

## СТАТЬИ

УДК 930.85

DOI: 10.22378/2313-6197.2017-5-3.494-508

**JOHN OF PLANO CARPINI VS SIMON OF SAINT-QUENTIN:  
13<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY EMOTIONS IN THE EURASIAN STEPPE***Mirko Sardelić**Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts  
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The *research objective* is to analyse why the accounts of two missionaries who visited the same Mongol “Other” in 1245 are quite different, despite their authors belonging to the same Christian circle. More specifically, the paper explores why Simon’s report is so much more negative in its depiction of the Mongols, and the imagological and emotional impact that these representations had.

My *research materials* include the two mendicant reports produced by John and Simon as well as extant scholarly discussions of various aspects of the Mongol Other, apocalyptic literature, and the relations between Western Christendom and the Mongol Empire in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century.

The *research innovation* of the article is in the comparison of the two contemporary accounts, the elaboration of their differences in representation of the Mongols, and the analysis of their imagery from the perspective of the history of emotions.

The aim of this paper is to show that in interpreting medieval European texts about the Mongols, one should combine approaches from various fields, including (but not limited to) history of emotions, cultural and literal history, anthropology, cross-cultural sociology, and others. Immediate and incorrect interpretations that the Mongols were cannibals or sodomites, as one could be tempted to hold from the account of Simon of Saint-Quentin, must be moderated from scholarly perspectives. These interpretations were the result of sediment layers of events in the 1240s: the violent contact of the Mongol armies with Western Christendom, contemporary Christian attempts to put the newcomers into known apocalyptic frameworks, and most probably the personal trauma of the author who had been threatened with death after an inaction with the Mongols, might be explained both as a cross-cultural misunderstanding and a display of power.

*Research results:* Comparison of the two accounts, one written by John of Plano Carpini and the other by Simon of Saint-Quentin, the contextualization of these sources within 13<sup>th</sup>-century missionary literature, parallel analysis of the imagery, as well as reference to other contemporary texts on the Mongols, offer a sound starting point for a complex process of re-creating the imagined Mongols conceived by Europeans in the late Middle Ages. This imagined Mongol consists of hundreds of reused images ranging from the Classical antiquity and biblical texts to medieval prophecies, with a power to elicit the most powerful emotions by a single reference. Subtle interdisciplinary approach is always needed to avoid misinterpretations of often highly emotional images that can bring hope or sow hatred, depending on their (mis)use.

**Keywords:** John of Plano Carpini, Simon of Saint-Quentin, mendicants, early papal missions to the East, 13<sup>th</sup>-century Mongol imaginary, apocalyptic literature, history of emotions

**For citation:** Sardelić M. John of Plano Carpini vs Simon of Saint-Quentin: 13<sup>th</sup>-century Emotions in the Eurasian Steppe. *Zolotoordynskoe obozrenie=Golden Horde Review*. 2017. Vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 494–508. DOI: 10.22378/2313-6197.2017-5-3.494-508

It is everything but an easy task to reconstitute an accurate cultural imaginary of the Mongol Other who violently made contact with Eastern Europe in the campaign of 1241/42<sup>1</sup>. Since it was mostly men of the Church who wrote early accounts of contact, it was unsurprising that the newcomers are first appraised within a Christian worldview. Holy Scripture and the Greco-Roman classical library offered material for initial accounts, as both these traditions in their cultural imaginaries mention the unusual appearance of people of the nations from the East<sup>2</sup>. The Book of Ezekiel refers to Gog and Magog, a nation of horsemen, while a 7<sup>th</sup>-century Syrian prophecy, attributed to Methodius (therefore called Pseudo-Methodius), provided an apocalyptic framework that would be repeatedly used to ‘counter’ invaders for the whole millennium to come – as late as 1683 and the Ottoman siege of Vienna [26, p. 72]. Classical authors such as Pliny and Solinus contributed to a distorted image of the East with fabulous descriptions of monstrous or hybrid creatures who they imagined to be inhabitants of the lands that were not charted yet [19, p. 348].

The literature of the apocalyptic traditions is substantial. It is worth remembering however that the apocalypse can be defined as “a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation and spatial, insofar as it involves another, supernatural world” [4, p. 9]. When we consider this extended understanding of the apocalyptic tradition or discourse, that it is “intended for a group in crisis with the purpose of exhortation and/or consolation by means of divine authority” [5, p. 41], it becomes clearer why apocalyptic imagery surfaces at this moment connecting invaded Christian Europe, the Mongols, and the history of emotions. Christianity was indeed in crisis in the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century: the Emperor Friedrich was in conflict with the Pope, the Saracens were a formidable enemy, and suddenly an even more powerful threat appeared from the unknown. Unsurprisingly, all the three were at certain point linked, directly or indirectly, with the Antichrist [6].

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank NEWFELPRO/Marie Curie Fellowship programme, ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions (Europe 1100–1800) and University of Western Australia for their support of my research, a part of which is this paper.

<sup>2</sup> The division between Classical and Christian authors has more a formal character. As early as the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, Saint Jerome saw Christian humanism as being based on a congruency of pagan (Greco-Roman) and Christian tradition. Therefore, medieval authors had their classical *topoi* intertwined with biblical references.

Given that the Mongols were perceived in Europe as a major, powerful, and destructive force from the unknown realms of the East, it was natural that their arrival “touched the apocalyptic sensitivities of medieval Christians, and in their attempts to make sense of the cataclysm, [Christians] turned to the historical and geographical material found in Scripture and Classical writings, as mentioned above” [19, p. 353]. Many Latin writers of the epoch linked (in a direct or an indirect fashion) the Mongol conquest with the Pseudo-Methodius’ prophecy. Many scholars have dealt with the image of the Mongols, in connection with apocalyptic literature, over the last several decades, starting with D. Sinor [42], D. DeWeese [7], W.R. Jones [22], C.W. Connell [6], G.G. Guzman [11; 12; 13], A. Klopprogge [24; 25], P. Jackson [17; 18; 19], C. Kappler [23], F. Schmieder [38; 39; 40; 41], A. Ruotsala [34], N. Giffney [8; 9], and M. Sardelić [36], in whose research most common *topoi* and references have been recognized and contextualized. This paper considers the emotional dimensions of these images and references. My discussion shows how a skilful choice of imagery on the part of authors of first Christian accounts of the Mongols amplified the affective impact of these Christian references, eliciting multiple emotions in readers. The very use of words can have the same effect: a simple example is the term ‘apocalypse’ itself. In its Greek form, apocalypse has kept a plenitude of historical connotations, more so than in other vernacular direct translations such as forms of *revelatio* in Romance languages or forms of *otkrivenje/откровение* in Slavic languages.

Prior to my analysis, and comparison of the two mendicant accounts, a short historical introduction will provide the reader with historical circumstances and the main protagonists. In a rather short period of two decades (1221–1241) rumours circulated around Europe regarding the arrival of the legendary Christian king David and his descendant, king-priest John (widely known as Prester John), almighty rulers of the East, giving hope of uniting the Eurasian continent under Christian rule. The legend of king-presbyter John was an embodiment, an amalgam of all Christian hopes and dreams of the East. Instead, this tremendous force from the East turned out to be the Mongols and resulted in a palpable domination of eastern borders of Christianity by this nomadic people (on first Latin reports see: R. Hautala [14]). Having subdued Russian principalities and the Kingdoms of Bulgaria and Hungary, the Mongols became the most powerful neighbours of the West. And yet their origins were almost completely unknown (on the relations between the Mongols and the West: P. Jackson [20]). Out of curiosity and even more so for reasons of strategic defence, someone needed to explore this eastern phenomenon. Given that the European continent was torn by political divisions and struggles, the first large-scale organized reaction came from the Pope. He had, among others, at his disposal a very efficient mendicant network of recently-established Franciscans and Dominicans whose houses stretched from England and Spain to Armenia and Syria.

The Papal response was swift. Since the Mongol menace was one of the main topics on the prelates’ agenda, on the eve of the Council of Lyons, in 1245, Pope Innocent IV (1243–1254) commissioned four separate embassies to the Mongol East (on papal motivation see: B.R. Phaire [28], on relations between Papacy and the Mongols: P. Pelliot [27], J. Richard [32], F. Schmieder [40]). Two of them

were entrusted to the Franciscans, Lawrence of Portugal and John of Plano Carpini; two others to the Dominicans, Andrew of Longjumeau and Ascelin respectively [10, p. 234]. John of Plano Carpini left Lyons on 16 April 1245 with Benedict the Pole, his companion and interpreter, and returned in November of 1247 with his report, while there is no record of what had happened to Lawrence. Dominican Andrew was sent to the Near East and he returned with a number of letters from Muslim princes in Syria and from the leaders of various Christian groups in the Levant, all included into the papal *Register* for the year 1246–1247 [10, p. 235; 30, p. 112–115]. The other Dominican embassy, of the Lombard Ascelin, is the least known of the four, although one of his companions, Simon of Saint-Quentin, wrote an account of the expedition. Ascelin and Simon spent more than three years on their journey, from spring 1245 till fall 1248. Nine weeks of that time (May–July 1247) they spent in the camp of the Mongol commander Baiju in Greater Armenia. The location of the camp is not certain, but Simon describes it as 59 days' travel from Acre [10, p. 238; 20, p. 87–88]. Simon wrote a report both on Seljuk Turks and the Mongols in the region [10, p. 249; 20, p. 92]. Alongside letters from Baiju Ascelin brought two Mongol legates with him to Europe. During his mission Carpini was offered to take legates with him as well, but he declined, giving five reasons against such scenario [2, p. 68].

Ascelin's mission has been judged by scholars as unsuccessful [10, p. 248–249; 20, p. 89]. Simon recorded precisely what the Pope had instructed Ascelin to do: to find the first Mongol army in Persia and to exhort the leader of that army to stop with killings, especially of Christians, and to do penitence for his sins<sup>3</sup>. Ascelin did exactly what he was ordered to, but he immediately offended his host by stating the Pope had never heard of the khan, Baiju, nor Batu [31, p. 95–96]. In addition, Ascelin refused to genuflect in front of the commander after which the Mongol lost his temper and three times threatened to kill at least half of the Dominican missionaries in the party, if not all of them [31, p. 95–96; 30, p. 116]. I suggest that there was not an unintentional breach of the Mongol protocol, due to ignorance. All envoys were certainly experienced mendicants, and one of them, Guiscard of Cremona, had lived in Georgia for seven years and understood the customs of the Mongols. I would not call these protocolary 'mistakes' as Ruotsala did [34, p. 83–84], but rather deliberate positioning on the part of mendicant envoys who represented the Pope. This display of (spiritual) power ended in the only predictable way, with emotional turmoil. The outcome of that particular political duel is less important here than the impact of the encounter. The traumatic experience of the event deeply affected Simon. This is visible in his report, which is far more negative than both the accounts of his contemporary Carpini, and of Flemish Franciscan William of Rubruck (1253–1255) that followed a decade later. Simon's horrified depiction of sodomite and cannibalistic Mongols became powerful stereotypes within the European cultural imaginary.

<sup>3</sup> [Papa] *misit nos ad primum exercitum Tartarorum quem citius invenire possemus, exhortans dominum exercitus omnesque qui ei obediunt ut ab hominum strage et maxime Christianorum facienda in posterum cessent, ac de perpetratis flagitiis vel facinoribus peniteant, sicut tenor litterarum ipsius plene manifestat legentibus* [31, p. 96].

In order to compare the representations and impacts of parallel traditions of Mongol imagology, this paper will analyse Carpini's and Simon's accounts. Substantial portions of both reports were compiled by Vincent of Beauvais into his encyclopaedic work [44] *Speculum historiale* (a part of *Speculum maius*) that was read all around Europe and that affected the European Mongol imagery significantly. Vincent copied and fused the two narratives into one unified account [11, p. 289]. Although the original text of Simon's *Historia Tartarorum* has not been preserved, its inclusion into *Speculum historiale* enabled its reconstruction (partially, with a translation into Russian) first in 1825 by D. Jazikov [21], then in 1965 by J. Richard [31]. By contrast, while Vincent's excerpts are the only extant record of Simon's report, there are twenty manuscripts of Carpini's work [11, p. 287–307; 34, p. 49]. Carpini himself wrote that some incomplete versions of his account were assembled in Poland, Bohemia, Germany and France [16, p. 96, note 3]. Add to this that upon his return Carpini was very popular and a welcome guest who given to talking about his experiences in the East. The well-known chronicler Salimbene de Adam, who met Carpini and talked to him in more than one occasion, testified to this<sup>4</sup>. Even though Simon's original text is lost, we can trace his images and representations from his cultural influence.

As stated in the introduction to his report, Carpini was aware of all dangers of the long journey he was about to dedicate a couple of years of his life to; however, the will of God stood higher than all calamities combined: "And although we feared we might be killed by the Tartars or other people, or imprisoned for life, or afflicted with hunger, thirst, cold, heat, injuries and exceeding great trials almost beyond our powers of endurance all of which, with the exception of death and imprisonment for life, fell to our lot in various ways in a much greater degree than we had conceived beforehand nevertheless we did not spare ourselves in order to carry out the will of God as laid down in the Lord Pope's mandate (...)" [2, p. 3]. During his eventful life, this companion of St Francis travelled across Europe on his donkey, establishing Franciscan houses. He was provincial of the Teutonic province (1224), the Spanish province (1230), and during his office as provincial of Saxon province (1232–1239) he was spreading his order to Hungary, Czech lands, and Norway. His ample experience was one of crucial reasons for appointing him envoy to the Mongols.

Four aspects of Mongol ethnocharacterology will be compared now, these are recognizable in many travelogues from distant lands. First I will consider initial visual impressions of the Mongols, secondly their character and temperament, thirdly representations of their food, and finally, alleged practices of sodomy and cannibalism.

Very early in the descriptions of John and Simon, where they consider the Mongols' physical appearance, a difference in the overall tone of perception is

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<sup>4</sup> *Et comedi cum fratre Iohanne tam in domo fratrum Minorum quam extra in abbatibus et sollempnibus locis, non semel neque bis. Invitabatur enim libenter et frequenter tam ad prandium quam ad cenam, tum quia legatus pape, tum quia ad regem Francie missus, tum quia a Tattaris venerat, tum etiam quia ex ordine fratrum Minorum erat et sanctissime vite credebatur ab omnibus. (...) Nam, cum fui Cluniaci, dixerunt michi monachi Cluniacensis: 'Utinam semper tales legati mitterentur a papa qualis fuit frater Iohannes, qui a Tattaris rediit!'* [35, p. 210–213].

evident. Carpini starts his neutral description with the following: “In appearance the Tartars are quite different from all other men, for they are broader than other people between the eyes and across the cheek-bones” [2, p. 6]. Carpini’s description is not long, but is far more descriptive than Simon’s; from his several paragraphs one is able to visualize the Mongols’ stature, face, and hair, as well as their clothes. By contrast, Simon introduces his personal aesthetic into his writing on more than one occasion: “The Tartar men are really ugly (*sunt turpissimi*) (...)” [44, c. XXX, 71]. He wrote the same for Tartar women: (*turpissime sunt*) [44, c. XXX, 71, and c. XXX, 85]. Simon’s view could have been worse, because even within Europe there were descriptions of local people that were far more disgusting. In one of his poems, Ragusan-born Franco Sacchetti, a 14<sup>th</sup>-century Florentine diplomat and novelist, records feeling so miserable because he is required to extend his stay in *Schiavonia* (i.e. present-day Croatia). The reason for his horror is that the local people, whose “appearance is so ugly”, their clothes, and knotted and greasy hair make him so sick, that he almost dies<sup>5</sup>. Social identification and differences often created deeper gaps than encounter with ‘really ugly’ unknown people ‘from the end of the world’.

Food is not only a common element of concern from a biological point of view – everyone needs to eat, at least once a day –, but also because of its wider cultural significance. Due to its central role in human lives, and variety both in ingredients and ways of preparation, food is a very powerful medium for the display and dissemination of culture and social identity. As a direct result of food being so culturally important, different and disgusting foods connected with the Other become a powerful tool in negative representations of Others. The original forms of disgust are believed by many to come about as a result of natural and cultural practices defending against infection via the oral route. Descriptions of food and eating are therefore an excellent medium for provoking disgust in readers: biological processes are ideal for the purpose.

The very first sentence in which Carpini mentioned Mongols at all starts with: “They cook their food (...)” [2, p. 5]. This was important because it challenged previous accounts: just a few years earlier, during the time of the invasion of 1241/42, various European reports insisted that Mongols ate raw meat and drank horse blood. Cooking here signifies basic level of civilisation. In addition, Carpini also clarified why Mongols eat everything that is edible. As a result of a decree issued by Chiggis-khan during a period of great famine, the Mongols never throw away anything that can serve for food: it was out of bare necessity [2, p. 25]. Several years later (1253–1255) William of Rubruck explained it in simplest possible fashion: in many parts of the Mongol Empire it is very hard to find wood for fire, therefore they were often cold and ate their food half cooked or even raw. Simon, by contrast, insists it is their meanness that makes them eat dead or dying animals [31, p. 36].

<sup>5</sup> Sacchetti F. *Il Libro delle rime*, ed. Franca Brambilla Ageno, Firenze/Perth, 1990: XIV. *Canzone distesa di Franco ditto Sacchetti, fatta in Schiavonia*: ‘(...) gente con apparenza sì brutta veggio, che m’han quasi morto (...)’, p. 18.

Both authors noticed that it is the flesh of animals that dominates in the Mongol cuisine: Carpini mentioned the meat of horses, dogs, wolves, mice, and foxes [2, p. 16], while Simon included cats as well [31, p. 40]. Several years later Rubruck mentioned horse sausages which were “more delicious than pork ones” and it sounds like a first-hand experience [33, p. 80]. A careful reader of Carpini can only conclude that the Mongols eat everything indiscriminately and find it a great sin to throw away any food or drink, which is a result of quite harsh conditions in which they live. They are also altruistic about available resources, for “they willingly share their food with each other, although there is little enough of it” [2, p. 15]. As all Europeans before them, both Carpini and Simon noticed that Mongols do not eat bread. In medieval Europe bread made up half of all calories consumed; even today one can hear the expression ‘earn one’s bread’. During the period of invasion, the repeated observation that the Mongols despised bread accentuated major cultural differences, in particular between sedentary and nomadic ways of life, for bread implies agriculture. Another significant barrier at that period was the widespread cultural construction of an opposition between Christians and pagans, given the importance of bread as element of the eucharist, i.e. the body of Christ [cf. 19, p. 362]. Several years later, Carpini and Simon used a more neutral formulation – that the Mongols do not have bread, as a piece of information rather than a cultural judgment saturated with emotional implications [2, p. 16; 31, p. 32].

As far as the people themselves are concerned, Carpini dedicates two paragraphs each to the Mongols’ good and bad sides of their character, dedicating space to both equally [2, p. 14–16]. It seems that, unlike others before him, Carpini felt that he had listed too many positive sides of their characters, therefore, for balance, he finished his account of their negative characteristics with the statement that there was “a very great number of them”. This ending might be interpreted as his real conclusion, but it sounds more like a safety-net after he spoke eloquently of their virtues, for he was to return and be read across Europe, whose wounds and traumas were still warm. On the other hand, even a glance to the paragraph titles of Simon’s report exposes his emphasis on the solely negative sides of the Mongol character: “Their arrogance and impiety”; “Their desire and greed”; “Their lack of restraint and their sensuality”; “Their cruelty and deceitfulness”<sup>6</sup>.

These are regular stereotypes that have been used for centuries to denigrate Others. All the characteristics of a threatening Other are reduced to just a few which are then represented as innate and permanent. To be convincing, the image of the enemy needs to be recognizable, threatening, (pseudo-)rationally justified, and emotionally charged [46, p. 5].

Explaining why he declined to bring Mongol envoys with him to Europe, Carpini made an implicit and unflattering comparison of the Mongol world and most of Europe: “The third reason was that we were apprehensive that they (Mongol legates) might be killed, for our people are for the most part arrogant and proud” [2, p. 68]. This illustration of his fellow Christians testifies to how well-

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<sup>6</sup> In Latin text, book XXIX: *De superbia eorum & impietate; De ipsorum cupiditate & auaritia; De effrenatione eorum & luxuria; De crudelitate ipsorum & fallacia* [31, p. 34–39].

balanced was the account of the Italian Franciscan, showing that members of all nations suffer from the same intemperate disposition.

In further considering the Mongols' character, Carpini [2, p. 16] briefly commented on how they are extremely exacting in their demands and most tenacious in holding on to what they have, which Simon additionally 'explains' as follows: "Such great desire burns in them, that when they see something they like, they immediately either very insolently extort it or violently take it, whether the owner consents or not"<sup>7</sup>. On this matter, again, Simon displays more negativity than the two Franciscans. Rubruck wrote the following: "They admittedly take away nothing by force, but when they see something they ask for it in a highly persistent and impudent fashion" [33, p. 98]. In a similar fashion, Simon adds to Carpini's brief account that the Mongols are avaricious, the spurious observation that they lend their money with high interest-rates. This is a feature that no other missionary had previously mentioned. Simon also elaborates on their frugality asserting that it is for that reason that the Mongols rarely eat healthy or live animals, but only ones that had died or are about to. This observation should be considered alongside Rubruck: "(...) they eat their dead animals indiscriminately, and with so many flocks and herds it is inevitable that many animals perish" [33, p. 79]. Rubruck's explanation is observant, that life is very precarious on the steppe, it is sympathetic, trying to understand the practical side of circumstances of Mongol living, and it is therefore far more neutral than Simon's account which emphasizes the disgusting perspective of eating already dead animals.

In the following examples of denigration, all related to the image of Mongol cruelty towards others, Simon wrote first: "They are so cruel that they have neither respect for the aged nor mercy for the young. They consider the spilling of blood like the spilling of water, and they reckon piles of human corpses as heaps of dung. They lust for the destruction of not just one people, but also of all Christians and all other human beings"<sup>8</sup>. The perception of cruelty (*crudelitas*), especially in relation with the aged and the young, the most vulnerable members of any community, is quite common stereotype of the Enemy, being the Other who is in position to pose threat to one's own community. Spilling of blood is very loaded Christian image, and Simon suggests the Mongols don't find anything sacred. The paradox is that the Mongols respected water so much that they never allowed any to be spilled. Simon also uses the image of severe desecration of human corpses comparing the piles with something as disgusting a heap of dung. His original combination of these images serves his purpose of dehumanization of the Other. He produced another original example of Mongol blood-thirst: "Entering homes, with a strike of a knife in their heart they [the Mongols] kill those who hide and tremble in the fear

<sup>7</sup> *Tanta vero in eis cupiditas exardescit ut cum aliquid quod sibi placeat vident statim aut nimia importunitate extorquant, aut violenter auferant ab illo cujus est, velit nolit* [44, c. XXIX, 75].

<sup>8</sup> *Crudeles adeo sunt, vt nec senem revereantur, nec puerorum misereantur. Effusio sanguinis apud eos tanquam effusio aquae reputatur, humanorumque corporum prostratio tanquam stercorum coaceruatio computatur; nec solum in vnam gentem, sed etiam in Christianorum, & omnium aliorum hominum exardescunt extinctionem.* [44, c. XXIX, 77; 31, p. 37]. Translated by the author of this paper.



of death. While blood is still flowing from their wounds, they sit and eat and drink, stabbing them again, saying: ‘Look how you lie here, now, our enemies!’<sup>9</sup>. Both examples are incredibly powerful because they strip the Mongols of any humanity or compassion rendering them into bestial enemies. The first one is to be singled out because the author perfectly managed to combine socio-moral and physical disgust [3] with cruelty and mercilessness all in one sentence, followed by lust for overall destruction in the other.

William of Rubruck, without any further elaboration, described the Mongols as annoying, rude and avaricious, using more or less such vocabulary. These are very conventional terms of describing barbaric worlds, even ones within European circle. As far as medieval vocabulary of the Other is concern, he was not exaggerating much in negativity. Further still, on two occasions he gave a hint, even a testimony of them having both mercy and concern respectively. In the first case a Mongol judge showed mercy on one of the people from Rubruck’s train who made a violation that by Mongols laws requires capital punishment – stepping on the doorstep. The judge could have sentenced the European to death and that would have been appropriate even from the European point of view, especially given the legal concept of ‘ignorance is not an excuse’ (*ignorantia legis neminem excusat*) that has a long tradition in European legal system. However, the judge took into account that the visitor broke the law unknowingly and set him free. In the other situation, when winter brought some rather cold weather, Mangu-khan sent three coats made of lynx fur and asked the Rubruck’s train whether they had enough food [33, p. 188].

Unlike Rubruck, Simon displays hostility and charges the Mongols with the sin of sodomy: “The Tartars have eyes for everything, that are full of continuous sin, they copulate with all kinds of beast indiscriminately, and they are like the Saracens, for the sin of Sodomy always flourished among them and it is also widespread among the Tartars”<sup>10</sup>. This part is particularly intriguing, because no other account of the Mongols mentions such practice. It is a form of heavy denigration, but it is not clear why Simon decided to put it into his report. The additions such as ‘always’ and ‘like the Saracens’ help in diagnosing that the image serves the exclusive purpose of negative propaganda. Accusations of sodomy are otherwise almost non-existent; Kim Phillips argues that “the absence of sodomy from the descriptions of the East is emblematic of a precolonial perspective, especially given that it was an available trope often used within contemporary Europe to condemn individuals or the groups (...)” [29, p. 123–124].

<sup>9</sup> *Intrantes domos, homines eciam timore mortis absconditos infixo cultello in corde occidunt et, sanguine eorum adhuc de vulneribus effluente, sedent et comedunt ac bibunt dicentes iterumque percucientes: ‘ecce modo jacetis hic, vos inimici nostri’* [44, c. XXIX, 77; 31, p. 38]. Translated by the author of this paper.

<sup>10</sup> *Oculos incontinentes paenitus habent Tartari, plenos incessabilis delicti, omnibus pecudibus se indifferenter commiscent, sicut & Saraceni, nam in illis semper viguit Sodomiae peccatum & in Tartaris est etiam diffusum* [44, c. XXIX, 76]. Translated by the author of this paper who owes thanks to Yasmin Haskell for her help with polishing some of these translations.

Another common trope used as a powerful weapon by Christian Europe was cannibalism. Matthew Paris's *Chronica majora* states that the Mongols drink blood, and devour canine and human meat (for the Mongols in Matthew Paris see: Saunders [37]). The same volume contains a letter (of contested authenticity) by Ivo of Narbonne addressed to the bishop of Bordeaux, that describes multiple rapes of attractive women and the serving of their intimate body parts as delicacies. Matthew Paris also includes the account of Russian archbishop Peter who relates that they eat different kinds of animal meat, even human flesh, but the latter only in dire necessity, and even then it is cooked, not raw. If one were to judge from Matthew Paris's work, the conclusion would be that the Mongols practiced all three forms of cannibalism according to the Guzman typology: survival, customary, and ritual cannibalism [12, p. 33].

Roger of Apulia and Thomas of Spalato, clerics and first-hand witnesses of the Mongol invasion of 1241/1242, describe all kinds of bloodshed, mutilations, burning and impaling people alive, but there was no mention of cannibalism. They would have certainly mentioned it had there been even a rumour of this. It is hard to believe that Roger would not have witnessed any of the alleged practices during his time as a prisoner of war, and Thomas met so many refugees who told him various pitiful stories. Kirakos the Armenian (ca 1200–1271) was also a Mongol captive, yet he never mentions anything about cannibalism. Neither do the Chinese and Persian chroniclers who had kept records of their neighbours for centuries. I consider it quite safe to conclude that there was no regular practice of cannibalism among the Mongols, definitely not in its customary form, but it must have been tempting and useful to keep it close in the imaginary.

However, all three missionaries who went to Asia in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century, Carpini, Simon of Saint-Quentin, and William of Rubruck, mention cannibalism in their accounts, and all three do so in diverse ways. If one relies on the account of Plano Carpini, who spent several months among the Mongols, it becomes clear that it is only survival cannibalism that he had heard of, and the author provides the exact circumstances under which that happened: once during a period of terrible starvation in a war campaign [2, p. 15]; and once during a siege Chinggis-khan ordered that one in ten men is to be sacrificed for the others to survive [2, p. 21; cf. 19, p. 363]. William of Rubruck reports ritual cannibalism, but he does not relate it to the Mongols at all, but to a neighbouring tribe. Simon of Saint-Quentin mentions all three types of cannibalism: out of necessity (*causa necessitatis*), customary (*causa delectacionis*) and another one that can be called tactical or exemplary (*causa timoris et horroris incuciendi populis hoc audituris*), because its function is to instil fear and serve as an example [44, c. XXIX,77; 31, p. 38].

Cannibalism indeed had been a powerful weapon throughout the Middle Ages and the early modern period. William Arens, in *The man-eating myth*, argues that the notion of cannibalism is a construct related to the discourse on the Other [1]. Gananath Obeyesekere argues that the fact that the aborigines of Fiji confessed their alleged cannibalism does not necessarily confirm that it actually had existed, in any form. Apparently, it became the 'weapon of the weak' and it served to keep the Europeans off their island. It existed exactly for the purpose of instilling fear, as it is understood by Simon of Saint-Quentin. The Mongols have probably used some

of their enemies' rumours about their demonic nature, (exaggerated) numbers of their armies or similar as a contribution to their so efficient psychological warfare. Imaginary, as well as emotion, is a two-way stream.

To conclude: John of Plano Carpini and Simon of Saint-Quentin were both mendicants belonging to the Western Christendom, they were sent in the same year of 1245 to the same nomadic Other. Yet, their reports are quite different although they come from the same cultural milieu and supposedly were exposed to the same imaginary. In my opinion three different elements contributed to the dissimilarity of their representations. First are their different spiritual tradition, for John was a Franciscan and Simon was Dominican friar, and function of their orders was different. Secondly, the nature of their embassy was somewhat different: Simon's train had a mission to protest the killing of Christians and a part of the mission's display of power was not to genuflect in front of the Mongol military commander in the Near East. This of course led to the third, an emotional response to a trauma: the Mongol commander was threatening to kill the Dominican envoys on more than one occasion.

People who read Carpini's report would have probably received a far more objective image of the contemporary Mongols – although there exists a reasonable doubt that Carpini was a mere ethnographer with ideal objectivity as a standard. On the other hand, Simon's report is more emotionally charged, as is demonstrated by his language. What is important to bear in mind is that imagery created by both authors has remained in the medieval and early modern imaginary of the Mongol Other. It would be interesting to track usage and dissemination of their images. According to psychologists, such generalizations and stereotypes have certainly been useful as an evolutionary help to react quickly in dangerous situations. By contrast, sound analyses of images can remove the obstacles in understanding the behaviour of the Other and establishing more highly evolved social cross-cultural relations.

In whichever way the results of Carpini's and Ascelin's missions might be perceived, the contribution of the two mendicant reports is very valuable from two perspectives. Firstly, it offers the first post-invasion image of the Mongols from which is possible to observe the evolution of imagery from a highly dehumanizing, deeply immersed into apocalyptic references and emotionally charged one – which was natural regarding the fact that a powerful unknown Other swept through Eastern Europe like a storm – into a much more neutral, descriptive one. Secondly, the difference in the tone of the two reports can be instructive, showing how the same people at the same time can be perceived differently by two authors from the same circle: the image gets shaped by circumstances, emotional states, proximity and gravity of the threat, and a socio-cultural background.

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*Received May 19, 2017 Accepted for publication August 31, 2017*

*Published September 30, 2017*

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## ИОАНН ДЕ ПЛАНО КАРПИНИ И СИМОН ДЕ СЕН-КАНТЕН В СРАВНЕНИИ: ЭМОЦИИ XIII ВЕКА В ЕВРАЗИЙСКОЙ СТЕПИ

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*Цель исследования:* поиск ответа на вопрос, почему отчеты двух миссионеров, посетивших одного и того же монгольского «Другого» в 1245 году, совершенно отличаются друг от друга, несмотря на то что их авторы относились к одному и тому же христианскому кругу? Точнее, в настоящей статье рассматриваются причины того, почему отчет Симона является намного более негативным в описании монголов, как и имагологическое и эмоциональное влияние на это отображение.

*Материалы исследования:* два мендикантских отчета, составленные Иоанном и Симоном, как и современные исследования различных аспектов монгольского «Другого», апокалиптической литературы и отношений между западным христианством и Монгольской империей в середине XIII века.

*Новизна исследования* заключается в сравнении двух синхронных отчетов, определении их отличий в репрезентации монголов и в анализе их образа с точки зрения истории эмоций.

Целью данной статьи является показать, что при интерпретации средневековых европейских текстов о монголах следует комбинировать подходы различных дисциплин, включая (но не ограничиваясь) историю эмоций, историю культуры и письменных текстов, антропологию, кросс-культурную социологию и др. Непосредственное и ошибочное толкование того, что монголы были каннибалами и содомитами, к которому кого-либо может подтолкнуть поверхностное прочтение отчета Симона де Сен-Кантен, следует опровергать с научной точки зрения. Подобные интерпретации появились в результате различных событий и явлений в 40-х годах XIII века: ожесточенного столкновения монгольских армий с западным христианством, одновременных христианских попыток поместить новых пришельцев в знакомый апокалиптический контекст и, скорее всего, персональной психологической травмы автора, жизнь

которого оказалась под угрозой в результате того, что может быть объяснено в качестве кросс-культурного непонимания или же демонстрации силы.

*Результаты исследования:* сравнение двух отчетов, составленных Иоанном де Плано Карпини и Симоном де Сен-Кантен, их контекстуализация внутри миссионерской литературы XIII века, параллельный анализ сформированных образов, как и отсылка к другим синхронным текстам о монголах представляются целесообразной отправной точкой для комплексного процесса отображения формирования образа монголов, использовавшегося европейцами в позднем Средневековье. Этот комплекс образов состоит в повторном использовании сотен образов, почерпнутых из классической Античности, библейских текстов и средневековых пророчеств, наделенных способностью вызывать наиболее сильные эмоции при единственном упоминании. Искусный междисциплинарный подход неизменно требуется для избежания ошибочных интерпретаций повышенно эмоциональных образов, которые могут принести надежду или вызвать гнев, в зависимости от их (неправильного) использования.

*Ключевые слова:* Иоанн де Плано Карпини, Симон де Сен-Кантен, мендиканты, ранние папские миссии на Восток, комплекс образов монголов XIII века, апокалиптическая литература, история эмоций

*Для цитирования:* Sardelić M. John of Plano Carpini vs Simon of Saint-Quentin: 13<sup>th</sup>-century Emotions in the Eurasian Steppe // Золотоордынское обозрение. 2017. Т. 5, № 3. С. 494–508. DOI: 10.22378/2313-6197.2017-5-3.494-508

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*Поступила 19.05.2017 Принята к публикации 31.08.2017*

*Опубликована 30.09.2017*