

about a false type of *techeiles* made not from the *chilazon* but from a tree, called *kala ilan*. It is visually indistinguishable from the more expensive *techeiles*. It is therefore imperative to ensure that one not substitute *kala ilan* for *techeiles*, either maliciously or by accident.

In Rabbi Herzog's study on the subject he found an incredible possible connection between *kala ilan* and ancient China. In suggesting a number of possibilities

explaining the origins of the term *kala ilan*, he identified the word "kala" in Sanskrit, which means black or deep blue, and "nilam," which is indigo. Rav Herzog also posits that the Chinese *ian* (indigo) might be involved. This might be lent additional support by the fact that in ancient Chinese, the term for indigo was actually *k'lan* which is very similar to *kala ilan*.

Furthermore, the Chinese character for indigo (*ian*) is made up of three elements: an

eye, a person and a vessel with water. Taken together, this represents a reflection in the water (perhaps of the sky)—very similar to the idea that *techeiles* is the color reflected in the sky!

Is there a connection between the Chinese purple found on the terracotta warriors, the similar blue color in ancient Egypt and *techeiles*? All this remains speculation. But the parallels are striking and provide food for thought. ■



Rabbi Yitzchak Halevi Herzog.

The Great Wall Of China

The Great Wall is one of the Seven Wonders of the World, and the longest ongoing building project in history, starting before the Roman Empire and lasting some 2,000 years! Even today, the remains of these ancient ramparts and towers scar the land. This stone colossus has become the national icon of China. Every day, armies of tourists pay their respects to the stone ramparts north of Beijing. But no one truly knows all the facets of the walls that snake across thousands of miles of northern China. What have these walls to say about the world they were built to protect? What made them build this giant wall frontier? What is its true story?

They arrived like the wind and descended like a storm. Moving at lightning speed on fleet-footed horses, Mongol warriors charge at defenders behind an earthen wall. The defenders are terrified not only by the sight of the world's most fearsome warriors, but

also by the high-pitched screech of arrows that whistle past them. These are not just deadly, armor-piercing arrows, but ones carved with holes in the end to make them whistle in flight. When the Mongols fire a volley of arrows they want you to hear them coming. The more arrows, the louder the

noise. The louder the noise, the greater the terror.

The Mongols even look fearsome. Short and stocky, they have broad faces, flat noses, prominent cheekbones, slit eyes, thick lips, sparse beards and straight black hair. Their bodies are protected by vests made of small scales of iron sewn together with leather thongs. They wear helmets made of large iron pieces, roughly in the shape of a



Actors dressed up as fearsome Mongol warriors on the attack.



Illustration of Mongol army on the move.



The Mongol horde, as it was sometimes referred to.

rounded cone, and with a protective neck guard of iron plates. Some go into battle wearing colorful felt hats with antlers. Even their horses wear adorned hats as they race into battle, and their tails are braided with long colorful pieces of felt.

Not all defenders wait passively for the charging horde. Some go on the offensive, especially if they think that they see a weakness in the attackers. Knowing this, the Mongols sometimes lay a trap. As Mongol archers fill the air with arrows, they are camouflaged by smoke from fires of dung and naphtha that their comrades have lit. When the enemy tries to send its soldiers through the smoke, they discover not lightly armored archers but cavalymen brandishing spears, swords and battle axes. They quickly realize it is a trap and there is no hope. The enemy force turns in confusion, colliding with other units... and then the rout begins.

Perhaps most devastating of all the Mongol tactics is that they have a system. They are not an undisciplined horde of barbarians—at least not since their legendary leader, Temujin, took over and organized his soldiers into groups based on the decimal system. Units, which included all males from 14 to 60, were built from groups of 10, 100, 1,000 and 10,000, all overseen by a quartermaster.

Most radically of all, Temujin restructured his army, disregarding tribal affiliations by rewarding his most loyal followers with power over a thousand men each. Without regard to rank or status, he

promoted according to ability alone. This was a new style of ordering large bodies of men.

In 1206, at age 44, Temujin received the greatest honor ever given to a Mongol warrior. A grand assembly of tribes proclaimed him Supreme Commander, the “Khan” of all Mongols. But this was not to be the summit of his career, merely the beginning.

Temujin then took a title nobody had ever been awarded before—Genghis Khan. The title Genghis was utterly unique to him. Historians do not know why it was chosen, nor are they sure what it means. However, the current thinking is that it means “fierce,” rendering the title, “Fierce Khan,” the Fierce King.

Indeed, Genghis Khan would come to be known as one of the most violent men in history. He once declared: “Man’s greatest good fortune is to chase and defeat his enemy, seize his total possessions....” The Mongols killed ruthlessly—opposing armies as well as hapless noncombatants—and subjugated millions as they pursued the dream of empire.

The Greatest Empire in History

Where did they come from?

The Mongolian tribes that Genghis Khan led originated from the steppe grasslands in the shadows of the Altai Mountains, in the southwest of the modern state of Mongolia. The Mongols were a nomadic race; they had no towns. Instead, they lived in movable tents called yurts. It was a harsh existence, and it produced a race of men and women who were extremely tough.

Centuries before Genghis Kahn, they had already developed the reputation as ferocious warriors, but they were not unified or organized. For centuries, Chinese emperors had kept them at bay by encouraging them to war among themselves, which was not hard to do.

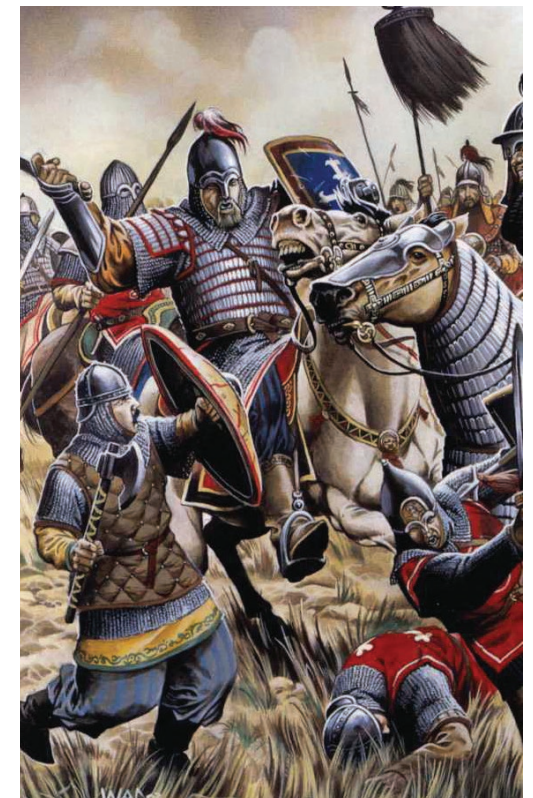
However, with the reform of his troops and administration, one of the first things



Mongol lands before Genghis Kahn.



Mongol empire, about 50 years after Genghis Kahn's death.



European knights engaged in battle against the Mongols.