

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons® 2nd Edition



Official Game Adventure

Horde Campaign

by Curtis M. Scott

Table of Contents

Introduction .....	.2
Chapter 1 The Coming of the Horde .....	.3
Chapter 2 The War of Semona .....	.11
Chapter 3 The Conquest of Khazari .....	.16
Chapter 4 The Invasion of Shou Lung .....	.21
Chapter 5 The War with Thay .....	.28
Chapter 6 The War in Kashemen .....	.32
Color Plates .....	.33
Chapter 7 The Crusade .....	.52
Conclusion .....	.59
BATTLESYSTEM™ Statistics .....	.61

Credits:

Design: Curtis M. Scott
Editing: Douglas Stewart
Cover Art and Color Plates:
Doug Chaffee
Black and White Art: Karl Waller

Cartography: Steve Beck
Typography: Gaye O'Keefe
Production: Sarah Feggestad
Art Coordinator: Peggy Cooper

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TSR, Inc.
POB 756
Lake Geneva
WI 53147
USA



TSR Ltd.
120 Church End,
Cherry Hinton
Cambridge CB1 3LB
United Kingdom



Introduction

The steppe nomads have existed for millennia. References to the horse people are found in the scrolls of lost Imaskar and the silver glyph plates of the First Emperor of Shou Lung. In each age they seem to live an unchanging existence; their customs, gods and way of life never varying for centuries.

This is no more true of the nomads than of any other people. Tribes appear and disappear, wars change grazing grounds, leaders come and go. Life on the steppe seems changeless because of the rigors of the steppe itself.

For thousands of years the peoples of Faerun and Kara-Tur dismissed the nomads as barbarians. No longer.

The Horde Wars, the Tuigan invasions of Kara-Tur and Faerun, have had a major impact on East and West. Landscapes have changed permanently, the Dragonwall is broken, and Khazari is no more. Zhentil Keep established two new outposts deep in Faerun. The consequences of Faerun unity, the result of the Tuigan threat, have yet to be assessed. No event in recent memory, save the Time of Troubles, had such an impact on the future of the Realms.

This is a history of the Horde Wars from a military perspective. It is too soon to determine what the long term effects of the Horde Wars will be, but a careful accounting of the military practices of the Horde and its opponents, and an assessment of events leading to the Wars, should provide military and political scholars with employment in the years to come.

This history follows the life of Hoekun Yamun, Khahan of the Tuigan, "Emperor of All The World", whose fortunes rose and fell with the Horde Wars. Perhaps the most striking element of the Wars is that they began with the ambitions of one man, rather than political and economic tensions. Koja of Khazari said,

"Yamun Khahan tried to make the world over in his image, to weave a picture that would encompass the entire globe!" Even in failure Yamun's name is forever engraved in the history of the Forgotten Realms.

The author is indebted to the careful renderings of events painted by Thom Reaverson's *History of the Crusade* and Koja of Khazari's *Life among the Tuigan*. Without the careful, unbiased chronicles of these scholars, none could undertake a history of the Wars with accuracy.

The author also acknowledges the assistance of the temple of Deneir in Procampur and Prelate Wenslan Amthur, for allowing him to examine the complete manuscript of Vilhiard of Procampur's *A Discovery of the World*. It is only with this older manuscript that nomad life can be understood and the rise of Yamun Khahan placed in context of the history of the Endless Waste.

How to Use This Book

This single 48 page history can be understood best if it is read in context with other material of the Horde Wars: the Horde boxed set, the Empires Trilogy (*Horselords*, *Dragonwall*, and *Crusade*), and the Empires Adventures Trilogy (*Storm Riders*, *Black Courser* and *Blood Charge*). Enough information is given here, however, to allow military gamers and FORGOTTEN REALMS® campaign enthusiasts to understand the scope of the Horde Wars without them.

Miniatures gamers will also find AD&D® BATTLESYSTEM™ statistics for all participants in the Horde Wars. They will allow miniatures gamers to recreate the battles of the Horde Wars, of Yamun Khahan, General Batu Min Ho, and King Azoun. Enough general information about troop dispositions and terrain is given in each chapter to allow miniatures gamers to devise BATTLESYSTEM™ scenarios.



Chapter 1

The Coming of the Horde

"The greatest joy a man can have is victory; to conquer one's enemies, to pursue them, to deprive them of their possessions, to reduce their families to tears, to ride on their horses, to make love to their wives and daughters!"
Yamun Khahan

The Grand Army of the Tuigan, known as the Horde, was born in the violence of tribal warfare and the betrayal of a single man. Yamun, a noyan of the Hoekun (a minor tribe of the Tuigan people), son of the Khan, strangled his father in battle to gain the title. The murder was the first in a long string of draconian measures which made Yamun Khahan and "Emperor of All The World!"

Gaining control of the Hoekun (probably in 1334 DR), Yamun led his tribe against his Tuigan neighbors. He gained the alliance of another minor tribe (the Basymits), and together they raided the Jamaqua, the Dalats, and the other Tuigan tribes. After each raid, the Khahan sent emissaries with a simple offer: join him or die. Through a combination of diplomacy, treachery and warfare, Yamun secured the alliance of most of the Clan and was elected Khahan of the Tuigan.

After asserting control over his own clan he conquered the Naican, the Commani, and the Oigur. The other tribes soon joined his growing army.

This was Yamun Khahan's secret: instead of



crushing his enemies and starting blood feuds, Yamun gave the khans of the clans a chance to join him. In these ear-

ly days, dreams of world conquest governed his actions. We have little documentation of the battles among the steppe tribes. No reliable observers were there, and the Tuigan themselves have no written language. Therefore, the details gleaned by Koja of Khazari during his stay with the Tuigan must guide our analysis.

Organization of the Tribes

Those who have not lived in the Endless Waste often view the nomads of the steppe as a single people. The truth is that the barbarians are divided into many different tribes, each with its own customs, alliances, and hatreds.

The tribes of the steppe tend to follow the same organization. The basic unit is the *yurt*, ruled by the head of the household. A number of grouped yurts become an *obogh* (horde). The households of a single *obogh* typically travel, hunt and herd together, though each yurt tends its own livestock.

Three or four *oboghs* normally made up a small *ordu*. Larger *ordus* contained as many as 30 *oboghs*, though *ordus* of this size were usually found only in the more prosperous regions of the steppe. Within the *ordu*, certain families are considered *noyan* (noble). The hereditary leader of the *ordu* was the *Khan*.

Khans ruled their *ordus*, and each khan did as he pleased, so long as his *obogh* would obey him. The nomads were more likely to follow a strong leader. In the face of a weak khan, *oboghs* rarely separated from their *ordu*, waiting instead for a more ambitious scion of the *noyan* to come to power.

The power of a khan was determined by the military force he commanded, or the allies he

could call upon. Some khans of small *ordus* were greatly respected because they allied with larger *ordus* and could call up the warriors of allies in time of war.

Regardless of their power, khans commonly had rights and privileges granted to no other member of the *ordu*. It was not permitted to challenge the khan to a blood duel, and many tribes maintained that it was an ill omen to spill the blood of a khan. In return for his service to the *ordu*, the khan was provided the best food and lodging, although this was likely no better than that enjoyed by the head of a yurt.

Most disputes between *ordus* were managed through a complex web of blood ties, marriage, and obligations among the *noyan*. In theory, disputes between *ordus* were settled by peaceful means. In practice, disputes were usually settled in favor of the most powerful khan.

Despite political effort, warfare was waged between *ordus*. *Ordus* battled for grazing or water rights, raiders descended upon the *oboghs* of neighboring *ordu* to steal livestock or wives.

A tribe was made of many *ordus*. Tribes ranged over specific geographic areas. Although the boundaries were fluid, *ordus* often crossed into the territory of a neighboring tribe, creating border turmoil.

Khan was not the greatest title which could be achieved. At rare moments when faced with an outside threat or when a charismatic leader arose, the khans might "elect" a *khahan*, a great khan. Once awarded, the title could not be taken away except by force. The *khahan* was the ruler of all the khans of a tribe, a title of great prestige and power. It normally went to the khan having the most power and political savvy. Unless there was an obviously superior candidate, (or a crucial outside threat) even a powerful khan was not always named *khahan*. Only a few of the tribes had a *khahan*, and two in one century was extremely rare.



Rarely, a single khahan did unite the tribes by conquest and diplomacy, conquered tribes became his and others gave allegiance out of friendship or fear. Prior to Yamun Khahan, this had not happened in many centuries.

The warriors of the tribes were organized by ordu. In war, the ordu's troops were led by the khan, and the headman of each obogh led his troops obedient to the orders of his khan. Without a strong force of his own, even a khahan was hard pressed to control the disposition of an ordu's forces.

Organization of Yamun Khahan's Army

When Yamun Khahan created the Great Horde, one of his innovations was the regularization of units under his command. Without a system of regular units, managing a force of 300,000 troops would have been impossible.

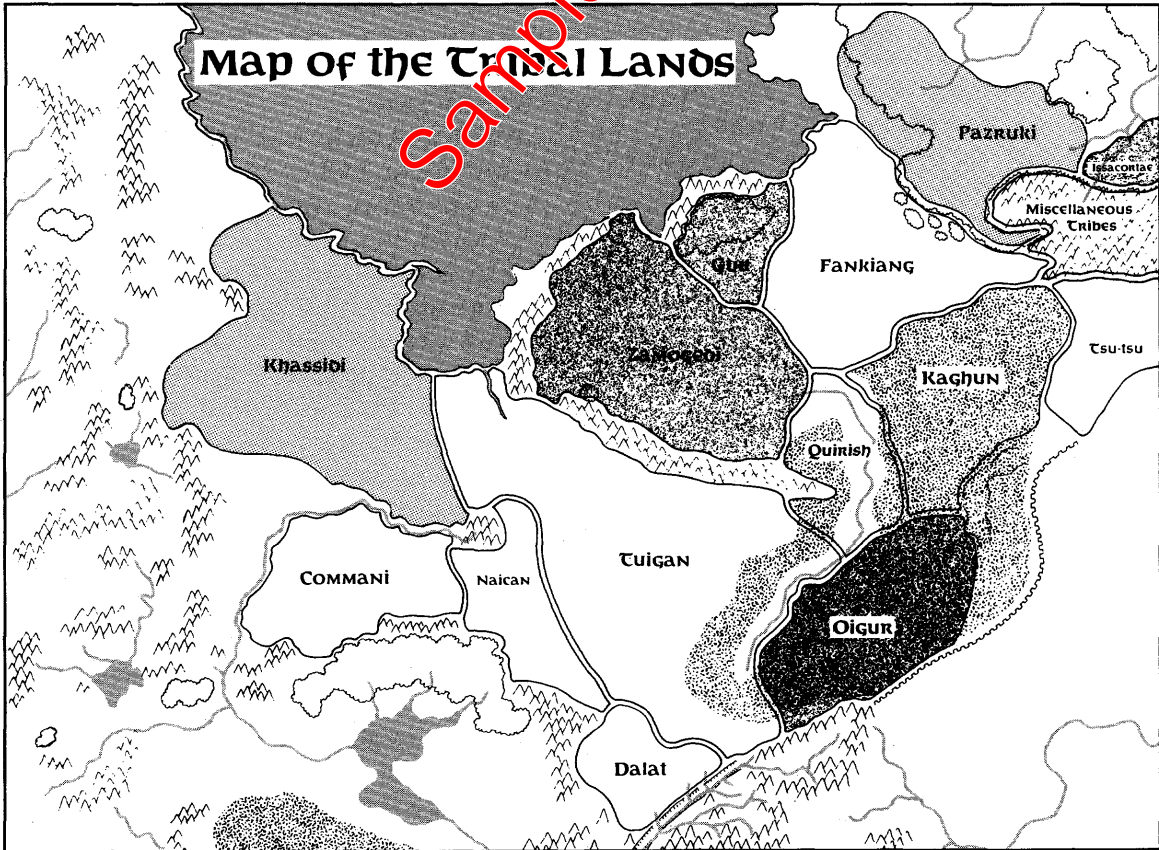
It is unlikely that Yamun created the organi-

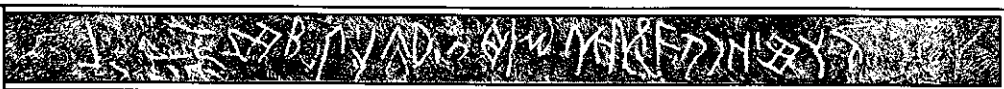
zation of his troops himself. The Lady Bay alun, Yamun's mother, had studied the philosophical writings of

Shou Lung and Khazari, and she was powerful in Yamun's councils. She probably learned the Shou system and explained it to the khahan.

The basic unit of Yamun Khahan's army was the warrior. Each warrior was assigned to an *arban*, a group of ten men. The arban chose a sergeant to command them. If one man committed a crime, all suffered. If one man was a hero, all benefited. Deserting a comrade was punished by death.

Ten arbans made a *jagun*, 100 men. The jagun acted as a single group, the sergeants choosing a commander for their jagun, the commanders were almost always noyan. Com-





monly, all men in an arban were members of the same obogh, although an obogh's warriors were often allo-

located to more than one jagun.

Ten jaguns formed a *minghan*, 1,000 men. Minghans were commanded by a khan (or at least a noyan), the warriors usually of the same ordu.

Ten minghans were a *tumen*, 10,000 men. This was the largest unit in the Khahan's army. Commanders of the *tumen* were appointed by Yamun Khahan himself, serving under army commanders. *Tumens* usually held men from a single tribe, although several *ordus* might be represented. Army commanders were Yamun's sons, *andas* (blood-friends), and trusted generals. An army commander had two to six *tumens* (20-60,000 men) under his command.

These troop strengths were of course ideal. At the beginning of the Horde War, Yamun Khahan's army numbered over 30 *tumens*, half of which were led by Yamun Khahan himself, and all fully staffed. As the war progressed and casualties increased, it became increasingly difficult to merge depleted *tumens* without encountering inter-tribal or inter-ordu conflicts. There were 17 *tumens* at the invasion of Rashemen, but the army was only about 100,000 strong.

Yamun himself was in command of the army commanders, and in addition led his own *tumen*: the *Kashik*. This special bodyguard was divided among day guards (*turgut*) and night guards (*kebtut*). They were easily identified by their black *kalats*, a uniform no others wore. Many of the *Kashik* were members of the Hoekun ordu; others were warriors whose courage or devotion caught Yamun's attention.

Discipline in Yamun's army was very different from the tribal rule which it replaced. Yamun Khahan was the ultimate appeal: only

he could sentence a man to death. But Yamun, cruel as any other Tuigan, routinely held for the commander making the fatal request.

Much of the Khahan's discipline was meant to transform the nomads from bands of raiders into a world conquering army. To stop inter-tribal warfare, Yamun outlawed plunder and raids, punishing violators with death. Minor infractions, failing to attend the Khahan, were punished with wooden rod beatings; more severe infractions (sleeping on guard) were punished with maiming or death.

Arms and Armor

Typical nomad warriors were well equipped for warfare on the steppe, but the type of armor he wore depended upon his resources. The common warrior wore a leather or horsehide *kalat*, a long coat. *Kalats*, heavily padded, usually extended down below the knees. A fur cap with long ear flaps served as a helm. A few carried light wicker round shields, mounted at the saddle side or across the warrior's back. Most rejected the shield; it interfered with the bow.

Wealthy warriors acquired armor made in neighboring civilized lands. Scale mail was most common, and chain mail tunics were not unknown. Some khans had banded mail made of plates tightly overlapping and riveted to a leather undercoat. This was not universal. Yamun himself had a steel gorget and bracers tooled with tigers and dragons.

Most nomads who could afford it wore conical bronze helms or fur trimmed skullcaps supporting narrow bronze or iron plates. These occasionally trailed tassels of chain mail to protect the neck. These helms were characteristic of the steppe, where warriors often cut at enemies' necks as they rode by.

Although the steppe warriors did not generally make their own armor, there were exceptions. The warriors of the Oigur tribe constructed loose fitting scale mail by stitching large bronze plates outside their *kalats*. The Pazruki of the Ama basin cured elk hides into