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HERBERT FRANKE

From Tribal Chieftain to Universal
Emperor and God:
The Legitimation of the Yüan Dynasty

Vorgetragen in deutscher Sprache am 4. November 1977

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In memoriam
Arthur F. Wright
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ABKÜRZUNGEN VON ZEITSCHRIFTENTITELN

BMFEA	Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities
CYYY	Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica
HJAS	Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies
JA	Journal Asiatique
JAS	Journal of Asian Studies
MS	Monumenta Serica
MTB	Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko
TG	Tōhō Gakuhō
TP	T'oung Pao
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesell- schaft

Die chinesischen Dynastiegeschichten werden durchweg nach der Po-na-Ausgabe zitiert.

VORBEMERKUNG

Die Tatsache, daß eine Arbeit in englischer Sprache in den Sitzungsberichten der Philosophisch-historischen Klasse der Bayerischen Akademie erscheint, bedarf einer kurzen Erklärung. Vom 16. bis 23. Juni 1975 fand in den Asilomar Conference Grounds, Monterey, Calif. eine internationale Forschungskonferenz über das Thema „Legitimation of Chinese Imperial Regimes“ statt. Sie stand unter der wissenschaftlichen Leitung von Professor Jack L. Dull (University of Washington, Seattle, Wash.) und wurde vom American Council of Learned Societies organisiert. Im Zuge der Vorbereitungen und der Verteilung der Einzelthemen auf die Teilnehmer der Konferenz wurde ich eingeladen, über die mongolische Yüan-Dynastie und ihre Legitimationsmuster zu handeln. Eine erste Fassung meines hier vorgelegten Manuskripts wurde auf der Konferenz diskutiert. Die vorgesehene Veröffentlichung aller auf der Konferenz diskutierten Referate in einem Sammelband hat sich jedoch bisher verzögert. Da ohnehin meine Arbeit für den Sammelband hätte wesentlich gekürzt werden müssen, bat ich Professor Dull im Januar 1978 um die Erlaubnis, eine vollständige revidierte Fassung andernorts publizieren zu dürfen, womit Professor Dull sich freundlicherweise einverstanden erklärte. Über einige Ergebnisse meiner Arbeit habe ich auf der Sitzung der Philosophisch-historischen Klasse am 4. November 1977 vorgetragen. Die Klasse hat sich dabei meiner Bitte, das Manuskript auf Englisch in den Sitzungsberichten veröffentlichen zu können, nicht verschlossen, wofür ich meinen aufrichtigen Dank ausspreche. Eine Übersetzung des englisch konzipierten Manuskripts ins Deutsche hätte nur zu einer Belastung und weiteren Verzögerung der Drucklegung geführt.

Mein Dank gilt auch dem American Council of Learned Societies, der mich zu der Teilnahme an der Konferenz eingeladen hatte. Ebenso bin ich allen Konferenzteilnehmern für Hinweise und Verbesserungsvorschläge dankbar, insbesondere Professor Hok-lam Chan (University of Washington, Seattle, Wash.), dessen ungemeine Belesenheit vor allem dem Abschnitt „The Theory

of the Five Elements and the Yüan“ zugute gekommen ist. Dr. Helga Uebach und Herrn Panglung, M. A. (Kommission für zentralasiatische Studien der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften) bin ich für Unterstützung hinsichtlich der tibetischen Literatur sehr verpflichtet. Schließlich gedenke ich mit Wehmut meines Freundes und Kollegen Arthur F. Wright (Yale University), der von Anfang an das Zustandekommen der Konferenz hat fördern helfen, ein Grundsatzreferat über Probleme der Legitimation beisteuerte und in Asilomar aus der Fülle seiner historischen Erfahrung schöpfend immer wieder unsere Diskussionen in unvergeßlicher Weise bereichert hat. Seinem Andenken ist die vorliegende Arbeit gewidmet.

I. YÜAN DEVIATIONS FROM CHINESE PATTERNS

A study of the legitimation of the Mongol Yüan dynasty in China has to take into account a number of elements which are unique in Chinese history or at least considerably different from most other dynasties. It may be argued that the case of the Mongols is basically atypical and that only a few of the recurring patterns of legitimation in China proper will become apparent in such a study. Even in comparison with earlier dynasties founded by foreign invaders, particularly the Liao and Chin, fundamental differences do exist; they place the Yüan state and its legitimacy in a special category. Without attempting an exhaustive enumeration, the following six characteristics of Mongol rule in China seem to be indicative of the fact that the Yüan present indeed a very special case.

1. In contrast with other states on Chinese soil, the Mongol state of Yüan was only a part, although a very important one, of a supranational world-empire. China, in particular Khubilai's dominion, was but one of the several *ulus* which emerged after the conquests of Chinggis Khan. A closer scrutiny of the development of legitimation aspects in the other *ulus* (Central Asia, Persia, the Golden Horde empire in Southern Russia) would show that religion (to be more specific, the religion which the Mongols encountered in the newly conquered territories) played a prominent role in legitimizing Mongol rule. This is particularly evident in the case of Islam. Even as late as ca. 1304, the Persian chronicler Rashīd al-Dīn (1247-1318) invokes Allāh when writing about Temür's (i. e. Ch'eng-tsung, r. 1294-1307) reign ("may it be God-aided and everlasting"), although Persia did at that time not belong to Temür's dominion and was a separate *ulus*.¹ However, Temür was still regarded as Grand Khan, as overlord of the supranational Mongol world-empire.

2. The conquest of China in its entirety took the Mongols almost three quarters of a century, from 1215 to 1276. There is

¹ John Andrew Boyle, *The Successors of Genghis Khan, translated from the Persian of Rashīd al-Dīn* (Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1971), 320.

no case on record for medieval China where a similarly long period, lasting for three generations, was required to achieve complete domination of the whole of China. This means a long period of potential acculturation and gradual sinicization, and also a not inconsiderable number of turning-points. Without trying to suggest here a periodization of this process, several stages in the transition from steppe rulership to (never fully realized) Chinese emperorship and back to the steppes can be distinguished, namely 1. the old-Mongol period up to Chinggis Khans's accession in 1206; 2. the conquest of Peking and parts of Northern China, marked by the years 1215 (conquest of Peking) and 1234 (extinction of the Chin state); 3. the rule of Khubilai Khan (1260–1294, where several sub-stages could be determined); 4. the later reigns of the Mongol emperors (1294–1368); 5. the influence on the Mongols of their rule over China after their expulsion in 1368. For a variety of reasons, however, a chronological approach towards stages and stations in the legitimation moves has its difficulties. We may, for example, find that some such moves had their impact at a given time but we cannot say for certain if or how far they subsisted at a later time. Again, some very important events in the field of power politics might be found devoid of any accompanying legitimation moves.

3. Most Chinese founders of Chinese dynasties, with the exception of Liu Pang (d. 195 B.C.) and Chu Yüan-chang (1328–1398), the founders of the Han and Ming dynasties respectively, came from families which must be counted among the ruling minority. And even so, both Liu and Chu did not proclaim themselves emperor all of a sudden but embarked on a self-made career with many intermediate stages, indicating a gradual rise in a hierarchical system until they had reached the highest point of the ladder. In the case of foreign founders of dynastic states we find, as a rule, that they too had already been part of the Chinese hierarchical and bureaucratic system, although frequently in a rather loose way, for example as Regional Commandants (*chieh-tu-shih*) of the Chinese state in border regions, or as holders of Chinese feudal titles beyond the frontier. This is certainly true for Aguda, the founder of the Chin, and his ancestors who had been Regional Commandants appointed by the

Liao for several generations until Aguda united the Jurchen tribes and marched against his Khitan overlords. In other words, men like Aguda had already held legitimized power, if only locally, and their eventual rise to the status of emperor (*huang-ti*) meant a start from the middle of the ladder, not its bottom. Their rise took place, so to speak, within the system, not outside. The Mongols, however, became a united power under Chinggis Khan beyond the frontiers of a Chinese-type state. To this interpretation objection may perhaps be made because of a passage in the *Ta-Chin kuo-chih* which seems to point to an early Mongol statehood, sanctioned by the Chin state. It is said that in the year 1147, after much fighting at the northern border of the Chin, the state of the Mongols (*Meng-ku kuo*) was pacified and that "its chieftain Ao-lo po-chi-lich was invested as assisting state ruler of the Meng. Only after that peaceful relations were established. (The Chin) gave annually very generous presents. Thereupon Ao-lo po-chi-lich called himself Ancestral and Originating Emperor (*Tsu-yüan huang-ti*) and proclaimed the era T'ien-hsing ("Heavenly Rise"). The Great Chin had used military force but eventually could not subdue them and only sent elite troops which occupied several strategic points and then returned".²

² *Ta-Chin kuo-chih* (ed. Basic Sinological Series, Shanghai, 1936) ch. 12, 99-100. See also Otto Franke, *Geschichte des chines. Reiches* (Berlin, 1948, 1952), vol. 4, 244-245 and 5, 133. This episode is not mentioned in the *Chin-shih*. It occurs, however, in a Sung source, the *Chien-yen i-lai hsi-nien yao-lu*, see Tamura Jitsuzō, "The Legend of the Origin of the Mongols," *Acta Asiatica* 24 (Tokyo, 1973), 10-11. For an exhaustive account of Mongol-Chin relations see Toyama Gunji, *Kinchōshi Kenkyū* (Kyoto, 1964), 421-442. It could be added that the era-name T'ien-hsing may have had for later historians unambiguous connotations, because it was the *nien-hao* of the last ill-fated Chin emperor 1232-1234. It is also noteworthy that the era-name T'ien-hsing occurs, apart from the Chin *nien-hao*, only once as reign name of a legitimate ruler, namely, T'ai-tsu of the Toba Wei (358-404). All other T'ien-hsing reign names belong to illegitimate or barbarian usurpers (see the list in Mathias Tchang, *Synchronismes Chinois* (Shanghai, 1905), LIV-LV).

A slightly different account of the alleged adoption of a reign-name in the 12th century is given in Chao Hung's (1195-1246) *Meng-ta pei-lu* (ed. Wang Kuo-wei, Collected Works, p. 3a): "The Mongols formerly adopted the reign name T'ien-hsing and called (the ruler) T'ai-tsu yüan-ming huang-ti. The Tatars today are very primitive and rustic and have no institutional rules. I,

It has been supposed that this first Mongol "emperor" by the name of Ao-lo (*po-chi-lieh*, **bogile* is a Jurchen title roughly equivalent to "lord") may be identical with Chinggis Khans's father Yesügei who was canonized as Lieh-tsu in 1266.³ But even if we grant that indeed already by 1147 the Mongols had formally been organized into a sort of state (*kuo*) with a reign name of its own, it remains a fact that they later made no attempt to regard this as a legitimizing factor. Neither Mongol nor official Yüan sources ever even mention this incident of 1147, and certainly Chinggis Khan himself or his advisors never used the enfeoffment of 1147 as a justification for assuming power over the tribes of the steppe. Legitimate rule, for the Mongols themselves and for the Yüan historians, began with Chinggis Khan. The hypothesis that the rise of the Mongols took place *outside* the Chinese system therefore cannot be seriously challenged.

4. In China, the transmission of imperial power, or, to use the European medieval term, *translatio imperii*, was frequently effected by a formal act of voluntary cession (*shan-jang*). This was obviously not the case with the Mongols in relation to the Chinese political entities which they occupied and absorbed. The last rulers of Chin and Sung did not formally transmit their rule to the Mongols in the form of a pseudo-contract, and the acquisition of the regalia remained a matter of later action after the dust of conquest had settled. Nor did Chinggis Khan or his successors try to obtain from a Chinese-type state the ritual insignia of imperial status. This would only have made sense if they still had felt

Hung, constantly asked them about all this and heard that the Mongols had long ago been extinguished". For a Russian translation of the passage and a discussion see N. C. Munkuev, *Men-da bei-lu* (Moscow, 1975) 50-52 and notes 121-125. The *Meng-ta pei-lu* 4a states expressly that at the time of Chao Hung's embassy (1221) the Mongols did not have a state-name and no reign-names.

³ It is not impossible that Ao-lo was not a personal name but a part of the title of the Mongol leader. Ao-lo could be related to the word *a'uruq* transcribed normally in Chinese as *ao-lu*. The meaning is "base, home camp". The words *Ao-lo po-chi-lieh* would mean "lord of the camp" if *ao-lo* should correspond to Mong. *a'uruq*. Tamura op. cit. 12 suggests that the leader enfeoffed by the Chin in 1147 was not Yesügei but his grandfather Khabul Khan who according to the *Secret History of the Mongols* § 52 "ruled over all the Mongols".

inferior to a Chinese emperor from whom it might have been profitable or prestigious to extort recognition by being granted imperial insignia. This fact too corroborates our thesis that Mongol legitimacy was initially effected outside the Chinese cultural sphere. We have clear indications what the ritual insignia and features were which Chinese political traditions regarded as essentials for legitimate statehood and imperial status in the early 12th century. The case in question is that of the recognition of the newly founded Chin dynasty on the part of the Liao (1114-15). The master-mind behind Aguda in the latter's struggle for imperial and independent status was Yang P'o, a Po-hai man well versed in Chinese ways. After Aguda had already been proclaimed as emperor and chosen Great Chin as the name of his state, Yang P'o said to Aguda:

"Since antiquity, when brave heroes founded a state, they either obtained their rank by voluntary cession or they asked the greater state for a document of investiture." Thus an envoy was sent in order to ask (the Liao) for a document of investiture. There were altogether ten items. The first was to ask for the honorific designation of Great Holy and Great Enlightened. The second was that the state's name should be Great Chin. The third was a jade-ornamented state-chariot. The fourth was imperial robes and caps. The fifth was a precious jade-carved seal for personal use of the emperor (Aguda). The sixth was communication (with Liao) as between elder and younger brothers. The seventh was to send envoys for each other's birthdays and for the New Year. The eighth was annual payment of 250,000 ounces of silver and the same amount of bolts of silk, fifty percent of what the Sung annually paid (to Liao). The ninth was cession of the two Routes of Liao-tung and Ch'ang-ch'un. The tenth was to send back the Jurchen great kings A-hu-ch'an and Chao-san.⁴

A significant variant of Yang P'o's speech is recorded in *Ta-Chin kuo-chih*: "Since antiquity, when brave heroes founded

⁴ *San-ch'ao pei-meng hui-pien* (reprint Taipei, 1962), ch. 3, 11b-12a.

a state and received a voluntary cession, they first asked the greater state for a document of investiture".⁵ Here investiture is regarded as a necessary step before a complete cession of power to the new ruler, whereas the former text opposes cession and investiture as alternatives. In any case, the passages quoted above show clearly what a statesman with Chinese education regarded as essentials (in addition to specific demands arising out of the situation at the moment, such as the extradition of refugees or annual tributes). But it is equally clear that the legitimation demanded by Yang P'o aimed as a first step at equal status in international relations and at coexistence, something which the Mongols never had in mind. The balance between or coexistence of states that mutually recognized each other and thereby considered themselves as equally legitimized (legitimization by mutual contract) was not what the Mongols wanted, not even as a first step. The explanation is, of course, simple: There was, in the formative stage of Mongol domination, no "greater state" which enjoyed among the Mongols such prestige that investitures of the kind described earlier could seem attractive. And it is equally obvious that the peculiarly Mongol ideas about rulership over the world (see *infra*) were incompatible with coexistence or contract.

5. It may be assumed as a general principle that with regard to legitimation there can exist a difference between the new ruler or the social group of which he is a leader (clan, clique, tribe) and those who supply him with the intellectual framework of reference into which the legitimative elements are cast. In the case of the Mongols such differences do certainly exist between the self-image of the rulers on the one hand and the Chinese advisors, particularly under the reign of Khubilai on the other. Whereas Chinese literati tried to present the Mongol emperors as followers of Chinese traditions and to talk them into adopting Chinese patterns, the emperors themselves and the Chinggiskhanide aristocracy cherished beliefs which came from quite different

⁵ *Ta-chin kuo-chih* ch. 1, 4. Yang P'o's proposals are also recorded in the Buddhist chronicle *Shih-shih chi-ku lüeh* (Taishō Tripitaka vol. 49), ch. 4, 884/II. For a discussion of these texts see my article "Chinese Texts on the Jurchen" in *Zentralasiatische Studien* 9 (Bonn, 1975), 158-165.

quarters, either Buddhist-Lamaist, or their national and native traditions. Such beliefs and influences were usually played down by the Chinese advisors, or even deplored and denounced. The official sources, in particular the *Yüan-shih* itself, reflect more the Chinese aspects and tend to ignore what was regarded as alien to Chinese traditions, above all Lamaism and Mongol pagan elements. The gradual but never fully effected absorption of the Mongol court into Chinese civilization can therefore, also with regard to legitimation, be viewed as the result of a permanent tacit or open struggle between advisors of different persuasions, in which the rulers themselves mostly played a passive role.

6. The national identity of practically all non-Chinese peoples who had, until the Mongols came, ruled parts of China and established dynasties of their own, disappeared, certainly in the sphere of national statehood. These peoples ceased to exist as identifiable political entities. The Khitan, after the destruction of their Liao empire, never again had a state in or near China; their Western Liao (Karakhitai) state was founded in far-away Western Central Asia. The Jurchen after 1234 remained semi-independent only in their original homelands in Manchuria and their exit from the political stage in East-Asia lasted for many centuries. The Mongols, on the other hand, after the interlude of the Yüan dynasty, remained a prominent and powerful factor even after they were no longer overlords of China, and Chinggis Khan's successors for a long time after 1368 continued to regard themselves as lawful rulers over China. We shall see repeatedly in the course of our study that legitimation elements which go back to the Yüan period and which at that time may well have been regarded as only marginal began to play a greater and greater role in later history. Legends fabricated or formulated in the 13th century grew into an essential element of the historical self-image of the Mongols as a nation. One could call this delayed-action or retrospective legitimacy; in any case, however, it would be un-historical and off the mark to limit a study of Yüan and Mongol legitimation to a period ending with 1368.

Finally, a general point should be made here which concerns a problem of broader importance but which can only be dealt with in passing. If it is true that the Mongols owed their sovereignty

more to military force than to anything else, we might ask ourselves to what degree techniques of psychological persuasion and propaganda were used in spreading their concepts of legitimacy or those prepared for them by the Chinese advisors. The interdependence between acceptance of rule as legitimate on the part of the ruled majority, and deliberate psychological propaganda or coercion is, of course, evident. Moralistic injunctions, couched in the form of edicts teeming with classical allusions, are certainly not uncommon also under the Mongols. If we look what the target groups were we might come to the conclusion that persuasion and propaganda were primarily directed at relatively small groups and that no large-scale propaganda campaigns aiming at the population in general were ever put into action. The procedural element in legitimation seems to have been limited to such actions or proclamations which remained inside the bureaucracy or the Buddhist clergy. Of course both these groups were multipliers to a certain extent so that the edicts issuing from the court could reach, after some dilution and vulgarization, also the population at large. We would know more about this problem if we knew better what, for example, Buddhist monks preached to their congregations or what the school-boys were taught in villages. I must, however, confess that I have not studied the diffusion of ideas on legitimacy under the Mongols and had to be content with formulating the preliminary hypothesis that persuasion and propaganda in Yüan China in the 13th and 14th centuries remained largely the affair of a minority. It seems, in any case, to be certain that no such propaganda actions as the first Ming emperor had started with his Great Announcement (*ta-kao*) ever took place under the Mongols.⁶

II. THE MONGOL RULERS AS GREAT KHANS

Chinese writers and historians have, prompted by the antinomy between recurring periods of disunity and the universal character

⁶ On Ming propaganda see Arthur F. Wright, "Propaganda and Persuasion in Imperial and Contemporary China", *Rice University Studies* vol. 59, No. 4 (Fall 1973), 13-14.

of Chinese monarchy as such, frequently stressed the legitimacy of succession (*cheng-t'ung*) when discussing the place of foreign dynasties in history. For the Mongols this aspect of legitimacy was never a problem. They did not care about succession, only about submission. To them, Heaven (*tengri*) had granted the unconditional right to rule over the nations of the world. In the *Secret History*, *tengri* or *möngke tengri* "eternal Heaven" is frequently invoked, and the usual incipit of Mongol edicts was *möngke tengri-yin küčün-dür* "by the strength of eternal Heaven" or its translation into one of the languages of subjected nations.⁷ Special protection of Heaven is accorded to Chinggis himself. "When Heaven and Earth increased my strength and took me into their protection . . ." It was one of Chinggis Khan's earliest companions, Jamuqa, who pronounced to the young Temüjin this prophecy:

"Together Heaven and Earth have agreed:
Temüjin shall be lord of the land!
Therefore laden with the land
I bring it to him".⁸

Significantly this passage occurs in the text in connection with a "heavenly sign". And much later, shortly before Temüjin had been proclaimed supreme ruler of the steppe nations, /when Jamuqa had defected and was about to be killed, the former friend of Temüjin said to him: "Now my sworn brother has pacified the peoples (*ulus*) all around, and he has united all those outside. The place of ruler (*qan*) has been ordained for you. The whole earth is prepared for you – of what use could I be as your companion?"⁹

This shows clearly that qualification and legitimation are granted by Heaven and based on the subjection of the other

⁷ These formulae have been discussed in great detail by N. Poppe, *The Mongolian Monuments in hP'ags-pa Script* (transl. by John R. Krueger, Wiesbaden, 1957), 67–75.

⁸ *Secret History of the Mongols*, § 125. English translation by Igor de Rachewiltz, "The Secret History of the Mongols", *Papers on Far Eastern History* (Australian National University), 5 (March 1972), 166.

⁹ *Secret History*, § 121, trsl. de Rachewiltz, ib. ,162.

nations. Success is regarded as the fundamental element for rulership. The word which is translated here as "pacified" is in Mongolian *tübsidke*-, a derivative of *tübsi(n)* "even, quiet, peaceful", and therefore the exact equivalent of Chinese *p'ing*. It should be borne in mind that this idea of peace and unity was devoid of altruistic notions. Peace and well-being of the people subject to Mongol rule was not the essential element but domination as such. Only at a later stage, in particular under Khubilai, moral obligations towards the people appear in official statements to a greater extent – a development which is certainly due to Chinese influence. In Chinggis Khan's time no moralistic justification of rule seems to have been current. To rule over others is a pleasure and therefore the throne is called in Old Mongolian *jiryalang oron* "the seat of joy".¹⁰

Perhaps the strongest evidence for the legitimation of universal rule by the strength of eternal Heaven is to be found in the many orders for submission issued by Mongol khans or generals and in the contemporary accounts of European travellers and missionaries.¹¹ Their number is so large that only a few can be quoted here for the sake of illustration. Ogodai's order to Bela IV, king of Hungary, transmitted by Batu begins with the words "*Ego, Chayn, nuntius regis celestis, cui dedit potentiam super terram subicientes mihi se exaltare et deprimere adversantes*" ("I, the Khan, messenger of the Heavenly King, to whom He has granted power on earth to exalt those who surrender unto me and to suppress those who resist").

The beliefs of the Mongols were summarized at the Council of Lyons in 1245 as follows: "*Unum dominatorem mundi credunt et cum legationem emitterent ad Ruthenos, mandaverunt in haec verba: Deus et filius eius in caelis, et Chyrchan in terris.*" (They believe in one Lord of the world and when they sent an embassy

¹⁰ *Secret History*, § 230.

¹¹ An important recent study of the political ideology of the Mongols is Klaus Sagaster, "Herrschaftsideologie und Friedensgedanke bei den Mongolen", *Central Asiatic Journal* 17 (1973), 223–242. For an excellent study of the Mongols in medieval European literature see now Gian Bezzola, *Die Mongolen in abendländischer Sicht (1220–1270). Ein Beitrag zur Frage der Völkerbegegnungen* (Bern-München, 1974), esp. 116, 136, 146–147.

to the Ruthenians (Russians), they ordered in these terms: God and His son in Heaven, and the universal Khan on earth)". This particular message to the Russians resulting from the claim to rule the whole world by order of Heaven can be corroborated by the *Secret History*: Batu reported from his campaign in Southern Russia to Ogodai Khan: "By the strength of eternal Heaven and the grandeur of the imperial uncle we have destroyed the town of Meget (i. e. Mekes in Georgia) and enslaved the Oros people (the Russians). We have brought to order states and nations, and have drawn the golden reins."¹²

John of Plano Carpini in his *Ystoria Mongolorum* of 1247 states repeatedly that the Mongols have the intention of subjecting to their rule the whole world (*sibi subiugare debeant omnem terram*) and that unless this is achieved there can be no peace (*nec cum aliqua gente pacem habere debeant*). Chinggis Khan is termed in the Latin version of a Mongolian original the sweet and venerable Son of Heaven (*Cingischam filius Dei dulcis et venerabilis*) because just like God is raised above everything (*Deus excelsis super omnia*) Chinggis Khan is the only lord on earth (*super terram Cingischam solus dominus*).¹³

These examples may suffice to show the unsophisticated and unconditional claim to legitimacy as universal rulers which the early Mongols held. There are many more. It is a far way from this to the idea that humanity (*jen*) and righteousness (*i*) should be the characteristics of an ethically legitimated ruler. Eric Voegelin was the first to study the constitutional and legal ideas expressed in formulae like those quoted above.¹⁴ He stresses the difference between potential and actual membership in a Mongol universal empire. No other ruler is, in the view of the early Mongol khans, on equal footing with them. Orders of submission are therefore sent out to inform those states which are not yet parts of the empire that they have to conform with the orders of Heaven and of Heaven's representative on earth. Peace can,

¹² *Secret History*, § 275. German transl. Erich Haenisch, *Die Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen* (Leipzig, 1941), 145.

¹³ Güyük's letter to Baiju, ap. Sagaster, op. cit., 241-242.

¹⁴ Eric Voegelin, "The Mongol Orders of Submission to European Powers, 1245-1255", *Byzantion* vol. 15 (1941-1942), 378-413.

in such a political theory, only be a state of not-yet-war or not-yet-submission, but never a status achieved by mutual agreement between equals. Refusal to surrender is regarded as rebellion. The orders of submission are, therefore, to quote Voegelin, "orders of God" and a "constitutional norm of the empire-in-the making", an *imperium mundi in statu nascendi*.¹⁵ The Mongol letters are therefore, in Voegelin's interpretation which seems correct, not so much diplomatic letters but acts of Law, informing the addressees of the consequences of disobedience or contravention. Applications for membership in the Mongol-ruled world-empire were invited in the 13th century.¹⁶

At this point we should perhaps ask a question which Voegelin did not ask: Are these ideas purely Mongol, or are they the outcome of a typical steppe mentality, or do they go back to Chinese influence? In my own opinion there can be no doubt that the one-world one-ruler theory is of Chinese origin. The Chinese emperors (*huang-ti*) were, in theory, rulers of All-under-Heaven (*t'ien-hsia*), a concept which by definition knew of no borders. Of course, the Sung empire was by no means universal, and much less the Liao or Chin states were universal, but the pretension was kept alive. It can therefore be put forward as a hypothesis that such ideas of universal rule as we find them among the Mongols of the 13th and 14th centuries have had a long though more or less undercover history among the nations neighboring on China, and that the empires of Han and T'ang must have been the conceptual model from which by diffusion influences have reached even the distant tribes of the North-West. The so-called barbarians did, after all, not live in a vacuum. They knew of China and Chinese emperors, even if they were not formally re-

¹⁵ Voegelin, op. cit., 406, 411. For the reactions on the part of the European powers see also Jean Richard, "Ultimatums Mongols et Lettres Apocryphes: L'occident et les motifs de guerre des Tartares", *Central Asiatic Journal* 17 (1973), 212-222.

¹⁶ It is interesting to compare the early Mongol missives to Western powers with the more carefully worded state-letters issued by Khubilai, where Chinese common sense and *Realpolitik* are prominent features. See for the whole problem Dietlinde Schlegel, *Hao Ching (1222-1275), ein chinesischer Berater des Kaisers Kublai Khan* (Diss. München, 1968), in particular pp. 99-145.

cognized as outer vassals through official titles and enfeoffments. Tribute bearers to the Chinese capital came back and told their tribesmen at the camp-fire of the awe-inspiring splendor of the Son of Heaven. The Mongols themselves had had, during the middle and late 12th century, relations with Chin China, partly as recipients of appeasing gifts (see above), partly as tribute bearers to the Chin court in Peking.¹⁷ Chinggis Khan himself had sent annual tribute to the Chin, a fact which has been conveniently ignored by the anonymous author(s) of the *Secret History*. But, as pointed out earlier, he had not been rewarded with an official rank for this act of subservience to a Chinesetype state.

Four more observations can be made. The first is that the Mongol concept of Heaven (*tengri*), regardless to what extent it might have its origin in China in a distant past, lent itself easily to identification with any highest divinity ("Hochgott"). *Tengri* could be merged with the concept of every monotheistic supreme being, hence the seemingly frictionless adoption of Islam in Persia and the Golden Horde empire, and later in the 14th century also in the *ulus* of Chagatai. A khan's seal on a Mongolian document dated 1348 or 1360 has a Turkish inscription (in Mongolian P'ags-pa script) *oron qudluq bolsun* "may the throne flourish", together with the word Allah "God" (in Arabic script).¹⁸ In China, the obvious translation of *tengri* was *t'ien*, although it would be difficult to assign to China monotheistic beliefs. And although the question "what would have happened if . . ." is not quite legitimate for a historian one could easily imagine that, had the Mongols stayed in Hungary after 1241, they would have as

¹⁷ For a good survey of Mongol-Chin relations see Igor de Rachewiltz, "Personnel and Personalities in North China in the Early Mongol Period", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 9 (1966), esp. 93-97. For a more general discussion of Chinese-barbarian relations see also H. Franke, "Zum Legitimitätsproblem der Fremddynastien in der chinesischen Historiographie", Friedrich Prinz, Franz-Josef Schmale, Ferdinand Seibt (editors), *Geschichte in der Gesellschaft. Festschrift für Karl Bosl zum 65. Geburtstag* (Stuttgart, 1974), 14-27. - The fact that the Mongols sent tribute to the Chin is recorded in *Yüan-shih*, ch. 1. 15b.

¹⁸ H. Franke, "Zur Datierung der mongolischen Schreiben aus Turfan", *Oriens* 15 (1965), 407-408. See also David Farquhar in MS 25 (1966), 389.

easily become converts to Christianity and their *tengri* amalgamated with the Christian concept of *Deus* (or Hungarian *Isten*). Another question is if the God of Heaven was thought of by the Mongols as a personal being and not only an abstract principle. Some passages in the *Secret History* do in fact indicate a strong personal relationship between Chinggis Khan and Heaven.

The second observation is concerned with the relative absence of complicated rituals for the enthronisation of rulers and their sacralization through the power of eternal Heaven. In order to be legitimate the proclamation of a new Khan had to take place at a great assembly (*quriltai*) where the whole clan of Chinggis, relatives and close companions flocked together. It seems that such assemblies had to be convoked in the Mongol homelands and could not be held elsewhere. When Batu in 1250 proposed to have a *quriltai* held for deciding on Güyük's succession and suggested that it should meet in the Issyk Kūl region in Central Asia, the representatives of the Chagatai and Ogodai branches protested, and it was finally held on the same field (Köde'e Aral) where already Chinggis Khan's succession had been proclaimed. At that particular meeting, Möngke was enthroned so that the succession passed from Ogodai's line to that of Tolui, youngest son of Chinggis Khan. The proclamation of Chinggis himself is described by the *Secret History* in rather laconic terms as far as ceremonies go. § 202 says only: "After he had thus subjected the nations with felt tents, they gathered in the tiger year (1206) at the source of the Onan and raised the white flag with nine streamers. Thereafter they gave to Chinggis Khan the title of Khan".¹⁹ This is all. It appears, however, even from this brief passage, that the white flag played a certain role as a national or personal symbol. White was an auspicious color for the Mongols, much to the surprise of the Chinese where it was a color of mourning. The raising of a flag marked the beginning of a campaign or a great event such as the proclamation of the new ruler. Nine was a holy number among the Mongols and other

¹⁹ German translation E. Haenisch, op. cit., 95. According to the *Meng-ta pei-lu* 13a the flag showed a black moon on white. It was always unrolled at the beginning of a campaign.

Central Asian peoples.²⁰ When a new khan was elected, his court paid homage by kneeling down nine times.²¹ It is not impossible that this special significance of the number nine goes back to Chinese thought; nine is the highest *yang* number. The war flag was sometimes consecrated and the *Secret History* mentions repeatedly this ritual (§ 106, § 193). The Mongol word in question is the verb *saču-* "to strew, to make a libation" so that we may assume that the ritual consisted of sprinkling the flag with milk or kumys.

We should also not overlook the role played by a shaman in the proclamation of Chinggis as khan. This was Kōkōčū who was also called Teb-tengri "Arch-Heaven". Although he was later killed by Chinggis Khan he took an active part during the early struggles of the ruler to whom he was perhaps related by marriage. It was Kōkōčū who, like Jamuqa, had once predicted that Temüjin would seize the empire (*ulus*). This prophecy had been communicated to him by the "order-king of eternal Heaven" (*mōngke tengri-yin jarliq qan*).²² In later centuries the raising of the white flag by Chinggis Khan was interpreted as the occasion when the summer banquet was celebrated for the first time. The flag ritual is certainly connected with the Mongol beliefs in *sülde*, a word which might be translated as "totem", or "symbol", or even "protective spirit". In the *Secret History* the word occurs as *sülde* (§§ 62–63, 201, 249). In the passage where a white falcon appears in a dream as the totem of Chinggis Khan's clan, the Chinese interlinear version glosses the word *sülde* with *chi-ch'ao* "lucky omen" (§§ 62–63), whereas in the other passages mentioned above it relates to Chinggis as a person and is explained in Chi-

²⁰ On white as a holy color among the Mongols see T'ao Tsung-i, *Cho-keng lu* (Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng ed.), ch. 1, 32. Also for the Khitans White was an auspicious color (K. A. Wittfogel – Feng Chia-sheng, *History of Chinese Society. Liao* (New York, 1949), 214, 216, 257 and 271–275). For "nine" as a holy number see, for example, Pavel Poucha, *Die Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen als Geschichtsquelle und Literaturdenkmal* (Prag, 1956), 137–138.

²¹ J. A. Boyle, op. cit. (note 1), 204.

²² For a thorough discussion of this passage and the role of Kōkōčū see Louis Hambis, "Un épisode mal connu de l'histoire de Gengis-Khan", *Journal des Savants* janvier-mars 1975, 3–46.

nese as *wei-ling* "awe-inspiring spirit". It seems that the words *tug* "flag" and *sülde* "totem, symbol" were interchangeable, if not in the early period of the Mongols then certainly later from the 17th century on.²³ If the *Secret History* is rather brief on rituals this might be due to a tendency to regard national traditions, including the *History* itself as secret and to keep them from the eyes of outsiders, chiefly of the Chinese. For later periods we have better information on Mongol cults performed by the emperor and for the imperial ancestors (see *infra*). For the early phase we may assume that the old Mongol rituals were indeed not very elaborate.

Thirdly, a special aspect of legitimation must be briefly mentioned at this point. It is the question of whether we find any attempts to bolster up the claims of the Tolui line over the other pretenders to khanship. Tolui himself had died already in 1232 and it was only almost twenty years later that his descendant Möngke was proclaimed as Great Khan and overlord of the whole empire. Indeed already in the *Secret History* and other works there are some indications of the future prominence of Tolui, doubtlessly inserted *post eventum*. It has now been established that the second part of the *Secret History* (from § 269 on) must be a later addition to an original work ending with the death of Chinggis Khan in 1227.²⁴ But already in the first and earlier portion of the work we find a passage which might be construed as a prophecy that eventually the rule would pass away from the Ogodai line. Chinggis Khan is reported to have said that if the descendants of Ogodai were bad and unable "so that the grass

²³ The relation between *tug* and *sülde* as national and personal symbols has been discussed in Klaus Sagaster, *Die Weiße Geschichte. Eine mongolische Quelle zur Lehre von den Beiden Ordnungen Religion und Staat in Tibet und der Mongolei* (Wissbaden, 1976), 351–354. The author is, however, mistaken in assuming that the word *sülde* does not occur in the *Secret History* (352 note 6). Otherwise Sagaster's study of the terms *tug* and *sülde* is very informative and thorough, particularly for the folklore and rituals of the later Mongols.

²⁴ Igor de Rachewiltz, "Some Remarks on the Dating of the Secret History of the Mongols", MS 24 (1965), 185–206; Gerhard Doerfer, "Zur Datierung der Geheimen Geschichte der Mongolen", ZDMG 113 (1963) 87–111. Both authors reached independently similar conclusions.

in which they are wrapped will not be eaten by cows and the fat in which they are wrapped not be eaten by dogs", then maybe from his other descendants a brave boy might be born. This passage might well be regarded as a fabrication in order to justify the transfer of the universal monarchy to Tolui's descendants.²⁵ Similar passages where the eventual ascension of Tolui's family is hinted at can be found in Rashīd al-Dīn. Chinggis Khan allegedly said once: "In the end, when thou (Tolui) shalt have a large army, thy children will be stronger and more powerful than all the other princes. And, indeed since he perceived the signs and marks of fortune upon them, it occurred to him that in the end the Khanate would be settled upon them, as all have seen." Ogodai himself at the occasion of his enthronement said: "In particular my younger brother Tolui Khan is more worthy to undertake and accomplish this task, for in accordance with Mongol usage and custom the youngest son from the eldest house succeeds the father and administers his house."²⁶ Here the custom of ultimogeniture is regarded as a legitimizing factor, with "signs and marks of fortune" as a corollary, but ultimately the will of the Khan himself, in our case, the veiled prophecy attributed to Chinggis Khan is sufficient legitimation, and this because the will of the Khan is God's will.

A quite different story concerning Tolui could also be interpreted as enhancing his prestige posthumously and thereby strengthening his descendants' claim to the empire. Tolui is said to have died because he offered his own life when Ogodai was ill and the shamans performed their ceremonies to save the ruler's life. The story of Tolui's *Opfertod* occurs in Mongolian, Persian and Chinese sources, and became an accepted part of the traditions on early Mongol history.²⁷ Also the official document decreeing a new and higher posthumous name for Tolui (Juitsung) in 1265 refers briefly to this episode and points out a parallel with the similar story of how the Duke of Chou offered

²⁵ *Secret History* § 225; Paul Ratchnevsky, "Šigi-Qutuqu, ein mongolischer Gefolgsmann im 12.-13. Jahrhundert", *Central Asiatic Journal* 10 (1965), 117.

²⁶ J. A. Boyle, op. cit., 164.

²⁷ *Secret History*, § 272 (trsl. Haenisch, 143-144); Boyle, op. cit., 167; *Yüan-shih* ch. 115. 3b.

his life for that of King Wu, transmitted in the Book of Documents (*Shu-ching*), chapter *Chin-t'eng*.²⁸ Posthumous honors had been accorded to Tolui immediately after Möngke's accession; he was given the Chinese temple name of Jui-tsung, and at the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth, Tolui should be paired with Chinggis Khan to receive the offerings. It is not clear how far Tolui's act of brotherly affection was an element in building up posthumously his claim to inherit the empire through his sons, but it cannot be denied that it played some role in this connection.

The fourth observation concerns a question which had already been raised by Paul Pelliot²⁹ and other scholars. In some Mongol letters and edicts issued after 1227, for example the letter of Güyük of 1247 quoted above, the text mentions Chinggis Khan as if he was still alive, and the letter of Möngke to king of France Louis the Saint (Louis IX) as reported by William Rubruk begins with the words: *Preceptum eterni Dei est. In celo non est nisi unus Deus eternus, super terram non sit nisi unus dominus Chingischan* ("It is the order of the eternal God: In Heaven there is only one eternal God, and on Earth there shall only be lord, Chinggis Khan"). This seems to point to a belief that Chinggis Khan after his death and residing in Heaven was still regarded as universal emperor ruling the world. If this belief has, in fact, existed and could be corroborated by other evidence, we would have to assume that the Mongols had a dual concept of rule, one metaphysical, that is, the eternal spirit of the founder Chinggis residing in Heaven and amalgamated with his Father, and one actual, the reigning khan himself. Such ideas involving a sort of metempsychosis would, in addition, facilitate the Buddhist metaphysical sacralization of the Mongol emperors which occurred after the 1250s and became a part of Mongol tradition for later

²⁸ The author of the document was Liu Keng (1248-1328). The text can be found in *Yüan wen-lei* (Basic Sinological Series, Shanghai, 1938), ch. 10, 121-122. Already Otto Franke had noticed the parallel with the Duke of Chou, *Gesch. d. chin. R.* vol. 5, 156. For the episode in the *Shu-ching* see the translation by Bernhard Karlgren, *BMFEA* 22 (1950), 35-36.

²⁹ Paul Pelliot, "Les Mongols et la Papauté", *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 24 (1924), 120 ff. (pagination of the offprint). For a summary see also Klaus Sagaster, *Central Asiatic Journal* 17 (1973), 242, n. 12.

centuries (see *infra*). In any case, legitimation for the earlier Mongol rulers derived solely from their being the sons of Heaven and speaking in the name of Heaven.

III. THE MONGOL RULERS AS CHINESE EMPERORS

The gradually and never fully achieved sinicisation of the Mongol rulers was, of course, the chief element underlying the methods and symbols of their legitimation in the eyes of their Chinese subjects. It is impossible to give here a detailed account of this process which lasted a century and longer, because this would amount to a study of Mongol acculturation *in toto*. On the other hand it is clear that the decisive steps to transform the Mongol ruler into a Chinese emperor have taken place under Khubilai Khan after some initial and rather inconclusive efforts under earlier rulers. Some of these aspects will be discussed in the following pages. We can obtain a clear picture of what the Yüan government in the 1330s, at a time when the Yüan state had existed already for almost 70 years, thought to be the most sacred and important utterances of their emperors if we look at the state-handbook *Yüan-tien chang*. Chapter one contains edicts (*chao-ling*) of successive emperors and is followed by chapters two and three with general principles ("sacred government", *sheng-cheng*), i. e., basic laws of specific importance. The edicts issued under Khubilai Khan concern: 1. His proclamation when ascending the throne (1260); 2. Introduction of the Chung-t'ung era (1260); 3. Establishment of a national capital (1264); 4. Introduction of the Chih-yüan era (1264); 5. Introduction of a new national (Mongolian) script (1269); 6. Adoption of Yüan as dynastic name (1271); 7. Appointment of empress and crown-prince (1276); 8. Mobilisation of the army against the South (1274); 9. Proclamation for giving peace to the newly annexed population (1276); 10. Introduction of a new calendar (1280); 11. Conferring higher titles upon ancestors (1284); 12. Issue of the Chih-yüan paper money (1287). For the later emperors similar edicts follow. They are, as we see, concerned with the name of the state, reign-names, appointing crown-princes or empresses, and other matters per-

taining to the ruler and his family. A new calendar also marks an important event, and, although this might surprise at a first glance, so does money. But the name of a dynasty or a reign has to appear on money, be it paper money as in the case of the 1287 edict, or coins. In any case the legitimacy of a dynasty is also mirrored on its money and without money bearing the name of a reign an essential element of full statehood is missing. It would need a whole book to analyse in detail all these basic edicts of the early Yüan dynasty and to study their implications. Only a few of these elements will be selected for a brief presentation, and a few others such as state-cult, portents and the role of the Yüan in cosmological speculations on history will be added in order to show what kind of constitutive elements guaranteeing statehood and legitimate rulership were discussed in Chinese sources for the early part of Yüan rule.

Dynastic Name and Reign-names

It would be quite wrong to regard rule prior to Khubilai as entirely "Mongol" and therefore barbarian and non-Chinese. Modern studies have shown that Chinese or Chinese-educated advisors were active already under Chinggis Khan himself.³⁰ The decisive step of adopting a Chinese dynastic name and thereby including the Mongol rulers in the succession of Chinese dynasties did take place only after Khubilai had ascended the throne. There is, however, a slight irregularity in comparison with other Chinese dynastic founders. These normally gave their territory, however small it might be in the beginning, a state-name and at the same time adopted a reign-name (*nien-hao*). In Khubilai's case a reign-name was adopted over 10 years before a dynastic name was created. All this goes back to the initiative of Chinese statesmen serving at Khubilai's court, among whom Liu Ping-chung was perhaps the leading personality. His activities and influence have been excellently studied by Hok-lam Chan and a clear general picture of the acculturation process emerges from his study.³¹

³⁰ See de Rachewiltz (note 17).

³¹ Hok-lam Chan, "Liu Ping-chung (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman at the Court of Khubilai Khan", TP 53 (1967), 98-146.

The reign-name which was chosen for Khubilai in 1260, immediately after his accession, was Chung-t'ung. It is not quite clear how this can be translated. One possible translation would be "Central Succession" or "Central Rule". This might perhaps refer to the fact that at that time Khubilai ruled over Northern China, the "Central Plains" (*Chung-yüan*). The edict in which the adoption of Chung-t'ung as a reign name was proclaimed is written by Wang E (1190-1273).³² It is full of allusions to the Confucian classics. Wang E refers to the Book of Changes (*I-ching*), hexagram *Ch'ien* and to the Spring and Autumn Annals (*Ch'un-ch'iu*): "(to have a reign-name) shows the righteousness of the family-like unity of the whole empire. We take as model the correct beginning of the *Ch'un-ch'iu* and incorporate the primal force of (hexagram) *Ch'ien* in the Great (Book of) Changes". The allusion to the "correct beginning" of the *Ch'un-ch'iu* means perhaps the beginning of the *Ch'un-ch'iu Kung-yang chuan* where the text reads "why is it said 'The first month of the King?' - It is the great universal rule (*ta i-t'ung*)". And the reference to the Book of Changes alludes possibly to the Commentaries to hexagram *Ch'ien* (The Creative) where the text speaks of a man emerging like "a dragon in the field" and who has the quality of a ruler, being correct and moderate (*chung*). If this interpretation is correct we would have to translate the reign-name of Chung-t'ung as "Moderate Rule".³³ In addition the passage from the Confucian classics both refer to the ideas of a new rule and a new ruler which would make them suited for naming a new era.

The reign-name Chih-yüan was adopted in 1264 and the corresponding edict was also drafted by Wang E. Chih-yüan could be translated "Complete Origin". This name, too, is derived

³² For the text see *Yüan wen-lei*, ch. 9, 106, *Yüan-shih*, ch. 4, 8a-b and *Yüan tien-chang* (ed. Shen Chia-pen, 1908), ch. 1, 2a. For a German translation see D. Schlegel, op. cit. (note 16), 168-169. On the author Wang E see Hok-lam Chan, "Wang O (1190-1273)", *Papers on Far Eastern History* 12 (Canberra, 1975), 43-70.

³³ *Ch'un-ch'iu Kung-yang chuan* (Yin-kung, 1st year), in *Shih-san ching chu-shu* (ed. Shih-chieh shu-chü, Shanghai, 1935) 2196/III; Richard Wilhelm-Cary F. Baynes, *The I Ching or Book of Changes* (Princeton University Press, 1975), 380.

from the Book of Changes. The Commentary to the hexagram *K'un* (The Receptive) says: "Complete (*chih*) is the great and originating (*yüan*) (capacity) indicated by K'un! All things owe to it their birth; it received obediently the influences of Heaven".³⁴ Therefore the idea of a new beginning or primal origin is also present in the era-name of Chih-yüan.

"Origin" (*yüan*) finally became also the name of the state (*kuo-hao*) in 1271. The idea of adopting Yüan as a name for the state and dynasty was suggested to Khubilai by Liu Ping-chung.³⁵ It was the first time that a dynastic name in Chinese history was not chosen among territorial or geographic names but selected from a classic text after much philosophical speculation. Even the Liao and Chin dynasties' state-names were derived from geography, from the Liao river in Southern Manchuria and the "Gold River" in the Northeast of Manchuria which was known in the 12th century under its Jurchen name An-ch'u-hu (<ju.* *alčuqu* "golden"). The edict proclaiming Yüan as the new state-name in 1271 is written not by Liu Ping-chung as could perhaps have been expected but by a Chinese advisor of Jurchen origin, T'u-tan Kung-lü. The circumstances of the adoption of the reign-name have been recently described by an Italian authoress; and there exist several translations of this document into European languages.³⁶ It has been remarked that the connotation inherent in the term *yüan* "origin" and its contexts in the Book of Changes facilitated the association of the Chinese term with the originally

³⁴ James Legge, *The I Ching* (repr. New York, 1963), 214. The translation by Wilhelm and Baynes is somewhat different (op. cit. 386): "Perfect (*chih*) indeed is the sublimity (*yüan*) of the Receptive", but the general idea is the same. The text of the edict drafted by Wang E can be found in *Yüan wen-lei*, ch. 9, 107 and *Yüan tien-chang*, ch. 1. 2 b-3 a. For an important general discussion on reign-names see also Arthur F. Wright and Edward Fagan, "Era Names and Zeitgeist", *Asiatische Studien* 5 (1951), 113-121.

³⁵ Hok-lam Chan, (note 31), 133.

³⁶ For the text see *Yüan wen-lei*, ch. 9, 107-108, *Yüan-shih*, ch. 7. 13b-14b and *Yüan tien-chang*, ch. 1. 3a-b. German translation in O. Franke, *Geschichte d. chin. R.*, vol. 4, 431-432 (who calls the document a "mindless exaltation" and "evidence of the perversions of Sung thought"). Italian translation in Maurizia Dinacci Sacchetti, "Sull'adozione del nome dinastico Yüan", *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli* 31 (1971), 553-558.

Mongol concept of Heaven (*tengri*) as their highest deity.³⁷ The dynastic name suggested by Liu Ping-chung could therefore become, at least to educated Mongols, a political symbol which clad a traditional religious concept with a Chinese classical garb.

The recurrent idea of "origin" and "beginning" in the nomenclature of the Mongol Yüan state and its first two reign-names points perhaps to the unprecedented way in which unity was achieved, namely, as part of a universal empire reaching over most of Asia and not starting from a Chinese territorium.

State Cult and Confucian Rites

The Chinese state-cult with its heavily allusive rituals and symbol-fraught insignia is an aspect of Chinese religious life which has much less been studied than its great political and historical importance would have deserved. Most histories of Chinese religions pay only cursory attention to this part of religious practice.³⁸ A similar situation exists with regard to court ceremonial which, on a different level, also reflects and embodies ideas of legitimate rulership. Court ceremonial was unknown to the early Mongols, and under the earlier reigns before Khubilai "they had not leisure to build a palace. Whenever there was an occasion for congratulations, the crowd of officials assembled before the tent and there was no distinction between high and low, noble and common. If the officers in charge of the rules were sick of the clamor and hubbub, they drove them away with sticks, but after they had gone they came back again and this happened repeatedly. The Han-lin chancellor Wang Wen-chung-kung (i. e. Wang P'an, 1202-1293) was at that time in charge of sacrificial worship (*t'ai-*

³⁷ Sacchetti, op. cit., 557.

³⁸ One of the few histories of Chinese religion in a Western language to describe the state-cult in some detail is Werner Eichhorn, *Die Religionen Chinas* (Stuttgart/Berlin/Köln/Mainz, 1973). On state-cult under the Yüan see p. 314-316. A short survey is also given in Otto Franke, *Gesch. d. chin. R.*, vol. 4, 497-500. Excellent modern studies are Paul Ratchnevsky, "Über den mongolischen Kult am Hofe der Großkhane in China", *Mongolian Studies* (ed. L. Ligeti, Budapest, 1970) 417-443, and id., *Un Code des Yuan* vol. 2 (Paris, 1972), 5-19.

ch'ang-ch'ing) and feared that this might cause laughter among the foreign nations. So he petitioned to establish a court ceremonial, and afterwards his words were followed."³⁹

This episode has not much to do with legitimation but rather with respectability in the eyes of outsiders who might compare unfavorably the lack of ceremony at the khans' court with more hierarchized and structured audiences. It also shows the long way which the Mongols had to go in order to introduce Chinese-type court ceremonies. But the same is also true, at least to a certain extent, for the rituals which were essential elements in the state-cult, the ancestor cult and the offerings to Heaven and Earth. The rituals to be performed by the emperor or his officials show, under the Yüan, a syncretism, because in addition to the rituals inherited from the Sung and Chin, Mongol national rites continued to be performed. Moreover, many of the emperors' rituals were considered by the Mongols very much as a family affair reserved for the ruler's clan and without participation of Chinese officials. Instead Mongol shamans assisted at these rites, and only the national language (Mongolian) was used on these occasions.⁴⁰ An ancestor cult organised on Chinese lines was only reluctantly and gradually adopted. In 1263 Khubilai Khan ordered the construction of an ancestral temple in Yen-ching (Peking), and in 1264 ancestors' tablets were set up but the building was only finished by 1266. In 1277 a new temple was built in Peking but an earthquake destroyed the building in 1337. It is significant that the first offering to the ancestors was performed in 1263 not by the emperor himself but by two princes of the imperial family and two Chinese, one of them Wang P'an. Another contrast between Mongol and Chinese ancestral worship was that the Mongols originally worshipped lifelike portrait statues⁴¹ whereas the Chinese had the more abstract notion that the spirit of the deceased ancestor was symbolically represented by a tablet bearing his ritual name. The Mongols therefore seem to have believed in

³⁹ *Cho-keng lu*, ch. 1, 31.

⁴⁰ For the ancestor cult see Ratschnevsky, "Über den mong. Kult . . .", 418 423-424, after *Yüan-shih*, ch. 74. 1a-b.

⁴¹ See, for example, Giovanni di Plano Carpini: Jean Becquet and Louis Hambis, *Jean de Plan Carpini, Histoire des Mongols* (Paris, 1965), 37.

a more personalised and anthropomorphic survival of the former rulers. To them the Chinese ritual must have appeared as abstract and bloodless if a compared with the offerings presented in the national way.⁴² The tenacity with which the Mongol emperors adhered to their national ways is also shown by the fact that the first emperor to sacrifice in person *more sinico* was Wu-tsung, as late as 1309. Later Chinese historians have therefore reproached the Yüan emperors that they performed all sort of rituals but neglected the proper rites (that is, Chinese rites).⁴³

In the ancestor temple (*t'ai-miao*) the tablets were kept in eight chambers. One chamber each was reserved for Chinggis Khan, for his four sons Ogodai, Joči, Chagatai and Tolui (canonised as emperor Jui-tsung), Güyük, Möngke and the last contained the tablets of Chinggis Khan's parents, Yesügei and Ho'elun. This arrangement of the "eight white yurts" (*naiman čayan ger*), as Ratchnevsky has pointed out in detail, became the name of the places for ancestral worship which has peristed in later Mongol folklore until our century⁴⁴ – another instance of a survival among the Mongols of rites which originated under the Yüan (see also *infra* under Buddhism).

The immanent reason for sacrificing at all to ancestors is, in part, the belief that the deceased continue to exist somehow after their physical death. In China this belief had been at an early time infused with moral and ethical ideas, so that the example set by the ancestors was at the same time an admonition to the living and a legitimation for their actions as long as they conformed to the spirit of the ancestors. This pattern of interaction between the living and the dead was, among the Mongols, matched by another set of rites which implied a rebirth ceremony. Every year in the second half of the twelfth month, on an auspicious day, ropes

⁴² For a translation of the text dealing with national Mongol customs see Ratschnevsky, "Über den Kult . . .", 418–421, after *Yüan-shih*, ch. 77. 15b.

⁴³ Ch'en Pang-chan, *Yüan-shih chi-shih pen-mo* (Basic Sinological Series, Shanghai, 1935), ch. 10, 61.

⁴⁴ Ratchnevsky, "Über den Kult . . .", 424–425. For a significant echo in a late Mongol source see *Altan tobči*, trsl. Charles R. Bawden, *The Mongol Chronicle Altan Tobči* (Wiesbaden, 1955), 145–146.

were prepared from the wool of white and black sheep, and the emperor, his consort and the princes were fettered from neck to hands and feet with these woollen ropes. Male and female shamans recited incantations and fumigated the body of the emperor with smoke arising from a silver bowl in which butter oil and rice hulls were sprinkled on a fire. Then the ropes were cut and the content of the bowl offered to the emperor. He then tore red ribbons several inches long, spat three times and threw everything into the fire. He finally took off cap and robes and gave them to the shamans. This ceremony was called "to throw off old ill-luck and inviting new luck".⁴⁵ The idea of an annual rebirth ceremony is also attested for the Khitan rulers and seems to have been common among the Northern neighbors of China.⁴⁶

A very important state ritual in China were the suburb (*chiao*) offerings to Heaven.⁴⁷ Their introduction took place under Khubilai in 1276, that is, after the annexation of the Southern Sung state; they should, however, follow Mongol customs. But the emperor did not take personally part in the rite and left its performance to delegates. Only Khubilai's successors gradually took more interest in this state-cult. After Khubilai's death in 1294 an altar was built 7 *li* south of the capital but also this time the ritual was performed by proxy. When Chinese advisors admonished Ch'eng-tsung to attend the ceremony in person, they pointed out that there were three rites he should perform himself, the sacrifices to Heaven, to the Ancestors and the Gods of Soil and Grain,⁴⁸ but the emperor could not be persuaded to attend in person. Under later reigns statutes for the offerings and rituals were composed, but it seems that the first emperor to attend personally the Southern Suburb

⁴⁵ *Yüan-shih*, ch. 77. 16b-17a, trsl. Ratchnevsky, "Über den Kult . . ." 432-433.

⁴⁶ K. A. Wittfogel-Feng Chia-sheng, *History of Chinese Society. Liao* (New York, 1949), 273-275.

⁴⁷ Professor R. A. Stein (Paris) has, many years ago, told me that he had the opportunity of witnessing the Chiao-ritual in the early 1940s in the Vietnamese royal capital of Hué. He said that the performance of this rite, which began in the late hours of the night, was an immensely impressive spectacle.

⁴⁸ The sacrifice to the Gods of Soil and Grain (*she-chi*) were institutionalized in 1272, *Yüan-shih*, ch. 76. 1a.

rite (*nan chiao*) was Wen-tsung in 1330.⁴⁹ We may suppose that Wen-tsung, whose accession had been, to say the least, irregular, felt in more need of Heavenly protection than his predecessors and tried to enhance his legitimacy performing the Chinese ritual. It is well known that the coup d'état which put him on the throne also brought about a certain reorientation towards Chinese values and Chinese culture.⁵⁰ Later Chinese historians did not fail to blame the disinterest of the Mongol emperors in the Chinese state-cult. "Under the Yüan, the ministers and dignitaries had three times offered to perform the Nan-chiao rites, but the ruler of the empire did not preside over the rites for the empire but delegated this to his officials. How could Heaven have been willing to grant them lasting fortune?"⁵¹ Here the eventual fall of the dynasty is seen as a consequence of the carelessness of the Yüan emperors in observing the Chinese rites.

Another aspect of the state-cult which embodied the claim to legitimate rule over the whole of China were the offering to the tutelary deities of the Holy Mountains and Rivers. These rites symbolized the domination over the empire in its totality. The Five Holy Mountains (*wu-yo*) were the T'ai-shan (Shantung) in the East, the Sung-shan (Honan) in the middle, the Heng-shan (Hunan) in the South, the Hua-shan (Shensi) in the West and the Heng-shan (Hopei) in the North. The Four Rivers (*ssu-tu*) were the Yellow River, the Yangtse, the Huai and the Chi (Shantung). Already under the Chin rituals for worshipping these protective deities of the empire were introduced in 1164.⁵² It is remarkable that of the five mountains that of the South and of the four rivers the Yangtse did not belong to the Chin state. Nevertheless the rites were performed, and thereby legitimate claims to the possession of the whole empire symbolically expressed.

⁴⁹ *Yüan-shih*, ch. 34. 23a. The edict for the amnesty proclaimed at that occasion was written by Yü Chi, *Yüan wen-lei*, ch. 9, 116.

⁵⁰ This has been demonstrated by John W. Dardess, *Conquerors and Conquered. Aspects of Political Change on Late Yüan China* (Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1973), 31 ff.

⁵¹ *Yüan-shih chi-shih pen-mo*, ch. 9, 55.

⁵² *Chin-shih*, ch. 6. 14a and 10.11a. Details on the rituals are also to be found in *Ta-Chin chi-li* (Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng vol. 1047), chapters 10 and 11.

The same geographic situation prevailed in the Yüan state prior to the conquest of Sung China.⁵³ Already in 1261 local officers were told to perform the rites and in 1266 the ritual for worshipping the mountains and rivers was held through delegated officials.⁵⁴ Even after the conquest of the Sung state, Khubilai rejected the idea of attending the ceremony in person (1291) on the grounds that "the way is so far that We cannot go. Also you, the ministers of state, have your affairs to attend to. It is better to send prominent officials to perform the offerings in Our name. The Chinese people should select renowned Confucians and Taoists who are experienced in ritual matters".⁵⁵ This passage shows again the reluctance of the ruler to identify himself personally with the Chinese state-cult. Needless to say that also the worship of the mountains and rivers was an affair of the state and not of the population. Moreover, an article of the Yüan code expressly forbade the participation of "petty people" in violation of the prescribed rulings, perhaps because a public performance could have given rise to the expression of nationalistic and anti-Mongol feelings among the crowd.⁵⁶

An equal reserve can be observed towards the cult of Confucius as far as the emperors are concerned.⁵⁷ And yet the Mongol rulers had been made acquainted with the Sage at a very early date. Ironically it was a Buddhist monk, Hai-yün (1202-1257), who persuaded Ogodai Khan that Confucius and his descendants should receive ritual attention and exemption from labor service. He told Ogodai that the teachings of Confucius were "the basis for ruling the state, controlling the family, pacifying All-under-

⁵³ For details see Ratchnevsky, *Code des Yuan*, 2, 5-17.

⁵⁴ *Yüan-shih*, ch. 6. 7b.

⁵⁵ *Yüan-shih*, ch. 76. 24b. — For details on the worship of the sacred mountain of the East, the T'ai-shan, see also Janet R. Ten Broeck and Yiu Tung, "A Taoist Inscription of the Yüan Dynasty: The Tao-chiao Pei", *TP* 40 (1951), 72-81.

⁵⁶ Ratchnevsky, *Code des Yuan*, 2, 5-8.

⁵⁷ The worship of Confucius is described in *Yüan-shih*, ch. 76. 16b-23b. For the legal side see Ratchnevsky, *Code des Yuan*, 2, 17-19. On the original indifference of the Mongols towards Confucianism see Paul Demiéville, "La situation religieuse en Chine au temps des Marco Polo", *Oriente Poliano* (Roma, 1957), 216-219.

Heaven, rectifying the heart and making all thought sincere. From Confucius to the present hereditary fief-holder, the Duke of Proclaiming Saintliness, there are altogether 51 generations. All those who have ruled the state have continued this and there was never an interruption of the offerings".⁵⁸ Indeed Hai-yün succeeded in having the ranks of the family members of Confucius restored and the exemption from services secured. Analogous rulings were issued for the descendants of Meng-tzu and Yen Hui. This early evidence of pro-Confucian persuasion contains already in a nutshell all the elements that were to become stock phrases in the endless flow of memoranda addressed to the Yüan court by well-meaning Confucian literati. Their main point is that the ideas of the Sage were indispensable for worldly success in governing the empire, and it is, either tacitly or overtly, implied that a ruler's legitimation depends from his adoption of the Confucian precepts. After many decades these attempts had some success, at least on the formal and ritual level. Confucius' posthumous rank was raised and state offerings for the great Confucian masters of the past were introduced, including the Neo-Confucian teachers of the Sung dynasty.⁵⁹ Chu Hsi could score a late victory over the other schools because in 1313, when the literary examinations were restored, his interpretation of the classics was accepted as orthodox. The deep impact of Neo-Confucianism on state-orthodoxy goes therefore to a great deal back to the time of the Mongol emperor Jen-tsung (r. 1311-1320). Chu Hsi himself was promoted posthumously to the rank of Duke of Ch'i in 1362.⁶⁰ All this, however, cannot be interpreted as indicating a deep influence of Confucianism on the Mongol rulers; they rather suffered such things to happen than that they took the initiative.

Calendar and Capital

To proclaim a new calendar had always been in China reserved for the emperor, and therefore an important element of

⁵⁸ Nien-ch'ang, *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai* (Taishō Tripitaka vol. 49), ch. 21, 704/l.

⁵⁹ *Yüan-shih*, ch. 76. 16b ff. (1313); ch. 77. 12b-14b (1359).

⁶⁰ *Yüan-shih*, ch. 77. 14b-15b.

legitimation, particularly in view of the universistic theories which linked the life and actions of men with nature and heaven. The Chin dynasty had promulgated a new calendar in 1137 (it had been devised already ten years earlier), and a revision of this Calendar of Great Brilliance (*Ta-ming li*) took place in 1171 and was promulgated in 1180. This revised Ta-ming calendar was first adopted by the Mongols and was in use until late in the 13th century (1282) a new calendar was devised.⁶¹ Its name was *Shou-shih li* "Calendar delivering the seasons", derived from a passage in the Book of Documents (*Shu-ching*). The importance of a calendar as dutiful action of a legitimate ruler is pointed out in the edict with which it was proclaimed, a text written by Li Ch'ien (1224-1302). "Since antiquity, the ruler who possessed the state and governed the people always had, in reverence towards Heaven, handed out the seasons and made this the basis of establishing order. The Yellow Emperor, Yao, Shun and those up to the Three Dynasties all followed this without exception."⁶²

A walled city as residence had been since times immemorial in China the corollary of a duly established dynasty. This was different from the tradition of nomadic steppe-dwellers, and indeed seasonal residences and therefore a plurality of residence towns or capitals were characteristic of the Liao and Chin who both had a system of five capitals. For the Mongols themselves the natural way had been to live in tents with no fixed abode, and "nation living in felt tents" (*sisgei to'urqatu ulus*) was a synonym for the steppe-dwellers.⁶³ To live in a walled town was even regarded as a distinct disadvantage. When Batu demanded the extradition of the Cumans from King Bela IV of Hungaria, he said that they could perhaps get away because they were living in tents but "thou who livest in houses and hast castles and cities, how wilt thou escape my hands?" (*tu autem in domibus habitans, habens*

⁶¹ *Chin-shih*, ch. 21. 1b-2a; *Yüan-shih*, ch. 53. 31a-32b.

⁶² *Yüan wen-lei*, ch. 9, 108 and *Yüan tien-chang*, ch. 1. 5a-b. For the importance of the Chinese calendar as reflected in an Islamic source see also Karl Jahn, trsl., *Die China-Geschichte des Rašīd ad-Dīn* (Österr. Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Denkschriften 105. Band, Wien 1971), 21-23.

⁶³ *Secret History*, § 202.

castra et civitates, qualiter effugies manus meas?).⁶⁴ It is, of course, true that Khara Khorum in Mongolia had already by the middle of the 13th century acquired some characteristics of a town, but it was still a long way from there to having a residence on the scale of Peking.

The plan to have a capital constructed goes back to Liu Ping-chung who suggested it already in 1256 under Möngke's reign.⁶⁵ A site was chosen north of the Luan River, near modern Dolon Nor, and the buildings were finished in 1260, when Khubilai became Khan. The name of this new town was K'ai-ping fu, renamed 1264 into Supreme Capital (Shang-tu, S. T. Coleridge's "Xanadu"). At that time Yen-ching (Peking) became the Central Capital (Chung-tu), renamed Ta-tu "Great Capital" in 1272. Liu Ping-chung was responsible for the construction of both cities and their planning. Hok-lam Chan has referred to studies by Japanese scholars which indicate that the Supreme Capital Shang-tu was built on the model of the T'ang capital Ch'ang-an which must be interpreted as a symbol for the intended succession to the world-empire of the T'ang. In Shang-tu, eight Buddhist and Taoist monasteries were built in octagonal arrangement following the eight trigrams of the *I-ching*, thus indicating a cosmological plan so that the city design became a symbolical representation of the forces of the universe.

The city design worked out by Liu Ping-chung for Peking as a winter capital seems to have been modelled on the idealized imperial city plan as described in the *K'ao-kung chi* section of the Rites of Chou (*Chou-li*).⁶⁶ Thus the model of one city was the T'ang metropolis Ch'ang-an, a real city, and of the other it was the ideal projected into the early times of the Chou dynasty. In both cases a sort of architectural "legitimate succession" may have been the motivation in Liu's mind. The actual construction work in Peking lasted over several decades; temporary city-walls were

⁶⁴ Letter of Brother Julian to the Bishop of Perugia, B. F. Dudik, *Iter Romanum* vol. I (Wien, 1855), 334.

⁶⁵ Hok-lam Chan, "Liu Ping-chung . . .", 126-128 and 133-134 (with copious bibliography).

⁶⁶ Hok-lam Chan, *op. cit.*, 133 n. 173, referring to Japanese scholars.

erected in 1267 but only in 1292 the walls had taken their definitive shape and been completed. Of course the theoretical model of the *Chou-li* could not be put into architectural practice without some modifications. These were chiefly caused by the necessity to include the former summer palaces of the Chin emperors in the design. In any case, both Yüan capitals have been designed after Chinese models, each of which had strong historical associations fitting well into the architectural symbolism of a new dynasty.

The Theory of Five Elements and the Yüan

On an even more abstract and symbolical level legitimate succession in China found its expression in the speculations assigning to each legitimate dynasty one of the Five Elements. The Sung still solemnly proclaimed in the third month of 960 in the beginning of T'ai-tsu's reign: "The state's revolving fortune (*yün*) was fixed. It ruled through the virtue of Fire, and among the colors Red (*ch'ih*) was held in esteem for sacrifices."⁶⁷ Such speculations may seem futile and mechanistic to the modern observer but in the Chinese Middle Ages they still played a role.⁶⁸ The restoration of the Southern Sung was marked by the reign-name Chien-yen "Establishing Bright Fire" in 1127. In the 14th century (1351) the Red Turban revolt in Southeastern China chose the color Red as distinctive mark because it was the symbolic color of the defunct Sung dynasty. Also the Chin dynasty became in this way a link in the ever-revolving and eternal succession of legitimate dynasties when they adopted as their element Earth in 1203.⁶⁹ The importance of this step is underlined in a passage in a Buddhist chronicle which says under the year 1203: "From then on only the state of Chin was established by ruling through the virtue of Earth and thus inheriting from the Sung.

⁶⁷ *Sung-shih*, ch. 1. 6a.

⁶⁸ Cf. Lien-sheng Yang, "Toward a Study of Dynastic Configurations in Chinese History", *HJAS* 17 (1954), 340-342.

⁶⁹ *Chin-shih*, ch. 13. 10a. For an excellent and extremely well documented study of the cosmological position of the Chin dynasty see Hok-lam Chan, "Theories of Legitimacy in Imperial China: Discussions on Legitimate Succession under the Jurchen-Chin Dynasty" (unpublished manuscript).

This means that the Liao people were not counted."⁷⁰ We could add: not counted as legitimate. And in fact the long list of elemental assignments in the Great Encyclopedia *T'u-shu chi-ch'eng* leaves out the Liao.⁷¹ But the enumeration ends with the Chin so that we could perhaps assume that from the Yüan on the theory of elements as applied to dynasties became obsolete. This might have been one of the reasons why attempts to include the Yüan in the cyclical succession of elements failed eventually. After Khubilai Khan's enthronement the Han-lin scholar Wang Yün (1227-1304) asked the emperor to have the issue of the position of the Mongol dynasty in the cosmological succession discussed. He also proposed to adopt White formally as the ritual color of the dynasty.⁷² This would have meant that Metal would have been the corresponding element. But Metal is Chin in Chinese, the same word as the name of the Chin dynasty which had been destroyed by the Mongols. It would have been unauspicious to associate the Mongol dynasty with an element bearing the name of a defunct dynasty and state. This too must have contributed to the inability of Chinese to give the new Mongol dynasty an appropriate place in the symbolical succession of elements. Contrary to the request of Wang Yün, no formal discussion of the issue ever took place.

⁷⁰ *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai* ch. 20, 694/II.

⁷¹ *Ku-chin T'u-shu chi-ch'eng* (Chung-hua shu-chü ed.) vol. 234, ch. 170, *ti-yün pu*. On the assignment of elements to dynasties see also the article by Kano Naoki in TG (Kyoto) 5 (1934), 50-86 where he states that after the Sung no dynasty was assigned an element. This mistake was corrected by Kano in a postscript, TG 6 (1936), 310-311, referring to Earth as element of the Chin (and that of the puppet state of Ch'i, 1130-1137). Kano does not mention the Yüan.

⁷² Collected works of Wang Yün, *Ch'iu-ch'ien hsien-sheng ta-ch'üan wen-chi* (ed. Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an), ch. 85. 4a-5a; 86. 19b-20a. Wang Yün also deplored the fact that the Mongol emperors had no real clan name (*hsing*) like decent Chinese imperial families; even the Khitans had Yeh-lü as imperial clan and the Jurchen had Wan-yen (op. cit., ch. 85. 3b-4a). In reality the descendants of Chinggis Khan had of course a clan affiliation (Borjigid) and a sib name (Kiyod) but these names were never sinicized or replaced by a Chinese family name. The absence of a formal family name of the Chinese type is another element which places the Chinggiskhanides apart from all other Chinese imperial families.

We have, however, some evidence that the Yüan dynasty was associated, although not formally in the sense of the Chinese system, with the element Water. In a Tibetan chronicle of the 14th century the Mongols are said to have conquered the Tangut state of Hsi-hsia because the Mongols had Water as their emblematic element, whereas that of the Hsi-hsia was Fire. The victory of the Mongols was, therefore, as inevitable as water would extinguish fire.⁷³

Portents and Mirabilia

We have seen above that portents played a role in early Mongol traditions about legitimation, mostly in conjunction with prophecies. Chinese traditions about the Yüan dynasty are, as far as I could ascertain, silent in this respect. There is the story of the "seal transmitting the state" on which see below, but otherwise portents and mirabilia were apparently not recorded (or fabricated) to bolster up the claims of the ascending Mongols, and it seems that generally such things as children songs (*t'ung-yao*) and similar prophetic utterings during the 13th and 14th century were rather reported in order to indicate the imminent collapse of a rule than to herald the coming of a new government. A negative aspect prevailed over the positive. There is, however, one episode which is related in connection with Chinggis Khan's attempt to conquer India. It has been studied in detail by Igor de Rachewiltz in his article on Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai.⁷⁴ In 1224 Chinggis Khan had reached the Iron Gate Pass south of Kash (modern Buzgala Pass in the Autonomous Uzbek Soviet Republic) when an "animal with one horn, shaped like a deer but with a horse-tail" appeared. It was of green color and could speak. Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai explained to the emperor that it was an auspicious animal and a portent descended from Heaven. "Your

⁷³ R. A. Stein, "Nouveaux Documents Tibétains sur le Mi-nag/Si-hia", *Mélanges de Sinologie offerts à Monsieur Demiéville* (Paris, 1966), 284-285.

⁷⁴ Igor de Rachewiltz, "Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai (1189-1243); Buddhist Idealist and Confucian Statesman", Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett (editors), *Confucian Personalities* (Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., 1962), 194-195.

Majesty is Heaven's original son and the people in All-under-Heaven are all Your Majesty's sons. I wish you would conform to the intention of Heaven and keep inviolate the lives of the people." Thereupon Chinggis withdrew with his army. The apparition of this unicorn (*Chüeh-tuan*) was deemed so important that the story was incorporated into the Basic Annals of the *Yüan-shih*.⁷⁵ The story appears already in the funerary inscription for Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai composed by Sung Tzu-ch'en (1187-1266)⁷⁶ and found its way into the *Yüan-shih* biography of Yeh-lü via the *Yüan-ch'ao ming-ch'en shih-lüeh*.⁷⁷ de Rachewiltz does not think that the episode of the unicorn is purely fictitious but might well go back to an actual encounter with an animal unknown to the Mongols (a rhinoceros?) but that Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai used the incident to warn Chinggis Khan against an invasion of India.

The version of the story in the *Cho-keng-lu*⁷⁸ has an elaboration over the earlier sources insofar as the unicorn *Chüeh-tuan* is interpreted as a portent sent by Heaven to indicate that Chinggis Khan would become the ruler of the whole world and found a universal empire. A 14th century Buddhist chronicle also records the event and stresses the benevolent aspect of the auspicious animal.⁷⁹ The apparition of the unicorn was a colorful enough episode to be eagerly seized by later Mongol tradition. It was incorporated with a definite Buddhist taint into Sagang Sečen's *Erdeni-yin tobči*: "Thereupon he (Chinggis) . . . overtook a wild animal called the *Seru* (rhinoceros), with a single horn, which bent the knee three times before the Ruler and made obeisance.

⁷⁵ *Yüan-shih*, ch. 1. 22a and ch. 146. 2a-b, For a translation see also E. Bretschneider, *Mediaeval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources*, vol. 2 (London, n. d.), 288-289. For a detailed study of the unicorn in China see Yen Chung-chiang "The Chüeh-tuan as Word, Art Motif and Legend", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 89 (1969), 578-599. The legend of the unicorn as reported in the *Yüan* history has been studied by Etani Toshiyuki in *Bukkyō Daigaku Kenkyū Kiyō* 48 (1965), 47-62.

⁷⁶ *Yüan wen-lei*, ch. 57, 831.

⁷⁷ *Yüan-ch'ao ming-ch'en shih-lüeh* (Peking, 1962), ch. 5. 2b.

⁷⁸ *Cho-keng lu*, ch. 5, 75.

⁷⁹ *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*, ch. 22, 729/I.

And everyone marvelled together about it, and the Ruler thus declaimed:

‘As for the Vajra seat of India, it is said:

It is the place where were born the powerful Bogda Khans,
The elevated Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of yore.

Now, this speechless wild-beast,

Why does he now thus like a man?

Does it indicate, there will be harm, when he arrives?

Can High Heaven, my father, have warned me?’ he said.

He wheeled about and returned back down.”⁸⁰

We see that in later Mongol tradition (taken up also by the *Hor-č’os byun* (“Propagation of the Law among the Mongols”, an early 19th century Tibetan chronicle) Yeh-lü Ch’u-ts’ai is not mentioned at all and the animal regarded as a portent warning Chinggis Khan against invading Buddha’s holy land of India.⁸¹ The story could be interpreted in many ways and it would be interesting to study the ideological content of the various versions in Chinese, Mongol and Tibetan sources. One point concerning the unicorn story deserves attention: All sources agree that the unicorn somehow stopped Chinggis Khan’s advance into India, which is in contradiction with the idea that Chinggis Khan was destined to rule over the whole world. This is surprising because, as we shall see later, also Buddhist ideology provided Chinggis Khan and his descendants with a legitimation to rule the universe.

The “Seal Transmitting the State”

There has been a tradition in China that the first emperor, Ch’in Shih-huang-ti, had a state-seal made of jade with an in-

⁸⁰ Trsl. John R. Krueger, *Sagang Sechen, History of the Eastern Mongols* (The Mongolia Society Occasional Papers, Bloomington, Ind., 1964), 61. – *Seru* is Tibetan (*bSe-ru*) and means unicorn or rhinoceros. It might perhaps be of some import that a god of war (*wer-ma*) in Tibet was known by the epithet of *bSe-ru* ‘Od-ldan dkar-po which I translate as “White luminary Unicorn”, cf. R. A. Stein, *Recherches sur l’épopée et le barde en Tibet* (Paris, 1959), 72–73.

⁸¹ Trsl. Georg Huth, *Geschichte des Buddhismus in der Mongolei* (*Hor Čhos Byung*), vol. II (Straßburg, 1896), 25–26.

scription of eight characters which was handed down over the centuries and came to be regarded as a palladium and external sign of rulership over the Chinese empire. Its Chinese name was *ch'uan-kuo hsi* ("seal transmitting the state"). As it happens so frequently with palladia of that kind, it turns up again and again in history and we may well presume that forgeries or pious fraud were not excluded. Pentti Aalto has devoted a substantial article to the story of this seal and adduced many examples of how this seal became a part of Mongol folklore and literature right into our century under the name of *qaš boo* ("jade seal").⁸² We are not concerned here with the earlier history (or legend) of the seal in China but only with its alleged reappearance in 1294. For the Chinese side of the story Aalto had to rely on secondary sources, chiefly on the account of the *Wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao* translated in R. Daudin's *Sigillographie Sino-Annamite* (Saigon 1937).⁸³ The *Yüan-shih* very frequently refers to the discovery of the seal, and the *Cho-keng lu* contains a long passage on the episode.⁸⁴ The author, T'ao Tsung-i, who was a great collector of antiques and an expert in palaeography, tries to prove that the seal found in 1294 cannot have been the authentic piece. He might well be right, but this is not our point. What should interest us are the details of the "discovery" and the possible reasons for its reappearance just after Khubilai's death.

The imperial seal was supposed to have belonged to Sung Hui-tsung and been stolen by the Jurchen when they conquered the Sung capital of K'ai-feng. It was afterwards in the possession of the Chin but nobody seems to have cared about or found it when the Chin state was extinguished by the Mongols. Only over half a century later, in 1294, the seal reappeared. A certain Shih-te had died some time before (1293). Shih-te was, according to the *Cho-keng-lu*, a grandson of the famous general Muqali, but in

⁸² Pentti Aalto, "Qaš Buu Tamaya und Chuan-kuo hsi" Herbert Franke (editor), *Studia Sino-Altaica. Festschrift für Erich Haenisch zum 80. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden, 1961), 12-20.

⁸³ The story of the *ch'uan-kuo hsi* is to be found in Daudin's work p. 129-157. The reappearance of the seal in 1294 is retold after the *Wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao* p. 156-157.

⁸⁴ *Cho-keng lu*, ch. 26, 387-391.

reality he was a great-great-grandson of Muqali. Shih-te had distinguished himself in the campaigns against Nayan (1287) and in the Western Regions as a member of the Imperial Guard to which he had belonged since 1260. He died in poverty and left a widow, Toqtojin, and a nine-year old son. His property was about to be sold when the seal was found among his belongings. The widow wanted to sell it to obtain some means for livelihood and offered it to Kōkōjū, a member of the censorate and a grandson of Anjar, one of Chinggis Khan's generals. Kōkōjū could not read Chinese and did not know what to make of the jade seal and therefore showed it to an acquaintance, the Chinese scholar Ts'ui Yü, a colleague of his in the censorate. Ts'ui Yü (d. 1298) had won some reputation as a straightforward and incorruptible official at Khubilai's court, and became later a minister of punishments and vice-chancellor (*p'ing-chang cheng-shih*).⁸⁵ Ts'ui was able to decipher only a few of the characters on the seal and took it to Yang Huan (1234-1299), who was at that time an inspecting censor (*chien-ch'a yü-shih*) and later held some offices at the Mongol court, including that of a junior supervisor of the imperial secretariat (*pi-shu shao-chien*).⁸⁶ Yang Huan was also co-author of the national gazetteer (*I-t'ung chih*). Moreover, he was an expert on palaeography who wrote a compendium on the Six Styles of Writing (*Liu-shu t'ung*) which is still extant.⁸⁷ Yang deciphered the seal inscription as *shou ming yü t'ien, chi shou yung ch'ang* "Having received the mandate from Heaven, may there be longevity and eternal brilliance". He therefore concluded that the seal must be the long-lost seal of the Ch'in. It was decided on Ts'ui Yü's suggestion that the seal should be presented to the empress Hui-jen yü-sheng (d. 1300), i. e., the widow of Jinggim (Yü-tsung) and mother of Temür (Ch'eng-tsung), Khubilai's grandson and successor. According to her biography she had the Mongol name of Kōkōjin and came from the Qong-

⁸⁵ Ts'ui Yü has a biography in *Yüan-shih*, ch. 173. 4b-14a,

⁸⁶ Yang Huan's biography is in *Yüan-shih*, ch. 164. 13b-15a.

⁸⁷ The *Liu-shu t'ung* (20 ch.) was printed in 1308 in Hangchow and also copied into the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu*. Another extant work by Yang Huan is the phonetic compendium *Shu-hsüeh cheng-yün* (36 ch.) which was also printed in Hangchow ca. 1308.

girad tribe which had customarily married its daughters to the family of Chinggis and his descendants.⁸⁸ In recognition of the special character of the valuable present the empress ordered to give 2,500 *kuan* in paper-money to the family of Shih-te,⁸⁹ and to reward Kōkōjū,⁹⁰ Yang and Ts'ui with gifts of brocade and other textiles.⁹¹

It is clear that the discovery of an antique seal symbolizing the transmission of imperial power over the centuries was of great propagandistic value, also with regard to the Chinese intellectuals in the capital. The move to present it to the mother of the heir-apparent was certainly designed to increase his legitimacy as successor of Khubilai. The importance attached to this episode is evident from the numerous passages in the *Yüan-shih* where it is referred to. But still greater was the impact on the Mongols. Later traditions show that the *qaš boo* came to be regarded as a symbol of Mongol and not only of Chinese imperial power.⁹² When the last Mongol emperor fled back into Mongolia in 1368, he took the seal (whether this particular seal or not is irrelevant) with him. Other Mongol traditions ascribe to a precious jade seal a supernatural origin, a legendary embellishment found in many Mongol chronicles. In the *Erdeni-yin tobči* it appears miraculously before Chinggis Khan's enthronement in a split rock, and is therefore an omen that he will become the legitimate ruler. In the *Altan tobči*, Chinggis himself says to his younger brothers: "Formerly, when I was born, in my right hand there happened to be, from the throne of the dragons (*luus-un oron*)

⁸⁸ Empress Kōkōjin has a biography in *Yüan-shih*, ch. 116. 1b-3b. She is also known under the name of Bairam Egeči, see Paul Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo*, vol. I (Paris 1959), 392-394.

⁸⁹ For the name of Shih-te, two different orthographies appear in the sources. For the genealogy of Muqali see now Louis Hambis, *Le chapitre CVIII du Yuan Che* (Leiden, 1954), table after p. 40. It is not improbable that the orthography as given in *Cho-keng lu* and *Yüan-shih* 122 is the original one because it is quite a normal word, "foundling", which might have been used as a personal name.

⁹⁰ On Kōkōjū see *Yüan-shih*, ch. 122. 10a.

⁹¹ *Yüan-shih*, ib.

⁹² For a thorough study see the article by P. Aalto (note 82).

and by the order of the mighty Buddha, the Qasbuu seal."⁹³ A slightly different version of this is given by the *Altan tobči nova*. Here the text reads: "When Temüjin was born, and the wise dragon king (*sečen luus-un qayan*) gave him the Qasbuu seal . . ."⁹⁴ The augury of the seal is again differently told in the *Meng-ku shih-hsi-p'u*: "Seven days after the Qan was born, a swallow (lit. a dark-coloured bird) came out from the sea and settled on a dark-coloured stone, and sang for three days and nights. Yisügei Bayatur understood this lucky augury and split the stone and obtained a jade seal, and placed it in the 'pure house' and worshipped it with incense."⁹⁵ The "dragon king" (*luus-un qayan*) in the *Altan tobči nova* is perhaps a reminiscence of Buddhist legends where dragons (*nāga*) appear at Buddha's birth. "Dragon king" is also the name of a Buddha (tib. *kLu-dban rgyal-po*) in Lamaism,⁹⁶ so that our text means that the seal was given to Chinggis by a Buddha.

The story of a supernatural seal symbolizing legitimate rulership shows, as we have seen, a growing legendarization, which goes parallel to the sacralization of Chinggis Khan in Buddhist terms. It should be added that even in our century these legends were current in Mongolia and that they appear also in the legendary elements relating to the origin of Manchu sovereignty over the Mongols.⁹⁷

Legitimation through Descent?

In medieval Europe it was believed that some families were legitimized by a charismatic and exceptional relation with God.

⁹³ Trsl. Charles R. Bawden, *The Mongol Chronicle Altan Tobči*, 136–137.

⁹⁴ Bawden, ib. 23 n. 62.

⁹⁵ Trsl. Bawden, ib. 24. The text of the *Meng-ku shih-hsi p'u* has been edited by W. Heissig and Charles R. Bawden, *Mongyol Borjigid obory-un teüke/Meng-ku shih-hsi p'u* (Wiesbaden, 1957). Our passage is on p. 102, fol. 6b of the Chinese text.

⁹⁶ Albert Grünwedel, *Mythologie des Buddhismus in Tibet und der Mongolei* (Leipzig, 1900), 110.

⁹⁷ P. Aalto, op. cit. (note 82), 13 (after Antoine Mostaert). Also the *Hor-ě'os byun* relates the story of the seal, and combines the Chinese tradition of the

Nobilitas carnis was thus connected with the self-image of a certain family and a religiously sanctioned social preponderance.⁹⁸ In a non-monotheistic religion this special link with God appears usually as a legend ascribing the origin of a clan to a supernatural or divine ancestor. Such ideas do in themselves imply that this *nobilitas* is inheritable, provided that the offspring was legitimate in the terms of the respective marital system. The belief in divine ancestry has taken a dual shape in the case of the Chinggiskhanides. On the one hand, Chinggis was regarded as the son of Heaven (*tengri*) and this distinction was, although perhaps to a lesser degree, passed on to his successors. On the other hand, he was, in later Buddhist speculation, believed to be a son of Buddhist deities (see *infra*). These are two different aspects of supernatural descent. We have also not infrequently cases in medieval Chinese history where persons of prominence, such as emperors, are said to have been of natural but illegitimate descent. Slandorous inventions of this type may have arisen out of tendencies to de-legitimize a ruler, or out of a desire to explain by heredity traits in the character of a person which had struck contemporaries as unusual. To this latter type of rumor belongs the story about the mother of the Chin emperor Chang-tsung (r. 1189–1200). Emperor Chang-tsung had received a solid Chinese education and become proficient in the arts of poetry, painting and calligraphy. He thereby imitated the Chinese model of the *imperator doctus*, in particular Sung Hui-tsung (r. 1101–1125), and even adopted Hui-tsung's personal style of calligraphy ("Slender Gold"). This gave rise to the belief current in Southern Sung China that he must have been a descendant of Chinese and not a pure Jurchen at all. He was believed to be a son not of the Jurchen empress nee T'u-tan but of a granddaughter of the Sung

seal with the Mongol legends. On the transmission of the Yüan seal to the Manchus see Piero Corradini, "La sottomissione dei Čačar alla dinastia Ch'ing", *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli* N. S. 19 (1969), 387–395, especially the chapter "la trasmissione del sigillo degli Yüan", 391–393.

⁹⁸ Karl Bosl, *Leitbilder und Wertvorstellungen des Adels von der Merowingerzeit bis zur Höhe der feudalen Gesellschaft* (Sitz. Ber. der Bayer. Akademie der Wiss. 1974, no. 5, München, 1974), 22–23.

emperor Hui-tsung.⁹⁹ This rumor implies that deviations from the norm or accepted image (in this case, that of the barbarian ruler) can be explained by heredity. The story doubting Chang-tsung's legitimate birth from a Jurchen empress was not meant to slander emperor Chang-tsung and could even be interpreted as an awkward sort of compliment. But the two stories or legends concerning the last Mongol emperor Shun-ti (Toγan Temür, 1320-1370, r. 1333-1368) belong certainly to the type of fabrications which tended at de-legitimizing an emperor.

The first legend concerns the birth of emperor Shun-ti whom some believed to be a son of the last emperor of the Sung, Ti Hsien (1270-1323). The story appears first in an unofficial history composed shortly after the fall of the dynasty, but must have been current as early as 1328. According to this story, there were rumors under Wen-tsung's reign (1328-1329) that Shun-ti was not the legitimate son of Ming-tsung (Qutuqtu, r. 1329), but somehow a bastard. It is clear that this rumor was intended to discredit Shun-ti and to keep him from inheriting the throne. The legend of Shun-ti's alleged birth reads as follows:

"When in the beginning of our dynasty Chiang-nan was annexed, the Duke of Ying (i. e. the last ruler of Sung) was still a young man. When he came to the capital (Peking) he wished to become a Buddhist monk in the White Pagoda Temple. Then he was ordered by edict to live in a temple in the mountains in Kan prefecture (Kansu province). There was a certain Prince of Chao who, on a pleasure trip, came to this temple. He felt pity for the Duke who was old and lonely and left for him a Mohammedan girl. In the seventh year of Yen-yu (1320) the girl was pregnant and in the night of the 16th of the 4th month gave birth to a boy. Ming-tsung happened to come from the Northern regions and when he arrived early in the morning he saw over the temple a dragon-like emanation in five colors. He made inquiries

⁹⁹ Yüan Chüeh, *Ch'ing-jung chü-shih chi* (ed. Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an), ch. 45. 9b-10a; Chou Mi, *Kuei-hsin tsa-shih, Hsü-chi* (ed. Hsüeh-chin t'ao-yüan), ch. hsia, 41b. For the Chinese culture of Chang-tsung see Toyama Gunji, *Kinchōshi Kenkyū* (Kyoto, 1964), 660-675.

and found that it was the dwelling-place of the Duke of Ying. Therefore he asked if there were perhaps precious jewels in the place where this man lived. The Duke of Ying said: 'There are none.' When asked insistently again, he said: 'This morning, after the fifth watch, a son was born in my house.' Ming-tsung was very pleased, asked for the son and took him and his mother with him when he returned."¹⁰⁰

This romantic story can, as far as the political situation goes under which it arose, be understood in terms of the questionable legitimacy of Wen-tsung. It has, however, another aspect: The last unfortunate ruler of the Sung is made father of the last unfortunate ruler of the Yüan. Legend has thus linked the two imperial houses which had followed each other, and the common denominator is something like a negative legitimation. Failure is regarded as hereditary.

The other story concerning Shun-ti makes him the father of the Ming Yung-lo emperor, a tradition which is reflected in many Mongol sources, again with romantic elaborations. The *Erdeni-yin-tobči* tells us that the third wife of Shun-ti (*Uqayatu qayan*) was taken prisoner when the Hung-wu emperor conquered Peking in 1368. She is said to have been Gereltei Qatun, a daughter of the Qonggirad chief Toqtaya Taiši, and pregnant in her seventh month when she fell into the hands of Hung-wu. Three months later she gave birth to a son. Hung-wu is reported to have adopted

¹⁰⁰ Ch'üan Heng, *Keng-shen wai-shih* (ed. Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng), 7. For a German translation see Helmut Schulte-Uffelage, *Das Keng-shen wai-shih, eine Quelle zur späten Mongolenzeit* (Berlin, 1963), 25, 40-42. Shun-ti's alleged illegitimacy was used as a pretext to banish him to Southern China in the pious hope that he would perish there. A version of the legend slightly different from the *Keng-shen wai-shih* is told by T'an Ch'ien (1594-1658) in his *Kuo-ch'üeh* (Peking, 1958), vol. 1, ch. 1, 268. The Prince of Chao in the text must be Aruqtu who held that title between 1314 and 1324, see Louis Hambis, *Le chapitre CVIII du Yuan-che* (Leiden, 1954), 23-25. For a factual biography of emperor Shun-ti see Herbert Franke in L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang (editors), *Dictionary of Ming Biography 1368-1644* (New York, 1976), 1290-1293. On the Duke of Ying (Ti Hsien) see I. Miyazaki in Herbert Franke (editor), *Sung Biographies* (Wiesbaden, 1976), 1010-1011. (In this article read on p. 1010 Dolon-nor for Peking, 1.5 from bottom.)

him as his own son, out of gratitude for favors which Shun-ti had formerly bestowed upon him. After Hung-wu's death his Chinese ministers discussed the situation. They feared that the adopted son, although he was the eldest, would meet with resistance from the Chinese for his foreign origin, and so they enthroned the younger son born from a Chinese wife. The son from the Mongol consort of Hung-wu was later enthroned and became the Yung-lo emperor "who administered the affairs of religion and state with equal diligence, whereby he strengthened the prosperity and fortune of his subjects".¹⁰¹

This is a strange mixture of facts and fancy. Shun-ti had indeed an empress from the Qonggirad clan but she had already died in 1365 and her personal name was Bayan Qutuγ. It is also true that the Ming took prisoner a Yüan prince, grandson of Shun-ti, and his wives, namely, Maidiribala (skr. Maitreyapāla).¹⁰² But the whole story itself is a fiction which must have been due to a desire among the Mongols after 1368 to see their imperial family continue to rule over China out of nostalgic feelings after the loss of imperial grandeur. The real origin of the story about Yung-lo's alleged Mongol ancestry must, however, be looked for in China itself. It is well known that the Yung-lo emperor who was later canonized as Ch'eng-tsu had usurped the throne and that his legitimacy was therefore questionable. In the course of the fighting for the throne the legitimate emperor Chien-wen had disappeared but there remained many of his followers among whom the stories about the Yung-lo emperor and his questionable descent might have originated. Pseudo-historical and semi-fictional accounts were published in Ming China in great numbers and the issue was kept alive right into the 17th century.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ I. J. Schmidt, *Geschichte der Ost-Mongolen und ihres Fürstenhauses* (St. Petersburg, 1829), 290-291.

¹⁰² *Yüan-shih*, ch. 47. 15a. On the capture of Maidiribala see also *Ming-shih*, ch. 126. 4b (biography of Li Wen-chung). The incident of Maidiribala's capture and subsequent release is also described in Henry Serruys, *The Mongols in China during the Hung-wu Period, Mémoires Chinois et Bouddhiques* 11 (Bruxelles, 1959), 184.

¹⁰³ On the Yung-lo emperor see now the article "Chu Ti" by F. W. Mote and L. C. Goodrich in *Dictionary of Ming Biography* (New York, 1976),

The *Altan tobči* gives an even more romanticized version of the story. In this version the Mongol empress tries to deceive the Ming ruler about her pregnancy and prays to Heaven that he may prolong the period of gestation. Her prayers are granted and she gives birth to her son in the thirteenth month so that Hung-wu has no reason to suspect that the boy is not his own offspring. Later he has a dream in which he sees two dragons fighting. His soothsayers interpret the dream as a fight between two sons. "The left hand dragon is the son of the Mongol queen. He is destined to sit on your royal throne". But Hung-wu says: "Now, although he is my heir, his mother is an enemy queen; if my son born from her were to sit in the royal throne, it would be bad". He causes him to leave the palace and builds for him the town of Kōke Qota outside the wall. The account as given by *Meng-ku shih-hsi-p'u* is an abbreviation of the version in the *Altan tobči*.¹⁰⁴ All these fanciful fabrications had, at least for the popular Mongol views on Chinese history, the effect that in their eyes a direct consanguinity existed between the imperial houses of Sung, Yüan and Ming. What was to the Chinese or to Chinese historians slander and rumor became with the Mongols a part of their national history.

355-365 (with bibliography). The problem of Yung-lo's succession will be studied in great detail by Hok-lam Chan in a forthcoming publication "The Uses of History for Legitimation: The Case of the Usurpation of the Prince of Yen during the Early Ming (1399-1402)". His paper has been prepared for the Conference on Legitimation of Chinese Imperial Regimes held in Asilomar, June 16-23, 1975.

¹⁰⁴ For the *Altan tobči* version see the translation by Charles R. Bawden (note 44), 154-155. A translation of the *Meng-ku shih-hsi p'u* version ib. 24 (text in Heissig-Bawden, *Mongyol Borjigid oboy-un teüke* (note 95), fol. 7b, p. 103). Bawden, op. cit. 24, quotes Antoine Mostaert who has found the legend of Yung-lo's birth still alive in oral tradition in the Ordos region some decades ago. A very good account of the Mongol traditions concerning the birth of the Yung-lo emperor is Henry Serruys, "A Manuscript Version of the Legend of the Mongol Ancestry of the Yung-lo emperor", *The Mongolia Society Occasional Papers* 8, *Analecta Mongolica Dedicated to the 70th Birthday of Professor Owen Lattimore* (Bloomington, Ind., 1972), 19-61. The Mongolian text romanized and translated by Henry Serruys comes from the Ordos Mongols. The two manuscript versions of the text have been copied in 1907 but certainly go back to a much older tradition.

IV. THE MONGOL RULERS AS BUDDHIST UNIVERSAL EMPERORS

Traditional Chinese views on history with its one-dimensional succession of dynasty-generations (*tai*), had no room for the concept of a Chinese empire (*imperium*) which consisted of qualitatively and culturally different political bodies (*regna*), nor for a succession of culturally different *imperia* in world history which the Judaeo-Christian theories on successive empires (based, in Holy Scripture, on Daniel II, 31-45) did develop. The supra-national character of Buddhism as a genuine world-religion did, however, provide a conceptual model of universal emperorship which transcended the sinocentric and monocultural idea which had been the basis for Chinese speculations about the role of the emperor in All-under-Heaven. The model of the *cakravartin-rāja*, the universal emperor who turned the wheel of the Law, prefigured in the Indian Maurya king Aśoka, was therefore immensely attractive to rulers in India, Tibet and the Far East.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, in China and elsewhere Buddhism was used as a legitimizing element for rulers, through protection of the clergy, promotion of Buddhist rites and generous donations for religious purposes. Lavish alms-giving and costly building of places of worship were the characteristics of another ideal-type of Buddhist rulership, the "great donator" (*Mahādānapati*). This kind of Buddhist legitimation must have had a special appeal for those Chinese rulers whose claim to the empire was otherwise insecure, and has been a source of spiritual reassurance which could, with the help of the clergy, be used as a means of strengthening the authority of state and emperor. Already under the Toba Wei there was a tendency to equate the ruler with the Buddha himself, and the fervent Buddhist emperor Liang Wu-ti was addressed as "Emperor Bodhisattva" (*huang-ti p'u-sa*), "Savior of the World and Bodhisattva" (*chiu-shih p'u-sa*) and "Son of Heaven Bod-

¹⁰⁵ For a general discussion with special reference to historiography see H. Franke, "Zum Legitimitätsproblem der Fremddynastien in der chinesischen Geschichte", F. Prinz, F. J. Schmale, F. Seibt (editors), *Geschichte in der Gesellschaft. Festschrift für Karl Bosl zum 65. Geburtstag*, (Stuttgart, 1974), 20-27.

hisattva" (*p'u-sa t'ien-tzu*). During the period of disunity the various dynasties in the North had an even stronger tendency towards this kind of Buddhist caesaropapism. The founder of the Sui dynasty very consciously adopted this ideology. He, too, was styled "Son of Heaven Bodhisattva", and part of his success in unifying China was due to his purposeful use of Buddhism as a universal religion. The extension of the realm was interpreted in terms of Mahāyānist visions of universal salvation.¹⁰⁶ All these elements reappear many centuries later in the 13th century, even stronger than before. The sacralization of Mongol rule through Lamaist Buddhism had also, as we shall see, lasting effects and became a part of the national heritage of the Mongols, and in the 17th and 18th centuries it was transferred to the Manchu emperors.

At first sight it might seem strange that Buddhist religion, which forbade to kill living beings as one of the Five Interdictions (*pañcaśīla*) could serve as legitimizing ideology for a people of warriors like the Mongols. But history has proven that Buddhism did not necessarily make pacifists of its believers. Paul Demiéville has shown in a penetrating study where dogmatic justifications for killing could be found in the Buddhist scriptures and their exegesis.¹⁰⁷ One of them has been the defense of Buddhism against its enemies, in the same way as Christian rulers felt the duty to defend the faith and to safeguard Christianity. Even in our days *defensor fidei* or its equivalent is still an epithet of some kings in Europe. A sort of crusader mentality was therefore not incompatible with Buddhism. It seems also that particularly in Northern and Central Asian Mahāyāna Buddhism martial elements were present, chiefly in connection with the cult of Vaiśravaṇa.¹⁰⁸ This

¹⁰⁶ See Arthur F. Wright, "The Formation of Sui Ideology", John K. Fairbank (editor), *Chinese Thought and Institutions* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1957), 93-104; and by the same author, *Buddhism in Chinese History* (Stanford, 1959), *passim*.

¹⁰⁷ Paul Demiéville, "Le bouddhisme et la guerre", *Mélanges publiés par l'Institut des Hautes Etudes Chinoises* tome I, (Paris, 1957), 347-385.

¹⁰⁸ Demiéville, *op. cit.*, 375-376. Vaiśravaṇa is in Mahāyāna Buddhism also one of the five *dharmapāla* or protectors of the Law. For the relation between Vaiśravaṇa and the Inner Asian war hero and god Gesar, see R. A. Stein, *Recherches sur l'épopée et le barde au Tibet* (Paris, 1959), 282-287.

is one of the four God-kings (*devarāja*), who preside over the four corners of the world. He is the king of the North, and in iconography frequently represented as a warrior in armor and holding a lance or cudgel in one hand (symbol of militant suppression of non-believers), and in the other a stūpa (symbol of the faith). He became even something like a God of War with the Tibetans and Mongols, but had also in China and Japan some features of a patron-saint of the soldiers. In China, Vaiśravaṇa is sometimes mentioned in connection with the deified Kuan Yü, who might be regarded as the God of War *par excellence* in medieval China. There are no studies as yet on religious rituals connected with warfare, but it should be mentioned here that even under the Sung, who cannot be regarded as a notably Buddhist dynasty, rituals were performed in the event of war where Vaiśravaṇa was invoked, along with Kuan Yü and other less personalized deities.¹⁰⁹ Briefly, conversion to Buddhism or casting oneself into the role of a *cakravartin* did not preclude waging war. Already Sui Wen-ti started his campaign against the South of China "with the armed might of a Cakravartin King" and regarded "weapons of war as having become like incense and flowers" (the usual offerings in Buddhist temples).¹¹⁰ To wage a war could therefore even in Buddhist terms be described as a meritorious action which secured a good *karma*. Briefly, there was nothing incompatible between the Mongols and their adoption of Lamaist Buddhism.

The Place of the Mongols in Buddhist World History

It has been customary in Chinese Buddhist chronicles to mark certain important events by indicating that since the Nirvāṇa of the Buddha so and so many years had passed. This is also the case in chronicles which otherwise use traditional Chinese dating with dynasties, reign-names and cyclical signs. Only events

¹⁰⁹ Ch. 20 of the military encyclopedia *Hu-ch'ien ching*. For details see H. Franke, "Siege and Defense of Towns in Medieval China", Frank A. Kierman, Jr., and John K. Fairbank (editors), *Chinese Ways in Warfare*, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1974), 187.

¹¹⁰ A. F. Wright, "Sui Ideology", 97, and *Buddhism in Chinese History*, 67.

thought to be of special importance for the salvation of the world and for the propagation of the Law are emphasized in this way. For the author of the chronicle *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai* completed in 1333, the birth of Chinggis Khan was such an event. The text describes first the succession of the Buddhist holy rulers, beginning with the mythical Mahāsamadi and the Śākya kings, Aśoka and the Buddhist kings of Tibet. Then it continues:

At that time a king was born in the Northern Mongol state whose virtuous fortune from previous existences had reached completeness. His name was Chinggis. He first ruled from the North over the nations with many languages, like a king turning the wheel of iron. (There follows an abbreviated genealogy of the Mongol khans, omitted here). The younger brother of the king (Möngke) was named Khubilai and followed him on the throne of emperor (*ti*) and king (*wang*). He subjected many countries and territories and became powerful by extending his frontiers. He adopted the teachings and the Law of the Buddha and civilized (*hua*) his people according to the Law. Therefore the teachings of the Buddha flourished twice as much as before.¹¹¹

In this passage the Mongol emperors do not appear as the legitimate or factual successors of a Chinese dynasty, be it Sung or Chin, but of the Buddhist universal emperors, the *cakravartin-rājas* of India, Central Asia and Tibet. This ideology of the universal emperor, who ruled over "peoples with many languages" and was therefore supranational provided the Mongol emperors with a legitimation for world domination which was even stronger than the ideology of the Chinese Son of Heaven. Such universal emperors had ruled in countries like India and Tibet, that is, outside China, whereas the Chinese emperors did not have the same supra-national dignity. Chinggis Khan appears here as a *cakravartin* turning the wheel of iron. Buddhist speculation distinguished four kinds of *cakravartin*, symbolized each by a wheel of gold, silver, bronze and iron. The golden wheel symbolized the rule over all four worlds (or continents, *dvīpa*), silver

¹¹¹ *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai* ch. 1, 489/II-III.

three, bronze two, and iron one world. But this one world is the whole earth (*Jambudvīpa*); the other three are mythical. Chinggis Khan's universal rule was thus religiously legitimized.

Another passage in the same work records under the year 1205:

T'ai-tsu, holy martial emperor (*huang-ti*), originating fortune (*yün*) in accordance with Heaven, in this year led a campaign against Hsi-hsia. In the following year he held a great reunion at the Onon River and raised the nine-stream-ered white flag. He was universally honored with the name Chinggis Huang-ti. He resided in (Khara) Khorum. Considering that this holy man has appeared in the world and that his awe-inspiring power shone brightly and Heaven Itself assisted him, he has received Its Mandate and was established as supreme, superior to the present and surpassing the past. If a phenix in its egg-shell should be submerged by water or fall upon the ground, he may though excell his fellow-creatures and be separate from the ordinary. How much more does this not apply to our T'ai-tsu emperor who resides on the throne of nine-five "flying dragon"? Therefore his vast fortune and overflowing prosperity will last as long as Heaven and Earth.¹¹²

This is a rather sykophantic text, but its ideological content is quite different from the passage translated earlier. Here we find no attempt to describe and justify the accession of Chinggis Khan in Buddhist terms, but in Chinese terms. The expression "nine-five": flying dragon" comes, of course, from the Book of Changes, hexagram *Ch'ien* where the commentary explains the "flying dragon" with "This shows the great man at work".¹¹³ The allusion to the phenix means that notwithstanding youth and difficult circumstances a saintly ruler will achieve success.

The seeming discrepancy between the two passages about Chinggis Khan in the *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai* can be interpreted as indicating two ways to legitimize him, one in terms of Buddhist universal monarchy and one in Chinese traditional terms. But the

¹¹² Op. cit., ch. 21, 701/l.

¹¹³ Wilhelm-Baynes, *The I Ching or Book of Changes* (note 33), 374.

first passage, describing Chinggis Khan as a *cakravartin*, is originally not the work of Nien-ch'ang, the author of the chronicle, but comes from a work of the famous P'ags-pa Lama (1239–1280). This Buddhist cleric who played such a prominent role in the Buddhist conversion of Khubilai and his relatives, had written in 1278 for Chen-chin (Jinggim 1243–1286), Khubilai's heir-apparent, a brief dogmatic treatise outlining the basic tenets of Buddhism as they were current in the Sa-skyia school from which he came. This work is the *Šes-bya rab-gsal* "What one should know". It was later translated into Chinese by Šar-pa (chin. Sha-lo-pa, 1259–1314) under the title of *Chang-so-chih lun* and incorporated into the Chinese Buddhist canon. Nien-ch'ang, in ch. 1 of his work, has copied verbatim two long passages from the *Chang-so-chih lun*, those on the "vessel world" (*ch'i shih-chieh*, skr. *bhajanaloka*) and on the "sentient world (of living beings)" (*ch'ing shih-chieh*, skr. *sattvaloka*), and it is from this part of the *Chang-so-chih lun* that the description of Chinggis as universal Buddhist emperor comes. The Tibetan original marks also chronologically the birth of Chinggis Khan by saying that he was born 3250 years after Buddha's nirvāṇa. All these datings are, needless to say, unhistorical. The Chinese translation of the *Šes-bya* omits the date. It should be added that the dedication for Chen-chin sanctifies the crown-prince by addressing him as "Bodhisattva and Imperial Prince", another instance of Buddhist sacralization of the Chinggiskhanides.¹¹⁴

The *Šes-bya* has been translated (with some additions to the text) into Mongolian in ca. 1600. The existing version of the text is titled *Čigula kereglegči tegüs udqatu neretü šastir*, „Šāstra named complete collection of what one should know", and has served as an important source for Mongol historical works since

¹¹⁴ The *Šes-bya rab-gsal* is reprinted in the collected works of the Sa-skyia school, *Sa-skyia pa'i bka' hbum*, (Tokyo, 1968), vol. 6, part 1. On the text see also Guiseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Rome, 1949) vol. 1, 103, 257. The Chinese translation *Chang-so-chih lun* is No. 1645 in vol. 32 of the Taishō Tripiṭaka. Parts of the work have been translated into English by P. C. Bagchi, *Sino-Indian Studies* vol. 2 (1947), 136–156. The translator into Chinese, the monk Šar-pa has a biography in the *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-t'ai*, ch. 22, 729/III to 730/II.

the 17th century, such as *Erdeni-yin tobči* and *Altan tobči*. In these late chronicles also the dating of Chinggis Khan's birth after Buddhist chronology is a recurrent feature. The special role assigned to Chinggis Khan is, of course, based on ideas that came into being and found literary expression only much later, certainly not before the reign of Khubilai Khan, when the influence of Lamaism became safely established.¹¹⁵

Phags-pa and the Conversion of Khubilai

Much has been written about the role of P'ags-pa Lama and the influence of Lamaism in the course of the "first conversion" of the Mongols to Buddhism (the second took place in the late 16th century).¹¹⁶ It goes without saying that his direct influence was centered on the imperial family and did normally not extend to the Mongol aristocracy or the commoners, except perhaps in a few cases. This is also evidenced by the relative frequency of Buddhist personal names in the imperial clan and their relative

¹¹⁵ For an analysis of the *Čigula kereglegči* see Walther Heissig, *Die Familien- und Kirchengeschichtsschreibung der Mongolen*, vol. I, Wiesbaden, 1959), 26–34. The first scholar to have noticed the derivation of the *Meng-ku yüan-liu* (the Chinese translation of the *Erdeni-yin tobči*) from the *Chang-so-chih lun* was Ch'en Yin-k'o, see his article "Chang-so-chih lun yü Meng-ku yüan-liu", CYYY 2 no. 3 (1931), 302–309. For an important study of the influence of Lamaism on the historiography of the Mongols see Walther Heissig, "Zur lamaistischen Beeinflussung des mongolischen Geschichtsbildes", *Serta Cantabrigiensia* (Wiesbaden, 1954), 37–44.

¹¹⁶ For some more recent studies see Paul Ratchnevsky, "Die mongolischen Großkhane und die buddhistische Kirche", Johannes Schubert and Ulrich Schneider (editors), *Asiatica. Festschrift Friedrich Weller*, (Leipzig, 1954), 489–504; Paul Demiéville, "La situation religieuse en Chine au temps de Marco Polo", *Oriente Poliano* (Roma, 1957), 193–236; Joseph Thiel, "Der Streit der Buddhisten und Taoisten zur Mongolenzeit", MS 20 (1962), 1–81; Noritada Kubo, "Prolegomena on the Study of the Controversies between Buddhists and Taoists in the Yüan Period", MTB 26 (1968), 39–61. A good biography of P'ags-pa lama is in Miyoko Nakano, *A Phonological Study in the 'Phags-pa Script and the Meng-ku tzu-yün* (Canberra, 1971), 24–38. A short study "Tibetans in Yüan China" by Herbert Franke is scheduled to appear in a collective volume edited by John D. Langlois, Jr. based on the papers submitted to the Conference on the Impact of Mongol Domination over China (York, Maine, July 17–23, 1976).

absence among other Mongols under the Yüan.¹¹⁷ The eager adoption of Lamaism as represented by P'ags-pa by the Mongol court can be easily explained because earlier contacts with Buddhism had brought the Mongol rulers in China together with representatives of Ch'an Buddhism. This kind of Buddhism was, however, far too intellectual and abstract to have appeal for the Mongols. Notably absent in Ch'an Buddhism was political theory and the notion of universal emperors (*cakravartin*) through which Mongol rule over the whole world and far beyond China, could be legitimized. Taoism, whatever its potentialities for a supernatural legitimation of kingship may have been, was far too much a purely Chinese phenomenon. In the religious discussions which took place in 1258 in the presence of Khubilai, the Taoists tried to impose their view that Buddha was only a reincarnation of Lao-tzu. The spokesmen of Buddhism, among them P'ags-pa himself, countered with the assertion that Buddhism was a international religion, whereas Taoism was limited to the Chinese world. "One has heard of Lao-chün only here (in China), but the name of the Buddha is known throughout the whole world".¹¹⁸

All sources, Chinese, Mongol and Tibetan, agree that Khubilai has been baptized by P'ags-pa Lama, or to use the correct term, received a Buddhist consecration (*abhiṣeka*) in 1253.¹¹⁹ It is well known that this was an initiation into the rites of dGes-pa rdo-rje (skr. Hevajra). Hevajra is a tutelary deity in Lamaism who was specially worshipped in the Sa-skyā monasteries and whose cult is closely linked with that of Mahākāla. P'ags-pa himself is said to have received mystic initiation in the *Hevajravaṣita* by Mahākāla. This is another Lamaist deity, a protector (*yi-dam*) and defender of the faith who is represented in a terrifying aspect. In later times, and until our century, the terrible Mahākāla remained the protector (*mGon-po*, skr. *nātha*) of the Mongols as a nation,

¹¹⁷ The article by Luc Kwanten, "Tibetan Names in the Yüan Imperial Family", *The Mongolia Society Bulletin* vol. X no. 1 (Spring 1971), 64-66 gives a brief survey based on the materials assembled by Pelliot and Hambis in their annotated translations of chapters 107 and 108 of the *Yüan-shih*.

¹¹⁸ *Pien-wei lu* (Taishō Tripitaka vol. 52), 772/I.

¹¹⁹ For contemporary sources on the initiation of Khubilai see also *Sa-skyā pa'i bka' hbum*, vol. 7, 2, nos. 316, 317 and 321.

just as the equally terrifying female deity Lha-mo was the protectress of Lha-sa, the Tibetan capital. Rites connected with Hevajra and Mahākāla seem to have become customary for every enthronisation of a Yüan emperor, a fact which is not only mentioned in Mongol or Tibetan texts but also in Chinese sources.¹²⁰ A Chinese official history like the *Yüan-shih* is not very explicit about the Buddhist and Lamaist elements inherent in Yüan statehood, and one has to turn to the Tibetan and Mongol sources, even though the latter ones are mostly relatively late and sometimes unreliable and fanciful. The Buddhist court rituals are described only in a sort of appendix to the Chinese rituals in the *Yüan-shih* and very briefly at that. They were introduced in 1270 on the instigation of P'ags-pa and were called "Suppression of Demons and Protection of the State". They were held every year on the 15th day of the second month. On that day a procession circumambulated the imperial palace precinct, with the purpose of "giving luck to the living beings and ward off evil". Another Buddhist ritual was performed on the 14th to the 16th day of the first month of the year. A procession was organised which circumambulated the capital clockwise (*pradakṣina*) and was watched by the emperor and his family. Religious plays or performances took place, there was a music band of Chinese, Mohammedan and Tangut musicians, and the whole city, men and women looked on when the procession, led by the Imperial Teacher (*ti-shih*, or chief lama) proceeded on its 30 *li* long way around the city, a way frequently interrupted by religious services. Similar services were held in the sixth month in the other capital (Shang-tu) and in Peking.¹²¹

Such processions, celebrated with colorful pomp, were of course

¹²⁰ See, for example, also H. Franke, *Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte Chinas unter der Mongolenherrschaft. Das Shan-chü hsin-hua des Yang Yü*, (Wiesbaden, 1956), 30–31. The Chinese author seems to hint at human sacrifices offered to Mahākāla. This deity was also regarded as the helper of the Mongols in their campaigns. For examples see the biography of Tan-pa in *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*, ch. 22, 726/I (campaign against Sung) and 726/III (campaign against Qaidu). Mahākāla was invoked to grant victory to the Mongols and complex rituals were performed at such occasions. See also *Yüan-shih*, ch. 202, 3a–b.

¹²¹ *Yüan-shih*, ch. 77. 18a–19b.

nothing new in Chinese history, but it can be safely assumed that they too served to enhance the prestige of the Yüan emperors as legitimate rulers. It is interesting to note that our text mentions also a host of "Kuan Yü spirit soldiers" – this can only mean in this context that either Kuan Yü had already been amalgamated into Buddhism or that the author wrote Kuan-yü when in reality a Buddhist warlike deity such as Vaiśravaṇa was meant. But what interests us for the subject of this study is that such performances to which the imperial family lent dignity by its presence were the expression of a theory of which P'ags-pa Lama has been if not the inventor then its protagonist. This is the theory underlying what might be called Lamaist caesaropapism, the theory of the two principles (mong *qoyar yosun*), in modern terms "state" and "religion" (mong. *törö* and *śasin*). Secular and spiritual salvation are, according to this theory of an idealized Mongol-Tibetan state, something that all human beings try to win. Spiritual salvation consists in complete deliverance from suffering, and worldly welfare is secular salvation. Both depend on a dual order, the order of religion (*nom-un yosun*) and the order of the state (*törö-yin yosun*). Religious order is based on sūtras and dharaṇīs, secular order on peace (*engke*) and quietness (*amur* or *kilbar*). The order of religion is presided by the Lama, and the state by the King. The priest has to teach religion, and the king to guarantee a rule which enables everybody to live in peace. Religion and state are thus dependent from each other, and the heads of the religion and of the state are equal, though with different functions. The lama corresponds to Buddha, and the king to the *cakravartin*. In each era these highest dignitaries appear only once, and in the 13th century these personalities were obviously P'ags-pa and Khubilai. P'ags-pa represents the highest teacher of the present *kalpa*, Buddha, and Khubilai is but the representative or substitute of the original *cakravartin*, Chinggis Khan. This theory of representation is a Buddhist-Lamaist version of the belief that the universal world-ruler, even after his physical death, was Chinggis Khan (see *supra*)¹²²

¹²² This description of the two orders follows Klaus Sagaster, "Herrschafts-ideologie und Friedensgedanke bei den Mongolen," *Central Asiatic Journal* 17 (1973), 227–230.

It would be wrong to attribute these theories to post-Yüan speculations, because they go perhaps partly back to a book written by P'ags-pa and apparently translated into Mongolian at an early date. In its extant Mongolian version the book has the title *Arban buyan-tu nom-un čayan teüke* "White Chronicle of the Ten Meritorious Laws".¹²³ We shall quote only one sentence which contains in a nutshell the theory of the two orders: "The basis of the exalted religion is the lord of religion (*nom-un ejen*) and the head of the great secular order (*yeke törö*) is the khan who has power in the world".¹²⁴ These ideas have shaped political ideology among the Mongols and in Tibet from the time of Khubilai Khan until our century and traces of the theory of the two orders can be found even today.

In view of all this it is surprising that as yet no deeper study of the writings of P'ags-pa lama has been made, with some notable exceptions. His works are important not only for caesaropapist theology but they can also supply additional information on the history of Buddhism under the Yüan and even clarify some obscure points in the genealogy of the Chinggis-

¹²³ For an analysis of the *Čayan teüke* see Heissig, *Familien- und Kirchengeschichtsschreibung*, I, 17–26 (a facsimile of the text is ib., Appendix, 2–25). G. Tucci (*Tibetan Painted Scrolls* I, 103) has supposed that the dogmatic parts of the *Čayan teüke* go back to the *rGyal-po la gdams pa'i rab byed* ("Instructions for the King") by P'ags-pa (no. 210 in the *Sa-skya pa'i bka' hbum* vol. 7, 2). P'ags-pa has also written a commentary to his "Instructions" (no. 154 of the same collection) but this text contains only dogmatic matters and does not refer to the historical circumstances. It is, in my opinion, not impossible that the historical (and pseudo-historical) elements concerning the Yüan in the *Čayan teüke* are derived from the "Red annals" (*Hu-lan deb-t'er* or *Deb-t'er dmar-po*) by C'al-pa Kun-dga' rdo-rje, completed in 1346. Recently an excellent and exhaustive study of the "White Chronicle" has been published by Klaus Sagaster, *Die Weiße Geschichte* (see above note 23 for bibliographical details). Sagaster has given a complete annotated translation of the "White Chronicle" based on a critical edition of the text and assembled a stupendous wealth of material bearing on the theory of the Two Orders and the sacralization of Mongol kingship.

¹²⁴ Sagaster, *Die Weiße Geschichte*, 109. – A fresco in the Tibetan monastery Tashilhunpo represents the meeting between P'ags-pa and Khubilai (*Wen-wu* 1959, no. 7, 12–13). An enlarged photo of the painting can now be seen in the Historical Museum in Peking.

khanides. P'ags-pa has addressed a constant flow of writings to Khubilai Khan and his relatives and it is of some interest to whom he dedicated his compositions.¹²⁵ In any case it seems certain that a full history of Buddhism under the Yüan cannot be written without referring to Tibetan sources, above all the writings of the Sa-skyä lamas.

The description of the close contacts between the Mongol emperors and the Tibetan clergy that we have outlined above is based chiefly on the reflections in later Buddhist or Buddhist-influenced literature. It seems to be certain that much wishful thinking and religious propaganda has found expression in the writings of the Tibetans and the Mongols. This applies in particular to the accounts of the first contacts between Mongols and Tibetans which are described in Buddhist literature in a way that presents the Mongols as having invited the Sa-skyä Pandita and later P'ags-pa because they wished to learn about Buddhism and to convert their people to a higher religion. Recent studies have, independently from each other, given a rather different picture of these early contacts.¹²⁶ Instead of following a polite invitation issued to Tibetan clerics, the Sa-skyä Pandita and his nephew were summoned to the Mongol court because the Mongols looked for somebody who would formalize Tibetan surrender. In return, the Sa-skyä lamas were granted regency over Tibet. On the political field, Tibeto-Mongol relations of the 13th century can therefore be seen as a victory of the Mongols over Tibet which they ruled through the Sa-skyä hierarchy. But in the spiritual field the theories expounded by P'ags-pa and his school remained victorious in the long run by providing the Mongols with a religiously sanctioned view of their role in world-history. The new interpretation sketched here all too briefly fits indeed well into the uncompromising attitude of the Mongols towards other countries and peoples which we have described earlier in this study.

¹²⁵ An enumeration of works dedicated by P'ags-pa to Khubilai and his family members is given by Tucci, *op. cit.*, I, 103.

¹²⁶ Turrel V. Wylie, "The First Mongol Conquest of Tibet Reinterpreted", *HJAS* 37, 1 (1977), 103-133; Dieter Schuh, *Erlasse und Sendschreiben mongolischer Herrscher für tibetische Geistliche*, *Monumenta Tibetica Historica* Abt. III, Band I (St. Augustin, 1977), esp. 29-36.

Chinggis Khan as Buddhist Incarnation and God

We have seen that Chinggis Khan was regarded as a Buddhist universal emperor (*cakravartin*) in Lamaist theology and thus included in the succession of holy kings in India and Tibet. This was primarily meant as a legitimation of his rulership on a religious basis. But apparently this sacralization was not enough for the Mongols in later centuries. In chronicles of the 17th century we notice that this spiritual succession was transformed into a bodily succession whereby the clan of Chinggis Khan is derived in direct lineage from the Tibetan kings. The succession of *cakravartin* in Buddhist speculation was thus amalgamated with the national Mongol traditions on the genealogy of Chinggis Khan. In the *Secret History* (§ 1) we read that the first ancestors of Chinggis were "a blue-grey wolf (*börte čino*) who was born with his destiny preordained by Heaven above. His wife was a fallow doe (*qo'ai maral*)".¹²⁷ These theriomorphic ancestors were later regarded as persons. The passage in question in the *Erdeni-yin tobči* reads:

Now if one discuss (*sic*) the dispersal of the clan of kings in the land of the Bede Mongols, in the seventh generation from the king of ancient Tibet, called King Seger Sandalitu (Neck Seat) the Universal Lord, a minister named Longnam slew the King called Dalai Subin Aru of the Golden Throne, and ascended his throne. His three sons, Boraču (Grayling), Sibaguči (Birdman), and Börte Cinua (Brindled Wolf), fled to other lands; the youngest, Börte Cinua, went to the land of rGuñ-po (Gung po). Being unaccustomed to the people of Gungpo, he took his wife named Guua Maral (Beautiful Doe) and crossing the Tenggis Sea, travelled in an eastern direction. At the end of Lake Baikal, reaching the mountain called Burqan Qaldun, he encountered the people called Bede. When these then inquired the cause and reason (for their journey), he cited his origin from King Acclaimed by Many of ancient India and Universal Lord of

¹²⁷ Trsl. I. de Rachewiltz, "Secret History", *Papers on Far Eastern History* 4 (Canberra, Sept. 1971), 118.

Tibet up to the present. The people of Bede all approved among themselves, and said to one another: "He is a child of nobility; we being completely without a chief, it would be fitting if we elevate him to Prince." Making him prince, they acted in accord with his every commandment.¹²⁸

Then follows the usual line of ancestors of Chinggis as we know it from the *Secret History* and other early sources. The *Altan tobči* gives a much briefer version of the supposed emigration of the Mongol ancestor from Tibet to Mongolia. After an enumeration of five Tibetan kings the text reads:

His son was Dalai sübin altan sandali-tu qaγan. Of his sons the eldest was Boroču, the second Sibayuči, and the youngest was Börte Cinoa. As they quarrelled amongst themselves, Börte Cinoa crossed over the Tenggis Sea in the direction of the north, and came to the land of the people. Taking a girl called Gooa Maral who had no husband, he settled in the land of the people, and became the Mongol clan.¹²⁹

As the *Altan tobči* was composed during the first decades of the 17th century and the *Erdeni-yin tobči* was completed in 1662, we can see that within a few dozens of years an embellishment and elaboration of the legend has taken place. It is not clear when this legend originated. So far I have found no evidence of it in texts of the 13th and 14th centuries. Also the *Čayan teüke* does not yet it. It is, however, clear that this alleged descent from the holy kings of India and Tibet aimed at giving Chinggis Khan a more exalted ancestry. Legitimation by descent was thus added to legitimation as Buddhist universal emperor conferred upon Chinggis by P'ags-pa.

From there it was only one step to consider Chinggis Khan as a Buddhist deity or the incarnation of a transcendental being. In the *Altan tobči* the birth of Temüjin is ordained by Buddha:

This was Temüjin Qaγan, born by command from Heaven. More than three thousand two hundred and fifty years after

¹²⁸ Trsl. J. R. Krueger, *Sagang Sechen*, 41. – The country Gungpo is tib. Koñ-po or rKoñ-po, located in the South of Kham (Eastern Tibet), cf. R. A. Stein, *Recherches*, 509.

¹²⁹ Trsl. C. R. Bawden, *The Mongol Chronicle Altan Tobči*, 113.

the Buddha had entered into Nirvana, as twelve evil kings had been born, and were causing suffering to all living things for the sake of suppressing them, an instruction was given by the Buddha, and Činggis Qayan was born. Taking tax and tribute first from the peoples of the Five Colours and Four Foreign Lands, and from the peoples of the three hundred and sixty one tribes and seven hundred and twenty tongues of Čambudvipa, pacifying them, with hands on the land and feet on the soil, he became celebrated as a čakra-varti king.¹³⁰

The role as savior of the world from "evil kings" appears here as ordained by Buddha himself. In a colophon of 1620 there occurs the phrase "Qormusta, ruler of the gods like the ocean of milk, has been transformed and reborn as the fortune-blessed holy Chinggis Khan".¹³¹ The same idea together with that of the savior from evil kings, is expressed in an alliterative poem recited by Chinggis Khan in *Erdeni-yin-tobči*:

By the commandments of my father, the elevated
 Qormusta Khan,
 Bringing into my power the twelve great Khans of
 earthly men,
 Subduing to their knees the petty princes of vain
 and evil conduct,
 I finished collecting, while assembling in hardship,
 my great and vast people.

...

On account of having pacified and tranquilized
 the immense great people,
 The happiness of the Khan and commoners in general
 Became like unto the happiness of the powerful
 Qormusta of the gods.¹³²

The name of the god Qormusta is derived from Iranian (Hormuzd) but refers to Indra, who is frequently styled in Buddhist mythology as the King of Gods. Indra was in ancient

¹³⁰ Trsl. Bawden, op. cit., 128-129.

¹³¹ W. Heissig, *Fam. und Kirchengeschichtsschreib.*, I, 45.

¹³² Trsl. Krueger, op. cit., 65.

India the god of thunder and one of his attributes is the thunderbolt (*vajra*), so that he is one of the more martial deities of the Indo-Buddhist pantheon. Also Gesar Khan, the famous legendary hero and God of War in Tibetan and Mongol traditions, was supposed to have been a son of Qormusta. Another figure of the Buddhist pantheon is also derived from Indra. This is Vajrapāṇi, the "holder of the thunderbolt", who is sometimes regarded as a protecting deity and a guardian of religion (*dharmapāla*), sometimes as a Bodhisattva. The amalgamation of Indra and Vajrapāṇi has also led to the belief that Chinggis Khan was a re-incarnation of Vajrapāṇi.¹³³ Thus more and more divine characteristics were heaped upon Chinggis Khan, and the authors of later Mongol and Tibetan works had no qualms in ascribing to him conflicting epithets. Nothing is impossible in Lamaist Buddhism. Thus a Tibeto-Mongol chronicle of the early 19th century sees in Chinggis an incarnation of Śrī Vajrapāṇi, a mighty *cakravartin*, descendant of the holy Indian and Tibetan kings, an incarnated *dharmarāja* and a son of the gods. This time the god is called by a Mongolian name, Badarangyui Čaγayan Tengri ("God of Flaming Light"), equated with tib. 'Od-gsal lha which has the same meaning. "Flaming light" can also stand as a metaphor for "supernatural enlightenment".¹³⁴

¹³³ e. g. in the 18th century chronicle *Bilig-ün ĵula* "Lamp of Wisdom" (1757), see W. Heissig, op. cit., I, 166.

¹³⁴ *Hor-č'os byun*, trsl. G. Huth, II, 14, 16-17. It is not improbable that the "God of Flaming Light" mentioned as father of Chinggis Khan has some relation with the Tibetan God of War bSe-ru 'Od-ldan dkar-po "Unicorn White Light", on whom see Stein, *Recherches*, 72-73 and 509. This deity was also regarded as the father of the hero Gesar Khan. On the other hand, the "God of Flaming Light" is Esrua, which in turn is the Mongolian name for Brahmā. The "White Brahmā" is a terrifying deity in the Lamaist pantheon (Albert Grünwedel, *Mythologie des Buddhismus in Tibet und der Mongolei*, 158-159). He is also the heavenly father of Gesar (R. A. Stein, *Recherches*, 319) and also Chinggis Khan was regarded as the son of a heavenly white horseman (Stein, op. cit. 291). All this points to a fusion between the historical Chinggis Khan and Gesar. See also Giuseppe Tucci and Walther Heissig, *Die Religionen Tibets und der Mongolei* (Stuttgart, 1970), 369, and Walther Heissig, *Mongolische volksreligiöse und folkloristische Texte* (Wiesbaden, 1966) 8 note 3. The identification of Brahmā with the protective spirits of Chinggis Khan took, however, place rather late, namely, in the second half of the 17th century.

Similar deification has taken place for Chinggis Khan's descendants. We shall quote only a few examples for Khubilai Khan. He appears as a Bodhisattva on the Greater Chü-yung-kuan inscription of 1345;¹³⁵ both Chü-yung kuan inscriptions are, by the way, an excellent example for the Buddhist sacralization of Mongol rule in the late Yüan period. In the *Čayan teüke*, Khubilai is exalted as an incarnation of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī and styled "Khubilai, Wise Khan and *cakravartin* who lets turn one thousand golden wheels" (*Mingyan altan kürdün ergigülügči Qubilai cakravar-un Sečen qayan*).¹³⁶ "Wise Khan", *Sečen qayan*, is, of course, Khubilai's name under which he was also known in China in his lifetime. The belief that the Mongol rulers were incarnations of gods or Bodhisattvas persisted after the fall of the Yüan dynasty and was resumed when the "second conversion" of the Mongols took place. Altan Khan, Ligdan Khan and all the leading chieftains in the 16th and early 17th century were addressed by the Lamas as incarnations – the theory of the "two orders" had become an integral part of Mongol politico-religious thought. From there it passed on to the Manchu emperors who purposefully promoted Lamaism as a means of legitimation in the eyes of their inner Asian Lamaist subjects. Thus the line of sacred kings was even more extended and a chain of succession stretched from Mahāsamadī¹³⁷ and Aśoka to Sroṅ-bcan sgam-po

¹³⁵ N. Poppe, *Mong. Monuments in the hP'ags-pa Script*, 65.

¹³⁶ K. Sagaster, *Die Weiße Geschichte*, 265. In the 16th century Altan Khan (1507–1582), the protagonist of the "second conversion" of the Mongols, was also honored with this title (Sagaster, op. cit., 42) and thus considered as a *cakravartin*.

¹³⁷ The Yüan emperor Temür (Ch'eng-tsung, r. 1295–1307) is compared to Mahāsamadī in the colophon of an Uighur Buddhist xylograph, cf. Anne-marie v. Gabain, *Die Drucke der Turfan-Sammlung* (Berlin, 1967), 20, 23. Also here we have an allusion to the Indo-Chinese succession of saintly rulers. In the colophon of the Mongolian *Bodhicaryāvatāra* by Č'os-kyi 'od-zer we read that Ayurbarwada Qayan (i. e., emperor Jen-tsung, r. 1312–1320) was "Sixth generation of the famous Činggis Qayan, having an intelligence as bright as a wiped mirror, Eightiest Great Lord of the vast realm" (trsl. F. W. Cleaves, HJAS 17 (1954), 85). F. W. Cleaves has suggested that "eightiest" may be evidence that the Mongol "royal lineage was of Tibetan and, ultimately, Indian origin" (HJAS 17 (1954), 122 note 312). But Cleaves himself

and the Tibetan kings, to Chinggis Khan and his descendants, and finally to the Manchu rulers.

Cosmological Implications

In Chinese cosmology and cosmography, the Son of Heaven's throne occupied the center, just as China itself was the Middle Kingdom. There was only one Son of Heaven, and no plurality of empires or Sons of Heavens was possible in this system. Mutual recognition of two *huang-ti* was only a last resort, imposed by dire political necessity, as it happened between the Sung state and its Northern neighbors, the Liao and later the Chin.¹³⁸ Plurality was always a deviation from the ideal. But the Buddhist cosmological system allowed for a plurality. The basis was the notion of the guardians of the four corners of the world (*lokapāla*), who sometimes appear as God-kings (*devarāja*). Their realms were equated with actually existing countries and these ideas gradually evolved into a world-system with Four Sons of Heaven. The dogmatic basis for this belief was the apocryphal legend that the Buddha foresaw the decline of his teachings and conferred the guardianship of the Law to the four great Kings of Heaven. The list of the Four Sons of Heaven has changed greatly over the centuries, and R. A. Stein has, in his immensely thorough study of the Gesar legend, listed over 40 of these tetrades from Chinese, Tibetan and Mohammedan sources.¹³⁹ To give only one example: In a 14th century chronicle the Four Sons of Heaven rule in the East over China, in the South over India, in the West over Iran (Ta-zig), and in the North rules Gesar.¹⁴⁰

has noted (ib., 121 note 312) that Jen-tsung was the eighth ruler of the Mongols, Chinggis Khan being the first. It is therefore probable that the word "eightiest" (*nayaduyar*) is a simple misprint for "eighth" (*naimaduyar*), where the letter -m- has been omitted. Otherwise the two words look rather similar in Mongolian script.

¹³⁸ On some aspects of international relations as revealed by the texts of treaties see also H. Franke, "Treaties between Sung and Chin", Françoise Aubin (editor), *Etudes Song in Memoriam Etienne Balazs/Sung Studies, Ser. I. Histoire et Institutions*, 1 (La Haye-Paris, 1970), 50-83.

¹³⁹ R. A. Stein, *Recherches*, 254-261.

¹⁴⁰ Stein's no. XVI, *Recherches*, 256.

Stein has shown how the originally Indian concept of the four Sons of Heaven has taken on a geographic realisation which placed Tibet in the center. Moreover, the ideas associated with the ruler of the North are treasures, weapons, and horses. All this points to a vague notion of the nomadic peoples in Central and Northern Asia. It is therefore easy to understand that also Chinggis Khan and his Mongols could be interpreted as the Son of Heaven of the North and his realm.

Under the influence of Chinese cosmological symbolism which knew of five directions (the four corners and the center) and associated them with colors, we find in Mongol sources a reflection of these ideas. Repeatedly lists of nations conquered by the Mongols are given and assigned to the five directions. The *Čayan teüke* which goes perhaps partly back to a Tibetan original of Khubilai's time says that Chinggis Khan subjected the people "with 361 languages and 721 clans, the Five Colors (*tabun öngge*) and the Four Vassals (*dörben qari*)".¹⁴¹ We can see here a contamination of the Chinese numerical system based on the number five, and the Indian which is based on the number four. Also the figures 361 and 721 are speculative and go perhaps back to chronomantic theories (360 is the round figure for the number of days in a year, and 720 is twice that number). Other passages in the *Čayan teüke* are more explicit. In an edict allegedly issued by Khubilai Khan it is said:

In the center is, with the highest leadership, the Blue Great Mongol people. In the East are the two peoples Solongyos (Koreans) and Bidegüd (a Northern tribe), in the South two, the Kitad (Chinese) and the Kiliyed (?),¹⁴² in the West two, the Balbu (Nepalese) and Sartayul (Mohammedans) and in the North the Tasiy (Iranians) and Töbed (Ti-

¹⁴¹ Klaus Sagaster, *Die Weiße Geschichte*, 108. Sagaster has given a detailed interpretation of the various lists of peoples in later Mongol and Lamaist cosmology, op. cit., 303–317.

¹⁴² I could not find a satisfactory explanation for the ethnic designation Kiliyed. Could it be derived from mong. *kili* "border, frontier"? Sagaster, *Die Weiße Geschichte*, 306–307, thinks that Kiliyed might be an aberrant orthography of the name of the Kereit.

betans) the Five Colors and the Four Vassals, the nine great peoples.¹⁴³

Evidently a confusion has taken place in this passage because somehow the Tibetans and Iranians have been displaced to the North, doubtlessly due to a constraint to conform with the five-corner system. North of the Mongols there were in reality no people to be subjected, and yet the North had to be filled somehow. Another enumeration, at the end of the work reads as follows:

The Five Great Colors and the Four Vassals, the Red Kitad (Northern Chinese) and Nanggiyad (Southern Chinese) in the East, Tibetans and Bidegüd in the Northeast, the Nepalese in the Southeast, the Kiliyed in the West, the Tasiy in the Northwest, but in the center the forty myriarchies of the Blue Mongols and the Oirats.¹⁴⁴

Also this enumeration is not quite in accordance with geographic realities. But what is important is the fact that here China has been displaced from the center of the world and that the Mongols have become the Middle Kingdom. We cannot follow this schematic system of the nations of the world through later times nor can we enter here into a discussion of the fusions and contaminations which have disfigured the system. The later the text, the more fanciful are the notions, and more or less mythical peoples (some of them derived from Chinese cosmography) invade the list of nations. In one and the same work, as shown above for the *Čayan teüke*, conflicting lists of nations may appear. A good example is the late chronicle *Hor-č'os byun* (1819) where we find in connection with the appearance of Chinggis Khan upon earth this list of nations.

He conquered all inhabitants of the earth and extended his rule in the North to K'in-ča (Kipchak), in the other three directions to China, Tibet and Mongolia, the island dwellers of gŽi-pen (Japan) hP'u-sang (Fusang), Siyen-lo (Thailand) and Ziyang (probably Jang, which is the Mongol name for the Thai kingdom of Ta-li), and over one half of Jambudvīpa,

¹⁴³ Sagaster, *Die Weiße Geschichte*, 132.

¹⁴⁴ Sagaster, *Die Weiße Geschichte*, 163.

namely, Kashmir, Ho-t'on (Khotan) and others. Thereby blessing and prosperity came like a joyful feast, a second Kṛtayuga as it had never befallen a king of China, Mongolia or Tibet.¹⁴⁵

The other list of nations reads:

The Blue Mongols with 400,000 families, the Red Chinese, the Black Tibetans, the Yellow Sartagul (Mohammedans) and the White Solonggos (Koreans); four more nations, the Cugte Women, the Left Wingers (gYon-ru), the One-eyed on the Breast (Brañ-mig-čan) and the Dog-heads (Khyimgo-čan).¹⁴⁶

Here the intrusion of fabulous peoples into the list of nations is perfect although it must be admitted that some of these strange beings may reflect real ethnic entities. The passage quoted above is much longer but for our purpose this partial quote may suffice. It shows a Mongol image of the world where China is but one of the nations, an image that was developed already in the 13th century when they ruled in China. The Blue Mongols are the center of the world and the Chinese are displaced into one of the corners of the world.

A Buddhist Palladium : The Sandalwood Buddha

After this excursion to the corners of the world we shall now return to a more tangible aspect of Buddhist sacralisation of the

¹⁴⁵ Trsl. after Huth, *Hor-č'os byuñ*, II, 17 f. Kṛtayuga "age of Kṛta" refers to the rule of Kṛta, a Buddhist king of Kashmir.

¹⁴⁶ Trsl. after Huth, op. cit., II 33-34. For a discussion of this passage see also P. Pelliot *Notes on Marco Polo*, 2 (Paris, 1963) 686, where old connections between the Amazone Kingdom and the "Kingdom of Dogs" in ancient Asian ethnography are referred to. There were several "kingdoms of women", one of them undubitably real and situated in Tibet. Pelliot thinks that tib. Cug-te is derived from Mongolian *čugtai* "together", but perhaps a derivation – if the original word is at all Mongolian – from *čoytai* "blazing, ardent, plucky, strong, majestic, spirited" makes more sense. gYon-ru "left horn (wing)" is interpreted by Pelliot as name of a population to the left, that is, in the East, in Manchuria. It is equally possible that this enigmatic name refers to the Dsungars, whose name is derived from mong. *jegün yar* "left hand, left side".

Mongols in the Yüan period, although legend plays also here an important part. We should perhaps begin with a text from the *Cho-keng lu* of 1366. The article in question has the title "The Sandalwood Buddha" (*Chan-tan Fo*) and the initial passage reads as follows:

The Sandalwood Buddha in the capital (Peking) is known throughout the empire because of its supernatural miracles. Royalty, nobility and ministers, gentry and commoners with their wives and daughters donate splendid gold ornaments in order to pray for luck and success, every day of the year. The elder people have a tradition which says that it is standing free with all four limbs and that it comes to this country when the ruler over men has the Tao. This might apply without the slightest doubt to the beginnings of our dynasty, but is certainly not the case for present times!¹⁴⁷

T'ao Tsung-i, who lived during the turmoil of the collapsing Yüan dynasty, is here skeptical about the Tao of the ruler (Shun-ti), but this need not concern us in our context. He continues by quoting the inscription for the Hall of the Auspicious Statue (*Jui-hsiang tien pei*) written in 1316 by the Han-lin academician Ch'eng Chü-fu (1249-1318). His version of the text of the inscription is, however, incomplete. A full version of Ch'eng Chü-fu's text is given in the Buddhist chronicle *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*.¹⁴⁸ It contains a brief history of the "auspicious statue" which is said to have been sculpted in 990 B. C. in the lifetime of the Buddha by his disciple Maudgalyāyana for king Udayana of Vatsa and to be the only lifelike portrait of the Savior.¹⁴⁹ For a tabulation of the different places where the statue was allegedly

¹⁴⁷ *Cho-keng lu*, ch. 17, 248-249.

¹⁴⁸ *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*, ch. 22, 730/II-731/II. For an abbreviated version see also *Shih-shih chi-ku lüeh*, ch. 4, 898/II-III. The full text of the inscription can also be found in the collected works of Ch'eng Chü-fu, *Hsüeh-lou chi* (ed. Hu-pei hsien-sheng i-shu), ch. 9, 16a-20b ("Chan-tan fo-hsiang chi").

¹⁴⁹ Apart from the unhistoricity of the dates themselves, there is a discrepancy in the chronology of our text. 990 B. C. is the date in traditional chronology according to the cyclical signs; the 8th year of King Mu of Chou, is, however, in traditional chronology 994 B. C.

kept and the dates see the Appendix. Because of its supposed old age and lifelikeness this statue was regarded as the most holy and venerable relic in Northern Buddhism. Its way from India to East Turkestan and into China is identical with the way of Buddhist propagation of the faith and marks those states where Buddhism was held in esteem. It became a palladium of Buddhism and was protected by the state authorities. But what should interest us most is the succession of places where the statue was preserved and worshipped in the Chinese middle ages. It was allegedly taken from K'ai-feng by the Jurchen and transported first to Peking, then to the Supreme Capital (Hui-ning in Northeastern Manchuria), then back to Peking. There it has remained, until 1900 as we can say in advance (for details see *infra*). The important point is that this palladium which appeared "when the ruler had the Tao" is evidence of a purely *Northern* religious legitimate succession which bypassed the Southern Sung. The possession of this miracle-working statue was therefore prestigious. Buddhist chronicles repeatedly mention the statue and its fate in prominent places. Nien-ch'ang, at the end of his great work,¹⁵⁰ which was completed in the first year of Yüan-t'ung (1333), notes that 2282 years had then passed since Buddha's nirvāṇa, 2324 years since the first appearance of the sandalwood statue, and 1266 since the first introduction of Buddhism into China: Three dates connected with the history of Buddhism, one of which concerns the statue. Nothing could show more clearly the great impact of this idol in the eyes of the faithful.

No wonder, then, that also Khubilai Khan had already attached great value to the statue. "One day the emperor said: 'The auspicious sandalwood statue of Buddha is a Buddha-jewel of the present age. One ought to build a great reliquary for its safe keeping and veneration, so that all people together can view and worship it.' Thereupon he built the temple Ta-sheng shou wan-an ssu."¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*, ch. 22, 727/I.

¹⁵¹ *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai*, ch. 22, 723/I. In Ta-sheng shou wan-an ssu the character *shou* should be deleted.

A comprehensive history of the sandalwood Buddha, its legends and its importance for Northern Buddhism has yet to be written.¹⁵² We give here only a few more details which may show that also after Khubilai and after the Yüan it continued to be an object of wide-spread worship and enjoyed particular patronage from Chinese emperors. Under the Ming the sandalwood statue which was until then covered with black lacquer, received a golden coating. At that time the name of its temple was Ch'ing-Fo tien "Hall of the Pure Buddha". The K'ang-hsi emperor had it repaired and renamed it (1665) Chan-tan ssu "Sandalwood Temple". In 1721 the emperor had a stone inscription set up which summarized the earlier history of the statue. This inscription has been translated by Paul Pelliot;¹⁵³ it mentions in passing also Ch'eng Chü-fu's earlier inscription. Originally the statue was not under the supervision of Lamaist monks, but under the Yüan the temple was entrusted to lamas, and the same is true for the Manchu dynasty. Also in Tibetan and Mongol works the statue is frequently mentioned. Its Tibetan name is Candan jo-bo "Sandalwood Lord", which became in Mongolian Čandan joo. As practically no history of Buddhism or no history at all was written in Mongolia or Tibet without referring in some way or other to the auspicious statue, we quote only one text here, the *Erdeni-yin tobči*. Buddha is said to have kneeled before his own image and to have uttered this prophecy:

¹⁵² For a survey of the history of the Sandalwood Buddha see Alexander C. Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona, 1959, *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* XIX), 259-265. On the Indian legends about the Sandalwood Buddha see also *Hōbōgirin*, *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme d'après les sources Chinoises et Japonaises*, troisième fascicule (Paris, 1974), article *Butsuzō*, 210-211. There were many replicas made in East Asia. Also the Japanese had a sandal-wood Buddha statue which seems to repeat an Indian iconographic prototype. This statue is kept in the Seiryōji temple in Kyoto (for a photograph see Sh. Mochizuki, *Bukkyō Daijiten* vol. III, plate 130, illustration no. 661, and on the statue vol. III, 2811/I-III, also vol. II, 2118/II and plate 123, ill. no. 633). It is a standing image of the Buddha; the right hand is raised in the posture of fearlessness (*abhayamudrā*) and the left in that of granting wishes (*varadamudrā*).

¹⁵³ Paul Pelliot, review of O. Franke and B. Laufer, *Epigraphische Denkmäler aus China*, JA 1914, II, 188-190.

After I have attained Nirvāṇa, this sandalwood *jūu*,
 A thousand years hence,
 At that time going to the land of the Khara Khitans,
 Will perform vast great benefit in the eastern region.¹⁵⁴

The "vast great benefit" of the statue was, of course, thought of as a benefit for the ruling house and the whole state. Already under the Jurchen dynasty of Chin the hall for the statue was inside the imperial palace and this remained so throughout the Yüan and Ming. For the Ch'ing it is frequently mentioned that religious services and prayers for the emperor were held there. In order to celebrate the sixtieth birthday of the Ch'ien-lung emperor the Peking Qutuqtu Rol-pa'i rdo-rje (1717-1786) wrote in 1770 a history of the famous statue which was in turn used by later Mongol and Tibetan chroniclers.¹⁵⁵ Throughout the 19th century the Chan-tan ssu remained one of the most famous and popular temples in Peking until it was destroyed during the Boxer uprising in 1900. Its site was some 600 feet north of the Catholic cathedral Pei-t'ang.¹⁵⁶ It is unknown what became of the statue and if perhaps, by some *pia fraus*, it has appeared elsewhere since. In any case, the Sandalwood Statue is one of the many features of symbolical import which link the Yüan capital Peking with the Peking of the Ming and Ch'ing emperors.

¹⁵⁴ Trsl. Krueger, *Sagang Sechen*, 15.

¹⁵⁵ On this work see Walther Heissig, *Pekinger Lamaistische Blockdrucke*, (Wiesbaden, 1954), 135-136 (no. 147) (with a summary of the contents and a description of the statue). For early translations of Chinese texts on the statue and its history into Tibetan see also R. A. Stein, "Nouveaux documents tibétains sur le Mi-nag/Si-hia", *Mélanges de sinologie offerts à M. Paul Demiéville*, I, (Paris, 1966), 285 note 1.

¹⁵⁶ For a brief survey of literature on the sandal wood Buddha see also Klaus Sagaster, *Subud Erike. Ein Rosenkranz aus Perlen*, (Wiesbaden, 1967), 112 note 195. For the site of the now destroyed temple see e. g. Alphonse Favier, *Peking, Histoire et Description*, (Lille, 1900), 291-294 (with a drawing of the statue); Fei-shih, *Guide to Peking*, (Tientsin, 1924), 25; L. C. Arlington and W. Lewisohn, *In Search of Old Peking* (repr. New York, 1957), 134-135.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The author of this admittedly impressionistic and unsystematic paper would not be in a position to object if a reader should say that it implicitly puts more questions than it answers. What, for example, about the general problem if barbarian rule over China could, in the eyes of the Chinese, be legitimate at all? Did a Chinese emperor have to be Chinese, or could he be a barbarian as long as he conformed to the traditional value-system of political ethics? Much in Chinese tradition points to a relative unimportance of concepts like race or nation, but it should not be forgotten that, until the Europeans came, foreign invaders had always been of the same anthropological stock as the Chinese themselves. In other words, the problem of color never arose because the Chinese had, until the age of Western colonialism and imperialism, no experience with racial foreigners as invaders or eventual rulers. And foreignness in language was perhaps perceived as nothing strange and unusual in a country where many widely divergent local dialects were spoken. Long historical experience had therefore conditioned Chinese thinking to a sort of culturalism (as opposed to racialism or nationalism) where even barbarian rule could be legitimate, if it kept to traditional values. There are, of course, violent denouncements of the barbarian Yüan rule on the part of some Ming intellectuals but in general those writers who had still lived under the Yüan or been in their formative stage before 1368 seem to have damned the old regime much less than modern nationalistic rigorism would have preferred them to do.¹⁵⁷ It must remain a question, one that is perhaps unanswerable, if the Chinese population, above all the lower classes, under the late Yüan when rebellions and defections had transformed wide parts of the country into battle-fields, viewed

¹⁵⁷ On these problems see Frederick W. Mote, *Some Problems of Race and Nation in 14th century China*, University Seminar on Traditional China, Columbia University, March 11, 1969, and John Fincher, "China as a Race, Culture, and Nation: Notes on Fang Hsiao-ju's Discussion of Dynastic Legitimacy", David C. Buxbaum and Frederick W. Mote (editors), *Transition and Permanence. Chinese History and Culture. A Festschrift in Honor of Dr. Hsiao Kung-ch'üan*, (Hong Kong, 1972), 59-67.

this as something qualitatively different from earlier periods of strife of which they had heard. We do simply not know enough of the social psychology of a given period to answer such questions, because all that we know has already been filtered through the medium of writing and that means, through the minds of those who wrote. Our evidence is, at most, indirect.

Some points, however, will have become clear from the observations made in the course of our study. The Mongols did not use the traditional patterns of legitimation in China before they had won power but afterwards. The initiative to adopt such patterns rested solely with their Chinese advisors, from Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai on down to the Confucian scholars of the mid-14th century. Another striking aspect is the lack of innovation as far as the Chinese symbols and rituals go. Conservatism was the salient feature, and the models of the T'ang, Sung and Chin were imitated. Restoration was, in the sphere of the Chinese state and statehood, what the Chinese assistants of Mongol rulers had in mind, not innovation.

But this is only one side of the picture. Buddhism, in its Lamaist variety, provided a much closer fusion of secular rule and religious sanction than it had been the case under the Southern Sung and the Chin. In earlier periods of Chinese history we find a gradual appropriation of Buddhism in China,¹⁵⁸ but under the Yüan we have what may be termed as appropriation of China in a Buddhist oikumene, a Buddhist universal empire. The theory of the two orders (*qoyar yosun*) as developed by the Sakya lamas became an integral part of the self-image of the Yüan emperors and was of enormous historical impact because it outlasted the Yüan and gave the later Mongols what they considered a legitimate place in world history. When driven from China, the Chinggiskhanides relied rather on Buddhist legitimation than on their claim to the Chinese throne. For the later Mongols the Yüan period remained a glorious episode. Chinggis Khan had been, after all, proclaimed universal khan in 1206 without the formalities of Chinese ritual and the legitimation of a *huang-ti*,

¹⁵⁸ This general problem is described in Arthur F. Wright, "Buddhism and Chinese Culture: Phases of Interaction", JAS 17 (1957), 17-42.

and his descendants after 1368 could equally do without. More than to the reminiscence of the imperial palaces in Peking did the Mongols cling to the ideas of Buddhist rulership which were taken up so fervently again in the 16th century.

It goes without saying that the strong alliance between Buddhist religion and Chinese emperors was not at all a phenomenon limited to the Mongols of the Yüan period. Also under the Ming we find this alliance, but the ideal of Buddhist emperor as devised by the P'ags-pa lama and his successors found its strongest expression and at the same time its most practice-oriented political application under the Manchu emperors. In some respects the fusion of the two kinds of emperor, the Chinese *huang-ti* and the Buddhist universal ruler or even incarnation (also K'ang-hsi and Ch'ien-lung were Bodhisattvas!), had become under the Manchus the crowning achievement of a development inaugurated in the middle of the 13th century. We must ascribe to the Yüan emperors a multiple personality as far as their self-image and the symbolic expression of these respective personalities or roles are concerned. They were at the same time hereditary chieftains of the Borjigid clan and the Mongol tribes, Great Khans, Chinese emperors, and Buddhist universal emperors. The simultaneous presence at the Yüan court of rituals connected with all of these different roles is a reflection of their multiple personality. The Mongol rulers, depending on which direction their advisors had indicated, could adopt the regalia of a *huang-ti*, of a *cakravartin* or, in an Islamic milieu, those of an *amir al-mumenin*, a Commander of the Faithful. For them different modes of legitimation were like so many different garments which they could wear according to what seemed appropriate for the particular occasion.

LISTE DER CHINESISCHEN SCHRIFTZEICHEN

A-hu-ch'an	阿	鵲	產			
An-ch'u-hu	按	出	虎	寺	極	烈
Ao-lo po-chi-lieh	熬	羅				
ao-lu	奧	魯				
Chan-tan fo	旃	檀	佛			
Chang-so-chih lun		彰	所	知	論	
Chang-tsung	章	宗				
Ch'ang-an	長	安				
Ch'ang-ch'un	長	春				
Chao Hung	趙	璘				
chao-ling	詔	令				
Chao-san	趙	三				
Chen-chin	真	金				
Ch'en Pang-chan		陳	邦	贍		
cheng-t'ung	正	統				
Ch'eng Chü-fu	程	鉅	夫			
Ch'eng-tsung	成	宗				
Chi	濟					
chi-ch'ao	吉	兆				
ch'i shih-chieh		器	世	界		
Chiang-nan	江	南				
chiao	郊					
chieh-tu shih	節	度	使			
chien-ch'a yü-shih		監	察	御	史	
Chien-yen i-lai hsi-nien yao-lu			建	炎	以來	擊年要錄
Ch'ien	乾					
Chih-yüan	至	元				
ch'ih	赤					
Chin-t'eng	金	滕				
Ch'ing-fo tien	清	佛	殿			
Ch'ing-jung chü-shih chi		清	容	居士	集	
ch'ing shih-chieh	情	世	界			
chiu-shih p'u-sa	救	世	菩	薩		
Ch'iu-ch'ien hsien-sheng			秋	澗	先生	大全文集
Cho-keng lu	輟	耕	錄			
Chou-li	周	禮				

Chou Mi	周	密							
Chu Hsi	朱	素							
Chu Yüan-chang		朱	元	璋					
ch'uan-kuo hsi		傳	國	璽					
Ch'üan Heng		權	衡						
Chüeh-tuan		角	端						
Ch'un-ch'iu Kung-yang chuan chung	中			春	秋	公	羊	傳	
Chung-tu	中	都							
Chung-t'ung	中	統							
Chung-yüan	中	原							
Etani Toshiyuki		惠	谷	俊	之				
Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-tsai			佛	祖	歷	代	通	載	
Hai-yün	海	雲							
Heng-shan (Hunan)		衡	山						
Heng-shan (Hopei)		恒	山						
Hu-ch'ien ching		虎	鈴	經					
hua	化								
Hua-shan	華	山							
Huai	淮								
huang-ti	皇	帝							
huang-ti p'u-sa		皇	帝	菩	薩				
Hui-jen yü-sheng		徽	仁	裕	聖				
Hui-ning	會	寧							
Hui-tsung	徽	宗							
i	義								
I-ching	易	經							
I-t'ung chih	一	統	志						
jen	仁								
Jui-hsiang tien	pei	瑞	像	殿	碑				
Jui-tsung	睿	宗							
K'ai-feng	開	封							
Kan	甘								
Kano Naoki	狩	野	直	喜					
K'ao-kung chi		考	工	紀					
Keng-shen wai-shih		庚	申	外	史				
Kinchōshi Kenkyū		金	朝	史	研	究			
Kuan Yü	關	羽							

- Kuei-hsin tsa-shih 癸 辛 雜 識
 K'un 坤
 Kuo-ch'üeh 國 權
 kuo-hao 國 號
 Li Ch'ien 李 謙
 Liao-tung 遼 東
 Liu Pang 劉 邦
 Liu Ping-chung 劉 秉 忠
 Liu-shu t'ung 六 書 通
 Luan 瀾
 Meng-ku shih-hsi p'u 蒙 古 世 系 譜
 Meng-ta pei-lu 蒙 韃 備 錄
 Ming-tsung 明 宗
 nan-chiao 南 郊
 Nien-ch'ang 念 常
 nien-hao 年 號
 pi-shu shao-chien 祕 書 少 監
 Pien-wei lu 辨 偽 錄
 p'ing 平
 p'ing-chang cheng-shih 平 章 政 事
 Po-hai 渤 海
 P'u-sa t'ien-tzu 菩 薩 天 子
 San-ch'ao pei-meng hui-pien 三 朝 北 盟 彙 編
 Seiryōji 清 涼 寺
 Sha-lo-pa 沙 羅 巴
 shan-jang 禪 讓
 Shang-tu 上 都
 she-chi 社 稷
 sheng-cheng 聖 政
 Shih-san-ching chu-shu 十 三 經 注 疏
 Shih-shih chi-ku lüeh 釋 氏 稽 古 略
 Shih-te 拾 得 , 碩 德
 shou ming yü t'ien chi shou yung ch'ang 受 命 于 天 既 壽 永 昌
 Shou-shih li 授 時 歷
 Shu-ching 書 經
 Shu-hsüeh cheng-yün 書 學 正 韻
 Shun-ti 順 帝
 ssu-tu 四 漬

Sung-shan 嵩 山
 Sung Tzu-chen 宋 子 金 貞 集
 Ta-Chin chi-li 大 金 國 禮 志
 Ta-Chin kuo-chih 大 一 統
 ta i-t'ung 大 明 歷
 Ta-ming li 大 明 聖 萬 安 寺
 Ta-sheng wan-an ssu 大 聖 萬 安 寺

Ta-tu 大 都

tai 代

t'ai-ch'ang ch'ing 太 常 卿

t'ai-miao 太 廟 山 巴

T'ai-shan 太 泰 山 巴

Tan-pa 膽 巴

T'an Ch'ien 談 遷 儀

T'ao Tsung-i 陶 宗 儀

Ti Hsien 帝 顯 師

ti-shih 帝 師 下 輿

t'ien-hsia 天 天 下 輿

T'ien-hsing 天 天 下 輿

Toyama Gunji 外 山 軍 治 帝

Tsu-yüan huang-ti 祖 元 皇 帝

Ts'ui Yü 崔 或 徒 軍 公 履

T'u-tan Kung-lü 童 謠 鵬 磐 憚

t'ung-yao 童 謠 鵬

Wang E 王 謠 鵬

Wang P'an 王 謠 鵬

Wang Yün 王 謠 鵬

wei-ling 威 靈 宗 物

Wen-tsung 文 文 宗 物

Wen-wu 文 文 宗 物

Wu-tsung 武 武 宗

wu-yo 五 藏

yang 陽

Yang Huan 楊 桓 朴 耶

Yang P'o 楊 桓 朴 耶

Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai 律 楚 材

Yen-ching 燕 京 宗

Yü-tsung 裕 宗

Yüan-ch'ao ming-ch'en shih-lüeh 元朝名臣事略
 Yüan Chüeh 袁桷
 Yüan-shih chi-shih pen-mo 元史紀事本末
 Yüan tien-chang 元典章
 Yüan-t'ung 元統
 Yüan wen-lei 元文類
 yün 運

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

After the completion of the manuscript I became aware of the article by Igor de Rachewiltz, „Some Remarks on the Ideological Foundations of Chinggis Khan's Empire“, *Papers on Far Eastern History* 7 (Canberra, March 1973), 21–36. His analysis reaches largely the same conclusions as mine on pp. 14–25 of this study. I am grateful to Dr. de Rachewiltz for having me presented with a copy of his valuable article on July 14, 1978.

pp. 42–46: The „seal transmitting the state“ is already mentioned under the Chin as part of the regalia of the dynasty (*Ta-Chin chi-li* ch. 30, 262–263). It was found after the Jurchen conquest of Peking in 1123 (*Chin-shih* ch. 2.21 b and 71.4 a) and presented to the Chin emperor in 1125 (*Chin-shih* ch. 3.6 b and 74.10 b). A description of the seal is in *Chin-shih* ch. 31.12 b.

APPENDIX

History of the Sandalwood Buddha Statue
(according to *Cho-Keng lu*, ch. 17, 248-249)

<i>Time</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Number of Years</i>
999 B. C. (?) - 293 A. D.	India	1285
294-361 A. D.	Kucha	68
362-375	Liang-chou (Kansu)	14
376-392	Ch'ang-an	17
393-565	Chiang-nan	173
566-932	Huai-nan	367
933-953	Chiang-nan	21
954-1130	P'ien-liang (K'ai-feng)	177
1131-1142	Yen-chiang (Peking), Sheng-an ssu	12
1143-1162	Shang-ching (Manchuria), Ta-ch'u ch'ing ssu	20
1163-1216	Yen-ching (Peking), Palace Hall	54
1217-1275	Yen-ching (Peking), Sheng-an ssu	59
1276-1277	Jen-chih tien Hall in Wan-shou shan palace grounds, Peking. Ta-sheng wan-an ssu is ordered to be built in 1277	2
1278-1288	Jen-chih tien Hall	11
1289-1315	Transfer from Jen-chih tien into back hall of the completed Ta-sheng wan-an ssu in 1289.	
1316	2,307 years have passed since the statue was made.	

The tabulation shows that exact locations are only given from 1131 on (Peking). This makes it probable that the earlier dates and locations might be legendary, but the whole problem needs critical investigation.