

The Central Asian Nomads and East-West Cultural Relations

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The most essential problem of the development of the human society and for its existence is the relationship and cooperation among nations. The good traditions of friendly, mutually beneficial relations among peoples have been honoured highly all-time throughout the history of Mankind. Without the multisided relationship and co-operation among nations, it is very difficult to imagine the establishment of mutual understanding with a deep knowledge and respect for each other's position and to live in a good way as neighbours. So mutual understanding and equal cooperation among nations should be one main stronghold for the progress of mankind.

From this point of view many important questions shall be raised, such as "What kind of role the central Asian nomad peoples has played in the relationship between the East and the West, especially concerning the development of the cultural relations among nations and what kind of positive and negative aspects there have been in the relations of nations in the past so on. These questions are very essential and attract many people, who respect and do their best for the flourish of mankind.

However, as I understand, in the due course of time up to the present days these problems had not been studied thoroughly, or had been studied only partly. I hope that there will be some researchers among those who engage in Mongol studies to take these questions with boldness and resolutions in order to show all aspects of these problems in a scientific way.

From the history we knew, the central Asian nomad peoples, including the Mongols, played a very important role in the relations between the East and the West. There were several factors that contributed to the development of these relations, especially the cultural interactions among peoples.

First of all, the existence of the earlier states in the territory of Mongolia, especially the United Mongolian state under the rule of Genghis Khan, which had existed for 200 years, had

created a favourable condition for opening and expanding the relations, especially the cultural relations among the peoples of that period. The other factor was the formation of horse messenger services among the nomad peoples.

In this regard I would like to express my deep gratitude to Mr. B. Shirndev, the Mongolian honoured scientist and academician, and Mr. Sh. Bira, the Academician, for their interesting and useful reports.

The horse messenger service and the caravan transportation of that time played a very important role in the relationship among peoples. In their due time the horse messenger service was the immediate and straight post service and the caravan transportation was the railway or auto-transportation, which had been organized under the state and civil service. With these purposes many supporting places were organized. They had immediate connections with the central Asian peoples.

We knew that Kublai Khan paid more attention to the development of horse messenger servicing of that time. He issued several degrees for making the horse messenger service more swift and quick to ensure this servicing with a trusted guarantee to make the messengers' stay on the road more comfortable.

From these points of facts I would like to say that there is much probability that there existed a well-organized horse messenger service, like the post service network, stretching vast areas of territories of the Central Asia from the Black Sea to the West, to the Pacific Ocean to the East, and from the Baikal Lake up to India to the South. In their due time this horse messenger service was the most progressive and advanced method of the relationship between the nations.

The horse messenger's service, which was created by the Central Asian nomads, had become the main link not only between peoples, but also between cultures of different countries in the East and the West. In Such a way these cultural relations have made peoples understand each other well and to cooperate with them in a friendly and mutually beneficial way. Thus they have made their valuable contributions to civilizations.

In the 50s of the 20th century the horse post service had been replaced by the Modern

technical post service. From its first stage the horse messenger service had been used for more than 2000 years.

The nomad peoples of central Asia by their intellectual knowledge and distinctive cultures and arts have made a considerable contribution to the development of the cultural interactions between the East and the West, especially in the field of literature, linguistics, philosophy and religion. Because of the rapid development of the cultural relations, wide opportunities were opened for the nomad people of Mongolia to establish close cooperation with other people in the field of culture and art, to study the famous works of the learned people and to translate them into their own native language.

The place occupied by the Mongols in the cultural relations between the East and the West

Up to recent time, the nomad people of Mongolia had been considered as ignorant and without other occupation and knowledge except breeding animals and fighting crudely.

At present, this attitude has been changed completely. That kind of attitude was related with a lack of knowledge and understanding of the nomadic way of living, the peculiarities of nomadic culture etc.

The Mongols, who had developed a distinctive civilization suited to their nomadic way of living, had made big strivings in their national development, not in the way of coping with others' best experiences, but in the way of developing national methods independently.

The Mongols during their long history developed animal breeding as a new labour branch, and national production extends the methods for animal production, without making harm to the natural environment. They also developed their religion, which is separated from the Buddhism founded only for peoples with a residential way of living.

In this connection I would like to stress the importance of the development of a centralist view of life in the national life, which was founded by Nagarzhuhai. The main essence of this centralist view is a humane, compassionate and collective way of thinking.