passages from the *Shih-lu* describing this steady growth of the volume of the horse fairs.

On October 16, 1578, an official from Chih-li, while extolling the happy results of the market policy inaugurated in 1570-1571, also stated that ever since the first opening of the fairs, the number of horses had steadily grown : the first year at the Hsüan-fu fair (Chang-chia-k'ou) fewer than 2000 horses had been purchased, but this year 35 or 36,000 horses had already been bought, and the final figures might well reach 40.000! The reporting official seeks the reason of this excessive increase of the Hsüan-fu market in the fact that whereas the Ta-t'ung and Shan-hsi fairs were attended by Mongols from the only one "tribe" controled by the Shun-i-wang, the Hsüan-fu market was attended by Mongols of at least two "great tribes", two "smaller tribes" and several other groups, with no one in overall control. This is no satisfactory explanation, because all princes were relatives of the Shun-i-wang, and at least technically responsible to him. A better explanation is the one which appears in the same document : the Mongols found in the horse fairs a better source of income than in border

raids and far from losing it were determined to exploit it to the fullest, and we have the interesting example of the enterprising Čing Bâtur (a nephew of the Altan-qan) who brought horses to the fairs on behalf of the "Eastern Caitiffs" (Tümen-qaγan and others who had no market privileges) and sold them on commission to the Chinese; then with Chinese goods acquired at the fairs he bought more horses from the Mongols, presumably living too far away to be familiar with the available opportunities, and drove them to the markets, too[154].

Whether because of incorrect information or through exaggeration for better effect, the figure 35 - 36,000 was not accurate. A comment by the Ministry of the Army from February 17, 1579, on a memorial by the governor-general Wu Tui who had succeeded Fang Feng-shih, puts the number of horses bought in Hsüan-fu district at 30,000[155].

If at first the Shensi markets did not show the same fast increase, by 1581 the horse fairs must have begun to grow too. Although we have no direct information regarding numbers of horses sold by the Mongols, on April 24, Hsiao Ta-heng, then governor of the district of Ning-hsia, wrote that judging by 1580 standards he would have a deficit for the current year's fairs[156]. And Ning-hsia was not alone : in July, 1581, the Ministry of the Army urged all border districts not to increase the subsidies and not to take any horses above the set quotas[157].

On January 1, 1585, a supervising secretary of the Ministry of the Army wrote that from inspection of the records it appeared that over the last three years, 104,400 horses had been imported through the horse fairs of the three military districts of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi at a cost of 920,000 taels of silver[158]. He considered this too much, yet if we remember that around 1579, the figure for Hsüan-fu alone was 30,000 horses, that

[154] *Mok.* 8. 372-374; *Shen SL* (100) 1702-04.
[155] *Mok.* 8. 384; *Shen SL* (100) 1751
[156] *Mok.* 8. 426; *Shen SL* (101) 2114.
[157] *Mok.* 8. 430-431; *Shen SL* (101) 2152.
[158] *Mok.* 8. 524; *Shen SL* (103) 2875.

in 1575, Ta-t'ung imported 10,000, and Shan-hsi, 6000 horses, we must conclude that after 1579, the growth had leveled off a little bit. This tapering off is indeed indicated by the following figures : in April, 1587, we are told that the total expenses for both horse fairs *and subsidies* were 80,000 taels for Hsüan-fu and 70,000 taels for Ta-t'ung[159]. At an average of 7 taels per horse, the total of horses would be 10,000 for Ta-t'ung and a little more for Hsüan-fu. Admittedly, an average of 7 taels is too high (see next chapter), but then the expenses for subsidies have to be taken into consideration, too.

In August 1588, the then governor-general Cheng Lo also urged strict limitation of the number of horses in order to keep down expenses : he wanted the Hsüan-fu quota not to exceed 30,000, and if possible to be reduced to 20,000; he further wanted a ceiling of 14,000 horses for Ta-t'ung, and 6000 for Shan-hsi[160]. In April 1591, the Ministry of Revenue proposed a series of measures, one being that since the number of horses imported through the three districts had grown to several times the original figure, a maximum total should be set not to be exceeded[161].

A report from August 1591 noted that while the number of horses for the Hsüan-fu fair in 1575 was 18,000 at a cost of 120,000 taels of silver, it had grown to 36,000 horses at an expense of 185,000 taels; and a little later we learn that by then Ta-t'ung district imported 15,500 horses at a price of 100.000 taels of silver, absorbing all available funds[162].

That in Shensi Province the same tendency was noticeable seems to be implied in a statement from the end of 1591 that the expenses of market and subsidies in Yen-sui district were originally set at 13,600 taels but over the years had grown "a hundred-

159 *Mok.* 8. 611; *Shen SL* (104) 3417.

160 *Mok.* 8. 662; *Shen SL* (105) 3752.

161 *Mok.* 9. 77; *Shen SL* (106) 4335.

162 *Mok.* 9. 97, 114; *Shen SL* (106) 4407, 4468-69. The SYCTK 2. 19a (see above note 128) puts the yearly Ta-t'ung quota at 14,500 horses. I guess that the *Shih-lu* figure is a misprint. A memorial from November 9, 1591, puts the Hsüan-fu expenses for fairs and subsidies at "over 200.000 tls". *Mok.* 9. 116; *Shen SL* (106) 4475.

fold"[163]. Just what this means is not clear. The number of horses imported through the Shensi fairs had always been much lower than in Shansi Province, but even so some increase must have occurred. During the 1590s the border region adjacent to the Ordos Mongols passed through a series of crises, and after peace was restored, the governor of Yen-sui district in 1602 recommended a number of measures, one dealing with the horse fairs in which he proposed as maximum quota of horses the figures of 1588 and 1589. He does not say, however, how many horses were purchased in those years. On the same occasion, the governor of Ning-hsia also presented a plan in which he stated that originally there was no fixed quota of horses bought in the district, yet he proposed to set a maximum of 3500 horses[164].

All the aforementioned figures, of course, are only government purchases; we do not know if private purchases grew, and if they did at what rate. The continued attempts on the part of the government to limit importation of horses – if it needs repeating – do not necessarily prove that there was a glut on the market. These attempts only show the concern of some men who thought that the horse fairs were not to China's advantage and that the danger was growing more threatening every year.

In order to present a more complete picture of the situation we should also note that along with those repeated warnings that the horse fairs grew too fast and that strict limitations were needed to reduce expenses, or at least hold them down, we also find contemporary statements about substantial savings from the fairs if viewed in the overall situation. Contrary to some claims it was not the Mongol horse fairs that exhausted the resources of the nations : if military expenditures along the Mongol borders had gone on at the rate needed before 1570, the financial burden would have been far heavier! In 1577, Fang Feng-shih wrote that the three districts of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi spent

163 *Mok.* 9. 127; *Shen SL* (106) 4504.

164 *Mok.* 9. 384,386; *Shen SL* (112) 6910, 6913.

every year 270,000 taels on the horse fairs and for subsidies, but that was only 20 or 30 % of the military expenditures needed before 1570[165]. Ten years later, in 1587, a censor stated that since 1570, in the two districts of Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung alone, 11,280,000 taels less had been spent than during the two decades prior to 1570; yet he insisted that the volume of trade be strictly limited, namely to 10,000 horses in Ta-t'ung, and 20,000 in Hsüan-fu[166]. This limitation, as we have seen, did not materialize. In September, 1600, we learn that the Hsüan-fu district spent 237,000 taels on the horse fairs and for subsidies, but in 1597, 1598, and 1599, this sum had been reduced to 156,900 taels : 52.600 for subsidies and 104.300 for the purchase of horses[167]. In 1612, the Ministry of the Army, quoting from a memorial by the governor-general, said that there had been forty years of peace (relative peace, to be sure) and listed the following yearly expenses : in Hsüan-fu district : 52,000 taels of silver for subsidies, and 185.000 taels for horses; in Ta-t'ung, 22,000 taels for subsidies and 100.000 taels for horses; in Shan-hsi : 14,000 taels for subsidies, and 40.000 for horses. And the reporter added that this could be called inexpensive[168].

In sum, no matter how alarmed some officials were at the steady growth of the fairs and the expenses needed for subsidies, the central government seems to have felt intuitively that all in all those expenses were not extravagant, and any way that the fairs could no longer be abolished without doing even greater harm to the country, and as time went on the Mongols constituted less and less a danger to China.

A more enduring effect of the horse fairs than the savings of money or the acquisition of horses, if much subtler and harder to evaluate, was the cultural penetration and Chinese influence upon the tribes across the borders resulting from the fairs. In a final

165 *Mok.* 8. 332. *K'ou-pei san-t'ing chih* 12. 22b.
166 *Mok.* 8. 624; *Shen SL* (104) 3460.
167 *Mok.* 9. 364; Shen SL (111) 6557.
168 *Mok.* 9. 647; *Shen SL* (118) 9466. The Hsüan-fu total 237,000 is

note to his biography of the Altan-qan, Ch'ü Chiu-ssu says the following : "The fact that among the Barbarians, clothing, food, and habitations are all the same as in China is like a Heaven-sent support for China : it gives control over life and death."[169]. Ch'ü's statement about similarity of food, clothing, houses, etc. must not be taken in too literal a sense. What he means is easily discovered if we remember that the author is thinking of what the Chinese traitor Chung-hang Yüeh 中行說 of the Han told the Hsiung-nu : "the Hsiung-nu are no match for the Chinese in numbers, but where they are superior to them is that their food and clothing are different and they are not dependent on China! Now that the Shan-yü has changed the customs and the Hsiung-nu have taken a liking to Chinese goods, no more than twenty percent of China's wealth will suffice to force them to surrender to China..."[170]. Whether during the Han period or during the Ming, the peoples of Mongolia had always been in some measure dependent on China for a number of articles, but the more pronounced this dependency became and the more it was further accentuated through trade, the more China was able to influence the Mongols. In the long run, cultural and economic dependency were to decide the issue of supremacy over the Sino-Mongol borders, and the history of the last hundred years of Inner Mongolia is telling proof of Chung-hang Yüeh's and Ch'ü Chiu-ssu's contention.

In addition to be being an instrument of "penetration", the markets must also have been a source of information for the Ming. This aspect of the horse fairs is never mentioned in the *Shih-lu*, except once and at a rather late date : on August 5, 1602, Hsiao Ta-heng, then acting Minister of the Army, noted that in the extreme east and in the extreme west some Mongols were not at

confirmed in *Mok.* 9. 605; *Shen SL* (119) 8991. The Ta-t'ung figures are confirmed in the SYCTK 2.17b-18a.

169 WLWKL 8. 176.

170 *Shih-chi* 110.6b; *Han-shu* 94A.5b. A. Wylie, "History of the Heung-noo in their relations with China", *Jo. of the Anthrop. Inst. of Gr. Brit. Ireland* 3, 1874, was not available to me. A translation of the relevant text may be found in Bičurin 50. 57.

peace with China and he expected the "Market Barbarians" to supply information on suspicious activities of those unreformed tribes[171]. This is no different from what China wanted from all tributaries : all tribute missions from Mongolia or elsewhere for that matter were regularly interrogated about geography of their country, the configuration of the regions they passed through on the road to China and events in Mongolia in general.

FINANCES OF THE HORSE FAIRS

The reader will have noticed that the "comfort rewards" or subsidies regularly paid to the Mongols most of the time are mentioned with the horse fairs. Subsidies and trade were in fact complementary elements of one system. In my study of the tribute I have tried to sketch the manner in which the subsidies were financed : part came from local army funds, or from moneys raised locally; another part came from funds provided by the Central Government, especially the Ministries of the Army and Revenue. One would need to be an expert in economic history of China to present a full account of the finances of the horse fairs, but as a tentative account will be better than no account at all, I shall attempt here a brief description of the finances of the Mongol fairs.

As always, the *Shih-lu* provides but fragmentary information, but those fragments enable us at least to form an idea of the complexity of the problem, the variety of the sources of income, and the steady growth of the expenses. No doubt, when Wang Ch'ung-ku started to organize the horse fairs in 1571, he had only the vaguest idea of what the expenses would be and where the money would come from. In point four of his important memorial of March 7, 1571 (see above), discussing the organization of the horse fairs, Wang does not even mention the financial

171 *Mok.* 9. 395-396; *Shen SL* (112) 7006.

problem involved. But in the next point, on expenses for "comfort -rewards", he seems to have the financial organization of the fairs in mind as well : he lists various expenses which may become unnecessary or may be greatly reduced from now on if a measure of peace can be achieved : dispatch of auxiliary troops ("guest troops") in times of emergency, spying and patroling missions, supplies for soldiers on watchtowers, rewards for outstanding courage in battle with the Mongols, or indemnity for those wounded or killed; most of those expenses would no longer be needed or could be reduced and the savings used for the fairs. If more was needed, part of the yearly expenses to supply and equip auxiliary troops could safely be allocated to the fairs. In his seventh point, Wang figures that 1 or 2 % of the expenses for supplies of the auxiliary troops would be enough to pay for subsidies and tribute, this latter term apparently indicating also horses brought to the fairs[172]. These speculations of Wang's tell us little in terms of absolute figures; undoubtedly Wang did not yet know himself.

Shortly afterwards, on April 22, 1571, Wang defending his views on tribute and trade, reverted to the financial problem : he figured that 2-3000 taels of silver from the supplies of the auxiliaries per military district, augmented by what every district used to spend for comfort and reward for Chinese troops (for wounded, dead, etc.) would be sufficient. Against a charge that his plans would seriously weaken the military posture, Wang was careful to point out that he intended to borrow money only from the auxiliary troops who would become largely unnecessary, not from the regular army (or "host troops")[172]. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* ascribes the following passage to the censor Liu Ying-ch'i (already partially cited in the foregoing pages) – it seems to be directly inspired by Wang Ch'ung-ku's proposals : "for our market-fund (*Shih-pen* 市本) we request to borrow for the time

[172] *Mok.* 8. 7, 9; *Mu SL* (95) 1337, 1340.
[173] *Mok.* 8. 17; *Mu SL* (95) 1376.

being 40,000 taels from the supplies of the auxiliaries; should this sum not be sufficient, then we would request that the treasury of Yün-chung 雲 中 (i.e. Ta-t'ung district) issue 3000 taels of silver, the yearly allowance for the supplies of the auxiliaries."[174]

In the meantime, the governor of Yen-sui in Shensi must have been searching for a solution of the same financial problem in his jurisdiction. From a reply by the Ministry of the Army from November 19, 1571 (after the fairs, but the governor's request must have been drawn up much earlier) we know that the governor had requested to borrow 290 taels of silver from government funds to be supplemented with income from taxes, to pay for Mongol subsidies; as for the market fund, the governor figured that income from the Stake-and-Stable fund and the Treasury of Loot and Fines 贓 罰[175] would be insufficient to buy all the horses the Mongols intended to bring to the fairs, and he requested an allowance from the Horse Fund (*ma-chia*, of the Court of Imperial Stud) to finance next year's fair. These requests were granted, but the amount actually allocated is not indicated[176].

On December 23, 1571, Wang Ch'ung-ku once more reviewed the situation on the Mongol borders, and with regard to the horse fairs he pointed out that large numbers of horses could be purchased at low cost and for this purpose requested that next year 10,000 taels of silver from the Horse Fund be made available to the armies of each of the three districts of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi[177]. Although Wang's request was allegedly granted, it does not seem that he received the full amount : on February 2, 1572, we are told that the Court of Imperial Stud forwarded

[174] WLWKL 8. 145. The *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi* 5. 7a says that in 1571, the fairs were financed from the Horse Fund, the Stake-and-Stable Fund of each district, and the savings on auxiliary troops.

[175] Sun 61. 279.

[176] *Mok.* 8. 47; *Mu SL* (95) 1515-16.

[177] *Mok.* 8. 50; *Mu SL* (95) 1543.

25,000 taels[178]. It is possible that Wang Ch'ung-ku was expected to make up the balance from local sources.

If late in 1571 the governor of Yen-sui district had made arrangements to finance the fair in his district, the governor of Ning-hsia, too, must have taken the necessary steps shortly afterwards. Indeed, the Ministry of the Army on February 19, 1572, requested an allowance of 25,000 taels from funds of the Court of Imperial Stud, namely 15,000 for the district of Yen-sui, and 10,000 taels for Ning-hsia, towards the purchase of Mongol horses, because both districts needed horses badly. On the same date, the governor of the district of Shan-hsi wrote that when the next horse fair came around, it would be difficult to limit the purchase of horses, because if the Mongols were left with horses they could not dispose of, their feelings might be hurt; therefore he proposed that the government buy up all surplus horses and turn them over to the Court of Imperial Stud. The governor further proposed that government allowances for the current year be made on the basis of 12 taels of silver per horses, and that the same rate be kept the following year[179].

As the above cases indicate, the T'ai-p'u-ssu, or Court of Imperial Stud under the Ministry of the Army, was one of the agencies regularly contributing towards the expenses of the horse fairs. In November, 1573, the T'ai-p'u-ssu allocated 14,400 ounces of silver for next spring's fair in Yen-sui district[179a]. On September 17, 1575, Fang Feng-shih requested that from 1576 on, the Ministry of the Army allocate every year 10,000 taels from the Horse Fund of the Court of Imperial Stud for the Shan-hsi fair, and 12,000 taels for the Ta-t'ung fairs[180]. Not that all allocations

[178] *Mok.* 8. 55-56; *Mu SL* (95) 1568.

[179] *Mok.* 8. 58-59; *Mu SL* (95) 1583-84.

[179a] *Mok.* 8. 178; *Shen SL* (97) 525.

[180] *Mok.* 8. 252; *Shen SL* (98) 937. Tani 62. 188 refers to this passage and states that a sum of 12,000 taels was also allocated to Hsüan-fu, but such a sum is not mentioned in the *Shih-lu*. It is mentioned, however, in the *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi* 5. 8a, which adds that these allowances had to be supplemented from the Stake-and-Stable Funds of the three districts and from money originally allocated to the auxiliary troops.

by the T'ai-p'u-ssu are regularly recorded : like other information in the *Shih-lu*, those allocations are entered in a more or less haphazard fashion. Under the date of March 1, 1576, there appears such an allocation of 10,000 taels of silver to the Shan-hsi district towards the purchase of horses[181]. Although no further explanation is provided, it is clear that this was part of the moneys requested by Fang Feng-shih a few months earlier. Similar allocations of moneys are recorded in the following years : in 1576, 13.336 taels for the following year's fair in Yen-sui; and 12,000 taels for the Ta-t'ung fairs; in 1579 : 12,000 taels for the following year's fairs in Ta-t'ung[182]; in 1580, 16,200 taels for the horse fairs in Ning-hsia district; in 1581, 38,700 taels for the current year's fair of Hsüan-fu; 20,000 taels for the Ning-hsia fairs, and 12.000 taels for the following year's fairs in Ta-t'ung district[183]; in 1585, 33,364 taels for Hsüan-fu, and 19,158 taels for Ning-hsia, and 12,000 taels for next year's fairs in Ta-t'ung[184]; in 1586, another 33,364 taels for Hsüan-fu, 12,000 taels for the following year's fair in Ta-t'ung, and 20,000 taels for the current year's fair in Ning-hsia[185]; in 1587, 12,000 taels for the Ta-t'ung fairs of 1588[186]; in 1589, 12,000 taels, and 20,000 taels respectively for the Ta-t'ung and Ning-hsia fairs of the following year, and an extra 8000 taels for Ning-hsia because the Tümed Mongols on their way to the west had requested an additional fair near Ch'ih-mu-k'ou[187]; finally, in 1590, the *Shih-lu* records an allowance of 100,000 taels from the same Horse Fund of the Court

[181] *Mok.* 8. 265; *Shen SL* (98) 1056.

[182] *Mok.* 8. 297, 305, 401; *Shen SL* (99) 1209; (100) 1867.

[183] *Mok,* 8. 417, 423, 425, 437; *Shen SL* (100) 1977; (101) 2086, 2111, 2177.

[184] *Mok.* 8. 529 (the same passage also records a 50,000 tael allowance for Liaotung district), 533; *Shen SL* (103) 2911, 2985.

[185] *Mok.* 8. 557, 588, 600; *Shen SL* (103) 3112; (104) 3287, 3361. (In November, 1586, there is also an allowance of 42,600 taels for the Liaotung fairs; *Man.* 4. 98; *Shen SL* (104) 3325.

[186] *Mok.* 8. 640; *Shen SL* (104) 3542.

[187] *Mok.* 8. 703, 708, 709; *Shen SL* (105) 4017, 4055, 4062. (Another text reads 8,100 instead of 8,000 : *Mok.* 8. 710).

of Imperial Stud to be spent in Kansu, without explaining the purpose, but the very source of the allowance, and the similarity to the preceding cases leaves little doubt that the sum was destined to the purchase of horses[188].

We may conclude that the Court of Imperial Stud allocated every year 12,000 taels to the district of Ta-t'ung as Fang Feng-shih had requested in 1576; sometimes this sum was made available one year in advance in order to provide enough time to prepare the necessary stock of goods to pay for the horses. Judging from the allowances of 1581, 1585, and 1586, Hsüan-fu district received a much larger sum than Ta-t'ung, but as we have seen, the number of horses purchased there was also much larger. It is strange, however, that Yen-sui and Ninghsia districts which purchased far fewer horses than Ta-t'ung, received a larger subsidy from the Horse Fund of the T'ai-p'u-ssu.

It would appear, however, that payments of the T'ai-p'u-ssu were not always made in time, and that other irregularities crept in : for example, in March, 1586, the governor-general complained that the market funds of Hsüan-fu had piled up a deficit of 14,400 taels of silver, and he insisted that from here on the T'ai-p'u-ssu allowance be paid out in full, without revealing though what the full amount of that year would have been, and why it had not been paid[189].

The T'ai-p'u-ssu was not the only governmental agency to contribute towards the purchase of Mongol horses, but our information here becomes even more fragmentary. First of all, a number of horses seem to have been resold almost immediately the fairs were concluded, and the proceeds of these sales were either returned to the T'ai-p'u-ssu, or set aside for next year's markets. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* has this interesting bit of information : in 1571, of the 726 horses purchased at Hsin-p'ing-p'u, six were resold to private traders at a price considerably higher than the

188 *Mok.* 9, 17; *Shen SL* (106) 4184.
189 *Mok.* 8. 549; *Shen SL* (103) 3067.

original price; the rest were turned over to governmental troops; of the 1993 horses bought at Chang-chia-k'ou, 472 were left to private traders also at a much higher price; 1176 were turned over to governmental troops (at no cost), 345 were given to garrison troops[190] who had to pay a price only slightly lower than that paid by private traders[191]. Such resales of Mongol horses either to private individuals or to soldiers who had to pay a certain sum of money, are mentioned several times : the *Shih-lu* entry of April 17, 1573, states that Mongol horses could not stand the Chinese climate and therefore ought to be sold and the proceeds turned over to the Court of Imperial Stud[192]. On March 14, 1576, the governor of Shan-hsi district noting that his district purchased every year more than 5000 horses, recommended that two tenths (二分) of the horses be turned over to the cavalry who would pay a contribution to the Stake-and-Stable Fund, and one tenth be graded into categories (according to quality, color, etc.) and sold in the various counties, and the proceeds be turned over to the market fund for next year[193]. The following year, as the soldiers in Shan-hsi district were suffering from the high price of rice, the governor in November, 1577, proposed as a measure of relief to sell all weak horses bought at the Mongol fairs and with the proceeds of these sales and the savings on fodder (not used as a result of the sales) buy

190 I am none too sure about the difference between those soldiers (militia?) who had to pay for their own horses and governmental troops *(kuan-chün)* who received them free.

191 WLWKL 8. 142-143.

192 *Mok.* 8. 139; *Shen SL* (97) 373. This passage goes on to say that the horses would no longer be kept and fed (by the army) in the "Inner Country". This opinion that Mongol horses could not adapt themselves to the climate of China comes up now and then. For example, in 1574, when a regional inspector *(hsün-an)* of Shan-hsi proposed to sell poor Mongol horses and with the money buy better ones, the Ministry of the Army stated that the climate (lit. "water and soil") did not suit Mongol horses and therefore that they must be kept on the borders. I think that the Ministry meant that Mongol horses must not be sent away from north China. This so-called incompatibility must not be exaggerated : after all horses had been imported from Mongolia, Central Asia, Korea, etc. for many centuries!

193 *Mok.* 8. 266; *Shen SL* (98) 1068.

better ones[194]. Although this is not stated explicitly, we may presume that the new horses would have to come from Mongolia, too. In November, 1582, the supervising secretary T'ien Ta-nien 田大年,[195] after an inspection tour of the three districts Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi, made several recommendations one of which was that Mongol horses that were not satisfactory must be sold and the money set aside for the market fund[196]; a similar proposal to sell horses came from Kansu in 1583[197]. In both cases the source of the better horses to replace the poorer ones is not revealed, but the implication seems to be that they were to come from the Mongol fairs. A clearer passage is found in the *Shih-lu* entry of January 1, 1585. In it a supervising secretary of the Ministry of the Army, speaking of the "northwest" which could well indicate the whole Sino-Mongol border west of Peking, says that strong horses should be turned over to the army, but poor horses should be sold and the money assigned to the market fund[198]. In November, 1591, the military authorities wanted to dispose of 4000 army horses for 8000 taels of silver. The horses must have been old and in poor condition to be sold at so low a price; at any rate, 5000 taels would revert to the market fund, and the rest to other uses. One thing explicitly forbidden here (as in many other places) is that officers must not palm off bad horses to the common soldiers at a high price[199]!

Hsiao Ta-heng, then governor-general, discussed on December 31, 1594, possible savings on the borders and listed the Horse Fund (of the T'ai-p'u-ssu), the Stake-and-Stable Fund, and the sale of horses as possible sources to build a market fund[200]. One final text to be mentioned in this connection is from the report

194 *Mok.* 8. 337-338; *Shen SL* (99) 1471-72.
195 For T'ien Ta-nien, see Serruys 59. 265.
196 *Mok.* 8. 458; *Shen SL* (101) 2408.
197 *Mok.* 8. 474, 489-490; *Shen SL* (102) 2535, 2594.
198 *Mok.* 8. 524, *Shen SL* (103) 2875.
199 *Mok.* 9. 115-116; *Shen SL* (106) 4474.
200 *Mok.* 9. 236, 257; *Shen SL* (108) 5165, 5274.

by the governor of Ning-hsia dated from April 8, 1602 : in his fifth point dealing with the horse fairs, the governor says that acceptable horses must be turned over to the army, and the remaining ones sold for whatever price they would fetch[201]. He does not state, however, that the proceeds were to be used next year to purchase new horses.

The Horse Fund of the T'ai-p'u-ssu was under the supervision of the Ministry of the Army, but the supplies of the auxiliary troops were administered by the Ministry of Revenue. We have already mentioned the request from March, 1576, by the governor of Shan-hsi district for an additional sum of 5000 taels so that the Mongols would not have to take back unsold horses. It was a supervising secretary of the Ministry of Revenue who opposed the governor's request with the result that the Ministry proposed that if an increase of money must be allowed, it should come from the Stake-and-Stable Fund, but not from the supplies of the auxiliary troops[202]. The Stake-and-Stable Fund is mentioned regularly, although less frequently than the T'ai-p'u-ssu fund. For instance, on March 3, 1576, the district on Yen-sui was ordered to use part of its Stake-and-Stable Fund for repairs of the Great Wall and part for the horse fair fund of the following year[203]. In August, 1581, the same fund is referred to as a partial source of income in the district of Shan-hsi[204]; in June, 1582, in Ning-hsia[205]; in 1585, we are told that in the three districts of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi, the Stake-and-Stable Fund had borne 10 % of the expenses[205a]; in August, 1591, after an inspection tour in Hsüan-fu, an official writing on the marked expansion of the horse fairs and the resulting increase of expenses, namely from 120,000 taels in 1575, to 185,000 taels,

201 *Mok.* 9. 387; *Shen SL* (112) 6913.
202 *Mok.* 8. 266-267; *Shen SL* (98) 1072.
203 *Mok.* 8. 265; *Shen SL* (98) 1057.
204 *Mok.* 8. 436; *Shen SL* (101) 2167.
205 *Mok.* 8. 452.
205a *Mok.* 8. 524; *Shen SL* (103) 2875.

stated that after spending the allowed amount of supplies of the auxiliary troops, the T'ai-p'u-ssu allowance, and various other sources, there still was a deficit of over 24,100 taels which had to be covered with income from the *p'eng-ho* 硼 合 fund (another name of the Stake-and-Stable Fund), the Flesh-and-Entrails Fund[206], and money contributed by merchants from Honan[207]. But the Stake-and-Stable Fund essentially being a tax paid by individual soldiers for replacement of horses that had died, its use to finance the horse fairs does not seem to have been favorably looked upon, since it could only result in heavier burdens and difficulties for the plain soldiers. At any rate, the use of Stake-and-Stable moneys for the horse fairs seems to have been disapproved in 1586 in Shan-hsi district[208]. To be sure, common soldiers often were the victims of manipulations of such funds and of irregularities in the distribution of Mongol horses[209].

One other sort of income used to finance the horse fairs, at least once in 1591, is taxes on land of postal stations in Hsüan-fu district[210]. Moreover, as had been explained in my study of the Mongol tribute system, Chinese patroling activity was considerably curtailed along the borders and the savings from the "reduced patrols" not only helped to finance subsidies ("comfort-rewards") for the Mongol princes, this "reduced patrol fund" also served to cover some of the expenses of the horse fairs, at least now and then as we see from one instance in Hsüan-fu district in 1584[211].

In the overwhelming majority of cases referred to in the

206 Proceeds, I assume, from the sale of dead horses. The text, however, has character 𥫱 *tsang* "spoils" which I think should be 𥫱 *tsang*.

207 *Mok.* 9. 97; *Shen SL* (106) 4407.

208 *Mok.* 8. 583; *Shen SL* (104) 3275.

209 For a few examples from 1582, 1588, 1591, and 1610, see *Mok.* 8. 452, 458, 660-661; *Mok.* 9. 81, 605: *Shen SL* (101) 2408; (105) 3745-46; (106) 4358; (117) 8991.

210 *Mok.* 9. 115; *Shen SL* (106) 4473.

211 *Mok.* 8. 506; *Shen SL* (102) 2732.

Shih-lu, the supplies of auxiliary troops were the most important single source of income used to finance the fairs. Instances could be found for every year, literally too numerous to be cited here. These army funds, of course, in final analysis were provided by the Central Government, and on several occasions we are informed that 70 percent were paid for by the Ministry of Revenue and 30 percent by the Ministry of the Army[212]. The breakdown of the sources of income to cover expenses of the Ta-t'ung fairs around 1600 may be considered as typical for all horse fairs on the Sino-Mongol borders : the total expense of the Ta-t'ung fairs was 100,000 taels of silver; of this sum, 40,000 taels came from the supplies of the auxiliary troops[213] 30.000, from the Horse Fund of the T'ai-p'u-ssu; 20,000, from the Fodder-and-Hay Fund of Battle Horses, and 10,000, from the sale of Mongol Horses[214].

As in Liaotung, taxes were levied on all commercial transactions carried on at the fairs, but I have not been able to find anything with regard to rates. In fact the taxes are rarely mentioned and we know very little about them. From the scanty information available it would seem that as a rule the income of taxes was used exclusively to pay for the subsidies (*fu-shang* : "comfort-rewards"). When the Altan-qan made a request that lamas be sent to his country and bring sutras along, Ch'ü Chiu-ssu says that tax moneys were used to buy such things as rice and flour, tea (for religious ceremonies), fruits vegetables, and red and yellow paper which the monks were to take to Mongolia[215]. In May, 1582, we are told that in Yen-sui district, too, the tax revenue was used for the Mongol subsidies, but when this revenue declined, money from the supplies of the auxiliary troops had to be diverted to the subsidies. By 1583, the original

212 For example *Mok.* 8. 265; *Mok.* 9. 365 (also *Mok.* 9. 128); *Shen SL* (98) 1057; (111)6557; (106) 4511.

213 *Yeh-hsiang-yin* 額餉銀 ; *yeh* is a misprint for *k'o* 客.

214 SYCTK 2. 17b.

215 WLWKL 8. 146. Also WLWKL 7. 128-129 (see above n. 8).

arrangement could be followed again, but for some reason trade fell off again with the result that the income from taxes declined and supplies of the auxiliary troops once more had to be used to pay part of the subsidies[216]. From these indications it can be safely concluded that taxes collected at the fairs were too insignificant to contribute substantially to financing the fairs themselves.

REGULATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

We must state again that we have only the barest information concerning rules to be followed at the fairs. The *Collected Statutes* says that in 1574 the governor-general of Ta-t'ung was ordered to have tablets *(p'ai)* made, numbered and stamped with his seal, for the Mongols to wear when going to the fairs[217]. However, these tablets are never mentioned again after that, and the fact that Chinese so often complained about the behavior of the Mongols suggests that not only those carrying tablets got access to the fairs.

The *San-Yün ch'ou-tsu k'ao* lists five rules to be observed at the horse fairs without stating when they had come into effect Here follows the text of those five rules :

1. (Horses) may only be paid for with textiles, goods, and foodstuffs. All else is forbidden, and officials who dare sell saddles and bits through the 'hidden doors' shall be found guilty of (illegal) relations with the Caitiffs[218].

216 *Mok.* 8. 473, 532-533; *Shen SL* (102) 2517-18; (103) 2971.

217 TMHT 130. 6a (1849b).

218 As we have seen, silver, furs, etc. were legal means of exchange, too. This article is aimed at the sale of weapons and related articles. The prohibition has been mentioned several times; let us only note here that the tribute regulations revised in 1613, art. 14, repeat the prohibition to carry swords at the fairs. SYCTK 2. 17b. Serruys 60. 47. The expression "hidden doors" here indicates the fairs. See next article.

2. On the days of the fairs, the military commander (of the district) and his assistants shall have cavalry disposed (to insure safety) and shall order interpreters to instruct the Caitiffs that it is not permitted to make up their quota with horses that are about to collapse and die, or that are not fit for riding. All horses with the tongue-nerves or the manes and tails cut, or with the throat pierced, or horses that have been forced to drink mud or sand[219], or that are too young to chew hay or beans, are not allowed to enter the 'hidden doors'. Should the Caitiffs persist as before in their wanton behavior, (their market privileges) shall be peremptorily cut off. For slight infractions, a way shall be found to punisn them.

3. (Officials) shall urge (those responsible) to transport market goods early, and to conclude the fairs promptly so that the Caitiffs need not tarry and needless expenses can be avoided.

4. Once an agreement has been made, (the Mongols) are not permitted to sell one extra horse; nobody is permitted to grant them one extra reward (above the amount agreed upon). Certainly if (deceased beneficiaries) have long since been eliminated, in such cases may newly born ones be added[220].

5. When the agreement was first made (1571), Caitiff envoys entered the passes at specified times and in well-determined numbers; but now they come and go as they please. Last year (the Emperor) ordered (Mongol) envoys to come to the borders: all Caitiffs requested rewards and presented horses and oxen which cost several tens of taels of silver; this time, inspectors went to the borders agreeing in advance with the interpreters to

[219] A six-point proposal from April 8, 1602, by the governor of Yen-sui, speaks of "cutting the tongue" and "giving sand to eat". *Mok.* 9. 384; *Shen-SL* (112) 691o. I do not know to what practices these expressions refer.

[220] The last sentence is a little awkwardly constructed; it refers to the lists of names of those who were entitled to subsidy grants. Generally speaking, these were the same persons who were allowed to present tribute and attend the fairs. As I have indicated elsewhere the Chinese seem to have had considerable trouble keeping those lists from growing excessively.

forbid (this practice), and (the Mongols) did not dare present oxen or horses. Also that Barbarian women did not come was evidently due to their dependence on the interpreters for guiding. Whenever the fairs are open, let (interpreters) make all matters absolutely clear[221] and thereafter it will be seen if the amount (of rewards) decreases : the interpreters will be rewarded or punished[222].

The purpose of this last article is hard to define. It seems aimed at interpreters, in connivance with the Mongols exacting more and more subsidies.

It will be remembered how poorly informed we are regarding the administration of the Liaotung fairs; we are hardly in a better position with regard to the administration and organization of the horse fairs in Shansi and Shensi. Since materials garnered from the *Ming Shih-lu* give us no more than a glimpse of the way the fairs were actually run but deal mostly with cases of corruption and maladministration, a review of the most representative cases may give an idea of the troubles besetting the fairs, at least from the Chinese point of view, and of the way the fairs were expected to be run.

On February 14, 1572, a former commander of the Northeastern Route of the district of Ta-t'ung who had been cashiered, was sent on frontier duty at Te-sheng and put in charge of the administration of the horse fairs. This appointment was made in

221 Reading 折 or 哲 instead of 折.

222 SYCTK 2. 18ab. Hou 38. 333-334 quotes these five articles with a few variants. He dates them from the 41st year Wan-li : 1608. Firstly the 41st year is 1613; and secondly, it is not self-evident that these regulations were put into effect in 1613. This latter date refers to Bušuγtu's appointment as Shun-i wang and the promulgation of 14 articles regarding tribute and other questions. Our five articles are simply not dated and may well have been promulgated before 1613. Sun and deFrancis give an abbreviated version of these regulations and repeat the erroneous date 1608 (Sun-deFrancis 56. 329).

response to a request by Wang Ch'ung-ku who wanted an experienced man for this job[223]. Since the horse fairs loomed so large in the Chinese defense system, it is understandable that usually, just as in Liaotung, it was military officers who had immediate control over the markets. In the *Shih-lu* entry of January 4, 1583, we read that the governor-general of Shensi thought that one man could not well administer all three fairs of the Ning-hsia district, and proposed that the vice-director of the branch office of the T'ai-p'u-ssu stationed at Ling-chou 靈 be put in charge of the fair of Ch'ing-shui-ying, and an officer in the supply section of the army, of the fairs of P'ing-lu and Chung-wei. Upon recommendation by the Ministry of the Army, the proposal was approved[224]. If military men were in control of the fairs, there is no doubt that they remained in control of higher officers; indeed, on August 4, 1588, Cheng Lo speaking of the need of better organization of the markets, and stricter enforcement of the regulations, said that the power of the governor-general was centered upon the seat of the military district and the power of the commander-in-chief, the circuit-commanders, etc., upon the markets[225]. As has already been noted and as we shall see again shortly, special reinforcements were stationed at the markets at the time of the fairs.

There is evidence also that next to the military, the Court of Imperial Stud had some say in the administration of the horse fairs : this agency as we have seen bore a large part of the responsibility of financing the fairs, and many of the horses purchased were turned over to it. The arrangement of January, 1583, mentioned above is a case in point. On April 28, 1581, Cheng Lo wanted the regional branch office of the T'ai-p'u-ssu to move to Shui-ch'üan (Shan-hsi district) for the duration of branding, and distribution of the newly acquired horses[226].

223 *Mok.* 8. 57; *Mu SL* (95) 1577.
224 *Mok.* 8. 465; *Shen SL* (102) 2439.
225 *Mok.* 8. 662; *Shen SL* (105) 3752.
226 *Mok.* 8. 427; *Shen SL* (101) 2116.

The administration of the horse fairs involved the keeping of detailed records of all sales and purchases made by governmental agencies. Registers of horses acquired by the government, or the army were a prime necessity. Ch'ü Chiu-ssu says that when the Tümed Mongols presented their first tribute of 500 horses in the summer of 1571, 40 geldings were selected and a full description of their age and color forwarded to the Ministry of Rites so that 30 could be chosen for presentation at the Court[227]. It was inevitable that similar records should be kept of all horses bought from the Mongols; without such records no reasonable account by responsible officers could ever be rendered. In fact registers are referred to several times. For example, "inspection of the market registers" mentioned without any further explanation on April 14, 1584, no doubt refers to registers of the horses[228]; on January 1, 1585, a supervising secretary of the Ministry of the Army, speaking of the numbers of horses purchased and the prices paid, stated that his information came from the registers[229]. On March 1, 1586, the governor-general of T'a-t'ung, Cheng Lo, spoke of the compilation of registers to be forwarded to the Ministry of the Army for inspection[230]. On October, 13, 1588, the governor-general of Shensi stressed the need for clear market registers so as to prevent losing track of the horses[231]. Finally when the border army in Liaotung needed horses urgently in 1591, a large sum of money from the T'ai-p'u-ssu was forwarded to purchase horses with an order to keep records and send them on to the Ministry of the Army for inspection[232].

No doubt records were also kept of the goods, such as silver, silks, cotton, furs, kettles, etc. sold to the Mongols as payment for the horses, especially since most of those commodities were

227 WLWKL 8. 138.
228 *Mok.* 8. 508; *Shen SL* (102) 2737.
229 *Mok.* 8. 524; *Shen SL* (103) 2875.
230 *Mok.* 8. 550; *Shen SL*(103) 3068.
231 *Mok.* 8. 670; *Shen SL* (105) 3786.
232 *Man.* 4. 147; *Shen SL* (106) 4338.

not available locally, or not in sufficient quantities, and had to be brought in from other provinces, sometimes as we have seen. relatively far away : Shantung, Honan, Chiang-hsi, etc,; and those purchasing operations seem to have been fairly complicated affairs necessitating frequent changes of personnel in order to avoid malfeasance and corruption. According to Cheng Lo's letter of March 10, 1586, the market goods used to be purchased by agents sent by the three district governors of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi, while the subsidy goods to be given away in the same territories were purchased by an agent from Ta-t'ung; Cheng Lo said that when he first became governor-general, he found this procedure very inconvenient and arranged for the subsidy goods to be taken out of the market goods and paid back to the market fund; but it is difficult to see what difference this made. Incidentally, Cheng Lo's arrangement also shows that the subsidy goods were essentially of the same nature as the market goods. Neither do we know why Cheng Lo thought his arrangement more practical, unless it has some connection with what he continues to say : that the governors must be careful not to overpay the market goods[233]. In 1587, we read that every winter the governor-general sent men with money to make the necessary purchases, but irregularities proliferated : the agents saw in these missions an opportunity for personal enrichment, the goods were of low quality and deliveries were deliberately delayed; they bribed higher officials and used false credentials (tallies : k'an-ho). The result was that Mongol demands could not be met : while officials got rich, the Mongols were disappointed, which could but have adverse effect upon border affairs. It was suggested that only honest personnel be employed, that a time limit be fixed, that stricter inspection be made and sanctions applied[234].

Apart from cases of outright dishonesty, there seem to have been other difficulties as well : a passage from April 1588

[233] *Mok.* 8.551-552; *Shen SL* (103) 3075-76.
[234] *Mok.* 8.611-612; *Shen SL*(104) 3417.

implies that the moneys allocated to the markets of Shensi did not arrive soon enough so that money had to be borrowed from army funds, resulting in new complications and hardship for the plain soldiers: and the governor-general requested speedier deliveries of the government subsidies, and, in addition, he wanted to use funds of the postal service to relieve the plight of the common soldiers[235].

On July 22, 1589, we hear again about the purchase of market goods for the horse fairs of Shan-hsi (i.e. Shui-ch'üan) : over 40,000 taels of silver were spent for the purchase of satins, shuttle-cloth, otter and fox furs, and other such things; officials were dispatched into various provinces to buy those goods, but in Hukuang the local brokers caused difficulties, and in Su-chou and Hang-chou, it was the purchasing agents who were to blame. The nature of the trouble is not further indicated, but the governor of Shan-hsi wanted the prices of the furs fixed by the governor-general of Hukuang (the furs seem to have come from there), and for textiles, he wanted the governor-general of Chechiang to arrange purchase and time of delivery directly with the weavers[236]. This measure seems to mean that from here on the agents sent from Shan-hsi would be responsible only for transport to the north.

In 1591 we learn that recently it was an assistant-prefect of Ta-t'ung who had been dispatched to take charge of the purchases, and some savings had thus been realized; but Ta-t'ung had borrowed money to pay for the purchases, and it was not clear why those loans had been necessary. Moreover, since the market privileges of the Tümed leader Čürüke had recently been suspended, some wanted to know what the market funds were being used for in the meantime, and it also appeared that proceeds from the sale of Mongol horses had been embezzled by officers

235 *Mok.* 8. 656; *Shen SL* (105) 3699.
236 *Mok.* 8. 700; *Shen SL* (105) 3972.

and officials[237]. At the very end of 1591, we are once more informed that an assistant-prefect from Ta-t'ung was sent by the governor to take money to Chechiang and buy market and subsidy goods; he was assisted by locally appointed officials to pay the weavers, determine the measurements of the textiles and the time of delivery; then when going back, he took a weaver along with him to Ta-t'ung to be present at the inspection of the goods[238].

The first point of the six-point proposal from April 8, 1602, by the governor of Yen-sui proposed a slightly different procedure of purchasing : "care must be taken that the (market and subsidy) goods are of fine quality; therefore an honest and able *t'ung-p'an* 通判 and a clerk (*ching-li* 經歷) shall be appointed to help the assistant-prefects of those places (where the purchases are made), and judgment shall be passed upon the quality of their performance".[239] Yet in spite of repeated complaints and changes of procedure, no satisfactory solution was found, so that in June 1603 the governor of Ta-t'ung stated that the market goods were to the detriment of China's prestige; and he urged that an honest and capable assistant-prefect be dispatched to Chiang-nan to select well-to-do weavers carefully, and payment would be made after weaving according to standard and delivery at the set time, and special care should be taken that the textiles were of fine quality[240].

This repeated insistence on the need for honest and capable officials clearly indicates that the situation left much to be desired and that the purchasing system was beset by irregularities which higher authorities found difficult if not impossible to correct.

After only a few years running, various irregularities and malpractices were uncovered at the fairs themselves. As has

[237] *Mok.* 9. 77; *Shen SL* (106) 4335.
[238] *Mok.* 9. 131; *Shen SL* (106) 4517.
[239] *Mok.* 9. 383-384; *Shen SL* (112) 6910.
[240] *Mok.* 9. 412-413; *Shen SL* (113) 7216.

already been indicated, officials easily yielded to various requests by the Mongols in order to spare themselves trouble. Thus on August 4, 1588, the governor-general Cheng Lo stated that every time the fairs opened, the Mongols insisted on selling more horses than they were entitled to; or demanded more "comfort rewards" than the regulations allowed : the Mongols claim some merit and insist on selling one more horse; they would kowtow or shout angrily and not desist until the officials saw no other way out but to yield a little bit, but many little concessions added up to a large amount; Cheng goes on to say that since he assumed office, he had never accepted one horse or granted one bolt of satin or cotton cloth above the fixed amounts[241]. In November, 1591, the Minister of the Army complained that the markets and subsidies were administered in a very wasteful manner because local officials on their own authority repeatedly granted increased quotas[242]. Around 1595-1596 some Mongol tribes in Köke-nuur had lost their market privileges as penalty for repeated incursions into Kansu, but some officials continued to hold fairs and both officially and privately traded with them[243]. Hsiao Ta-heng, who after a long career on the borders was now acting Minister of the Army, warned in August, 1602, that Mongols who for some reason had lost their market and subsidy privileges must not be treated too leniently, and those who had been found guilty of some incursion must be excluded from all trade and subsidy for one full year[244]. Such warnings clearly imply that many officials preferred to ignore orders from above and take the easy way out rather than become involved in conflicts resulting from too strict application of orders.

On November 1, 1591, the Ministry of the Army recommended for approval a proposal made after an inspection trip through Ta-

241 *Mok.* 8. 661-662; *Shen SL* (105) 3751-52.
242 *Mok.* 9. 116; *Shen SL* (106) 4475.
243 *Mok.* 9. 277, 285; *Shen SL*(109) 5464.
244 *Mok.* 9. 396-397; *Shen SL* (112) 7007.

t'ung : every year 15.500 horses were imported through the Ta-t'ung fairs, at a cost of 100,000 taels of silver; in addition, Ta-t'ung spent 22,000 taels for subsidies : these figures must be held on to and no increases must be granted without authorization. Then follow these five regulations : 1. officers are not allowed to trade privately (i.e. illegally : *ssu)*; 2. horses about to collapse and die must not be accepted; 3. the Barbarians must not be allowed to remain longer (than necessary) on the borders; 4. no increase (of horses or subsidies) must be granted; 5. nobody is allowed to bring any iron to the fairs or sell saltpetre and other such goods[245]. The same official who had made this proposal in November, pointed out a few weeks later, that if it was necessary to take precautions against the Mongols and safeguard peace at the fairs, it was equally necessary to prevent the soldiers from provoking the Mongols under the pretext of distinguishing themselves with meritorious deeds[246]. Such a flagrant provocation by a narrow minded officer is related for example on January 1, 1600 : while the fairs were in progress, he had attacked the Mongols encamped in the vicinity of the Great Wall[247].

In the fourth point of his long memorial from April, 1602, the governor of Yen-sui district stressed the necessity "to forbid the military population to trade privately, officers to be greedy for merit (and provoke the Mongols through excessive zeal), and the administrators to withhold funds or accept bribes and neglect their duties."[248].

Little business could have been transacted without the assistance of interpreters. Yet interpreters were always suspected of taking advantage of their privileged position to further their own interests at the expense of both Chinese and Mongols, and all evidences seem to indicate that this suspicion was not wholly unfounded. A memorial from 1587 without going into details

[245] *Mok.* 9. 114; *Shen SL* (106) 4468.
[246] *Mok.* 9. 127; *Shen SL* (106) 4506.
[247] *Mok.* 9. 357; *Shen SL* (111) 6341-42.
[248] *Mok.* 9. 385; *Shen SL* (112) 6911.

recommends a thorough investigation of the interpreters dealing with the tribute and the fairs[249]. In August, 1591, a supervising secretary complained that there were crafty men amoug the interpreters of Hsüan-fu district who incited the Mongols to demand extra goods, or made them (or told them how to?) sell extra horses[250] and split the profits; capable officers should be promoted in order to prevent such irregularities and stricter sanctions applied to interpreters and "Barbarian-comforting officials"[252]

[249] *Mok.* 8. 639; *Shen SL* (104) 3517.

[250] The sentence is not very clear.

[251] I do not know what difference there is between *t'ung-shih* 通 使 and *t'ung-kuan* 通 官. The latter expression, no doubt, is a short form for *t'ung-shih-kuan* 通 事 官 : oral interpreter. The *t'ung-shih* must also have been some sort of interpreters.

[252] The functions of this official are no further indicated. *Fu-i* "to soothe, or comfort the Barbarians" in fact means "to make amenable, to control the Barbarians" as when the Yung-lo emperor said in 1409 : "the way to soothe the Barbarians is to treat them with sincerity and fairness". *Mok.* 1. 344; *T'ai SL* (11) 1196. Many things having to do with the Mongols (or other non-Chinese) were called *fu-i* "comforting the Barbarians". A few examples to illustrate this employ : as early as 1497, there was in Su-chou a centurion with the title of *fu-i*; what his duties were we are not told; we only know of him that when he heard that the "Northern Caitiffs" had attacked the Čigil Mongols of the Sha-chou region who had recognized Ming suzerainty, he set out with both Chinese and non-Chinese (Fan : Tibetans?) troops to chase them away (*Mok.* 5. 16; *Hsiao SL* (56) 2327). In May, 1509, when the Three Uriyangqad Commanderies sought Chinese assistance against a probable Mongol invasion from the North, the Ming were in favor neither of sending an expedition nor allowing the Uriyangqad Mongols to cross into Chinese controled territory, but instead sent them an interpreter "comforter of the Barbarians" to give them courage and explain the emperor's sollicitude (*Man.* 3. 214; *Wu SL* (63) 1143). The same expression applies also to lodging houses : in the second Lung-ch'ing year (an error for the second Wan-li : 1574) permission was granted to build "lodgings to comfort the Barbarians" outside the walls of Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung : "when the Barbarians come to report events or request rewards they may stay in those houses and only the chieftains are allowed to enter (the towns) and see (the officials). When they cross the borders (on their way home) governmental troops must search them : they are not allowed to carry iron goods, saltpetre and other forbidden articles. Personnel of the lodging houses must not induce (the Mongols) to stir up trouble. Those who are guilty of such behavior will be arrested and questioned". (TMHT 130. 3ab : 1848a). In the section "Kan-su" the same expression *fu-i* refers to a permission granted in 1571 for some tribal groups,

either Mongols or Turks, to settle outside the borders of Su-chou (TMHT 130. 1718a : 1855). In the 1570s, a group of Mongols were living inside Ming territory in Hsüan-fu district (Serruys 59). Since they received subsidies and monthly allowances of grain, in 1578, someone wanted a "Barbarian-comforting official" to watch them constantly so that their subsidies and allowances could be withdrawn if they acted in a suspicious manner (*Mok.* 8. 379; *Shen SL* (100) 1719). In a four-point report from December 17, 1586, by the governor of Ning-hsia, the fourth point reads as follows : "Ever since the creation of the fairs, Ning-hsia has relied on interpreters to investigate the Caitiffs' intentions and estimate the prices of the wares. The district of Ning-hsia has only one man for this job, the Barbarian official *(Ta-kuan)*, officer of the mobile unit (*yu-chi* 遊擊), Cheng Yang 鄭暘. One cannot manage every place without neglecting one or the other, and at the present time (Cheng Yang) is getting old. What shall we do in an emergency? The chiliarch Sha Yang 沙暘 of the commandery of Ning-hsia should be promoted to the rank of comforter of the Barbarians and garrison commander so that (in addition to his present duties) he can take care of comforting the Barbarians' feelings and manage the horse fairs." (*Mok.* 8. 599; *Shen SL* (104) 3354). In the second point of the plan proposed on April 8, 1602, the governor of Yen-sui says : "We need someone familiar with Barbarian affairs to give them instructions : the commanding officer of Po-lo 波羅, Ma Ying-shih 馬應時 has traveled through the Caitiff country and speaks the language. I propose that in addition to his present duties he also take charge of comforting the Barbarians. Pending the presentation of the tribute horses and the opening of the markets, we should first solve (difficulties) reasonably so that afterwards the Caitiffs have no extra demands to make..." (*Mok.* 9. 384; *Shen SL* (112) 6910). Po-lo, a little garrison town east of Ordos in the vicinity of Yü-lin-fu, undoubtedly is a Mongol name, yet its modern Mongol name is quite different : Könöγ ∿ Könög qota. See Mostaert 56. 104). In the same text (point 5) we read that there was a "Barbarian-comforting official" of the Hung-shan fair, and in the enclosure which the governor of Yen-sui planned to build there, this official's office is referred to as *"fu-i-t'ai"* – "terrace of the Barbarian-comforting (official)" (*Mok.* 9. 385; *Shen SL* (112) 6911). On the same date, the governor of Ning-hsia presented various requests, the third of which regards the appointment of the "Barbarian-comforting" garrison-commander to administer the Ch'ing-shui fair (*Mok.* 9. 386; *Shen SL* (112) 6912). And in 1607, an official dealing with the Ordos Mongols and blamed for giving in too hastily to requests for higher subsidies or increase of market volume, is called *fu-i-kuan* "official comforting the Barbarians" (*Mok.* 9. 495; *Shen SL* (115) 8171). Even the moneys and goods destined to the Mongols were called "Barbarian-comforting" moneys or goods : for example in *Mok.* 8. 57, 612; *Mu SL* (95) 1577; *Shen SL* (104) 3418. With regard to the *fu-i-kuan-t'ai* mentioned above in connection with Hung-shan, we may add that a corresponding name *fu-i-(kuan)-t'ing* 廳 appears in the *K'ai-yüan t'u-shuo* 2. 11b : on a sketch of the town of K'ai-yüan such an office is indicated on top of the walls. Both this fact and the name *t'ai* imply that the office was intended to occupy a position overlooking the surrounding area. For a modern application of the word *fu* "to soothe" to foreign affairs, see Meng 62. 19-20, 113-114, n. 27.

found guilty of any misdemeanor[253]. Nevertheless, however suspected and open to accusations, interpreters knowing the language and experienced in things Mongol could not be easily dispensed with and in fact continued to be employed.

The complaint perhaps most commonly heard, at least in later years, is that concerning the poor quality of the textiles offered to the Mongols. One reason for this, according to Hsiao Ta-heng, was that the goods were stored too long and spoiled[254]; but otherwise, it seems, purchasing agents and other officials involved were to blame : they bought textiles and other goods of lower quality at a cheap price to palm off to the Mongols at the regular price and pocketed the balance. Several references in the foregoing pages had to do with the purchase of goods destined to the fairs; a few instances may suffice here : in December, 1603, when a quarrel had broken out between the Tümed prince and Chinese officials, the Ministry of the Army admitted that Chinese subsidy goods were below standard[255], and this must have been true of the market goods as well. As we have seen, if the textiles were too bad, the Mongols might refuse to accept them; indeed we read in a passage from June 19, 1606, that as time went on, the Mongols acquired greater experience and could no longer be fooled; the governor-general of Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung blamed the situation on greedy officials who purchased substandard goods, and on rich families in Chiang-nan who monopolized the weaving industry; he wanted orders to be issued to the governor and the eunuchs supervising the manufacture of silks to speed up production, have closer inspection and have unsatisfactory goods returned for reweaving[256]. The governor-general stated that the profits from the market-rewards were the most efficient means to control the Barbarians. This had

253 *Mok.* 9. 97-98; *Shen SL* (106) 4407.
254 *Mok.* 9. 129; *Shen SL* (106) 4511.
255 *Mok.* 9. 420; *Shen SL* (113) 7345.
256 *Mok.* 9. 459-460; *Shen SL* (115) 7968.

always been true, but good relations with the Mongol princes became even more important towards the end of the dynasty with the Manchu threat looming ever larger in the northeast. In 1607, the governor of Shan-hsi district proposed a series of measures, one of which was that "market rewards", no doubt meaning all goods brought to the fairs for payment as well as for subsidy, should be inspected in order to show good faith[257].

Enough has been said about official governmental business and opportunities for private trade at the fairs; but a final remark is in order concerning illicit, or to use the official Chinese term, "private" trade. This trade seems never to have stopped. We have just seen that as late as 1591, officers in Ta-t'ung district were warned that they could not trade privately; and nobody was allowed to bring iron, saltpetre, and other such articles to the fairs for resale to the Mongols. In his memorial from April, 1602, the governor of Yen-sui district spoke of the military population trading privately. Nowhere are we told how, where, and when those private or illegal transactions were made. Probably those references aim at commercial transactions outside of the horse fairs : in August, 1576, an official in the district of Shan-hsi stated that no day went by without the Mongols asking for trade[258]. Obviously this text testifies to a much greater desire for trade on the part of the Mongols than the Chinese were ready to meet during the short periods the yearly or even the monthly fairs were open. It must have been much harder even to know, let alone control, what was being sold or bought outside the official markets. As time went on it seems to have become ever more difficult to control trade at the fairs too. At least a memorial from 1604 gives this to understand : among other things it says : "Forbid intercourse with the Caitiffs : the town of Chang-chia-k'ou in Hsüan-fu (district) is the market place of Čing (-bâtur) and Yüng (siyebü), but the traders

[257] *Mok.* 9. 496; *Shen SL* (115) 8174.
[258] *Mok.* 8. 299; *Shen SL* (99) 1229.

(attending that fair) are mostly scoundrels who are only concerned with profits : they entertain relations with every Barbarian and sometimes leak out military secrets, or stealthily sell iron goods; under the circumstances it is difficult to prevent it,,,"[259].

In view of all the foregoing relative to the effect of the horse fairs on Sino-Mongol relations in general, especially the measure of peace achieved, one gains the impression that officials away from the local scene tended to be oversuspicious of "private" relations.

SECURITY MEASURES : MONGOL GUARDS

What has been said about Chinese troops stationed at or near the fairs to forestall disturbances, or about the responsibilities of officers[260] regarding the fairs, will not be repeated here. The fact that in this matter the Chinese government relied almost as much on the cooperation of the Mongols as on its own security measures deserves a brief discussion. Regularly, once the fairs were concluded, influential Mongol princes were granted rewards for their own good will and their effective control of their subjects at the fairs. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* tells us that Liu Ying-ch'i in 1571 proposed that the Altan-qan should first summon his people for the tribute presentation and thereafter they would be allowed to come to the fairs, but even there they would remain under the qan's control : a number of days would be assigned to every tribe, and they would be supervised (*chien* 監) by their princes[261]. How this supervision was to be exercised in practice is no further explained : the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* only says that the Mongols were not supposed to cross

259 *Mok.* 9. 431-432.

260 One may consult *Mok.* 8. 427, 661-662; *Mok.* 9. 18, 385, 386, etc. *Shen SL* (101) 216; (105) 3752; (106) 4186; (112) 6911-12.

261 WLWKL 8. 145.

the border at will. The fifth article of the regulations listed in the *San-Yün ch'ou-tsu k'ao* (above) states that the Mongols could come only at the appointed time, in prescribed numbers, but could not come and go at will. Substantially the same is said now and then in the *Shih-lu*. A primary condition for maintaining order at the fairs seems to have been that only those were admitted unto the fairs who really intended to do business there, and then that they left as soon as the fairs were concluded. This seems simple enough, but the many ordinances issued in 1571 and regularly thereafter make it plain that it was not always that easy to make Mongol horsemen understand that the Chinese did things differently from the Mongols and that in a Chinese village one could not behave like in the steppe[262]!

What is remarkable in this matter is that the Chinese not only relied on the cooperation of the Mongol princes to enforce a minimum of discipline, but also hired Mongols to help police the horse fairs. I am not now speaking of Mongols who had immigrated to China and entered the Ming service, but of Mongols who remained subjects of their native princes and apparently after their "term of duty" returned home. We do not have much information concerning this "Mongol guard", but the fact itself cannot be doubted. As early as March 7, 1571, even before the Ming Court had decided to open horse fairs of any kind, Wang Ch'ung-ku in his memorial which we have quoted so often, mentions modest rewards not only for the Mongol envoys bringing the tribute, but also for "Barbarian market guards" (*shou-shih i-ping* 守市夷兵), and in the debate at the capital on Wang's plan, this idea seems to have been accepted without opposition[263]. The very expression used by Wang is an indication that he was thinking of Mongols who were not in the Ming service : these would have been called "Ta". As far as I know, the word *i* "Barbarian" is

[262] For these regulations see Serruys 60. 23-47, and in a revised version : in my "Tribute... ," pp. 589-605.

[263] *Mok.* 8. 7, 12; *Mu SL* (95) 1338, 1356.

never used for Mongols settled in China. On April 22, Wang Ch'ung-ku stated once more that it was necessary to foresee gifts for the guards and the envoys[264]. In its account of the fairs of 1571 of the districts of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi, the *Shih-lu* (October 12) speaks of "comfort rewards" granted at every fair, but fails to mention Mongol guards, in fact names no one by name. But under the date of November 24, 1571, mentioning the conclusion of the fairs of Shensi, the *Shih-lu* notes that the jinong of the Ordos was rewarded along with (Qutuγtai) Sečen qung-tayiji and one Üijing-kiya-tabunang[265]. No reason for this grant is indicated, but the *Collected Statutes* is more helpful here and notes that the Ordos chieftains who had supervised the fairs (*chien-shih* 監 市) received rewards — the same as those listed in the *Shih-lu*[266]. No Barbarian guards of the markets are mentioned, but if the princes received their rewards, we may assume that soldiers under their command received theirs, too. From then on rewards are regularly mentioned at the conclusion of the fairs, but it is a little surprising that in this connection the *Shih-lu* mentions only the Ordos Mongols. The reason for this may well be that Shensi officials regularly reported those grants to the Court explicitly, while Ta-t'ung officials never or rarely bothered to do so in their correspondence with the government in Peking. On October 16, 1573, Ombo (Yin-pu) tayiji and others were granted silks and clothes as a reward for their good services in supervising the fairs, and, in addition, each received one "patent" entitling them to present more tribute and consequently obtain more return presents[267]. One who before 1571 had caused much trouble but now was very influential in promoting good relations with China, was the abovementioned Qutuγtai-sečen qung-tayiji. On November 19, 1573, not only did he receive rewards along with other

264 *Mok.* 8. 17; *Mu SL* (95) 1376.
265 *Mok.* 8. 48; *Mu SL* (95) 1517.
266 TMHT 111. 14a (1649).
267 *Mok.* 8. 173; *Shen SL* (97) 508. Ombo here spelled Yin-pu, is rendered Wan-pu in the Genealogical Tables. See Serruys 58. 33.

chieftains, but he was even called "manager" (*chu-chang* 主 張) of the tribute and the fairs[268]. On March 13, 1580, the governor-general of Shensi noted that there were four fairs in his district and he wanted four men appointed and given the name of "manager of the fairs" *(shih-chu)* : Bušuγtu-abuγai who later also became ǰinong of the Ordos, Qutuγtai-sečen qung-tayiǰi, and two Bingtü's; he wanted them to have "patents" (confirming their authority?) with the title "manager of the fairs" so that they would keep their subjects under control[269]. Bušuγtu is mentioned again in 1581, 1582, 1583, 1585 and 1589; he was not alone to be granted rewards, but he is alone to be mentioned by name; in 1582, 25 men were rewarded, of whom only Bušuγtu and Qutuγtai-secen are mentioned by name[270]. In 1583, the *Shih-lu* notes that the rewards were granted according to precedent, clearly indicating that this had become the customary procedure. On more than one occasion "patents" are mentioned meaning that the bearers were entitled to present more tribute. In two cases from 1586 and 1589, the tribute is explicitly linked to the rewards of supervising the markets : in 1586, not only are the "Barbarian officials" who have supervised the fairs rewarded, but 26 men who had presented horses are granted extra gifts. The case of 1589 even included women[271].

After Qutuγtai-sečen's death, the governor of Ning-hsia advised to enlist the support of his nephew a certain Man-k'o-su abuγai who had already proved that he enjoyed the confidence of his fellow Mongols[272]. Finally we may mention a memorial from May 13, 1607, in which the governor-general of Shensi writing on Ordos affairs says that one Čečen-dayičing was the supervisor of the fairs and that he was entitled to give instructions to the chieftains[273].

[268] *Mok.* 8. 178; *Shen SL* (97) 527;

[269] *Mok.* 8. 410; *Shen SL* (100) 1936.

[270] *Mok.* 8. 423, 451, 485, 511; *Shen SL* (101) 2086, 2295; (102) 2577, 2782.

[271] *Mok.* 8. 595, 679; *Shen SL* (104) 3333; (105) 3832.

[272] *Mok.* 8. 599; *Shen SL* (104) 3353-54. The name Man-k'o-ssu (Mangγus ?) does not appear on the Genealogical Tables of the Ordos He may be listed under another name.

[273] *Mok.* 9. 494; *Shen SL* (115) 8170. Sečen or Čečen-dayičing was a

ENTERTAINMENT AND BANQUETS

Like in Liaotung, some forms of entertainment and banquets, presentation of gifts were part of the ceremonial aspect of the horse fairs. This was all the more important on the Shansi and Shensi borders as the horse fairs were also the occasion on which the official tribute was presented and, contrary to the general practice, no Tümed and Ordos tribute envoy was allowed to proceed to the capital for this ceremony; since the presentation of the tribute at the Court was always followed by grants of return gifts and banquets, it was fitting that something similar was done to compensate the Mongols at the horse fairs.

Rewards are regularly referred to under such general terms as *shih-shang* 市賞 "market rewards", and such expressions may very well indicate anything the Mongols received at the fairs, payment for the horses as well as presents and entertainment. However we are never told what those things consisted in, or how they were presented. Apparently this was one of those matters too well known to the Chinese and absolutely taken for granted to require more than a passing reference in official records. In a special chapter of my study of the tribute relations I have discussed entertainment and banquets tendered to foreign tribute missions at the Court. As I have indicated there, it was the foreigners themselves struck by the lavish nature of those banquets who left us the best descriptions of those festivities. The details cannot be repeated here. The banquets tendered at the fairs, although along the same lines as those given to tribute

cousin of the late Qutuγtai-sečen qung-tayiǰi. Cf. Serruys 58. 39, 46. It should also be mentioned that besides this Barbarian market-guard, the Chinese employed Mongols to patrol the borders and the passes. These Mongols, too, remained subjects of their own princes but were paid by the Ming for services along the borders. They were called *shou-k'ou-i* : Barbarian border guard.

missions in Peking, were necessarily much less elaborate.

Ch'ü Chiu-ssu, as far as I know, is the only author to provide a few details regarding the banquets tendered to the Mongols at the fairs of 1571. The reader should bear in mind, however, that the tribute presentation of the Altan-qan took place at the same time and that since this was his first tribute presentation and thus something of a solemn occasion, it is quite possible that the festivities were organized on a somewhat more lavish scale than later on, or than they usually were at K'ai-yüan, Kuang-ning, and other places of Liaotung where no tribute was presented at the time of the fairs. With these reservations in mind, here is how Ch'ü Chiu-ssu describes the entertainment of 1571 : "There upon the Emperor dispatched a chief-minister of the Court of Imperial Entertainment (*kuang-lu-ssu* 光祿寺) and an usher from the Court of State Ceremonial (*hung-lu-ssu* 鴻臚寺) to prepare a banquet on the borders to be attended by the governor-general. The Alta(n-qan)'s banquet consisted of ten 'trays'[274] with two stems of golden flowers. (He further received) one crimson robe with the *mang* 蟒 design, and four lined garments in varicolored satin. The Old Bâtur [the Altan-qan's younger brother], (Sengge-) Qung-tayiǰi, and the (Ordos) ǰinong [the qan's nephew] were tendered a banquet consisting of five 'trays' and two stems of silver flowers; and they received two bolts of gold-colored satin. The banquets of the other chieftains comprised two plates of fried food and candied fruits, and five courses of 'soup-foods'. (They also received) two bolts of colored satin. (For all this was needed) : five oxen, ten sheep, thirty jars of wine, 5000 cakes, two bushels *(shih)* of rice; (and they received) twenty bolts of medium satin, twenty bolts of medium fine silk, and one thousand bolts of colored cotton cloth. Only the Altan-qan had 'assistants' : the border officer of Chen-ch'iang-chen and other officers were at his left and right."[275].

[274] The expression *hsi-lien* 席 連 must signify what is regularly called "tray" in the Persian account of Shah-Rukh's tribute mission of 1420-1421.

[275] WLWKL 8. 141.

Then Ch'ü Chiu-ssu describes what appears to have been a second banquet : "(Wang) Ch'ung-ku then ordered military officers to organize a banquet ceremony and to present comfort rewards to the Caitiff prince [i.e. the Altan-qan] and the great chieftains (holding the ranks of) *tu-tu*, and *chih-hui*, like at the time of the enfeoffment and the presentation of the tribute; they gave (each person?) two bolts of gold-colored satin, two bolts of fine Lu 兀 silk, two stems of silver flowers, and, in addition, one silver terraced plate. In all 130 bolts of gold-satin and fine Lu silk, 65 stems of silver flowers, and 33 silver terraced plates were needed[276].

276 WLWKL 8. 143-144.

VII

PRICES OF THE HORSES

We know next to nothing of the prices of the various commodities bought and sold on the Sino-Mongol borders. Fortunately we do have at least some information on the prices of the horses. However, since even this information remains very spotty, it may be useful for purposes of comparison to provide some additional information regarding the horses purchased from other nations than the Mongols as well.

The variety of the means of exchange and the changing rates at which the Chinese throughout the Ming period paid for Korean, Mongol, and Central Asian horses complicate the problem. Usually horses were paid with textiles, cotton, and silks; more rarely with other goods; at any rate at any given time the price was calculated in more than one commodity, and this price was apt to change from one occasion to the other; but even the kinds and the relative amounts of the various commodities used as means of exchange were apt to change from one occasion to the next. One would need a thorough grounding in statistical science and a sound familiarity with Ming economic history to be able to calculate the relative value of all the commodities used to pay for the horses and the absolute value of the horses themselves. No such evaluations will be made here; only a survey will be made of the most representative prices recorded in the *Shih-lu* without any attempt to interpret them[1].

The earliest prices I know of are those paid for purchases of horses in Korea. In the entry of December 27, 1386, we read that Ming envoys were dispatched to Korea to buy horses; payment

[1] The *Yen-chou shih-liao, ch'ien chi* 8. 9a-17b lists many of the prices recorded in the Shih-lu.

was fixed at two bolts of flowered silk (*wen-ch'i* 文綺) and eight bolts of cotton per horse[2]. On April 11 of the following year, the envoys back from Korea reported that the Koreans refused to accept any payment for their horses. Probably this was no more than a formality (or did the Koreans consider the price offered too low?). Anyhow the emperor rejected the Korean refusal and ordered the authorities in Liaotung, as soon as the horses arrived there, to pay the full price for good horses and a slightly lower price for less good ones. Shortly afterwards 3040 horses arrived in Liaotung and were duly paid for probably according to the rate set in December[3]. On August 27, 1387, the *Shih-lu* records another important purchase of Korean horses : 5000 horses for a total of 2670 bolts of flowered silk and 30,186 bolts of cotton[4]. In 1393, 9880 Korean horses were paid one bolt each of fine silk and cotton fabric apiece[5]. In 1401, the Chinese made what seems like another important purchase, and the Korean sources indicate the following rates of payment :

a first-grade big horse :	500 pieces of cotton cloth 5 *sheng* 升 long;[6]
a medium-grade :	450 pieces
a low-grade :	400 pieces

[2] *T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 2714-15.

[3] *T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 2731-32.

[4] *T'ai-tsu SL* (7) 2757.

[5] *T'ai-tsu SL* (8) 3298. As for the date, *jen-ch'en* (March 29 in Ejima 56.41 is an error for *kuei-ssu* : March 30. Payment was delivered by a Liaotung official : July 15, 1393 : Yijo sillok I. 176-177. The 26th Hung-wu year (1393) is a *kuei-yu* year, and corresponds to the second year of T'ai-t'sung of Korea. In M. Tchang, *Synchronismes chinois*, Chang-hai 1905. p. 416, the second year of T'ai-tsung is erroneously made to correspond to 1394, instead of 1393. All Korean equivalents in that particular column seem to be incorrect.

[6] One *sheng* is the length formed by 80 threads (*lü* 縷). The translators of the *T'ien-kung k'ai-wu* render *sheng* as "strip" : "in ancient (Chinese) writings eighty warp threads were termed as one 'strip'." Sun 66. 55; *T'ien-kung k'ai-wu* p. 62. Ejima 56. 41 mistakenly reads *chang* 丈. Probably the

a first-grade medium horse : 300 pieces
a medium-grade 250 pieces
a low grade 200 pieces[7]

On October 2, 1402, the high-commandery of Shensi recommended to buy horses from Mohammedan traders at Ning-hsia. Upon orders from the Court, the horses were acquired at the following rates :

first-grade horses : 4 bolts of coarse silk and 6 bolts of cotton
medium-grade horses : 3 bolts of coarse silk and 5 bolts of cotton
low grade horses : 2 bolts of coarse silk and 4 bolts of cotton
colts : 1 bolt of coarse silk and 3 bolts of cotton[8].

The *Yung-lo shih-lu* further records on November 16, 1403, that "tribute" horses from the Uriyangqad Mongols were paid for in paper money at the following rates : first, medium, and low-grade horses : 50, 40, and 30 ingots (*ting* 錠) respectively in paper currency[9].

cloth was not in individual pieces of 5 *sheng*, but in longer sections, 5 *sheng* serving as a unit of measurement.

[7] *Yijo sillok* II. 97-98. The text goes on to indicate the relative value of cotton and satin : one bolt of top-grade satin was the equivalent of 90 pieces of cotton 5 *sheng* long; one bolt of medium grade satin : 80 pieces of cotton of the same length; one bolt of low-grade satin : 70 pieces of cotton. One bolt of coarse "government silk" : (top-grade : 30 pieces of cotton; medium-grade : 25 pieces of cotton; one bolt of (Chinese) cotton fabric : 20 pieces of cotton 5 *sheng* long. Ejima 56. 42 calculates the prices of the horses in terms of cotton and silk respectively.

[8] *T'ai SL* (9) 213.

[9] *T'ai SL* (10) 450; *Yen-chou shih-liao* 8.12a. As I have indicated in my work on the tribute, paper money was rarely used as partial payment for tribute articles. Paper notes could be spent in China to purchase other goods. As I have also indicated, since the Uriyangqad Mongols lived so close by, and came to China regularly, paper notes may even have had limited currency in their own country. But whether envoys and merchants from other nations ever took Chinese paper notes home is not known. At any rate, I know of only one case of horses being paid for with paper notes exclusively : in 1428, the envoy of Ili-baliq, Darqan-Muhammad received the following prices for his horses : medium-grade horses : 3000 strings of cash in paper apiece; low-grade horses : 2500 strings of cash; extra-low grade horses *(hsia-hsia)*: 2000 strings of cash; female colts : 1000 strings of cash. The authorities of Shensi were to pay him from their treasury. *Hsüan SL* (18) 1043.

On April 4, 1404, the *Shih-lu* relates that the Uighur prince of An-ting 安定, Dorǰi, offered to sell 500 horses; the usual payment for horses from Pi-li and Han-tung in the same general area, was tea, but in this case the Court made an exception and ordered to pay Dorǰi in silks and cotton : for first-grade horses : 2 bolts of coarse silk and 2 bolts of cotton; for medium-grade horses : 1 bolt of coarse silk and 2 bolts of cotton; for low-grade horses : 1 bolt of coarse silk and 1 bolt of cotton[10]. If the bolt of silk and cotton had remained unchanged in quality and in size, it is remarkable that these prices were less than half those paid to the Mohammedans in 1402. On April 19, 1405, the *Shih-lu* records a purchase of horses from the Uriyangqad in Liaotung. Here apart from the colts, the horses are graded into four classes, as follows : extra-first grade horses *(shang-shang)* : 8 bolts of coarse silk and 12 bolts of cotton; girst grade horses : 4 bolts of coarse silk and 6 bolts of cotton (i.e. exactly half as much as the extra-first grade); medium-grade horses : 3 bolts of coarse silk and 5 bolts of cotton; low-grade horses : 2 bolts of coarse silk and 4 bolts of cotton; colts : 1 bolt of coarse silk and 3 bolts of cotton[11].

[10] *T'ai SL* (10) 522. The reason for this switch from tea to textiles is said to be that this was the first tribute mission from An-ting, which is not correct. It may have been this particular prince's first mission.

[11] *T'ai SL* (10) 667. Also listed in *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi* 5. 4b (incomplete), *Yen-chou shih-liao* 8. 12b, *Liao-tung chih* 3. 29b, and Franke 49. 20. Wada 57. 911, n. 9 calculates that according to this rate, an extra-first grade horse was worth 8 taels of silver, and a first-grade horse, 4 taels. At this time, the Shih-lu makes no mention of the Liaotung fairs of K'ai-yüan and Kuang-ning (their creation is officially recorded only in March, 1406); nevertheless the TMHT 153. 16b (2138) which dates the creation of the Liaotung fairs from 1405, indicates the same rates as official. We find the same rates also in the *Ming-shih* 81. II. 857a, but in summary form : the *shang-shang* grade is called *shang*; and for *shang* of the *Shih-lu* we read "next". The HM *Chiu-pien K'ao* 2. 12b13a also dating the creation of the fairs from 1405, lists the price of one category of horses only : "first-grade horses : 8 bolts of coarse silk and 20 bolts of cotton". It is obvious that here too, "*shang* : first grade" corresponds to "*shang-shang*" of the *Shih-lu*, and that *20 bolts* of cotton is a misprint for *12*.

For 300 horses bought from the Koreans in 1407, the Ming government paid 15.000 bolts of coarse silk and cotton, that is 5 bolts per horse, or according to Ejima's reckonings, 2 bolts of silk and 3 bolts of cotton per horse[12].

On August 25, 1409, an imperial rescript to the commander-in-chief of Ning-hsia enjoined him not to be stingy when buying good horses from surrendered Tatars, and also to increase the price of medium-grade horses, but otherwise nothing is indicated regarding exact prices or mode of payment[13]. The *Ta-Ming hui-tien*[14] records a list of prices for the horse fair of "K'ai-p'ing", certainly a misprint for "K'ai-yüan"; here the horses are classified a little differently : there are only *"shang-shang"* (extra-first) horses; but they are divided into two grades : horses of one grade fetched 5 bolts of coarse silk and 10 bolts of cotton; horses of the next grade : 18 bolts of cotton; colts fetched 5 bolts of cotton.

The Korean *Shih-lu* on November 5, 1410, records another purchase of 10,000 horses, at 3 bolts of coarse silk and 2 bolts of cotton per horse, a total of 30,000 bolts of coarse silk and 20,000 bolts of cotton[15].

As has been indicated in another chapter, in 1407 and 1417, special rates were decreed for the Liaotung fairs on account of famine conditions prevailing then, and payments were made partly in rice, partly in textiles :

for first-grade horses : 15 *shih* of rice, and 3 bolts of coarse silk;

second-first grade horses *(tz'u-shang)* : 12 *shih* of rice and 2 bolts of coarse silk;

medium-grade horses : 10 *shih* of rice, and 2 bolts of coarse silk;

12 Ejima 56. 42-43. In the *T'ai SL* (11) 1023, the payment is recorded under the date of January 2, 1408, and the horses are described as "tribute", but the transaction has all the characteristics of a commercial deal.

13 *T'ai SL* (12) 1247

14 TMHT 153. 16b (2138). Also in the *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi* 5.5b, and *Yen-chou shih-liao* 8. 12b-13a, dated 1411.

15 *Yijo sillok* III. 740.

low-low-grade horses : 8 *shih* of rice and 1 bolt of coarse silk[16].

Famine in Mongolia almost certainly was due to drought and this could not but seriously affect the animals themselves. Poor condition of the horses may well have been the reason for the governor of Liaotung to propose in December, 1417, a reduction of rates, and after deliberations the following rates were adopted :

for extra-first grade horses : 5 *shih* of rice and 5 bolts each of coarse silk and cotton;

first-grade horses : 4 *shih* of rice and 4 bolts each of coarse silk and cotton;

medium-grade horses : 3 *shih* of rice and 3 bolts each of coarse silk and cotton;

low-grade horses : 2 *shih* of rice and 3 bolts each of coarse silk and cotton;

colts : 1 *shih* of rice and 2 bolts of cotton[17].

One last indication of prices for Korean horses is recorded in 1427 : according to this passage, back in 1423, the Ming had ordered 20,000 horses valued at 40,000 bolts of cotton and 60,000 bolts of "large" coarse silk *(ta-chüan)* : i.e. 2 bolts of cotton and 3 bolts of silk per horse, the same price as in 1410. By 1427, however, the order of 1423 was not yet completed because the Chinese had difficulty finding enough textiles to pay for the horses[18].

In 1436, the army of Liaotung received funds to buy horses, although it is not said that they were to come from the Mongols : for a medium-grade horse : 15 bolts of cotton and 5 bolts of coarse silk; for a low-grade horse : 12 bolts of cotton and 2

[16] *Mok.* 1. 319-320; *T'ai SL* (11) 898; *Yen-chou shih-liao* 8. 12b.

[17] *Man.* 1. 291-292; *T'ai SL* (13) 2037, 2039. Also listed in the *Liao-tung chih* 3. 30a, *Ch'üan-Liao chih* 1. 35b, and Franke 49. 20. Also in *Huang-ch'ao ma-cheng chi* 5.5b, where no "first-grade" horses are listed, and where we read "2 bolts of cotton and coarse silk" (instead of 3) for "low-grade horses"; *Yen-chou shih-liao* 8.13b, where we find the same discrepancy.

[18] *Hsüan-SL* (17) 727.

bolts of coarse silk[19].

In February, 1444, the commander-in-chief of Shensi was ordered to purchase a large number of horses for soldiers lacking them, and to pay respectively 18 and 16 bolts of coarse silk for medium-grade *(chung-teng)* and medium-medium *(chung-chung)* horses[20]. Here again it is not said where the horses were to come from, but since during the 1440s numerous Oyirad missions brought large quantities of horses as tribute and for trade, the horses needed in Shensi could easily be imported from Mongolia.

Around this time silver begins to be mentioned as payment for horses, but not to the Mongols. In 1449 and 1450, the situation was very tense between China and Mongolia; as a result of the war of 1449 and subsequent "invasion" of China by the Oyirad armies, the Chinese had lost many horses, and the commander-in-chief of the Ta-t'ung armies recommended to buy good horses in the possession of the military population and pay 8 taels of silver for a first-grade horse and 6 taels for a medium-grade one. Several months later the transaction was completed, with over 800 horses bought, but the prices paid were considerable lower, namely for first-grade horses : 6 taels; for medium-grade horses : 4 taels, and for low-grade horses : 3 taels[21].

In 1516, the military in Kansu were given permission to buy horses – the *Shih-lu* does not say whether abroad or not – at

[19] *Man.* 2. 15; *Ying SL* (23) 366.

[20] *Ying SL* (27) 2269.

[21] *Mok.* 3. 285, 335-336; *Ying SL* (31) 3783, 4075. A few days later, the government decreed a reward for soldiers who in a daring raid had captured 100 Mongol horses : 3 taels and 2 taels of silver respectively for first-grade and medium-grade horses. *Mok.* 3. 337-338; *Ying SL* (31)4083. In 1500, with many Chinese abducted into Mongolia or emigrating, an official in the Ministry of Rites recommended to pay a good reward to Chinese who succeeded in fleeing back to China and bringing Mongol horses along : for one horse brought back, a reward of 20 taels would be paid; anyone bringing ten or a hundred horses would receive the same reward (per horse?) and his family would become tax exempt for ever. *Mok.* 5. 65; *Hsiao SL* (57) 2946.

10 taels of silver apiece[22].

With regard to the price of Mongol horses bought at the short-lived fairs of 1551, the *Shih-lu* contains little information. Under the date of April 9, 1551, we read that a number of officials recommended that the Ministry of the Army allocate 100,000 taels four times a year to buy textiles to pay for Mongol horses; the number of fairs, however, was reduced to two a year, but the amount of money to be spent each time remained the same. The text does not indicate how many horses this sum would buy, except that the number of horses must remain limited, meaning of course that no matter how many horses the Mongols put on the market only 100,000 taels could be spent twice a year[23]. The price seems to have been calculated at 10 taels per horse : indeed in his long memorial protesting the opening of the fairs, Yang Chi-sheng on April 20 said that "several" 100,000 taels for "several" 10,000 horses would soon exhaust the treasury[24]. The *Wan-li wu-kung lu* is a little more precise : there we read that at the fairs of Chen-ch'iang-p'u and Hsin-k'ai-k'ou, 4771 horses were purchased at 10 taels apiece. The price, however, was not paid in silver, but in textiles, bought for 44,032 taels, implying a real average of 9.23 taels per horse. With regard to the textiles bought for the horse fairs, the same author informs us that Shih Tao who supervised the operations, bought 4740 bolts of *tseng-pi* 缯皮 (probably the same as what is usually called *chüan* "coarse silk" in the *Shih-lu)* at a cost of 8893 taels of silver, or 1.88 per bolt, and 7000 bolts of cotton, the price of which is not indicated[25]. Even if the prices were calculated at an average of 10 tls., if the practice of 1571 and thereafter may be taken as an indicator, it is very doubtful that the Mongols received anything

[22] *Mok.* 5. 453; *Wu SL* (67) 2804.
[23] *Mok.* 6. 667-668; *Shih SL* (86) 6624-25.
[24] *Mok.* 6. 671; *Shih SL* (86) 6631. MSCSPM 60. 14.
[25] WLWKL 7. 67-68.

near the full-price!

It is interesting that the army shortly afterwards – when there were no more Mongols horse fairs – had to pay much more for horses in China. In 1566, the governor of the district of Shan-hsi wrote that all along the borders the army paid 12 taels of silver; only in the Shan-hsi district was the price 10 taels[26]. The horses in question were horses privately bred by the military population and bought up by the army. The governor thought that the common soldiers lost out on the deal and ought to be given a better price for their horses. Two years later, the district of Yen-sui requested an allowance from the Central Government towards the purchase of horses at 12 taels apiece "as was the rule in Hsüan-fu and Ta-t'ung districts"[27]. Wang Ch'ung-ku, then still governor-general of Shensi, mentioned the same price a little later : for 10 taels one could buy only inferior horses in Shensi, Shansi, etc., and he requested an allowance so he would be able to pay 12 taels[28].

This brings to the horse fairs of 1571 and thereafter. We have seen that in the summer of 1571, the government purchased 1370 horses at Te-sheng for 10,545 taels of silver, that is 7.69 apiece; at Hsin-p'ing-p'u, the government purchased 726 horses for 4253 taels, or 5.85 apiece; at Chang-chia-k'ou, 1993 horses for 15,277 taels, or 7.66 apiece, and at Shui-ch'üan-ying, 2941 horses at a cost of 26,400 taels, or 8,97 taels apiece[29].

The prices were well below the prices paid for horses in China : well below the 12 taels paid for Chinese horses in 1566 and 1568, but also below the price horses fetched locally in

[26] *Mok.* 7. 471; *Shih SL* (91) 8985.
[27] *Mok.* 7. 542; *Mu SL* (93) 421.
[28] *Mok.* 7. 594-595; *Mu SL* (93) 624.
[29] Hayashi gives an average of 8 tls for Te-sheng; for Hsin-p'ing, 6; for Shui-ch'üan, 9, but these are only approximations. His average of 2.5 tls for Chang-chia-k'ou must be a misprint (Hayashi 52. 217).

1571 : the author of the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* tells us that of the 726 horses bought at Te-sheng, 6 were immediately resold to private traders who paid 55.65 taels, or 9.27 taels per horse; of the 1993 horses bought at Chang-chia-k'ou, 472 were resold to private traders for 4570.5 taels, or 9.68 taels apiece; 345 were resold to garrison troops for 3298.5 taels, or 9.56 taels apiece[30].

In 1572, the price paid to the Mongols was even lower than the previous year : at Te-sheng, the average price for a single horse fell from 7.69 to 7.52 taels, namely 26,821 taels of silver for 3562 horses; and at Shui-ch'üan-ying, the price fell to 8.97 taels per horse, namely 18,677 taels for 2378 horses[31].

These averages are confirmed in another passage of the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* where we find the following figures : Shan-hsi (i.e. Shui-ch'üan) fair : 7.8; the western fair of Ta-t'ung (i.e. Te-sheng) : 7.5; the eastern fair of Ta-t'ung (i.e. Hsin-p'ing) : 7.3; Hsüan-fu (i.e. Chang-chia-k'ou) : 8.2 taels of silver[32]. The author goes on to explain that the averages had been calculated in advance at 12 taels for first grade horses, 10 taels for medium grade, and 8 for low grade horses, but here we notice a little discrepancy with the information found in the *Shih-lu* : under the date of December 27, 1572, there is a comment by the Ministry of the Army on Wang Ch'ung-ku's report on the market operations of that year : 8242 horses had been purchased at a cost of 65,696 taels of silver. Wang explained that the horses had not been purchased at a uniform rate, but graded into three categories : high, medium, and low, and paid for at the rates of 12, 10, and 6 taels, with an overall average of "only *(pu-kuo)* 8 taels". An average of 8 would make a total of 8242 × 8 = 65,936. If the total was 65,696, as indicated in the *Shih-lu*, the real average

30 WLWKL 8. 142.
31 WLWKL 8. 150-151, 156-157.
32 WLWKL 8. 157.

was slightly lower : 7.97 taels. At any rate, Wang's report implies that Mongol horses were mostly of the medium and low grades, and if this was so in 1572, it may well have been true in 1571, too, which would explain the low averages of the prices of 1571. Any way, in Wang Ch'ung-ku's opinion there was a possibility of making great profits[33].

As has already been indicated, the *Collected Statutes* states that in 1573 it was decided that every year 1900 horses purchased at the Shan-hsi fairs would be made available for use by the postal stations and paid 12 taels of silver apiece[34]. It is evident that this was not the price paid to the Mongols but what the relay stations were supposed to pay back to the market funds : a handsome profit.

For the year 1574 we read in the *Wan-li wu-kung lu* that the Ministry sent 12 taels per horse to be purchased at the border fairs, 8 taels of which served for the actual purchase, the balance

[33] *Mok.* 8. 122-123; *Shen SL* (96) 266. The WLWKL describes a first grade horse as follows : between four and eight years old and more than three feet 6 inches tall. WLWKL 8. 124. No doubt, *three* is a misprint for *five*. It is interesting that during the Han period, when China was also regularly at war with the Hsiung-nu, horses five feet and 9 inches tall were not permitted to leave China (Chang 66. 168). Here is some information about some Central Asian horses after Radloff : he says that on average Altaic horses are 1 arshine and 13 1/2 verchok (51.6 inches) high, and 2 arshine and 1/2 verchok (56.87 inches) long; the Kirgiz horses "usually small" are 2 arshine and 1/2 verchok (56.87 inches) high (this is exactly the figure of the length of the Altaic horses); the Mongol horses of Kobdo : 2 arshine high (56 inches), and 2 arshine and 2 verchok long (59.5 inches) (Radloff 93. I. 276, 440; II, 264). All very small indeed. Smaller than the average Mongol "pony".

[34] TMHT 153. 17a (2139a). I have no information concerning prices paid to the Mongols in 1573. As a term of comparison, however, we may refer to the price paid for tribute horses that year (WLWKL 8. 158) : the Altan-qan and his relatives as usual presented 500 horses as tribute, a small number of which were forwarded to the Court; the remaining were turned over to the army on the borders. The "price" of tribute horses presented at the Court was increased to 5 taels, and for those on the borders to 10 taels. 5 taels for tribute horses seems like a small price, but it should be borne in mind that besides payment of the "value" of the tribute articles, tributary vassals also received sizable return presents.

for feeding and various other expenses[35]. And it is rather doubtful that as high a price as 8 taels should have been paid to the Mongols. Indeed the prices paid in 1575 were much lower : in Hsüan-fu, 120,000 taels for 18,000 horses, or 6.66 taels apiece; in Ta-t'ung, 70,000 taels for 10,000 horses, or 7 taels apiece, and in Shan-hsi, 40,000 for 6000 horses, or 6.66.taels[36].

As time went on, prices do not seem to have fluctuated very much.. On January 1, 1585, a supervising secretary of the Ministry of the Army wrote that according to the official registers, over a period of three years 104,400 horses had been acquired in the three districts of Hsüan-fu, Ta-t'ung, and Shan-hsi, at a cost of 920,200 taels, making an average of 8.81 apiece[37]. But this may not have been the actual price paid to the Mongols for we read that by 1591, the district of Hsüan-fu imported 36.000 horses at a yearly expense of 185,000 taels, or an average of 5.14, and Ta-t'ung, 15,500 horses at an expense of 100,000 taels, or 6.45 taels apiece[38], and on July 14, 1597, the governor-general wrote that the horses purchased at the

35 WLWKL 8. 159. The sum of twelve taels per horse sent to the borders in 1574 explains an intriguing *Shih-lu* passage from February 19, 1572, already referred to : the governor of Shan-hsi afraid that the Mongols might become dissatisfied if at the conclusion of the fairs they were left with unsold horses, suggested that he be allowed to buy for the government all Mongol horses left over after the fairs, and he be given a sum of money from the Court of Imperial Stud for this purpose at a rate of 12 taels of silver per horse. *Mok.* 8. 59; *Mu SL* (95) 1584. Neither in 1571 nor in 1572 was such a high price ever paid for a Mongol horse, but what the governor had in mind no doubt was something similar to what the WLWKL says for 1574 : 8 taels or thereabout for the actual purchase from the Mongols and the rest for feeding and additional expenses. We read something similar in another passage of the WLWKL (8. 144) : the text says that in 1571 (apparently still prior to the opening of the fairs) Wang Ch'ung-ku arranged for the purchase of silks and cottons to serve as payment for the horses. He calculated the prices at 12, 10, and 8 taels, respectively for first-grade, medium-grade, and low-grade horses, but the Mongols actually would receive only 9, 7.5, and 6.4 taels.

36 *Mok.* 8. 249; *Shen SL* (98) 919.

37 *Mok.* 8. 524; *Shen SL* (103) 2875.

38 *Mok.* 9. 97; *Shen SL* (106) 4407. If Ta-t'ung imported only 14,500 horses a year as the SYCTK states, the average would be a little higher.

horse fairs cost from 5 to 7 taels, while tribute horses were paid 10 taels; all this exclusive of the subsidies given to the Mongols[39].

Although the prices of the Mongol horses are always expressed in terms of silver, it is obvious from what has been said in previous chapters, that what the Mongols actually received were textiles, foodstuffs, iron kettles, and other implements of daily use. However some silver was given out : on May 24, 1591, the Ministry of the Army referred to a memorial in which we are told that the number of "silver horses" must be strictly limited and that the poor common soldiers must not be fleeced in order to replenish the market funds[40]! No explanation is given in the *Shih-lu* of this term "silver horse" but we find it in the *San-Yün ch'ou-tsu k'ao* where horses purchased at the Ta-t'ung fairs are classified into categories according to the means of exchange employed to pay for them. This list, already referred to above, not only tells us what sort of goods the Mongols received, but also the rate of exchange. Here follows the complete text of this important passage : "The yearly number of horses bought at the (Ta-t'ung) fairs : 14,500; they are divided into eight categories : (1) 'silver horses', in all four classes rating from six to twelve taels per horse: (2) '*mang*-and-otter horses' : 5 classes, rating one bolt of *mang*-satin and from six to 20 otter furs *(shui-tai)* per horse; (3) 'gold-satin horses' : 2 classes, rating one bolt of gold-satin and from 10 to 15 otter furs per horse; (4) 'tiger-skin horses' rating 4 (tiger) furs: (5) 'leopard-skin horses' : 3 classes rating from 3 to 6 leopard skins per horse; (6) 'shuttle-cloth horses', 2 classes rating 40 bolts of shuttle-cloth

[39] *Mok.* 9. 324; *Shen SL* (110) 5805. In September, 1600, the governor-general pointing out that the Hsüan-fu market expenses had come down remarkably, wanted 48,000 taels allocated for the purchase of 3000 *tung-cheng* 東征 horses ("eastern chargers?"); this would be a rate of 16 taels per horse. *Mok.* 9. 364-365; *Shen SL* (111) 6557. These must have been special horses, and one may doubt if they were Mongol horses.

[40] *Mok.* 9. 81-82; *Shen SL* (106) 4358.

per horse; (7) 'government-goods horses' rating one bolt each of *chen-yüan-ch'ien-yü-fen* 真遠鏡羽分 satin and *chung-lu-ch'ou* 中潞紬, one bolt of black shuttle-cloth and ten bolts of blue or white shuttle-cloth[41]". Presumably at other fairs, payments were made in more or less the same manner.

[41] SYCTK 2. 19ab. This list comprises only seven categories; "eight" could be a misprint. I have found nothing to elucidate the names or nature of the textiles referred to in the last category.

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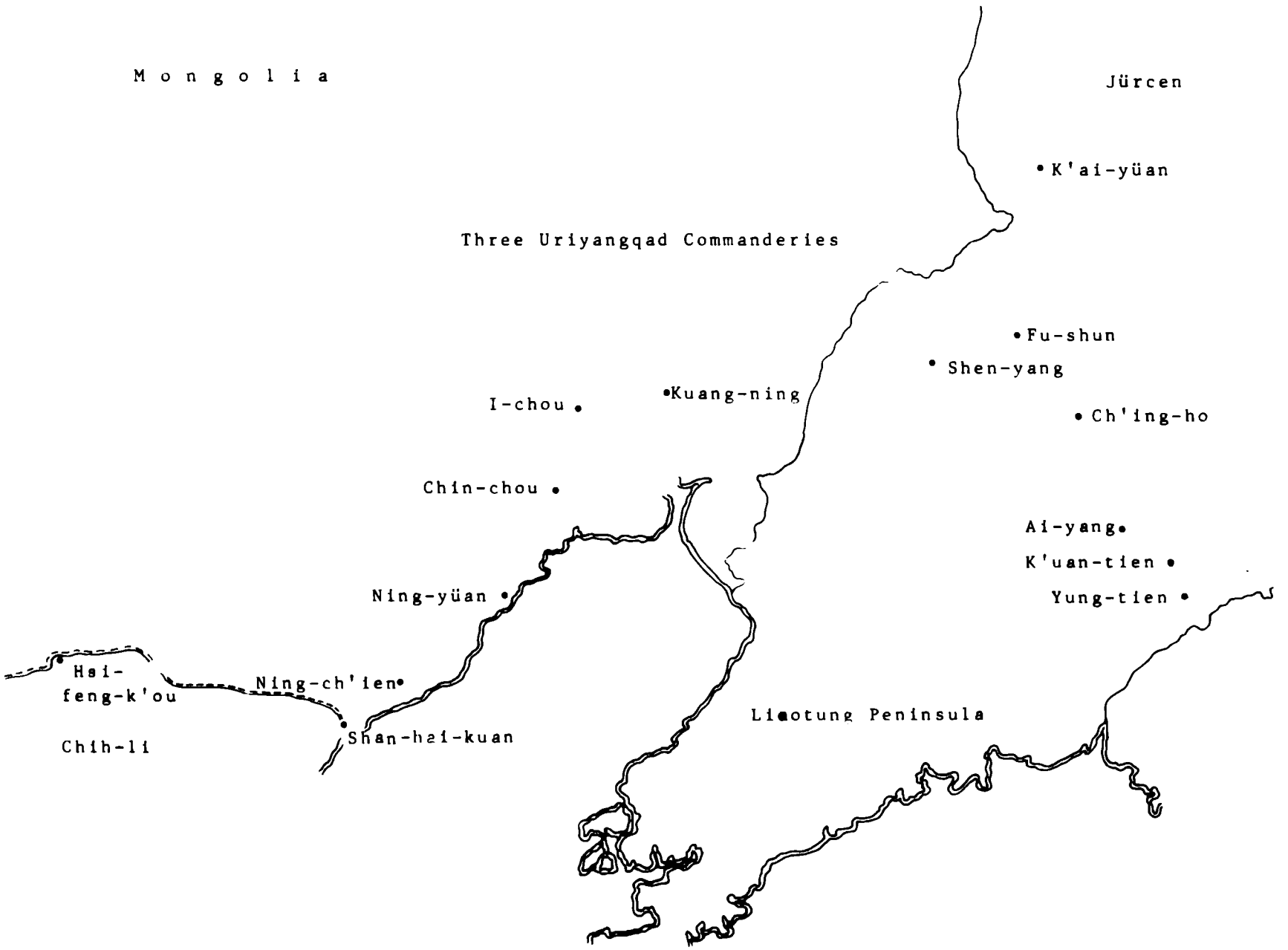
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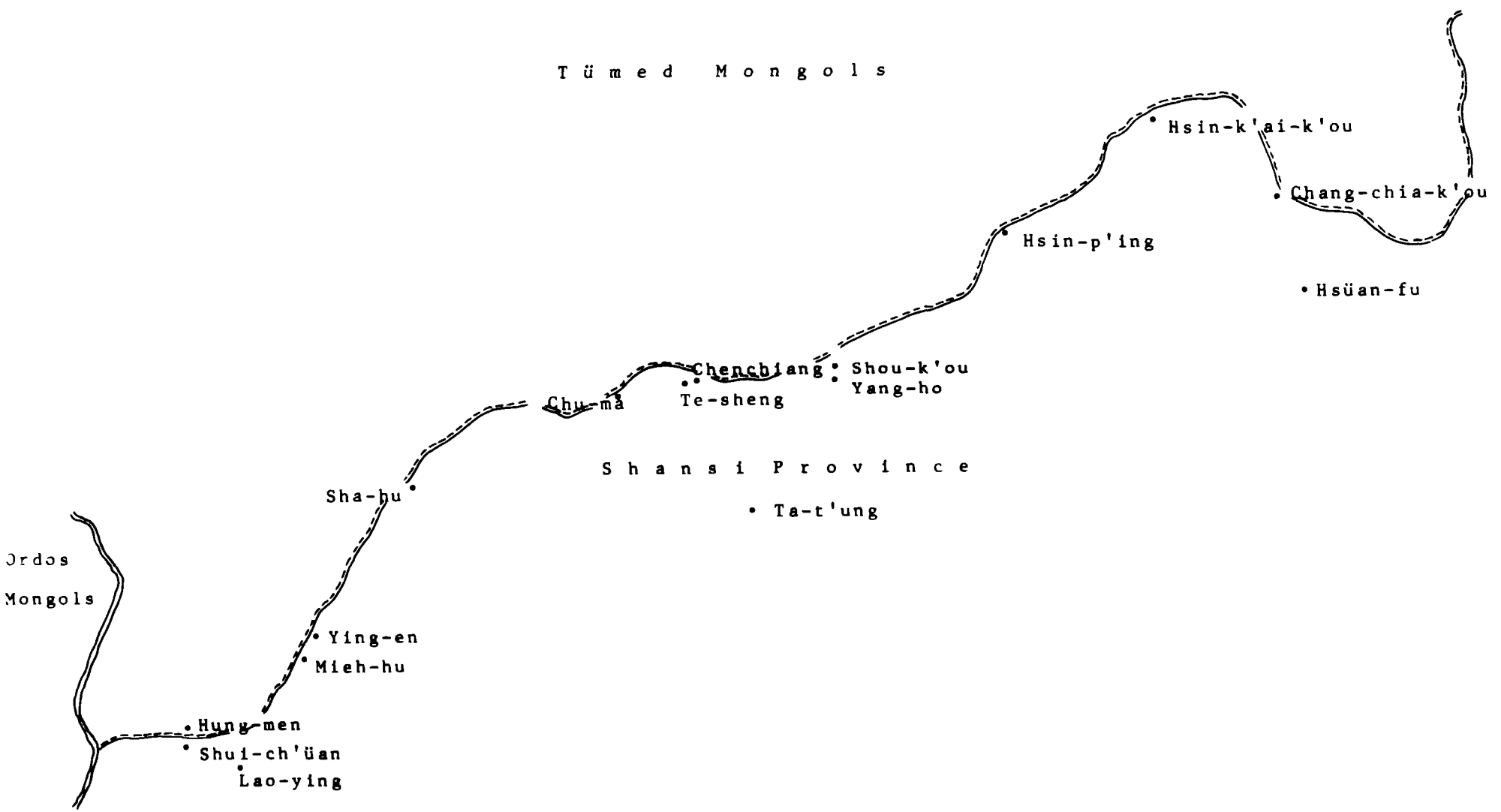
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