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## CHINGIS KHAAN'S SPIRIT DISTURBED

The world media erupted last August with sensational headlines "Chinggis Khaan Tomb found!" Digging up Genghis Khan"



*One of stone monuments to the rulers of steppe empires.*

At a press conference held in Chicago on August 17th the research team led by Prof. John E. Woods, director of the Middle East Studies department and Mr. Maury Cravitz, a Chicago based commodity trader and lawyer, announced that they found a burial site some 200 miles northeast from the Mongolian capital that may contain the remains of the Mongolian khans and nobles, including Chinggis Khaan.

"It is an exciting discovery because it's located near where some other important events occurred in Khan's life," says University of Chicago history professor John Woods.

The walled burial ground is known locally by a variety of names such as "the Almsgivers Castle," and believed to serve as a fortification built during the Hun time or 3rd century before B.C.

Some 3.2 km long and nine feet high stone wall fences out an area of about 100 hectares of sparsely forested rugged mountains in Batshireet locality in Khentii province. In that area the expedition spotted about 60 graveyards believed to belong to the Mongolian khans, princes and other nobles.

The area was guarded for generations by a small tribe of royal guards, but nowadays only one remained. "I do not know the reason, but my father told me guard the place against intruders," says the last of loyal guards, now an ordinary herder.



*A defensive wall circling the Great Taboo area in Khentii province*

" We do hope that the government will pay due attention and take the site under protection," says Dr. Bazargur of the Mongolian Institute of Geography.

" It will be even better if it allows us to continue exploration and digging given the special significance of the possible finding."

When the expedition began in July 2000, many experts doubted whether it could really find the tomb.

The Japanese expedition searched Mongolia during 1991-1993 using satellite data and the most advanced technologies. They found more than 1,400 graveyards from different periods but failed to identify one that may belong to Chinggis Khaan.

Not the least reason was the strong public sentiment against disturbing the graveyards, and the government refused the Japanese expedition any digging.

" Keeping the location of Khan's tomb secret may have been an attempt to deter grave robbers from plundering a possible treasure trove buried with him, and may also be related to the shamanistic belief that disturbing the remains of the dead would destroy the soul of the interred," Woods said. "

According to chronicles Chinggis Khaan died on July 12 of 1227 while leading an offensive against the Tanguts state, presently in Ningxia autonomous region of China.



*Mongolian cavalry crossing a river.*

Legends say that his body was taken on a cart back home, to the Mountain of Burkhan Khaldun where he once ordered to bury him after the death. Special precautions were taken to conceal the burial place.

All the people on the road were killed, and even the envoy was decimated. To assure that nobody can find the place a herd of horses was pastured over the place for months. In addition, after few years a young camel was buried on the tomb site and the she camel brought in to check whether it can find the place.

Moreover, khaan's personal bodyguards from the tribe of Darkhats were assigned to protect the Great Taboo area and they dutifully served for more than six hundred years, until being dispatched to northern borders by the Manchu emperors in 19th century.

The expedition claims that the burial site of the escort men or around 100 soldiers have been found as well at some 30 miles form the nobles graveyards. Through the expedition members do not divulge openly their expectations, apparently hopes are high.



"There are tantalizing references in oral epics to maidens being sacrificed and booty. We don't know what to expect," Prof. Woods says.

While Mr. Cravitz is more confident that the tomb may contain vast treasures. "Nothing out of the booty collected from all over the vast empire emerged."

*Maury Cravitz, continues his 30 years long quest for the Tomb.*

Though the expedition has not secured yet official permission to do archeological digging at the site, the team has petitioned the prime minister through the Mongolian counterparts.

Meantime, the latest news is that Hollywood martial art star Steven Sigal plans to direct an action movie about Chinggis Khaan, playing the latter role himself.

He was expected to arrive to Mongolia on September 20 and to travel to the Khentii Mountains to familiarize with the local flavor, but he had to postpone his visit due to the terrorist attacks on Twin Towers in New York.

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