**Document A (modified excerpt)**

**A Letter from Chinggis Khan**

*Document A comes from a letter that Chinggis Khan sent to an elderly Chinese Daoist (a Chinese religion) master named Changchun in 1219, requesting a personal meeting with the teacher. Changchun made the difficult journey to the camp of Chinggis Khan, at that time located in Afghanistan, where he stayed with the Mongol ruler for almost a year, before returning to China.*

Heaven has abandoned China because of its **haughtiness** and extravagant luxury. But I, living in the northern wilderness, have no **inordinate** passions. I hate luxury and exercise moderation. I have only one coat and one food. I eat the same food and am dressed in the same tatters as my humble herdsmen. I consider the people my children, and take an interest in talented men as if they were my brothers…At military exercises I am always in the front, and in time of battle am never behind. In the space of seven years I have succeeded in accomplishing a great work, and uniting the whole world into one empire. I have not myself distinguished qualities. But the government of the [Chinese] is **inconstant**, and therefore Heaven assists me to obtain the throne...All together have acknowledged my supremacy. It seems to me that since the remote time…such an empire has not been seen…Since the time I came to the throne I have always taken to heart the ruling of my people; but I could not find worthy men to occupy [high offices]…With respect to these circumstances I inquired, and heard that you, master, has understood the truth…

…I have fasted and washed. I have ordered my **adjutant**…to prepare an escort and a cart for you. Do not be afraid of the thousand **li**…Do not think of the extent of the sandy desert…have pity upon me, and communicate to me the means of preserving life. I shall serve you myself. I hope that at least you will leave me a **trifle** of your wisdom. Say only one word to me and I will be happy.

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| **Word Bank**  haughtiness – pride  inordinate – excessive  inconstant – unfaithful  adjutant - assistant  li – a great distance  trifle – small amount |

**Source:** E. Bretschneider, *Mediaeval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources* Vol. 1. London: 1875, 37-39.

**Retrieved from:** Strayer, Robert W. *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources*. N.p.: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012. Print.