

ХРОНИКА

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**NEW ASPECTS ON THE IL KHANS
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
IN ULAAN BAATAR, MONGOLIA, 21–23 MAY 2014*****Judith Kolbas****(Cambridge University, UK)*

A special conference held in Ulaan Baatar, Mongolia, explored new aspects on the Il Khans. It was jointly sponsored by the Mongolian National University and the University of Indiana, Bloomington, USA, from 21 to 23 May of 2014. Twenty-one invited speakers presented topics in various panels that each had a unifying theme. The entire event was extremely well organized by Dashdondog Bayarsaihan (Ph.D. from the University of Oxford) on the faculty of the History Department of the Mongolian National University. There was, indeed, much new information on imperial Mongol activity in Greater Iran, and the proceedings will be published in Mongolia and abroad.

Several important trends in current research on the Mongols in Iran became strikingly apparent during the conference. The first was that the standard texts that have been relied upon for so long, such as Rashid al-Din, Juvayni and Wassaf, need much more critical analysis than has occurred before. These works sometimes disagree with other material from more local or overlooked sources such as from the Nestorian community in Irbil, the Armenian hagiographies, the position of Anatolia and Afghanistan within the Il Khanate and finally diplomatic correspondence. The second development is that all the sources can fruitfully be analyzed more carefully from reviewing Rashid al-Din's records to al-Qalqashandi's terminology. Thirdly, although the period is richer in sources than almost any other previous era, even more material is available than has been normally considered.

With this significant increase of source material, critiques of the previously common references and analyses of forces below the military and court levels, this conference exhibited the vibrant expansion of Il Khanid studies in its own right, so long an adjunct to regional studies of other states.

Keywords: International conference, Mongolian National University, University of Indiana, new aspects on the Il Khans, critical analysis of the sources, Il Khanid studies.

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After the welcome and opening remarks, the first day dealt with “Sources on Il Khanid History”. Christopher Atwood (Indiana University, Bloomington, USA) led the way with a presentation of “Rashid al-Din’s *Ghazanid History*”. He pointed out that the recently published edited volume *Rashid al-Din as an Agent and Mediator of Cultural Exchanges in Medieval Iran* (2013) emphasized that the *Jami’ al-Tawariikh* incorporated histories from a wide variety of intellectual and religious traditions without subordinating them to one dominant ideological framework. Rashid al-Din’s approach lies in the first part of the work that related to Ghazan. Many of Rashid al-Din’s sources for this section can be cross-referenced to Chinese and Mongolian material. This allows source criticism to clarify now-lost Mongolian material including substantial oral histories that were never written down. For example, although he may have had access to the *Altan Defter*, it had genealogies only up to the life of Chingiz Khan but no further. Moreover while the *Altan Defter* was also a register of chiliarchs, Rashid al-Din did not have access to that information. Dr Atwood was followed by Yajima Yoichi (Nara Women’s University, Japan) on “Il Khanid Arabic *farmans*”. He noted that edicts in Chinese, Mongolian and even Latin have been studied rather well but not the Arabic ones from the Il Khanate. These extant *farmans* exist mostly as citations in diplomatic letters to the Mamluks; but since details sometime vary, the *farmans* need to be understood also within Mamluk history. However, others relate to appointments and tax exemptions. Although they follow standard Mongol decrees with the beginning formula, the Arabic is not a simple translation of Mongolian but instead uses Islamic phrases. Therefore, they should be considered an Arabic genre.

After lunch, Pietro Borbone (University of Piza, Italy) discussed “The ‘History of Mar Yahballaha and Rabban Sawma’”. The *History* has had many commentators, but most have concentrated on the journey from China to the lands of the Il Khans. Instead, Dr Borbone pointed out apparent discrepancies with other source material on the Il Khans. These re-

garded specifically the favorable attitude of Ahmad/Tegudar Khan towards Christians, movements of the court as compared with Rashid al-Din's accounts and the role of the Merkid mountain troops in the siege of Irbil. Then Dashdondog Bayarsaikhan (Mongolian National University) gave a paper on "Armenian Hagiography for the Il Khans". The paper showed that the interaction of Mongols with the Armenian clergy can give added insight into political history. She focused on *The Martyrdom of Grigor Baluce'i* which she placed within an Il Khanid context. After the coffee break, Dimitri Korobeynikov (University of Albany, UK) discussed "The Il Khans in the Byzantine Sources". The Il Khans maintained close cultural and political relations with the Greek states of Nicaea, Trebizond and Byzantium, the latter leaving a rich store of material. The aim of both parties was to stabilize Anatolia, which was partially accomplished with marriage alliances. The Byzantines, however, continued to maintain their cultural pre-eminence and explained the presence of the Mongols in literature akin to the "mirror for princes" genre. They considered the Jochids as Tatars and definitely barbaric but attempted to portray the Il Khans as successors of glorious rulers of the past, including even Alexander the Great of Macedonia. In this way, the Byzantines could work with rather than confront the Il Khans as aliens. This accommodation led to Byzantine acceptance of the rise of the Ottomans later as successors to the Il Khans. This presentation was the final one for the first day. The group departed shortly afterwards to an excellent guided tour of the National History Museum and then to the first of many excellent restaurants near the university and center of the city.

On the second day in the morning, the theme was "Intellectual Aspects of the Il Khans". The first speaker was Michal Biran (Hebrew University, Israel) giving a paper on "Literature, Books and Transmission of Knowledge in Il Khanid Baghdad". She challenged the oft-repeated assertion of Arab nationalists that the apparent destruction of the Baghdad libraries at Hulagu's conquest was the point at which Muslim civilization lost its leading position and began to decline. She considered the actual state of intellectual life in Baghdad and found that many libraries were quite active, new ones were built and the book trade also flourished by catering for personal and instructional libraries. She also considered the role of the Il Khans and their administrators in intellectual life in Baghdad. Moreover, she stressed the flow of knowledge with other regions of the Middle East, in particular with Mamluk Egypt. After that, her former student, Jonathan Brack (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA) discussed "The Tabrizi Qadi and the Mongol Mahdi: Il Khanid intellectual networks and religious reform in fourteenth century Anatolia". He focused on the putative revolt of Timurtash, son of Chopan, in the 1320s. Timurtash was the Mongol governor of Rum, but his claim to be a cyclical mahdi (not the eschatological one) was strongly encouraged by the chief qadi of Rum. Eventually, both were executed by Chopan. The entire affair

highlights the intricate interconnection of politics and religion at the time. After the coffee break, Reuven Amitai (Hebrew University, Israel) talked about “Echoes of Iran’s pre-Islamic Past in the Mongol-Mamluk Correspondence and Related Sources”. He reviewed his work in some recent publications in which he disagreed with Charles Melville’s opinion that, after 1260, the Il Khans employed the pre-Islamic past of Iran to bolster their legitimacy. Dr. Amitai had consulted again the massive administrative works of al-Qalqashandi (13 volumes) and al-Umari (30 volumes) to digest the chancery formulae for diplomatic relations between the Il Khans and Mamluks. After that study, he did agree that the Mamluks attributed pre-Islamic conditions to the Il Khans by using terms such as *al-hadra shahinshahiyya*, *khusraw* and others. However, there was no title of *shahinshah* applied to rulers from Hulagu to Ghazan. Then his discussion examined the Il Khanid response to these terms including the Mongol proclamation at the occupation of Damascus in 1300. This paper and that of Dimitri Korobeynikov definitely opened up new aspects on Il Khanid history since they both revealed that neighboring states did not view the Il Khans in religious but in political ways, in particular as successors to great and influential ancient states. Then Michael Hope (Australian National University, Canberra) provided a further look into “Political Traditions and the Islamization of the Il Khanid Court”. He asserted that the two subjects have normally been studied as separate topics. Unfortunately, this approach has confused both issues. Instead, by reading the Persian and Arabic sources more carefully, which do not isolate each process, Dr Hope pointed out that the internal conflict between the khans and the military establishment was probably the most important factor in the partial Islamic conversion of the Il Khanid court elite. Behind the struggle was the theory of the Imamate or hereditary legitimacy that also agreed with the Chingizid code in many respects. The Mongols took authority from (1) the Chingizid aura, (2) the inheritance of property, (3) the divine mandate, (4) the unique blessing of Tinrgri or *lese fortuna* and (5) the particular role of the *keshik* as an extension of the khan’s household. By 1282, military commanders were entrenched by virtue of these Chingizid forces of authority. However, when Ahmad/Tegudar Khan was murdered, it was the first regicide in the Il Khanate. The event resonated in religious terms: the heirs of Muhammad and of Chingiz Khan were betrayed by later supporters, who were not direct descendents of the founder. This event brought into the open the internal conflict of hereditary Chingizid claims and the semi-religious reverberations that surfaced with Tegudar’s conversion. A similar internal conflict was noted in 2006 by the author of this report that the same kind of duality of power levels caused the later downfall of the Juvaynis, but that was between Mongols and hereditary Persian bureaucrats. Awareness of these internal struggles, especially over traditional Mongol rights, will provide much clearer insight into the dynamics of Il Khanid rule.

After lunch, the theme was “Fiscal and Regional Politics”. The first speaker was Timothy May (University of North Georgia, USA) on “The Il Khanate and Afghanistan”. Since the Mongols did not control Afghanistan directly, the history of the region is difficult to understand. There is little information except when the Il Khans and Chaghadaids confronted each other for supremacy in the area. Even though the Karts of Harat, who sided with first one and then the other house, maintained the general order of the region, the Il Khans left a legacy there. Following him, Bruno de Nicola (University of St Andrews, Scotland, UK) presented on “A Future Il Khan in Rum: Geikhatu and his governorship in Anatolia”. Dr de Nicola explored Geikhatu’s tenure as governor of Anatolia (1285 – 91) to provide information on the transformation of Mongol rule in Iran and Anatolia when he became khan. Using historical and hagiographical material, he indicated that Geikhatu had a successful and peaceful administration in Rum. His generals and officials considered him competent and involved with governing that benefitted the region. This appraisal is in marked contrast to reports by later historians about his khanate. Then after the coffee break, Judith Kolbas (Miami University, Ohio, USA) presented the topic of “A Dirham for Your Drinking Cup: determining monetary value”. Her work on Mamluk glass monetary weights and Il Khanid monetary development showed a direct relationship through weight patterns of the coinage of each state. The actual artifacts indicate that traders could easily operate in each other’s markets and sustain increased international trade through some simple calculations not reported in the sources. This was possible in spite of the lack of a standard weight for Mamluk coins because the purity of the silver was consistent while Il Khanid coins were highly standardized. Together, the Il Khan-Mamluk system completely superseded the former Caliphal one and set the stage for enhanced international trade from China to the Mediterranean and for strong economic growth in the Middle East. Following her, Andrew Peacock (University of St Andrews, Scotland, UK) gave a paper on “The Mongols, Islam and Local Politics in Anatolia”. He highlighted the role of the Mongols in changing a great deal of the Anatolian population to Islam, both through concerted building enterprises (which this reporter pointed out in 2006 was probably one of the reasons that led to the downfall of Ata Malik Juvayni) and the strong influence of Sufis. He concluded with an example of the relationships in the fourteenth century between the now-converted Mongols and local *akhis* or religio-social-economic fraternities. Ankara, for example, although technically under Il Khanid rule, was entirely run by an *akhi* group that even extracted economic concessions. This paper and that of Bruno de Nicola were part of a current research project dealing with the medieval history of Anatolia.

On Friday, the 23rd of May, the theme in the morning was “Il Khans in Middle Eastern and World Contexts”. The first speaker was Kazuhiko Shiraiwa (Tokyo University) on the “Mongol Endorsement of the Islamic

Institution of Pious Endowment (*waqf*) as revealed in the *waqf* document of 1272 in Arabic and Mongolian drawn in Kirshehir for Nur al-Din, the son of Jaja”. The document is now in Istanbul with copies in Ankara. It was previously studied in 1938, 1948 and again in 1969 but warrants more detailed analysis. Jaja was a Mongol, and the document was for his son. The main part is in Arabic in order to register the property as a religious endowment, but two lines are in Mongolian, which shed fascinating light on the close interplay of local religious and economic practices and Il Khanid connections with them. The endowment was not for salaries or maintenance but for ownership of the Sultan Khan caravansary in the middle of Anatolia at Kirshehir in 1272 and was endorsed in the Mongolian section with the names of the local garrison. The prominent terms of *waqf* and *noker* as well as the equivalent use of *Allah* and *Mongke Tingri* in the same multilingual document indicate the degree to which the Mongols were tolerant of local customs and encouraged the expansion of trade. There are other *waqf* documents for Christian endowments that were similarly endorsed by local Mongol administrators. After that presentation, Na’ama Aron (Hebrew University, Israel) spoke on “Arrowheads of Hulagu Khan – Envoys and Diplomacy in his Invasion of the Middle East, 1255 – 1258”. She noted that historical sources give Hulagu’s campaign a highly religious motivation, in particular that his aim was to destroy the Nizari sect, a welcome event; but that the destruction of the Caliphate was a most unfortunate one. Her study of phrases used in diplomatic correspondence to Middle Eastern rulers shows that Mongol policy was consistent by always having complete conquest the aim, not religious motivations, since the same threats were applied to everyone before the actual military advances. Although this point of conquest has been consistently held by this reporter, her study has added substantially more proof to this position. After the morning coffee break, D. Enkhtsetseg (Mongolian National University) discussed “Sorgetani Beki and the Sources”. She kindly filled in at the last moment for someone who could not make the conference. This was probably an interesting presentation; but, unfortunately, it was given in Mongolian, which this reporter does not fully understand. After her, Qui Yihao (Fudan University, Shanghai) elaborated an unusual expedition “On Fakhr al-Din Tibi’s Embassy: a survey of the maritime commercial network between the Il Khanate and the Yuan Empire”. He examined the importance of the two main trading enclaves in the Persian Gulf, Hurmuz and Kish, in their rivalry and level of co-operation with the Il Khanate. Tibi’s family from Kish had close relations with the government and had a family-controlled port in Malabar on the western coast of India. His high political rank (governed the khan’s personal property or *inja* in Fars) and trading connections (commissioned as an *ortoq* or trader for the government) induced Ghazan Khan to dispatch him to China in 1298, but Tibi did not arrive until 1302. He had official letters from one khan to another, so he did not have to pay customs fees; but amazingly he

still had to pay for escort service in China. The reverse was apparently not the case in Iran. His journey is not as famous as the reverse one of Marco Polo earlier because Tibi's embassy was not popularized. However, Dr Yihao consulted the work of Wassaf for the Il Khans and the records of the Maritime Trade Bureau of the Yuan Dynasty as well as other documents to portray the highly developed sea routes and diplomatic ties of the Mongol houses.

After a group lunch at another excellent restaurant, the theme was "The Il Khanate and Mongol Institutions". The first speaker was Koichi Matsuda (Osaka International University) on "Comparing Depictions of the Il Khan and Yuan Courts". He offered some clear diagrams of the placement of officials at Mongol court ceremonies by comparing Il Khanid paintings and fuller written descriptions from the Yuan Dynasty. The khan sat at the north with a water clock representing long life between him and the khatun on his left. Moreover, all female relatives gathered on the left side of the assembly. The generals of the guards were one level lower on each side, the group on the left of the khan held green crystal swords to correct wrongs. Below these men was the third rank of officials represented by individuals stretched out in front of the khan. There was a great deal of precise use of colours, locations, standing or sitting and symbolic props that made a court ceremony intricate and awe inspiring. Following Dr Matsuda, Yokkaichi Yasuhiro (Waseda University, Japan) talked "On the Impact of the Official Seal of the Yuan Dynasty Brought to the Il Khanate Court: the case of a newly uncovered Mongolian decree with *al-tamgha* (vermillion seal) issued by Amir Bolad Aqa or Amir Choban". He reported on the "Collaborative Joint Research Project on Multiple Language Documenters in the Mongol Empire" established in 2009 among colleagues in Iran, China and Japan. By 2012, work began in the archives of the National Museum of Iran on Il Khanid material. Although the project is still in a formative stage, some previously unknown items have already been discovered. For example, a Mongol-Turkic document has the official red seal of the agent dispatched by Quriltai Khan and the personal black seal of the agent, Amir Bolad Aqa. The decree will soon be translated and published by another member of the team. This presentation provided numerous examples of official seals stamped at various points within texts and often under the writing which highlighted the role of Yuan epigraphic styles on Il Khanate decrees. Dr Yasuhiro also noted that at first the official red seal was used on documents in Uighur and 'Phags-pa script. After our last coffee break, Tserenbaltav Minjin (Mongolian National University) presented a paper on "Mongolian Tradition and the Great Yasa in the Il Khanate State". She covered the term "Great Yasa" as a legal code and its structure, noting that the term was not in use before the time of Chingiz Khan. She also urged a critical approach to the study; and then she reviewed the tradition of the code in the Il Khanate, aspects of which appeared even when it was nominally Muslim. Finally, Judith Pfeiffer (University of Oxford, UK) presented a fasci-

nating look at the legal interactions of the “*Yasa* and *Shari’a* in the Mongol Il Khanate”. She took a clearly defined period of the early Il Khanate in order to isolate the functions of the two legal systems. That period was dominated by Buddhism in the court, but the administration wielded justice through the Mongol *yasa* in a Muslim region. She considered the important aspect of land ownership and concluded that the *yasa* was the umbrella system under which *shari’a* operated in normal circumstances. If the *shari’a* system did not satisfactorily deal with the problem as her case study showed, then the *yasa* was brought to bear. This examination adds significantly to our understanding of the accommodation the Il Khans made to local administration and the way in which various systems were meshed together. It also complimented the paper of Dr Shiraiwa on *waqf* administration. After her the remarks concluding the conference, Dr Bayarsaikhan opened a general but brief discussion on the meaning of *il khan* itself. There were distinctly different interpretations of the term, and this author preferred that it be dropped in favor of the “Hulaguid state”. This would be quite a battle; however, the term does need much more analysis.

The following day, there was an excursion to the Thirteenth Century Village almost two hours to the east of Ulaan Baatar, in which seven very scenic locations depict traditional life from herding, crafts and shamanic rituals to entertainment. Some participants chose rather to go to the imperial capital of Kharkorin for the weekend which takes a good day to reach.

Several important trends in current research on the Mongols in Iran became strikingly apparent during the conference. The first was that the standard texts that have been relied upon for so long, such as Rashid al-Din, Juvayni and Wassaf, need much more critical analysis than has occurred before. These works sometimes disagree with other material from more local or overlooked sources such as from the Nestorian community in Irbil, the Armenian hagiographies, the position of Anatolia and Afghanistan within the Il Khanate and finally diplomatic correspondence. The second development is that all the sources can fruitfully be analyzed more carefully from reviewing Rashid al-Din’s records to al-Qalqashandi’s terminology. Thirdly, although the period is richer in sources than almost any other previous era, even more material is available than has been normally considered. These include views from outside the Il Khanate, for example from the Byzantines and the Mamluks and the influence of the Yuan court on the Il Khans as shown in Tibi’s voyage and the official Yuan seal on Il Khanate decrees. A serious omission so far has been an analysis of the view of the Jochids and Chaghadaids on the Il Khans. Finally, much more information is becoming available on the economic, legal and administrative interdependence of the Mongol steppe system with local realities. The evolution consisted of intricate adaptation as the papers on monetary values, libraries, the *yasa* and *waqf* arrangements showed by probing deeply into the actual activities of Iranian life. With this significant increase of source material, critiques of the previously

common references and analyses of forces below the military and court levels, this conference exhibited the vibrant expansion of Il Khanid studies in its own right, so long an adjunct to regional studies of other states. It also emphasized the scope of international interest and the number of new and younger scholars entering the field, always a most welcome trend.

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**НОВЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ В ИЗУЧЕНИИ УЛУСА ХУЛАГУИДОВ
НА МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ КОНФЕРЕНЦИИ В УЛАН-БАТОРЕ,
МОНГОЛИЯ, 21–23 МАЯ 2014**

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С 21 по 23 мая 2014 года в Улан-Баторе была проведена международная конференция, посвященная новым аспектам в изучении улуса Хулагуидов. Конференция была организована при совместной материальной поддержке Национального университета Монголии и университета Индианы (Блумингтон, США). Свыше двадцати участников, приглашенных на конференцию, представили свои доклады на различных панелях, каждая из которых была посвящена рассмотрению одной объединяющей темы. Все мероприятие было безупречно организовано Дашдондог Баярсайхан (получившей звание Ph.D. по истории в университете Оксфорда) на историческом факультете Монгольского национального университета. Проведение конференции способствовало раскрытию новых сведений об Иране в монгольский период, которые будут опубликованы в сборнике материалов конференции в Монголии и за рубежом.

Во время конференции наиболее отчетливо прояснились следующие актуальные тенденции в исследованиях монгольского Ирана. Во-первых, ряд докладов на конференции показал, что сведения стандартных источников, на которые длительное время безоговорочно полагались исследователи (Рашид ад-Дин, Джувейни, Вассаф); нуждается в гораздо более углубленном критическом анализе. Сведения этих сочинений нередко не совпадают с информацией локальных и недооцененных источников. Так, несторианские, армянские, анатолийские, афганские источники, как и материалы международной переписки Ильханов, предоставляют, в данном контексте, не менее ценные сведения, которые следует принять во внимание. Во-вторых, содержание стандартных источников должно быть подвергнуто более тщательному анализу, начиная от сочинений Рашид ад-Дина, до творчества аль-Калкашанди. В-третьих, несмотря на то, что монгольский период предоставляет намного больше источников, чем предыдущие; участники конфе-

ренции констатировали наличие ценного исторического материала, который еще не был подвержен детальному рассмотрению.

Суммируя, новый исторический материал, критика устаревших взглядов и анализ влияния тех слоев населения, которые не принимали участия в управлении высшим административным или военным аппаратом, представленные в ходе конференции; не только засвидетельствовали актуальность изучения улуса Хулагуидов, но и показали новые возможности изучения монгольского Ирана посредством исследования его отдельных регионов или даже соседних государств.

Ключевые слова: международная конференция, Национальный университет Монголии, университет Индианы, исследования улуса Хулагуидов, критический анализ источников.

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**II ВСЕРОССИЙСКАЯ НАУЧНАЯ КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ
«ИСТОРИЯ, ЭКОНОМИКА И КУЛЬТУРА СРЕДНЕВЕКОВЫХ
ТЮРКО-ТАТАРСКИХ ГОСУДАРСТВ ЗАПАДНОЙ СИБИРИ»
(КУРГАН, 17–18 АПРЕЛЯ 2014 Г.)**

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В статье подводятся итоги работы II Всероссийской научной конференции «История, экономика и культура средневековых тюрко-татарских государств Западной Сибири», которая состоялась в Кургане 17–18 апреля 2014 года. В работе конференции приняли участие 38 исследователей из России, Казахстана и Украины.

Работа конференции велась по нескольким направлениям. В первый день были рассмотрены вопросы истории улуса Шибана и роли Шибанидов в истории Золотой Орды, в том числе проблема границ этих владений, место в административной структуре Улуса Джучи, участие представителей династии в событиях Великой Замятни и междоусобиц 1420-х годов. Также обсуждались этнические и политические процессы в Тюменском и Сибирском юрте. Значительное внимание было уделено вопросам тюркизации населения Западной Сибири и формирования различных групп сибирских татар. Исследователи