



The Great Conqueror's True Face (图)

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No documents or portraits were left behind to convey the real appearance of Chinggis Khaan. The few descriptions of him available are from vague historical chronicles. Alladin Juvaini (1226 - 1283), a Persian historian, wrote in his History of the World Conqueror:

"Trustworthy persons have related that Chinggis Khaan, at the time that he came into Khorasan, was 65 years old, a man of tall structure, of vigorous build, a robust body, the hair on his face scanty and white, with cat's eyes, possessed of great energy, discernment, genius and understanding, awe inspiring, a butcher, an over-thrower of enemies, sanguinary and cruel ?He was an adept in magic and deception and some of the devils were his friends."

The only existing portrait preserved until today was painted in 1278, almost a half a century after his death. Khublai Khaan, the grandson of Chinggis Khaan, ordered artist Khorisun to paint the portrait, and asked some of Chinggis Khaan's few remaining trusted men to overlook the painting and make sure it reflects the true image.

The portrait was kept in the Forbidden City in Beijing along with other portraits of Chinggis Khaan's descendants; rulers of the great Mongol empire. In 1949, General Chiang Kai-shek took it and many other treasures to his retreat to Taiwan.

Perhaps, the final discovery of Chinggis Khaan's tomb will also bring the re-creation of the true face of the Greatest Conqueror of all time.

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