THE INSTITUTE FOR MONGOL STUDIES
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MONGOLIA

ACTA MONGOLICA

Volume 20 (540)

Edited
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ULAANBAATAR
2022

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Introduction

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Cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears, even if the thread of their discourse is secret, their rules are absurd, their perspectives deceitful, and everything conceals something else.[1]

Calvino's imaginary dialogue between Marco Polo (1254-1324) and Qubilai Qa'an (r. 1260-1294) well represents the various qualities of Qaraqorum's history of rise and decline, from the desire and hope of universality of the 13th century Mongol emperors, to the fear and despair brought about by intra-Mongol rivalries and the end of the empire in the 14th century.

Several works of scholarship have analyzed the imperial Mongols' varying attitudes towards the urbanization of the steppe, as well as their impact on the development of urban centers and settlements, alongside the expansion of the empire into sedentary territories.[2] On the one hand, the medieval Mongols capitalized on pre-existing urban centers, trade-hubs, and capitals as part of their claim for imperial legitimacy. On the other, their lifestyle brought new meanings and expressions of urbanization across Eurasia, from "felt-cities" to mobile camps, Islamic mausoleums, and multiple capitals.[3]

John W. Dardess among others has shown how the establishment of urban centers often served as an inflection point between the pastoral nomadic lifestyle of the imperial elite and the need to administer their sedentary subjects.[4] Further, the medieval Mongols' strong impact on the exchanges along the Silk Roads, both in terms of scale and in terms of institutionalization, led to the creation of new "emporia" and the reshaping and expansion of new trade-hubs. This resulted in important changes in the urban nodes and in the commercial routes connecting western and eastern

[1] Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, translated from the Italian by William Weaver (San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974), 44.

[2] Isabelle Charleux phrases it in terms of "ambiguous relation with cities, based on both need and antipathy" (p. 175) in: I. Charleux, "The Khan's City. Kökeqota and the Role of a Capital City in Mongolian State Formation", in D. Sneath (ed.) *Imperial Statecrafts. Political Forms and Techniques of Governance in Inner Asia, Sixth-Twentieth Centuries*, (Bellingham, WI,2006), 175- 207. The concept is addressed also by M. Biran, "Rulers and City Life in Mongol Central Asia (1220-1370)", in: D. Durand-Guédy (ed.), *Turko-Mongol Rulers, Cities and City Life*, Brill's Inner Asian Library 63 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013), 257-284.

[3] See on this the various contributions in: D. Durand-Guédy (ed.), *Turko-Mongol Rulers, Cities and City Life.*

[4] J. W. Dardess, "From Mongol Empire to Yüan Dynasty." Monumenta Serica 30 (1972–1973), 117–65.

Eurasia.[5] The shift from trade-oases to emporia and commercial hubs, that had been going on for centuries, reached its peak under the agency of the Mongol Empire: thus, it constitutes a fundamental aspect of 13th-and 14th century Medieval Eurasia.[6]

Another, not less important motive for the development of urban centers - and especially capitals - under the Mongols was the display of charisma and the claim to imperial legitimacy, be it in terms of political legacy, such as in the case of the Yuan capital, or in terms of religion and spiritual geography.[7]

Qaraqorum is an exceptional example among the capitals of the medieval Mongols, as its foundation combines all of these economic, administrative, and ideological motivations. In their desire to create a center to showcase their imperial mandate and the universality of their empire, the first Mongol emperors looked back at Inner Asian precedents. Thus, they choose as their political center the Orkhon valley, home to many Inner Asian empires before theirs.[8] Yet, Qaraqorum arose also from the desire to build something different, a place of many cultures and many flavors, as attested by the famous fountain described by Flemish Franciscan missioner William of Rubruck (fl. 1248–1255).[9] The role of the capital as a symbol of power even outside the Mongolian cultural context is easily traceable in the Chinese sources, as for example the section on imperial geography (*dili zhi* 地理志) of the *Yuanshi* 元史 (*History of the Yuan Dynasty*, 1370), which mentions the city as the first place around which the geography of the empire was organized, and as the literal point of origin of the Yuan dynasty.[10]

Yet, while symbolizing a strong connection with their territory of origin, the destiny of Qaraqorum also symbolizes the difficulties that the medieval Mongols encountered in administering the various regions of their growing empire and keeping

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[5] For a classic example see: N. Di Cosmo, "Black Sea Emporia and the Mongol Empire: A Reassessment of the Pax Mongolica", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* Vol. 53, No. 1/2 (2010), 83-108.

[6] This became such a notable feature of Mongol Eurasia, that Prazniak's recent work even takes cities and their development as a symbol of the cosmopolitism and cultural interconnectivity of medieval Eurasia under the Mongols. See: R. Prazniak, *Sudden Appearances: The Mongol Turn in Commerce, Belief, and Art* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2019).

[7] A classical study on spiritual geography among the medieval Mongos is T. T. Allsen, "Spiritual Geography and Political Legitimacy in the Eastern Steppe", in: H. Claessen and J. Oosten (eds.), *Ideology and the Formation of Early States* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 116–135. On the Yuan capital see: N. S. Steinhardt, "The Plan of Khubilai Khan's Imperial City", *Artibus Asiae*, 44, issue 2-3 (1983), 137-58.

[8] Allsen for example has shown that the Mongols derived their legitimacy and their sense of belonging from the connection to the two places Burqan Qaldun and Qaraqorum. T. T. Allsen, "Spiritual Geography", p. 118-121 (for Burqan Qaldun) and 121f (for Qaraqorum).

[9] See the translation of Rubruck's account in: Ch. Dawson, *The Mission to Asia : Narratives and letters of the Franciscan missionaries in Mongolia and China in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries*, edited by Christopher Dawson, translated by a nun of Stanbrook Abbey, (London : Sheed and Ward, 1995), 175-176.

[10] Song Lian 宋濂, *Yuanshi* 元史 (repr. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), j*uan* 58: 1382-3, translated in: F. W. Cleaves, "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1346." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* Vol. 15, 1/2 (June 1952), p. 25.

up with their project of universal expansion, all while tormented by internal disputes and rivalries within the imperial lineage.

Still, after slightly more than 800 years since its foundation, Qaraqorum remains a starting point to understand the significance of the Mongol empire for the history of the medieval and early modern worlds. The papers gathered in this volume address this idea by combining insights and perspectives from various disciplines and sources, from archaeology in the paper of Anne Sklebitz, to material culture in the paper of Yuka Kadoi, to history in the paper of Morris Rossabi and that by Francesca Fiaschetti, to literature and ethnography in the paper by Gerelt Honichud. As the volume shows, there are still many sources that need to be studied to fully comprehend the history and development of the capital of the Mongol empire.[11]

Sklebitz's study on ceramics found in the Chinese artisan quarter in Qaraqorum shows the strategic importance of the city, at the crossroads of trade and communication routes connecting 13th century Mongolia on the one hand to China, which provided not only grain but also trade goods for both the nobility and local consumption, and on the other hand to Baghdad.

Kadoi's paper analyses the visual evidence for the introduction of Buddhism and Buddhist motifs in Mongol Iran, showing the role of religion in shaping a universalizing, multicultural court culture across Eurasia. Religious encounters and religious architecture (from Buddhist pagodas to the Erdeni Zuu monastery) strongly contributed to the idealization of Qaraqorum as a symbolic place for the imperial Mongols. The symbolic power of the city is further addressed in the paper by Rossabi, who reviews the development of the capital, from the imprint of the nomadic Uyghur style to the adoption of Chinese administration up until the Ming (1368-1644). The political legacy of Qaraqorum between the mid-Yuan and the early Ming periods is further taken up in the paper by the author of this introduction. The paper shows how shaping a linkage with Mongolia, in terms of symbolic geography as well as words of power, remained a fundamental priority of the emperors ruling over East Asia well beyond the 14th century and the end of the Yuan dynasty.

Honichud explores the travels of West and East Asian explorers crossing Mongolia under Qing rule (1644-1911) to discuss the legacy of Qaraqorum in the late modern period. By looking at the travelogues left behind by these explorers, and at the motives behind their expeditions, Honichud reconstructs the powerful role of Qaraqorum as a symbolic place for the representation of the identity of modern Mongolia.

[11] As a main reference on the archaeology and history of Qaraqorum see: Ulambayaryn Erdenebat, *Mongolyn ėrtniĭ niĭslėl Kharkhorum* Монголын эртний нийслэл Хархорум [*Qaraqorum - Ancient Capital of Mongolia*], (Ulaanbaatar: Mongol Ulsyn Ikh Surguul', Mongol Sudlalyn Khurėėlėn, Монгол Улсын Их Сургууль, Монгол Судлалын Хүрээлэн, 2018). A more recent overview is provided in: J. Bemmann, S. Linzen, S. Reichert, L. Munkhbayar, „Mapping Karakorum, the capital of the Mongol Empire", *Antiquity*, vol. 96 (2022), 159-178.

The papers collected in this volume originate from a conference organized in celebration of the 800-years history of Qaraqorum, and which had been planned for Vienna in 2020. The original impulse for the conference came from Yuka Kadoi and Morris Rossabi, to whom I am thankful for involving me in this project. Due to worldwide travel restrictions, the conference could not take place in 2020, yet I am thankful to the authors of the papers for contributing, with these pages, a virtual point of gathering and discussion, when a physical one was unachievable. Further, the editors of the volume have agreed to include additional articles to the conference papers in order to broaden the thematic and chronological focus of the issue.

The editors and authors of this volume are thankful to the Institute for Austrian Historical Research and to the Institute of History at the University of Vienna, which not only sponsored the volume, as well as the planned conference, but also patiently supported the project in many ways up to its completion.

Qaraqorum in Yuan Times

Morris Rossabi
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Abstract: The Mongols' establishment of a capital in the thirteenth century indicated their desire not only to plunder but to rule the domains they had conquered. The placement of the capital in Qaraqorum, in their own native land, appears to have been optimal, and merchants and craftsmen flocked to the city to ply their wares. As Qaraqorum flourished and the population increased, a major flaw became apparent: its hinterland could not fulfill its needs, and in 1267, Qubilai Khan moved the capital to Dadu, which had nearby supplies. Yet Qaraqorum was not abandoned, as it signified the Mongols' attachment to their own land. In the early fourteenth century, the Yuan dynasty court sought to protect and incorporate it as part of the provincial system. However, the city was unable to govern and tax mobile herders and thus to secure the essential revenue for its needs. It faced considerable difficulties, and the Yuan dynasty itself declined due to internecine struggle, natural disasters, and corruption among Mongol princes. Rebellions erupted, and the founders of the Ming dynasty forced the Yuan court to withdraw from China and to retreat to Qaraqorum. Conflicts between the Ming and the so-called Northern Yuan court finally resulted in the destruction of Qaraqorum in 1388. Yet it retained its appeal and aura for the Mongols and led them to establish their first Buddhist monastery around the site in the sixteenth century.

Keywords: Mongolia, Mongol Empire, Yuan, local administration, intra-mongol warfare

Mongolia, with its lush vegetation and pristine environment, offered a sustainable location for the Mongols, although winter snows and summer droughts, on occasion, threatened them and their animals. Nonetheless, they returned to their homeland both after trade with peoples in China and after wars with the Xia (or Tangut) or Jin (or Jürchen) dynasties. Changes in their lifestyles started with their campaigns against the Khwarazmian shah in Central Asia. Seeking direct rule over territory and people that had put up stiff resistance, Chinggis Qan left behind an occupying force in the region as he returned eastward.[1] His son and successor Ögödei (r. 1229-1241) eventually stationed troops in Russia and in other distant lands, but he and his successor Möngke (r. 1251-1259), who also became a *qa'an*, spent most of their lives in Mongolia and maintained their courts in the steppes. Mongolia remained the center until Qubilai Qa'an's (r. 1260-1294) reign.

[1] On these campaigns, see J. Boyle, *Genghis Khan: The History of the World Conqueror by Ata Malik Juvaini* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), pp. 81-132.

However, the construction of a capital signaled a change in Mongol policies. Nomadic pastoralism did not require a central location for a government. As the empire expanded, however, perhaps Chinggis Qan (1162?-1227) and certainly Ögödei recognized that rule, rather than plunder, required an administrative center. Moreover, the establishment of a capital would contribute to greater Mongol legitimacy as rulers. Yet Mongolia itself did not become centralized, as it remained the migrating pastoralists' domain. Difficulties in transport and bitter winters precluded control over the vast majority of herders who roamed over considerable distances to find grass and water for their animals.

Ögödei had decided to construct his capital in Mongolia near the Orkhon river and started to build a palace, after which he built city walls around what would become Qaraqorum in 1235.[2] The founding of a capital city signaled a transformation to a somewhat more sedentary society.[3] Earlier pastoral nomadic societies had established capitals in the steppes, but none had conquered the sizable territory that the Mongols now sought to rule from one center. The Uyghurs had founded a capital city as early as the eighth century, and its capital was only about twenty-five kilometers from Qaraqorum. One scholar has suggested that the siting of the Mongol capital was based on Uyghur influence.[4] Even before the construction of Qaraqorum, the Mongols had gathered Chinese artisans and farmers to establish a new settlement in Western Mongolia. Because the Nestorian Christian Chinqai (ca. 1169-1252) was the principal commander who supported this site, it became known as Chinqai Balgasun ("Granary of Chinqai" or "City of Chinqai").[5] The Mongol rulers also moved weavers they had captured in their conquest of Samarkand in 1221 to a new settlement in Xinmalin near present-day Kalgan in Inner Mongolia.[6]

The most prominent buildings in Qaraqorum would have been the Wanangong, Ögödei's palace, which was surrounded by walls and was isolated from the rest of the town, and a Buddhist temple, but the latter was not completed until 1256. The construction of walls around a city was characteristic of Chinese cities, an indication of the Chinese influence in the building of Qaraqorum. The inhabitants also built a north-south stone paved road that facilitated transport and communication, as well as trade. The authorities, on several major occasions, raised and repaired the road

[2] Song Lian, et al. *Yuanshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), 34. For more on the Chinese version of events, see W. Abramowski, "Die chinesischen Annalen von Ögödei und Güyük – Übersetzung des 2. Kapitels des Yüan shih." *Zentralasiatische Studien* 10 (1976), 117-67.

[3] On an earlier work on Qaraqorum, see P. Pelliot, "Note sur Karakorum." *Journal asiatique* 206 (1925), 372-5.

[4] Th. Allsen, "Spiritual Geography and Political Legitimacy in the Eastern Steppe." in *Ideology and Formation of Early States*, eds. H. Claessen and J. Oosten. (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 126-8.

[5] P. Buell, "Cinqai." in *In the Service of the Qan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol Yuan Period (1200-1300)*, ed. I. de Rachewiltz et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), p. 100.

[6] P. Pelliot, "Une ville musulmane dans la Chine du Nord sous les Mongols." *Journal asiatique* 211 (1927), 261-79.

to improve drainage and remove mud, as the road was battered with sand and other impediments in the difficult Mongolian winters. These efforts revealed their view of the importance of the road.[7] However, as Mongol rule declined in the early to mid-fourteenth century, the repairs and renovations were not well done, which naturally fit in with the decline of the town.

Craftsmen and craft quarters lined both sides of the road. The objects found in the recent German Mongolian archeological expeditions attest to the production of numerous kinds of craft articles. Pottery, glassware, and gems and precious stones have been found, and artisans also fashioned gold and silver bracelets and necklaces. One of the golden bracelets displayed a phoenix, a quintessential Chinese motif, still another indication of the presence and prominence of Chinese craftsmen. A flourishing bronze industry produced bronze seals and other objects.[8]

The court moved craftsmen and construction workers from various parts of its domains to construct the capital and to set up craft shops. Thousands of Chinese, Central Asians, and Persians collaborated on the structures, with the result that Qaraqorum became a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic religious center. A Muslim bazaar, a mosque, and a Chinese artisan area also attest to the city's cosmopolitanism.

The variety of peoples in the town is readily confirmed in numerous writings, but the sources on religion are limited. Yet the available data indicate the presence of diverse groups. Buddhism certainly played a significant role in Mongolia following its contacts with China, and it is no accident that a Buddhist temple in Qaraqorum was one of the most significant buildings in the town. Support for Buddhism persisted well into the fourteenth century. In 1311, the five-storied pagoda was repaired, and in 1342, the Yuan dynasty emperor ordered a further restoration of the pagoda.[9] Archeologists had originally believed that the remains were of Ögödei's palace, but recent excavations have confirmed that the building was a Buddhist temple. Stupas and the configuration of the temple as a mandala, as well as the numerous depictions of Guanyin or Avalokiteshvara, attest to the building's identity as a Buddhist site.[10] The

[7] E. Pohl, "Interpretation without Excavation – Topographic Mapping on the Territory of the First Mongolian Capital at Karakorum." in *Current Archaeological Research in Mongolia*, eds. J. Bemmann et al. (Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, 2009), 505-33. pp. 505-506.

[8] Some of these objects are provided with full color illustrations in W. Fitzhugh et al. *Genghis Khan and the Mongol Empire* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), pp. 137-45. See also S. Reichert, "Imperial Policies toward Handicraft: The Organization of Production in the old Mongolian Capital Karakorum." in *Craft Production Systems in a Cross-Cultural Perspective*, eds M. Benz and T. Helms (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt GmbH, 2018), pp. 185-208. For the latest work on the excavations of Karakorum, see J. Bemmann and S. Reichert, "Karakorum, the First Capital of the Mongol World Empire: An Imperial City in a Non-urban Society." *Asian Archeology* (can be accessed as *Asian Archaeology* (2020) https://doi.org/10.1007/s41826-020-00039-x).

[9] F. Cleaves, "The Sino-Mongol Inscription of 1346." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 15 (1952), pp. 30-2.

[10] S. V. Kiselev, the prominent Soviet archeologist, had excavated Qaraqorum in 1948-1949 and had assumed that the building was Ögödei's palace, but the discoveries of the German Mongolian Arche-

discovery of Buddhist statues in sections of the site provides additional confirmation of the religion's significance. An Islamic cemetery yields even greater evidence of religion in Mongolia. In addition, several ceramics were adorned with attempts to use Arabic script, still another indication that foreigners of Muslim extraction had reached Mongolia. Evidence of Nestorian Christianity is limited to written sources, including the travel account of William of Rubruck,[11] but several prominent women among the Mongol elite, as well as some men, were Nestorians, an indication that this religion was found in Qaraqorum.[12] Written sources also confirm that the native practices, whether we call them shamanism or use another term, persisted. Festivals associated with the New Year, the commemoration of Tengri, the sky god, and of the ancestors, as well as the scattering of mare's milk at the outset of a military campaign remained significant.[13]

Although Ögödei had signaled his intention to govern by setting up a capital city in Qaraqorum, the site was too far from the center of the Mongols' newly subjugated domains, which by 1234 included North China and by the end of his reign had expanded to much of Russia. Moreover, it required vast expenditures of resources to supply the city because it was not in an economically viable area for a growing population. Although the government encouraged agriculture by providing tools for farmers, the weather, the short growing season, and the limited arable land precluded efforts to sustain a large population. In a 1260 memorial to Qubilai Qa'an, his Confucian adviser Hao Jing wrote that "the central government ought to be based in North China because that is the true heartland, but a subsidiary administration should be retained in Qaraqorum, and military districts should be established on the border."[14]

The conventional view concerning Qaraqorum after the transfer of the Mongol capital starting in the late 1260s is that the city declined. The struggles between Qubilai and his younger brother Ariq Böke and the later attacks by his cousin Qaidu led to occupations of Qaraqorum, and the destruction wrought on the steppes and in Qaraqorum allegedly harmed the Mongol population and caused damage to the old capital.

ological Expedition in the early twenty-first century challenged his identification. See H.-G. Hüttel, "Royal Palace or Buddhist Temple? On Search for the Karakorum Palace." in *Current Archaeological Research in Mongolia*, eds. J. Bemmann et al. (Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, 2009), p. 542.

[11] See P. Jackson ed., *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1990) pp. 150-2, 212-6. William adopted a condescending attitude toward the Nestorians.

[12] On Nestorianism and on Mongol women, see M. Rossabi, "Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family." in *Sino-Mongolica: Festschrift für Herbert Franke*, ed. W. Bauer (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1979), 153-180. and two recent studies of Mongol women in the Mongols' Middle Eastern domains: A. Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) and B. de Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran: The Khatuns, 1206-1335* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017).

[13] Jackson, *The Mission*, p. 242.

[14] M. Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 70; D. Schlegel, *Hao Ching (1222-1275): Ein chinesischer Berater des Kaisers Kublai Khan* (Bamberg: Offsetdruckerei Kurt Urlaub, 1968) for a biography of this prominent adviser.

Yet recent archeological excavations in Qaraqorum seem to belie this image of the capital. Archeologists have confirmed that Qaraqorum was still a town of some importance until its destruction by Ming dynasty forces in the 1380s. The European traveler William of Rubruck (fl. 1248 – 1255) did not find the city remarkable and wrote that "discounting the Chan's palace, it is not as fine as the town of St. Denis [currently, a suburb of Paris], and the monastery of St. Denis is worth ten of the palace."[15] However, the imposing religious buildings, bazaars, and artisan quarters attest to a lively commercial and artistic life. The various times the city was occupied seem not to have overwhelmed it or to have ended its role as a center for the Yuan dynasty, as evidenced by wall paintings, porcelains, and metal vessels. One possible reason for its survival was the scale of warfare during this time. The actual engagements consisted of relatively few troops because the steppes and Qaraqorum itself could not support a substantial force. Battles were likely small-scale events, which basically explains the limited damage to Qaraqorum. The Chinese sources tended to exaggerate the numbers of those captured and killed, so it is important to discount those statistics.

The 1260 to 1264 struggle between Qubilai and Ariq Böke to be the *qa'an* showed the weakness of relying almost exclusively on Mongolia and Qaraqorum. Ariq Böke's troops were based in the steppe lands, and if he had emerged victorious, the center of power would have remained in Mongolia. Rashīd al-Dīn revealed Ariq Böke's weakness in noting that five hundred carts daily reached Qaraqorum with provisions for its inhabitants.[16] If Ariq Böke had any hopes for success, he would have to safeguard these supply lines. Yet Qubilai had substantial advantages because of the availability of resources from the sedentary civilization of China. Thus, he prevented the delivery of grain in order to put Ariq Böke on the defensive and denied him access to critical and nearby regions, which could supply provisions. As a result, Ariq Böke's troops suffered from a famine in 1263, and Qubilai actually laid siege to Qaraqorum. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, Qubilai "intended to go in pursuit of Ariq Böke, but messengers arrived and reported that because of his absence, madness and confusion had appeared in the land of Khitai."[17] Nonetheless, Ariq Böke was forced to surrender in 1264.[18] Qaraqorum could no longer be the center of the empire. Three years later, the capital was moved from Qaraqorum to Dadu in China.

Qubilai then sought to stabilize Qaraqorum and the areas around it to bring these regions under central government control. He set up a Pacification Commission and a General Regional Command (*xuanwei shisi du yuanshuai fu* 宣慰使司都元帥府), with two Commissioners, two Registrars, two Chief Clerks, and a Recorder and

[15] Jackson, *The Mission*, p. 221.

[16] J. Boyle, *The Successors of Genghis Khan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 62.

[17] J. Boyle, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, p. 258.

[18] On Arigh Böke's supply problems, see J. Dardess, "From Mongol Empire to Yüan Dynasty: Changing Forms of Imperial Rule in Mongolia and Central Asia." *Monumenta Serica* 30 (1972-73), 117-165.

Concurrent Files Supervisor, to promote the local economy.[19] He was eager to have Qaraqorum supply itself and established local agricultural colonies in the region and furnished them with tools and draught animals. Yet these efforts proved insufficient. The Yuan court still needed to allocate funds for the purchase of grain or to order shipments from North China. Corrupt officials hindered Qubilai's efforts by pocketing the funds to be used to supply Qaraqorum. In 1301, granary officials at Qaraqorum were indicted for the illegal embezzlement of grain. In 1303, a government transport contractor was found guilty by the Court for having stolen 250,000 piculs of grain and 130,000 ingots of cash in the course of supplying grain for the Qaraqorum garrison.[20]

Qubilai would eventually face forays by Qaidu from Central Asia into Mongolia and Qaraqorum, but he was determined to preserve control over Qaraqorum and Mongolia for symbolic reasons.[21] Qaidu, a descendant of the line of Ögödei, Qubilai's uncle, had been disenchanted with the rise of the Toluid branch of the Chinggisids, and from a base in Central Asia, challenged the Yuan dynasty, which had just been established in 1271. Moreover, he had supported Ariq Böke during his struggle with Qubilai, undermining relations with the first Yuan emperor. Seeking an advantage over Qaidu, Qubilai attempted to create a buffer zone by gaining control over the Tarim river basin, and, at the same time, to establish a blockade by preventing Qaidu from accessing food from that region. He even dispatched his son Nomuqan to set up garrisons and agricultural colonies (*tuntian* 屯田*)* in the Tarim region, but this assignment proved difficult.[22] In addition, a few years later, Nomuqan's top commanders detained Nomuqan and sent him to the Golden Horde in Russia.[23] He was eventually released, but Qubilai was compelled to abandon his control over Kashgar, Khotan, and other towns in what is now southern Xinjiang. Without a buffer zone, Qaraqorum was vulnerable.

As Qaidu solidified his control over Central Asia and the Tarim basin, he became a greater threat to Qaraqorum. Qubilai was aware that anyone who aspired to be the Great Khan needed to govern the traditional homeland, although it was not a key economic or administrative center. The legitimacy of Qubilai's position as great khan depended on his governance over Mongolia. Thus, in 1289, when Qaidu initially occupied Qaraqorum, Qubilai quickly headed to Qaraqorum to oust Qaidu, and his large force prompted Qaidu to withdraw. Nonetheless, Qaidu and his forces continued

[19] *Yuanshi,* p. 2309; D. Farquhar, *The Government of China under Mongol Rule: A Reference Guide* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990), p. 412.

[20] Dardess, "From Mongol Empire", p. 156.

[21] On Qaidu, see M. Biran, *Qaidu and the Rise of the Independent Mongol State in Central Asia* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1997).

[22] *Yuanshi*, p. 265; Tu Ji, *Mengwuer shiji* 76, 8b

[23] I. de Rachewiltz, "Muqali, Bōl, Tas, and An-t'ung." *Papers on Far Eastern History* 15 (March, 1977), 57; J. Boyle, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, p. 161, 266; Yanai Wataru, *Mōkoshi Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Publishing house, 1930) pp. 515-6. For an account of these efforts, see Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, pp. 107-10.

to raid Qaraqorum, and in 1299, Ulus Buqa, one of his commanders, actually reached the city and did considerable damage to its food supply and markets.[24] He too withdrew, but in 1301, Qaidu set forth on another campaign that proved to be inconclusive, and once again he was unable to gain control over Qaraqorum. His death in 1301 ended Central Asian threats to Yuan domination over Mongolia.[25]

The Yuan emperors recognized that such combat had harmed the city and sought to promote the recovery of Qaraqorum. In 1307, the Yuan court devised a new administrative structure for the inhabitants of Mongolia. It is difficult to judge the effectiveness of this structure to rule the steppes. Nomadic pastoralists were scattered throughout the vast domains of Mongolia. If the Qing dynasty and the Mongolian People's Republic, with better transport and communications and a larger military force, could not enforce their will on the herders, it seems unlikely that the few small towns and surrounding regions and the almost endless grasslands would have abided by the Yuan policies described. Nonetheless, in 1307, the Yuan court established a province known as Lingbei and abolished the Pacification Commission and the General Regional Military Command by which it had earlier ruled Mongolia. The new structure meant that Mongolia would be a regular part of China and not a military outpost or colony. The court set up a Branch Secretariat in Lingbei (*lingbei xing zhongshu sheng* 嶺北行中書省) in that year, and two years later it changed its name to Branch Secretariat for Qaraqorum and Other Places (*helin xing shangshu sheng* 和林行尚書省*)*, based in Qaraqorum.[26] However, this structure differed from other areas in China in that it did not create lesser administrative units, thus leaving considerable power and authority in the hands of the Mongol princes[27]. Within a few years, it also established a Recorder's Office for the registration of births and deaths, a Judicial Proceedings Office, an Administrator of the Archives, and a Superintendency of Confucian Schools, all in Qaraqorum.[28] The Superintendency of Confucian Schools not only supervised the schools but also ensured the performance of rituals. The government apparently hoped to foster Confucianism among Qaraqorum's inhabitants, but this effort would not be successful. Part of the reason for the proliferation of these agencies was control, but, in addition, the population of Qaraqorum had increased, placing additional strains on supplies and provisions for the town.

These offices were not effective, partly because Mongol princes often were the key powers in the region, and the Yuan officials were unable to control them. In

[24] J. Boyle, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, p. 327.

[25] These events are dealt with in Biran, *Qaidu.*

[26] *Yuanshi,* p. 1383; Farquhar, *The Government of China*, pp. 396-8.

[27] See Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, "Mid-Yuan Politics." in *Cambridge History of China: Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368*, eds. D. Twitchett and H. Franke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 491, on the frequent negative roles of the Mongol princes in the fourteenth century.

[28] *Yuanshi*, 2305, 2312; Farquhar, *The Government of China*, p. 397.

addition, the new administration required taxes, but it proved difficult to collect these from herders who roamed around a vast domain. The herders particularly resented the government's demand that they maintain postal stations, a vital institution in the Mongol empire. Postal stations facilitated communications and the transmission of intelligence information for the Mongols, but supplying and maintaining them with food, accommodations, and animals for messengers fell heavily on the herders.[29]

The damage Qaraqorum suffered during the struggles between Qubilai and Arigh Böke and Qubilai and Qaidu also undermined proper governance. A plague around 1313, which claimed more than three thousand deaths, and an earthquake in 1317 further contributed to instability in the city.[30] Similarly, within China itself, instability increased in the early fourteenth century. Assassinations of emperors and struggles between brothers to claim the throne also weakened the court and also had a destructive influence on Qaraqorum. Many of the conflicts arose between Sinicized Mongols from China and the upholders of the traditional Mongol lifestyle and values. Princes from the Chinggisid lineage, as well as others to whom the emperors had granted titles, also contributed to the difficulties.[31] They received payments from the government and continued to demand higher rewards. Corruption and bribery persisted, undercutting the government's prestige. Tax evasion resulted in revenue shortfalls, preventing the dynasty from maintaining dams and irrigation complexes, which resulted in floods. The most damaging development was a change in the course of the Yellow River, which flooded arable land, created a sizable homeless population, and interfered with grain deliveries from South to North China. The infectious and parasitic diseases that accompanied the floods created even greater misery. Rural poverty led to a disgruntled population, which, in turn, generated banditry and the development of millenarian movements and rebellions. Zhu Yuanzhang, one of the rebel leaders, emerged victorious and overthrew Mongol rule to establish the Ming dynasty in 1368.

The turbulence in China naturally had an impact on Qaraqorum. The local government weakened as a result of revenue shortfalls, the infrastructure was not well maintained, and the earlier craft industries and commercial enterprises faltered. Yet the Yuan imperial family fled to Mongolia and eventually to Qaraqorum. Toghon Temür (r. 1333 – 1368), the last Yuan emperor, reached Yingzhang in Inner Mongolia and died there in 1370. His son Ayushiridara succeeded him and moved the capital to Qaraqorum, where he was enthroned. The deposed Yuan emperors still laid claim to China and called themselves the Northern Yuan dynasty but had been weakened

[29] On the postal stations, see P. Olbricht, *Das Postwesen in China unter der Mongolenherrschaft im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1954).

[30] H.-G. Hüttel, "Im Palast des ewigen Friedens – Die mongolisch-deutschen Ausgrabungen." in *Expeditionen in vergessene Welten. 25 Jahre archäologische Forschungen in Afrika, Amerika, und Asien* (Aachen: Linden Soft, 2004), p. 186.

[31] Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, "Mid-Yuan Politics", pp. 490-560.

because of disunity. They could not rely on support from other Mongol domains. The Ilkhanate in Persia had collapsed, the Chaghadai Khanate in Central Asia had weakened and was soon to be ruled by Temür, or Tamerlane, and the Mongols in Russia were too far away to be of much assistance. Conflicts also bedeviled the inhabitants of Qaraqorum. The Mongols who had returned from China, perhaps consisting of 100,000 people, were at odds with those who had remained in Qaraqorum. This new group competed with the residents for local authority, the commercial base, pastureland, water, and herds. Nonetheless, Ayushiridara defeated a Ming dynasty army allegedly consisting of 150,000 men in 1372, as well as in several battles near Qaraqorum. Yet Ming forces seized Ayushiridara's son and consort, who were then delivered to Zhu Yuanzhang". Nonetheless, "Despite periodic Ming strikes, the capture of his son, the loss of China's vast resources, and the increasing autonomy of his generals, Ayurishiridara as the ruler of the Great Yuan *ulus* still posed the greatest single foreign threat to Zhu Yuanzhang…"[32]

When he sought assistance from Goryeo against the Ming, it appeared that he might have considerable leverage against the enemy dynasty in China. However, the king of Korea rejected such assistance, as did his successors and indeed there were some battles between the Koreans and the Mongols.[33] Meanwhile the Mongol commander Naghachu moved into the Liaodong peninsula in 1375, blocking Ming access to Korea. Ayushiridara averted a few minor Ming raids until his death in 1378, but, without allies, increasingly became less of a threat.[34]

Yet the Ming attacks generated shortages for the Northern Yuan because land, as well as a supply center in Qaraqorum, had been damaged. Ayushiridara's half-brother Tögüs Temür took power in 1378, but was in a much weaker position. Meanwhile, the Ming dynasty needed time to establish itself in China but was determined to preclude any threat from the Northern Yuan to restore control over China. It initiated raids from 1380 to 1382, but its most important campaign was launched against Mongol forces in Liaodong. In 1387, capitalizing upon a famine in Liaodong, a Ming army attacked the region and compelled Naghachu to submit. In 1388, another Ming army defeated Tögüs Temür, and he was captured and killed by a fellow Mongol and descendant of Arigh Böke. The Ming army then headed toward and destroyed the capital at Qaraqorum.[35]

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[32] D. Robinson, *Empire's Twilight: Northeast Asia under the Mongols* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 286.

[33] D. Clark, "Sino-Korean Tributary Relations under the Ming." in *Cambridge History of China: Volume 8: The Ming Dynasty, 1368-1644, Part 2*, eds. D. Twitchett and F. Mote (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 274-5.

[34] For greater detail about the so-called Northern Yuan, see M. Rossabi, "Mongolia in Yuan Times." in *Cambridge History of the Mongol Empire*, eds. M. Biran and Kim Hodong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming). L. Hambis, *Documents sur l'histoire des Mongols à l'époque des Ming* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969) translates the *Mingshi* sections on these events.

[35] See the Hambis translations for these developments.

Despite its destruction in 1388, the legacy of Qaraqorum was not extinguished. In the early sixteenth century, Batu Möngke, with the title of dayan qan, sought to reunify the Eastern Mongols and organized his forces into six *tümen*, three in the left wing and three in the right wing. He may have conceived of a restoration of Mongol control over China, and, on a number of occasions, threatened the Ming. He selected a site in the old capital of Qaraqorum as his main stronghold and no doubt bolstered his appeal by capitalizing on the Mongol legacy and history.[36] In 1586, Abtai Sayin Qan, the Tüsheet Qan, chose Qaraqorum as the site of the first Buddhist monastery, after the Altan Qan had selected a Tibetan Buddhist sect as the new religion among the Mongols.[37] Some stones from the destroyed Yuan dynasty buildings were used in the construction of parts of the Erdene Zuu monastery. The geographical location in Qaraqorum may have offered legitimacy for Buddhism in Mongolia. The archeological excavations, which were conducted by Mongolians, Russians, and Germans, in turn, boosted Mongol pride because they revealed a remarkable cultural efflorescence in thirteenth and fourteenth century Qaraqorum.[38]

The Mongols' establishment of a capital in the thirteenth century indicated their desire not only to plunder but to rule the domains they had conquered. The placement of the capital in Qaraqorum, in their own native land, appears to have been optimal, and merchants and craftsmen flocked to the city to ply their wares. As Qaraqorum flourished and the population increased, a major flaw became apparent: its hinterland could not fulfill its needs, and in 1267, Qubilai Qan moved the capital to Dadu, which had nearby supplies. Yet Qaraqorum was not abandoned, as it signified the Mongols' attachment to their own land. In the early fourteenth century, the Yuan dynasty court sought to protect and incorporate it as part of the provincial system. However, the city was unable to govern and tax mobile herders and thus to secure the essential revenue for its needs. It faced considerable difficulties, and the Yuan dynasty itself declined due to internecine struggle, natural disasters, and corruption among Mongol princes. Rebellions erupted, and the founders of the Ming dynasty forced the Yuan court to withdraw from China and to retreat to Qaraqorum. Conflicts between the Ming and the so-called Northern Yuan court finally resulted in the destruction of Qaraqorum in 1388. Yet it retained its appeal and aura for the Mongols and led them to establish their first Buddhist monastery around the site in the sixteenth century.

[36] On him, see Okada Hidehiro, "Life of Dayan Khan." *Acta Asiatica* 11 (1966), 46-55; Wada Sei, "A Study of Dayan Khan." *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 19 (1960), 1-42; and H. Serruys, *Genealogical Tables of the Descendants of Dayan-qan* ('s-Gravenhage: Mouton, 1958).

[37] For sources on Altan Khan, see M. Rossabi, "Altan Khan." in *Encyclopedia of Asian History*, ed. A. Embree (New York: Macmillan Company, 1987), Vol. I, p. 50. and H. Serruys, "Four Documents Relating to the Sino-Mongol Peace of 1570-1571." *Monumenta Serica* 19 (1960), 1-66.

[38] See S. V. Kiselev, *Drevne mongol'skie goroda* (Moskva: Nauka, 1965) and Bemmann, *op. cit.*

Glazed Ceramics from Qaraqorum – Archaeological Evidence on Routes to the Old-Mongolian Capital

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Abstract: The Old-Mongolian capital Qaraqorum is described in historical sources as a vivid, international, and multicultural city with constant exchange and contacts across cultures. This is particularly so in a description that the Franciscan friar William of Rubruck made while visiting Qaraqorum in the year 1254. Rubruck noted that Muslim traders, Chinese craftsmen, Buddhists, Nestorian Christians as well as several European captives all lived and worked in Qaraqorum. Despite this, the city is seldom included on maps depicting Eurasian and Inner Asian travel and trade networks of the 13th–14th century. Such networks have left archaeological traces at various city sites, through the presence of imported ceramics, food, and other goods. This article will focus on the glazed ceramics excavated in Qaraqorum. The author classified the material and determined the production sites of the different wares. A chorological study based on this data expands our knowledge of connections to Qaraqorum in the medieval Asian trade network. The results are presented in this article. As every aspect of archaeological research reflects parts of the overall picture only, this study is meant to enable further research on the subject. This article is dedicated to the symposium "800 years Qaraqorum" and thus included in a broader research framework on the fascinating Old-Mongolian capital.

Keywords: Chinese Ceramics, Song, Yuan, Ceramic Road, Qaraqorum

In researching routes and connections to Qaraqorum, one starting point is a search for what is known already. Then, additional research material can be analyzed and studied. In this study, the sources on Qaraqorum and its location in the Inner Asian/Eurasian network are briefly reviewed. Following this, the glazed ceramics from Qaraqorum are described and an analysis of the material is given which expands our knowledge of the routes to the Old-Mongolian capital.

Political Framework

According to the famous inscription from the year 1346, Qaraqorum was founded by Chinggis Qan (r. 1206–1227) in the year 1220.[1] As stated in this inscription, the reason for the foundation of the capital in the Orkhon valley was of a political nature.

[1] H.-G. Huettel and U. Erdenebat, *Karabalgasun und Karakorum. Zwei spätnomadische Stadtsiedlungen im Orchon-Tal* (Ulaanbaatar: Mongolyn Shinzhlėkh Ukhaany Akademi, 2009), 8.

Qaraqorum had traditionally served as a base for state formation.[2] Surely, its location was well-considered. In this connection Franke and Twitchett state that the Orkhon valley was "the core territory of all previous nomadic polities of the eastern steppe. According to pre-Mongolian Turkic traditions, good fortune (*qut*) and imperial power [were] strongly associated with possession of these holy mountains." [3] In terms of strategic considerations, the location of Qaraqorum in the Orkhon valley enabled military access to the Ordos Desert and China.[4] Bemman et al. emphasize that the city is "positioned like a keystone […] at the major migration line, allowing the permanent control of every kind of travel and migration activities."[5] Though the location of Qaraqorum seems to have been carefully considered concerning political control, there were recurring problems, for example with its supply of grain. Judging from archaeobotanical analyses most of the plants that were consumed in Qaraqorum were imported.[6] Historical sources reveal that multiple attempts to cultivate crops in the surroundings of the city were ultimately unsuccessful.[7] Consequently, Qaraqorum depended on the import of grain from modern-day northern China. This dependency allowed Qubilai Qa'an (r. 1260–1294) to lay siege to his rival Ariq Böke (r. 1260–1264) when fighting over the position of supreme khan of the Mongol Empire. Qubilai used his power over northern China to ban all imports from there to Qaraqorum. The city suffered a great famine before Ariq Böke finally surrendered in 1264.[8] From then on, Qaraqorum was part of Qubilai's khanate and later belonged to the Yuan Dynasty (1271/79–1368) which Qubilai proclaimed in 1271/72.[9] The capital of the Yuan Dynasty was the newly built Dadu (modern-day Beijing) which was located

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[2] Huettel and Erdenebat, *Karabalgasun und Karakorum*, p. 8.

[3] H. Franke and D. C. Twitchett eds., *The Cambridge History of China. Vol. 6. Alien Regimes and Border States, 907–1368* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 347.

[4] Franke and Twitchett, *The Cambridge History of China,* 341.

[5] J. Bemmann, E. Pohl, B. Schütt and W. Schwanghart, "Archaeological Findings in the Upper and Middle Orkhon Valley and their Geographical Setup." In *Mongolian-German Karakorum Expedition Vol. 1. Excavations in the Craftsmen Quarter at the Main Road.* eds. J. Bemmann, U. Erdenebat and E. Pohl (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2010), 307-19. p. 307.

[6] M. Roesch, E. Fischer, T. Märkle and B. Oyuntuya, "Medieval Plant Remains from Karakorum, Mongolia." in *Mongolian-German Karakorum Epedition Vol. 1. Excavations in the Craftsmen Quarter at the Main Road,* eds. J. Bemmann, U. Erdenebat and E. Pohl (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2010), 219-49. esp. p. 233.

[7] U. B. Barkmann, "Qara Qorum (Karakorum) – Fragmente zur Geschichte einer vergessenen Reichshauptstadt." In *Qara-Qorum-City (Mongolia) I. Preliminary Report of the excavations 2000/2001*, eds. H. R. Roth, U. Erdenebat, E. Nagel and E. Pohl (Bonn: Bonn Institut of Pre- and Early Historical Archeology, 2002), 5-21. p. 14.

[8] E. Pohl, "Interpretation without Excavation – Topographic Mapping on the Territory of the first Mongolian Capital Karakorum." in *Current Archaeological Research in Mongolia. Papers from the First International Conference on "Archaeological Research in Mongolia" held in Ulaanbaatar, August 19th–23rd, 2007*, eds. J. Bemmann, H. Parzinger, E. Pohl and D. Tseveendorzh (Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie, Rheinische Friedrich.Wilhems-Universität, 2009), 505-33. p. 514 with further references.

[9] Franke and Twitchett, *The Cambridge History of China*, 616; J. D. Langlois ed., *China under Mongol Rule* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981). p. 3.

in the border region between the sedentary culture of the Chinese and the nomadic culture of the Mongols. It is assumed that Qubilai chose this location in order to side with the Chinese without abandoning the Mongols during the political shift to civic consolidation and empire building.[10] Although Qaraqorum lost its status as a capital during this time, the city remained of high political importance for retaining power over the original Mongol territories. It was thus necessary for the successors to the throne of the Yuan Dynasty to have a residence in Qaraqorum.[11] Additionally, Qubilai founded new postal stations in order to provide a strategic and commercial link between Qaraqorum and his capital Dadu.[12]

Generally, Qaraqorum is hardly mentioned in historical sources of the 14th century. The Yuan Dynasty was characterized by a constant change of emperors and ongoing conflicts of power during this time.[13] With the fall of the Yuan Dynasty in 1368, its last emperor Toghon Temür (r. 1333–1368 and 1368-1370) opted to retreat to Qaraqorum. An official from his entourage documented the events of this flight.[14] But the army of the succeeding Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) reached Qaraqorum in 1380 or 1388 and destroyed the city.[15]

Overall, this brief review shows that Qaraqorum was of high political relevance and strongly connected to the territory of modern-day China. The city relied on the supply of grain from this region and the ruling Mongol emperors of the Yuan Dynasty exercised control over Qaraqorum. Postal relay routes between Dadu and Qaraqorum were maintained and provided commercial and other links. Regarding the geographical position of Qaraqorum in the Yuan Empire, the city was located at the northern margin of the realm. At the same time, its location was strategically relevant to nomadic territories of the steppe. In terms of trade and continental communication the role of Qaraqorum is largely unknown. Generally, the commonly known trade routes of the time are located approx. 500 km south of the city.

Trade Connections

In brief, despite the fact that major trade routes belonging to the Silk Road crisscrossed Asia during this time, only a few documents are known that specifically include Qaraqorum in this extensive network. These include two travel reports from the 13th century, written by John of Plano Carpini and the Franciscan Friar William of

[10] Franke and Twitchett, *The Cambridge History of China*, p. 419, 454; Sh. McCausland, *The Mongol Century. Visual Cultures of Yuan China, 1271–1368* (London: Reaction Books, 2014). p. 28.

[11] Barkmann, "Qara Qorum (Karakorum)", p. 17.

[12] Franke and Twitchett, *The Cambridge History of China*, p. 445.

[13] For a short overview see McCausland, *The Mongol Century*, p. 178.

[14] P. Olbricht ed., *Zum Untergang zweier Reiche. Berichte von Augenzeugen aus den Jahren 1232-33 und 1368-70. Aus dem Chinesischen übersetzt von Erich Haenisch* (Wiesbaden: Komissionsverlag F. Steiner, 1969). pp. 27-41.

[15] E. Pohl, "Interpretation without Excavation", p. 515.

Rubruck. Both of their travel routes were published by Shepherd among others.[16] As Rubruck resided in Qaraqorum in 1254, under the reign of Möngke Khan (r. 1251–1259), his description of the city is one of the main historical sources on Qaraqorum. Several translations of his itinerary are available. The present article uses the German translation by Leicht.[17] Most of the contemporaneous European travel reports are collected by Yule.[18] An overview on travel reports of people going from China to Europe is given by Toepel.[19] Following the foundation of Dadu in 1264, and because of its function as the Yuan capital in the 14th century, the described travel routes from the 14th century run along the Silk Road to Dadu and do not mention detours to Qaraqorum. A mapping of these routes is available online as part of the author's PhD.[20]

Whether Chinese ceramics, which are going to be the subject of this study, were part of the regular trading goods on these routes, is under discussion. Medley does assume that there was trade with Chinese ceramics on the Silk Road during the 10th–14th century.[21] Routes to Qaraqorum, however, are not included in her map. Wang Xie doubts the existence of a so-called "continental ceramic-road" (Chin. *lushang taoci zhilu*, 陆上陶瓷之路) and argues that goods such as southern Chinese ceramics were transported overland for the Mongol aristocracy only.[22] Southern Chinese ceramics in particular are better known from the sea trade with South-East Asia.[23] As Qaraqorum clearly was strongly influenced by the Mongol aristocracy, it should be kept in mind that traceable transport routes and connections to Qaraqorum do not necessarily correspond to regular trading routes for these wares. This subject requires further research that includes additional sites. Still, a determination of the production sites of the glazed ceramics found in Qaraqorum clearly displays connections between the city and the production centers.

Regarding the agents of trade during the Yuan Dynasty it is noteworthy that long-distance trade is specifically associated with Muslim merchants who formed

[16] W. R. Shepherd, *The Historical Atlas* (New York 1926).

[17] Wilhelm von Rubruck*, Reise zu den Mongolen. Von Konstantinopel nach Kaakorum. 1253–1255*, ed. H. D. Leicht (Wiesbaden: Marixverlag GmbH, 2012).

[18] Sir H. Yule ed., *Cathay and the Way Thither. Vol. III. Missionary Friars: Rashiduddin, Pegolotti, Marignolli* (Taipei: Ch'eng Wen Pub. Co., 1966).

[19] A. Toepel, *Die Mönche des Kublai Khan. Die Reise der Pilger Mar Yahballaha und Rabban Sauma nach Europa* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2008).

[20] A. Sklebitz, *Glazed Ceramics from Karakorum. The Distribution and Use of Chinese Ceramics in the Craftsmen Quarter of the Old-Mongolian Capital During the 13th–14th Century A. D.* (Bonn, PhD Diss., 2018). Published online https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:5-50054.

[21] M. Medley, *The Chinese Potter. A Practical History of Chinese Ceramics* (Singapore: 1989, Rprint: London: Phaidon, 2006). p. 104.

[22] Wang Xie, "Yuandai jininglu gucheng yizhi chutu ciqi jiedu = The Interpretation of Ceramics Excavated from the Yuan Dynasty City Site of Jininglu". *Beifang Wenwu* 3 (2008), pp. 54-6.

[23] D. Heng, *Sino-Malay Trade and Diplomacy from the Tenth through the Fourteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009); F. Gipouloux, *The Asian Mediterranean. Port Cities and Trading Networks in China, Japan and Southeast Asia, 13th –21st Century* (Cheltonham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2011).

partnerships with the aristocracy via merchant associations, the so-called *ortogh*.[24] Rossabi states that these Muslim merchants often lived in rather self-contained quarters that were separated from those of the Chinese population.[25] This matches well with Rubruck's description of Qaraqorum, as he mentions a Muslim quarter. Due to its proximity to the court, many merchants gathered at its markets. Furthermore, it was the quarter where foreign envoys were housed.[26] Therefore, historical evidence for trade connections to Qaraqorum that might include goods for the aristocracy is strong. The question is whether these goods are archaeologically traceable and whether there were significant changes over time. Concerning ceramics there are no references to trade or supply of the city mentioning specific wares. Yet, ceramics are some of the most reliable archaeological sources as ceramic objects are often numerous, well preserved, and cannot be as easily recycled as for example metal wares.

Excavations

The site of Qaraqorum in the Orkhon valley, close to modern-day Kharkhorin and about 320km southwest of the modern Mongolian capital Ulaanbaatar, was first identified by either Pozdneev in 1883 or Jadrincev in 1889.[27] Crucial for the interpretation of the site as ancient Qaraqorum was also the evaluation of the Radloff-expedition in 1891.[28] The archaeological research history of the site has been repeatedly outlined in recent studies and comprehensively summarized by Becker.[29] Some of the mostly smaller excavations that took place before the year 1999 have never been fully published. Still, parts of the data are available, and some has been revised during the past years.[30] Much still remains to be researched and published.

This article is based on an analysis of findings from the excavation project "KAR-2" only. These excavations took place as part of the "Mongol-German

[24] Franke and Twitchett, *The Cambridge History of China*, p. 600, 612; McCausland, *The Mongol Century*, p. 15, 19.

[25] M. Rossabi, "The Muslims in the Early Yüan Dynasty." in *China under Mongol Rule*, ed. J. D. Langlois (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 257-95. p. 259.

[26] Leicht, *Wilhelm von Rubruck*, p. 169.

[27] Ch. Franken, *Die Befunde der „Großen Halle" von Karakorum. Die Ausgrabungen im sogenannten Palastbezirk* (Bonn: PhD Diss., 2012). pp. 34-5.

[28] *Ibid*., p. 35; E. Becker, "Die sowjetisch-mongolischen Ausgrabungen von 1948/49." in *Mongolian-German Karakorum Expedition Vol. 1. Excavations in the Craftsmen Quarter at the Main Road*, eds. J. Bemmann, U. Erdenebat and E. Pohl (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2010), 27-38. p. 27.

[29] Becker, "Die sowjetisch-mongolischen Ausgrabungen".

[30] For example Y. Konagaya and I. Elikhina, *Some Archaeological Findings of the Mongolian-Soviet Expedition Led by S. V. Kiselev. Karakorum Settlement Relicts Stored in Hermitage Museum* (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2014) and I. Elikhina, "The Most Interesting Artefacts from Karakorum in the Collection of the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg." in J. Bemmann, U. Erdenebat and E. Pohl eds., Mongolian-German Karakorum Expedition Vol. 1. Excavations in the Craftsmen Quarter at the Main Road. Forschungen zur Archäologie Außereuropäischer Kulturen 8 = Bonn Contributions to Asian Archaeology 2 (Wiesbaden 2010), 39-47.

Qaraqorum Expedition" (MDKE) that was founded in 1998.[31] They were conducted under the direction of Dr. Ernst Pohl during summer campaigns from 1999–2005. The preliminary results were published by Bemmann et al.[32] The surface area of the excavations that were conducted at the site KAR-2 measures about 700 m^2. The excavations are located at the main street of Qaraqorum. Some of the trenches were excavated up to the natural substratum. Overall, the excavator worked out three settlement periods.[33] The findings from the excavation can be assigned to these settlement periods and thus evaluated in relation to them. The first settlement period according to Pohl encompasses the construction of the city in about 1237 until the early period of the Yuan Dynasty in about 1280/90.[34] The second settlement period partly correlates to historically documented reconstruction works in Qaraqorum and dates to about 1280/90 until about 1310.[35] Finally, the third settlement period lasts up until the destruction of Qaraqorum in the late 14th century.[36]

Regarding the context of the excavations it is important to note that the KAR-2-project took place at a quarter of the city that is presumed to be the Chinese craftsmen quarter. The analysis on the actual craft production at the site is part of a PhD-project that, unfortunately, has been yet unpublished when the article was written.[37] Additional studies will bring a clearer picture once further data is available. For now, it is important to bear in mind that the ceramics that are analyzed in the given study belong in the context of the Chinese craftsmen quarter. Their spectrum partly differs from the ceramics that were found inside the so-calld Great Hall (a Buddhist temple) that has been excavated in Qaraqorum.[38] Unfortunately, the ceramics found at the temple-site remain largely unpublished up until now. Furthermore, data from excavations in the presumed Muslim trade quarter is not available yet, although this surely represents one of the most interesting quarters for researching connections to Qaraqorum. Overall, the informative value of the present archaeological data is limited to the specific context of the excavations at KAR-2 as far as results were accessible when writing this article. It needs to be compared with additional data sets from other excavation sites inside Qaraqorum once they are available.

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[31] Bemmann et al., *Archaeological Findings*, pp. 7-12.

[32] *Ibid*.

[33] E. Pohl, "The Excavations in the Chinese Craftsmen-Quarter of Karakorum (KAR-2) between 2000 and 2005 – Stratigraphy and Architecture." in *Mongolian-German Karakorum Expedition Vol. 1. Excavations in the Craftsmen Quarter at the Main Road*, eds. J. Bemmann, U. Erdenebat and E. Pohl (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2010), 63-136.

[34] *Ibid*., p. 126.

[35] *Ibid*., p. 133.

[36] *Ibid*., p. 134.

[37] S. Reichert, *Craft Production in the Mongol Empire. Karakorum and its Artisans* (Bonn: PhD Diss., 2020).

[38] Franken, *Die Befunde der „Großen Halle"*.

Glazed Ceramics from the Craftsmen Quarter

When the author started to work with the glazed ceramics from the excavations at the craftsmen quarter of Qaraqorum, the material was stored at the Mongolian Academy of Sciences in Ulaanbaatar. During a five month stay in Mongolia in 2011, a total of 21,164 fragments of glazed ceramic were recorded in a specially designed database. This amounts to an estimated 70% of all glazed ceramics found at the KAR-2 site. The method and the precise criteria for documenting the ceramics are published in detail by Sklebitz.[39] To establish a classification of the wares, technological features like the color and temper of the body and the color and thickness of the glaze were noted. Furthermore, typological features like shapes and décor were documented. Additional features like signs of repair and marks were also recorded. Wide ranges in each of the criteria reflect the high variety of different wares that were found at the craftsmen quarter. It is interesting to note that neither ceramic pillows nor ceramics figures were entered in the record. Still, few figurines from the site are known.

The vast range of glazed ceramics that was recorded did not match previously existing classifications. Therefore, a classification specifically for the ceramics from Qaraqorum was established. It is intended to be used in further research on the subject and thus is published in English, and is also available online for any researcher who is interested in the topic.[40]

Classification of the Glazed Ceramics

The glazed ceramics from the craftsmen quarter were classified according to the following criteria:

First, the wares were subdivided according to the ceramic group they belong to. These groups are defined as porcelain, porcellaneous wares, stonewares and earthenwares.[41] Second, these groups were subdivided according to glaze colors. This results in groups like "white glazed stoneware" and "white glazed porcellaneous ware" which is important for the determination of the production sites, as porcellaneous wares and stonewares were usually produced at different sites. Many of these groups allow comparability to known Chinese ceramics. A reference to previously used Chinese terms on the ceramics from Qaraqorum and possible kiln sites of the wares is given by Sklebitz in Appendices A+B.[42] Moreover, some of the stonewares were subdivided according to variations in body color or temper which allows additional precision and better comparability of the data for detailed research.

[39] Sklebitz, *Glazed Ceramics from Karakorum.*
[40] *Ibid*.
[41] *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[42] *Ibid.* pp. 238-41.

On the whole, 43 types of wares were determined,[43] some of which are divided into subgroups. The upper-level grouping of the wares is as follows:

- Porcelain (blue-and-white porcelain)
- Porcellaneous wares (6 types of wares, e.g. celadon and Qingbai)
- Stonewares (mostly fine tempered) with a
    - clear glaze (2 types of wares, e.g. Jiaotai)
    - white glaze (6 types of wares, e.g. Cizhou)
    - greenish glaze (2 types of wares)
    - turquoise glaze (2 types of wares)
    - thick blue to green glaze (2 types of wares, mostly Jun)
    - brown to green glaze (6 types of wares, some with a coarse temper)
    - black glaze (7 types of wares, e.g. a few Jizhou and some with a coarse temper)
    - black and white glaze (3 types of wares, e.g. Cizhou)
    - mud-colored slip (1 type of ware)
- Earthenwares (fine tempered, 5 types of wares, e.g. lusterware)

All of the glazed ceramics that were excavated at the craftsmen quarter in Qaraqorum are defined and described by Sklebitz.[44] Shapes and décor of the ceramics are described for each of the defined wares. Plates with drawings of the documented shapes and décor are included in the publication. The definitions of the wares, their shapes and characteristics allow comparability with data from other sites and commonly used definitions of Chinese ceramics. To enable further research on the material, the full classification of the glazed ceramics from Qaraqorum is published online (in English) and freely downloadable. Detailed descriptions of all the documented wares are beyond the scope of this article. It is recommended to look up specific wares individually for future research. Given below is a broad overview of the determined production sites of the ceramics found at Qaraqorum, which is a first result of the classification of the wares.

Production Sites and Specifics

In total, three main production regions can be located for the glazed ceramics found in Qaraqorum. These are northern China, southern China, and Central Asia.[45] The latter category is represented by a share of only 1.17% of all documented fragments. Basically, this is earthenware with a brick-red body and green or turquoise lead glaze plus findings of lusterware. Its production sites cannot be located at the present state of research. Most of these findings appear in lower layers of the excavation only, that is, they date to the first settlement period from about 1220–1280 (see above).

[43] *Ibid.*
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] *Ibid.* p. 199.

Concerning the production sites of the Chinese wares, potential kiln sites are traceable for many of the classified wares. Here, especially the production areas of southern Chinese ceramics are well known. This is the region around Jingdezhen in Jiangxi province as well as the region around Longquan in Zhejiang province. Overall, almost 11% of the documented fragments are attributed to southern Chinese production sites. According to Chinese classifications of these wares, these ceramics include Qinghua (blue-and-white porcelain), Qingbai (pale blue porcellaneous ware), and Longquan celadon. Southern Chinese ceramics from Qaraqorum are especially interesting for interpretation and research. As stated above, some scholars argue that southern Chinese ceramics were transported overland for the Mongol aristocracy only. Still, the findings from Qaraqorum were excavated in the craftsmen quarter. Possibly, this is an indication for a connection of the craftsmen with the Mongol aristocracy which has not yet been researched. The spectrum of southern Chinese ceramics found in Qaraqorum includes high-quality wares for specific uses as well as wares that are known as export goods for example to the Near East or South East Asia. Regarding the blue-and-white porcelain which is found in Qaraqorum from the second settlement period on, i.e. from about 1270/80, it is considered to have been produced for export and specially adapted for the Near Eastern taste.[46] However, compared with published blue-and-white porcelains of the 13th and 14th century, it is likely that the findings from Qaraqorum do not belong to export goods and wares for the imperial households but to porcelains made for the domestic market.[47] The most striking example is a finding from Qaraqorum which is associated with imperial households at first sight because of its dragon décor.[48] This finding is however comparable with stemcups made for family altars and shrines.[49] Thus, it is an indicator for Chinese domestic rituals that took place in the craftsmen quarter of Qaraqorum. Although often connected with imperial relations, blue-and-white porcelain was not necessarily an imperial ware from its beginnings. It does not seem to have been produced for official use before 1328,[50] but is found in Qaraqorum from about 1280 on (see above). Therefore, the findings of blue-and-white porcelain are especially interesting to gain further insight into the controversial early history of blue-and-white porcelain.

Further special findings from Qaraqorum include to a group of pale blue glazed porcellaneous wares. These wares are usually defined as Qingbai when describing

[46] Medley, *The Chinese Potter*, 176ff; J. Carswell, *Blue and White. Chinese Porcelain around the World* (London: British Museum Press, 2000). p. 17.

[47] Medley, *The Chinese Potter*, p. 186ff.

[48] Sklebitz, *Glazed Ceramics from Karakorum,* plate 54, fig. 9.

[49] Medley, *The Chinese Potter*, p. 187; A. D. Brankston, *Early Ming Wares of Chingtechen* (Beijing: Henri Vetch, 1938), p. 27.

[50] Liu Xinyuan, "Yuan Dynasty Official Wares from Jingdezhen." in *The Porcelains of Jingdezhen. Colloquies on Art & Archaeology in Asia No. 16*, ed. R. Scott (London: Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 1993), 33-46. p. 37.

Chinese ceramics. This type of ceramics is known to have been produced for the export market and thus widely distributed.[51] Notably, Qingbai vessels with black spots are known as characteristic import ceramics from China in the Philippines.[52] Interestingly, few of the findings from Qaraqorum belong to this group of Qingbai vessels with black spots that were supposed to be made for trade with South East Asia.[53]

Further, the Qingbai ceramics from Qaraqorum have other peculiarities. Some of the fragments can be identified as scholar's accoutrements. This is true especially for brush washers.[54] Furthermore, an imperial use is implied by the motif of a phoenix on one of the findings, as such motifs were exclusively produced for the court.[55] The phoenix also appears on a few findings of celadon from Qaraqorum.[56] Generally, most of the exceptional décor documented from Qaraqorum was applied on celadon. This includes auspicious symbols like the so-called miscellaneous treasures, Buddhist symbols like the endless knot or Taoist designs like the eight trigrams.[57]

Due to comparisons with celadons from the Sinan shipwreck, most of the celadon found in Qaraqorum can be associated with southern Chinese production sites like Longquan. Although much closer to Qaraqorum, hardly any of the celadon fragments found can be connected to northern Chinese celadon production sites like Yaozhou.

Generally, many of the porcellaneous wares found can be associated with southern Chinese production sites while many of the stonewares and some of the earthenwares are associated with northern Chinese production sites. A northern Chinese origin accounts for about 53% of the glazed ceramics from Qaraqorum. Additionally, about 23% of the documented ceramics are assumed to have been produced in or around the traditional northern Chinese production sites in modern-day Inner Mongolia, Liaoning or Ningxia provinces.[58] These wares are not as specialized as southern Chinese ceramics are.[59] Thus, their production regions are more extensive and differences between the products of the kiln sites are less specific. An exception is the so-called Jun ware.

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[51] R. E. Scott, "Introduction: Qingbai Porcelain and its Place in Chinese Ceramic History." in *Qingbai Ware: Chinese Porcelain of the Song and Yuan Dynasties*, ed. S. Pierson (London: Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 2002), 6-12. pp. 10-11.

[52] M. Crick, *Chinese Trade Ceramics for South-East Asia from the 1st to the 17th Century. Collection of Ambassadorr and Mrs Charles Müller* (Milan: 5 Continents, 2010). pp. 190, 206-207; D. Wiesner, *Chinesische Keramik auf den Philippinen. Die Sammlung Eric E. Geiling* (Köln: Museum für Orientalische Kunst, 1977). pp. 157-63.

[53] Sklebitz, *Glazed Ceramics from Karakorum,* p. 87.

[54] *Ibid*., 295, fig. 9.

[55] R. Kerr and N. Wood, "Ceramic Technology." in *Science and Civilisation in China. Vol. 5. Chemistry and Chemical Technology. Part XII: Ceramic Technology*, ed. J. Needham (Cambridge 2004). p. 202.

[56] Sklebitz, *Glazed Ceramics from Karakorum,* plate 59.

[57] *Ibid*., pp. 93-94.

[58] *Ibid*., p. 198.

[59] Kerr and Wood, *Ceramic Technology*, pp. 87-88.

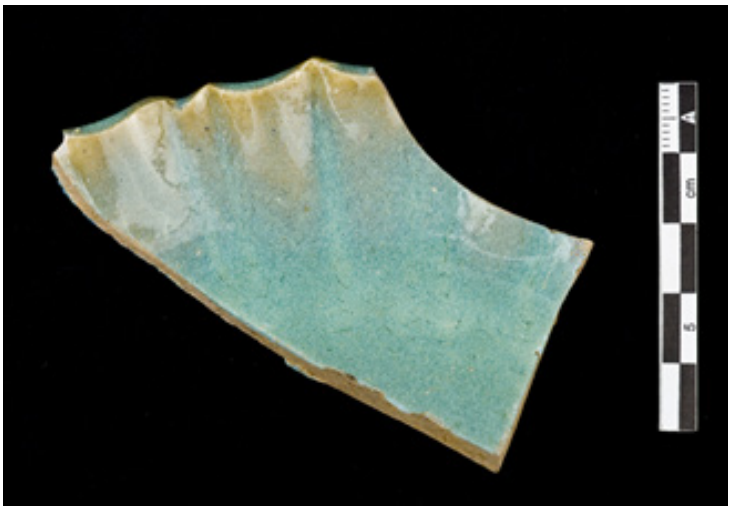

Fig. 1. Sample for Jun ware excavated in Qaraqorum. Photo by Nico Becker.

With its clearly identifiable thick blue glaze, it was a highly specialized ware that was typically produced in the region of modern-day Henan province.

In contrast, an extraordinarily broad spectrum of northern Chinese ceramics found in Qaraqorum is associated with the Cizhou kiln system, and with Cizhou type wares.[60] These ceramics were primarily produced in Hebei, Henan and Shanxi provinces. They include inter alia marbled stoneware (Jiaotai), black and white glazed stonewares, earthenwares with multicolored décor or glaze, parts of black glazed stonewares and large parts of the white glazed stonewares.

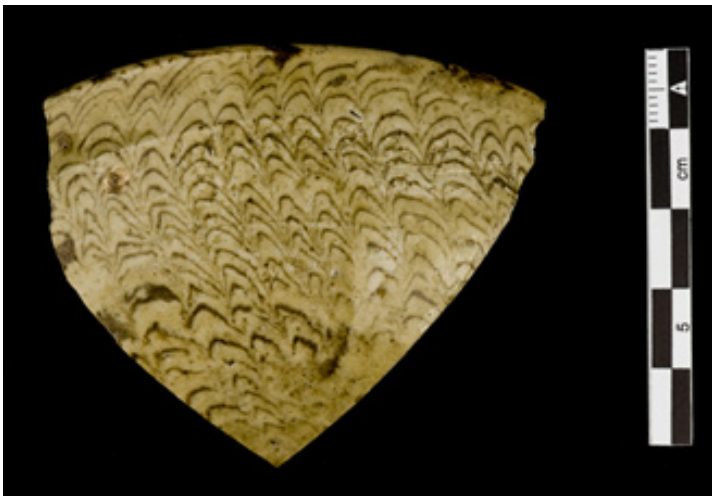

Fig. 2. Sample for Jiaotai excavated in Qaraqorum. Photo by Nico Becker.

[60] Sklebitz, *Glazed Ceramics from Karakorum*, 10ff.

Particularly stonewares with a white glaze are often associated with traditional northern Chinese kiln sites. However, these wares were copied and produced in a wider area.

Fig. 3. Sample for northern Chinese white ware excavated in Qaraqorum.
Photo by Nico Becker.

Based on studies that are available in Europe, a distinction between real Cizhou ceramics and similar wares that were possibly produced further north is currently impossible. To determine their production sites additional studies and field work is necessary. Potential kiln sites of northern Chinese wares found in Qaraqorum include Huoxian, Ding, Gangwa, Cizhou, Lizhou, Lingwu, Jiangguantung, Bacun, Jun, Duyaotai, Huairen, Zibo, Lushan, Baofeng, Jizhou, Guantai, Pengcheng, Changzhi, Bayi, Yuzhou, and Sheshou.[61]

Despite the high variety and uncertain production sites, it can be concluded that the vast majority of glazed ceramics found in Qaraqorum are northern Chinese wares for domestic use. Most of the special findings from Qaraqorum that are striking because of their shape or décor can be associated with southern Chinese production sites. Additionally, a few Central Asian ceramics appear but seem to have been out of use by the end of the 13th century.

[61] *Ibid*., p. 201.

Fig. 4. Fragment of lusterware excavated in Qaraqorum. Photo by Nico Becker

Routes to Qaraqorum – Evidence from the Glazed Ceramics Found

What does the classification and determination of production sites of the glazed ceramics imply about Qaraqorum? First of all, there is evidence for strong connections between the city and modern-day northern China. Almost half of all the ceramics found in Qaraqorum – whether glazed or unglazed – are assumed to derive from northern China.[62] This high share can only be explained by well-working connections between Qaraqorum and the production sites. Furthermore, it correlates with the historical sources that indicate a dependency of Qaraqorum on northern China for its supply of grain (see above). During the Yuan dynasty there were also strong political connections between Qaraqorum and northern China. It is said for example that the heir to the throne of the Yuan dynasty – which was based in modern-day Beijing – also had a residence in Qaraqorum.[63] These connections seem to closely relate the city to the North of China. Regular trade routes for the supply of domestic wares that are widely distributed in Qaraqorum are to be assumed.

Secondly, there are indications that the presence of the Mongol aristocracy in Qaraqorum may have extended the trading power of the city and thus its access to luxury goods. Judging from their shapes and décor, some of the findings of glazed ceramics from Qaraqorum are attributable to the Mongol aristocracy. These include southern Chinese ceramics with phoenix décor and brush washers made for scholars and officials (see above). As these ceramics were found in the craftsmen quarter of the city, their presence needs to be explained. Maybe connections between the craftsmen and the aristocracy were close and enabled them access to luxury goods.

[62] *Ibid*., p. 206.

[63] Barkmann, "Qara Qorum (Karakorum)", p. 17.

Or maybe the general access to high-quality wares from southern China was better than commonly assumed.

As stated above, the routes to Qaraqorum for the supply of ceramics are not as self-evident as it seems at first sight – especially when referring to southern Chinese ceramics that were produced at a linear distance of about 2,500 km from the city. The share of these ceramics found in the craftsmen quarter rose significantly when southern China became part of the territory of the Yuan dynasty.[64] This was about a decade after the Mongol capital shifted from Qaraqorum to Dadu. Whether the higher share of ceramics that were imported via long-distance routes can be explained by a better accessibility in general or a higher demand for such goods by the Mongol heirs to the throne living in Qaraqorum remains unknown. Nevertheless, it proves that connections and routes of supply were running from southern China to Qaraqorum. This is why ceramics are an important source for research on the connections of Qaraqorum with the Inner Asian and Eurasian network. In terms of trade and supply routes and continental communication, the function of Qaraqorum during the Yuan dynasty is largely unknown. As far as the distribution of Chinese ceramics during the 13th and 14th century has been mapped, Qaraqorum has not been included in the network across medieval Eurasia in the research to date.[65] This needs to be changed as the classification of ceramics from Qaraqorum proves its connections to this network. Due to aspects of transportability it is supposed that ceramic trade on overland routes was less important than on maritime routes.[66] However, is it obvious that such transports took place. Unfortunately, additional information on the distribution of ceramics in city sites that are contemporaneous to Qaraqorum are scarce, especially in its surroundings. Regarding sites in Inner Mongolia, the ceramics found at Yanjialiang and Jininglu have been elaborately published.[67] In both cases the spectrum of findings is well comparable though not completely identical to the ceramics found in Qaraqorum.[68] This proves that ceramics that were undoubtedly produced in southern China (such as blue-and-white-porcelain) were distributed at several city sites far in the north. The same can be said for the site of Kharakhoto.[69] Concerning the above-mentioned city

[64] Sklebitz, *Glazed Ceramics from Karakorum,* p. 208.

[65] A. Heidenreich, *Islamische Importkeramik des hohen Mittelalters auf der Iberischen Halbinsel. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der frühen Goldlüsterproduktion im Untersuchungsraum* (Mainz: Philip von Zabern, 2007). p. 171, Fig. 111; V. Ciociltan, *The Mongols and the Black Sea Trade in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2012). Map 3; M. Tampoe, *Maritime Trade between China and the West. An Archaeological Study of the Ceramics from Siraf (Persian Gulf), 8th to 15th Centuries A. D* (Oxford: B.A.R., 1989). p. 421, Fig. 114d; Medley, *The Chinese Potter*, p. 104.

[66] Kerr and Wood, *Ceramic Technology*, p. 728.

[67] Ta La, Zhang Haibin and Zhang Hongxing eds., *Baotou yanjialiang yizhi fajue baogao = Excavation Report from Baotou Yanjialiang. 3 Vols.* (Beijing 2010). Chen Yongzhi, *Neimenggu jininglu gucheng yizhi chutu ciqi gaishu = Porcelain Unearthed from the Jininglu Ancient City Site in Inner Mongolia* (Beijing 2004).

[68] Sklebitz, *Glazed Ceramics from Karakorum,* p. 213-218.

[69] A. Th. Kessler, *Song Blue and White Porcelain on the Silk Road* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

sites, Kharakhoto is the only one that is located on the commonly known routes of the Silk Road. Still, the spectrum of ceramics found is the broadest in Qaraqorum, which implies a more extensive network compared to the other sites. Findings from any of the above-mentioned sites include southern Chinese ceramics. It thus needs to be considered whether this distribution can be explained by a supply of the Mongol aristocracy only[70] or whether a regular continental trade route for ceramics existed. Generally, trade with ceramics on overland routes across Yuan China and Eurasia was most likely conducted by Muslim merchants.[71] Therefore, future excavations at the Muslim quarter of Qaraqorum will surely provide further insight on this question.

Regarding the overall picture, the glazed ceramics are but one indication that the 13th and 14th century network across China and Eurasia extended further north than commonly mapped and included goods that we are not yet aware of. Although Qaraqorum was not the capital of the Yuan dynasty it held a vital function in the trade network.

The incorporation of the city in the network is supported by further sources as well, for example, the provenance of edibles documented in the city. Parts of the medieval plant remains from the excavations at the main road of Qaraqorum have been analyzed in a preliminary archaeobotanical report.[72] One of the main source areas for the imported food documented in the city was Baghdad. This correlates with a route from Qaraqorum via Tashkent to Baghdad.[73] Another source is the postulated congruence of the spread of the plague as mapped by Abu-Lughod[74] which connects Qaraqorum to Beijing and Tashkent. An additional connection of Qaraqorum with Central Asia and the network of the Silk Road is implied in the already mentioned travel itinerary of William of Rubruck as mapped by Shepherd.[75] The routes used by Rubruck are assumed to be postal routes for messengers between the Mongol rulers.[76] Apart from the great internationality in Qaraqorum that is described in Rubruck's itinerary but not yet archaeologically proven, Rubruck reports presents from the patriarch of Baghdad for the Nestorian Christians living in Qaraqorum,[77] which is another indicator for connections between Qaraqorum and the Eurasian trade route system. Finally, it needs to be kept in mind that the proximity of Qaraqorum to caravan routes is assumed to have been one of the aspects that lead to the founding of the city on the river bank of the Orkhon.[78]

[70] Wang Xie, *Yuandai jininglu*.

[71] Rossabi, *The Muslims in early Yuan Dynasty*, p. 282.

[72] Roesch et al., *Medieval Plant Remains*.

[73] Roesch et al., *Medieval Plant Remains*, p. 219, Fig. 1.

[74] J. L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony. The World System A. D. 1250–1350* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). pp. 172-3, Fig. 7.

[75] Shepherd, *The Historical Atlas*, pp. 102-3.

[76] Leicht, *Wilhelm von Rubruck*, p. 26.

[77] Leicht, *Wilhelm von Rubruck*, p. 164.

[78] Franken, "Die Befunde der „Großen Halle*"*, p. 26.

Mapping the information about Qaraqorum, the commonly known routes of the Eurasian network as well as the production sites of the glazed ceramics found in the city illustrates the need for further research on yet unknown connections. Additional roads and possibly even stronger networks are to be assumed, including a wide continental distribution of ceramics.[79]

[79] Sklebitz, *Glazed Ceramics from Karakorum*, p. 308, Fig. 61.

Revisiting Buddhism in Ilkhanid Iran: Archaeology, Toponymy and Visual Culture*

Yuka Kadoi

Abstract: It is generally agreed that Buddhism, which already came to be known in West Asia during the Sasanian period through commercial exchanges with India, revived in Iran under the Ilkhanids. A pioneering study of Buddhist-Islamic interactions by Elverskog (*Buddhism and Islam on the Silk Road*, 2010) amply demonstrates the importance of the Mongol period for the understanding of the religious contacts between Buddhists and Muslims, with particular reference to the role of Tibet in this unique socio-cultural as well as scientific encounter (the latter subject is explored by several studies, notably *Islam and Tibet – Interactions along the Musk Routes*, 2016). On the other hand, it remains a challenging task as to how the impact of Buddhism on the visual and material culture of Ilkhanid Iran should be reassessed, apart from attributions of unusual architectural remains to former Buddhist sites or interpretations of Buddhis iconographical elements found in manuscript paintings and decorative objects.

Keywords: Iran, Ilkhanid, Mongol, Buddhism, Islam, visual culture, material culture

The presence of Buddhist elements in the art and architecture of the Iranian world, both in pre-Islamic and medieval times, has been widely pointed out.[1] Yet the issue of Buddhism in Iranian art during the Islamic period, particularly with the second advent of Buddhism under the Mongols, requires a synthesis of conventional wisdom and new findings, focusing not only on its Iranian and Islamic contexts, and the changes which it underwent there, but also on its origins. My concern is therefore to search for visual evidence for the prevalence of this foreign-born faith in Iran during the Mongol period, Iranian artists' engagement with Buddhist themes and the assimilation of such themes into Iranian culture.

[1] * This article was previously published as "Buddhism in Iran under the Mongols: An Art-Historical Analysis." in *Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the European Society for Central Asian Studies*, eds. T. Gacek and J. Pstrusińska (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), pp. 171-80. The main text and footnotes of the current version have been lightly copy-edited, with a list of further references on this subject as an appendix below, while illustrations have been removed due to the shortage of space. Some of the contents of this article were presented at the international conference, *The Mongols and Religions*, at the Institute of Iranian Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, 16-17 May 2019.
See A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, "The Buddhist Heritage in the Art of Iran." in *Mahayanist Art after A D 900, Colloques on Art and Archaeology in Asia, No 2*, ed. W. Watson (London: Percival David Fundation of Chinese Art, 1972), pp. 56-65; idem, "Recherches sur l'architecture de l'Iran bouddhique 1." *Le Monde Iranien et l'Islam* 3 (1975), pp. 1-61. See also multi-authored entries on "Buddhism" in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. 4, (New York: Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 1989), pp. 492-505.

The following discussion includes a brief overview of Buddhism in Islamic Iran and aspects of Buddhist influence on Iranian art with special reference to that found in architecture and painting. Throughout this discussion I shall follow the process of Persianization in each area so as to discern the uniqueness of the particular mixture of Buddhist and Islamic elements in the Iranian art of the late 13th and early 14th centuries.

It is generally agreed that Buddhism came to be known in Iran during the Sasanian period as a consequence of maritime trade with India, though how much fundamental effect it had on Iranian artistic concepts is open to question.[2] Even after the predominance of Zoroastrianism and later Islam, Iran, particularly in the eastern provinces, continued to be in frequent contact with Buddhism.[3] Besides the rich Buddhist heritage in Afghanistan, a number of Buddhist sites datable to Islamic times have been discovered in Khorasan, for example at Merv.[4] As Buddhism moved westwards, the norms of East Asian beauty were gradually incorporated into Iranian literature and pictorial vocabulary.[5] Figures with East Asian traits were, for instance, highly appreciated as the moon-faced Buddha (*bot-i mahruy*) in medieval Iranian culture,[6] and the Mongoloid facial feature commonly depicted in *minai* wares of the 12th and 13th centuries mirrors this phenomenon.[7] The emphasis on the linear-drawing techniques found in the illustrations of the Kitab Suwar al-Kawakib al-Thabita ("The Book of Fixed Stars") of al-Sufi (probably Fars, 1009-10 or c. 1200-1300; MS Marsh 144, Bodleian Library, Oxford)[8] is evocative of the pictorial

[2] For example, the Chehel-Khaneh caves at Zir Rah were known as a Buddhist complex in Sasanian Iran (see W. Ball, "Two Aspects of Iranian Buddhism." *Bulletin of the Asia Institute of Pahlavi University*, nos. 1-4 (1976), pp. 104-27; *idem*., "Some Rock-Cut Monuments in Southern Iran." *Iran* 24 (1986), pp. 99-103; Ball has also identified the Qal'at-i Haidari caves near Khurmuj as a Buddhist monastery of the Sasanian period (*ibid*., pp. 95-8); wall-paintings found at a site of Kuh-e Khwaja in Sistan contain Buddhist elements (see T. Kawami, "Kuh-e Khwaja, Iran, and Its Wall Paintings: The Records of Ernst Herzfeld." *Metropolitan Museum of Art Journal* 22 (1987), pp. 25-50. I am most grateful to Dr. Trudy Kawami for drawing my attention to this monument). See also *The Cambridge History of Iran* (hereafter, *CHI*), vol. 3 (2) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 949-64. For Sasanian maritime trade with India, see D. Whitehouse and A. Williamson, "Sasanian Maritime Trade." *Iran* 11 (1973), pp. 43-5.

[3] Melikian-Chirvani, "Buddhist heritage", pp. 56-9; R. W. Bulliet, "Naw Bahar and the Survival of Iranian Buddhism." *Iran* 14 (1976), pp. 140-5; *CHI*, vol. 3 (2), p. 957.

[4] G. Frumkin, *Archaeology in Soviet Central Asia* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970), pp. 146-9.

[5] A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, "L'evocation littéraire du bouddhisme dans l'Iran musulman." *Le Monde Iranien et l'Islam* 2 (1974), pp. 1-72. See also D. Gimaret, "Bouddha et les bouddhistes dans la tradition musulmane." *Journal Asiatique* 257 (1969), pp. 273-316.

[6] Melikian-Chirvani, "Buddhist heritage", pp. 60-3. See also H. W. Bailey, "The Word 'But' in Iranian." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 6 (1931), pp. 279-83. For further discussion about the penetration of the East Asian type of beauty into Iranian aesthetics, see E. Esin, "Turk-i mah chihrah (The Turkish Norm of Beauty in Iran).", in *Akten des VII internationalen Kongresses für iranische Kunst und Archäologie*, *München 10 September 1976* (Berlin: D. Reimer, 1979), pp. 449-60.

[7] See E. Atil, *Ceramics from the World of Islam* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institute, 1973), nos. 41-2.

[8] For this manuscript, see E. Wellesz, "An Early al-Sufi Manuscript in the Bodleian Library in Oxford." *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959), pp. 1-26. See also a recent study on this manuscript by Soudavar who has

devices used in figure painting of Chinese or Central Asian origin.[9] In particular, the convention of vermicular drapery folds found in the al-Sufi illustrations shows a striking resemblance to that used in 7th-century works of the Khotanese painter, Weichi Yiseng.[10] But the Mongol invasion, which took place in the 1220s, facilitated the widespread propagation of Buddhism, resulting in a great deal of disruption in the religious life of Iran and a shift in the faith, though temporary, towards this idol-worshipping polytheistic religion.

Ilkhanid Iran was a multi-religious society. While keeping their shamanistic background, the religious orientation and patronage of the Ilkhans ranged over Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism.[11] Buddhism had already gained official status during the reign of the first Ilkhan Hulagu (r. 1256-65). He promoted the involvement of Buddhists in official positions, especially Tibetan lamas (*bakhshi*), but he was also familiar to a certain extent with Christianity, notably through his Nestorian Christian wife Doquz-khatun.[12] Abaqa (r. 1265-82) followed his father: he protected Buddhists and had Christian wives. His brother, Teguder (r. 1282-84), was baptized but later converted to Islam, though for purely personal reasons. Royal patronage of Buddhism was intensified during the reign of Argun (r. 1284-91). A number of Buddhist monuments were erected, and Buddhists were actively involved in Mongol court life. Argun's son, Ghazan (r. 1295-1304), was brought up as a Buddhist, but finally in 1295 he decided on an official conversion to Islam.[13] His successor, Uljaitu (r. 1304-16), had a complex religious background: originally a Christian, he became a Buddhist and finally went over to Shi'ism in 1310. The last Ilkhan Abu Sa'id (r. 1316-35) was, however, a Sunni.

What, then, happened in the art of Iran during these 40 years of Buddhist presence? The quest for the Buddhist heritage of Iran must start with architecture, which is, among the various forms and media of art, the most powerful image-propaganda. One of the earliest reflections of Buddhist architectural style can be seen in domed mausolea, a type of which evolved in Transoxiana in early Islamic times—the tomb of Ismail Samanid in Bukhara (c. 900) is a case in point—and became the most popular building type in the architecture of Islamic Iran. The canopy structure, consisting of

proposed a 12th- and 13th-century date (A. Soudavar, "The Concepts of 'al-Aqdamo Asahh' and 'Ya-qin-e Sabeq,' and the Problem of Semi-Fakes." *Studia Iranica* 28 (1999), pp. 262-4).

[9] For example, see painter's sketches at Dunhuang (S. E. Fraser, "Formulas of Creativity: Artist's Sketches and Techniques of Copying at Dunhuang." *Aribus Asiae* 59 (1999), pp. 189-224).

[10] See M. Bussagli, *Central Asian Painting* (Geneva: Sikra, 1963), pp. 66-7.

[11] For Buddhism in Ilkhanid Iran, see *CHI*, vol. 5 (1968), pp. 540-1.

[12] See J. D. Ryan, "Christian Wives of Mongol Khans: Tartar Queens and Missionary Expectations in Asia." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* ser. 3, 8, no. 3 (1998), pp. 411-21.

[13] For the conversion of Ghazan, see C. Melville, "Padshah-i Islam: The Conversion of Sultan Mahmud Ghazan Khan." in *History and Literature in Iran: Persian and Islamic Studies in Honour of P. W. Avery* ed. C. Melville (London: British Academic Press, 1990), pp. 159-77; R. Amitai-Preiss, "Ghazan, Islam and Mongol Tradition: A View from the Mamluk Sultanate." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 59 (1996), pp. 1-10.

a square base and a hemispherical dome, recalls the Buddhist stupa.[14] The stylistic impact of the stupa is also visibly pronounced on a type of incense-burner which has been attributed to Khorasan, including what is now Afghanistan, under the Samanids and the Ghaznavids.[15] Given such a direct response to Buddhist architecture, it would not be surprising if Iranians were already fully aware of the style of Buddhist temples (*botkhaneh*) by the time of the Mongol conquest.

Literary sources refer to the existence of Buddhist monuments in north-west Iran during the Mongol period, such as in Khoy and Maragha under Hulagu,[16] in Tabriz under Arghun and in Khorasan (Khabushan) under Ghazan.[17] Archaeological evidence is not abundant, due to the destruction of Buddhist monuments following Ghazan Khan's official conversion to Islam in 1295,[18] but it is sufficient to demonstrate the evolution of Buddhist architecture in Mongol-ruled Iran. The ruin of a rocky complex at Viar near Sultaniyya[19] is one of the few Buddhist remains which escaped the anti-Buddhist movement, thanks to a subtle conversion into a mosque. A non-Islamic feature of this monument is particularly evident in the presence of an elaborately sculptured dragon in stone next to a non-oriented *mihrab*.[20] Some iconographic features of the dragon, such as its well-proportioned serpentine body exhaling flames or clouds, are distinct from Islamic-type dragons, which are characterized by their stillness and symmetrical arrangement.[21] The accuracy of the depiction of the dragon points to the involvement of artists who were conversant with the iconography of the dragon in the Chinese art tradition.[22] Another monument to be noted is the Imamzade Ma'sum at Varjovi near Maragha, a cave complex which Warwick Ball has convincingly identified as a Buddhist monastery of the Mongol period.[23] Indeed, despite the later additions of a *mihrab* and Quranic inscriptions, the complex is not

[14] Another possible source for the domed mausoleum in the Islamic Iranian world is the Zoroastrian fire-temple (see R. Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 1994), pp. 275-6.). For the stupa, see A. L. Dallapiccola ed., *The Stūpa: Its Religious, Historical and Architectural Significance* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1980).

[15] For a study of this subject, see G. Fehervari, "Islamic Incense Burners and the Influence of Buddhist Art." in *The Iconography of Islamic Art: Studies in Honour of Robert Hillenbrand*, ed. B. O'Kane (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), pp. 127-41.

[16] E.g. the Rasatkhaneh caves at Maragha (Ball, "Two Aspects of Iranian Buddhism", pp. 127-43).

[17] D. Wilber, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran: The Il Khānid Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 15.

[18] *CHI*, vol. 5, 542.

[19] G. Scarcia, "The 'Vihar' of Qonqor-olong: Preliminary Report.", *East and West*, n.s., 25 (1975), pp. 99-104.

[20] See G. Curatola, "The Viar Dragon." in *Soltâniye III. Quaderni del Seminario di Iranistica, Uralo-Altaistica e Caucasologia dell'Università degli Studi di Venezia*, 9 (Venice: Bosco, 1982), pp. 71-88.

[21] For Islamic-type dragons, see G. Curatola, *Draghi: la Tradizione Artistica Orientale e i Disegni del Tesoro del Topkapi* (Venice: Poligrafo, 1989), pp. 45-81.

[22] For Chinese dragons, see J. Rawson, *Chinese Ornament: The Lotus and the Dragon* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1984), pp. 93-9.

[23] W. Ball, "The Imamzadeh Ma'sum at Vardjovi: A Rock-Cut Ilkhanid Complex near Maragheh." *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 12 (1979), pp. 329-40.

completely disguised as Islamic. Rather, several architectural details, for example the circumambulatory layout of the chambers and a circular dome with multi-toothed decoration, betray its non-Islamic nature.[24] The erased remains of painted frescoes can be interpreted in the context of iconoclasm in Ilkhanid Iran of the post-1295 period.

The unavailability of reliable Ilkhanid painting pre-dating 1295 makes it difficult to trace the exact course of how Buddhist elements were assimilated into Iranian pictorial concepts during the early Mongol period. Yet three early 14th-century illustrated manuscripts provide a clear picture of the impact of Buddhist iconography on Ilkhanid painting, as well as the tenacity of Buddhism in Ilkhanid Iran: the *al-Athar al-Baqiya* ("Chronology of Ancient Nations") of al-Biruni (north-west Iran, 1307-8; MS Arab 161, University Library, Edinburgh);[25] the *Jami' al-Tawarikh* ("Compendium of Chronicles") of Rashid al-Din (Rashidiyya, 1314; MS Arab 20, University Library, Edinburgh; MS 727, Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, London);[26] and the so-called Great Mongol *Shahnama* ("Book of Kings") of Firdawsi (Tabriz, c. 1335)[27].

The al-Biruni manuscript is remarkable for its mélange of different religious themes and iconographic traditions, including those coming from Buddhist art. The most telling example in this manuscript is undoubtedly the scene of the *Annunciation*. Initially derived from the Byzantine prototype,[28] the painter did not hesitate to add Buddhist flavor to this very Christian theme. Both the Angel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary are portrayed with East Asian features in terms of facial appearance, robes, ribbons and haloes.[29] Exact sources of inspiration for this image are difficult to specify from long-established Buddhist painting. Yet it is possible to compare the image of Gabriel with an 8th century painting of a Bodhisattva now in the Shoso-in in

[24] *Ibid*., p. 339.

[25] For this manuscript, see P. Soucek, "An Illustrated Manuscript of al-Bīrunī's Chronology of Ancient Nations" in *The Scholar and the Saint: Studies in Commemoration of Abu'l Rayhan al-Bīrunī and Jalal al-Din al-Rūmī* ed. P. Chelkowski (New York: New York University Press, 1975), pp. 103-68; R. Hillenbrand, "Images of Muhammad in al-Biruni's Chronology of Ancient Nations" in *Persian Painting from the Mongols to the Qajars. Studies in Honour of Basil W. Robinson* ed. R. Hillenbrand (London–New York: I. B. Tauris, 2000), pp. 129-46.

[26] For this manuscript, see D. T. Rice, *The Illustrations of the 'World History' of Rashid al-Din* (Edinburgh: Edinburg University Press, 1976); S. S. Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid Al-Din's Illustrated History of the World* (London: Nour Foundation in ass. with Oxford University Press, 1995).

[27] For this manuscript, see O. Grabar and S. S. Blair, *Epic Images and Contemporary History: The Illustrations of the Great Mongol Shahnama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

[28] Soucek, "An Illustrated Manuscript", p. 148.

[29] Haloes were originally developed in Sasanian royal imagery and were adopted in India to highlight the head of the Buddha (M. Bary, *Figurative Art in Medieval Islam and the Riddle of Bihzâd of Herât (1465-1535)* (Paris: Flammarion, 2004), p. 59). But the Buddhist nimbus may have been re-introduced into the Ilkhanid realm.

Nara.[30] Mary recalls the goddess Hariti, an image found near Turfan.[31] This suggests the involvement of artists with a Central Asian Buddhist background, most probably Uighurs, in Ilkhanid ateliers.[32] Buddhist temples are not themselves depicted in the al-Biruni manuscript, but the scenes of *Abraham destroys the idols* (f. 88v)[33] and *Bukhtnassar orders the destruction of the temple* (f. 134v) can be seen as an echo of the actual event that accompanied the conversion of Ghazan to Islam in 1295.[34]

In the Rashid al-Din manuscript, paintings located in the history of India should be observed with great caution. The sources for the image of *Shakyamuni offering fruits to the devil* (f. 34)[35] were not only general sources of inspiration from Chinese painting[36] but probably also illustrated Buddhist texts brought by the Indian Buddhist monk called Kamalashiri, who served in the Mongol court, and brought Sanskrit sources of the life and teachings of Buddha to Rashid al-Din.[37] Similar Buddhist-Chinese associations can be observed in the *Grove of Jetavana* (f. 276v).[38] The story which is depicted here came from Buddhist sources, but the image is more reminiscent of typical Chinese landscape painting.[39] What is remarkable in this illustration is that Iranian painters were acclimatized to East Asian pictorial traditions and were engaged in adapting newly acquired elements into their own pictorial settings.[40] In addition to such iconographic ideas, Buddhist sources may also have facilitated compositional development in early 14th-century Iranian painting. As in some of the album paintings of the Rashid al-Din manuscript now in Berlin and Istanbul, known as the Diez Albums and the Saray Albums,[41] the horizontal arrangement of

[30] R. Hayashi, *The Silk Road and the Shoso-in* (New York: Weatherhill, 1975), pp. 145-7, fig. 168.

[31] *Along the Ancient Silk Routes: Central Asian Art from the West Berlin State Museums*, H. Härtel and M. Yaldiz eds. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Arts, 1982), p. 206, pl. 147.

[32] E. Esin, "The Bakhshi in the 14th to 16th Centuries: The Masters of the Pre-Muslim Tradition of the Arts of the Book in Central Asia." in *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia 14th-16th Centuries*, eds. B. Gray and O. F. Akimuškin (London: Serinda Publications, 1979), pp. 281-94.

[33] Soucek, "An Illustrated Manuscript", pp. 114-8, fig. 5.

[34] *Ibid*., pp. 143-5, fig. 20.

[35] For further discussion of this illustration, see S. Canby, "Descriptions of Buddha Sakyamuni in the Jami' al-Tawarikh and the Majma' al-Tawarikh." *Muqarnas* 10 (1993), pp. 301-3.

[36] For example, see *Zhongguo meishu quanji*, Painting 4 (Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe, 1988), pl. 3.

[37] T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 84. For Kamalashri, see K. Jahn, "Kamālashrī - Rashīd al-Din's 'Life and Teaching of Buddha': A Source for the Buddhism of the Mongol Period." *Central Asiatic Journal* 2 (1956), pp. 81-128. For the political relationship between Kashmir and the Mongol court, see *idem*, "A Note on Kashmīr and the Mongols." *Central Asiatic Journal* 2 (1956), pp. 176-80.

[38] Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles*, p. 78.

[39] For example, see the works of Fan Long (fl.1227-62; suggested by Canby, "Descriptions of Buddha", p. 303.).

[40] It was during the Timurid period that faithful copies of Buddhist paintings were made in the Iranian world (e.g. Timurid drawings of Chan Buddhist monks (Iran or Central Asia, c. 1400-50; Diez A. Fol. 73, S53 and S55, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Berlin); see D. Roxburgh ed., *Turks: A Journey of A Thousand Years, 600-1600* (London: Royal Academy of Art, 2005), cat. nos. 175A-B).

[41] For the Diez Albums, see M. İpşiroğlu, *Saray Alben: Diez'sche Klebebände aus den Berliner Sammlu-*

attendants and the differential size to indicate hierarchy are very comparable to those seen in Buddhist illustrated texts.[42] Such compositional challenges serve to enrich enthronement images, albeit in a rather peculiar way.

Even in the Great Mongol *Shahnama*, which was produced in the mid-1330s, Buddhist elements are ubiquitous in the surviving illustrations of the manuscript. The decoration that appears in Zahhak's throne is visibly inspired by flaming jewels of Buddhist origin, known as *cintamani*,[43] and lotus motifs which evoke those found in the lacquerware of the Song and Yuan periods.[44] The prince is enthroned with a stately bearing as if he were a Buddhist deity, though it remains unclear to what extent the Buddhist connotations of these motifs—such as auspiciousness and purity—were understood in Ilkhanid Iran. One of the images of Isfandiyar is evocatively Tibetan in terms of posture, suggesting the availability and familiarity of Tibetan Buddhist iconography in Ilkhanid ateliers. Apart from paintings and illustrated texts,[45] the image of a kneeling man gesturing towards the people around him possibly came to be known through imported wall hangings and woven tapestries, for example a *tanka* hanging of the Tangut empire (Xixia; c. 1030-1227),[46] which seems to have functioned as a chief decorative element in Buddhist monuments in Iran, possibly together with idols.

In addition to the hangings, the role of textiles in the westward transmission of Buddhist decorative ideas needs to be considered afresh. In South and East Asia, textiles became important media not only as commodities but also as essential items in a religious context. The early development of the silk trade was thus closely associated with the expansion of Buddhism, because of the increased demand for silk for use in

ngen (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1964); for the Saray Albums, see M. Rogers, F. Çağman and Z. Tanındı, *The Topkapı Saray Museum: The Albums and Illustrated Manuscripts* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1986), p. 69, nos. 43-4.

[42] Similar ideas can be found in the frontispieces of pre-Mongol Islamic manuscripts (e.g. the *Kitab al-Aghani* [probably Mosul, c. 1218-9; see R. Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting* (Geneva: Skira, 1962), p. 65.] suggested by B. Brend, "The Little People: Miniature Cityscapes and Figures in Persian and Ottoman Painting." in *Proceedings of the Third European Conference of Iranian Studies 2*, ed. C. Melville (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1999), p. 367.), suggesting that Buddhist art traditions were already known in the early 13th-century Middle East.

[43] For this motif, see G. Paquin, "Çintamani" *Hali* 64 (1992), pp. 104-19.

[44] For example, see H. Garner, *Chinese Lacquer* (London–Boston: Faber, 1979), no. 44. For a further discussion of Chinese lacquer and Islamic design, see Y. Crowe, "The Chiselled Surface: Chinese Lacquer and Islamic Design." in *Silk & Stone: The Art of Asia (Hali Annual Series No. 3)*, ed. J. Tilden (London: Hali Publications, 1996), pp. 60-9.

[45] For example, see S. Kossak, "Early Central Tibetan Hierarch Portraits: New Perspectives on Identification and Dating." *Oriental Art* n.s, 45 no. 4 (1999-2000), pp. 2-8.

[46] For example, see *Lost Empire of the Silk Road: Buddhist Art from Khara Khoto (X- Xlllth Century)*, ed. M. B. Piotrovsky (Milan: Electa, 1993), pp. 140-1. The Tangut Empire, which had Tibetan Buddhism as its state religion, was destroyed by the advent of the Mongols, but the existing religious connections between the Tanguts and the Tibetans were adopted by the Mongol rulers. For further information about this empire, see H. Franke and D. Twitchett eds., *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 154-214.

various ceremonies or to wrap religious texts and bodies in for burial.[47] Silk textiles were imported from South and East Asia to the Middle East essentially as tribute and luxury items. They served to convey East Asian themes westwards into Iran in the wake of the Mongol invasion, and motifs of East Asian origin, such as dragons and clouds, were quickly absorbed into Iranian artistic vocabulary.[48] Similarly, Buddhist motifs, for example the lotus and the flame, came to be recognized in Ilkhanid Iran chiefly through imported Chinese or Central Asian textiles[49]; they were quickly transplanted across the various media of Ilkhanid pictorial and decorative arts, due in part to the introduction of paper in the process of design making.[50] Of particular note is the role of the lotus in the development of *Shahnama* iconography in Ilkhanid painting. As we have seen in the image of Zahhak, the lotus motif appears as a device to embellish thrones, but it also functions as heraldry in rulers' costumes in the Great Mongol *Shahnama*.[51] In the earliest surviving copies of illustrated *Shahnama* manuscripts, known as the Small *Shahnama*s (north-west Iran or Baghdad, c. 1300)[52], the flame is often incorporated into the images of dragons[53], which may have been derived from Chinese or Central Asian textile designs,[54] whereas it is also combined with other animals, for example a *qiling*-like animal, called the *karg*.[55] Perhaps, Iranian painters found the flame a convenient device to enhance the image of mythical animals.

My final observation touches on Ilkhanid monuments decorated with Buddhist motifs. Interestingly, Islamic and Buddhist elements, such as Qur'anic inscriptions and lotus motifs, appear side by side in religious buildings of the Ilkhanid period.[56] Such a mixture of disparate motifs was perhaps not so controversial, assuming that by that time the lotus had lost its original Buddhist significance, and that some symbolic

[47] For further discussion, see X. Liu, *Silk and Religion: An Exploration of Material Life and the Thought of People, AD 600-1200* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998); R. Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road: Overland Trade and Cultural Exchange from Antiquity to the Fifteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 8-9.

[48] For dragons in Ilkhanid art, see Curatola, *Draghi*, pp. 65-73; for clouds in Ilkhanid art, see Yuka Kadoi, "Cloud Patterns: The Exchange of Ideas between China and Iran under the Mongols." *Oriental Art* n.s. 48 no. 2 (2002), pp. 25-36. For further discussion on *chinoiserie* in Ilkhanid art, see Rawson, *Chinese Ornament*, pp. 147-56.

[49] For example, see J. Watt and A. Wardwell, *When Silk Was Gold: Central Asian and Chinese Textiles* (New York: Abrams, 1997), cat. nos. 15-9, 35-47.

[50] J. Bloom, *Paper Before Print: The History and Impact of Paper in the Islamic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 178.

[51] See Grabar and Blair, *Epic Images and Contemporary History*, nos. 12, 37, 42, 50 and 56.

[52] For the Small *Shahnama*s, see M. S. Simpson, *The Illustration of an Epic: The Earliest Shahnama Manuscripts* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1979).

[53] *Ibid*., figs. 40, 42 and 91-2.

[54] Watt and Wardwell, *When Silk Was Gold*, cat. nos. 17-8.

[55] For example, see Simpson, *The Illustration of an Epic*, 177-9, figs. 37-8, 59-61. For the *karg*, see R. Ettinghausen, *Studies in Muslim Iconography: I. The Unicorn* (Washington DC: Lord Baltimor Press, 1950), pp. 101-6.

[56] See L. Komaroff and S. Carboni eds., *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in West Asia, 1256-1353* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002), figs. 151-2.

aspects of the motif had possibly been re-interpreted in an Islamic context. In the case of the lotus border decoration found in the stucco *mihrab* of Sultan Uljaitu at the Masjid-i Jami‘ of Isfahan, the motif, suggesting flowerage, appears to have symbolized a gate to paradise.

Judging from the above discussion, there is no evidence that Buddhism was viewed negatively in Islamic Iran; nor was its art tradition disregarded by Iranian artists. Even though the political situation prevented Buddhism from propagating, the Buddhist heritage was deeply rooted in Iranian soil. The multi-cultural atmosphere made it possible to establish a unique composite of Islamic and Buddhist styles in architecture and a curious amalgamation of Buddhist and Iranian iconography in painting. Owing to the nature of Ilkhanid ornaments, which meant that motifs were transferable from one medium to another thanks to the wide use of paper cartoons for the process of design making, Buddhist elements were soon translated into their own artistic idioms and became fashionable motifs in late 13th- and early 14th-century Iranian art. In sum, the Buddhist contribution is one of the fundamental parameters in assessing the Iranian renaissance in art and architecture.

Appendix: select references on historical and cultural aspects of Buddhism in Ilkhanid Iran (published after 2000)

A. Akasoy, C. Burnett and R. Yoeli-Tlalim eds., *Rashīd al-Dīn: Agent and Mediator of Cultural Exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran* (London–Turin: The Warburg Inst., 2013).

A. Akasoy, C. Burnett and R. Yoeli-Tlalim eds., *Islam and Tibet: Interactions along the Musk Routes* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016).

F. Calzolaio and F. Fiaschetti, “Prophets of the East: The Ilkhanid Historian Rashīd al-Dīn on the Buddha, Laozi and Confucius and the Question of his Chinese Sources (Part 1).” *Iran and the Caucasus* 23/1 (2019), pp. 17-34.

F. Calzolaio and F. Fiaschetti, “Prophets of the East: The Ilkhanid Historian Rashīd al-Dīn on the Buddha, Laozi and Confucius and the Question of his Chinese Sources (Part 2).” *Iran and the Caucasus* 23/2 (2019), pp. 145-166.

J. Elverskog, *Buddhism and Islam on the Silk Road* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

H. Fahimi and R. Tsuchihashi (eds.), *Report on the Iran-Japan Joint Research on the Diffusion of Buddhism in Iran*, 2005 (Nara: Research Center for Silk Roadology, 2006).

S. M. Grupper, “The Buddhist Sanctuary-Vihāra of Labnasagut and the Il-Qan Hülegü: An Overview of Il-Qanid Buddhism and Related Matters.” *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 13 (2004), pp. 5-77.

Y. Kadoi, *Islamic Chinoiserie: The Art of Mongol Iran* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

Y. Kadoi, 'The Mongols Enthroned.' In *The Diez Albums: Contexts and Contents*, eds. Ch. Rauch, J. Gonnella and F. Weis (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 243-75.

R. Prazniak, "Ilkhanid Buddhism: Traces of a Passage in Eurasian History." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 56/3 (2014), pp. 650-80.

M. Vaziri, *Buddhism in Iran: An Anthropological Approach to Traces and Influences* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2012).

Qaraqorum's Afterlife: Centres and Peripheries in the late Yuan and early Ming Periods

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Abstract: The capital of the Mongol Empire, due to its favourable location, was not only the symbolic centre of power for the medieval Mongols, but also performed several key functions in the political, economic, and military administration of the empire. Throughout the thirteenth century, and even after the city's decline in the fourteenth century, its strategic and ideological value remained undisputed. Control of the region around Qaraqorum, therefore, became a prerogative for all those who wanted to dominate the Yuan territories and claim the legacy of the Mongol empire. By examining some Chinese sources of the period, the article shows how shaping a linkage with Mongolia, in terms of symbolic geography as well as words of power, remained a fundamental priority of the emperors ruling over East Asia well beyond the mid-fourteenth century and the end of the Yuan dynasty.

Keywords: Tuq Temür, Yuan Dynasty, principle of collegiality, Qaraqorum, Inner Asian frontier

Introduction

Among the few medieval sources on Qaraqorum, a notable commemoration of the city is to be found in the words of the Yuan scholar Xu Youren 許有任 (1286–1364), who had been commissioned to celebrate the city in a stele inscription dating from 1346:

> "As for the place where Our Dynasty arose, it towers above the myriad states. […] From the Han down there has been none comparable to us.' In establishing the capital at Helin 和林 [Qorum] the foundation for creating a state was set up."[1]

The stele in question not only retraces the history of the medieval capital since its foundation under Chinggis Qan (r. 1206-1227) in 1220 and fortification under Ögödei (r. 1229–1241), but also bears witness to the uninterrupted interest that the Yuan dynasty (1260–1368) took in this territory, even after the city was affected by various disputes in the context of intra-Mongol conflicts and struggles for power.[2]

[1] The text is recorded in three collections, for details see: F. W. Cleaves, "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1346." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* Vol. 15, 1/2 (June 1952), 1-123. The translation is a slightly modified version of Cleaves' translation: F. W. Cleaves, "Inscription of 1346", p. 31.

[2] For a recent overview of the structural development of the city across these various periods, see: S. Reichert, *A layered history of Karakorum: stratigraphy and periodization in the city center*, Bonn Contributions to Asian Archaeology 8 (Bonn: Vfgarch, 2019).

The capital, due to its favourable position, was the symbolic centre of power for the imperial Mongols, and also performed several fundamental functions in the framework of the political, economic and military administration of the empire. Accounts from the period of the United Mongol Empire (1206–1259) testify famously to Qaraqorum and its surrounding area as being a place for diplomatic encounters, and for the gathering of artisans and craftsmen from all over the empire.[3] Additionally, as Dardess has shown, the city served as a strategic point for revenue collection, and for managing military activities in the steppe region.[4] Qaraqorum, as well as other court towns across the empire, constituted in fact a specific layer in the tripartite division of the imperial space: a layer which served to facilitate communication between the conquered sedentary areas and the steppe region where the imperial elite and its military forces resided, as well as gathering and redistributing resources within the empire.[5]

The attention towards the administration of Qaraqorum remained an imperial prerogative throughout the course of the Yuan period. The *Yuanshi* 元史 (*History of the Yuan Dynasty*, presented in 1370) records that still in the 14th century, and especially after the Branch Central Secretariat for Qaraqorum and other areas (*Helin deng chu xing zhongshu sheng* 和林等處行中書省) was established in 1307,[6] high ranking officials were appointed to the supervision of the area as a reward for their meritorious services and due to the skill that they (and their ancestors) had shown in the service of the state.[7] Similarly, during the 14th century, several attempts to optimize the administration of the region were made, and this period also witnessed structural changes to the city.[8]

These measures show the imperial elite's constant attention toward this city and the surrounding region, something which didn't end with the Yuan dynasty, but remained a crucial feature also of Ming policies.

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[3] See, among others, the famous account by William of Rubruck (fl. 1248–1255) translated in: P. Jackson and D. Morgan (eds.): *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: his journey to the Great Khan Möngke*. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1990), p. 209-216. See also the "Notes on a Journey" (*jixing* 紀行) by Zhang Dehui 張德輝 (1195-1274), recently translated by Ch. Atwood, *The Rise of the Mongols: Five Chinese sources* (Indianapolis: Hacket Publishing, 2021), p. 163-176.

[4] J. W. Dardess, "From Mongol Empire to Yüan Dynasty." Monumenta Serica 30 (1972–1973), 117–65, esp. p. 118.

[5] J. W. Dardess "From Mongol Empire", p. 121.

[6] Song Lian 宋濂, *Yuanshi* 元史 (repr. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), *juan* 58: 1383.

[7] Notable examples are the high officials Yochichar (*Yuechicha'er* 月赤察兒, 1249–1311), and Harqasun (*Halahasun* 哈剌哈孫, 1257–1308). The *Yuanshi* biography of Yochichar records that emperor Wuzong 武宗 (Qaishan, r. 1307-1311), on occasion of the establishment of the branch secretariat for Helin [Qorum] and other areas, appointed Yochichar as Right Minister, to reward his loyalty and meritorious service to the state. See: *Yuanshi* 119: 2952. The *Yuanshi* biography of Harghasun also provides some data on the economic aspects of this prestigious position: see *Yuanshi* 136: 3294.

[8] The *Yuanshi* (*juan* 16: 3909) testifies to the strong military relevance of Qaraqorum at the eve of Temür's (Emperor Chengzong 成宗, r. 1294-1307) reign. See also the relevant section on imperial geography in: *Yuanshi* 58: 1382-3, translated in: F.W. Cleaves, "Inscription of 1346", p. 25. For a recent study on the development of the city see: S. Reichert, *A layered history.*

The Early Ming

Given the military confrontations with the remnants of the Yuan dynasty, engagement with the steppe region and the area around Qaraqorum was a priority also for the early Ming emperors. The *Mingshi* 明史 (*History of the Ming Dynasty*, submitted 1739) records various measures adopted for a better control of the territory.[9] The interest toward the border region around Qaraqorum was only part of a general preoccupation of the Ming (1368–1644) with the legacy of the Yuan. Recent scholarship has in fact underlined how the Ming dynasty capitalized on Mongol Yuan ideology and imperial dynamics in establishing their rule over East Asia and seeking their place within broader Eurasian dynamics. This went from adopting Yuan administrative divisions and the famous postal system up to the inclusion of Mongolian and Inner Asian officials in the administrative elites of the Ming.[10] However, the context in which the Ming borrowed the most from the Mongols was in their display of royal ideology. It is specifically in the way that they portrayed their imperial mandate and legitimacy that the Ming declared themselves successors of the Mongols not only in East Asia, but also more generally in Eurasian terms. This profoundly shaped the diplomatic language and royal image of the Ming emperors.[11]

Recently Christopher Eirkson has brought forth the debate by showing how the Ming's efforts to portray themselves as successors of the Yuan influenced their representation of geography as well as their attitude towards the steppe region. [12] Not only did early Ming geographical representations, such as the *Amalgamated Map* (*Da Ming Hunyi Tu*大明混一圖, 1389), reflect an image of Eurasia that had been moulded on Yuan cartographic precedents – thus breaking with previous Song (960–1276) conventions – but they were peculiar also because they didn't show fortifications at the frontier with Inner Asia. This seems to contrast with the frequent military interactions of the Ming with the Northern Yuan dynasty in the steppe region, due to which fortifications would have been valuable information to display on a map.[13] Instead, the lack of defined boundaries in the representation of this space testifies, so

[9] Relevant passages are collected and analysed in: Dalizhabu 达力扎布, "*Bei Yuan chuqi de jiangyu he han wo'erduo diwang*北元初期的疆域和汗斡耳朵地望" [The Territorial Extent of the Early Northern Yuan and the Location of the Khan's Court], *Menggushi yanjiu*蒙古史研究, vol. 3 (1989), p. 88-107.

[10] Notable studies on the topic are by: M. Rossabi ed., *Eurasian Influences on Yuan China* (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2013); D. M. Robinson, *In the Shadow of the Mongol Empire: Ming China and Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Hosung Shim, "The Postal Roads of the Great Khans in Central Asia under the Mongol-Yuan Empire." *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 44 (2014), 405-69. For Inner Asian elites at the service of the Ming see, among others, J. S. Lotze, *Translation of Empire: Mongol Legacy, Language Policy, and the early Ming World Order, 1368-1453*, PhD Dissertation, University of Manchester, 2016.

[11] On this, see among others David Robinson's analysis of what he calls the Ming "Chinggisid Narrative" in: D. Robinson, *In the Shadow of the Mongol Empire*, p. 129-157.

[12] Ch. Erikson, "Early Ming Imperial Ambitions: The Legacy of the Mongol Yuan in Spatial Representations and Historical Judgements." *Frontiers of History in China* Vol. 12/3 (2017), 465-84.

[13] Ch. Erikson, "Early Ming Imperial Ambitions", p. 471.

Eirkson, to "a rhetorical desire for an extension of Ming authority over a strategically troublesome area."[14] This desire was framed rhetorically also in the traditional terms of orthodox succession (*zhengtong* 正统) at the inception of the Ming period. A relevant document in this regard is the proclamation of the Hongwu 洪武 Emperor (r. 1368–1398), stating that:

> "The Hu [胡] who established the Yuan arose from the desert and in a short time amalgamated China with the whole world (中國混一海內). At the founding of the country the assisting officials were nearly all illustrious and influential. Thus, government was harmonious and ordered. [But] petty men accumulated power and craftily competed for advancement; they selected relatives and friends for positions and produced cliques. Officials at home and abroad (中外百司) were avaricious and without shame. Because of this, moral standards became daily weaker and there was no more discipline (the legal code lacked vitality). Finally, as a result, [the dynasty] collapsed – soldiers could not save it."[15]

Beyond the common cliché on the Yuan dynasty originating from the steppe region,[16] two elements are noteworthy here, namely the representation of the empire in terms of "home and abroad" (*zhongwai* 中外), and the stress on administrative elites as important agents in shaping the destiny of the empire. Further, the spatial representation of the empire links, in a relation of complementarity, the affairs of China with the situation outside of the Middle Kingdom: here one could probably see a reference to Inner Asia and Inner Asian elites. These elements are strikingly reminiscent of the rhetoric appearing in Yuan edicts from the mid-Yuan period, and more specifically from the period of Tuq Temür (the Wenzong文宗 Emperor, r. 1328–1332), to which we shall now turn our attention.

Tuq Temür's Centers and Peripheries

Tuq Temür's ascension to the throne was famously one of the moments in Yuan history when the relation with Inner Asia played a fundamental role in legitimizing imperial decisions. The restoration of the line of Qaishan (Emperor Wuzong 武宗, r. 1307-1311) to the throne, following one of the bloodiest civil wars in Yuan history, had witnessed Inner Asian princes supporting the enthronement of Tuq Temür's brother,

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[14] Ch. Erikson, "Early Ming Imperial Ambitions", p. 473.

[15] 元本胡人起自沙漠一旦據有中國混一海內建國之初輔弼之臣率皆賢達進用者又皆君子. 是以政治翕然可觀及其後也小人擅權.奸邪競進舉用親舊結為朋黨中外百司貪婪無話.由是法度日弛紀綱不振至于土崩瓦解卒不可救. *Ming shilu* 明實錄 [Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty], Hongwu 洪武, *juan* 15: 211 (ed. Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo中央研究院 歷史語言研究所), (accessed via Scripta Sinica, August 2021 at: http://hanchi.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/mqlc/hanjishilu?25:1849185162:10:/raid/ihp_ebook2/hanji/ttsweb.ini:::@SPAWN#top). The English translation is by Ch. Erikson, "Early Ming Imperial Ambitions", p. 477.

[16] This same *topos* appears, for example, also in the "Memorial for submitting the *Yuanshi*" (*Jin Yuanshi biao* 進元史表), in: *Yuanshi* 15: 4673. It has been translated in: F. W. Cleaves, "The Memorial for Presenting the Yuan Shih." *Asia Major* 1 (1988), 59–69 at p. 61-62.

Qoshila (Emperor Mingzong 明宗, r. 1329), something on which the future emperor Wenzong wanted to capitalize after his own enthronement.[17] His political manifesto is recorded in the edict known as the "Pacification of Dawlat Shah" (*ping Daolasha* 平倒剌沙), which states:

> "Our Great Ancestor [Taizu 太祖, i.e. Chinggis Qan], the Emperor, initiated the Empire. The Generation Founder (*Shizu*世祖, i.e. Qubilai), the Emperor, unified everything within the oceans, thereupon he established the practices which served as the threads of the Great Unity（混一海宇爰立定制以一統緒）. […] The powerful ministers Dawlat Shah and Ubaydullah usurped authority for their own interests, drifted apart from the old Mongol families（疏遠勳舊）, discarded the loyal and virtuous [i.e. Han officials]（廢棄忠良）, brought chaos into the laws of the ancestors（變亂祖宗法度）, emptied the government repositories for the benefit of their own kind [⋯] These are the crimes of Dawlat Shah. Inside and outside the administration, a similar rage, a common intention（於縣宇中外同心）: to withstand the enemy with courage and determination [⋯], to return to the institutions of the sacred ancestors, and to pacify everything within the Four Seas（安四海）.[18]

This edict shares some similarities with the words of the Hongwu Emperor mentioned above. The claims of universality (in reference to Qubilai's enterprise) are here expressed likewise in terms of "inside and outside (the administration)" (*zhongwai* 中外), indicating that the affairs of the Yuan empire were connected to and influenced by the dynamics of Inner Asia. Another example of this is to be found in a further edict of Tuq Temür, stating that:

> "And you, my local and foreign, high- and low-ranking subjects, investigate, each of you, your heart, and you will find my intention."[19]

These passages show how the imperial enterprise of the Yuan dynasty is perceived as a joint effort of the emperor with the support of elite members and officials from China and from outside. The intentions of high- and low-ranking subjects are not only the reason why dynasties may decay, but they are called upon, in this instance, as the necessary force to build Tuq Temür's new reign. Further, in this passage, the "outside" (*wai* 外) can be variously interpreted: on the one hand it might be a nod to the military elites headed by the Qipchaq general El Temür (d. 1333) and the Mongol Bayan of the Merkid (d. 1340), masterminds behind the coup leading to

[17] Further details in: Hsiao Ch'i-Ch'ing "Mid-Yüan China.", in *The Cambridge History of China Vol. 6. Alien Regimes and Border States 907-1386*, eds. D. Twitchett and J. K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 490-560, p.545-547.

[18] Zhao Shiyan 趙世延 and Yu Ji 虞集 (auth.), Zhou Shaochuan 周少川,Wei Xuntian, 魏訓田, Xie Hui 謝輝 (eds.), *Jingshi dadian jijiao* 經世大典輯校 [*Critical edition of the Compendium for Governing the World*], (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2020), vol. 2, p. 331-332.

[19] 亦惟爾中外大小之臣，各究乃心，以稱朕意，*Yuanshi* 33: 738.

Tuq Temür's enthronement.[20] On the other hand, it might be a nod to those members of the Mongol imperial house who ruled over Central Asia, and who supported the restoration on the imperial throne of the line of Qaishan. In any case, it is evident that Yuan emperors looked at Inner Asian dynamics as a determining factor in Chinese affairs and considered the two territories as two facets of the same imperial mandate. The shared responsibility of emperor and officials in shaping the destiny of the state is an idea which reminds us of the "principle of collegiality", a leading decision-making principle in the political and legal history of the medieval Mongols.[21] A similar notion is traceable in Yuan edicts already from the period of Qubilai (r. 1260-1294). One example is his edict directed at the kingdom of Annam in 1261:

> "We recall that You had already submitted under the previous ruler and sent local products as tribute. Therefore We issued an imperial decree, and We sent the Director of the Ministry of Rites in the capacity of special appointee for the South, Meng Jia 孟甲, and the Vice-director of the Ministry of Rites Li Wenjun 李文俊 as his deputy, to proclaim to the scholars, officials and common people of Your reign (本國官僚士庶) that in the matter of uniforms and caps, ceremonies and customs everything will remain as before, there will be no change."[22]

It is clear from Qubilai's words that acknowledging the imperial mandate of the Mongols - and contributing to their imperial project - is a collective responsibility of all subjects of the empire: not only rulers have to submit, but also the various individuals and communities under them are called to actively contribute to the Mongol imperial enterprise.

Conclusion

The few documents addressed here are useful to reframe some aspects of Mongol Yuan and East Asian history. First of all, they show that Mongol political traditions and symbols remained fundamental tools of legitimation also in the mid- and late Yuan periods. Tuq Temür acted very much like a Eurasian ruler rather than simply as a "Confucian" or "confucianised" one, as scholarship traditionally tended to portray him.[23]

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[20] For details see: Hsiao Ch'i-Ch'ing "Mid-Yüan China.", p. 541-545.

[21] For the "principle of collegiality" see: F. Hodous, "The *Quriltai* as a Legal Institution in the Mongol Empire." Central Asiatic Journal 56 (2012/2013), 87-102. Endicott-West phrases it as "consultative tradition", see E. Endicott-West, *Mongolian rule in China: Local Administration in the Yuan Dynasty* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 54.

[22] 及念卿在先朝已歸款臣附，遠貢方物，故頒詔旨，遣禮部郎中孟甲充安南宣諭使，禮部員外郎李文俊充副使，諭本國官僚、士庶：凡衣冠、典禮、風俗百事，一依本國舊例，不須更改. Lê Tắc 黎崱, *Annan zhilüe* 安南志略 [*Concise Records of Annam*], ed. by Wu Shangqing; 武尚清, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), *juan* 2: 46.

[23] See for example J. W. Dardess, *Conquerors and Confucians: Aspects of Political Change in Late Yüan China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973). p. 31-51.

Moreover, Mongol rule in China linked the destiny of the Middle Kingdom to Inner Asian dynamics, conventions, and ideology in an unprecedented way, and one that shaped imperial rhetoric and policies for centuries. Since the foundation of the Yuan dynasty, in fact, the way in which the imperial space and the imperial project were spoken about changed. As China became an integral part of Eurasia, new formulations of the idea of universal empire entered Yuan edicts and imperial propaganda. The founder of the dynasty, Qubilai, referred to his government using metaphors of universality and equality: his edicts portray an empire in which "near and distant [subjects] are looked upon with equal benevolence" (*yishi tongren* 一视同仁).[24] After decades of intra-Mongol conflicts across Eurasia, however, the image of the empire started to be expressed in terms of complementarity, of "inside and outside" (*zhongwai* 中外). This rhetoric was then adopted by the Ming, together with the idea and principle of a collective duty towards shaping the imperial destiny. The Mongol principle of collegiality, which had been integrated in the administrative system for decades throughout the Yuan period, remained a functional device for the Ming rulers too, as they strove to build their empire by including various Mongol and Central Asian elites in the administrative ranks of China.

Thus, from the Yuan period onwards, the emperors of the Middle Kingdom were never ever solely emperors of China: they had inevitably to come to terms with their position as the successors of the Mongol rulers of Eurasia. Qaraqorum is the symbol of this ideological shift and of a heritage which shaped further centuries of East Asian history after the Mongol period and the destruction of their imperial capital. The Qing scholar Li Wentian 李文田 (1834–1895), writing more than five hundred years after Xu Youren's compilation of the commemorative stele of 1346, testifies to that in one of his poems:

> Broken stelae cover the ground and there is no one to pick [them] up.
>
> I sigh deeply for the *hanlin*, Xu of Guitang.[25]

The traces of the place where the medieval Mongols built, hosted, and displayed the many elements of their universal empire might have quickly disappeared after the 14th century. Yet, even after Qaraqorum's decay, even after the stones broke and the inscriptions disappeared, their words remained to convey the symbolic heritage of the Mongol Empire, to build the foundation of a new understanding of the world, which shaped Eurasia for centuries to come.

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[24] See on this F. Fiaschetti, "Tradition, Innovation and the construction of Qubilai's diplomatic rhetoric", *Ming Qing Yanjiu* 18 (2014), 65-96.

[25] 殘 碑满地無 人拾，太 息圭塘評 翰林. Li Wentian 李文田, *Ti E'ren Helin tu yinben*題 俄 人 和林 圓 印 本 ["Superscribing a Printed Copy of the Russian's Helin Plates "] Text and translation in F. Cleaves, "Inscription of 1346", p. 6.

Travelogues of the early twentieth century and Qaraqorum

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Abstract: In the twentieth century, a large number of scientific research campaigns were organized in Asia, including China and Mongolia, by various countries, such as Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and Japan. Western tourists or scientists who travelled to Mongolia during the 20th century and wrote reports can be divided, in the framework of this paper, into two groups: Russian tourists and scientists on the one hand, and members of the Sino-Swedish expedition campaign on the other. Among these travellers and scholars of Mongolia were Nikolay Przhevalsky (1839-1888), Pyotr Kozlov (1863-1935) led by Sven Hedin (1865-1952), and Haslund-Christensen (1896-1948). The travel notes left by these people cover almost the whole of Mongolia, and now these travel notes are included in Mongolian local research and used as material for the country's history and politics, while details about farming, religion, rites, and rituals will play an important role in future research. This is especially true for the Sino-Swedish expedition as numerous travel diaries from the Sino-Swedish joint field trip to Northwest China have been published, detailing the lives of the inhabitants of Inner Mongolia as well as Xinjiang. One interesting difference among the travellers mentioned above is that some of them visited Qaraqorum while others did not. The paper will investigate the reasons for these different itineraries, as well as some of the information provided by these travellers about Mongolia.

Keywords: Mongolia, ethnography, Russian explorers, Sino-swedish expedition, Qing Dynasty

There are many ways for human beings to find out about their past, one of the most important being written records. In the past century, with the development of the analytical profession, new methods have emerged, such as photography and image acquisition, which record the events of the past and the human condition in great detail. Regarding Mongolian history, available sources from Western observers are far more numerous than indigenous writings. In particular, travel notes written by Western tourists and explorers traveling across Mongolia in the twentieth century may help fill some gaps in the information.[1] These travelogues vary depending on the level of education and personal interests of the traveller, but when combined, they can provide important information for understanding many aspects of Mongolian history, politics, life, customs, religion, and even cities such as Qaraqorum.

[1] On travel writing as a genre, see C. Thompson, *Travel Writing* (London: Routledge, 2011).

In the twentieth century, a large number of scientific research campaigns were organized in Asia, including China and Mongolia, by various countries, such as Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and Japan. This period coincided with the decline of the Manchu Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the expansion of the political alliances of the Western powers, and the looting of the economy. In the last years of the Qing Dynasty, the increasing contacts with external powers meant not only conflicts, but also the introduction of new Western knowledge and skills, and the concepts of "democracy" and "science" expanded China's perception of society and state.

Growing economic and political relations between the Manchu Empire and the West set the background for more and more individuals traveling to Central and East Asia. Western tourists or scientists who travelled to Mongolia during the 20th century and wrote reports can be divided, in the framework of this paper, into two groups: Russian tourists and scientists on the one hand, and members of the Sino-Swedish expedition campaign on the other.[2] Among these travellers and scholars of Mongolia were Nikolay Przhevalsky (1839-1888), Pyotr Kozlov (1863-1935) led by Sven Hedin (1865-1952), and Haslund-Christensen (1896-1948). The travel notes left by these people cover almost the whole of Mongolia, and now these travel notes are included in Mongolian local research and used as material for the country's history and politics, while details about farming, religion, rites, and rituals will play an important role in future research. This is especially true for the Sino-Swedish expedition as numerous travel diaries from the Sino-Swedish joint field trip to Northwest China have been published, detailing the lives of the inhabitants of Inner Mongolia as well as Xinjiang.

One interesting difference among the travellers mentioned above is that some of them visited Qaraqorum while others did not. What was the reason for this? In my opinion, the itinerary of the travellers changed based on their interests, whether they were historical or scientific. This is most evident in two of the main travelogues from this period, which will be analysed in this paper, namely the travel notes by Maisky and Larson. Larson was a Swedish missionary who lived and worked in Mongolia for 46 years. He made little mention of Mongolian history or archaeology because of his lack of interest in history or scholarship. In particular, no mention was made of Qaraqorum. On the contrary, he wrote in great detail about his experience in Mongolia, focusing in particular on the life and customs of the Mongols.

The situation was different for Maisky, who was a Russian historian and diplomat. As a historian, he wrote extensively about the ancient history of Mongolia, especially its capital city, including the history of the Mongol domination of Russia.

[2] On Scandinavian explorers in 20th century Mongolia, see Ch. Braae, "Scandinavian Explorers in Mongolia." in *Among Herders of Inner Mongolia: The Haslund-Christensen Collection at the National Museum of Denmark*, ed. Ch. Braae (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2017), pp. 46-105.

It is also important to note that these travellers were not like Marco Polo or Plano Carpini, who visited Mongolia in the thirteenth century, and whose itineraries have been analysed by Thomas T. Allsen.[3] Maisky and Larson never saw Qaraqorum with their own eyes but only saw the ruins of the city. It should be noted, therefore, that these notes are not the primary source of research on the former capital of the Mongol Empire; they only provide information about the ruins of the city at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Russian explorers and their travel notes

During the Russian Empire (1721-1917), most foreigners who travelled to Mongolia focused on religion, trade, and exploration. The missionaries were mostly Russian Orthodox missionaries, while the explorers were mostly researchers supported by the Russian Geographical Society. As for traders, they traded between Mongolia and Russia. They mainly collected Mongolian livestock and raw materials.

The first explorer of the 19th-20th centuries was the sinologist and theologian Nikita Jakowlewitsch Bitschurin (1777-1853). He wrote a travelogue entitled "Notes on Mongolia".[4] He used materials in Chinese to study Mongolian history, ethnography, and geography, including "History of the First Four Kings of Genghis Khan's Descendants",[5] "An Overview of Early Modern Dzungar and East Turkestan".[6] He also wrote in Mongolian, mostly notably "A Historical Review of the Oirats or Kalmyks from the 15th Century to the Present".[7] Nikolay Przhevalsky (1839-1888) also made five expeditions to Central Asia. As a result of these trips, he wrote: "Mongolia, the Tangut Country, and the Solitudes of Northern Tibet",[8]"Khangai"[9] and "Journey to the Land of Wild Camels".[10] The explorer and ethnographer Grigory Potanin (1835-1920) travelled extensively in Mongolia. He authored two

[3] T. T. Allsen, *"Imperial Posts, West, East and North: A Review Article Adam J. Silverstein, Postal Systems in the Pre-Modern Time Islamic World." Achivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 7/11 (2011), pp. 237-76.

[4] Н. Я. *Бичурин, Записки о Монголии I-II* (Санктпетербург: Типография Карла Крайя, 1828).

[5] Н. Я. Бичурин, *История первых четырёх ханов из дома Чингисова* (Санктпетербург: Типография Карла Крайла, 1829).

[6] Н. Я. Бичурин, *Описание Чжунгарии и Восточного Туркестана в древнем и нынешнем состоянии* (Санктпетербург: Типография Карла Крайла, 1829).

[7] Vv.Aa., *Mongyol sudulul-un nebterkei toli. Olan ulus-un mongyol sudulul /* Encyclopaedia of Mongolian studies (Huhhot, 2019), pp. 108-109.

[8] N. v. Prschewalski, *Reisen in der Mongolei, im Gebiet der Tanguten und den Wüsten Nordtibets in den Jahren 1870 bis 1873* (Jena: Hermann Costenoble, 1877). English translation: N. Prejevalsky, *Mongolia, the Tangut Country, and the Solitudes of Northern Tibet*: *being a Narrative of Three Years' Travel in Eastern High Asia* (London: S. Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1876).

[9] N. M. Prshewalski, *Hanhai: Von Kuldschaüber den Tianschan und zum Lob-nor* (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1952).

[10] N. M. Prshewalski and H. Sträubig: *In das Land der wilden Kamele: von Kjachta zu den Quellen des Gelben Flusses, die Erforschung des nördlichen Randgebietes von Tibet und der Weg über den Lobnor durch das Tarimbecken* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1954).

books, "Tangut-Tibetan margins of China and Central Mongolia",[11] and "Essays on Northwestern Mongolia".[12] Aleksej Pozdneev (1851-1920) also travelled extensively in Mongolia and published "Mongolia and the Mongols"[13] and "Sketches of Life of Buddhist Monasteries and Buddhist Clergy in Mongolia".[14] Pyotr Kozlov (1863-1935) also travelled to Mongolia and became the first scientist to discover the secrets of Qara Qoto. He wrote a travelogue entitled "Mongolia and Amdo and the Dead City of Qara-Qoto" (1923).[15] Further, the Russian historian and politician Ivan Maisky wrote: "Mongolia on the Eve of Revolution" (1921).[16]

Notes on Qaraqorum

Among those who travelled to Mongolia in the first half of the twentieth century, most of those who reached central Mongolia and explored the ancient Mongolian capital of Qaraqorum were Russians. Among them is the Russian historian and politician Maisky (1884-1975), who arrived in Qaraqorum in 1919 and wrote in his diary about the remains of the city.

Maisky was a Russian-born Soviet politician, foreign affairs officer, and historian. As a historian, he focused on the ancient capital of the Mongols, who ruled Russia for hundreds of years. His writings are important for later researchers. His travel diary, "Mongolia on the Eve of Revolution" details the location of the city of Qaraqorum at the time, the size of the city, as well as its remaining walls and fortifications surrounding the city.

"*Another remarkable monument of the past is Khara khorum (or black ruin, Khar Balgas) on the banks of the Orkhon River, twenty kilometers north of Erdene Zuu. There were large cracks on both sides, flattened to the ground. What was that? Is it*

[11] Г. Н. Потанин, *Тангутско-Тибетская окраина Китая и Центральная Монголия* (Санкт-Петербург: Типография А. С. Суронина, 1893). See also related entries in: Vv.Aa., *Mongγol sudulul-un nebterkei toli. Olan ulus-un mongγol sudulul /* Encyclopaedia of Mongolian studies (Huhhot, 2019), p. 94.

[12] Г. Н. Потанин, *Очерки северо-западной Монголии I-IV* (С. Петербург, Типография Т. и Безобразова, 1881-1883). See Vv.Aa*., Mongγol sudulul-un nebterkei toli. Olan ulus-un mongγol sudulul /* Encyclopaedia of Mongolian studies (Huhhot, 2019), p. 94.

[13] А. М. Позднеев, *Монголия и монголы. Результаты поездки в Монголию исполненной в 1892-1983 I-II* (Санктпетербург: Типография императорской академии наук, 1896-1898). English translation in J. R. Krueger ed., Mongolia and the Mongols. Trans. by. J. R. Shaw and D. Plank (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1971).

[14] А. М. Позднеев, *Очерки быта буддийских монастырей и буддинского духовенства в Монголии в связы с отношение сего последнего к народу* (Санктпетербург: Типография императорской академии наук, 1887). English translation: A. M. Pozdneev, *Religion and Ritual in Society: Lamaist Buddhism in Late 19th Century Mongolia*. Trans. by A. Raun and L. Raun (Bloomington: The Mongolia Society, 1978). See: Vv.Aa*., Mongγol sudulul-un nebterkei toli. Olan ulus-un mongγol sudulul /* Encyclopaedia of Mongolian studies (Huhhot, 2019), pp. 94-95.

[15] П. К. Козлов, *Монголия и Амдо и мертвый город Харахото* (Москва–Петроград: Государственное издательство географической литературы, 1923).

[16] И. М. Майский, *Монголия накануне революции* (Москва: Издательство восточной литературы, 1959).

a door? At a distance of 50-60 meters around the wall, there are 6-7 gravel mounds with the remains of a mainline made of clay and gravel.… There are rubbles of a watchtower near the west wall, half of which is about 15 meters above the ground now. It looks very high in the past. The city stretched from east to west, covering an area of at least 4 square kilometers."[17]

Until the early twentieth century, the remnants of Qaraqorum had only been eroded by winds and rain. Because of the country's indigenous beliefs, it was forbidden to disturb the base of this ancient capital. Nomadic Mongolians have a long tradition of refraining from touching or destroying nature and its remains. According to Maisky's account, two herders said to him, "Hello, Russian. Do not disturb this debris, or it will bring you misery." (*Сайн байна уу Орос оо, Битгий хөндөөрэй, Золгүй юм болно шүү*).[18] From this conversation, it can be seen that although the city of Qaraqorum had been destroyed by the beginning of the 20th century, in the hearts of the Mongols, its importance as the capital of the Mongol Empire still existed.

By 1919, all that was left outside the city walls was gone. Only some remnants of the original palaces and buildings, such as fragments of stone, bricks, and fragments of pottery, were scattered everywhere.

> *As you walk slowly along the steppes around the wall, there seem to be traces of antiquity everywhere. Existing buildings are scattered with bumps, and excavated sites and traces. There are also piles of bricks, pottery, and granite fragments. There is also a stone pool, a large millstone, a grass-covered irrigation ditch, and a street full of building debris on either side. Here and there, there are cluttered granite fragments that seem to be the wreckage of columns, balconies, and crossbars. One or two of them have various patterns, a lion's claws with sharp nails, a tortoise's snout, a wheel and indistinct rings and circles. There are also occasional inscriptions, but they have been erased or have faded.*[19]

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[17] "Өнгөрсөн үеийн бас нэг гайхалтай дурсгал нь Эрдэнэ зуу хийдээс хойд зүгт 20-иод км зайд Орхон голын хөвөөнд орших Хархорин(буюу Хар Балгас)болой. Хоёр талд нь том гэгчийн сэтэрхий гаран газартай тэгширсэн байв. Юу байсан юм бол? Хаалга юм болов уу? Ханын эргэн тойронд50-60 метрийн зайд мөн л шавар, хайргаас бүтсэн тэргүүн шугамын үлдэгдэл маягтай овгорууд байх бөгөөд тал бүрд нь 6-7 ширхэг харагдана... Баруун ханын ойролцоо харуулын цамхагийн туурь байх бөгөөд одоо хагас нь нурж унасан энэ үлдэгдэл газраас 15 орчим метр өндөр байгааг харахад урьд нь их өндөр байсан бололтой. Тэр хот 4км квадратаас багагүй талбайг эзлэн зүүнээс баруун тийш сунан тогтсон байж...". И. М. Майский, *Монгол орон хувьсгалын босгон дээр (Mongolia on the Eve of Revolution),* (Ulaanbaatar, 2014), pp. 102-103.

[18] И. М. Майский, *Монгол орон хувьсгалын*, pp. 105.

[19] "Хэрмийг тойрсон хээр талаар аажуухан сажлан явахад хаа сайгүй л өнө эртний ул мөр байх мэт. Урд өмнө нь байсан барилгадуус хоцорсон ховил, овон товон, ухаж төнхөгдсөн ором харагдана. Энд бас бөөн бөөн тоосго, ваар шавар, боржин чулууны хагархай хөглөрчээ. Мөн чулуугаар бүтээсэн усан сан, тээрмийн том гэгчийн чулуу, өвс ногоонд дарагдсан усалгааны суваг, хоёр талаар нь байшин барилгын үлдэгдэл дүүрэн байх гудамжны ор мөр ч байх шиг. Энд тэнд эмх замбараагүй хөглөрсөн боржин чулууны хагархай байгаа нь ямар нэгэн багана, тагт, хөндлөвчөөс үлдсэн бололтой. Тэдгээрийн ганц нэг дээр элдэв хээ угалз, урт гэгчийн хурц

The ancient capital of Mongolia, which underwent centuries of historical changes and natural erosion such as wind and rain, by the beginning of the 20th century had become a place marked only by city walls and filled with pottery.

Notes on the life of Mongolians in the early twentieth century

Ethnographic research is an important part of a travel diary, as it can accurately reflect the characteristics of an ethnic group and fully reflect the life, customs, appearance, society, language, and beliefs of a people.[20] Many Russian scholars and scholars of other nationalities who participated in the joint Sino-Swedish expedition to the Northwest published detailed travelogues about Mongolia and the people around Qaraqorum in the early 20th century. Frans August Larson (1870-1957), a Westerner who lived in Mongolia for 46 years, knew Mongolia and Mongolians well. His book, "Duke of Mongolia",[21] covers many aspects of Mongolia's history, geography, climate, religion, people, and life. In it, he provided his audience with a wealth of material that is important for understanding the life and behaviour of Mongolians in the early 20th century. In the following section, we will look at how travellers' depictions of Mongolian housing, clothing, family relationships, and the position of women in the eyes of Europeans were recorded in the travelogues.

What Larson observed were customs and a way of life that was reminiscent of that described in the 13th and 14th century travelogues. Mongolians were herders, they did not live in a house in one place, rather they moved their livestock between pastures and so were continually on the move in order to find good grass and water. Therefore, their dwellings and home furniture were suitable for a nomadic herder life. The *ger* was easy to move. Also, interior furniture traditionally had a fixed location. When entering a circular *ger*, there was a *tulga* in the centre of the *ger*, with kitchen utensils on the left side of the door and Buddhist and religious objects on the opposite side. Men sat on the right side of the house, and women and children sat on the left side. They respectfully sat in the back of the *ger* whenever a visitor arrived. They also lit a fire to keep the *ger* warm and to prepare tea and food. When it was cold, they heated their home, and conversely, when the weather warmed up, the *ger* gradually became more comfortable to live in.

> "The Mongolian people dwell in a cone-shaped structure which foreigners call a *yurt* and the Mongols a *ger*. The inside framework is a crisscross lattice of wood, generally willow, bound together with short rawhide thongs. These press up into a small

хумстай арслангийн сарвуу, ёст мэлхийн хоншоор, хүрд, учир нь үл олдох цагаригъ тойргуудтай дүрс, бас хааяа зарим газарт бичээс байх боловч илт арчигдаж, элэгдэж бүдгэрсэн байх учир унших ямар ч боломж байсангүй." И. М. Майский, *Монгол орон хувьсгалын*, pp. 105-106.

[20] On travel writing and ethnography see J. P. Rubiés, "Travel Writing and Ethnography." in P. Hulme and T. Youngs eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 242-61., which focuses, however, on early modern travel writing.

[21] F. A. Larson, *Larson, Duke of Mongolia* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1930).

bundle for transport. When a *yurt* is set up, men stretch out four to eight of these sections, according to the size desired, to form a circular wall about four feet high. On opening is left on the south side in which is placed a carved door frame. Next, two workers stand in the centre of the circle and hold a wheel on poles high above their heads. Other poles are stuck cantingly into slots in the wheel with their lower ends fitted into leather loops at the top of the lattice. This makes a skeleton cone. Over this skeleton cone, with care to leave the wheel uncovered, the workers put three or four layers of wool felt, which are shaped to fit the cone and fasten them with horsehair rope. It is the custom in the autumn to renew half of the *yurt*. In the last mild days of summer, the felt is taken off the *yurt* as, shaken, and the bad pieces discarded. Then it is put on again with what was the back top layer now the front top layer, with new, felt at the back."[22]

Fig.1. Mongolian grasslands, Inner Mongolia (*photography by Walther Bosshard*)[23]

At the beginning of the last century, Mongolians wore traditional Mongolian costumes. Nowadays, traditional costumes are often worn only on holidays and anniversaries. Therefore, in order to study the clothing and ornaments of the Mongols a hundred years ago, it is clear that the detailed descriptions in these travel notes, or the pictures and recordings of that time, will be an important tool. Larson's notes detail the attire and ornaments of the Mongolian men, women, and monks of that time. The 13th century Franciscan John of Plano Carpini (1185-1252), in his travel diary, offers one of the most significant descriptions of Mongolian clothing culture, classifying three main styles: clothes for males, females, and monks. For example, Carpini writes: "On their head they have a round thing made of twigs or bark, which is an ell in height and ends on top in a square; it gradually increases in circumference

[22] Larson, *Larson, Duke of Mongolia*, p. 52.

[23] The photos by Walther Bosshard are collected in the Archives of Contemporary History at ETH Zurich (www.afz.ethz.ch). The author of the paper had access to the pictures included in the article with permission of the archive.

from the bottom to the top, and on the top there is a long and slender cane of gold or silver or wood, or even feather, and it is sewn on to a cap which reaches to the shoulders".[24] But by the beginning of the 20th century, even the women of wealthy families had stopped using it. As Larson notes:

"The garb of man, women, and children, whether commoner or noble, is practically the same. They wear trousers and shirt under a long outer garment slit on the sides so as not to hamper them when in the saddle. Men and unmarried girls have a long garment bound with a wide girdle. This girdle is a length of silk wound several times about the waist. Married women wear their outer garments hanging free. Everyone wears high riding boots of stout leather, turned up at the toe tip to suit the Mongolian stirrup. The tops are high and have a pocket in them for the man's pipe or for any article the women may desire to carry there. The garments are fashioned of cotton, of silk, or fur in winter. The robes of priests are of crimson or yellow, and those of the lay folk are of every other colour." [25]

Further, he adds:

"...Noblewomen have headdresses of gold set with rubies, emeralds, and pearls, often with a long curtain of jewels, which hangs to the waist behind, set in a network of gold. Commoners' headdresses are of silver, with the stones according to the wealth of the woman's family. Every feminine headdress has deep old-rose coral set in it. Coral is the national ornament of Mongolia. Some women use no ornamentation except lovely pieces of coral that have been handed down from the generations, set in silver. Every woman also has a snuff bottle made of gold or silver and ornamented with coral and jewels. Every Mongol man, whether lama or layman, wears a long knife, thrust through his girdle on his right side. These knives are carried in a sheath which also contains a socket in which chopsticks are carried. Attached to each sheath is a chain with a heavy ornament. The chain is twisted through the girdle and the end ornament keeps it from slipping out. Knife sheath and chain are of gold or silver studded with precious stones, according to the wealth and fancy of the owner. On the left side, every man wears a flint purse with a chain and end ornament to match those on the knife. Each man also has a snuff bottle, larger than the woman's, which he carries in his girdle. Each person in Mongolia has his or her food bowl. These are of birth-root, often gold- or silver-lined and with gold or silver ornamentation on the outside. No person in Mongolia goes abroad without taking his food bowl with him. It is carried in front of his or her garment."[26]

[24] Ch. Dawson, *Mission to Asia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), p. 7.
[25] Larson, *Larson, Duke of Mongolia*, pp. 50-51.
[26] Larson, *Larson, Duke of Mongolia*, pp. 50-51.

Fig 2. Tsahar woman, Inner Mongolia (photography by Walther Bosshard)

The daily tasks of Mongolian nomadic livestock herders were divided up between family members: male members were more likely to work on the herd in the countryside, while female members were more likely to coordinate household chores. Equality between men and women in Mongolia was of great interest to Westerners. It is interesting to note that the 13th century Plano Carpini notes: "They show considerable respect to each other and are very friendly together, and they willingly share their food, although there is little enough of it."[27]

Similarly, Larson notes:

"A good many of the women are absolute rulers in their yurts. They know and track every animal in every flock and herd, and will not permit the men of their family to sell or trade them without their consent. Often when I have wanted to buy a good horse of a man he has asked me to wait until he has obtained the consent of his wife. As a rule, I find such families very prosperous, because women seem to be better able than men to attend to the small things that build a fortune. They avoid wastefulness, and nurse sick animals or weak lambs and calves and foals, more wisely than men. Compared to those of the West, the morals of the Mongolian women are, to put it mildly, lax. There has never been a double-standard system in Mongolia. The Mongolian women are not property; a Mongolian woman can and does do exactly as she pleases."[28]

[27] Dawson, *Mission to Asia*, p. 15.
[28] Larson, *Larson, Duke of Mongolia*, pp. 70-71.

Thus, compared to the 13th century travelogue Larson's account testify to the fact that the nomadic pastoral and social conditions of the Mongols had remained largely unchanged. Further, Larson's work contains a good deal of influential Buddhist material that has been popular among Mongolians since the 16th century. The respectable position of monks within herder families could be seen in the fact that the Mongols were zealous worshipers of the Yellow Religion and taught their children to read and write.[29] Regarding the education of children, he notes:

"Mongolians treat each other with great respect. While men take care of the outside of the *ger*, they have a special respect for their wife inside the *ger*, and they take care of everything in the *ger*. Children do not go to school, they are prepared from an early age to cope with a difficult life, and they help their parents with family chores. To make the fire, they collect dung, and they herd livestock, and help demolish houses. Occasionally, an itinerant monk will visit a family for a few days or even a few weeks. During this time, the monk teaches the children to read and write."[30]

About a field trip to the Northwest

Sven Hedin was the first to launch a joint field trip to Central Asia. At the time, Dr. Hedin had travelled to Central Asia three times, and this was his fourth trip. The number of scientists, finances, and manpower was greater than ever before. This is evidenced by the fact that the Europeans of the time and the participants in China described it as a "traveling university".[31]

The tour guide, Sven Hedin (1865-1952), was a Swedish geographer, hurdler, and travel writer. From an early age, he loved to explore, so he studied geography. He was an academician at the Royal Academy of Sciences and the Swedish Institute of Literature and was awarded 11 prestigious doctorates from around the world. He was honoured as a member of many scientific societies and organizations.

During a series of visits to Germany between 1925 and 1926, Sven Hedin undertook to study the conditions of air travel from Berlin to Beijing, funded by the Lufthansa airline. After arranging a scientific mission for conduct a meteorological survey to build an airport, he held talks at China Government House and obtained the approval and support of the Government House and local military authorities. However, due to protests from scholars in China, there were further negotiations, and eventually, a nineteen-point agreement was reached to establish a joint field trip between China and Sweden.

[29] Larson, *Larson, Duke of Mongolia*, pp. 70-71.

[30] H. E. Dettmann, *Karawanen-Fahrt mit Sven Hedin* (München: Schneider Verlag, 1963), pp. 25-27.

[31] S. Hedin, *Auf großer Fahrt. Meine Expedition mit Schweden, Deutschen und Chinesen durch die Wüste Gobi 1927-1928* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1929), p. 11. English translation: S. Hedin, *Across the Gobi Desert*. Transl. by H. J. Cant (London: George Routledge & Son, 1931; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1933).

Xu Binchang 徐炳昶 (1888-1976) led the researchers from China, including Yuan Fuli袁复礼 (1893-1987), Huang Wenbi 黄文弼 (1893-1966), Ding Daoheng 丁道衡 (1899-1956), Zhang Fanxun 詹蕃勋 (fl. 1920s-1930s) and ten more people from China. E. Bergman and E. Norin (fl. 1920s-1930s), W. Haude, and seventeen other members from Sweden, Germany, and Denmark took part. In addition to Mongolian and Chinese workers, the expedition now has a total of more than 60 people. The field study lasted for eight years, and the members of the field study were constantly changing.

This expedition was a great success in the fields of history, archaeology, ethnography, geography, living matter, and meteorology. In the field of history, it was very successful in analysing the traces of ancient history and comparing them with the historical records of the ancient peoples living in Central Asia, especially in Xinjiang. Archaeological finds included more than 120 boxes of ancient artefacts, including new stone tools, pottery, bronze ware, bone, and glassware. Moreover, there were many Chinese bamboo inscriptions from the Gashuun Lake area and large bones of giant lizards and eggs from the Gobi Desert. Important discoveries were made. Geography and topography revealed that Lake Lob was drying up. More than 160 measurements of the latitude were taken. 35 minerals were collected, most notably from the Bayan-Ovoo ore mine. Numerous animal fossils were identified and collected for living biology, of which more than 470 turned out to be new species. Also, more than 7,500 plant fossils were collected. On meteorology, them established seven meteorological stations on the river and for the first time scientifically studied precipitation, air pressure, and climate change in the Northwest of China. The field trip to the China strengthened the scientific exchange between the West and the East and initiated and deepened research in a wide range of disciplines, including history, geography, ethnography, archaeology, biology, and meteorology.[32]

As a literary form, the travelogue not only expressed the author's views, but also covered topics such as sightseeing, politics, history, society, customs, geography, religion, and landscapes. Therefore, travel notes provide important material for research on a country's history, politics, economy, geography, culture, and social structure. Much of the travelogues about Inner Mongolia were recorded by Westerners in their mother tongue, and many of them have not been translated into Mongolian, so the Mongolian world does not have access to these works.

The Sino-Swedish expedition lasted a total of eight years, and due to the large number of participants, a significant volume of travel notes have been and continue to be published. Most of the European members of the expedition were from Germany, Sweden, and Denmark, and as at that time the importance of the German language in Western Europe had not yet been lost, almost ninety percent of the travel notes were

[32] Wang Keyun王可云 (aut.)，Fang Xinliang房鑫亮 (superv.), *Zhong Rui xibei kexue kaocha tuan yanjiu*中瑞西北科学考察团研 (Master's Thesis, East China Normal University 2005), pp. 3-35.

published in German. Among the expedition members, Fritz Muehlenweg (1898-1961) was the only researcher to write and publish many travel notes on Mongolia's livestock, ritual, behaviour, and religion. Also, members from China who participated in the trip wrote diaries. The history, geography, political situation, ethnic life, customs, religion, physical characteristics, and clothing of the people living in the area were observed. The following is a list of works in German from these notes:

- Sven Hedin's "Across the Gobi Desert",[33] "Riddles of the Gobi",[34] "Jehol, City of Emperors" (Jehol, die Kaiserstadt, 1932),[35] "The Flight of 'Big Horse",[36] "The Silk Road",[37] and "The Wandering Lake".[38]
- Nils Ambolt's "Karavan. Travels in Eastern Turkestan",[39] and "Achieving My Dream".[40]
- Paul Lieberenz's "Crossing the Sands of Asia with Sven Hedin".[41]
- Ferdinand Lessing's "Mongols, Herders, Monks, and Demons".[42]
- Works by Hans Eduard Dettmann, such as "Crossing the Gobi with Sven Hedin",[43] "The Adventure of My Life",[44] and "Traveling by Camel with Sven Hedin".[45]
- Henning Haslund-Christensen's "Tents in Mongolia",[46] and "Men and Gods in Mongolia"[47]

[33] Hedin, *Auf großer Fahrt*.

[34] S. A. Hedin, *Rätsel der Gobi. Die Fortsetzung der Großen Fahrt durch Innerasien in den Jahren 1928–1930* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1931). English translation: S. Hedin, *Riddles of the Gobi Desert*. Trans. by E. Sprigge and C. Napier (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1933).

[35] S. A. Hedin, *Jehol, die Kaiserstadt* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1932). English translation: S. Hedin, *Jehol, City of Emperors*. Trans. by E. G. Nash (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1933).

[36] S. A. Hedin, *Die Flucht des Grossen Pferdes* (Leipzig, Brockhaus, 1935). English translation: S. A. Hedin, *The Flight of "Big Horse": The Trail of War in Central Asia*. Trans. by F. H. Lyon (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1936).

[37] S. A. Hedin: *Die Seidenstrasse* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1936). English translation: S. Hedin, *The Silk Road: Ten Thousand Miles Through Central Asia*. Trans. by J. Hare (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1938).

[38] S. A. Hedin, *Der wandernde See* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1937). English translation: S. A. Hedin, *The Wandering Lake*. Trans. by F. H. Lyon (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1940).

[39] N. Ambolt, *Karawanen. Im Auftrag Sven Hedins durch Innerasien* (Leipzig, Brockhaus, 1937). English translation: N. P. Ambolt, *Karavan: Travels in Eastern Turkestan*. Trans. by J. Bulman (London and Glasgow: Blackie, 1939).

[40] N. P. Abolt, *Zum Ziel meiner Träume* (Leipzig, Brockhaus, 1944).

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- Gösta Montell's "Traveling through the Steppes of Mongolia",[48] "Between Gods and Men"[49]
- Fritz Mühlenweg's "The Valley of No Return",[50] "Truth and Imagination"[51] "The Secret Journey through the Gobi Sands",[52] "Mongolian Secrets",[53] and "Three Times in Mongolia".[54]

Works written by Chinese scholars who participated in the expedition include Huang Wenbi's "Diary of Exploration in Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang 1927-1930",[55] "The Exploration around Lob Nor: A report on the exploratory work during 1930 and 1934",[56] Xu Binchang's "Diary of an Expedition to the West"[57] among others.

Concluding remarks

20th century travel journals about Mongolia provide in-depth information about the Mongols of the time of the time when they were written and are important in the social sciences, especially in the field of ethnography and folklore.

Of course, the twentieth century was a time of great change for the Mongols, as the great transformations in the world political scene also affected Mongolia. Traditional nomadic pastoralism gradually disappeared in Inner Mongolia as Mongols were divided into three countries in terms of political affiliation and benefited from new technical, professional, and other economic influences. Under the political authority of the Soviet Union, Mongols in Mongolia and the Soviet Union also adjusted their lives in many respects, one notable example being the adoption of the Cyrillic alphabet. These innovations brought about a marked shift in the politics, economy, and culture of Mongolians. Ethnography and folklore also followed these changes. Today, when we study the life and behaviour of the Mongols, we must take into account the traditions that date back to the beginning of the last century.

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[54] F. Mühlenweg, *Drei Mal Mongolei: Dampignak und andere Erzählungen; Reisetagbücher und Briefe aus der Sven-Hedin-Expedition durch die innere Mongolei* (Regensburg: Libelle, 2006).

[55] Huang Lie黄烈 (ed.), *Huang Wenbi meng xin kaocha riji*黄文弼蒙新考察日记（1927-1930）, (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1990).

[56] Huang Wenbi 黄文弼, *Luobu nao'er kaogu ji*罗布淖尔考古记 (Beijing: Guoli Beidaxue, 1948).

[57] Xu Binchang徐炳昶, *Xuxusheng xiyou riji*徐旭生西游日记 (Ningxia: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2000 [1930]).

The First Century of Hungarian Khitanology[1]

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Abstract: Hungarian scholarship has traditionally shown a deep interest in East Asian philology, and as a result has achieved several significant results in this field. Ever since the first written records of the Khitan (formerly also known as "kitaj" in Hungarian literature) were discovered at the beginning of the 20th century, Hungarian philologists have paid particular attention to these discoveries. The first scientific article on the subject in Hungarian was a 1927 study by Lajos (Louis) Ligeti. In this paper, we would like to give an overview of almost a century of research on the Khitans in Hungary.

Keywords: Archaeology, Hungarian scholars, Khar bökh balgas, Khitans, Khitan language and writing

Research on the Khitans (the term Khitanology will be used henceforth) has come a long way since the time when even the mere identification of the language written in the Khitan writing systems was not a self-evident task. There have also been stages on this long road when the two Khitan writing systems, i.e. the so-called "Khitan small script" (or Khitan Assembled Script cf. Kara 1987, 2005) and "Khitan large script" (or „Khitan Linear Script“ cf. Kara 1987, 2005) were thought to be quite different by researchers from what they are thought of today: for example, the Khitan small script was previously identified as the Uyghur-Mongolian writing.

It was a time when scholars' knowledge of the Khitan language was limited by the sources that were available, which were in fact only linguistic data preserved as glosses in Chinese language works, and thus filtered through Chinese linguistic and literary barriers, and which, in their scarcity, provided little information for making sound conclusions about the Khitan language. The first fifty years of Khitanology therefore saw the discovery of the language and its scripts progressed mainly in small steps, and, apart from the few European scholars, it was mainly Japanese and Chinese researchers who were involved.

Hungarian scholars have traditionally shown a deep interest in East Asian philology, and as a result they have been able to produce several significant results in this field.

[1] An earlier, Hungarian-language version of this paper has been published in *Távol-keleti Tanulmányok* 2020/2 (Apatóczky–Szilágyi 2020).

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In 1927, at the dawn of scientific research into the Khitan people and language, Lajos Ligeti summarised the knowledge and assumptions about the Khitans in his study entitled *A kitaj nép és nyelv*[4] *[The Khitan people and language]. Ligeti also reported on the archaeological discoveries of Louis Kervyn, a Belgian missionary, during his expeditions to the newly-forming China between 1928 and 1931.*[5] *By the time, researchers were not yet able to distinguish between the two Khitan writing systems. In his book Sárga istenek, sárga emberek* [Yellow Gods, Yellow People] in 1934, Ligeti recounts his expedition to Inner Mongolia and mentions that he bought some Khitan coins in the town of *Ulaanhad* (Chinese: *Chifeng* 赤峰), but unfortunately the whereabouts of the coins are now unknown. Throughout his long and prolific academic career, Ligeti kept abreast of the latest developments in the field of Khitanology and returned to the subject every now and then (Ligeti 1950-1951, 1955, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1970), yet many of his findings on the Kithan language remain unpublished.

To process his unpublished manuscripts preserved in the Manuscript Archives of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, they were made available to researchers in 2017, in accordance with Ligeti's will. To complete this task the Hungarian Academy of Sciences established a committee to process Ligeti's manuscripts in 2018.[6] The committee asked the author of these lines to review Ligeti's notes on Khitan, and since that time a couple of articles on Ligeti's reconstructions of the Khitan numerals were published.[7]

Ligeti's former students, György Kara and András Róna-Tas, also made significant contributions to our knowledge of the Khitan language and writing.

György Kara (1935-2022)

Kara's studies (1975, 1977, 1987, 1988, 2000, 2002, 2021) have helped to confirm the relationship of the Khitan language to the Mongolic languages by scientific methods. In 1996, he summarised the views of the time on the Khitan writing systems for a wider audience (Kara 1996). In his inaugural paper as an academician of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences titled "On the Writing, Religion and Power in the History of the Mongolian Peoples", presented in 2001, he also addressed the question of the Khitan writing systems. Shortly before his passing away in 2022 he has published a seminal article on his reconstructions of a few Khitan words based on their rhyming patterns.

[4] A kitaj nép és nyelv. *Magyar Nyelv* 23: 293–310.

[5] Ligeti 1933.

[6] The members of the committee were: György Kara, András Róna-Tas (chair), István Vásáry, Ágnes Birtalan, Ákos Bertalan Apatóczky.

[7] Apatóczky 2020, 2021b.

András Róna-Tas (1931-)

András Róna-Tas in his inaugural paper at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences analysed the structural parallels between the 10th century Khitan and Hungarian societies during the period of their respective conquests.[8] Later, he identified the Tibetan origin of the Khitan word *pí lí* 貔貍 (Old Tibetan *'phyi* 'marmota' + *lī* diminutive suffix) (2014). In the second decade of the 21st century, Róna-Tas has been particularly active in the field of Khitanology. Some of his recent articles (2016a, 2016b) provide insights into the characteristics of the dotted and undotted glyphs of the Khitan Small Script, as well as into the etymology of the Khitan numerals and the etymology of the Khitan ethnonym. For the latter, he proposed a tripartite system on the basis of historical linguistic data: singular: *qïta* (cf. Arabic *Ḫṭa* اط خ or *Ḫṭay* ىاطخ and also *Qtā* اتق,; Hua-Yi yiyu, Beilu yiyu *qita* etc.)[9] collective plural: *qïtan*, vernacular plural: *qïtas*.

Róna-Tas initiated a research cooperation between the Department of Altaic Studies of the University of Szeged (SZTE) and the Department of Khitanology of the Inner Mongolian University (IMU), which resulted in a continuous scholarly dialogue and cooperation since 2015. In the first phase of the cooperation, Hungarian researchers tried to collect the most important pieces of Khitanological literature published in China, however difficult this task was in itself, as in China alone hundreds of publications of significantly varying quality appear every year. The Inner-Mongolian scholars operate the largest and one of the strongest centres for Khitanology in the world, and they are of course the first to have access to the latest related archaeological findings. Accordingly, cooperation with the Inner-Mongolian centre is of paramount importance to Western researchers, and their acceptance of Hungarian colleagues to participate in the work demonstrates that they are aware of the scientific achievements of Hungarian Khitanology to date. As an important step of the cooperation, SZTE researchers participated in the First International Symposium on Ancient Scripts of Northern Nationalities, held in Hohhot, Inner-Mongolia in December 2016, and published a paper on the presentations given there.[10] As a further result of this collaboration, several joint and related studies have already been, and many others will be published in the future.

A state-of-the-art article on the most recent results of Khitanology was published in the 2017 special issue of *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* on Khitanology (Apatóczky-Kempf 2017). In the same issue, András Róna-Tas published a paper on the vowels of the Khitan Small Script, and representing the Chinese side of the partnership Wu Yingzhe [= Oyuunchi] 吴英喆, Jiruhe 吉如何. and Peng Daruhan

[8] Róna-Tas 1999.

[9] Data in *Hua-Yi yiyu* and *Beilu yiyu* are results of textual corruption (乞塔惕 >乞塔), therefore they cannot be taken into consideration here, as both sources lost the diacritic惕 character; see Kuribayashi 2003: 36; Apatóczky 2009: 133 and the revised data of the latter in Apatóczky 2021a.

[10] Apatóczky 2016

彭鞘茹罕 wrote about the interpretation of the Khitan Large Script epitaph tomb inscription of *Changgun Yelü Zhun* 常袞耶律準.[11]

Since then, joint research has continued, with the most recent result being a paper on the labial final tone marking of the Khitan Small Script (Róna-Tas-Wu 2020). Róna-Tas has also published studies on the position of Khitan among the Altaic languages (2018a), on the Khitan names of the "Five capitals" and the related Khitan names of the cardinal directions (2019a), on the Turkish elements in Khitan language monuments (2019b), on the representation of dental plosives in the Khitan Small Script (2020). Besides, he wrote an article reflecting the current state-of-the-art for the general public (2019c). In 2019 an article reviewing and introducing one of the most important Chinese-language summaries of the achievements of the last few years by Chinggletei–Wu Yingzhe–Jiruhe, was published (Apatóczky-Róna-Tas 2019).

The *Khi-Land project*

Almost parallel to the SZTE-IMU cooperation, the research project called *Khi-Land landscapes in Mongolia* of the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (currently Research Centre for the Humanities, Eötvös Loránd Research Network (ELKH)) started in 2016. The research was carried out as part of the *Cooperative Agreement on the Mongolian and Hungarian Joint Research – Khitan Landscapes in Mongolia Project 2017–2023,* signed in 2017, by the Institute of Ethnology of the Research Centre for the Humanities in cooperation with the Institute of History and Ethnology (until 2019 Institute of History and Archaeology) of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. The participants of the project together with the experts of the Mongolian Scientific and Technological University[12] have been researching the Khitan cemeteries from the 10th -12th centuries in Mongolia, their place in the landscape and the cultural phenomena connected to them using the most modern landscape archaeological and computer methods.

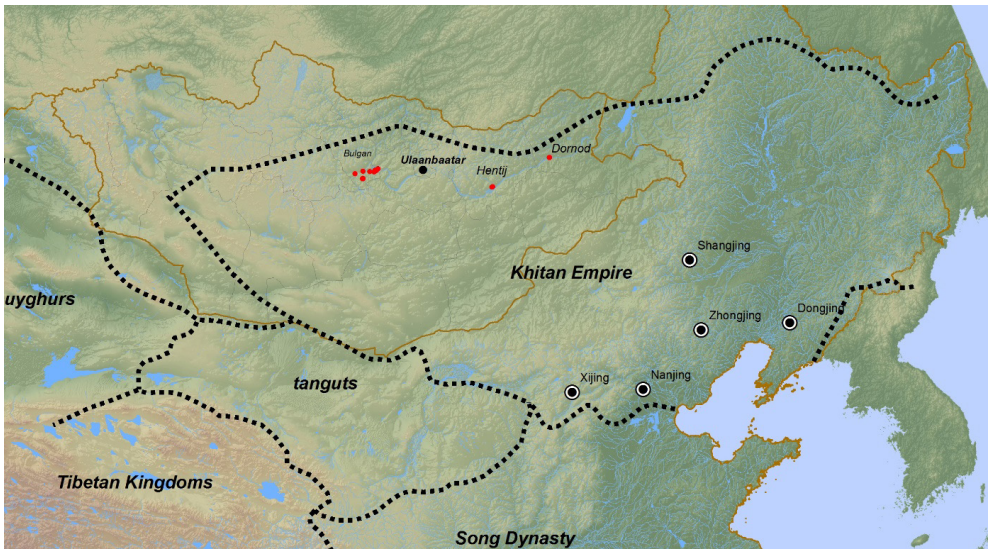
Although in some of the fortified settlements from the Khitan period in Mongolia archaeological excavations have already been performed, their environment and their connection with the settlement network of that period have not been researched in detail. Due to the technological development of landscape archaeology and its scientific approach, the research was not focussed only on one site, but using non-invasive methods, their environment, their location in the landscape and their effect on it, and the relationships of particular settlements were also scrutinized. Topographic surveys, aerial photos made by drones and the knowledge gained by analysing the

[11] Róna-Tas 2017 and Wu–Ji–Peng 2017

[12] From the Hungarian part, the research is led by Zsolt Szilágyi, from the Mongolian part, by Prof. Sampildondov Chuluun. The research team is made up of the following members: Lkh. Erdenebold, Katalin Tolnai, András Harmath, József Laszlovszky, Csilla Siklódi. In the first two years of the research programme project, Gergely Csiky and Jambajantsan D. Amina also participated.

3D models made on the basis of the data gleaned in this manner, as well as exploring the objects that belonged to the settlements but that were found outside them (tumuli (mound tombs), traces of cultivated land, ditches, ceramic furnace etc.) also played an important role in the research.

Surveys made by UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) and aerial photography were (and are) done according to preliminary plans. During the imagery the coordinates of more than 500,000 surface points were determined by photogrammetric method. The data of aerial photos, GPS data, topographic surveys were processed in GIS (Geographic information system), which enables the information gained from various sources to be analysed in one platform. The data such gained will complete the information gathered through historical research, field surveys and traditional archaeological field work, and by analysing them in a comprehensive system, an exact picture not only of the location, size, the internal road network and the buildings of a settlement, but also about the objects in their surroundings may be reached.



The territory of the Khitan Empire and the sites researched in the Khi-Land project (marked red)

In the 10th-12th centuries the Khitans occupied the south-eastern and central parts of present-day Mongolia and established important settlements. To the present stage of our knowledge, they established more than 150 towns and fortified settlements and the remains of some significant ones can be found in the valley of the River Kherlen in the east, but there are sites also at the west of Öndörkhaan (recently, the name of the town has been changed to Chinggis), in Khentii province, too. The sites at Chin tolgoi balgas, Ulaan kherem, Tsagaan üzüüriin kherem in Bulgan province and other settlements of the Orkhon Valley are also of major significance. The sites excavated

so far constitute a special chain near the northern edge of the steppe regions of the so-called border state established by the Khitan Liao-dynasty (916-1125), therefore the research of the fortified settlements dating from the Khitan period may help understand their role in the history of the empire, how sedentary and nomadic cultures interacted and what links were created with their help between the representatives of the different cultures.

The above-mentioned towns and fortified settlements or their remains were used after the fall of the Khitan Empire too, so findings hold a lot of interesting objects in terms of archaeology and cultural history. A good example is given by the sites excavated in Bulgan province in the Khi-Land Project, where remains of settlements and buildings dating from the 10th -12th centuries and from the 16th -17th centuries could be excavated in the same area, in some cases not far from other archaeological sites that can be dated to even earlier periods. The excavations may answer questions raised by the landscape archaeological approach like why these areas were chosen to establish settlements, what changes were generated in different ages by human intervention, how they functioned and what their later fate was.

At the same time, besides the landscape archaeological research, investigations to observe the processes in heritage protection and the retention of national traditions in present day Mongolia can also be done, and they might help to understand the current social and academic discourse about the creation of heritage. Moreover, they shed light also on the sacralisation of excavation sites and facilitate ethnological research of the role of these sites in local and regional identity.

In recent years in many cases families leading a nomadic way of life in these areas were assigned with some tasks concerning local heritage protection. These activities are supervised and coordinated by the Mongolian Heritage Protection Centre (Soyoliin Öviin Töv). Dashinchilen sum in Bulgan province is one of the richest regions in archaeological remains, therefore the protection of this area is important not just in terms of outstanding archaeological excavation sites, but also for the Chin Tolgoi ovoo (sacrificial site) too (Erdenebold et al. 2018).

Khar bökh balgas, which is considered to be one of the most important research sites of the Khi-Land project, is among the big fortified settlements. The ruins are situated at 47˚ 52’ 249’’ longitude and 103˚ 53’ 051’’ latitude, 1015 m above sea level. The settlement is surrounded by rammed earthen walls with a perimeter wall of almost 700m x 700m. The four gates were connected by wide roads in north-south and east-west directions within the walls. The roughly 30 m wide roads divided the inner area of the fortified settlement into four quarters.

The ruins of a 16th century monastery within the perimeter walls at Khar bökh balgas site. (*Khi-Land project, 2018*)

The ruins of Khar bökh balgas were first excavated by Russian and then by Mongolian researchers in the 19th century. More recently, in 2002–2003 and in 2011–2012, smaller sections of the younger layers of the town were excavated by the Mongolian archaeologists A. Ochir and Lkh. Erdenebold. (Ochir – Erdenebold – Enkhtör 2015). Inside the perimeter walls of the former Khitan settlement, a Buddhist monastery operated in the 16th – 17th centuries, the buildings of which were built of stone slabs and its walls still stand 2-3 meters high. The ruins of the monastery consists of several buildings. During the excavations conducted in the central shrine, numerous objects such as Buddha depictions, textile and metal remains were unearthed. Some perfectly preserved manuscripts found under the ruins were a special discovery of these excavations. The monastery must have had close connections with the Tsagaan baishin palace, built approximately 30 km away from here at the end of the first decade of the 17th century by Tsogt taij (1581-1637), a local Khalkha Mongolian nobleman. Both buildings were important centres of Mongolian Buddhism at that time, and the present-day monastery is an important remain of the 17th century architecture and also considered a sacral place of the reviving religious life today.

Tsagaan baishin (*Khi-Land project, 2018*)

In Bulgan province, near Khar bökh balgas several fortified settlements are known from the Khitan Era, which have been excavated in the field research of the project so far. Before the field research, the sites were identified with the help of Google Earth satellite images and also the earlier research results of the Mongolian colleagues were taken into account (Ochir et al. 2015). Based on the detailed data from the maps, flight plans have been drawn up not just for these but also for the research of other objects in the region. Thus in the field work of the Khi-Land project performed so far, several sites have been surveyed, which can only be listed briefly here: Tsagaan üzüüriin kherem, the outer settlement next to Chin tolgoi balgas, Ulaan kherem 1-2, Khermen denj and Tsagaan denj. These are discussed in more detail in the summary of the 2018 research report (Erdenebold et al. 2018).

Some important elements of the network of Khitan period settlements in Mongolia can be found east of Ulaanbaatar: in Khentii and Dornod provinces, too. In Khentii province two large fortified settlements from the Khitan period now called Zuun kherem (’Eastern rampart’), and Baruun kherem (’Western rampart’) were detected in 2019. The two sites situated close to each other were earlier excavated by the great Mongolian archaeologist, Kh. Perlee in 1952-53 (Perlee 1961: 62–66.), and a few simple surveys were published by him about the sites. According to the written sources, the two walled settlements must have been founded around 1015, in one of them people doing economic activities were settled, while in the other were inhabited by soldiers (Tolnai et al. 2019).

In Dornod province, the remains of three settlements dated to the Khitan period were excavated by Perlee (Perlee 1961: 62), the largest of them was Kherlen bars khot. The most notable element of the site is the stupa erected around the 10th

century. This multi-storey brick building was restored with the financial support of the Chinese National Office of Cultural Heritage and with the help of the members of the Cultural Heritage Academy of China and the Mongolian Cultural Heritage Centre in 2015-2016, after a comprehensive survey. The renovation was carried out by using materials that are available in the surrounding area, the bricks used were made and burned on site, for which a brick burning kiln was also built. Thank to these efforts the building, which is the only monument of the Khitan Empire in the territory of present-day Mongolia still standing, is in safe condition again.

In the 2019 field survey of the Khi-Land project, a number of data that do not fit in the theories thought about this site earlier were found (Tolnai et al 2019). The analysis of the drone images and the creation of the 3D models is still in progress, and more definite consequences concerning the emerging new questions may only be drawn after a detailed process of the data and a comparison of the new information gained.

The renovated stupa in Kherlen bars
(*Khi-Land projekt, 2019*)

The field research done so far, along with the research findings have already yielded important results and they also provide grounds for planning the next phases of the research, which are being elaborated in detail at present. In the field research season of 2021-2023 excavation works are carried out at the Khar bökh balgas site in Hungarian-Mongolian cooperation, which may trigger a new phase in the earlier bilateral research, after an interval of nearly half a century.

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ACTA MONGOLICA

Volume 20 (540)

Хэвлэлийн эх бэлтгэсэн: Э. Уранбилэг
Хавтасны дизайнер: Б. Эрдэнэбулган
Цаасны хэмжээ: 70x100/16
Хэвлэлийн хуудас: 20.33
Хэвлэсэн тоо: 200 ш

ISSN 2074-1014

“Соёмбо Принтинг” ХХК-д
хэвлэв.