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SINO-MONGOLICA REMOTA

✪ Igor de Rachewiltz

The present collection of critical remarks on early Mongolian and Sino-Mongolian documents (inscriptions, manuscripts and printed texts) of the 13th and 14th centuries is the outcome of much reading and writing on the subject over many decades. They are addressed mainly to philologists and students of Preclassical Mongolian, but sinologues working on the language and literary culture of the Yuan period (including the reigns of the first four khans, 1206–1368) can also benefit. It is assumed that the reader, besides knowing Chinese and written Mongolian, is also acquainted with the documents in question and has access to photocopies of the original texts. In any event, I shall constantly provide references to the transcriptions/transliterations of these texts published by L. Ligeti, D. Tumurtoogoo & G. Cecegdari, F.W. Cleaves, D. Cerensodnom & M. Taube, and others, and their translations when available. The texts are arranged in chronological order.

The ‘Stone of Chingis’

The so-called ‘Stone of Chingis’ is the inscribed stele celebrating the victory of Činggis Qan’s nephew Yisüngge (c. 1190–c. 1270) in an archery contest that Činggis held at a place near the Imil and (Black) Irtysh rivers in present-day northern Xinjiang on his return journey to Mongolia after the great campaign against Khwarezm (1218–24). It was in all probability the same area between the old territory of the Uighurs and the Naimans where he and his army had encamped en route to the West in the summer of 1119.¹ There he set up his *ordo* again in the summer of 1224, engaging in the usual activities of hunting, archery contests, etc., and holding a great feast. In the archery contest, Prince Yisüngge, the second son of Činggis’ younger brother (Joči) Qasar (1164–c. 1213) — himself a great archer — shot an arrow to the distance of 335 *aldas* or fathoms equivalent to 536 metres. The text, roughly carved

Editor’s note

To the best of our knowledge, this paper was unpublished, new research at the time of Professor de Rachewiltz’s death. We welcome any correspondence that corrects the record.

Due to the length and complexity of the notes in this paper, we depart from our usual format of sidenotes adjacent to corresponding text. All notes appear as endnotes and are set in regular-sized type.

on the two-metre high granite stone now at the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg reads:

When Činggis Qan, having subdued the Sartayul (= Central Asian Muslim) people, set up camp, and the noblemen of the entire Mongol nation gathered at Buqa Sočiyai,² at the long-distance shooting Yisüngge shot an arrow to the distance of 335 fathoms.³

Most of the problems associated with the decipherment of the inscription derive from the fact the stone was not inscribed by a professional carver; the stone surface was not smoothed properly before the text was inscribed; and that the text was subsequently damaged by the breaking of the stone which occurred accidentally while the stele was being transported from the east Baikal region to St. Petersburg in 1829–32. Fortunately, only two letters of two separate words in the inscription were obliterated. More than a century and a half of assiduous work on the part of a dozen scholars from various nations has yielded a reconstruction of the full original text and an interpretation that is both thorough and reliable. The Mongolian text is no longer a problem.⁴

The main problem concerning this interesting monument, which (it should be mentioned) is unique of its kind in the history of Mongolian epigraphy, is the dating of its erection and inscription. The latter was, of course, made when the stele was erected, but was it erected in Central Asia at the time of the event it celebrates, that is, in the summer of 1224, thus making it the first monument in Uighur-Mongolian script and, indeed, the very first specimen of this script that has come down to us? As is known, according to the Chinese sources the then illiterate Mongols adopted the Uighur alphabet at the very beginning of the thirteenth century (1204), some twenty years before the archery contest, and adapted it, almost without a change, to their own language. In 1206, together with a major reform of the military system, Činggis created a rudimentary 'tent administration', with recording and bookkeeping duties, which clearly required the use of the new script. The officer in charge was the newly appointed adjudicator (*ǰarǰuči*) Šigi Qutuqu, who, as a child, had been adopted by Činggis' mother Hö'elün. All of Činggis Qan's sons had received personal tuition in the Uighur-Mongolian script by the Uighur Tatar Tonga, a former seal-keeper and secretary of the khan of the Naiman tribe and the very man who reputedly introduced the Uighur script to the Mongols. The rudimentary administration run by Šigi Qutuqu was the precursor of the later court Secretariat which, in the latter part of Činggis' life and during the reign of his successor Ögödei Qayan (1229–41), was headed by the (? Uighur) official Čin(g)qai (c. 1169–1252) and the sinicised Khitan Yelü Chucai (1189–1243), the former being in charge of all matters entailing the use of the Uighur script, hence the adoption on the part of the Mongol court administration of Uighur chancellery practices and procedures in drafting documents, etc. Yelü Chucai was in charge of all Chinese matters to be dealt with by the Secretariat, as well as acting also as court astrologer-astronomer using both Arabic-Persian and Chinese techniques. As the chief 'Chinese' scribe, he drafted official letters in that language and was probably the one who sanctioned the use of vernacular Chinese in the official correspondence and imperial edicts.⁵

Now, the 'Stone of Chingis' or, more correctly, the 'Stele of Yisüngge', was discovered some time before 1818 among the ruins of two medieval Mongolian settlements on the rivers Khirkhira and Kondui, both affluents of the Urulyngui, itself a left tributary of the Argun River. Some five kilometres

upstream from the Khirkhira site a few ancient kurgans were found, that is, large burial mounds or tumuli, and it was near them, according to local informers, that stood the stele which by 1818 had already been removed and stored in the nearby village of Nerchinskii Zavod.⁶ Later investigations by Russian scholars confirmed that Yisüngge's stele originally stood on a granite base in a ravine at the Khirkhira site and in the area of the kurgans linked to the medieval Mongolian settlement, which further excavations revealed to be a large township with its citadel, palatial buildings and workmen's dwellings. Further research identified the whole area as the centre of the former domain or apanage of Joči Qasar, of his sons and their descendants in south-eastern Transbaikalia, that is, in the region of the Argun and Hulun Lake (or Dalai Nōr), where the borders of Russia, China and Mongolia converge. Prince Yisüngge presumably returned there late in 1224 or early in 1225 after the great campaign in the West. When he died more than forty years later, he was buried (one assumes) with the inscribed granite stele erected near his tomb as a memorial to his skill as the best Mongol archer and his great feat in Central Asia in Činggis Qan's time.⁷

The problem, then, in Pelliot's words, is the following:

Whatever reading [of the place-name *Buqa-(s)učiqai – I.R.] we may adopt, it is difficult to account for the region where the 'stone of Chingiz-khan' was found, presumably in situ: the stone was discovered in the basin of the Argun, i.e., far to the east of the track which Chingiz followed on his way back from the Ili region to his *ordo*. I have no solution to proffer for this question, which former inquirers have ignored.⁸

The point raised by Pelliot is pertinent since it has a direct bearing on the dating of the inscription. Excluding the very remote possibility that the stone was cut and inscribed in Central Asia and carted all the way to Transbaikalia, there are only two likely scenarios. One, that the stone was cut and erected immediately after Yisüngge's return to his family domain — an unusual practice for a Mongol at the time, but not impossible. If so, that would date it from 1224–25. The other, that the stone was erected after his death, that is, c. 1270, as a funerary monument, to honour and perpetuate his memory by recording the most outstanding achievement of his life.

While there is no certain way to find out which of the two alternatives is more likely to have occurred, Pelliot was of the opinion that the stele probably dated from 1225. He therefore was in favour of the first alternative but gave no reason for it.⁹ For my part, I am entirely in agreement with Pelliot, my main reason being that the granite stele is, as an inscribed memorial stone, very 'primitive', completely lacking in polish and roughly incised. Had it been erected and inscribed in or about 1270, it would have undoubtedly been executed more professionally. Nevertheless, after Yisüngge's death it would still make a fitting gravestone and epitaph for a personage whose major claim to fame was that extraordinary bow shot.

To this general consideration we must add certain orthographic features of the text, viz. the use of the Uighur letter *z* to render the Mongolian final *s* in the words Činggis and *aldas* in the first and fourth lines, whereas the final *s* of the word *ulus* in the second line is rendered with the Uighur letter *s*. The verb *ontud-* 'to shoot an arrow at a long distance' is spelt differently in the fourth and fifth lines (*ontuDur-un* and *onDutulay-a*, where *D* is the Uighur *d* and *t* the Uighur *t*, that is, the two letters are used interchangeably). The diacritic points added to the letters *n* and *γ* are used erratically, and *q* has two

dots, as in Uighur, when it should have none in the Uighur-Mongolian script. There is, therefore, a definite Uighur influence on the orthography, which is a characteristic of Mongolian epigraphies and documents throughout the Mongol-Yuan period, *except for* the Uighur *z* used, inconsistently, also for the Mongolian final *s*. Thus all the formal (material) and textual features of the monument point to an earlier rather than later date.

In conclusion, I think we can safely say that in all likelihood the stele of Yisünger was erected in Qasar's family domain in 1224 or 1225 and that it remained in situ until the beginning of the 19th century, eventually finding its way, somewhat worse for wear, to the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg where it can still be admired today. Consequently we may, indeed, continue to regard it as the first surviving example of an ancient Mongolian commemorative stele as well as the first specimen of Uighur-Mongolian script still extant.¹⁰

The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1240

The Mongolian text of the Empress Töregene's edict of 1240 is only three lines long and comes immediately after the Chinese text of the edict (11 lines in vernacular officialese).¹¹ It is purely formulaic in contents, warning any transgressor and using a phraseology employed in numerous other documents of the early Mongol period.¹² Contrary to F.W. Cleaves' opinion, I do not think that it is the end of a longer text in Mongolian and, moreover, incomplete.¹³ The transcription of the Mongolian text is the following:

- [1] *ᠠᠨᠡ ᠮᠢᠨᠤ ᠤᠭᠡ ᠪᠤᠰᠢ ᠪᠣᠯᠶᠭᠠᠰᠠᠨ ᠬᠦᠮᠤᠨ*
 [2] *ᠶᠡᠬᠡ ᠡᠷᠬᠡ ᠠᠯᠳᠠᠶᠰᠢᠲᠤ ᠪᠣᠯᠲᠤᠶᠠᠢ ᠠᠨᠡ*
 [3] *ᠪᠢᠴᠢᠭ ᠴᠤᠯᠠᠶᠠᠨᠠ ᠵᠢᠯ*

Please note that 1) the text lacks any punctuation, 2) in the first line the separation of *san* from *bolyay*, and in the second line the separation of *situ* from *alday* are simply orthographic peculiarities: the two words should be read *bolyaysan* and *aldaysitu* respectively, and 3) the same applies to the reading *ᠠᠨᠡ* (*ane*) = *ene* in the first and second lines.¹⁴ If one ignores these orthographic features and punctuates the text, I would at present read the same text as follows:

- [1] *Ene minu üge. Busi bolyaysan kümün*
 [2] *yeke erke aldaysitu boltuyai. Ene*
 [3] *bičig qulayana jil.*

I would also offer a new literal interpretation of the text, as follows:

- [1] This [is] my word (= order). [Any] person who has contravened [it]
 [2] shall be guilty of great arrogance (= lese-majesty) [and will die]. This
 [3] Writ [was issued by me in] the Year of the Rat (= 1240).

I take the first three words as a single proposition and not as the direct object of what follows as previously done by Cleaves and myself.¹⁵

The major bone of contention is the first two words of the second line, viz. *yeke erke*. Cleaves does not transcribe and translate the word *erke*; Ligeti transcribes it as 'eregü [?]' ('punishment'); Dobu has '*ᠠᠨᠬᠡ*' adding in a note 'This word is unreadable'; Saitō transcribes it as '*änkä*' adding in a footnote '*änkä?*' (all these scholars read the preceding word *yeke* or *yäkä* 'great' or 'greatly'); de Rachewiltz reads *yeke erke* and translates '[by] the supreme power', explain-

ing further ‘which I presume refers to Heaven rather than to the *qayan* of the Mongol state’; Tumurtogoo transcribes the two words also as *yeke erke*.¹⁶

However, it has escaped all the above transcribers and translators that the term *erke*, the primary meaning of which is ‘power’, has in Preclassical Mongolian also the extended meaning of ‘arrogance’. In the Mongolian version of the *Xiaojing* 孝經 or *Classic of Filial Piety*, which I believe dates from the early Yuan period, that is from the second half of the thirteenth century, the word *erkeben* (= *erke-ben*) ‘his arrogance (or pride)’ occurs twice, *erke* rendering in both cases the term *jiao* 驕 ‘proud, arrogant’ of the *Xiaojing*.¹⁷ In Classical and Literary Mongolian, as well as in the modern dialects *erke* also occurs with the meanings of ‘arbitrary, wilful, capricious; disobedience, insubordination, defiance’ and the like.¹⁸

As for *aldaysitu*, I think that A. Mostaert (in Cleaves, ‘Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1240’, p.70, n.5) is right in regarding it as an adjective in *-tu* of *aldaysi*, but I do not share his opinion that the latter may be a deverbal noun in *-si* (see Poppe, *Grammar*, §181) of **alday-* = *alda-* ‘to lose, fail, err’ and, by extension, ‘to make a serious mistake, to commit a crime’, hence ‘an offence, a crime (< “a mistake liable to punishment”’). In Mongolian there is no attested occurrence of a verb *alday-*, however, except for this single instance. This, I believe is because *alday* is not a Mongolian word but a Turkic deverbal noun formed on *tu*. *alda-* or *alta-* ‘to deceive, cheat, mislead’ (> mo. *alda-* ‘to fail, err, etc.’) and meaning ‘fraud, deceit’. See Wilhelm Radloff, *Versuch eines Wörterbuches der Türk-Dialecte*, I-IV (St. Petersburg: IAN, 1893–1911), Vol.1/1, p.414, and p.413, s.v. *alday*; V.M. Nadelyaev et al., *Drevnetyurkskii slovar* (Leningrad: ‘Nauka’, 1969), p.34b; Clauson, *Etymological Dictionary*, p.133a; Doerfer, *Elemente*, no. 533. *Alday* does correspond to mo. *aldal* ‘mistake, punishable crime’, as Mostaert, *loc.cit.*, correctly says, but this is not relevant here insofar as *aldal* does not come into the picture. The word *aldaysitu* is simply an aberrant form of mo. *aldasitu* (*alda-* + *-si-* + *-tu*) due to a Central Asian scribe-secretary (of Turkic language background?) with an imperfect knowledge of Mongolian who mistakenly coined this Turko-Mongolian hybrid term meaning ‘who has (committed) a crime (liable to punishment)’, viz. ‘guilty of a capital offence’. *Aldasi* ‘crime, criminal (= capital) offence’ is a technical term one frequently encounters in the historical and legal-administrative literature of the Mongol-Yuan period in Chinese. See Cleaves, *op.cit.*, pp.70–71, where several citations clearly indicate that under the first Mongol rulers the *aldasi*-offence entailed capital punishment.¹⁹ Therefore, the very concise, formulaic and somewhat ungrammatical Mongol validation and caveat at the end of the imperial edict of 1240 may be understood in plain English as follows:

This is my order. Anyone who contravenes it shall be guilty of lese-majesty and will die. This Writ was issued by me in the Year of the Rat (= 1240). Alternatively: ‘Anyone who contravenes this order of mine shall be guilty of lese-majesty, etc.

The above remarks are meant, in particular, to complement, supplement and revise what I have already written on the subject in de Rachewiltz, ‘Töregene’s Edict of 1240’, and in the *Secret History*, Vol.2, p.769, and Vol.3, pp.112–13.

1 For a comprehensive survey of the history and identification of the stele, as well as for relevant remarks on the interpretation of the five lines of the Mongol text of the inscription see Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Some Remarks on the Stele of Yisüngge' in eds Walther Heissig et al. *Tractata altaica Denis Sinor sexagenario optime de rebus altaicis merito dedicata* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1976), pp.487–508. In view of the fact that the editors of *Tractata altaica* failed to send the proofs of the above article to the author, the article contains a large number of misprints as well as a few statements that require correction. In the Appendix of the present article the reader will find a fairly complete list of corrections which is indispensable. However, these do not include the new data and interpretations contained in the present article. The 'recreational' army halt and victory celebration on the return journey of Činggis Qan in the summer of 1224 is recorded by Rašid al-Dīn, but the passage in question is misunderstood in W.M. Thackston (trans.), *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Jami'u't-tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles. A History of the Mongols* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1998), Vol.2, p.260. Cf. Igor de Rachewiltz, 'The Dating of the Secret History of the Mongols: A Re-interpretation,' *Ural-Altäische Jahrbücher*, N.F. 22 (2008): 150–84, at p.164, n.51, and Igor de Rachewiltz (trans. & comm.), *The Secret History of the Mongols. A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*, I–III (Leiden: Brill, 2004–13), Vol.3, pp.105–06. From the same Persian source, we learn that Činggis was back at his *ordo* in northern Mongolia in February of 1225. See Thackston, *op.cit.*, p.261. (I take this opportunity to correct two typographical errors in de Rachewiltz 'The Dating', p.164, l. 6: for 'contexts' read 'contests'; same page, l. 5 from bottom: for '258' read '260'. Also on p.170, l. 9, for '9 May' read '11 March'.)

2 The second element of the place name is mutilated, the first letter being obliterated by the crack in the stone. The full form of the name is preserved however by Rašid al-Dīn as Buqa Sučiyu (or Sučiqu) — an Uighur Turkic name (we are in Uighur-speaking territory) — meaning '(Place where) the bull shies away from'. The name on the stele appears to be the Mongolian version of the Turkic, that is Buqa (S)očiyai or '(Place where) the bull startles'. *Buqa* is in the singular but can also be used with a meaning of plurality; and the semantic range of *tu. suči-* and *mo. soči-* include 'to be frightened, to startle, to rear and jump about, to shy away from'. Clearly we are dealing with the same placename. Cf. de Rachewiltz, 'Some Remarks', pp.488–89.

3 The following is the Mongolian text with the single and double dots indicating the diacritic points opposite the letters *n*, *γ* and *q*: [1] Činggis Qan-i [2] Sartaγul irge (d)ayuliγu baγuγu qamuγ Mongγol ulus-uñ [3] noyad-i Buqa (S)očiyai quriγsan-dur. [4] Yisüngge ontudur-uñ γurban jaγud γučin tabuñ aldas- [5] tur ontudulaγ-a.

In the inscription the two lines (1 and 4) with the names of Činggis Qan and Yisüngge are placed higher, and in the case of the former also separated from the rest, as a sign of respect. However, the one with Yisüngge's name is less elevated than the first line. Cf. de Rachewiltz, 'Some Remarks', pp.487–91 and notes, and Igor de Rachewiltz and Volker Rybatzki, *Introduction to Altaic Philology* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp.161–65. (Please note the following two *corrigenda*: p.164, l. 16, for 'words' read 'letters', and l. 8 from bottom, for 'q' read 'q'.)

4 This is true for the meaning of the text. There is, however, still disagreement among scholars regarding the correct reading of the last word of the inscription: is it *ontudulay-a* (Ligeti, de Rachewiltz and Rybatzki, Street and others) or *ontudlay-a* (Tumurtogoo, Dobu, Orlovskaya)? A close inspection of the monument reveals that while the whole inside circle of the letter *u* of *-tu-* which was encapsulated, as it were, within the body of the *t* (written like the Uighur *d*,

exactly as in the case of the *u* of *-du-* in the word *ontudur-un* of the fourth line), has indeed been obliterated, the right-hand ‘bulge’ of it is still clearly visible just above the following letter *d* (written like the Uighur *t*). The correct reading is therefore, *ontudulay-a*. For the use of the affirmative or definite past in *-laya/-lege* (= *praesens perfecti*, cf. Nicholas Poppe, *Grammar of Written Mongolian*, third printing [Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974], §351) see now John C. Street, ‘On the three past-tense endings in Early Middle Mongolian,’ in *Ural-Altäische Jahrbücher*, N.F. 23 (2009), pp.126–59 (esp. at p.152, where ‘*ontuda-laya*’ is a misprint for ‘*ontudu-laya*’). In Mariya N. Orlovskaya, *Yazyk mongol’skikh tekstov XIII–XIV vv.* (Moscow: Inst. Vost. RAN., 1999–2000), p.86, ‘*ontudlq=a*’ should be ‘*ontudlaq=a*’ or, rather, ‘*ontudlay=a*’. For the reading ‘Yisüngge’ instead of ‘Yisüngke’ see David M. Farquhar, ‘The Official Seals and Ciphers of the Yüan Period,’ *Monumenta Serica* 25 (1966): 362–93, at pp.364–65.

5 On the various issues raised after posing the question of the dating of the stele of Yisüngge, such as the introduction of writing among the Mongols, etc., see de Rachewiltz and Rybatzki, *Introduction*, p.159–60; de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, Vol.1, pp.xxxv ff., 135–36, Vol.2, pp.767–74, Vol.3, p.112; Igor de Rachewiltz et al. eds, *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period (1200–1300)*, with the assistance of May Wang (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), pp.75–94 (‘Šigi Qutuqu’), 95–111 (‘Činqai’), 136–72 (‘Yeh-lü Ch’u-ts’ai’). We know that several official letters and ordinances were issued in literary Chinese and Chinese vernacular in the 1220s and 1230s when Yelü Chucai was the head of the Chinese Secretariat. For the hybrid vernacular of the Mongol-Yuan period see Ed. Chavannes, ‘Inscriptions et pièces de chancellerie chinoise de l’époque mongole,’ *T’oung Pao* 5 (1904), 357–447; 6 (1905), 1–42; 9 (1908), 297–428; I.T. Zograf, *Mongol’sko-kitaïskaya interferenciya. Yazyk mongol’skoï kancelyarii v Kitae* (Moscow: ‘Nauka’, 1984); Li Congxing 李崇興, Zu Shengli 祖生利, Ding Yong 丁勇, *Yuandai hanyu yufa yanjiu 元代漢語語法研究* (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 2009); S. Rimsky Korsakoff Dyer, *Grammatical Analysis of the Lao Ch’i-ta with an English Translation of the Chinese Text*, Faculty of Asian Studies Monographs: New Series no.3 (Canberra: Australian National University, 1983); and by the same author, *A Comparison of the Original Lao Qida and the Lao Qida Yanjie*, 29 + 336 pages incl. the photo-reproduction of the Yuan original text, pp.31–109 (1a–40a) (unpublished). Much on the Yuan official Chinese vernacular can be learned from the material contained in the *Yuan dianzhang 元典章* or *Statutes of the Yuan* in the forthcoming edition prepared by Dr Hung Chin-fu 洪金富 of Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, as well as from the masterful work by Paul Ratchnevsky *Un Code des Yuan*, I–IV (Paris: Leroux, PUF, Collège de France, 1937–85; Vol.3, the *Index*, in collaboration with F. Aubin). Cf., by F. Aubin, the book reviews in *T’oung Pao* 75 (1989), 167–77, and the *Revue bibliographique de sinologie* 7 (1961), 230, no.456. The vernacular of the Yuan plays is treated in the earlier mentioned *Yuandai hanyu*, to which one must add the important work by Fang Linggui 方齡貴, *Gudian xiqu wailaiyu kaoshi cidian (A Dictionary of Loanwords in Classical Dramas of China)* 古典戲曲外來語考釋詞典, (Shanghai: Hanyu dacidian chubanshe; Kunming: Yunnan daxue chubanshe, 2001) and I.T. Zograf, *Srednekitaïskii yazyk. Opyt strukturno-tipologičeskogo opisanija* (St. Petersburg: ‘Nauka’, 2005). There is now a vast literature on the subject in several languages, with some of the most important contributions in Japanese and Korean. The Mongol rule in China is characterised by a series of dichotomies: use of two scripts, the Uighur-Mongolian and the ‘Phags-pa or ‘square’ script introduced under Qubilai in 1269; vernacular as well as literary Chinese employed in the bureaucracy; Persian and Turkic equally current in commerce

and trade; and, if we believe in the Tibetan-influenced Mongolian historiography, a 'dual-order' system of government based on civil-administrative and religious principles introduced also by Qubilai under Tibetan Lamaist influence. The efficient postal-relay system (*jam*) introduced by Ögödei ensured better communications between the central government and the four khanates (*ulus*) but by itself it could not enforce the authority of the khaghan on the khanates after Möngke's death in 1259. Perhaps the most striking aspect of the dichotomy of the Mongol empire is the lack from its very beginning of a unifying internal structure to avoid the political and administrative separation of the khanates from the imperial capital and seat of government at Daidu (Peking). Throughout the Yuan dynasty the imperial authority exercised by the khaghans was virtually restricted to China, Tibet and Mongolia (and only, in the case of Mongolia, after Ariq Böke's submission in 1264), the khans of the individual *ulus* being de facto independent rulers in their domains, and often at odds with each other.

6 Not in the city of Nerchinsk as incorrectly stated in de Rachewiltz and Rybatzki, *Introduction*, p.160.

7 See de Rachewiltz, 'Some Remarks', pp.492–93. Since 2009 Russian archaeologists from Vladivostok, Irkutsk and Chita have been carrying out excavations at the Mongolian 13th–14th cc. necropolis at Okoshki and the Kondui and Kirkhira sites. See the provisional report of this investigation in *Rossiiskaya arkhologiiya*, 2014, no.2, pp.62–75. In a personal communication of 18 May 2016, Prof. Dr Nikolay Kradin of the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnology, Far-Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Vladivostok, informed me that in 2013–14 the archaeological team excavated one platform and a kurgan at the Kirkhira site. He and his colleagues hope to publish the results of these diggings in 2016, as well as a preliminary report of the excavations conducted at the Kondui site in 2014. Work is still in progress and they expect to complete the excavation of the palace pavilion in 2016. Dr Kradin has confirmed that 1) the original location of Yisüngge's stele is still unknown, and 2) the kurgan of Yisüngge has not yet been identified. According to information collected locally in the 19th c. the stele was found in the area of the kurgans in the Okoshki cemetery two km north of Khirkhira, or in the lowland beyond it. However, Yisüngge himself, being a close relative of Činggis Qan, may have actually been buried in a secret location. Furthermore, Dr Kradin stresses the importance of a detailed survey of the Khirkhira site which he suggests may be undertaken in the spring of 2017, and points out that the chronology of the two settlements must be revised. He now thinks that the Khirkhira site may have been built before Kondui and that it was there that Yisüngge had his palace, but it is too early to reach a definite conclusion before all the carbon dating tests are completed in 2016–17.

8 P. Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo*, I–III, (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1959–73), Vol.1, p.309.

9 Pelliot, *loc. cit.*

10 The statement on the dating of the stele in de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, Vol.3, p.106, must be revised accordingly.

11 On this edict, first published by Cai Meibiao 蔡美彪 in 1955 see Cai Meibiao, *Yuandai baihua bei jilu* 元代白話碑集錄 (Beijing: Institute of Linguistics and Philology, Chinese Academy of Sciences), p.7, no.6 and pl.1; Francis W. Cleaves, 'The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1240,' *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 23 (1960–61): 62–75 + 2 pl.; Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Some Remarks on Töregene's Edict of 1240,' *Papers on Far Eastern History* 23 (March 1981), 38–63 + 1 pl.; Dobu, *Uyiyurjin mongyol üsüg-ün durasqaltu bičig-üd* (Beijing: Ündüsüten-ü keblel-ün qoriya, 1983); pp.8–12;

Louis Ligeti, *Monuments préclassiques 1: XIII^e et XIV^e siècles*, in ed. L. Ligeti, *Monumenta linguae Mongolicae collecta* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971–), Vol.2, 1972, p.19; D. Tumurtogoo, ed., *Mongolian Monuments in Uighur-Mongolian Script (XIII–XVI Centuries). Introduction, Transcription and Bibliography*, with the collaboration of G. Cecegdari, *Language and Linguistics Monograph Series A-11* (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 2006), p.10. The Chinese text of the inscription is translated and annotated in Cleaves, ‘Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1240’, pp.65–68.

12 Cf., for example, Francis W. Cleaves, ‘The Mongolian Documents of the Musée de Téhéran,’ *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 16 (1953), 1–107 + 2 pl. at pp.26–27 (‘Document II’); Antoine Mostaert et Francis W. Cleaves, ‘Trois documents mongols des Archives secrètes vaticanes,’ *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 15 (1952): 419–506 + 8 pl., at pp.451, 464 (‘Lignes 22–25’); and, in somewhat different form, Nicholas Poppe, *The Mongolian Monuments in ḥP’ags-pa Script*. 2nd ed, trans., and ed. John R. Krueger, *Göttinger Asiatische Forschungen* 8 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1957), pp.57–58, Texts VII, VIII and IX.

13 See Cleaves, ‘Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1240’, p.64: ‘As for the Mongolian text, it consists of only three lines, presumably, the last three of a *Bičig* which probably did not consist of more than a dozen lines in all. Even the three lines which have been preserved seem not to be complete, for the text terminates with the words *qulayana jil* “rat year”, rather than the usual formula which includes the day and the month of the year as well as the name of the place where the *Bičig* was written’.

I believe that the three lines in Mongolian are a brief validation of the Chinese text of the edict with the customary warning in case of transgression *and nothing more*. See de Rachewiltz, ‘Töregene’s Edict of 1240’, pp.61–62.

14 For *ane* (Šne) = *ene* ‘this’ see Francis W. Cleaves, ‘An Early Mongolian Version of the Alexander Romance,’ *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 22 (1959), 2–99 + 8 pl. at p.33, and Dalantai Cerensodnom, Manfred Taube, *Die Mongolica der Berliner Turfansammlung* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993), p.10.

15 Cf. the other occurrences of this formula cited in Cleaves, ‘Mongolian Documents’, p.49, n.19, as well as the beginning of the ‘safe conduct of Abaya’ of 1267 or 1279 in Mostaert et Cleaves, ‘Trois documents mongols’, p.433, and the important note 1 on pp.434–36. In the present instance the word *ane* (= *ene*) ‘this’ is used instead of the name of the sovereign, that is Empress Töregene, who issued the edict. However, one cannot exclude the possibility that the former translations which make ‘this my word’ the object of ‘contravenes’ are the correct ones since the text allows both interpretations.

16 See Cleaves, ‘Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1240’, p.69; Ligeti, *Monuments préclassiques*, p.19; Dobu, *Uyiyurjin*, p.11 and n.3; Yoshio Saitō 齋藤純男, *Mongorugoshi kenkyū nyūmon* モンゴル語史研究入門 (Tokyo: Tōkyō gakugei daigaku, 2009 draft), p.13 and n.15; de Rachewiltz, ‘Töregene’s Edict of 1240’, pp.61 and 56; Tumurtogoo, *Mongolian Monuments*, p.10. As I pointed out in de Rachewiltz, *op.cit.*, p.55 and n.52, in an earlier (1963) transcription of the Mongol text Ligeti had tentatively but, in my opinion, correctly proposed the reading *erke* which he later rejected in favour of an equally tentative but untenable *eregü*, which is also his choice in Louis Ligeti, ‘Fragments mongols de Berlin,’ *Acta Orientalia Hung.* 24 (1971), 139–164, at p.148. For a different interpretation of the latter see Cerensodnom, Taube, *Die Mongolica*, p.191, no.86, l. 11.

17 See Francis W. Cleaves, *An Early Mongolian Version of the Hsiao Ching (The Book of Filial Piety)*. Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine Transcription, Translation, Commentary.

Chapters Ten through Seventeen Transcription, Translation, Publications of the Mongolia Society Occasional Papers 28 (Bloomington: The Mongolia Society, Inc., Indiana University, 2001. [This issue edited by J.R. Krueger, Y.C. Ruby Lam and B. Bauman.]), p.121 [22r] and [22v].

- 18 The meaning 'to act arbitrarily' (*ejerkejü yabu-*) of *erke* is found in the *Qorin nigetü tayilburi toli* (Changjiakou: Research Institute on Mongolian Language, Literature and History of Inner Mongolia, 1979. [It contains all the Mongol words and definitions of the *Qayan-u bičigsen Manju ügen-ü toli bičig* of 1717.], p.75b. Cf. kalm. *erkə* 'arbitrary' (Gustaf J. Ramstedt, *Kalmückisches Wörterbuch* [Helsinki: Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura, 1935, sev. reprints], p.125a); Konstantin F. Golstunskii, *Mongol'sko-russkii slovar'* (St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg University, 1895–1901, incl. supplements), Vol.1, p.113b, has among others: 'disobedience, insubordination, defiance'; Ferdinand D. Lessing, gen. ed., *Mongolian-English Dictionary*, compiled by M. Haltod, J. Gombojab Hangin, S. Kassatkin and F.D. Lessing. Corrected reprinting (Bloomington: The Mongolia Society, Inc., 1982), p.329b, gives as secondary meanings of *erke* 'self-willed, willed, wilful, wayward, capricious; spoiled (of children); wilfulness, waywardness, capriciousness'. The meaning of 'arbitrariness' in *tu erk*, corresponding to *mo. erke*, is well attested. See Clauson, *Etymological Dictionary*, p.220b: 'freedom to decide for oneself without being subject to the authority of others'. In fact, in a Turfan text we find the very expression *uluy erk* (= *mo. yeke erke*) which Clauson, *loc.cit.*, renders 'a large measure of independence', that is, 'a great independence (from other authorities)'. Cf. Radloff, *Versuch*, Vol.1/1, p.776, s.v. *ärk* (3) 'wilfulness'. In Manchu the same word (*erki* < *mo. erke*) was used with the meaning of 'self-willed, arbitrary'. See Doerfer, *Elemente*, no.65. From the above it is clear that from the beginning the term *erke* could be used to define the 'legitimate' power of the established authority as well the 'arbitrary' power of the individual, the latter being inseparable from 'arrogance', 'insubordination' and 'disobedience'. This is a fairly common phenomenon in many languages. Cf., for example, the English word 'pride' meaning both 'self-respect' and 'arrogance'; French 'amour-propre' meaning also 'self-respect' and 'vanity, conceit'; etc.
- 19 Although in later (post Qubilai Qayan) regulations the 'aldasi-offence' no longer entailed a mandatory capital punishment but could in certain cases be commuted to the confiscation of the culprit's property (see Ratchnevsky, *Code*, Vol.2, p.87, n.3), there is no doubt that, as stated earlier, such reduction of punishment did not apply under the early rulers. Especially so in the case of an *aldasi*-offence of gross insubordination or lese-majesty (*yeke erke*) where the subject disobeyed an imperial rescript. In my translation of this compound I expressly use the expression lese-majesty because it concerns an affront to the sovereign by an official or individual daring to interfere with (lit., 'disturb') the printing of the *Taoist Canon* (*Daozangjing* 道藏經) sponsored by the Mongol court. See Cleaves, 'Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1240', pp.65ff. I should add, *pace* Ratchnevsky, that the *Lixue zhinan* 吏學指南 by Xu Yuanrui 徐元瑞 (1301), edited by Li Zhenhua 李振華 (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1979), p.64, clearly states that 'to be adjudged an *aldasi*-offence' meant 'to be adjudged a capital offence'. There is no mention of a commutation to a fine or to the confiscation of property: as a general rule, *aldasi* meant capital punishment right into the fourteenth century. In practice, of course, some 'accommodation' may well have been reached and leniency applied by the enforcing authority, but hardly in a case of lese-majesty.