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Thomas T. Allsen
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Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia

In the thirteenth century the Mongols created a vast transcontinental empire that functioned as a cultural “clearing house” for the Old World. Under Mongol auspices various commodities, ideologies, and technologies were disseminated and displayed across Eurasia. The focus of this path-breaking study is the extensive exchanges between Iran and China. The Mongol rulers of these two ancient civilizations “shared” the cultural resources of their realms with one another. The result was lively traffic in specialist personnel and scholarly literature between East and West. These exchanges ranged from cartography to printing, and from agriculture to astronomy. Unexpectedly, the principal conduit of this transmission was an obscure Mongol tribesman, Bolad Aqa, who first served Chinggisid rulers of China and was then posted to Iran where he entered into a close and productive collaboration with the famed Persian statesman and historian, Rashīd al-Dīn. The conclusion of the work examines why the Mongols made such heavy use of sedentary scholars and specialists in the elaboration of their court culture and why they initiated so many exchanges across Eurasia. The book is informative and erudite. It crosses new scholarly boundaries in its analysis of communication and culture in the Mongol Empire and promises to become a classic in the field.

THOMAS T. ALLSEN is Professor in the Department of History, The College of New Jersey, Ewing. His publications include *Commodity and Exchange in the Mongol Empire: A Cultural History of Islamic Textiles* (1997).

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Preface

The present study originated some twenty-five years ago with a chance discovery that the Mongolian courts in China and Iran both sponsored the compilation of agricultural manuals in the course of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. A few years later I discovered, again quite by accident, that this was not mere coincidence, and that there were indeed “agronomical relations” between these two courts. This in turn led to an interest in other types of cultural exchange between the Il-qans and the Yuan, an exchange that became the focal point of my research over the last decade.

My initial intention was to cover all facets of the interchange in one large monograph but this was clearly impractical. Consequently, I have concentrated here on cultural exchanges in the fields of historiography, geography, cartography, agronomy, cuisine, medicine, astronomy, and printing technology. My investigations into other areas of their contact – language study, popular entertainments, and economic thought, as well as the transfer of military technology and the transcontinental resettlement of artisans of varied specialties – will appear as separate studies.

I have had the opportunity to present my preliminary findings in the form of lectures at a number of academic institutions and the response has always been welcoming and the questions and comments from these audiences most helpful in shaping the direction of my subsequent research. To these various students and scholars I offer my thanks for their guidance and encouragement. I must also record my gratitude to the National Endowment for the Humanities which awarded me a Fellowship for the academic year 1998–99 that permitted me to complete research and prepare a first draft of the manuscript.

Peter Golden and Stephen Dale read and commented on this manuscript and helped to improve it in many substantial ways. So too did the many suggestions and corrections of the anonymous reviewers of the Press. I am deeply indebted to all of these scholars.

I must also offer special thanks to my current department chair, Daniel Crofts, who has supported and facilitated my research over the last several years.

Finally, I again express my profound gratitude to my wife, Lucille Helen Allsen, whose enthusiasm, patience, and editorial and word-processing skills are essential ingredients in all my scholarly endeavors.

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Note on transliteration

For Persian, Arabic, and Russian I have used the Library of Congress system. Chinese is in Wade-Giles, and for Mongolian I have used the system found in Cleaves' translation of the *Secret History*. Lastly, for Turkic, I have followed Nadeliaev *et al.*, *Drevnetiurkskii slovar*.

Abbreviations

<i>AEMA</i>	<i>Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi.</i>
<i>AOASH</i>	<i>Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae.</i>
Bar Hebraeus	Bar Hebraeus, <i>The Chronography of Gregory Abū'l-Faraj</i> . . . commonly known as <i>Bar Hebraeus</i> , trans. by Ernest A. Wallis Budge, London: Oxford University Press, 1932, vol. I.
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.</i>
<i>CAJ</i>	<i>Central Asiatic Journal.</i>
<i>DTS</i>	Nadeliaev, V. M. <i>et al.</i> , eds., <i>Drevnetiurkskii slovar</i> , Leningrad: Nauka, 1969.
<i>EI</i> , 2nd edn	<i>Encyclopedia of Islam</i> , 2nd edn, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960–97, 9 vols. to date.
Farquhar, <i>Government</i>	Farquhar, David M., <i>The Government of China under Mongolian Rule: A Reference Guide</i> , Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1990.
Golden, <i>Hexaglot</i>	Golden, Peter B., ed., <i>The King's Dictionary: The Rasūlid Hexaglot, Fourteenth Century Vocabularies in Arabic, Persian, Turkic, Greek, Armenian and Mongol</i> , Leiden: Brill, 2000.
<i>HJAS</i>	<i>Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies.</i>
Hsiao, <i>Military</i>	Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, <i>The Military Establishment of the Yuan Dynasty</i> , Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978.
Ibn Baṭṭūṭah/Gibb	Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, <i>The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭah</i> , trans. by H. A. R. Gibb, Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1958–94, 4 vols.
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society.</i>
<i>JRAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.</i>
Juvaynī/Boyle	Juvaynī, 'Atā-Malik, <i>The History of the World Conqueror</i> , trans. by John A. Boyle, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958, 2 vols.
Juvaynī/Qazvīnī	Juvaynī, 'Atā-Malik, <i>Ta'rikh-i Jahāngushā</i> , ed. by

xii Abbreviations

- Mīrza Muḥammad Qazvīnī, E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Series, vol. XVI; London: Luzac, 1912–37, 3 vols.
- Jūzjānī/Lees Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i nāširī*, ed. by W. Nassau Lees, Bibliotheca Indica, vol. XLIV; Calcutta: College Press, 1864.
- Jūzjānī/Raverty Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i nāširī*, trans. by H. G. Raverty, repr., New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp., 1970, 2 vols.
- Kirakos, *Istoriia* Kirakos Gandzaketsi, *Istoriia Armenii*, trans. by L. A. Khanlarian, Moscow: Nauka, 1976.
- Kōdō Tasaka Tasaka Kōdō, “An Aspect of Islam[ic] Culture Introduced into China,” *Memoirs of the Research Department of Toyo Bunko* 16 (1957), 75–160.
- Laufer, *Sino-Iranica* Laufer, Bertold, *Sino-Iranica: Chinese Contributions to the History of Civilization in Ancient Iran*, repr., Taipei: Ch’eng-wen, 1967.
- Marco Polo Marco Polo, *The Description of the World*, trans. by A. C. Moule and Paul Pelliot, London: Routledge, 1938, vol. I.
- Mongol Mission* Dawson, Christopher, ed., *The Mongol Mission: Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955.
- MS* *Monumenta Serica*.
- MSC* Wang Shih-tien, *Mi-shu chih*, Taipei: Wei-wen tu-shu pan-she, 1976.
- Needham, *SCC* Needham, Joseph *et al.*, *Science and Civilization in China*, Cambridge University Press, 1954–.
- Pelliot, *Notes* Pelliot, Paul, *Notes on Marco Polo*, Paris: Adrien-Maissonneuve, 1959–61, 2 vols.
- Qāshānī/Hambly Al-Qāshānī, Abū al-Qasīm, *Ta’rīkh-i Ūljaytū*, ed. by Mahin Hambly, Tehran: BTNK, 1969.
- Rashīd/Alizade Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi’ al-tavārīkh*, ed. by A. A. Alizade, A. A. Romaskevich, and A. A. Khetagurov, Moscow: Nauka, 1968–80, vols. I and II.
- Rashīd/Boyle Rashīd al-Dīn, *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, trans. by John A. Boyle, New York: Columbia University Press, 1971.
- Rashīd/Jahn I Rashīd al-Dīn, *Ta’rīkh-i mubārak-i Ghāzānī*, ed. by Karl Jahn, ’s-Gravenhage: Mouton, 1957.
- Rashīd/Jahn II Rashīd al-Dīn, *Ta’rīkh-i mubārak-i Ghāzānī*, ed. by Karl Jahn, London: Luzac, 1940.
- Rashīd/Karīmī Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi’ al-tavārīkh*, ed. by B. Karīmī, Tehran: Eqbal, 1959, 2 vols.

Rashīd/Quatremère	Raschid-eldin [Rashīd al-Dīn], <i>Histoire des Mongols de la Perse</i> , trans. and ed. by E. Quatremère, repr., Amsterdam: Oriental Press, 1968.
Rubruck/Jackson	Jackson, Peter, trans., and David O. Morgan, ed., <i>The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck</i> , London: Hakluyt Society, 1990.
Seifeddini	Seifeddini, M. A., <i>Monetnoe delo i denezhnoe obrashchenie v Azerbaidzhane XII–XV vv.</i> , Baku: Elm, 1978–81, 2 vols.
SH/Cleaves	<i>The Secret History of the Mongols</i> , trans. by Francis W. Cleaves, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982.
SH/de Rachewiltz	de Rachewiltz, Igor, <i>Index to the Secret History of the Mongols</i> , Indiana University Publications, Uralic and Altaic Series, vol. CXXI, Bloomington, 1972.
TP	<i>T'oung Pao</i> .
ʿUmarī/Lech	Al-ʿUmarī, Ibn Faḍl Allāh, <i>Das mongolische Weltreich: al-ʿUmarī's Darstellung der mongolischen Reiche in seinem Werk Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣar</i> , trans. by Klaus Lech, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1968.
Vaṣṣāf	Vaṣṣāf al-Ḥaẓrat, <i>Taʾrīkh-i Vaṣṣāf</i> , Tehran: Ibn-i Sina, 1959.
YS	<i>Yuan shih</i> , Peking: Chung-hua shu-chū, 1978.
YTC	<i>Ta-Yuan sheng-cheng kuo-ch'ao tien-chang</i> , repr. of the Yuan edn, Taipei: Kuo-li ku-kung po-wu yuan, 1976.
Yule, Cathay	Yule, Sir Henry, <i>Cathay and the Way Thither, being a Collection of Medieval Notices of China</i> , repr., Taipei: Ch'eng-wen Publishing Company, 1966, 4 vols.
YWL	Su T'ien-chüeh, <i>Yuan wen-lei</i> , Taipei: Shih-chiai shu-chū ying-hsing, 1967.