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AMERICA CONQUERED BY THE MONGOLS!

Various have been the hypotheses suggested to explain the enigma of the peopling of that great portion of the terrestrial globe, the existence of which was not known in Europe till the close of the fifteenth century. As there is a total absence of all historical data upon this question, to guide the inquirer, every hypothesis must be founded upon conjectures, more or less corroborated by physical traits of resemblance between the races inhabiting America and those of other countries; for the former, when discovered by Europeans, had made too slight a progress in civilization, and were too imperfectly acquainted with the inventions of social life, to afford the means of comparing institutions, manners, governments, literature, or useful arts.

The peculiar features, which discriminate the various races of North and South America respectively, seem clearly traceable to a cause independent of climate and other physical circumstances, which vary the aspect of the aboriginal natives of one and the same country, in widely different latitudes, and to demonstrate that the origin of the American tribes was not in all cases identical. The close approximation of the American continent to that of Asia, the earliest peopled portion of the earth, in the north, easily reconciles us to the supposition that the inhabitants of the one passed over to the other; but it is scarcely credible that the race who inhabited those frozen regions, where the two continents are in near contact, was the stock from which sprung the subjects of the populous empires in the southern portion of America, which had attained something approaching to civilization and splendour, when crushed by invaders from Europe.

We do not recollect to have met with any theory which assigned the peopling of South America to the emigration of the Malays thither; but, if we were forced to adopt some hypothesis, this appears, if not plausible and probable, to have fewer objections to encounter than any other.

The active and enterprising Malay race, who appear to have originated, not as vulgarly supposed, in the peninsula of Malacca, but in the great islands of Borneo and Sumatra, in the centre of the latter of which there existed a powerful and flourishing Malay government as late as the eleventh or twelfth century, have spread themselves throughout the islands of the Eastern Archipelago; and there is now ample ground for assuming it as an admitted fact, that the clusters of islands in the Pacific Ocean, and even the continent of Australasia, were peopled by Malays. This fact, which has long been considered probable from consimilarity of person, is now almost demonstrated by affinity of language, the Polynesian tongues, in particular, generally speaking, being dialects, more or less diversified and corrupted, of the Malay language, most of them retaining all its softness and delicacy. From repeated experiments, it has been ascertained that of one hundred Malay words, one-half are Polynesian. The structure of the Malay language has all the simplicity of the island dialects; it is without complexity or artificial arrangement; it has no inflexion, gender,

tease, or mood: the same word is often used as noun, adjective, verb, or adverb, its quality being determined by position. The genuine Malay governments are likewise of the rudest construction, and exhibit an analogy with those in the Pacific Ocean, which, although possibly the result of accident, is not a circumstance of trifling weight, or to be overlooked, when taken in conjunction with other facts.

That these people should make such long voyages is not surprising, when we consider that they are undoubtedly the most enterprising and fearless native navigators in the Eastern seas, and that many of their prahus are remarkably fine vessels. That they have visited the northern coast of New Holland is notorious. When the expedition to this part of Australasia first landed at Port Essington, with a view of forming the settlement at Melville Island, which was afterwards abandoned, evident traces were perceived of the visits of the Malays in that quarter; and it even entered into the speculations of those who projected the settlement, that traders of that race might be attracted thither, and that a commercial emporium might be formed there as at Singapore.

Under these circumstances, there is no improbability whatever in supposing that the Malays peopled the Sandwich and Society Islands; and if so, since the former are distant from the coast of Mexico only about one-half the distance at which the Sandwich Islands are situated from Borneo, and the Society Islands are about equidistant from Australasia and the coast of Peru, it seems no violent theory to conceive that those empires were really founded by Malays, the less so, as the description of the persons and dispositions of the Americans, given by their Spanish conquerors, corresponds remarkably with the Malay character in all essential points. The bronze complexion, the regular features, the long black hair, are not less remarkable points of analogy between the native Americans within the tropics, and the Malays, than the vindictive and cruel disposition, when provoked, which is attributed to both.

Whatever be the value of this conjecture, for we offer it as nothing more, it is at least somewhat more rational than the hypothesis that Peru and Mexico were conquered in the thirteenth century by *Mongols accompanied with elephants*: a discovery which has been made by Mr. John Ranking, and which he has announced in a work\* of about 500 pages, containing what he fancies to be *proofs* of this extraordinary fact.

As our critical duties require, before passing judgment upon a book submitted to us, we have not only read Mr. Ranking's work, but read it attentively from beginning to end; and having done so, we can only express our utter astonishment that a person capable of appreciating the nature of evidence of any kind, could ever have imposed upon himself so far as to imagine he had adduced *one single fact* in support of his theory. The whole work consists of a mass of trifling circumstances, some extremely frivolous and

\* *Historical Researches on the Conquest of Peru, Mexico, Bogota, Natchez, and Tlaxcala, in the Thirteenth Century, by the Mongols, accompanied with Elephants; and the local Agreement of History and Tradition with the Remains of Elephants and Mastodons found in the New World.* By JOHN RANKING, author of "Researches on the Wars and Sports of the Mongols and Romans." London, 1827; Supplement, 1831. Longman and Co.

puerile, verbal resemblances, analogies of customs stated upon the credit of such writers as Sir John Mandeville, Marco Polo, and other oracles of little higher authority, and which, even if uncontrovertible, would leave Mr. Ranking just at the same distance from his ultimate point as when he set out.

Although we might content ourselves with this summary sentence upon the work, without the fear of its being impugned by any indifferent person who should examine it, we shall, nevertheless, give the reader a little insight into Mr. Ranking's method of induction, and into the nature of the proofs upon which he relies to convince the world that the Mongols, a race unacquainted with nautical science, could and did convey an army and elephants from the shores of China or Japan, 7,000 or 8,000 miles across a trackless ocean, to an unknown country, of which their own records, as far as they have been examined, make no mention whatsoever.

He begins by saying that, "in the Introduction to the Researches on the Wars and Sports of the Mongols and Romans, the writer hinted at having met with some indications of a connexion between Asia and America, long before the discovery of the New World by Columbus. From that time he has kept this object in view; and such has been the success of his further inquiries, that he now ventures confidently to affirm, that Peru, Mexico, and other countries in America, were conquered by the Mongols, accompanied with elephants, in the thirteenth century;" and elsewhere, he says, that "there is strong reason to conclude that the progress of the Mongols in America reached Rhode Island."

His process of proof is as follows. He shows from Du Halde, Marco Polo, &c., that the Tartars, after their conquest of China, invaded Japan, in which operation they suffered many reverses, in short, were miserably defeated. "From the confusion in the histories of China," he assumes it to be probable, that "the number of the invading troops was very considerably above a hundred thousand;" and then he says, "we shall see, from the construction of the ships (Chinese junks!), how possible it is that a great number of them might reach the shores of America."

This happy conclusion from "the confusion in the Chinese histories," and the great likelihood that many thousand Mongols could be wafted safely over the Pacific in Chinese junks, from "the construction" of those vessels, constitute positively the whole of the evidence that a wild American tradition, recorded by Garcilasso de la Vega, without date, commemorates the safe arrival of the Mongols on the coast of Peru!

As Mr. Ranking has drawn so important a conclusion from the exceedingly commodiousness of Chinese junks, as transports for the conveyance of troops and elephants some thousand miles, we may just mention to him that, in the evidence lately taken before the Parliamentary Committee, we find Mr. Marjoribanks stating that these vessels are cumbrous, insecure, and unseaworthy; that Mr. Davidson declared that property is so unsafe in them, that, even with an European master on board, he would not risk his goods in one, and that, out of every five junks which sail from China to a distant port, one is lost; and lastly, that Mr. Crawford, albeit a warm

friend to junks, confesses that they are clumsy and awkward in the extreme; that their crews are entirely unacquainted with navigation, and that they manage to complete their short voyages "only at the height of the moon, when a fair and steady seven or eight-knot breeze carries them directly from port to port." We cannot suppose that the junks were more safe and commodious in the thirteenth than in the nineteenth century.

The counterpart of his proof is the tradition to which we have alluded, and which is thus reported by Garcilasso de la Vega.

I shall relate what Pedro de Cieza de Leon told me that he had heard in the province where the giants arrived. They affirm, said he, in all Peru, that certain giants came ashore on this coast, at the Cape, now called Cape St. Helena, which is near the town of Puerto Viejo. Those who have preserved this tradition from father to son, say that these giants came by sea, in a kind of rush boats, made like large barks; that they were so enormously tall, that from the knee downward they were as high as common men; that they had long hair, which hung loose upon their shoulders; that their eyes were as large as plates, and that other parts of their bodies were big in proportion; that they had no beard; that some went naked, others were covered with the skins of wild beasts, and that they had no women with them. After having landed at the Cape, they established themselves at a spot pointed out to them by the inhabitants, and dug very deep wells through the rock, and which to this day supply excellent water. These giants lived by rapine, and desolated the whole country. They say, that they were such gluttons, that one would eat as much meat as fifty of the native inhabitants, and that for part of their nourishment, they caught a quantity of fish with nets. They massacred the men of the neighbouring parts without mercy, and killed the women by their brutal violations. The wretched Indians often tried to devise some means to rid themselves of these troublesome visitors, but they never had either sufficient force or courage to attack them. Secure from apprehension, these new monsters thus tyrannized for a long while, committing the most infamous enormities. Divine justice sent fire from heaven with a great noise, and an angel armed with a flaming sword, by whom they were destroyed at one blow. To serve as an eternal monument of the vengeance of God, their bones and skulls were not consumed by the fire, but are found at the very place, of an enormous size. I have heard Spaniards say, that they have seen bits of their teeth, by which they judged that a tooth weighed more than half a pound. As for the rest, it is not known from what place they came, nor by what route they arrived.

If there was any thing in this absurd story which could by possibility apply to the arrival of a large body of Mongols with elephants (to which no allusion is here made), it might be worth while to consider what degree of credit was due to "the Inca," as he is called, whose authority Dr. Robertson repudiates upon very sufficient grounds. But if the story, reduced to the standard of credibility, were accepted as true, it is almost an insult to the understanding to call this a *proof* of the fact sought to be established; yet it is the only direct one offered! The rest of Mr. Ranking's evidence is derived from extracts from De la Vega's History of the Incas, from whence he garbles a few forced and pretended analogies between the terms, customs, &c. of the Mexicans and Peruvians, and those

of the Tartars, wheresoever they can be found, for Mr. Ranking does not confine himself to Mongolia, or to the ancient seats of the Mongol, Manchoo, or Tartar tribes, but takes the entire range of Asia,—China, Japan, Hindostan, Siam, Pegu, Tibet, Assam, and even Siberia! His authorities, moreover, are almost always the least satisfactory he could adduce, and most of them are such as an oriental antiquary would never dream of consulting, and which, of course, lead him sometimes into the most ridiculous mistakes. Mr. Ranking tells us that he has resided upwards of twenty years in Hindostan and Russia: yet he evinces not the slightest knowledge of oriental languages or oriental history, properly so called, which is an indispensable qualification for the task he has undertaken.

As we have pronounced some of Mr. Ranking's proofs frivolous and puerile, we shall specify an example of each, and then dismiss a book, which, we must say, it was a lamentable waste of time to compose, and will teach a reader nothing but error.

Manco Capac, the first Inca of Peru, Mr. Ranking boldly identifies with a Mongol prince of the house of Genghiz Khan; upon no other ground, however, than similarity of name! *Manco* (or, as he chooses to write it, *Mango*, though he admits the Peruvians had not the letter *g* in their tongue), he says, is a word which has no meaning in the language of Peru. The rest we will give in Mr. Ranking's *ipsissimis verbis*, as a beautiful specimen of his mode of induction:—

*Mango* is a Mongol name. *Mango* was grandson of Genghis Khan, and brother of Kublai; and his name is thus spelt by Du Halde, vol. ii. p. 251; by Maundeve, p. 275. *Mango* was grand khan till 1257, when he was killed at the siege of Ho-cheu in China (Sir W. Jones, vol. i. p. 101. Marco Polo, note 381. De la Croix, p. 399), and was succeeded by his brother Kublai. He conquered and ravaged Thibet (M. Polo, p. 412; and Purchas, vol. iii. pp. 49, 78). His name is spelt *Mangu* by Polo, p. 172. *Mangou* by De la Croix. Marco Polo, p. 200, writes *Mongu*. These are the *Mongol* modes of spelling.\* The Chinese pronounce the *g* hard; for *Bengal*, they write *Pen-ka-la*. (Modern Univ. Hist., vol. ii. p. 387). The Peruvians have not the letter *g* in their tongue (Vega, vol. ii. p. 164). These are sufficient reasons for Vega and others writing *Manco*. The Japanese annals relate, that "the Tartar general *Mooko* appeared on the coast of Japan, with 4,000 ships and 240,000 men." (Kæmpfer, p. 187.) We find the name spelt *Mongko* in a note in Du Halde, ii. 251. The grand khan Kublai had twenty-five sons by his concubine, all of whom were placed in the rank of nobles, and were continually employed in the military profession. (Polo, p. 286.) Thus it appears *highly probable* that the first Inca of Peru was a son of the Emperor Kublai.† Marco Polo, p. 281, describes Kublai "of the middle stature, his limbs well-formed, and his whole figure of a just proportion. His complexion is fair, and occasionally suffused with red, like the bright tint of the rose, which adds much grace to his countenance; his eyes are black and handsome; his nose well shaped and prominent." The reader is referred to the portrait of *Mango Capac*,‡ in this volume, that he

\* We should rather have supposed them to be the French and Italian modes of spelling.

† Elsewhere he says: "the opinion of the writer is, that *Mango Capac*, the first Inca of Peru, was a son of the Grand Khan Kublai, and that *Montezuma's* ancestor was a Mongol grandee from Tangut, very possibly Assam."

‡ Trumpery portraits of all the Incas, from *Mango Capac* to *Atahualpa*, are inserted in Mr. Ranking's book, and he deduces a serious argument from their head-dress!

may compare it with this description of Kublai! There is certainly nothing in it to weaken the conjecture that the Inca was a son of Kublai; and Mango was the name of Kublai's brother.

All this we call trifling and frivolous, and stronger examples might be cited. Of the puerilities, we subjoin the following instance among many.

The reader will remember that Garuillasso de la Vega, in his account of the arrival of the giants, stated that they came in "rush boats." Mr. Ranking, finding that, translated into *French*, "rush boats" would be *bateaux de jonc*, is struck with the similarity of the word *jonc* to *junk*, and says "the reader is referred to the description of Chinese and Japanese vessels in Ch. I., and he will then not fail to remark what an important word *junk* is in the mass of proofs of the identity of the Mongols and the Incas!" It is vain to attempt to give a syllogistic form to this argument, a parallel to which must be sought in the nursery or in Bedlam. We may just remark that our author, being desirous of ascertaining the meaning of the word *junk*, refers to *Todd's Johnson's English Dictionary*, where, he says, it is defined, "probably an Indian word, applied to large and small ships!" A dictionary of the Chinese tongue would have been a better authority, and there Mr. Ranking would have learned that the term *junk* is an European corruption of *chuen*.

It is always with sinoere regret and reluctance that we pronounce a condemnatory sentence upon the labours of any writer; but until the office of a critic really merges in that of an author's herald or encomiast,—a revolution which certain *pseudo* critics seem impatient to bring about,—we shall esteem it to be our duty to the public, although it be as little pleasing to ourselves as to the objects of our censure, when a work is forced upon our notice, which, like the one before us, is utterly useless, if not worse than useless, honestly to say so.

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#### EXPORT OF COTTON YARN.

THE policy of encouraging the exportation of cotton yarn, which is the state of nearly one-fourth of our boasted amount of cotton manufactures shipped by the free-traders to India, may be doubtful after the following statement recently made in a petition to the House of Commons by the operative cotton weavers of Whittle-le-woods, and its vicinity, in the county of Lancaster, which sets forth that they are in a lamentable state of poverty and distress, working from fourteen to sixteen hours a day for 8d. or 10d., and "in thousands of instances, a man with his wife and four to six children are compelled to subsist upon that small pittance." The causes of these distresses they allege to be the necessity of our manufactures being on a level (as regards wages) with foreign manufacturers; and the export of cotton yarn. The state of the weavers (they say) was comfortable, previous to 1803, "when a part of the raw material (the cotton yarns), about 5,000,000 lbs. per annum, on which the petitioners were employed, being exported to the continent, gave the first shock to their wages; and in proportion as these 5,000,000 lbs. have increased to upwards of 60,000,000 lbs., so have the wages of the petitioners been reduced, until they are not only brought down to famine prices, but at certain periods of the year thousands can get no work at all." They ask a protecting duty on the exportation of cotton yarn.