The wars which took place between the Chinese government and the Northern nomads occurred largely either in the interior of China or in the neighbouring region which bordered on the present provinces of Shansi and Hopei. This region is commonly known by the name of "Inner Mongolia". However, in a few rather rare instances, before the whole of Mongolia was united under the power of the Manchu dynasty, Chinese generals have succeeded in penetrating into the Mongolian steppes as far as the Selengi and Amur basin. To such campaigns belong the military exploits of the Ming dynasty, particularly those of the emperor Yung-lo 永樂 (1403-1425). The Manchus, who had begun the subjugation of Mongolia with the campaigns of Kanghsii 康熙 (1662-1722), completed this penetration.

The routes on which the Chinese troops advanced were naturally of particular interest to the orientalists because the region between the interior of China and North-Mongolia does not favour everywhere the movements of regular troops. Nevertheless, the Chinese armies, which consisted of infantry with a huge baggage-train and also artillery, must have found out the most favourable route through the Gobi desert. But unfortunately this could not be ascertained until quite recently; only now has it become possible to shed some light on a few of them. This information is limited to details concerning the campaigns of Yung-lo in 1410, the advance of the main body of the Manchu army under the immediate command of Kanghsii in 1696, and the route of the auxiliary army of the same Kanghsii, which covered his left flank against the Oirats in the west.

In the literature pertaining to this subject only until quite recently has the advance route of Kanghsii in 1696 been known to us, due to the

* Materialy k istorii kitaiskix veroemix ekspeditsii v Mongoliyu. In: Zapiski instituta Vostokovedeniya Akademii Nauk SSSR, II, 3; Leningrad, 1933; 151-160, with 7 illustrations, not reproduced in the translation.
fact that his travel-companion, the Jesuit Gerbillon, has left us a detailed description of the campaign. In addition we possess the Meng-ku-yu-mu-chi 蒙古遊牧記, the Sheng-wu-chi 勝武記, brief details by E. F. Timkovski, A. J. H. Charigton, and other authors. This campaign is remarkable because of the fact that, apart from contemporary documents, the advance route of the Chinese army is repeatedly indicated in the stone-inscriptions of Kanghsi. Three such monuments exist in the region of the Mongolian People's Republic (Outer Mongolia) for reference. The first is situated next to the battle-field in the neighbourhood of Dzung modo, the second, at the foot of the mountain Tono ula on the northern border of the river Kerulen, and the third, in the neighbourhood of Tșagh-an tșalu in the southern part of the former aimak Khan kentel ala. Until 1927 none of them had been discovered.

In the summer of 1927, at the time of my travel in Dariganga, I intended to trace one of the inscriptions, as I gathered from the data of the Meng-ku-yu-mu-chi and of Gerbillon that the inscriptions of Kanghsi, i.e., those in Tșagh-an tșalu were to be found in Dariganga. That was confirmed by Tserendsab, who was sent there in 1925 as a member of the Scientific Commission of the Mongolian People's Government. He prepared a handwritten but rather inaccurate copy of it, which the sinologists of Ulan batur photo could not decipher properly. On my arrival in

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1) Du Halde, Description ... de l'Empire chinois et de la Tartarie chinoise, La Haye, 1736, t. IV, p. 315.
3) A. M. Fedneev, Mongolskaja leтопись "Ergden-yin erike" ("Mongolian Chronicle"), St. Petersburg, 1883, pp. 244-251.
4) Puteshestvie v Kitai chrez Mongoliyu ("Travels to China through Mongolia"), St. Petersburg, 1824, v. III, pp. 233-234, 239
5) Le livre de Marco Polo, Pékin, 1924, t. I, p. 194-211.
6) A. A. Vladimirskii (v Etnologo-lingvisticheskim izledovaniyakh 1927 g. — in: Ethnological-linguistic Researches 1927), Sbornik Severnaya Mongoliya ("North-Mongolian Almanac"), AN, no. II, pp. 36-37; V. L. Kotovich, Russkie arkhivnye dokumenty ("Russian Archival Documents"), IRAN, 1919, p. 804; I. V. Palbek, Prevaritel'nyi otkryt o poezde v Vostochnuyu Mongoliyu ("Preliminary Report on Travel into Eastern Mongolia"); Izv. IROG. T. XXXVII repeats only the above-mentioned sources.
7) Poedika v Dariganga ("Travel to Dariganga"), Materiały MONK AN SSSR, no. 5.
8) The reference cited here from the I-Ua'g-chih — 呼格江 mentions Tșagh-an tșalu, whereas the author estimates its length at 200 li (7) from east to west, although actually it is but a small rock (cf. photographs en Pl. I, II and II, I-2).
Dariganga I had no particular difficulties in discovering the actual facts concerning the inscription — moreover, not only about one, but about several — in the neighbourhood of Ghurban khalustai and Dzilgit shanda. The one in Ghurban khalustai is carved on a granite rock about 1½ metres in height, the others in Dzilgit shanda on a rock of white quartz, likewise 1½ metres in height; there the inscriptions are distributed on the various sides of the stone.

In the following I quote the texts of these inscriptions together with their translations, which have been kindly furnished by Mr. V. M. Alexeev, member of the Academy of Sciences.

Rubbings of the inscriptions were made by me on Chinese "moto"-paper (毛頭紙). These are kept in the archives of the Oriental Seminary of the Academy of Sciences.

TEXTS

1. 優勝関
大明永樂八年四月廿一日
2. 魏永樂八年歲永康宮四月丁酉朔十六日壬子
3. 大明皇帝征討胡奴將大軍過此
4. 大清皇帝征討厄魯特喀爾丹，將大軍過此，御筆勒銘：輔天所覆，眷臨
赤子，昭穆通靈，殄滅蛇豕，山澤駒騟，草木泉谷，羽衛清經，真石為紀，熙照三
五年歲丙子四月丙戌十四日己亥
5. 休養銘：瀚海鯨鰲，山山兵鋒，一掃胡氛，永霑洪恩
6. 圖碑泉
7. 窮源山

TRANSLATION

(1) Victory-rock, The Great Ming dynasty, 8th year, 4th month, 21st day of the reign of Yung-lo. [May 24, 1410 A.D.]

(2) 8th year of Yung-lo (of the cycle with the indication of igned-yin), 4th month (its first day in the cycle with the indication of ting-yu), 16th day (of the cycle with the indication of jen-tzu). [May 19, 1410 A.D.]

(3) The Emperor of the Great Ming (dynasty) passed here on his march at the head of six imperial armies during the punitive expedition against the barbarian robbers.

10. Posedka v Dariganga, pp. 47 and 66. Cf. also map attached to this article; ZIVAN, II.

[1 Nos. 2 and 3 must originally have formed one single inscription, reading: "In the 8th year . . . , the Emperor . . " The two stones fit into one another and moreover the calligraphy is identical.]
(4) The Emperor of the Great Ch‘ing (dynasty) passed here commanding six imperial armies during the punitive expedition against the Oirat (Oirat) Ka-erh-tan (Galdan). Written down with a brush by the Emperor’s own hand and from that engraved or the stone.

You, who wander under the sky,
Are all Our little children.
While pacifying the border regions
We have destroyed — annihilated the vipers and wild boars
(i. e., good-for-nothings).
The mountains, the lowlands testify of a miracle,
The grass is dense and the springs are sweet (tasty).
The term of the protective guard expires.*
We engrave (the record) of the victorious deed on this stone.

In the 85th year (ping-tsu), in the 4th month (beginning with the
day ping-hsii), on the 14th day (in the cycle with the indication
chi-hai). [May 14, 1696 A. D.]

(5) The inscription was drawn up by His Majesty and was engraved on
the stone:

Ha-hai (the desert) — like a sword-handle,
T‘ien-ch‘an (mountains) — like its edge.
At once I wiped off the ashes of the Hu (barbarians),
For ever purifying the desert.

(6) The spring of the miraculous help.

(7) The mountain on which I seized the barbarians.

As is evident from the text, the first three inscriptions date from
the beginning of the 15th century. The find no. 1 comes from the region
of Ghurban khulustai, while nos. 2 and 3 were discovered in the region of
Dulget shanda (Tsaghan blulu). The inscription no. 4, and apparently
likewise no. 5 (judging by its handwriting and literary style), date from
the end of the 17th century, and both were found in the region of Dulget
shanda. Nos. 6 and 7 are likewise carved on rocks in the region of Dulget
shanda; it is difficult to determine to what period they belong. I note here

[* 慶賀格勒. Prof. Alexeev reads 彈 for 頭, hence this translation. A correct
version would be: “Passing by here with Our bodyguard,...” The text contains several
misprints, which are here corrected according to the inscriptions as given in the
illustrations.]
that the distance between both regions amounts to 125 kilometres as the crow flies, and that between them passes a broad road that has been built to serve as a link between China and North-Mongolia.

We know of three campaigns that the Chinese government has undertaken against the Mongols on their own territory during the reign of Yung-lo. The Chinese were completely defeated in the first one in 1409 led by Ch'iu Fu 司諤. The Chinese army was destroyed and nearly all the commanders were killed in battle with the Eastern Mongols. This fact provoked the Chinese government to such an extent that it was deemed necessary to re-establish authority by sending a new expedition under the command of the emperor himself in the spring of 1410. The emperor pursued Oulzitii Temür Khan as far as the river Oron, where the latter was defeated. When the emperor on his return met with the bands of Aruktai, he annihilated them likewise in battle. Finally, Yung-lo undertook his third campaign in 1414; however, not any longer against the Eastern Mongols, but in alliance with them against the Oirats, in a decisive battle he defeated the leader of the latter, Maham, and pursued him as far as the river Tola. The operations undertaken by the Chinese against the Eastern Mongol bands of Aruktai took place towards the end of the reign of Yung-lo (1422-1424). They found their expression in the three campaigns in Inner Mongolia on the territory of the present provinces of Jehol and Chahar. All of these events are sufficiently well known and have been described extensively in the Ming-shih 前史 and Tung-chien hsiang-mu 通畧総目 11.

Until now, however, only Gerbillon has mentioned the inscriptions of Yung-lo in Dariganga which he had seen with his own eyes 12. But these are certainly not identical with the one erected by Yung-lo in 1424 in the region of Ta-lan na-mu-erh 答蘭木兒見 (apparently somewhere near Dolonor), as it is rendered in the Tung-chien hsiang-mu 13, and not discovered until now. The accurate indications of the inscriptions 1 and 2 permit us to give the year 1410 as the date which coincides with the 8th year of the reign of Yung-lo.

For two and a half centuries after the campaigns of Yung-lo, the Chinese government made no further attempt to penetrate thus far with its armies into the North-Mongolian steppe; only under the Manchu dynasty

13) Maille, op. cit., p. 182.
can we observe a new advance of large Chinese armies. The first attack of real significance was the campaign of the emperor Kanghsí against the Oirats under Galdan bosู้kutu in 1696. The right wing of the Chinese army advanced against the Oirats from Manchuria, the left wing from the west to the river Ongjin ghol and from there to the river Tola; but the centre of the army, led by the emperor, moved forward on the same road on which Yung-lo had once advanced. As the 35th year of the reign of Kanghsí coincides with the year 1696 of our era, the inscription discovered by me in Dsülget shanda was doubtless made during this campaign.

The contents of all the three above-mentioned inscriptions by Kanghsí in Dsün modo, Tono ula and Tšaghan tūulu were known for a long time from translations quoted by Timkovski and Popov. These renderings give, however, only the approximate meaning of the original text. Apart from the quality of the translations, the character of the inscriptions is the same in all three cases. His own pompous praise of his heroic deeds, his boastful contempt for the Mongols, as though they were creatures of the lowest order, are exaggerations of the worst kind, typical of an emperor who introduced into Mongolia the principle of economic and political bondage for the next two centuries. But although the style appears to us only as a reflection of an epoch of Manchu absolutism, Kanghsí is the least justified to claim the military glory for the exploits of 1696. The supply of the central army which he commanded was not safely secured and it advanced at a comfortable pace through regions full of magnificent pastures. In the end, he did not participate in a single battle. The operations of 1696 were won only thanks to the decisive blow inflicted upon the Oirats by the Western Manchu army (on the left wing) in the region of Dsün modo on the river Tola, 69 kilometres east of the present Ulan batur khoto, the capital of the Mongolian People's Republic.

The commander of the Western army, Ta chiang-chün Fiyanggō 大將軍 費揚古 received the order to throw his army in the autumn of the same year through the most desolate part of the Gobi, namely the Ghalbin gobi of the former aimak Bogdo khan ula of the Mongolian People's Republic. A detailed description of his campaign is to be found in the work: "Short Memoirs of Yin Hua-hsing about his Campaign to the West" (豐慧行征西紀略). As the high command was well informed about the desolate character of the region, it was ordered to establish in advance half-way between the rivers Huang-ho and Ongin ghol (in Khalka), i.e., in the very centre of the Gobi, a fortified base where

"Since I have stored a sufficient quantity of provisions, I have ordered the soldiers to dig a moat 9 feet deep and to build a wall 6 feet high with gates on the north and south sides and with barricades that can be opened and closed".

Naturally the garrison of this lonesome desert-fort could only live by importing food-stuffs. Therefore it was neglected after the conclusion of the operations against the Oirats, probably towards the end of the 18th century. But its strategical significance during the Machtu wars in Dun-garia must have been very great, because it secured the point of vantage for the invasion of West-Mongolia on the shortest route between the latter and the interior of China.

Doubtlessly the Chinese high command selected the roads through Dariganga in the 15th and 17th centuries. I have mentioned above, quoting from my work: "Travels through Dun-garia" that the conditions in the Mongolian People's Republic are particularly favourable to vegetation, hence, likewise producing a permanent abundance of cattle. These factors were assuredly taken into consideration by the Chinese high command, the more so, as Dariganga could serve as a natural base for one of the shortest routes from the interior of China to Central Khalka.

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Translated by Rudolf Löwenthal

18) Materialy MONK AN SSSR, no. 5, p. 41, etc.
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