“Everywhere Where People Live, They Are All Subordinated to Me”: The Influence of the Imperial Steppe Ideology on the Mongol Empire’s Cultural Exchange and Diplomacy

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Abstract

This thesis will argue that the Mongolian Empire's policies of cultural exchange and diplomacy towards the Latin world were driven by an imperial steppe ideology whose core characteristic was to achieve universal dominion. The thesis will make this argument by explicitly linking these two broad agendas of diplomatic engagement and cultural exchange to each other and placing them within the context of the Mongol ideology of universal rule. The thesis will make this argument by first examining the imperial steppe ideology of the nomadic empires which preceded the Mongol Empire in order to demonstrate that they also considered universal rule to be a key factor in their respective ideological basis. The early history of the Mongol Empire will then be examined to show the ideological continuities with the previous empires. Subsequently, the individuals and groups which comprised the empire's administration will have their religious and cultural backgrounds examined in order to indicate why they retained the universal nature of the imperial steppe ideology. Following this, examples of cultural exchange and trade within the Mongol Empire and with its neighbouring states will be situated within the context of the universalism of the imperial steppe ideology. Finally, diplomatic engagement between the Mongol Empire and the Latin world will also be placed within the ideological framework of the empire's goal of achieving universal rule. It is hoped that the thesis will provoke further questions and research into the field of Mongolian history concerning the ideological foundations of the empire and its effect on their policies.

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Contents

Introduction

This thesis will propose two primary arguments: the Mongol Empire's ideological claim to universal dominion was a direct continuation of an ideological trend held by previous steppe empires; and that the Mongols' policies of cultural exchange and diplomacy towards the Latin world were driven by this universalising imperial steppe ideology. The thesis will make this argument first by explaining the imperial steppe ideology and its prevalence among both previous steppe empires and the early stages of the Mongol Empire, and then by explicitly linking the two broad agendas of diplomatic engagement and cultural exchange to each other and to the Mongol ideology of universal dominion. It will be argued that when the ruling clan of a nomadic steppe empire achieved considerable military success, they adopted an imperial steppe ideology which can be defined as the following: the ruling clan claimed a divine origin - an origin which usually involved lupine spirit animals – and the clan was invested with *qut* (heavenly good fortune). Possession of *qut* compelled the leader of this clan, who was usually titled *qaghan*, to impose his authority (*erk*) "everywhere where people live" – in other words, universal rule - while upholding customary tribal law (*törü*). The appearance and embracing of new religions did not necessarily detract from the observance of *törü*, and in fact is indicative of the ideology's universalist pretensions. The thesis will also analyse the administration of the Mongol Empire and how it was integral to the maintenance and development of the desire for universal dominion of the imperial steppe ideology. Furthermore the division of the Mongol Empire (from 1260 CE) which has been commonly argued in previous historiography and its alleged effects on this overarching agenda will also be examined. The internecine conflicts between the descendants of Tolui on one hand (who came to rule Mongolia, China, and the Middle East) and the descendants of Ögedei, Jochi, and Chagatai on the other (whose realm consisted of Central Asia and the western Eurasian steppe) frustrated the Toluids' plans regarding the Latin West and Outremer. The frustration occurred due to the Jochid Golden Horde/Kipchak Khanate cooperating with the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt, the latter being the enemy of the Latin states of Outremer and the Toluid Ilkhanate in the Middle East alike, and continuing to act antagonistically towards the Latin states of

Eastern Europe (primarily Poland and Hungary). It must be stated though that recent research has challenged the prevalent notion that the divisions in the empire were deep-seated, hostile, and destined to be so, an avenue which this project will also pursue.[1] It will be argued that the Jochids and Toluids continued to consider themselves as part of the same empire, and thus compelled to achieve universal rule, yet their respective avenues of expansion brought them into conflict with each other. The thesis' arguments will be based on a reassessment of both the primary sources and the historiography which they have generated, from a perspective based on the universalising ideology.

The historiography of the imperial steppe ideology as expressed by the Mongols can in a way be traced back to Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, where the religious toleration of Chinggis Khan is held up as a precursor to the Enlightenment's alleged triumph over superstition;[2] the religious dimension is key to the ideology, as it revolved around the ruling dynasty's divine origin and the (universal) responsibilities which derived from that. Between the nineteenth century and the late twentieth, studies of the ideological aspect of the Mongol Empire were neglected in favour of the political, military, and economic aspects. Igor de Rachewiltz' paper from 1973 signalled a change however by emphasising the ideology's role in the empire's foundation, as well as noting its origin in the ideology of the previous nomadic empires.[3] Subsequent general works, for example David Morgan's *The Mongols* (originally published in 1986),[4] did not fully take note of de Rachewiltz' observations, leaving it to specialist studies which restricted themselves with the basics such as: when did the ideology develop; and to whom was it directed towards.[5] The more important question of how the ideology affected the governing of the Mongol Empire remained unanswered, though Thomas T. Allsen's portrayal of

[1] Hodong Kim, 'The Unity of the Mongol Empire and Continental Exchanges over Eurasia', *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 1 (2009) pp. 15-42; Marie Favereau, 'The Mongol Peace and Global Medieval Eurasia', *Comparativ*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (2018) pp. 49-70.
[2] Christopher P. Atwood, 'Validation by Holiness or Sovereignty: Religious Toleration as Political Theology in the Mongol World Empire of the Thirteenth Century', *The International History Review*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2004) pp. 237-238.
[3] Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Some Remarks on the Ideological Foundations of Chingis Khan's Empire', *Papers on Far Eastern History*, No. 7 (1973) pp. 21-36.
[4] David Morgan, *The Mongols*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007).
[5] Peter Jackson, 'The Mongol Empire, 1986-1999', *Journal of Medieval History*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2000) p. 195.

Möngke as a traditionalist approaches the subject, but does not quite make the connection.[6] By the end of the century, Peter Jackson's survey of the historiography contained only one short paragraph concerning ideology.[7] Shortly afterwards, Allsen published a study of the imperial textile trade which did argue for an ideological motive.[8] The next major study which tied ideology to policy was Anne Broadbridge's *Kingship and Ideology*, which focused on diplomacy between the Mongols and the Mamluks.[9] By the time of Michal Biran's historiographical survey,[10] there had been more research done on cultural exchange and diplomacy, some of which even had an ideological basis.[11] However, while Biran's survey recognised the importance of synthesising research on cultural and diplomatic exchange it failed to both link them to each other and to research on the imperial steppe ideology. While there has since been further research on these three areas, there has as of yet been no study which argues for the Mongolian policies of cultural exchange and diplomacy being driven by the all-encompassing imperial steppe ideology; this thesis has set out to do just that.

Over the last couple of decades or so, there has been a large body of further specialist research on diplomatic and cultural exchange which must be re-examined from the perspective of their relation to imperial steppe ideology. Direct diplomacy between Latin agents, usually missionaries, and the Mongol authorities is one of the main avenues in which the competing ideologies of the Latins and Mongols can be seen. Roman Hautala's work focuses on the direct diplomacy between the Latins, usually Franciscan and Dominican friars, and the Mongols of Eastern Europe and the western Eurasian steppe.[12] Hautala has, for example, pointed out the freedom with

[6] Thomas T. Allsen, *Mongol Imperialism: The Policies of the Grand Qan Mongke in China, Russia, and the Islamic Lands, 1251-1259* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987).
[7] Jackson, 'The Mongol Empire, 1986-1999'.
[8] Thomas T. Allsen, *Commodity and exchange in the Mongol empire. A cultural history of Islamic textiles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[9] Anne Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
[10] Michal Biran, 'The Mongol Empire: The State of the Research', *History Compass*, Vol. 11, No. 11 (2013) pp. 1021-1033.
[11] For an exploration of this work, see below.
[12] For a collection of his essays see: Roman Hautala, *Crusaders, Missionaries and Eurasian Nomads in the 13th-14th Centuries: a Century of Interactions*, ed. by Victor Spinei (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 2017).

which Christian missionaries could proselytise, and how the first reports in the Latin world of the Mongol conquests fit into contemporary Crusade ideology. However, due to the reliance on the Latin sources, the Mongol perspective, shaped by their own ideological pretensions, is neglected. By contrast an article on Latin attempts at conversion of the Mongols written by Timothy May is foregrounded in the universalism of the Mongols' imperial steppe ideology and comes to the conclusion that the competing universalism of Latin Christianity and the Mongolian ideology was to blame for the failure at conversion.[13] Denise Aigle meanwhile explicitly situates her discussion of diplomatic correspondence within the context of the Mongols' ideological claim to universal dominion.[14] She argues that the diplomacy of the Ilkhans differed from that of the Great Khans by toning down the demands for submission and universal dominion, and adopted a more conciliatory tone towards the Latin world. Peter Jackson's expansive study of the relations between the Mongol Empire and the Latin world is vital to this topic and deserves examination from the universalist ideological perspective.[15] The second edition of the study is an improvement over the first through its incorporation of research that does place ideology at the forefront, such as Aigle's forementioned research. Even though Anne Broadbridge's *Kingship and Ideology* concerns diplomacy between the Ilkhanate, the Golden Horde, and the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt, its methodology of analysing diplomacy through the respective ideologies of the states concerned, is one to be emulated when studying Latin-Mongol diplomatic engagement.[16] Previous research into diplomatic exchange between the Mongols and the Latins is useful in illuminating the specifics of such meetings, and has, encouragingly, begun to show an interest in the role of the imperial steppe ideology. It has not gone far enough in this direction, which is a situation that this thesis aims to rectify by indicating

[13] Timothy May, 'The Mongols and the Missionaries: Why Catholicism Failed Amongst the Mongols', in *Studia et Documenta Turcologica, 5-6/2017-2018*, ed. by Stoica Lascu (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2018) pp. 211-226.
[14] Denise Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance. Thoughts on the Diplomatic Exchanges between the Mongols and the Latin West', in *The Mongol Empire between Myth and Reality: Studies in Anthropological History* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).
[15] Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221-1410*, 2nd edn (Oxon: Routledge, 2018).
[16] Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*.

examples of the Mongol rulers injecting their ideological pretensions into their diplomatic statements.

The Armenians and other Eastern Christians played a significant role as mediators in the diplomatic and cultural exchange between the Mongol Empire and the Latin world. As such, the historiography on their role should also be reappraised within the context of the Mongol imperial ideology. Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog's general history of Armenia during the period of Mongol rule does make reference to the steppe imperial ideology, but is otherwise a conventional political and military history of the subject.[17] An article by Alexandr Osipian also refers to the Mongolian ideology but instead argues how the arrival of the Mongols was conveyed to the Latins, by the Armenians, with reference to their own shared Christian ideological framework as a means of encouraging a Franco-Mongol alliance to continue the Crusade.[18] Zaroui Pogossian likewise deals with Armenian Christian apocalypticism but argues that it gave way to praise of Mongolian rule, with some allusion to imperial steppe ideology being present in the chapter.[19] Lauren Prezbindowski justifiably dedicates a chapter in her thesis to a discussion of the Mongolian divine mandate and its effects on the triangular relations between the Ilkhanate, the Armenians, and the Mamluk Sultanate, ultimately arguing that the Armenians' association with the Mongols proved to be overwhelmingly negative for them.[20] By contrast, Kenneth Parker's survey of other Eastern Christians in the Middle East is focused on their attitudes as well as those of the Muslims and not on the Mongols, though there is some awareness of Mongolian ideology.[21] His thesis argues that the treatment of the Christians by Muslims deteriorated as a result of their support for the failed Franco-Mongol alliance. Samuel Hugh Moffett's general history of

[17] Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians (1220-1335)* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).
[18] Alexandr Osipian, 'Armenian Involvement in the Latin-Mongol Crusade: Uses of the Magi and Prester John in Constable Smbat's *Letter* and Hayton of "*Flos historiarum terre orientis,*" 1248-1307', *Medieval Encounters*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2014) pp. 66-100.
[19] Zaroui Pogossian, 'Armenians, Mongols, and the End of Times', in *Caucasus during the Mongol Period – Der Kaukasus in der Mongolenzeit*, ed. by Jürgen Tubach *et al* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2012) pp. 169-198.
[20] Lauren Prezbindowski, 'The Ilkhanid Mongols, the Christian Armenians, and the Islamic Mamluks: a study of their relations, 1220-1335', *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*, Vol. 1152 (2012).
[21] Kenneth Parker, *The Indigenous Christians of the Arabic Middle East in an Age of Crusaders, Mongols, and Mamluks (1244-1366)* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, Royal Holloway, 2012).

Nestorian Christianity exhibits some outdated views on the Mongol Empire and so has little to say on the empire's imperial steppe ideology, whereas Ian Gillman and Hans Joachim-Klimkeit's *Christians in Asia* is at least cognisant of the ideology's existence.[22] Historiographical awareness of the importance of Mongolian ideology upon the Eastern Christian role as mediators is therefore strongest concerning the Armenians. This thesis aims to begin the exploration of the place of the other Eastern Christians within the Mongols' ideological structure, while being more explicit about the nature of the Armenians' role. The role of the Turkic and Mongol Nestorians is expected to be of significance, given their familiarity with both steppe and Christian ideology.

The historiography on the role of Mongolian women within the administration of the empire is undoubtedly an important area to consider with regards to the steppe ideology. This is because the women in question originated from the diverse array of Turkic and Mongol tribes of the Eurasian steppe, and so were also bearers of the same imperial ideology as the Chinggisid Mongols. Jack Weatherford's popular history monograph *The Secret History of the Mongol Queens* - which argues that the womens' effective rule was hampered by male mismanagement - does address the ideology, particularly some of its religious aspects which, he argues, exhibit a female character.[23] Bruno De Nicola has contributed a considerable amount of research on women during Mongol rule, while relating the subject to the importance of the imperial ideology.[24] He has also expanded the scope on to women from previously established Turkic dynasties within the Mongol Empire and how they contributed to the imperial administration, and thus the continually developing ideological underpinning of the state.[25] Anne

[22] Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia Volume I: Beginnings to 1500*, 2nd edn (New York: Orbis Books, 1998); Ian Gillman and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Christians in Asia before 1500* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016).
[23] Jack Weatherford, *The Secret History of the Mongol Queens: How the Daughters of Genghis Khan Rescued his Empire* (New York: Broadway Books, 2010).
[24] For example: Bruno De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran: The Khatuns, 1206-1335* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017); Bruno De Nicola, 'Patrons or *Murīd*s? Mongol Women and Shaykhs in Ilkhanid Iran and Anatolia', *Iran*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (2014) pp. 143-156.
[25] Bruno De Nicola, 'Pādshāh Khatun: An Example of Architectural, Religious, and Literary Patronage in Ilkhanid Iran', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) pp. 270-289.

Broadbridge's *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire* is an important contribution regarding female involvement in the shaping of the imperial ideology, though it is perhaps less explicit on the subject than her earlier monograph on diplomacy.[26] Jonathan Brack's study of a Mongol princess participating in the *hajj* is an important exploration into the reconciliation between the traditional Mongol ideology and newfound Islamic faith and its resulting religious and political obligations.[27] Konstantin Golev's study of political intrigues and conflicts at the centre of Mongol power provides important examples of the heights women, including those who were taken prisoner, could achieve and then lose through factional conflict, though Golev unfortunately leaves unsaid the link to Mongolian ideology that is apparent in his article.[28] It is clear that previous historians who have studied the Mongol Empire's female figures have provided a solid base for further exploration into women's roles with regard to the steppe ideology; this thesis aims to continue this exploration. The fact that many of the women involved were Christian is of particular importance in exploring their influence on diplomacy with the Latins.

Trade and commercial enterprise between the Mongol Empire and the Latin world provides avenues for research into both the diplomatic and cultural exchange between the two civilisations. Due to the Mongol Empire's interest in encouraging trade as part of the universalistic mandate of their ideology, it is necessary to reconsider the historiography of this area in light of the overbearing imperial ideology. Timothy May has studied the impact three Mongol "queens" (Töregene, Oghul Qaimish, and Sorqoqtani) had upon the empire's trade.[29] Their mercantile interests are explicitly linked to their political manoeuvrings and though ideology and traditional custom is referenced, May does not quite join the connection

[26] Anne Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
[27] Jonathan Brack, 'A Mongol Princess Making *hajj*: the Biography of El Qutlugh Daughter of Abagha Ilkhan (r. 1265-82)', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (2011) pp. 331-359.
[28] Konstantin Golev, 'Witchcraft and Politics in the Court of the Great Khan: Interregnum Crises and Inter-Factional Struggles among the Mongol Imperial Elite. The Case of Fatima Khatun', in *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU, Vol. 23 (2017)*, ed. by Gerhard Jaritz *et al* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2017) pp. 132-144.
[29] Timothy May, 'Commercial Queens: Mongolian Khatuns and the Silk Road', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 26, No. 1-2 (2016) pp. 89-106.

between the two. Judith Pfeiffer's edited volume centred on the city of Tabriz contains a number of useful chapters concerning the city's important role in diplomatic and cultural exchange through trade.[30] Patrick Wing's chapter delineates the Ilkhanid Mongol elite's encouragement of the links between Tabriz and Italian mercantile activity in the Black Sea, but does not provide the reason for why; that is, the Mongols' ideological compulsions.[31] Sheila Blair's chapter analyses visual sources such as illuminated manuscripts, textiles, and architecture originating in Tabriz, highlighting the foreign influences on the cultural output as well as said output's influence outside of the Mongol Empire.[32] Unlike Wing's chapter, Blair does touch upon Mongol ideology and its syncretism with Iranian imperial ideology. Johannes Preiser-Kapeller's chapter describes the significant place of Tabriz within the mental geography of western, mostly Italian, merchants (as well as clerical figures) but unfortunately limits its discussion of ideology to the conceptions of the Christians.[33] Elsewhere, Marie Favereau has argued in an insightful article that trade was vital not only to the redistributive nature of the steppe economy, but also to the Mongols' efforts to create a new world system.[34] Even though the article says little about similar efforts of previous nomadic empires, the ideological continuity between them would be simple to indicate. The previous historiography of trade and commercial enterprise has so far shown great promise in placing the subject in regard to the ideological dimensions of steppe nomadic rule; this thesis intends to utilise this solid foundation and go beyond with the emphasis on ideological concerns, particularly with how the increased trade could be construed as an extrapolation of the steppe tradition of gift-exchange.

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[30] *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*, ed. by Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

[31] Patrick Wing, '"Rich in Goods and Abounding Wealth:" The Ilkhanid and Post-Ilkhanid Ruling Elite and the Politics of Commercial Life at Tabriz, 1250-1400', in *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*, ed. by Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014) pp. 301-320

[32] Sheila S. Blair, 'Tabriz: International Entrepot under the Mongols', in *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*, ed. by Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014) pp. 321-356.

[33] Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, '*Civitas Thauris*. The Significance of Tabriz in the Spatial Frameworks of Christian Merchants and Ecclesiastics in the 13th and 14th Centuries', in *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*, ed. by Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014) pp. 251-299.

[34] Favereau, 'The Mongol Peace'.

The administration of the Mongol Empire, and the individuals employed by it, is one of the areas in which the universalistic nature of the steppe ideology is readily apparent. It is necessary therefore to ascertain whether previous historians have appreciated the ideological perspective to a sufficient degree. The introduction to Michal Biran *et al*'s edited collection of biographies on imperial officials touches upon the ideological reasons for such diverse employment.[35] Bruno De Nicola's chapter in the volume, which has already been described, features discussion of the accommodation between Islamic and steppe traditions, as well as the non-discriminatory female patronage of a wide array of religious and intellectual projects.[36] However, in another introductory section to a collection of biographies edited by Biran, the ideological aspect is neglected in favour of a straightforward outline of the following articles in the issue.[37] Daniel Zakrzewski's article details the career of the local Iranian who governed Mongol-ruled Tabriz, but disappointingly says little about the ideology which determined the subject's important role in the administration.[38] By contrast, Or Amir's article concerning a court scribe and musician who first worked for the Ilkhanate, then the Mamluk Sultanate, before returning to Iraq to regain employment with the post-Ilkhanate Jalayirid state, highlights the permeable nature of political borders within what is termed in the article as "Turko-Mongol cultural-political dominance".[39] Similarly, Qiao Yang's article on a Muslim astronomer in Mongol China outlines how the subject was able to advance his standing due to his knowledge of the imperial ideological and political landscape.[40] Meanwhile, George Lane's study of a long-lived Mongol bureaucrat neglects the ideological context of the bureaucrat's many political and administrative

[35] *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020).
[36] Bruno De Nicola, 'Pādshāh Khatun'.
[37] *In the Service of the Khans: Elites in Transition in Mongol Eurasia*, ed. by Michal Biran, *Asiatisches Studien – Études Asiatiques*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (2017) pp. 1051-1245.
[38] Daniel Zakrzewski, 'Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn Tabrīzī and the Establishment of Mongol Rule in Iran', in *In the Service of the Khans: Elites in Transition in Mongol Eurasia*, ed. by Michal Biran, *Asiatisches Studien – Études Asiatiques*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (2017) pp. 1059-1073.
[39] Or Amir, 'Niẓām al-Dīn Yaḥya al-Ṭayyārī – An Artist in the Court of the Ilkhans *and* Mamluks', in *In the Service of the Khans: Elites in Transition in Mongol Eurasia*, ed. by Michal Biran, *Asiatisches Studien – Études Asiatiques*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (2017) pp. 1075-1091.
[40] Qiao Yang, 'From the West to the East, from the Sky to the Earth: A Biography of Jamāl al-Dīn', in *In the Service of the Khans: Elites in Transition in Mongol Eurasia*, ed. by Michal Biran, *Asiatisches Studien – Études Asiatiques*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (2017) pp. 1231-1245.

travails.[41] Donald Ostrowski's analysis of the origins of the dual-administration of civil and military governors only alludes to the Mongol ideology's influence, though there is a brief hint of awareness of the continuity with the previous nomadic empires.[42] Roxann Prazniak's survey of Ilkhanid Buddhism explicitly attributes the construction of monasteries and employment of their monks to the universalistic nature of the Mongol ideology.[43] For the purpose of this thesis, where the foreign policy focus is on the Latin world, Jackson's *The Mongols and The Islamic World* provides important research on the Muslims who staffed the imperial administration.[44] The research on the Mongol administration so far has demonstrated an admirable start to the inclusion of the steppe ideology in its conclusions, but there is more to be achieved and this thesis hopes to do so.

The tangible results of cultural exchange, that is the transfer of material objects and of practical knowledge, is another area in which the imperial steppe ideology was the determining factor, and so it is necessary to consider previous research in this subject from that perspective. Stephen Pow has argued that Mongol medical practices and the employment of diverse medical personnel left no lasting legacy despite evidence of exchange between East and West; moreover the study misses the ideological motivations of the Mongols and instead opts for the simple explanation that they merely desired more varied expertise for common ailments.[45] By contrast, Reiko Shinno's article on the Mongols' stimulating influence on Chinese medical tradition comes close to identifying ideological factors, but concludes that the increased investment in Chinese medical institutions was directly influenced by Mongol appropriation of Islamic/Middle Eastern tradition.[46] Concerning silk and other textiles, David Jacoby's description of silk production and trade to the West

[41] George Lane, 'Arghun Aqa: Mongol Bureaucrat', *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (1999) pp. 459-482.
[42] Donald Ostrowski, 'The *tamma* and the dual-administrative structure of the Mongol empire', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (1998) pp. 262-277.
[43] Roxann Prazniak, 'Ilkhanid Buddhism: Traces of a Passage in Eurasian History', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 56, No. 3 (2014) pp. 650-680.
[44] Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017).
[45] Stephen Pow, 'Gout of Khans: Disease, Treatments, and Medical Philosophy in the Mongol Empire', in *The Proceedings of the 22nd Annual History of Medicine Days Conference 2013*, ed. by Aleksandra Loewenau *et al* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018) pp. 204-231.
[46] Reiko Shinno, 'Medical Schools and the Temples of the Three Progenitors in Yuan China: A Case of Cross-Cultural Interactions', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (2007) pp. 89-133.

briefly attributes the Mongol export of the commodity to their ideology,[47] while admonishing other historians for having a Eurocentric focus on the Italian merchants to the detriment of their (Mongol-sponsored) Asian counterparts.[48] Though on the other hand, Jacoby dismisses political concerns from Latin motivations in their large import of silk from the Mongol Empire. Thomas T. Allsen's monograph on the same topic, which demonstrates the Mongol Empire's intimate control of textile production, openly places the topic within an ideological perspective, linking the Mongol elite's preference for golden cloth to the Chinggisid 'golden lineage' (*altan urag*).[49] Ulrike Herold's thesis goes even further in this direction, arguing that the Mongol administration's regulation of courtly attire and gifting of textiles was a direct result of their aim for a universal empire.[50] The historiography of the tangible results of cultural exchange so far show an admirable awareness of the significance of the steppe ideology, though without quite making the logical connections. This thesis explicitly highlights the numerous connections between this subject and the importance of the Mongolian ideology.

The impact of cultural exchange on the Mongol Empire's political development and theoretical basis is undeniably the subject on which the imperial steppe ideology is most intertwined; engaging with academic research on this area then will be an important part of this thesis. Jackson's study of the Mongols in the Islamic world just provides an overview of how the Mongolian ideology accommodated Islamic ideas of state and legitimacy.[51] Jonathan Brack's argument for the Ilkhanid, and therefore Chinggisid, origins of the phenomenon of Islamic sacral kingship raises the question of whether there was a continuous steppe ideology, but unfortunately leaves it unanswered.[52] Stefan Kamola's research into

[47] David Jacoby, 'Cross-Cultural Transfers of Industrial Technologies in the Later Middle Ages: Incentives, Promoters and Agents', in *Union in Separation: Diasporic Groups and Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean (1100-1800)*, ed. by Georg Christ *et al* (Rome: Viella, 2015) pp. 487-504.
[48] David Jacoby, 'Oriental Silks at the Time of the Mongols: Patterns of Trade and Distribution in the West', in *Oriental Silks in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Juliane von Fircks and Regula Schorta (Riggisberg: Abegg-Stiftung, 2016) pp. 92-123.
[49] Allsen, *Commodity and exchange in the Mongol empire*.
[50] Ulrike Herold, *Clothing Authority: Mongol attire and textiles in the socio-political complex* (unpublished master's thesis, Leiden University [?], 2008).
[51] Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World*.
[52] Jonathan Brack, 'Theologies of Auspicious Kingship: The Islamization of Chinggisid Sacral Kingship in the Islamic World', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (2018) pp. 1143-1171.

Rashid al-Din provides not only a critical biography of the figure, but also engages with the historiographical traditions which informed Rashid al-Din's writing and explores how he transformed those traditions.[53] The resulting study explains how the Mongols' univsersalising ideology was presented rather than just answering the question of whether it occurred. Christopher P. Atwood's article on Mongolian religious policy, which argues that the policy was less about explicit tolerance and instead was more a universalist conception of religion, makes only a brief allusion to shared traditions to other nomadic empires.[54] Anne Broadbridge's application of the ideological perspective to the diplomacy between the Ilkhanate, Golden Horde, and the Mamluk Sultanate, which concurs with Brack's arguments on sacral kingship, draws a clear distinction between the Mongols' ideology and those of the preceding nomadic empires.[55] George Lane's study of the intellectual debates hosted at the courts of Mongol rulers argues that the debates held far more importance than mere entertainment value, and moreover were a continued tradition from the previous empires of the steppe.[56] In Anatoly Khazanov's novel comparison between the Prophet Muhammad and Chinggis Khan, he agrees that there are certain elements of the Mongolian ideology which demonstrate continuity with other Eurasian nomads, yet casts doubt on the notion that universal dominion was one of those common elements.[57] Michael Hope's *Power, Politics, and Tradition* argues that the post-Chinggis empire saw the development of competing patrimonial and collegial interpretations of the Mongolian ideology.[58] Hope notes the continuities with previous steppe empires but does not expand his argument further outside of the immediate subject of the Mongol Empire, and the study focuses on the effect on domestic rather than foreign policy. By its very nature the historiography of this specific topic is already steeped in ideological analysis, therefore the issue is whether

[53] Stefan Kamola, *The Making of Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and the Jami al-Tawarikh* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019).
[54] Atwood, 'Validation by Holiness or Sovereignty'.
[55] Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*.
[56] George Lane, *Intellectual jousting and the Chinggisid Wisdom Bazaars* (unpublished conference paper delivered in Jerusalem, July 2014).
[57] Anatoly Khazanov, 'Muhammad and Jenghiz Khan Compared: The Religious Factor in World Empire Building', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 35, No. No. 3 (1993) pp. 461-479.
[58] Michael Hope, *Power, Politics, and Tradition in the Mongol Empire and the Ilkhanate of Iran* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

the continuity between the Mongol Empire's ideology and the ideologies expressed by its antecedents has been recognised; generally it has not. In this dissertation the argument will be made that the Mongol Empire's ideological development with regards to outside influences did have parallels with the previous nomadic empires.

This thesis will go beyond the previous historiography by beginning with a chapter that will situate the Mongolian ideology of universal dominion as the continuation of an imperial steppe ideology that was held by previous nomadic empires originating in the eastern Eurasian steppe. The opening chapter will make this argument by examining the imperial steppe ideology of previous nomadic empires, followed by a demonstration of the ideological continuity expressed by the early Chinggisid Mongol Empire. This chapter is important in establishing the focus of the thesis as it is, in part, a reassessment of the current historiography of nomadic empires, which will inform the perspective through which the primary evidence and scholarly research of the Mongol period is analysed. Once the importance of the universalism of the imperial steppe ideology has been established, the second chapter will explore the structure and composition of the Mongol Empire's administration. The imperial steppe ideology of the empire was developed and expressed by the members of the administration, so it is necessary to understand their religious and cultural backgrounds and how they influenced the governing ideology which determined the empire's policies towards the Latin world. The chapter will accomplish this first by describing the imperial administration and then exploring the various groups which comprised the administration. The following chapter will apply the universalistic framework of the imperial steppe ideology to an analysis of various instances of cultural and material exchange which occurred within the Mongol Empire and with its neighbours. Likewise, the final chapter will apply the same universalistic framework of the imperial steppe ideology on to an examination of the Mongol Empire's diplomacy with the Latin world. The chapter will also address the conventional periodisation of the history of the Mongol Empire within the context of the universalist imperial steppe ideology.

This thesis will re-examine the primary sources used by the previously indicated historiography to argue that the imperial steppe ideology compelled the Mongol elite to carry out the twofold process of diplomatic and cultural exchange.

These sources include travelogues, chronicles, narrative histories, and diplomatic documents. Although the sources were composed in a wide array of languages (Latin, French, Armenian, Arabic, Persian, Chinese and so on) the nature of Mongol studies as a topic that covers multiple geographic areas and disciplines has ensured that most of these are translated into English and thus readily available. The travelogues comprise narrative accounts not only from European religious and trading perspectives (Marco Polo being the most famous) but also includes accounts from agents of the Mongolian administration. On the one hand there are reports from missionaries such as John of Plano Carpini, William of Rubruck, and Simon of Saint-Quentin who were working on behalf of the popes and European monarchs.[59] The Latin missionaries acted as agents of said European rulers and were primarily concerned with gauging the military strength of the Mongols as well as their suitability for conversion. As such these sources reflect a wariness towards the Mongol Empire, especially in the early period of contact when military conflict between the Latins and Mongols was recent. Furthermore, the missionary reports illustrate the regular misunderstandings on the part of the missionaries of the Mongolian ideology and its practical effects for diplomacy between the empire and the Latin world. In some cases the misunderstandings could almost result in fatal consequences, as was the case with Simon of Saint-Quentin's record of Ascelin of Cremona's mission. This of course often had the effect of the reports portraying the Mongols as being duplicitous or deceitful; this accusation sometimes extended to the Eastern Christians who populated the Mongol courts. On the other hand, there were agents of the Mongol government who travelled west, including the Turkic Nestorian monk Rabban Bar Sawma and the Armenian noble-turned-monk Het'um of Corycus.[60] While Het'um's account is technically a narrative history rather than a travelogue, it was composed after he travelled to Poitiers with the intent of

[59] John of Plano Carpini, 'History of the Mongols', in *Mission to Asia. Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, ed. by Christopher Dawson (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) pp. 3-72; *The Mission of Friar William Rubruck. His journey to the court of the Great Khan Möngke, 1253-1255*, trans. by Peter Jackson and ed. by David Morgan (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2009); Simon of Saint-Quentin, *The History of the Tartars*, trans. by Stephen Pow *et al*, http://www.simonofstquentin.org/index.html.
[60] *The Monks of Kublai Khan, Emperor of China*, trans. by Ernest A. Wallis-Budge (London: Religious Tract Society, 1928); Het'um of Corycus, *History of the Tatars. The Flower of Histories of the East*, trans. by Robert Bedrosian, http://www.attalus.org/armenian/hetumtoc.html.

organising a military alliance between the Latins and the Mongols. The Mongol diplomats to the west tended to be from religious minority groups that had been empowered by Mongol rule and therefore were more likely to present the empire in positive terms for their Latin audiences. Moreover, the Eastern Christians saw the Mongols as the best opportunity to re-establish Christian hegemony in the Middle East and they were therefore integral to the efforts in effecting Latin-Mongol military cooperation. Het'um of Corycus, for example, was able to use his military background to present a detailed proposal for joint Latin-Mongol action. The chronicles and narrative histories include works from figures in the Mongol administration such as Rashid al-Din Hamadani, Gregory Bar Hebraeus, and Ata-Malik Juvaini,[61] as well as the famous *Secret History of the Mongols*.[62] Understandably the accounts from the administrators are generally positive towards Mongol rule, while accounts from subject states like those which existed in Armenia are more circumspect; the works of Kirakos Ganjakets'i and Grigor Aknerts'i are just two examples of the number of Armenian sources from the period.[63] Rashid al-Din worked his way up through the Mongol administration, while Juvaini belonged to a family with generational service to rulers in Iran; both authors played significant roles in transposing the Mongolian ideology into a Perso-Islamic context. Bar Hebraeus was a paramount figure for the Syriac Christian community and his work was likewise vital for rationalising Mongol rule for an Eastern Christian audience. The authorship of the *Secret History of the Mongols* remains in debate, but this thesis will argue the author was either Chinggis Khan's adopted relative Šigi Qutuqu or his supporters; the conventional identification of Šigi Qutuqu as a 'traditionalist' will be re-examined along with the reassessment of the Mongolian ideology. The Armenian

[61] Rashid al-Din Hamadani, *Rashiduddin Fazlullah Jami 'u't-Tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles*, trans. by Wheeler M. Thackston (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Rashid al-Din Hamadani, The Successors of Genghis Khan, trans. by John Andrew Boyle (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971); Gregorius Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l-Faraj Bar Hebraeus' Political History of the World*, trans. by Ernest A. Wallis-Budge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932); Ata-Malik Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, trans. by John Andrew Boyle, 2 vols (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958).

[62] *The Secret History of the Mongols. A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*, trans. by Igor de Rachewiltz, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

[63] Kirakos Ganjakets'i, *History of the Armenians*, trans. by Robert Bedrosian, http://www.attalus.org/armenian/kgtoc.html; Grigor Aknerts'i, *History of the Nation of Archers*, trans. by Robert Bedrosian, http://www.attalus.org/armenian/gatoc.html.

narrative histories originated mostly from the clergy and, like Bar Hebraeus, were concerned with contextualising Mongol rule within Christian tradition. The diplomatic documents are comprised of the letters that were exchanged between the popes and European monarchs on one side, and the various Mongol khans on the other;[64] these letters demonstrate the two sides' competing claims to (often universal) authority while also attempting to negotiate military cooperation against their enemies, usually the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt. The Mongolian letters illustrate the issues of translation. Some of the letters were composed in Mongolian, translated to Persian, and then to Latin, while others were composed directly in Latin. In some cases the translations were done by those in Mongol employment; other times by those who employed by the recipients. As a result, the nuance of the ideological aspersions were lost or misunderstood, which was only exacerbated by the conflict between the two ideologies on display.

[64] Paul Meyvaert, 'An Unknown Letter of Hulagu, Il-Khan of Persia, to King Louis IX of France', *Viator*, Vol. 11 (1980) pp. 245-259; *Mission to Asia. Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, ed. by Christopher Dawson (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).

Chapter 1: Imperial Steppe Ideology (Re)Defined

This chapter will present the argument that the Mongolian ideology of universal dominion - which will be argued in later chapters to have been the determining factor in Mongolian imperial policies - was not a unique innovation of the Chinggisid dynasty as is claimed in current historiography,[65] but rather was a continuation of a steppe ideology dating back at least to the period of the Göktürk Empire (sixth century CE). This argument will be accomplished by way of an exploration of the pre-Chinggisid history of the imperial steppe ideology and how it was utilised and developed by the Chinggisid rulers before they were exposed to greater external influence of the sedentary world of Europe and Asia through their conquests. As the Mongol Empire's ideological goal of universal rule had an influence on their policies of cultural exchange and diplomacy, it would be instructive to identify the antecedents of that ideology among the preceding empires in order to demonstrate the continuities.

The Origins and Characteristics of the Imperial Steppe Ideology

The Mongolian imperial ideology had its origins in the ideologies of the earlier Turkic-Mongolic states, and perhaps even those of the Xiongnu, the Rouran/Avars, and other associated peoples. The identification of the ethnic and linguistic affiliations of these early nomadic polities remains problematic, but is arguably a less pressing issue than their socio-economic model, political organisation, and the ideology which supported said organisation.[66] These polities were comprised of horse-borne pastoral nomads who inhabited the plains and semi-desert regions of the Eurasian steppe. They often ruled over the neighbouring sedentary populations

[65] For example: Michal Biran, 'The Mongol Transformation: From the Steppe to Eurasian Empire', *Medieval Encounters*, Vol. 10 (2004) pp. 339-361.
[66] Turkic, Mongolic, Iranian, Tocharian, Manchurian, and Yeniseian ethno-linguistic groups all likely played roles in the formation of political entities on the eastern Eurasian steppe.

and relied on them for trading in, or exacting tribute of, goods that they were unable to produce themselves.[67]

The rulers of the Xiongnu, the earliest identifiable state on the eastern Eurasian steppe, functioned as absolute rulers who held military, diplomatic, legal, and religious authority;[68] their title of *chanyu* is argued to have been derived from *yabghu*, which in turn is alleged to be of Iranian origin, meaning "control, command, lead" or "to bring together".[69] In his correspondence with the Chinese, the Xiongnu *chanyu*, Mao-tun/Modu, portrayed himself as being "born of heaven and earth and ordained by the sun and moon".[70] Arguably, this was a direct challenge to the competing claim to universal dominion professed by the Chinese emperors, which was known as the Mandate of Heaven.[71] It is interesting to note that Modu Chanyu elaborated his claim to universal dominion just as the Han dynasty were doing the same after their unification of China following the Warring States era.[72]

In contrast to the Xiongnu, the later Xianbei and Rouran rulers adopted the title *qaghan* as early as the third century CE;[73] the Xianbei are often described as being early or proto-Mongolian in ethno-linguistic terms.[74] The title of *qaghan* has an uncertain origin, in other words, it is not Mongolic or Turkic.[75] Prior to the adoption of the title by the Göktürks, who overthrew the Rouran in the sixth century

[67] Peter B. Golden, *Central Asia in World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) p. 14; Christopher I. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road: A History of Central Eurasia from the Bronze Age to the Present* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011) pp. 26-28.
[68] Golden, *Central Asia in World History*, p. 30.
[69] Peter B. Golden, 'The Turk Imperial Tradition in the Pre-Chinggisid Era', in *Imperial Statecraft: Political and Techniques of Governance in Inner Asia, Sixth-Twentieth Centuries*, ed. by David Sneath (Bellingham: Western Washington University Center for East Asian Studies, 2006) pp. 39, 51.
[70] Golden, 'The Turk Imperial Tradition', p. 40; Peter B. Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples: Ethnogenesis and State-Formation in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia and the Middle East* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992) pp. 64-65.
[71] Luke Glanville, 'Retaining the Mandate of Heaven: Sovereign Accountability in Ancient China', *Millennium – Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (2010) p. 331; Hanje Park, 'From Barbarians to the Middle Kingdom: The Rise of the Title "Emperor, Heavenly Qaghan" and Its Significance', *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 3 (2012) p. 25.
[72] Glanville, 'Retaining the Mandate of Heaven', pp. 340-341. On the other hand Park argues that most of the Han emperors dropped their claim to rule over the steppe peoples: 'From Barbarians to the Middle Kingdom', pp. 25-27.
[73] Peter B. Golden, 'Some notes on the Avars and Rouran', in *The Steppe Lands and the World Beyond Them*, ed. by Florin Curta and Bogdan-Petru Maleon (Iaşi: Editura Universităţii "Al. I. Cuza", 2013) p. 54; Park, 'From Barbarians to the Middle Kingdom', p. 31.
[74] Golden, *Central Asia in World History*, p. 31.
[75] Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road*, p. 104 n. 36; Golden, 'The Turk Imperial Tradition', p. 42.

CE, *qaghan* was used by the Göktürks to refer to both powerful foreign rulers with claims to universal dominion, such as the Chinese and Tibetan emperors, and to subordinate rulers and peoples, such as the Turgesh and the Kirghiz.[76] This may at first appear to diminish the importance and universality of *qaghan*, but the title was prefaced with *ilig*,[77] a term with multiple meanings but when prefacing *qaghan* it probably referred to dominion over all peoples.[78] Already in this early period, it is apparent that there was a great deal of cultural interchange occurring between the Turkic-Mongolic nomads and their neighbours which affected their ideological formation, whether those neighbours be the Iranian-speaking nomads of the western Eurasian steppe, the Iranian and Tocharian city-states of Central Asia, or the sedentary Chinese and Tibetan imperial states.

The aforementioned Göktürks were pivotal in the history of the Eurasian steppe if only because they ruled almost the entirety of the region from the sixth to eighth centuries CE. Such a widespread domain aided in the diffusion of their imperial ideology. The two usual motifs of the various origin myths of the Göktürks are descent from a female wolf and the presence of a 'holy cave' as a passage to the 'underground [spiritual] world'.[79] The neighbouring Wusun, who preceded the Göktürks and were possibly of Indo-European origin, were also purported to have a female wolf involved in their ethnogenesis; wolves played prominent roles in the origin myths of many Indo-European civilisations.[80] In the shamanic beliefs of the steppe nomads, the wolf in question was a spirit animal imbued with the divine (*tengri*).[81] This divine ancestry played an important role in legitimating Göktürk rule, or more specifically, the rule of the leading Ashina clan, by investing the *ilig qaghan*

[76] Golden, 'The Turk Imperial Tradition', p. 41.
[77] Ibid. 40.
[78] Ibid. 31-33.
[79] Peter B. Golden, 'The Ethnogonic Tales of the Turks', *The Medieval History Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (2018) pp. 306-309.
[80] Golden, 'The Ethnogonic Tales of the Turks', pp. 307-309; Michael R. Drompp, 'Strategies of Cohesion and Control in the Türk and Uyghur Empires', in *Complexity of Interaction Along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE*, ed. by Jan Bemmann and Michael Schmauder (Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie, 2015) pp. 442-443.
[81] Peter B. Golden, 'Wolves, Dogs and Qipčaq Religion', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, Vol. 50, No. 1/3 (1997) pp. 89-90; Drompp, 'Strategies of Cohesion and Control', pp. 443-444.

with *qut*: 'heavenly good fortune'.[82] *Qut* can be compared to Iranian *khwarenah*/*farr* and Chinese *qi*, in the importance to their corresponding imperial ideologies.[83] The possession of *qut* in turn granted the *ilig qaghan* with the authority (*erk*) to "impose [his] will on others".[84] His actions however had to comply with *törü*, the customary law of the tribes.[85] It is important to note that *qut*, and the resulting right to rule, were held collectively by the ruling Ashina clan. If the *ilig qaghan* failed in his duties then one of his relatives, usually a brother, would be justified in overthrowing and killing him, though it would have to be done bloodlessly due to the divine nature of the ruler.[86] One of the *ilig qaghan*'s duties was to maintain possession of a specific holy territory; in the Ashina clan's case this was the Ötüken Mountain which acted as their capital.[87] The tumultuous and contested reign of the Göktürks was brought to a final end when a coalition of Uyghur, Basmil, and Qarluq rebels took control of Ötüken and the surrounding sacred territory.[88]

The successors to the defeated Ashina-ruled Göktürks continued to utilise their ideology. The Uyghurs were the group that emerged triumphant in the battles of the post-Göktürk era (740s and 750s CE). The chief, or *yabghu*, of the leading Yaghlakar clan adopted the regnal name/title Qutlugh Bilge Kül Qaghan;[89] other titles include *tengri qaghan* and *tengri ilig*.[90] Even after the Kirghiz deposed the Uyghurs and drove them south to the Tarim Basin in 840 CE, the latter continued to use titles like *tengri ilig quti* or *ilig khan* despite the blow to their legitimacy that came with losing Ötüken Mountain and the surrounding region.[91] In addition to the titulature and the possession of the sacred territory, the Uyghurs also claimed lupine descent. In their case though, their ancestors were a male wolf and a Xiongnu princess.[92] Through this tale the Uyghur Yaghlakar clan were claiming legitimacy

[82] Golden, 'The Turk Imperial Tradition', p. 43; Biran, 'The Mongol Transformation' p. 340.
[83] Golden, 'The Turk Imperial Tradition', p. 43.
[84] Ibid. 36.
[85] Ibid. 36-38.
[86] Ibid. 42.
[87] Golden, 'The Turk Imperial Tradition', p. 49; Biran, 'The Mongol Transformation', p. 341.
[88] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, pp. 138, 158.
[89] Ibid. 158.
[90] Golden, 'The Turk Imperial Tradition', p. 43.
[91] Ibid. 43-44.
[92] Golden, 'The Ethnogonic Tales of the Turks', p. 308; Drompp, 'Strategies of Cohesion and Control', p. 443.

two-fold, by appropriating the already established divinity of the (pre-Göktürk) Xiongnu rulers, and by asserting their own divinity through the well-recognised motif of the wolf as a spirit animal. The contemporaries of the Uyghurs, such as the Basmils, the Khazars, and the Turgesh, also employed these themes in the legitimation of their rule to varying degrees.[93] The Khazars, whose rulers were possibly from the Ashina clan and held dominion over the western Eurasian steppe from the seventh to ninth centuries CE, further developed their own institution of sacral kingship to the point that the *qaghan* became a ceremonial figurehead separated from de facto rule.[94] When the Göktürk Empire was experiencing trouble, at least some of the Chinese Tang emperors, including Taizong (r. 626-649 CE) and Xuanzong (r. 712-756 CE), also adopted the title of *tian kehan*, the Chinese rendering of *tengri qaghan*, in addition to their traditional title of *huangdi*.[95] This was done to assert Chinese suzerainty over the nomadic world and was sometimes accompanied by actual physical rule over the neighbouring steppe tribes.[96]

The appearance of new religions did not detract from these recurrent ideological themes. The universalist, monotheistic religions of Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Manichaeism, and Islam were all accepted to varying degrees among the nomadic polities. Some examples include: the Khazars converting to Judaism in the eighth century CE; the Uyghurs converting to Manichaeism in the 760s CE and then to Buddhism in the ninth century; and the Qarakhanids, an amalgam of Qarluq, Tukhsi, Chigil, and Yaghma tribes, converting to Islam at about the same time as they formed their state in the mid-tenth century.[97] The role of the ruler as a *qaghan* invested with *qut* and charged with upholding the *törü* remained the same. The Jewish Khazar *qaghan*s are described by al-Mas'udi, a tenth century Muslim historian and geographer, as being the ones ultimately held responsible for the stability of the

[93] Golden, 'The Turk Imperial Tradition', pp. 48, 43.
[94] Ibid. 26-27, 46-47.
[95] Park, 'From Barbarians to the Middle Kingdom', pp. 28-30.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Anatoly Khazanov, 'The Spread of World Religions in Medieval Nomadic Societies of the Eurasian Steppes', in *Nomadic Diplomacy, Destruction and Religion from the Pacific to the Adriatic*, ed. Michael Gervers and Wayne Schlepp (Toronto: Joint Centre for Asia Pacific Studies, 1994) pp. 16-17, 19-21, 25; Richard Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road: Premodern Patterns of Globalization*, 2nd edn (New York: Palgrace Macmillan, 2010) pp. 97-98, 77, 79-80, 99-100.

state despite their, by that point, ceremonial nature.[98] The Manichaean missionaries, in their traditionally syncretic manner, utilised Turkic terminology to express Manichaean concepts while the converted Uyghur *qaghan* appended to his already long title the additional phrase *zahag 'i Mani*, "emanation of Mani".[99] One of the titles adopted by the Qarakhanid rulers was *ilak* (cognate of *ilig*) *qaghan* and they Persianised their origin myth by claiming descent from Afrasiyab, the legendary king of Turan (the non-Iranian steppe world).[100] The only major change to the nomadic polities was that, in addition to being multi-ethnic societies, they now became multi-religious societies as well. More importantly, the multiple religious communities were generally integrated into the state apparatus without a single one dominating to the exclusion of the others. For example, the Khazars had seven judges to prosecute laws for the various religious communities: two for Jews, two for Muslims, two for Christians, and one for pagans/shamanists.[101] Documents from the Uyghur state in the Tarim Basin demonstrate that Buddhists, Manichaeans, and Christians (and perhaps also Muslims) considered the *qaghan* to be their protector, while the Manichaean clergy retained their eminent position even after the rulers converted to Buddhism.[102] Even though the Qarakhanids sought to portray themselves as Islamic *ghazi*s (holy warriors),[103] they maintained trade and marriage relations with the non-Muslim states to the east and, of course, conversion to Islam did not result in the complete loss of pre-Islamic religious practices.[104]

Historians have recently posited a division between nomadic polities of the first millennium CE and those of the second millennium. Nicola Di Cosmo argues for a periodisation thus: tribute and trade-tribute empires from 209 BCE to 907 CE; and

[98] Peter B. Golden, *Khazar Studies: An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, vol. I (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980) p. 100.
[99] Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road*, p. 78; Drompp, 'Strategies of Cohesion and Control', p. 447.
[100] Michal Biran, 'Ilak-khanids', *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition (2012); Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, p. 214.
[101] Golden, *Khazar Studies*, p. 102.
[102] Peter Zieme, 'The West Uigur Kingdom: Views from Inside', *Horizons*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (2014) pp. 6-14, 18-24; Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road*, pp. 79-80.
[103] Jeff Eden, *Warrior Saints of Silk Road. Legends of the Qarakhanids* (Leiden: Brill, 2019) p. 11; Biran, 'Ilak-khanids'.
[104] Michal Biran, 'Qarakhanid Studies. A View from the Qara Khitai Edge', *Cahiers d'Asie centrale*, Vol. 9 (2001) pp. 79, 83.

dual-administration empires and direct-taxation empires from 907 to 1796 CE.[105] Michal Biran concurs, arguing that from the tenth century onward these new states began to rule over both nomadic and sedentary societies.[106] Sergey Vasyutin offers a more nuanced view of this transitional period but ultimately agrees that the tenth century was the point of transition.[107] The empire that epitomised this posited change was the Liao dynasty of Sinicised Khitans who ruled over the eastern steppe and northern China from the tenth to twelfth centuries CE. The Liao Empire conquered sedentary northern China, implemented separate administrations for the nomadic and sedentary territories, adopted Chinese cultural customs, employed Chinese administrators, and engaged in a program of urban construction and colonisation of the steppe.[108] The Liao dynasty was brought to an end by the Sinicised Jurchen Jin dynasty, while a group of Khitans established the Qara Khitai rump state to the west; both of these states are considered to be influenced by the Liao and therefore are part of this proposed transition, and both states were conquered by Chinggis Khan.[109]

The question of whether there was a transition between two types of steppe empire in the tenth century is important because it impinges on this thesis' argument that universal dominion was a key component of imperial steppe ideology. Implicit in the previous argument for periodisation is the suggestion that earlier nomadic empires claimed dominion only over the steppe and not the sedentary world. However, alongside the core elements of imperial steppe ideology as described above, there is enough evidence to demonstrate that some of the characteristics that have been described as Liao innovations were exhibited by pre-tenth century nomadic empires as expressions of their claim to universal dominion, that is, over both the nomadic and sedentary worlds. The Uyghurs engaged in urban

[105] Nicola Di Cosmo, 'State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History', *Journal of World History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1999) pp. 29-37.
[106] Biran, 'The Mongol Transformation', pp. 342-344.
[107] Sergey A. Vasyutin, 'The Model of the Political Transformation of the Da Liao as an Alternative to the Evolution of the Structures of Authority in the Early Medieval Pastoral Empires of Mongolia', in *Complexity of Interaction Along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE*, ed. by Jan Bemmann and Michael Schmauder (Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie, 2015) p. 414.
[108] Vasyutin, 'The Model of the Political Transformation of the Da Liao', pp. 416-419, 421-425.
[109] Biran, 'The Mongol Transformation', p. 344; Cosmo, 'State Formation and Periodization', pp. 32-33.

construction even before they overthrew the Göktürks, and the practice continued apace after the establishment of their empire.[110] In addition to urbanisation and the ruling of agrarian sedentary societies, the Uyghurs employed Sogdians (sedentary Central Asian Iranians) in their government, expanded trade infrastructure, and governed sedentary peoples in ways that progressed beyond the mere collection of tribute.[111] The Göktürks also ruled over considerable sedentary populations; Vasyutin contradicts his argument by pointing out that the western regions of the Göktürk Empire saw:

> Close ties between the nomadic and urban elites develop[ing], where control was effected over a significant part of the trading arteries of the Silk Road, where a growing complexity of economic and fiscal practices developed, and where new towns were founded and old ones grew.[112]

An example of this administrative complexity is demonstrated by Bactrian documents from northern Afghanistan, where local Iranian administrators working on the behalf of the Turks adopted traditionally Turkic titles and explicitly referred to Turkic governance of the region.[113] Furthermore, the Göktürks, similarly to the Uyghurs, also employed Sogdians at the centre of their empire.[114] These peoples were thus subjects of universal empires which claimed dominion over all. The failure of the Göktürks and Uyghurs to rule northern China as the Liao did, can be attributed to a combination of intra-dynastic warfare and Chinese military strength rather than an aversion to ruling over sedentary peoples.

The imperial steppe ideology up to the thirteenth century can be summarised as follows. A ruling clan of divine origin, an origin which usually involved lupine spirit

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[110] Vasyutin, 'The Model of the Political Transformation of the Da Liao', pp. 408; John Daniel Rogers, 'Inner Asian States and Empires: Theories and Synthesis', *Journal of Archaeological Research*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (2012) p. 227.
[111] Vasyutin, 'The Model of the Political Transformation of the Da Liao', pp. 409, 411.
[112] Ibid. 393.
[113] *Bactrian Documents from Northern Afghanistan I: Legal and Economic Documents*, trans. by Nicholas Sims-Williams, revised edition (London: Nour Foundation, 2012): Documents N, Nn, P, Q, S, T, Uu, and Y.
[114] Sören Stark, 'Aspects of Elite Representation among the Sixth- and Seventh-Century Türks', in *Empires and Exchanges In Eurasian Late Antiquity. Rome, China, Iran, and the Steppe, ca. 250-750*, ed. by Nicola Di Cosmo and Michael Maas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) p. 342.

animals, was invested with *qut* (heavenly good fortune). Possession of *qut* compelled the leader of this clan, who was usually titled *qaghan*, to impose his authority (*erk*) "everywhere where people live", while upholding customary tribal law (*törü*).[115] The appearance and embracing of new religions did not necessarily detract from the observance of *törü*. If the *qaghan* failed in his duty, for example by losing the sacred homeland of the ruling clan, he could be justifiably deposed and replaced with another from the divine ruling clan. From at least the time of the Göktürks onward (sixth century CE), all of the nomadic polities that aspired to more than mere tribal status adhered to this continuing imperial steppe ideology, including the Chinggisid Mongol Empire.

The Chinggisid Imperial Ideology

The internecine tribal warfare of the Mongol clans ultimately resulted in the unification of a large part of the eastern Eurasian steppe by Chinggis Khan (or rather, Temujin as he was known at the time) by 1206 CE, which in turn led to him being granted the title of *činggis qan*.[116] Unlike the Göktürks and the Uyghurs, but similarly to the Khitans, the disunited Mongol clans were not under the direct rule of a preceding nomadic empire. As the Chinggisid Mongols did not depose a ruling imperial clan, and therefore did not effectively inherit an empire, the question of why the Mongols (and also the Khitans) transitioned from a tribal confederation to an imperial nomadic empire must be asked. In agreement with Peter Golden, the answer adopted by this thesis is in the combination of the rising clan's military success - in this case the Kiyat-Borjigin for the Mongols - and the ever-present imperial steppe ideology which provided the explanation for such military success.[117] The military successes of the Yelü (Khitan dynasty) and the Kiyat-Borjigin in unifying the eastern Eurasian steppe demonstrated that they possessed *qut* (or *suu* in

[115] The quote is from the eighth century Orkhon stele inscriptions: Vasyutin, 'The Model of the Political Transformation of the Da Liao', p. 393.
[116] *The Secret History of the Mongols. A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*, trans. by Igor de Rachewiltz, vol. I (Leiden: Brill, 2004) p. 133; Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, p. 286.
[117] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, pp. 286-287.

Mongolian), compelling them to engage in the process of empire building and consequently to adopt the ever-present imperial ideology of the steppe.

The thirteenth century *Secret History of the Mongols* (*SHM*) offers an earlier native view of the imperial steppe ideology as expressed by the Chinggisids, as opposed to the later accounts recorded by the administrators drawn from the subject populations. The *SHM* begins with a statement on Chinggis Khan's origin: "At the beginning there was a blue-grey wolf, born with his destiny ordained by Heaven Above. His wife was a fallow doe."[118] On first appearance this is a continuation of the traditional steppe origin myth; it bears most resemblance to the Uyghur Yaghlakar clan origin, though with the Xiongnu princess replaced by a female deer. However, Tatiana Skrynnikova develops this by arguing that the two animals, wolf and doe, respectively represent the Turks and the Mongols.[119] Furthermore, the later ancestral unions of Chinggis Khan also consist of a male Turk and female Mongol.[120] In this way, the *SHM* presents Chinggis Khan as the unifier and rightful ruler of the two dominant populations of the eastern Eurasian steppe as a post-facto justification for his conquests.

With Chinggis Khan's possession of *qut*/*suu* affirmed by his military success, the *SHM* extends his dominion to include everybody else; at the Khan's coronation, before his apportionment of peoples to his followers, he declares "protected by Eternal Heaven, I am engaged in bringing the entire people under my sway … Divide up all the subject people and apportion them to [the Chinggisid family], splitting up those that live in felt-walled tents, separating those that live in dwellings with wooden doors."[121] The description of the scene does not confine itself to just the apportionment of the peoples who had been subjugated so far, but also describes the dispatch of further military expeditions.[122] This indicates that the "entire people" referred to was a claim to universal dominion rather than just those who were

[118] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, p. 1.
[119] Tatiana Skrynnikova, 'The Old Turkish Roots of Chinggis Khan's "Golden Clan". Continuity of Genesis. Typology of Power', in *Complexity of Interaction Along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE*, ed. by Jan Bemmann and Michael Schmauder (Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie, 2015) p. 623.
[120] Ibid. 626.
[121] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, p. 135.
[122] Ibid. 162-163.

already under Chinggis Khan's control, echoing the Göktürk Bilge Qaghan's exhortation "everywhere where people live, they are all subordinated to me".[123] Furthermore, when Jochi and Chagatai were arguing after their father's enthronement in 1206, the khan decided to separate their appanages, stating "*Mother Earth is wide*: its rivers and waters are many. Extending the camps that can be easily divided, We shall make each of you rule over a domain and We shall separate you."[124] Clearly the Mongols would need to expand their nascent empire beyond just Mongolia to provide territories and resources not just for Chinggis Khan's sons, but also for the rest of his clan as well. This corporate sovereignty of the nomadic clan, that is, the investment of *qut*/*suu* and the resulting right to rule being collective among the clan's members, was further expressed in the *SHM* for the Chinggisids. After his enthronement Chinggis Khan gave the following decree: "Divide up all the subject people and apportion them to Our mother, to Us, to Our younger brothers and sons".[125]

The requirement to uphold *törü*, or customary tribal law, was another imperial nomadic characteristic that was continued by the Chinggisid Mongols. Lhamsuren Munkh-Erdene argues that the *SHM* went to great effort to explain that Chinggis Khan's rise to power in Mongolia, especially his war against his former ally Ong Toghrul Khan of the Keraits, was conducted in accordance with *törü*.[126] The *SHM* does this by delineating the examples of when and how Temujin's enemies had betrayed him, thus forfeiting their favour from *Tengri* and therefore their right to rule.[127] Once Temujin had risen to supreme rule in Mongolia, he charged his adoptive brother/son Šigi Qutuqu with composing a "register [of] all decisions about the distribution and about the judicial matters of the entire population, [to] make it into a book" in collaboration with the Khan himself.[128] In his commentary, Igor de Rachewiltz notes that this register may be linked to the famous, and contested, *Yasa*

[123] Vasyutin, 'The Model of the Political Transformation of the Da Liao', p. 393.
[124] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, p. 187. Italicised emphasis is mine.
[125] Ibid. 135.
[126] Lhamsuren Munkh-Erdene, 'The Rise of the Chinggisid Dynasty: Pre-Modern Eurasian Political Order and Culture at a Glance', *International Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2018) pp. 39-84.
[127] Ibid. 43-47.
[128] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, pp. 135-136.

(law code) of Chinggis Khan,[129] though *törü* is described as a normative moral code by Lhamsuren Munkh-Erdene, from which more mundane aspects like tradition (*yosu*), law (*yasa*), and decrees (*yarliq*) were derived.[130] Furthermore, *törü* often appears in conjunction with *yosu* and *yasa*.[131] With this perspective in mind, whether or not Šigi Qutuqu's register was the *Yasa*, or an antecedent of it, is less important than the fact that it was a demonstration by Chinggis Khan of his commitment to upholding *törü*, just as the preceding empires did. The importance of the register was underlined by the khan's declaration: "Until the offspring of my offspring, let no one alter any of the blue writing … Anyone who alters it shall be guilty and liable to punishment" thus confirming its eternal and normative nature.[132]

Even during the early phase of the Chinggisid conquests, before the empire included large, religiously diverse subject populations, Chinggis Khan's governance demonstrated the inclusion of other religions that had already been exhibited by the earlier steppe empires. In Mongolia itself tribes such as the Keraits, Naimans, Merkits, and Onguts were already (Nestorian) Christian by the time of Chinggis' unification of the region.[133] Those tribes were integrated into the administration and married into the imperial clan.[134] The episode of the Baljuna Covenant of 1203, where Chinggis was at one of the lowest points in his career, provides further evidence of the traditional steppe inclusivity. The companions of the future khan were promised great reward upon his victory; among the companions were a Christian, two Muslims, and two Buddhists.[135] The Covenant being partially omitted from the *SHM* is argued by Christopher Atwood to have been motivated by anti-foreign sentiment on behalf of the author;[136] however another likely explanation is

[129] Ibid. 773-774.
[130] Munkh-Erdene, 'The Rise of the Chinggisid Dynasty' p. 70.
[131] Ibid.
[132] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, pp. 135-136.
[133] Ian Gillman and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Christians in Asia before 1500* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016) p. 229; Christopher P. Atwood, 'Validation by Holiness or Sovereignty: Religious Toleration as Political Theology in the Mongol World Empire of the Thirteenth Century', *The International History Review*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2004) p. 244.
[134] To be explored in a later chapter.
[135] Atwood, 'Validation by Holiness or Sovereignty', p. 244.
[136] Christopher P. Atwood, 'Baljuna Covenant', in *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 2004), p. 30.

potentially jealousy from the author who was not party to the event.[137] During the course of the early campaigns exemptions from taxes and certain other duties were granted to members of the clergy of the different religions after meetings between prominent clerics and Chinggis Khan. The granting of exemptions was not predicated on strict religious categories but rather on loyalty to the imperial clan: "[while] praying to Heaven, they are not to have difficulties imposed on them",[138] Heaven of course having invested Chinggis and his family with *qut*/*suu* and thus the right to universal rule.

Conclusion

Through the expression of titulature and lineage, their concept of law, the treatment of diverse religions, and the integration of sedentary populations into government where possible, the nomadic empires of the pre-Chinggisid Eurasian steppe demonstrated that they adhered to an imperial steppe ideology which held universal rule at its core. Consequently, when the Chinggisid dynasty rose to dominance on the eastern Eurasian steppe they were able to seamlessly embrace an already existing imperial steppe ideology which provided an explanation for their success and a blueprint for further expansion. The universalistic imperial steppe ideology therefore had an almost immediate influence on the prosecution of the Mongol Empire's policies.

[137] Until the author of the *SHM* is identified however, this remains conjecture. The authorship of the *SHM* will be discussed in the next chapter.
[138] Atwood, 'Validation by Holiness or Sovereignty', pp. 244-247.

Chapter 2: Administrators within the Imperial Steppe Ideology

Many polities are guided by governing ideologies; the previous chapter described the characteristics of the imperial steppe ideology of the nomadic empires and how it was continued by the Mongol Empire. This chapter will explore the structure and composition of the Mongol Empire's administration. The imperial steppe ideology of the empire was developed and expressed by the members of the administration, so it is necessary to understand their religious and cultural backgrounds and how they influenced the governing ideology which determined the empire's policies towards the Latin world. The chapter will first describe an outline of the imperial administration and will then explore its membership, expanding upon the current historiography by emphasising the ideological backgrounds of the individuals and the groups from which they originated. The chapter will do this by dividing the administrators into two main categories of individuals: those of a steppe background; and those from the sedentary world. Within the steppe category, there will be a discussion of: members of the Chinggisid dynasty, women, sons-in-law, 'commoners', and semi-sedentarised nomadic groups. Organising the individuals by their occupation in the imperial administration (bureaucrat, diplomat, general, and so on) as other studies have done would not be the best approach because in many cases the administrators fulfilled multiple roles and so cannot fit into neat classification.[139]

Structure of the Imperial Administration

The administration of the Mongol Empire was closely related to the military reforms that Chinggis Khan enacted upon his ascension as *qan* in 1206. The decimalisation of society within the empire which followed the reforms had profound consequences not only for military organisation, but also for the civilian administration and the

[139] See for example the various entries in the following volumes: *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz, et al (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1993); *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020).

bureaucracy which emerged. The tribes that were subject to Chinggis as of 1206 were divided into ninety-five units of a thousand households each (a *mingqan*) each led by a commander, some of whom commanded multiple *mingqad*.[140] Some of those *mingqad* were further grouped into units of ten thousand, named a *tumen*.[141] The fates of the integrated tribes varied: some retained their homogeneity in the new units, like the Qonggirats, Qorulas, and Jalayirs; while others were distributed between the units, like the Keraits, Merkits, and Naimans.[142] Anne Broadbridge points to previous arguments that the former category either had egalitarian tribal structures, had voluntarily submitted to Chinggisid rule, or their members had personally aided Chinggis, while the latter had prominent royal lineages of their own and were violently conquered and.[143]

The formalisation of the *keshig*, ostensibly a bodyguard detail for the *qan*, acted as a base for the future administration. As of the *quriltai* (council) of 1206 the *keshig* was comprised of ten thousand men drawn from the ninety-five *mingqad*, and were removed from the normal chain of command so that they were subordinate only to Chinggis: "My guards are of a higher standing than the outside commanders of a thousand … if [they] quarrel with them, We shall punish the leaders of a thousand."[144] The duties of the *keshig* members (the *keshigten*) extended beyond merely guarding the khan; they supervised the functioning of the royal household while also engaging in administrative and judicial matters.[145] In time, the Chinggisid princes established their own *keshig*s, often inheriting personnel from their father's *keshig*.[146] The sons and other relatives of the *keshigten* were recruited into the unit, resulting in a self-replenishing membership with shared interests. Even from the institution's beginning it was intended to be open to non-Mongols, as evidenced by its conscription-like recruitment and Chinggis' command

[140] *The Secret History of the Mongols. A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*, trans. by Igor de Rachewiltz, vol. I (Leiden: Brill, 2004) pp. 133-134; Timothy May, *The Mongol Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018) p. 77.
[141] May, *The Mongol Empire*, p. 77.
[142] Anne Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) p. 107.
[143] Ibid. 107, 110.
[144] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, p. 157.
[145] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, p. 160-162; May, *The Mongol Empire*, p.78.
[146]Thomas T. Allsen, 'Guard and Government in the Reign of the Gran Qan Möngke, 1251-59', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (1986) p. 507.

that "People who come to Us in order to learn to serve inside the tent by Our side shall not be hindered";[147] the "tent" perhaps being a metaphor for the new Mongol state. Michael Hope has identified the Kerait as using the *keshig*, while Christopher Atwood links the institution through the Kerait to the Khitan Liao dynasty who, as explained above, are considered by most historians to have espoused a universalistic imperial steppe ideology.[148] Thus the core of the Mongolian imperial administration was drawn from a pool of Mongol and non-Mongol individuals whose careers and livelihoods depended on service to the Chinggisid dynasty.

The administrative positions of the Mongol Empire were many and experienced evolution throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, yet there were some which remained reasonably consistent. The *tammachi* was a commander of a unit of men (a *tamma*) drawn from the *mingqad* and acted as a temporary military governor of recently conquered territories.[149] The *tammachi* was invariably accompanied by a *daruqachi*, an overseer, who would supervise the transition to a civilian administration and thus allow the *tamma* to move on to new conquests.[150] The *daruqachi* would remain in place and act as either a governor or a mediator between the local government, comprising native dynasties and Mongol-appointed bureaucrats, and the central Mongol government.[151] The *daruqachi* was assisted by bureaucrats, chief among whom was the *jarquchi*, judges who also oversaw the census and tax collection; in some cases the same individual held both positions of *daruqachi* and *jarquchi*.[152] The position of *daruqachi* reportedly originated in the Liao dynasty and was retained by its rump Qara Khitai state, thus providing a clear succession of its usage to the Chinggisid Mongol Empire.[153]

Parallel to the regular administration of the Mongol Empire was the system of appanages. In accordance with imperial steppe ideology, the empire was

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[147] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, pp. 153-154.
[148] Michael Hope, *Power, Politics, and Tradition in the Mongol Empire and the Ilkhanate of Iran* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) p. 37; Christopher P. Atwood, '*Keshig*', in *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 2004), p. 297. See the previous chapter for more information on Khitan imperialism.
[149] May, *The Mongol Empire*, pp. 80-81.
[150] Ibid. 83-84.
[151] May, *The Mongol Empire*, pp. 83-84.
[152] Ibid. 83-84; Atwood, '*Jarghuchi*', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 264.
[153] May, *The Mongol Empire*, p. 83.

considered to be a possession of the ruling dynasty as a whole. From the empire's establishment in 1206, subject peoples were assigned to the princes, female relatives (sisters, wives, and mother Hoelun), and brothers of Chinggis Khan. The apportionment was soon extended to cities and other sedentary territories. In addition to this familial corporate nature of rule, the appanages (*inju*) were to provide revenue to the family members; the khan himself held a personal appanage separate from the regularly administered territory.[154] In addition to the appanages owned by individuals, were appanages owned collectively by the princes (*qubi*).[155] There was a concerted effort by the central government to distribute apportionments throughout the empire, rather than concentrate them too regionally. For example, even though Jochi and his branch of the family have become associated with the western Eurasian steppe and the Golden Horde/Kipchak Khanate, they also owned territory as far afield as China.[156] Combined with the regular movement of the subject nomadic - and sometimes sedentary – peoples across the empire, the appanage system attempted to ensure that the members of the royal dynasty held a vested interest in cooperation and maintaining the unity of the empire. Despite conflict and the often-alleged dissolution of the empire in 1260, revenues from disparate appanages continued to circulate among the royal princes.[157]

In order to cohesively administer such a large expanse with varying levels of administration, the central government established a relay and postal system known as the *jam*; it is argued to have been a continuation from the Jurchen Jin dynasty.[158] The *jam* consisted of a network of stations furnished with horses and staff, operated by the army and paid for with the taxes from local populations, usually a household which was assigned to the station.[159] Roads, bridges, and ferries were constructed

[154] May, *The Mongol Empire*, p. 92.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Yihao Qiu, 'Independent Ruler, Indefinable Role: Understanding the History of the Golden Horde from the Perspectives of the Yuan Dynasty', La Horde d'Or et l'islamisation des steppes eurasiatiques, *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, No. 143 (2018) para. 12.
[157] Hodong Kim, 'The Unity of the Mongol Empire and Continental Exchanges over Eurasia', *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 1 (2009) p. 33.
[158] Márton Vér, *The postal system of the Mongol Empire in northeastern Turkestan* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Szeged, 2016) p. 43.
[159] George Lane, *Daily Life in the Mongol Empire* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006) p. 121.

and maintained to enhance the efficiency of the system.[160] Only individuals with official tablets of authority (*paiza*) were to use the *jam*, though unsurprisingly abuse occurred and was followed by subsequent attempts at reform.

Administrators from a Steppe Background

The Mongolians themselves, especially the Chinggisid family, were at the heart of their empire's administration.[161] As explained in the previous chapter, the divine right to rule (*qut* or *suu*) was conferred on the royal dynasty as a whole. This corporate sovereignty ensured that, besides the primary rulers of the empire and its appanages, family members were deeply involved in the administering of the empire. Of Tatar origin Šigi Qutuqu, adoptive brother/son of Chinggis Khan and potential author of the *Secret History of the Mongols*, was one of the most prominent officials of the early empire. His storied career included his appointment as chief judge and chief scribe, and his participation in the campaigns against the Khwarazmshahs of Central Asia; after Chinggis Khan's death, Šigi Qutuqu was further involved in the conquest of the Jurchen Jin dynasty and was appointed chief judge of northern China by Ögedei Khan.[162] The case for Šigi Qutuqu being the author of the *SHM* becomes stronger when considering the source's content concerning him and its confused chronology. Claims of his noble lineage, the young age at which he achieved his positions, the denigration or omission of his later rivals, and his supposed involvement in the rescue of Tolui all indicate the author's strong disposition towards Šigi Qutuqu.[163] Of particular relevance to this thesis is the ideological viewpoint of Šigi Qutuqu and the *SHM*; that is to say, a traditional or 'conservative' view of the imperial steppe ideology. For example, when Chinggis sought to revoke his paternal uncle's appanage Šigi Qutuqu and others protested,

[160] Atwood, '*Jam*', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 259.
[161] Previous historiography had portrayed the Mongols as just a "passive medium" for the material and cultural exchange which their empire engendered. For a survey of the changes in the historiography see Michal Biran, 'The Mongol Empire: The State of the Research', *History Compass*, Vol. 11, No. 11 (2013) p. 1021.
[162] Atwood, 'Qutuqu, Shigi', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 464.
[163] Paul Ratchnevsky, 'Šigi Qutuqu', in *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz, et al (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1993), pp. 75-79.

claiming that it would be "like extinguishing one's own hearth-fire [and] destroying one's own tent."[164] The emphasis here is on the inviolability of the royal dynasty.

However, as argued in this thesis, the imperial steppe ideology already exhibited a claim to universal dominion prior to the Mongol Empire's establishment. In the light of this argument, Šigi Qutuqu's attitude and actions towards the sedentary world requires further analysis, as does his common description of belonging to the 'traditional' faction of Mongolians. When Chinggis Khan asked his adoptive relative in 1206 what reward he thought he deserved, Šigi Qutuqu requested governance over the sedentary population.[165] Under previous historiographical assumptions on the territorial extent of the imperial steppe ideology, Šigi Qutuqu's request would appear to be innovative. However, as universal rule was not a Mongol innovation, the request from a literate Mongolian administrator does not appear out of place. During his tenure as the chief scribe of northern China Šigi Qutuqu was responsible for completing the census of 1235-1236 which held a lasting influence on the Mongolian administration of China; contemporary opinions on the census and the subsequent taxation were mixed, as is to be expected for such a significant policy.[166] The administration which Šigi Qutuqu presided over included people from Turkic-Mongolic and Chinese backgrounds, as was common practice among previous nomadic empires.[167] Furthermore, Šigi Qutuqu established relations with the prominent Chinese Buddhist monk Haiyun and the Taoist Li Zhichang (protégé of the more famous Changchun) which resulted in the increased influence of their respective religious establishments at the Mongol court.[168] While Šigi Qutuqu certainly appears to have been a traditionalist, the exact definition of Mongol traditionalism must take into account the imperial steppe ideology's already inclusive nature as a means to achieving universal dominion.

The women of the royal dynasty, whether they entered the dynasty through birth or marriage, also played a pivotal role in the empire's administration. However even with the relatively more egalitarian environment of the Eurasian steppe, the

[164] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, p. 167; Ratchnevsky, 'Šigi Qutuqu', p. 80.
[165] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, p. 136.
[166] Ratchnevsky, 'Šigi Qutuqu', p. 88.
[167] Ibid. 93.
[168] Ibid. 87, 89.

extent of female presence in the administration remains obfuscated in the male-dominated sources. After Chinggis Khan's enthronement in 1206 and during the subsequent apportionment of appanages and titles, the *Secret History* for example has a very brief statement of "Let Us reward our female offspring!", followed by a lacuna in the text.[169] Igor de Rachewiltz suggests a factional dispute as the cause for the omission of detail.[170] If Šigi Qutuqu or his partisans were indeed the authors of the *SHM*, it would be prudent to note that Chinggis Khan's adoptive relative was for a time given to Sorqaqtani, who inherited the appanage of her husband Tolui after his death in 1232.[171] As such Šigi Qutuqu was, in theory at least, subject to Tolui's widow. Given the aggrandising nature of the *SHM* towards Šigi Qutuqu, it is certainly conceivable that Šigi Qutuqu would diminish the role of all prominent women if it would result in the further embellishment of his own prestige.

The aforementioned Sorqaqtani was powerful enough of a figure in the empire to rise above attempted obfuscation of her activities. As the niece of Ong Toghrul Khan of the Keraits, Sorqaqtani was given in marriage to Chinggis Khan's youngest son Tolui.[172] The Keraits had been the preeminent tribe of the Mongolian region of the eastern Eurasian steppe just prior to the Chinggisid rise and so could have transitioned from leading a tribal confederation to establishing an imperial nomadic empire if events had transpired differently, just as other tribes had previously done and would continue to do so. The members of the Kerait therefore were bearers of the same imperial steppe ideology as the Chinggisid Kiyat-Borjigin. The entry of women like Sorqaqtani into the royal family were thus reinforcing elements of the imperial steppe ideology. When Ögedei Khan attempted to arrange a marriage between his son Güyük and Sorqaqtani, the latter refused stating:

> How is it possible to alter the *yarlïgh* [of Chinggis Khan]? and yet my thought is only to bring up these children until they reach the stage of manhood and independence, and to try to make them well mannered and *not liable to go*

[169] *The Secret History of the Mongols*, p. 148
[170] Ibid. 807
[171] Ratchnevsky, 'Šigi Qutuqu', p. 85.
[172] Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, p. 197.

apart and hate each other so that, perhaps, some great thing may come of their unity.[173]

Bruno De Nicola correctly points out that Sorqaqtani's refusal demonstrates both her great influence and her long-term plan to enthrone her son Möngke.[174] However, a further explanation is the widow's faithful adherence to imperial steppe ideology: the recognition that *qut*/*suu* was invested in the royal dynasty as a whole, and the desire to see corporate, fraternal relations maintained so as to prolong the longevity of the empire. Given that Sorqaqtani had witnessed the familial strife that contributed to the Kerait's conquest by Chinggis Khan,[175] it is doubtful that she would want to see the process repeat itself for her new family. Broadbridge on the other hand disagrees, ascribing malicious and treasonous motives to Sorqaqtani's wish to remain single.[176] Moreover, Sorqaqtani, like most of the Kerait, was a Nestorian Christian and yet she upheld the non-exclusive nature of steppe religiosity, which itself was a key component of the imperial steppe ideology. Her many donations to Islamic clergy and the poor, including the funding of the construction of a major madrasa in Bukhara, garnered her much praise from Islamic authors.[177] This was in addition to her patronage of her fellow Christians.[178]

Sorqaqtani was not the only wife brought in from the Kerait tribe. Tolui was also given Doquz, a granddaughter of Ong Toghril Khan, while Sorqaqtani's sisters Begtütmish and Ibaqa married, respectively, Jochi and Chinggis Khan himself.[179] The Keraits continued to provide wives throughout the so-called successor khanates, especially so in the Ilkhanate. Their importance in the latter khanate was mostly due to the efforts of Doquz, who was married off to Tolui's son Hulegu; though she remained childless, Doquz used her resources to marshal her relatives into positions

[173] Rashid al-Din Hamadani, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, trans. by John Andrew Boyle (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971) p. 169. Italicised emphasis is mine.
[174] Bruno De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran: The Khatuns, 1206-1335* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017) p. 73.
[175] Atwood, 'Kereyid', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 296.
[176] Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, p. 198.
[177] De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran*, p. 211; Rashid al-Din, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, p. 200.
[178] De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran*, pp. 211-212.
[179] Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, pp. 80-81. Ibaqa was later, for reasons that are unclear, given to one of Chinggis' prominent commanders: see Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, pp. 81-83.

of authority.[180] Later in the thirteenth century, the ilkhan Arghun's Kerait wife Örüg outcompeted her rivals by producing five children, winning her an *ordo* (camp) with which she was able to peddle influence and patronage.[181] As the previous examples suggest, the Kerait wives having control of their own *ordo*s, and sometimes appanages, were able to remain at the forefront of imperial politics and administration while reinforcing the imperial steppe ideology.

The Kerait were of course not the only, nor even the primary, steppe tribe to furnish wives for the Kiyat-Borjigin. Some tribes, like the Ongut and the Naiman, were also Christian like the Kerait.[182] Alongside the traditional non-exclusivity of religious practice, Christianity was a significant part of the identity of some of these tribes. Previous Kerait rulers, for example, used overtly Christian names such as Marqus (Marcus) and Qurjaqus (Cyriacus) appended to the Turkic Buyruq.[183] The Kerait are purported to have converted to Christianity in the early eleventh century due to a vision from Saint Sergius. This conversion narrative is based on the evidence of the thirteenth century Syriac bishop Bar Hebraeus and was perhaps influenced by the Kerait's prominence in the Middle Eastern portion of the Mongol Empire at the time of his writing; however Atwood has argued persuasively that the converted tribe in question was in fact the Ongut, leading to the popularity of names such as Ioqanan (John), Sirgis (Sergius), and Körgis (George).[184] The earlier Arabic source Atwood uses goes into further detail into how the Nestorian Church of the East granted the converts a dispensation to continue using fermented mare's milk for the Eucharist until such a time that they were able to procure wine.[185] The women who were married into the Chinggisid dynasty carried this Christian-inflected imperial steppe ideology with them. In addition to the aforementioned Kerait wives, other prominent wives of Christian background included: Töregene, wife of Ögedei and regent of the whole empire (1241-1246), previously married into the Merkits and

[180] Ibid. 269-271.
[181] Ibid. 279-280.
[182] Ian Gillman and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Christians in Asia before 1500* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016) pp. 229-230.
[183] Atwood, 'Kereyid', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 296.
[184] Christopher P. Atwood, 'Historiography and transformation of ethnic identity in the Mongol Empire: the Ong'ut case', *Asian Ethnicity*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (2014) pp. 516-517.
[185] Ibid. 517-518, 519-520.

possibly of Naiman origin;[186] Gürbesü, wife of Chinggis and previously married to two Naiman rulers;[187] and Nuqdan, wife of ilkhan Abaqa and mother of Gaikhatu, of Tatar origin.[188] As will be argued in later chapters, this noticeable Christian identity among select Mongol tribes may have influenced later popular narratives surrounding Prester John and the Mongol Empire as a whole.

Some of these wives reached the pinnacle of power in the Mongol Empire. The previously mentioned Töregene acted as the regent of the empire after her husband Ögedei's death in 1241, and reigned until the election of her son Güyük in 1246. After the death of Güyük in 1248, his wife Oghul Qaimish reigned as regent until the election of Möngke in 1251. Both of the wives were of Merkit origin, a tribe which was often in conflict with Chinggis' Kiyat-Borjigin. Furthermore, the Merkit had close historical contact with the Kerait, the preeminent tribe just prior to Chinggis Khan's conquests, and the Khitan Liao dynasty and their Qara Khitai offshoot.[189] The Merkit tribe were thus familiar with the imperial steppe ideology which had an enduring presence in the region. The reigns of Töregene and Oghul Qaimish are treated poorly in the relevant, mostly Middle Eastern and Chinese sources, but that can be attributed to the Toluid sympathies of the sources; after all, the descendants of Tolui were the ones who won the factional struggle for imperial succession and engaged in a purge of their Ögedeid opponents.[190] The de facto ruler of the Chagataid branch's Central Asian territory for an approximately fifteen year period in the 1250s and 60s was Orqina, granddaughter of Chinggis on the maternal side and paternal granddaughter of the last Oirat leader Qutuqa Beki.[191] Orqina was able to exercise power by being married to two official rulers of the *ulus* (territory), Qara-Hulegu and Alghu, and acting as regent for a third, her son Mubarak Shah. Indeed, De Nicola argues that Alghu's marriage to Orqina is what provided him with

[186] Though Broadbridge is sceptical of the Naiman origin. See: Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, p. 167, n. 16.
[187] Ibid. 89-92.
[188] Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, p. 271; James D. Ryan, 'Christian Wives of Mongol Khans: Tartar Queens and Missionary Expeditions in Asia', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1998) p. 417.
[189] Atwood, 'Merkid', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 347.
[190] Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, pp. 165-166; De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran*, pp. 66, 72.
[191] De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran*, p. 82.

the legitimacy to rule despite the fact that he was a Chagataid.[192] At about the same time in the so-called Golden Horde, the death of Jochi's son Batu, and the very short reign of his son Sartaq, resulted in the regency of Batu's principal wife Boraqchin, of Tatar origin.[193] Like Orqina's regency, that of Boraqchin was given official grant by the *qa'an* Möngke.[194] In addition to these high-profile regencies, the importance of Chinggis' principal wife Börte and his mother Hoelun's involvement in the governing of the early empire cannot be overstated and has been covered extensively elsewhere.[195] Thus, the wives who governed the Mongol Empire on equal terms with their husbands originated from tribes which shared the imperial steppe ideology of the Kiyat-Borjigin and additionally shared in the corporate *qut*/*suu* of the *altan urug*, the Golden Lineage, of the Chinggisid family when they married into it.

Alongside the wives of the Chinggisid men, were the Chinggisid daughters. Within the sources the most visible purpose of the daughters was to bring new men – that is, generals and administrators - into the dynasty through marriage. Broadbridge has outlined two waves of incorporation through marriage: the first, from 1190 to 1206, focused on nearby Mongolian tribes; the second wave of 1208 to 1211 on Turkic tribes and states further afield.[196] The first wave saw daughters married into the Ikires, Olqunu'ut, Qonggirat, Uru'ut, and Baya'ut tribes and clans.[197] Like the Kiyat-Borjigin, these small tribes would have been exposed to the imperial steppe ideology through their relationships with the larger political entities of the region, and thus have had a similar understanding of the ideology to the Chinggisids. The second wave of marriages brought the Onguts, Oirats, Uyghurs, and Qarluqs into the Mongol Empire.[198] The Syriac Christian-influenced identity of the Ongut has already been described above. The Oirats were a large but diverse tribe who submitted peacefully to the Chinggisids while under the leadership of Qutuqa Beki. The Uyghurs of course had their own significant imperial history and, as argued

[192] Ibid.
[193] De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran*, p. 80; Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, p. 256.
[194] De Nicola, *Women in Mongol Iran*, p. 81.
[195] For example: Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, pp. 43-72.
[196] Ibid. 138-147.
[197] Ibid. 138-139.
[198] Ibid. 140-145.

previously, continued to maintain their pretensions to the imperial steppe ideology long after the end of their empire. The Qarluqs had been at the forefront of the establishment of the Qarakhanid state which had incorporated Perso-Islamic themes into their own conception of the imperial steppe ideology. Furthermore, the Qarluqs, and the Qarakhanids at large, had been subject to the imperial Qara Khitai dynasty prior to their incorporation into the Mongol Empire. The sons-in-law, or *kürgen*, of these tribes were either integrated into the command structure of the new military-decimalisation of imperial society, or granted command of special auxiliary units; Broadbridge highlights the importance of the in-laws receiving latitude in the command and organisation of their soldiers.[199] She further argues that the creation of a network of marriage alliances/vassals influenced Chinggis to conquer the Tangut Xi Xia and Jurchen Jin dynasties.[200] Hope has pointed out that every Oirat prince bore the title of *küregen*.[201] Consequently, many of these tribes gained almost-official status as consort-families (*quda*) which continued to supply husbands and wives, and thus personnel, to the Chinggisid dynasty for generations to come.[202]

The daughters themselves were just as closely involved in administering the empire as both their husbands and the wives of the Chinggisid princes. A prominent example was Alaqa, the daughter of Chinggis who was married into the Ongut tribe. Through marriage to three successive Ongut rulers, Alaqa emerged as the effective ruler of Ongut territory, a position she used to support the military campaign against the Jin dynasty.[203] Given the regularity with which the *kürgen* held commands in the expansionist campaigns, it is likely that Alaqa was not the only Chinggisid daughter to govern her husband's land while they were away at war. The familial corporate aspect of the imperial steppe ideology which was common among the Mongol and Turkic tribes, combined with the regular involvement of women in governance makes it all but certain that the Chinggisid daughters acted as regents and rulers when necessary. On the other hand, it was common for wives to accompany their husbands on campaign, whether they were involved in planning, organisation,

[199] Ibid. 110, 115-124.
[200] Ibid. 143-144, 145-146.
[201] Hope, *Power, Politics, and Tradition*, p. 40.
[202] Some of these tribes based their own claims to imperial legitimacy on their Chinggisid *quda* status.
[203] Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, pp. 149-150.

logistics, or combat.[204] The extreme example of a Chinggisid daughter's involvement in warfare was Qutulun, the daughter of the Ögedeid prince Qaidu who engaged in a long-term conflict with Qubilai Khan. Qutulun is considered to be a rarity for her role as a female general who regularly took part in combat.[205] While the extent of Qutulun's involvement may be an exception, the familial corporatism of the imperial steppe ideology ensured that the daughters of the royal dynasty, invested with *qut*/*suu*, played an important role in the empire's military conflicts. Like the wives, the Chinggisid daughters also engaged in the religious patronage that was a result of the non-exclusive nature of steppe religion. Öljei, the daughter of the ilkhan Arghun, for example financed the construction of a *khānaqāh* (Sufi lodge) at her father's burial site even though he personally was inclined to Buddhism.[206]

Within the imperial administration, but separate from the sphere of the Chinggisid royal dynasty, were the 'commoners' (*qarachu*) of the Mongolian and Turkic world; they also were integral to the governing of the empire.[207] The thirteenth and fourteenth century Ilkhanid Persian vizier Rashid al-Din Hamadani compiled a list of fifty-four commanders (or more accurately officials) of Qubilai's court in his *Shu'ab-i panjgāna*.[208] Even though Qubilai has earned a reputation of being too Sinophilic, only two of the fifty-four officials were Chinese; forty were Mongols and six or seven were Turkic.[209] Some of the listed individuals were *kürgen* and many others were *keshig* commanders. As already stated in the introduction to this chapter the administrators served in multiple roles, both civilian and military, aptly demonstrated by Hodong Kim's table sorting the officials by their role and appearance in other sources.[210] The 'commoners' also acted as governors of large

[204] Ibid. 137-138.
[205] Michal Biran, 'Qutulun: The Warrior Princess of Mongol Central Asia', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) p. 75. Qutulun's modern fame is such that she appeared in Netflix's *Marco Polo* series as a love interest for the titular character.
[206] Bruno De Nicola, 'Patrons or *Murīd*s? Mongol Women and Shaykhs in Ilkhanid Iran and Anatolia', *Iran*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (2014) p. 148.
[207] 'Commoner' being defined in relation to the Chinggisid dynasty, not reflective of the individual's social background.
[208] Hodong Kim, 'Qubilai's Commanders (*Amīr*s): A Mongol Perspective', *Archivum Euarasiae Medii Aevi*, Vol. 21 (2014-2015) p. 148.
[209] Ibid. 149-151.
[210] Ibid. 156-157.

territories. Prior to Hulegu's establishment of the Ilkhanate, the entire Middle Eastern territory of the empire (including Iran) was governed by a succession of Mongolian 'commoners' of whom Chormaqan, Baiju, and Arghun Aqa were the most prominent.[211] Originating from tribes in close proximity to the Kiyat-Borjigin, these 'commoners' would have had a comparable understanding of the imperial steppe ideology, especially after they were incorporated into the Chinggisid empire. In Hope's thesis of patrimonialism versus collegialism, these 'commoners' often adhered to the collegial interpretation of imperial steppe ideology; those who sought to protect the paramount status of the companions of Chinggis (the *nököt*) and their descendants not only in sharing in the bounty of the empire but also having a say over its policies.[212] Of course, if their Chinggisid patron rose to power over an *ulus* the associated 'commoners' would agitate for more centralisation of government power; in other words, moving to the the patrimonialist position.[213] Some commoners came from even further afield. The Qipchaqs of the western Eurasian steppe proliferated throughout Eurasia in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in what has even been called a "Qipchaq moment".[214] Numerous Qipchaqs entered the service of the Mongol Empire, including a certain Banducha, his son Tuqtuqa, and their family who reached the height of influence in the Chinggisid Chinese territories right until the reign of the last Yuan emperor.[215] Unlike many of the Turkic polities examined in this dissertation, the Qipchaqs did not establish a centralising empire which espoused the characteristic elements of the imperial steppe ideology. Instead they appear to have remained a loose confederation of tribes despite covering a vast expanse of the Eurasian steppe and being in regular contact with the Khazars, who certainly did promulgate clear ideological pretensions.[216]

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[211] George Lane, 'Arghun Aqa: Mongol Bureaucrat', *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (1999) pp. 459-482.
[212] Hope, *Power, Politics, and Tradition*, p. 3.
[213] Ibid. 3-4.
[214] Vered Shurany, 'Tuqtuqa and His Descendants: Cross-Regional Mobility and Political Intrigue in the Mongol Yuan Army', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) p. 121. For further discussion on the interchangeability of the terms Cuman and Qipchaq, see: István Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars: Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185-1365* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) pp. 4-9.
[215] Shurany, 'Tuqtuqa and His Descendants', pp. 123-131.
[216] See the previous chapter.

Throughout the various groups so far discussed were nomads with an imperial history who had sedentarised to some degree. The Khitan Liao dynasty was a prominent example. Following the Liao dynasty's conquest by the Jurchen Jin dynasty, some of the imperial Yelü clan escaped west to establish the Qara Khitai state while others entered the employ of the new Jin dynasty. Of the latter group, the brothers Yelü Ahai and Yelü Tuhua defected to Chinggis Khan's service relatively early in his career (prior to his enthronement as *qan* in 1206).[217] The brothers, and their sons, fought in the Chinggisid military campaigns and helped to establish the new imperial administration in northern China and Central Asia.[218] A distant relative, Yelü Chucai, entered Chinggisid employ later and became governor of northern China during Ögedei's reign.[219] Alongside their personal preference for Buddhism and the collective memory of the imperial steppe ideology, the urban Yelü clan members were versed in Confucian and Taoist attitudes towards the state and governance.[220] Members of the Western Liao (Qara Khitai) state also served in the Chinggisid administration, but it was Baraq Hajib, the man who escaped the Qara Khitai's conquest, who provides a more informative narrative to analyse.[221] A member of the Yelü clan, Baraq Hajib moved to Kirman (in southern Iran) where he took control of the region, converted to Islam, and gained the recognition of both the Abbasid Caliph and the newly-arrived Mongol authorities.[222] The dynasty which was established, the Qutlugh Khanids, was able to retain control of Kirman for the rest of the thirteenth century through pragmatic politicking and marriage alliances with the Chinggisid family; for example, Baraq Hajib married one of his daughters to Chagatai, and later Padishah Khatun, one of the Qutlugh Khanid rulers, was married

[217] Paul D. Buell, 'Yeh-lü A-hai, Yeh-lü T'u-hua', in *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz, et al (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1993), p. 114.
[218] Ibid. 115-118.
[219] Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-lü Ch'u Ts'ai, Yeh-lü Chu', in in *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz, et al (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1993), p. 136.
[220] Buell, 'Yeh-lü A-hai, Yeh-lü T'u-hua', pp. 112, 119-120, 136, 139.
[221] Michal Biran, 'The Qara Khitai', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*, online edition (2020).
[222] George Lane, *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Iran: A Persian Renaissance* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003) p. 103.

to the ilkhans Abaqa and Gaikhatu.[223] In addition to the Buddhism, Chinese-influenced attitudes, and the imperial steppe ideology, the Western Liao officials in Mongol service were further influenced by Perso-Islamic attitudes not just from western (Islamic) Central Asia which they ruled, but also from the much deeper immersion which the Qutlugh Khanid branch experienced after their relocation to Iran. The Uyghurs were also a semi-sedentarised group with their own imperial history. As already described, the ruling dynasty of the Uyghurs were joined in marriage with the Chinggisids and played an important role in the early expansionist campaigns; the Uyghur *idiqut* Barchuk Art Tegin married Chinggis' daughter Al Altan.[224] It was other Uyghurs who had a greater direct impact on the empire however. Even before the Chinggisid unification of Mongolia, Uyghurs were employed as scribes and tutors among the preeminent tribes of the region.[225] Two of the most important Uyghur scribes – and administrators - for the early Mongol Empire were Tatar-Tung'a and Chinqai, the latter a Nestorian Christian.[226] Alongside their promotion of the Uyghur script for written Mongolian, the Uyghur officials acted as bearers of the imperial steppe ideology, especially in its attitude towards the existence of multiple religions.

Administrators from a Sedentary Background

On the other hand, the Chinggisid Mongol Empire also recruited into its administration officials from a wholly sedentary background. The empire ruled over most of Asia and part of Eastern Europe, and thus had a large and diverse pool of talent to employ. Additionally, there were those individuals from outside of the empire who, due to specific circumstances, found themselves in the service of the Mongolian rulers. Of particular interest to this dissertation are the Muslims of Central Asia and the Middle East, and the Armenian, Georgian, and Syriac Christians of the Near and Middle East. Their importance is due to the direct and sustained

[223] Ibid. 97, 104, 109-110.
[224] Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, pp. 119-121.
[225] Atwood, 'Uighurs', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 563.
[226] Paul D. Buell, 'Činqai', in *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz, et al (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1993), p. 96.

contact with the Latin world prior to the Mongols' arrival. Within Hope's schema of patrimonialism versus collegialism, government officials of a sedentary background were mostly supporters of the patrimonial position.[227] They were outsiders to the Turkic-Mongolian military aristocracy and thus without those bases of political power to call upon their best chances of career security and progression was to attach themselves to Chinggisid dynasts and state administration in general.

East Asia was the closest of the sedentary worlds to Chinggisid-ruled Mongolia and had been a source of constant cross-cultural interaction. The Mongols conquered China in stages during the thirteenth century, throughout which numerous Chinese officials found themselves in Mongol service, sometimes through defection. Chinese officials such as Wang Chi, Yang Wei-chung, and Yang Huan entered Mongolian service early in their careers and thrived during the early stages of the Mongol Empire.[228] Likewise, generals such as Guo Kan and Yang Tingbi experienced illustrious careers on behalf of the Mongols not just in China, but further west throughout Asia.[229] The Chinese administrators were steeped in notions of ordered, meritocratic Confucian government and a universalist Mandate of Heaven which theoretically considered "all under heaven" to be subjects of the Chinese emperor.[230] Some of the personnel had been immersed in such attitudes through generations of government service: Guo Kan allegedly descended from a famous eighth century general of the Tang dynasty; Yang Huan also had an ancestor in Tang government employ.[231] The political supremacy of the Khitan Liao dynasty

[227] Hope, *Power, Politics, and Tradition*, pp. 3-4, 146, 166.
[228] For more detail see: C. A. Peterson, 'Wang Chi', in *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz, et al (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1993), pp. 176-184; H. L. Chan, 'Yang Wei-chung', in *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz, et al (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1993), pp. 185-194; H. L. Chan, 'Yang Huan', in in *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz, et al (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1993), pp. 195-207.
[229] For more detail see: Florence Hodous, 'Guo Kan: Military Exchanges between China and the Middle East', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) pp. 27-43; Masaki Mukai and Francesca Fiaschetti, 'Yang Tingbi: Mongol Expansion along the Maritime Silk Roads', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) pp. 83-101.
[230] Lin Hang, 'Political reality and cultural superiority: Song China's attitude toward the Khitan Liao', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (2018) p. 388.
[231] Hodous, 'Guo Kan', p. 28; Chan, 'Yang Huan', p. 195.

however cast doubt on the universalist aspirations of a Chinese-centric empire. In the contemporaneous Song dynasty (960-1276), the Chinese administration went to great effort to ensuring that no diplomatic blunders threatened their peace with the Liao, excising the usage of derogatory terms like 'barbarian' from official discourse as much as possible.[232] On the other hand, the administrators also began to compensate for the Song's lack of political and military prowess by instead emphasising Chinese cultural superiority and the apparent assimilation of the steppe nomads into Chinese culture.[233] The new Chinese ideological paradigm continued towards the Jurchen Jin dynasty, whom the Song were also practically subservient to, thus preparing the Chinese for service in the Chinggisid Mongol administration.

The Muslims of Central Asia and the Middle East became an integral component of the imperial bureaucracy. In addition to the previously mentioned Muslim steppe nomads and semi-sedentarised Turks, were the sedentary urban Islamic populations. Some of the personnel entering Mongol service had long generational histories of employment in the administrations of preceding dynasties, such as the Juvaini and Malikan families.[234] After the execution of the Abbasid Caliph, there was for a few years considerable continuity of government in Baghdad, including the retention of the caliph's vizier ibn al-Alqami.[235] Others, such as Mahmud Yalavach and his son Mas'ud, Ja'far Khwāja, and the al-Tibi family, originated from backgrounds in the vibrant trans-continental trade network.[236] As already described, the *keshig* functioned as a producer of skilled and loyal

[232] Lin, 'Political reality and cultural superiority', pp. 392-394.
[233] Ibid. 398-401.
[234] Ata-Malik Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, trans. by John Andrew Boyle, vol. 1 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958) pp. xv-xvi; Daniel Zakrzewski, 'Malik Ṣadr al-Dīn Tabrīzī and the Establishment of Mongol Rule in Iran', *In the Service of the Khans: Elites in Transition in Mongol Eurasia*, ed. by Michal Biran, *Asiatisches Studien – Études Asiatiques*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (2017) p. 1062.
[235] Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017) p. 160.
[236] Thomas T. Allsen, 'Mahmud Yalavač, Mas'ud Beg, 'Ali Beg, Safaliq, Bujir', in *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz, et al (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1993), p. 122; Yihao Qiu, 'Ja'far Khwāja: Sayyid, Merchant, Spy, and Military Commander of Chinggis Khan', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) pp. 145-146; Matanya Gill, 'Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ṭībī: The Iraq Trader Who Traversed Asia', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) pp. 177-179.

administrative personnel; those of a relatively humble background who progressed through the institution included the famous Rashid al-Din.[237] Additionally, there were also the ruling dynasties who submitted to the Mongols and were therefore retained as part of the local administration; the Qutlugh Khanids and the Salghurids in Iran are just two examples.[238] Even the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum, defeated by the Mongols in 1243, was allowed to keep a much-reduced governance in Anatolia.[239] The marriages which occurred between Chinggisid dynasts and the subject Muslim dynasties was also significant. Though Peter Jackson considers them to be only rare exceptions to the usual practice of marriage with the 'commoner' (*qarachu*) Turkic-Mongolian aristocracy,[240] the marriages resulted in the entry of personnel into the highest level of imperial administration: the Chinggisid household.

The individuals of this talent pool were inheritors and continuators of a Perso-Islamic tradition which combined Islamic religion and nominal fealty to a caliph with pre-Islamic Iranian titles, aesthetics, and attitudes towards government. The old ideology of a single Islamic state ruled by a caliph with the power to appoint or revoke governorships had long fallen into abeyance; as early as the tenth century ibn Miskawayh, a bureaucrat and chronicler for the Buyid dynasty, lamented that the "world was in the hands of usurpers" and "provincial kings" who deprived the Abbasid Caliph in Baghdad of revenue.[241] Moreover, many of the administrative personnel were Turks or intimately familiar with the Turks, and so had already incorporated their dominance into the Perso-Islamic perspective. The rule of the Qara Khitai immediately preceded the arrival of the Mongols and presaged many of the ideological and governmental features which were to continue under the Mongol Empire. The Qara Khitai, despite their personal Buddhism and the traditional steppe non-exclusivity towards religion, were legitimised by theoretical developments within the eastern Islamic world which emphasised the dispensation

[237] Stefan Kamola, *Rashīd al-Dīn and the making of history in Mongol Iran* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Washington, 2013) p. 119.
[238] See previous references for the Qutlugh Khanids. For the Salghurids: Lane, *Early Mongol Rule*, pp. 122-152.
[239] Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World*, p. 144.
[240] Ibid. 150-152.
[241] Miskawayh, *The Experiences of the Nations*, trans. by D. S. Margoliouth, vol. 1 (Oxon: Basil Blackwell, 1921) p. 413.

of justice as the foundation for kingship.[242] For example Nizam al-Mulk, the influential eleventh century vizier for the Seljuks, argued that "kingship remains with the unbeliever but not with injustice".[243] Hulegu himself prodded the *ulama* into judging whether a just infidel ruler was preferable to an unjust Muslim ruler; unsurprisingly the *ulama* answered in the Mongols' favour.[244] The acceptance of the Chinggisid Mongols as just rulers, regardless of their personal religious beliefs, allowed the Muslim subject authors to translate the imperial steppe claim to universal dominion into tropes that were congruent with their own religious milieu. Rashid al-Din described the Chinggisids as 'lords of auspicious conjunction' (*sāhibqirān*), a phrase denoting their special protection from "ominous celestial patterns"; in other words, a translation of steppe *qut*/*suu*.[245] When the ilkhans converted to Islam, Rashid al-Din and others began to use the term *mujaddid*, the predestined centennial renewers of religion, to describe the converted Mongol rulers.[246] Later in the fourteenth century one author even claimed that Chinggis Khan was Muslim, for there could be no other explanation for his divinely-ordained success.[247]

The Christians of the Near and Middle East were another source of administrative expertise for the Mongol Empire. Individuals from some Christian denominations, due to their minority status, had served in the administrations of previous Muslim states dating back to the arrival of Islam.[248] The Syriac (Nestorian, Jacobite, and Maronite) and Greco-Arabic (Melkite) denominations were the primary Christians of the Middle East. Christian clergy were an obvious administrative resource for the Chinggisid government. Bar Hebraeus, bishop and Maphrian (second only to the Patriarch) of the Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church, was

[242] Anne K. S. Lambton, 'Justice in the Medieval Persian Theory of Kingship', *Studia Islamica*, No. 17 (1962) pp. 91-119.
[243] Ibid. 104.
[244] Michal Biran, 'True to Their Ways: Why the Qara Khitai Did Not Convert to Islam', in *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World*, ed. by Reuven Amitai-Preiss and Michal Biran (Leiden: Brill, 2005) p. 190.
[245] Jonathan Brack, 'Theologies of Auspicious Kingship: The Islamization of Chinggisid Sacral Kingship in the Islamic World', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (2018) pp. 1162-1163.
[246] Ibid. 1153-1155.
[247] Ibid. 1165.
[248] Ian Gillman and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Christians in Asia before 1500* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016) pp. 67-68, 130.

something of an unofficial liaison to the ilkhans and was granted an official position at the royal library/observatory in Maragheh.[249] Other members of the clergy were appointed as governors, such as Bishop Hanon Isho of Jazira ibn Umar (modern Cizre).[250] Outside of the clergy were the individuals recruited based on talent or recommendation; for example the Caucasian Syriac Isa Kelemechi, who joined the *keshig* and embarked upon diplomatic missions across Eurasia before settling down in China.[251]

These Christian denominations had rarely, if ever, ruled their own states in the region and thus had to rely on the patronage and protection of governments adhering to other religions. As a consequence of this geopolitical reality, the Syriac Christians, for example, developed a particular non-sectarian perspective on kingship. If the kings were just, pious, and treated the Syriac Christians well, their subjects would follow suit and the realm would prosper. However, if they neglected their moral and spiritual behaviour and mistreated the Syriac Christians the realm would suffer.[252] Bar Hebraeus used this paradigm to explain the waxing and waning of the Byzantine Empire and Arab Caliphate in their contest for control of the Middle East.[253] The Mongol rulers, specifically the *qa'an*s and ilkhans, were described with the same character traits as the preceding "good" kings - "wise, just, generous, and merciful" – thus reflecting the Syriac view of what constituted a good king.[254] In addition to the Mongols' purported descent from Gog and Magog, which signified their divinely ordained purpose to Syriac authors like Bar Hebraeus, the Chinggisid defeat of the Kerait tribe also held religio-ideological significance. Bar Hebraeus identified Ong Toghrul Khan as Prester John who had forsaken Christianity; God's

[249] George Lane, *Genghis Khan and Mongol Rule* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2004) pp. 104-106.
[250] Aptin Khanbaghi, *The Fire, The Star and the Cross: Minority Religions in Medieval and Early Modern Iran* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2014) p. 63.
[251] Hodong Kim, ''Īsa Kelemechi: A Translator Turned Envoy between Asia and Europe', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) pp. 255-269.
[252] Mikko Vasko, *Writing a Christianized History of the Mongols: The Mongols in Syriac texts in the late 13th and early 14th century* (unpublished master's thesis, University of Oulu, 2006) p. 44.
[253] Ibid. 44-45.
[254] Ibid. 57-58.

favour was then passed to Chinggis.[255] Even the shaman who communicated the granting of universal dominion upon Chinggis was portrayed in the manner of a biblical prophet.[256] With the sacking of Baghdad and the conquest of the Abbasid Caliphate for its sins in 1258 by Hulegu, Bar Hebraeus considered the event to be the inauguration of the kingdom of the Huns (by which he meant the Mongols) within world history.[257]

On the other hand, the Armenian and Georgian Christians did have a long history of ruling states of their own. Like with the Muslims, Armenian and Georgian ruling dynasties which submitted to Mongol suzerainty were allowed to remain in power and were integrated into the Mongol administration.[258] In addition to the practice of governing on behalf of the Mongols, the kings of Armenian Cilicia were personally involved in the diplomatic exchange between the Mongol Empire and the Crusaders and Latin Europe.[259] For the Armenians and Georgians maintaining their independent rule was their priority, and so paradoxically submitting to Mongol authority was overall considered to be their best course of action when faced with rival lords, Mamluk and Anatolian Turkic foes, or even hostile Mongols during periods of conflict between Chinggisid dynasts.[260] Despite the initial eschatological descriptions of the Mongolian arrival by Armenian authors, Armenian opinion rapidly shifted to support for Mongolian rule.[261] Even the generally hostile and eschatological *History of the Armenians* by Kirakos Ganjakets'i gave high praise for Hulegu's sacking of Baghdad and portrayed the Mongol army as the "instrument of God's vengeance" in that instance.[262] The 1248 letter from Constable Smbat of

[255] Gregorius Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l-Faraj Bar Hebraeus' Political History of the World*, trans. by Ernest A. Wallis-Budge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932) p. 353.
[256] Vasko, *Writing a Christianized History of the Mongols*, p. 72; Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography*, p. 353.
[257] Vasko, *Writing a Christianized History of the Mongols*, pp. 76, 79.
[258] Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians (1220-1335)* (Leiden: Brill, 2011) p. 71.
[259] Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians*, p. 162; Alexandr Osipian, 'Armenian Involvement in the Latin-Mongol Crusade: Uses of the Magi and Prester John in Constable Smbat's *Letter* and Hayton of "*Flos historiarum terre orientis,*" 1248-1307', *Medieval Encounters*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2014) p. 71.
[260] Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians*, pp. 71-80.
[261] For eschatological portrayals see: Zaroui Pogossian, 'An "Un-known and Unbridled People": Vardan Arawelc'i's Colophon on the Mongols', *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*, Vol. 23 (2014) pp. 7-48; Zaroui Pogossian, 'Armenians, Mongols, and the End of Times', in *Caucasus during the Mongol Period – Der Kaukasus in der Mongolenzeit*, ed. by Jürgen Tubach *et al* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2012) pp. 169-198.
[262] Pogossian, 'Armenians, Mongols, and the End of Times', p. 178.

Cilician Armenia to his relative King Henry I of Cyprus emphasised the strong Christian element within the Mongol Empire; intended for King Louis IX of France, the letter claimed that the Mongols had converted to Christianity through the agency of the Three Magi, protected other Christians, and had also aided the Christian king of India (either Prester John or King David) against the Muslims.[263] By the composition of the *History of the Nation of Archers* by Grigor Aknerts'i in 1273, the eponymous phrase of the title had lost all previous apocalyptic connotations.[264] Instead, the Mongol rulers were described in superlative terms: Hulegu was "of a great mind and a great soul, just … slew only the wicked … and not the good or the righteous"; his son Abaqa "was the handsomest in appearance … and in the days of his Khanate there was abundance of all things throughout the land".[265]

Christians from Latin Europe also found themselves in Mongol employ after travelling into the empire for a variety of reasons. The Venetian merchant Marco Polo was undoubtedly the most famous Latin in Mongolian service; he worked as a travelling bureaucrat in China and ended his Mongolian career by accompanying the intended Baya'ut wife of ilkhan Arghun to Iran.[266] Polo was of course not the only Latin merchant working for the Mongol government. The Mongols continued the imperial steppe practice of state sponsorship and funding of merchants (known as *ortoq*), either from the central government treasury or through the personal resources of Mongolian elites.[267] The *ortoq* merchants were (for a time) exempted from taxes and were entitled to use the *jam* network.[268] In the Black Sea region merchants from the Latin trade colonies, especially Venetian Tana (modern Azov) and Genoese Caffa (modern Feodosia), benefited greatly from these

[263] Pogossian, 'An "Un-known and Unbridled People"', pp. 10-11; Osipian, 'Armenian Involvement in the Latin-Mongol Crusade', pp. 83-85.
[264] Pogossian, 'Armenians, Mongols, and the End of Times', pp. 186-187; Pogossian, 'An "Un-known and Unbridled People"', pp. 13-14.
[265] Pogossian, 'Armenians, Mongols, and the End of Times', pp. 187-188.
[266] Lane, *Genghis Khan and Mongol Rule*, pp. 115-117; Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, p. 286. Arghun died before the arrival of Kökechin (the wife) and she was instead married to Arghun's son Ghazan.
[267] 'Introduction', in in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) pp. 10-11.
[268] Gill, 'Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ṭībī', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 176.

arrangements.[269] North-western Iran, the capital region of the Ilkhanate, and its major city of Tabriz also acted as an *entrepôt* which attracted Latin merchants who ultimately joined Mongol service through the *ortoq* or in other roles; examples include Buscarello de Ghizolfi of Genoa and Isolo da Anastasio of Pisa.[270] Besides the merchants were the adventurers, exiles, and former captives. Italians such as Tomaso Ugi of Siena, Guiscard Bustari of Florence, and Strena di Bonfante of Pisa, appear to be predominant among the Latins.[271] There were other Latin Europeans in the Mongolian military and civilian administration however: Bargadin of Metz, if he was not a fictitious stand-in for other Latins in the Mongol administration, was a mercenary who served in China; the anonymous Englishman who was captured while commanding Mongol forces near Vienna in 1242, identified by Gabriel Ronay as a chaplain of one of the barons who revolted against King John of England; and William Boucher, a smith whose creations included a large ornamental drinks fountain commissioned by Möngke.[272]

The point at which the Mongol Empire came into direct and close contact with Latin Europe in the mid-thirteenth century was vital. Due to the rapid expansion of Latin Christianity in the tenth and eleventh centuries, followed by the Investiture Contest between popes and Holy Roman Emperors and then the onset of the Crusades, the political power of the papacy increased substantially. Jacob Tullberg describes the resulting situation as a "Papal Empire", though not an empire in the traditional, centralised manner but rather as a commonwealth characterised by cultural instead of political unity.[273] The popes presented themselves as universal

[269] Nicola Di Cosmo, 'Black Sea Emporia and the Mongol Empire: A Reassessment of the Pax Mongolia', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 53, No. 1/2 (2010) pp. 104-106; Szilvia Kovacs, 'Taydula: A Golden Horde Queen and Patron of Christian Merchants', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) pp. 197-199, 203.
[270] Patrick Wing, '"Rich in Goods and Abounding in Wealth:" The Ilkhanid and Post-Ilkhanid Ruling Elite and the Politics of Commercial Life at Tabriz, 1250–1400', in *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*, ed. by Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014) pp. 307, 309-310; Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221-1410*, 2nd edn (Oxon: Routledge, 2018) p. 211.
[271] Laurence Lockhart, 'The Relations between Edward I and Edward II of England and the Mongol Īl-Khāns of Persia', *Iran*, Vol. 6 (1968) p. 29; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 211.
[272] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 280; Gabriel Ronay, *The Tartar Khan's Englishman* (London: Phoenix Press, 2000) pp. 216-222; Gregory Guzman, 'European Captives And Craftsmen Among The Mongols, 1231-1255', *The Historian*, Vol. 72, No. 1 (2010) p. 144.
[273] Jacob Tullberg, 'Caliphs, Popes, Emperors, Kings, and Sultans: The Imperial Commonwealths of Medieval Islam and Western Christendom', in *The Oxford World History of Empire*, ed. by Peter

rulers as an alternative source of authority to the Holy Roman Empire, though perhaps ironically they did so by promoting greater regionalisation of power.[274] The Latin administrators in Mongol employ would have been primary witnesses of this paradoxically universalising-regionalising process and so could have recognised similarities with the Chinggisids' equally, if not more so, universalist project.

Conclusion

Even though the Chinggisid Mongol Empire employed a wide and varied range of administrators from outside of the cultural sphere of the eastern Eurasian steppe – personnel who had an important influence on the governing ideology – at its core, the imperial steppe ideology remained rooted in steppe tradition and was not replaced by competing sedentary ideologies such as the Chinese Mandate of Heaven or Perso-Islamic tradition. The Chinggisid dynasty, along with other individuals from Mongol and Turkic tribes, retained their pre-eminence within the imperial administration while incorporating people from their subject sedentary populations. As will be argued in the following chapters, in practical terms this means that the empire's policies towards foreign states, especially those of the Latin world, were driven by traditional imperial steppe ideology and its desire for universal dominion.

Fibiger Bang, C. A. Bayly, and Walter Scheidel, vol. 2 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021) pp. 598-599, 605. The phrase "from political to cultural unity" is actually used to describe Islamic developments but the processes being described are the same.

[274] Ibid. 616-617.

Chapter 3: The Influence of the Imperial Steppe Ideology on Cultural and Material Exchange

The previous chapter explored the various steppe and sedentary groups which comprised the Mongol Empire's administration and how they contributed to the universalist imperial steppe ideology. This chapter will move on from the preceding discussion of the Mongol Empire's ideology and apply the universalistic framework of the imperial steppe ideology to a discussion of the cultural and material exchange that occurred within the empire and with its neighbouring states. For the purpose of this thesis, cultural exchange is defined as: ideas being shared between peoples from different cultural backgrounds. Recent scholarly work, especially that of Thomas T. Allsen, has demonstrated that the Chinggisid dynasty and their fellow Mongolians were integral to the facilitation of the exchange which their empire engendered.[275] This chapter will synthesise and expand upon the previous scholarship by highlighting instances of cultural and material exchange and situating them within the context of the universalist imperial steppe ideology in order to demonstrate the ideological influence on such policies. The chapter will be divided into two broad sections: the first section will examine the effects of cultural and intellectual exchange on historiography, languages and printing, religious discourse, geography, and medicine. The second section will examine mercantile activity, with an emphasis on the trade in textiles due to their importance within nomadic societies.

Cultural and Intellectual Exchange

Historiography, or the practice of writing history, has been and remains inextricably linked to ideology; even more so where the involvement of state and government is concerned. Like many other states, whether modern or pre-modern, the Chinggisid Empire had a vested interest in ensuring that its place in the historical record conformed to the ideological perspective with which it viewed itself; in this case, it

[275] For example: Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Marie Favereau, 'The Mongol Peace and Global Medieval Eurasia', *Comparativ*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (2018) pp. 49-70; *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*, ed. by Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

was the pre-existing universalist imperial steppe ideology. In its turn the ideology itself was a determining factor in how the historiography was produced. The work of the Ilkhanid Persian vizier Rashid al-Din Hamadani is undoubtedly the most prominent example of the Mongol state-directed historiography. As is about to be argued, Rashid al-Din's work is also an example of how cultural and intellectual exchange was shaped by the universalism of the imperial steppe ideology. In the *Jami al-Tawarikh*, or the *Compendium of Chronicles*, Rashid al-Din described the context of the *Compendium*'s composition:

> Today, thanks to God and in consequence of him, the extremities of the inhabited earth are under the dominion of the house of Chinggis Qan and philosophers, astronomers, scholars and historians from North and South China, India, Kashmir, Tibet, [the lands] of the Uighurs, other Turkic tribes, the Arabs and Franks, [all] belonging to [different] religions and sects, are united in large numbers in the service of majestic heaven. And each one has manuscripts on the chronology, history and articles of faith of his own people and [each] has knowledge of some aspect of this. Wisdom, [which] decorates the world, demands that there should be prepared from the details of these chronicles and narratives an abridgement, but essentially complete [work] which will bear our august name . . . This book [he concludes], in its totality, will be unprecedented – an assemblage of all the branches of history.[276]

The ilkhan Ghazan ordered the creation of the *Compendium* ostensibly to prevent the Mongols of Iran from forgetting the details of the rise of their empire.[277] However, the first line of the above quote makes clear the intended message of the source: God/*Tengri*/"majestic heaven" had bestowed universal dominion upon the Chinggisid dynasty. The "wisdom [that] decorate[d] the world" in this context could thus only be in reference to Chinggisid rule.

Even though Rashid al-Din took primary credit for the *Compendium*, the work was in reality a collaborative effort of international scope, as intimated by the above

[276] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 83.
[277] Ibid. 85.

quote. Rashid al-Din's most important partner was Bolad Chingsang, a Mongolian administrator sent to Iran by Qubilai Khan, who was to prove very influential in the composition of the *Compendium*. A brief overview of Bolad's background and career is necessary to appreciate the importance of his influence. His father had been a *keshig* commander and steward for Chinggis, while Bolad himself served in Qubilai's administration before moving to Iran where he became a *keshig* commander for Arghun (r. 1284-1291) and received a royal concubine as wife.[278] Serving in the administration for successive ilkhans, Bolad was thus intimately invested in upholding Chinggisid rule and therefore was a bearer of the imperial steppe ideology. As one of the contributors to the *Compendium* Bolad's knowledge of the steppe nomads, especially their origins and genealogies, was indispensable; Ghazan himself was tutored by Bolad on Mongolian history.[279] Given Bolad's high rank at the Ilkhanid court and relation with the ilkhans, it is beyond reasonable to conclude that Ghazan and his successor Öljeitu ordered Bolad to aid Rashid al-Din in composing the *Compendium*. As one of the "Great Amirs" Bolad had access to the restricted Mongol archive known as the *Altan Debter* ("Golden Register").[280] Clearly the ilkhans did not want the *Compendium* to be just a Perso-Islamic history but a truly universal history. Additionally, Bolad's service in China gave him both knowledge of the region and a network of colleagues whose knowledge he could draw upon for the *Compendium*.[281]

There were various other collaborators on the *Compendium* project, many of whom unfortunately remain unknown. The Kashmiri Buddhist monk Kamālashri was prominent enough to survive in the historical record. Alongside the Chinese collaborators Litaji and Kamsun, the three had a major influence on the *Compendium*'s content on Buddhism.[282] Rashid al-Din did not need to look far for Buddhist sources as numerous ilkhans had been personally Buddhist and so the

[278] Christopher P. Atwood, 'Bolad Chingsang', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 2004) p. 43.
[279] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, pp. 85.
[280] Ibid. 88.
[281] Ibid. 71.
[282] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 92; Johan Elverskog, *Buddhism and Islam on the Silk Road* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010) p. 149.

influence of Buddhist monks at court was substantial.[283] Indeed, the *Compendium*'s assertion that the Tibetan Tantric form was the supreme Buddhist denomination strongly indicates that Rashid al-Din had unnamed Buddhist sources other than the three previously mentioned.[284] It is pertinent to note that both Ghazan and Öljeitu were raised as Buddhists.[285] Though both ilkhans converted to Islam it is arguable that they directed the Buddhists at court to aid in the *Compendium*'s composition. This of course is congruent with the established religious non-exclusivity of the imperial steppe ideology and further indicates the Chinggisid preoccupation with universal rule and its effects on cultural and intellectual exchange.

The collaborative nature of the *Compendium of Chronicles*' composition allowed for the claim that Rashid al-Din engaged in plagiarism. Abd Allah Qashani, another Muslim scholar in the employ of Ghazan, claimed that Rashid al-Din had appropriated Qashani's work as his own. Previous modern historiography has dismissed Qashani's allegation, yet Stefan Kamola has convincingly argued that Qashani was correct.[286] Qashani composed his own universal history, which included the help of the aforementioned Buddhist monks, titled the *Jami al-Tawarikh* or *Compendium of Chronicles*.[287] Kamola has demonstrated that Rashid al-Din lifted whole sections, made organisational amendments, and of course omitted Qashani's explanations of how the project came to be.[288] Rashid al-Din's achievement of sole authorial credit for the Compendium can likely be attributed to both his paramount position at court, and his other theologically-inclined works which helped to further legitimise Chinggisid rule.

Despite the *Compendium of Chronicles*' undeniably universal format it was still a Perso-Islamic history; indeed it had to be in order for it to be authoritative among the Muslim population both within and without the Mongol Empire. And yet, the Perso-Islamic content of the *Compendium* and Rashid al-Din's other writings was itself a result of Chinggisid-directed universalism. As stated in the previous chapter,

[283] Elverskog, *Buddhism and Islam on the Silk Road*, p. 149.
[284] Ibid. 150.
[285] Ibid. 140-141.
[286] Stefan Kamola, *The Making of Mongol History: Rashid al-Din and the Jami al-Tawarikh* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), pp. 101-102.
[287] Ibid. 96-97.
[288] Ibid. 99-100.

Rashid al-Din translated the steppe idea of *qut*/*suu* of the Chinggisids into their status as Perso-Islamic 'lords of auspicious conjunction' (*sāhibqirān*).[289] Furthermore the conversion of Ghazan to Islam was presented in a manner which was appealing to both Muslim and steppe audiences: a divine light descending into Ghazan's body.[290] Ghazan's conversion was also compared to the conversion narratives of Abraham and Oghuz Khan (legendary founder of the Oghuz Turks), thus resulting in an overlapping of the cultural constituencies to which the ilkhans were drawing from and appealing to.[291] Even Rashid al-Din's claim that Ghazan's conversion was the fulfilment of God's plan can be likened to the investment of divinity in the Chinggisid dynasty. Öljeitu, Rashid al-Din's second patron/employer, received no less of a superlative universal role; Kamola has argued that Öljeitu's embrace of Shia Islam was portrayed by Rashid al-Din as an attempt to "assume a role as a world sovereign with divine and absolute sanction" rather than the often-claimed indecision of a religiously ignorant monarch.[292] Furthermore, the way in which Rashid al-Din's collected histories were intended to be ordered – with Öljeitu's story at both the beginning and end – conveyed the ilkhan as a universal sovereign.[293]

The *Compendium of Chronicles* was not the only example of Perso-Islamic history directly inspired by the Mongol Empire's universalism. The *Tarikh-i Jahangusha*, or *History of the World Conqueror*, of Ala al-Din Ata Malik Juvaini (1226-1283) was another such example. Juvaini's father Baha al-Din had served as the *sahib-divan* to a succession of Mongol governors of the Middle Eastern territories prior to Hulegu's assumption of power in 1258.[294] As a result, Juvaini and his brother Shams al-Din embarked upon multiple journeys to the imperial capital in Mongolia, where Juvaini decided to begin writing his history in 1253.[295] Shortly thereafter the Juvaini brothers entered the direct employ of Hulegu: from 1259 Ala al-Din was appointed as the governor of the province of Baghdad while Shams al-Din served as

[289] Jonathan Brack, 'Theologies of Auspicious Kingship: The Islamization of Chinggisid Sacral Kingship in the Islamic World', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (2018) pp. 1162-1163.
[290] Stefan Kamola, 'Beyond History: Rashid al-Din and Iranian Kingship', in *Iran After the Mongols. The Idea of Iran, Vol. VIII*, ed. by Sussan Babaie (London: I.B. Tauris, 2019) p. 62.
[291] Ibid. 63.
[292] Ibid. 65-66.
[293] Kamola, *The Making of Mongol History*, p. 94.
[294] Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, pp. xvii-xx.
[295] Ibid. xix-xx.

the vizier from 1262.[296] The opening of the *Tarikh-i Jahangusha* leaves no ambiguity in the professed universalism of Chinggisid rule: Möngke was "the World-Emperor, the Commander of the Earth and the Age, the source of the blessings of peace and security … may his august shadow extend over mankind!"[297] Immediately after meeting Möngke, Juvaini was all but commanded by his companions to "immortalize the glorious actions of the Lord of the Age".[298] The companions in question included Arghun Aqa, the Mongolian governor of the Middle Eastern territories, and numerous subordinate governors and administrators who were of course an assortment of Mongolians and local Middle Eastern Muslims.[299] As a scribe at that point, Juvaini could not refuse the "suggestion of friends, which [was] a definite command".[300] It is likely then that the composition of the *Tarikh-i Jahangusha* was, if not a direct order from Möngke himself, at least at the behest of the highest tier of the Mongolian administration, likely Arghun Aqa. Juvaini's promotion into Hulegu's service would only have reinforced the onus on him to continue writing the history.[301] Like the *Compendium of Chronicles*, the *Tarikh-i Jahangusha* was therefore an attempt to translate Chinggisid universal rule into terms which a Perso-Islamic audience could understand.

A further aspect of the *Tarikh-i Jahangusha*'s importance in cultural exchange was the explicit influence it had on Bar Hebraeus' *Chronography*. Mikko Vasko has argued that the *Chronography*'s entire section on the Mongols prior to the conquest of Baghdad was copied from the *Tarikh-i Jahangusha*, with the addition of ideological tropes that would be appropriate for a Syriac audience.[302] Bar Hebraeus cited Juvaini's work himself: "[Juvaini] composed a marvellous work in Persian on the chronology of the kingdoms of the Saljuks, and Khawarazmians, and Ishmaelites, and Mongols; what we have introduced into our work on these matters we have derived

[296] Atwood, 'Juvaini, 'Ala'ud-Din Ata-Malik and Shams-ud-Din Muhammad', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 281.
[297] Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, p. 4.
[298] Ibid. 5.
[299] Ibid. vol. 2, p. 514.
[300] Ibid. vol. 1, p. 10.
[301] Juvaini stopped writing his history after his appointment as governor, probably due to being preoccupied with both his new career and the political intrigues brought with it.
[302] Mikko Vasko, *Writing a Christianized History of the Mongols: The Mongols in Syriac texts in the late 13th and early 14th century* (unpublished master's thesis, University of Oulu, 2006) pp. 22-23. A side-by-side comparison is provided by Vasko in his third appendix.

from his book."[303] It is almost certain that Bar Hebraeus used the *Tarikh-i Jahangusha* while he was at the royal library/observatory at Maragheh.[304] Vasko argues that because Bar Hebraeus only had two official meetings with the (Ilkhanid) Mongol rulers (in 1265 and 1282 to confirm his position as Maphrian), the Mongols must have had "little interest in this member of a minority group."[305] However, as has been regularly argued in this thesis, the Chinggisid Mongols did have an interest in courting the opinions of the representatives of various religious groups. As the Maphrian, Bar Hebraeus was not only second to the Jacobite Patriarch, but also the senior bishop of the Jacobites in 'Iran', by which was meant the former Sassanid Empire and further east.[306] The decision to grant Bar Hebraeus a position at the Maragheh institution thus would likely have come from the Mongol court itself. The Syriac bishop had first become known to the Mongols when his father treated a Mongol general in 1244, but there was further contact through the mediation of Simeon of Qal'a Rumaita, who was a prominent physician at the Ilkhanid court from 1260 to 1288.[307] Furthermore, the mother of ilkhan Ahmad Teguder revived the Christian Epiphany procession in Maragheh while Bar Hebraeus was present, and the ilkhan later granted permission for the bishop to construct more churches in Iraq, Assyria, and Azerbaijan.[308] While it would be an exaggeration to claim that administrators conspired to place Bar Hebraeus at Maragheh in order to propagate the official historiography of Juvaini among Syriac Christians, the results of the cultural exchange were certainly a consequence of the deliberate governmental policy of integrating diverse personnel into a broader administrative framework.

Chinese historiography under the Mongol Empire was also affected by the state's favourable attitude towards cultural exchange, if for no other reason than the influx of non-Chinese immigrants and their employment in the administration. The

[303] Gregorius Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l-Faraj Bar Hebraeus' Political History of the World*, trans. by Ernest A. Wallis-Budge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932) p. 473.
[304] Vasko, *Writing a Christianized History of the Mongols*, p. 23.
[305] Ibid. 24.
[306] Ian Gillman and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Christians in Asia before 1500* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016) p. 126.
[307] Vasko, *Writing a Christianized History of the Mongols*, p. 24; Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography*, p. 437.
[308] George Lane, 'An Account of Gregory Bar Hebraeus Abu Al-Faraj and His Relations with the Mongols of Persia', *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1999) pp. 226-227.

Mongols themselves and the *semuren* (Westerners) were present in all parts of the government; despite the name, the latter group included some of the peoples on the border of China proper, for example the Tanguts and the nomadic Ongut and Naiman tribes.[309] Following Chinese tradition the Mongolian government in China published official histories on the preceding dynasties of China: the Khitan Liao, the Jurchen Jin, and the Han Chinese Song.[310] Of course, the purpose of such historiography was to explain how those dynasties had failed and how the current dynasty (the Chinggisids) had succeeded to power. Also in line with Chinese tradition was the compilation and editing of the histories via committee.[311] Combined with the imperial steppe ideology's predilection for recruiting foreigners, the historiographical committees attained a predictably diverse and multicultural composition, thus drawing from multiple historiographical traditions. For example, the committees which compiled the Liao, Jin, and Song histories comprised Chinese, Mongol, Turk, Jurchen, and Muslim officials.[312] The parallel with Rashid al-Din's *Compendium of Chronicles* is clear. The aforementioned Bolad Chingsang, together with fellow Mongol Sarman, the Chinese Wang O, and the Syriac Christian Isa Kelemechi, were integral to the promulgation of the dynasty's official universalist historiography through the establishment of new institutions such as the Imperial Library Directorate and the National History Academy.[313]

Related to state-directed historiography was the usage of language and the practices of printing and manuscript production. The popularity of printing in China prior to the thirteenth century Mongol conquests is well attested, but there was also a much more limited history of printing in the Middle East.[314] The introduction of printed paper money in the Ilkhanate during Gaikhatu's reign (1291-1295) was infamous for its failure and the widespread resistance it provoked; the crisis may

[309] Atwood, '*Semuren*', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 494.
[310] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 96.
[311] Ibid. 98.
[312] Ibid.
[313] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, pp. 95-97; H. L. Chan 'Wang E', in *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz, et al (Wiesbaden: Harassowitz Verlag, 1993) pp. 306-307; Hodong Kim, ''Īsa Kelemechi: A Translator Turned Envoy between Asia and Europe', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) p. 261.
[314] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, pp. 176, 181.

even have influenced long-term rejection of the printing press in the Middle East.[315] Once again Bolad Chingsang played a prominent role, this time as one of the primary instigators of printing's introduction to the Ilkhanate; it is probable that it was an explicit objective of his transfer from China to the Middle East given that Qubilai dispatched Bolad with both paper money and the requisite gold and silver backing.[316] The currency itself featured "Chinese characters, Muslim formulas, and the name and seal of the Il-qan", indicating the overt universalism of Chinggisid rule.[317] Unsurprisingly Rashid al-Din, partner of Bolad and arguably the chief propagandist of Chinggisid universal rule, appears to be the only Muslim author who advocated the adoption of printing and the usage of paper money.[318] There was however a vibrant scene of traditional manuscript production in Iran that was patronised by the imperial elite. For example, in 1309 Rashid al-Din established a foundation near Tabriz to mass-produce copies of the Quran and a particular *hadith* collection.[319] Over the next five years the project expanded to another twenty foundations and the scope of mass-production was extended to include Arabic and Persian copies of the *Compendium of Chronicles* and an assortment of Rashid al-Din's other works.[320] According to Rashid al-Din, the project was ostensibly charitable and educational in purpose.[321] However, given the overt ideological themes of his work and his status at the apex of the Ilkhanid administration, it is doubtful that audiences would have failed to see in action the clear government policy of disseminating products of intense cultural exchange.

In East Asia however the ubiquity of printing allowed the Chinggisid government to engage in patronage without the problems observed in the Middle East. It is all but certain that the Mongols were first exposed to printing through the auspices of peoples such as the Khitans, Jurchens, and Tanguts before the Mongol conquest of China proper had even begun, and Mongolian vocabulary concerning

[315] Ibid. 185.
[316] Ibid. 177-178.
[317] Ibid. 177.
[318] Ibid. 184.
[319] Nourane Ben Azzouna, 'Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh al-Hamadhānī's Manuscript Production Project in Tabriz Reconsidered', in *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*, ed. by Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014) p. 190.
[320] Ibid. 192-196.
[321] Ibid. 198-199.

printing indicated further influence from the Uyghurs and Tibetans.[322] As early as 1236, the Khitan official Yelü Chucai successfully lobbied for the establishment of the Office of Literature and the Compilation Office as printing centres, both of which acted as predecessors to the Imperial Library Directorate.[323] A few years later an inscription provided evidence of Töregene, wife of Ögedei, having commissioned the monumental publication of the *Daozang*, or *Taoist Canon*.[324] Before his transfer to China, Bolad Chingsang was a firm supporter of printing in China; his involvement in the establishment of the Imperial Library Directorate and the National History Academy, both of which were printing centres, has already been mentioned above. One of the more popular genres of printed books were astrological tables and almanacs; the Chinggisid government established an Academy of Calendrical Studies to regularise the printing of such books.[325] Marco Polo referred to the astrological books as *tacuini*, derived from Arabic *taqwīm*; of the large amount of books printed a small portion were Islamic calendars written in the languages of the Islamic world.[326] Clearly the Muslim *semuren* the Mongol rulers brought to China shared little of the hostility to printing that their compatriots back home did. The preceding examples indicate the influence of the imperial steppe ideology through the administration's patronage of a range of culturally diverse output, so long as the aforesaid products advanced the goal of universal rule.

The range of languages and scripts in use in the Mongol Empire prompted the Chinggisids to initiate a truly universalist project. In 1269 Qubilai commissioned the Tibetan Buddhist clerical leader Drogön Chögyal Phagpa Lama, the State (and later Imperial) Preceptor, with creating a new script for use with all of the major languages of the empire.[327] Based on the Tibetan script, the new alphabetic Square script was written from left-to-right in vertical columns and featured over forty characters.[328] Schools were established to train the bureaucracy in the new script

[322] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, pp. 177, 182.
[323] Ibid. 182.
[324] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 182; Francis Woodman Cleaves, 'The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1240', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 23 (1960-1961) p. 65.
[325] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 184.
[326] Ibid. 183-184.
[327] Atwood, 'Square script', *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 519.
[328] Ibid.

and it was to be used in all official documents, inscriptions, and currency.[329] Even though the Square (or Phagpa) script failed to completely threaten the popularity of the Uyghur, Chinese, and Arabic scripts, it did find usage across the Mongol Empire. The Ilkhanate, ever loyal to their fellow Toluids in China, unsurprisingly used the script but so too did the *ulus*' which were allegedly hostile to Qubilai after the so-called dissolution of the empire in 1260.[330] Examples of the Square script have been found in the Jochid Golden Horde and even from Central Asia at the time the region was controlled by the decidedly anti-Qubilai Ögedeid prince Qaidu.[331] As persuasively argued by Hodong Kim, the Mongol rulers did not consider their empire to be dissolved nor did they contest the idea of a single *qa'an*; they were merely in contention over their differing views of the correct apportionment of their sources of revenue.[332] As the preceding discussion suggests, when there was a policy which did not interfere with conflicts over revenue, such as the introduction of a new script, the Chinggisid rulers adhered to their often-stated universalism and heeded the central authority of the empire.

Given the diverse array of religions present in the imperial administration, discourse between the adherents of the religions was not only commonplace but was also encouraged by the Chinggisids themselves. In his study of religious court debates, George Lane lists four purposes for the debates: entertainment; acquisition of strategically important information; education in verbal and rhetorical skills; and the showcasing of ideology.[333] Though the first three were undoubtedly of great importance to the Chinggisid and Mongol elite, it is the latter which is of particular interest to this dissertation. There were numerous examples of debates presided over by members of the Chinggisid dynasty. Bar Hebraeus described a debate between Buddhists and shamanists on the orders of Chinggis, the outcome of which resulted in the Chinggisids apparently adopting Buddhism.[334] As correctly indicated

[329] Ibid.
[330] Mark A. Whaley, 'A Rendering of Square Script Mongolian on the Ilkhan Ghazan Mahmud's Coins', *Mongolian Studies*, Vol. 26 (2003-2004) p. 40.
[331] Ibid.
[332] Hodong Kim, 'The Unity of the Mongol Empire and Continental Exchanges over Eurasia', *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 1 (2009) pp. 33-36.
[333] George Lane, 'Intellectual jousting and the Chinggisid Wisdom Bazaars', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 26, No. 1/2 (2016) p. 236.
[334] Lane, 'Intellectual jousting', pp. 237-238; Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography*, p. 355.

by Vasko though, Bar Hebraeus' history relied extensively on Juvaini's *Tarikh-i Jahangusha*; the Bar Hebraeus passage in question is an almost verbatim retelling of Juvaini's description of the eighth century Uyghur rulers convening a religious debate.[335] The description from Bar Hebraeus and Juvaini still has its use however. Firstly, it is an attestation of religious court debates being a characteristic of previous steppe empires and of the prevailing imperial steppe ideology. Secondly, given the evidence of other Chinggisid court debates, it is likely that Bar Hebraeus was referring to an actual event but confused the details and so looked to the *Tarikh-i Jahangusha* to fill in the blanks. Thirdly, the apparent conversion (in the Bar Hebraeus version) did not result in an end to the religious pluralist policy of the Chinggisids, while the similarly inclusive policies of the Uyghur Empire have been described earlier in this thesis.[336]

Other examples of religious court debates have firmer evidential backing in the sources. In the 1250s the Franciscan friar William of Rubruck travelled to the court of Möngke and provided an extensive description of a religious debate. The reasoning of Möngke in the source for convening the conference was as follows: "Here are you Christians, Saracens and *tuins* [Buddhists], and each of you claims that his religion is superior."[337] Despite being a foreign emissary, William was a participant in the debate alongside the Nestorian clergy against the Muslims and the Buddhists. The significance of William being a participant in court ceremony will be expanded on later. Even though Möngke did not personally attend the debate he did appoint three judges, one for each religion, and presumably on the basis of their judgement declared the following day to William and one of the Buddhist debaters that: "just as God has given the hand several fingers, so he has given mankind several paths."[338] The question of Möngke's personal religious beliefs are secondary to the clear demonstration of the *qa'an*'s commitment to steppe universalism and the religious inclusivity it entailed. Elsewhere, Möngke tasked Qubilai in 1258 with

[335] Vasko, *Writing a Christianized History of the Mongols*, pp. 22-23; Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, pp. 59-60.
[336] Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography*, p. 356.
[337] *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck. His journey to the court of the Great Khan Möngke, 1253-1255*, trans. by Peter Jackson and ed. by David Morgan (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2009) p. 229.
[338] Ibid. 231, 236.

presiding over a religious debate between Buddhists and Taoists in China. Even though Lane is correct to emphasise the political circumstances of the debate (the near-violent confrontation between the two religious groups), claiming that "the debate had never been about ideology" is an overstatement.[339] The relatively lax penalties meted out to the Taoists combined with the active participation of Qubilai and Confucian mediators demonstrate that there was the intention to appear even-handed and to uphold universalist ideals, even if there was some behind-the-scenes politicking.[340]

The ilkhans also endorsed religious debates at court but Öljeitu went further than his predecessors. When constructing his new capital of Sultaniyya, the ilkhan set aside space for a series of "audience chambers centred around a raised dais where … he would be able to observe and direct the discussions he had organised."[341] His vizier Rashid al-Din constructed the nearby House of Good Works for debating purposes in addition to his own primary foundation of *Rab'-i Rashīdī*.[342] Furthermore, a religious debate between Hanafi and Shafi'i Muslim scholars played an integral role in the narrative of Öljeitu's conversion to Shia Islam.[343] The ilkhan subsequently became a central figure for religious debate at court and was lauded by Rashid al-Din as an expert on Islamic doctrine, a champion of reason, and a "king of *kalām*".[344] To repeat Kamola's argument, Öljeitu was "assum[ing] a role as a world sovereign with divine and absolute sanction."[345] After his conversion to Islam, Buddhists attempted to convince Öljeitu to return to their religion.[346] Due to the importance of debates in convincing steppe (including Mongol) rulers to convert and Öljeitu's own predilection for debate, it is likely that the Buddhist attempt to convert Öljeitu occurred in the form of a religious debate. That Öljeitu continued to engage

[339] Lane, 'Intellectual jousting', pp. 245-246.
[340] Ibid. 246.
[341] Ibid. 242.
[342] Ibid.
[343] Kamola, 'Beyond History: Rashid al-Din and Iranian Kingship', p. 65.
[344] Kamola, 'Beyond History: Rashid al-Din and Iranian Kingship', p. 67; Brack, 'Theologies of Auspicious Kingship', p. 1166.
[345] Kamola, 'Beyond History: Rashid al-Din and Iranian Kingship', p. 65.
[346] Roxann Prazniak, 'Ilkhanid Buddhism: Traces of a Passage in Eurasian History', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 56, No. 3 (2014) p. 667.

in debate with his courtiers of other religions would suggest that he took his role as a universal steppe ruler seriously while adapting it to his more Islamic environment.

Related to the Mongolian administration's interest in historiography was their interest in geography. Indeed every state has an interest in defining the features and borders of their territory; for a state which proclaims universal rule - like the nomadic steppe empires - and thus has an expansionist foreign policy, geography becomes even more important. For example, in the 1250s Möngke ordered the neighbouring tributary/vassal states to provide detailed maps of their domains.[347] His successor Qubilai established the Hostel for Foreign Envoys in 1277 with one of its purposes being the collection of geographical data.[348] While there are the obvious military and diplomatic applications for such information gathering, it also is congruent with the Chinggisids' universal outlook. The Imperial Library Directorate, among its many other responsibilities, was also responsible for the compiling and synthesising of geographical data and the publication of new geographical works.[349] Further aiding in the Library's universalist goal was the appointment of the Syriac diplomat Isa Kelemechi as the department's head after his return from Europe.[350] Staffed by Middle Eastern and Central Asian Muslims, Mongols, Chinese, and others, the Library blended their diverse cartographical traditions and knowledge to create new works which would both provide accurate data on the world's geography and express the Chinggisid dynasty's right to universal rule. The major publication from the Library was the *Da Yuan Dayi Tongzhi*, or the *Treatise on the Great Unified Realm of the Great Yuan*, in 1291; the project's committee was led by the Middle Eastern astronomer Jamal al-Din.[351] The *Da Yuan Dayi Tongzhi* was revised and expanded for a second publication, this time under the oversight of the Mongol Boralqi.[352] Over in the Ilkhanate Rashid al-Din's *Compendium of Chronicles* also included a geographical volume which was composed in the same collaborative manner as the rest of the work.[353] Yet again

[347] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 106.
[348] Ibid.
[349] Ibid. 107.
[350] Kim, ''Īsa Kelemechi', p. 261.
[351] Kim, ''Īsa Kelemechi', p. 261; Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, pp. 107-108.
[352] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, pp. 108-109.
[353] Ibid. 103.

Bolad Chingsang, prominent Mongolian member of the *qa'an*'s court and the Imperial Library Directorate, was instrumental in providing the information for Rashid al-Din's universal geography.[354] As a representative of the Mongolian ruling elite and their imperial steppe ideology, Bolad would have been keen to ensure that the state's ideological pretensions were made clear in official geographical publications.

Medicine, or healing magic - the two being indistinguishable to the steppe peoples – was an area of great concern to the Chinggisid dynasty. Prior to the establishment of the Mongol Empire, the Mongols had a relatively limited range of medical practices based on empirical observation and spiritual concerns.[355] It is likely that the limitations on pharmacology and the availability of herbal remedies was influenced by the environment of the eastern Eurasian steppe.[356] Once the Mongols came into sustained contact with other, especially semi-nomadic or sedentary, peoples however their medical horizons expanded dramatically and was certainly driven by the Chinggisid elite. Allsen considered the Chinese physicians who accompanied the Mongol conquests of western Central Asia in 1219 to be the first to "cross cultural boundaries".[357] However, the Chinggisid marriage alliances of 1208-1211 integrated the Onguts, Oirats, Uyghurs, and Qarluqs into the empire; in other words, Christians, Buddhists, and Muslims.[358] The exchange of personnel that often accompanied state marriages would certainly have included physicians and other medical personnel, thus exposing the Mongol elite to formalised medical systems from an early point in the history of their empire.

Stephen Pow asserted that the exchange in medical personnel and knowledge was driven merely by "the illnesses of important Mongol leaders."[359] Yet the degree of the imperial organisation of the medical profession suggests something greater at work. Rashid al-Din, it must be remembered, began his career

[354] Ibid. 106.
[355] Ibid. 141.
[356] Stephen Pow, 'Gout of Khans: Disease, Treatments, and Medical Philosophy in the Mongol Empire', in *The Proceedings of the 22nd Annual History of Medicine Days Conference 2013*, ed. by Aleksandra Loewenau *et al* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018) p. 213.
[357] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 142.
[358] Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire*, pp. 140-145.
[359] Pow, 'Gout of Khans', pp. 222-223.

as a Jewish physician and his activities demonstrated an interest in furthering his former profession.[360] The personnel and knowledge Rashid al-Din utilised for the *Compendium of Chronicles* was also carried on into the publication of a specifically medical work, the *Tanksūq-nāmah* (*The Treasure Book*), which included Persian translations of Chinese medical texts alongside Persian commentary.[361] The preference of successive ilkhans for Chinese physicians certainly exerted an influence on Rashid al-Din's dissemination of Chinese medicine.[362] Furthermore, Rashid al-Din's foundation in Tabriz included the House of Healing, a combined hospital and medical college.[363] In East Asia, the Chinggisid government established an Office for Western/Muslim Medicine in the 1260s followed by a Western/Muslim Pharmaceutical Bureau in 1292.[364] Syriac Christians also featured prominently among medical personnel throughout the empire. Bar Hebraeus first came to Mongol attention through his father's medical expertise and Isa Kelemechi may have been a prominent physician in Syria prior to his recruitment into Mongol service.[365] Isa went on to lead the aforementioned medical offices in China, as did at least two of his sons.[366] Reiko Shinno has argued that Chinggisid rule in China was the "most hospitable dynasty for elite physicians in premodern Chinese history"; the often-quoted tax exemption for the clergy also included physicians, suggesting that the Chinggisids considered both groups to be of a similar social standing.[367] Shinno also notes that the Jurchen Jin dynasty placed a greater emphasis on supporting the medical sciences than the Han Song dynasty and that this may have been an influence on the Chinggisids.[368] Given that the Jin dynasty, as a successor to the Khitan Liao dynasty, was also an adherent of the imperial steppe ideology, the

[360] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, pp. 143-144.
[361] Ibid. 144.
[362] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, pp. 142-143; George Lane, *Daily Life in the Mongol Empire* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006) pp. 141-142.
[363] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 144.
[364] Pow, 'Gout of Khans', pp. 227-228.
[365] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 149.
[366] Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, p. 150; Kim, ''Īsa Kelemechi', pp. 257, 263-264.
[367] Reiko Shinno, 'Medical Schools and the Temples of the Three Progenitors in Yuan China: A Case of Cross-Cultural Interactions', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (2007) p. 95. Interestingly the quote also included lawyers.
[368] Ibid. 97.

argument for universalism being a decisive factor in the selection of medical expertise is further strengthened.

Mercantile Activity

The activities of merchants both within the Mongol Empire and between the empire and the neighbouring states provides a clear indication of the universalism of the imperial steppe ideology in action. Mercantile activity was divided between two groups: private individuals and those who were employed by foreign states; and the state-sponsored merchants of the Mongol Empire known as *ortoq*, or "partners". As explained above, the *ortoq* were provided money either directly from the imperial treasury or from the private finances of the Chinggisid and Mongol elite in order to procure luxuries and generate revenue. The *ortoq* system was not a Chinggisid innovation though. As far back as the sixth century Göktürk Empire, the ruling Turks established an *ortoq* system with the Sogdian merchants; the Uyghur, Khitan, and Jurchen empires continued the practice with the Sogdians and those who superseded their pre-eminence within the regional trade networks.[369] The immediately obvious answer as to why the nomadic elites patronised merchants was for purely political reasons: the luxury goods were redistributed among the members of the elite to ensure their loyalty to the ruler and the state at large.[370] However, when applying the conclusions reached in chapter one of this thesis – the continuity of universalism in the major nomadic empires – combined with Sören Stark's own observations of Göktürk rulers incorporating Chinese, Himalayan, Iranian, and Byzantine motifs into their artistic self-representations, it is hard not to see universalist ambitions behind the pre-Chinggisid *ortoq* system.[371]

Consequently the *ortoq* system can be placed early within the history of the Mongol Empire due to it being a continuation of previous steppe nomadic practice.

[369] Atwood, '*Ortoq'*, *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p 429. The word *ortoq* is itself Turkish and dates from at least the eleventh century.
[370] Sören Stark, 'Luxurious Necessities: Some observations on foreign commodities and nomadic polities in 6th to 9th century Central Asia', in *Complexity of Interaction Along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE*, ed. by Jan Bemmann and Michael Schmauder (Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie, 2015) pp. 473-474.
[371] Ibid. 478-487.

Indeed, the *ortoq* system was inadvertently the trigger for the empire's western expansion (though given the Chinggisids' pretension to universal rule, the conquest of Islamic Central Asia and the western Eurasian steppe would likely have occurred at some point). Juvaini recorded that in 1218 Chinggis ordered his court to "equip … two or three persons from their dependants and give them capital of a *balish* of gold or silver, that they might proceed … to the Sultan's territory, engage in commerce there and acquire strange and precious wares."[372] With the trade delegation Chinggis sent a message to the Khwarazmshah which included the following statement: "henceforth the abscess of evil thoughts may be lanced by the improvement of relations and agreement between us, and the pus of sedition and rebellion removed."[373] As the message shows, Chinggis was already at this time applying a universal perspective to his diplomatic relations and therefore the Khwarazmshah was seen as merely a rebellious vassal. The subsequent arrest and mass execution of the trade delegation is well known in current historiography and warrants no further description here. However, besides the loss of a great deal of wealth and the breach of diplomatic protocol, the immediate context of the so-called Otrar Incident requires further consideration. The *ortoq* merchants were official members of the Chinggisid administration; they possessed the *paiza* tablets and so were allowed to use the *jam* relay and postal system, as well as bear weapons.[374] The incident was consequently not only a direct attack on the Mongol Empire but, within the framework of universal Chinggisid rule, was a rebellion by a powerful vassal. The resulting invasion which induced so much consternation within contemporary Muslim sources was as such the only logical response for the Mongols.

Further analysis of the *ortoq* system provides yet more evidence of the universalist intent behind the policy of patronage. In Rashid al-Din's account of the exchange between Chinggis and the Khwarazmshah, Chinggis argued that "we should secure the roads against harmful incidents in order that merchants, upon whose comings and goings the well-being of the world [depends], might ply to and

[372] Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, pp. 78-79.
[373] Ibid. 79.
[374] Atwood, '*Ortoq'*, *Encyclopedia of Mongolia*, p. 429.

fro with a light heart."[375] As Chinggis considered the world to be under his purview, it therefore was his (and his dynasty's) responsibility to provide for its betterment through the direct sponsorship of trade. The rest of the Chinggisid dynasty clearly agreed; the fact that the family members and others from the Mongol elite were even able to select "two or three … dependants" would suggest that the importance of integrating merchants into the administration and court life was widespread. The reigns of Ögedei and his son Güyük, and the regencies of their respective wives Töregene and Oghul Qaimish (1229-1251) can be seen as the highpoint of *ortoq* activity and influence.[376] The patronage of *ortoq* merchants is in fact one of the areas in which women of the imperial family were most visible. For example, Rashid al-Din noted that "each one [of the *qatun*s in the Ilkhanate] had several *ortoγ*s and they would bring [the *qatun*s] a little money in the form of interest", while the famous Sorqaqtani leveraged her grief over Tolui's death to gain one of Ögedei's *ortoq* merchants.[377] The Mongol elites often made losses on their *ortoq* investments, but profit was not the goal. Allsen has pointed out that, besides the display of extreme wealth and generosity, the investment of capital was a way to attract trade and manufacturing opportunities to the courts of the Mongol rulers, often situated in the steppe and far away from urban areas.[378] Marie Favereau has expanded on that line of thought by applying a distinctly ideological interpretation of the *ortoq* system. In Favereau's words, the steppe redistributive system or "the circulation of luxuries was both a pillar of the social order and its reflection."[379] As a consequence of this, the Mongols sought to change "the rules of exchange in Eurasia" to ones that were more appropriate to their own steppe political culture.[380]

The activity of private merchants and foreign state agents also provides evidence of the Mongol Empire's universalist policies. Furthermore, the negotiations and commercial agreements established with foreign states such as the republics of

[375] Thomas T. Allsen, 'Mongolian Princes and Their Merchant Partners, 1200-1260', *Asia Major*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1989) p. 89.
[376] Ibid. 95-96, 103-105.
[377] Allsen, 'Mongolian Princes and Their Merchant Partners', p. 111; Rashid al-Din Hamadani, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, trans. by John Andrew Boyle (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971) p. 168.
[378] Allsen, 'Mongolian Princes and Their Merchant Partners', pp. 95-96.
[379] Favereau, 'The Mongol Peace', p. 57.
[380] Ibid. 51.

Genoa and Venice were also a form of diplomacy on the part of the Mongols. The Black Sea was one of the main arenas in which interactions between the Mongols and foreign merchants occurred, as merchants from both Venice and Genoa had interests in the region prior to the arrival of the Mongols in the mid-thirteenth century.[381] The onset of Mongol rule on the Pontic steppe resulted in stiff competition for influence between the two republics, with the Genoese establishment of the colony of Caffa in the Crimea from the 1270s, while the Venetians followed up with the establishment of Tana at a later date.[382] The trade agreements between the Mongol government of the Jochids and the Italian republics included such provisions as: a commercial tax which varied but never rose above five percent; a land tax; tribute payments to the khans; protection of Italians and their property; and joint adjudication of legal cases.[383] Nicola Di Cosmo has argued that the governments of Genoa and Venice were not interested in trade further than the Black Sea because they were more concerned with accumulating staple goods such as grain, hides, and slaves rather than more luxurious commodities.[384] For the latter goods, Tabriz was the nexus for adventurous and independent European merchants; the importance of Ilkhanid patronage was demonstrated by the significant decline in Italian presence following the collapse of the Ilkhanate.[385] Perhaps complementary with Di Cosmo's view is Favereau's detailing of attempts by the ilkhans Öljeitu and Abu Sa'id to attract Venetian investment (1306 and 1320), which ultimately failed due to the weakness of the Venetian position in Tabriz.[386] Furthermore, the existence of the *ortoq* system was a limiter on the activities of the non-*ortoq* merchants; the official Genoese and

[381] Lorenzo Pubblici, 'Antagonism and Coexistence. Local Population and Western Merchants On Venetian Azov Sea in the 14th Century', in *Russia, Oriente slavo e Occidente europeo. Fratture e integrazioni nella storia e nella civiltà letteraria*, ed. by Claudia Pieralli *et al* (Florence, Italy: Firenze University Press, 2017) pp. 26-27.
[382] Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221-1410*, 2nd edn (Oxon: Routledge, 2018) p. 262.
[383] Nicola Di Cosmo, 'Mongols and Merchants on the Black Sea Frontier in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: Convergences and Conflicts', in *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World*, ed. by Reuven Amitai-Preiss and Michal Biran (Leiden: Brill, 2005) pp. 396, 407, 411.
[384] Ibid. 397-398, 403-404.
[385] Patrick Wing, '"Rich in Goods and Abounding Wealth:" The Ilkhanid and Post-Ilkhanid Ruling Elite and the Politics of Commercial Life at Tabriz, 1250-1400', in *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*, ed. by Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014) pp. 315-316.
[386] Favereau, 'The Mongol Peace', p. 68.

Venetian merchants only had limited access to the *jam* and to little of the resources that were available to their *ortoq* competitors. Favereau has convincingly demonstrated that this was a deliberate policy by the Jochids to direct the flow of trade to their desired hubs.[387] Taking into account the universal outlook of the Mongolian administration and the operational freedom afforded to the *ortoq* merchants, the foreign trade agreements just discussed strongly suggests that the Mongol Empire attempted to deliberately constrain foreign states into tributary relationships in order to entice individual merchants to 'defect' and become *ortoq* and thus agents of the Mongol Empire, while also regulating the trade of foreign states.

The name popularly associated with the trans-Eurasian trade network, the Silk Road, amply demonstrates the importance of the exchange of textiles. The involvement of nomadic states in the trade has long been recognised in the historiography.[388] The uses of textiles, especially silk, were numerous - clothing, currency, status symbols, components for other items - and the redistribution or gifting of these important wares was, as mentioned above, integral to the maintenance of elite steppe nomadic society. As argued throughout this dissertation, the Chinggisid Mongol Empire continued the tradition of previous nomadic states and was similarly driven by a desire for universal rule which, it is being suggested, had an influence on imperial policies. In order to satisfy the consumption demands of the elite, Mongolian administrations transferred skilled personnel across the empire and established state-owned workshops; unsurprisingly, demand for luxurious textiles from those groups outside of the elite resulted in a proliferation of private manufacturing.[389] Combined with the overt patronage of mercantile activity, Mongol-sponsored textiles were traded throughout Asia and into Europe. Through export from Crusader-held Acre and into Lucca, Venice, and Florence, the textiles became known as *tartaire d'outremer* or *panni tartarici*.[390] Their popularity in

[387] Ibid. 69-70.
[388] For the most explicit example see: Thomas T. Allsen, *Commodity and Exchange in the Mongol Empire. A Cultural History of Islamic Textiles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[389] David Jacoby, 'Cross-Cultural Transfers of Industrial Technologies in the Later Middle Ages: Incentives, Promoters and Agents', in *Union in Separation: Diasporic Groups and Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean (1100-1800)*, ed. by Georg Christ *et al* (Rome: Viella, 2015) pp. 489, 491.
[390] Ibid. 491-492.

European society can be attested to by some prominent examples: a golden silk piece originally produced in Tabriz for ilkhan Abu Sa'id eventually served as the burial robe for the Habsburg Duke Rudolf IV of Austria (r. 1358-1365); the papal inventory of 1311 included a silk cloth that was either a Mongolian import or a faithful Italian reproduction; and King Philip V of France (r. 1316-1322) owned a Mongolian import and several Italian reproductions.[391] For those who could not afford the genuine imports from the Mongol Empire, European (especially Italian) workshops used cheaper materials while also integrating European motifs into the final products.[392] Even though this proliferation of Chinggisid material culture cannot be compared to the formal subjugation of Europe which the Chinggisids desired, it can perhaps be compared to the ubiquity of American popular culture or manufactured Chinese products that is observable in the modern world. Whether they realised it or not, Latin Europe was participating in a world system of which the Chinggisid dynasty were the creators and masters.

The domestic court context for the use of textiles by the Chinggisids indicates a no less universalistic intent. Eiren Shea has demonstrated that the production of gold-coloured textiles in Chinggisid China far surpassed that of previous dynasties. The Mongol government in China established official weaving centres at Hongzhou, Xunmalin, and Beshbalik (later moved to Beijing), in addition to a Gold Thread Office.[393] The colour gold was emblematic of the Chinggisid dynasty itself, the *altan urug*.[394] The redistribution of golden textiles would therefore have been a striking visual reminder of whom the recipients were subservient to, whether they were courtiers or foreign emissaries. Furthermore, the regulation of court attire was intricately tied to the redistributive system. At specific court ceremonies, such as the election or coronation of a new *qa'an*, the entire court would be attired in clothing of matching colours provided by the *qa'an*; the clothing was referred to as the *jisün*

[391] Sheila S. Blair, 'Tabriz: International Entrepôt under the Mongols', in *Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th-15th Century Tabriz*, ed. by Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden: Brill, 2014) pp. 332-333; Jacoby, 'Cross-Cultural Transfers', p. 492.
[392] Jacoby, 'Cross-Cultural Transfers', p. 492-493.
[393] Eiren L. Shea, 'The Spread of Gold Thread Production in the Mongol Period: A Study of Gold Textiles in the China National Silk Museum, Hangzhou', *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, Vol. 50 (2021) pp. 394, 396.
[394] Ibid. 401-402.

robes.[395] The Franciscan friars John of Plano Carpini and William of Rubruck were among the observers who commented on the *jisün*.[396] Marco Polo grasped the significance of the practice when he stated: "Hence you may see what a huge business it is, and there is no prince in the world but he alone who could keep up such customs as these."[397] Ulrike Herold has correctly identified the ideological intent behind the *jisün*, in that the Chinggisids were creating a "community, impressing on the participant the imperial favour and estimation of everyone contributing to the creation and consolidation of the empire."[398] That foreign emissaries were included as well just further indicates that they and the states they represented were already subjects of a universal Mongol Empire.

Conclusion

The core characteristic of the Chinggisid dynasty's imperial steppe ideology was its ambition to achieve universal rule. This ambition can be seen clearly in the empire's policies regarding cultural and material exchange. Whether in the fields of historiography, geography, publishing, and so on, the Chinggisid and Mongol elite initiated mass transfers of personnel across the breadth of their empire that would suggest that they sought to create a cultural milieu that reflected traditional nomadic steppe values while also selecting those elements of sedentary cultures which further enhanced the steppe ideological framework of universal rule. Furthermore, the trade which this process stimulated was harnessed and deliberately utilised by the Chinggisid and Mongol elite in a way that would indicate the creation of a new world system which drew in those parts of Eurasia, especially Latin Europe, which escaped formal Mongol rule.

[395] Ulrike Herold, *Clothing Authority: Mongol attire and textiles in the socio-political complex* (unpublished master's thesis, Leiden University [?], 2008) p. 98.
[396] *Mission to Asia. Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, ed. by Christopher Dawson (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) p. 61; *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck*, p. 246.
[397] Herold, *Clothing Authority*, p. 100.
[398] Ibid. 101.

Chapter 4: The Influence of the Imperial Steppe Ideology on Mongol Diplomacy with the Latin World

The previous chapter examined the Mongol Empire's policies regarding cultural and material exchange within the context of the universalism of the imperial steppe ideology. This chapter will apply the universalistic ideological framework of the Chinggisid dynasty to an analysis of the empire's foreign policy towards the Latin world. Examination of the Mongol Empire's diplomatic policies will proceed in a broadly chronological manner from the earliest contacts between the Mongols and Latins into the fourteenth century. The examination will be divided into three periods: up to the Mongolian invasion of Europe in 1241; the period from then until the death of *qa'an* Möngke; and the period after his death into the fourteenth century. The chapter will place a special emphasis on the emissaries involved, the role of Near and Middle Eastern Christians, and the utilisation of legends such as Prester John and King David by both sides to further foreign policy goals. Furthermore, the latest scholarly work that has challenged the traditional periodisation of the Mongol Empire will be taken into account when applying the universalistic perspective to diplomacy.

Early Contacts and Encounters between Mongols and Latins

Prior to the Mongol invasion of Hungary and Poland in 1241, the previous two decades saw Latin Europe abuzz with rumours and speculation surrounding the arrival of the Mongols. From 1219 onwards the Mongols were in the process of conquering the Khwarazmshah's empire, which comprised western Central Asia and Iran. By the end of 1220 a Mongol army had reached Greater Armenia, then under the sovereignty of the Georgian kingdom, and defeated a Georgian-Armenian army; the following year another joint Georgian-Armenian army was defeated by the Mongols.[399] Interestingly the Mongol army carried a Christian cross with them; previous historians have debated whether the cross was a ploy to confuse

[399] Bayarsaikhan Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians (1220-1335)* (Leiden: Brill, 2011) pp. 48-49.

opponents, or a sign of genuine religious devotion from Nestorians in the Mongol army.[400] In the context of the Chinggisid dynasty's ambition for universal rule and the knowledge of Christianity demonstrated in later correspondence from the Mongols to the Latin rulers, the two interpretations of the usage of the cross are not mutually incompatible. The ability to confuse the enemy by using a recognisable symbol, while also projecting the image of an all-encompassing universal empire would certainly have appealed to Mongolian commanders who were immersed in the imperial steppe ideology. The strategy apparently worked: in the 1223 letter from Queen Rusudan of Georgia and her Armenian constable Ivane Zakarian to Pope Honorius III, the former complained that "we took no precautions against them because we believed them to be Christians."[401] The Armenian historian Kirakos Ganjakets'i later expanded on the confusion:

> False information arrived concerning [the Mongols], to the effect that they were mages and/or of the Christian faith, wonder-workers, and that they had come to avenge the Christians from the tyranny of the Tachiks. And it was said that they had with them a portable tent-church, as well as a miracle-working cross, and that they would bring an ephah of barley and put it before this cross and all the troops would take from it and give it to their horses, yet the supply would not be exhausted, for when all of them had finished taking, the original amount remained. The same was true for their own food.[402]

The similarity to the Biblical story of Christ feeding the five thousand is clear. It could be argued that the comparison resulted solely from Kirakos' own religious background. However, Kirakos briefly worked as a scribe for the Mongolian administration and became familiar with the Mongols, their language, and their religious views.[403] It is possible then that the alleged miracle was reflective both of the Mongols' own understanding of Christianity and their deliberate attempt to

[400] Ibid. 50.
[401] Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221-1410*, 2nd edn (Oxon: Routledge, 2018) p. 52.
[402] Kirakos Ganjakets'i, *History of the Armenians*, trans. by Robert Bedrosian, http://www.attalus.org/armenian/kgtoc.html, fol. 202.
[403] Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians*, pp. 11-12.

project it towards their future subjects. Furthermore, the usage of a physical cross in this manner was not limited to the Caucasus, as there are indications of the same or similar tactics in the contemporaneous Russian campaign.[404]

At about the same time as the Mongol incursion into the Caucasus, the Fifth Crusade was underway in Syria and Egypt. The Crusaders heard of the ongoing conquest of the Khwarazmshah's empire and assumed it was a Christian army from East Asia coming to help the crusaders. There was a strong precedent for this belief. In 1141 the Qara Khitai defeated the Seljuqs; news of this event emanated from the Nestorians and filtered through Latin Outremer to Europe.[405] The conquering Asian king was purported to be a Christian priest named John; previous associations in Europe between the legendary figure and Christian Ethiopia were swiftly forgotten.[406] From 1165 a forged 'Letter of Prester John' appeared in Western Europe and its popularity resulted in its translation into numerous vernacular languages.[407] According to Bernard Hamilton however the 'Letter' should be situated within the conflict between Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and Pope Alexander III.[408] Regardless of the exact provenance of the 'Letter of Prester John' or its intended political message, it created a readiness in the Latin world to seek allies against the targets of the Crusades. Similarly to the Qara Khitai, the imagined leader of the new salvific army was King David, a descendant of Prester John according to Bishop Jacques de Vitry of Acre, and tales of his deeds and goals were recounted in the *Relatio de Davide rege*.[409] Once again the Nestorians featured prominently in the origin story for the new Christian army, this time in the person of Catholicos Yahballaha II, who allegedly summoned the army of King David to fight the Khwarazmshah.[410] As other modern historians have pointed out, this claim was likely a flawed reproduction of the idea common among contemporary Muslim authors

[404] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 51.
[405] Peter Jackson, 'Prester John "redivivus": A Review Article', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (1997) pp. 425, 428.
[406] Ibid. 425-426.
[407] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 23.
[408] Jackson, 'Prester John "redivivus"', p. 427.
[409] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 50.
[410] Ibid.

that it was the Abbasid Caliph who had summoned the Mongols.[411] The fact that the new arrivals had attacked the Georgians and Armenians could be explained away by arguing that the Caucasians were being punished for their sins, or that King David commanded "savage races" presumably drawn from the Biblical milieu.[412] Subsequent events were to problematise the hopes for an Eastern Christian ally even further.

While a second Mongol army was conquering Greater Armenia with the intent for the region's permanent inclusion within the empire (1229-1236),[413] a series of Dominican missions from Hungary into the Eurasian steppe resulted in direct contact between Latin Europe and the Mongol Empire. The Hungarian kings Andrew II and Bela IV sought to locate the Siberian homeland of the Hungarian people and so dispatched four Dominican expeditions: in the first half of the 1230s Friar Otto failed to locate Magna Hungaria but confirmed its existence; Friar Julian's first expedition during approximately 1235-1236 resulted in him successfully finding Magna Hungaria, albeit losing his colleagues along the way; a successive expedition in 1237 was halted in Ryazan and Suzdal; and Julian's second expedition of 1237-1238 resulted in him discovering that Magna Hungaria had been conquered by the Mongols.[414] The last expedition is especially important because Julian met with Mongolian envoys who had been imprisoned by the Russian prince of Suzdal; here Julian was given the letter intended for King Bela IV of Hungary.[415] The letter, from Batu (son of Jochi) on behalf of *qa'an* Ögedei, made clear the Mongols' intentions:

> I, the Chan, the messenger of the Heavenly King, who has given me authority over the entire world to raise up those who submit and to crush those who dare to resist:

[411] Roman Hautala, 'Early Latin Reports About the Mongols (1221): Reasons for Distortion of Reality', in *Crusaders, Missionaries and Eurasian Nomads in the 13th-14th Centuries: a Century of Interactions*, ed. by Victor Spinei (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 2017) p. 275.
[412] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 66.
[413] Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians*, pp. 52-60.
[414] Aron Rimanyi, 'Closing the Steppe Highway: A new perspective on the travels of Friar Julian of Hungary', *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU*, Vol. 24 (2018) pp. 99-100.
[415] Gabriel Ronay, *The Tartar Khan's Englishman* (London: Phoenix Press, 2000) p. 165.

> I am amazed that you, the kingling of the Hungarians, have taken no notice although I have sent you thirty [probably a mistranslation of three] embassies; why do you not send me either envoys or replies?
> I know that you are a rich and powerful king, who has many warriors and who rules alone in a big kingdom. And precisely because of this you find it difficult to submit to me of your own volition.[416]

The letter continues on to criticise Hungary's sheltering of the Cumans/Qipchaks and warns Bela of the inadvisability of such an action. The immediately obvious theme of the letter was the claim to universal rule and how it was conferred on to the Chinggisids by God, or the "Heavenly King". However, despite the overall threatening tone, there was also an element of flattery to the letter. Alongside the positive description of Hungary, the translation provided by Peter Jackson gives the additional line of "and yet it would be better for you, and healthier, were you to submit willingly."[417] While the threat common to the rest of the letter remained, it is arguable that there was an almost entreating quality to the demand. A comparison can be made to the letter from Chinggis to the Khwarazmshah prior to the Otrar Incident, whereby the Mongol *qan* also combined a domineering attitude with a measure of friendliness.[418] Given the frequency with which subjugated rulers were allowed to retain their lands and were integrated into the universalist Mongolian administration, it is not inconceivable that Ögedei intended for Bela and his successors to fulfil a role analogous to the kings of Armenian Cilicia as loyal subject intermediaries between the Mongol Empire and Latin Europe. Furthermore, the history of close interaction between Hungary and the Qipchaqs, which the Mongols were aware of, indicated that the Hungarians could be well suited to such a role in representing nomadic interests.[419]

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[416] Ibid. 166.
[417] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 66.
[418] Ata-Malik Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, trans. by John Andrew Boyle, vol. 1 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958) p. 79.
[419] For more information on the Qipchaqs in Hungary, see: István Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars: Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185-1365* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) pp. 137-138; Roman Hautala, 'The Kingdom of Hungary and the Cumans Shortly before the Western Campaign of the Mongols', in *The Golden Horde in World History. A Multi-Authored Monograph*, ed.

The matter of the imprisoned Mongolian envoy to King Bela IV of Hungary also deserves some examination. Gabriel Ronay, though in a journalistic popular history, has argued that the envoy in question was his titular 'Tartar Khan's Englishman'. Ronay deduced the identity of the envoy to be a priest named Robert, who served as chaplain to Robert FitzWalter, one of the leaders of the Barons' War against King John of England; the excommunication and exile of the rebels resulted in their pilgrimage to Latin Outremer during the Fifth Crusade and then further east where chaplain Robert's skill with languages brought him to the attention of the Mongol army.[420] After a long period of work as a Mongol diplomat Robert was later captured alongside other Mongol commanders following a battle at Wiener Neustadt in 1242.[421] The recorded confession of the envoy points out that his loyalty was secured by the Mongols "bestowing on him many gifts."[422] As argued in the previous chapter, the redistribution of gifts – especially quantities of silk - was a common practice in nomadic steppe society and was part of the system of patronage of courtiers and subjects by the Chinggisids. The use of a Latin European envoy for negotiating with Latin European rulers was a deliberate choice by the Mongol elite. The Chinggisids' goal of a universal empire would be more palatable for their subjects to accept if the subjugation was presented or couched in terms they could recognise, as would later occur in the Middle East and East Asia. While the letter to Bela of Hungary perhaps lacked refinement in this regard, Ronay has argued that there was already indications of an attempt to tailor the message to its received audience through the "typical medieval Latin turn of phrase … how do you escape my hands" that appeared at the end of the letter.[423] Alternatively it should be pointed out the letter was written in Mongolian using the Uyghur script and translated by an associate of Friar Julian rather than the Mongol embassy themselves, resulting perhaps in some of the nuance being literally lost in translation.[424]

by Rafael Khakimov (Kazan: Sh. Marjani Institute of History of the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences, 2017) pp. 49-56.

[420] Ronay, *The Tartar Khan's Englishman*, p. 218.

[421] Ibid. 12.

[422] Ibid. 232.

[423] Ibid. 166.

[424] Ibid. 165-166.

Diplomacy between the Latin World and the 'United Empire'

In early 1241 the Mongol armies began their invasions of Hungary and Poland. Of particular concern to the Latin world, the preceding two decades had already seen the Mongols subjugate Iran and parts of the Middle East, the Caucasus, the western Eurasian steppe, and European Russia. The invasion of Europe proceeded into Bohemia and Austria, then turned south through Croatia, Bosnia, and Serbia before looping through Bulgaria to return to the Eurasian steppe after March 1242.[425] Latin Europe had not been caught completely unaware by the invasion. Besides the fantastical rumours originating from the first news of the Mongols' arrival in the Middle East, Friar Julian's detailed reports on the Mongols were circulated to the Pope and other rulers in Europe,[426] and yet the immediate response of those rulers outside of the Mongols' immediate area of operations was fragmented and ineffectual. Pope Gregory IX authorised the preaching of two separate crusades: one to defend Hungary; the other to bolster an extant and autonomous effort to defend Germany and Bohemia.[427] As ever, the conflict between the Holy Roman Emperors and the Papacy prevented any serious military action from occurring, with the exception of the defence of Wiener Neustadt by, according to the priest Ivo of Narbonne, "the duke of Austria, the king of Bohemia, the patriarch of Aquileia, the duke of Carinthia … the marquis of Baden [and] many princes of the neighbouring states".[428] To be charitable to the Latins, the swift withdrawal of the Mongol forces in 1242 may have led the unaffected rulers to believe that the threat had passed. The Roman Curia, not so convinced, endeavoured to send embassies to the then out of reach Mongols.

Before moving on to the examination of the Latin embassies, a brief review of the reasons for the Mongol withdrawal from Latin Europe in 1242 is necessary. Later attempts to conquer Hungary also failed, for example in 1285,[429] and these can be

[425] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, pp. 69-71.
[426] Mary Dienes, 'Eastern Missions of the Hungarian Dominicans in the First Half of the Thirteenth Century', *Isis*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (1937) pp. 234-235.
[427] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 72.
[428] Ronay, *The Tartar Khan's Englishman*, p. 231.
[429] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 173.

contextualised alongside the Mongol Empire's failure to expand further into the Middle East, India, or even Japan. As has been argued throughout this thesis the Mongol elite exhibited an ideology of universal rule; the aforementioned military setbacks did not diminish this claim. Furthermore, as this thesis has chosen to highlight Mongolian diplomacy with the Latin world – as opposed to Mongolian diplomacy with East Asia or the Middle East - it is necessary to address the event which was pivotal in the history of the two geopolitical spheres. Jackson has enumerated a variety of reasons for the Mongol withdrawal: the death of Ögedei; logistical problems, especially concerning pasturage for horses; discord among the Mongol commanders; fierce resistance from the Latins; and the potentially limited aims of the invasion.[430] Stephen Pow has named these reasons, with the exception of the third, respectively: the 'political theory'; the 'ecological theory'; the 'military weakness theory'; and the 'limited goals theory'.[431] The discord among the Mongol commanders can reasonably be included within the political theory. Pow has convincingly dismissed three of the aforementioned theories and modified the 'military weakness theory' by arguing that a mass proliferation of fortifications throughout Europe acted as an effective obstacle to Mongolian progress.[432] Meanwhile, the current impending climate crisis has unsurprisingly generated interest in environmental history and this approach has also been applied to the Mongol withdrawal of 1242. Ulf Büntgen and Nicola Di Cosmo have argued that climatic fluctuations reduced the availability of supplies for the Mongols and thus negatively impacted their ability to successfully besiege European fortifications.[433] Pow has responded to Büntgen and Di Cosmo's article with the argument that the specific climatic conditions of 1242 should have aided the Mongol conquest, rather than precipitate their withdrawal.[434] It is beyond the purpose of this thesis to

[430] Ibid. 71-74.
[431] Stephen Pow, *Deep Ditches and Well-Built Walls: A Reappraisal of the Mongol Withdrawal from Europe in 1242* (unpublished master's thesis, University of Calgary, 2012) pp. 10-11.
[432] Ibid. 46.
[433] Ulf Büntgen and Nicola Di Cosmo, 'Climatic and environmental aspects of the Mongol withdrawal from Hungary in 1242 CE', *Scientific Reports* (2016) pp. 5-6.
[434] Stephen Pow, 'Climatic and Environmental Limiting Factors in the Mongol Empire's Westward Expansion: Exploring Causes for the Mongol Withdrawal from Hungary in 1242', in *Socio-Environmental Dynamics Along the Historical Silk Road*, ed. by Liang Emlyn Yang *et al* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2019) pp. 317-318.

decisively argue for one specific theory for the Mongol withdrawal of 1242. However it must be stated that the 'limited goals theory' runs counter to the core argument of this thesis, namely that the ambition for universal rule determined imperial policy. Moreover, the sheer amount of manpower involved in the campaign along with the many members of the Chinggisid dynasty in command disproves the idea of a mere punitive raid.[435] Additionally, a Latin witness to the Hungarian campaign reported that the Chinggisids were already apportioning appanages prior to their withdrawal, clearly indicating that it was a war of conquest.[436]

When the Roman Curia decided to dispatch embassies to the Mongol Empire after the 1242 withdrawal from Europe, they also convened a council at Lyon in 1245 to discuss the Mongol threat. Just prior to the Council of Lyon, Pope Innocent IV and his cardinals were afforded the chance to question a Russian bishop named Peter about the Mongols. Though claiming to be a refugee from the Mongol conquest of Russia, the information he provided reveals much about his agenda. Firstly though, the identity of the previously obscure Peter is relevant to understanding his motives; other historians have recently concluded that he was the bishop of Belgorod.[437] Alexander Maiorov has further argued that the timing of Peter's westward journey would indicate that he had actually been dispatched by Prince Yaroslav of Kiev, who had just personally confirmed his allegiance to Batu, and Peter was therefore acting as the head of the Russian Church.[438] Beyond the explanation of the Mongols' Biblical origins, Peter provided a wealth of information about the new threat. Of the information specifically related to diplomacy, Peter claimed: the Mongols were led by St. John the Baptist; they observed treaties and received envoys favourably; they exacted tribute in the form of skilled personnel; their army included "peoples from every nation and from all religious sects"; they were engaged in campaigns in the Near and Middle East and Eastern Europe; they aimed to conquer the world; they did not spare those who waited to be attacked; and they were capable of easily

[435] Pow, *Deep Ditches and Well-Built Walls*, p. 38.
[436] Ibid. 39.
[437] Peter Jackson, 'The Testimony of the Russian 'Archbishop' Peter Concerning the Mongols (1244/5): Precious Intelligence or Timely Disinformation?', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 26, No. 1-2, (2016) p. 68; Alexander V. Maiorov, 'The Rus Archbishop Peter at the First Council of Lyon', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 71, No. 1 (2019) p. 23.
[438] Maiorov, 'The Rus Archbishop Peter', pp. 23-24, 25.

crossing rivers.[439] In other words, Peter's testimony was designed to both encourage and intimidate Europe into formally submitting to Mongol rule.[440] The Chinggisids' intention for universal rule, in terms of both physical expanse and integration of subjects into government, is abundantly clear throughout Peter's testimony. Moreover, the testimony was tailored specifically for a Christian audience; the claim that the Mongols were led by St. John the Baptist fits within the context of the previous belief that Prester John or King David were at the head of the new arrivals. Peter's source for his information was allegedly a former son-in-law of Chinggis named 'Chalaladan' who had been exiled; Jackson has convincingly pointed out that this 'exile' may have instead been a plant.[441] Taking into account Maiorov's dating, it is more than likely that Peter was directly in the employ of the Mongol administration when he travelled west; a conclusion which Jackson also considers likely.[442] The employment of non-Mongol subjects for diplomatic missions, especially those of cultural or religious proximity to the recipients, was of course a consistent feature of Chinggisid diplomacy.

The testimony of Bishop Peter had a significant influence on the Papacy's dispatch of embassies; in 1245 three diplomatic missions left to journey to the three Mongolian campaigns Peter had described.[443] The Franciscan John of Plano Carpini led the mission to Eastern Europe, while two Dominican missions to the Near East were led respectively by Ascelin of Cremona and Andrew of Longjumeau; each of the embassies carried two letters written by Pope Innocent IV.[444] Both of the letters reference the information provided by Peter regarding the safe conduct and respect for envoys.[445] The second letter also unwittingly declared the Pope's submission to

[439] Jackson, 'The Testimony of the Russian 'Archbishop' Peter', pp. 73-74.
[440] Ibid. 72.
[441] Ibid. 71-72. The identity of Chalaladan remains unknown; Jackson proposes the name Jalayirdai. To me Chalaladan resembles Jalal al-Din and could refer to a Muslim Qarluq. For more on Chinggisid-Qarluq marriages, see chapter two of this thesis or Anne Broadbridge, *Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) pp. 122-123.
[442] Ibid. 76-77.
[443] Jackson, 'The Testimony of the Russian 'Archbishop' Peter', p. 77; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 93.
[444] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 93.
[445] 'Two Bulls of Pope Innocent IV Addressed to the Emperor of the Tartars', in *Mission to Asia. Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, ed. by Christopher Dawson (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) pp. 75, 76.

the Mongol Empire: "deal honestly with them [the envoys] in those matters of which they will speak to you on *our behalf*, and when you have had profitable discussions with them concerning the aforesaid affairs, especially those pertaining to *peace*".[446] Within the universalistic framework of the imperial steppe ideology, peace was coterminous with submission;[447] the Mongolian term was *il*, which featured prominently throughout steppe nomadic history, as argued in the first chapter of this thesis. The Pope further compounded his faux-pas when he stated that "we, therefore, following the example of the King of Peace, and desiring that all men should live united in concord in the fear of God".[448] The Chinggisid rulers could only interpret such a phrase through their own understanding of peace, one in which their dynasty had been invested with universal, united dominion by God/*Tengri*.

The account of Friar John of Plano Carpini, or the *Ystoria Mongalorum*, provides further details of the Mongols' steppe universalism and how it affected their diplomatic conduct. John was able to grasp that which Pope Innocent did not know: "the Tartars never make peace except with those who submit to them".[449] This was because of Chinggis Khan's command to achieve universal dominion, or in the often-repeated words of John: "to bring the whole world into subjection".[450] The friar also recognised that the Mongol administration recruited specialists and skilled personnel from the subject peoples, though of course he portrayed it in an unambiguously negative manner rather than seeing it as a deliberately diverse administration for a universal empire.[451] John also noted that envoys of "powerful princes", presumably meaning independent rulers, and rulers who were subject to the Chinggisids were treated the same in terms of obligations in providing tribute.[452] Though the friar regularly pointed out Chinggisid universal rule, he did not seem to have connected the evidence and understood the practical applications of the imperial steppe ideology; namely, that independent rulers were already considered

[446] Ibid. 76. Italicised emphasis mine.
[447] Jackson, 'The Testimony of the Russian 'Archbishop' Peter', p. 75.
[448] 'Two Bulls of Pope Innocent IV', pp. 75-76.
[449] John of Plano Carpini, 'History of the Mongols', in *Mission to Asia. Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, ed. by Christopher Dawson (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) p. 38.
[450] Ibid. 43.
[451] Ibid. 42, 39.
[452] Ibid. 39.

to be subjects and vassals of the Mongol Empire. After a long journey through the Eurasian steppe, John's mission arrived in Mongolia in 1246 and was eventually granted an audience with the newly-elected Güyük. The friars communicated with Güyük through intermediaries, including the Nestorian Uyghur Chinqai, due to the apparent custom "for the Emperor of the Tatars never to speak to a foreigner".[453] As will be discussed later, William of Rubruck had no trouble speaking to Möngke. Of particular interest to the friars was the claim from "the Christians of [Güyük's] household" that he was about to become a Christian; the evidence they provided included the favour they were shown and the presence of a chapel before Güyük's tent.[454] One possible explanation for this is that it was a ploy aimed at the diplomats to improve their receptiveness towards Mongol overtures. Another explanation is the traditionally non-exclusive and universalistic view of religion exhibited by nomadic steppe empires; the Christians likely omitted the mention of the favour shown to adherents of other religions. The two explanations are not mutually exclusive; the Christians may have genuinely believed in Güyük's impending conversion and they may have been ordered or encouraged to inform the diplomats of such a belief. The friars departed with a letter from Güyük; the *qa'an* also wanted his own ambassadors to accompany the friars back to Europe, but they were able to dissuade him.[455] Before their departure the friars met with Töregene, mother of Güyük and the preceding ruler of the empire, whereupon each of them were granted gifts: fox-skin cloaks and lengths of velvet.[456] As argued in the previous chapter, the redistribution of gifts was one of the ways in which the Chinggisids (and rulers of other steppe empires) acknowledged or confirmed the fealty of their subjects. In other words, John of Plano Carpini, his colleagues, and the party they represented, that is the Pope, were considered to be subjects of the Mongol Empire. Their acceptance of the gifts, from the Mongolian perspective, confirmed their loyalty.

The letter from Güyük to Pope Innocent IV is undoubtedly vital to understanding the universalism of the Mongols' imperial steppe ideology. The

[453] Ibid. 67.
[454] Ibid. 68.
[455] Ibid. 68-69.
[456] Ibid. 69.

Persian original began and ended with the formulaic phrase "We, by the power of eternal heaven".[457] The Latin translation produced by John of Plano Carpini's retinue instead began "The Strength of God, the Emperor of all men"; though slightly different, it demonstrates that the friars understood the *qa'an*'s broad intentions.[458] Güyük went on to state his understanding of the friars' mission and the letter they carried: that the Pope had submitted to Mongol authority. As such, "the great Pope, together with all the other Princes" should travel to Güyük's court to make their submission in person. Here is where the two versions of the letter crucially diverged though. Whereas the Persian original stated "come in person to serve us. At that time I shall make known all the commands of the *Yasa*", the Latin translation instead had "in no way delay to come to me to make terms of peace and then you shall hear alike our answer and our will." Again the friars had not made the connections between their gathered intelligence and had thus failed to realise that peace was submission in the Mongol imperial context. Other misunderstandings focus on the Pope's appeal to Güyük to convert, and the reason for the invasion of Eastern Europe. The first misunderstanding can be explained by the steppe view of religion; Güyük himself stated "how knowest thou whom God absolves, in truth to whom He shows mercy? How dost thou know that such words as thou speakest are with God's sanction?", presaging Möngke's later comments on the several paths to God.[459] Güyük's declarative answer, which also addressed events in Eastern Europe, was to ask how he could commit any of those actions "contrary to the command of God?"[460] Or, to put it another way, Güyük and his dynasty had been invested with divine power and so their actions, as long as they corresponded to God's command which only they were privy to, were divinely ordained.

[457] 'Guyuk Khan's Letter to Pope Innocent IV (1246)', in *Mission to Asia. Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, ed. by Christopher Dawson (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) p. 85-86.
[458] 'The Narrative of Brother Benedict the Pole', in *Mission to Asia. Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, ed. by Christopher Dawson (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) p. 83-84.
[459] *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck. His journey to the court of the Great Khan Möngke, 1253-1255*, trans. by Peter Jackson and ed. by David Morgan (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2009) p. 236.
[460] 'Guyuk Khan's Letter to Pope Innocent IV', in *Mission to Asia*, pp. 85-86.

The events of the Dominican Friar Ascelin of Cremona's mission were recorded by his companion Simon of Saint-Quentin. The mission provides details on the impact of the Mongols' universalism on diplomacy, especially because of Ascelin's consistently obstinate tone towards his hosts. In 1247 Ascelin's party arrived at the camp of Baiju, military governor of the Middle East, in Greater Armenia.[461] At his first meeting with Baiju's intermediaries, Ascelin claimed that the Pope was "superior in dignity to all men"; the intermediaries "became extremely annoyed at these words" and responded that "[Güyük] Khan is the son of God and that Baiju Noyan and Batu are his princes and thus their names are made known and exalted everywhere".[462] The claim of Güyük's divine parentage may have been a misinterpretation by the friars of the formulaic Chinggisid claim to divinely-ordained universal rule. Ascelin further antagonised the intermediaries by stating "the lord pope does not know who Khan is, or Baiju Noyan or Batu, nor has he ever heard their names"; the friar then admitted that his party had brought no gifts or tribute for Baiju, further drawing the ire of the Mongols.[463] The final straw for the Mongol courtiers was the Latin party's refusal to perform formal genuflection before Baiju; Friar Guichardus of Cremona, demonstrating considerably more knowledge than his colleagues, explained that it was not idolatry but "a sign of the submission of the lord pope and the entire Roman Church to the mandate of the khan."[464] Baiju and several of his advisors decided to have the friars executed for their repeated insolence and refusal to submit to Mongolian diplomatic protocol, but two figures dissuaded Baiju: his oldest wife, and the bureaucrat responsible for overseeing envoys. The wife argued that killing the friars would frighten off other envoys and cut off the gifts and tribute they brought which, as previously discussed, was integral to the steppe nomadic political system; she also pointed out that imperial envoys would subsequently be put in danger.[465] The bureaucrat raised the interesting issue that he had previously been ordered by Baiju to execute another envoy in the past

[461] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 94.
[462] Simon of Saint-Quentin, *The History of the Tartars*, trans. by Stephen Pow *et al*, http://www.simonofstquentin.org/index.html, book XXXII, chapter 40.
[463] Ibid. chapters 40-41.
[464] Ibid. chapter 42.
[465] Ibid. chapter 44.

which had earned him the *qa'an*'s displeasure, and that if he was ordered to do so again he would not hesitate to testify against Baiju at Güyük's court.[466] Clearly Baiju's somewhat cavalier attitude was not in line with official imperial policy.

Despite Baiju having calmed down he was keen to be rid of the friars and tried to send them on to Güyük's court; Ascelin continued to be obstinate however and insisted that he had fulfilled his mission by delivering Pope Innocent IV's letters to the first Mongol army they encountered.[467] In the ensuing arguments, Baiju's intermediaries repeated their assertion that "the khan is greater than your pope and everyone, by the power and glory which has been given to him by God, and by the dignity which he has acquired."[468] In between the arguing, the friars were able to translate the Pope's letters with the aid of Persian, Turkish, and Greek bureaucrats in Baiju's employ.[469] The friars were compelled to wait for months to receive Baiju's reply to the Pope and were delayed even further by the arrival of Eljigidei, Baiju's later replacement, who brought a letter from Güyük to Baiju; finally the Latin party was allowed to leave accompanied by Mongol envoys Aybeg and Sargis.[470] Judging by his name, the latter envoy was an Asian Christian, which would be a recurrent feature of Mongolian diplomacy with the Latin world. To summarise then, two competing worldviews clashed with nearly fatal results during this diplomatic mission. The papal supremacy of the friars against the universal dominion of the Chinggisids' imperial steppe ideology was fraught with misunderstandings, exacerbated by the obvious unsuitability of Friar Ascelin of Cremona for his task. The altercations had an impact on Baiju's letter to the Pope: "Your emissaries spoke big words. We do not know whether you instructed them to speak that way to us or if they spoke at their own behest."[471] The rest of the letter was similar to the letter from Güyük which John of Plano Carpini carried. Baiju referenced "the unwavering command of God and the statute of him who encompasses the entire Earth"; the governor's command to the Pope was for "yourself to come in person to us and

[466] Ibid.
[467] Ibid. chapter 46.
[468] Ibid.
[469] Ibid. chapter 47.
[470] Ibid. chapters 48-50.
[471] Ibid. chapter 51.

submit to him who encompasses the surface of the entire world."[472] The letter from Güyük to Baiju confirmed the mandate of universal rule that was presented in Baiju's letter. Moreover, Güyük divided the world into two categories: "provinces that obey us and … provinces that are in rebellion against us."[473] To reiterate the point made throughout this thesis, the Chinggisids considered all rulers to be subjects of the Mongol Empire "be they ignorant or knowledgeable" of that assertion.[474]

Information on the mission of Dominican Friar Andrew of Longjumeau is sparser compared to that of his two contemporary embassies. After travelling through Syria and Palestine, Andrew went northeast to Tabriz and the camp of Eljigidei.[475] During his journey Andrew met with Simeon Rabban-Ata, a Nestorian who oversaw the Christian population of the Middle East on behalf of the Mongol administration.[476] Simeon forwarded to Andrew a profession of faith from Nestorian Catholicos Sabrisho V and wrote a letter to the Pope acknowledging the primacy of the patriarchate of Rome.[477] Interestingly, Simeon, along with the Jacobite Patriarch Ignatius III who Andrew also met, asked the Pope to affect better treatment of Syriac Christians in Latin Outremer; as Jackson has pointed out, that would be congruent with the treatment of Christians under Mongolian universal rule.[478] Andrew's mission encouraged Eljigidei to send his own embassy to King Louis IX of France, who had just arrived in Cyprus in 1248. The two ambassadors were Christians from Mosul: Mark and David, or rather Sayf al-Din Muzaffar Dawud.[479] Previous historiography has argued that the letter Eljigidei's ambassadors delivered had no direct demand for submission.[480] Crucially though, the surviving letter is a Latin translation. As was demonstrated earlier with John of Plano Carpini's Latin translation of Güyük's letter to Pope Innocent IV, the friars had failed to understand

[472] Ibid.
[473] Ibid. chapter 52.
[474] Ibid.
[475] Denise Aigle, 'The Letters of Eljigidei, Hulegu, and Abaqa: Mongol Overtures or Christian Ventriloquism', *Inner Asia*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2005) pp. 146-147.
[476] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 98.
[477] Ibid.
[478] Ibid.
[479] Aigle, 'The Letters of Eljigidei, Hulegu, and Abaqa', p. 146.
[480] For example: Aigle, 'The Letters of Eljigidei, Hulegu, and Abaqa', p. 148; Eric Voegelin, 'The Mongol Orders of Submission to European Powers, 1245-1255', *Byzantion*, Vol. 15 (1940) p. 380; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 219.

the Mongols' equivalence of peace with submission. It is therefore likely that the French king's party, which included Andrew of Longjumeau and the papal legate, also made the same mistake as their colleagues. Furthermore, the formulaic phraseology of Eljigidei's letter was identical to the other letters from Mongol leaders to Latin rulers which are recognised to have been demanding submission.[481] The content of Eljigidei's letter broached the same topic as the letters from Simeon Rabban-Ata and the Jacobite Ignatius III:

> We come with the power and the mission (granted by the king [the *qa'an* Güyük]) that all Christians be liberated from servitude and from tribute, from taxes and all things similar; that they be honoured and respected and that nobody lay hands on their property; that the churches that were destroyed be rebuilt, that the bells sound, and that no-one dare prevent them from praying for our kingdom with a tranquil and joyful heart.[482]

The envoys, Mark and David, also verbally delivered the order for Louis and the Franks to attack Egypt in order to prevent the Ayyubids from defending the Abbasid Caliphate from an impending Mongol invasion.[483] The embassy indicates that Eljigidei and the government he represented considered the Franks to be subjects and so the Mongols were therefore able, in theory at least, to dictate the religious and foreign policies of Louis. The embassy also indicates the extent to which Middle Eastern Christians were becoming involved in the Mongol administration and consequentially the effect they were having on the Chinggisids' imperial steppe ideology. Mark and David had the presence of mind however to exaggerate the Christian presence within the Mongol government in order to increase the likelihood of Louis' compliance. The envoys confirmed the earlier report of Andrew of Longjumeau that Güyük's mother Töregene was not only a Christian but also the daughter of Prester John; they further claimed that Güyük and a large number of

[481] Aigle, 'The Letters of Eljigidei, Hulegu, and Abaqa', pp. 147-148.
[482] Ibid. 149.
[483] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 219.

Chinggisid princes and generals had already been baptised.[484] The bold claims induced Louis to appoint Andrew as the head of another mission to the Mongols; the embassy was forwarded by Eljigidei to the *qa'an*'s court on the Eurasian steppe where they learned Güyük had died and had been succeeded by his wife Oghul Qaimish as regent.[485] The embassy brought with them a scarlet tent and a cross made from the wood of the True Cross as gifts to congratulate Güyük's conversion; however, Oghul Qaimish interpreted the gifts as tribute to confirm the Franks' voluntary submission and in her responding letter ordered Louis to continue sending annual tribute.[486] Worryingly for the Latins, the regent also declared that "Prester John rose up against us … and we put [him] to the sword."[487] While the Chinggisids did regularly incorporate the ideological tropes of their intended subjects into diplomatic discourse, clearly it was not uniformly consistent and could sometimes result in contradictory impressions among, for example, the Latins. Oghul Qaimish's lapse should not be understood as a break with the previous adaptiveness of Chinggisid universal dominion, but as a problem with communications over such vast distances. On the other hand, the claim of defeating Prester John could have been an early version of Bar Hebraeus' assertion that Prester John was none other than Ong Toghrul Khan of the Kerait;[488] this would suggest that Syrian Christians already had considerable influence at the imperial court at this early stage.

At the same time as King Louis IX of France received Eljigidei's embassy in Cyprus, the island's King Henry I received a letter from his brother-in-law Constable Smbat of Cilician Armenia, brother of King Het'um I; the Armenian was on his way to Güyük's court to present his kingdom's submission to the Mongol Empire.[489] The letter was given to Louis, who in turn sent it Pope Innocent IV.[490] The content of the letter was replete with Christian imagery:

[484] Aigle, 'The Letters of Eljigidei, Hulegu, and Abaqa', p. 150.
[485] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 104.
[486] Aigle, 'The Letters of Eljigidei, Hulegu, and Abaqa', p. 152.
[487] Ibid.
[488] Gregorius Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l-Faraj Bar Hebraeus' Political History of the World*, trans. by Ernest A. Wallis-Budge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932) p. 353.
[489] Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians*, p. 82.
[490] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 102.

> [Tangut] is the land from which came the Three Kings to Bethlehem to worship the Lord Jesus, which was born. And know that the power of Christ has been, and is, so great, that the people of that land are Christians; and the whole land of Chata believes in those Three Kings. I have myself been in their churches and have seen pictures of Jesus Christ and the Three Kings … And it is through those Three Kings that they believe in Christ, and that the Chan and his people have now become Christians. And they have their churches before his gates where they ring their bells and beat upon pieces of timber.[491]

The similarity to John of Plano Carpini's report from the Christians of Güyük's household is striking. Whatever the personal religious beliefs of Güyük and his court, there was clearly an attempt to portray the Chinggisids as ruling over a universal empire in which Christianity had a respected position. Providing further evidence for this was the letter's use of the salvific Prester John/King David themes which were popular in the Latin world:

> Let me tell you, moreover, that in the land of India, which St. Thomas the Apostle converted, there is a certain Christian king who stood in sore tribulation among the other kings who were Saracens. They used to harass him on every side, until the Tatars reached that country, and he became their liegeman. Then with his own army and that of the Tatars, he attacked the Saracens.[492]

Alexandr Osipian has argued that Smbat's letter was a product of the collaboration between the Nestorians and Armenians and with Eljigidei to minimise the negative impressions from the papal embassies.[493] On the one hand, the Armenians and Nestorians wanted to secure the power of Christendom in the Middle East in a way

[491] Alexandr Osipian, 'Armenian Involvement in the Latin-Mongol Crusade: Uses of the Magi and Prester John in Constable Smbat's *Letter* and Hayton of "*Flos historiarum terre orientis,*" 1248-1307', *Medieval Encounters*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2014) p. 84.
[492] Ibid.
[493] Ibid. 89.

which was advantageous to their own interests. On the other hand, Eljigidei was compelled to prosecute his mission to realise Chingisid universal dominion and he appears to have been more flexible than his predecessor Baiju in achieving such goals. Through the attempted military coordination with the crusaders and the other Christians Eljigidei was able to focus on one enemy at a time. The more conciliatory overtures to the Latins therefore still fit within the remit of the imperial steppe ideology's theme of universal rule.

Not to be dissuaded by the disappointment of Andrew of Longjumeau's embassy to Oghul Qaimish, King Louis IX of France sponsored another mission to the Mongol Empire in 1253, this time led by Franciscan Friar William of Rubruck. However, to dispel the notion that Louis was seeking to submit to the Mongols, the friars were instructed to deny that they were French ambassadors.[494] The goal of the mission was for the Latin party to meet with Sartaq, son of Batu, who they heard had become a Christian.[495] The letter from Louis to Sartaq was of relatively limited scope: Louis was asking permission for the friars to stay with Sartaq and aid him in evangelising the Christian faith.[496] The letter's limitations however caused confusion among the Mongol rulers and resulted in the friars' mission being extended considerably. When William and his party met Sartaq, the Chinggisid prince had Louis' letter translated and came to the conclusion that the friars were envoys; Sartaq decided to send the friars on to his father along with the letter in order to clarify the situation.[497] It is important to note that when presenting themselves as just members of the Christian clergy, William and his colleagues had been exempt from usual diplomatic protocol such as genuflection before Sartaq.[498] When it became apparent that the friars were indeed envoys, their situation became more complicated and necessitated their meeting with a higher authority, that is to say Batu. Of further note from the meeting, Sartaq's Nestorian secretary Quyaq informed William: "Do not say that our master is a Christian. He is not a Christian; he

[494] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 103.
[495] Ibid.
[496] *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck*, p. 43.
[497] Ibid. 119.
[498] Ibid. 117 n. 1.

is a Mo'al [Mongol]."[499] The friar deduced that 'Christian' was a term for a people in the Mongolian worldview rather than a religious descriptor, yet he demonstrated the limit of his understanding when he went on to state that the idea that Sartaq, Möngke, or Güyük were Christians was solely due to Nestorian exaggeration.[500] However there is evidence attesting to Sartaq's personal Christianity from the non-Nestorian sources of Ata Malik Juvaini, Bar Hebraeus, and the Armenians Kirakos Ganjakets'i and Vardan Arewelts'i.[501] The steppe nomads' conception of religion was different to that of William's Latin Europe and so the idea of a universal empire in which a rigid definition of religion was not central to the governing ideology was therefore incomprehensible to the friar. The result of which being that William did not consider Sartaq or other Mongols to be real Christians.

At William of Rubruck's subsequent audience with Batu, the friar began by urging the Chinggisid prince to embrace Christianity otherwise he would "not possess the things of Heaven".[502] From the Mongolian perspective, Heaven had already granted the Chinggisids dominion over the Earth so the friar's claim was, at best, presumptuous. According to Friar James of Iseo via King Het'um I of Cilician Armenia, Batu remarked to his court that if William had acted in a "simple and reasonable fashion" like other members of the religious classes he would have "found favour with the king of the Tatars."[503] Despite William's lack of tact however Batu was favourable towards the friars' presence but noted that it was up to *qa'an* Möngke to decide; as a result the Latin party were dispatched further east.[504] During the friars' eastward journey their Mongol guide had them visit the camps of Chinggisid princes so that the Latins could pray for them.[505] The friars' status as members of the privileged religious class superseded their position as envoys of - from the Mongol perspective - rebellious subjects. This example of the Chinggisid view of universal dominion would become even more pronounced after the

[499] Ibid. 120.
[500] Ibid. 120, 122.
[501] Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, p. 268; Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography*, p. 398; Kirakos Ganjakets'i, *History of the Armenians*, fol. 358; Vardan Arewelts'i, *Compilation of History*, trans. by Robert Bedrosian, http://www.attalus.org/armenian/vaint.htm, fol. 150.
[502] *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck*, p. 133.
[503] Ibid. 282.
[504] Ibid. 134.
[505] Ibid. 141-142.

Franciscans arrived at Möngke's court. In the latter stages of William's journey to Qaraqorum, he was informed that Batu had understood King Louis' letter to Sartaq to have been asking for reinforcements for the ongoing Seventh Crusade; the friar blamed the mistranslation on the Armenian secretaries at Batu's court.[506] Given the growing influence of Armenians, from both Greater and Cilician Armenia, at the Mongol courts and their passion for encouraging a Mongol-Crusader alliance, William's assertion was certainly the most probable cause for the miscommunication.

The confusion over the status of William of Rubruck's party was the first thing which confronted them when they arrived at Möngke's camp: the *qa'an*'s secretaries "kept repeating constantly: 'Why have you come, seeing that you did not come to make peace?'", by which of course they meant submission; for his part, William continued to demonstrate his misunderstanding of peace and submission in the Mongolian worldview.[507] The Mongol administrators demonstrated their diametric world view of loyal subjects and rebellious subjects when they jointly questioned the friars and ambassadors from Nicaean Emperor John III Ducas Vatatzes; to the Mongols' confusion, William claimed that France and the Nicaeans were neither at peace or war.[508] William's reasoning that the two realms were far apart clearly was not a convincing argument to the Mongols. The Nicaean ambassador stated however that the two realms were at peace.[509] The Nicaean may have understood the Mongolians' view of peace and submission, and used the opportunity to proclaim the much-diminished Roman Empire's dominance over Europe. William's negative reaction would suggest that he had a suspicion of something foul at play. In a subsequent chance encounter with an Armenian hermit from Jerusalem, the hermit relayed to William that he had received a vision from God urging him to promise Möngke universal dominion if the *qa'an* embraced Christianity; the hermit "advised [William] to tell him [Möngke] the same thing."[510] Unsurprisingly the Franciscan refused, unable to countenance the Pope and the Franks' subjection to the Mongols.

[506] Ibid. 170-171.
[507] Ibid. 172.
[508] Ibid. 175.
[509] Ibid.
[510] Ibid. 174-175.

The question of whether this was a deliberate subterfuge from the Mongols, a genuine belief of the Armenian hermit, a result of the universalistic steppe attitudes toward religion, or even coordinated realpolitik from the Middle Eastern Christians is a prescient one. Once again, the multiple explanations are not mutually incompatible with each other and indeed arguably can be considered to be complementary to one another.

The friars' first audience with Möngke was marred by the dubious ability of William's interpreter as well as his inebriation; William was however able to understand the *qa'an*'s statement of universal rule: "Just as the sun spreads its rays in all directions, so my power and that of Baatu are spread to every quarter".[511] Jackson considers the inclusion of Batu to be evidence of co-equal rule between him and Möngke after Batu helped enthrone the *qa'an*.[512] On the other hand, it could just be recognition of the corporate sovereignty which characterised the imperial steppe ideology and furthermore of recognition of Batu as the eldest Chinggisid dynast. In between audiences with Möngke, William heard the tale of a priest from Acre who falsely claimed to be an envoy for the Pope. The details of the story are not relevant for the present study except for the part in which the *qa'an* provided details on cooperation with the Latins. The false envoy was to "go to the king of the French" and "if he wants peace with us [the Mongols], we shall conquer on the one hand from the Saracens the territory as far as his, and we grant him on the other the remaining land to the west."[513] This embassy was at about the same (1253/1254) in which Möngke dispatched his brother Hulegu to the Middle East to reorganise imperial administration and continue the war against so-called rebellious subjects. As will be seen later Hulegu and his *ulus* were key participants in the attempted Mongol-Crusader alliance. This embassy of Möngke's would therefore suggest that this was a deliberate policy in realising Chinggisid universal dominion.

Before William of Rubruck's next proper audience with Möngke, the friar participated in a religious debate between Christians, Muslims, and Buddhists. The Christians and Muslims together 'defeated' the Buddhists, in no small part due to

[511] Ibid. 180.
[512] Ibid. 180, n. 1.
[513] Ibid. 185-186.

William's rhetorical skills, at least according to his own words.[514] The importance of William's participation in the debate despite his status as a foreign envoy cannot be understated. To the Mongol Empire foreign rulers were rebellious subjects; William, as an envoy of King Louis IX of France, therefore was also a subject of the empire, though it should be noted that just prior to the debate the Mongol administration finally decided that the friar had "no diplomatic business with him [the *qa'an*] but [had] come to pray for him just as do many other priests."[515] However, the decision had come after the invitation for William to participate in the debate, indicating that the friar's foreign status was no impediment to participation in court ceremony. Furthermore, the numerous occasions in which William and his colleagues had accepted gifts from members of the Chinggisid family had, unbeknownst to the Latins, confirmed their status as loyal subjects. Following the religious debate William had his final audience with the *qa'an*. By this point, the friar had been appointed a new interpreter in the person of the adopted son of William Boucher, the famed Parisian goldsmith; both father and son created commissioned works for Möngke's court. Accordingly, the audience went much more smoothly. The *qa'an* described his religious pluralism and piety before tasking William with relaying a letter back to King Louis, which the friar agreed to do.[516]

The content of Möngke's letter to Louis of France was similar to the previous Mongol orders of submission. The letter began with an "order of the everlasting God [or eternal Heaven]" which decreed that "on earth there is only one lord, Chingis Chan".[517] As Möngke was Chinggis' successor, the implication was clear that Möngke was the new lord on Earth and therefore due the same fealty as his ancestor. Part of the letter explained how William had come to be an envoy of the *qa'an*, which was important given the original limited nature of the friars' mission to Sartaq.[518] The usual demand for envoys to relay the French king's response to the ultimatum ended the letter.[519] Interestingly the letter also repudiated Eljigidei's 1248 embassy to

[514] Ibid. 235.
[515] Ibid. 230.
[516] Ibid. 237-238.
[517] Ibid. 248.
[518] Ibid. 249.
[519] Ibid. 250.

Louis: “A man named David [Sayf al-Din Muzaffar Dawud] came to you as though an envoy of the Mo’als, but he was a liar”.[520] The policy of Eljigidei in his capacity as governor of the Middle East – military cooperation between the Mongols and the crusaders – was, as just previously argued, congruent with Möngke’s own policies in the period (1250s). The reason for the embassy’s repudiation consequently was not due to a reverse in policy, so it must therefore be placed on the person of Eljigidei. As a supporter of Güyük, Eljigidei was recalled from his post and became one of the victims of Möngke’s purge against the Ögedeid branch of the family; he was succeeded as governor by his predecessor Baiju.[521]

Diplomacy between the Latin World and the ‘Divided Empire’

In 1259 the death of Möngke precipitated a succession crisis between his two brothers Qubilai and Ariq Böke. Qubilai was victorious and conventional historiography has considered his assumption of power to have resulted in the division of the Mongol Empire into four independent, and often hostile, khanates: the Yuan dynasty of China and Mongolia, the Ilkhanate of Iran and the Middle East, the Golden Horde of the western Eurasian steppe, and the Chagatai Khanate of Central Asia. Recent scholarly work has increasingly problematised this narrative however. Hodong Kim has pointed out that there was actually relatively little warfare post-1260 and that the ‘opposing’ sides never “made serious plans to attack the capital area of the enemy.”[522] Furthermore, private merchants and members of the religious classes were able to travel between the khanates which were ostensibly hostile to each other without much danger; the *ortoq* merchants and ambassadors, as agents of the Mongol courts, faced considerably more risk but were still often able to fulfil their duties.[523] Due to the nature in which appanages were apportioned to Chinggisid dynasts, individual princes had revenue streams spread throughout the empire, including in areas which are alleged to have been hostile to one another.

[520] Ibid. 249.
[521] Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians*, pp. 64-65.
[522] Hodong Kim, ‘The Unity of the Mongol Empire and Continental Exchanges over Eurasia’, *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 1 (2009) p. 19.
[523] Ibid. 22-27.

After 1260, collection of disparate revenues was irregular but did still occur.[524] In some cases the appanages were expanded: for example, the Jochid appanage in China was increased by 60,000 households by Qubilai in 1281.[525] For their part, Qubilai and his successors certainly regarded themselves as *qa'an*s of a united Mongol Empire. Kim has convincingly argued that the term (Da) Yuan was simply the official Chinese translation for *Yeke Mongγol Ulus*, or 'Great Mongol State/Empire', and not the declaration of a new exclusively Chinese dynasty, though the Chinese administrators certainly portrayed it that way as a means of rationalising Mongol rule over China.[526] On the other hand, the rulers of the 'independent' khanates recognised the supremacy of the *qa'an* in China and thus the unity of the empire. For example, the Jochid khans Möngke-Temur (r. 1266-1280), Toqta (r. 1291-1312), and Özbek (r. 1313-1341) all requested the official confirmation for their rule from their Qubilaid relatives.[527] It would be more accurate then to refer to the four khanates instead as the *ulus* of *qa'an*/Qubilai, the *ulus* of Hulegu, the *ulus* of Jochi, and the *ulus* of Chagatai, all of which belonged to a united empire of varying centralisation. Of course, subdivisions within those four *ulus*, in addition to the existence of additional smaller *ulus* such as those of Chinggis' brothers, further complicates the traditional historiography's periodisation of the Mongol Empire.[528]

Of more direct consequence to this thesis was the antagonism between the *ulus* of Hulegu and the *ulus* of Jochi, both of which had direct relations with the Latin world. Once the conventional historiography's preconception of a divided empire has been dispensed with, the reason for the two *ulus*' policies towards the Latin world can rather be explained by a combination of: differing interpretations of how to achieve the empire's universal dominion; and the quarrel over territory and revenue collection. To address the latter problem first, the deterioration of relations

[524] Thomas T. Allsen, 'Sharing out the Empire: Apportioned lands under the Mongols', in *Nomads in the Sedentary World*, ed. by Anatoly Khazanov and André Wink (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2001) p. 179.
[525] Allsen, 'Sharing out the Empire', p. 179; Yihao Qiu, 'Independent Ruler, Indefinable Role: Understanding the History of the Golden Horde from the Perspectives of the Yuan Dynasty', La Horde d'Or et l'islamisation des steppes eurasiatiques, *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, No. 143 (2018) para. 13.
[526] Kim, 'The Unity of the Mongol Empire', p. 32; Hodong Kim, 'Was 'Da Yuan' a Chinese Dynasty?', *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, Vol. 45 (2015) pp. 284-289.
[527] Qiu, 'Independent Ruler, Indefinable Role', para. 44.
[528] Kim, 'The Unity of the Mongol Empire', p. 32.

between the Jochids and Toluids can be traced to Möngke's reign. In order to regularise the collection of disparate princely revenue and prevent abuses, the *qa'an* sought to reform various taxation systems. Furthermore, Hulegu was dispatched to the Middle East and Qubilai to China to consolidate Toluid control over those regions' administrations and to continue expansion. In doing so Möngke weakened the ability of the Jochids to extract their revenue outside of the western Eurasian steppe; after the death of Batu in 1255, his brother Berke positioned himself as the leader of the Jochid princes who were opposed to Möngke's centralisation.[529] With the death of Möngke, Berke supported Ariq Böke in the ensuing succession crisis, perhaps because Ariq Böke had been less conspicuous in the centralisation reforms compared to Qubilai, or alternatively because Ariq Böke was elected as *qa'an* at the traditional capital of Qaraqorum. Berke's death in 1267 resulted in an improvement of relations between the Jochids and *qa'an* Qubilai, but tensions the Jochids and Hulegu's *ulus* remained.[530] This can be explained by the clash of interpretations over realising Chinggisid universal dominion. During Chinggis' reign Jochi was granted "the territory stretching from the regions of Qayaligh and Khorazm to the remotest parts of Saqsin and Bulghar and as far in that direction [west] as the hoof of Tatar horse had penetrated."[531] The ultimate enemy to the west would turn out to be Latin Europe. Later in 1253 Möngke dispatched Hulegu to the Middle East; the contemporary Juvaini tellingly used the phrase "charged him with the conquest of the Western parts."[532] The principal enemy for Hulegu would be the Muslim sultanate in Egypt, then ruled by the *mamalik* (or mamluks), soldiers of servile origin. Continuing the policy of Eljigidei and Möngke, the *ulus* of Hulegu sought military cooperation with the weak Latin presence against the stronger Islamic threat. While both the Jochids and Huleguids adhered to an imperial steppe ideology which sought to achieve universal dominion for their shared dynastic sovereignty, there was clearly a conflict of interests: the enemies of the Jochids were potential allies of the

[529] Qiu, 'Independent Ruler, Indefinable Role', para. 27-29.
[530] Ibid. para. 41.
[531] Juvaini, *History of the World Conqueror*, p. 42.
[532] Ibid. 607.

Huleguids and this incongruity had an effect on the empire's diplomatic discourse with the Latin world.

It was in the context of such intra-dynastic contention, and after the Mongol defeat at Ayn Jalut in 1260, in which Hulegu dispatched an embassy to the Latin rulers in Europe. Some of the ambassadors may have been intercepted and prevented from delivering their letters by King Manfred of Sicily who was in conflict with Pope Urban IV.[533] A letter addressed to King Louis IX of France has survived however, though it may only have reached the Pope. Hulegu began his letter by quoting the Bible to legitimise the bestowal of divine universal dominion on the Chinggisid dynasty: "In the heavens I alone am the omnipotent God, and I appoint you ruler over all peoples and kingdoms, and you will become king of the entire globe, so that you will 'uproot and demolish, scatter and destroy, build up and plant' [Jer 1:10]".[534] It should be noted that the letter was composed in Latin by a Frankish scribe called Richard.[535] The employment of Latin Christians, in addition to Nestorians and other Eastern Christians, was to become an abiding feature of Mongolian diplomacy. The letter went on to boast of the many kingdoms that Hulegu had brought into submission under the empire, before going on to praise Louis as the greatest of the Latin rulers.[536] Hulegu declared his intent to restore Jerusalem to the Pope, but to do so the Franks would have to support a Mongol offensive with a naval blockade.[537] Military cooperation between Latins and Mongols was not a completely novel prospect. Besides the earlier proposals of Eljigidei and Möngke, Cilician Armenia (which officially recognised Papal supremacy) and Prince Bohemond VI of Antioch joined the Mongol invasion of Syria and Palestine; the latter prince submitted to the Mongols like his Armenian in-laws and even received some of his former territory.[538] However the Latins of the much-reduced Kingdom of

[533] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 204.
[534] 'A Letter from Hulagu, Il-Khan of Persia, to Louis IX of France, 1262', in *Crusade and Christendom. Annotated Documents in Translation from Innocent III to the Fall of Acre, 1187-1291*, ed. by Jessalynn Bird et al (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013) p. 343.
[535] Denise Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance. Thoughts on the Diplomatic Exchanges between the Mongols and the Latin West', in *The Mongol Empire between Myth and Reality: Studies in Anthropological History* (Leiden: Brill, 2014) p. 180.
[536] 'A Letter from Hulagu, Il-Khan of Persia, to Louis IX of France, 1262', pp. 344-346.
[537] Ibid. 347.
[538] Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 121.

Jerusalem temporised with the Mongol army of Kitbuqa, a Nestorian of the Naiman tribe, and provided passage and supplies to the Mamluk Sultanate's army after the Mongols had sacked Latin-held Sidon.[539] Hulegu's letter to Louis ended with the implicit demand for submission.[540] As the Mongol campaign in Syria and Palestine demonstrated, there could be no other way. The new governor's remit was to bring rebellious subjects into submission; Louis' aid would provide an indication of status but he was still required to send envoys to make his intentions known.

Just two years before Hulegu's embassy, Berke sent his own to Latin Europe. The immediate context of the embassy was a renewed offensive against Eastern Europe: in 1258 the occasionally Latin-inclined Russian Principality of Halych-Volhynia was defeated and forced to submit; the following year the Mongol army, which included forces from the newly-submitted Russians, invaded Poland; and Berke sent an ultimatum to King Bela IV of Hungary demanding a quarter of his military supplies and a marriage alliance.[541] The ultimatum to Bela can be seen as a continuation of Batu's earlier ultimatums to the Hungarian in the 1230s, thus demonstrating continuity between the two conventional periods of the Mongol Empire's history. Bela attempted to coerce Pope Urban IV by threatening to accede to Berke's demands if the Papacy did not provide real assistance.[542] Given that numerous European rulers had already submitted to the Mongol Empire, Bela's threat was no bluff and indeed the Hungarian kings paid irregular tribute to the Jochid envoys who visited over the following decades.[543] Returning to Berke's embassy further west, the target was King Louis IX of France.[544] Aleksandar Uzelac has argued that the given date of 1262 and the subsequent association with Hulegu's embassy are erroneous based on the involvement of Pope Alexander IV, who died in 1261.[545] The embassy comprised twenty-four Mongols and two Dominican friars

[539] Ibid. 117-118.
[540] 'A Letter from Hulagu, Il-Khan of Persia, to Louis IX of France, 1262', p. 347.
[541] Aleksandar Uzelac, 'Saint Louis and the Jochids', *Golden Horde Review*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (2020) pp. 666-667; Roman Hautala, 'The Confrontation Between the Ulus of Jochi and the Catholic Europe from the Mid-13th to the Mid-14th Centuries', in *The Golden Horde in World History. A Multi-Authored Monograph*, ed. by Rafael Khakimov (Kazan: Sh. Marjani Institute of History of the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences, 2017) pp. 368-369.
[542] Hautala, 'The Confrontation Between the Ulus of Jochi and the Catholic Europe', p. 369.
[543] Ibid.
[544] Uzelac, 'Saint Louis and the Jochids', p. 665.
[545] Ibid. 666.

conveying the demand for Louis to "submit, with his kingdom, to the power of the Tartars."[546] Obviously the king "fiercely rejected that", but "he held the emissaries with honor in Paris and sent them in peace to Pope Alexander."[547] Berke's ultimatum may have had an influence on Louis' decision to ignore Hulegu's more conciliatory demand for submission, presuming that his letter even reached its intended recipient of course. The embassy suggests that there was a commonality between the *ulus* of Jochi and Hulegu in that they both considered France and its king to be at the apex of Latin Europe's political order; therefore they turned their efforts to securing France's submission, and by extension the rest of Europe, under Chinggisid universal rule.

Hulegu's son and successor Abaqa also engaged in diplomatic discourse with Latin Europe as part of his efforts to bring the Middle East into submission. In the late 1260s Abaqa sent at least two letters to Pope Clement IV arguing for military cooperation against the Mamluk Sultanate, but it would not be until the Eighth Crusade (1270) which targeted Tunisia and ended in failure, that tangible cooperation would occur.[548] The relatively small army of Prince Edward of England (soon to be King Edward I) continued on to Acre where they were able to establish contact with Abaqa.[549] Due to dynastic conflict in Central Asia, Abaqa was only able to send a small army under the Mongol commander Samaghar; the two armies were unable to achieve much of note.[550] The next major opportunity for Abaqa to engage the Latin world was at the Council of Lyon of 1274. Abaqa's embassy of sixteen individuals included Mongols, Eastern Christians, the Dominican Friar David of Ashby, and the scribe Richard; some of the Mongols were baptised.[551] In addition to repeating the earlier calls for military cooperation, the letter also claimed that Hulegu's wife had been the daughter of Prester John; Doquz was in fact a Nestorian

[546] Ibid. 665.
[547] Ibid.
[548] Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', p. 182; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 205.
[549] Laurence Lockhart, 'The Relations between Edward I and Edward II of England and the Mongol Īl-Khāns of Persia', *Iran*, Vol. 6 (1968) p. 24.
[550] Lockhart, 'The Relations between Edward I and Edward II of England and the Mongol Īl-Khāns', p. 24; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 205.
[551] Aigle, 'The Letters of Eljigidei, Hulegu, and Abaqa', p. 152; Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', p. 182.

of the Kerait tribe and Bar Hebraeus' identification of the Kerait leader Ong Toghrul Khan as Prester John has already been noted earlier in this thesis.[552] The reference to Prester John was also used for Güyük and his mother, demonstrating the Mongols' continued use of ideological tropes for appropriate audiences. Denise Aigle has argued that Abaqa's letter to the council contained no demand for submission.[553] However there was a "proposal to establish a treaty of perpetual peace with the Holy Roman Church."[554] As argued throughout this chapter peace and submission were equal in definition to the Mongols. At about the same time as the Council of Lyon, Abaqa was also engaged in a furious diplomatic exchange with Sultan Baybars of Egypt where the Chinggisid ideology of universal rule was on full display.[555] The more conciliatory tone towards the Latins can be explained by the considerably lesser threat they posed compared to the Mamluks. In 1279 Abaqa sent a letter to Pope Nicholas III; the tone was less conciliatory. Not only did Abaqa want to know why the crusading army had not arrived, but he referenced Chinggis' universal rule and the desire to establish "peace" with the Latins.[556] It should be noted that by this point Abaqa had ceased his negotiations with Baybars and fought off a Mamluk campaign which reached Anatolia.[557] The inaction of the Latins must have appeared awfully to the Mongol ruler as if they were drifting away from being loyal subjects.

After the brief hiatus of Ahmad Teguder's reign (1282-1284) – who continued his predecessors' goal of subjugating the Mamluks despite his conversion to Islam[558] - his successor Arghun, son of Abaqa, resumed the policy of seeking military cooperation with the Latin world. The primary embassy of Arghun was that led by Rabban Sawma; he and his colleague Rabban Markos were Turkic Nestorians who had intended to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but were prevented from doing

[552] Aigle, 'The Letters of Eljigidei, Hulegu, and Abaqa', p. 154; Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography*, p. 353.
[553] Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', p. 182.
[554] Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', p. 183; Aigle, 'The Letters of Eljigidei, Hulegu, and Abaqa', p. 154.
[555] Anne Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) pp. 35-37.
[556] Thomas Tanase, 'Une lettre en latin inédite de l'Ilkhan Abaqa au pape Nicolas III: croisade ou mission?' in *Les relations diplomatique entre le monde musulman et l'Occident latin*, ed. by Denise Aigle and Pascal Buresi (Rome: Istituto per l'Oriente C. A. Nallino, 2008) pp. 335-336.
[557] Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*, pp. 37-38.
[558] Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*, pp. 39-40; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 206.

so by the hostilities between the Mongols and the Mamluks.[559] Rabban Markos was shortly thereafter elected as the Nestorian Catholicos Yahballaha III.[560] In 1287 Rabban Sawma was dispatched to Europe on the recommendation of the Catholicos.[561] The events of the embassy were anonymously recorded in an abridgement of Rabban Sawma's report. Accompanying him were, among many others, Thomas Anfossi, a Genoese banker, and Ugeto the interpreter, presumably also Italian.[562] The previous embassy of Arghun in 1285 had been led by another Nestorian, Isa Kelemechi who had been a prominent administrator in Qubilai's court; he also was accompanied by Thomas Anfossi and Ugeto.[563] By the time Rabban Sawma arrived in Rome, Pope Honorius IV was deceased and so the Nestorian conveyed his message to the cardinals: "Now the king [of the Mongols] who is joined in the bond of friendship with the Catholicus hath the desire to take Palestine, and the countries of Syria, and he demandeth from you help in order to take Jerusalem."[564] The cardinals however appear to have been more interested in theological debate with Rabban Sawma.[565]

While waiting for the election of a new Pope, the embassy visited King Philip IV of France and delivered the same message; interestingly Philip stated that even if the Mongols were not Christian he would fight alongside them to retake Jerusalem.[566] Afterwards the embassy travelled to Gascony where King Edward I of England was present. Following the diplomatic exchange, Edward responded positively and asked Rabban Sawma to administer the sacrament of Communion to the king and his court.[567] The significance of this event has gone unnoticed in current historiography. In Catholic tradition the priest assumes the role of Christ during the

[559] Pier Giorgio Borbone, 'A 13th-Century Journey from China to Europe. The "Story of Mar Yahballaha and Rabban Sauma"', *Egitto e Vicino Oriente*, Vol. 31 (2008) p. 224.
[560] Ibid. 226.
[561] *The Monks of Kublai Khan, Emperor of China*, trans. by Ernest A. Wallis-Budge (London: Religious Tract Society, 1928) pp. 165-166.
[562] Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', p. 185.
[563] Hodong Kim, ''Īsa Kelemechi: A Translator Turned Envoy between Asia and Europe', in *Along the Silk Roads in Mongol Eurasia. Generals, Merchants, and Intellectuals*, ed. by Michal Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Francesca Fiaschetti (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020) p. 260.
[564] *The Monks of Kublai Khan*, p. 174.
[565] Ibid. 174-177.
[566] Ibid. 183.
[567] Ibid. 186.

Mass, especially during the sacrament of Communion and the subsequent transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. The priest therefore is superior to the congregants; in this instance the priest, Rabban Sawma, was a representative of the Mongol Empire and the congregants were the English royal court. It is arguable therefore that, for however short a moment, the English king was, in abstracted religious terms, in submission to the Mongol *qa'an*. The embassy returned to Rome and discovered that Pope Nicholas IV had been elected; the narrative then goes on to emphasise the importance of the sacrament of Communion to the assorted clergymen.[568] Rabban Sawma returned to the *ulus* of Hulegu overjoyed by his journey but for Arghun there were no tangible commitments for military cooperation despite the enthusiasm of the French and English kings.[569] Consequently, Arghun dispatched two further embassies to Philip of France. Both were led by Buscarello de Ghizolfi, Genoese quiver-bearer of Arghun and member of his *keshig*.[570] Once again, the planning of military cooperation was enjoined by the demand for submission to the Mongol Empire.[571] Arghun died in 1291, the same year as the conquest of the rump Kingdom of Jerusalem by the Mamluks.

The ilkhans Ghazan and Öljeitu also sought military cooperation with Latin Europe even while they were appending overtly Islamic tropes to their expression of the imperial steppe ideology. Ghazan embarked upon a military offensive in 1299 without waiting for Latin aid; it was only after his army was mobilised did he send envoys to King Henry II of Cyprus for aid.[572] The Pisan merchant Isolo da Anastasio, Öljeitu's godfather, conveyed the message to Henry of Cyprus and the king responded with two naval expeditions which ultimately achieved little. In 1302 Ghazan sent an embassy to Pope Boniface VIII. Aigle has implied that the three envoys were Muslim based on their names: Sadadin (Sa'd al-Din), Sinanadin (Sinan al-Din), and Samsadin (Shams al-Din).[573] It is unlikely however that Ghazan's personal

[568] Ibid. 190-194.
[569] Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', p. 185.
[570] Ibid. 186.
[571] Ibid. 187.
[572] Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', p. 189; Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*, p. 208.
[573] Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', p. 190, n. 158.

adoption of Islam had altered the prevailing Mongol practice of using religiously and culturally appropriate envoys especially when other embassies from Ghazan followed precedent and so it is likely that the envoys to the Pope were Middle Eastern Christians. The letter to the Pope ordered him to corral the other European rulers into providing their own forces for the "agreed date" of the campaign against the Mamluks.[574] Another embassy to Europe, led by Buscarello de Ghizolfi, delivered the marching orders to the kings of France and England; neither king acted and Ghazan died in 1304 before he could continue campaigning.[575]

Öljeitu began his reign by announcing in a letter to the European rulers that the dynastic strife within the Mongol Empire had come to an end:

> We, elder and younger brothers, because of the calumnious talks of evil commoners, let our affection fall out with each other. Now, gratified with the inspiration of heaven, beginning with Temür Qaghan, Toghtogha, Chabar and Dugha, we, descendants of Chinggis Qaghan, from forty or fifty years ago up to this time recriminate against each other, but now by the protection of heaven all the elder and younger brothers made a mutual peace and from the land of Nangghiyas [southern China] where the sun rises to the sea of Talu [far west], we have joined each other and let the postal stations be relayed.[576]

The reconciliation had consequences for the *ulus* of Hulegu's diplomacy towards Latin Europe. In his letter Öljeitu stated "without contravening the orders and ordinances of our good ancestors … we propose to you that we remain tied to you by bonds of friendship even more than before … and to send each other ambassadors."[577] The letter ended with the following statement: "Now, as for those who will not agree, either with us, or with you, on what Heaven decides, with the

[574] Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', p. 192; Antoine Mostaert and Francis Woodman Cleaves, 'Trois documents mongols des Archives secrètes vaticanes', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3/4 (1952) p. 470.
[575] Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', pp. 192-193.
[576] Kim, 'The Unity of the Mongol Empire', p. 35.
[577] Aigle, 'From 'Non-Negotiation' to an Abortive Alliance', p. 194.

force of Heaven we will, banding together, arise against them."[578] The "orders and ordinances" of course refers to the Chinggisid divine mission for universal dominion, while the demand for ambassadors and greater "bonds of friendship" was another way of demanding confirmation of the recipients' status as loyal vassals. In other words, the assertiveness of the older embassies towards the Latin world had made a return, though Öljeitu still recognised the need for military cooperation.

In the context of the reconciliation within the Chinggisid dynasty and Öljeitu's continued solicitation for Latin military cooperation, Het'um of Corycus travelled to France and composed a universal history. Het'um was a prominent statesman and general from Cilician Armenia's royal dynasty before retiring to a monastic life.[579] His *Flower of Histories of the East* was, besides its historical content, an explicit appeal for Latin military aid to the Mongols in the war against the Mamluks. However the deterioration of relations between Öljeitu and Cilician Armenia may have been an influence on the goal of securing European aid for the struggling Christian kingdom.[580] Of course, the difficulties of Öljeitu's reign were omitted in Het'um's account; the ilkhan had "sent his messengers offering to use all his power to undo the enemies of the Christian land."[581] Het'um even all but stated that Öljeitu was not a Muslim.[582] The Armenian provided a relatively detailed joint strategy for the Latins and Mongols to follow, complete with troop numbers and strategic locations to secure.[583] Het'um also repeated the common claim of Eastern Christians and Latins in Mongol employ that the Mongols "would willingly give in keeping to the Christian forces" the lands they conquered; they would do this because they "never [fought] with the Sultan of Egypt for greed of obtaining lands and cities, since they have all of Asia in their subjugation."[584] This of course was a deliberate misrepresentation of Chinggisid aims, as Öljeitu's communications indicate that he sought nothing less than the full submission of rebellious subjects like the Mamluks in accordance with

[578] Ibid.
[579] Het'um of Corycus, *History of the Tatars. The Flower of Histories of the East*, trans. by Robert Bedrosian, http://www.attalus.org/armenian/hetumtoc.html, translator's preface.
[580] Dashdondog, *The Mongols and the Armenians*, pp. 203-206.
[581] Het'um of Corycus, *History of the Tatars*, Book 4, fol. 75.
[582] Ibid.
[583] Ibid. fol. 78-80.
[584] Ibid. fol. 80.

the Chinggisid policy of universal rule. However, just like with Öljeitu's own diplomatic exchange with the Latin European rulers, Het'um's appeals garnered no assistance from Europe and Öljeitu's unsuccessful military offensive of 1311 was to be the last war between the *ulus* of Hulegu and the Mamluk Sultanate, giving way to a period of ideological competition between the two states.[585]

Conclusion

The Mongol Empire of the Chinggisid dynasty adhered to an imperial steppe ideology which had universal rule at its core. As part of this ideological framework the Mongols divided the world into loyal subjects and rebellious subjects. This perspective determined the Chinggisids' diplomacy towards the Latin world. Traditional historiography has periodised the empire's history into a united empire and a divided empire of four independent states, with the split occurring after the death of *qa'an* Möngke in 1259. Concomitant with this periodisation is the preconception that the 'independent' states abandoned the goal of universal rule. However, the available evidence has greatly problematised this conventional narrative and demonstrated that there was continuity over the two periods. Therefore it has been argued that the Chinggisids, wherever they ruled, continued to uphold their goal of shared universal dominion. The apparent contradictions in policy towards the Latin world from the *ulus* of Hulegu and the *ulus* of Jochi has been explained by the differing geopolitical circumstances facing the dynastic branches. The way in which diplomacy was conducted also strongly suggests uniformity among the branches of the dynasty; the use of culturally and religiously appropriate envoys, in this case Christians of various backgrounds, and the exploitation of religious and ideological tropes which were common to the Latin and Christian worlds.

[585] Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*, pp. 96-98.

Conclusion

This thesis has sought to demonstrate that the imperial steppe ideology of the Mongol Empire - a key characteristic of which was universal rule – was a determining influence on the empire's policies. The two broad areas of cultural exchange and diplomacy were thus intricately tied into Chinggisid notions of universal dominion.

The first chapter argued that, contrary to conventional historiography, the universalism of the Mongol Empire was not an innovation, but instead was an inheritance from the imperial steppe ideology of previous nomadic empires of the Eurasian steppe dating back to the Göktürk Empire of the sixth century. This continuity was demonstrated by an examination of the pre-Chinggisid empires focusing on areas such as: the expression of titulature; the construction of lineage and genealogy; the granting of divine favour; the conception of law; the complexity of administration and the integration of sedentary subjects; and the inclusive treatment of diverse religions. Following the Chinggisids' military success and their resulting dominance of the eastern Eurasian steppe, they were able to easily adopt the imperial steppe ideology of their forebears. The chapter demonstrated this by examining the remarkable continuities that existed between the old empires and the new Mongol Empire in the early stages of its history, that is, before there was considerable direct contact between the Mongol Empire and the sedentary peoples of Europe and Asia.

The following chapter advanced the argument that the individuals who comprised the administration of the Mongol Empire were responsible for the retention and further development of the imperial steppe ideology as the ideological underpinning of the empire. Through an exploration of the various groups which staffed the imperial government it was demonstrated that those who originated from the steppe world held an overbearing influence in the administration throughout the history of the Mongol Empire; the Mongols themselves, along with related peoples from a firmly nomadic background on the Eurasian steppe collaborated with groups such as the Uyghurs and the Khitan who had a mixed history of steppe and sedentary background. Individuals from the sedentary peoples who were subjugated by the empire - especially the Chinese, Iranians, Armenians,

and Tibetans – also had an important role in the government, as did immigrants or prisoners from Europe, but they were unable to displace the governing imperial steppe ideology with their own ideological perspectives, though they did however influence the imperial steppe ideology's adoption or adaptation of local cultural and religious norms.

With the redefinition of the imperial steppe ideology – in both its pre-Chinggisid and Chinggisid expressions – achieved, the conclusion that universal dominion was central to the ideology was then applied to analyses of the cultural exchange and diplomatic engagement which the Mongol Empire deliberately instigated.

The third chapter argued that the cultural and material exchange that occurred both within the Mongol Empire, and between the empire and the neighbouring states was determined by the universalism of the imperial steppe ideology. This argument was carried out, firstly, by explicitly situating examples from the following fields within the context of the imperial steppe ideology: historiography, languages and printing, religious discourse, geography, and medicine. It was observed that the Chinggisid and Mongol elite initiated mass transfers of personnel across the breadth of their empire in a way that indicate the creation of a cultural milieu that reflected their own traditional nomadic steppe values while also deliberately selecting those elements of sedentary cultures which further enhanced the universalistic character of the imperial steppe ideology. Subsequently, trade and commercial exchange were also examined within the aforementioned ideological context. Through the division of commercial activity into *ortoq*s - trusted merchant partners - and the regulation of private and foreign state merchants, the Mongol Empire sought to shift the networks of trade into avenues which directly benefitted the ruling Chinggisid elite. In doing so it was suggested that the empire created a new world system in which even regions outside of the empire, such as Latin Europe, were inextricably drawn into. As an example of this, the chapter focused on the trade in silk and other textiles due to the role that they played in traditional nomadic political economy.

The final chapter has argued that the universal rule of the imperial steppe ideology determined the course of the Mongol Empire's diplomatic engagement

with the Latin world. It did this by analysing examples of Mongol diplomacy towards the Latins from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Within this ideology of universal dominion the Chinggisid dynasty regarded the world as being divided between loyal subjects and rebellious subjects. Furthermore, the concepts of peace and submission were the same from the Mongolian perspective, which resulted in regular confusion between the Mongols and the Latins. The Mongols were therefore compelled by their ideology to make war upon those states which refused to submit to imperial authority. The chapter also engaged with recent historiography which has problematised the conventional narrative of the Mongol Empire dividing into four independent khanates with the election of Qubilai as *qa'an*. Accompanying this prevailing narrative is the belief that the newly 'independent' Mongol states abandoned their pursuit of universal dominion. Instead, the chapter built on newer historiography which argued the Chinggisid rulers continued to see themselves as part of the same universal empire, in order to strongly suggest that there were continuities in diplomacy between both the two traditionally defined periods of Mongolian history and between the so-called independent states. The difference between the approaches of the *ulus* of Jochi (the Golden Horde) and the *ulus* of Hulegu (the Ilkhanate) towards the Latins was argued to have been due to geopolitical differences; the main target of the Jochids was Latin Eastern Europe while the target for the Huleguids was Islamic Egypt and Syria. The common elements of Mongolian diplomatic conduct included the use of culturally and religiously appropriate envoys, in this case Christians of various backgrounds, and the exploitation of religious and ideological tropes which were common to the Latin and wider Christian worlds.

In conclusion, the Chinggisid elite of the Mongol Empire were compelled by their inherited imperial steppe ideology to achieve universal rule over the world. To complement their military campaigns against those who they perceived to be rebellious subjects, the present study suggested that the Mongols combined cultural exchange and diplomacy to construct a new world system to facilitate the realisation of universal dominion. Due to military failures and differing interpretations between branches of the Chinggisid dynasty on how to achieve universal rule, expansion came

to a halt yet the empire appears to have continued to seek the completion of its divinely-appointed mission.

This thesis is not an exhaustive or a definitive answer as to how or to what extent the universalistic ideology of the Mongols provided a clear blueprint for the running of the empire, however it is hoped that the thesis has raised further questions on the relatively neglected field of studies of the Mongolian ideology and that it will provoke further research into this field in future. Furthermore, it is also hoped that the ideological framework applied in this thesis could be applied to research on other nomadic steppe empires in order to explore further commonalities apparent in the Eurasian steppe tradition.

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