DIGITAL ACCESS TO SCHOLARSHIP AT HARVARD
DASH.HARVARD.EDU

HARVARD LIBRARY

Writing Empire: Culture, Politics, and the Representation of Cultural Others in the Mongol-Yuan Dynasty

Citation

Hui, Ming Tak Ted. 2020. Writing Empire: Culture, Politics, and the Representation of Cultural Others in the Mongol-Yuan Dynasty. Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences.

Link

https://nrs.harvard.edu/URN-3:HUL.INSTREPOS:37365865

Terms of use

This article was downloaded from Harvard University's DASH repository, and is made available under the terms and conditions applicable to Other Posted Material (LAA), as set forth at
https://harvardwiki.atlassian.net/wiki/external/NGY5NDE4ZjgzNTc5NDQzMGIzZWZhMGFlOWI2M2EwYTg

Accessibility

https://accessibility.huit.harvard.edu/digital-accessibility-policy

Share Your Story

The Harvard community has made this article openly available.
Please share how this access benefits you. Submit a story

© 2020 – Ming Tak Ted Hui

All rights reserved.

Table of Contents

Abstract v

Acknowledgments vii

Introduction 1

1. Debates on the Sinicization Model 5
2. The Emergence of Global Consciousness? 10

Chapter 1 Journeys to the West: Travelogues and Discursive Power in the Making of the Mongol Empire 13

1. Preaching the Anti Conquest?: The Relationship between Spiritual Conversion and Imperial Expansion 16
2. Displaced Perspective: Yelü Chucai's *Record of the Journey to the West* 30
3. Perceiving the Exotic: The Poems of Yelü Chucai on Hezhong 40
4. A Shared Tradition? Justification of Military Advancements and Rulership 53
5. Conclusion 60

Chapter 2 Discussions of Ethnic Boundaries: Configurations of the *Hua-Yi* Dichotomy in the Early Yuan Dynasty 62

1. Hao Jing and the *Hua-Yi* Dichotomy 64
2. A Tale of Two Confucian Scholars: Xu Heng and Liu Yin 73
3. Conclusion 88

Chapter 3 Translingual Tensions: Language Policies and the Creation of a Yuan Sinitic Literary Tradition 90

1. A Universal Script and its Reception 91
2. Translation and the Emergence of a Hybrid Language 104
3. Conceptualizing Foreignness: The Authority of the Hybrid Language 113
4. The Search for a Yuan Literary Tradition 123
5. Conclusion 130

Chapter 4 Discursive Limits of Cultural Interactions: Reflections on the Writings on the Diplomacy of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty 132

1. Looking at the Gift Horse: How are Papal Envoys Represented in Chinese Sources 134
   - *The Spectacle of the Heavenly Steed* 136
   - *Painting the Tribute Bearers: The Project of an Empire* 164
2. The Stories of Three Envoys: Interactions with Annam 172
   - *The Diplomatic Mission after the Third Mongol Invasion* 174
   - *Pushing the Limits of Poetry: Chen Fu and his Poems on Annam* 188
   - *Fu Ruojin and His Interaction with the Annam Envoys* 203
3. Conclusion 213

Conclusion 216

Appendix 1 Translation of Other Poems on the Heavenly Horse 219

Appendix 2 A Full Translation of Chen Fu's "An Account at Annam" with His Original Annotations 225

Bibliography 249

Dissertation Advisor: Wai-yee Li Ming Tak Ted Hui

Writing Empire:

Culture, Politics, and the Representation of Cultural Others in the Mongol-Yuan Dynasty

Abstract

This dissertation explores the intersection of literary and cultural identities by examining the representation of cultural others during the Mongol-Yuan dynasty from the 13th to the mid-14th century. With a ruling class that was Mongol, not Han Chinese, the dynasty reunified northern and southern Chinese territories for the first time in over a century. In a period characterized by a high degree of ethnic antagonism, political division, and intricate cultural negotiation, the representation of cultural others became highly contested. Examining Yuan poetry and prose alongside travelogues written by religious leaders, and edicts issued to foreign states, I discuss how the literati, driven by social and political considerations, fashioned their cultural identity, re-enforcing the dominance of Han cultural values in some texts and inventing a shared history that cut across various ethnic groups in others. This dissertation discusses how royal power and policies are represented in discursive forms and considers how these processes create a heightened sense of ethnic identity.

The first chapter discusses how travel narratives strategically renegotiate cultural boundaries. It studies the travelogues composed by Li Zhichang and Yelü Chucai. Through rhetorical maneuvers, social elites are able to define "self" and "others" and anchor themselves within an imagined cultural lineage. The second chapter investigates how the *Hua-Yi* distinction (sometimes translated as the "Sino-Barbarian" dichotomy) was evoked during the early Yuan. Using the literary writings of three northern scholars, Hao Jing, Xu Heng and Liu Yin as a point of entry, I examine how the configuration

of Han and non-Han were consciously applied to the confrontation between the Mongol-Yuan and the Southern Song and used in political persuasions targeted at the Mongol ruler. Language policy is the topic of the third chapter, in which I examine the promulgation of the 'Phags-pa alphabets by the Mongol-Yuan dynasty and the emergence of a hybrid language which brought about a heightened awareness of the difference between various cultural groups. The fourth chapter moves to the conflicts and diplomacy between the Mongol-Yuan and other foreign entities including Annam and the Roman Catholic church. The juxtaposition allows us to trace how the representatives of the dynasty present diplomacy and cultural encounters and how the understanding of the world is shaped by literary conventions.

While the Mongol-Yuan dynasty is often considered a dark period for literary production, this project argues that the cultural dynamics of this era significantly determined how later dynasties produced new conceptions of identities and communities. Drawing on various disciplines such as linguistics, history and literary analysis, this dissertation seeks to intervene in the ongoing debate over the formation of a Chinese identity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the course of writing this dissertation, I have accumulated numerous personal and professional debts I can never adequately repay. My deepest gratitude goes to my advisor Wai-yee Li. She served as my academic advisor, but her role extends well beyond the development of my research project. She guided me through my graduate program at Harvard, and I owe much of who I am as a person and scholar to her invaluable mentorship and zealous support. She has set a tremendously high bar as a mentor, scholar and friend. Her research has been some of the greatest inspiration for my own, and I continue to strive to be as thorough a scholar as she is.

In many ways, this dissertation would not have been possible without my other committee members, Peter Bol and Stephen Owen. Peter Bol has shown me how to ask intriguing questions. He has challenged me over the years, and pushed me to think more deeply about the uses of literary analysis. His comments on my project have helped me situate it in a larger historical context. Stephen Owen has bestowed on me tremendous wisdom. His extensive knowledge of classical Chinese poetry and other literary traditions enriched my intellectual interests. I consider myself very privileged to have learned from all these faculty members. A simple expression of gratitude hardly seems sufficient for their unwavering support for my research.

I have benefitted enormously from the vibrant intellectual community at Harvard. I would like to thank Xiaofei Tian, who read my dissertation and gave me specific advice on how to revise it. I am thankful to David Wang and Thomas Kelly for their constant support and encouragement. I gained useful insights on Chinese history and literature from my conversations with Yedong Chen, Feiran Du, Du Heng, Benjamin Gallant, Jin Huan, Dingru Huang, Kangni Huang, Kou Lu, Liu Chen, Nichimin Lu, Yuan-heng Mao, Huijun Mai, Kate Monaghan, Canaan Morse, Kyle Shernuk, Dylan

Suher, Dominic Toscano, Yung-chang Tung, Joel Wing-Lun, Ying Lei and Mengdie Zhao. In particular, I would like to convey my gratitude to Kou Lu, Mengdie and Joel, who have always been unstinting in their encouragement. Feiran, Dingru and Yuan-heng have been a model of enthusiasm and kindness, and I am extremely grateful for their friendship. I also wish to thank Jannis Chen and Tim Teng for all the necessary distractions. The staff at the Fairbank Center and the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations has always been extremely helpful. My special thanks to Nick Drake, Carolyn Choong, Gustavo Espada, Alison Howe and Susan Kashiwa for making my experience at Harvard so enjoyable.

At the Academia Sinica in Taiwan, Hu Siao-chen, Liu Chiung-yun and Zeb Raft were always ready to help and share their considerable knowledge about Chinese literature. I have benefitted a lot from my conversations with Cheng Yu-yu, Lee Yu-lin and Liao Chao-heng. I am also indebted to Chen Chung-yu, Cheng Yi-hui, Chu Hsien-min, Chung Chih-wei, Huang Tse-chun, Lo Pei-hsuan and Yang Fu-min for their hospitality and generosity. The Academia Sinica provided me with a stimulating intellectual environment and the time to write and think. For that I am extremely grateful.

Finally, I have to thank my friends and my family. My friendship with Francis Chan, Patrick Yiu, Roger Phang, Aldis Sung, Bryan Ng, Calvin Li, Christopher Wong, Mung-ting Chung and Chien-wei Pan is a great blessing to me. It is impossible to imagine myself without their accompany. My mother, Christine Hui, has always believed in me and remained a tireless supporter over the years. I am also indebted to my brother Ray, his wife Charlie and my little nephew Raphael for all their love. No words would suffice for my deep appreciation to my family. They show me the joy and meaning of life. This dissertation is dedicated to them.

INTRODUCTION

As the last Song emperor was forced to drown himself in 1279, China proper was once again unified under the Yuan dynasty founded by the Mongols after more than three centuries of division. Before the unification, the northern and southern parts of China proper had long been governed by several separate political entities: in 937, the Khitan-Liao gained control over northern China in the area along the Great Wall, traditionally known as the Sixteen Prefectures of You and Ji 幽薊十六州. The territory remained under Khitan control until the Jurchen-Jin dynasty conquered the region in 1123. At the same time, the Western Xia 西夏 founded by the Tanguts had occupied the northwestern Chinese provinces including modern Ningxia, Gansu and northeastern Xinjiang from 1038 to 1227. After Chinggis Khan (c. 1162-1227)[1] united the Mongol tribes of the steppes in 1206, he launched a series of raids against the Western Xia and the Jurchen-Jin. Despite the death of the Khan in 1227, the Western Xia collapsed in the same year when Chinggis Khan died. Eventually, in 1234, the Jurchen-Jin dynasty was also conquered by the Mongols.[2]

In 1271, Khubilai Khan (r. 1260-1294), the grandson of Chinggis Khan, officially proclaimed that the new dynasty established would be known as the Yuan 元 dynasty, following the suggestion of his advisor Liu Bingzhong 劉秉忠 (1216-1274).[3] The Mongol empire was, of course, not only the ruler of China proper. By the late 13th century, the territory of the empire spanned from the Sea of

---

1 The spelling of the great conqueror is given here throughout as Chinggis Khan instead of the more common Genghis Khan, which originated from a misreading of the Persian sources in the 18th century. The spelling "Chinggis" is more accurate in terms of transcribing the pronunciation, and is strongly preferred by the Mongols themselves.

2 For a detailed study of the history of the period, see Herbert Franke and Denis C. Twitchett eds., *The Cambridge History of China Volume 6: Alien Regimes and Border States 907-1368* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1-42.

3 On the history of the establishment of the Yuan dynasty, see Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2009), 134-137.

Japan in the east to the shores of the Persian Gulf in the west. As historians try to take stock of the largest contiguous land empire that ever existed in world history, they have sought to move away from a regional study and shift to a more holistic approach. Cultural and religious exchanges across Eurasia, for instance, become one of the many ways to rewrite history that would not confined by national borders.[4] This scholarship provides us with new insights into the intensive cultural transmission that occurred from the 13th to the mid-14th century, and underscores the roles of the Mongols as active agents facilitating cross-cultural contact. By situating the Mongol Empire in a broader global context, more historians are seeking to evaluate the degree of acculturation happening in various parts of the world.

Situated at the center of these scholarly works are the following questions: Did these cultural contacts change how one perceived oneself and how one related to the world? How did ethnic Han Chinese interact with the Mongols and Central Asians? How did the people in northern and southern China find a stable and continuous frame of reference to situate themselves after three centuries of political division? Were the Mongols and Central Asians taking up Sinitic values, behaviors and beliefs? How did they adjust themselves to a new cultural environment? Did they hold onto their original cultural norms and practices?

These questions all centered around the problem of "cultural identity," which is a difficult and dangerous undertaking because the term "identity" itself is a modern construct rather than a concept that existed in the 13th or the 14th century. But the lack of the term "identity" does not mean that racial boundaries did not exist. Much scholarship has been dedicated to the study of the relationship between ethnicity and class in the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. According to Tao Ji 屠寄 (1856-1921), during the

---

4 See, for instance, Thomas Allsen, *Commodity and Cultural Exchange in the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Thomas Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); and Morris Rossabi ed., *Eurasian Influences on Yuan China* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2013).

Yuan dynasty, the Mongols had imposed a class system by dividing society into four classes: they are, in order of descending privilege: (1) the Mongols; (2) the *Semu* 色目 (people from Central and Western Asia including Uighurs, Tanguts, Tibetans, and Persians); (3) the *Hanren* 漢人 (including all subjects from the territory of the former Jin dynasty, Dali Kingdom and Goryeo) and (4) the Southern inhabitants of the former Southern Song dynasty.[5] This class system was further studied by Meng Siming 蒙思明 (1908-1974) who stresses that the social stratification imposed by the Mongols (based on ethnicity) did not align with the economic standing of the people in the early Yuan. He argues that this gap between the two hierarchies eventually disappeared as money flowed into the hands of some Mongol and *Semu* rulers while the wealthy Southerners gained more political power over time.[6] Both Tu and Meng agree that the Yuan society was divided into four ethnic classes, but their view has since been challenged by many later scholars.

One of the main critique of their works lies in the absence of a legal provision that explicitly classified the people of the Yuan into four categories. This seems to suggest that the Mongols were not self-conscious about enforcing this class system.[7] To develop this observation, Funada Yoshiyuki 舩田善之 argues that the Chinese term *Semu* (literally, colored-eyes) does not have a Mongol language equivalent, and concludes that most of the higher offices were held by the Mongols and other Central Asians in the Yuan dynasty only because titles of nobility were often hereditary. The phenomenon was not necessary related to the problem of ethnic identity.[8] In response to Funada's argument, Hu Xiaopeng 胡小鵬 argues that *Semu* is a translation of the Mongol term *qari irgen*, which is a noun referring to someone or something that is ethnically alien. Since the meaning of *qari irgen* encompasses

---

5 Tao Ji, *Meng wu'er shiji* 蒙兀兒史記 (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian, 1984), 104.

6 Meng Siming, *Yuandai shehui jieji zhidu* 元代社會階級制度 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 25-115.

7 Yip Hon-Ming, "The Class System of Yuan Society: A Critique of Meng Siming's *Yuandai shehui jieji zhidu*," *Journal of Asian Culture* 4 (1980), 82-106.

8 Funada Yoshiyuki, "Semu ren yu Yuandai zhidu, shehui" 色目人與元代制度、社會, in *Menggu xue xunxi* 蒙古學信息 2 (2003): 7-16.

all non-Mongol foreigners, Hu concludes that the Mongol rulers were initially only concerned about distinguishing Mongols from non-Mongols. But after the term was translated into Chinese as *Semu*, the Mongol court began to further distinguish all non-Mongol foreigners into smaller groups. The term *Semu* underwent a process of redefinition and was hence much more fluid in the Yuan dynasty.[9]

The discussion surrounding the term *Semu* prompts reflections on the question of ethnic consciousness during the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. From a legal standpoint, certain rights were allocated to non-Han ethnic groups. For instance, according to the legal code of the Yuan dynasty, it was announced in 1285 that the weaponry confiscated in the Jiangnan region would be distributed among Mongols and officials who were ethnically Uighur and Muslim. All ethnic Han Chinese, even if they held office, were not allowed to be in charge of any armaments.[10] There is no question that maintaining differentiation between the conqueror and the conquered was essential to the rule of the Mongols. After all, one of the most basic problems a Mongol ruler had to solve was this: how to rule over China proper where they were greatly outnumbered by the Han Chinese.

As Hsiao Ch'i-Ch'ing 蕭啟慶 has shown in his research, from a policy level, the Mongols had always sought to maintain a separate identity and apply different laws to different ethnic groups.[11] But the problem of ethnic identity should not be analyzed solely through a consideration of the legal status of each group of people. It is also crucial to look at the cultural interactions between different groups of the people and examine how the cultural boundaries were perceived at the time in the Yuan dynasty.

---

9 Hu Xiaopeng, "Yuandai 'semu ren' yu erdeng renzhi" 元代「色目人」與二等人制, in *Xibei shida xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 西北師大學報（社會科學版）50.6 (2013): 56-59. For a related discussion on the terminologies used by the Mongols to refer to tribes and dynasties, see also Christopher Atwood, "How the Mongols Got a Word for Tribe – and What it Means," *Menggu shi yanjiu* 蒙古史研究 10 (2010): 63-89.

10 *Yuan dianzhang* 元典章 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe; Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011), 1218-1219.

11 Hsiao Ch'i-Ch'ing, *Nei beiguo er wei zhongguo: Meng Yuan shi yanjiu* 內北國而外中國：蒙元史研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007), 463-475.

Debates on the Sinicization Model

This leads us to the debates on the level of Sinicization of the Mongols and the Inners Asians during the Yuan dynasty. As early as 1923, Chen Yuan 陳垣 (1880-1971) published his seminal work *Western and Central Asians in China under the Mongols: their transformation into Chinese* 元西域人華化考 (*Yuan Xiyu ren Huahua kao*), in which he attempts to measure the extent to which people from Inner Asia were adopting ethnic Han Chinese cultural practices. Looking at various aspects like Chinese literature, Confucianism, art and rituals, Chen Yuan concludes that many Inner Asians absorbed Han Chinese cultural norms.[12]

Chen's narrative stresses the assimilation of Inner Asians and highlights the allure of Chinese cultural modes. Extending Chen's findings, Hsiao Ch'i-Ch'ing compiles a list of 117 Mongol Confucian scholars, poets, lyricists and painters who were deeply influenced by Sinitic culture.[13] The findings of Chen and Hsiao are a direct response to the traditional view of the Mongol empire as the least Sinicized regime in Chinese history. For instance, Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-1590) argues in his "Reading the History of Yuan" 讀元史:

> Take a look at their rulers and their ministers who were constantly striving to use their own customs to transform the culture of the Central Kingdom. For the positions of departmental dignitaries and regional commanders, they would not appoint people who were not from their kin. For memorials submitted to them, they would not read works that were not written in their language. When they bestowed a title, they would not consider it beautiful unless it followed

---

12 See Chen Yuan, *Yuan xiyu ren Huahua kao* 元西域人華化考 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008). This study is translated into English in 1966 by Ch'ien Hsing-hai and L. Carrington Goodrich, see *Western and Central Asians in China under the Mongols: their transformation into Chinese* (Los Angeles: Monumenta Serica at the University of California, 1966).

13 Hsiao Ch'i-Ch'ing, *Nei beiguo er wei zhongguo: Meng Yuan shi yanjiu*, 579-669.

their nomenclature. The Emperor stayed in Dadu [i.e. modern Beijing] in winter and moved to the Xanadu during summer. Xanadu is located at the desert in the north. They were also buried in the northern desert. They viewed the land of the Central Kingdom as the border land where they stayed only because they had no choice. They regarded the people of the Central Kingdom as a superfluous burden that they managed only because they had no choice. Or else they treated the people as if they were the six domestic animals, eating their flesh and sleeping on their pelts to cater to their own desires.[14] Alas! Isn't this the most extreme calamity of heaven and earth?

顧其君臣，日斷斷焉思以其教而易中國之俗。省台院寺，諸路之長，非其人不用也。進御之文，非其書不覽也。名號之錫，非其語不為美也。天子冬而大都，夏而上都。上都，漠北也，其葬亦漠北。視中國之地，若甌脫焉，不得已而居之。於中國之民，若贅疣焉，不得已而治之。又若六畜焉，食其肉而寢處其皮，以供吾嗜而已。於乎！不亦天地之至變不幸者哉？[15]

Wang Shizhen's view represents many scholars who believe that the Mongol-Yuan dynasty was the least Sinicized among conquest dynasties. While Chen and Hsiao set out to debunk the false impression that Mongols and other Central Asians never absorb the Sinitic culture, it is important to note that the cultural exchanges between Inner Asians and Han Chinese was never a one-way affair. The results of cultural interactions between different ethnic groups can yield very different results: on the one hand, it may facilitate a process of social and cultural symbiosis with which the customs and beliefs of the non-Han conquest regimes integrate with that of the Han Chinese. Yet, the awareness

[14] An allusion to *Zuozhuan* (Lord Xiang 21.8): "But as for these two men, if I may compare them to beasts – I wish I could eat their flesh and sleep on their pelts already" 然二子者，譬於禽獸，臣食其肉而寢處其皮矣. See *Zuo Traditions*, translated by Stephen Durrant, Wai-yee Li and David Schaberg (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2016), 1090-1091.

[15] Wang Shizhen, *Yanzhou shanren dushu hou* 弇州山人讀書後 (Beijing: Guojia tushuguan chubanshe, 2014), 5.7b.

of the existence of foreign culture may also prompt people from different ethnic origins to search for ways to preserve their distinctiveness.

To borrow Mark Elliott's analysis of the Qing dynasty, the establishment of a conquest dynasty could produce a situation whereby the non-Han groups relied not just on military force, but also on a climate of fear, to overwhelm rivals and to impose a new political order. The fear of effacing the boundary between the conquerors and the conquered populations may also prompt the non-Han regime to sustain earlier cultural norms.[16] One of the problems of a Sinicization model thus lies at its over-simplification of the possible outcomes of cultural contact.

Using language policy implemented during the Mongol-Yuan dynasty as the line of inquiry, the third chapter of this dissertation examines how the 'Phags-pa alphabets promulgated by the Mongol rulers brought about a heightened awareness of the difference between various cultural groups, even though the promotion of a universal writing system represented a conscious effort on the part of the Mongols to enhance national cohesion. While some ethnic Han literati perceived this bold project as one similar to the unification of the script under the Qin dynasty, others expressed concern about the impact of the promulgation of the alphabet. The increase in cultural interactions also brought about the emergence of a hybrid language that integrates the grammar of Mongolian and the semantics of vernacular Chinese. The language was perceived in the early 13th century as a threat to the cultural hierarchy upholding literary Chinese as the only legitimate form of writing.

From the perspectives of the Han Chinese under Yuan rule, even when a non-Han writer was skilled in Chinese arts and literature, it did not necessary mean that other ethnic Han Chinese writers would accept them as belonging to the same cultural community. One clear illustration of this phenomena is the use of the term *Huaxue* 華學 (Hua studies), a term that signifies the mastery of

[16] Mark Elliott, *The Manchu Way* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 4-5.

Chinese literature and culture but was only employed for someone with a non-Han background. For instance, in the biography of Ma Zuchang 馬祖常 (1279-1338), who came from an Ongüt Nestorian Christian family, the Han scholar Xu Youren 許有壬 (1287-1364) commented: "The ancestors of this gentleman had already been conducting Hua studies. But it is only Ma Zuchang who brought it to a great height of development" 公先世已事華學，至公始大以肆.[17] Similarly, when Xu Youren was asked to compose an eulogy for the Mongol minister Shabuzhu Juren 沙卜珠居仁, he wrote: "He was of noble descent, and endowed with a virtuous nature. He was aided by Hua studies, and had demonstrated the power of his will" 唯公生於貴胄，禀有淑質，濟以華學，申以定力.[18]

Even though a person from a non-Han background may be well versed in Chinese classics, it does not necessary mean that person would be identified as a Han Chinese. The use of the term *huaxue* demonstrates the Han biographers' eagerness in highlighting how a non-Han individual could also gain mastery over Chinese art and culture. This takes us back to the concept "ethnic identity." From the scholarly research over the last few decades, we learn that identity is much more fluid and can be manifested in multiple ways. Often people do not define themselves according to ethnic categories. In other words, composing Chinese poetry does not necessary mean that the poet identified himself as a Han or possessed a kind of "Chineseness." Instead, the evocation of "ethnicity" was historically contingent and often more strategic. In the words of Mark Elliott, ethnicity is "a form of discourse arising from the social organization and political assertion of cultural or descent-based difference, actual or perceived."[19]

Thus, instead of looking at the cultural practices of the people living under the rule of Mongols, this dissertation seeks to offer case studies from a discursive level and investigates why and how

---

17 Xu Youren, *Xu Youren ji* 許有壬集 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1998), 540. The emphasis are mine.
18 Ibid., 737. The emphasis is mine.
19 Mark Elliott, *The Manchu Way*, 16.

cultural differences were articulated during the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. Chapter 1 uses travelogues as examples. When the Quanzhen Taoist Qiu Chuji 丘處機 (1148-1227) was invited to visit Chinggis Khan, his disciple Li Zhichang composed a travelogue to highlight Qiu's superiority over the Mongols and other Inner Asians by painting non-Han groups as warriors who embraced a martial culture. To argue against this travelogue, Yelü Chucai wrote a counter-narrative that stresses how the Mongols wage wars according to values laid down in the Sinitic tradition. It would be naïve to conclude from Yelü Chucai's travelogue that the Mongols were Sinicized and were really concerned about adhering to the principles laid down in classical Chinese texts. Instead, here we witness how Sinitic values were appropriated to justify the expansion of the Mongol empire in Central Asia.

Chapter 2 investigates how the *Hua/Yi* distinction 華夷之辨 (sometimes translated as the Sino-Barbarian dichotomy) was evoked during the early Yuan. Using the literary writings of three scholars born in northern China, Hao Jing 郝經 (1223-1275), Xu Heng 許衡 (1209-1281) and Liu Yin 劉因 (1249-1293), who all served under Khubilai Khan, I discuss how the configuration of Han and non-Han were consciously applied to the description of the confrontation between the Mongol-Yuan and the Southern Song, and used in remonstrance directed at the Mongol rulers. The chapter would also touch upon how these literati became a focal point of contention in later times, and showcase how posterity articulated their anxiety about ethnic allegiance by harking back to these early Yuan figures.

Both chapters hope to contribute to an understanding of the discursive strategies employed in the writings of the literati during the Yuan dynasty. Unlike previous scholars who uphold the Sinicization model, this dissertation aims to show that claims of Sinicization can be used as a rhetorical device and should not be taken at face value. By situating these texts in their historical contexts, we can see that the literati were consciously capitalizing on cultural differences in order to advance their own political agendas.

The Emergence of Global Consciousness?

The definition of self relies on the existence of others. Unlike the previous chapters, which focus on the question of the discourse concerning cultural identity within the Mongol-Yuan dynasty, the last chapter of my dissertation zooms out and considers the Yuan literature of diplomacy. Although the Mongol-Yuan has been regarded as a Chinese dynasty in Chinese historiography, scholars are aware that the Mongol-Yuan was a component of a larger global entity. In recent years, many scholars call for the need to view the Yuan dynasty as a part of the Mongol world empire. Kim Hodong, for instance, argues that the title *Da Yuan* 大元 (Great Yuan) did not only refer to the regime governing China proper, but instead to the entire Mongol world empire. He thus calls for a study of the Mongol empire as a whole.[20] Sugiyama Masaaki 杉山正明 goes so far as to propose that the Mongol empire should be viewed as the starting point of world history.[21]

Masaaki raises two supporting argument as to why the Mongol empire marks the beginning of world history. First, he argues that nearly every part of the world is inseparable from the expansion of the Mongol empire since most countries were either conquered or invaded by the Mongols. Thus it would almost be impossible to write a history of a certain nation without considering the impact of the Mongols. Second, he argues the expansion of the Mongol empire promotes a global consciousness which is evident in the compilation of the "first world history" – the *Compendium of Chronicles* (*Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh*) by Rashid al-Din Hamadani (1247-1318).

While it is true that the *Compendium of Chronicles* includes the histories of the Mongols, Arabs, Persians, Jews, Indians, Franks, Turkic peoples and Chinese, Masaaki's proposal seemed to assume that such global consciousness was shared in the whole Mongol empire, yet it is clear that there is a

---

20 Kim Hodong, "The Unity of the Mongol Empire and Continental Exchanges over Eurasia," *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies* 1 (2009), 32.

21 See Sugiyama Masaaki 杉山正明, *Mongoru teikoku to Dai Gen Urusu* モンゴル帝國と大元ウルス (Kyoto: Kyōto Daigaku Gakujutsu Shuppankai, 2004), 19-24.

lack of similar compilations composed in Chinese language. Does it mean that the Chinese sources did not exhibit any emergence of the global consciousness? How were cultural others depicted in the Chinese art and poetry at an age where cultural interactions between the Mongol-Yuan and the rest of the world became much more intensive?

In the fourth chapter of this dissertation, I examine how Annam (modern Vietnam) and the arrival of the papal envoys are represented in the Chinese texts. The accounts of foreign lands show how the understanding of the world was shaped by received literary conventions. Although papal envoys were sent from the Franciscan church to the Mongol-Yuan dynasty multiple times, their mission was only remembered in the Chinese records as a tributary state offering a heavenly horse from the extreme west. Literary conventions determine how cultural interactions were recorded and limit global awareness. The interactions with the Franciscan monks, in this case, did not seem to have stimulated the curiosity of the Mongol-Yuan court literati towards cultural others, instead they simply fell back to the praise of the tributary system.

This chapter allows us to examine how literary conventions serve as an underlying force that facilitates the Mongol-Yuan dynasty to situate itself in a chain of Chinese dynasties. Even if we agree with Sugiyama that the political and economic system installed by the Mongol empire covers a vast territory that stretched beyond China, it is important to note that this vision of creating a global empire hardly exists in any Chinese textual records. If these textual expressions reflect the cultural identity of the Mongol-Yuan literati, then the constant reference back to high antiquity in China alerts us to the fact that the authors of the time did not seem to envision a new world order. Instead they perceive themselves as inheriting traditional Chinese values.

It is important to clarify that the case studies conducted in this chapter are not meant to argue that the foreign relations of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty are monolithic, but the representations of these diplomatic occasions and foreign states create an impression that the relations between Mongol-Yuan

and its neighboring countries are no different from previous dynasties. The case studies allow us to investigate how Chinese literary texts create continuity between the high antiquity and the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. It also sheds light on how literati positioned themselves within the Chinese literary tradition from the 13th to the mid-14th century.

CHAPTER 1

Journeys to the West:

Travelogues and Discursive Power in the Making of the Mongol Empire

In the years leading up to the Mongol conquest in 1279, the Southern Song court sent numerous envoys to its neighboring states, both for diplomacy and to gather information. So, for instance, Zhao Gong 趙珙 traveled to Hebei to meet with the Mongol army commander in 1221, and Peng Daya 彭大雅 and Xu Ting 徐霆 were sent in 1232 on a diplomatic mission to Karakorum. With information on customs, climate, language, economic and administrative systems, the records these emissaries produced enabled the Southern Song to devise plans to prevent further invasions from the north. Taking my cue from Xiaofei Tian's discussion of early medieval travel writings, these Southern Song travelogues employed a "utilitarian mode" of narration, in which foreign territories and alien peoples were evaluated and (it was hoped) tamed to lessen their threat to the text's host culture.[1]

Far from merely utilitarian, the travelogue entitled *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji* 長春真人西遊記 (The Record of the Perfected Master Changchun's Journey to the West) warrants special attention. Invited by Chinggis Khan, a leader of the Quanzhen 全真 sect named Qiu Chuji 丘處機 (1148-1227) traveled in 1220 from Shandong to Hindu Kush (see Map 1); his journey was later recorded and recapitulated by his disciple, Li Zhichang 李志常 (1193-1256).[2] Unlike the envoys commissioned by the Southern Song, the Quanzhen Taoists were not sent from a center of political authority. Thus, the "host" is no longer a self-evident concept. Instead, Li's travelogue presents a case in which political

---

1 Xiaofei Tian, *Visionary Journeys: Travel Writings from Early Medieval and Nineteenth Century China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 159-165.

2 For an English translation of the text, see Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist: A Journey of the Taoist Ch'ang-ch'un from China to the Hindukush at the Summons of Chingiz Khan* (London: Routledge, 1931). The text cited in this chapter was extracted mostly from Waley's work with modifications.

and cultural authorities diverge – while the Mongols became the source of political authority, the Taoists held the discursive power. Such divergence suggests the following questions: How did the geopolitical configuration affect the representation of these Mongol conquerors? Does this travelogue demonstrate curiosity toward an exotic world? Who were the cultural others constructed in this text? What rhetorical schemata were applied in the depiction of Central Asia?

Though preserved as part of the Taoist Canon, the Quanzhen travelogue's significance was not recognized until the renowned scholar Qian Daxin 錢大昕 (1728-1804) reprinted the text in 1795. From the eighteenth century on, this travelogue was often incorporated into various geographical compendia, with numerous annotations to identify its place names.[3] Through painstaking effort in reconstructing Qiu's itinerary, previous scholarship has tended to regard the text as a source of historical information, often ignoring the ideological agenda and strategies adopted by the compiler, Li Zhichang. Li's biography indicates that he was among the disciples left behind by Qiu as the travelers approached the Argun Mountains.[4] That Li did not accompany his master on some of the major parts of the journey prompts us to reconsider the compilation process and the nature of the text. After all, the travelogue was meant to be read as a religious work, not as a geographical manual. It is crucial, then, to consider how this ideological agenda informs the text's vision.

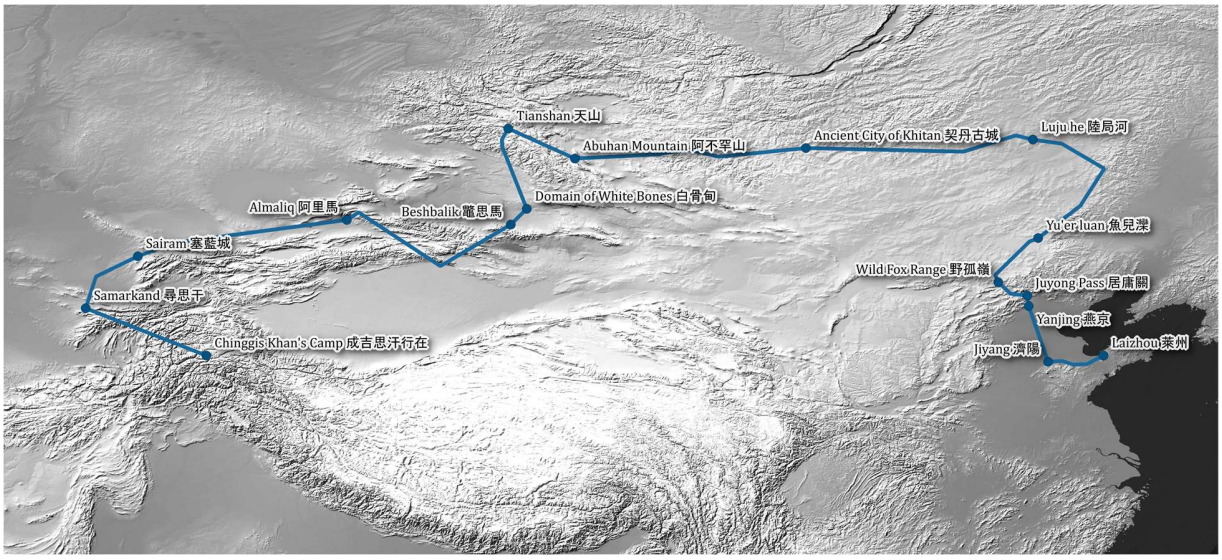
The present study argues that Li Zhichang deliberately adopted a narrative strategy that allowed the Mongols to claim political legitimacy while maintaining the Taoists' cultural dominance over the Mongols. Thus, the travelogue is not an objective portrayal of the Western regions' landscape and customs, but a narrative shaped by a series of cultural and political concerns. We will also

---

[3] For instance, it was reprinted in 1903 under the anthology *Wangchao fanshu yudi congshu* 皇朝藩屬輿地叢書 (Geographic Collectanea of Imperial Dynastic Barbarian Colonies). Shen Yao 沈垚 (1798-1840), Ding Qian 丁謙 (1843-1919), Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877-1927), and Wang Rutang 王汝棠 (1905-1944) published their annotated versions of this travelogue with an emphasis on identifying the place names in the text.

[4] For a detailed account of Li Zhichang's biography, see Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu* (Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 2015), 354-365.

juxtapose Li's work with another travel record composed by Yelü Chucai 耶律楚材 (1190-1244), a Khitan advisor who served the Mongol empire, travelled with Chinggis Khan on his Western military expeditions, and persuaded the Khan to send an invitation to Qiu. In Yelü's literary corpus, we find several companion pieces written in response to Qiu, but just a couple of years later, Yelü, infuriated by the Quanzhen sect, decided to compose *Xiyou lu* 西遊錄 (Record of the Journey to the West), a rebuttal directed against Li Zhichang's work. Although Yelü's travel account was meant to counter the Quanzhen Taoists' claims, a closer look reveals that he was simultaneously appropriating Li's strategy. While the rhetorical schemata shared by the two dueling travelogues provided a foundation for the political discourse affirming the Mongol-Yuan dynasty's legitimacy, we shall also try to detect a more personal voice. Using Yelü Chucai's poems as the point of inquiry, this chapter contends that his portrayal of the Central Asia is filled with anxiety. The chapter ends with a case study of Yelü Zhu 耶律鑄 (1221-1285), son of Yelü Chucai, whose literary corpus contains a series of *yuefu* poems 樂府. Although some of these songs celebrate the military achievements of the Mongol army, the rhetoric changed drastically after the fall of the Southern Song in 1279. Through tracing the changes in this work, we can gradually see how different authors produced a shared identity through evoking "Sinitic values."



Map 1.1. Qiu Chuji's journey to meet with Chinggis Khan. Scale: 1:11,000,000. Created with QGIS.

Preaching the Anti-Conquest?

The Relationship between Spiritual Conversion and Imperial Expansion

As one traces Qiu's journey in the Li travelogue, a clear demarcation between the culture of the central plains and that of the barbaric land emerges:

> He crossed the Wild Fox Range the next day. Looking back southward, we got a good view of the Taihang and other mountains. The mist on the hills was very agreeable. Gazing northward, there was nothing but wintry sands and withered grass. Here, the customs and climate of the central plains come to an end. But the Taoist must learn to be at ease wherever he goes. Song Defang[5] and the rest pointed to the skeletons lying on the battlefield and said,

[5] Song Defang 宋德方 (1183-1247) is one of Qiu Chuji's disciples. Together with Li Zhichang, eighteen disciples accompanied Qiu on his journey.

"Let us, when we come home, make offerings to them. This is also part of our fate as we set out on this journey to the north."

明日，北度野狐嶺，登高南望，俯視太行諸山，晴嵐可愛；北顧但寒沙衰草，中原之風，自此隔絕矣。道人之心，無適不可。宋德芳輩指戰場白骨曰：「我歸，當薦以金籙，此亦余北行中一端因緣耳。」[6]

Clearly, then, Qiu and his followers became conscious of cultural differences well before they arrived at the heart of Central Asia. As they crossed the Wild Fox Range, they pause to look back at their homeland, exemplified in the charming scenery of the Taihang Mountains. In contrast, gazing northward, the barren landscape ahead of them suggested desolation. A spatial liminality was perceived that prompted the group to reflect on the differences between their homeland and their destination.

In fact, before describing the Wild Fox Range, the travelogue gives us a glimpse into Qiu's activities when he was still in Laizhou 萊州 and Yanjing 燕京. Poems were composed at feasts celebrating Qiu's marvelous deeds, monasteries staged ceremonies in which thousands of believers praised the deities, and we learn of renowned paintings sent to Qiu for colophons. The text portrays a world filled with ritual and culture, and Li seems to take pleasure in naming many of the participants of this elite community. In this way, he builds an environment that eventually forms a sharp contrast with what the travelers witness on their journey – especially the jarring scene of exposed human bones in the wilderness. Central Asia is described as a battlefield, in contrast to the civilized central plains.

Death was often associated with places in the Western region. When Qiu arrived at the first Mohammedan city 回紇城 and met with General Tian Zhenhai 田鎮海, he was told they would soon arrive at the Domain of White Bones 白骨甸 (*Baigu dian*):

[6] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 72; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 52-62.

The Master asked, "Why was the place called the Domain of White Bones?" Zhenhai replied, "This is the site of an ancient battle. When an army of exhausted men reached this place, fewer than one in ten managed to return. This is the land of the dead. More recently, the valiant troops of Naiman were also defeated here."

師曰：「何謂白骨甸？」公曰：「古之戰場，凡疲兵至此，十無一還，死地也。頃者，乃滿大勢亦敗。」[7]

The origin of this area's name comprised a history of recurring conquests and serious causalities. Although war and destruction are never directly described in the travelogue, death nonetheless becomes a central image in this foreign land. Such an association is easily translated to a landscape filled with ghosts and evil spirits, and as Qiu headed to the desert, his followers warned their Master to avoid night travel for fear of goblins bewitching them in total darkness.[8]

Immediately before Qiu was to meet with the Khan, he passed through the Iron Gate Pass 鐵門關 (*Tiemen guan*), which the Mongol army had recently stormed. He was stunned by the scene:

	It is still bearable to pass through the Iron Gate north of the waters;	水北鐵門猶自可
2	The rocky gorges south of the waters are simply too terrifying.	水南石峽太堪驚
	Sheer cliffs on the two sides are thrust toward heaven,	兩崖絕壁攙天聳
4	A single stream of cold waves tumbles on earth.	一澗寒波滾地傾
	Exposed corpses flanking the roads make men cover their noses,	夾道橫屍人掩鼻
6	Long-eared donkeys drowned in streams leave me in distress.	溺溪長耳我傷情

7 Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 111; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 78.
8 Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 112; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 79.

	For ten years now, warring halberds have clashed over a thousand *li*.	十年萬里干戈動
8	Bring back the forces and restore peace as soon as you can.	早晚回軍復太平[9]

The poem begins with a juxtaposition of the natural scenery to the north and south of the stream near the Iron Gate Pass. Startled by the dangerous terrain, the poet provides a full description of the landscape by first looking up to the cliffs looming over the path. He then turns his gaze to the rapids running swiftly at the bottom of the hills. While such a vertiginous contrast could explain his shock on arrival at the rocky gorges, the next couplet provides a more jarring twist, as it depicts a scene with exposed dead bodies emitting a pungent smell and drowned donkeys inspiring melancholy. All these causalities lead the poet to ponder the suffering wrought by Mongol attacks. He ends the poem with a plea urging the Khan to take his army back and return to peace.

On the surface, this poem presents a straightforward argument against violence and conquest, but that this remonstrance is presented in the form of a poem is particularly intriguing. The travelogue offers evidence that Chinggis Khan often communicated with Qiu via a translator. Instead of taking this poem as a direct appeal to the Khan, we may surmise that the intended readers here are not the Mongol rulers, but the literati equipped to appreciate the art of poetry. This poem reminds us of the text's self-fashioning nature: The depiction of bones and corpses is part of the Quanzhen scheme to shape the image of Qiu Chuji as a compassionate teacher promoting an anti-conquest agenda in the

[9] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 174. Waley omitted most of Qiu's poems in his translation, explaining: "Changchun [i.e., Qiu Chuji] has no reputation as a poet, and judging from the specimens in the *Xiyouji* [i.e., this travelogue], he deserves none. The reader may, therefore, feel assured that by the omission of the poems, he is losing nothing of importance." Given that Li Zhichang authored the text's prose sections, I would argue that its poems offer us a more accurate portrayal of Qiu's mentality. As for their aesthetic value, the late Qing critic Kuang Zhouyi 況周頤 (1859-1926) once praised their vigor. Hong Jingfang 洪靜芳 also has argued for their importance, comparing them with the works preserved in Qiu's own literary corpus. See Hong Jingfang, "*Changchun zhenren xiyou ji* shici tanxi," in *Donghai daxue tushuguan guanxun* 東海大學圖書館館訊 128, no. 5 (2015): 49-72. The English translations of Qiu's poems in this paper are my own.

barren lands of Central Asia. And with this objective in mind, the travelogue pushes an analogy between Laozi and Qiu Chuji.

Before it has Qiu leaving Yanjing, the narrative refers to the painting *Taishang guoguan tu* 太上過關圖 (Laozi Crossing the Pass) by the renowned Tang painter Yan Liben 閻立本 (601-673). Qiu has been asked to inscribe a colophon on it:

	The day he left the Shu province and traveled to the West,	蜀郡西遊日
2	Was the moment he bade farewell to the East at Hangu Pass.	函關東別時
	If all the barbarians respectfully touch the ground with their heads,	群胡若稽首
4	The foundation of the Great Way will be laid again!	大道復開基[10]

The travelogue never explains why this particular moment is mentioned, but one can easily detect in Qiu's poem the analogy Li Zhichang means to suggest. As the legendary founder of Taoism, Laozi was said to have left the central plains through Hangu Pass 函谷關 to spend his final days educating the barbarians 化胡 (*huahu*) in the West, thereby contributing to the emergence of Buddhism.[11] By comparing Laozi's journey to Qiu Chuji's, this detail foreshadows Qiu's success in converting the "barbarians" to civilized culture.

Another allusion to Laozi appears in a poem composed when Qiu is leaving Yanjing:

	This journey is indeed not easy,	此行真不易
2	With this parting, there is much to be said.	此別話應長

[10] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 45.

[11] Traditionally, Laozi was said to have written *Laozi huahu jing* 老子化胡經 (Classic on Laozi Converting the Barbarians) while travelling to India to convert the population to Taoism. Many scholars believe that the text is a forgery originally compiled by the Taoist Wang Fu 王浮 in the early fourth century, and that this false attribution is made only to support the superiority of Taoism over Buddhism. The possible dating of the text's extant version ranges from the late fourth century to the sixth century.

	Striding northward past the Wild Fox range,	北蹈野狐嶺
4	Reaching westward limits to the home of the heavenly steeds:[12]	西窮天馬鄉
	No mirage can be found in Yinshan,	陰山無海市
6	Whitened grass grows in the sandy desert.	白草有沙場
	I sigh: Being no Sage of Profound Greatness,	自嘆非元聖
8	How can I pass through the barren wilderness?	何如歷大荒[13]

Here, Qiu Chuji gives his readers a glimpse of the journey on which he is about to embark. The enumerated distant locations build up an incredible itinerary culminating in the final line, when Qiu exclaims that he is not comparable to the "Sage of Profound Greatness," an honorific title given to Laozi. The last couplet's tone is particularly interesting. By humbly denying the grounds of comparison with Laozi, Qiu Chuji inevitably draws our attention toward the resemblance between the legendary Taoist master and himself: both set out to the West toward the end of their lives with the hope of educating the barbarians. This humble gesture paradoxically affirms the connection between the two.

That the Quanzhen sect was building an analogy between Laozi and Qiu Chuji is evident, especially if we consider other materials they printed. Records of a debate between the Buddhists and Taoists in 1258 indicate that Quanzhen leaders repeatedly printed the classics associated with Laozi educating the barbarians. Apart from these reprints, the Quanzhen leaders also compiled *Laozi bashiyi huatu* 老子八十一化圖 (Illustrations of the Eighty-One Incarnations of Laozi) to promote the image of Laozi's superiority to the Western peoples.[14] Obviously, the analogy the Quanzhen sect sought to draw here would not be complete without "barbarians" in the picture. It is quite tempting to simply

---

12 "Heavenly Steeds" is a reference to the Akhal-teke horses raised in Central Asia. During the Han dynasty, Emperor Wu acquired some of these horses and referred to them as "heavenly steeds."

13 Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 67.

14 For a detailed discussion of the Quanzhen sect's printing of Taoist texts, see Lucille Chia, "The Uses of Print in Early Quanzhen Daoist Text," in *Knowledge and Text Production in an Age of Print: China 900-1400* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 167-213.

identify the Mongols as the foreigners awaiting conversion: they were, after all, at the receiving end of Qiu's teachings. But a closer look at the travelogue suggests a more nuanced picture.

The Mongols were only one of many groups Qiu encountered in Central Asia. As he and his companions passed through the western hills, heading toward the Kerulen River (known as Luju he 陸局河 in the text), they were intrigued by the appearance and customs of local herdsmen, with their black wagons and white tents. Said to have no writings, these people were willing to obey orders and keep promises, prompting this comment: "They have indeed preserved the simplicity of primeval times" 有上古之遺風焉.[15]

While it is not unusual to present cultural differences in temporal terms, the poem Qiu composed adopts this logic with specific emphasis on the sages' teachings:

	Gazing as far as I can see, the mountains and waters have no limits,	極目山川無盡頭
2	Wind-blown smoke never breaks off, while the currents flow endlessly.	風煙不斷水長流
	Why would the Creator separate heaven and earth,	如何造物開天地
4	Only to order humans to have horses and cows graze at this place?	到此令人放馬牛
	Drinking blood and devouring raw meat like those living in a remote past,	飲血茹毛同上古
6	They differ from the central plains, where bound hair and tall caps hold sway.	峨冠結髮異中州
	The sages do not get to pass down the transforming power of culture,	聖賢不得垂文化
8	Through successive ages, they have run wild wherever they please.	歷代縱橫只自由[16]

The poem opens with a landscape surrounded by hills and rivers. The area's ruggedness prompts Qiu to turn to the locals living in these harsh conditions. Without enough flatland for farming, pasturing

[15] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 85; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 68.
[16] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 85.

becomes the only means of survival. Evaluating their customs by the standards of the central plains, he finds similarities and differences between the two groups. In the second couplet of the poem, Qiu gestures toward the beginning of time by asking the Creator why he would order the men to stay in such a location. This brings in a temporal dimension that prompts Qiu to ponder the root of divergent paths. The answer he gives is culture. Without the teachings passed down by the sages, the native inhabitants act without ritual or moral restraint.

While this poem hints at a form of geographic determinism, it is particularly intriguing if we juxtapose it with Daoist philosophy. The last couplet calls readers' attention to the achievements of the sages, implicitly praising them for the gift of civilization. Civilization, however, diverges from the ideal in *Laozi* of embracing simplicity and banishing desires If we follow that logic, the image and tone of the last line is more positive: "Through successive ages, they have roamed in all directions according to their will." This interpretation would change the poem's overall message, turning it into a celebration of the freedom enjoyed by people unrestrained by any hypocritical teachings.

While both readings are possible, the travelogue's overall context governs the understanding of this line. The text is consistent in presenting Qiu as the sage who enlightens primitive peoples; it would be very hard to imagine him glorifying a lifestyle independent of moral concerns. In fact, the travelogue is constantly weighing all "cultural others" against an ideal standard set by the "central plains." Thus, immediately after composing this poem, when Qiu and his disciples see an abandoned town whose layout "did not differ from that of a city in the central plains" 制作類中州,[17] we are given to understand that the resemblance implies a more civilized and preferable world. A more explicit instance occurs when the group arrived at the town of Beshbalig 鼈思馬大城 (*Biesima dacheng*):

[17] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 87. Waley translated the term *zhongzhou* 中州 as "Chinese," which may be problematic, as "China" tends to refer to the modern nation-state. To avoid any unintended confusion, I took the liberty of modifying his translation accordingly. See Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 68.

> Here, some relations of the Uighur king brought us wine, as well as marvelous flowers, all kinds of fruit, and choice perfumes. They also entertained us with [dwarfs] and musicians, all of whom were from the central plains. The people of the place indeed grew daily more courteous in their attentions. Among those who came to wait upon the Master were Buddhist and Taoist priests, as well as Confucians. We asked them about the history of the place, and they said in Tang times, this was the so-called Northern Court or residence of the Governor General of the central plains. In the third year of the period, Jinglong (709), the governor was a certain Yang Gonghe who ruled so well that the native population was devoted to him, and the effects of his administration are felt even today.
>
> 時回紇王部族勸蒲萄酒，供以異花、雜果、名香，且列侏儒伎樂，皆中州人。士庶日益敬，侍坐者有僧、道、儒，因問風俗。乃曰：「此大唐時北庭端府。景龍三年，楊公何為大都護，有德政，諸夷心服，惠及後人，於今賴之。」[18]

After watching a group of entertainers of Sinitic background and noticing the humble demeanor of the scholars, Qiu and his followers are intrigued and ask the locals about the history of the place. The explanation associates Beshbalig with the Tang dynasty, presented as the source of such courtesy. The message here is clear: General Yang Gonghe's virtuous rule has successfully transformed the place. Following this logic further, a people's level of civility hinges on its degree of "Sinicization," the standard for evaluating "cultural others" in the Western regions.

A similar instance can be found when a Buddhist monk greets Qiu Chuji as Qiu reaches the City of Chambalig. Qiu inquires, through an interpreter, about the scriptures the monk has read. The

[18] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 119; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 81.

monk replies that he has received the tonsure and worshipped the Buddha without following any school of teaching, leading the narrator to exclaim that no true Buddhist or Taoist priests can be found beyond the dominion of the Tang dynasty.[19] Familiarity with scriptures determines the degree of civilization in his vision of center and periphery. Just how this hierarchical structure is intimately tied to the Tang dynasty's expansion is clearly revealed.

With this hierarchy as a basis, the text deliberately paints a favorable picture of the Mongol rulers by emphasizing their reverence toward Qiu and their willingness to promote Sinitic culture. We see this when Chinggis Khan asks Qiu Chuji the reason for calamities such as earthquakes and thunder after learning of a bridge swept away in a storm. Qiu replies by criticizing the Mongols for mistreating their parents, bathing in rivers during summer, and washing their clothes in the fields – all violating the proper way to serve Heaven. Chinggis Khan is pleased. He orders prohibitions on these behaviors and asks the officials to write them in Uighur characters so that the words of Qiu can be circulated to all of Khan's subjects.[20]

The parallel between Chinggis Khan and Tang General Yang Gonghe is obvious: The Mongol ruler was the next virtuous ruler of the Western region who could spread the ethical code, cultural values, and religious practices of the central plains, thereby bringing civilization to his kingdom. Recall the anti-conquest theme explained above: Here we see its contradiction. This glorification of Chinggis Khan is easily translated as a justification of his conquest and rulership. Ultimately, the Quanzhen sect's eagerness to paint a positive picture of the Mongols points to the political reality of the times: they were relying on Chinggis Khan's political power to spread Quanzhen teachings, or in their parlance, to educate and transform the "barbarians in the West." As the Mongols increased their control in the region, the Quanzhen sect hoped to extend its influence.

---

[19] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 123; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 83.
[20] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 204; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 115-116.

The travelogue seeks to bring together political and cultural authority. By doing so, it inevitably undermines the anti-conquest agenda also present within the text. In fact, if we examine the travelogue closely, apart from the instances in which Qiu Chuji laments the calamities he witnesses throughout his journey, we never see Qiu directly remonstrating with the Khan over the cruelty of his conquests. This recently sparked a series of debates about Qiu's achievements. Yang Ne 楊訥 has undertaken to trace how Qiu's achievements were historically fabricated, while Zhao Weidong 趙衛東 argues that Qiu's role may be obscured by Chinggis Khan's explicit order that the details of their meetings be kept secret.[21] It is almost impossible to decipher what Qiu recommended to the Khan during their meetings. Instead of asking whether Qiu actually preached an anti-conquest message to Chinggis Khan, I will examine how the travelogue strategically gestures toward an anti-conquest agenda while simultaneously undercutting it.

As illustrated above, Central Asia is deliberately portrayed as a war zone. It is natural to infer from these accounts a stance against any military expansion, but the text also provides a possible justification for such conquest: The Mongols would bring a Sinitic civilization to a barren land. The deliberate ambiguity of this narrative strategy is a response to the political and cultural circumstances behind the travelogue's composition. The intended readers of *The Record of the Perfected Master: Changchun's Journey to the West* were mostly people living in the central plains, pining for peace. Not only does the anti-conquest message echo their concerns, but the implicit Sino-centric perspective also satisfies their curiosity about the West. However, as he finished the travelogue in 1228, Li Zhichang was well aware of the Mongol Empire's ongoing military advance. He had to gain the Khan's support and not alienate the new ruler of the central plains. Since Li Zhichang was consulted by the new

[21] For arguments from both sides, see Yang Ne, *Qiu Chuji "yiyan zhi sha" kao* 丘處機「一言止殺」考 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2018); and Zhao Weidong, "Qiu Chuji 'yi yan zhi sha' bianzheng." 丘處機「一言止殺」辨正, in *Jin Yuan Quanzhen daojiao shilun* 金元全真道教史論 (Jinan: Qi Lu shushe, 2010), 150-182.

Ögedei Khan 窩闊台 (r. 1229-1241) in 1229 on the education of the Crown Prince, his narrative strategy may be counted a great success.[22]

If Qiu's preaching did not bring about the cessation of wars of conquest, what are Qiu's other accomplishments and how are they presented in the travelogue? Enter the text's fantastic elements. The travelogue does not end when Qiu meets with Chinggis Khan; it goes on to document the Quanzhen Taoists' journey back to Laizhou, as well as key moments in Qiu's life until his death in Yanjing in 1227. In many of the places where Qiu preached, numerous miracles are reported. On more than on occasion, his approach seems to have brought desperately needed rain.[23] Qiu and his disciples also stop the carnage in barbarian lands. Thus, according to the travelogue, when Qiu and his company reach the Yinshan Mountain 陰山:

> The members of the congregations made the following address to the Master: "This district, lying far away from any civilized region, has never, since the early days, received instruction in the True Doctrine. The people have consequently been led astray into worship of mountain-spirits and wood-demons. But since the foundation of this temple, they have more than once celebrated the Festival of the Dead,[24] and on the first and fifteenth days of the month, there have been regular meetings of the faithful. The rules against the taking of life have been generally observed. Only the mysterious operation of Tao could have wrought such a change.

---

22 This interview's details are documented in the epitaph of Li Zhichang, composed by Wang E 王鶚 (1190-1273). See Chen Yuan ed., *Daojia jinshi lue* 道教金石略 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1988), 587.

23 After Qiu and his disciples reached a town next to the Abuhan Mountain 阿不罕山, when Qiu was alighting from the wagon, a rainstorm began, which greatly pleased the residents, who often suffered from summertime droughts. The text attributed the downpour entirely to Qiu's religious power. A similar event happened in Yanjing when Qiu hosted a rainmaking ceremony. For details, see Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 217; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, p. 122.

24 *Jiaoyan* 醮筵 (The Festival of the Dead) refers to a large-scale Taoist ceremony that local communities organized. It may be performed at intervals of one, three, or five years, either as a recurrent rite to renew life, or to give blessings to the community.

Last year, the Taoist community suffered much from the jealousy of certain evil men, and we had some unpleasant experiences. But one day, when Song Tao'an had fallen asleep in his cell, there suddenly appeared through a hole in the roof the figure of Zhao Jiugu who said, 'A letter has come.' 'Whence did it come?' asked Song.[25] 'From Heaven', replied the apparition, who held out a letter, upon which seemed to be written only two words, 'Great Purity'. Then the letter and its bearer suddenly vanished. The next day, your letter came, and since then, our torments have gradually decreased. The physician Luo, who had worked against us in every possible way, one day fell from his horse right in front of our temple and broke his leg. He at once repented of his errors, saying that this accident had come as a punishment and begged the Taoists to forgive him."

會眾白師曰：「此地深蕃，太古以來，不聞正教，惟山精鬼魅惑人。自師立觀，疊設醮筵，旦望作會，人多以殺生為戒。若非道化，何以得然？先是壬午，道眾為不善人妬害，眾不安。宋公道安晝寢方丈，忽有天窻中見虛靜先生趙公曰：『有書至。』道安問：『從何來？』曰：『天上來。』受而視之，止見『太清』二字，忽隱去。翌日，師有書至，魔事漸消。又豎者羅生，橫生非毀。一日，墜馬觀前，折其脛，即自悔曰：『我之過也。』對道眾服罪。」[26]

This peculiar incident well captures the tensions hidden throughout the text: By depicting the deceased disciple Zhao Jiugu's return from heaven as a messenger, Qiu's letter the following day is likened to a note from heaven. After the people receive these messages, the evil spirits are said to gradually

[25] Zhao Jiugu 趙九古, whose religious name was Xujing xiansheng 虛靜先生 (Master of Empty Purity), was one of the followers of Qiu Chuji. He was said to have received signs that he would never return to the central plains. Eventually, he fell ill and died in the town of Sairam 塞藍. See Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 142, and Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 90.

[26] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 224; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 124-125.

disappear. Here Qiu is presented as the powerful religious leader who brings peaceful order to a barren place. At the same time, the text shows how educating and transforming the community into fervent supporters of Taoism grants them a religious power that can exert dominance over others. The physician Luo, an opposing voice to the religious sect, is shown to have suffered for his opposition. Even as the religious sect promoted its message of anti-conquest, a consistent yearning for power, rationalized as subjugation for an appropriate cause, seems to persist.

The travelogue initiates (or augments) a cult of Qiu Chuji, in which his image is repeatedly deified. Additional printed materials promoting his legacy include the text entitled *Changchun dazongshi xuanfeng qinghui tu shuowen* 長春大宗師玄風慶會圖說文 (Illustrations of the Record on the Auspicious Gathering with the Taoists), compiled by Shi Zhijing 史志經 (b. 1202) in 1274. As only the front matter and first chapter (of five *juan*) from this illustrated hagiography survive, the sections related to Qiu's journey cannot be found in the extant version.[27] Nonetheless, through extensive study of how it was compiled and circulated, Paul R. Katz argues that the text represents an attempt to use the writing of history to enhance the Quanzhen movement's legitimacy.[28] There is clearly awareness within the Quanzhen community that the construction of its history can help them claim authority over other religious sects. In fact, this same awareness can be seen in Li Zhichang's travelogue, which epitomizes a conscious attempt to gain support from readers with a Sinitic background, glorifying the culture from the central plains while highlighting the marvelous power of Qiu Chuji. The text's ambitions extend still further, into the political realm by proposing a basis for political legitimation as it contrasts the Mongols with other cultural groups in the West, portraying them as political leaders

[27] The two copies of the text preserved in the Tenri Library in Japan and at the Fu Ssu-nien Library of the Institute of History and Philology in Taiwan are both reprints made in 1305. The Tenri Library published the fragments they acquired with an explanatory postface written by Shinobu Iwamura 岩村忍 (1905-1988). See *Gyosei shōyōei. Genpū keikaizu* 御製逍遥詠．玄風慶會圖 (Naragen Tenri-shi: Tenri Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1981), 203-346.

[28] Paul R. Katz, "Writing History, Creating Identity – A Case Study of the *Xuanfeng qinghui tu* 玄風慶會圖," in *Journal of Chinese Religions* 29, no. 1 (2001): 161-178.

who would eventually bring Sinitic order to the "barbarians." We now turn to the response from the Mongol authorities and as well as Yelü Chucai's response to the Quanzhen travelogue.

Displaced Perspective: Yelü Chucai's *Record of the Journey to the West*

The term *xuanfeng qinghui* 玄風慶會, "auspicious gathering with the Taoists," is a phrase often used to refer to the meeting between Chinggis Khan and Qiu Chuji. It appears in the title of a Taoist text *Xuanfeng qinghui lu* 玄風慶會錄 (Record on the Auspicious Gathering with the Taoists), attributed to Yelü Chucai. According to its preface, Chinggis Khan asked Yelü Chucai to keep Qiu's profound teachings a secret:

> Master Changchun, the teacher of the state, had received an imperial edict. He could not but begin his journey, leaving the central plains and passing through the Drifting Sands. He presented his moral teachings to the ruler, stopped the clash of arms, and saved all creatures. Having accomplished his great work, he withdrew. Weary from the mundane realm, he ascended to heaven. After the Most Supreme and Profound Master [traveled] to the West, Master Changchun was the only [other] person who could achieve this over hundreds and thousands of years. The details of his journey have already been recorded in the *Journey to the West*. However, what remains a secret are the teachings he imparted to the emperor. The emperor ordered his close attendants to record his profound words and subtle ideas while keeping it a secret. Now, more than ten years have passed, [and] this should be spread to the world through printing and publication. I hope to share with all under heaven the marvel of this auspicious gathering with the Taoists (a preface dated Winter Solstice, 1232).

> 國師長春真人，昔承宣召，不得已而後起，遂別中土、過流沙，陳道德以致君，止干戈而救物，功成身退，厭世登天。自太上玄元西去，之後寥寥千百載，唯真人一人而已，其往回事跡載於《西遊記》中詳矣。唯餘對上傳道，玄言奧旨，上令近侍錄而秘之，歲乃踰旬，傳之及外，將以刊行於世，願與天下共知玄風慶會一段奇事云。壬辰至日序。[29]

The preface's author praised Qiu for his commitment to preventing the devastation brought by war. Comparing Qiu Chuji with the supreme master Laozi, this piece again reinforces the analogy drawn in Li Zhichang's travelogue. This preface, however, prompts a number of intriguing questions about its authenticity. First, the text is not found in Yelü Chucai's literary corpus, nor do any of his friends mention it. And if we take a closer look at Yelü Chucai's writings, we find another work condemning the Quanzhen sect, referring to it as a deviation from the righteous way. Thus, the dating of this text becomes a crucial problem. According to Li's travelogue, Yelü Chucai advised Chinggis Khan to host Qiu and his followers in the West. If he did, when did Yelü Chucai change his perception of the Quanzhen sect? What triggered his negative opinion of Qiu and his followers?

This brings us to the *Record of the Journey to the West*, by Yelü Chucai. With a preface dated 1229, *the Record* attacks Qiu Chuji for being heterodox, and Yelü Chucai positions himself as a successor of Mencius, who seeks to correct the impropriety of Qiu's perverse teachings. Why would Yelü Chucai condemn the Quanzhen in 1229, then turn around and celebrate them in 1232? This contradiction can be explained in different ways: Perhaps another Mongol official wrote the Taoist text, and it was

[29] *Xuanfeng qinghui lu* 玄風慶會錄 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 1985), 194. The English translation is mine.

attributed wrongly to Yelü Chucai in the Taoist Canon.[30] Another way to account for such a discrepancy would be to dismiss the whole text as a forgery. As the main concern here is not Yelü Chucai's philosophy, we shall, instead, focus on the *Record of the Journey to the West*, whose authorship is not disputed.

The *Record of the Journey to the West* is divided into two *juan*: the first is dedicated to a discussion of the customs and scenery Yelü Chucai witnessed in the West, while the second chapter presents Yelü Chucai's clarification of his views on the Quanzhen sect of Daoism.[31] As indicated in the preface of the text, this travel account was written in response to those curious about the foreign world and to clarify Yelü Chucai's attitude toward Qiu Chuji and the Quanzhen sect.[32]

The first chapter opens with a dialogue:

> It was the spring of 1218, the day after the full moon in the third month, when I, Layman Zhanran [i.e., Yelü Chucai], was summoned to serve in the ruler's retinue and travel to the West. After the heavenly army returned, during the winter of 1227, I received an edict to search through classical texts and hurried to Yanjing. At the first watch of the night, a guest favored me with his arrival, and asked quickly and casually, "Your journey to the West measures I don't know how many thousand *li* across. May I hear about your journey to the West?"

---

30 The Ming scholar Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-1590) first spotted the discrepancy between Yelü Chucai's criticism of Qiu and the attribution of the Taoist text. He argued that Master Yelü 移剌 (the Jin 金 dynasty attempted to change all the Yelü 耶律 surnames to these two homophones) may not be Yelü Chucai. Developing Wang's ideas, the Qing scholar Chen Minggui 陳銘珪 (1824-1881) argued that this record was written by Ahai 阿海, the translator who may have the surname Yelü and had accompanied Qiu to the meeting with Chinggis Khan. After Li Zhichang and other Qiu disciples passed away, later Taoists could no longer identify who this master Yelü is and wrongly attributed this work to Yelü Chucai. For their arguments, see Wang Shizhen, "Shu xuanfeng qinghui lu hou" 書玄風慶會錄後, in *Yanzhou shanren dushu hou*, 8.4a-5b; Chen Minggui, *Changchun daojiao yuanliu* 長春道教源流 (Taipei: Guangmin shuju, 1989) 584-587.

31 For a detailed introduction to the text, see Yao Congwu 姚從吾 (1894-1970), "Yelü Chucai *Xiyou lu* zuben jiaozhu" 耶律楚材《西遊錄》足本校注, in *Yao Congwu xiansheng quanji* 姚從吾先生全集 (Taipei: Cheng Chung, 1982), 7:203-284; Igor de Rachewiltz, "The *Hsi-yu lu* 西遊錄 by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai 耶律楚材," *Monumenta Sinica* 21 (1962): 1-128.

32 Igor de Rachewiltz, "The *Hsi-yu lu* by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai,"17-18.

戊寅之春，三月既望，詔徵湛然居士扈從西遊。迨天兵旋旆，丁亥之冬，奉詔搜索經籍，馳驛來燕。既已更拂，有客惠然而來，率爾而問曰：「居士之西遊也，不知其幾千里邪？西遊之事，可得聞乎？」[33]

The guest's question sparks a lengthy response from Master Zhanran. This framing of the text calls for further analysis. First, instead of giving a chronological account of his journey, Yelü presents his account in the form of a dialogue. The use of the phrase "I don't know how many thousand *li* across" 不知其幾千里 (which comes from the first chapter of *Zhuangzi* 莊子)[34] and "may I hear about it" 可得聞乎 (which can be traced back to another pre-Qin classic *Mencius* 孟子)[35] reminds us of Yelü Chucai's mission: he was searching for the classics in Yanjing. All these intricate details build up a cultural world in sharp contrast to the military expeditions of the opening line. When Yelü Chucai announces that he is accompanying the Khan to wage war in Central Asia, the reader might expect descriptions of glorious battle or devastated battlefields (like those depicted in Li Zhichang's travelogue). Instead, Yelü Chucai gradually diverts our attention to the Mongols' effort to restore culture. They are presented here not only as heavenly soldiers ready to fight, but implicitly as the protectors of cultural heritage. But what kind of cultural heritage? Here we see how Yelü Chucai deliberately erases the distinction between the Mongols and the people in the central plains. For him, Zhuangzi and Mencius become the epitomes of a common culture the new empire seeks to preserve.

This strategy is even more evident in Master Zhanran's reply. While enumerating all the places he visits, he repeatedly refers to the Tang empire. Besides Beshbalig (transcribed in the text as Bieshiba 別石把) and Luntai 輪台，where he finds stone inscriptions dating back to the Tang, he tracks down

[33] Yao Congwu, "Yelü Chucai *Xiyou lu* zuben jiaozhu," 213.
[34] Burton Watson tr., *The Complete Works of Zhuangzi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 1.
[35] D.C. Lau tr., *Mencius* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2013), 14-15.

the history of Hezhou 和州，once named Gaochang 高昌，and the exact location of the Kingdom of Khotan (Yutian 于闐), active during the Tang.[36] By providing place names documented by official histories of the Tang dynasty, the text draws a map of the land either belonging or submitting to the Tang. Yelü's effort to match geographical data with corresponding names given in the Tang is most evident in the following case:

> The Kingdom of Kefacha can be found in the Northwest of Black India. There are several thousand *li* of flat land without any hills and mounds. Alas! This is strange! No city walls or gates are erected, and the people own a lot of sheep and horses. They use honey as brew, and the flavor is no different from that of the central plains. In this Kingdom, the days are long, and the nights short. Just as the shoulder of mutton is cooked, the sun has already risen again. This suits the depictions of the Kurykan Kingdom recorded in the *History of the Tang*, only the two kingdoms have different names. Isn't it because the pronunciation came to be misunderstood after such a long period of time?
>
> 墨色印度之西北有可弗叉國。數千里皆平川，無復丘垤。吁，可怪也！不立城邑，民多羊馬。以蜜為釀，味與中原不殊。此國晝長夜促，羊胛適熟，日已復出矣。正符《唐史》所載骨利幹國事，但國名不同耳，豈非歲時久遠，語音訛舛邪？[37]

A detailed description of the Kingdom of Kurykan can be found in *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 (Important Documents of the Tang), compiled by Wang Pu 王溥 (922-982), in which this same description of

[36] Yao Congwu, "Yelü Chucai *Xiyou lu* zuben jiaozhu," 214.
[37] Ibid., 217.

the short nights is recorded.[38] The history of the Tang dynasty is cited as if it has already become part of the knowledge shared by author and reader. Comparing this with Li Zhichang's travelogue, we discover a similar strategy in which the text measures the product or customs of the foreign land according to the standard in the central plains: here, the point of juxtaposition lies in the flavor of the honey brew. Both the Tang history and the taste of honey ale suggest an imagined audience with a background similar to the author's. Although Yelü Chucai served as administrator in the Mongol court, he was born near Yanjing, then capital of the Jin dynasty. In 1218, Yanjing was captured by the Mongol army, and Yelü Chucai, age 28, joined Chinggis Khan's administration.[39]

We can understand how Yelü Chucai would write from the perspective of someone from the central plains, yet the intriguing problem here is how he simultaneously speaks as representative of the Mongol Empire. In the beginning of his travel account, he opens with a grandiose sketch of the Mongol army:

> I set off from Yong'an, went through the Juyong Pass, passed by Wuchuan, proceeding from the right of Yunzhong and reached the north of the Tianshan Mountains. I then traversed the massive sandbar and crossed the desert. In less than 100 days, I already arrived at the temporary capital. The mountains and river wound around each other with the dense green of the forests. The carriage awnings hovered like clouds, while generals and soldiers were as dense as raindrops. Fields were covered with horses and oxen. Weapons and armor brightened up the sky. Beacon smoke and fire beckoned to each other; the lined-up camps stretched for 10,000 *li*. Of all the splendors of time, none could surpass this. After a year, the heavenly

[38] Wang Pu, *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1955), 100.1782.

[39] For a detailed biography of Yelu Chucai, see Igor de Rachewiltz et al. eds., *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yuan Period (1200-1300)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), 136-171.

troops launched a great military expedition in the West, and we passed through Jinshan Mountain.

予始發永安，過居庸，歷武川，出雲中之右，抵天山之北，涉大磧，逾沙漠。未浹十旬，已達行在。山川相繆，鬱乎蒼蒼。車帳如雲，將士如雨，馬牛被野，兵甲赫天，煙火相望，連營萬里，千古之盛，未嘗有也。越明年，天兵大舉西伐，道過金山。[40]

While Yelü Chucai's itinerary is very similar to that of the Quanzhen group, his journey from Yanjing to the temporary capital, where Chinggis Khan and his army are stationed, is presented in a cursory fashion. Unlike Qiu and his followers, he gives no indication of differences between the civilization in the central plains and that of the Mongols. Yelü's narrative deliberately glosses over the 100-day journey and focuses instead on the troops' magnificent appearance. The line "The mountains and river wind around each other with the dense green of the forests" 山川相繆，鬱乎蒼蒼 is taken verbatim from "The Poetic Exposition on Red Cliff" 前赤壁賦 by Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101).[41] But while Su Shi was describing the Red Cliff gorges where Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220) planned to launch his invasion of the South, the scenic portrayal is here applied to Central Asia. Su Shi image of Cao's army: "The prows and sterns of his galleys stretched a thousand *li*, his flags and banners blotted out the very sky" 舳艫千里，旌旗蔽空[42] is similarly echoed and rivaled by Yelü Chucai who seeks to formulate a still grander picture of the Mongol army. His series of four-syllable lines covers the Mongol army's

[40] Yao Congwu, "Yelü Chucai *Xiyou lu* zuben jiaozhu," 213.
[41] The line's English translation is extracted from Stephen Owen's work. See Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911* (New York: Norton, 1996), 292.
[42] Ibid., 292.

carriages, soldiers, food supplies, and weaponry – all to suggest history has never seen such an impressive military force.

The text draws readers into comparison of Cao Cao's troops and the Khan's armies through such allusions, thereby successfully situating the Khan's army in the long tradition of Sinitic history. This is also where the narrative perspective merges with that of the Mongol army: an account of the different locales and ethnic groups of Central Asia (according to standards of the central plains) follows. Without alerting the reader, the text shifts perspective and blurs cultural differences between the Mongols and those living within the Great Wall. By positioning himself as part of the Mongol army, Yelü Chucai forges a "self" that traverses multiple ethnic groups. If we compare this with Li Zhichang's travelogue, we notice some striking similarities: Both texts present the Western region from a Sinocentric perspective, but while the Quanzhen Taoists seek to elevate the Mongols by praising their ability to conform to Sinitic culture and spread it, Li Zhichang ultimately draws a line between the Mongols and those from the central plains. In contrast, while evaluating cultural others using a Sinocentric standard, Yelü Chucai redefines the notion of "self" in his text through the use of historical references and textual allusions. Thus, he strategically creates a narrative in which readers could easily identify with the Mongol army. All associations to previous Sinitic dynasties can, in turn, be used as resources to legitimize Mongol rule. We see, for instance, how he recounts the military campaign against the Western Xia:

> In 1224, the heavenly troops put their force in order. Since the Western Xia betrayed good faith and turned against a covenant, during the spring of 1226, we repeatedly advanced in the second and the sixth month. We drummed once and defeated them. One single outcast was persecuted, and all the citizens are at peace. Shazhou and Guazhou were administrative units established by the Han dynasty. Shuzhou refers to Shanshan, Ganzhou refers to Zhangye, and

Lingzhou refers to Lingwu. Alas! These are the edges of heaven and the corners of the seas. No one has ever arrived at these places. It is, indeed, a wondrous event!

歲在涒灘，天兵振旅。以西夏失信背盟，丙戌之春二月、六月迭進，一鼓而下之，獨夫就戮，萬姓懷安。沙州、瓜州，漢所置也。肅州即鄯善也。甘州即張掖也。靈州即靈武也。噫！天涯海角，人所不到，亦一段奇事。[43]

The Western Xia is portrayed as faithless and perverse. The term *dufu* 獨夫 (one single outcast) reminds us of *Mencius*, in which the philosopher famously claims that the ruler of a state should be considered an "outcast" only when he has become a mutilator and a crippler and the punishment of such an outcast is permissible.[44] However, not only is the conquest's logic here presented with an archaic twist, but many of the terms used in this short account can be traced back to the Han dynasty. For instance, while using the sexagenary cycle as a basis to date events, Yelü Chucai employs the term *guntan* 涒灘, an esoteric term that refers to the year of *shen* 申 (i.e., the ninth of the twelve earthly branches).[45] These highly archaic terms match the geographical depictions that follow, with the place names of Western Xia territory taken from Han dynasty history. Through these associations, readers are guided to see parallels between the Han dynasty and the Mongol empire, with both upholding similar values just as their territories overlap. Yelü Chucai not only describes the scenes he observed during his journey, but also maps out a Mongol empire in both spatial and temporal terms. The Mongol empire stretched across Central Asia, where traces of Han and Tang rule are easily found. By

43 Ibid., 292.

44 In *Mencius* 1B.8, King Xuan of Qi asked Mencius if he considered the ancient sage kings' military revolts against their rulers regicides. Mencius said, "He who mutilates benevolence is a mutilator; he who cripples rightness is a crippler; and a man who is both a mutilator and a crippler is an 'outcast'. I have indeed heard of the punishment of the 'outcast Zhou' [i.e., the corrupted leader who committed suicide after his army was defeated], but I have not heard of any regicide." See D.C. Lau tr., *Mencius*, 43.

45 *Erya* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2015), 94.

associating it with these earlier Sinitic dynasties, Yelü Chucai invents a tradition in which Mongol rule's legitimacy can be established. Learning from the Quanzhen project, he realized how travel writings could serve as effective propaganda to preach one's worldview. However, unlike Li Zhichang's travelogue, which at least hints at an anti-conquest agenda, Yelü highlights another side of the Sinitic tradition in which warfare and occupation are justified. Such reconfiguration of self and others cannot be achieved without conscious effort in bringing together a series of textual references: the text's highly allusive language creates the illusion that the Mongol empire is the legitimate successor of previous "Chinese dynasties" by emphasizing continuities in mentality and territorial span.

One may question the significance of Yelü Chucai's strategy, given his text's eventual obscurity – *Record of the Journey to the West* was rediscovered in Japan only in 1926.[46] It appears the text was not widely circulated and may have had limited impact even among other literati. Although it is difficult to ascertain the extent of the text's circulation and transmission, some of the portions analyzed above were copied into an anecdotal record compiled during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In *Shuzhai laoxue congtan* 庶齋老學叢談 (Collected Notes of an Aged Learner of the Commoner's Study), Sheng Ruzi 盛如梓 (active thirteenth century) laments that Yelü's contemporaries seldom read his travel account. Thus, he records an abridged version of the text to illustrate the customs and scenery of Western regions.[47] Intriguingly, this abridged version is not an innocent replication of the original text. It eliminates not only the text's dialogic structure, but also all references to the Mongols' military

[46] For example, Jack Weatherford argues, "For seven-hundred years, Li Zhichang's account was accepted as the sole record of the discussions between Chinggis Khan and the sage, as Yelü Chucai's report had disappeared from the libraries and archives of China, and scholars began to suspect that it had never existed." See Jack Weatherford, *Genghis Khan and the Quest for God* (New York: Penguin, 2016), 229. It is true that the latter half of Yelü Chucai's work was not found until it was rediscovered by Kanda Kichiro 神田喜一郎 (1897-1984).

[47] Sheng Ruzi, *Shuzhai laoxue congtan* (Taipei: Xingzhong shuju, 1964), 1.2b-5a. Using Sheng's text as his base, the Qing scholar Li Wentian 李文田 (1834-1895) produced an annotation of the text. See Li Wentian, *Xiyou lu zhu* 西遊錄注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 1-18. This abridged version has also caught the attention of Emil Bretschneider (1833-1901), who translated this version of the text into English. See Emil Bretschneider, *Mediæval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources: Fragments towards the Knowledge of the Geography and History of Central and Western Asia from the Thirteenth to the Seventeenth Century* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1888), 1: 9-24.

expeditions. A careful comparison of the two versions suggests that the political implications of Yelü's travelogue did not interest later readers. The dialogic structure justifying Mongol expansion seems irrelevant to Sheng, who is interested merely in the portrayal of Western regions.

A similar choice informs Lu Youren's 陸友仁 (active fourteenth century) *Yanbei zazhi* 研北雜誌 (Miscellaneous Notes by Yanbei), as he focuses on Yelü Chucai's erudition.[48] Rather than question the text's political motives, Lu Youren seeks to place the travelogue in the category of *bowu* 博物 (study of a wide range of things). Yelü Chucai's portrayal of landscapes and cultures are evaluated in terms of knowledge and as an attempt to comprehend an unknown world. This view allows Lu to assimilate Yelü Chucai into a network of knowledge shared by scholars of the central plains. Both Sheng Ruzi and Lu Youren place Yelü Chucai's text in a scholarly tradition that conveniently ignores the author's political loyalties and rhetorical strategies. And in simplifying the text, they alter the image of Yelü Chucai – for them, he was merely a highly Sinicized scholar who travels to the West and adopts Confucian learning to investigate this exotic world.

Perceiving the Exotic: The Poems of Yelü Chucai on Hezhong

Although both travel accounts discussed above were informed by a completely different ideological agenda, these texts attempt to lure its readers by arousing their curiosity about the exotic world. In Li Zhichang's travelogue, numerous exotic goods are enumerated: peacocks and elephants from India, grapes and wine from Balasagun, and red salt from Kesh. This appeal is best captured in a poem composed by Qiu Chuji:

Three peaks rise together, pierce into the clouds and grow cold, 三峰並起插雲寒

[48] Lu Youren, *Yanbei zazhi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), 175.

2	Four hills stretch, winding around the streams.	四壁橫陳繞澗盤
	Snowy summits form the borders of the sky where men can never reach,	雪嶺界天人不到
4	The sun glares from the iced pool – people can hardly gaze upon it.	冰池耀日俗難觀
	Some say: if a person looks at this iced pool, his mind will be in a muddled daze.	人云：向此冰池之間 觀看，則魂識昏昧
	The cliffs are steep, offering an escape from the disasters of wars,	巖深可避刀兵害
	The cliffs form a strategic its natural barrier. In an age of turmoil, if one tries to guard it with determination, one can be spared from disaster.	其巖險固，逢亂世堅 守，則得免其難
6	An abundance of water nourishes dry farmland.	水眾能滋稼穡乾
	There are springs and streams below, which can be used to irrigate the grains in the fields. Every autumn, there is a harvest.	下有泉源，可以灌溉 田禾，每歲秋成
	This famous fort is the best in the north,	名鎮北方為第一
8	Yet no one has produced any painting for scrutiny.	無人寫向圖畫看[49]

As indicated in Li's travelogue, this poem is composed while the Quanzhen Daoists were staying in Luntai. Gazing at the renowned Yinshan, the poem underscores how the city surrounded by the cliffs is hardly accessible by outsiders. This inaccessibility is more evident when the poet draws a contrast between the fame this place enjoys with its lack of pictorial representation. This ending of the poem hence gestures back to the value of this poem – it is a perfect substitute for a map of the area. The notes accompanying the poem offered explanations to the poetic images, which calls our attention again to the intended readers here. The assumption is clear: its intended readers are people from the south who do not have any access to this foreign place.

[49] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 121-122.

In Yelü Chucai's literary corpus, there is a poem composed with the same rhyming scheme. As Wang Guowei argued, the poem is most likely written in harmony with Qiu's.[50] However, unlike the poem by Qiu, there are much fewer references to the peculiarities of the location in Yelü's work:

	Snow presses down on the cliff as the eighth month grows cold,	雪壓山峯八月寒
2	The woodcutters' path wind around like sheep gut.	羊腸樵路曲盤盤
	A thousand cliffs compete to stand tall, and my mind is cleared,	千巖競秀清人思
4	Ten thousand torrents vie in flowing and expand my view.	萬壑爭流壯我觀
	Clouds passing the hillside spread the flourishing colors of the mountain,	山腹雲開嵐色潤
6	A breeze rises at the tip of the pine trees, while the sounds of rain fade.	松巔風起雨聲乾
	Lights and winds fill my sack with poetry,	光風滿貯詩囊去
8	When I yearn for the mountain, I look at these works.	一度思山一度看[51]

In this poem, Yelü Chucai never seeks to stress on the peculiarity nor the inaccessibility of the place. The descriptions of the snowy hills and the winding roads are not typically foreign to the readers. Moreover, in the second couplet, the poet chose to allude to the line "A thousand cliffs compete with their elegance, ten thousand torrents vied in flowing" 千巖競秀，萬壑爭流, which was taken verbatim from *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 (A New Account of Tales of the World) where a famous calligrapher Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (348-409) was said to have used these words to describe the beauty of Zhejiang 浙江.[52] However, at the end of the poem, the poet also reflects upon the representation of

[50] Wang Guowei, "Yelü Wenzheng gong nianpu" 耶律文忠公年譜, in *Wang Guowei quanji* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 2009), 11.181-182.

[51] Yelü Chucai, *Zhanran jushi wenji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 7.

[52] Liu Yiqing 劉義慶 (403-444), *Xinshuo xinyu jiaojian* 世說新語校箋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006), 81. For an English translation, see Richard Mather tr., *Shih-shuo Hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002), 74.

the marvelous landscape. The representation itself serve as a cue to bring back the poet's personal memory rather than a piece that could be circulated among people who have never been to the distant mountain.

Through the comparison above, we can see that the same landscape can bring forth poems with drastically different foci. I do not mean that Yelü Chucai was not interested in depicting the exotic qualities of Central Asia. In fact, we can also see from his travel account a detailed depiction of foreign products (for instance, the honey brew discussed above). But there is also a strong tendency in Yelü Chucai to portray Central Asia as a place that one could get settled. The best example to illustrate this are his poems on Hezhong fu 河中府.

Hezhong fu, also known at the time as Xunsigan 尋斯干, refer to modern day Samarkand. This place feature prominently in both travelogues composed by Li Zhichang and Yelü Chucai. Yelü Chucai arrived at the place with the Mongol army in around 1219, two years before Qiu and his followers reached the city. Of course, the divergent nomenclature itself provides us with a glimpse into how the site gathered people with different political and ethnic identities: first, Hezhong fu was a Sinitic term used by the Western Liao 西遼 when they occupied the city in 1141.[53] By contrast, Xunsigan 尋斯干 is probably a transliteration from the Tangut, as explained by Yelü Chucai in the *Record of the Journey to the West*:

> More than a thousand *li* west of Edala is a huge city called Xunsigan. In the language of the western people Xunsigan means "fat," and since the soil there is rich and fertile, they have given it this name. The Western Liao called this city Hezhong fu because it lies along rivers.

[53] Emil Bretschneider traced how the city was called in different languages in the 13th century. He mentioned that the term Hezhong fu, meaning the city between rivers, is a "literal translation of the Arabic 'Beïn naharein.'" See Bretschneider, *Mediæval researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources*, vol. 2, 59-60.

The people in Xunsigan are quite wealthy. They use gold and copper coins without hole or rim, and all commodities are weighed on scales. The city is surrounded by several dozen li of gardens. All those swift-flowing channels and running fountains, square ponds and round pools, cypresses and willows next to each other, and peach and plum trees in unbroken succession form the most magnificent sight ever. As for the melons, the large ones are as big as a horse's head, and long enough to contain a fox. Apart from millet, glutinous rice and soya beans, all kinds of grain can be found there. In the height of summer, it does not rain. The river is thus realigned for irrigation. In general, the yield is about two *zhong* per two *mou*.[54] Wine is made from grapes, and its taste is similar to that of the ale from Zhongshan and Jiuwen.[55] There are some mulberry trees, but few are fit for the breeding of silkworms. Therefore, silkworm cocoons are extremely rare, and everyone wears cotton. The natives regard white clothes as clothes in auspicious color, and black ones are considered as mourning clothes; hence they all wear white.

訛打剌西千餘里有大城曰尋思干。尋思干者西人云肥也，以地土肥饒故名之。西遼名是城曰河中府，以瀕河故也。尋思干甚富庶。用金銅錢，無孔郭。百物皆以權平之。環郭數十里皆園林也，率飛渠走泉，方池圓沼，柏柳相接，桃李連延，亦一時之勝槩也。瓜大者如馬首許，長可以容狐。八穀無黍糯大豆，餘皆有之。盛夏無雨，

[54] One *zhong* equals to 37.95 liters while 1 *mou* is equivalent to 5.655 acres.

[55] Igor de Rachewiltz identifies this as an allusion to an anecdote in *Powu zhi* 博物志 (Record on Myriad Things) by Zhang Hua 張華 (230-300) concerning a man who, having had some wine of Zhongshan 中山, was dead drunk for a thousand days. But it seems more likely that the terms "Zhongshan" and "Jiuwen" 九醞 here refer to two specific brands of ale produced at the time. In *Quwei jiuwen* 曲洧舊聞 (Old Tales from Quwei), Zhang Nengchen 張能臣 is said to have recorded all the names of the ale he found. Two of the brands he mentioned is exactly "Zhongshan Hall and Jiuwen produced in Dingzhou" 定州中山堂又九醞. See Zhu Bian 朱弁 (1085-1144), *Quwei jiuwen* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2016), 178.

引河以激。率二畝收鍾許。釀以蒲萄，味如中山、九醞。頗有桑，鮮能蠶者，故絲蠒絕難，皆服屈胞。土人以白衣為吉色，以青衣為喪服，故皆衣白。[56]

Through explaining the names given to the city, Yelü Chucai draws our attention to the economic situation of the place. With fertile soil, the area produces melons, grapes and various types of grains. Not only were the currency and clothing of the people different from those of the central plains, Yelü Chucai also takes pleasure in appreciating the gardens surrounding the city. Yet even though Yelü gestures towards the history of the city, his account never touches upon the dire consequences of the Mongol's invasion. Here is where we should turn to Li Zhichang's account:

> After a while, we entered the city by the northeast gate. The town is built along canals. As no rainfalls during the summer and autumn, two rivers have been diverted to run along every street, thus giving a supply of water to all the inhabitants. Before the defeat of the Khwarizm Shah[57] there was a fixed population here of more than 100,000 households; but since the collapse of that kingdom, there remains only about a quarter of this number, of whom a very large proportion are Uighurs. But these people are quite unable to manage their fields and orchards for themselves, and are obliged to call in the Han, Khitai and Tanguts. The administration of the town is also conducted by people from various groups. Han craftsmen are found everywhere. Within the city is a mound about a hundred feet high on which stands

---

56 Yao Congwu, "Yelü Chucai *Xiyou lu* zuben jiaozhu," 215-216.

57 The Khwarizm Shah referred here is Ala ad-Din Muhammad II (r. 1200-1220). In 1218, a group of merchants led by a Mongol envoy were deployed by Chinggis Khan to develop trade relations with the Shah. The party were accused of spying in the state, and they were thus executed. Three envoys were sent again from Chinggis Khan to demand for reparations, and the Shah refused their request. Enraged by Muhammad II's decision, Chinggis Khan launched a military campaign against the Khwarazmian dynasty. Samarkand was sacked in 1220, and Muhammad II died while he fled to an island in the Caspian Sea. See Rene Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 166-170.

the Khwarizm Shah's new palace. The Mongol Governor at first resided here. But the local population suffered from food shortage and there was perpetual brigandage. Fearing trouble, the Governor went to live on the north side of the river.

少焉，由東北門入。其城因溝岸為之，秋、夏常無雨，國人疏二河入城，分繞巷陌，比屋得用。方算端氏之未敗也，城中常十萬餘戶。國破而來，存者四之一，其中大率多回紇人，田園不能自主，須附漢人及契丹、河西等。其官亦以諸色人為之，漢工匠雜處城中。有岡高十餘丈，算端氏之新宮據焉，太師先居之。以回紇艱食，盜賊多有，恐其變，出居於水北。[58]

Li Zhichang proceeds to portray his master's insistence on staying in the palace within the city, and on this basis Li praises him as a true master who is perfectly comfortable with where fate guides him. While highlighting how Qiu seemed to be above the fray in Samarkand, Li inadvertently exposed the jarring destructions and grim reality in the city. As seen from Li's account, three quarters of the city population had disappeared after the Mongol invasion, and since then, the locals were struck by famine and perpetual plunder. In fact, Li's work is not the only historical source that could attest to the devastating consequences brought by the war. One can also refer to *The History of the World Conqueror* composed by Atâ-Malek Juvayni (1226-1283) where he recorded in detail how Samarkand suffered when the Mongol army entered the city.[59]

Since Yelü Chucai was part of the ruling class, it may seem logical to infer that he also noticed contemporary political circumstances. Can we spot any reference to the dire situation in his literary works? In Yelü's literary corpus, a total of 33 poems are clearly composed while he was in Hezhong.

---

[58] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 149; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 92-93.

[59] Atâ-Malek Juvayni, *Genghis Khan: The History of the World Conqueror* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 115-122.

Most of these works were composed while he was visiting the Western Garden 西園, as in the following example:

	Visiting in the Western Garden (I)	河中遊西園四首（其一）
	During late spring in Hezhong, I invited some guests,	河中春晚我邀賓
2	Poems fill cloud-patterned paper as plentiful wines makes the rounds.	詩滿雲牋酒滿巡
	Facing such scenery, I do not dare to look at the setting sun;	對景怕看紅日暮
4	Overlooking a pool, I am embarrassed by the reflection of my newly gray hair.	臨池羞照白頭新
	The azure colors of the willow floss deepens, creeping onto the weeds,	柳添翠色侵凌草
6	The flowers shed its lingering fragrance that touches us visitors.	花落餘香著莫人
	Let us compose some new poems to pair with these fragrant wines,	且著新詩與芳酒
8	In such fine places in the western garden, we bid farewell to the last of spring.	西園佳處送殘春[60]

The poem presents the scene of a banquet where Yelü Chucai hosts several guests at the Western garden to enjoy a spring evening. After providing the readers with the setting of the poem, Yelü Chucai turns to the juxtaposition of the scenery with himself. By comparing himself to the setting sun, he laments his old age. This sadness is forgotten when the poet faces the beautiful spring scene with the flourishing colors of the willows and the sweet fragrance of the flowers. This brings the poet to the message – *carpe diem*. In his final couplet, Yelü Chucai gestures back to the wine and poetry in the first couplet and urge his guests to enjoy the last of spring with him.

The emphasis of this banquet poem is not the exotic qualities of the borderland. Even though in this series of works, Yelü Chucai does use terms like *biancheng* 邊城 [border city] or *kecheng* 客城

[60] Yelü Chucai, *Zhanran jushi wenji*, 99.

[guest city] to refer to Hezhong, it seems that the poems were written as social poems addressing those who were already in Central Asia, or more specifically, those who attended his banquet. Although we do not have any evidence that Yelü invited Qiu Chuji (they were both in Samarkand at the time). We do find two poems written by Qiu Chuji with the same rhyming scheme. Here is one of them:

	Deep in the borderland, there still lies traces of the past,	深蕃古跡尚横陳
2	I wish to visit all my good friends in the desert.	大漠良朋欲徧巡
	Pavilions and terraces from former days are lined up everywhere,	舊日亭臺隨處列
4	Flowers from yester year are refreshed following the cycle of seasons.	向年花卉逐時新
	The bright weather really knows how to lure their guests,	風光甚解流連客
6	How can the setting sun bear to send us off?	夕照那堪斷送人
	In my humble opinion, worldly men answers to the shortness of swift days,	竊念世間酬短景
8	How can this compare to drinking to lasting spring in the realm beyond the horizon?	何如天外飲長春[61]

The poem begins by recounting the history of the border town. Using it as a cue to the architecture in the city, Qiu then juxtaposes what is ephemeral with what can last forever in the second couplet. The ruins from the past stands in contrast with the blooming of the flowers. Similar to the poem by Yelü Chucai, Qiu laments the shortness of the days as the sun sets. But the message posed at the end is particularly intriguing. Underlining how the world responds to the passage of time, Qiu argues instead for transcendence. In the given context, this transcendence can be understood in two different ways: one is to urge one's guests to seize the moment and drink in this "realm beyond the horizon." The word *yin* 飲 or drink here points to this understanding. But, of course, if we take into

[61] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 164.

consideration the fact that Qiu's religious name is "Lasting Spring" (Changchun), one can also read the poem in a religious way: the readers should turn to spiritual cultivation and enjoy everlasting life.

From the materials we have, it is difficult to ascertain the sequence when Yelü and Qiu wrote their work. But there is indeed a tension between the two sets of poems if we are to compare them. While Qiu seemed to have taken advantage of the occasion to write about his own religious position, Yelü Chucai used the occasion to praise the Mongols' military achievements. In the same set of poems, he wrote:

	Visiting in the Western Garden (IV)	河中遊西園四首（其四）
	Together with kettledrums, the phoenix-belled palanquin set off from Qin,	金鼓鑾輿出隴秦
2	Flying forward on the eight steeds, he again made a tour in the West.	驅馳八駿又西巡
	Meeting his moment in a thousand years of history, winds and clouds change,	千年際會風雲異
4	Setting the rules for the whole age, the whole universe is renewed.	一代規模宇宙新
	Soldiers were dispatched to the Western Regions to capture the pretender ruler,	西域兵來擒偽主
6	Issuing summons to the Eastern Hills, he roused the recluse.[62]	東山詔下起幽人
	Worthy ministers, a wise emperor, and an age of prosperity,[63]	股肱元首明良世
8	Hands folded, clothes draping down,[64] his Majesty shall enjoy longevity.	高拱垂衣壽萬春[65]

[62] Eastern Hills is an allusion to the place where Xie An 謝安 (320-385) lived as a hermit before he joined the administration and become a high official.

[63] *Gugong* 股肱 literally refers to "thigh and forearm." It is often used as a metaphor for the "right-hand man" assisting the ruler. *Yuanshou* 元首 is also a body metaphor. Its literal meaning is one's head and is often employed as a reference to the emperor.

[64] The phrase "hands folded in front, with clothes draping down" is an allusion to *Shangshu* 尚書 (*the Book of Documents*), which stated "he had only to let his robes fall down, and fold his hands, and the kingdom was orderly ruled" 垂拱而天下治. See James Legge tr., *The Chinese Classics: with a Translation, Critical and Exegetical Notes, Prolegomena and Copious Indexes* (Hong Kong: Legge, 1861-1872), vol. 3, part II, 316. This implies effective governance by moral authority and non-action.

[65] Yelü Chucai, *Zhanran jushi wenji*, 100.

This poem is drastically different from the other works in the series. Instead of making any reference to his banquet or the location where he composed this piece, Yelü Chucai simply begins the poem by enumerating the achievements of the Mongol army. As we have discussed above, both works from Qiu Chuji and Yelü Chucai are often informed by an ideological agenda. While Qiu focused on spreading his religious ideas, Yelü was more concerned about the image of the Mongol ruler. By portraying Chinggis Khan as a virtuous ruler who is always willing to accept the assistance from worthy ministers and is only launching his attacks to capture the fake ruler, Yelü Chucai is explicitly justifying his loyalty to the Mongols.

Looking through the set of poems composed by Yelü Chucai in the Western Garden, most poems look quite similar to the examples analyzed above. What we may conclude from this analysis is that Yelü Chucai is not too keen on highlighting the exotic qualities of his location while composing poems on such social occasions. But is there a venue for a more individual voice? Can we reconstruct how Yelü Chucai reacted as he embarked on this long journey? Here we turn to another set of his poems "Ten Songs on Hezhong" 河中十詠, which among other things set out to illustrate the lives and customs of Samarkand. The songs in this set all share a similar opening "How lonely I am in the Hezhong city" 寂寞河中府 as we can see in the first poem in this series:

	How lonely I am in the Hezhong city!	寂寞河中府
2	Roof tiles are linked together for ten thousand homes.	連甍及萬家
	With grapes, I ferment the wine myself,	葡萄親釀酒
4	I watch the flowers of the olive bloom.	杷欖看開花
	Satiated with the meat from the chickens' tongue,	飽啖雞舌肉

6	I share a melon as big as a horse head.	分餐馬首瓜
	The life of men is all about filling one's belly,	人生唯口腹
8	What is to stop me from crossing the desert?	何礙過流沙[66]

The poem presents a process whereby the poet first exclaims that life in Hezhong is particularly desolate. But then he moves on to list the delicacies of the place: chicken tongues, wines and melons. This culminates in his realization of the satisfaction he can get from settling in this place. And thus, the poem ends with the message that one can still fulfill his need for good food if one stays in Hezhong.

The whole poetic sequence is written in a similar format, where the poet first complains about the place, but then swiftly turns to a realization that he can also be satisfied in this foreign land. Another example will be:

	How lonely I am in the Hezhong city!	寂寞河中府
2	Located at an isolated corner in the distant wilds.	遐荒僻一隅
	Mare milk drips from the grapes,	葡萄垂馬乳
4	Olives glisten by the ghee.	杷欖燦牛酥
	Brewing in spring, the wine-makers face no demands for taxes,	釀春無輸課
6	Ploughing fields, the farmers are exempt from rental payments.	耕田不納租
	Travelling ten thousand *li* to the west,	西行萬餘里
8	Who would expect that there is such a fine protocol?	誰謂乃良圖[67]

This poem follows a similar strategy: the poet first complains about the remoteness of the city, but then moves on to display how life in Hezhong can be satisfying. Within this frame, he directs our

[66] Ibid., 114.
[67] Ibid., 114.

attention to the lenient taxation policies and argue for the advantages of settling down in the city. The rest of the poems in the sequence also refer to the differences in weather, scenery and culture, but all the exotic qualities of the place are framed in this format. This begs the question: why would Yelü Chucai place so much of his emphasis on the comfort and ease one could attain in the area? This is especially surprising if we take into consideration how the city had just been struck by war and famine at the time.

One way to approach the question is to consider Yelü Chucai's political agenda. From the perspective of the Mongol empire, Hezhong belongs to a newly conquered territories that have yet to be assimilated. While Yelü Chucai's poems emphasize the exotic, they can simultaneously serve as a tool to enhance the appeal of Mongol rule. A reader from the Central plains could infer from reading these poems that life in Hezhong was quite attractive even though it was situated in the distant west. But reading the series as a whole, one can also get a sense that Yelü Chucai himself was struggling to adapt to the lifestyle in the area. While he notes that a person can also satisfy his basic needs in this land, the immense differences between life in the Central plains and in Hezhong are inevitably showcased through his works. The series of poems become a device that can go either way: one could believe in the concluding claim of satisfaction, but one could also notice an author struggling to turn the exotic qualities of the land into values that can convince his readers of its transformation into land fit for settlement.

Since it is impossible to determine to whom these poems were written, it would be very difficult to ascertain the intention of Yelü Chucai. But I would propose one possibility here: if we were to date these poems, as Wang Guowei suggested, to 1222, then Yelü Chucai had already been following Chinggis Khan's army in Central Asia for three years.[68] During this time, Yelü did not see

[68] Wang Guowei attempted to date every poem in Yelü Chucai's collection. But a lot of speculations are made in his dating. See Wang Guowei, "Yelü Wenzheng gong nianpu," 184.

too much opportunity to go back to Yanjing, and thus these series of poems can be seen as a poetic sequence written to console himself since he may have to stranded in Hezhong for the rest of his life. This explains why he was much more concerned about the life of being a citizen in the Western regions. Unlike other Daoists who have also composed poem on this area,[69] he stressed the possibility of viewing Samarkand as a decent settlement. If one places this series of poems in the historical context and compares them with the accounts by Li Zhichang and Juvayni, one would notice that the Mongol governor had moved out of the city due to banditry and a constant lack of food. These texts show a sharp contrast with Yelü's poems. Instead of simply considering them as political rhetoric, I would argue that this discrepancy between these different perspectives may allow us to catch a glimpse of Yelü Chucai's personal voice. The depictions of the journeys to the west are not merely manifestations of the political or cultural agenda, a poet's circumstances, especially his sense of dislocation, could also alter the representation of the foreign land.

A Shared Tradition?

Justification of Military Advancements and Rulership

The rhetorical devices adopted in the Quanzhen travelogue and Yelü's account hint at the problem of political legitimacy. They become part of the rhetorical basis which later writers adopted to justify both military expansions and political dominance. The poems composed by Yelü Zhu, son of Yelü Chucai, illustrate this point. Yelü Zhu was a prominent official serving under Khubilai Khan. He composed four sets of *kaige* 凱歌 (songs of triumph). Each set of songs contains praise of the Mongol

[69] Apart from Qiu Chuji and Li Zhichang, one could also find three sets of quatrains composed by Yin Zhiping 尹志平 (1169-1251), a Taoist who accompanied Qiu in his journey. See Yin's "Jinshan Mountain" 金山, "Passing through the City Dashilinya in the Khitan Kingdom" 過大石林牙契丹國 and "The Produce in the Western Regions Ripen at Times Earlier than the Central Plains, hence I Composed this as a Record" 西域物熟，節氣比中原較早，故記之, in Yin Zhiping, *Paoguang ji* 葆光集 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1923-1926), 1-3.

ruler and his military power, depictions of the places conquered by the Mongols, and justifications as to why the army would launch an attack in the first place.

In his preface to the "Lyrics of the Songs of Triumph" 凱樂歌詞曲, he explained the history of this genre. Yelü Zhu cited *The Rites of Zhou* to show that the origin of the songs of triumph can be traced back to the Zhou dynasty.[70] He proceeded on to quote the *Yuefu shiji* (Collection of *Yuefu* Poetry) by Guo Maoqian 郭茂倩 (1041-1099) to show that this practice of composing military songs has been inherited in the Jin, Sui and Tang dynasties. Therefore, in order to record the martial achievements of the Mongol Emperor, Yelü Zhu argues that he has to emulate the songs composed in the Tang and continues to follow this tradition.

Justifying the composition through historical precedence is a common move seen in the travelogues discussed above. But what is intriguing here is that Yelü Zhu saw the need to situate the Yuan dynasty in a chain of dynastic succession. It is unclear if the songs composed here had ever been performed before Khubilai Khan, but from Yelü Zhu's perspective, he noticed that the legitimacy of the Mongol rule cannot be established unless a historical claim can be made. This does not only appear in the preface, but also becomes a tactic he adopted to validate the Mongol army's aggression. One can clearly observe this from his piece "Victory of the Southern Campaign" 南征捷:

Breaking one's promise and perversely certain of one's course, are of course to deceive heaven,	食言自是是誣天

[70] One could compare this section of his preface with that of a memorial sent in the Tang dynasty the eighth month of 829. As recorded in the *Jiu Tang shu* (Old Tang History), the Court of Sacrifice 太常院 recommends the Emperor to restore the habits of performing "songs of triumph" whenever the army won a battle. The historical precedents cited in this memorial are exactly the sources quoted in Yelü Zhu's preface.

2	Swimming in the cauldron, the fish yet think that they are playing in deep pools.[71]	游鼎魚疑戲洞淵
	It is natural that the token of trust should come from the northern ends of heaven.	征信自從天北極
4	In whose eyes the world South of the Yangtze has been disdained for many years.	目無江表已多年[72]

Yelü Zhu claims that the Song dynasty has betrayed its alliance (line 1), and the Mongol Emperor hence ordered a military strike in order to punish the dishonorable regime, which fatuously believes in its security despite its dire situation (line 2). Providing his own annotation to the piece, the author provides all the historical details where the Southern Song promised the Mongol Empire that they would assist the Mongols when they attacked the Jurchens and the Khitans but eventually failed to carry out the promise.[73] Ultimately, Yelü Zhu emphasizes the Mongols ability to demonstrate trust and uphold justice. The military campaign launched by the Mongols is thus justified with a moral cause.

Yelü Zhu's songs celebrate the expansion of the Mongol empire and the might of the Mongol army. In these songs, he never shies away from bloodshed and presents this as a proof of the Mongol's military strength. One example is "A Battle in Wuhu Lake" 戰蕪湖:

	Prows and sterns stretched a thousand *li*, covering rivers and lakes,	舳艫千里蔽江湖
2	He picks the storied ships that would sweep away the enemies.	擿挑樓船為騷除
	Three hundred thousand vanguards of an advancing army,	先直前鋒三十萬
4	After one single roll of top-speed drumming, their foes all turn into fish.	一通嚴鼓盡為魚[74]

[71] This is an allusion to a letter sent by Qiu Chi 丘遲 (464-508) which contains the line, "The general is similar to a fish swimming in a sizzling cauldron, or a swallow nesting above a moving tent" 將軍魚游於沸鼎之中，燕巢於飛幕之上.

[72] Yelü Zhu, *Shuangxi zuiyin ji* 雙溪醉隱集 (Shenyang: Liaohai shushe, 1985), 2.2b.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid., 2.4b.

The poem emphasizes the swift actions of the Mongol army. Written in the long tradition of frontier poetry, this song does not present the actual scene of fighting. It only calls attention to the swiftness of the military conquest by underlining how all the three hundred thousand Southern Song soldiers are drowned with one round of drumming. Yelü Zhu's glorification of the military achievements of Khubilai Khan reminds us of the rhetorical strategies employed by his father – as long as the military campaign is justified with a moral reason, he does not see the destruction brought by the conquest as problematic.

This is particularly intriguing because as we move on to another *yuefu* poem, *Zhan chengnan* 戰城南 (Fighting South of the City), the readers can observe a totally different way of reasoning:

	From time immemorial, ancient battlefields	自來古戰場
2	are mostly found to the south of the Great Wall,	多在長城南
	Rarely are there any to the north of the Great Wall.	少在長城北
4	How can the endlessly vast Domain of the White Bones,	茫茫白骨甸
	Be directly connected with the desert of the Kingdom of Huanglong?[75]	如何直接黃龍磧
6	One may say:	或云
	ever since the time when Emperor Wu of Han opened up the Western regions,	自從漢武開西域
	Losing hundreds and thousands of men	耗折十萬眾
8	Only to obtain scores of fine horses,	博得善馬數十匹
	Exerting military power,	奮軍勢
10	Engaging in fierce battles,	務鏖擊

[75] The Kingdom of Huanglong is a term used by Southerners in the fifth century to refer to the Northern Yan 北燕 (407-436). It becomes a general reference to the North.

	Who has been washing their weapons as they come and go?	往來誰洗兵
12	The waters of the crimson river are still crimson.	赤河水猶赤
	The Han eventually abandoned the land of Luntai.	終棄輪台地
14	For the central plains,	其地於中國
	Why would losing this land do any harm?	失之且何損
16	Acquiring it does not in any case bring any benefits.	得之本無益
	Adding up everything gained throughout time,	歷計其所得
18	It still could not compensate for the losses.	皆不償所失
	Even if an imperial decree, filled with sorrow and pain, was issued,	雖下哀痛詔
20	How could regrets be of any avail?	追悔將何及
	This is true for all time:	此是萬萬古
22	The Sinitic world falls apart in the ruts of the wheels.	華夏覆車轍
	Tracing how things develop,	底事夤緣
24	the tracks reached the end of the Tang.	其軌迄季唐
	Craving for military triumphs at the borders,	競喜邊功
26	They took pleasure in aggrandizement while showing off their talent.	好大矜英哲
	The Illustrious August One failed to foresee the Yuyang debacle,[76]	明皇不慮漁陽厄
28	From ten thousand miles away, he dispatched one army for an expedition against Suyab.[77]	萬里孤軍征碎葉
	Not even a single carriage returned,	只輪曾不返
30	How can one's emotions not boil over?	得無五情熱
	Lives were cruelly destroyed, people wasted away in quagmire and grassland,	暴殄生靈塗草莽

[76] The Yuyang debacle refers to the An Lushan 安祿山 (c. 703-757) Rebellion which began in 755. The Illustrious August is a common reference to the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang. Before the outbreak of the rebellion, Emperor Xuanzong suspected that An Lushan, an ambitious general of Sogdian and Göktürk origin, was planning a revolt and sent several officers to An's home base Yuyang (near modern Beijing). These officers were bribed and reassured An's loyalty when they returned to court.

[77] Suyab was an ancient city located near modern Kyrgyzstan. It was one of the Four Garrisons of Anxi Protectorate under the Tang dynasty. It was handed over to Sulu Khagan of the Turgesh in 719. After Sulu's murder in 738, an army was dispatched to Suyab. In 766, the city fell to a Qarluq ruler.

32	How could they bear to claim an undeserved reputation for might and glory?	忍徇虛名為盛烈
	Haven't you seen	君不見
	the people in this world,	世間人
	their minds are knit firmly together?[78]	心固結
34	This is called the emperor's enterprise of true unification.	是謂帝王真統業
	Haven't you heard	君不聞
	all around the world	四海內
	words of praise?	有美談
36	The son of heaven in the Zhiyuan reign has pacified Jiangnan:	至元天子平江南
	Were there ever pestles drifting in rivers of blood or drowning horses? [79]	何曾漂杵與溺驂
38	The sage ruler owns an invincible city,[80]	聖人有金城
	Favors strategies and detests wars,	貴謀賤戰
40	He subdues the enemy's troops without fighting.[81]	不戰屈人兵[82]

The poem employs many familiar rhetorical tactics. First, Yelü Zhu juxtaposes the Mongol empire's military campaigns with those of the Han dynasty. Like his father, Yelü Zhu is making a historical argument, attempting to justify Mongol conquest of the Southern Song by highlighting the frustrated endeavors of the earlier dynasty. From his perspective, the Mongol empire is much more civilized

---

78 The term *gujie* 固結 is a reference to *Liji* 禮記, in which Zhou Feng 周豐 explained to the ruler, "If the heart be not observant of righteousness, self-consecration, good faith, sincerity, and guilelessness, though a ruler may try to knit the people firmly to him, will not all bonds between them be dissolved?" 苟無禮義忠信誠慤之心以蒞之，雖固結之，民其不解乎？

79 The term *piaochu* 漂杵 is an allusion to *the Book of Documents*, in which the blood shed by the Shang army during the battle of Muye 牧野 was said to flow so heavily that even pestles floated in it. *Nican* 溺驂 was a reference to the catastrophic consequences from the war between Qi 齊 and the alliance between Song 宋 and Zheng 鄭. Warhorses were said to have drowned in the warriors' blood.

80 This phrase is taken verbatim from Jia Yi 賈誼 (200-168 BCE), in which he argues that the subjects of a state are all willing to sacrifice for their leader if he is virtuous and, thus, a sage king automatically "owns an unconquerable city."

81 This line is taken from *Sunzi bingfa* 孫子兵法. See Philip Ivanhoe tr., *Master Sun's Art of War* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2011), 17.

82 Yelü Zhu, *Shuangxi zuiyin ji*, 2.7a-b.

than those dynasties because the Mongols did not inflict serious suffering on their enemies. Of course, as seen from his other "victory songs," it is important to point out that this particular poem presents a biased narrative that aims to establish Mongol legitimacy, and the claim that the Mongol army conquered the Southern Song without violent battles is questionable at best. Setting aside the problem of historical accuracy, this claim against violence reminds us of the narrative strategy in Li Zhichang's travelogue.

But *Fighting South of the City* was written in very different times. Yelü Zhu wants to argue against acquiring territory beyond the Great Wall, and that the emperor of the Zhiyuan reign (i.e., Khubilai Khan) is trying to consolidate his rule in what will come to be known as the Yuan dynasty. But when did the Mongol empire begin its claim to be a Chinese dynasty? How was Mongol rule's legitimacy established? Such questions have long been central concerns for historians of this period, even as the naming of the Mongol empire captures much scholarly attention.[83] I want to suggest that the travel accounts of Li Zhichang and Yelü Chucai are key texts in this transition, presenting the Mongols as the embodiment of Sinitic values. In the work of the Quanzhen sect, the Mongols are portrayed as humble promoters of Sinitic values, whose regrettable violence is, however, still considered barbaric. To counter this narrative, Yelü Chucai appropriates the framework but stresses that the Mongols wage wars according to values laid down in the Sinitic tradition. Both narratives claim for the Mongols the authority of cultural tradition (however borrowed), yet their emphases shift according to the author's cultural and political agenda. Returning to an argument against violence, Yelü Zhu places the Yuan dynasty in the chain of dynastic succession while claiming the regime either inherit the practice of its predecessors or sometimes, surpasses its predecessors because it truly upholds the teachings passed

[83] See, for instance, Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, *Meng Yuan shi xinyan* 蒙元史新研 (Taipei: Yunchen wenhua shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 1996), 23-48; Chen Dezhi, "Guanyu Yuanchao de guohao, niandai yu jiangyu wenti" 關於元朝的國號、年代與疆域問題, in *Beifang minzu daxue xuebao* 北方民族大學學報 87, no. 3 (2009): 5-14.; and Kim Hodong, "Was 'Da Yuan' a Chinese Dynasty?" *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 45 (2015): 279-305.

down from the ancients. This explains why the poem culminates in a highly allusive ending, with each line derived from an ancient text.

Conclusion

Studies of travel writing in conjunction with the rise of empires have garnered much attention in recent years. Mary Louise Pratt's concept of "imperial eyes" focuses attention on the power relations hidden behind representations of "foreign" lands. Using nineteenth-century European travel narratives as an example, she describes a process of "transculturation," through which subordinated groups are invented from materials transmitted to them by a dominant culture. These groups considered as living in the "periphery" in turn justify the creation of an European identity. Thus travelogues, according to Pratt, become a way to legitimize and familiarize the European expansion process.[84]

The dueling travelogues presented in this paper can serve as a reference point to reconsider Pratt's formulation. Like their European counterparts, these travel accounts are not simply products of people moving between distant geographical locations, but represent a moment when two or more entities clash and grapple with each other in a context of highly asymmetrical power relations. The asymmetry in the case of the Mongol empire, however, is rather different from that in Europe and its colonies. At the turn of the thirteenth century, China's cultural and political instability was profound: political authority could be used to enhance cultural currency, while appropriation of the dominant cultural tradition served to boost political legitimacy. Although the two travel accounts discussed above present different imagery as to what comprises *zhongguo* 中國, they contribute to the invention of a historical continuity and value system their readers could share. The travelogues, in other words, become part of the process of inventing an identity.

[84] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 2008), 1-11.

In focusing on the power dynamics hidden within these works, I have not devoted much space to their obvious curiosity regarding the exotic. Sheng Ruzi rightly noted that many contemporary readers were attracted to these texts for their descriptions of exotic landscapes and customs in Central Asia. Such curiosity ebbed as concerns about political legitimacy within China proper became more pressing. After the death of Chinggis Khan, literary works composed in Chinese became markedly less concerned with representations of Western lands and peoples. While the concept of *zhongguo* and the essence of its culture were still contested in debates between Buddhists and Taoists, most travelogues reverted to a "utilitarian mode," in which foreign lands are treated as tributary states.[85]

[85] The concept of *zhongguo* was often raised in debates between Buddhism and Taoism. For instance, in the Buddhist text *Sanjiao pingxin lun* 三教平心論 (preface written in 1324), Liu Mi 劉謐 argued that "there is a central kingdom outside the barbarians from the four sides of our state" 四夷之外固有中國. See Liu Mi 劉謐, *Sanjiao pingxin lun* 三教平心論 (Kuaiji: Dongshi, 1888), 1.1b.

CHAPTER 2

Discussions of Ethnic Boundaries:

Configurations of the *Hua-Yi* Distinction in the Early Yuan Dynasty

The distinction between *Hua* 華 and *Yi* 夷 is a conceptual polarity that differentiates the Chinese from other peoples. This differentiation is sometimes translated as the "Sino-Barbarian" dichotomy given that Chinese were regarded as superior to the foreign people under this paradigm.[1] In previous studies of this theoretical dichotomy, it was often assumed that the distinction between Chinese and the "barbarians" lies in the difference in culture but not race or ethnicity. For instance, Yuri Pines argues that the aliens presented in major pre-Qin texts show that ancient Chinese thinker conceived of their differences with the aliens as primarily cultural, and hence changeable. The transformability of one's identity from an alien to Chinese, he argued, was never questioned by any known pre-imperial thinkers.[2] What Pines showed in his discussion was a more inclusive perception of Chinese identity as those foreigners who acquired Chinese cultural values can become "Chinese."

The discourse on the *Hua-Yi* distinction has always been evolving during the imperial times, and was not necessary always inclusive. Through a study of the Southern Song philosopher Chen Liang 陳亮 (1143-1194), Hoyt Tillman shows that Jurchen's encroachment on China proper prompted Chen Liang to basically deny the "barbarians" any possibility of participating in Chinese culture. The *Hua-*

---

1 Many scholars have dispute the use of the term "barbarian" in the Chinese context. Andrew Gillett, for instance, argues that Chinese language has never developed a derogatory term for all foreign peoples even though Chinese culture was conscious of the potentially threatening outsiders. See Andrew Gillet, "The Mirror of Jordanes: Concepts of the Barbarian, Then and Now," in Philip Rousseau ed., *A Companion to Late Antiquity* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2009), 397. Refuting Gillet's observation, Shao-yun Yang argues that the Chinese does use *yi* 夷 as a generic label for all foreign peoples since the Warring States period and the term eventually acquires strong pejorative associations. See Shao-yun Yang, *The Way of the Barbarians* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2019), 9.

2 Yuri Pines, "Beasts or Humans: Pre-imperial Origins of the 'Sino-Barbarian' Dichotomy," in *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 59-103.

Yi dichotomy, in Chen's formulation, is strictly defined by ethnicity and much more exclusive. To use Tillman's term, Chen Liang's philosophical assumptions constitute a kind of "proto-nationalism" which stands in sharp contrast to the more universal Chinese "culturalism."[3]

Both inclusive and exclusive view of Chinese identity can be found before the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. It is important to delve into how Confucians in the early Yuan perceive this distinction since different views on the *Hua-Yi* distinction may alter how policies were drafted and could have profound implications on the choices of a literatus. In this chapter, I would like to first focus on Hao Jing 郝經 (1223-1275), a renowned scholar who was born under the Jurchen-Jin rule and lived under the Mongol rule. As a political advisor to Khubilai Khan, Hao Jing understandably demonstrates a more universalistic and inclusive view of Chinese identity. This section explains how he devised a philosophical framework that would support the political legitimacy of Mongol rule.

The second part of this chapter shifts to a discussion of two Confucian scholars: Xu Heng 許衡 (1209-1281) and Liu Yin 劉因 (1249-1293). Similar to Hao Jing, Xu Heng enthusiastically promoted the institutions and values of the Han Chinese to the Mongol ruler. Yet, his service in the Yuan court became a point of contention during the Ming and Qing dynasties. Later scholars often compared him unfavorably with Liu Yin, who consistently refused to serve in the Mongol court but instead lived as a private teacher in his home district. The debate surrounding the two scholars gradually evolved into an argument about ethnic allegiance, yet there is little evidence that Xu Heng and Liu Yin were anxious about serving an alien ruler. Analyzing the literary works composed by Xu and Liu, this section will investigate how the two Confucian scholars positioned themselves under the Mongol rule.

---

[3] Hoyt Tillman, "Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China? The Case of Ch'en Liang," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 39 (1979), 403-428.

Hao Jing and the *Hua-Yi* Distinction

Before we begin to analyze Hao Jing's view on the *Hua-Yi* distinction, it is important to first understand some biographical information about him. Hao came from a distinguished Shanxi family. His ancestor from six generations earlier was a student of the famous Song Neo-Confucian philosopher Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-1085) and his grandfather Hao Tianting 郝天挺 (1161-1217) was the teacher of the renowned Jurchen literatus Yuan Haowen 元好問 (1190-1257). The biographical records state that shortly before Hao Jing's birth in 1223, his parents crossed the Yellow River as they fled from the invading Mongol army. Hao grew up in a chaotic time and his family was said to have moved their residence ten times. At age 22, he was employed as a family tutor by one Yuan general Jia Fu 賈輔 (1191-1254). In 1256, he had his first audience with Khubilai, four years before he ascended to the throne as khan. During their meeting, Khubilai consulted Hao Jing about the proper actions of a sovereign. His talent was appreciated by the then prince Khubilai, and he was asked to draft a series of memoranda on the proper conduct of the government.

After Khubilai Khan was appointed the khan of the Mongols in 1260, Hao Jing was chosen by the newly crowned Khan to negotiate peace terms with the Song court. Hao's mission was unsuccessful as he was arrested by the Song minister Jia Sidao 賈似道 (1213-1275). Hao was detained for eight years and was released only in 1275 as part of the last effort for the Southern Song to stop the Mongol invasion. Hao Jing fell ill during his return and died a few months after he arrived at the Yuan capital Dadu.[4]

One of the most memorable essay Hao Jing composed was his letter addressed to Li Tingzhi 李庭芝 (1219-1276), the Song governor of the Huai region. In the letter, he explains why he decided to serve Khubilai Khan:

---

[4] A detailed biography of Hao Jing can be found in Igor de Rachewiltz et al. eds., *In the Service of the Khan*, 136-171.

Now when my Emperor was still a prince, he opened up his residence to receive all talents under heaven. An endless streams of carriages were deployed to seek worthy men. The mounds and gardens are adorned by light.[5] He sought advice about the way of governance, and expected himself to match King Tang of Shang and King Wu of Zhou.[6] In the *yimao* year (1255), he issued an order of summon, and I set off enthusiastically to serve him. I surmised: "military chaos has already lasted for more than forty years, is there anyone who is capable of employing a worthy scholar? Whoever can employ worthy scholars today and can practice the Way of the Central Kingdom, is the ruler of the Central Kingdom. If a scholar refuses to let himself be of use, then the bodies of our people will become odder for the execution axes and manure in the wilds. None of them will survive!" Thus when our Emperor ascended to the throne, he first undertook this [i.e. sent an envoy to the Song] and ordered me to go on the mission. With the mission he was to sweep away the violence that have accumulated over the years, make blunt tens and thousands of arms and preserve millions of lives.

今主上在潛，開邸以待天下士，征車絡繹，賁光丘園，訪以治道，期於湯、武。歲乙卯，下令來徵，乃慨然啓行。以爲兵亂四十餘年，而孰能用士乎？今日能用士，而能行中國之道，則中國之主也。士於此時而不自用，則吾民將膏鈇鉞、糞土野，其無孑遺矣。故主上踐祚，首有是舉，即命僕以行，將以彗積年之凶衅，頓百萬之鋒鋭，存億兆之性命。[7]

---

5 An allusion to the *Book of Changes*. The heights and gardens were traditionally interpreted as the place where hermits reside. Here it means that those who retired were visited by the messengers sent by Khubilai.

6 King Tang 湯 (c. 1675-1646 BCE) is the founder of the Shang dynasty, and King Wu 武 (1055-1021 BCE) is the first king of the Zhou dynasty.

7 Hao Jing, *Hao Wenzhong gong Lingchuan wenji* (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 2006), 577.

Many scholars single out this passage to prove that Hao Jing has an exclusive view on the *Hua-Yi* dichotomy: it seems that he believes that any foreign ruler who can employ the literati and practice the rules of the Central Kingdom can have the right to rule over the Central Kingdom.[8] But the focus of this section seems different: it is a testimony to why Hao Jing finds it necessary to justify his political choice – he had to take the opportunity to stop the slaughtering of millions of people. Hao Jing believes that he has the moral duty to prevent further destruction, and this concern is reflected in a lot of his policy recommendations composed before he was sent as an envoy. In his "Discussions on the Longing for Good Governance" 思治論 (Sizhi lun), he argues that the Mongols had been successful at acquiring land through their martial power but they failed to realize that good governance lay in a civil and benevolent rulership. He further explicates how this rulership can be accomplished: education and agriculture should be promoted, a comprehensive legal system should be installed, and administrative institutions should be established.[9]

Hao Jing's "Discussions on the Longing for Good Governance" deserves further explications because we can see from his discussion an attempt to integrate the ideas of Neo-Confucianism into his understanding of rulership:

> Rules, regulations, rites, and moral duty are the primal *qi* of all under heaven. They may be either incomplete or complete, but they always exist and will never perish. Even if all under heaven perish, the primal *qi* never perish. Therefore, those who can uphold rules, regulations, rites and moral duty will be able to unify all under heaven; those who cannot uphold rules,

---

8 See, for instance, Zhou Shuang 周爽, "Hao Jing 'Zhongguo' guan de lixue hua qingxiang" 郝經「中國」觀的理學化傾向, *Jiangxi shehui kexue* 江西社會科學, 11 (2014): 112-117.

9 Hao Jing, *Hao Wenzhong gong Lingchuan wenji*, 281-283.

regulations, rites and moral duty would have to live on in a corner of the world and make compromises.

綱紀禮義者，天下之元氣也。或偏或全，必有在而不亡。天下雖亡，元氣未嘗亡也。故能舉綱紀禮義者，能一天下也；不能舉綱紀禮義者，安於偏而苟且者也。[10]

The aim of the essay is obviously to appeal to Khubilai's desire to achieve dominion over the world. By associating rules, regulations, rites and moral duty with the *qi*, he argues that the key to unification was not military force but laws and a sense of moral duty. Unification here takes on a different meaning since it does not only mean territorial unification but also implies long term governance. But what is intriguing is not only Hao Jing's attempt to transform Khubilai into a ruler of culture (*wen*), but also his tendency to merge the rhetoric of Neo-Confucianism (primal *qi*) with his political proposals.

The "Discussions on the Longing for Good Governance" begins with an evaluation of the nature of every dynasties, which he groups them into three categories: (1) those who intended to govern but not to acquire land, like the Shang and Zhou dynasties; (2) those who intended to govern and to acquire land, like the Han and Tang dynasties; (3) those who intended to govern and to acquire land, yet failed to realize their goals, like the Jin and Sui dynasties.[11] He used these historical precedents to redefine what true unification may entail. From this policy recommendation, we can observe an interesting amalgamation of Neo-Confucianism and history that allows Hao Jing to advance his argument.

[10] Ibid., 283.
[11] Ibid., 281.

Through a thorough analysis of Hao Jing's philosophical treatises, Hoyt Tillman once pointed out that Hao Jing was consistently trying to view the Confucian classics as histories.[12] Certainly, we can infer from Tillman's argument that Hao Jing was also concerned with the question of how to bring Confucianism into the study of history. If we look at the literary works of Hao Jing, we can see that he demonstrates great interest in the history of the Han dynasty. When he composed an epitaph for the temple for Liu Bei 劉備 (161-223), he makes the following observation:

> The legitimacy of a ruler is closely tied to the mandate of Heaven, while the mandate of Heaven is closely tied to people's heart. To gain or lose the support (literally, heart) of the people determines the continuation and cessation of the mandate of Heaven. Whether the basis of legitimacy exists or not lies exactly here. […] Although the Cao clan had occupied the Central Kingdom, its ruler was simply illegitimate. Ultimately, heavenly mandate and legitimacy belonged to Emperor Zhaolie [i.e. Liu Bei]. Alas! Emperor Gaozu [i.e. 劉邦 (256-195 BCE)], Emperor Guangwu [i.e. 劉秀 (5 BCE-57 CE)] and Emperor Zhaolie inherited a sincere mind and turned it into benevolence. They took this as the vital essence of the Han dynasty and viewed it as the basis of their legitimacy. This was used to hold together the Central Kingdom: at first, it established the Han dynasty; then it revived the Han dynasty; in the end, it preserved the Han dynasty.[13] For almost five hundred years, this loyalty is deep ingrained in the people. To this day, people could not forget their accomplishment!

---

12 Tillman Hoyt, "Hao Jing dui *Wujing*, *Zhongyong* he Daotong de fansi" 郝經對《五經》、《中庸》和道統的反思, in *Zhong Ri Han jingxue guoji xueshu yantaihui lunwenji* 中日韓經學國際學術研討會論文集 (Taipei: Wanjuanlou tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 2015), 51-77.

13 A reference to the three emperors mentioned above. Emperor Gaozu was the founder of the Han dynasty. After the fall of the Western Han, Emperor Guangwu restored the dynasty and hence founded the Eastern Han. Towards the end of the Eastern Han, when various warlords controlled different territories, Emperor Zhaolie founded the state of Shu Han.

王統繫於天命，天命繫於人心，人心之去就，即天命之絶續，統體存亡，於是乎在。[……]曹氏雖據中夏，祗為僭偽，天命王統，卒在昭烈。嗚呼！高帝、光武、昭烈三君，傳一誠心，歸之於仁，作漢命脈，以為統體，維繫中國，始則造漢，中則復漢，終則存漢，幾五百年，涵浸深浹，固結民心，至今不忘。[14]

The Han dynasty has always occupied an important role in Hao Jing's philosophy because he viewed it as the high point of Chinese culture.[15] In the above quote, he argued that Liu Bei, the renowned founder of the Shu, was seen as a legitimate successor of the Han not because he claimed the Han imperial line as his distant ancestors, but because he managed to build his state in accordance with sincerity and benevolence. The legitimacy of the rulership lies therefore in a moral governance that would garner the support of the people.

In another political treatise, "Task of the Times" 時務 (Shiwu), he elaborates on why he took the Han dynasty as the golden age of Chinese civilization. The essay begins by claiming that Chinese civilization had been at a high point from the beginning since the Central Kingdom was ruled by the sage kings Yao 堯 and Shun 舜. This ideal rulership continued until the Qin dynasty 秦 (221-206 BCE) ended it by seeking to burn books and bury scholars despite forging a new unified state. From Hao Jing's perspectives, the Han dynasty was crucial because it prevented further decline and restored the civilization passed down by the ancient sage kings. The end of the Han dynasty again marked the collapse of the Chinese civilization:

---

14 It is important to note that one of Hao Jing's works is the *Sequel to the Book of the Later Han* 續後漢書 (*Xu Hou Hanshu*). The book is Hao's attempt to rewrite the history of the Three Kingdoms by positing Liu Bei as the legitimate ruler.

15 Hao Jing, *Hao Wenzhong gong Lingchuan wenji*, 460.

With the fall of the two Han dynasties, there was no longer any righteous *qi* between heaven and earth, and there was no longer anyone of all-round talent in all under heaven. By the time of the Jin dynasty, only cunning and deceitful men were employed, and the bond between rulers and subjects thus disappeared; slanders and subterfuge went rampant, and the bond between fathers and sons thus disappeared; insubordinate and jealous women were chosen as wives, and the bond between husbands and wives was thus abandoned; people turned against their flesh and blood, and the bond between brothers was thus severed. By the time when warfare with the barbarians broke out, the blessings left by the Han was finally exhausted and the Central Kingdom was then fell apart. Therefore, the rites and music were destroyed in the Qin dynasty, and the Central Kingdom perished during the course of the Jin dynasty.

二漢之亡，天地無正氣，天下無全才，及於晉氏，狙詐取而無君臣，讒間行而無父子，賊妒騁而夫婦廢，骨肉逆而兄弟絕，致夷狄兵爭，而漢之遺澤盡矣，中國遂亡也。故禮樂滅於秦，而中國亡於晉。[16]

A very similar argument can be observed in one of Hao Jing's poem:

	Since the Taikang reign, the Jin dynasty achieved unification,	太康晉一統
2	The might of the Central Kingdom is roused.	中國威幾振
	The Son of Heaven did not have any far-reaching strategies,	天子無遠略
4	His minsters outdid each other to deceive and scheme against him.	宰貳爭欺徇
	By being pure and lofty, they abandoned all their duties,	清高機務廢
6	Seeking to be free and easy, their honesty and integrity came to an end.	曠達廉節盡

[16] Ibid., 292.

	They have always boasted of their abandon and extravagance,	往往矜豪奢
8	Pearls and jade disks filled their houses.	珠璧家充牣
	This brought about the disaster of flesh and blood,[17]	搆成骨肉禍
10	And induced conflicts with the barbarians at the borders.[18]	結起邊夷釁
	From that point on, the Central Kingdom perished:	自此中國亡
12	The blame should not be cast on Shi Jin.[19]	罪莫加石晉[20]

If one compared the historical vision of Hao Jing with that of other Song Neo-Confucians, one would find some similarities shared by Hao and Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107); the latter argues that the Jin rulers were morally tainted by the ways of the barbarians, and that this impact persisted in the Tang.[21] Although both Hao Jing and Cheng Yi saw the Jin dynasty as the low point of Chinese civilization, Hao Jing argues that the fall of the Central Kingdom was only triggered by the invasion of barbarians. The core reason that brings about the destruction of the Chinese civilization is the moral corruption of the Jin elites themselves.

By absolving the non-Han actors from blame for the fall of the Chinese civilization, Hao Jing further proposed in the "Task of the Times" that ethnicity was irrelevant to one's possibility to gain the Mandate of Heaven:

---

17 A reference to the Rebellion of the Eight Princes 八王之亂, which is a series of civil wars among the princes of the Jin dynasty from 291 to 306.

18 A reference to a series of uprisings from 304 to 316 led by four ethnically non-Chinese groups living in North China against the Jin dynasty. It was commonly known as the "Uprising of the Five Barbarians" 五胡亂華.

19 Shi Jin is another name of the Later Jin. It is founded by Shi Jingtang 石敬瑭 (892-942) who was of a Shatuo descent. Here it is just a generic reference to the non-Han ethnic sovereign.

20 Hao Jing, *Hao Wenzhong gong Lingchuan wenji*, 22.

21 For a detailed discussion of this view, see Shao-yun Yang, *The Way of the Barbarians*, 130-131.

> There is none to whom Heaven is partial; Heaven is partial only to the good.[22] There is none to whom the people must follow; they follow only the virtuous. Since the Central Kingdoms has already perished, why would it be necessary to assume that only a person of the Central Kingdom would be able to govern it well? The sage said, "If barbarians advanced to the level of the Central Kingdom, then they can be regarded as people from the Central Kingdom."[23] If a person is good, then it is acceptable to approve of him and it is acceptable to follow him. Why should it matter whether he is of the Central Lands or that of the barbarians?
>
> 天無必與，惟善是與；民無必從，惟德之從。中國而既亡矣，豈必中國之人而後善治哉？聖人有云：「夷而進於中國則中國之。」苟有善者，與之可也，從之可也，何有於中國於夷？[24]

Arguing that the Central Kingdom has already perished in the Jin dynasty, Hao Jing declares a decoupling between ethnicity and the essence of Chinese civilization. The political legitimacy of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty was thus confirmed from a historical perspective. Once Khubilai Khan was willing to follow the laws, practice the rites and take up the moral duty, then the Mongol-Yuan dynasty would be able to revive the primal *qi* of the Central Kingdom and become part of it. The recovery of the Central Kingdom brought by a non-Han regime was not without precedence. Hao Jing cites the Former Qin 前秦 (351-394) and Northern Wei 北魏 (386-534) states as an ideal predecessors that brought good governance to the people.

While providing advice to Khubilai Khan, Hao Jing devises a framework that would allow the legitimacy of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty to be established. He achieves it by equating the ability to

---

22 A reference to the *Book of Documents*: "Great Heaven has no partial affections; it helps only the virtuous" 皇天無親，惟德是輔. See Legge tr., *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 3, part II,

23 An allusion to the opening line of "Inquiry into the Way" 原道 (Yuan dao) by Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824).

24 Hao Jing, *Hao Wenzhong gong Lingchuan wenji*, 292-293.

practice civil rule with the revival of the primal *qi* of Chinese civilization and creates a historical vision that would support this view. If we circle back to the letter Hao Jing sent to Li Tingzhi, one curious point is that Hao finds it necessary to justify his own participation in Khubilai's court. Is there a general anxiety shared among northern elites concerning serving the Mongols? If so, is this associated with the problem of ethnicity? For this, we will turn to Xu Heng and Liu Yin.

A Tale of Two Confucian Scholars: Xu Heng and Liu Yin

The biography of Hao Jing looks a bit similar to another renowned Confucian scholar Xu Heng. Shortly before Xu's birth, his family moved from Henei 河内 (modern Qinyang 沁陽) to Xinzheng 新鄭 to flee from a local rebellion. Although Xu Heng was born in 1209, fourteen years prior to Hao Jing's birth, he also spent most of his childhood witnessing the violent Mongol conquest of the Jurchen-Jin. At the age of eight, Xu Heng began to study Confucian texts in Xinzheng under an elderly teacher who had failed the imperial examination. In 1224, he went to work for his maternal uncle, and was then promoted to serve as a secretary in charge of the clerks in the local magistrate's office. The Mongol army invaded Xinzheng in 1232, and Xu Heng was captured when the town fell to the Mongols' hands. He was later released and had successfully passed the civil examination in 1238. He showed no interest in serving the government, and only took the examination so that his family would be exempted from taxes. In 1254, Xu Heng was summoned by Khublai to serve as the master of the district school of Jingzhao 京兆. He stayed in the position for four years, and he then retired and went back to his hometown. From then on, Xu Heng was repeatedly invited to serve in the Mongol court. He responded to the summon at least five times, but he retired every time after serving briefly in Khublai's court. He passed away in 1281 at the age of 72.[25]

[25] For a detailed biography of Xu Heng, see Igor de Rachewiltz et al. eds., *In the Service of the Khan*, 416-447.

Not only did both Hao Jing and Xu Heng lived through the Jin-Yuan transition, their political stance are quite similar. In 1266, Xu Heng presented a memorial to the Khublai Khan listing five suggestions he deemed most important for sustaining Yuan rule. The first among these proposals deals with "an exemplary model for the establishment of the state" 立國規摹:

> Our dynasty has vast territories where people from all regions congregate. Their customs are different and it is difficult to determine which principles the state should follow. If we take into account what has happened in previous eras, then we can see that when northern states occupied the central plains, the state could last long only if Han regulations were adopted. Thus the Wei, Liao and Jin, able to adopt the Han regulations, were among the longest lasting dynasties. The rest that could not practice Han regulations were plagued by successive chaos and destruction. This is clearly illustrated in the historical records. At the time when Our dynasty was still governing the distant desert, this was not an issue. Yet if we look at the situation today, it is simply impossible not to adopt Han regulations.
>
> 國朝土宇曠遠，諸民相雜，俗既不同，論難遽定。考之前代，北方奄有中夏，必行漢法，可以長久，故魏、遼、金能用漢法，歷年最多。其他不能實用漢法，皆亂亡相繼。史冊具載，昭昭可見也。國朝仍處遠漠，無事論此。必若今日形勢，非用漢法不可也。[26]

Xu Heng cites other alien regimes – the Northern Wei (386-535) founded by the Tuoba clan of the Xianbei, the Khitan-Liao and the Jurchen-Jin – to support his argument that the stability of a dynasty governing the central plains lie in their ability to adopt the so-called "Han regulations" 漢法 (*Hanfa*).

[26] Xu Heng, *Xu Heng ji* (Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 111.

Of course, it may be a bit ambiguous as to what "Han regulations" entails, but from the other suggestions he made, we can deduce that Xu Heng was proposing a systematic adoption of the legal system, the promotion of education and agriculture, and a more extensive recruitment of talents for government.

Unlike Hao Jing who devised a more comprehensive framework to attract Khubilai Khan to pursue more civil governance, Xu Heng was aware of the absurdity of asking the Mongol ruling class to abandon their own customs and to convert themselves to the teachings of the people they have conquered. Thus, he proposed that the adoption of Han customs should not be rashly done, instead he suggested that the Mongol nobles should first familiarize themselves with the histories and learning of the ethnic Han people, so their customs can be gradually adopted over a period of thirty years.[27]

It is difficult to gauge the impact of Xu Heng's proposal, but some of the policies implemented in the following years seem to echo some of Xu's suggestions: for instance, more Confucian scholars were employed to the Secretariat Council in 1267 and the National Academy was established in 1269. Of course, it is important to bear in mind that Khubilai's court did not always favor the proposals of the Confucian scholars. When the Administrator of the Central Secretariat Ahmad 阿合馬 (d. 1282) had planned to appoint one of his sons as the head of the military, Xu Heng opposed such appointment since this would allow the family of Ahmad to gain control over the administration, finance and military of the state. Xu Heng argued that this would lead to a rebellion. Upon hearing Xu Heng's opposition, Ahmad rebuked Xu by claiming that all human beings sought power, wealth and sensual pleasures, but it seemed that Xu was not interested in anything but the people's approval. Ahmad thus claimed that Xu Heng was particularly concerned about garnering the support of the

[27] Ibid, 112.

people just because he needed the support to launch a rebellion.[28] Despite repeated attempts to check Ahmad's policies and appointments, Xu Heng never succeeded in persuading Khubilai Khan to confront Ahmad. The conflict ended with Xu once again resigning from his post.

Xu Heng did once try to use a metaphysical argument to describe the relationship between the central kingdom and the barbarians in his recorded sayings:

> Most events in the world come down to how two sides win and lose. This has been true from the antiquity till today. It is just like the battle between the essence of yin and yang, or a struggle between strength and gentleness. Someone from the past said that this is just like a trial of strength between two people, if one side wins then the other side loses, and if the other side wins then this side loses. But the winners could never stop at their allotted share, instead they would stop after exceeding the limits. The losers would suffer to the extreme and then seek vengeance. Both sides would failed to abide by their allotted share. Thus they wreak vengeance against each other and would never stop. A case in point is the Central Kingdom and the barbarians. When the Central Kingdom gains victory, they would send all their troops to the corners of the world to subjugate the barbarians. When the barbarians win, they would certainly break apart the central plains with extreme cruelty. When revenge breeds revenge, when will there be an end to it? In the golden age of the three dynasties,[29] there were distinctions between people from the central land and the barbarians, the gentlemen and the petty men abided by their lots, and thus the world enjoyed perfect governance. Later generations can never compare to that. The rule of King Cheng (r. 1042-1021 BCE) and King

[28] The incident was seen by Ma Juan as one of the many examples of the conflicts between Muslim and Confucians. See Ma Juan, "The Conflicts between Islam and Confucianism and Their Influence in the Yuan Dynasty," in *Eurasian Influences on Yuan China*, 64-66.

[29] Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties.

Kang (r. 1020-996 BCE) of Zhou, or that of Emperor Wen (r. 180-157 BCE) and Emperor Jing (r. 157-141 BCE) of the Han dynasty are often referred to as an age of perfect governance. But judging from the amount of land they owned, it is clear that the four rulers never launched any expeditions against remote regions. They merely ruled over the land that they should rule. They did not seek a victory over the barbarians and also did not end up being defeated by the barbarians.

天下事常是兩件相勝負，從古至今如此。大抵只是陰陽剛柔相勝，前人謂如兩人角力相抵，彼勝則此負，此勝則彼負，但勝者不能止於其分，必過其分然後止，負者必極甚然後復，各不得其分，所以相報復，到今不已。如中國與夷狄，中國勝，窮兵四遠，臣伏夷狄；夷狄勝，必潰裂中原，極其殘酷。如此報復，何時能已？三代盛時，分別中夏、夷狄，君子、小人各安其分，所以大治。後世不及也。且如成、康，漢文、景，世所謂大治者，然土宇廣狹，可見彼四君者，未嘗事遠略也。治吾所當治者而已，不取其勝夷狄也，故亦不至於為夷狄所敗。[30]

The clash between the central kingdom and the barbarians are used here as an illustration of the merits of not going beyond one's bounds. Looking back at the golden era achieved in the previous dynasties, Xu Heng concludes that military expansion against a foreign state would only lead to future vengeance, and thus he argued that the ultimate goal of a state is to turn inwards and focus on the governance of the territory the ruler already owned. Here, the terms "Central Kingdom" 中國 and "barbarian" 夷狄 are not necessary indicators of the moral standing of the country, they are instead geographical references that could help Xu Heng to clarify his stance against war.

[30] Xu Heng, *Xu Heng ji*, 14. Note that the discussion about the Central Kingdom and Barbarians is completely deleted in the *Siku quanshu* edition of the text.

Although Xu Heng did comment on the literary writings and philosophical thoughts proposed by the scholars in the Southern Song, his works rarely touch upon the political enmity between the two states. His silence on the matter was later picked up by scholars in the Ming dynasty as an indication of his political allegiance to ethnic Han cultural traditions.[31] Among late imperial Confucian scholars, there were multiple debates surrounding Xu Heng's loyalty to Han culture. In the Ming dynasty, Qiu Jin 丘濬 (1421-1495) argued that Xu should never have sought employment under alien rule. Citing Xu Heng's last words: "I had to bear the burden of my undeserved reputation and could not retreat from officialdom. After my death, no one should ask for a posthumous honorific. Just inscribe the words 'The Tomb of Xu'" 我平生虛名所累，竟不能辭官，死後慎勿請諡，但書許某之墓四字, Qiu argued that Xu was showing regret for betraying his allegiance to Han culture.[32] To defend Xu Heng's political choice, He Tang 何瑭 (1474-1543) makes the following rebuttal:

> The Confucians in recent times argue that Xu Heng was ethnically Han Chinese, but served as a subject of the Yuan dynasty. They claimed that this violates the teaching of *Chunqiu* which states that "the people of Xia should be cherished as 'one of us,' and the Yi and Di barbarians should be kept at bay" – hence this amounts to a violation of Confucian ritual codes. Some officials are confused by this argument, and I, He Tang, had already composed an essay to discuss this issue. In brief, I believe that the names central Xia and barbarians are not associated with land or kin, but is only related to the Way. Thus, according to the principle of *Chunqiu*, if the Central Kingdom is adopting the rites of the barbarians, then they should be regarded as barbarians. If the barbarians are promoted to the level of the Central Kingdom,

[31] See, for instance, the comments of Xue Xuan 薛瑄 (1389-1464) in *Dushu lu* 讀書錄 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2017), 11-12 and 44.

[32] Qiu Jun, *Shishi zhenggang* 世史正綱 (Taipei: Qiu Wenzhuang gong congshu jiyin weiyuanhui, 1972), 6.

then they should be regarded as part of the Central Kingdom.[33] Shouldn't one be aware of this? Shun was born in the eastern Yi, and King Wen was born in the western Yi.[34] People like Duke Liu[35] and Gugong Danfu[36] are all born in barbaric territories. Yet posterity has praised them as sages regardless of their place of birth or their kin. Although the rulers of the Yuan dynasty were not comparable to the ancient sages, they respected Heaven, toiled for the people, employed talents and sought perfect governance. They were adopting the way of the Central Kingdom. Barbarians often take pride in waging war and killing people – this inflicts great calamity on all mankind. If there is anything one can do to transform their customs and prevent all mankind from being ravaged like the rotting flesh of fish and animals, a benevolent person should exhaust all his mental energy to achieve it.

獨近世儒者，謂公華人也，迺臣於元，非《春秋》內夏外夷之義，有害名教。縉紳之士，間有惑於其說者，瑭嘗著論辨之。大略以為中夏夷狄之名，不係其地與其類，惟其道而已矣！故《春秋》之法，中國而用夷禮則夷之，夷而進於中國則中國之，無容心焉！舜生於東夷，文王生於西夷，公劉、古公之儔，皆生於戎狄，後世稱聖賢焉，豈問其地與其類哉！元之君，雖未可與古聖賢並論，然敬天勤民，用賢圖治，

33 An allusion to the opening line of Han Yu's "Inquiry into the Way."

34 This is an argument made in *Mencius* 4B.1: "Shun was an Eastern barbarian: he was born in Zhufeng, moved to Fuxia, and died in Mingtiao. King Wen was a Western barbarian: he was born in Chizhou and died in Piying" 舜生於諸馮，遷於負夏，卒於鳴條，東夷之人也；文王生於岐周，卒於畢郢，西夷之人也. The translation is taken from D.C. Lau tr., *Mencius*, 173. D.C. Lau decides to translate the term *yi* 夷 as "barbarian," but it is important to note that etymologically the character *yi* only portrays a man carrying a bow and has no derogative implication.

35 Duke Liu was the early leader of the Ji clan that later founded the Zhou dynasty. He was said to have led the people of the Ji clan to settle in Bin near the Rong tribes.

36 Gugong Danfu was a descendant of Duke Liu who relocated the Ji clan to the foot of Mount Qishan in order to avoid attacks from the Rong tribes.

蓋亦駸駸乎中國之道矣。夷狄之俗，以攻伐殺戮為賢，其為生民之害大矣。苟有可以轉移其俗，使生民不至於魚肉糜爛者，仁人尚當盡心焉。[37]

A similar debate emerged during the Ming-Qing transition when Wang Fuzhi condemned Xu Heng for having aided the Mongols' theft of the cultural tradition of China.[38] There is little evidence in Xu Heng's literary corpus that he was anxious or concerned about ethnical allegiance, but Xu Heng's repeated withdrawal from the Mongol court lends credence to the theory that he regretted serving the Mongols. The problem remains: how persistent is the self-awareness of loyalty to one's cultural tradition or ethnic roots in the age of Jin-Yuan transition?

One piece of evidence later scholars love to use in evaluating Xu Heng's moral character is an anecdote recorded in Tao Zongyi's 陶宗儀 (1329-1410) *Nancun chuogeng lu* 南村輟耕錄 (*Records while at Rest from Farming in the Southern Village*): while Xu Heng was traveling to the capital to respond to the summon of the Mongol emperor, he met another Confucian Liu Yin on the way. Liu asked Xu Heng why he was so eager to respond to the Mongols' summon. Xu justified his willingness to serve the regime by claiming: "Were I to behave otherwise, then the Way would not be practiced" 不如此則道不行. In contrast to Xu's response, Liu Yin defended his decision to retreat from officialdom. He said, "Were I to behave otherwise, then the Way would not be honored" 不如此則道不尊.[39]

John Langlois expressed some doubts on the credibility of this exchange with good reason. Even if we accept this incident as authentic, it does not seem that the decisions to serve (Xu Heng) or

---

37 He Tang's essay was recorded in Xu Heng's literary collection, see *Xu Heng ji*, 220-221. Jiang Haijun 姜海軍 mistook this passage as Xu Heng's own words, see his "Meng Yuan yongxia bianyi yu Hanru de wenhua rentong" 蒙元「用夏變夷」與漢儒認同, in *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大學學報 49.6 (2012): 50-56.

38 For a detailed research on the debate surrounding Xu Heng's political decision in the early Qing, see John D. Langlois Jr., "Chinese Culturalism and the Yuan Analogy: Seventeenth-Century Perspectives," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 40.2 (1980): 355-398.

39 Tao Zongyi, *Nancun chuogeng lu* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012), 20.

withdraw (Liu Yin) is necessary tied to an ethnic allegiance. For this we turn to the biography and literary works of Liu Yin.

Born in 1249, Liu Yin was a native of Rongcheng 容城. His family had some ties with Jurchen-Jin dynasty since both his great-great-grandfather and his great-grandfather served under the Jin dynasty. He was a disciple of Yan Mijian 硯彌堅 (1211-1289), a Confucian scholar who was invited to move to the north in 1235. Later, he acquired from Yao Shu 姚樞 (1203-1280) the commentaries on the classics by Song Confucians such as Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017-1073), Cheng Yi, Cheng Hao and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200). In 1282, Liu Yin was summoned by Khubilai Khan.[40] He did serve in the Mongol court, but retired the next year to take care of his stepmother who had suffered a stroke. After that, Liu never resumed government service again.

Liu's refusal to serve again, as we can see from the case of Xu Heng, was perceived later as a demonstration of his ethnic allegiance. And this view had profound impact in literary history. For instance, Yoshikawa Kōjirō 吉川幸次郎 (1904-1980) goes as far as to list Liu Yin under the chapter on "Southern Song Loyalist Poetry."[41] According to Yoshikawa, Liu Yin was not only opposed to the Mongols, but he also considered the three non-Han dynasties from the Liao and Jin as illegitimate. He cited two poems to establish his case. One is a heptasyllabic regulated verse named "the Yi Terrace" 易臺 (Yitai):

	The lone bird in view sinks into sky-locked recesses,	望中孤鳥入消沉
2	While clouds carry parting's grief to weave evening shades.	雲帶離愁結暮陰
	The hills and streams of myriad states, once Yan and Zhao,	萬國山河有燕趙

[40] For a study of Liu Yin's philosophical thoughts, see Shang Jude 商聚德, *Liu Yin pingzhuan* 劉因評傳 (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 1996), 109-177.

[41] Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Five Hundred Years of Chinese Poetry, 1150-1650: The Chin, Yuan, and Ming Dynasties* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1989), 71-75.

4	For a hundred years were under the sway of Liao and Jin.	百年風氣尚遼金
	The glory of things wears off as autumn's glow fades,	物華暗與秋容老
6	No cup of wine can plumb the depths of the human heart.	杯酒不隨人意深
	When countless frosty pines sway in craggy ravines,	無限霜松動嚴壑
8	Heaven sets leaves aflutter to help purify our song.	天教搖落助清吟[42]

The poem begins with a description of a gloomy sky. The poet's gaze follows the lone bird until it disappeared among the dark clouds. From a distant view, the second couplet gradually zooms out to the broader landscape. The Yi terrace was the remains of the Golden Terrace 黃金臺 in Yizhou 易州 which was built by King Zhao of Yan 燕昭王 (ca. 351-297 BCE), and thus, the view of the hills and streams draws the poet back to the time when the terrace was built and leads him to ponder how this terrace was erected at the border of the states of Yan and Zhao. Moving from the Warring states back to recent times, the poet then touches upon the rise of the Liao and Jin dynasties. The third couplet shifts from the dynastic change to seasonal change, and expresses the poet's wistfulness as things wear out. He ends the poem with another twist: even though Liu Yin's melancholy cannot be dispelled through a cup of ale, he manages to find consolation in the landscape as a breeze passes through the frosty pines. The craggy ravines are not supposed to move; yet there is an illusion of movement since they are covered by swaying trees. As the trees sway, the poet seem to see the craggy ravines shake. The sight of leaves fluttering down inspires the poet's chant.

The above is a more straightforward way of interpreting the poem. If we follow this reading, then there is no evidence that this poem downplays the legitimacy of the Liao and Jin dynasties. To arrive at Yoshikawa's conclusion, a reader must read the final couplet as an allegory of the fall of the

[42] Liu Yin, *Jingxiu xiansheng wenji* 靜修先生文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 165. The poem is translated into English by John Timothy Wixted, see Yoshikawa, *Five Hundred Years of Chinese Poetry*, 74.

two alien regimes. If we read "Heaven sets leaves aflutter" as an image signifying how Heaven facilitates the fall of the two dynasties, then the ending of the poem would become a celebration of the collapse of the Khitan-Liao and the Jurchen-Jin.

Although it is not impossible to completely refute Yoshikawa's reading, there is little evidence that Liu Yin was expressing his disdain for the Liao and Jin dynasties in this poem. If one read through Liu Yin's literary corpus, we can see that he has another pentasyllabic ancient-style poem entitled "the Golden Terrace" 黃金臺 (Huangjin tai) which demonstrates the poet's sadness induced by the passage of time. Given that the two poems may be written for the same visit, it seems highly plausible that the poem was written not as a comment on the legitimacy of the Liao and Jin dynasties, but simply as an expression of the poet's melancholy in the conventional mode of lamenting the past.

The other example Yoshikawa raised in his analysis was "Song of Yan" 燕歌行 ("Yange xing"):

	At the Ji Gate, there comes a mournful wind,	薊門來悲風
2	Cold waves emerged in the Yi waters.	易水生寒波
	Why would the colors of the clouds change?	雲物何改色
4	The traveler sings the Song of Yan.	游子唱燕歌
	Where is the Song of Yan sung?	燕歌在何處
6	At the winding western mountain bend.	盤鬱西山阿
	Wuyang, the secondary capital of Yan,	武陽燕下都
8	Is where I passed through alone late in the year.	歲晚獨經過
	The blue hills are linked together in a distance,	青邱遙相連
10	Wind-swept rain falls on the towering peaks.	風雨墮嵳峩

	The seventy provinces and towns of Qi,[43]	七十齊郡邑
12	And the perilous hills and streams of the Qin.[44]	百二秦山河
	They had Guan Zhong and Yue Yi for learning,[45]	學術有管樂
14	In matters of moral virtues, there was no Confucius or Mencius.	道義無邱軻
	Dazed and confused were the common people,	蚩蚩魚肉民
16	Who could help them stop the clash of arms?	誰與休干戈
	The past has already been like this,	往事已如此
18	How would the future unfold?	後來復如何
	There was also Shi Jingtang who ceded his territory,[46]	割地更石郎
20	This song contains deep sorrow.	曲中哀思多[47]

The song begins with the poet traveling around the secondary capital of the former Yan state and lamenting the inability for the state to sustain its rule. Even though the state of Yan may have politicians and strategists that can facilitate reforms and wage wars, they lack true moral compass and do not have compassion for the common people. He thus mourns that no one in the Yan court could comprehend the sufferings of the people caught in endless wars. The song ends with a shift from the past to the present – Liu Yin condemns Shi Jingtang for yielding territory to the Khitan-Liao. While it is true that this poem expresses frustration at the ruler's inability to empathize with the people in the Yan region, and this includes the Liao and the Jin dynasties, that is utterly different from

43 A reference to the territory Yan pacified after King Zhao of Yan spent twenty-eight years to build up the strength of the state.

44 The term *baier shanhe* 百二山河 is a standard phrase used to refer to the perilous landscape where only two men can fend off a hundred men.

45 Guan Zhong 管仲 (c. 725-645 BCE) was a renowned politician who reformed the State of Qi 齊. Yue Yi 樂毅 (n.d.) was a prominent military leader of the State of Yan.

46 Shi Jingtang 石敬塘 (892-942) as the founding emperor of Later Jin. He yielded the strategically crucial Sixteen Prefectures of You and Ji to the Khitan-Liao.

47 Liu Yin, *Jingxiu xiansheng wenji*, 106. Yoshikawa did not cite the poem, and the English translation here is mine.

considering Liao and Jin as illegitimate states. Yoshikawa's perception has clearly been affected by the debates of ethnic allegiances during the Ming and Qing dynasties.

If one were to survey Liu Yin's literary corpus, one can locate some counter-examples that glorify unification under the Yuan empire. We can take a look at his "Preface Given to Zhang Zhongxian at Parting" 送張仲賢序:

> The southeast region is filled with beautiful hills and waters. But since the south and north were blocked, one cannot travel around, and have a full view of the area. This always makes me feel discontented and I feel as if there is something missing. With the fall of the Song dynasty, the hundred and fifty year division has been overcome in one day. From that day hence all the famous sites in the southeast can be visited in travels over ten thousand *li* travel as one follows one's desire to roam.
>
> 東南富山水之奇秀，而限於南北，不得周游而歷覽之，使人恆鬱鬱不樂而若有所失。自宋亡，百五十年之分裂一日復合，凡東南名勝之跡，一日萬里，而惟其所欲焉。[48]

The above abstract is taken from the words of encouragement Liu Yin wrote for his parting from Zhang Zhongxian. Given that the text is composed for a certain occasion, one may argue that Liu Yin was just using the unification as a rhetorical devise to comfort his friend who was about to set off to the southeast.

Apart from this preface, one of the most obvious piece of evidence that Liu Yin was not concerned about his ethnic allegiance is "Poetic Exposition on Crossing the Yangtze River" 渡江賦

[48] Liu Yin, *Jingxiu xiansheng wenji*, 29.

(Du Jiang fu).[49] In this long *fu* piece, Liu Yin presents a debate between a Northern Yan recluse 北燕處士 and one swordsman from Huainan 淮南劍客 on whether the Yuan will conquer the Song. As the beginning of this piece clearly shows, this poetic exposition was written as a response to Hao Jing after he has been detained in the Song for nine years. Representing the Mongols, the recluse first lays out the might of the Mongol army, and then he describes a detailed plan as to how the troops would advance. He concludes by claiming that no matter the Song dynasty chose to fight or to surrender, the southern state is doomed to lose its glory. The swordsman, as a representative of the Song dynasty, presents a counter-argument. He claims that the perilous landscape of the Southern Song would prevent the Mongols from achieving any victory.

Just like other poetic expositions, the debate ends with a third speech, here delivered by the recluse:

> You have captured our envoy, and have shown hatred for our great state. For years, we have made all heroes under heaven volunteer for battles, cleave through the wave, and eye the Yangtze River with ambitious plans. Now, Heaven is going to open a way for us, the Song is about to be in peril, our Central Kingdom will be unified,[50] and our trustworthy envoy will return. This is in accordance to the wills of Heaven and men. There will only be an expedition but no battle. […] Who says the Song cannot be conquered?
>
> 彼留我奉使，讎我大邦，使天下英雄，請纓破浪，虎視長江，亦有年矣；今天將啟，宋將危，我中國將合，我信使將歸，應天順人，有征無戰。[……]孰謂宋之不可圖邪？[51]

---

[49] Ibid., 94-96.
[50] Ibid., 94-96.
[51] The Central Kingdom (*zhongguo*) here seems to refer to the realm that results from unification.

Defeated by the eloquence of the Northern Recluse, the poetic exposition ends with the swordsman rendered speechless. This poetic exposition is a straightforward piece advocating the conquest of the Southern Song. Precisely because this piece does not align with the Ming and Qing scholars' understanding of Liu Yin's ethnical allegiance, many have doubted the veracity of the text. Luo Wenli 駱問禮 (1527-1608), for instance, argues that the authenticity of this poetic exposition is questionable because the text is recorded in the sequel of Liu Yin's literary corpus.[52] Some scholars argue that the text was written to alert the Southern Song and urge them to take precautions as soon as possible.[53] The apparent incongruity of Liu Yin's image with this poetic exposition has even become a civil examination question in the Ming dynasty.[54] However, once we drop the assumption that Liu Yin was not willing to serve the Mongols because he was ethnically Han, it is not difficult to understand why he has composed this text.

From the above example, we can conclude that in the early Yuan, northern Confucians were not particularly anxious about serving an alien ruler. The different political choices that Xu Heng and Liu Yin made reflected their different philosophical pursuits.[55] To borrow Frederick W. Mote's terminology, Liu Yin was a leading representative of "Confucian eremitism" who focused more on self-development.[56] Unlike Xu Heng who seeks to strive to change the world through his policies, Liu

---

52 Luo Wenli, *Wanyi lou ji* 萬一樓集, in *Siku qinhui shu congkan* 四庫禁燬書叢刊 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1997), *jibu*, 174: 640.

53 See Sun Qifeng 孫奇逢 (1585-1675), *Sun Xiafeng ji* 孫夏峰集 (Printed by Daliang shuyuan 大梁書院 in 1845), 3.42a-44a.

54 Recorded by Zhan Ruoshui 湛若水 (1466-1560), *Zhan Ganquan xiansheng wenji* 湛甘泉先生文集, in *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書 (Jinan: Qi Lu shushe, 1997), *jibu*, 57: 117.

55 The Qing scholar Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705-1755) once proposed that Liu Yin's "Record of the Studio of Withdrawal" 退齋記 (Tuizhai ji) was a veiled attack of Xu Heng. His argument was further developed by the contemporary scholar Zhang Fan 張帆. See Zhang Fan, "'Tuizhai ji' yu Xu Heng, Liu Xin de chuchu jintui" 《退齋記》與許衡、劉因的出處進退, in *Lishi yanjiu* 歷史研究 3 (2005): 69-84.

56 For a discussion of Liu Yin's Confucian Eremitism, see Frederick W. Mote, "Confucian Eremitism in the Yüan Period", in *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 213-15; Tu Wei-ming, "Towards an Understanding of Liu Yin's Confucian Eremitism," *Way, Learning, and Politics: Essays on the Confucian Intellectual* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1993).

Yin rarely touched upon contemporary affairs in his work. One need not explain this by resorting to ethnic loyalty.

Conclusion

Using Hao Jing, Xu Heng and Liu Yin as three case studies, this chapter seeks to examine (1) how the *Hua-Yi* dichotomy was configured in the early Yuan; and (2) whether ethnical allegiance existed in the early Yuan.

For the first question, through the juxtaposition of Hao Jing and Xu Heng, it is clear that there is a conscious effort in redefining the understanding of the Central Kingdom to facilitate a more universalistic view of Chinese identity. Hao Jing, in particular, devised a comprehensive framework that can bring together a historical vision and neo-Confucian thought and would enable the Mongol rulers to be considered legitimate rulers.

For the second question, while Xu Heng and Liu Yin were often thought of as a binary pair during the Ming and Qing dynasties, their different choices cannot be explained in terms of their sense of ethnic allegiance. Neither scholar doubted the legitimacy of Mongol rule. The anxiety about serving an alien ruler while promoting Chinese cultural tradition was an imaginary problem later scholars imposed on Xu and Liu. From their policy recommendations and literary writings, one can see they both supported the Mongol-Yuan regime.

To arrive at a more comprehensive picture of the early Yuan thought, it would be necessary to also consider how Song loyalists like Zheng Sixiao 鄭思肖 (1241-1318) and Xie Bingde 謝枋得 (1226-1289) viewed the *Hua-Yi* dichotomy. It would also be useful to think about the debates between Buddhism and Taoism here since the dichotomy between *Hua* and *Yi* was often evoked to prove or disprove their rivals' position. Through a thorough survey of the dichotomy in the 13th and 14th century, we shall then be able to conduct further comparisons and examine how the biographies and anecdotal

accounts circulating in the Yuan dynasty were (mis-)appropriated for various political and cultural purposes in later periods.

CHAPTER 3

Translingual Tensions:

Language Policies and the Creation of a Yuan Sinitic Literary Tradition

In *The Record of the Perfected Master Changchun's Journey to the West*, there are multiple instances when the Quanzhen Daoist tried to record how certain phrases and concepts were translated. One noteworthy example is the term *taohua shi* 桃花石, which was the name Central Asians used to refer to the people from China proper.[1] A lot of linguists and historians dedicate their best effort to trace the origin of these terms. Paul Pelliot (1878-1945) and Shiratori Kurakichi 白鳥庫吉 (1865-1942), for instance, believe that the term *taohua shi* comes from the word Tangus, which had been a transliteration of the term *Tuoba* 拓跋 (which, according to Shiratori, originated from the Tuoba words for "earth" and "ruler"). Another speculation proposed by Friedrich Hirth (1845-1927) is that the term originated from *Tangjia* 唐家 (The Tang imperial house).[2] While scholars may not agree on the origins of every nomenclature, these linguistic mysteries are important reminders of how concepts and ideas travelled in a multilingual environment. How would the process of translations and transliterations alter the understanding of self and cultural others? From an administrative point of view, did governing an empire where people spoke in Mongolian, Chinese, Uyghur, Tibetan, Sanskrit and Persian lead to any attempts to implement language policies that could narrow the gap between different ethnic groups in the empire? How would these policies affect the literary and intellectual landscape in the late 13th and 14th century?

---

1 Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 129.

2 For a discussion of the existing views on the nomenclature, see Wang Penglin, *Linguistic Mysteries of Ethnonyms in Inner Asia* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2018), 123-168.

This chapter seeks to answer these questions by scrutinizing two specific language policies: (1) the creation of the 'Phags-pa script under the order of Khubilai Khan in 1269, and (2) the translation of official documents under the Mongol Yuan rule. Here I argue that the use of this script, together with the special translation methods adopted in this period, created a need for Han scholars to reassert the dominance of classical Chinese. Hence, paradoxically, the invention of a "national" Sinitic literary tradition was a response to the existence and proximity of other languages. The nature of such a literary tradition would become much clearer if we compare different literary discourses advocated by various Yuan dynasty writers. We shall turn to state funded projects and literary anthologies to see how this "national" literature was created. Through considering the interaction between political and cultural spheres, this chapter will focus on how language and literature altered the sense of identity under the rule of the Mongols.

A Universal Script and its Reception

Before the rise of Chinggis Khan, the Mongols did not have a sanctioned orthography. According to *Yuanshi* 元史 (the History of Yuan), in 1204, Chinggis Khan captured Tata-tonga 塔塔統阿, a Yugar administrator who was entrusted with guarding the official seal of the kingdom. Chinggis Khan was curious about the importance of the seal, and he was eventually convinced that the existence of a written script could facilitate effective military communication and financial management. Thus, Tata-tonga was ordered to teach members of the Mongol court the Old Uyghur alphabets so that they could transcribe the Mongolian language.[3]

The Uyghur-based alphabet were never the perfect way to transcribe the Mongolian language since the two phonological systems did not match. And in 1269, as Khubilai Khan was advancing to

[3] Song Lian et. al., *Yuanshi*, 124.3048.

the southern part of China proper, he found out that it was impossible to adopt this script to record the sounds of the Chinese language. Thus, in order to transcribe all languages spoken by the people he subjugated, the Khan ordered the Tibetan monk and State Preceptor Drogön Chögyal 'Phags-pa to design a universal script.[4] As soon as the 'Phags-pa script was invented, the Khan issued an edict to promulgate this writing system:

> Consider the Liao and Jin dynasties and the states of remote areas: each of them has their own script. Nowadays the government by culture has gradually come to flourish, and yet a writing system is lacking. The institutions of our dynasty are in fact not complete. Wherefore, we specifically command the State Preceptor 'Phags-pa to create a new Mongolian script in order to transcribe all writing systems. Our expectation is simply to facilitate communication and convey meaning. From this time forward, all documents issued under the Imperial Seal will adopt the new Mongolian script, with transcriptions composed in the script of each state attached alongside.
>
> 考諸遼、金，以及遐方諸國，例各有字。今文治浸興，而字書有闕，於一代制度，實為未備。故特命國師八思巴創為蒙古新字，譯寫一切文字，期於順言達事而已。自今以往，凡有璽書頒降者，並用蒙古新字，仍各以其國字副之。[5]

Apparently the goal of the invention is to facilitate effective communication within the empire, but there was simply no incentive provided for the subjects to learn this writing system if the scripts of

---

4 For a detailed discussion of the invention, textual attestation and historical background of the script, see Coblin W. South, *A Handbook of 'Phags-Pa Chinese* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 1-13.

5 Song et al., *Yuanshi*, 4518. The edict has been translated into English multiple times, see Cheng Tsai-fa, *Ancient Chinese and Early Mandarin* (Berkeley, CA: Journal of Chinese linguistics, Project on Linguistic Analysis, University of California), 148; Miyoko Nakano, *A Phonological Study in the 'Phags-pa Script and the Meng-ku Tzu-yün* (Canberra: Faculty of Asian Studies in association with Australian National Press, 1971), 35-36. The text cited was extracted mostly from Cheng's work with modifications.

every state were still in use. In fact, after this script was invented in 1269, 'Phags-pa script schools were established in all provinces, yet in a report submitted to the throne in 1272, a Mongol minister complained that most children of Han officials were not being taught the 'Phags-pa script, and even in some official correspondences, Uyghur alphabets were still in use in transcribing the Mongolian language. The Mongol-Yuan government responded by changing their policy – the transcriptions would no longer be attached and all official documents will henceforth only be composed in the 'Phags-pa script.[6] To further promote the adoption of this writing system, the Mongol government also established a special office in the Hanlin Academy in 1275 to encourage students to learn this orthography.[7]

While it is difficult to ascertain how widespread the 'Phags-pa script was, there was at least one instance when the Khan received local pushbacks. In 1292, both the Henan and Fujian provinces had submitted memorials to the throne. Instead of using the 'Phags-pa alphabet, they asked the court to issue edicts with a Sinitic script. Khubilai Khan rejected Henan's request but permitted the use of Sinitic edicts in Fujian.[8] The rationale behind this decision is not explained in any historical records, but one can surmise that the arrangements were made because the two locales had very different histories. Henan had been under the rule of the Mongol-Yuan since 1235, while Fujian had only been conquered in 1278. After five decades of governance, the Mongol ruler seemed to expect that Henan would and could be better assimilated into the imperial system.[9] From this decision, we may infer that Khubilai Khan was well aware of the regional differences within the empire. Moreover, the expectation

---

6 Chen Dezhi et al. eds., *Yuandai zouyi jilu* 元代奏議集錄 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1998), 1.121.

7 Song et. al., *Yuanshi*, 8.165.

8 Song et. al., *Yuanshi*, 17.358. Along with other examples, Zhao Yi 趙翼 (1727-1814) concludes that a lot of the edicts issued during the Yuan dynasty was written entirely in Mongolian, thus most people in the empire were capable of comprehending the language. While it is true that most edicts were composed with the 'Phags-pa script, there is no necessary correlation between this fact and the extent of its use. Quite the contrary, it seems that the common folk could not use the new script since few examples of 'Phags-pa writings have survived.

9 The phenomena can be considered in terms of "linguistic imperialism." For a detailed discussion, see Robert Philippson, "Imperialism and Colonialism," in Bernard Spolsky ed., *Cambridge Handbook of Language Policy* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 203-225.

seemed to be that, with the passage of time, the empire would eventually replace the Sinitic script with the 'Phags-pa alphabet.

Apart from evaluating the effectiveness of the policy, it is important to investigate how Yuan literati made sense of this project. Cheng Jufu 程鉅夫 (1249-1318), an official in the Hanlin Academy, elevated the status of the script by associating it with the creation of Sinitic characters in the pre-Qin era. In his essay written to commemorate the naming of the Tongwen Hall 同文堂 (or literally, Hall of the Same Script), an academy founded by his friend Song Youliang 宋友諒, he argues:

> In the past, whenever a sage emerged, this must be accompanied by a great creation. He could thereby become thoroughly conversant with the virtues inherent in the numinous, perceive all the mysteries under heaven, unite the minds of the people and put into practice the perfect way of governance.[10] Sovereign Fuxi interpreted the buds of heaven, and Lord Yu explained the symbols on earth.[11] Both of them are acting in accordance with this principle. Since the glorious Yuan dynasty unified all the territories, those on whom the sun and moon shone are all subjects of our Emperor. This has never been the case since the creation of the world. The Emperor invented the Mongol alphabet. It was as important as the heavenly mandate and was placed on the right of other scripts.[12] The arrangement of the alphabet is orderly and the movement of each stroke demonstrates restraint. The script bears a resemblance to the

---

10 This line is an allusion to the "Record of Music" 樂記 in the *Book of Rites*.

11 The buds of heaven and the symbols of earth are said to have appeared together with *Hetu* 河圖 (the Chart of the Yellow River) and *Luoshu* (Writ of the Luo River) respectively. According to legend, the mythical king Fu Xi obtained the Chart and discovered the trigrams which later became the basis of *the Book of Changes*; while Yu, the founder of the Xia dynasty, received the Writ of the Luo River and took it as a model to govern the realm.

12 The learning of the 'Phags-pa alphabets is sometimes referred to *youzi xue* 右字學 (the learning of the script on the right). This is because the alphabets were often placed on the right of other scripts when transcribed. Moreover, the right is often considered more important in traditional Chinese culture. Thus, by referring to the fact that the 'Phags-pa alphabets was placed on the right, Cheng Jufu is claiming that the new script ranks higher than that of all other orthographs.

hexagrams flowing according to cosmic changes and is created by heaven and the divine. It supplements the omissions of former generations, and serves as an exemplar for the next million years. It signifies a return to plainness by reducing complexity and embracing simplicity. To take up this script and integrate it into the lives of all the people under heaven – this we call all "the great task of life." It functions for the common folk on a daily basis, yet they are unaware of it. Alas! This is perfection!

若昔聖人之興，必有大製作，所以通神明之德，見天下之賾，同人心而出治道也。皇犧闡天苞，神禹著地符，一用此道。皇元混一區宇，日月所照，共惟帝臣，開闢以來所未有。制蒙古字，與正朔同被，暨位諸字右。其開闔布置，井井有截，與卦畫相表裏，變動周流，天造神化，備前古之闕遺，垂億載之矩矱，還淳反樸，約繁就簡。舉而措之天下之民，謂之事業。百姓日用而不知，烏乎至矣。[13]

One can find multiple references to the "Xici zhuan" 繫辭傳 (Commentary on the Appended Phrases) of the *Book of Changes* in the above passage. The phrases "be thoroughly conversant with the virtues inherent in the numinous" 通神明之德, "perceive all the mysteries under heaven" 見天下之賾, are all direct quotations from the "Commentary." The last two lines concerning the "great task of the life" and the obliviousness of the common folk are also citations taken from the text. Even the term "perfection" (至矣 *zhiyi*) is an implicit reference to the "Commentary" where Confucius used the same words to praise the profound meaning of the *Book of Changes*.[14] Cheng's intention is clear. He is drawing a parallel between the discovery of hexagrams and the invention of the 'Phags-pa script. Although the design of the 'Phags-pa script is clearly constructed on the basis of the Tibetan alphabet,

[13] Cheng Jufu, *Cheng Jufu ji* 程鉅夫集 (Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 2009), 11.121.
[14] The translation of these phrases can be found in Richard John Lynn tr., *The Classic of Changes*, 47-101.

from Cheng's perspective, the newly created orthographs share the same features with the hexagrams. Through this analogy, the 'Phags-pa script becomes an embodiment of virtues which can be passed down as a model for later generations.

From Cheng's essay, a reader can deduce two ways of characterizing the imperial project. On the one hand, hexagrams were often regarded as the basis of the Sinitic script.[15] Calling attention to the similarity of the two sets of symbols, Cheng is claiming that the 'Phags-pa script inherits the tradition passed down from early antiquity. Under this formulation, the newly created alphabet is no different from the Sinitic script since both of them can be traced back to a common origin. On the other hand, Cheng stressed the groundbreaking nature of the founding of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. If Cheng were to further develop this line of thought, he might argue for the enforcement of the use of the script by focusing on, for instance, the need for the Khan to govern a population with unprecedented diversity. What is intriguing here is, between continuity and rupture, Cheng decided to place the 'Phags-pa script in the long tradition of Chinese culture instead of pointing out the particularity of his times.

Cheng proceeds to elaborate the importance of learning the 'Phags-pa alphabets by linking the learning of orthography with moral cultivation:

> The character for "word" has "son" as a radical. The character for "learning" also contains "son" as a radical. Hence, to serve one's master, the disciple must be modest; to serve one's parents, the son must be filial; to serve one's ruler, the subject must be loyal. As the Commentary on the Classics stated, "all carriages have wheels of the same size; all writing uses the same characters; and for conduct there are the same rules."[16] Now, all under heaven, the

[15] For instance, Xu Shen 許慎 (40-121) mentioned the eight trigrams in the context of the invention of writing.
[16] This is a direct quotation from "Zhongyong" 中庸 (Doctrine of the Mean) in *The Book of Rites*.

carriages have wheels of the same size and all writing is done with the same characters. Those who learn here would certainly create a positive impact for one another and uphold the righteous moral order. Everyone will act the same way as the scholar and the noble man. This is what we meant by "sameness." There are six arts documented in the *Officers of Zhou*, and writing is one of them.[17] Those who are wise and capable have all arisen due to this ability. This is the vision of education under our Great Dynasty.

字字從子，學字從子。事先生，則為弟子必恭；事父母，則為人子必孝；事君父，則為臣子必忠。《傳》曰：「車同軌，書同文，行同倫。」今天下車同矣，文同矣。學於斯者，其必相與薰淑，扶植倫紀，人人皆有士君子之行。是則同。周官六藝，書居其一。賢者、能者，胥此焉興。此聖朝教育之意也。[18]

The compounds *dizi* 弟子 (disciples), *renzi* 人子 (sons), and *chenzi* 臣子 (subjects) all end with the same character *zi* 子, which is etymologically linked to both the character *zi* 字 (word) and *xue* 學 (learning or education). This word play, together with the citation of various classical texts, stress the importance of studying etymology and regard it as a preliminary step in creating a moral order in which everyone could participate. Yet there is a sense of irony in his emphasis on the virtue of *tong* (sameness or uniformity) embodied by the 'Phags-pa script, because ultimately Cheng is building his argument with an essay written in Chinese characters. As he cites the available historical precedents, he gestures back to the etymological features of the Sinitic script and a body of literature that is more familiar to the literati. Paradoxically, this directs our attention to the impossibility of abandoning the Sinitic script and culture. If sharing the same script is a preliminary step to building an unified moral order, then it

[17] *Officers of Zhou* is another title for the *Rites of Zhou* 周禮, which stated that every students must learn the six crafts: rites, music, archery, charioteering, writing, and mathematics.

[18] Cheng Jufu, *Cheng Jufu ji*, 11.122.

would seem more logical, following Cheng's reasoning, to promote Chinese characters as the unifying script. In other words, if one were to extract this section of the essay and used it for an academy established to promulgate Chinese characters, the argument would perhaps match more perfectly.

Cheng Jufu was well aware of the fact that people from the south of China proper were not capable of comprehending the 'Phags-pa script. In 1287, ten years before he composed the above essay, Khubilai Khan granted Cheng a special permission to bring an edict composed in Sinitic characters to the Jiangnan area to recruit Han elites to the court.[19] There is no reason to suspect that Cheng Jufu, as a minister appointed by the Mongol, would object to the imperial policy of promoting the script. However, the way Cheng constructs his argument betrays the original intent of this empire-building project. If the ultimate goal of the promulgation of a universal script was to foster national cohesion, Cheng's prose exposed the difficulty of thinking beyond one's cultural tradition and historical reasoning.

From the existing corpus of Yuan texts, there are rarely any arguments made against the spread of the script. One exception is an essay by Zhao Tianlin 趙天麟 recorded in his *Taiping jinjing ce* 太平金鏡策 (The Golden Mirror of Peace: A Policy Manual):

> Since the State Preceptor was ordered to create the Mongol script in 1269, all proclamations and edicts issued were composed with this writing system. […] I, your humble subject, certainly know that Your heavenly edicts glow and cast light in all directions, while the National language is innovative and its ingenuity is unmatched in a thousand years. However, when the State had just unified the north, it was fitting that the ruler of the north should honor the customs of the north; now, everyone from the north to the south, from the east to the

[19] Song Lian et. al., *Yuanshi*, 172.4016.

west, are all receiving imperial guidance. The present and the past come under the same rule. Each and every spirits are governed by Your Majesty, the only sacrificant. Shouldn't the [best] regulations of all previous generations become what Your Majesty put into practice? Shouldn't Your Majesty cherish the entire population of the realm? This is what is meant by being the one and only ruler of all under heaven. This is not the same as the time when You were the ruler of the north, why would it be appropriate to single out the language of the north and privilege it above all others?

自至元六年命國師創為蒙古字之後，宣勑制詔，並皆用之。［……］臣固知天章焜耀，照徹十方，國語新奇，迥超千古。然以國家初統北方，乃北方之主而當崇北方也；今則東西南北，罔不承風，籠今昔而同歸，總神祇而獨祀。何代之制，非陛下當行之制乎？何方之民，非陛下普庇之民乎？乃所謂天下之一主，而非若統北方之時也，豈宜獨尊異北方之言哉？[20]

There is a clear consciousness of linguistic difference between the north and the south. Zhao believed that the Mongols were imposing the northern language onto the Han Chinese, thus he calls for the Yuan government to fully recognize the diversity within the territories under Yuan rule. Zhao then proceeded to argue that the Mongol court's linguistic policies would encourage a calculating person to try to get recruited by the court by simply learning the 'Phags-pa script. In the north, he claimed, even children at the age of three could speak Mongolian. Therefore, what was lacking for the Yuan regime were not officials who could speak the official language or write in the newly invented alphabets, but talented men who possessed outstanding administrative and martial abilities.

[20] Zhao Tianlin, *Taiping jinjing ce*, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995), *shibu*, 475: 211.

Zhao quickly turned from the linguistic diversity of the empire to the criterion of political recruitment. He felt that under the current policy, language ability had become the determining factor as to who could climb up the social ladder. He set forth some specific policy recommendations, including quotas for those who would be recruited for their knowledge of the new alphabet. Unlike Cheng Jufu, Zhao did not see the learning of the script (especially a new script like the 'Phags-pa alphabet) as a foundation of practical knowledge or moral cultivation. But his policy proposal points to the relationship between language and power. It shows us the anxiety a Han Chinese might harbor as more resources and infrastructure were dedicated to the promotion of the new Mongol script.

Nothing much is known about Zhao Tianlin except that he was a commoner from Dongping 東平 (modern Shandong).[21] Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain how the Mongol empire reacted to Zhao's proposal. But it is important to bear in mind that the learning of the 'Phags-pa script provides an alternative for Han Chinese to enter officialdom. This created anxiety among some Han Chinese literati. One more evident complaint came from the Southern Song loyalist Zheng Sixiao 鄭思肖 (1241-1318), who denounced those willing to learn the 'Phags-pa script and served under the Mongols.[22] Even though not every educated men demonstrated such a strong aversion against the promulgation of the Mongol alphabet, one can still catch a glimpse of how the establishment of the learning of the Mongol alphabet altered the intellectual landscape by reading Gong Hui's 貢奎 (1269-1329) poem, "Presented to Instructor Zhou who Teaches the Mongol Script" 贈送蒙古字周教授:

Inscriptions on the Stone Drums of the King Xuan of Zhou, has long been worn away.	周宣石鼓久剝落

[21] Only a short biography of Zhao can be found in *Da Ming yitong zhi* 大明一統志 (Unity Gazetteer of the Great Ming Dynasty). The *Golden Mirror of Peace*, a compilation of his political admonitions, was dismissed by the Siku Compilers for using dazzling titles without a solid foundation of content. The compilers were particularly harsh on Zhao probably because some of his recommendations touch upon the issue of ethnic differences.

[22] Zheng Sixiao, "Dayi lüexu" 大義略序, in *Zheng Sixiao ji* 鄭思肖集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1991), 188.

2	Transformed like drifting clouds,	浮雲變化字跡訛
	the forms of characters are all erroneous.[23]	
	The bafen small seal script had also been abandoned.[24]	八分小篆亦已廢
4	Running hand and grass writing,	紛紛行草何其多
	how numerous the varieties of script were!	
	Consider how those prosperous eras have now become the past:	洪惟盛世自作古
6	They created their script and carved steles,	制書勒石傳不磨
	which would be passed down without obliteration.	
	I know you are aware of the changes in the times:	知君達時尚所學
	you cherish what you have learned.	
8	You wield your brush whose light reaches to the stars	落筆星斗光森羅
	and shines over myriad existence.	
	Receiving imperial beneficence from a thousand *li* away,	蒙恩千里領教職
	you take up the teaching position.	
10	You have cultivated numerous scholars	養育多士培菁莪
	and nourished distinguished talents.	
	Matching sounds with meanings,	諧音正譯妙簡絕
	your perfect translations excel in simplicity.	
12	With a thorough inquiry into the roots,	窮究根本芟繁柯
	you have pruned the unwanted branches of scholarship.	
	Between ivory bookmarks and jade rollers,	牙簽玉軸點畫整
	the strokes of the script are all organized.	
14	Illuminating later generations,	照耀後世推名科
	these aided the civil service examination.	

[23] This is an allusion to Du Fu's 杜甫 (712-770) "Song For Li Chao's Bafen Small Seal Script" 李潮八分小篆歌: "the forms of characters have transformed like drifting clouds" 字體變化如浮雲.

[24] *Bafen* (literally, "eight divided") was a term used to describe the features of the small seal script. This is named because the wave of the strokes of this script looks like the character *ba* 八.

Ashamed of my meager and lowly talent, 愧予鄙俚事章句
I work on the chapters and lines of ancient texts.
16 A scholar's cap often ruins a man, but what shall I do?[25] 儒冠多誤將如何[26]

The poem begins with the renowned "Stone Drums," which were dolmens inscribed with poems of the Eastern Zhou. They were lost in transmission, rediscovered in the Tang dynasty, and were again disposed in the Jin dynasty. The faded inscriptions on the Stone Drums signified the constant transformations of the official script. The later developments of the writing system epitomize the fate of culture in an age of chaos and division – there is no longer one single calligraphy that can be circulated in this world. Various styles of calligraphy, the running hand and grass writing, emerged in history. The poem then proceeds to the Mongol-Yuan dynasty by affirming that the empire would again produce a significant cultural monument like the Stone Drum. Taking up the role as a teacher, Instructor Zhou became part of this imperial project that focuses on the transmission of the script and the translation of texts. To praise Zhou, the poet claims that all these can greatly benefit posterity.

The term *dashi* 達時 (knowing what is timely) here is quite curious, since it reminds us of the accusation made by Zhao Tianlin and Zheng Sixiao. If one were to follow Zhao's and Zheng's point of view, one could argue that Instructor Zhou was an opportunist taking a shortcut that deviates from traditional learning. But here the poem turns timeliness into a strength, the ability to adjust to different times. What makes this intriguing is how this poem ends. Gong Hui shifts from praising Instructor Zhou's achievements to reflecting on his own endeavors. He juxtaposes the study of the 'Phags-pa script with *zhangju* scholarship (learning through discussion of chapters and lines) on classical Confucian texts. Though the poem ends in a self-deprecatory tone, one can sense implicit pride when

[25] "The scholar's cap often ruins a man" is a phrase taken from the poem "Respectfully Presented to Vice-Director of the Left, the Senior Wei: Twenty-two Couplets" 奉贈韋左丞丈二十二韻 by Du Fu.

[26] Gong Gui, *Yunlin ji* 雲林集, in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan, 1983), *jibu*, 1205: 624.

the poet invokes the line "a scholar's cap often ruins a man" by Du Fu. In the original poem, Du Fu uses that line to refer to himself, not because he disdains Confucian scholarship, but because he wants to distinguish himself from the rich and morally corrupt.[27] The misfortune, for Du Fu, is a symbol of integrity, and the same can be said for Gong Hui. Unlike Instructor Zhou, he refuses to follow the trend as he adopts the Confucian approach of learning.

Framing the poem with references to Du Fu's works establishes a link between Gong Hui and the famous Tang poet. The poem was composed for a social occasion, and one should not simply take Gong's statement at face value. In fact, the juxtaposition demonstrates how Gong perceives the two subjects of learning: while learning the 'Phags-pa script may be a more practical way to rise in officialdom, the study of Confucian classics is undervalued by the society, but it is a noble calling with a long tradition. As a scholar who hopes to make his mark on the world, Gong is venting his frustration and disappointment.

The creation of the 'Phags-pa script had profound implications in the intellectual world from the 13th to early 14th century. The linguistic policies aimed at promoting national cohesion drove some scholars to a different route to seek office. The literati who were determined not to pursue this path were not left unaffected. The linguistic policy instead prompted them to evaluate the worth of their scholarship, which they perceived as being under-appreciated.

The study of the Mongol-Yuan history often focuses on the problem of Sinicization, and we often overlook how Mongolization or imperialization may function during that period. The spread of the 'Phags-pa script indicated that, many members of the Han Chinese intellectual elite tried to learn Mongolian and adjust to the demands of the new regime. At the same time, this drove them to question the meaning and compass of Sinitic learning. Perhaps it would be naïve to assume that all Mongols were pleased to witness more Han Chinese learning to write and speak in Mongolian. We

[27] For a complete translation of the poem, see Stephen Owen, *The Poetry of Du Fu* (Boston: De Gruyter, 2016), 1.35.

learn in the *History of Yuan* that Emperor Shundi 順帝 (r. 1333-1370) once sought to ban Han Chinese from using Uyghur and Mongolian dictionaries.[28] As the competence of Han Chinese to use the 'Phags-pa script eventually blurred the boundary between the Mongol ruling class and their subjects, it seemed to also create anxieties among the Mongols. After all, language policies implemented by the Mongols were not only about promoting one single national writing system, they were also drafted to ensure the status of the ruling class. The promulgation of the newly established script might bring some to identify themselves as citizens of the empire, but it paradoxically drove others to reevaluate their cultural identity and the value of their learning.

Translation and the Emergence of a Hybrid Language

In the previous section, we focus on the spread of the 'Phags-pa alphabet. It is important to notice that the script itself is a method of transcription, but not a language itself. In other words, a person who learned the 'Phags-pa script might not be able to comprehend the meaning of the sounds this script represented. The demand for translations was thus still high even though a shared alphabet was generated. To thoroughly consider how the multi-lingual environment in the Mongol-Yuan dynasty changed the perception of self and others, we should take a closer look at the strategies and processes of translations.

Going back to *The Record of the Perfected Master Changchun's Journey to the West*, we can see in its appendix some official documents. Among them, one *zhaoshu* 詔書, or imperial decree, issued by Chinggis Khan was included as a textual endorsement of the trip. Part of this decree has already been copied verbatim in the travelogue where the emperor compares Qiu Chuji with the legendary Laozi

[28] Song Lian et al., *Yuanshi*, 182.4202. The policy was said to have ceased because of Xu Youren's 許有壬 (1287-1346) admonition.

who was said to have travelled west and educated the barbarians. The decree was written in a high diction and pattern of parallelism is maintained throughout the passage:

> I have examined the memorial by which you explained how you came in answer to my edict. I became fully aware of the situation. But, my Master, your understanding of the Way is superior to the three gentlemen,[29] and your virtue is appreciated in numerous regions. Thus, I ordered my subject to take with him these dark colored silks, and swiftly pay you a visit around the sea. The time was favorable to my desire, and Heaven did not oppose the will of men. While the two dynasties had repeatedly asked for you, you refused their requests, but you decided to set off at the first invitation of my messenger. You said that Heaven had opened the way for me, therefore you would come to me in person. You never hesitate to expose yourself to the wind and the frost, and you willingly crossed the barren desert. When your letter reached me, my satisfaction was beyond expression. State and the military affairs are not what I am interested in. I wish to honor your cultivation of the Way and virtues. For me, since the tribal chiefs did not submit to me, I had to launch a punitive expedition. As soon as my army arrived, the frontier region was entirely pacified. Their decision to submit or to revolt was really the result of our exertion. A long rest after this momentary effort will hopefully ensue with their wholehearted submission.
>
> 省所奏應詔而來者，備悉。惟師道踰三子，德重多方。命臣奉厥元纁，馳傳訪諸滄海。時與願適，天不人違。兩朝屢詔而弗行，單使一邀而肯起。謂朕天啓，所以身歸。不辭暴露於風霜，自願跋涉於沙磧。書章來上，喜慰何言。軍國之事，非朕所

[29] This refers to the three fellow apostles of the Quanzhen sect: Ma Yu 馬鈺 (1123-1183), Liu Chuxuan 劉處玄 (1147-1203) and Tan Chuduan 譚處端 (1123-1185).

期。道德之心，誠云可尚。朕以彼酋不遜，我伐用張。軍旅試臨，邊陲底定。來從去背，寔力率之故然。久逸暫勞，冀心服而後已。[30]

But apart from this imperial decree, the appendix also includes three *shengzhi* 聖旨, which I translated here as edicts, written in a completely different language. For instance, one of the three edicts read as follows:

> The edict issued by Chinggis Khan relayed through the royal envoy and the Chief Military Commander Jia Chang: Immortal master Qiu, you left me and set out on your travels in the spring and were still on the road on the summer. The trip must be tough as it's a real scorcher out there. Were you riding the fine horses provided by the postal stations? Did you have enough to eat and drink on the way? When you arrived at Xuande, are the officials treating you well? Did the common folk come to visit you? I'm always thinkin' bout you here, Immortal master. I not have forgotten about you, so don't forget about me.
>
> 宣差都元帥賈昌傳奉成吉思皇帝聖旨：丘神仙，你春月行程別來至夏日，路上炎熱艱難來，沿路好底鋪馬得騎來麼？路裏飲食廣多不少來麼？你到宣德州等處，官員好覷你來麼？下頭百姓得來麼？我這裏常思量着神仙你，我不曾忘了你，你休忘了我者。[31]

---

30 Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 298. The edict was not included in Waley's work, but was translated into French by Édouard Chavannes, see "Inscriptions et pièces de Chancellerie chinoises de l'époque mongole," *T'oung Pao*, 3.3 (1958): 305-308.

31 Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 300-301. I modified Arthur Waley's translation to convey the nature of the text. Waley did not seem to notice that this piece is the same edict included in the main body of the text. See Arthur Waley tr., *Travels of an Alchemist*, 158.

Although these edicts were incorporated into the travelogue composed by Li Zhichang, the documents are completely rewritten in the standard classical Chinese:

> Holy adept, between the spring and summer you have performed no easy journey. I wish to know whether you were properly supplied with provisions and remounts. At Xuande and the other places where you have lately stayed, did the officials make satisfactory provision for your board and lodging? Have your appeals to the common people resulted in their coming over to you? I am always thinking of you and I hope you, holy adept, do not forget me.
>
> 神仙自春及夏，道途匪易，所得食物、驛騎好否？到宣德等處，有司在意館穀否？招諭在下人戶得來否？朕常念神仙，神仙無忘朕。[32]

The act of rewriting deserves scrutiny because it signifies the Quanzhen Taoist's view of the language of the original decree – the language does not match with the rest of the travelogue. This leads us to reflect on the linguistic dimension of official correspondence under Mongol rule: Why were there two different Sinitic languages employed by the Mongol rulers in their official declarations? How does the use of different languages affect the perception of the Mongol rulers? What were the language policies of the time and how did that affect the perception of the literary Sinitic at the time?

Before we approach these questions, it is necessary for us to understand the nature of the language used in these documents. Since the early 20th century, the edicts composed in this language were often referred to as *baihua shengzhi* 白話聖旨 (vernacular edicts). The term was first coined by Feng Chengjun 馮承鈞 (1885-1946) in 1931. According to Feng, the refinement of the Sinitic literary language was a result of deliberate calculation. Thus, in order to recover what a person felt and thought,

[32] Li Zhichang, *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu*, 241; Arthur Waley tr., *The Travels of an Alchemist*, 132.

Feng preferred to use historical sources that were written in the so-called *baihua*.[33] Feng never goes into details as to why he would use the designation *baihua* (which he believes is a kind of dialect at the time as indicated in the original English title *Dialectic Inscriptions of the Mongol Dynasty*). But his usage of the term has profound impact. One year after Feng published his study, Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸 (1898-1958), in his *Zhatuben Zhongguo wenxue shi* 插圖本中國文學史, picked up Feng's claims and declared that the edicts written in *baihua* in the Yuan dynasty represented a breakthrough since this body of texts differed from the literary Sinitic language. Zheng argued that these texts were direct, easily comprehensible, and should stand as the representative of Mongol-Yuan prose in literary history.[34]

Feng and Zheng made their arguments in the context of the ongoing debate within China on the development of a national standardized language that does not deviate from natural direct speech.[35] They tended to treat the language of the Mongol edicts as the forerunner of a written language that can truly reflect the spoken language in the 13th and 14th centuries. Both of them stressed that the language was a relatively transparent reflection of the speech of the time and was stylistically simplistic. But if we were to trace why the term *baihua* was used in the first place, one would find that their assessment were based upon the findings of two Sinologists: Alexander Wylie (1815-1887) and Gabriel Deveria (1844-1899). In 1862, Wylie sought to translate an edict inscription written in both 'Phags-pa and the Sinitic script. He argued that the Sinitic version of the text was a translation and it appears to be a specimen of the Chinese language spoken at the time.[36] Deveria concurred with Wylie and

---

33 Feng Chengjun, *Yuandai baihua bei* (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1931), 2.

34 Zheng Zhenduo, *Chatupen Zhongguo wenxue shi* 插圖本中國文學史 (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2015), 666-667.

35 For a discussion of the politics of language in the early 20th century, see Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova, "Literary Historiography in Early Twentieth-Century China," in *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 123-166; Elizabeth Kaske, *The Politics of Language in Chinese Education: 1895-1919* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 77-160.

36 Alexander Wylie, "Sur une inscription mongole en caract res Pa'-sse-pa" (On a Mongol stele inscribed in 'Phags-pa script), *Journal Asiatique*, 19.4 (1862), 461-471.

regarded the Sinitic text as a translation of the Mongolian edict, yet he believed that the work was produced by an illiterate scribe whose command of the Chinese language was questionable.[37] Feng was well-aware of the findings of Wylie and Deveria since he was studying in France as an exchange student under Émmanuel-Édouard Chavannes (1865-1918) whose research cited the arguments made by Wylie and Deveria. Thus, without further examining the nature of the language, he accepted their conclusions. But Feng neglected why Deveria would argue that the scribe was an illiterate person. Deveria found the Sinitic inscriptions particularly difficult to comprehend, and he mentioned in his paper that a large section of his translations of the Sinitic text was accomplished only through cross-referencing the Mongolian counterpart.

Deveria's observation is significant. Unlike Feng and Zheng, he never overstated the plainness or transparency of this language. If we compare the language of the edict with other textual materials circulating in the Yuan, we may see how the language of the edicts is quite different from the written vernacular. In a genre of texts called "direct speech," one can witness how Yuan writers attempt to write with a spoken language. The following is an excerpt taken from *Zhishuo tonglue* 直說通略 (*An Abridged Compendium in Direct Speech*) composed by Zheng Zhensun 鄭振孫 (preface dated 1321):

> When Emperor Gaozu of the Han accepted the surrender of Qin, he hadn't ascended to the throne yet. Thus, he was only known as Duke Pei. When he went west and entered Xianyang, he summoned all the elders and all the heroes, he pacified them by proclaiming that only three laws would be drawn while all the unreasonable laws of Qin would be eradicated. The people were pleased and bought beef, mutton, ale and food to serve the army. Duke Pei would not accept that, and the people were even more pleased.

[37] Gabriel Devéria, "Notes d'épigraphie mongole-chinoise" (Notes of Mongolian-Chinese Epigraphy), *Journal Asiatique*, 8.4 (1896), 395-443.

太祖高皇帝受秦降時，未曾登位，只稱沛公。西入咸陽，召眾父老每、眾豪傑每，憮諭他約法三章，除去秦時不好的法度。百姓每喜歡，都將牛羊酒食管待軍馬，沛公不受，百姓越喜。[38]

In the preface of *Zhishuo tonglue*, Zheng claims that his compilation was meant to be used as a history textbook which was largely based on Sima Guang's 司馬光 (1019-1086) *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (*Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance*) but was rewritten in spoken Chinese to reach a broad readership. As we can see from the above excerpt, there are some features that would be considered comparable to the modern vernacular – the use of plural marker *mei* 每 (which is an equivalent of the marker *men* 們) and the structural auxiliary *de* 的. Yet when compared to the language of the edicts, there are still major differences because there is a lack of an alternate use of *you* 有 at the end of a sentence or the suffix encoding causatives like *shangtou* 上頭.[39]

A careful comparison between the grammatical structure of the language of the edicts with that of the written vernacular leads to the conclusion that the two are starkly different. According to the findings of the modern linguists like Tanaka Kenji 田中謙二, Yi Linzhen 亦鄰真 and Zu Shengli 祖生利, these edicts were composed in a language that uses Sinitic characters and retains the grammar of the Mongolian language.[40] Let us illustrate the feature of this hybrid language in the following example:

---

38 Zheng Zhensun, *Zhishuo tonglue* (Reprinted in Chenghua 16 [1480]), 1.3a.

39 For an extensive discussion of the grammatical features of this text, see Zu Shengli, "*Zhishuo tonglue* he ta de yuyan tese" 《直說通略》和它的語言特色, in *Yuyan xue luncong* 語言學論叢, 38 (2008), 335.

40 Tanaka Kenji, "*Gentenshō* ni okeru Mōbun chokuyakutei no bunshō" 元典章的蒙文直譯體文章, in *Gentenshō keibu dai issatsu* 元典章．刑部．第一冊, 47-161; Yi Lianzhen, "Yuandai yingyi gongdu wenti" 元代硬譯公牘文體, in *Yuanshi luncong* 元史論叢, 1 (1982): 164-177; and Zu Shengli, "*Zhishuo tonglue* he ta de yuyan tese," in *Yuyan xue luncong*, 38 (2008), 335-352. For an English scholarly review on the problem of linguistic contact during the Yuan dynasty, see

Phrase by phrase translation	Dispense reward and punishment without proper discrimination	*structural auxiliary*	**because,**	Evil man	*Plural marker*	numerous	***Present tense marker***
Sinitic text	賞罰不明	的	**上頭，**	歹人	每	多	**有。**[41]
Literal translation	Since rewards and punishments are dispensed without proper discrimination, there are a lot of evil men.						

Since the Mongolian language belongs to the Altaic language family which has an agglutinative morphology and a Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) word order, not only does the literary Sinitic language not have the same word sequence, they also do not have the same vocabulary that exhibit similar grammatical function. In order to convert the edicts issued by the Mongol rulers into Chinese, it seems that the translators would deliberately adopt the grammar of the source language and search for an equivalent word in Chinese as a substitute. Hence, to translate the Mongol language which has causal connectives at the end of the clause explaining the reason, the translators will often place the word *shang* 上 or *shangtou* 上頭 in the corresponding position. Similarly, to match with the Mongolian language which has a tense marker, the Sinitic translation places the word *you* 有 as a substitution.

The goal of this section is not to enlist all the grammatical features of the Mongolian language that are maintained in the translation process, but instead to showcase the hybrid nature of the language used in some of the official documents translated or issued during the Yuan dynasty. The product of translations of the imperial edicts were not meant to be fluent, or to borrow Lawrence

Cao Guangshun and Yu Hsiao-yung, "Language Contact and its Influence in on the Development of Chinese Syntax," in *The Oxford Handbook of Chinese Linguistics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 203-214.

41 *Yuan dianzhang*, 1582.

Venuti's terms, the translators adopts a "foreignization strategy" that would put pressure on the cultural values of the readers to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text.[42]

Why is the nature of the language important here? This is because if the Sinitic text was translated with a "localization strategy," a contemporary reader might have recognized the text as a simple reflection of his or her speech. But if a "foreignization strategy" was adopted, this would induce a very different response from that reader. To illustrate this difference, we can use the response of the Qing literati to two edicts cited in the *History of the Yuan* as a reference point. Zhao Yi 趙翼 (1727-1814), in his comprehensive study of all the dynastic histories, made a comparison between the edict written in standard literary Chinese and that written in the hybrid language under the heading "Contrast between refinement and vulgarity found in the edicts translated by people during the Yuan dynasty" 元人譯詔旨雅俗不同:

> "Biography of Mang'ge sa'er": Emperor Xian had killed many people while he was alive. After he died, slander spread furiously among the people. However, when he issued an edict to his son, which is now included in the biography, it was written entirely in the style of the *Book of Documents*, comparable to the edicts issued during the Northern Zhou (557-581). This must have been deliberately revised by the translators at the time to make it look elegant and profound. […] As for the edict issued upon the enthronement of Emperor Taiding, the translation is cast entirely in vulgar language, and is no different from the words from a rustic woman or an elderly neighbor. Yet the *History of the Yuan* did not try to improve it. Perhaps the historian chose to preserve this in order to show how crude the administration was?

[42] Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 1-34.

〈忙哥撒兒傳〉：憲宗以其生前多所殺，及卒，人多騰謗言，特降詔於其子，今載傳中，乃全用尚書體，竟與宇文周詔書相似。此當時翻譯者之有意潤色，以為典冊高文也。［……］及泰定帝登極一詔，則所譯全是俗語，無異村婦里老之言，而《元史》亦遂不加改潤，或有意存之，以見當時政體之陋耶？[43]

Zhao Yi draws a parallel between the language used in the edict and the level of refinement. In his formulation, a more refined language corresponds with a better polity. His claim is obviously made with an assumption that the hybrid language (or, from his point of view, the everyday vernacular) is inferior to a literary language that strives to emulate the *Book of Documents*. What he points to is the hierarchy whereby a highly codified literary language is considered prestigious and refined and the everyday vernacular is seen as having a lower status (vulgar). This is a distinction embedded in social stratification, since the literati were held together by their shared competence in the literary language. This was apparently a common view held in the Qing dynasty, but was this also true during the time of Mongol rule? How did the literati view the use of a hybrid language?

Conceptualizing Foreignness: The Authority of the Hybrid Language

At a time when various groups with different linguistic background were in contact, language acquisition became a crucial problem. Although there are scarcely any sources pertaining to the issue of why the Mongol empire would choose to adopt a foreignization policy in translating their official documents, maybe we can first turn to an anecdotal account recorded in the Southern Song:

[43] Zhao Yi, *Nianer shi zhaji* 廿二史札記 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2008), 446.

> When children in Khitan begin to read, they will first learn by expressing it with the vernacular and altering the sequence of its phrases. In the extreme case, they will use two to three characters to replace one single word. While I was serving as an envoy in the Jin dynasty, Wang Bu, the Vice Director of the Palace Library who serves as the Deputy Escort, often told me that as a joke. For example, when the children come across the two lines, "The bird nests in the trees reflected in the lake; / The monk knocks at the gate beneath the moon." They will say, "Under the bright moonlight, the monk, on the door, strikes; beneath the water, on the tree, the old crow sat." A lot of them do this. Wang Bu, a native of Jinzhou, is also a Khitan.
>
> 契丹小兒初讀書，先以俗語顛倒其文句而習之，至有一字用兩三字者。頃奉使金國時，接伴副使秘書少監王補每為余言以為笑。如「鳥宿池中樹，僧敲月下門」兩句，其讀詩則曰：「月明裏和尚門子打，水底裏樹上老鴉坐」，大率如此。補，錦州人，亦一契丹也。[44]

This anecdote is particularly thought-provoking: first, the example raised in the anecdote are two famous lines from the Tang poet Jia Dao 賈島 (779-843), who was said to have consulted another famous writer Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824) while he was trying to decide whether to use the verb *tui* 推 [pushes] or *qiao* 敲 [knocks].[45] The question of literary craftsmanship has been completely overtaken by the children's need to comprehend the line. Thus, the ingenuity of the verb "knock" was replaced by the much simpler character *da* 打 [strike]. Moreover, from the example given in this anecdote, we can see how the Khitan children acquire a second language by the end of the 12th century. They would

[44] Hong Mai 洪邁, *Yijian zhi* 夷堅志 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 514.

[45] For a discussion of the anecdote related to the composition of this couplet, see Stephen Owen, *The End of the Chinese "Middle Ages": Essays in Mid-Tang Literary Culture* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 115-116.

translate the words from literary Chinese to vernacular while twisting it to fit the grammatical structure of Khitan. This resulted in an artificial language that shares the features of the hybrid language seen in the edicts: although the characters were still written in the Sinitic script, the sequence of words, or to put it in modern terms, grammatical pattern, is completely foreign.

The attitude illustrated by Wang Bu towards this language gives us a glimpse into how the hierarchy of the written languages was seen at the end of the 12th century. While being reportedly disdainful of how the Khitan children learn the lines in poetry via such methods, Wang Bu was trying to curry favor with the envoy sent by the Southern Song whom he believed would agree with his assessment – no official from the Southern Song would have approved of such a twist in the language of Chinese poetry. The hidden assumption here is that such an artificial language should be considered naïve and erratic. With an ironic twist at the end of the anecdote, Wang Bu is revealed to be a Khitan. Wang's contempt can thus be taken as a proof of his critique of the cultural level of his own people. This account by Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123-1202), written from the perspective of a Southern Song envoy, hence become a testimony against the Khitans – the Khitans were culturally inferior.

This anecdote allows us to examine how language and ethnicity were perceived together at the turn of the 13th century. The hybridity of language was portrayed as a flaw while the officials in the north seemed to acknowledge this cultural hierarchy. Before the Mongol invasion, the cultural hegemony is clear: a hybrid language that combines the grammar of one language with the vocabulary and script of another would be regarded as a defect among the literati and scholar officials, both from Han and non-Han background.

But this situation apparently changed in the 13th century. Let us use *Zhiyuan bianwei lu* 至元辨偽錄 [*Notes on the Identification of the Heterodoxy in the Zhiyuan reign*] as an illustration. Compiled by the monk Xiang Mai 祥邁 and structured as debates between Buddhism and the Quanzhen sect, this text

is one of the many existing sources of edicts issued in the Yuan dynasty. As I have shown in the first chapter, the Quanzhen sect gained the support from Chinggis Khan after Qiu Chuji's trip to Central Asia. Qiu and his followers were granted full exemption from taxes in 1223. Yet, just a few years after the death of Qiu in 1227, Yelü Chucai felt threatened by the rise of the Quanzhen sect and, as the leader of Buddhism, he launched an attack against the Taoists. The conflicts between Buddhism and the Quanzhen sect culminated in a series of heated discussions in court from 1255 to 1258.

In these debates, Li Zhichang was accused of occupying 482 Buddhist temples and of spreading the rumors that Buddha was a reincarnation of Laozi. According to Xiang Mai's records, fourteen arguments were made to refute the claim that Buddhism originated from Laozi. Among them, we can see how knowledge about Central Asia was used by the monks:

> Formerly, Zhang Qian (164-113 BCE) went west, and it was from that point on that the name of Buddha came to be transmitted. From then till today, more than a hundred envoys have been sent back and forth and none of them mentioned the idea that Laozi transformed the people in the west through his teachings. In the lands covered by the western expeditions of Emperor Gugu, there were only Buddhist monks. When he approached the sea in the northwest, there was a kingdom where pagodas were as numerous as trees in a forest. The King of that kingdom only believed in monks. And in the Tang, Wang Xuance was sent to the west as an envoy. When he reached the Magadha Kingdom, he went to Mount Gridhrakūta and the place where Buddha attained enlightenment, he recorded all the inscriptions on the steles that praised the sagely transformation of the Buddha, yet he never mentioned anything about Laozi. In addition, Master Zhanran (i.e. Yelü Chucai) followed Emperor Taizu (i.e. Chinggis Khan) to wage war against the Kingdom of Khotan and Kefacha. He went through the Tianshan Mountains and crossed the Snowy Hill. He documented in detail customs and

practices, and yet nothing was said about the affairs of Laozi. Even now, with the younger brother of our Emperor Hulagu Khan stationed in the Western Regions, being situated in the southwest of Xunsigan and the west of the Snowy Hill, when we personally ask the envoys endlessly sent to and from the place about the story of Laozi, they all said that they have heard nothing about it. It means that all those bizarre texts concerning the miracles of Laozi are fake. Since this is not a valid theory, why should we believe in it?

初張騫西來，始傳浮圖之號。至於今代，國使往還無慮百人，並不見老君西化之說。古谷皇帝西征之地唯有佛僧。行近西北海有一國土，城中佛塔森然若林，彼國君王唯是和尚。又唐王玄策奉使西行，至摩竭陀國，於耆闍崛山及佛成道處，咸述碑銘讚佛聖化，未聞說有老君之事。又湛然居士扈從太祖西征于闐及可弗叉國，越天山，過雪嶺，風化具詳，亦未知有老子之事。即今煦烈大王皇帝親弟鎮守西域，在尋思干西南、雪山之西，使命往還來往不絕，除親諮詢老化云，並云無聞，則老子神異道書偽出。既非通論，何足信哉？[46]

Citing Zhang Qian, an imperial envoy sent by the Han dynasty to Central Asia, as their first example, the Buddhist monks make an argument by listing the explorers all the way from the 2nd century BCE till their time. They come to their conclusion by stressing that none of these travelers or envoys – Yelü Chucai included – had mentioned any traces of Laozi in their accounts about Central Asia. The fact that messengers sent by Hulagu Khan 旭烈兀 (1218-1265), the younger brother of Möngke Khan 蒙哥 (r. 1251-1259), became one of their informants is also interesting. It seems that the Buddhist monks at that time had access to the envoys who were constantly travelling in Central Asia. From a discursive

[46] Xiang Mai, *Bianwei lu*, in *Taishō shinshū Daizōkyō* (Taipei: Shihua yinshua qiye youxian gongsi, 1962), T. 52, no. 2116, 764.

point of view, one crucial factor determining the outcome of the debate between the Buddhists and the Quanzhen Taoists is their understanding of the history in the West.

Of course, the final decision as to whether the Buddhists or the Taoists won the debate would depend on the judgment of the emperor. In a debate before Möngke Khan, the Buddhists rebuked the Taoists for their failure to recognize the historical accuracy of the "histories compiled in the West," that is, the Buddhist sutras. The following exchange deserves attention:

> [The Taoists] then presented to the Emperor *the Biography of Laozi*, the *Classics of Transforming the Barbarians*, and the *Records of the Historian*. The Emperor said, "Just stop talking, you Taoists! Just show me the textual evidence." The Emperor asked, "Who wrote these books?" The Taoists replied, "This is the *Records of the Historian* compiled by famous emperors from the land of the Han since antiquity. It has served as authoritative evidence from the past to the present." The Emperor asked, "Ever since antiquity, have emperors been born only in the land of the Han? Are there emperors elsewhere?" The Taoists replied, "There are also emperors elsewhere." The Emperor then asked, "Are the emperors from other kingdoms similar to the emperors in the land of the Han?" The Taoists replied, "They are similar." The Emperor then asked, "Since they are similar, are the words from other emperors equally valid when compared to the words of the emperors from the land of the Han?" The Taoists replied, "They are equally valid." The Emperor said, "If they are equally valid, then Laozi has never been to other places to transform others through his teaching. These words in the *Records of the Historian* claim that Laozi transformed the barbarians – are they not false? In this case, the *Records of the Historian* should also be burned as it is not believable." The Taoist cannot answer. […] Yao Shu told the Taoists, "It is difficult to discuss weighty matters with scholars of limited views who keep to their distant corner. You are only holding on to the *Records of the Historian* and

your words are contradictory. All the records in the past are considered records of history, how dare you not believe in it? If the records of history from the Western Paradise claims so, then the Buddha is a sage."

乃將《老子傳》、《化胡經》、《史記》等書呈於帝。帝曰：「不須道士多言，但取文字為證。」帝曰：「此是何人之書？」道曰：「此是漢地自古已來有名皇帝集成底《史記》，古今為憑。」帝問：「自古皇帝唯漢地出耶？他處亦有耶？」道曰：「他國亦有。」又問：「他國皇帝與漢地皇帝都一般麼？」道曰：「一般。」又問：「既是一般，他國皇帝言語，漢地皇帝言語，都一般中用麼？」答曰：「都中使用。」帝曰：「既中使用。老子他處不曾行化，而這《史記》文字主張老子化胡，不是說謊文字？那這般《史記》都合燒了，不可憑信。」道士並無一答。［……］姚公茂謂道士曰：「守隅曲士難論大方。只為執著漢兒《史記》，自語相違，向者前言都是史記，敢不憑信？既西天史記如此言之，則佛是聖也。」[47]

In the *Records of the Historian*, Sima Qian provides a biography for Laozi saying that Laozi departed through the Hangu Pass after witnessing the decline of the Zhou dynasty.[48] This account formed the kernel out of which grew the myth surrounding Laozi transforming the barbarians in the west. As illustrated above, Möngke Khan was furious because the Taoists, while citing the *Records of the Historian* as their textual evidence, did not recognize the validity of the scriptures from India. This quickly escalated to a discussion concerning the origins of the emperor's authority. If the Taoists could recognize and respect an emperor who gained power in a place outside the land of the Han, then they should also respect the records of histories from a foreign world. The analogy is quite simple, yet its

[47] Ibid., 771.

[48] Sima Qian, *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994), 63.2141.

implication is significant – a challenge against Buddhism would be considered a challenge against the Khan since they both share foreign origins. Yao Shu 姚樞 (1201-1278), a Confucian scholar serving in the Yuan court, thus concluded that the Taoists lost the debate due to their ignorance about Buddhist scriptures.

According to the record of Xiang Mai, after the Taoists were defeated in the debates, they were ordered by the Khan to shave their heads and to return some of the temple properties to the Buddhists. The historical accuracy of this account has been questioned. Through tracing the biographies of the Taoists who supposedly participated in the debates, Chen Yuan 陳垣 (1880-1971) argued that a lot of them enjoyed high reputation till they died and there were apparently no records found in the Taoists' tradition that would suggest some of the Taoists priests were forced to shave their heads under Mongol rule.[49] While it is true that the records of Xiang Mai might have been a biased account, it is still important to see how he strategically tried to stress the foreign nature of the Mongol rulers and tied it together with Buddhism.

While Xiang Mai's record may be tainted with exaggerations and fabrications, he was acutely aware of the problem of historical veracity since one of the accusations the Buddhist monks made was that the Quanzhen Taoists were producing fake edicts.[50] Thus, to prove that his records were real, Xiang Mai included multiple edicts to illustrate all the decisions made by Möngke Khan. It is important to note that apart from attaching four separate edicts within the texts, the monk also cited an edict written in the form of hybrid language within a text written in literary Chinese.[51]

---

49 Chen Yuan, "Nan Song chu Hebei xin daojiao kao" 南宋初河北新道教考, in *Chen Yuan quanji* 陳垣全集 (Hefei: Anhui daxue chubanshe, 2009), 18.452.

50 The Quanzhen Taoists were accused for "filling in the edicts themselves and deceiving the ruler" 自填聖旨謾昧主上. Xiang Mai, *Bianwei lu*, 768.

51 Ibid., 768.

We can draw a comparison between Li Zhichang and Xiang Mai here. Although Li in his travelogue also stressed the political authority his master gained from Chinggis Khan, he decided to rewrite the edict while it is incorporated into the text. The decision to rewrite may not be a conscious one, but it reflects an assumption Li had in his mind. His travelogue should be composed in a coherent form of literary Chinese – the inclusion of an edict composed in a hybrid language does not seem appropriate to him. Unlike Li's travelogue, not only is the Buddhist record more willing to showcase the alien nature of the imperial house, it is also less anxious about including edicts in hybrid language, which it considers a reflection of the source of authority tied to the official words spoken by the Mongol Khan.

Although the Quanzhen sect may not be comfortable in crafting a text that would have different languages mingled together, I am not suggesting that the Taoists were not exploiting the alien nature of the Mongol rule. In fact, once we turn to the rubbings of the steles collected by modern scholars, we find that Quanzhen Taoist abbots accounted for one of the major sources where inscriptions of these edicts can be found.[52] For instance, in the rubbing of an edict found in the Palace of Purple Tenuity 紫微宮 in Jiyuan 濟源 in Henan 河南, (figure 2.1), we find, towards the end of the edict after the date of issuance was inscribed in Chinese, a few lines of Uighur stating that "The person who shall have contravened this my word, / let him be held greatly ..?.. punishable. This / Writ. The year of the rat."[53] The Uighur is not meant to be read separately from the Sinitic inscription since it does not include any details of the imperial order. On the contrary, one can totally grasp the meaning of the order without knowing Uighur. Thus, we can see that the Uighur inscriptions were included only because it can lend greater authority to the Sinitic inscriptions.

---

52 See Cai Meibiao 蔡美彪, *Yuandai baihua bei jilu* 元代白話碑集錄 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2017).

53 For a detailed discussion and an English translation of the inscription, see Francis Woodman Cleaves, "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1240," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 23 (1960-1961): 62-75.

Like the Uighur inscription, the hybrid language was a marker of foreignness. It exemplifies the authority of the ruling class by reminding the readers that this was issued by a Mongol leader. While scholars have often been attracted by the usage of multiple languages in the Mongol empire, it is also important to realize that the multilingual nature of the empire could be emblematized even when only the Sinitic script was used.

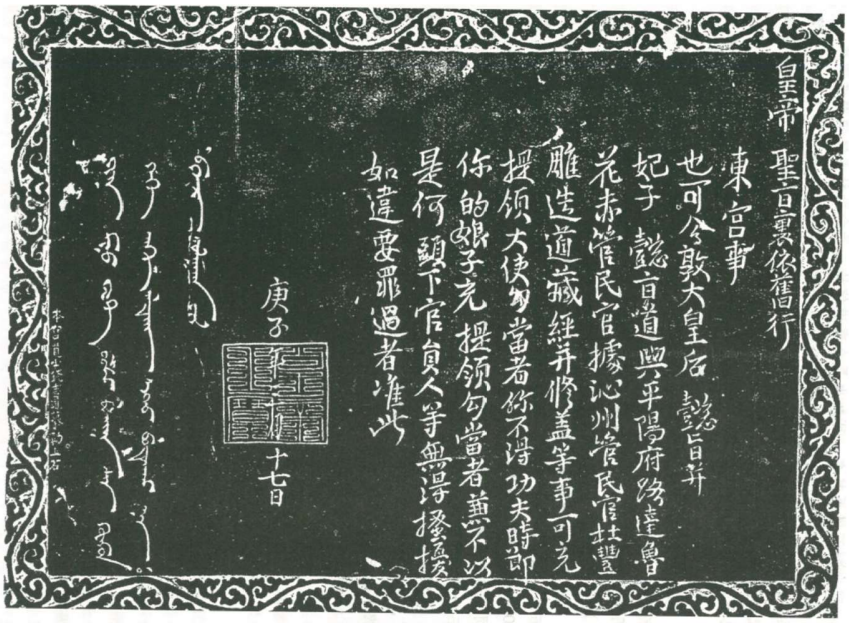


Figure 3.1. A Rubbing from a Stone Inscribed with the Edict Issued in 1240[54]

The use of the hybrid language did not cease in the Yuan dynasty. This practice continued in the early Ming. Using the edicts issued by the court of Zhu Yuanzhang (r. 1368-1398) as a point of reference, one could notice an intriguing phenomenon – even though the official documents were no longer issued based on a translation, the habit of using a hybrid language remains.[55] The situation in the early Ming demonstrates the existence of pseudo-translation, in other words, even though there is no practical need to retain the grammar of the original language, there are other forces that would support

[54] See, for instance, Zhu Yuanzhang's edict issued in 1370 in *Da Ming Taizu Huangdi yuzhi ji* 大明太祖皇帝御製集 (Ming neiku edition in the Beijing Library), 2.19a-b.

[55] Cai Meibiao, *Yuandai baihua bei jilu*, 22.

a use of a hybrid language. One may surmise that this use of pseudo-translation has a longer history that can be traced back to the Yuan dynasty, and we can also see that the hybrid language has become a source of authority.

Let us go back to the case of Li Zhichang. What prompted him to write in literary Sinitic is the assumption that he was addressing a group of literati who would not feel comfortable to see the integrity of the literary language undermined. If the use of the hybrid language signifies an active attempt to borrow the authority of the Mongol rulers, this is only successful because the readers of the text would find it unfamiliar and unnatural, and hence be reminded of the translingual nature of the text. As such translingual practices were intricately linked with the Mongol ruling class, it begs the question: how does this use of language affect the perception of the Mongol ruling house?

The Search for a Yuan Literary Tradition

During the reign of Emperor Wenzong, a series of steles were erected with his commands inscribed on it. Among these works, one can find the following essay:

> The officers from the Academy of Assembled Worthies have presented a memorial: "Ever since Emperor Shizu became an heir presumptive, his first task was to establish schools and cultivate literary men. After he ascended to the throne of high dignity, all under heaven has been unified. Schools were established in every single place, ranging from the capital to the most distant provinces, to make manifest ethical human relations, to let good customs flourish, to cultivate talents and to consolidate the foundation of governance. Sages came in continuous succession, and they provided zealous support and guidance. Both the rules of the civil exams and the learning of our state are clear. Yet we are worried that some officials may regard this as mere rhetoric, and would not be too enthusiastic about instituting schools. Now, as the emperor has

ascended the throne, edicts about establishing new schools are issued in all corners of the realm in the hope of achieving success." End of quote.

Now, there are already established rules for recruiting scholar officials. Students from the National Academy can gain points. The Metropolitan Secretariat and the Censorate are holding public exams. Both policies are working per instructions from my edict. Candidates and Confucian households, no matter what they owe in taxes, based on the guidelines set by the edicts of Emperor Shizu, don't pay. The smart young lads from the Confucian households and common folk should come to school and receive an education. In all the buildings of temple schools and academies, officials, envoys and soldiers should never stay, never execute legal judgments, never hold banquets, never work or store official items. No one, no matter who he is, should seize the academies' land, orchards and fields. The money and food for the school should provide for two *ding* ceremonies during spring and fall, as well as the sacrifices on the first and the fifteenth of each month. They should also be used to provide food for students and teachers, to support scholars who are impoverished, old or sick, and to renovate crumbling classrooms. If the temples and gardens in Qufu are damaged, one should repair it according to the rules. For all the graves of late worthy men who do not have progeny, the local officials should take care of them and not allow them to be damaged. The educational intendents and teachers should select those who are virtuous and knowledgeable and appoint them. As for the property of the school, no one, no matter who he is, can be allowed to damage it. The officials in each route, province and prefecture, should pay attention to their management. Investigating censors and surveillance commissioners should give encouragements and observe the conditions of the schools. I have thus announced. Those who violate my orders, shan't they be afraid?

集賢院官人每奏：「我世祖皇帝潛邸以來，首務立學養士。及登寶位，天下混一。內自京師，外及郡縣，無不立學，以明人倫，以厚風俗，以養人材，以隆治本。列聖相承，諄諄勉勵，科舉條章，國學典治，俱以昭明。伏慮有司視為文具，怠於舉行。今皇帝即位，作新學校的聖旨頒降四方，以期成效。」麼道奏有。

如今科舉取士已有成規。國子積分、省台公試，依已予的聖旨行者。秀才儒戶每，不揀甚麼差發，依着世祖皇帝聖旨體例裏休當者。儒戶及民間俊秀子弟入學讀書者。各處廟學書院房舍裏，官員使臣軍人休安下，休斷詞訟，休做筵會，休造作，休頓放官物。地土、園林、莊田，不揀是誰休侵奪者。在學錢糧，供辦春秋二丁，朔望祭祀及師生廩膳，贍養貧窮老病之士，修理損壞了學舍者。曲阜林廟如有損壞，依例修理者。各處先賢墳無子孫的，所在官司禁治，休損壞者。儒學提舉、教官人等遴選有德行學問的人委用者。學校的勾當，不揀是誰休沮壞者。路府州縣官人每，常切用心提調者。監察御史、廉訪司官人每勉勵體察者。這般宣諭了，別了的人每，他每不怕那。[56]

What is intriguing here in this stele is the existence of two languages within one document. On the first half of this edict mostly written in literary Chinese, we see an inclusion of the memorial submitted by the officials from the Academy of Assembled Worthies 集賢院. This is followed by the answer given by the emperor composed in the hybrid language. There is an abrupt linguistic change at the very end of the memorial immediately before the line "Now, as the emperor has ascended the throne" 今皇帝即位 signified by the use of the particles *de* 的. The reason of the change is not evident, but

[56] Ibid., 216.

one possibility is that the memorial submitted by the courtier to the emperor was originally written in literary Chinese, but the latter half of the essay is then abridged when the document was embedded in the edict. Even if the last line of the memorial were to be composed in literary Chinese, the juxtaposition is still peculiar since it serves as a constant reminder of the multilingual linguistic environment of the ruling class.

This stele is found in the Temple of Letters 文廟 in the northern part of modern Henan 河南. From the details described in the edict, it is clear that such steles were erected in the academies around the empire. Even though the edict is concerned about the schools, the civil examination, and the well-being of the literati, the language presents a feeling of disjuncture that would alert the readers to the foreignness of the Mongol emperor.

A lot of historians have conducted extensive studies on the problem of Sinicization. From the literary works composed by the courtiers at the time, there is ample evidence showing that Emperor Wenzong was a great artist whose calligraphic works were carved into stones while rubbings were made as gifts to be conferred on his subjects.[57] One may argue that this evidence is sufficient to prove that Emperor Wenzong is highly conscious of creating an image of a Sinicized ruler. The point raised here is not that the Mongol ruler was not Sinicized, but rather there are traits embedded within the language of edicts that would prevent the literati at the time from considering the ruler as part of one single community.

One example that would tie together the problem of language and the image of the emperor would be the compilation of *Jingshi dadian* 經世大典 [*The Great Canon on Governing the World*]. In 1329, Emperor Wenzong ordered his courtiers to compile this compendium to gather all the materials

[57] For instance, after Kuizhang ge 奎章閣, the academy where the imperial collections of books and paintings were housed, was established in 1329, Emperor Wenzong was said to have sent the scholars he appointed his calligraphy. The event was recorded in Huang Jin 黃溍 (1277-1357). See *Quan Yuan wen* 全元文 (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 1998), 29.133.

related to statecraft. Led by the officials Zhao Shiting 趙世廷 (1260-1336) and Yu Ji 虞集 (1272-1348), a total of 880 fascicles were completed in 1331. Although the collection is no longer extant, some fragments are preserved in the Ming compendium *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 [*The Great Canon of the Yongle Reign*]:

> On the seventeenth day, a memorial was presented by the Office of Transmission: "The translator Asan came from the land of the Jurchens. According to the report sent from the postal household from Xinzhou, 'The officer Hudulu from the Commission of the Capturing of Eagles returned to this station from the Sichuan route. He refused to eat the available meat and demanded that a live lamb be slaughtered and cooked. If those who come after him emulate this practice, we will certainly not be able to afford this.'" His majesty said, "Why would this postal station still give him food when they were met with such requests? From now on, give a person meat if there is available meat. When meat is offered and the person decides not to eat it, then it is fine to not give him anything, not even water."
>
> 十七日，通政院奏：「譯史阿散來自女真之地，據信州站戶告言：『打捕鷹房官忽都魯者，由川路回過本站，見在之肉不食，必需活羊烹之。後來者若復仿此，實難供給。』」上說：「此站何遇而與之！今後見在有肉則與之，與而不食，雖水勿與可也。」[58]

[58] *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 19418.

The same case can also be found in *Yuan dianzhang* 元典章 [*Codex of the Yuan*], a collection of various jurisdictions published around 1322. But in the codex, the jurisdiction edicts and the memorials are all written in the hybrid language:

> On the seventeenth day of the second month in Zhiyuan 21, the officials from Tongzheng presented a memorial, "At the time I came from the land of the Jurchens, the postal households shows me a note with these words: at the time Hudulu, who lives in the capital and hunts eagle, was returning home. It was daytime when he passed by. I gave him the available mutton. He refused. I reprimanded him. He did have a live lamb slaughtered and ate it. We seized Hudulu and said, 'If many others also act this way, refusing to eat the available meat and demanding to eat freshly slaughtered mutton – if that's the case, how can I manage? You envoys should report this incident. You know how to report to the ruler.'" End of quote. This is presented. "An offer from a stupid postal household! Now if there is meat available, give the person this meat. If the meat available was given and the person refuses to take it, then don't even give him water." End of quote. This is the edict.
>
> 至元二十一年二月十七日，通政院官等奏：「我從女真田地裏來的時分，信州站戶每我行文字與着告有來：『裏住的打捕鷹的忽都魯回還家去的時分，白日經過時，見在的羊肉與呵，不肯喫，俺行嗔責道不是。要訖活羊喫了也。俺每忽都魯根底攀着說有，若別個的似這般行的，見有的肉與呵，不喫，要活羊喫的多有，似這般啊，俺生受有。您使臣每根底告有。怎生上位奏知的，您識者。』麼道來。」麼道，奏

呵。「呆站家與來也者。如今見在肉有呵，與見在肉者。若見在肉與呵，不麼的人每根底，水也休與者。」麼道，聖旨了也。[59]

My translation may not be able to convey the tone of the language, but one can still notice that the version in the codex is much more repetitive. If we follow the sequence of the compilation, it is fair to speculate that the account was rewritten in literary language when the *Great Canon on Governing the World* was compiled. The tone has been revised. This again reflects the mentality and anxiety of the literati class who was serving the Mongol ruler. The *Great Canon on Governing the World* was prepared by the scholars in the Academy of Gathered Worthies. In the compendium, there has been a conscious effort to delineate the different documents issued by the Mongol empire. As stated in the short preface for "Institution of the Emperor" 帝制:

> I have heard that in ancient times, the words of the canons, counsels, proclamations, announcements, declarations and charges may either come from a spontaneous speech of the ruler or modified by the historians. This has a long history. In this dynasty, the proclamations made in the language of the state are called decrees, while those written by the historians on behalf of the emperor are called edicts.
>
> 臣聞古者典謨訓誥誓命之文，或出於一時帝王之言，或出於史臣之所修潤，其來尚矣。國朝以國語訓勅者曰聖旨；史臣代言者曰詔書。[60]

---

59 *Yuan dianzhang*, 560.

60 The preface of the compendium can be found in Su Tianjue ed., *Guochao wenlei* 國朝文類, in *Sibu congkan* 11: 40.6a.

If the distinction between decrees and edicts was systematically followed, it would be important to reconsider why the documents were rewritten by the courtiers when they were gathered. In the existing preface of the *Great Canon on Governing the World*, the editor Yu Ji claims that this compilation shall "gather historical accounts from the officers and embellish them, so that the state language can be expressed in accordance with the *Examples of Refined Usages*[61] while the redundant words of the official correspondences can be eliminated" 悉取有司之掌故而修飾潤色之，通國語於爾雅，去吏牘之繁辭.[62] As one can see from the above example, Yu Ji was consciously embellishing the official documents by getting rid of the hybrid language. The necessity to present a compendium without the "redundant words" gestures towards a need to protect the integrity of the language. In the minds of the literati, as seen in this preface, literary Chinese is considered a more elevated style than the hybrid language. The courtiers saw the necessity to exorcise all the foreign qualities of the hybrid language, and to produce a work written in only one unified language.

The example of the stele and the juxtaposition of materials presented above push us to two extremes. The former presents a ruling class not too concerned about the unity of language, while the latter represents an effort to create one community through the revision of texts. It is not contradictory to have various opposing forces within one state provided that different actors have different interests. The most important point here is that the linguistic dimension is always influencing how one perceives the empire when China was under the rule of the Mongols.

Conclusion

Antonio Gramsci once noted in his *Prison Notes*:

---

61 *Erya* 爾雅 (*Examples of Refined Usages*) is one of the earliest lexiographical work compiled in around 3rd century BCE.

62 Su Tianjue ed., *Yuan wenlei* 元文類, in *Sibu congkan* 11: 40.2b.

> Every time the question of the language surfaces, in one way or another, it means that a series of other problems are coming to the fore: the formation and enlargement of the governing class, the need to establish more intimate and secure relationships between the governing group and the national-popular masses, in other words to reorganize cultural hegemony.[63]

Gramsci calls our attention to how the emergence of linguistic questions reflects changes in the social grid. This chapter is nothing more than an attempt to bring this concept into the context of the Yuan dynasty. Under the Mongol rule, the need for translation creates a more complex relationship by introducing the Sino-Mongolian hybrid into the linguistic scape. In a world where the hierarchy between literary Chinese and vernacular has always been in place, the introduction of a new hybrid language creates translingual tension. By translingual tension, I mean the antagonism created by (1) the power of the hybrid language backed by the political reality of the time, which can ultimately lead to a reorganization of the cultural hegemony; and (2) the cultural integrity of literary Chinese which draws its authority from previous practices. This unprecedented tension can be found throughout the Yuan dynasty.

This translingual tension calls attention to how our perceptions of the Yuan dynasty are mediated through different forms of language. The linguistic representation should never be thought of as a transparent tool but instead lens that may alter our perception of the Mongol empire. In particular, when the Yuan literati themselves were constantly rewriting the documents to fit them into different compendia, the image forged by the historical sources was easily manipulated through the choice of the language and the method of representation.

---

[63] Antonio Gramsci, *The Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings, 1916-1935* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 356.

CHAPTER 4

Discursive Limits of Cultural Interactions:

Reflections on the Writings on the Diplomacy of the Mongol-Yuan Dynasty

The study of diplomacy of pre-modern China has become increasingly significant in recent years. As an alternative to the Eurocentric international relations, scholars have been searching for a unique Chinese vision of world order. Looking back at the beginning of the first millennium BCE, Zhao Tingyang argues that the Zhou dynasty (ca. 1046-771 BCE) invokes a vision of *tianxia* 天下 (literally, all-under-heaven) that departed from the state-centered polity in order to prevail over the corrupt yet powerful Shang (ca. 1554-1045 BCE). Realized through moral leadership, the Zhou dynasty sought to gain legitimacy by securing the recognition of the people and forming alliances with its neighboring states. The boundaries between self and other under this world view are relational and not essential – in other words, those who are culturally competent can be considered as insiders, even though they may not come from the same location or may not share the same ethnicity.[1]

Although the applicability of the *tianxia* ideal in modern day politics remains highly contested, most scholars agree that this concept was realized in the past through the tributary system under which foreign states send envoys to acknowledge the superiority of the Chinese emperor, while the Chinese in return granted investiture and trading rights to the subordinate state. The hierarchical relationship is largely symbolic since the Chinese emperor would rarely intervene in the autonomy of its tributary states.[2]

---

1 Zhao Tingyang, "All-Under-Heaven and Methodological Relationism," in Fred Dallamayr and Zhao Tingyang eds., *Contemporary Chinese Thought: Debates and Perspectives* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 46-66.

2 See John K. Fairbank and Teng Ssu-yu, "On the Ch'ing tributary system," in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 6.2 (1941): 135-246.

Did the foreign relations of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty fit into this model of the tributary system? There is no easy answer to the question. According to Sun Laichen, it seems that the Mongol empire was indeed following the diplomatic protocols set up in the Zhou dynasty though sometimes its demands were ignored by the neighboring state. Conducting a case study on the diplomatic interactions between the Mongol-Yuan and the countries located at its southwest border, Sun concludes that the Mongols had apparently learned from the Zhou dynasty (or indirectly through the channel of the Liao and the Jin dynasty) that feudal lords and foreign rulers should come to the capital to have an audience with the Son of Heaven, and thus they demanded the king of Annam 安南 to follow the tradition and pay homage to the Mongol emperor. When Annam refused to comply with the demands of the Yuan dynasty, the Mongols wage war against their southern neighbor.[3]

In the same vein, Thomas Allsen's research on the relationship between the Yuan dynasty and the Uighurs of Turfan yields similar results: while the Mongols borrowed the idea of a divinely anointed, universal sovereignty from the well-known Chinese concept of the Mandate of Heaven (*tianming* 天命), they relied exclusively on military force to subjugate their neighbors and make demands on their dependent states.[4]

Despite their focus on different borders, both studies arrive at a strikingly similar conclusion – there is a continuity between the worldview of the Zhou and that of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty in theory, yet they execute the concept in a different manner. The disjunction between theory and practice prompts us to reflect on the following questions: is the worldview of the Zhou dynasty simply evoked in the Yuan dynasty as a rhetorical strategy for the Mongols to push forward their demands? From the discursive perspective, how were the diplomatic exchanges between the Mongol-Yuan and

---

3 Sun Laichen, "Imperial Ideal Compromised: Northern and Southern Courts Across the New Frontier in the Early Yuan Era," in James A. Anderson and John K. Whitmore eds., *China's Encounters on the South and Southwest: Reforging the Fiery Frontier over Two Millennia* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 193-231.

4 Thomas Allsen, "The Yan Dynasty and the Uighurs of Turfan," in Morris Rossabi ed., *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbors, 10th-14th Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 243-280.

its neighbors recorded in Chinese historiography? Was there an implicit bias that may prompt later scholars to observe a continuity between the worldview of the Mongol-Yuan and that of their predecessors? At this point, we shall turn to the discursive dimension and consider how the diplomatic relations were recorded from the 13th to the mid-14th centuries.

This chapter examines the discursive limitations and possibilities of diplomatic writings by focusing on two cases: first, the visit of a papal envoy that became a historical event widely celebrated among the Chinese literati in the 14th century; and second, the interactions between the Mongol-Yuan and Annam as recorded by three envoys, namely Xu Mingshan 徐明善 (fl. 1288), Chen Fu 陳孚 (1259-1309) and Fu Ruojin 傅若金 (1303-1342). The former case allows us to see how literary conventions determine which types of events are remembered in Chinese historiography to shape representation, while the latter illustrates how foreign experiences may challenge the limits of generic conventions. Using these two cases as point of entry, this chapter seeks to explore the intricate relationship between literary conventions and the understanding of the foreign world.

Looking at the Gift Horse:

How are Papal Envoys Represented in Chinese Sources?

In 1338, Pope Benedict XII sent Giovanni de' Marignolli (ca. 1290-1357) from Avignon to China. This mission was a response to a letter sent by the Mongol ruler Toghon Temür (sometimes referred to as Shundi 順帝 in Chinese historiography, 1320-1370) and a petition sent by several chiefs from Khanbaliq 汗八里 (i.e. Beijing today) requesting the appointment of a new pastor to lead the church in the Mongol-Yuan in succession to the late Giovanni da Montecorvino (1247-1328), who was consecrated in 1307 as the first Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Khanbaliq. The details of Marignolli's journey was recorded in his historical compilation *Cronica Boemorum* (*Chronicle of Bohemia*), from which

we knew that he passed through the Black Sea, visited the court of Khan Öz Beg (1313-1341) at New Sarai, sojourned at the city of Almaliq, and continued to progress eastwards again until they reached Hami 哈密 (Qomul) in 1341.[5]

Marignolli was obviously not the first papal envoy sent to meet with the Mongol-Yuan emperor.[6] Yet, among the many Franciscan missions in China, the journey of Marignolli was by far the best documented in Chinese sources. The event became so enthralling that when the Ming prince Zhu Youdun 朱有燉 (1379-1439) composed a series of quatrains recounting the history of the Yuan dynasty, this diplomatic exchange was singled out in one of the poems:

	A Hundred Palace Lyrics of the Yuan	元宮詞百章
	(LXXXVII)	（其八十七）
	Arrived from the west is the heavenly steed that originated in Folang,	天馬西來自佛郎
2	Paintings were created while essays were also commissioned.	圖成又敕寫文章
	The Hanlin academy translated them over and over to the language of the state,	翰林國語重翻譯
4	A hundred copies were bestowed on every rear battalion.	襖魯諸營賜百張[7]

Folang 佛郎 (also written as Fulang 富浪 or Folin 拂林) is a reference commonly used in the Yuan dynasty to describe Europeans.[8] From Zhu's poem, we can see that the Mongol-Yuan court has taken

---

5 Giovanni de' Marignolli was appointed as a court chaplain by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, and was entrusted to write a chronicle for the kingdom: *Cronica Boemorum* (*Chronicle of Bohemia*). He took liberty in inserting some of his recollections of Asiatic travel into his compilation. These fragmentary notes were later re-organized by Henry Yule (1820-1889) in his *Cathay and the Way Thither: Being a Collection of Medieval Notices of China.*

6 Instead he was referred to as the "last mission to Cathay," see Igor de Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khans* (Stanford University Press, 1971), 187-204.

7 Fu Leshu 傅樂淑, *Yuan gongci baizhang zhuanzhu* 元宮詞百章箋注 (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1995), 95.

8 A similar term Folin 拂菻 was first seen in *Suishu* 隋書 (*the History of Sui*) compiled in the 7th century. Most scholars believe that it is a transliteration of Rome (since Rome is referred in Armenian as Hrom, and in Pahlavi as Hrōm). The usage of the term, written with characters that share a similar pronunciation, is believed to have a different origin in the Yuan dynasty. Based on the usage of the term, it is believed that Folang is a transliteration of فرنگ (Farang) in Persian, which refers to the Franks. For a detailed study of the term, see Zhang Xinglang 張星烺, *Zhong Xi jiaotong shiliao huibian* 中西交通史料匯編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), 1.79-85.

advantage of this diplomatic exchange to produce art and literary works that could promote their power. Yet, why would this historical event, of all Franciscan missions, become one that is most remembered in Chinese sources? What does the wide celebration of the arrival of this papal envoy tell us about the Yuan literati's consciousness of the world beyond China?

The Spectacle of the Heavenly Steed

Before reading the Chinese literary texts associated with Marignolli's arrival, perhaps we can first examine how Marignolli recounts his impressions of the Yuan court in the *Chronicle of Bohemia*:

> After having passed it we came to Cambalec,[9] the chief seat of the Empire of the East. Of its incredible magnitude, population, and military array, we will say nothing. But the Grand Khan, when he beheld the great horses, and the Pope's presents, with his letter, and King Robert's too, with their golden seals, and when he saw us also, rejoiced greatly, being delighted, yea exceedingly delighted with everything and treated us with the greatest honor. And when I entered the Khan's presence it was in full festival vestments, with a very fine cross carried before me, and candles and incense, whilst *Credo in Unum, Deum* was chanted, in that glorious palace where he dwells. And when the chant was ended I bestowed a full benediction, which he received with all humility.[10]

[9] Although the original text claims that Marignolli was received by the Yuan emperor at Cambalec (that is, Khanbaliq), Xu Quansheng 許全勝 points out that, according to the Chinese texts, the meeting should have occurred in Xanadu instead. See Xu Quansheng, *Shen Zengzhi shidi zhuzuo jikao* 沈曾植史地著作輯考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2018), 350.

[10] Translated by Henry Yule in *Cathay and the Way Thither* (London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1866) 2.339-340.

According to Marignolli's account, the Mongol Emperor did host the papal envoy with great respect. Not only did he receive the envoy's blessing ceremoniously, he also sent two princes to attend to all the needs of the representatives of the Pope. After staying in the Mongol-Yuan for four years, when Marignolli set off on his return to Avignon, the legates were given three years of allowances and some gifts for the Pope. It was also recorded that the Mongol-Yuan emperor asked him to relay a request: a priest with the rank of Cardinal should be sent speedily to the Mongol capital to resume the office of Bishop.[11]

None of the above exchange was recorded in the Chinese historiography except the fact that "great horses" are offered as tributary gifts to the court. This is because the Mongol Khan was very pleased with the tributary horses and thus he ordered the court painter Zhou Lang 周朗 (fl. 1342) to produce a painting of the tributary horse (see figure 1).[12] After the painting was made, the Toghon Temür also commissioned the courtier Jie Xisi 揭傒斯 (1274-1344) to inscribe a colophon on it. The painting in turn invited a series of literary works celebrating the occasion: for instance, Ouyang Xuan 歐陽玄 (1283-1358), Zhou Boqi 周伯琦 (1298-1368), Wu Shidao 吳師道 (1283-1344) and Xu Youren 許有壬 (1286-1364) participated in the production of the commemorative pieces for the event.[13]

Before reading the literary works composed by these court literati, we can first take a look at the painting that inspired these texts:

---

11 Yule tr., *Cathay and the Way Thither*, 2.340-341.

12 A photo reproduction of the painting can be found in *Qianli ma* 千里馬 (Paris: Hermès, 1997), 120.

13 The works of Jie Xisi and Ouyang Xuan will be discussed in details below. As for the poems composed by Zhou Boqi, Wu Shidao and Xu Youren, I have included a translation of both poems in Appendix 1.

Figure 1. A Ming Replication of Zhou Lang's *Heavenly Horse* (Housed in Beijing Palace Museum)

While it is important to note that the painting found in Beijing Palace Museum today is nothing more than a Ming dynasty copy, since Zhou Lang's original work has been lost, this painting is the best way for us to gain some insights into the pictorial imagination of the meeting between the papal envoy and the Mongol Khan. As seen in this replication, the spectacle of the meeting between the envoy and the Emperor does not only focus on the horse, but the Emperor himself is also the subject of a visual display. As Wang Yuejin has aptly pointed out, the placement of the Emperor and the tributary horse suggests that the painting situates both parties at the center of attention.[14] The Yuan Emperor is apparently wearing Mongol attire, while the noble women and ministers surrounding him are all clothed in Han Chinese clothes.[15] The disjunction itself marks the special status of the Khan. One of the important images in the painting is the astonished scholar on the right of the painting. As a spectator, the figure illustrates the response expected of a viewer both of the event and of the painting. One should marvel at this glorious diplomatic event.

After Zhou Lang has completed this painting, the Emperor then asked his courtiers to inscribe poems on the scroll. Among the literary men in court, Jie Xisi was chosen by Qangli Kökö 康里巎巎

---

14 Wang Yuejin 汪躍進, "Wei shenme meiyou huihua Make Boluo de huihua" 為什麼沒有繪畫馬可．波羅的繪畫 (Why weren't there any paintings of Marco Polo?), in Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館 ed., *Zai zui yaoyuan de defang xunzhao guxiang* 在最遙遠的地方尋找故鄉 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshu guan, 2018), 286-294.

15 Wang Yuejin seeks to explain the existence of the two female by associating them with Chinese cosmology and the power struggle between Bayan 伯顏 (d. 1340) and his nephew Toqto'a 脫脫 (1314-1356). A more straightforward understanding would be the two female portrayed in the painting are Empress Bayan Khutugh 伯顏忽都 (1324-1365) and Empress Gi 奇皇后 (1315-1370). This will better explain the identity of the child standing between the two women, who may be a portrayal of Prince Ayushiridara 愛猷識理達臘 (ca. 1339-1378).

(1295-1345), the Director of the Hanlin Academy, to compose the following work "Tianma zan" 天馬贊 (An Appraisal of the Heavenly Horse):

	Heaven holds the spiritual energy,	維乾秉靈
2	The constellation Fang sends down its essence.[16]	維房降精
	It is bred in the far west,	有產西極
4	This is the divine steed that cannot be named.	神駿難名
	They do not dare to own this horse,	彼不敢有
6	Through multiple translations, they have come to the court.	重譯來庭
	They advanced eastwards through the moon-cave	東逾月窟
8	And passed the Liang and Yong area.[17]	梁雍是經
	At dawn the steed drank at the great river,	朝飲大河
10	The river gods were anxiously attentive.	河伯屏營
	They were fed with fodder at Taihua mountain at dusk,	暮秣太華
12	While the spirits descended to receive them.	神靈下迎
	Treading for four summers and winters,	四踐寒暑
14	They finally arrived at Xanadu.	爰至上京
	The Emperor paid a visit to the stable,	皇帝臨軒
16	The envoy bowed down to greet Him, saying:	使拜迎稱
	"Your subject of the Kingdom of Folang,	臣拂郎國
18	From the remote and limitless Western Deeps.	邈限西溟

[16] The constellation Fang was believed to be the ancestor of horses.
[17] Modern Gansu.

	Having received civilizing transformation, we submit a tribute,	蒙化效貢
20	In hope of participating in Your sagely and glorious reign."	願歸聖明[18]

The first section is about the origin and the form of the tributary steed. Endowed with the heavenly spirit, the horse is portrayed by Jie as a mythical creature to which gods and spirits from the seas and mountains descend to pay tribute; and thus, the Kingdom of Folang would not dare to keep such horses from the Mongol-Yuan Emperor. The hierarchy set up in Jie Xisi's piece is simple: while gods and goddesses of various landmarks are all eager to please the heavenly steed, ultimately the horse has to endure a four year journey to come to the Mongol court. The difficulty of the journey adds weight to the gift presented. Jie then imagines how the envoy would characterize this exchange – he presents this gift to the Mongol-Yuan emperor as a symbol of submission to this great civilization. Even though the heavenly horse is described as a precious gift, it is but inadequately recompense for the civilization brought to the foreign land. Therefore, the gift horse becomes not only a symbol of friendship between two states, it also signifies submission – the Kingdom of Folang is willingly yielding to the superior Mongol-Yuan dynasty.[19]

The imagined "reciprocity" presented in this piece is certainly a commonplace in Chinese literary works, and this, of course, contradicts Marignolli's view that the relationship of the two states are founded on the interest of the Mongol Emperor in the teachings of Christianity. This points to the power of conventional tropes: the arrival of an envoy bearing tributary gifts is by default portrayed as a form of subjugation. The papal envoy is simply perceived as the representative of yet another

[18] Jie Xisi, *Jie Xisi quanji* 揭傒斯全集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012), 465.

[19] Daniel Bell and Wang Pei has distinguished two modes of reciprocity in the study of Chinese foreign relations: "strong reciprocity" with which other countries would model themselves on China while China used moral power to spread Confucian ideals; and "weak reciprocity" with which the relations between China and its vassals are grounded in mutual economic interests. See Bell and Wang, *Just Hierarchy: Why Social Hierarchies Matter in China and the Rest of the World* (Princeton University Press, 2020), 117-128.

Western country. Its religious affiliations are never mentioned in any Chinese sources. Jie Xisi then turns to the gift horse and provides his interpretation of the gift:

	The Emperor is gentle and humble,	皇帝謙讓
22	He rewarded their sincere commitment in coming from afar.	嘉爾遠誠
	The steed stood up in the Crimson Yard,	摩於赤墀
24	Looking back and forth, it did not appear boastful.	顧瞻莫矜
	After I have praised its virtue,	既稱其德
26	Let me also outline its shape.	亦貌其形
	It is six feet in height,	高尺者六
28	Length twice its height, it still seems brawny.	修倍猶羸
	Its color corresponds with Xuanwu,	色應玄武
30	Its steps are as light as those treading over Hesperus.	足躡長庚
	Turning its gaze backwards, bolts of lightning flash from its eyes,	回眸電激
32	As its reins are halted, the wind rises.	頓轡風生
	It is exceptionally outstanding and remarkably powerful,	卓犖權奇
34	It has a tigerish gaze and it leaps like flying dragons.	虎視龍騰
	Following pictures and examining the models,	按圖考式
36	One finds nothing comparable to this steed.	曾未足幷
	The Zhou dynasty had employed eight coursers,[20]	周騁八駿
38	While Lord Yan of Xu organized a military coup.[21]	徐偃構兵

[20] King Mu of Zhou 周穆王 was said to have recruited eight coursers to tour around the world.

[21] Lord Yan of Xu rebelled against the Zhou empire. Although the Zhou army eventually succeeded in pushing his forces back, King Mu of Zhou was forced to acknowledge the independence of Xu in a peace treaty.

	The Han Emperor hitched the fine steed up the drum carriage,[22]	漢駕鼓車
40	Ruled by virtue of the element fire, the Lius achieved restoration.	炎劉中興
	The Heaven-sanctioned Lord is truly numinous and wise,	維帝神聖
42	This can all be attested in the records.	載籍有征
	Emperor Guangwu of Han is the model,	光武是師
44	And King Mu of Zhou the example to avoid.	穆滿是懲
	The wise and worthy are promoted and honored,	登崇俊良
46	Together they build a foundation for great peace.	共基太平
	Whether advancing or stepping back,	一進一退
48	They plan matters of state, be they weighty or minor.	為國重輕
	Let the concern about men take precedence over things,	先人後物
50	This shall bring peace to all kingdoms!	萬國咸寧[23]

Instead of congratulating the Emperor for his success in securing tributes from a foreign country, Jie Xisi concludes by turning to two historical precedents related to the acquisition of horses: one signifies the downfall of the Zhou dynasty, and another points to the Han restoration. The use of historical precedents here is particularly fascinating.[24] In the *Record of the Grand Historian*, King Mu of Zhou's

---

22 In 37 CE, a tributary horse and a precious sword were presented to Emperor Guangwu of the Han 漢光武帝 (3 BCE-57 CE). Instead of keeping them, he hitched the horse to the drum carriage and awarded the sword to a general. This was seen as an act of frugality.

23 *Jie Xisi quanji*, 465.

24 Composed in Japan in around 1380s, a passage in *Taihiki* 太平記 contains a story as follows: A "heavenly horse" was presented to Emperor Go-Daigo 後醍醐天皇 (1228-1339). He asked his courtiers if this is an auspicious sign or a bad omen. While most courtiers associated the tributary horse with the phoenixes appeared at Shun times or the *kilin* appeared before Confucius and conclude that this portended the Emperor's long and peaceful reign, Fujiwara no Fujifusa 藤原藤房 (ca. 1296-1380) disagreed. He cited the Han Emperors Wen and Guangwu and argued that the two Emperors had refused the gifts and thus achieved political stability; King Mu of Zhou, on the other hand, had employed eight heavenly horses and his dynasty soon declined. Fujifusa concluded that the heavenly horses were all a

acquisition of the eight heavenly steeds, together with his recruitment of a talented carriage driver, facilitates the King's western tour. The King indulged so much in the pleasures of his expedition that he ignored all state affairs. Eventually, the Lord of Xu led a rebellion against Zhou. With the help of the carriage driver, the Zhou King managed to return to his Kingdom and overcome the rebels.[25] Departing from Sima Qian's record, the eight heavenly steeds are instead often considered a symbol of royal power. For instance, according to Wang Jia's 王嘉 (d. ca. 386) *Shiyi ji* 拾遺記 (Notes on Neglected Matter), King Mu of Zhou is said to have toured around the world with these horses and brought about the submission of all other domains.[26]

Not only did Jie Xisi decides to include the version of King Mu's story where the tributary horses signify a disaster, the Zhou King's indulgence in the gifts is further juxtaposed with the frugality of Emperor Guangwu of Han, who had also received a tributary horse but did not cling to it. The fact that Jie Xisi evokes these stories is quite remarkable. Instead of offering an effusive celebration of the diplomatic exchange, Jie Xisi uses the occasion for remonstrance. Undercutting the spectacle depicted in the painting, he warns the Emperor against taking excessive pleasure in the horse (and, by extension, Zhou Lang's work) by drawing his attention back to the problem within the empire – the talented should be promoted and the unworthy should be removed from office.

Jie Xisi's appraisal ends with the conclusion that warn of prizing mere things over people – a moral lesson often seen in previous texts.[27] His treatment of the event is quite peculiar compared to

---

metamorphosis of the Fang constellation that would bring disaster to the country. Enraged by Fujifusa's words, Emperor Go-Daigo accepted the horse without heeding his advice. The tale ends with the imperial family split into the Northern and Southern court. Jie Xisi's poem may have inspired the compiler of *Taihiki* since both works cite similar historical precedence. See *Taihiki* 太平記 (Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 1980), 2.122.

25 Burton Watson tr., *Records of the Grand Historian: Qin Dynasty* (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong; New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 2-3.

26 Wang Jia, *Shiyi ji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 60-62.

27 For example, in the Spring and Autumn period, King Zhuang of Chu 楚莊王 (d. 591 BCE) planned an elaborate funeral for his favorite horse. His courtiers considered it inappropriate. Enraged by their response, the King issued an order, saying "If anyone dares to remonstrate against the treatment of the horse, he will be executed." Upon hearing the news, You Meng 優孟 pleaded the King instead to bestow even greater honors to the horse. His exaggeration prompts the King to reflect upon his actions. See Sima Qian, *Shiji*, 126.3200.

the works composed by other courtiers. For instance, Ouyang Xuan's ode is simply a direct celebration of the Emperor's rule:

> On the eighteenth day of the seventh month in the second year of the Zhizheng reign (1342), the Emperor arrived at the Ciren Hall. The Folang Kingdom presented a heavenly horse. On the twenty-first, the Emperor issued an edict from the Longguang Hall to order Zhou Lang to make a painting of its likeness. On the twenty-third day, the painting was presented to the throne. The Hanlin Academician and the Receiver of Imperial Commands Qangli Kökö relayed the message of the Emperor, and Jie Xisi was ordered to compose an appraisal. Your subject pondered that Emperor Wu of Han once sent out two hundred thousand soldiers and he barely obtained a few horses from Ferghana; but now the heavenly horse has arrived without the deployment of one soldier. This has all been attained through the enlightenment of Your Majesty's cultured rule. Despite my limitations, dare I not pay obeisance with my hands, touch the ground with my head and offer an ode:
>
> 至正二年壬午七月十八日丁亥，皇帝御慈仁殿，拂郎國進天馬。二十一日庚寅，自龍光殿勅周郎貌以為圖。二十三日壬辰，以圖進。翰林學士承旨，嶴嶴傳旨，命傒斯為之賛。臣惟漢武帝發兵二十萬，僅得大宛馬匹。今不煩一兵而天馬至，皆皇上文治之化所及。臣雖駑劣，敢不拜手稽首，而獻頌曰：

	The Son of Heaven is benevolent and wise! All kingdoms turn to him!	天子仁聖萬國歸
2	The heavenly horse comes from the west of the west.	天馬來自西方西
	Dark clouds adorn its body, it has two jade hoofs.	玄雲被身兩玉蹄
4	Its height exceeds five feet, doubled in its length.	高踰五尺修倍之

	In seven crossings of the ocean, its body seemed to fly,	七渡海洋身若飛
6	Surrounded by a retinue of river gods, lightning and thunder followed.	海若左右雷霆隨
	At dawn, the Emperor arrived at the Ciren Hall,	天子曉御慈仁殿
8	With a sudden western breeze, the heavenly horse appeared.	西風忽來天馬見
	It has a dragon's head and a phoenix's chest, and its eyes dart lightning.	龍首鳳臆目飛電
10	There was no need to deploy two hundred thousand soldiers of the Han.	不用漢兵二十萬
	Virtue naturally brings submission, to the envy of the four seas.	有德自歸四海羨
12	Since the heavenly horse has come, all things are prosperous and peaceful.	天馬來時庶昇平
	Long live the benevolent Son of Heaven! Myriad kingdoms are in harmony!	天子仁壽萬國清
14	I am pleased to write a verse for myriad kingdoms to hear.	臣願作詩萬國聽[28]

The first half of Ouyang Xuan's poem is quite similar to Jie Xisi's work – they touch on similar subjects including the origin and appearance of the heavenly horse, the horse's fantastic journey on the seas, and the meeting between the tributary horse and the Emperor. The difference between the two poems is obviously the analogy made between the Yuan emperor and his predecessors. As we can see from the preface of the poem, Ouyang Xuan explicitly compares the Mongol Khan with Emperor Wu of Han, who sought to retrieve the "heavenly horses" of Ferghana at the cost of aggressive wars. The comparison leads Ouyang to the conclusion: the achievements of the Mongol-Yuan Emperor are more impressive since the heavenly horse was sent to him as a tribute without sacrificing anyone from his military force.

[28] Ouyang Xuan, *Ouyang Xuan quanji* 歐陽玄全集 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 2010), 9-10. An English translation can be found in Lauren Arnold, *Princely Gifts and Papal Treasure: The Franciscan Mission to China and its Influence in the Art of the West, 1250-1350* (San Francisco: Desiderata Press, 1999), 103-104. I have revised some parts of the translation here.

This poem strikes a more positive tone about the diplomatic event, and one point worth noticing is the opening and the end of the poem: as one can see from line 1 and line 13, Ouyang Xuan employed the same sentence structure juxtaposing the Son of Heaven 天子 with myriad kingdoms 萬國. What follows these lines deserves attention: in line 2, as evidence of the Son of Heaven's grace and wisdom, the heavenly horse has arrived from one of the many kingdoms. In line 14, the direction of gift giving is reversed – the horse given to the Mongol-Yuan dynasty is now replaced by Ouyang Xuan's congratulatory poem, which he expects to garner attention from all the kingdoms around the world. The reciprocity of the diplomatic exchange is hence implied by the framing of the poem.

Despite the criticism of the Han Emperor for risking his soldiers' life, Ouyang Xuan's poem is clearly modelled after the song composed on tributary horses during the Han dynasty:

	The heavenly horse came from the far west,	天馬來兮從西極
2	It travelled ten thousand *li* to submit to the virtuous.	經萬里兮歸有德
	Having received divine authority,	承靈威兮降外國
	the Han brings all foreign kingdoms to submission,	
4	Crossing the desert, its army subjugates all barbarians.	涉流沙兮四夷服[29]

It is important to remind ourselves that Ouyang Xuan was writing in a long tradition of works concerning tributary horses. Although Ouyang's poem seems to be nothing more than an attempt to curry favor with the Yuan Emperor, literary motivation turns out to be a more complex issue. This becomes obvious when we juxtapose Ouyang's ode with his "Tianma fu" 天馬賦 (A Poetic Exposition on the Heavenly Horse). This essay was written 28 years before the papal envoy arrived at Xanadu. In 1313, the Mongol-Yuan dynasty proclaimed that it would reinstate the civil examination

[29] Sima Qian, *Shiji*, 24.

system.[30] Hence, district examinations were held the following year. A native of Luling 廬陵, Ouyang Xuan had taken the examination in Jiangxi 江西, and for the examination he was asked is to compose a poetic exposition on the topic of "heavenly horse" (*tianma* 天馬).

Ouyang's examination essay begins with a description of the tributary horse. Employing some of the descriptions we have seen above, he describes a fine steed that is endowed with the spirit of the Fang constellation with the head as fierce as a dragon and a chest as broad as a phoenix. He then argues that since such heavenly horses are rarely found and difficult to be nurtured, they are found only in the past and not in present. He then proceeds to present a hypothetical dialogue:

	Now there is one who seeks to emulate Zou Yang and Mei Sheng,[31]	時則有倣鄒、枚
47	And continue to present *yuefu* poems.	請賡樂府
	A guest may confront him by saying:	而客或難之曰
49	"This is just the time to sing aloud the song of the 'Deer Cry,'[32]	時方歌鹿鳴之章
	And you decided to compose a poetic exposition on the heavenly horse.	子乃為天馬之賦
51	Can there be any lack of men who can steer the drum carriage?[33]	得無馳駕鼓車者
	Why would you not go along and do something so different?	寧不與此而迥殊也哉
53	In the past,	昔者
	King Wu of Zhou received the tributary hounds of the Lü,	武王受旅獒之獻
55	And the Grand Guardian promoted the trend to offer remonstrance.	而太保倡窺諫之風

[30] For a discussion of the historical context for the Mongols to restore civil examinations in 1313, see Benjamin Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 29-38.

[31] Zou Yang 鄒陽 (d. 120 BCE) and Mei Sheng 枚乘 (ca. 210-138 BCE) are both famous literati serving under Emperor Wu of Han.

[32] *Luming* 鹿鳴 (Deer Cry) is a banquet poem in *the Book of Poetry* that demonstrates how the Duke of Zhou entertained his noble guests and illustrates an harmonious relationship between the lord and his ministers.

[33] Here simply means someone with talent.

	King Wen of Han rejected the winged steed,	文帝卻千里之足
57	And the historian recorded his admirable virtue of self-restraint.	而史臣紀儉德之崇
	Furthermore we have King Wu of Han,	況夫天馬求於漢武也
	whose quest of the heavenly horse,	
59	Is like the curse of being barred from rule because of a deformed leg,[34]	縶足之詛
	Just like he who tries to chew his navel, the attempt ends with vain regret.[35]	噬臍厥終
61	Moreover, are the horses truly a manifestation of Heaven's will?	且是馬誠天意歟
	Even if it yields the most outstanding of all creatures,	則與其產物中之傑
63	How can it compare to yielding the most distinguished among scholars?	曷若產士林之雄
	Heaven did not use horse to reward King Wuding,	天之賚武丁不以馬
65	But it delivered the spirit who rides on the Scorpion star,[36]	而以騎箕之精
	The old gentleman who had a fin emerging from his back.[37]	植鰭之翁
67	Heaven did not send horses to Xibo as an auspice,[38]	天之瑞西伯不以馬
	It instead deploys the Eagle of Muye,[39]	而以牧野之鷹
69	The hero on the back seat.[40]	後車之雄
	Scholars nowadays	厥今之士
71	Should certainly produce changes like a leopard ahead of everyone.	固當先萬人而變豹

34 An allusion to Gongsun Zhi 公孫縶 in the *Zuo tradition* who would not to be given a place in the Ancestral Temple due to his deformed leg.

35 An allusion to the *Zuo tradition*: "If one fails to make plans early on, later you'll have to chew your navel, attempting the impossible" 若不早圖，後君噬齊.

36 A reference to Fu Yue 傅說 . In *Zhuangzi*, he was considered the chief minister of King Wuding who assisted the King to pacify the world. After serving the King, he was said to have mounted to the Milky way by riding on the Scorpio star.

37 Also a reference to Fu Yue who was said in *Xunzi* to resemble one who has a fin emerging from his back.

38 Xibo is King Wen of Zhou 周文王 (ca. 1125-1051 CE).

39 Refers to the renowned Taigong Wang 太公望 (Shangfu 尚父) who was said to resemble an eagle in the battle of Muye in *the Book of Odes*.

40 Also a reference to Taigong Wang who was said to have impressed King Wen of Zhou and was thus carried back to court on the back seat of the chariot.

How can they have the leisure to craft an ornate poetic exposition for one horse?" 奚暇為一馬而雕蟲賦者[41]

The art of this speech lies in the play of the references to animals: although the "guest" in Ouyang Xuan's essay is trying to argue for the precedence of talented men over tributary horses, he is consciously making references to various animals: from deer to hounds, from sharks to eagles. This leads up to the final line: there is no reason to compose a poem on horses since a gentleman should "produce change like a **leopard** transform itself" (*bianbao* 變豹) instead of engaging in the insignificant work of "**insect** carving" (*diaocong* 雕蟲). The term *bianbao* comes from the *Book of Changes* which stated that "the superior man transforms himself as the leopard does when it changes its spots" 君子豹變.[42] *Diaocong*, on the other hand, is a renowned expression coined by Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53 BCE-18 CE) as a reference to belletristic literary composition that consumes energy without any clear moral purpose.[43] Drawing allusions from various classical texts concerning tributary horses and other animals, the ingenuity of Ouyang Xuan lies in his ability to display his erudite knowledge while advancing a coherent argument against writing about the heavenly horse – ultimately a gentleman should not waste time in writing a congratulatory piece while disregarding important practical affairs. Just like the Grand Guardian in King Wu's time and the historians in Emperor Wen's era, a statesman should use his writing to directly engage with his times.

After constructing this hypothetical argument, Ouyang Xuan proceeds to present his rebuttal:

I disagreed and said, 謝曰

41 Ouyang Xuan, *Ouyang Xuan quanji*, 2.

42 According to the "Commentary on the Images," "when the noble man does a leopard change, it means that his pattern [*wen*, meaning "culture, cultivation"] becomes magnificent." See Lynn tr., *The Classic of Changes*, 448.

43 Yang Xiong, *Fayan* 法言 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 5.

74	"If I almost share an obsession with horses just like the Jin man,[44]	吾幾晉人好馬之癖
	You are also just making in vain an argument like Zhuangzi who states that a horse is not a horse,[45]	子亦徒為漆園非馬之卞耳
76	Only in the first edict issued in the *xinhai* year,[46]	惟辛亥之首詔
	The beauty of self-restraint has been illustrated.	已節儉之昭美
78	It limits the chase of dogs and horses,	限犬馬之驅馳
	And requests all to obey the Emperor whether to advance or to stop.	聽上方之進止
80	Instead of cherishing creatures from afar, he cherishes the talented men,	不寶遠物而寶人才
	Instead of valuing clever craft, he values those with moral principles.	不貴藝能而貴義理
82	He thus embraces virtues by promoting the worthies,	爰尚德以興賢
	And does not simply seek able scholars through examination essays.	匪程文而求士
84	Perhaps, for the horses that have an extraordinary nature,	大抵馬有異質者
	They are mostly arrogant and aggressive.	多驕而踶躧
86	For the scholars who possess extraordinary talent,	士有異才者
	They are mostly wild and unrestrained.	多流而跅跎
88	If one cannot observe their fine nature,	匪觀良質
	How can one find an analogy for the gentleman?	曷譬君子
90	I am glad that we do have people like Fang Yin who can recognize the worth of a horse,[47]	幸識馬之方歟

[44] A reference to the Western Jin general Wang Ji 王濟 (n.d.).

[45] In the chapter "Discussion on Making All Things Equal" 齊物論, Zhuangzi argued that "To use a horse to show that a horse is not a horse is not as good as using a non-horse to show that a horse is not a horse" See Burton Watson tr., *The Complete Works of Zhuangzi*, 10.

[46] The edict issued in the year *xinhai* may refer to the document announcing Buyantu Khan's (or Emperor Renzong of the Yuan dynasty 元仁宗, 1285-1320) ascendance in 1311.

[47] Fang Yin refers to Jiufang Gao 九方皋 who served under Duke Mu of Qin in the Spring and Autumn period and was said to be able to observe and identify exceptional steeds.

	Just like Liu Lei who could tame dragons.[48]	若攫龍之劉氏
92	Using the traces set by the previous sages to regulate them,	範之以往聖之驅馳
	Accommodate them via following the tracks of our worthy predecessors.	納之以前修之轍軌
94	I also despise the "Song of heavenly horse" composed by the Han,	亦既鄙漢人天馬之歌
	And I hope to delve into the principle of the virtuous horse Ji stated in the *Analects* of the Lu.[49]	則願究魯論德驥之旨也[50]

While disputing the claim that writing on the heavenly horse is trivial, the speaker argues that the ultimate goal of such composition is to yield recognition. To respond to the Emperor's call for talent, the speaker argues that the heavenly horse is not simply a topic that would allow an examination candidate to show off his literary talent, it also provides the writer with a vocabulary to describe the virtuous men: just like a heavenly steed, the wise and virtuous men would not be easily tamed. They are both waiting for their worth to be recognized. And thus, the speaker ends this essay by turning back to himself:

	Alas!	嗟夫
97	A treasure cannot on its own become valuable,	寶不自貴
	It becomes valuable when someone recognizes its value.	以人而貴
99	A thing cannot become exceptional on its own,	物不自異
	It becomes so when someone recognizes it as exceptional.	以人而異

48 Liu Lei 劉累 was a descendent of the legendary king Yao 堯 who had studied the skills of dragon-taming.

49 *Analects* 14.33: "The famous horse Ji was valued not for its physical strength, but for its inner force" 驥不稱其力，稱其德也.

50 It is important to note that in the Ouyang Xuan's extant literary corpus, line 52 to 94 are completely omitted. This section is appended because it is preserved in some commercial examination guidebook. See Ouyang Xuan, *Ouyang Xuan quanji*, 2.

101	When the divine steed is still showing its beauty around the edge of the water,	方神駒絢綵於水涯
	It certainly expects to go nowhere, just like inferior horses.	固期駑劣之同滯
103	But once it is presented to the court like stone arrowheads,[51]	至其裂砮矢而庭實
	It is finally put alongside those in the imperial stable.[52]	竟乃自齒於天駟
105	Of course no beautiful objects will ever be cast off,	信物美而無所遺兮
	But it is also because those with exceptional talent can bring about their recognition.	亦奇才之能自致
107	For the fine steed dragging a cart of salt up the Taihang mountains,	負鹽車而上太行者
	One laments its fate for not meeting Bole.[53]	慨未遇夫伯樂
109	For the manger-bound horse that yet aspires to gallop a thousand *li*,	伏皁櫪而志千里者
	Why should it be ashamed of being an old steed?[54]	又何慙乎老驥
111	As it shakes its long mane with a neigh,	振長鬣而一嘶兮
	I hope you know my intention.	冀識余之所意
113	Waiting on winds to fleetly fare upwards,[55]	壒埃風而上征兮
	I wish to borrow the azure clouds to be my horse tack.	願借翠雲以為鞁
115	Follow the flying dragon to go high and then low,	隨飛龍而上下兮
	How could it avoid riding ahead on the road?	羌先路其焉避
117	It may not be riding the invisible and galloping without dependence,	彼豈乘虛而騰踏兮

51 The King Wu of Zhou had received these flint arrowheads as tribute from the distant Shushen 肅慎 people.

52 Tianxi 天駟 is another name of the Fang constellation. It is also the name of one of the four stables built by the Song Emperor in 979.

53 An allusion to a story told in *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 concerning an old steed given the task to tow a cart of salt up to the Taihang mountains. Bole 伯樂, the renowned connoisseur of horses, recognized that it was a horse that can cover a thousand *li*, was desolate and in tears. He thus went over to cover the steed with his clothes.

54 A reference to the poem "Buchu Xiamen xing" 步出夏門行 (Strolling out the Xia Gate) by Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220): "An old steed in the stable still aspires to gallop a thousand *li*, / A scholar in his autumn years may still cherish high aspirations" 老驥伏櫪，志在千里；烈士暮年，壯心不已.

55 A line from *Lisao* 離騷.

	But one can certainly expect it to chase the clouds and catch thunder.	追雲逐電之可冀也
119	If you hope to find those beyond Purple heavens and Yellow earth,[56]	庶幾求之玄黃之外兮
	This is truly the fine steed's bone that is worth buying.[57]	則亦駿骨之可市也[58]

Taking the examination in his thirties, Ouyang Xuan compares himself with an old steed filled with aspirations. By drawing an analogy between himself and the horse towing a salt cart up to the Taihang mountains, the examiner has thus become a potential connoisseur who can judge the worth of all horses. The essay did not end with Ouyang Xuan boasting of his talent. Instead he argues that even if he is not the wisest and most worthy man, the mere gesture of recruiting him to the administration would encourage those who possess true talent to come forward and serve the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. As in the anecdote in *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 (*Strategies of the Warring States*), the act of buying the bones of a fine steed is a gesture of exhibiting how much the lord cherishes a great horse. This symbolic act will finally pay, and similarly, the recruitment of an old and untalented Ouyang Xuan can yield the same results – it shows the eagerness of the examiner to promote talented scholars.

In Ouyang Xuan's piece, all references to spirited horses are, of course, employed as analogy to the virtuous men. Yet even if this text was simply composed for the civil examination, its reflection on the reason of writing about the horse is still noteworthy. It prompts the readers to look at these texts on a meta level: what meaning can one assign to the "heavenly horse"? Is the horse a symbol of human talent, or is it an epitome of state power?

---

56 The term *xuanhuang* literally means purple and yellow, or simply dark yellow. It was used in the *Song of Poems* to refer to the color of a tired horse after ascending a lofty ridge. But the term is also a reference to the color of Heaven and Earth. Here Ouyang Xuan is playing with the double meaning of the word.

57 An allusion to a story on *Zhanguo ce*: Lord of Yan learned that there is a fine steed in the market, and thus, he gave his servant a thousand in gold in order to acquire the horse. As the servant arrived at the market, he was told that the steed has already deceased and all they have is the bones of the horse. He spent five hundred in gold to buy the bones of the horse, and eventually the act attracts other horse owners to present their fine breed steeds to Lord of Yan. This is a standard parable on how a ruler can gain the service of talented men by showing his appreciation of talent.

58 Ouyang Xuan, *Ouyang Xuan quanji*, 2-3. This section (from line 96 to 120) is completely omitted in the commercial examination guides. One possible explanation is that the reference to the old horse is too specific in the context.

Since Ouyang Xuan has achieved first place in the provincial examination, this poetic exposition had been widely read by his contemporaries. It was anthologized in the commercial examination guidebook *Qingyun ti* 青雲梯 (*Ladder to Clouds in the Blue*) along with the examiner's comments. The guidebook also includes a poetic exposition by Chen Tai 陳泰 (1315 *jinshi*) who took the provincial examination in the same year and lost to Ouyang Xuan.[59] To console Chen Tai, his friend Liu Shen 劉詵 (1268-1350) also composed an ode on the topic of the heavenly horse.[60] Later in 1315, both Chen Tai and Ouyang Xuan passed the metropolitan examination and became the first *jinshi* degree holders after the examination system was reinstated. Both of them became widely recognized among scholars of the time.

Since 1314, the legacy of the heavenly horse has become intricately intertwined with Ouyang Xuan. In a draft biography dedicated to Ouyang, the chief examiner overseeing the Huguang provincial exam was reported to have dreamt of a steed standing before a flag with Ouyang's name on it.[61] From another anecdotal record, we are told that Ouyang Xuan himself was said to have dreamed of a heavenly horse in his youth and had composed a draft of the examination essay.[62] All these anecdotes attest to a fascination with the heavenly steeds that may appear before the papal envoy arrived at the Mongol-Yuan court. One could imagine that as Jie Xisi composed his poem on Zhou Lang's painting, he might have thought of Ouyang Xuan's poetic exposition – thus when he seeks to assign meaning onto the event, he decides to offer a remonstrance concerning the use of talent.

---

59 His essay can be found in *Qingyun ti* 青雲梯 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1935), 2a-3b.

60 Liu Xian, "Tianma ge zeng Yanling Chen Suoan" 天馬歌贈炎陵陳所安 (Song of the Heavenly Horse: To Chen Tai from Yanling), in *Guiyin xiansheng ji* 桂隱先生集 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1985), 102.

61 Wei Su 危素, "Da Yuan gu Hanlin xueshi chengzhi guanglu dafu zhizhigao jian xiu guoshi Guizhai xiansheng Ouyang gong xingzhuang" 大元故翰林學士承旨光祿大夫知制誥兼修國史圭齋先生歐陽公行狀 (A Draft Biography of Master Ouyang Xuan, the Hanlin Academician Recipient of Edicts, the Grand Master of Splendid Happiness, the Participant in the Drafting of Proclamations, and the Compiler of Dynastic History of the Great Yuan Dynasty), in *Ouyang Xuan quanji*, 802.

62 Kong Qi 孔齊, *Zhizheng zhiji* 至正直記 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), 28.

Looking at the poems and odes presented to the Mongol-Yuan Emperor about the gift horse from the papal envoy, one could not but notice that the texts fall into two different modes: they either advice the Emperor to recruit talent, or offer praise to the Emperor for bringing civilization to the world. These texts never touch upon any information concerning the Folang Kingdom apart from stating that the papal envoys are from the extreme west and had crossed seven seas before presenting the gift horse. The only exception would be Zhou Boqi's preface with which he declared that the "people from the Folang Kingdom has yellow beard and green eyes. They wore tight-fitting garments in two colors. Their language is not comprehensible" 其國人黃鬚碧眼，服二色窄衣，言語不可通, but then he never expounded on this in his poem.[63]

The writing of the Folang gift horses later became part of a literary exercise. One intriguing example was composed by Wang Wei 王禕 (1322-1374).[64] During his preparation for the civil examination, Wang Wei drafted a memorial on behalf of the Folang Kingdom concerning the tributary horse:

	Riding the dragon of vigor,	乾龍在御
2	He supervises the era of supreme governance.	通觀至治之期
	The heavenly horse arrives at the court	天馬來廷
4	To humbly offer tributes from distant lands.	謹效遐方之貢
	Presuming to trouble the many translators on the boats and in the carriages,	敢憚舟車之重譯

[63] Zhou Boqi, "Tianma xing yingzhi zuo" 天馬行應制作 (An Ode of the Heavenly Horse written at Imperial Command), in *Jinguang ji* 近光集, SKQS edition, vol. 1214, 520.

[64] Liu Hongying 劉宏英 (See his *Yuandai Shangjing jixing shi yanjiu* 元代上京紀行詩研究 [Poems on Journeys to Xanadu in the Yuan Dynasty], 111-112) mistook this text as a memorial written during the time when the papal envoy has arrived at Xanadu. From Wang Wei's biography, although he became quite well-known at a young age, it is difficult to imagine him drafting that document in 1342 since he was not given any official post at that time. As composing memorials for historical scenarios was a common literary exercise used to prepare one for officialdom in late imperial times, it is more likely that Wang's memorial was written for that reason.

6	Your subject respectfully lay bare his sincere thoughts.	恭伸臣妾之微誠
		[……]
	Look upon us: subjects in an impoverished state beyond the bounds of civilization	伏念臣化外窮邦
17	Situated in a remote area along the sea.	海濱僻壤
	As descendants of a barbaric race	種分夷裔
19	We lodge and hide away in the west of the western region.	遁居西域之西
	Our mind drawn to Chinese culture,	心慕華風
21	We crane our neck to the north of the pole star.	引領北辰之北
	Can it be that there is no path to ascend to heaven?	豈登天之無路
23	We can only look at the sun every day to observe Your brightness.	每就日以瞻輝
	Luckily we have this famous horse,	幸此名駒
25	To serve as the local product of our country.	可充方物
	Although it does not have the qualities to soar up to the clouds,	雖匪望雲之質
27	It is acclaimed for its aura surpassing all in the land.	亦稱絕地之姿
	Advancing over the deserts with isles and bushes,	歷洲草之流沙
29	It dashes through ten thousand *li*.	驅馳萬里
	The imperial carriage drawn by six flying steeds are now prepared	備六飛之法駕
31	To protect the Entourage in the nine layers of Celestial Palace.	警蹕九重[65]

To compose a memorial behalf of the Folang Kingdom, Wang Yi imagines the reasons why a tributary horse was offered to the Mongol-Yuan empire in the first place. Like all the literary works composed for the occasion, his memorial imagines a distant kingdom longing to submit to the Yuan dynasty due to the prominence of its culture. Corelating race and the level of civility, Wang argues that the Folang

[65] Wang Wei, *Wang Zhongwen gong wenji* 王忠文公文集 (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1988), 223.

Kingdom stays in the southern periphery because they are no match for the Chinese. Even though they are eager to participate in the Sinitic civilization, they have nothing to offer in exchange, except for the heavenly horse. The hierarchical order presented in the text is obvious: the envoy proclaims himself a loyal subject coming to the center of the civilization to offer tributary goods in order to participate into the world order created by the Mongol-Yuan dynasty.

This imagined memorial ends with a reiteration of Wang's ideal world order:

	With shields and feathers, one dances between the two staircases,	舞干羽于兩階
41	The virtuous influence of peace is spread.[66]	誕敷文德
	Ten thousand domains have come with jade and silk [67]	執玉帛者萬國
43	All become the subject of Your Majesty.	共為帝臣
	Various regions pay tribute with white wolves,[68]	異區并獻於白狼
45	The auspicious signs appear in accordance with the crimson phoenix.	休應嘗符於朱鳳
	Every country comes to offer praise,	周邦來賀
47	They all return to Your overspreading shield.	盡歸覆燾之中
	Since the roads leading to Mount Qi are levelled,[69]	岐道有夷

[66] In "Da Yugao" 大禹謨 (Counsel of the Great Yu), the people of Miao was said to have rebelled. In order to pacify them, "the Di set about diffusing on a grand scale the virtuous influences of peace - with shields and feathers they danced between the two staircases in his courtyard" 帝乃誕敷文德，舞干羽于兩階. The lord of Miao thus came and made his submission.

[67] A phrase taken from the *Zuo Traditions*: "When Yu gathered the princes together at Mount Tu, ten thousand domains came with jade and silk" 禹合諸侯於塗山，執玉帛者萬國 (Lord Ai 7.4a)

[68] According to *Guoyu* 國語, white wolves were one of the tributary gifts sent to the Zhou dynasty. The Bailang 白狼 (White Wolves) is also a Tibeto-Burman tribe that lived near modern Sichuan. In the reign of Emperor Ming of Han, three Bailang songs were presented to the Emperor to acknowledge their submission. Here, I decide not to translate it as a proper name, but to see it as a tributary gift.

[69] An allusion to the *Book of Odes*, "Till that rugged mount Qi, Had level roads leading to it. May their descendants ever preserve it" 彼徂矣岐，有夷之行，子孫保之.

49	Who would be coming after those from the domains of restraint and wilderness?[70]	孰在要荒之後
	Your subject is ashamed of his meager tributes,	臣禮慚輸貢
51	Fearing that his sincere intention may be misunderstood.[71]	意切戴盆
	This is a grand unification of the world:	大一統於輿圖
53	You will for forever promote effortless moral transformation.	永囿無為之化
	Harmonize the six tunes in the imperial music bureau,	協六律於樂府
55	I stand and listen to the songs of the August One.[72]	佇聞太乙之歌[73]

There are two points worth noting in this passage. First, not only does this memorial include allusions to pre-Qin classics, it shares the standard rhetoric used by officials responsible for diplomatic exchanges. To offer a point of comparison, we can turn to the following text extracted from a memorial composed by an envoy from the Kingdom of Champa 占城 during the Song. There are obvious similarities between the two texts:

With shields and feathers, they danced between the two staircases,	**舞干羽于兩階**
Spreading the virtuous influence of peace.	**誕敷文德**
Ten thousand domains came with jade and silk	**執玉帛者萬國**

[70] According to "Yugong" 禹貢 (Tribute of Yu), a schematized government system of five domains (*wufu* 五服) was devised to determine how rulership emanated from the capital to the rest of the world. The tribes of Yi 夷 and Cai 蔡 are said to inhabit the *yaofu* (domain of restraint), and those known as the Man 蠻 and those undergone greater banishment inhabit the *huangfu* zone (domain of wilderness). These two are the farthest to the center of the Zhou regime.

[71] Literally it means "wearing a basin on one's head." This is an expression taken from Sima Qian's "Letter to Ren An" 報任安書 (Bao Ren An shu) in which he declares "How can someone with a basin on his head ever look up to Heaven" 僕以為戴盆何以問天? The metaphor seems to infer that Sima Qian felt he could not serve the emperor if his true intentions were misunderstood. The same proverb is used later in the Eastern Han to refer to disreputable careerists who are blinded to the potential pitfalls of pursuing political power at any cost. For a discussion of the term, see Stephen Durrant et al., *The Letter to Ren An and Sima Qian's Legacy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016), 91. Here, the term "wearing a basin" refers to one's true intention being hidden.

[72] Taiyi, or the August One, was a celestial god also known as the "supreme emperor of heaven."

[73] Wang Yi, *Wang Zhongwen gong wenji*, 223.

Eventually they arrive at the imperial court.	咸造王庭
You did not only pacify Ailao and liberate Yongchang,	豈止綏哀牢而開永昌
You are also about to open up the Western region and soothe Jiaozhi.[74]	方將發西域而撫交趾
Your bright appearance will certainly shine	容光必照
Without forgetting the remote and desolate places.	不忘僻陋之區
Since the roads leading to Mount Qi are levelled,	**岐道有夷**
The duty of tribute lies with those from the domains of restraint and wilderness.	職在**要荒**之服[75]

All the specific locations marked in the Song memorial was deleted in Wang Yi's draft, but apart from changing those place names that are clearly referring to the south, Wang's memorial largely follows the template set in the earlier diplomatic literature. In other words, if one were to perceive Chinese foreign policy as rigid and monolithic, one of the reasons that may contribute to such an impression may be the literary training that encouraged scholar officials to compose memorials and record diplomatic affairs in a formulaic manner. In other words, discursive inertia explains why the Mongol-Yuan literati articulate a worldview upholding the Yuan dynasty as the center bringing to submission tributary states from the peripheries.

This brings us to the second point: Wang Yi may not know much about the Folang Kingdom, but what about the Mongol-Yuan government? How much did it know about the papal envoy? The discrepancy between sources in different languages is illuminating. From the records of the Franciscan friars, we learn that there were constant epistolary exchanges between the Mongol-Yuan Emperor and the Pope. Not only was the Mongol ruler well aware of the activities of the Catholic Church, they

---

74 Ailao (3 BCE-76 CE) is the name of an ancient kingdom located near modern Yunnan and the north of Myanmar. Yongchang is the provincial name used in the Han dynasty to designate the western part of modern Yunnan. Geographically Jiaozhi refers to modern Vietnam.

75 Lê Tắc 黎崱 (active early 14th century), *Annan zhilue* 安南志略 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000), 156-157.

deliberately allow their Archbishop to preach in the lands under Mongol-Yuan rule. As de Rachewiltz has observed, the Mongols were heavily dependent on the Alans[76] since they formed the backbone of the Mongol army. Thus, the reception of the papal envoys does not necessary signify that the Mongols are interested in developing diplomatic relations with Europe, the main reason driving such diplomatic exchanges is probably the Mongol-Yuan Emperor's desire to secure the support of the Alans who were fervent followers of the Catholic Church.[77]

The practical calculations behind Marignolli's mission are largely ignored in all Chinese records. The literati never seem to notice any relations between the Folang Kingdom and the Catholic Church (known as *Jingjiao* 景教 or *Yelikewen* 也里可溫). Apart from the complex political negotiations omitted in the Chinese texts, the Mongol-Yuan dynasty had also set up institutions to receive foreign envoys and gather information concerning all foreign states.[78] The Mongol-Yuan dynasty might not have set out to form an alliance with the Franciscans, but it seems that they were interested in acquiring more data about foreign lands. This leads us to an essay written by Zhu Derun 朱德潤 (1294-1365), who represents a rare exception since he has recorded some exquisite details about the Folang Kingdom:

> During the winter of the *dinghai* year in the Zhizheng reign (1347), I stayed in one Baojian Studio of the Qianyuan Abbey in Jingkou. By coincidence, Yue Hunan, the Commandery Supervisor of Biling, and San Litai, the Associate Minister of Pingyang, were just visiting this place together. They claimed that while they were serving as the Palace Guard and Court Attendant during the

---

76 The Alans, also called Alani, an ancient nomadic pastoral people who occupied the steppe region northeast of the Black Sea. Most Alans submitted to the Mongol Empire in 1240s to 70s. It was said that many Alans contributed to a Mongol clan, Asud, and some of them were appointed to be the royal guard of the Mongol-Yuan court in the capital Dadu. The archbishop of Khanbaliq, John of Montecorvino, converted many Alans to Roman Catholic Christianity.

77 de Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khans*, 189.

78 According to *Mishujian zhi* 秘書監志 (*Records of the Secretariat*), all foreign envoys were required to stay in the Huitong guan 會同館 (Interpreters' Institute) in the capital where they would be thoroughly interrogated. See Wang Shidian 王士點, *Mishujian zhi* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1992), 92.

Yanyou reign (1314-1320), an envoy from the Kingdom of Folang had arrived at the court. He described the Kingdom in detail: it is located at the place where the sun sets. It has quite a vast amount of land, and a total of seventy-two chieftains. Within its territory, there is a sea of mercury that is around forty to fifty *li* in diameter. As for the way people in the Kingdom draws the mercury, they will first dig up several dozens of holes and wells about ten *li* from the sea. Then they will find some strong men and some fine steeds capable of driving away flying eagles, and attach some golden foil onto them. They will march along the sea. When the sun shines on them, there is a dazzling brightness. The mercury boils over and will rise like tide. It strikes as if it will wrap up everything. The men will swiftly turn their horses and dash back. The mercury will pursue closely behind them. If there is a slight hesitation, the men and their horses will be engulfed by mercury. As the men and their horses swiftly turn back, the power of mercury would gradually grow weaker as it stretches wider, and it will again gush back. When the mercury meets with the holes and wells, it will accumulate inside them. Afterwards, the people from the Kingdom will take it and boil the mercury with fragrant herbs. They are known as "flowery silver." Their territory can also weave hair into cloth, known as *suofu*. They use *mixidan* leaves to dye the cloth dark green, and its color would not fade away even if the cloth is washed. Carpets and brocades are their common produce.

In the *renwu* year of the Zhizheng reign (1342), the Kingdom offers a black horse, which is more than nine feet in height and its mane and tail are seven feet long extended to the floor. This is what this land produced. The envoy spent four years on the way to Kashmir, and an extra four years to arrive at the Central Plains. They crossed the sea seven times before they arrived at the capital. Commandery Supervisor Yue and Associate Minister Li departed, and I wrote this down to record their words.

– The nineteenth day of the eleventh month of this year.

至正丁亥冬，寓京口乾元官之寶儉齋，適毗陵監郡岳忽難、平陽同知散笠台偕來訪，自言在延祐間忝宿衛近侍時，有佛㬎國使來朝，備言其域當日沒之處，土地甚廣，有七十二酋長。地有水銀海，周圍可四五十里。國人取之之法，先於近海十里，掘坑井數十，然後使健夫駿馬馳驟可逐飛鷹者，人馬皆貼以金薄，迤遑行近海，日照金光晃曜，則水銀滾沸，如潮而來。勢若粘裹，其人即迴馬疾馳，水銀隨後趕至。行稍遲緩，則人馬俱為水銀撲沒。人馬既迴速，於是水銀之勢漸遠，力漸微，却復奔回。遇坑井，則水銀溜積其中。然後其國人旋取之，用香草同煎，皆花銀也。其地又能撚毛為布，謂之梭福。用密昔丹葉染成沉綠，浣之不淡，其餘氍毹錦疊，皆常產也。至正壬午間，獻黑馬，高九尺餘，鬐尾垂地七尺，即其地所產。來使四年至乞失密，又四年至中州，過七度海，方抵京師焉。岳監郡、竺同知既別去，僕書而記其說。是歲十一月十九日也。[79]

The historian Chen Dezhi 陳得芝 has identified the envoys who visited during the Yanyou reign as a group of legates led by André de Pérouse (fl. 1307-1326), whose arrival in the Yuan court has never been documented in any other Chinese sources.[80] While Chen's argument focuses on reconciling the discrepancies between this account and the letters composed by the envoys, it is also important to note that how the information is relayed among scholars in Zhu's account and why such anecdotes are recorded. The anecdote begins with Zhu Derun meeting two officials. He found himself lured by the charm of the exotic world described by the two imperial guards who had witnessed the arrival of the papal envoys first hand. As attested by the title of this text, "Yiyu shuo" 異域說 (A Record of the

[79] Zhu Derun, *Cunfu zhai wenji* 存復齋文集 (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1973), 156-158.

[80] Chen Dezhi 陳得芝, "Yuan Renzong shi jiaohuang shizhe lai Hua de yitiao Hanwen shiliao" 元仁宗時教皇使者來華的一條漢文史料, in *Meng Yuan shi yanjiu conggao* 蒙元史研究叢稿 (Beijing: Renwen chubanshe, 2005), 524-528.

Alien Realm), the allure of the text lies in the strangeness of the customs of the people in the Folang Kingdom, namely how they fetched mercury from the sea. From the later reception of the text, we can see that scholars are intrigued by this detail so much so that it entered into multiple anecdotal collections and is eventually incorporated in the renowned medical compendium *Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目 (*Essentials of Chinese Materia Medica*).[81] A sea of mercury responsive to the glimmer of gold on horses and men is certainly intriguing, especially when we consider mercury is obtained in the Yuan dynasty through evaporation instead. Together with the cloth soaked with permanent dye, the Kingdom of Folang was seen as a foreign world filled with alien practices and products. On the one hand, the record does not present a necessary hierarchy between the Mongol-Yuan dynasty and the Folang Kingdom – instead of portraying its customs as crude and uncivilized, the strangeness of the foreign land lies in its remarkable difference with the standard practice in the Yuan dynasty.

On the other hand, it is also necessary to consider the source of information here. Zhu Derun seeks to establish the authority of the text by introducing the two imperial officials. This implies, at least from the perspectives of some Yuan literati, the officials in the palace had a better understanding of the foreign world than others. Therefore, the acquisition of such secret knowledge about Folang does not only satisfy one's curiosity about the foreign world, it also becomes a proof of erudition when this type of information was not widely available. In other words, Zhu Derun's account was a testimony to the lack of equal access to information about foreign countries. In the case of the Kingdom of Folang, no Han Chinese literati were ever sent there as envoy, the literati were confined to composing odes, essays or memorials that follow time-honored tropes in a long literary tradition. In this sense, when we study the world view of the literati of the time, it is almost impossible for us

[81] The details about how people from the Folang Kingdom draw mercury can be found in *Ganlu yuan duanshu* 甘露園短書 (*A Short Book of the Garden of Sweet Dew*) by Chen Ruqi 陳汝錡 (fl. 1597-1610). Li Shizhen 李時珍 (1518-1593) cites the information from *Liangshan motan* 兩山墨談 (*Brush Talk on the Two Mountains*) by Chen Ting 陳霆 (jinshi 1502). See Li Shizhen, *Bencao gangmu* (Beijing: Renmin weisheng chubanshe, 1975), 1.524.

to detect a novel understanding of the world – even though the Mongol-Yuan dynasty may have interacted with a more diverse global counterparts, these interactions were rarely reflected in the Chinese historiography of the time.

Painting the Tribute Bearers: The Project of an Empire

Apart from the painting by Zhou Lang discussed in the above section, there is also another pictorial depiction often considered a response to the papal envoy's mission.[82] The painting in question is Ren Xianzuo's 任賢佐 (ca. 1287-1358) "Three Steeds" (Sanjun tu 三駿圖).[83] Housed in the Beijing Palace Museum, the painting depicts a group of six envoys offering foreign horses to the Mongol-Yuan dynasty (see figure 2). Unlike Zhou Lang's work, the focus of this painting is the exotic clothing and outlook of the envoys. Some scholars associate this painting with Marignolli's journey because the work was supposedly submitted to the court in 1342, the year when Marignolli was received by the Mongol-Yuan emperor, and because a poem Wang Feng 王逢 (1319-1388) sent Ren Xianzuo includes the following couplet:

He never forgets that he was once the assistant of the Grand Councilor,	不忘舊為丞相掾
Personally painting the heavenly steed, he presented his work to the palace.	手圖天馬獻金鑾[84]

[82] Both Wang Yuejin and Lin Meicun 林梅村 consider this painting a depiction of the papal envoys. See Wang Yuejin, "Wei shenme meiyou huihua Make Boluo de huihua," 286; Lin Meicun, *Dachao chunjiu* 大朝春秋 (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 2013), 271-295.

[83] The painting is inscribed with a marginalia: "My uncle, the Daoist of Nine Peaks, composed this painting and presented it to the Emperor in the autumn of the *renwu* year of the Zhizheng reign (1342)" 至正壬午季秋，叔九峰道人作此圖拜進. The Daoist of Nine Peaks (*jiufeng daoren* 九峰道人) was a name Ren Xianzuo used, see Yu Hui 余暉, "Jiufeng daoren 'Sanma tu' kaole" 九峰道人〈三駿圖〉卷考略及其他, in *Wenwu* 文物 1993.1: 93-96.

[84] Wang Feng 王逢, *Wuxi ji* 梧溪集 (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1988), 462.

Figure 2. "Three Steeds" attributed to Ren Xianzuo (Housed in Beijing Palace Museum)

Ren Xianzuo might have produced a painting related to the tribute of the heavenly steed, but since neither the colophon nor Wang's poem explicitly mentioned the Kingdom of Folang, it is impossible to prove the association between this painting and Marignolli's journey. Judging from the painting itself, it portrays a group of six attendant guards and dignitaries carrying a banner and tributary horses. The clothing and dark complexion suggest their foreignness: the first two envoys who hold respectively a longsword and a banner (inscribed with the words *yuangong* 遠貢 [tributes from afar]) are wearing armlets and walking bare feet, they are followed by two men wearing a red tunic and armed with a scimitar each bringing a horse. By assigning a different posture to each of these four men, the painting seeks to portray both a front and rear view of them. The last two envoys wear different garment, while one is wearing a white fur cap and a green robe, the other is wearing an embroidered orange tunic.

Multiple versions of this painting can be found in museums around the globe. In the National Palace Museum of Taiwan, one can find a similar artwork (see figure 3) with the signature of Ren Renfa 任仁發 (1254-1327), the father of Ren Xianzuo, dated 1308.[85] If we believe in the authenticity of the signature, then the dating of this painting would precede the arrival of both Marignolli and André de Pérouse.[86] In the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., another version of this painting survives with the title "Huren chengma tu" 胡人呈馬圖 (Central Asians Presenting Tribute Horses).[87] This work is traditionally attributed to Han Gan (ca. 715-after 781), and the painting has also included a colophon by Ouyang Xuan, but its authenticity is questionable. The attire, head gears and facial features of the envoys diverge drastically from the other two paintings which leads some scholars to suspect that the painting is a Ming dynasty forgery.

Figure 3. "Tributary Horses" attributed to Ren Renfa (Housed in National Palace Museum in Taiwan)

85 Ren Renfa, *Yuan Ren Renfa gongma tujuan* 元任仁發貢馬圖卷, National Palace Museum, https://painting.npm.gov.tw/Painting_Page.aspx?dep=P&PaintingId=1191#. Accessed 15 February 2020.

86 Wang Yuejin and Lin Meicun have not included this version of the painting in their analyses. If we believe in the colophon and locate its date of production in 1308, then it would be much less likely to associate this painting with the arrival of the papal envoys.

87 Traditionally attributed to Han Gan, *Central Asians Presenting Tribute Horses*, the Smithsonian Institution, https://www.si.edu/object/fsg_F1919.11. Accessed 15 February 2020.

Last but not least, in the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, one can also find a similar painting with the title "Zhigong tu" 職貢圖 (Tribute bearers).[88] With a colophon inscribed by the renowned painter Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470-1559), this version of the painting shows a procession of nine tribute-bearing emissaries instead (figure 4 is an excerpt of the right half of the painting):

Figure 4. An Excerpt from "Tribute Bearers" (Housed in the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco)

Looking at the painting from the left to the right, we would notice that the latter half of the scroll looks exactly the same as the artwork stored in Beijing and in Taipei. The only difference here lies in the short attendant who is balancing a platter with a statue of a lion surrounded by gems on his head, and the two foreigners who hold in their hand an incense burner and some scriptures.

If we consider the details of the multiple versions of this painting, none of them seem to reflect the appearance of the papal envoys as described in Zhou Boqi's account, where they are said to have a yellow beard and green eyes. The contrast is especially clear since some of the envoys depicted in these painting clearly demonstrate Sogdian features. The embroidered saddles fastened to the horses also seem to suggest that the envoys are from Persia. Unless we accept that the painter is deliberately using these images to showcase how the European envoys have passed through Central Asia,[89] it seems highly unlikely that the painting is linked to the papal envoys' visit to the Mongol-Yuan court.

---

88 Ren Bowen, *Tribute Bearers*. Asian Art Museum Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture. http://onlinecollection.asianart.org/view/objects/asitem/subject@court/1?t:state:flow=8162921b-4877-49ac-9327-f31523b907fb. Accessed 15 February 2020.

89 A hypothesis proposed by Wang Yuejin, see his "Wei shenme meiyou huihua Make Boluo de huihua," 286.

Scholars have devoted painstaking effort to determine the historical context surrounding the production of this artwork. Since one of the many versions of the painting was attributed to Ren Renfa, it is quite tempting to read this artwork together with Wang Feng's poem "A Song on the Vice Director of the Imperial Library Ren Renfa's 'Illustration of the Tribute Bearers'" 任月山少監職貢圖引:

	A fine breeze blows from the east, bringing welcome rain,	好風東來快雨俱
2	I examine the "Illustration of the Tribute Bearers" at the sedge pavilion.	夫須亭觀職貢圖
	Their superintendent is a Hu with a high-bridged nose and sunken eyes,	厥酋高鼻深目胡
4	Pheasant feather stuck on his cap, he wore an embroidered tunic.	冠插翟尾服綉襦
	With leather belt and shoes, he wears a fur trimmed coat,	革帶鞮鞻貂襜褕
6	The maid on the left holds the ale cup, and the right holds the pot.	左女執盞右執壺
	He moves his hands reverently like an inferior minister.[90]	手容恭如下大夫
8	The superintendent's wife dresses her hair in a tuft;[91]	酋妻髻椎將湛盧
	their generals carry the sword Zhanlu.[92]	
	The five colors on the ornaments of their girdles are entwined together,	五采雜佩相縈紆
10	They turn and look back at the faces of the flying tigers and dragon.	轉顧飛虎飛龍顏
	The one with elongated ears stays at the back,	鎪耳者殿帕首驅
	while the one with a turban dashes in front.	
12	Wearing a jade ornament and walking with bare feet are two dwarfs.	瓔珞袒跣兩侏儒

[90] This is a reference to "Yuzao" 玉藻 from *the Book of Rites*: "The carriage of a man of rank was easy, but somewhat slow; grave and reserved, when he saw any one whom he wished to honor. He did not move his feet lightly, nor his hands irreverently" 君子之容舒遲，見所尊者齊遬。足容重，手容恭. It was also stated in the "Yuzao" that an envoy should refer to themselves as "an inferior minister" (*xia dafu* 下大夫) when he is at another court.

[91] "Dressed her hair in a tuft" 髻椎 is often referred to as a barbaric practice in early texts. For instance, in *Lunheng* 論衡, the king of the southern Yue was said to have taken the habits of the southern barbarians, disregarded the imperial commands and dressed his hair in a tuft.

[92] Zhanlu is the name of a famous sword.

	One carries a plant made with the coral and munan gems,[93]	一擎木難珊瑚株
14	One bears the Suanni-shaped incense burner carved in jade.[94]	一戴玉琢狻猊鑪
	Similar to a baby mammal, the hackles of the legendary molossian hound rise,	神獒髦鬋狀乳軀
16	Who shall haul it and pamper its fur and whiskers?	復誰牽之鬈髮鬚
	The last person wears a tall ceremonial hat adorned with precious pearls,	最後峩弁飾寶珠
18	As if entering into court, he scurries in humility.	若將入朝謹進趨
	A bareheaded slave is also swaying along his way,	禿奚踉蹡亦在途
20	With embroidered drapery and reins, he leads the blood-sweating horse.[95]	錦膊驄帶汗血駒[96]

Judging from the text, the only similarity between visual imagery in the poem and the extant paintings would be the short attendant who carries a jade lion-shaped incense burner. Apart from that figure, the artwork Wang Feng described centers around a foreign ruler whose cap is decorated with a pheasant feather. Surrounded by his wife and other female servants, the chieftain seems to be located at the center of the attention. These descriptions apparently do not match with the painting attributed to Ren Renfa or his son Ren Xianzuo.[97]

Wang's poem may yet be describing another painting of Ren Renfa, but the comparison is still intriguing as we can observe that certain tropes recur in the artworks on tribute bearers: for instance, short attendants bringing precious coral branches or incense burners crafter in the shape of lions, grooms who bring tributary steeds or hounds to the court, and bareheaded slaves who scurry along

---

93 Egyptian emeralds were renamed "merukuta" in India, and was thus transcribed as munan 木難 in Chinese.

94 Suanni is a legendary creature believed to be the offspring of dragons. Its appearance is similar to lions, and it is often used to decorate the tripods of incense burners due to its fondness for fire and smoke.

95 The "embroidered shoulder piebald" refers to the horse lacks any markings except for a variegated patch on its foreleg.

96 Wang Feng, *Wuxi ji*, 420-421.

97 Without noticing the version of painting housed in the National Palace Museum of Taiwan, Lin Meicun cites this poem and argues that the painting drawn by Ren Xianzuo is a copy of his father's work. While his argument may be helpful for us to understand the relationship between the two copies of the work stored in Beijing and Taipei, there is little reason to believe that Wang's poem is describing any of the extant paintings.

the way. Just as we observe from the discrepancies between the extant paintings, a lot of these tropes can be freely added to or deleted from the portrayal of a procession of envoys. It seems that a painter does not have to produce an illustration of tribute bearers based on an actual diplomatic occasion, and it would be dangerous for later scholars to associate a painting with a specific historical event.

Not only does Wang's poem include a textual reproduction of the visual image, he proceeds to turn back to the painter:

	Noble men and commoners are different,	尊貴卑賤各爾殊
22	Some plan the execution of their craft to cover every minute detail.	經營意匠窮錙銖
	The Tang dynasty praised the two Yans, applauded Wu Daoyuan,[98]	唐稱二閻道元吳
24	Now the capital adores the Vice Director of the Palace Library.	今也少監稱京都
	The Vice Director got talent beyond being a painter-historian,	少監材抱豈畫史
26	He once organized the tracks of Yu in person for the Emperor.	禹跡曾為帝親理
	River gods and goddesses are ready to take orders,	河伯川后備任使
28	The water goblins Wuzhiqi are willing to serve as slaves.[99]	無支祈氏甘胥靡
	Dade and Yanyou reigns are comparable to the Zhenguan era,[100]	大德延祐貞觀比
30	Touring on the land, sailing over the seas, gift baskets are filled.	輦陸航海填筐篚
	Those from afar who speak like birds and sport tribal looks can be drawn near;	鳥言夷面遠能邇
32	The Vice Director imitates ancient style not without precedents.	少監臨古不無以

[98] The two Yans refer to Yan Lide 閻立德 (596-656) and Yan Liben 閻立本 (c. 600-673). Together with Wu Daoyuan 吳道元 (685-758), they were all famous painters in the Tang dynasty.

[99] Wuzhiqi is a three-legged mythical creature who looks like a monkey with eyes of gold and snow-white teeth. They were said to have controlled the waters of the Huai 淮 and Guo 渦 rivers.

[100] Dade (1297-1307) is the reign name of Temür Khan and Yanyou (1314-1320) is the reign name of Buyantu Khan. Zhenguan (626-649) refers to the reign of the Emperor Taizong of the Tang dynasty, which is considered a golden age in Chinese history.

	Master Zhao and Shang, together with Gao and Li,[101]	趙公商公暨高李
34	They soared high in the Milky Way – I sigh that they are all gone!	頡鳩霄漢嗟已矣
	First streaks of light break through the auspicious clouds,	霝雲曙開儼斧扆
	just like the opening of the axe-embroidered screen.	
36	When offerings of bundled *mao* grass did not arrive,	包茅不入顙誰泚
	who will sweat in shame?	
	The Zhou dynasty has compiled the great book	周編大書王會禮
	to document the rites of the kings' assembly.[102]	
38	How can we get every imperial subject to follow the divine order?	安得臣臣奉天紀
	I, an ignorant Confucian, make this song to praise this proper beginning.	陋儒作歌歌正始[103]

Comparing Ren Renfa with the renowned Tang dynasty painters, Wang Feng praises Ren for not only excelling in aesthetics, but also achieving success in flood control.[104] Ren Renfa's accomplishments are proofs of the Mongol empire entering into a golden age comparable to the idyllic times in the Tang. Upholding Ren Renfa as an exemplary figure, Wang Feng placed him in a lineage of famous painters active in the Yuan dynasty. The painting is thus not only viewed as a testimony of Ren Renfa's mastery of painting, it also symbolizes how Ren carries on a tradition passed down by his predecessors. The painting also functions as a document to urge all subjects around the world to submit properly to the Mongol-Yuan emperor. *Zhigong tu* 職貢圖 (illustration of tribute bearers), also known as *wanghui tu* 王會圖 (illustration of the King's assembly), is seen here as a guidance for all to follow the rites set out

[101] Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254-1322), Shang Qi 商琦 (d. 1324), Gao Kegong 高克恭 (1248-1310), and Li Kan 李衎 (c. 1245-1320) respectively.

[102] A reference to the chapter "Wanghui jie" 王會解 (Commentary on the Kings' Assembly) in *Yi Zhou shu* 逸周書.

[103] Wang Feng, *Wuxi ji*, 421.

[104] Ren Renfa was appointed the Directorate of Waterways and was responsible for the water resource management in Dadu (modern Beijing) and the western part of Zhejiang. He has also published a text on hydrology.

in the Zhou dynasty. Just like this poem offered by Wang Feng himself, the painting serves in an imperial project to bring everyone back to a hierarchical order inherited from the Zhou.

Although this poem is neither directly linked to the Kingdom of Folang nor the four paintings illustrated above, Wang Feng's poem demonstrates how the portrayal of the cultural others has to be justified with a concern about the world order surrounding the empire. The purpose of producing such portrayals is thus not descriptive but prescriptive. Curiosity towards ethnic others does not justify their representation in these illustrations, and thus, Wang looks back at the traditions and argues that the painting has a more practical significance. Even though the poem is seemingly drawn to the spectacle of the envoys, Wang dedicates the latter half of his work to advocating a continuity both within the Yuan itself as well as across different dynasties. The temporal dimension is introduced into the poem to highlight the utility of these artworks – they form part of a project that would maintain the world order set up since the Zhou dynasty. The otherness of the Central Asians depicted in the painting is now contained in Wang's poem since he declared that the aim of both Ren's painting and of his own poem is not to satisfy a curiosity towards ethnic others, but to strengthen the order of what he perceived as the dominant culture. The rites of the Zhou King's assembly becomes a shorthand for Wang Feng to declare that the painting does not deviate from any traditional norms and values. As in the case of the heavenly horse, from a discursive level, a potential interest in the world beyond China proper illustrated in the tribute bearer paintings is ultimately replaced by a praise of the power of the Mongol-Yuan empire.

The Stories of Three Diplomatic Missions: Interactions with Annam

Although there were some epistolary correspondences between the Mongol khans and the Popes, the "Folang kingdom" was after all a distant neighbor that exerted limited influence on the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. In comparison, the Mongol empire had a much deeper engagement with Annam. After the

Mongols pacified Yunnan 雲南 in 1257, its army began to march east. They demanded that the ruler of Đại Việt (or Annam, now known as Vietnam) Trần Thái Tông 陳太宗 (1218-1277) to open up a route for the Mongol army so that they can launch a coordinated attack on the southern Song from all directions. Two envoys were sent to the Trần dynasty, but they were all detained. Enraged by their response, the Mongol army invaded Annam. The Mongol's first invasion of Annam ended with them capturing Thăng Long (modern Hanoi), the capital of the Trần dynasty. According to the *History of the Yuan Dynasty* 元史, nine days after the fall of the capital, the general Uriyangkhadai 兀良哈台 (ca. 1201-1272) returned due to the humidity and heat.[105] This account contradicts Annam historiography, where the ruler of the Trần dynasty was said to have organized a counterattack against the Mongol troops with the help of local tribesmen, and Uriyangkhadai was driven to retreat due to rebellions within Yunnan.[106]

In 1278, Trần Thái Tông ceded his throne to his son Trần Nhân Tông 陳仁宗 (1258-1308). Envoys were sent from the Mongol khan to persuade the newly enthroned ruler to submit tributary goods and acknowledge the sovereignty of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. Since then, emissaries were deployed by both states to deliver gifts to one another and to make formal requests. There were clearly still a lot of tensions between the two states as it was reported that the Mongol-Yuan dynasty found the Trần dynasty's tributes useless and insisted that Trần Nhân Tông should visited the Yuan court in person. This strain culminated in 1284 when the Mongol prince Toghan 脫歡 (d. 1301) was appointed to pacify Champa. As with the first engagement with Đại Việt, Toghan demanded the Trần dynasty to clear a passage for them to launch an attack. An official in the Trần dynasty was said to

---

105 Song Lian et al., *Yuan shi*, *j.* 209, 4634. In *Annan zhilue* (85), Lê Tắc simply states that the Mongol army returned because Emperor of the Trần dynasty had already submitted.

106 Ngô Sĩ Liên 吳士連, ***Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*** 大越史記全書 (Tokyo: Centre for East Asian Research at Tokyo University, 1984), 339.

have accepted the request, yet when the Mongol troops marched in, they were met with resistance. Enraged by the Trần dynasty's behavior, Toghan decided to invade the Trần dynasty again. Initially, the Mongol army gained the upper hand and even some members of the royal family from the Trần dynasty defected to the Yuan, but the Mongols were greatly weakened by the weather and the lack of supplies while they further advanced into Annam. Seizing this opportunity, the Trần began to push their enemy back with a series of counterattack. As a result, the Mongol's navy suffered a great defeat and Toghan was forced to withdraw from Annam.

In retaliation, Khubilai Khan installed a defector to the Yuan, Trần Ích Tắc 陳益稷 (1254-1329) as the prince of Đại Việt. With the pretext of restoring Trần Ích Tắc in Annam, the Mongols invaded the Trần dynasty for the third time in 1287. The military campaign ended as the Mongol fleet bringing food provisions to Toghan's army was ambushed and was completely destroyed. Due to a lack of food, the Mongols were again forced to retreat. Although the Mongol army did not succeed in defeating the Trần dynasty, they managed to withdraw their troops without suffering a huge number of casualties.[107]

The Diplomatic Mission after the Third Mongol Invasion

With this backdrop in mind, we shall now turn to the story of our first envoy Xu Mingshan 徐明善, who was appointed to assist Li Siyan 李思衍 (d. 1290) in his mission to Annam. This journey is particularly significant since this was the first time delegates were sent from the Mongol-Yuan court to the Trần dynasty after their military engagement in 1278. Although the *History of Yuan* only lists the time and the names of the envoys responsible for this diplomatic mission, many poems describing the

[107] For a detailed discussion of the Mongol attacks, see James A. Anderson, "*Man* and Mongols: the Dali and Đại Việt Kingdoms in the Face of the Northern Invasions," in James A. Anderson and John K. Whitmore eds., *China's Encounters on the South and Southwest: Reforging the Fiery Frontier over Two Millennia*, 106-134.

journey and a travelogue composed by Xu Mingshan, *Annan xingji* 安南行紀 (*Account of a Trip to Annam*), survived.

As noted by James Hargett, *Account of a Trip to Annam* was written in a diary format which follows the tradition of previous embassy accounts composed during the Song dynasty, like *Rushu ji* 入蜀記 (*Accounting of Entering Shu*) and *Wu chuanlu* 吳船錄 (*Register of a Boat Trip to Wu*).[108] Yet unlike its predecessors which often start directly with the envoy setting off from his homeland, *Account of a Trip to Annam* begins by incorporating two official documents sent between the Trần dynasty and the Mongol-Yuan court. The first document was a memorial sent by the ruler of the Trần dynasty to Khubilai Khan in 1288 in which the Kingdom of Annam insisted that they have fulfilled their responsibilities as a tributary state and attempted to assign blame to General 'Umar 烏馬兒 (d. 1289), the grandson of the Provincial Governor of Yunnan who was captured by Annam after the Mongols' third invasion. In this memorial, the Trần ruler argued that General 'Umar was extremely eager to achieve a military victory and thus he insisted on launching an attack on Annam:

> In the winter of the twenty-fourth year of the Zhiyuan reign (1287), we witness again the advancement of your great army over land and on water. The troops burned down the temples in our Kingdom, dug up the graves of our ancestors, killed and abducted old and young civilians, and destroyed the properties of our people. Every single manner of evil had all been attempted. At that moment, fearing death, I had already fled. The Assistant Grand Councilor 'Umar announced to my people a message subsequently conveyed to me, "If you go up to the sky, I'll go up to the sky. If you go underground, I'll go underground. If you flee in the mountains, I'll

[108] James Hargett, *Jade Mountains and Cinnabar Pools: The History of Travel Literature in Imperial China* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2018), 120.

pursue you in the mountains. If you flee to the sea, I'll pursue you to the sea." He humiliated and criticized me in various ways beyond what words can convey. I heard what he said and learned that I cannot be spared from his attack. So I fled to a more distant place.

至元二十四年冬，又見大軍水陸並進，焚燒國內寺宇，開掘祖先墳墓，擄殺民家老小，摧破百姓產業，諸殘負行，無所不為。時臣怕死，先已逃去。烏馬兒參政說與國人，傳報臣云：「你走上天，我上天去。你走入地，我入地去。你逃山裏，我山裏去。你逃水裏，我水裏去。」百端毀辱，不可容言。臣聞斯語，知其不免，愈行遠遁。[109]

The document portrays 'Umar as the culprit responsible for the war between the two states, and thus absolves both parties from ruining the diplomatic relations with their aggressive behavior. Seeking to demonize 'Umar as an impulsive general, the memorial includes a speech he relayed to the Trần ruler, which sound particularly coarse in comparison with the more ornate style of this memorial. The Trần ruler positions himself in the memorial as a humble subject who is willing to submit to the demands of the Yuan court. He ends the document with an explanation of the delay in offering tributary goods – the blazing heat of Annam rendered it impossible for the kingdom to send in their local products. The Trần dynasty can only resume their duty in winter instead.

The second text included in the *Account of a Trip to Annam* is Khubilai Khan's response to the memorial. Issued in the fourth month of 1288, the edict lists all the offenses committed by the Trần dynasty:

[109] Xu Mingshan, *Annan xingji*, in *Jin Yuan riji congbian* 金元日記叢編 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2013), 164.

> I rule over all myriad domains by conferring dignities and displaying my formidable authority. Why would I deploy armed forces only to your kingdom? Since all under heaven is unified, I repeatedly emphasize the rituals of a general audience. You declare submission to me, yet you have never visited our court. Letters have been sent to you again and again to summon you, but you refused every time with the excuse of sickness. When I ordered your uncle (i.e. Trần Di Ái 陳遺愛) to govern your territory, you showed defiance in public and dared to appropriate the authority to kill. In regards to the pacification of Champa led by Ariq Qaya (1227-1286), we asked you to clear a passage, and assist us by putting in good order your waterways and bridges and by swiftly supplying food. Not only did you break your promise, you also attacked our army. If we do not respond with a military campaign, who would obey the regulations of our Empire? 朕君臨萬邦，威福并用，豈于爾國，獨忍加兵。蓋自混一以來，屢講會同之禮。爾名為向化，實未造朝。累示徵書，輒辭以疾。及命爾叔攝守彼疆，公然拒違，敢行專殺。至若阿爾海牙占城之役，就爾假途，俾之繕治津梁，飛芻挽粟，不惟失信，乃復抗師。此而不征，王憲何在？[110]

Unwilling to place any blame onto the General 'Umar, the Mongol-Yuan court enumerates three reasons to justify their attack on Annam: (1) The Trần ruler refused to came to the Yuan court to pay a visit; (2) Annam refused to acknowledge Trần Di Ái, the ruler installed by the Mongol-Yuan court, as its governor and murdered him when he returned to Annam; and (3) The army of the Trần dynasty did not honor their promise and sabotaged the Mongol's military force while they launched an attack on Champa. After providing an ample justification of their military advancement, the edict then seizes

[110] Ibid., 165.

on the term *fugu* 伏辜 (plead guilty), a phrase appeared towards the end of the previous memorial, and claims that the Trần dynasty has shown regrets over its own actions.

If we were to scrutinize the texts more closely, it is quite obvious that from the memorial submitted by the Trần court, Annam only pleaded guilty for not presenting their tributes on time, but not for its counterattack. What we observe here is the Mongol court's deliberate distortion of the meaning of the memorial. Such discrepancy between the two documents highlights the dilemma of the Mongol-Yuan court: On the one hand, Khubilai Khan did not want to warrant the claim that his generals should bear the responsibility for the military conflict. On the other hand, the Mongol-Yuan court did not want to wage another war against Đại Việt, and so the only way to allow the edict to lay out all the wrongdoings of the Trần dynasty without reaching the conclusion that the Mongol would start another invasion was to depict the Trần ruler as being regretful for his decisions.

The edict proceeds to outline all the demands of the Mongol-Yuan court: requesting Annam to release all the captives and urging their ruler to visit Khubilai Khan in person. Citing the fallen Song as example, the edict attempted to coerce the Trần dynasty into accepting the demands.[111] The tension embedded within this text means that it wavers between offering a compromise and threatening aggression. We shall see a similar tension between hostility and hospitality from the poems composed by Li Siyan and Xu Mingshan, who served as the envoys delivering this edict to the Trần dynasty.

After providing its readers with the two official correspondences between the Mongol-Yuan and the Trần court, the *Account of a Trip to Annam* then offers a chronological record on how the envoys received their mission, left the capital, arrived at Annam, negotiated with the ruler of the Trần dynasty, and returned. All we know from this travel account is that the envoys left Dadu on the twenty-sixth day of the eleventh month of 1288 and arrived the next year on the twenty-eighth day of the

[111] Ibid., 165.

second month. Instead of outlining their route and the scenery they observed during the journey, Xu's diary is particularly terse and does not give us any details concerning his trip. Instead he devotes more space to describe how they were received by the ruler of the Trần dynasty:

> On the first day of the third month, they prepared banners, yellow palanquins and a musical ensemble to receive the edict and envoys into the capital. We dismounted our horses at the gate of the palace, and entered into the Hall of Gathered Worthies. The Prince[112] bowed down several times and offered incense. Then he bowed down again. We announced the edict. Only the Prince's attendants and those who are close to him heard our announcement. After the ceremony, the envoys were regaled with a banquet.
>
> 三月一日，具旗幟、黃傘、鼓吹，迎詔書、使者入王城。及殿門下馬，再入門曰集賢殿。世子再拜上香，又再拜，宣詔書。聞者世子之左右親侍而已。禮畢，宴使者。[113]

The record demonstrates the diplomatic protocols of the time. As trivial as it may seem, any deviation from these rules of courtesy may hinder the negotiation between the two states. For instance, in 1268, when Zhang Tingzhen 張庭珍 (1225-1280) entered Annam to deliver Khubilai Khan's edict, the Trần ruler stood to receive it. Infuriated by the ruler's demeanor, Zhang threatened to deploy a million troops to invade Annam, and the Annam ruler eventually kowtowed to receive the edict.[114] The same applies to the Mongol envoys: in 1324, when the Yuan delegates arrived at the capital, they were not

---

[112] Note that the Emperor of the Trần dynasty was always referred to as the Prince (*shizi* 世子) as an indication of his inferiority.
[113] Xu Mingshan, *Annan xingji*, in *Jin Yuan riji congbian*,166.
[114] Song Lian et al., *Yuanshi*, 167.3920.

willing to dismount their horses. The envoys were thus not allowed to enter the palace, and both parties refused to budge until an Annam official convinced the delegates to give in.[115]

Xu's record provides us with a glimpse on the normal procedures of how envoys were received. The ruler of the Trần dynasty was quick to respond to the demands: one day after the edict was announced, the Assistant Grand Councilor 'Umar was released to the Yuan court. Although the Annam ruler insisted that he was too ill to go to visit Khubilai Khan in person, he drafted a series of memorials and prepared numerous tributary goods for the envoys to deliver back to the Mongol-Yuan court. Li Siyan and Xu Mingshan stayed in Annam for a total of 17 days. They returned on the fifteenth day of the third month. Appended at the end of Xu's *Account of a Trip to Annam* are the memorials the Trần dynasty drafted and a list of tributes he sent to the Mongol-Yuan court.[116]

Compared to a lot of the envoy records composed during the Song dynasty, Xu's *Account of a Trip to Annam* focused much more on how international courtesy was achieved through words and practices. There is no sense of disagreement or conflict over the negotiation processes, even though the Trần ruler refused to visit the Mongol-Yuan court in person. This prompts us to consider the nature of this account. Xu's work is ultimately not about the customs or sceneries of Annam, it serves instead as a report to the senior officials at the Mongol-Yuan court who seek to evaluate the efficacy of the diplomatic mission. Even though the account strives to maintain objectivity in its tone, there seem to be a tendency to ignore all the hidden tensions between the two states.

This brings us to the poems composed by Li Siyan and Xu Mingshan. Although only a handful of poems composed by the two envoys are extant today, we can still detect from these works a sense

[115] Ngô Sĩ Liên, *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*, 404.
[116] Xu Mingshan, *Annan xingji*, in *Jin Yuan riji congbian*., 166-171.

of tension between the two states.[117] Let us begin by reading Li Siyan's "The Prince of Annam asked for a Poem on the Banquet" 世子燕席索詩:

	The cosmic forces between heaven and earth signify a new beginning,	乾坤氣運會貞元
2	The bright moon rises to the sky and clears off the miasma.	皓月騰空息瘴烟
	From the northern palace gate, a shooting star brings a new command,	北闕星馳新誥命
4	On the southern meadow, spring time transforms the old landscape.	南郊春轉舊山川
	One must preserve sincerity to serve the high gods,	存誠乃可必事帝
6	To protect a state, nothing can match with the fear of Heaven.	保國無如是畏天
	Having an audience with the Emperor at the Zichen Palace, all will be transformed into gifts of brocade.	光覲紫宸歸化錦
8	Even if the river is turned into a sash, and the hill turned into a grindstone, Your kingdom will be preserved for a thousand years.[118]	山河帶礪保千年[119]

The poem begins by evoking the "rhythms of fate" 氣運, the mysterious cosmic forces that correspond with the rise and fall of a dynasty. Using the changes of these forces to gesture to the Song-Yuan transition, the poet equates the newly established Mongol empire as a bright moon clearing off the miasma in the south. Following this metaphor, the envoys are compared to shooting stars sent from the imperial palace to deliver the edict; and similar to the spring time, the imperial command has arrived and reinvigorates the landscape of Annam.

---

[117] Li Siyan does not have an extant literary collection. Although Xu Mingshan's *Fanggu ji* 芳谷集 was reprinted in the *Siku quanshu*, the collection only includes Xu's prose but not his poems. None of the texts in *Fanggu ji* is related to Xu's journey to Annam. Poems composed by both Li Siyan and Xu Mingshan related to Annam are mainly preserved in Lê Tắc's *Annan zhilue*. 391-393.

[118] An allusion to *Shiji* which stated "Even if the Yellow River was turned into a sash, and Mount Taishan has become a grindstone, the state will remain peace forever, and grace will be bestowed to all your descendants" 使河如帶，泰山若礪，國以永寧，爰及苗裔.

[119] Lê Tắc, *Annan zhilue*, 391.

While the first half of Li Siyan's poem set out to outline the beginning of a new era, he moves then in the third couplet to give advice to the Trần ruler: asking him to serve the Mongol-Yuan emperor with sincerity, respect and fear. Only by yielding to the demands of the Mongol empire can the Trần dynasty survive the ebbs and flows of fortunes over time. The poem juxtaposes changes with constancy: while the poet never explicitly threaten the Trần ruler, it suggests that Annam would be in danger if they do not recognize the formidable authority of the Mongol empire. In the penultimate line, Li Siyan gives a concrete recommendation: the ruler of the Trần dynasty should visit the Mongol court in person to secure the relationship between the two states.

As we could see from the above documents, Khubilai Khan insisted the Trần ruler should go to the Yuan court. This request was reiterated in Li Siyan's poem. In response to this command, the Trần ruler composed a poem matching the rhymes of Li. Although the full poem was lost, we can see from the extant couplet how the Trần ruler respond to the request:

Considering myself untalented, I feel ashamed to be given land and authority,	自顧不才慚錫土
It is only because I am sickly that I failed to attend the august court.	只緣多病欠朝天[120]

The Trần ruler heeded Li Siyan's advice, and stressed that he could not go to the Yuan court only because his health conditions would not allow him to make such a trip. The matching poem prompted Li Siyan to again composed a regulated verse in reply:

	Rain and dew forms a vast expanse of water, spreading the grace of the Han,	雨露汪洋普漢恩
2	Holding the crimson decree, the phoenix soared above the red clouds.	鳳銜丹詔出紅雲
	All corners of the earth are opened up with a peaceful aura,	拓開地角皆和氣

[120] Ibid., 391.

4	The dust of war is cleansed by the heavenly river.	淨挾天河洗戰塵
	Everyone claims if you read ten lines of the edict with one glance,	盡道璽書十行下
6	This is as good as hearing the "Breeze" performed by the five stringed lute.	勝如琴殿五弦薰
	The universal love of heaven and earth does not differentiate the north and the south,	乾坤兼愛無南北
8	Why would you worry that the clouds and thunder would bring about more "birth throes"?[121]	何患雲雷復有屯[122]

In the first half of the poem, Li Siyan compares the grace bestowed by the Yuan emperor as water and referred to the envoys as a phoenix bringing forth the imperial edict. The delivery of the decree opens up a peaceful world where wars and conflicts no longer exist. The third couplet turns back to the present occasion – comparing the act of reading the edict issued by Khubilai Khan with hearing the "Southern Breeze" 南薰, a song said to be composed by the Sage King Shun 舜 on a five-stringed lute. According to *the Book of Rites*, this piece of music was employed by the Son of Heaven in order to reward the most virtuous among the feudal lords.[123] The juxtaposition of Khubilai Khan with the ancient Sage King implies that the Mongol-Yuan court would reward those who would follow their decree and are loyal to them. The poem concluded by claiming that the love of the Yuan emperor is impartial and urged the Trần ruler not to worry about the difficulties of the state.

---

121 An allusion to the hexagram "birth throes" 屯.

122 Li Siyan, "The Prince Matched My Previous Verse with the Line 'Considering myself untalented, I feel ashamed to be given land and authority, / Just because I am often sick, I failed to go to the dawn court.' I Improvised This Poem with the Same Rhyming Scheme" 世子和前韻有自顧不才慚錫土只緣多病欠朝天之句即席次韻, in Lê Tấc, *Annan zhilue*, 391. The poem was attributed to Trần Nhân Tông 陳仁宗 (1258-1308), the Emperor of the Trần dynasty, in *Thơ văn Lý Trần* (*Vietnamese Literature during the Lý and Trần Dynasties*) and was given a different title "Tặng bắc sứ Lý Tư Diễn" 贈北使李思衍 (Presented to the Northern Envoy Li Siyan). See Nguyễn Huệ Chi ed., *Thơ văn Lý Trần* (Hà-nội : Khoa Học Xã Hội, 1988), 2.39.

123 James Legge tr., *Sacred Books of the East, volume 28, part 4: The Li Ki* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879-1910), 105.

The poem concludes with an allusion to the hexagram "birth throes" (*zhun* 屯) in the *Book of Changes*, which is composed of the trigrams representing wind and thunder. In the Commentary of the Judgment of the hexagram, *zhun* is explained as the repletion of things brought about by the action of thunder, and at this primordial stage of Heaven's creativity, it was recommended that feudal princes should be established but one should never expect stability with such an establishment.[124] Why would Li Siyan bring up this hexagram at the end of the poem? One possibility is that he is simply using this allusion to address the adverse relationships of the two states. That would imply that Li is asking the Trần ruler not to worry about the initial peril caused by the wars between the Mongol-Yuan and the Trần dynasty. Another possibility here is that he is making a reference to Trần Ích Tắc, the Prince of Annam established by the Mongol-Yuan empire.

Although it is a bit unclear what exactly was Li Siyan alluding to, the message of the poem is to urge the ruler of the Trần dynasty to fully recognize the country's political subservience and act according to the edict issued by Khubilai Khan. The two verses lead us to reflect upon the importance of envoy poetry at this point. From the titles of both poems, it is quite clear that both regulated verses were composed during a banquet hosted by the ruler of Annam. Yet, both texts seem to be more invested in instructing the Trần ruler to submit to the Mongol court. Of course, Li Siyan did not succeed in convincing the Trần ruler to leave Annam and visited Dadu in person, but the envoys did manage to secure some tributes from the Annam court. This success was reportedly tied to the following poem composed by Xu Mingshan:[125]

Riding a carriage to the Nanzhong region,	乘傳入南中

[124] Richard John Lynn tr., *The Classic of Changes*, 152-153.

[125] This claim is based on *Zhongzhou yelu* 中州野錄 (Unofficial Records of the Central Region) by Cheng Wenxian 程文憲, cited in the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要.

2	The patterns of the clouds shine and turn the sea red.	雲章照海紅
	The aura of dragon and tiger emerges at the ends of the earth,[126]	天邊龍虎氣
4	On the southern border, horses and cattle are seeking one another.[127]	南徼馬牛風
	The sun and the moon brightens all the eight far wilds,	日月八荒燭
6	In all ten thousand *li*, axle-width and script are the same.	車書萬里同
	If the imperial assembly becomes the subject of a painting,	丹青入王會
8	Your domain would enjoy continuous sacrifice.	茅土胙無窮

This poem is much more direct when compared to Li Siyan's work. The opening couplet describes the departure of the envoys and the sceneries he saw on his way. Then he turns to the recent military conflicts. By referring to these engagements as horses and cattle chasing each other, the poet suggests that such warfare is unnecessary. The poem then praises the achievements of the Mongol empire by comparing it to the sun and moon that shine upon every corner in the world. And it ends with this suggestion: if a painted image of you can be included in the imperial assembly, then every year your domain would be rewarded with sacrificial meat (which implies that the Trần dynasty will last forever if they are obedient).

Juxtaposing Li Siyan's works with that of Xu Mingshan, we can see that Li's poems seem to invoke the formidable authority of the Mongol-Yuan court while Xu seeks to induce the Trần ruler to obey Yuan commands by promising him that his regime would last forever. All three poems

[126] Here, the aura of dragon and tiger is a reference to the military conflicts between the two states.

[127] An allusion to the *Zuo Traditions* (Xi 4.1). Chu was invaded by Qi, and the Master of Chu sent someone to speak with the Qi's troops: "Your ruler dwells near the northern sea, while I, the unworthy one, dwell near the southern sea. Even when our horses and cattle are in heat, they cannot come close to one another. So I did not expect that you would encroach upon our territory. Why have you done so?" See *Zuo Traditions*, 265. This implies that the engagement of the Mongol-Yuan and the Trần are unnecessary.

ultimately arrive at the same message, but it is understandable that Xu's persuasion may function better in a scenario of conflict and antagonism.

The two envoys did not only compose poems for the sake of political persuasion. Apart from the above three verses, we can also see that Li Siyan has composed a poem while he was watching a chess game in Annam:

	With mat on the ground, they sit in the lotus position in a cool afternoon,	地席跏趺午坐涼
2	Folding my hands beside the chess game, I look at the bustling people.	棋邊袖手看人忙
	Betel nuts and coconut leaves turn green again in the springtime,	檳榔椰葉又春綠
4	To whom are they sending the fragrance of oranges and pumeloes?	送到誰家橘柚香[128]

Unlike the works cited above, this quatrain includes multiple local customs and products. For instance, the chess players sit on the group in the lotus position. Although the poem is entitled "Watching a Chess Game" 觀棋, the poet never pays much attention to the game itself. He begins by observing the sitting posture of the players, and he quickly shifts to the seasonal change and the environment surrounding the players: the local fruits are ripened and are ready to be transported. This prompts the poet to ask a rhetorical question: to whom would these fruits be sent? At the end of the poem, Li Siyan appended a note: "The flowers of the pumeloes in Annam are as fragrant as jasmines. This cannot be found in the Lingbei region" 安南柚花甚香如茉莉，嶺北所無.[129] Lingbei area refers to the Mongolian Plateau where the Yuan dynasty was founded. The suggestion is thus obvious here: the fragrant flowers, citrus fruits and betel nuts would be sent back to the Mongol court for those who cannot enjoy the exotic objects in the scene.

[128] Lê Tấc, *Annan zhilue*, 391.
[129] Ibid., 391.

Li Siyan was not the only envoy who wrote a poem on a chess game. From Lê Tấc's compilation, we can find a poem by Xu Mingshan entitled "As Aide to the Envoy Li Siyan, I watched a Chess Game on a Spring Night, and Presented this Poem to the Prince" 佐兩山使交春夜觀棊贈世子:

	In a dark green courtyard, the moon is charming,	綠沉庭院月娟娟
2	They sit within a gourd, enjoying a little piece of Heaven.[130]	人在壺中小有天
	Their bodies share one single chessboard under red candles,	身共一枰红燭底
4	Their minds wander ten thousand fathoms to the edge of emerald sky.	心遊萬仞碧霄邊
	Who can wake up those enchanted?	誰能喚醒迷魂者
6	They have to rely on the immortals who stand by with folded arms.	賴有旁觀袖手仙
	The commander's arrogance upon victory:	戰勝將驕兵所忌
	this is what a strategist would avoid.	
8	Facing a new situation – I am afraid this will keep you from sleeping.	從新局面恐妨眠[131]

Unlike the poem composed by Li Siyan, the main focus of this regulated verse lies on the chess game itself. Moving from the bowl to the chessboard, Xu Mingshan assumes in the first half of the poem the voice of a Go stone.[132] The poem lures the readers to imagine themselves as being literally inside the game, but as the readers are fully immersed in it, the poem zooms out in the third couplet and reminds us of the existence of the bystanders who are watching the contest. The poem ends with the moral lesson –arrogance brought on by a victory may be detrimental for a general and his forces, especially when they have to start a new game. Given that the Trần dynasty had just successfully fend off the Mongol's invasion, one is tempted to interpret the lesson drawn from the chess game as a

[130] The gourd is a metaphor employed in Daoist writings to since its shape represents the sky and the earth. "A little piece of Heaven" is the name of a Taoist immortal realm, here it refers to the small opening of the Go game bowl.
[131] Lê Tấc, *Annan zhilue*, 392.
[132] A Go stone, colored either black or white, is a round object placed on the chess board.

potential warning: Annam may have won the recent battle, but the complacency upon victory may lead the kingdom to a disastrous failure if they were to start a new battle with the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. Instead of directly confronting the ruler of the Trần dynasty, Xu Mingshan attempts to caution the Emperor by using an analogy between the chess game and current affairs.

Given that the chess games Li and Xu wrote about occur in different times of the day, they may not be composing the poems together at one single event. But by juxtaposing the two poems, one could still find one commonality: they are writing on behalf of the Mongol-Yuan state. While observing the chess game, Li Siyan is concerned about the tributes offered by Annam while Xu Mingshan takes the opportunity to convince the Trần ruler not to engage in another military conflict. From the extant corpus of the two envoys, we can only find the kind of poems discussed above: they involve, either directly or indirectly, negotiating with the Kingdom of Annam. They are mostly written for the purpose of political persuasion and are less concerned with recording the customs in a foreign world. Of course, it is important to remind ourselves that a lot of the envoys' works may have been lost while the political poems are transmitted. They only provide a glimpse into the interaction between the Mongol-Yuan empire and the Trần dynasty.

Pushing the Limits of Poetry: Chen Fu and his Poems on Annam

Despite the fact that large quantities of valuables were sent to Khubilai Khan after Li and Xu visited Annam, Khubilai Khan insisted that the ruler of the Trần dynasty should personally pay him a visit. Multiple envoys were sent to summon the Trần ruler, yet they met with little success. In the autumn of 1292, a group of delegates led by Liang Zeng 梁曾 (1242-1322) and Chen Fu were sent again to summon the Trần ruler. After they had arrived at Annam on the first month of 1293, according to the *History of the Yuan*, the Trần ruler refused to receive them in person, but instead sent his attendants

to host them in a guest house over sixty *li* away from the palace. When they entered into the palace, the Annam ministers asked the Yuan envoys to carry the edict through the left gate instead of the middle one. Enraged by all these arrangements, Liang Zeng led the envoys to return to the guest house without delivering the imperial edict, and three letters were then drafted by Chen Fu to warn the Trần ruler of the dire consequences of being disrespectful to the envoys and not following the diplomatic protocols.[133]

All the correspondences between the Mongol-Yuan envoys and the Annam court are preserved in Chen Fu's literary corpus *Chen Gangzhong shiji* 陳剛中詩集. In some of these letters, one can see that blatant threats were made to force the Trần ruler to recognize the uneven power dynamics and to urge him to be more modest:

> In the past, when the royal legions waged war to punish you and encountered minor setbacks, I have heard from various sources that Annam seemed to have become complacent. We did not believe that. Alas! This was the mistake the Song dynasty made, why would Annam seek to repeat the same error? The Celestial court is not eager to deploy troops for immediate results and is not bothered by tiny losses. If an attack is not successful today, then there will be another attack tomorrow; if an enemy is not conquered this year, then there will be another battle next year. Military expeditions can be repeated as many as four, five, six, or seven times – we will never stop until we achieve a victory, and will never cease until we attain our goal. Great feats will be achieved with the passage of years, just as Shun overcame the Miao and the Shang King Gaozong vanquished Guifang.

[133] Lê Tắc, *Annan zhilue*, 392.

比者王旅徂征，微有失利，聞諸道路，以謂安南似有矜色。曾等殊未之信。嗚呼！此宋之覆轍也，安南其肯蹈之乎？聖朝用兵，不急近效，不顧小失。今日攻弗下，則攻明日。今年戰弗克，則戰明年。至于四伐、五伐、六伐、七伐，不勝不已，不得不休。積以歲月卒成大業，舜之格有苗，高宗之伐鬼方是也。[134]

Both King Shun and Gaozong were said to have conquered the barbarians after three years of war.[135] Chen Fu continues to list a number of historical examples of military campaigns to raise the specter of the Mongol military might to threaten the Trần ruler in order to force him into visiting the Yuan court. Not only does Chen Fu threaten Annam with a military invasion, he also cites Goryeo as an example to showcase how an emperor who fully submitted to the Mongol-Yuan court may enjoy stability and prosperity. According to Chinese historiography, the mission was reportedly a success since the envoys did manage to preserve their integrity and enter the palace through the middle gate.[136] Yet, if we consider the consequence of the mission, ultimately the Trần ruler did not agree to visit the Mongol court in person. He also refused to send any of his family members on the mission to the Yuan dynasty. The diplomatic relations between the two states deteriorated to a new low.

The combination of threats and enticements in the rhetoric of these official exchanges was no different from the edicts we have seen in Xu Mingshan's record. The only difference may be that Chen Fu cited many more historical and contemporary examples to build his case. But Chen Fu left behind not only the formal exchanges between the two states, but also his literary corpus which includes a poetry collection entitled *Jiaozhou gao* 交州藁 (*Draft of Jiaozhou*). Intended to document his entire

---

134 Chen Fu, *Chen Gangzhong shiji* (Printed by Shen Cong 沈琮 in Guangzhou in 1460, Stored in Taiwan National Central Library), *fulu*, 7b. Part of the letter is translated in Sui Laichen, "Imperial Ideal Compromised," 223-225.

135 See Burton Watson tr., *Han Feizi: Basic Writings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003) 100-101; and Richard John Lynn tr., *The Classic of Changes*, 541.

136 Song Lian et al., *Yuan shi*, *j.* 178, 4134.

mission from the Mongol-Yuan capital to the Annam palace, the *Draft of Jiaozhou* includes a total of 107 poems. Although most poems were composed before Chen entered into the Kingdom of Annam, we can still find some peculiar texts that portray the weather, customs and historic sites of the southern borderland.

One of the many poems included in this collection is "Crossing the Moyun Peak to the Siling Prefecture" 度摩雲嶺至思凌州:

	The Moyun Peak rises steep and rugged,	嵳峩摩雲嶺
2	The stony walls resemble a staircase spiraling up to the heavenly peak.	石壁如梯遶天頂
	For a thousand years, poisonous miasma well up and never disperse,	千年毒瘴鬱不消
4	Raging vapors enter into old maple trees and grow crimson tumors.	怒入老楓結丹瘿
	The vast expanse recalls Siling Prefecture,	蒼莽思凌州
6	Houses are erected on cliffs just like a mirage.	懸厓結屋如蜃樓
	The gates of the battalion are half-closed, showing sharp swords and pikes.	寨門半掩刀槊健
8	Faintly from the edge of the clouds, I hear the lowing cow.	隱隱雲際聞鳴牛
	As strong as tigers, the tribal men rush down the hill,	蠻獠下山健如虎
10	Their mouths are as red as blood, faces as pale as clay.	口紅如血面如土
	Holding coconut water on their hands, they bow down before our horses,	手捧椰漿跪馬前
12	Mountain vipers and water insects are mixed with their sacrificial meat.	山虺水蟲間殽俎
	Facing this, I halt my horse and heave a sigh to myself:	對此停鞭空自慨
14	"Why am I here alone in such a barren corner of the world?"	吾獨何為在荒裔
	Someday when an illustration of the King's assembly is made in the royal capital,	他年周京王會圖

16 I wish to borrow paint to portray the mallet-shaped coiffure. 願借丹青寫椎髻[137]

The Moyun Peak is a place located in modern Guangxi where the envoys usually pass through before they entered into Annam.[138] Unlike the poems composed by other envoys, Chen shows his readers a perilous landscape filled with poisonous vapors and deformed old trees. Through using the same word *jie* 結 (form), Chen links the imagery of the tumors formed on the bark of the maples with the houses clinging on the cliffs. The awe-inspiring scenery induces fear and prompts the poet to exercise more caution as he marched ahead. Once he arrived at a battalion, he sees that the gates are not entirely shut – an image that could signify that the place is extremely safe that the local people simply do not bother to close them. But then the poem presents a twist by indicating that the poet observes some sharp weapons lying inside the gate: the gates are thus half-opened not because the locals believe that there will not be any conflicts, but that they are fully prepared to fight their enemies. And at this juncture, he heard the roaring sound of the tribal men coming from the hill just like the lowing of a cow. They march down to receive the envoys. Startled by their appearance and the food they offered, Chen Fu could not help but to reflect upon the reason why he would enter into such a foreign land. The poem concludes by assigning meaning to this journey: the envoy will be able to portray the appearance of these foreigners as he imagines them coming to the capital to pay tribute – they will soon join the great civilization established by the Mongol-Yuan empire. In this sense, the poem represents a process of "taming the wild" and ends triumphantly with the successful subjugation of these cultural others – they now come and enter the "Illustration of the King's assembly."

This poem by Chen Fu stands in sharp contrast with other envoys' work not only because he depicts a more unsettling image of the frontier, but also he seeks to be more daring and innovative in

[137] Chen Fu, *Chen Gangzhong shiji*, 15a-b.

[138] Li Siyan has also composed a poem on the Moyun Hill, see his "The Moyun Hill in the Siming Prefecture" 思明州摩雲嶺, in *Yongle dadian*, 5134.

his work. Consider, for instance, the imagery of crimson tumors formed on the maple trees. Unlike his predecessors who often use the medical term *ying* 瘿 (tumor) to refer to the rage of a person, Chen Fu seeks to link the lumps on the old maple tree to the miasma of the scenery to convey a sense of strangeness. A similar strategy could be found in his other poems like "An Account at the Zhiling Post in Jiaozhi" 交趾支陵驛即事:

	Taking six reins in hand, we dash to the south and descend from Mount Butai,	六轡南驅下寶臺[139]
2	On the first month, plum fruits had already been green in Jiaozhou.	交州正月已青梅
	The Fuliang River flooded as the miasmic clouds are heavy with moisture,	富良江湧瘴雲濕
4	Anhua Bridge darkened while the violent rain arrives.	安化橋昏蠻雨來
	Flying through the forest, the bats are as red as flames,	蝙蝠穿林紅似焰
6	Floating on the ocean, the centipedes look like black mounds.	蜈蚣浮海黑如堆
	The ruler of Fangfeng is again late for the assembly of Tushan,[140]	防風猶後塗山會
8	This will eventually sow the seed of disaster for all living creatures.	終為生靈結禍胎[141]

The poem begins by describing the arrival of the envoys at Jiaozhou. Using the green plum fruits as the signifier, the poet describes a locale where the weather is comparatively hot and humid. Following this logic, the poem turns to the landscape next to the post station where the scenery is darkened by the clouds and the river overflows due to the heavy rain. The gloomy scenario then recedes in the third couplet with the appearance of the exotic animals: the red bats flying in the forest and numerous centipedes gathered on the shore. The strangeness of the animals is seen as an inauspicious sign linked

139 A note was appended by the poet: "Putai is the name of a mountain in Jiaozhi" 寶臺，交趾山名.

140 The sage king Yu once feasted the feudal lords at Tushan and the lord of Fangfeng arrived late. He was thus decapitated as a warning to others.

141 Chen Fu, *Chen Gangzhong shiji*, 16a.

to poor governance. Thus, the poet alludes to the ancient anthology and compares the ruler of the Trần dynasty to that of Fangfeng who was executed by the Sage King Yu for being late in the assembly of the lords. The unwillingness of the Trần ruler to enter into the Mongol-Yuan court was viewed as the ultimate cause of such an eccentric scene in the Jiaozhi area.

Comparing the ruler of Fangfeng with that of the Trần dynasty is certainly a dangerous attempt since this would imply Khubilai Khan should get the Annam ruler killed. The intended readership of this poem is certainly not people from Annam but others from the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. It is thus important to assess the strangeness of the scenery through the perspectives of the intended readers. If we were to look up "red bats" in previous Chinese texts, we would notice that as early as the Tang dynasty, such bats are said to be found in the Jiaozhou region.[142] Although this information was copied in some encyclopedias like the *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (*Extensive Records of the Taiping Era*), this image has never been employed in poetry prior to Chen Fu.

Chen Fu is not only intentionally bringing in new imagery to fully express the strangeness of Annam. He is also experimenting with different forms of expression during his stay. For instance, he composed a poem playing on the names of the medical herbs. As indicated in one title of his poetic sequence, Chen composed a series of ten quatrains through the practice of *jiju* 集句 (composing a poem by borrowing exclusively lines from previous extant poems) while he was too busy negotiating with the ministers of the Trần dynasty.[143] From all these poetic works, we can see that Chen Fu is not only concerned about the content of his poetry, he is also highly conscious of the genre he is using to express himself.

---

[142] The earliest record of this information is found in *Youyang zazu* 酉陽雜俎 (*Miscellaneous Morsels from Youyang*), see Duan Chengshi 段成式, *Youyang zazu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 277.

[143] Chen Fu, *Chen Gangzhong shiji*, 17b-28a.

This brings us to the Chen Fu's extended regulated verse (*pailü* 排律) entitled "An Account of Annam" 安南即事.[144] Comprised of 60 parallel couplets, this poem covers the history, customs, geography, weather, fashion, entertainment and the local produce of Annam. Judging from the range of the topics included, one can interpret this piece as a small gazetteer presented in a poetic form.

This poem provides us with a lot of insights concerning the sociohistorical details of Annam, but I would like to focus on three aspects of the work. First, the source of Chen's information and the construction of an authoritative voice. While reading through the poem, one would find different forms of knowledge related to the Annam people: some seem like an objective portrayal of local practices while others sound more mythical. While the veracity of Chen Fu's account has never been doubted in premodern times, we would notice that some of the information included in the poem does not sound plausible for a modern reader. For instance, Chen Fu mentions in line 86 that some tribal people from the south are able to get their heads detached from their bodies. He further elaborates on the subject:

> Among the Tong people, there are some whose heads can (detach from their bodies) and fly, using their ears as wings. At night, their heads fly to the seaside and feed on fish and shrimps. Their heads return at daybreak, and their bodies look as perfect as before, yet a trace, similar to a red thread, would appear under their necks.
>
> 峒民頭有能飛者，以兩耳為翼，夜飛往海際，拾魚蝦而食，曉復歸，身完如故，但頸下有痕如紅線耳。[145]

[144] A full translation of this poem can be found in Appendix 2.
[145] Chen Fu, *Chen Gangzhong shiji*, 26a-b.

As Li Jiayu 李嘉瑜 has pointed out, Chen Fu's description of the winged heads is neither his observation nor his invention but a concept he inherited from previous texts.[146] In the Tang dynasty anecdotal collection *Miscellaneous Morsels from Youyang*, for instance, we can find an account which is strikingly similar to the text by Chen Fu:

> In the caves and lakes of Lingnan, there are often people with flying heads, and thus they acquire the name "Liaozi[147] with Flying Heads." One day before a man's head flies off, a trace will appear on his neck. The trace looks like a red thread encircling his neck. His wife will then guard him. At night, the person will show symptoms of illness. All of a sudden, wings are grown on the head and it will fly off from the body. The head will feed on crabs and earthworms from the muddy seashore. It will fly back when the sun is about to rise. The man will feel like he has just woken up from a dream, but his belly is full.
>
> 嶺南溪洞中，往往有飛頭者，故有飛頭獠子之號。頭將飛一日前，頸有痕，匝項如紅縷，妻子遂看守之。其人及夜狀如病，頭忽生翼，脫身而去，乃於岸泥尋蟹蚓之類食之，將曉飛還，如夢覺，其腹實矣。[148]

Although the red trace appears before the head flies off in Duan's anecdote, the general arc of the story is the same: the heads of the tribal people in the south fly off at night to feed on sea creatures found in the shore and return before daybreak. The similarity brings us to a reflection upon the source of information: Chen Fu did travel to Annam as an envoy, but a lot of the customs recorded in his works rely on textual records transmitted from earlier times. This does not only apply to the more

---

146 Li Jiayu, "*Jiaozhou gao* de Annan shuxie" 《交州藁》中的安南書寫, *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究, 34.4 (2016), 88.
147 "Liaozi" was the term Han Chinese authors used to refer to the tribal people living around the Red River delta.
148 Duan Chengshi, *Youyang zazu*, 47.

fanciful information recorded in the texts, the depictions of certain exotic goods in Chen's poem are also comparable to other travelogues composed in previous dynasties. See, for instance, how he describes the bananas in Annam:

> There is a banana of an extremely large variety that does not wither in winter. A single stem grows from the center of the plant, with flowers on each and every joint. When the flower is too heavy, the stem will bend accordingly. When it bears fruits, it droops down. Each spike has several dozens of fruits. They are several inches in length and are comparable to soap beans. When the outer skin is peeled, it is as soft and mushy as green persimmon and is extremely sweet and refreshing. It is also known as ox banana.
>
> 芭蕉極大者，冬不凋，中抽一幹，節節有花。花重則幹為所墜。結實下垂，一穗數十枚，長數寸，如肥皂，去皮，軟爛如綠柿，極甘冷，一名牛蕉。[149]

If we compare Chen Fu's description with *Guihai yuheng zhi* 桂海虞衡志 (*Treatises of the Supervisor and Guardian of the Cinnamon Sea*), a gazetteer composed by Fan Chengda 范成大 (1126-1193), we can find a similar portrayal of bananas in the text:

> Banana fruit of the extremely large variety does not wither even in winter. A single stem grows from the center of the plant several feet in length, with flowers on each and every joint. When the flowers shed their leaves, fruit grows on the stems. When the outer skin is peeled, the pulp of the banana is obtained. It is as soft and mushy as green persimmon and is extremely sweet

[149] Chen Fu, *Chen Gangzhong shiji*, 25b.

and refreshing. The banana bears fruit throughout the four seasons. […] It also goes by the name ox banana fruit, and it too bears fruit throughout the four seasons.

蕉子。芭蕉極大者，凌冬不凋，腹中抽一幹，長數尺，節節有花，花褪葉根有實。去皮取肉，軟爛如綠柿，極甘冷，四季實。［……］又名牛蕉子，亦四季實。[150]

Chen's description of bananas is almost taken verbatim from the Fan's gazetteer. The similarity of these two texts does not imply Chen Fu has never seen bananas in his journey or that the whole account is fictive, but it alerts us to the possibility that Chen Fu might have consulted a lot of the textual accounts related to the local produces and practices while he was crafting his poem on Annam. Thus, he was not necessary writing to document what he witnessed in person – he might not have seen some of the scenery or products he mentioned in the text.

This leads us to the second issue: the display and consumption of the cultural representations of a foreign land. Premodern commentators rarely question the veracity of the poem. In fact, in Lang Ying's 朗瑛 (1487-1566) *Qiuxiu leigao* 七修類稿 (*Draft Arranged in Seven Categories*), Chen Fu's poem was cited to prove the existence of tribal men whose heads can fly at night.[151] This brings us to reflect upon the nature of Chen Fu's poem. Chen Fu begins his poem by describing his journey and explaining the political changes in Annam over time. After recounting the history of Annam, he moves on to comment on the vulgarity of local customs and of the outlook of local residents. While enumerating the bizarre practices of Annam, he interspersed the poem with his personal experience – how every envoy was led to the capital of the Trần dynasty in a different route and what he saw when

[150] James M. Hargett tr., *Treatises of the Supervisor and Guardian of the Cinnamon Sea* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), 106-107.
[151] Lang Ying, *Qiuxiu leigao* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), 2.713.

he entered into the city. These details lend credibility to the more bizarre details of the poem and lull the readers into believing that all the information included are witnessed firsthand by Chen Fu.

The effect of such an integration of personal experience with miscellaneous anomalies passed down from previous texts colors the more fanciful descriptions of Annam. But this strangeness does not mean complete difference. As we can see from the poem, Annam has its own taxation and legal systems, its inhabitants are also offering sacrifices to their deities, and furthermore, most of the songs performed in the Annam court are tied to historical figures commonly known in the Mongol-Yuan world. All these practices are not that different from the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. But as Chen Fu shows us in his poem, there are something unsettling behind all these practices – either their legal system are unusually strict, the mysterious deity they worshipped looks unpleasant, or the songs are performed in a way that is different from that of the central plains. What happened in Annam was not entirely incomprehensible for a reader in the Mongol-Yuan dynasty, yet if one were to scrutinize every single detail of the local's daily life, one would find certain twists and deviations. If we look back at the beginning of the poem, the fact that Annam was originally part of the Han dynasty becomes more intriguing here since it suggests that Annam could have potentially developed into a Mongol-Yuan province. What Chen Fu's poem seeks to capture is an alternate place – a world that is both familiar and strange to his contemporaries.

Even though Chen Fu never hides his disapproval of Annam – he finds the entertainers there distasteful, the local cuisine bizarre, and the natural landscape perilous – he takes extreme pleasure in showing his readers this foreign world in the name of documenting it for the Mongol-Yuan emperor. A lot of information presented in the poem would not aid the Yuan dynasty in how they interact with Annam, but Chen Fu still incorporates them into the poem because he realizes the strangeness of the place would be interesting for his readers. For readers who can never gain access to Annam, the poem provides a safe and convenient way to enter into an exciting world filled with poisonous weapons and

ferocious creatures. Chen Fu's poem appeals to the readers' curiosity and interest in anomalies and this approach is remarkably different from other envoy poets of his time.

Finally, I would like to turn back to the tension between the representation of a new world and the format of poetry. It is quite obvious that Chen Fu seeks to incorporate a lot of new objects and materials into his own work. Apart from specific place names and exotic names, there are instances in the poem where Chen Fu simply transcribes the Annam language into Chinese:

	On a *diya* litter, the body reclines sideways like a boar,	抵鴉身偃豕
36	One leaned forward like a fox while sitting on a *luowo* seat.	羅我背拳狐[152]

As Chen Fu explained in his notes, the terms *diya* and *luowo* are both words in the Annam language referring to two specific types of litter. Clearly these objects do not have an equivalent in the Chinese vocabulary, and thus Chen Fu chose to present the concepts of these objects through transcribing the sounds of the Annam language. What we observe here is a challenge to the poet in the representation of a foreign world. With concepts and objects that could not be easily translated back, even though literary Chinese was used in Annam, Chen Fu still faces a great difficulty while he describes to his readers the new world he had witnessed. The poetic format, namely the pentasyllabic line and parallel structure maintained in every couplet, imposes extra constraints on how the poet can elaborate his observations. It is almost impossible for Chen Fu to refrain from adding a prose section to explain the details of his poem.

Consider the terms "guests among officials" 官中客 (line 45) or "rules of the purple canopy" 紫蓋律 (line 52). Even though they are not direct transliteration of the Annam language, the exact meanings of these phrases are not easily comprehensible for a reader from the Mongol-Yuan court

[152] Chen Fu, *Chen Gangzhong shiji*, 19b.

without the help of Chen Fu's notes. From this poem, we can see how the representation of a foreign society exposes the limits of the poetic form, and prompts the poet to devise new ways to portray the history and customs of Annam to his readers. But the annotations do not only function as an explanation to the poetic line, they also provide extensive information not covered in the poetic line. Perhaps the term "annotation" here is a misnomer since from the printing format of the poem, we can notice that the prose section appended under each couplet is not listed in the same way like other annotations in the collection.[153] Chen Fu is deliberately using a mixture of poetry and prose to communicate his experience in Annam to his readers, and this is quite unusual since we rarely see extended regulated verse crafted in a similar fashion before Chen Fu's "An Account of Annan."[154]

Chen Fu's experience in Annam had provided him with an opportunity to reflect upon the limits of poetry and explore different ways of expression. His poems seem remarkably different from his peers. It seems surprising that when Lê Tắc 黎崱 (active early 14th century), a minister who surrendered to the Yuan dynasty during the 1285 invasion, compiled *Annan zhilue* 安南志略 (*Abbreviated Records of Annam*), he incorporated only a quatrain and a regulated verse from Chen Fu's corpus.[155] Perhaps Lê Tắc found the exotic descriptions and condescending tone of Chen's poems problematic, and thus decided not to include most of Chen's works into his compilation. Yet Chen Fu did manage to create a reputation as a knowledgeable frontier poet. In a Ming miscellaneous notes compiled by Yao Fu 姚福, we find the following story:

---

153 Other annotations in Chen Fu's literary collections are listed in double lines with a smaller font, yet the prose section of this poem are not listed in the same way.

154 One exception is an extended regulated verse entitled "The Jinyang Gate" 津陽門 written by Cheng Yu 鄭嵎 in late 851 or early 852. For a detailed analysis of the poem, see Paul Kroll, "Nostalgia and History in Mid-Ninth-Century Verse: Cheng Yü's Poem on 'The Chin-yang Gate,'" in *T'oung Pao*, 89.4 (2003): 286-366. I wish to thank Xiaofei Tian for drawing my attention to this piece.

155 The two poems anthologized are "Jiangzhou" 江州 and "Li Jiaozhou yu Ding shaobao" 離交州與丁少保 (Departing Jiaozhou Presented to Junior Protector Ding). The former poem is about the poet's longing to return home, while the latter is an occasional poem composed to encourage Ding to be a loyal minister. See Lê Tắc, *Annan zhilue*, 393-394.

> There is a type of fish in Jiaozhou whose head looks human. It is known as the *zhulou* fish. In the Yuan dynasty, Chen Fu arrived at Jiaozhou as an envoy. The ruler and ministers of the state served this fish to fool Chen Fu. Chen took the two eyes of the fish and swallowed them. The people in Jiaozhou admired him for being so knowledgeable. This is because the most tasty part of a fish lies in their eyes. I have heard this from some wise predecessors, and when I examined the biography of Chen Fu, it does mention his mission in Annam but never include this anecdote. I recorded this and await other erudite scholars to assess its veracity.
>
> 交州有魚，其首類人，名曰蠋螻魚。元陳孚為使至彼。彼國君臣以是餉孚，蓋愚孚也。輒取二目啗之，彼遂服其多識。蓋魚之至味在二目，故福嘗聞此於先達。及考孚傳，有使安南事而不及此，識之以候夫博聞者質焉。[156]

Chen Fu never mentioned anything about devouring a fish with the human head, yet from this anecdote, we can see that he was remembered in history as an erudite envoy even though his diplomatic mission was not particularly successful. After all, the Yuan envoys failed to persuade the Trần ruler to personally visit the Mongol court. Enraged by the behavior of Annam, the Yuan dynasty planned to launch another invasion of their southern neighbor. The military operations were halted since Khubilai Khan fell sick and died in 1294. Diplomats were sent again from both sides to amend the relationship between the two states.

[156] Yao Fu, *Qingxi xiabi* 青溪暇筆 (Ming edition, manuscript in Peking University Library), *j.* 2, 12b-13a.

Fu Ruojin and His Interaction with the Annam Envoys

This brings us to the last envoy Fu Ruojin, who was appointed by Toghon Temür to assist Tiezhu 鐵柱 and Zhi Xishan 智熙善 for their mission to Annam in 1335. Writing forty years after Chen Fu's mission, Fu Ruojin was facing a situation completely different from that of his predecessor. Over this period of time, although low intensity conflicts still existed between the two states, tributes were regularly sent from Annam to the Mongol court, and the Mongol-Yuan emperor no longer insisted that the Annam ruler should personally come to visit him. The diplomatic relations between the states had improved significantly. The task given to Fu Ruojin and his fellow envoys was simply to announce the ascension of Toghon Temür and present a new calendar to the Trần ruler.[157]

Perhaps due to a change in the nature of the diplomatic mission, Fu Ruojin's portrayal of Annam is drastically different from that of Chen Fu. In Fu Ruojin's *Nanzheng gao* 南征藁 (*Drafts on My Journey South*), Annam is often presented as a welcoming place with a peaceful scenery.[158] For instance, as Fu Ruojin entered Jiaozhou, he composed the following poem "Entering Annam on the La Festival" 臘日入安南:[159]

	Entering the Kingdom of Annam in winter,	冬入安南國
2	Clouds greet the carriages of the envoys.	雲迎使者軺

[157] The imperial decree issued for this mission is preserved in Lê Tắc, *Annan zhilue*, 58.

[158] *Drafts on My Journey South* is no longer extant as an independent work, yet Fu Ruojin's poems are preserved in his literary corpus edited by his younger brother Fu Ruochuan 傅若川, in which works are arranged according to genre. The preface of *Drafts on My Journey South* can also be found in the existing corpus of Fu Ruojin. According to this preface, we know the original collection contains around 100 poems. Chen Qiaoling 陳巧靈 seeks to recover the *Drafts on My Journey South* and found only 60 poems related to the Annam mission. Yet it would be hard to conclude from her analysis that the works Fu Ruojin composed are lost since she omits a lot of the poems Fu wrote while he was on his way in the northern part of the China proper. For Chen's argument, see Chen Qiaoling, "Yuandai Annan jingxing shi yanjiu" 元代安南紀行詩研究 (MA thesis, Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua), 16.

[159] The La Festival is on the eighth day of the twelfth month.

	I have heard that this province is established during the Qin dynasty,	郡聞秦日置
4	Looking at the Bronze pillars, I imagine them as markers erected in the Han.[160]	柱想漢時標

	Along the path near the river, the bamboo retain their sheaths,	江路篁猶籜
6	Millets begin to sprout in the mountain fields.	山田稻始苗
	Imperial grace covered people near and far,	皇恩函遠邇
8	Setting out on a mission, I will not flinch from a distant journey.	行役不辭遙[161]

The envoys reached Annam on a cloudy winter day. Fu Ruojin first explains to his readers the historical background of the place: Annam was once the territory of the Qin and Han dynasties. His attention then moves from the history of the Kingdom to the scenery he observed. Bamboo sheaths only fall off after they reach a certain point of maturity. Together with the sprouting of the millets, the poet seeks to employ these images to highlight how winter is almost over and the place is hence filled with vitality. This change in weather coincides with the arrival of the delegates, prompting Fu Ruojin to see the growth of plants as a sign of impending imperial grace. He thus concludes his poem with the praise of the Mongol-Yuan emperor and declares that he would gladly take up his duty as envoy.

The sentiment displayed in Fu Ruojin's poem is echoed by Zhi Xishan. Although only two of his poems are now extant, we can see a very similar portrayal of Annam in his "Rejoicing Over the Rain in Annam" 安南喜雨:

	Holding a decree, the crimson phoenix descends from the highest clouds,	丹鳳啣書下九霄
2	The miasma from the distant wastelands have since all been dispersed.	遐荒氛癘已全消

[160] The bronze pillars are erected by the Han general Ma Yuan as a mark of the southern end of the Han dynasty after he put down the rebellion of the Trưng Sisters. The pillars were carved with the following inscriptions: "if the pillars break, the people of Jiaozhou will be destroyed." Trần Nhật Huyên had buried the pillars in soil and built a temple on site to honor the General who subdues the waves.

[161] Fu Ruojin, *Fu Yuli shiji jiaozhu* 傅與礪詩集校注 (Kunming: Yunnan daxue chuban she, 2015), 173.

	Dews from the earth and rain from heaven share the same primal breath,	乾坤露雨通元氣
4	Wind and clouds from the rivers and hills follow the carriage of the envoys.	海岳風雲逐使軺
	Why would we use Yang Pu's towered galleys to enter this place?[162]	楊僕樓船何用入
6	There is no longer any need to use Ma Yuan's bronze pillars as markers.	馬援銅柱不須標
	If you want to know how the golden rain nourishes those afar,	欲知金澤涵濡遠
8	Take a look at the green sprouts filling each and every village.	看取村村滿綠苗[163]

Notice that not only do both poems by Zhi Xishan and Fu Ruojin employ similar images (like the carriage of the envoys and Ma Yuan's bronze pillars), they also share the same rhyme. Although we do not know if the two envoys are writing for a particular occasion, the poems are clearly in dialogue with one another. The clouds in Fu Ruojin's poem have now changed to rain, and they become the symbol of imperial grace that not only nourishes the green sprouts but also washes away the miasma in Annam. Instead of alluding to the fact that Annam was once a territory of the Han dynasty, Zhi Xishan noticed the bronze pillar may be interpreted as a symbol of subjugation since Ma Yuan was said to have erected them after putting down the rebellions of the Trưng Sisters in Jiaozhi. Thus, the poem claims that these bronze pillars and towered galleys are now rendered obsolete since the Mongol envoys are coming in peace.

The juxtaposition of these two poems allows us to evaluate the context of Fu Ruojin's composition. It is plausible that a lot of the poems composed by Fu Ruojin are read immediately by his fellow envoys, and poetry here mediates social interactions. This may explain why a lot of Fu Ruojin's works are more focused on his identity as envoy and on the goal of the peace mission.

[162] Yang Pu is an admiral who pacified the Kingdom of the Southern Yue 南越國 in 112 BCE.
[163] Lê Tấc, *Annan zhilue*, 397.

Immediately before he entered into Annam, he composed the following poem "On the Nanning Postal Station" 書南寧驛:

	Rushing on the road late in the year, I think back on the capital,	歲晚驅馳憶帝京
2	Turning my head in the north wind, I am filled with emotions for the multiple barrier passes.	北風回首重關情
	In mid-sky, the sun and the moon encircles the golden towers,	中天日月回金闕
4	At the southern celestial pole, stars travel around the Jade Yoke.[164]	南極星辰繞玉衡
	To convince the elders, we still rely on Sima Xiangru's proclamation,[165]	父老尚煩司馬檄
6	The troops of General Fubo must be deployed to pacify the barbarians.[166]	蠻夷須用伏波兵
	We also know that civil virtue can soften the men from afar,	也知文德能柔遠
8	Relay the message of a new grace – we plan to stop the military expedition.	傳道新恩欲罷征[167]

Throughout the whole poem, the poet's attention is fixated on the mission of the envoys. Looking back at his journey from the capital to the Nanning post, the poet imagines how the constellations are revolving around the court. The poet then lays out two possibilities in dealing with the natives living on the borders: negotiations (represented by Sima Xiangru) or battles (represented by Ma Yuan). He then concludes with the decision of the Emperor: he chose to peacefully transform those from afar through civil virtues. The imagined readers of this poem are certainly not the officials back in the Mongol-Yuan capital, instead this poem seem to function as an elegant report sent to the attendants

164 Jade Yoke is a constellation and a symbol of the Emperor.
165 Sima Xiangru was a renowned literati who once served as an envoy of the Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty in the southwest. He once wrote a proclamation to in the Shu to mediate a dispute between the local inhabitants and the Han official. Another dispatch was composed by him to the elders in the Shu to convince them that the Han dynasty should establish regular contacts with the southwestern native people.
166 General Fubo (or, literally the General who subdue the waves) is a reference to Ma Yuan.
167 Fu Ruojin, *Fu Yuli shiji jiaozhu*, 216.

of the postal station so as to inform them the purpose of the envoys' travel. There is no attempt to depict the geographical features or the local customs in these poems.

Most of the poems composed while Fu Ruojin was in Annam function in a similar fashion. They are written for the locals in Annam out of diplomatic courtesy. One example would be "On the Residence of the Celestial Envoy" 題天使館:

	On the third year of the Yuantong reign, the dawn of a new era was announced,	元統三年頒正朔
2	A imperial decree was sent from afar to the extreme south.	詔書遠到極南開
	The envoy banners entered into the embassy while the blue clouds stirred,	使旌入館青雲動
4	The immortal canopy arrived at the edge of the river as the white sun set.	仙蓋臨江白日回
	Why would we need Sima Xiangru's proclamation to instruct the Shu?	諭蜀豈勞司馬檄
6	Yuechang is finally seen paying tribute to the Zhou dynasty.[168]	朝周終見越裳來
	Returning home, the old folks will certainly ask me how this feels,	還家耆舊應相問
8	The transformative power of culture is now spread to all directions of the world.	文化如今徧九垓[169]

The above poem is a perfect illustration of the formulation of these diplomatic works: the poem begins first by gesturing back to how the envoys set off from the capital, then it proceeds to their arrival to Annam, and then the poem turns to two historical precedents which are related to the southwest border and can best capture the moment. It finally ends with a glorification of the empire's cultural

[168] Yuechang is said to be the name of a kingdom to the south of Jiaozhou. The envoys from this kingdom presented a white pheasant to the Zhou dynasty. When the envoys were asked by a minister from the Zhou court why they came, their response is that the elders in their kingdom said that there had been no severe rains and winds for years, and that this signified that a sage was on the throne in the Middle Kingdom.

[169] Fu Ruojin, *Fu Yuli shiji jiaozhu*, 218.

impact. The purpose of these poems determine how Annam was represented – the exotic landscape portrayed by Chen Fu disappeared completely in Fu Ruojin's work:

	The Hualin Village	華林村
	Near the pier of Hualin, the path along the river is winding,	華林步頭江徑迂
2	I faintly see a village in the sunny haze.	晴烟渺渺見村墟
	By the waters, the thatched cottage is surrounded by azure bamboos,	水邊茆屋圍青竹
4	Under the trees, green vegetation is hidden behind the wooden gates.	樹底柴扉掩綠蔬
	The elders of the Kingdom, cups in hand, all bid farewell to me,	國老把杯齊送別
6	Attendants from the embassy bring paper to ask for my calligraphy.	館人操紙解求書
	On my way of return, it so happens that the flowers bloom in cold.	歸程正遇寒花發
8	Pure fragrance everywhere follows the carriage of the envoy.	滿處清香逐使車[170]

Moving along the river from the pier to the Hualin village, the poet first plays with the visual perception of the landscape. At first, he can barely see the village from afar due to the sunny haze. As he approaches the village, his vision is again blocked by the bamboo groves. Step by step, the readers are led to the thatched cottage where the green vegetation are hidden behind its gates. The hidden objects have to be discovered through the poet's movement, and thus, although the portrayal of the landscape is extremely tranquil, the readers are led by the poet to gradually arrive at his destination. Up to this point, the portrayal of the village does not seem too different from any other suburbs in the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. The context of the poem is only given in the third couplet: the envoy is departing Annam and is on his way back to the Mongol-Yuan court. There is a series of exchanges happening here: the ministers sent Fu Ruojin off by holding a banquet for him, and he returns the

[170] Ibid., 219.

favor by giving them his calligraphy. Similarly, at the end of the poem, after the envoy brings peace to the Kingdom of Annam, he is rewarded with a fragrance rare in the winter time. The word *zhu* 逐 [chase or follow] is particularly clever here since it provides the flower scent a sense of movement while the action is undertaken by the envoy's carriage instead. Playing with sight and smell, motion and stillness, the poem demonstrates Fu Ruojin's ingenuity in crafting a regulated verse.

Instead of showcasing the exotic features of Annam, Fu Ruojin is more inclined to highlight how the envoys have successfully accomplished their mission and to emphasize the friendship fostered between the two states. Apart from a poem written on the rejection of a gift of female attendants from Annam, there are no signs of conflicts between the delegates and the Trần dynasty.[171] In fact, even the rejection of the gift from Annam should be considered part of a standard diplomatic protocol since Li Siyan, Xu Mingshan and Chen Fu had all written about refusing them. Fu Ruojin's mission is highly praised by his contemporaries as we can see in a recommendation letter written by Jie Xisi:

> For every single envoy who have visited Annam from the Qin and Han period to our dynasty, Fu Ruojin can enumerate their talent, names and dates of mission without leaving out anyone. Thus, he was consulted for every single diplomatic mission. […] When the tribute bearers from Annam arrived at the gate of the capital, they first asked for Master Fu's whereabouts.
>
> 要自秦漢而下，逮于我朝，凡使安南賢否、姓名、若出使歲月，皆歷數不遺，故凡使事悉以諮之，［……］及安南入貢使及國門，首問：「傅先生安在？」[172]

---

171 Ibid., 218.

172 This text was not included in Jie Xisi's literary corpus, and thus Liu Zhenlun 劉真倫 suspects that this piece may be a forgery. For his argument, see Liu Zhenlun, "Chen Yuan xiansheng 'Sadula' yinian buzheng" 陳垣先生〈薩都剌疑年〉補證, in *Minzu wenxue yanjiu* 2008(3): 87-92. Yang Kanghe 楊匡和, the annotator of Fu Ruojin's poetry collection, argues that Liu's suspicion is not founded since a lot of Yuan dynasty texts are preserved without entering into the literary collection of the original author. His argument can be found in *Fu Yuli shiji jiaozhu*, 23-25. For Jie Xisi's "Jie Wen'an gong songxing xu" 揭文安公送行序 (A Farewell Note composed by Jie Xisi), in *Fu Yuli shiji jiaozhu*, 335.

Indeed, from the poetry collection of Fu Ruojin, we know that he was visited by some Annam envoys and some precious incense was given to him as a present. He also asked by the Annam envoys again to produce some calligraphic works of previous texts. He gracefully agreed to most of their requests, yet when he was asked to create a calligraphy of the renowned "Lament on an Ancient Battlefield" 弔古戰場文 by Li Hua 李華 (715-766), he seized upon the opportunity to give his Annam friends a lecture:

> You asked me to create a calligraphy of "Lament on an Ancient Battlefield," and truly I do not want to produce it. Sages used weapons only when they had no choice but to do so. Now the Son of Heaven is mollifying the natives of all borderlands with his civil virtues. If he has no choice, then he may launch a punitive expedition. But how can he be compared with those rulers who crave triumphs and exhaust all military means to poison the world? I would not want to praise an ancient battlefield today. Furthermore, you are asking me for calligraphy: is it because I once visited your state as an envoy that I have won your recognition? I have heard that "one would not ask a benevolent person about warfare."[173] If such a question is raised, a gentleman would be ashamed to respond. You now ask me to write out the piece "Ancient Battlefield," this would suggest that I am not benevolent. This is to say that I failed to let your state know me in former days. For that too I would be ashamed and would not like to produce this calligraphy. You may say that the essay is meant to lament the past and offer criticism (of those in power), yet the words are already too mournful. From my youth, I cannot bear to recite it, let alone produce a work of calligraphy by writing it. If the papers are not to be returned blank, I

[173] A phrase taken from Dong Zhongshu's biography in *Hanshu* 漢書 (*Book of the Han*). See Ban Gu 班固, *Hanshu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1964), 56.2523.

would like to propose producing a calligraphy of "A Decree Sent to the King of Southern Yue Zhao Tuo" by Emperor Wen of the Han dynasty for you to take back. Alas! My calligraphy does not deserve much praise. Since you, the men from afar, have come all the way to make this request, I can tell that you are sincerely enamored of culture. Isn't this something that everyone should deeply respect?

求書《弔古戰場文》，而余意不欲書也。夫兵者，聖人不得已而用，今天子方以文德懷四裔，苟不得已，伐罪之師則有矣，豈若好功之主，窮兵以毒天下者哉？余不欲稱古戰場於今日也。且其求書於余，亦以余嘗使其國，而見知乎？吾聞伐國不問仁人，有問焉，君子且恥其對。今而求書古戰場文於余，將以余為不仁，是余前日不足見知其國，余又恥而不欲書之。藉曰文以弔古，有風刺之義，而其辭則已戚矣，自余幼既不忍誦焉，況書之乎？若紙不可虛反，則請書漢文帝《賜南粵王佗書》以歸之。嗚呼！余書不足稱也，遠人之求及此，蓋篤好於文者矣，豈不深可尚哉？[174]

The "Lament on an Ancient Battlefield," written in parallel prose, describes the gloom of an ancient battlefield and ends with an admonition against military expansion at the borders. Fu Ruojin interpreted the Annam envoy's request to produce a calligraphy of this piece of prose as a hidden complaint launched against the Mongol-Yuan emperor since it may imply the emperor is waging wars without considering the dire consequences. He also finds the detailed description of the casualties in the piece slightly distasteful, and hence he proposes producing instead a calligraphy of "A Decree Sent to the King of Southern Yue Zhao Tuo," which is a letter sent by Emperor Wen of the Han to warn Zhao Tuo about the futility of war and to urge him to revitalize the diplomacy between Han and the Southern Yue. The intent to replace Li Hua's prose with this letter could not be more obvious: Fu

[174] Fu Ruojin, *Fu Ruojin ji* (Gansu: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 268.

Ruojin is drawing an analogy between the Prince of the Southern Yue and the Annam ruler, suggesting that warfare in the borderland is caused by the actions of the southern neighbor of the Yuan dynasty and that the two countries should prevent future conflicts through diplomacy.

The fact that Fu Ruojin decides to record this exchange in a colophon deserves further explication. We could interpret his intention in multiple ways. First, as the representative of the Mongol empire, he was cautious that his calligraphy may be used to infer that the Mongol emperor was fond of war. To avoid this possibility, he feels compelled to highlight the hierarchy of the two states through a substitution of the piece he wrote. The colophon serves as a reminder of its tributary status for Annam.

Second, considering that Fu Ruojin might have composed this text for readers in the Mongol-Yuan dynasty, the colophon could also serve as a venue for Fu Ruojin to show his competence as a diplomat. In an age when the relationship between the Mongol-Yuan empire and the Trần dynasty had become more stable, there were less conflicts between the two states that had to be resolved through diplomatic negotiations. The requests of Annam turn to be a rare opportunity for Fu Ruojin to show his meticulous attention to details. In fact, if we look back at his mission to Annam, immediately after Fu Ruojin and his fellow delegates set off from the capital, Fu was said to have found out that the imperial edict issued by the Annam court has mistakenly referred to the ruler of the Trần dynasty as a king (*wang* 王) instead of a prince (*shizi* 世子). His thoroughness was highly praised by his contemporaries and contributed to his reputation as a successful envoy.[175] Here Fu Ruojin may have deliberately staged a diplomatic exchange that would demonstrate a similar attribute: he is a capable diplomat who stopped a potentially defiant gesture of Annam with his attention to details.

[175] Ibid., 290.

In any case, Fu Ruojin's colophon portrays Annam as a foreign entity that is attracted by the Chinese culture, but at the same time, potentially scheming to defame the Mongol-Yuan emperor. Even though Fu Ruojin has a more positive portrayal of Annam in his poems, this colophon offers us a brief glimpse of hostility. If we take into account the history of the Mongol-Annam diplomatic relations, it is understandable why the ministers from the Mongol-Yuan dynasty still harbor a sense of distrust – after all the two countries had been at war just 40 years earlier.

Conclusion

Juxtaposing the literary works composed by the two envoys, Chen Fu and Fu Ruojin, we can see how the representation of Annam differs drastically within the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. One way to account for such variations is that the diplomatic relations between the two countries had been improving over the years. Thus, while Chen Fu's poetry sought to exoticize Annam at a time when the two countries were at the brink of war, Fu Ruojin, on the other hand, was more concerned about using poetry to portray a peaceful side of Annam because he was facing a more stable foreign relations. But it is also worth noting that Chen and Fu are writing in two entirely separate traditions. The poems by Fu Ruojin fall into the category of envoy poetry: the focus of his works is not on the representation of Annam but the efficacy of his mission. Xu Mingshan provides a useful contrast: his existing poems are specifically for the Trần ruler. The function of the poems composed by Xu Mingshan and Fu Ruojin is mostly to offer political persuasion or to glorify the success of the mission. The practical function of these poems dictates how Annam would be represented – there is rarely any trace of Annam's foreignness in their works.

Chen Fu's poems are remarkably different as they are meant to be read by those who are in the Mongol-Yuan world. The purpose of his poems is not to describe his mission, but the exotic features of an alien world. The poet is self-conscious about the difficulty of finding a vocabulary that could

describe all the unfamiliar objects and practices and incorporate them into poetry. The motivation behind Chen's poem is to satisfy the curiosity of his readers, and it is particularly intriguing to see how the foreignness of the world he seek to represent prompted him to break from simply offering a link verse but to instead adopt a mixture of prose and poetry.

Chen Fu is a unique case since he was writing in a way quite different from the literary conventions. This is not to say that his poems are necessarily better than that of Xu Mingshan or Fu Ruojin, but these two types of works yield different ways of appreciation. The allure of Chen Fu's poems lies in his excitement in discovering the history and customs of an unknown world, while the aesthetics of the poems by Xu and Fu depends on their mastery of language since they have to craft the text to appropriately respond to a certain occasion.

Fu Ruojin's poems bring us back to the writings concerning the heavenly horse presented by the papal envoys. The aesthetics of the odes composed by the Mongol-Yuan ministers lie in how they bring together existing imagery within the literary tradition and glorify the imperial power. They are not motivated to represent an alienated world, and the journey of the papal envoys is only featured in their works as a glorification of the dynasty's power to cultivate those from afar.

Of course, the two cases presented here have some significant differences: in the case of the papal envoys, the Mongol-Yuan dynasty was receiving foreigners who came from a distant country. Thus, when the papal envoys arrived at the capital to present the heavenly horse, all the scholars from the Hanlin Academy hark back to the Zhou or the Han dynasty to look for references that could be useful to describe the current situation. The message they arrived at may not be the same, but they would look back to the history to construct their argument – for instance, Jie Xisi cited King Mu of Zhou to offer remonstrance to the Emperor while other scholars were more inclined to compare the Han Emperors to the current situation and offered praise to the Emperor for obtaining the tributary horse without waging wars.

For Annam, envoys were sent to a more familiar neighborhood. Long before the Mongol-Yuan dynasty invaded Annam, there are travelogues composed for the region. There are essentially more interactions between the people from Annam and the ministers in the Mongol court. The envoys' works diverge significantly, yet we can see that apart from Chen Fu, most of the envoys were not interested in exploring the culture of the foreign world, they write to affirm Yuan court's dominance over Annam. A common theme is emphasis on a hierarchical world order that can be turned into a foundation for making a political argument.

In both cases, the texts contain a potential force that would lure a reader to see the diplomatic relations of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty as a continuation of the idealized Zhou imperial order. This impression is often linked to the vocabulary employed in the literati's work. The use of terminologies like *wanghui* 王會 (the King's assembly) prompted later scholars to idealize the diplomatic relations of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty and to ignore the more dynamic power calculations behind every political move. The texts present to us the discursive limits of cultural interactions that determine how the international relations of the Mongol-Yuan court could be analyzed.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation explores the intersection of ethnic and cultural identities through an examination of the representations of cultural others during the Mongol-Yuan dynasty from the 13th to the mid-14th century. One basic question thread through all the chapters: How did the literati configure the cultural boundary between self and other in their works? To address this question, we have to take into account the strategic dimension of each literary text. In the first chapter, through a close reading of the Taoist travelogue composed by Li Zhichang, this project shows how cultural differences between the ethnic Han, Mongols and other Central Asians are represented for a religious agenda. While the destructive nature of war waged by the Mongols is highlighted in Li Zhichang's account, Yelü Chucai seeks to redefine this warfare as morally justifiable by appropriating the Chinese value system. The second chapter presents a similar problem. Before the Yuan dynasty was established, there were multiple ways to approach the *Hua-Yi* dichotomy. In order to attract Khublai Khan to adopt a Sinitic way of governance, Hao Jing and Xu Heng designs a theoretical framework that could both persuade the Mongol ruler to practice civil governance and provide the Mongol rule with a legitimate foundation. The first two chapters alert us the boundary between self and other are constantly shifting. Rhetoric strategies (chapter 1) and philosophical reasoning (chapter 2) are employed to legitimize Mongols' rulership over China.

In Chapter 3, this dissertation turns to the relationship between language policies and the awareness of cultural differences. Using the promulgation of the 'Phags-pa script and the use of a hybrid language as two lines of inquiry, this chapter highlights the tensions that arise in a multilingual environment. In the case of the 'Phags-pa script, some Han Chinese seek to tame the foreignness of the language by associating the promotion of the new alphabet with a more familiar reference (for instance, comparing the promotion of the 'Phags-pa script with the unification of script in the Qin

dynasty), while many others complained about the promotion of the new writing system encouraged scholars to discard Confucian learning. In another case presented in this chapter, the cultural superiority of literary Chinese was challenged by a hybrid language devised to integrate Mongolian grammar with vernacular Chinese. When these documents were gathered in court in 1330, the literati sought to rewrite the official documents composed in this hybrid language, and thereby reassert the cultural superiority of literary Chinese.

Chapter 4 considers from a broader context how diplomatic exchanges were recorded in the Mongol-Yuan period. Through a survey of the literary texts and artworks related to the papal envoys' visit to the Mongol court and the Mongol-Yuan court's exchange with Annam, this chapter highlights how literary conventions lure later readers to observe a continuity of the Mongol-Yuan's diplomacy with the Zhou dynasty in the distant past. If the expansion of the Mongol empire brought about more cultural interactions between different political entities in the world, it seems that such global consciousness were rarely reflected in the literary writings composed by the Mongol-Yuan courtiers and envoys.

The project is my first step in pondering what forces were affecting the construction of cultural identity. It is quite obvious that the four cases presented in this dissertation do not cover every aspect of cultural identity formation. Yet, using these four case studies as a point of departure, this project seeks to provide a deeper understanding on how language and literature can sometimes be strategically employed to reconstruct cultural boundaries, and it can sometimes function as a force that can limit our knowledge about cultural others.

In recent years, more and more scholars are interested in the making of Chinese identity. A thorough study of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty is necessary for us to consider how the regime constructed its legitimacy in a multi-ethnic empire. The legacy of Mongol rule had a profound impact in the Qing dynasty when the Manchus ruled over China. Of course, as one can see from the previous

discussions, Ming and Qing scholars were always debating how we could comprehend the history of the Mongol-Yuan dynasty. On the one hand, it is crucial for us to remember that the received knowledge about the Mongol-Yuan is often obtained through the lens of the Ming and Qing literati, who often projected their own beliefs and anxieties onto the Yuan historical figures. To understand what was happening in the 13th and the 14th century, one must be aware of the biases and presumptions in the later sources. Yet, while it is important to distinguish anachronistic projections with facts, it is also important to trace how the Mongol-Yuan was perceived and mediated in the later times. Issues such as ethnical allegiance has become much more dominant in the mid-Ming and during the Ming-Qing transition, using this research as a foundation, we can trace a historical development of certain concepts and trends.

My research thus provides a framework for further investigations. On the one hand, it allows us to examine how different concepts and the image of the Mongol-Yuan evolved in time. On the other hand, it also permits us to conduct comparisons in a broader historical framework. For instance, how were language policies conducted in other dynasties? What are the similarities and differences between the Mongol-Yuan empire and other multilingual societies? In a broader sense, my research does not only aim to contribute to a new understanding of the Mongol-Yuan, I hope this dissertation will provide a foundation for a more thorough investigation of the representation of cultural others.

APPENDIX 1

Translation of Other Poems on the Heavenly Horse

A. Zhou Boqi 周伯琦, "The Ballad of the Heavenly Horse: Done on Imperial Command"

天馬行應制作[1]

On the eighteenth day of the seventh month on the second (*renwu*) year of the Zhizheng reign, an envoy was sent by the Kingdom of Folang from the Western region to present a horse. One of them is eight feet three in height, and its length is one-and-a-half times its height. It is black in color and its two rear hooves are white. Sometimes it bends its neck, and sometimes it raises its head, its magnificent look is exceptional. Other famous horses from the Western Region are not comparable to it. Sporting a golden bridle and an elaborate headstall, its rider is from that kingdom. He has yellow beard and green eyes. He wore tight-fitting garments in two colors. His language is not comprehensible. Judging from his general meaning, he had crossed the river seven times and finally reached the Central Kingdom. On that day, the sky is bright and the air is crystal clear. The Grand Chancellors and the ministers reported his arrival. The Emperor arrived at the Ciren Hall. When he saw the horse, he sighed in admiration. He then ordered the horse to be nurtured in the Heavenly Rest Stable where it was fed with meat, millets, and kumis. He commanded the Receiver of Imperial Commands Kökö from the Hanlin Academy to order an expert painter to portray it, and to request the Auxiliary Academician Jie Xisi to compose an ode on it. There are no precedents for this since the founding of the dynasty. Can this possibly be what the ancients referred to as the "heavenly steed"? Having received the edict and composed a poem as an inscription to the painting, I, Zhou Boqi humbly submit this poem:

至正二年歲壬午七月十有八日，西域佛郎國遣使獻馬，一匹高八尺三寸，修如其數而加半，色漆黑，後二蹏白，曲項昂首，神俊超越，視他西域馬可稱者皆在下。金轡重勒，馭者其國人。黃鬚碧眼，服二色窄衣，言語不可通。以意諭之，凡七

[1] Gu Sili 顧嗣立, *Yuanshi xuan* 元詩選 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 1864-1865.

度海洋，始達中國。是日，天朗氣清，相臣奏進，上御慈仁殿臨觀稱歎，遂命育於天閑，飼以肉粟酒湩，仍敕翰林學士承旨臣孅孅，命工畫者圖之，而直學士臣揭傒斯贊之。蓋自有國以來，未嘗見也。殆古所謂天馬者邪。承詔賦詩，題所畫圖。臣伯琦謹獻詩曰：

	The flying dragon has been in the sky for ten years,[2]	飛龍在天今十祀
2	Through translations, people come to court regardless of the distance.	重譯來庭無遠邇
	Rarities from the rivers and tributes from the hills are all auspicious signs,	川珍嶽貢皆貞符
4	The heavenly steed leapt out from the pond in the west.	神駒躍出西洼水
	The small Folang Kingdom does not dare to keep it,	佛郎蕞爾不敢留
6	It was sent to travel tens and thousands *li* for four years.	使行四載數萬里
	The imperial carriage was at the palace in Xanadu to escape heat,	乘輿清暑灤河宮
8	The ministers summon him formally to enter into the royal gates.	宰臣奏進閶闔裏
	Eight feet in height, it is tall, strong and magnificent,	昂昂八尺皐且偉
10	It raises its head with a siphon tube, and its ears look like bamboo-pared,	首揚渴烏竹批耳
	Snow hitched on its pair of hooves, and its hair soaked in ink,	雙蹄縣雪墨漬毛
12	Its sparse mane is wreathed in mist, while wind rises from its tail.	疏鬚擁霧風生尾
	Adorned with vermilion flowers, azure ribbons and golden trappings,	朱英翠組金盤陀
14	Mirrors hanging on its square pupils reflect purple divine rays.	方瞳夾鏡神光紫
	Stretching its body, it nearly reaches the highest clouds,	聳身直欲凌雲霄
16	Hovering around the crimson hall, it is calm and quiet.	盤辟丹墀卻閑頎

[2] "The flying dragon is in the sky" is a phrase taken from the commentary of the first hexagram in the *Book of Changes*. It is a metaphor for the rulership of the Emperor. This line is another way to infer that Toghon Temür has ascended the throne for 10 years.

	The groom with a yellow beard wears some strangely patterned clothes,	黃鬚圉人服尨詭
18	Bit hanging loose like a thread, he nods to everyone.	韗鞚如縈相諾唯
	All officials bowed down and called out "long live your Majesty"	羣臣俯伏呼萬歲
20	In the early autumn, the wind and the sun at dawn are splendid.	初秋曉霽風日美
	The doors of the nine-tiered court opened,	九重洞啟臨軒觀
	and the Emperor visited the stable to take a look:	
22	Wearing a ceremonial dress and a bright cap, the Emperor is delighted.	袞衣耀冕天顏喜
	The painter portrays the scene and ingeniously capture its spirits,	畫師寫倣妙奪神
24	It was presented to the imperial bench and the Emperor is satisfied.	拜進御床深稱旨
	It was led forth to face the painting, and their undulations are the same.	牽來相向宛轉同
26	Once it entered into the Heavenly Rest Stable, who dares to match it?	一入天閑誰敢齒
	Our dynasty controlled a territory of an unprecedented scale,	我朝幅員古無比
28	The armored cavalry of the Northland are as thick as ants.	朔方鐵騎紛如螘
	Miasma is not found in mountains, and waves are not found in seas,	山無氛祲海無波
30	A hundred years since the dynasty has founded, the horse is now seen.	有國百年今見此
	The eight steeds to Mount Kunlun cause an indulgence of a roaming mind,[3]	崑崙八駿遊心侈
32	The Dayuan of Maoling brings about an excessive use of military might.[4]	茂陵大宛黷兵紀
	Our sage king did not reject nor pursue it,	聖王不卻亦不求
34	Dropping his hands without action, he pacifies the borders.	垂拱無為靜邊鄙
	Those from afar admires our culture and bring forth their local tribute,	遠人慕化致壤奠
36	The very corners of the earth know that heaven is merely a foot away.	地角已知天尺咫

[3] A reference to King Mu of Zhou and his journey to Kunlun.
[4] Alludes to the acquisition of Akhal-teke horses by Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty.

	Feeding on clover in our divine land, it will grow fat in the west wind,	神州苜蓿西風肥
38	Harness its haughty power to allow itself to be used	收斂驕雄聽驅使
	Year after year, the imperial entourage move between the two capitals,	屬車歲歲幸兩京
40	The eight simurgh bells and the close attendants bolster the spectacle.	八鸞承御壯瞻視
	The odes of "Zouyu" and "the Feet of Lin" are performed together,[5]	騶虞麟趾並樂歌
42	Pheasants of the Yue and hounds of the Lü are all attracted.[6]	越雉旅獒盡風靡
	I therefore know that this is the charisma of the true dragon,	迺知感召由真龍
44	The birth of the gift from the Fang constellation is no coincidence.	房星孕秀非偶爾
	Gold is not needed to build a lofty terrace,	黃金不用築高臺
46	The talented horse rises up upon hearing the call.	髦俊聞風一時起
	I wish to see everyone from this era to be fully content,[7]	願見斯世皞皞如
48	And just like Fuxi drawing the trigrams based on the chart, everything will be renewed.[8]	羲皇按圖畫卦復茲始

B. Wu Shidao 吳師道, "An Appraisal of the Heavenly Horse" 天馬贊[9]

On the seventh month in the autumn of the second year of the Zhizheng reign, the Emperor was at the Xanadu. The Kingdom of Folang presented a horse, which is one *zhang* and an extra one foot and three inches in length. It is six feet and four inches tall, and its height increases by one-third when it raises its head. Its body is purely black, and its two rear hooves

5 "Zouyu" and "the Feet of Lin" are respectively the first song of the in Shaonan 召南 and Zhounan 周南 the *Book of Odes*.

6 White pheasants were once sent from the Yuechang kingdom to the Zhou dynasty to acknowledge the presence of a sage. Hounds of the Lü were also tributes sent to the Zhou court – it prompted the Grand Preceptor to compose a song to instruct the King to pay cautious heed to his virtue.

7 The phrase "to be fully content" 皞皞如 is taken from *Mencius* 13.13.

8 The eight trigrams is traditionally believed to have derived from the sage Fuxi. He was said to have discovered a numerological diagram known as the "River Diagram" 河圖 (Hetu) from the back of a dragon-horse and created the trigrams based on it.

9 Wu Shidao, *Wu Shidao ji* (Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 2008), 244.

are white in color. It eats hay and millets double the amount normal horses consume, and sometimes it also eats meat and drinks kumis. Incredibly strong and energetic, it is truly a divine object. Folang is located at the west of the Western river and is tens and thousands *li* away from the capital. Their envoy crossed the vast oceans seven times, and arrived after four years of travel. The Emperor arrived at the Ciren Hall to accept the gift. After a month, he rode it back to return to the Yan region. He ordered the painter to create a portrayal and the scholar officials to compose odes for it. As a student in the imperial academy, I witness the grand event in person. I humbly pay obeisance with my hands and bow my head a hundred times, and I offer you this ode:

至正二年秋七月，上在灤京，拂郎國來獻馬，長丈一尺有三寸，高六尺四寸，昂首復增三之一焉。身純黑，後二蹄白。食芻粟倍常，間以肉湩。奇偉驍駿，真神物也。拂郎在西海之西，去京師數萬里，凡七渡巨洋，歷四年乃至。上御慈仁殿受之，後月，乘以歸燕，既勅畫工為圖，仍命詞臣賛之。臣某具員學館，目睹盛事，謹百拜稽首，而獻賛曰：

	The Fang constellation bestows its essence,	房星降精
2	A dragon emerges from the waters.	龍出水中
	Standing straight, it makes a majestic appearance.	挺生雄姿
4	The extreme west is then completely emptied.	西極為空
	The sage has sway over heaven,	聖人御天
6	His subjects do not dare to ride the steed.	臣不敢駕
	Spending four years on the way,	四年在途
8	It was then presented beneath the imperial steps.	祗獻墀下
	Dark clouds drape over its body,	玄雲披身
10	It has white jades on both of its hooves.	白玉並蹄
	Raising its head, it looks like a mountain,	昂首如山

12	Ten thousand horses yield to it with a neigh.	萬驥讓嘶
	The divine object comes in response to the times,	神物應期
14	There is no match since antiquity.	振古無匹
	Without any command, it comes by itself,	不命自來
16	This is virtue inspiring longing from afar.	懷遠之德
	This is the dragon the Emperor rode to examine all regions of the empire,	省方時乘
18	Within a day, it travelled between the two capitals.	一日兩京
	Marching with a good fortune without using a whip,	吉行無驅
20	Forever it honors the glory of the Emperor.	永奉皇明

APPENDIX 2

A Full Translation of Chen Fu's "An Account of Annam" with His Original Annotations

The following poem is a pentasyllabic verse composed by Chen Fu preserved in his *Drafts of Jiaozhou*.[1] Supplemented with detailed notes, this poem demonstrates the envoy's extensive knowledge on the history and customs of Annam, as well as the cultural prejudices related to that state.

	The Emperor's Virtue has nothing beyond its way,	聖德天無外
2	His gracious light illuminates the edge of the sea.	恩光燭海隅
	He thus sent an edict to the Eastern Yue,[2]	遂頒東越詔
4	The covenant was carried by the Confucian at the northern gate.	載命北門儒
	Ten thousand leagues away, the envoy staff was held in autumn,	萬里秋持節
6	A thousand soldiers held their falchions at night.	千軍夜執殳
	Those galloped in the vanguard grasp tight their bows and arrows.	前駈嚴弩矢
8	At the back, the cooks huddled with the wood and grass-gatherers.	後爨擁樵蘇
	They looked back at that land of Jiaozhou,	睠彼交州域
10	which was at first the territory of the Han.	初為漢氏區
	Towered galleys were dispatched and had overcome the foe,	樓船征既克
12	Trưng Trắc revolted and was then executed.	徵側叛還誅
	During the five dynasties, royal control slackened.	五代頽王紐

1 Chen Fu, *Chen Gangzhong shiji*, 17b-28a.

2 I choose to follow *Yuanshi jishi*, which has the character *dong* 東 instead of *huang* 黃.

14	Multiple domains split the authorized territory.	諸方裂霸圖
	The wind vapors has thus been blocked,	遂令風氣隔
16	One suddenly realized the virtues of the terrain were different.	頓覺版章殊
	Đinh Liễn ran rampant in former times,	丁璉前猖獗
18	While Lê Hoàn later had inappropriate ambitions.	黎桓後覬覦
	In one single morning, the legacy of the Trần has been established,	一朝陳業搆
20	And eight generations of Lý's rule was discontinued.	八葉李宗徂

Annam was originally Jiaozhou in the Han dynasty. In the Tang, a Protectorate was established.[3] In the Zhengming era (915-920) of the Later Liang, the local strongman Điền Thừa Mỹ[4] occupied the land. Dương Đình Nghệ (d. 937), Thiệu Hồng (d. 938),[5] Ngô Xương Ngập (d. 954) and Xương Văn (d. 965) competed with and attacked one another. During the early years of the Qiande reign (963-968) of the Song dynasty, Bộ Lĩnh (924-979), the son of Đinh Công Trứ, founded a new kingdom. His throne was succeeded by his son Liễn (d. 979) and Toàn (974-1001), and was usurped by the general Lê Hoàn (941-1005). Hoàn's son Chí Trung (986-1009) was again usurped by Lý Công Uẩn (974-1028). Their rule lasted for eight generations: from Công Uẩn to Đức Chính (1000-1054), to Nhật Tôn (1023-1072), to Càn Đức (1066-1128), to Dương Hoán (1116-1138), to Thiên Tộ (1136-1175), to Long Cán (1176-1210), to Hạo Sảm (1194-1226) till the *yiyou* year (1226) of the Jiading reign of the Song dynasty when the Trần family seized control of the state. The Trần clan originated from the Min area. There was one Trần Kính who obtained the illegitimate posthumous title Văn Vương. He was Lý's son-in-law. It was right at the time when Long Cán was growing old, losing his wit, and no longer with administrative affairs. Kính and his younger brother, who obtained the illegitimate posthumous title Khang Vương, stole the

3 In the Tang dynasty, six protectorates 都護府 were established in border areas. They were directly responsible to the central government, and were instituted to scout the frontier regions and pacify hostile tribes.

4 The name of the local tyrant referred here should be Khúc Thừa Mỹ 曲承美 instead.

5 This is a reference to the general Kiều Công Tiện 矯公羨, whose surname was recorded by the character Jiao 皎 in the *New History of the Five Dynasties*.

reins of power. Hạo Sảm was young, and Kính's son usurped the throne. Trần Kính overstepped by declaring himself Thượng Hoàng (Retired Emperor). He died, and his son Quang Bình (1240-1290) inherited the throne. He was named Weihuang in the Song. He submitted a memorial to be a tributary state of Our Dynasty, and received the title "King of Annam." He died, and his son Nhật Huyên (1258-1308) succeeded the throne. He was named Rizhao in the Song. He died, and now Nhật Tuấn (1276-1320) has taken the place to lead the multitudes. By now, the Trần s have gained control over the domain for sixty-nine years.

安南本漢交州，唐立都護府，梁貞明中，土豪田承美據其地。楊延藝、結洪、吳昌岌、昌文，互相爭襲。宋乾德初，丁公著之子部領立，傳子璉、璿，大將黎桓簒之。桓子至忠，又為李公蘊所簒。公蘊、德政、日尊、乾德、陽煥、天祚、龍翰、昊昱，凡八傳至宋嘉定乙酉歲，陳氏始奪其國。陳本閩人，有陳京者，偽謚文王，壻於李，值龍翰昏耄，不恤政事。京與弟本偽謚康王，盜國柄，昊昱冲幼，其子承簒立，僭號太上皇，死。子光炳嗣，在宋名威晃。上表內附，國朝封為安南王，死。子日烜立。在宋名日照，死。今日焌代領其眾，於是有國六十九年矣。

	The local customs are extremely vulgar,	下俗澆浮甚
22	No Sinitic rites and music can be found.	中華禮樂無
	To avoid taboo words, they mistakenly change the surnames to Nguyễn,	諱嫌訛氏阮
24	While drafting documents, the king transgresses and calls himself "the orphan."	托制僭稱孤

Lý is considered a taboo word in the kingdom. Those from the Lý family changed their surnames to Nguyễn. When they come to literary composition, they cannot find the appropriate words. After the king's father died, he called himself *guzi* (the orphan). He used this term in all his edicts and official documents, and when he was addressing his subjects.

國諱李字，姓李者皆易以阮。臨文為字不成，以父死，自稱孤子，表疏文移及對其群臣皆然。

Sacrifices are not offered to the ancestral temples, 祭祀宗祊絕

26 The clans are tainted by the marriages within each lineage. 婚姻族屬污

Although there are imperial tombs and temples, no seasonal rites and rituals are held. They are only dedicated to Buddhism. It was the custom of the Kingdom for men and women sharing the same clan names to marry. The spiritual tablets are arranged according to age but not to the regular order of descent. The wife of the chieftain today is the daughter of the chieftain's uncle Trần Hưng Đạo (1228-1300). The Trầns stole the Kingdom from the Lýs – this is truly a punishment.

雖有寢廟，無歲時祀禮，惟供佛最謹。國族男女與同姓為婚，互相匹偶。以齒不以昭穆。今酋之妻，其叔興道女也，蓋竊國於李，懲創而然。

The noble and the mean are all walking barefoot. 尊卑雙跣足

28 The old and the young share the same bald head. 老幼一圓顱

The people all walk barefoot. Some may tread with leather shoes, yet they will remove them as they enter a hall. When they perform a ritual to receive distinguished guests at the suburbs, a hundred people appear with their gowns and badges, and none of them have any footwear. All men have their head shaved. Those who have an official post cover their head with a green cloth. All the people are Buddhist monks.

民皆徒跣，間有躡革履，至殿則去之。郊迎之際，袍笏百人，皆跣而已。男子悉髡，有官則以青巾羃之。民悉僧也。

They ascend the submit as swift as a deer 陟嶠輕於鹿

30 And they glide through waves like ducklings. 泅波疾似鳧

The skin on their feet is thickened. They climb the hills as if leaping in the air, and they are not afraid of any thorns and thistles. Father and son, men and women, all bath in the same

river. They do it both in summer and winter. They are good at swimming. Some of them can dive for several hundred leagues.

足皮厚甚，登山如飛，芒刺悉無所懼。父子男女同川而浴，冬夏皆然。善水，有潛行數百里者。

They wear hats made with cloths and a slanted hook, 斜鉤青繒帽

32 Their black silk tunics sport round collars. 曲領黑羅襦

The color of their head cloth is dark green; they soaked the cloth in lacquer to make it. Using an iron wire to pass through the part that covers the forehead, the hat is one-foot tall in front. The wire is then bent to reach the neck, and a ribbon is used to tie up the back. The top of this headwear has an iron hook, and those with administrative roles will add a ribbon on the hook. At home, they will leave their hair unkempt like a criminal; and they will only wear a head cloth when they are meeting with guests. When a person travels afar, another person will follow and hold the headwear for him. Only the chieftain will wrap his bun with a fine black silk. Seen from afar, his headwear is just like the black turban worn by the Taoists except that his headwear is more protruding. His hair on the sides are exposed and hanging down. Everyone from the Kingdom wear black. Their black robes have hem at four points, and the overlapping collars are made with silk. Women also wear black, but their undergarment is white, which is extensively exposed and form an ornamental braid. The collars are four inches wide, and is thus different from others. Colors like green, red, yellow and purple are certainly not worn here.

巾色深青，髹繒為之，貫額以鐵線，前高一尺，而屈之及頸，以帶束反結其後，頂有鐵鈎，有職掌則加帶於鈎。家居囚首，見客乃巾，遠行則一人捧巾以從。惟酋髻以皂羅包束，遠望如道家綸巾，而益廣出，其旁髮皆露垂。國皆衣黑，皂衫四裾，盤領以羅為之。婦人亦黑衣，但白裏，廣出就以緣，其領博四寸，以此為異。青、紅、黃、紫諸色絕無。

Their words and laughter resembles the swallows before the hall, 語笑堂前燕

34 They scurry like crows from the roof. 趨鎗屋上烏

Their pronunciations sound boorish. They referred to the heaven as "*bowei*," the earth as "*yan*," the sun as "*fubomei*," the moon as "*bocha*," the wind as "*jiao*," the clouds as "*mei*," the hill as "*wowei*," the water as "*lüe*," the eye as "*wei*," the mouth as "*xue*," father as "*zha*," mother as "*na*," men as "*gan*," women as "*yudogai*," husbands as "*zhong*," wives as "*tuobei*," good as "*ling*," and no-good as "*zhangling*." Most are like these examples. The sound is fast and trilling, and greatly resembles the chirping of birds. They scurry in a light and frivolous manner. They come and go like wind. All of them wear clothes with the same pitch-black color. They look like ten thousand specks of wintry crows.

語音侏離，謂天曰「勃未」，地曰「煙」，日曰「扶勃未」，月曰「勃叉」，風曰「教」，雲曰「梅」，山曰「斡隈」，水曰「掠」，眼曰「未」，口曰「血」，父曰「吒」，母曰「娜」，男子曰「干」，女曰「於多蓋」，夫曰「重」，妻曰「陀被」，好曰「領」，不好曰「張領」，大率類此。聲急而浮，大似鳥語。趨進輕佻，往來如風，深黑一色，如寒鴉萬點。

On a *diya* litter, the body reclines sideways like a boar, 抵鴉身偃豕

36 One leaned forward like a fox while sitting on a *luowo* seat. 羅我背拳狐

Litter carriers there use one bolt of cloth that is more than one *zhang* in length.[6] They make use of two pieces of round wood, each five inches long, to carry the two edges of the cloth. Moreover, they tie strings to the round wood, and fasten a long bamboo pole across the two knots. The litter is carried by two carriers, and the passenger reclines sideways on it. The bearers carry the passenger just like they are hoisting up a lamb or a boar. This is called the "*diya*" chair. The classier ones use silk brocade, and the poles are painted with black lacquer. On the poles, the bearers carry a house made with black oiled paper. The house is more than four feet in height. The ridge is high and the eaves extend for four feet. The eaves are open during rain. On a sunny day, the house is discarded, and canopies are used instead. The

6 One *zhang* is 231 centimeters.

chieftain travels around in a red litter with crimson screens. He is carried by eight bearers, and the spectacle is quite remarkable. Saddle and bridle are positioned on the back of an elephant. These seats are known as "*luowo*." When one sits on these, he will have to curl up like a fox. Dozens of bells are tied to the lower jaws of an elephant. As they walk, a tinkling sound is made.

其舁人用布一匹，長丈餘，以圓木二，各長五寸，挈布兩端，更以繩挈圓木，上以大竹貫繩，兩人舁之，人側其中，若舉羊豕然，名曰「抵鴉」。貴者則以錦帛，扛用黑漆，上拖黑油紙屋。高四尺許，銳其脊而廣其檐，檐廣約四尺，雨則張之，晴則撤屋而用傘。酋出入以紅輦朱屏，八人舁之，甚麗。象背上施鞍轡，凡座名曰「羅我」，人坐其上，拳屈如狐。象頷編鈴數十，行則琅琅然。

Calling the temple "thousand years" shows fatuous ignorance, 寺號千齡陋

38 It is foolish to name a province "ten thousand *kalpa*." 州名萬劫愚

Envoys are housed in the Residence of the Grand Preceptor, where a small pagoda is situated on its left. This pagoda is called "Heaven grants one a thousand years of peace." A stele is erected before the temple, on which the temple was said to have been built in the eighth (*renzhen*) year of the Kiến Trung reign (1232). The term Kiến Trung is an inappropriate reign name used by the ancestor of the chieftain. The pagoda is built for the commemoration of the chieftain's mother *née* Lý as a means for her to attain happiness in the underworld. Lady Lý was given the illegitimate posthumous title Empress Dowager Từ Thuận, who was the daughter of Lý Long Trát (1173-1210). Trần Tuấn (1228-1300), the illegitimate Prince Hưng Đạo, occupies the "Ten Thousand *kalpa*" [Vạn Kiếp] prefecture. This is Langzhou in the Tang dynasty and was known as Langbo/Xili region where Ma Huan's (14 BCE-49 CE) army once stationed. Most people embrace Buddhism there, and the prefecture is thus named "Ten Thousand *kalpa*."

使者館於太師府，左有小刹曰「天啟千齡」。寺前有碑，載建中八年壬辰歲造，乃其祖僭號，為母李氏追悼冥福。李氏偽謚慈順太后，龍翰女也。偽興道王陳峻據萬劫府，即唐浪州。馬援駐兵浪西里地。甚重佛，故州名曰「萬劫」。

Pipes and flutes surround with some ugly performers, 笙簫圍醜妓

40 Sacrificial animals are offered to a licentious shaman. 牢醴祀淫巫

Once they held a banquet at their Jixian Hall [Hall of Gathered Worthies]. Ten male and ten female performers were sitting on the ground and they carried some musical instruments which resembles the *pipa*, zither and the one-stringed fiddle. While their ditties are in harmony with the tunes of the strings, their songs are performed first with some unintelligible chattering and then lyrics. Below the hall, there were entertainers balancing objects with their feet, climbing on beams, and playing rod puppets. There were also other men wearing brocade trousers who went bare-chested, leaping, flinging objects and howling. The women exposed their bare feet and danced by wiggling all their ten fingers. Their unseemly mien is blatantly displayed. A small shrine can be found before the gate of each household. The deity is named the "Great Man Ma," which is carved into a wooden statue. Its appearance is disgusting beyond description. Every full moon, the statue will be placed on the hall, so that the old and the young can kneel and worship around it.

嘗宴於其集賢殿，男優女倡各十人，皆地坐，有琵琶、箏、一弦之屬。其謳與弦索相和，歌則先哩唸而後詞。殿下有踢弄、上竿、杖頭傀儡。又有錦褲，裸其上體，跳擲號呶。婦人赤腳，十指爪槎枒起舞，醜態百出。人家門首必有小祠，其神曰「馬大人」，刻木像，猥惡不可名狀，朔望則陳於庭，老稚羅拜之。

The State Preceptor is protected by the green basin, 國尉青盤護

42 Military officers are patrolling with white wooden sticks. 軍掫白梃驅

Two men are in charge of the Kingdom: the chieftain's uncle, the illegitimate Grand Preceptor Trần Khải (1241-1294), and the chieftain's younger brother, the illegitimate Grand Commandant Trần Diệp. All state affairs, no matter how significant or trivial, are all controlled by Trần Khải and Trần Diệp. Every time they stepped out of a palanquin before the palace gate, the two of them will each carry two huge pieces of lumber, which are as

round as a mirror and are green in color. They are six feet wide. The sun and the moon, the North Dipper and the twenty-eight constellations are painted on the wood as a symbol of self-protection. Every province and county has an official post named "*jiangqu*." These officers are responsible for patrol operations and are also leading soldiers. Whenever there is a warning, he would bring all the strong men to the scene. They all equip themselves with weapons. They have neither bows nor arrows, instead they hold crossbows and javelins. Some of them also wield a white wooden stick.

當國二人，其叔偽太師陳啟，弟偽太尉陳曄，國事巨細，曄、啟皆專之。每至殿門下輿，則二人各執二大木，圓如鏡，色青，廣六尺，上畫日月北斗二十八宿，意以自障也。每州縣有官曰「將掫」，司巡徼之事，兼領士兵。有警則盡驅丁壯以往，器械悉自備，無弓矢，惟持藥弩、標鎗，亦有操白梃者。

	The Legal Officer adjudicates suits and cases in person,	閱條親獄訟
44	While the Script Interpreter controls the central administration.	明字掌機樞

In terms of official ranks, below the Commandant, there are the posts Legal Examiner and the Script Interpreter. Both are executive officials. Today Dinh Công Văn, Đỗ Quốc Khí and Lê Khắc Phục hold the posts. On the next level below are the Grand Secretary, the Assistant Minister, the Academician, the Correspondence Adjunct, the Head Commissioner, and the Three Supervisors. There is also the Legal Officer who was responsible for legislation and adjudication. Chiêu Minh,[7] Hưng Đạo, Chiêu Hoài, Chiêu Văn,[8] and Tá Thiên[9] from the clan of the chieftain all transgress and hold Prince designations. On the fourth day of the first month, the chieftain fells an ox and provides a meal for his officers. A great festival is celebrated on the fifth day of the seventh month, when people exchange greetings and gifts. Each government official present one livestock to their chieftain. On the sixteenth day, the chieftain holds a feast to thank them.

7 Trần Quang Khải 陳光啓 (1241-1291) who was the third son of the first emperor of the Trần Dynasty.
8 Trần Nhật Duật 陳日燏 (1255-1330) who was the sixth son of the first emperor of the Trần Dynasty.
9 Trần Đức Việp 陳德詰 (1265-1306) who was a son of second emperor of the Trần Dynasty.

官自司尉而下，有撿法、明字，皆執政官，今丁公文、杜國器、黎克復等為之。次有尚書、亞卿、翰林、奉旨、判首、三司。又有關條，則掌法令、刑獄。其族有昭明、興道、昭懷、昭文、佐天，皆僭王號。正月四日，椎牛饗其官屬。以七月十五日為大節，人家相問遺，官屬各以一口獻其酋，十六日開宴酬之。

The "guests among officials" are crawling slowly, 勃窣官中客

46 The hair of the "seated slaves" is disheveled. 鬅鬙座上奴

Most slaves have their forehead painted black. Those known as the "guests among officials" are the official entertainers, while those known as "the seated slaves" can serve beside the chieftain. All the others painted their forehead white.

奴皆涅其額，有曰官中客，則官奴也。曰座上奴，則可至酋左右，餘皆白。

The Censorate Assistant gathered in the imperial palace, 台章中贊糾

48 Local taxes are transported by the Administrator. 邑賦大僚輸

The post Assistant in the Censorate is established, which is equivalent to our Censor-in-chief. Their legal code includes some harsh punishments. Robbers and fugitives would have their fingers or toes cut off, and they are willing to submit to such punishment. Sometimes they will be executed by being crushed by elephants. There is a great bell tower in the Kingdom where the people can strike the bell when they want to make a complaint. A Commissioner-general is delegated to each prefecture, and an Administrator is found in each county. Heavy taxes are imposed. Fish, shrimps, vegetables and fruits are all confiscated as taxes. All these are decided by the Administrator.

置御史台中贊，即中丞也，刑法酷甚，盜及逃亡，斮手足指，其人甘心，或付象蹴殺之。國有大鐘樓，民訴事扣鐘。州設安撫通判，縣有大僚，箕斂煩重，魚蝦蔬果，悉以充斂，皆大僚主之。

Officers levy duties on betel nuts, 吏権檳榔税

50 The people collect rent by leasing Parthian trees. 人收安息租

It produces the largest amount of betel nuts, and the taxes involved are also heavy. Officers are appointed specifically to levy the tax. Sap and leaves are collected from the Parthian trees, and are made into small balls about several inches in size. The annual rental income can be quite profitable, yet this is different from the Parthian trees in the Western Region.
產檳榔最多，其稅亦重，專立官権之。安息木取其津及葉，揉為小團，大數寸，歲收租利甚厚，然與西域安息不類。

Gold cannot be used to redeem one's punishment, 黃金刑莫贖

52 It is hard to go against the rules of the purple canopy. 紫蓋律難踰

Gold and silver among the people, even a single penny, are all seized by the authorities. If any common folk uses it, the person will be sentenced to death. The order of precedence among the officials can be observed through the number of canopies they carried. The Grand Chancellor and other prominent officials would use three green canopies. Those with a lower rank would use two or one canopy. Only those from the chieftain's family can use the purple canopy. Others dare not use it.
民間金銀，雖銖兩悉徵送官，有私服用者罪死。官品崇卑，視傘為差。卿相則用三青傘，次二傘、一傘，若紫傘，惟親族用之，他人不敢用。

Alas! The Anhua bridge is perilous! 安化橋危矣

54 How dangerous is the Mingling Pavilion? 明靈閣岌乎

Sixty *li* from the envoy's residence is the Anhua Bridge. One *li* after crossing the bridge, one reaches the north of the Qinghua Bridge. There are nineteen houses. The gate leading to the chieftain's mansion is called Yangming Gate, where the pavilion above it is called Chaotian Pavilion. The gate on the left is called Rixin Gate, and the gate on the right is called Yunhui

Gate. The courtyard inside the gates is several dozen *zhang* wide. One can ascend by the steps on the east. The plaque on the hall is inscribed with the characters Jixian Hall. There is a grand pavilion above known as Mingling Pavilion. One can go through the right chamber and reach the main hall, Dehui Hall. Its left gate is called Tongle Gate while its right is called Qiaoying Gate. All the plaques are inscribed with a golden ink.

自館行六十里過安化橋，復一里至青化橋北，其上為屋十九間。至酋所居門曰陽明門，上有閣曰朝天閣，左小門曰日新門，右小門曰雲會門。門內天井，廣袤數十丈，升自阼階。閣下扁曰集賢殿，上有大閣曰明靈閣，道右廡至大殿曰德輝殿，左門曰同樂門，右門曰橋應門，其扁皆金書。

Tunes demonstrate the "Lament for the times of misfortune," 曲歌嘆時世

56 The music "Enter the Imperial Palace" is performed. 樂奏入皇都

Around a dozen men, all shirtless, link arms and stamp their feet. They go in circle and sing for a long time. When a man from a row lift his hands up in the air, then around a dozen men will follow. They will do the same when one drops his hand. Their songs include "Zhuang Zhou's butterfly dream,"[10] Bai Juyi's "A mother bidding farewell with her sons,"[11] "Scholar Wei and Jade Flute,"[12] "The stamping song," and "The full-voiced song." The song "A Lament for the Times of Misfortune" conveys the deepest sadness and melancholy, yet its lyrics are simply too hard to comprehend. When a feast is held on the hall, the grand music is performed back behind the corridor. Thus the musical instruments and musicians are not to be seen. Every time when the ale is poured, one will then call out loudly, "perform this piece of music!" Those behind the corridor will hear that and perform accordingly. Their tunes include "Subdue the Yellow Dragon," "Enter the Imperial Palace," "A Banquet at the

[10] A famous anecdote in *Zhuangzi* where Zhuang Zhou dreams of himself being a butterfly. After Zhuang Zhou awakes, he is uncertain whether he is a butterfly dreaming of being Zhuang Zhou.

[11] "A mother bidding farewell with her sons" is the title of one Bai Juyi's 白居易 (772-846) "new *yuefu* poems" about a woman who had to leave her sons behind because her husband was marrying a new wife after his victorious return from the frontier.

[12] This is presumably the romance between a Tang general Wei Gao 韋皋 (745-805) and a courtesan Han Yuxiao 韓玉簫.

Jasper Pool," and "Wind on the River." These melodies sound quite archaic, yet they are short and rapid.

男子十餘人，皆裸上體，聯臂頓足，環繞而久歌之，各行一人舉手，則十數人皆舉手，垂手亦然，其歌有《莊周夢蝶》、白樂天《母別子》、《韋生玉簫》、《踏歌》、《浩歌》等曲。惟《嘆時世》最愴惋，然漫不可曉。大宴殿上，大樂則奏於廡下之後，樂器及人皆不見，每酌酒，則大呼曰樂奏某曲，廡下諾而奏之。其曲曰《降黃龍》、曰《入皇都》、曰《宴瑤池》、曰《一江風》，音調亦近古，但短促耳。

The local always bore stamens of dragon flowers on walls, 龍蕊常穿壁

58 Betel vines never left the goblets. 蔞藤不離盂

The stamens of the dragon flowers and the Parthian aroma oils are mixed and made into small poles in the shape of a chopstick. They are about one foot in length. People stick them onto the wall and burn them. From morning till night, they are not extinguished. The scent is quite pure. The people from Fujian and Guangdong eat dry betel nuts, and consume them with betel vines and lime powder. The Jiaozhou residents only eat soft betel nuts. They pick the tender young betel nuts, roll it in a two-inch betel leaf with clam shell powder and consume it. The noblemen stored betel nuts in little boxes made out of bronze. Their servants always carry it and stay close to their masters. They chew the betel nuts day and night without ceasing.

以龍花蕊和安息香油揉為小鋌如箸，長尺許，插壁上然之，終日不絕，香甚清馥。閩廣人檳榔皆啖乾者，以蔞藤石灰和之。交人惟啖軟檳榔，取新采嫩者，以蔞葉二寸，塗蜆灰裹而食。貴者以黃銀榼，僮攜之不離左右，終日咀嚼不少休。

Tortoise-shell hairpins are lodged on their thinning hair, 玳簪穿短髮

60 Insects and knots carved on their rough skin. 蟲紐刻頑膚

The women cut their hair, leaving only three inches to be tied on top of their hand. They roll the tip of their hair and tie them like a brush. They do not have coiffures and coils at the back of their heads. They do not use things like fragrant oils and jade hairpins. The wealthy wear tortoise-shell hairpins, and the rest use only bones and horns. Gold or pearls cannot be found at all. Everyone tattoo their body with patterns of connected hooks twisting and winding, comparable to the design on the ancient bronze incense burners and cauldrons. Some tattoo words on their chest stating that they will sacrifice their lives for what is right, and realize this ideal through serving the Kingdom. Even the chieftain's sons and grandsons practice that.

婦人斷髮，留三寸束於頂上，屈其杪，再束如筆，無後鬢鬟，亦無膏沐環珥之屬。富者玳瑁珥，餘骨角而已，錙銖金珠無有也。人皆文身，為鉤連屈曲之文，如古銅爐鼎款識。又有涅字於胸，曰義以捐軀，形於報國，雖有子姓亦然。

Holes pierced through every room, 有室皆穿竇

62 No beds are found without brazier. 無床不尚爐

Layered frames are not used to construct houses. The main beam rises straight to the eaves as if it were slanting. Though the beams can be extremely tall, the eaves are only four or five feet in width. There are also some low slung ones, that is why they are all very dark inside. They build a window next to the floor, just like a hole in the wall for a dog. People cover the floor with rush mat, and sit in the direction facing the source of light. On the sides of their sleeping couches, a coal-burning brazier can always be found. This is true even in high summer, because they need to avoid the steaming humidity.

屋無折架法，自棟至檐，直峻如傾，棟雖至高，檐僅四五尺，又有低者，故皆黑暗，則就地開窗，如狗竇然。人用蒲席地，坐而向明。睡榻之側，必有爐熾炭，盛暑亦然，以避濕蒸之氣。

At the Tĩnh Hoa Prefecture, boats form a marketplace, 星華舟作市

64 Water encircles the Hoa Phúc Province. 花福水為郛

Tĩnh Hoa Prefecture was called Huanzhou in the Tang dynasty. It is located more than two hundred *li* from the city of Jiaozhou. Boats carrying foreigners from overseas touch each other. They trade on the boats, and the market has been quite robust. The ancestral temple of Chiêu Văn, the uncle of the chieftain, and his riches can all be found here. This is indeed a great town. Jiaozhou does not have a proper city wall. There is only a low barricade made of mud. To the west of the Jiaozhou city is the Hoa Phúc Province, which is surrounded by waters. There are four bridges, the Mạc Kiều, Tây Dương, Ma Tha and Lão Biên, which are used to facilitate transportation.

星華府即唐驩州，去交州城二百餘里，海外諸番，舟航輻輳，就舟上為市甚盛，酋叔昭文祖廟與其重寶皆在，實大鎮也。交州無城壁，土牆睥睨而已。西有花福州，以水圍繞，前有莫橋、西陽、麻他、老邊四橋，以通出入。

	A towering hill divides the La region,	突兀山分臘
66	In a vast blur, the waves pour into the Lu river.	汪茫浪注瀘

The west of the Kingdom is enclosed by mountains. Within its territory, only Jilang, Baotai, Foji and Ma'an are of high altitudes. There is one Chitu Hill in the Shanyu province at the southwest, which is ten thousand yards high piercing through the sky. It stretches several hundred […] After crossing the Nansan River with a raft, one walks forty *li* to reach Fuliang River. The water is surging and swift, though the river is not too wide. The south of the river is known as Qiaoshi where many locals reside. Forty-four *li* further is Guihua River, which is also known as Lu River. Its width is equivalent to that of Mo'e river. The river flows west from the Dali region, and enters the sea in the southeast. This is the downstream of the Lu River where Zhuge Liang (181-234) crossed.[13] There are four fords. Sea levels rise and fall without a fixed schedule.

[13] Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 launched a southern campaign in 225 as a response to the rebellions started by local governors in the Nanzhong 南中 region and intrusions by the southern barbarians.

其國西面皆山，惟寄狼、寶台、佛跡、馬鞍於境內為高。西南善汝縣有赤土山，萬仞插天，綿數百［缺一行］南珊江以筏渡，行四十里至富良江，水湍急，不甚闊。江之南名橋市，居民頗眾，又四十四里曰歸化江，一曰瀘江，闊與漠鄂等。江自大理西下，東南入于海，即諸葛武侯渡瀘之下流也。有四津，潮汐不常。

	The forests grow thick near the Mice Pass,	鼠關林翳密
68	A stream winds around the Wolf Fort.	狼塞澗縈紆

Around a dozen *li* southeast to Qiuwen, one ascends the summit and climbs over the mountain. Traveling to the southwest between the two hills, one would first see some yellow floss grass and tall bamboos. Then deep woods filled with lush trees unfold. The water is not many feet wide, yet it has hundreds of twists and turns. One may have to cross the river every hundred steps or traveling every half *li*. This crossing would happen sixty to seventy times. After climbing over another hill, one would find ancient trees and dark vines flanking the road. Giant boulders stick out, while bamboo groves can be found with overgrown shrub. This is extremely perilous, and is known as the Mice Pass. There are cliffs further in the west., which stretch endlessly in a splendid and magnificent manner. This is the Wolf Lodge Mountain. There are the green cliffs and dark ledges filled with strange trees and plants that grow in dense profusion. Flying parrots and peacocks are calling to each other. Countless apes are found in this place. After thirty *li*, one arrives at the Thorny Bamboo Pass, which is guarded below by soldiers. The pass is located at the intersection of the two mountains. Only path for horses goes through this point. The large bamboos are all around two feet in diameter, with awns on them. This is the strategic point of the Kingdom.

丘溫東南行十數里，陟岡度嶺。西南行，兩山間，初所見黃茅修竹，既而深林茂樹，水闊不數尺，然周遭百折，或百步一涉，或半里一涉，凡六七十。復度一嶺，夾道皆古木蒼藤，有巨石挺出，篁竹叢薄，最為嶮，名老鼠關。西行有山峰，秀拔綿亘不絕，是為寄狼山。翠壁蒼崖，異木翳密，鸚鵡孔雀，飛鳴互答，猿猱無數，凡三十里，抵刺竹關，下有兵守之，關上兩山相交，僅通馬道。大竹皆圍二尺，上有芒刺，蓋其國控扼之地也。

The shrine of Shi Xie is about to be flooded with people. 士燮祠將壓

70 Gao Pian's pagoda is not yet abandoned. 高駢塔未蕪

Shi Xie (137-226) from the Wu was a native of Cangwu. He was one of the four sons in his family. While his three siblings were respectively the Administrators of Hepu, Jiuzhen and Nanhai, he was the Administrator of Jiaozhi. He carried out some benevolent policies. After he died and was buried, the locals have been offering sacrifice to him with respect. Later when Gao Pian (821?-887) pacified Jiaozhou, he built a stone pagoda to the left of Qiaoshi near the bridge crossing the Fuliang River. The pagoda still exists and is towering at the same place.

吳士燮，蒼梧人。兄弟四人，一為合浦太守，一為九真，一為南海，士燮為交趾太守，有惠政，死葬焉，土人祠之甚謹。高駢既定交州，遂於富良江上橋市之左立石塔，巋然猶存。

Iron ships are seen under the shadows of the waves, 鐵船波影見

72 On the bronze pillars, traces of earth has dried up. 銅柱土痕枯

When Ma Yuan launched an expedition against Trưng Trắc, he built four iron ships and they had all sunk into the sea. Even now, one still seems to see these ships when the water is clear. Bronze pillars are erected by Ma Yuan at the Dryland Post and carved with the following inscriptions: "if the pillars break, the people of Jiaozhou will be destroyed." Trần Nhật Huyên had buried the pillars in soil and built a temple on site to honor the General who subdues the waves.[14]

馬援征徵側，造鐵船四隻沈於海，今水清猶彷佛可見。銅柱，援所立也，在乾地鋪，其刻有云：銅柱折，交人滅。今陳日烜以土埋之，上建伏波祠。

[14] *Fubo jiangjun* 伏波將軍, literally the General who subdue the waves, was the official title granted to Ma Yuan.

In the marketplace, numerous benches are placed, 墟落多施榻

74 Over high cliffs, the roads change often. 顛崖屢改途

Markets can be found in the village. They are open every two days with a wide range of commodities gathered there. Three houses are built in every five *li*. Benches are placed on all sides to form the venue of a marketplace. When an envoy arrives at the Kingdom, he would not be allowed to travel in the old path. Every time, a new pathway will be made by digging through the hills. He would have a difficult journey through winding roads. This is to show that the Kingdom is in remote and treacherous terrain.

村落有墟，每二日一集，百貨萃焉。五里則建屋三間，四面置榻，以為聚墟之所。使臣至其國，不復行舊徑，皆鑿山開道，縈回跋涉，意以示險遠也。

Thousands of ships are trading in the salt marshes, 千艘商斥鹵

76 With four rounds of harvest, grains are abundant. 四穫粒膏腴

The Kingdom do not have any reserves, and they rely on trading with merchants on voyage. Grains ripen four times per year. Even deep in winter, the seedlings are exhibiting vitality.

國無儲蓄，惟恃舟航賈販。稻歲四熟，雖隆冬，苗芃芃然。

Short seedlings for mulberry trees are planted in the garden, 短短桑苗圃

78 Thorny bamboos are densely clumping around the road. 叢叢竹刺衢

Mulberry trees are planted every year for the cultivation of silkworms. Each household owns three to five *mou* of mulberry fields surrounded by bamboo fences. Large thorny bamboos are seven or eight inches in diameter. Its spikes are as sharp as iron. One can cut and replant the bamboo in soil, it will continue to live.

桑椹逐年種以供蠶，每家三五畝，竹籬環之。刺竹大者徑七八寸，刺堅如鐵，斬而插之則活。

An ox banana droops down like a sword, 牛蕉垂似劍

80 Dragon lichees are adorned with pearl-like fruits. 龍荔綴如珠

There is a banana of an extremely large variety that does not wither in winter. A single stem grows from the center of the plant, with flowers on each and every joint. When the flower is too heavy, the stem will bend accordingly. When it bears fruits, it droops down. Each spike has several dozens of fruits. They are several inches in length and are comparable to soap beans. When the outer skin is peeled, it is as soft and mushy as green persimmon and is extremely sweet and refreshing. It is also known as ox banana. Dragon lichees have fruits resembling those of a small lichee. The pulp tastes like longan. The tree and leaf of this fruit are also comparable to those of longan. Both longan and small lichee are well-known precious fruits in the past. Jack fruit is as big as a gourd. The skin is covered with kinky nodules like Buddha's topknot. The taste is extremely sweet. The flesh of a human-face fruit is sweet and sour. The kernel has two eyes, a nose, and a mouth. There are also coconuts, silverberries and Indian gooseberries, all of which are edible delicacies.

芭蕉極大者，冬不凋，中抽一幹，節節有花。花重則幹為所墜。結實下垂，一穗數十枚，長數寸，如肥皂，去皮，軟爛如綠柿，極甘冷，一名牛蕉。龍荔實如小荔枝，味如龍眼，木與葉亦相似。二果，古名奇果。有波羅蜜，大如瓠，膚礧砢如佛髻，味絕甘，人面子肉甘酸，核兩目口鼻皆具。又有椰子、盧都子、餘甘子，皆珍味可食。

Parrot snails are displayed in precious winecups, 寶斝羅鸚鵡

82 Renowned aromatics resemble thin slices of francolins. 名香屑鷓鴣

The color of parrot snails is as red as mica. Their shape resembles the beak and wings of a parrot, hence their name. Among the incense they produced, most of them are of the agarwood variety. They also have sandalwood. The most precious ones are those with spots like a francolin.

鸚鵡螺，色紅如雲母，形嘴翅似鸚鵡，故名。香材最多水沈，旃檀亦有之，似鷓鴣斑者為貴。

Ghosts are painted on the flying banners, 揭旌圖鬼像

84 Striking the watchman's rattle, the soldiers are gathered. 擊柝聚兵徒

Their banners are yellow, black, green and red in color. They are bright in appearance and rectangular in shape. Star spirits and heavenly immortals are drawn on these banners. Some resemble the appearance of Rākṣasa. When the people call and gather their peers, they will cut the huge bamboo poles as tubes and tap on it. One can hear it even from afar.

旌旗黃黑青紅簇色四腳，中畫星官天神，或如羅剎之狀。呼集儔類，則以大竹截為筒，叩之，雖遠亦聞。

They drink with their nose, just like a ceramic pot. 鼻飲如瓴甋

86 Their heads soar like well pulleysf. 頭飛似轆轤

They are accustomed to drinking through their noses like cows. They may use a small straw to sip the ale. The heads of some Dong people are able to leave their bodies and fly away with their ears as wings. At night, their heads fly to the seaside and feed on fish and shrimps. Their heads return at daybreak, and their bodies look as perfect as before, yet a trace, similar to a red thread, would appear under their necks.

習以鼻飲，如牛然，酒或以小管吸之。峒民頭有能飛者，以兩耳為翼，夜飛往海際，拾魚蝦而食，曉復歸，身完如故，但頸下有痕如紅線耳。

Pythons skin becomes drums for beating, 蚺皮為鼓擊

88 Shrimp whiskers are made into canes offering support. 蝦鬚作筇扶

A large python can reach the size of a tree as big as a man's embrace. Their length matches their size. The locals cure their skin and peel off the scales, and use it as the surface of a drum. They are several feet wide, and only the skin on their back is used. They never use the skin from their belly. Viewing them in daylight, they are black in nature but with white stripes, which forms a lozenge pattern. The people from Jiao loves to place these instruments in the front row. Large crustaceans are as big as pillars. Their whiskers can be as long as seven or eight feet. Those around the shore use them as canes. They are quite superior.

蚺蛇大者，如合抱之木，長稱之，腊其皮，刮去鱗，以鞔鼓面，闊數尺，但用背皮，腹皮不與也。向明視之，黑質白章如方勝，交人樂以為前列。巨蝦大如柱，鬚有長七八尺者，海濱之人以為拄杖，甚佳。

Each household is certain to boil snakes and vipers, 家必烹蛇虺

90 Their men can transform into tigers and leopards. 人能幻虎貙

The snakes on hills and vipers in water form their daily meals. Sometimes they also minced and pickled it. The people of Dong practice sorcery. By chanting incantations and training, they can transform themselves into tigers and fight with deer and roe, devouring them raw. Yet this does not happen frequently.

山蛇水虺，乃其常膳，間以充脯醢。峒民有妖術，誦咒修煉，則幻形為虎，搏獐鹿生啖之，然不常有也。

Similar to fish scales, the roof tiles are gleaming on the eaves. 魚鱗檐粲瓦

92 Just like tail feathers of the pheasants, the rafts are floating on the sea. 鵲尾海浮桴

The shape of the roof tiles looks similar to planks. A bamboo is cut open into halves and place horizontally to serve as a column, and to be nailed with other bamboo canes. The roof tiles are nailed to the column. Just like fish scales, the tiles are piled up one by one from the eaves to the ridge. Their boats are light and long, and the wooden hull are rather thin. The stern of the boat resembles the wings of mandarin ducks with its two sides turned up. It can

carry thirty people, and the maximum capacity reaches a hundred. It is as swift as if it were flying.

瓦形如板，上正方而銳，其下之半，如古圭然，橫半竹以為棧，以為竹釘，釘其瓦於棧上，自檐以次相壓至屋脊，宛如魚鱗。舟輕而長，板甚薄，尾如鴛鴦之翅，兩旁翹起，操以三十人，多有至百人者，其疾如飛。

Holding a batch of sand, water crossbows create a blast, 水弩含沙擲

94 Leaving their caves, the *shancan* are sturdy. 山獀出穴麄

Water crossbows are also known as the gear which holds and shoot a batch of sand. With a gush of air, it can shoot for a range of thirty steps. When one's shadow is being shot, the person will only experience some itchy rashes. The flesh must be immediately cut off with a knife, or else the person will certainly die. Since poisonous insects and toxic drugs are ubiquitous south of Guangdong, if someone from the central plains who do not know how to protect oneself arrives at this place, it is almost certain that they will be harmed. The *shancan* are also called *shandu*. They build nests in huge trees for residence. Some may reside in stone caves. They leap around with only on one leg. Men can be bewildered by them. It is said that they belong to the category of mountain goblins and water monsters.[15]

水弩一曰含沙射工，以氣射三十步，射中其影，但覺紅癢。即以刀抉去肉，不爾必死。大率毒蟲毒藥，廣以南多有之，中州人至此，不善寶護，必為所害。山獀一曰山都，居在大木為巢，或居岩穴，獨足跳躑，能眩惑人，蓋山鬼水怪類云。

Crocodiles growl like rolling thunder, 鱷魚鳴霹靂

96 From the dragon's birth emerges a Buddhist pagoda. 蜃氣吐浮屠

[15] *Shancan* was an appellation for the mountain goblins, and it was also referred to as *shanxiao* 山魈 in earlier texts. The lore of this creature has been studied in detailed by Richard von Glahn. See von Glahn, *The Sinister Way: The Divine and the Demonic in Chinese Religious Culture* (Berkeley, CA : University of California Press, 2004), 98-129.

Large crocodiles are three to four *zhang* tall. They have four legs and resemble the features of lizards. They are yellow in color and their tails are trimmed. They have jagged mouth and serrated teeth. They are also known as *hulei* [sudden thunder], as their voice is like a thunderbolt. When a deer walks on the cliff and hears its roar, it gets scared and falls down. Most of these deer are eaten by crocodiles. There are many big fish in the sea. Among them, the baleen whales are the most powerful. Even a small one is several thousand feet in height. It is often said that they can swallow a boat, and this is certainly not a rumor. The dragon *shen* breathes out mists between spring and summer that covers the sky. The mists take the shapes of mansions and palaces. Sometimes it also resembles a seven-level pagoda. People often see it.

鱷魚大者三四丈，四足，似守宮，黃色修尾，口森鋸齒，一名忽雷，其聲如霹靂，鹿走崖上，聞其嗥吼，則怖而墜，多為鱷所啖。海中大魚多有之，惟海鰍最偉，小者亦數千尺，吞舟之說非虛也。蜃於春夏間吐氣蔽天，如樓台宮室，亦有如七級塔者，人往往見之。

	Staying in this province, I am pained by the separation,	寓縣傷分阻
98	Living beings are trapped in a poisonous snare.	生靈困毒痡
	Dancing between staircases, the chieftain has not yet made his submission.[16]	舞階猶未格
100	How can he be summoned by some broken bamboo strips?[17]	折簡豈能呼
	On the Grand Altars, we first had the news from the Father of War,	大社初傳禡
102	It is fitting that captives were presented at the commander's gate.	轅門合受俘
	The *pixiu* briefly rested its weapon,[18]	貔貅微偃戢
104	Snakes and boars for a moment went into hiding.	蛇豕偶逃逋

[16] A reference to "Da Yu Mo" 大禹謨 in *the Book of Documents*, which stated "The Di set about diffusing on a grand scale the virtuous influences of peace - with shields and feathers they danced between the two staircases. In seventy days, the lord of Miao came (and made his submission)" 帝乃誕敷文德，舞干羽于兩階，七旬有苗格.

[17] An allusion to an exchange between Wang Ling 王凌 (172-251) and Sima Yi 司馬懿 (179-251). Wang Ling led a rebellion against Sima Yi, and was later forced to submit to the Sima clan. Wang claimed that Sima should have summoned him to surrender with an informal letter written on some broken bamboo strips.

[18] *Pixiu* refers to a mythological creature which wards off evil and is in charge of wealth. Since the creature seems to project a sense of strength, the term *pixiu* is often used as a reference to brave soldiers.

	Though Heaven has already punished the chieftain's misdeeds,	天已殂渠惡
106	The people still follow his illegitimate offspring.	民猶奉僭雛
	The situation is just like Wei Chun's occupation of the Long area,[19]	勢如純據隴
108	His policies are similar to that of Sun Hao who brought down the Wu.[20]	政以皓亡吳
	With a phoenix letter, the imperial command is reiterated,	鳳札重宣令
110	With a savage mind, these wolves should submit to their punishment.	狼心更伏辜
	He is fortunate to be spared from the executioners' axe,	幸能寬斧鑕
112	Yet he still yearns for the muddy road.	猶自戀泥塗
	Presenting this hymn to honor the Son of Heaven,	獻頌尊天子
114	Memorials submitted, the Grand Masters are dispatched.	騰章遣大夫
	Through translation, their words can be examined,	象鞮言可訂
116	The events recorded in these worm-eaten books are not false accusations.	蠹冊事非誣
	What we wants to achieve is the reacquisition of the borderland,	功欲收邊徼
118	To gain authority, we rely on the plans of the court.	威須仗廟謨
	With my body cleansed and incense burnt, I submit this poem to you.	沐薰陳此什
120	From Chen Fu, your humble officer of the Board of Rites.	禮部小臣孚

[19] Wei Xiao 隗囂 (d. 33) was a regional warlord in the interregnum at the beginning of the Eastern Han. After his death, his territory was inherited by his second son Wei Chun 隗純 (d. 42), who surrendered to the Han dynasty in one-year time.

[20] Sun Hao 孫皓 (243-284) was the last emperor of the Wu during the Three Kingdoms period. He was known for his extravagance and cruelty. Wu was eventually conquered by the Jin dynasty due to his failure to manage the domestic affairs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allsen, Thomas. "The Yan Dynasty and the Uighurs of Turfan." In Morris Rossabi ed., *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbors, 10th-14th Centuries*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983, 243-280.

———. *Commodity and Cultural Exchange in the Mongol Empire*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

———. *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Anderson, James A. "Man and Mongols: the Dali and Đại Việt Kingdoms in the Face of the Northern Invasions." In James A. Anderson and John K. Whitmore eds., *China's Encounters on the South and Southwest: Reforging the Fiery Frontier over Two Millennia*. Leiden: Brill, 2015, 106-134.

Arnold, Lauren. *Princely Gifts and Papal Treasure: The Franciscan Mission to China and its Influence in the Art of the West, 1250-1350*. San Francisco: Desiderata Press, 1999.

Atwood, Christopher. "How the Mongols Got a Word for Tribe – and What it Means." *Menggu shi yanjiu* 蒙古史研究 10 (2010): 63-89.

Ban, Gu 班固. *Hanshu* 漢書. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1964.

Bell, Daniel and Wang Pei, *Just Hierarchy: Why Social Hierarchies Matter in China and the Rest of the World*. Princeton University Press, 2020.

Bretschneider, Emil. *Mediæval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources: Fragments towards the Knowledge of the Geography and History of Central and Western Asia from the Thirteenth to the Seventeenth Century*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1888.

Cai, Meibiao 蔡美彪. *Yuandai baihua bei jilu* 元代白話碑集錄. Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2017.

Cao, Guangshun and Yu Hsiao-yung. "Language Contact and its Influence in on the Development of Chinese Syntax." In *The Oxford Handbook of Chinese Linguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, 203-214.

Chavannes, Édouard. "Inscriptions et pièces de Chancellerie chinoises de l'époque mongole." *T'oung Pao*, 3.3 (1958): 305-308.

Chen Dezhi 陳得芝 et al. eds. *Yuandai zouyi jilu* 元代奏議集錄. Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1998.

Chen, Dezhi. "Guanyu Yuanchao de guohao, niandai yu jiangyu wenti" 關於元朝的國號、年代與疆域問題. In *Beifang minzu daxue xuebao* 北方民族大學學報 87.3 (2009): 5-14.

———. "Yuan Renzong shi jiaohuang shizhe lai Hua de yitiao Hanwen shiliao" 元仁宗時教皇使者來華的一條漢文史料. In *Meng Yuan shi yanjiu conggao* 蒙元史研究叢稿. Beijing: Renwen chubanshe, 2005), 524-528.

Chen, Fu 陳孚. *Chen Gangzhong shiji* 陳剛中詩集. Printed by Shen Cong 沈琮 in Guangzhou in 1460. Stored in Taiwan National Central Library.

Chen, Minggui 陳銘圭. Changchun daojiao yuanliu 長春道教源流. Taipei: Guangmin shuju, 1989.

Chen, Qiaoling 陳巧靈. "Yuandai Annan jingxing shi yanjiu" 元代安南紀行詩研究. MA thesis, Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua.

Chen, Yuan 陳垣 ed. *Daojia jinshi lue* 道教金石略. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1988.

Chen, Yuan. "Nan Song chu Hebei xin daojiao kao" 南宋初河北新道教考. In *Chen Yuan quanji* 陳垣全集. Hefei: Anhui daxue chubanshe, 2009, 18.423-455.

———. *Yuan xiyu ren Huahua kao* 元西域人華化考. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008.

Cheng, Jufu 程鉅夫. Cheng Jufu ji 程鉅夫集. Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 2009.

Cheng, Tsai-fa. *Ancient Chinese and Early Mandarin*. Berkeley, CA: Journal of Chinese linguistics, Project on Linguistic Analysis, University of California.

Chia, Lucille. "The Uses of Print in Early Quanzhen Daoist Text." In *Knowledge and Text Production in an Age of Print: China 900-1400*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

Ch'ien, Hsing-hai and L. Carrington Goodrich tr. *Western and Central Asians in China under the Mongols: their transformation into Chinese*. Los Angeles: Monumenta Serica at the University of California, 1966.

Cleaves, Francis Woodman. "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1240." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 23 (1960-1961): 62-75.

de Rachewiltz, Igor et al. eds. *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yuan Period (1200-1300)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993.

de Rachewiltz, Igor. *Papal Envoys to the Great Khans*. Stanford University Press, 1971.

———. "The *Hsi-yu lu* 西遊錄 by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai 耶律楚材." *Monumenta Sinica* 21 (1962): 1-128.

Devéria, Gabriel. "Notes d'épigraphie mongole-chinoise." *Journal Asiatique*, 8.4 (1896), 395-443.

Dolezelova-Velingerova, Milena. "Literary Historiography in Early Twentieth-Century China." In *The Appropriation of Cultural Capital*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Duan, Chengshi 段成式. *Youyang zazu* 酉陽雜俎. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981.

Durrant, Stephen et al. *The Letter to Ren An and Sima Qian's Legacy*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016.

Elliott, Mark. *The Manchu Way: the Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011.

Elman, Benjamin. *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Erya 爾雅. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2015.

Fairbank, John K. and Teng Ssu-yu. "On the Ch'ing tributary system." In *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 6.2 (1941): 135-246.

Feng, Chengjun 馮承鈞. *Yuandai baihua bei* 元代白話碑. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1931.

Franke, Herbert and Denis C. Twitchett eds. *The Cambridge History of China Volume 6: Alien Regimes and Border States 907-1368*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Fu, Leshu 傅樂淑. *Yuan gongci baizhang zhuanzhu* 元宮詞百章箋注. Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1995.

Fu, Ruojin 傅若金. *Fu Ruojin ji*. Gansu: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 2010.

———. *Fu Yuli shiji jiaozhu* 傅與礪詩集校注. Kunming: Yunnan daxue chuban she, 2015.

Funada, Yoshiyuki 船田善之. "Semu ren yu Yuandai zhidu, shehui" 色目人與元代制度、社會. In *Menggu xue xunxi* 蒙古學信息 2 (2003): 7-16.

Gillet, Andrew. "The Mirror of Jordanes: Concepts of the Barbarian, Then and Now." In Philip Rousseau ed. *A Companion to Late Antiquity*. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2009.

Gong, Gui 貢奎. *Yunlin ji* 雲林集. In *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書. Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan, 1983, *jibu*, 1205.

Grousset, Rene. *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1991.

Gramsci, Antonio. *The Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings, 1916-1935*. New York: New York University Press, 2000.

Gu, Sili 顧嗣立. *Yuanshi xuan* 元詩選. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987.

Gyosei shōyōei. Genpū keikaizu 御製逍遥詠・玄風慶會圖. Naragen Tenri-shi: Tenri Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1981.

Hao, Jing 郝敬. *Hao Wenzhong gong Lingchuan wenji* 郝文忠公陵川文集. Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 2006.

Hargett, James tr. *Treatises of the Supervisor and Guardian of the Cinnamon Sea*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010.

Hargett, James. *Jade Mountains and Cinnabar Pools: The History of Travel Literature in Imperial China*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2018.

Hong, Jingfang 洪靜芳. "*Changchun zhenren xiyou ji* shici tanxi" 《長春真人西遊記》詩詞探析. In *Donghai daxue tushuguan guanxun* 東海大學圖書館館訊 128, no. 5 (2015): 49-72.

Hong, Mai 洪邁. *Yijian zhi* 夷堅志. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981.

Hsiao, Ch'i-ch'ing 蕭啟慶. *Meng Yuan shi xinyan* 蒙元史新研. Taipei: Yunchen wenhua shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 1996.

———. *Nei beiguo er wei zhongguo: Meng Yuan shi yanjiu* 內北國而外中國：蒙元史研究. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007.

Hu, Xiaopeng 胡小鵬. "Yuandai 'semu ren' yu erdeng renzhi" 元代「色目人」與二等人制. In *Xibei shida xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 西北師大學報（社會科學版）50.6 (2013): 56-59.

Ivanhoe, Philip tr. *Master Sun's Art of War*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2011.

Jiang, Haijun 姜海軍. "Meng Yuan yongxia bianyi yu Hanru de wenhua renting" 蒙元「用夏變夷」與漢儒認同. In Beijing daxue xuebao 北京大學學報 49.6 (2012): 50-56.

Jie, Xisi 揭傒斯. *Jie Xisi quanji* 揭傒斯全集. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012.

Juvayni, Atâ-Malek. *Genghis Khan: The History of the World Conqueror*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997.

Kaske, Elizabeth. *The Politics of Language in Chinese Education: 1895-1919*. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

Katz, Paul R. "Writing History, Creating Identity – A Case Study of the *Xuanfeng qinghui tu* 玄風慶會圖." *Journal of Chinese Religions* 29, no. 1 (2001): 161-178.

Kim, Hodong. "The Unity of the Mongol Empire and Continental Exchanges over Eurasia." *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies* 1 (2009): 32.

———. "Was 'Da Yuan' a Chinese Dynasty?" *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 45 (2015): 279-305.

Kong, Qi 孔齊. *Zhizheng zhiji* 至正直記. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987.

Kroll, Paul. "Nostalgia and History in Mid-Ninth-Century Verse: Cheng Yü's Poem on 'The Chin-yang Gate.'" In *T'oung Pao*, 89.4 (2003): 286-366.

Lang Ying 朗瑛. *Qiuxiu leigao* 七修類稿. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959.

Langlois, John D., Jr. "Chinese Culturalism and the Yuan Analogy: Seventeenth-Century Perspectives." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 40.2 (1980): 355-398.

Lau, D.C. tr. *Mencius*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2013.

Lê Tấc 黎崱. *Annan zhilue* 安南志略. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000.

Legge, James, tr. *Sacred Books of the East, volume 28, part 4: The Li Ki*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879-1910.

———, tr. *The Chinese Classics: with a Translation, Critical and Exegetical Notes, Prolegomena and Copious Indexes*. Hong Kong: Legge, 1861-72.

Li, Jiayu 李嘉裕. "Jiaozhou gao de Annan shuxie" 《交州藁》中的安南書寫. *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究, 34.4 (2016), 88.

Li, Shizhen 李時珍. *Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目. Beijing: Renmin weisheng chubanshe, 1975.

Li, Wentian 李文田. *Xiyou lu zhu* 西遊錄注. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985.

Li, Zhichang 李志常. *Changchun zhenren xiyou ji jiaozhu* 長春真人西遊記校注. Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 2015.

Lin, Meicun 林梅村. *Dachao chunjiu* 大朝春秋. Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 2013.

Liu, Hongying 劉宏英. *Yuandai Shangjing jixing shi yanjiu* 元代上京紀行詩研究. Beijing: Zhongguo jingji chubanshe, 2016.

Liu, Mi 劉謐. *Sanjiao pingxin lun* 三教平心論. Kuaiji: Dongshi, 1888.

Liu, Xian 劉詵. *Guiyin xiansheng ji* 桂隱先生集. Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1985.

Liu, Yin 劉因. *Jingxiu xiansheng wenji* 靜修先生文集. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985.

Liu, Zhenlun 劉真倫. "Chen Yuan xiansheng 'Sadula' yinian buzheng" 陳垣先生〈薩都剌疑年〉補證. In *Minzu wenxue yanjiu* 民族文學研究 2008(3): 87-92.

Liu, Yiqing 劉義慶. *Xinshuo xinyu jiaojian* 世說新語校箋. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006.

Lu, Youren 陸友仁. *Yanbei zazhi* 研北雜誌. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991.

Luo, Wenli . *Wanyi lou ji* 萬一樓集. In *Siku qinhui shu congkan* 四庫禁燬書叢刊. Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1997, *jibu*, 174.

Mather, Richard tr. *Shih-shuo Hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World*. Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002.

Meng, Siming 蒙思明. *Yuandai shehui jieji zhidu* 元代社會階級制度. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980.

Mote, Frederick W. "Confucian Eremitism in the Yüan Period." In *The Confucian Persuasion*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960.

Nakano, Miyoko. *A Phonological Study in the 'Phags-pa Script and the Meng-ku Tzu-yün*. Canberra: Faculty of Asian Studies in association with Australian National Press, 1971.

Ngô, Sĩ Liên 吳士連. *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư* 大越史記全書. Tokyo: Centre for East Asian Research at Tokyo University, 1984.

Nguyễn Huệ Chi ed. *Thơ văn Lý Trần*. Hà-nội : Khoa Học Xã Hội, 1988.

Ouyang, Xuan 歐陽玄. *Ouyang Xuan quanji* 歐陽玄全集. Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 2010.

Owen, Stephen. *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911*. New York: Norton, 1996.

———. *The End of the Chinese "Middle Ages": Essays in Mid-Tang Literary Culture*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996.

———. *The Poetry of Du Fu*. Boston: De Gruyter, 2016.

Philippson, Robert. "Imperialism and Colonialism." In Bernard Spolsky ed., *Cambridge Handbook of Language Policy*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 203-225.

Pines, Yuri. "Beasts or Humans: Pre-imperial Origins of the 'Sino-Barbarian' Dichotomy." In *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World*. Leiden: Brill, 2004, 59-103.

Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: Routledge, 2008.

Qianli ma 千里馬. Paris: Hermès, 1997.

Qingyun ti 青雲梯. Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1935.

Qiu, Jun 丘濬. *Shishi zhenggang* 世史正綱. Taipei: Qiu Wenzhuang gong congshu jiyin weiyuanhui, 1972.

Quan Yuan wen 全元文. Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 1998.

Ren, Bowen 任伯溫. Tribute Bearers. Asian Art Museum Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture: http://onlinecollection.asianart.org/view/objects/asitem/subject@court/1?t:state:flow=8162921b-4877-49ac-9327-f31523b907fb. Accessed 15 February 2020.

Ren, Renfa 任仁發. Yuan Ren Renfa gongma tujuan 元任仁發貢馬圖卷, National Palace Museum: https://painting.npm.gov.tw/Painting_Page.aspx?dep=P&PaintingId=1191#. Accessed 15 February 2020.

Rossabi, Morris ed. *Eurasian Influences on Yuan China*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2013.

Rossabi, Morris. *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2009.

Shang, Jude 商聚德. *Liu Yin pingzhuan* 劉因評傳. Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 1996.

Sheng, Ruzi 盛如梓. *Shuzhai laoxue congtan* 盛齋老學叢談. Taipei: Xingzhong shuju, 1964.

Sima, Qian 司馬遷. *Shiji* 史記. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994.

South, Coblin W. *A Handbook of 'Phags-Pa Chinese*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007.

Su, Tianjue 蘇天爵. *Yuan wenlei* 元文類. *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊 edition.

Sugiyama, Masaaki 杉山正明. *Mongoru teikoku to Dai Gen Urusu* モンゴル帝國と大元ウルス. Kyoto: Kyōto Daigaku Gakujutsu Shuppankai, 2004.

Sun, Laichen. "Imperial Ideal Compromised: Northern and Southern Courts Across the New Frontier in the Early Yuan Era." In James A. Anderson and John K. Whitmore eds., *China's Encounters on the South and Southwest: Reforging the Fiery Frontier over Two Millennia*. Leiden: Brill, 2015, 193-231.

Sun, Qifeng 孫奇逢. *Sun Xiafeng ji* 孫夏峰集. Printed by Daliang shuyuan 大梁書院 in 1845.

Taihiki 太平記. Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 1980.

Tanaka, Kenji 田中謙二. "Gentenshō ni okeru Mōbun chokuyakutei no bunshō" 元典章的蒙文直譯體文章. In *Gentenshō keibu dai issatsu* 元典章．刑部．第一冊, 47-161

Tao, Ji 屠寄. *Meng wu'er shiji* 蒙兀兒史記. Beijing: Zhongguo shudian, 1984.

Tao, Zongyi 陶宗儀. *Nancun chuogeng lu* 南村輟耕錄. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012.

Tian, Xiaofei. *Visionary Journeys: Travel Writings from Early Medieval and Nineteenth Century China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011.

Tillman, Hoyt. "Hao Jing dui *Wujing*, *Zhongyong* he Daotong de fansi" 郝經對《五經》、《中庸》和道統的反思. In *Zhong Ri Han jingxue guoji xueshu yantaihui lunwenji* 中日韓經學國際學術研討會論文集. Taipei: Wanjuanlou tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 2015.

Tillman, Hoyt. "Proto-Nationalism in Twelfth-Century China? The Case of Ch'en Liang." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 39 (1979), 403-428.

Tu, Wei-ming. "Towards an Understanding of Liu Yin's Confucian Eremitism." *Way, Learning, and Politics: Essays on the Confucian Intellectual*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1993.

Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. New York: Routledge, 2012.

von Glahn, Richard. *The Sinister Way: The Divine and the Demonic in Chinese Religious Culture*. Berkeley, CA : University of California Press, 2004.

Waley, Arthur tr. *The Travels of an Alchemist: A Journey of the Taoist Ch'ang-ch'un from China to the Hindukush at the Summons of Chingiz Khan*. London: Routledge, 1931.

Wang, Feng 王逢. *Wuxi ji* 梧溪集. Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1988.

Wang, Guowei 王國維. *Wang Guowei quanji* 王國維全集. Hangzhou: Zhejiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 2009.

Wang, Jia 王嘉. *Shiyi ji* 拾遺記. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981.

Wang, Penglin. *Linguistic Mysteries of Ethnonyms in Inner Asia*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2018.

Wang, Pu 王溥. *Tang huiyao* 唐會要. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1955.

Wang, Shidian 王士點. *Mishujian zhi* 秘書監志. Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1992), 92.

Wang, Shizhen 王世貞. *Yanzhou shanren dushu hou* 弇州山人讀書後. Beijing: Guojia tushuguan chubanshe, 2014.

Wang, Yaojin 汪躍進. "Wei shenme meiyou huihua Make Boluo de huihua" 為什麼沒有繪畫馬可.波羅的繪畫. In Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館 ed., *Zai zui yaoyuan de defang xunzhao guxiang* 在最遙遠的地方尋找故鄉. Beijing: Shangwu yinshu guan, 2018, 286-294.

Wang, Yi 王禕. *Wang Zhongwen gong wenji* 王忠文公文集. Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1988.

Watson, Burton tr. *Han Feizi: Basic Writings*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

———, tr. *Records of the Grand Historian: Qin Dynasty*. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong; New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

———, tr. *The Complete Works of Zhuangzi*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.

Weatherford, Jack. *Genghis Khan and the Quest for God*. New York: Penguin, 2016.

Wylie, Alexander. "Sur une inscription mongole en caract res Pa'-sse-pa." *Journal Asiatique*, 19.4 (1862): 461-471.

Xiang, Mai 祥邁. *Bianwei lu* 辨偽錄. In *Taishō shinshū Daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經. Taipei: Shihua yinshua qiye youxian gongsi, 1962. T. 52, no. 2116, 764.

Xu, Heng 許衡. *Xu Heng ji* 許衡集. Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 2010.

Xu, Mingshan 徐明善. *Annan xingji* 安南行紀. In *Jin Yuan riji congbian* 金元日記叢編. Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2013.

Xu, Quansheng 許全勝. *Shen Zengzhi shidi zhuzuo jikao* 沈曾植史地著作輯考. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2018.

Xu, Youren 許有壬. *Xu Youren ji* 許有壬集. Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1998.

Xuanfeng qinghui lu 玄風慶會錄. Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 1985.

Xue, Xuan 薛瑄. *Dushu lu* 讀書錄. Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2017.

Yang, Ne 楊訥. *Qiu Chuji "yiyan zhi sha" kao* 丘處機「一言止殺」考. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2018.

Yang, Shao-yun. *The Way of the Barbarians*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2019.

Yang, Xiong 揚雄. *Fayan* 法言. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985.

Yao, Fu 姚福. *Qingxi xiabi* 青溪暇筆. Ming edition, manuscript in Peking University Library.

Yao, Congwu 姚從吾. "Yelü Chucai *Xiyou lu* zuben jiaozhu" 耶律楚材《西遊錄》足本校注. In *Yao Congwu xiansheng quanji* 姚從吾先生全集. Taipei: Cheng Chung, 1982, 7: 203-284.

Yelü, Zhu 耶律鑄. *Shuangxi zuiyin ji* 雙溪醉隱集. Shenyang: Liaohai shushe, 1985.

Yelü, Chucai 耶律楚材. *Zhanran jushi wenji* 湛然先生文集. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986.

Yi, Lianzhen 亦鄰真. "Yuandai yingyi gongdu wenti" 元代硬譯公牘文體. In *Yuanshi luncong* 元史論叢, 1 (1982): 164-177;

Yin, Zhiping 尹志平. *Paoguang ji* 葆光集. Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1923-1926.

Yip, Hon-Ming, "The Class System of Yuan Society: A Critique of Meng Siming's *Yuandai shehui jieji zhidu*." *Journal of Asian Culture* 4 (1980): 82-106.

Yongle dadian 永樂大典. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Five Hundred Years of Chinese Poetry, 1150-1650: The Chin, Yuan, and Ming Dynasties*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1989.

Yu, Hui 余暉. "Jiufeng daoren 'Sanma tu' kaole" 九峰道人〈三駿圖〉卷考略及其他. In *Wenwu* 文物 1993.1: 93-96.

Yuan dianzhang 元典章. Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe; Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011.

Yule, Henry tr. *Cathay and the Way Thither*. London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1866.

Zhan Ruoshui 湛若水. *Zhan Ganquan xiansheng wenji* 湛甘泉先生文集. In *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書. Jinan: Qi Lu shushe, 1997, *jibu*, 57.

Zhang, Fan 張帆. ""Tuizhai ji' yu Xu Heng, Liu Xin de chuchu jintui" 《退齋記》與許衡、劉因的出處進退. In *Lishi yanjiu* 歷史研究 3 (2005): 69-84.

Zhang, Xinglang 張星烺. *Zhong Xi jiaotong shiliao huibian* 中西交通史料匯編. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977.

Zhao Tianlin 趙天麟. *Taiping jinjing ce* 太平金鏡策. In *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995, *shibu*, 475.

Zhao, Tingyang. "All-Under-Heaven and Methodological Relationism." In Fred Dallamayr and Zhao Tingyang eds., *Contemporary Chinese Thought: Debates and Perspectives*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012, 46-66.

Zhao, Yi 趙翼. *Nianer shi zhaji* 廿二史札記. Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2008.

Zhao, Weidong 趙衛東. "Qiu Chuji 'yi yan zhi sha' bianzheng." 丘處機「一言止殺」辨正. In *Jin Yuan Quanzhen daojiao shilun* 金元全真道教史論. Jinan: Qi Lu shushe, 2010, 150-182.

Zheng, Sixiao 鄭思肖. *Zheng Sixiao ji* 鄭思肖集. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1991.

Zheng, Zhenduo 鄭振鐸. *Chatupen Zhongguo wenxue shi* 插圖本中國文學史. Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2015.

Zheng, Zhensun 鄭振孫. *Zhishuo tonglue* 直說通略. Reprinted in Chenghua 16 (1480).

Zhou, Boqi 周伯琦. *Jinguang ji* 近光集. *SKQS* edition, *jibu*, 1214.

Zhou, Shuang 周爽. "Hao Jing 'Zhongguo' guan de lixue hua qingxiang" 郝經「中國」觀的理學化傾向. *Jiangxi shehui kexue* 江西社會科學, 11 (2014): 112-117.

Zhu, Derun 朱德潤. *Cunfu zhai wenji* 存復齋文集. Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1973.

Zhu, Bian 朱弁. *Quwei jiuwen* 曲洧舊聞. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2016.

Zhu, Yuanzhang 朱元璋. *Da Ming Taizu Huangdi yuzhi ji* 大明太祖皇帝御製集. Ming neiku edition in the Beijing Library.

Zu, Shengli 祖生利. "*Zhishuo tonglue* he ta de yuyan tese" 《直說通略》和它的語言特色. In *Yuyan xue luncong* 語言學論叢, 38 (2008), 335.

Zuo Traditions. Translated by Stephen Durrant, Wai-yee Li and David Schaberg. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2016.