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# CRONICA HUMANITATIS

## People that shaped the history of humanity

*“Perhaps you and I were born too late to explore the world and too early in history to explore the stars, but we were born at just the right time, which is pretty much all times ever.”*

**-Michael Stevens**

# Chapter I: The Monk and the Mongol

The little bird walked around the roof of the monastery. It's children had been craving for food for hours. The monks often gifted him grains, bread crumbs, seeds and other things. The roof was wide and flat, and was covered with what seemed to be bricks. The bird walked from the one end to the other, and sometimes, some flies would land on the bricks, however, the bird was too slow to catch them. The bird looked inside the windows of the monastery, and it saw monks meditating or studying. It didn't really know why, but the bird saw that the monks were very dedicated and serious about their meditation. It knew that the monks in the monastery were different from the people in Lhasa. In the city, the people didn't really pay attention to their surroundings and focused mainly on their work. They always walked very fast, as if they were chased, but the monks at all times were devoted. The bird didn't really know to what, but it realized they had a goal that was apparently very important to them. However, the bird didn't really care, it was fine with it as long as the monks wouldn't eat it and would keep giving it food. The bird then remembered that it was here to find food for its children, so once it realized there would be nothing to find on the roof, it spread his wings and flew to the courtyard. The air of the Tibetan Plateau was fresh and clean. The bird's lungs and air sacs filled with the fresh air of the Transhimalayas. It liked the air in this region, the downside although was that the winters were very cold in Tibet. The bird saw a lot of monks beneath him. It enjoyed flying, it loved the pressure of the wind and the feeling of levitating.

The flight did not last long however, as the bird landed in the courtyard. Monks were walking around, discussing the teachings of the Buddha and the flavour of the breakfast. The bird walked around carefully, so no one would stomp on it. It looked around for bread crumbs and old vegetables. All the monks wore orange robes, and many of them were bald. The bird always wondered why humans have little to no feathers or fur. It then refocused on finding food. Luckily, a monk approached the bird and threw a piece of bread right before it. The bird's reflexes ordered it to fly and escape, but

as soon as it saw what the monk had given it, it flew back to the ground and started ripping the piece of bread apart. The bread was hard and probably old, but the bird still enjoyed it. It decided to eat some of it now and come back later to bring the rest to his children. The monk laughed at the sight of the bird struggling with the bread and walked away. However, in anticipation of more food, the bird followed him. The man passed through the gate of the monastery, and found himself in Lhasa. People were working or walking around. Some soldiers with long spears and light armour patrolled the streets, as the Dzungars, a group of Oirat Mongols that settled down in Eastern Turkestan, often raided Tibet during this time. The Tibetans hoped that the Qing<sup>1</sup>, the current ruling Dynasty of China, a royal family composed of Manchu that conquered China in the 17. century, would intervene in Tibet to save them from the Mongols. The rulers of Tibet at this time however also were Mongols, and even Oirats, the same group the Dzungars belonged to.

The monk left the city and headed for the mountains. He only took a staff, a knife, a towel and a bag filled with vegetables and bread with him. The bird knew that the monk often took walks through the mountains. In the far distance, rough silhouettes of the Himalayas, the tallest mountain range, could be seen. The bird often flew around the Transhimalayas, but never beyond the mountains, so he never saw the riches of the Indian subcontinent. They travelled further, and they saw the Yarlung Tsangpo. It's water was clear and they could see themselves in it. The bird flew along the river and saw many small villages that were situated next to the river. The people here also were different from the people in Lhasa. Many of them had great herds of animals like goats, sheep and cattle. The bird loved messing around with the animals, but shortly after he flew back up the Yarlung Tsangpo. On his way, he once again met the monk, and so, he kept following him.

Soon they reached a cliff where the monk sat down and meditated. The bird watched and first thought the monk was sleeping, however, he often opened his eyes when something disturbed him. The bird often saw the monks doing this, and wondered why they do. It's observations told it that the monks

slept at night, so it couldn't get why they would do the same at daytime. The bird walked around. The cliff was very deep, and a small river flowed in it. Little fish jumped around in the cold water, and sometimes large birds would come and catch them. The bird often considered also catching fish for its children, but it knew it was too weak, the fish would drag it into the water. Rocks were scattered around the bird and the monk, but the monk sat on a little patch of grass. The grass was barely green, it was more like yellow. The bird tried eating some of it but it was very dry and it couldn't shove it down its throat. So he walked around and looked for bugs and worms it could catch. Sometimes, the monk would give it small pieces of bread and vegetables. The bird took these and flew back to the valley to bring them to its children, but it always returned to the mountain. But after some time, dark clouds approached and rain soaked the bird's feathers full with cold water. When the monk saw the clouds, he stood up and wanted to head back to the monastery, but suddenly, he tripped and fell down the cliff. The bird heard him screaming watched as the monk landed in the river, but it would soon after fly away back to its children.

The monk was not dead however, as the water was very deep. He passed out, but woke up again in very short time, as the water was very cold. He swam to the edge of the river, and walked out of it. The monk saw that the clouds above him were as black as coal, and sometimes, lightning struck nearby mountains. He sat down, and tried to think, but he felt like his thoughts froze from the coldness of the water. Before he could stand up again, the monk passed out.

When the monk woke up again, the sun was shining. The fish once again happily jumped around in the water. He had probably broken one of his legs and possibly his arm. He looked around, and found something he had not seen before. Right before his feet were two small tablets made of polished stone or possibly even iron. In the first one, the monk saw an inscription written in a rather weird form of the Tibetan:

ཉགས་མཚན་དེ་ཚོ་གསལ་པོ་བཟོས་ནས་སྐར་མ་དེ་ཚོ་ཁྱེད་རང་ལ་གྲ་སྒྲིག་ཡོད་པའི་སྐབས་ལ་ཁྱེད་རང་གི་ཡིན། དེ་བར་དུ་མཚན་ཉགས་འདི་དག་ཉར་ནས་སྤང་སྐྱོབ་བྱེད་དགོས། མིའི་རིགས་ཀྱི་མ་འོངས་

པའི་མདུན་ལམ་དེ་མཚན་ཉགས་དེ་དག་གིས་ཐག་གཅོད་བྱ་རྒྱུ་རེད།

Even though the text was slightly different from the Tibetan he learned, he could still read the inscription easily. He read:

*“Uncover the symbols and the stars will be yours when they are ready for you. Until then, keep and protect these symbols. The future fate of mankind will be decided by them.”*

He then saw those symbols the inscription talked about, they were on the second tablet. Weird symbols and shapes were there, some of them he recognized as Arabic numerals, and possibly some Latin alphabet. He couldn't recognize the rest of them though. The monk put them into his bag. Now he wondered how to escape the cliff. His leg was broken, so he crawled on the floor. He hoped the other monks would search for him. But soon, night approached and there were still no rescuers in sight. He took a piece of wood and his knife and made a spear, if wild animals would come. To keep warm, he took his towel and covered himself in it. As there were no wild animals in sight, he soon fell asleep.

He dreamt of the symbols and their possible meaning. Maybe it was an ancient inscription from the time of the Tibetan Empire? Maybe a message from the Dzungars, or perhaps even a message of the universe itself? He dreamt that the symbols one by one revealed their true meaning, he dreamt of stars vanishing, birds that turned into suns, burning cities, birds made of steel that flew around the stars and bent their surroundings, giant holes in the sky that would suck stars into them, humans turning into animals, dwarfs and other creatures.

When he woke up, he found himself in the monastery.

A monk approached him: “Ah, Jampel Ngawang, you are awake!”

“Where are the stone tablets?”

“What? Oh, yeah we put them into your room. Don’t stand up, the medic will come now and bandage your leg. You had luck we found you, a bird came and kept dragging my clothes. It eventually led us to you.”

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Togtokh seated his horse. The sky was unusually blue today, a perfect day to pillage Lhasa. Left and right to him were rows of riders, armed with muskets, spears, scimitars and bows. Togtokh himself had a large musket in his hand and a scimitar attached to his belt, both stolen during raids. He hoped to find treasures during the raids, so he could return to Mongolia as a rich man. He loved the Tibetan mountains as much as the Mongolian steppes, so he felt at home everywhere. However, he hoped that the war would end with a final attack on Lhasa. The plan was to depose the Khan of the Tibetans and establish rule over Tibet. The man’s horse was large, big enough to survive light sword slashes. After some minutes of waiting, the horn was heard and the raid began. Thousands of horses dashed forward. They met the Tibetan cavalry before the gates of the city, but they were quickly mowed down and the survivors fled. The Dzungars then laid siege to the city. They encountered little resistance, as the Khan was highly unpopular among the Tibetans.

Togtokh built up his tent. It was made of leather and fur and just was big enough for him to lay in it. He saw many soldiers on the walls, armed with bows and muskets. They sometimes shot at the approaching Dzungars, however they knew they wouldn’t have unlimited amounts of gunpowder. Togtokh wandered around the camp, until a captain approached him.

“Togtokh, me and my boys are going to raid that monastery there.” He pointed at a group of buildings outside Lhasa. “Do you want to join us?”

Togtokh didn’t hesitate to agree and once again seated his horse.

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Jamphel Ngawang entered his room. He asked for books about the western scripts and sat down to look at the stone tablets. However, the symbols barely aligned with the western script. He could only find a few groups of letters that were readable: “S P I D”, “S H Y N G” and “K R Y M E N”. The rest were largely modified versions of letters, and some were even largely simplified Chinese characters. He wondered what this might mean, so he took a book that held the meaning of many French words, a gift he once got from an European. However, he didn’t find any words similar to the ones he found. He wanted to search for a book on Latin language when he heard screams in the courtyard.

“The Dzungars are coming! The Dzungars are coming!”

What, they were already at the gates of Lhasa? Jamphel took the stone tablets and entered the courtyard. Around 500 meters away, Mongols gathered. They stormed through the gate.

“Kill them!”, their leader screamed, and the soldiers followed his orders. He ran into the library. The Mongols already were inside, and he heard the sound of muskets firing and the screams of monks. He quickly grabbed a bag and put the stone tablets inside it. He hastily wrote, “These tablets are the hope of humanity” and wanted to throw the bag out of the window, until he heard a voice.

“Ah, a monk trying to escape with his fortunes! Togtokh, come, I’ve found someone who might solve your money issues!”

Togtokh entered the library. He seemed quite impressed by the dozens of scrolls and books that were put here, but he quickly refocused on the monk.

“If your life is dear to you, you should hand over that bag now!”

Togtokh grabbed Jamphel at his throat. Jamphel heard his bones cracking. In panic, he slapped the other Dzungar with the bag, who fell down to the floor. Togtokh looked at him and pinned Jamphel to the ground.

“You have chosen death, old man!” The Mongol grabbed his scimitar and slashed it right at the monk. Togtokh then grabbed the bag and left. Jamphel however had used the bag with the stone tablets inside as a shield. He and Togtokh’s friend now lay in the library, seemingly dead. However, Jamphel stood up again. The Mongol didn’t. Soon after, the Mongols left, together with the bag. The surviving monks gathered in the courtyard. The monastery still burned.

“What do we do now?”, asked a young monk.

“We don’t have much left to do. Everything was taken from us. And soon, death will take us too.”, replied an old monk.

“I will go to the Dzungar leader and take back my belongings.”, said Jamphel.

The other monks looked at him in terror. “Jamphel, they will murder you! Look what they have done to us!”

He pointed at the dead monks that were scattered everywhere.

“My destiny is among these belongings! I have to find out what the inscription means!”

“Jamphel, you will never get them back! Forget it! We will now go to Nyingchi, join us or die at the gates of Lhasa!”

Jamphel knew he had no choice and they gathered what was left and set out to Nyingchi.

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Togtokh arrived in the camp. He opened the bag and was disappointed that there were only stone tablets in it. He threw them into his tent.

After many days, the gates of Lhasa were broken. The Labzang Khan, the last independent ruler of Tibet until 200 years later, was found and executed.

Three years after, Chinese soldiers marched into Tibet and Dzungaria and ended the 123-year reign of the Dzungar Khanate.

Togtokh reached Dzungaria, however, he was killed later in the war. The stone tablets remained there for more than 300 years, until they were found once again.

Jamphel reached Nyingchi and joined the local monastery. He lived a long and happy life, however he always remembered that he would never fulfil his self-proclaimed destiny.

The bird had many more children. It long forgot the with the monk that would forever change the fate of humanity. After many years of living a happy life, it finally reached the land beyond the Himalayas, India, and never returned to the cold and grey Tibet.

Although Jamphel Ngawang believed the stone tablets would be lost to eternity, a young an eager Chinese professor would find them 300 years later in the Xinjiang<sup>2</sup> Uygur Autonomous Region, whose northern part is to this day called Dzungaria.

<sup>1</sup>*Qing wird wie "Tsching" ausgesprochen*

<sup>2</sup>*Xinjiang wird wie "Schindschiang" ausgeprochen*

## Chapter II: The Rediscovery

Zhou Li<sup>1</sup> sat in her apartment. It was quiet. Only the ticking of the clock could be heard. It was an old grandfather clock. The clock was in the possession of her family since Zhou Li's ancestors bought it in a German market in Qingdao<sup>2</sup>, which was at the time a German possession. The pendulum swang around from left to right. Zhou Li was fascinated by the steady and unchanging speed of the pendulum, swinging around seemingly forever. As a child, when she still lived in Changzhou<sup>3</sup>, she loved to watch the pendulum swing from one side to the other. When she moved to Xinjiang, she also took the grandfather clock with her.

She opened the window of her apartment. The warm air of Ürümqi filled her room. She saw the skyline of the city, giant skyscrapers left and right. Some Uyghur, but mostly Chinese people filled the streets. In fact, barely any Uyghur lived in northern Xinjiang, most of them lived in the south, the Tarim Basin. The north was mostly the home of Han and Hui Chinese, Kazakh and Mongols. Xinjiang always was a crossroad of empires, mighty realms like the Han Dynasty, the Xiongnu<sup>4</sup> Empire, the Turkic Khanate, the Tibetan Empire, the Uyghur Khanate, the Mongol Empire and many others ruled it. The Silk Road also ran through Xinjiang, and many important city states like Kashgar, Khotan and more were located here.

Zhou Li decided to visit a local library today. She loved books, that was probably natural, as she was a history professor and her family belonged to the intellectuals since the end of the Qing Dynasty. Zhou Li left her apartment and walked towards the elevator. The door opened and she entered. Two men were standing in it, Zhou Li knew their names, Zhang Xin<sup>5</sup> and Alim Zunun. Alim was one of the few Uyghur in the building. Most were Chinese, since the Chinese government promoted Chinese settlement in Xinjiang. The men raised their arms and greeted her. Zhou Li also greeted them, although she didn't pay much attention to them.

Zhang Xin asked her if she had to go to work today.

“No, not today, the university is closed today because of the heat. I’m taking the day off and will visit an old library I found out about. It has very old books, some even maybe a hundred years old!”

Alim asked: “Ah, you work as history professor, right?”

“Yes. I am a history professor since five years! Did you never notice?” Zhou Li responded.

“I’m sorry, I am teaching at a different university. Are you teaching the students about the Ili Rebe...”, but the elevator stopped and Zhou Li said goodbye and left.

Zhou Li opened the door of the building and found herself on the street. She looked at her phone. To visit the library, she had to leave Ürümqi and visit the suburbs, called Ürümqi County. A bus would take around one hour to get there, so she went to the bus stop. Many people were standing here. Most of them wanted to go to work, but she also saw some children that probably wanted to go to school. Zhou Li remembered the schools would close today because of the heat.

“Kids, you don’t have to go to school! They are closing because of the heat!”

“Oh, really?”, the children responded. They looked quite excited. “Well, that would explain why I’m melting! Thanks for telling us, miss!”, the children happily walked away.

All of them were Chinese, but she was sure they were not Han but Hui Chinese, a group of Chinese Muslims scattered across Western China.

Soon, the bus arrived, and Zhou Li entered. It was quite hot in the bus, and she smelled the sweat of dozens of people. She sat down on a seat next to the window and looked outside. The city was very busy during this hour, thousands of people went to work. At the start of the journey, the bus was very full, however, the more the bus drove further away from the centre of the city, the less people filled it. Soon, there were only a few people left in the bus. They passed corn fields and pastures with horses,

sheep and cattle and soon arrived in the designated village. By now, Zhou Li was the only passenger of the bus. The door opened and Zhou Li inhaled the fresh air of Dzungaria. The city didn't have such fresh air and was filled with the smoke of the industrial era. She asked some local residents where the local library is.

An old lady responded in a Mongol accent: "Oh, you mean Batzorig's library? It has quite some good books! I once got a book filled with Chinese recipes there! My grandchildren love Chinese food. Well, I personally prefer the good old Mongol cuisine, but I love my grandchildren so much! They remind me of my childhood. When I was a small girl, every boy in town loved me! I could literally pick who I wanted to marry! My husband is wonderful, I remember when..."

But Zhou Li interrupted her: "Hmm, very interesting. But I would like to know where the library is!"

"Oh, sorry. You chose a good library! I'm glad Chinese people are interested in it! It's a real treasure trove! Batzorig is such a nice man, before I married by husband, I wished that..."

"Come, mother, we have to go! Don't you remember we wanted to visit the city today?" a young woman said.

"Oh yeah, I totally forgot that! Enjoy the library, miss, it has really good books! And maybe drink a tea with Batzorig!"

"But I don't even know..."

The old lady entered a car and drove away.

Zhou Li walked around the village and finally found the library. It was an old building. The sign above the door of the house was written in letters Zhou Li couldn't read, probably in the traditional Mongol script:



*monastery of Nyingchi. For twenty years I didn't think about the scrolls, but now I can't stop thinking about them. These stone tablets will decide the fate of humanity.*

*Sincerely, Jamphel Ngawang”*

Zhou Li asked Batzorig if he knew what this was about, but he replied he never learnt Tibetan. Batzorig gave her the tea and she paid him ten Yuan. The tea was very sweet, Batzorig must have had put a lot of sugar into it. She took her phone and searched for the name “Togtokh”. Apparently he was a high-ranking officer of the Dzungar army who took part in the sacking of Lhasa and the nearby monasteries. She read that he fell later in the war at home in Dzungaria. He apparently lived in the north of Dzungaria, in Bayan Khuree. Zhou Li thanked Batzorig for the tea and left. She then took the bus to return to Ürümqi. When she arrived, she immediately took another bus that drove to her university. Zhou Li entered the university, but she realized it was closed today. So she went back to her home and wrote an email to her fellow professors:

*“Dear professors,*

*I have found a text worthy of further investigation. Here it is:*

*“May anyone who reads this understand what I didn't. Fifty years before I wrote this, I lived in a monastery in Lhasa, where I found something unusual. I found two stone tablets, one with undecipherable symbols and the other with the inscription:*

*“Uncover the symbols and the stars will be yours when they are ready for you. Until then, keep and protect these symbols. The future fate of mankind will be decided by them.”*

*They were taken by a Mongol to Dzungaria. That is why I sent this letter to your land. The name of the Mongol was Togtokh as far as I remember. If these stone tablets are found, please bring them to the*

*monastery of Nyingchi. For twenty years I didn't think about the scrolls, but now I can't stop thinking about them. These stone tablets will decide the fate of humanity.*

*Sincerely, Jamphel Ngawang”*

*I have found out the Togtokh mentioned here lived in a Mongol village called Bayan Khuree. I advise an investigation so we may find out what these stone tablets mean.*

*Sincerely,*

*Professor Zhou Li”*

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The professors arrived in the village. The villagers viewed them with suspicion, however they answered their questions. Many of them knew that this was the home of Togtokh, however, their village was burnt down during the Dzungar genocide and only later rebuilt. Thus, there were not much traces of the Mongol times left. Many of the people here were not Mongols but rather Kazakh, Uygur, and others.

“Where did Togtokh live?”, they asked the mayor of the village.

“He lived in one of the huts in the north, but those were burnt down during the genocide.”

“Can you please lead us there?”

They reached an empty field. It was an ordinary meadow with sheep grazing on the green grass. A few shepherds sat in the grass and watched their herds.

“Where are the ruins?”

The mayor first looked at them in visible confusion and then laughed: “Oh you city dwellers! These huts were not made of stone and concrete but of wood! They completely burned down and what was left slowly decayed over the centuries. You’ll only find some things like vases and other hard objects that didn’t disintegrate!”

The professors were slightly embarrassed. A local farmer from an underdeveloped village knew more about the preservation of ruins than famous history experts. They then set up camp and grabbed their tools. Zhou Li began with carrying out geological survey. They would have to just dig down maximally half a meter to reach the ground of the eighteenth century.

Zhou Li asked her neighbour and fellow professor: “Zhang Xin, can you please map out the first area we will be searching?”

“Sure!”

Zhang Xin grabbed some small red flags to mark the area. He first observed the excavation plans and then placed the flags accordingly. After two days of preparation, the excavation began. Zhou Li woke up early in the morning and the professors immediately met in a tent that was set up on the field. They discussed the plans for today. Zhou Li took the leading role.

“First, the GPR will be used to detect possible buried objects. If some are found, we will begin to dig down to the wanted level. After that, the objects will be freed from the earth with light tools like brushes and trowels. Any questions?”

“Will we further search the area for artefacts even after the wanted objects are found?”

“Good question. Let’s hold a vote to decide that.”

23 professors expressed their support for further excavation while nine voted against it. Zhou Li voted for further excavation since she didn’t want to make the professors think that she only wanted to

search the area to get the stone tablets and nothing more. Also, her interest for the region was further raised by the library and the story of Togtokh.

Alim brought the GPR. It looked slightly like a lawnmower, however it had a display. He drove the GPR across the ground to detect any possible artefacts. The device soon had crossed half the area and there were still no findings. Another quarter was searched and still nothing was found. Alim's thoughts slowly seemed to fade away, but then the display showed him the outlines of a rectangular object. Alim immediately ran to the tent to report his finding. The professors enthusiastically grabbed their tools. Everything, from spades to trowels, from brushes to pickaxes was taken and soon every professor had some form of tool in their hand

d. Zhou Li grabbed a spade and began to dig. After around three quarters of a meter, deeper than expected, the professors finally found the object. It was a rectangular shield, unusual for the Dzungars. Zhou Li was slightly disappointed, but the excavation continued and after three more days, they finally found the stone tablets. They had weird inscriptions, most unrecognizable, but some were Chinese and Latin characters. However, the Latin words were totally different from any European languages Zhou Li knew. The professors decided it was best to let them be analysed by linguists. After five days, the excavation finally ended and they held a celebration with the villagers for their support. The locals often brought them food and water and helped them with the more rough works. Alim Zunun, Zhang Xin and Zhou Li met at Batzorig's library and drank green tea.

“Zhou Li, do you teach your students about the atrocities committed against my people? My heart is broken by the terrible crimes that your people does to mine.”

“What do you mean? I thought your people are educated in training centres and nothing more?”

“Oh you too believe the propaganda taught by your government? China is not a democracy, if your so called “communism” works, they have betrayed the revolution. China is not any better than the

western capitalists, probably even worse, flooding the markets with its cheap copies of western quality! Some of my relatives were in these “education centres”, they were tortured were forced to work as slaves for the Chinese. Some even were...”

“SHUT UP!”

Zhang Xin was furious. He had been silent and drank his tea for most of the time, but this was too much for him. He always was very loyal to the government and defended it when necessary.

“Even if this would be true, I know these people would deserve it!”

Zhou Li feared that Alim Zunun would respond with violence, however he kept calm.

“If you believe that, I can’t help you and you can’t be saved. When the battle for Xinjiang will begin, you will regret this.”

After he said that, he stood up and left. He entered his car and drove away. Zhang Xin and Zhou Li didn’t say a word after.

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A few days later, the analysis of the university arrived. The inscriptions on the stone tablets were written in a completely unknown language and a partially unknown script. Zhou Li was disappointed by this, however she hoped the stone tablets would be decrypted soon. This however didn’t happen for the rest of her lifetime and she soon forgot about the stone tablets. When she returned, Alim Zunun already was in the middle of moving away. She didn’t see him again for 37 years.

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Zhang Xin later joined the People’s Liberation Army when the Great Uygur Revolt began. He fell during the battle of Kashgar.

Alim Zunun joined the Turkestan Islamic Party and fought in the Great Uygur Revolt. He survived the war and helped in the establishment of the East Turkestan Islamic Republic , which, unlike advocated by many Turkestan Islamic Party members, didn't become a caliphate but a democratic republic.

Batzorig moved to Mongolia after the Revolt and gifted the library to the village. He donated most of his wealth to the efforts to decrypt the stone tablets and lived the rest of his life as a shepherd of the Mongol steppe.

Zhou Li lived for another five years in her apartment before she was arrested for supporting the Uygur independence movement. After the Sino-American conflict and the Great Uygur Revolt, she left Xinjiang in the Han Exodus from Western China and lived the rest of her days in Beijing. She again met Alim Zunun when she visited the East Turkestan Islamic Republic.

The stone tablets would soon be forgotten. Although none of the four witnessed the decryption of the stone tablets, the mystery would be solved around 240 years after the Great Uygur Revolt, in the year 2277.

*<sup>1</sup>Zhou Li wird wie "Dschu Li" ausgesprochen*

*<sup>2</sup>Qingdao wird wie "Tschingdau" ausgesprochen*

*<sup>3</sup>Changzhou wird wie "Tschangdscho" ausgesprochen*

*<sup>4</sup>Xiongnu wird wie "Sch(i)ongnu" ausgesprochen*

*<sup>5</sup>Zhang Xin wird wie "Dschang Schin" ausgesprochen*

## Chapter III: The Decryption

Lucas Oliveira observed the stone tablets through the screen of his laptop. Just recently he gained access to the Chinese archives as part of the Sino-Brazilian Friendship Treaty. The stone tablets seemed to be written in a foreign language, so he asked an AI to analyse them.

*“I don’t see any resemblances to any known language. Maybe it is fictional? The text contains many known letters and symbols, however most of them are unknown.”*

Lucas closed the AI app and shut down his laptop. For days he had tried to decrypt the stone tablets but to no avail, they were simply unreadable. Oliveira sat down on his couch and turned on the TV. An announcement by the UN, which gained more and more influence after the rise of democracy in the 2040s, by some called the world government.

“Today the UN announces the construction of a new language, temporarily called Mantakunic, a fictional word derived from another fictional word “Mantakuna”, a word for human containing elements from all of the most widely spread language families. The UN has stated that the goal of this new language is to ‘replace English as the global language to further develop international cooperation’. The language takes elements from the most widely spoken languages, having huge parts of it’s vocabulary from languages like English, Chinese, Hindi, Spanish, Arabic and others. The basics of the language are to be released on the website of the UN, with printed versions soon to follow.”

Lucas opened the website of the UN. He navigated to the section on Mantakunic and noticed it looked suspiciously familiar. He then realized where he knew the language from. He opened the picture of the stone tablets and inserted the text into the translator on the page. Some words could not be translated, but the rest was translated into clear Portuguese sentences. His heart started racing. He copied the text and pasted it into a text document. Lucas immediately opened a program and called his university. He waited for a few seconds until someone picked up.

“Hello, you called the Universidade de São Paulo.”

“Umm, hello. I have something of utmost importance. Please immediately connect me to the Instituto de Astronomia, Geofísica e Ciências Atmosféricas, it is highly important.”

“I am connecting you.”

Professor Manteus Almeida then showed up on the screen. He greeted Lucas.

“Greetings, Professor Almeida, I must show you something. You probably have heard about Mantakunic, right?”

“Yes, it’s the language proposed by the UN.”

“Perfect. Anyway, since we gained access on the Chinese archives, I have been examining the whole archive for five months, and have found two stone tablets. The first one was written in Tibetan from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which is already weird, since, according to the Chinese, the stone tablets are from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. But what was even more shocking is that the second one is written in, you won’t believe it, Mantakunic.”

Almeida first was silent and then spoke again.

“Did these Chinese play a joke on us?”

“I don’t think so, there are accounts of the stone tablets from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, for example a letter by the monk who discovered them.”

“But how was Mantakunic known in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century? Did the UN just dig out an extinct language from China and called it ‘future world language’?”

“I guess that can’t be found out, but what is more important is the content of the stone tablets. The first one states:

*‘Uncover the symbols and the stars will be yours when they are ready for you. Until then, keep and protect these symbols. The future fate of mankind will be decided by them.’*

But what is more important is the second one. It is a pretty long text, so I’ll send you a file.”

Almeida opened the file and then looked at Lucas.

“Is this some kind of bad joke, Professor Oliveira?”

“Trust me, this is what it said!”

“But Tibetans from the 18<sup>th</sup> century didn’t know what interstellar travelling is! And especially not the secret of travelling at the speed of light, it is something even we haven’t solved!”

“Scroll further, please.”

“An internet link?!”

“What?”

“Look here, its a typical link to a website.”

Lucas saw how Almeida opened the link. He was brought to a website containing multiple texts. The site was very simple, it had white background and Mantakunic text. No images or even colours were there.

“My friend Professor Lucas Oliveira, this website gives the solution to creating negative energy density.”

“What does that mean?”

“I’ll tell you what the website suggests.

**Travel at the speed of light.”**

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Project Alcubierre was running perfectly. After two years of preparation and waiting for official approval by the UN and the main space agencies, the project could start. It was named after Miguel Alcubierre, a Spanish theoretical physicist who proposed the Alcubierre Drive, a speculative way to move objects at the speed of light. The length of the project was speculated, with some estimates saying it would take only 50 years and the most pessimistic saying it would take 2000 years. The mysterious website greatly helped in the development. It was speculated how the website came to be, however this was only solved way later. Ultimately, the project lasted 800 years, the progress being massively boosted by the website and the stone tablets.

Both Almeida and Oliveira took leading roles in the project, on one side for their expertise, but mainly as symbolism since they were the ones that decrypted the stone tablets.

Almeida lived for 70 more years and died at the age of 140. He greatly contributed to the project. He later moved to Europe. On his death bed, his last wish was that his ash shall be sent to Alpha Centauri, together with the soon starting space probe aimed for the three star system.

Lucas Oliveira died at the age of 137, although he died twenty years after Almeida. He decided to move to Tibet to become a Buddhist monk and first lived in Drepung Monastery and then moved to Nyingchi just like Jamphel Ngawang.

In the year 3092, the first humans reached Alpha Centauri. From there on, the now growing Human Empire was unstoppable.

## Chapter IV: The first contact

Xyren commanded a scan of the object. His space ship, the *No Borders*, started the scanning program. 153 people were on board, this only being possible due to huge robotization efforts, without any robots or automatization, the ship would need half a million people to function properly. Ten million frozen embryos were stored in the lower decks, for the case of a colony having to be established.

Earlier, an object had been detected that moved at rapid speed, around 50% of the speed of light. Now it seemed to have stopped. The *No Borders* still moved at a fast pace, although not as fast as the *No Borders*' maximum speed, around 95% of the speed of light. Xyren ordered the ship to transition to a slower pace to not crash into the object. The speed slowly decreased, until the ship barely moved.

Xyren asked an officer: "What are the results of the scan?"

"We are unsure, we do not get any response from our scan."

"How far is the object from our current position?"

"Around 30 Astronomic units, moving at rapid speed, oh never mind, it starts to transcend into some sort braking, it is moving slower and slower!"

"How high is the chance it is controlled by living objects?"

"Very high, maybe they are some lost settlers. Should we contact the object?"

"Yes, ask them what brings them here."

They waited three hours, however no response was made. The unknown object had stopped moving. Then, the *No Borders* intercepted a signal.

“We are receiving a signal! It’s a number of pulses. They seem to be irregular, we are receiving pauses and then again pulses. Maybe it is some kind of Morse code?”

Xyren had an idea. “Convert the pulses and pauses into binary!”

The result looked roughly like this:

***11 [LONG PAUSE] 001001000011111101101010100010001000010110100011...***

Everyone had the same thought when they saw the binary.

“Its  $\pi$ !”, everyone shouted at once.

“But why don’t they use Mantakunic?”

“Either they can’t send basic messages... or they can’t speak it!”, Xyren responded.

“What do you mean?”, someone asked. “Everyone speaks Mantakunic since the old languages became extinct?”

“Well, who says those beings are human?”

“Impossible!”, a woman shouted. “The UN has declared extraterrestrial life non-existent after humanity hadn’t encountered any, even after 50,000 years of near light speed!”

Xyren ignored the comment and ordered the ship to prepare the weapon systems.

“Do you suspect them to be a threat?”, an officer asked.

“We can never know, if they are really aliens, this will be the first contact and the outcome of it will decide the fate of humanity. Send a message to earth!”

“The message will take seven years to arrive on earth. Are you sure?”

“Yes, send the message!”

The United Nations officially the “United Nations of Humanized Worlds” were organized as a federal empire. Each fleet and each star system was *de facto* left to itself and the central government on Earth had little to no power. However, Xyren saw a possible first contact with extraterrestrial life as important enough to let the government know.

“Now, what about the unidentified object?”, someone asked.

Xyren responded: “Send a reply.”

“What should that contain?”

“Send them the first ten prime numbers, in binary of course, in the same way they sent their message, through pulses.”

Thus, the message looked like this in binary:

10 11 101 111 1011 1101 10001 10011 10111 11101 11111

“Message is sent, it will take roughly four hours until the object receives it.”

They waited for four hours. After eight hours had passed, they still hadn’t got a reply.

“Move closer towards the object!”, Xyren ordered.

“That doesn’t seem to be necessary, the object is already approaching our location.”

“What? How fast are they approaching?”

“They are moving towards us at around 75% of the speed of light. They will arrive at our location in 332.44 minutes!”

“Print a copy of the golden record. That shall be our gift to them.”

A door opened and a robot arrived with the copy ordered. The robot looked like a human, but was purely white and the “skin” was as smooth as marble.

“Prepare a space probe that will transport the record. Also, disinfect it so we don’t accidentally contaminate the crew of the ship.”

The alien ship arrived. It was giant, although not as big as Xyren’s ship. It was entirely black and had the shape of a long cylinder. The front was pointy and the ship ended with a huge fiery drive. Burning gas left it.

“Hmm, they don’t seem to use the Alcubierre Drive.”, a woman in the back noticed.

“They have obviously developed a different form to move at near light speed. Launch the space probe!”

They saw how the space probe left their ship and approached the aliens. One of their own space probes intercepted it and brought it to the ship.

“Look, they are also sending us a space probe.”, someone noticed.

When the space probe from the foreign ship was intercepted, it was opened and contained a smooth ball of metal. It was so smooth and polished it almost had no colour as mirrored everyone and everything in the room.

“This must be a sign of peace.”, Xyrem said. “Encourage them to travel to Earth, together with us!”

“How?”, the officer in charge of the machines asked.

“Send them our coordinates.”

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Since the communication system of the aliens was totally different from those of the humans (it was based on light signals since the bodies of the aliens could start to glow on command) and they had no name that could be expressed through sound, they were named the Selenites by the UN, after the aliens in Lucian’s *True History*, one of the first works of science fiction from the first century. After the

encounter, the two species lived rarely interacted again, although in constant knowledge of each other. Sometimes, there was exchange in the fields of science, although not much, since the Selenites were slightly inferior to the humans in scientific and technological terms. Sometimes there were conflicts on the borders of the empires, with billions of dead and hundreds of world made uninhabited. Both didn't possess weapons of mass destruction, so both couldn't wipe out the other. This continued until they were forced to unite against a larger threat, the Shanta, a galactic superpower, although both empires were dismantled in the war.

## Chapter V: The Destruction

*From the book "Rise and Fall of the Mantakunic Empire" by the Selenite 1011110100110101.*

When the Shanta, nomads from the Perseus Arm, attacked the civilizations of the Orion Arm, many were destroyed. The Selenites were forced to leave most of their territory, including the homeworld 101011001, the Xenoi had to abandon their marches, the Kryptoi were subjugated by the Shanta as loyal vassals, but none were hit worse than the Mantakuni, punished for leading the Orion Alliance and holding out against the Shanta far longer than any other species, for 5,000 years. 95% of their population was killed, and half of the survivors were enslaved by the Shanta. The remaining Mantakuni fled and scattered across the galaxy. The central government collapsed and warlords replaced authority. After 10,000 more years, the next victim was the technology of the Mantakuni. Many worlds devolved into a society comparable to the middle ages of Mantakunic history, while some even became hunter gatherers. The history of the Mantakunic Empire was turned into myths and legends, passed down verbally from generation to generation. 1,000,000 years later, the Mantakuni were barely recognizable any more. Most evolved into new species, more fitted to their surroundings. Some of those species recovered some of the lost technology and built small realms usually encompassing around 15 systems. But some managed to create giant empires, although not as great as the Mantakunic Empire once was. There are five main empires among the post-Mantakunic realms. The biggest of the five are called the Restorationists, seeking to return to the former glory of the Mantakunic Empire, although they see the Shanta as unbeatable and aim to make the Carina-Sagittarius Arm the new home of the Mantakuni. They often work together with the Crusaders, a warrior people that, like the Restorationists, want to reunite the Mantakunic Empire. However, unlike the Restorationists, they aim reconquer the Orion Arm in what they dub a "crusade" and destroy the Shanta Empire. They often fight against the Shanta and Shanta allies, although their attacks rarely have any impact. The third group, the Amnesiacs, want to create a new identity and leave behind their Mantakunic heritage. They moved far away from the

Orion Arm and live on the edges of our galaxy. Communication between them and the other Mantakunic empires is strictly forbidden to not revive their former identity. They are friendly towards the Shanta, although not as much as the fourth group, the Collaborators. They are partially made up of the former slaves of the Shanta, however most of them are the descendants of the Mantakuni that stayed in the Orion Arm. They think the only way to restore the Mantakunic Empire is to work together with the Shanta. They were turned into *de facto* vassals of the Shanta. The Shanta gave them control of huge swaths of former Mantakunic land, however they were not given the Solar System to not make them develop plans for independence.

The reader may have noticed that these are only four and not five, this is because I left one out, the Prophets. The Prophets formed themselves in the Restorationist Empire and they claim the true succession to the Mantakunic Empire. They seek to unite all Mantakunic realms and finally return Earth to the Mantakunic peoples. Their leader is called the Prophet of Terra and supposedly received a divine message from the UN, the former government of the Mantakunic Empire.

Today, all of these factions fight for power over the Mantakunic peoples, and it is open to see if they succeed or if the Shanta Empire crushes them.

## Chapter VI: The Mission

Vaetrix once again visited the local caves. She loved the air in them, but mostly she loved being alone. The small creatures in it didn't disturb her, she sometimes put them on her hand and they seemingly didn't care. She sat down and watched the sunset of the two stars of the Elion System. She felt the warm rays on her cyan skin.

A little bird approached her. Her grandmother had told her they were descendants of birds that once lived on Earth, the ancestral homeland of all Mantakunic peoples. Vaetrix never really believed her, but she loved the stories she always told her. She gave the bird some bread once in a while and watched how it tore it apart. She ventured further into the caves. The bird seemed to follow Vaetrix, but that didn't really disturb her. Soon, she reached a deep abyss. Vaetrix sat down on the cold, wet ground. She tried meditating, she had read many people on Earth had done that to calm down or simply just as a daily ritual. The bird tried eating some of the dead grass, however it was not easy to eat. Vaetrix stood up and tried to give the bird some bread, but before she could do that, she slipped and fell into the abyss.

Vaetrix landed in cold water. She saw a small island in the underground lake and swam to it. She sat down and considered her possible actions. But before she could think of a plan, she saw a small round object. It had a button. Vaetrix first considered if it is maybe a bomb from some kind of war, but she pressed it anyway. The projection of a tall man appeared in front of her.

“If you have received this message, the war against the Shanta has been lost. In preparation of this, we have prepared this message for you. When you pressed the button, an AI analysed you and found out you are the perfect person for our mission. You may wonder how we know your language. Well, we actually don't, but the AI has been observing this planet for years and quickly learned your language. Now you may want to know what mission you will be given. We assume the Mantakunic Empire has

been destroyed, so you will be tasked with reuniting it and fighting the Shanta. We wish you luck. Behind you, a door will now open. We have given you a special gift for your task, use it wisely.”

Vaetrix saw how a few rocks moved aside and an opening was revealed. She entered it.

A robot greeted her. “Welcome, please lay down.”

The robot had talked about what seemed to be a table. She didn’t really know why the robot wanted her to lay down, but she did it anyway. She felt how the robot injected something into her and she suddenly fell asleep.

When she woke up, she once again saw the “face” of the robot.

“Your genes have now been altered to always restore your body to how it currently is. In short, you have been given immortality. You are expected to fulfil your task, however you now have infinite time. You could wait for eighty years and then start. You have enough time.”

## Chapter VII: The Dialogue

The final battle had finally been won. The remaining ships of the Shanta slowly started retreating. Earth had been liberated. 7,000 years after the unification of the Mantakunic nations, the war had finally ended.

“Great Prophet, one of their smaller ships is approaching us. It states it comes in peace. Should we destroy it?”

“No, it is probably the delegation handing over the surrender. I want to speak to them.”

The screen of the control room of the ship lighted up and the yellow face of a Shanta appeared. Its dark eyes seemed to penetrate Vaetrix’ body.

“My name is Zinbanu. et us speak to the Prophet, but alone.”

“Permission granted. My dear officers, you have served me well in the battle. But know, the battle is over. You are free to go anywhere.”

After everyone had left, Zinbanu began to speak again.

“I am Zinbanu, 542<sup>nd</sup> captain of the mission, the same mission you will have to fulfil in 8 billion years. We will now reveal our mission. You may know we are technically superior to any species in the galaxy. That is because we are time travellers. We converted, or should I say “we will convert” all of our atoms into tachyons, and with a speed faster than light, it was possible to move backwards in time. Our mission is to learn from the Mantakuni. Our species is developed, we are dominant in every time, we possess everything, everything but love. We have forgotten it. That is what we want to learn.”

“But why from the Mantakuni, why not any other species?”

“We have a special relationship with your people. We sent the stone tablets to Earth. But there is more. We selected the Mantakuni, dear Vaetrix, because we are not some barbarian people destroying

thousands of species. Our ancestors were an insignificant species from an ocean planet. That planet was called Earth, And our ancestors, dear Vaetrix, they were called humans. And what better master there is but our very own people?"

# Epilogue

10 billion years after the events of this story, I Xingun Golbani, have finally finished this book. I wanted to cover the history of the Mantakuni for a long time, it is one of the most interesting stories in the Andromeda-Milky Way Galaxy. I also wanted to cover the Great War against the Andromedans, the second destruction of the Human Empire, the second unification and the Great Migration, but the days until the deadline were approaching very fast, so the reader may also notice the last chapters are not as detailed as the others. I hope this book will make history more alive for students. All I wanted was to contribute to education about the Mantakuni. Especially now, after investigations of the sudden vanishing of the Mantakunic species has started. They have vanished around 2 billion years ago, and it is still unknown why. Perhaps, this book will help to solve it.