

réponse"; Lessing p. 996b "to give one's promise or word; to inform; to remind"; p. 630a "to give notice, notify"). It is equally clear from the text that the letter was written by one official of a feudal king to those of another. The names, titles and offices require, however, some detailed comment.

A 14TH CENTURY MONGOLIAN LETTER FRAGMENT

by HERBERT FRANKE

In 1963, Walther Heissig kindly provided me with photographs of a Mongolian manuscript fragment preserved in Japan. A visit to Kyoto in March 1965 gave me the opportunity to see the original document which is kept among the Central Asian manuscripts of the Yürinkan 有鄰館 collection (No. 4, "red" series).¹ It is a fragment from a letter written in Uighur-Mongolian script where only the first five lines containing the initial formula, the sender and the addressee are preserved (see plate 1). It happens that this short text is made up less by Mongolian words than by transcriptions of Chinese terms and names which cannot in each case be identified with absolute certainty. On the other hand, one person mentioned can be identified with a prince attested in an epigraphic source. This allows to date the letter fragment at least approximately. The deciphering and translation of this letter is a first attempt and there will be certainly room for improvement on individual problems. A tentative romanisation and translation of the letter fragment would read as follows:

- 1 qayan u jarl(i)γ iyar
- 2 sultanš-a si ning ong un
- 3 ongwuu yin noyad ta
- 4 buyanquli uei uu sining ong un
- 5 wuu ui sun-g (?) günsi (?) üg-e ögümü

Translation:

By command of the *qayan*!

To the commanders of the *wang-fu* (office) of

Sultan-ša, king of Hsi-ning, the *fu-wei* Sung Chün-hsi(?)

of Buyanquli, king of Wei-wu and Hsi-ning, gives answer.

The Mongolian parts of the text offer no problems at all. The formula "by command of the *qayan*" is too well known to deserve discussion. The last words of our fragment are effaced but the reading *ögümü* seems defensible. *üg-e ög-* is a well-known expression, meaning "to give word, to answer, to inform" (see e.g. Kovalevski, p. 554b "répondre, donner la

¹ I am very much indebted to my friend Prof. Akira Fujieda of Kyoto University for introducing me to the Yürinkan and its director, Mr. Fujii Shuichi 藤井守一, who gave me his permission to publish the document.

I. Names

1. *Sultanš-a* is, of course, the Arabo-Persian *sultān-šāh* "sovereign king", used here as a personal name. The bearer of this name had the title "king of Sining", i.e. Chinese Hsi-ning (see below for details). He is obviously identical with the prince of Hsi-ning, *wang-tzu* 王子 Su-tan-sha 速丹沙 whom we find mentioned on inscriptions dated 1348 and 1351. These inscriptions are donation memorials for a Buddhist temple discovered in Tun-huang and have been studied by Edouard Chavannes (*Dix Inscriptions de l'Asie Centrale d'après les estampages de M. Ch.-E. Bonin*, in: *Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres de l'Institut de France*, Prem. Sér. tome XI (2me partie), Paris 1904, p. 193-295; see also Sir Aurel Stein, *Serindia*, vol. II, p. 800 for a description of the place where the inscriptions were, in his time, *in situ*). The inscription of 1348 gives the following list of donors (restitutions of the names, put in brackets, are taken from Louis Hambis, *Le Chapitre CVII du Yuan Che*, Leiden 1945, p. 46, note 33):

Su-lai-man 速來蠻, King of Hsi-ning (*Sulaiman)

Ch'ü-chu 屈朮, Royal Consort (*Küjü)

T'o-hua-ch'ih 脫花赤, Great King (*Toqač)

Yang-a-sha 養阿沙, Crown Prince (*Yanga-šah)

Su-tan-sha 速丹沙 (*Sultān-šāh)

A-su-tai 阿速歹 (*Asudai)

Chieh-lai-tai 結來歹 (Käräidäi)

Pu-lu-ha-chen 卜魯合真 (*Buluqajin = Buluyajin, nom de femme)

Ch'en-shih 陳氏妙因

It seems from this list that our Sultān-šāh was a younger family member of Sulaimān, king of Hsi-ning. In 1348, he still had no title affixed to his name. But in 1351 (see Chavannes, op. cit., pp. 291-294, Chinese text p. 292) we find Sultān-šāh, after the death of Sulaimān which must have occurred in 1349 or 1350, listed among the donors as "son of the king":

Ya-han-sha 牙罕沙 Hsi-ning wang 牙罕沙西寧王

Po-lo Ta-wang 孛羅大王

Wang-tzu 王子 Su-tan-sha 王子速丹沙

A-su-tai 阿速歹

Fei-tzu 妃子 Ch'ü-chu 屈朮

Kung-chu 公主 Pi-lieh-ch'ieh 公主必列怯

Fu-ma 駙馬 Sang-ko-ta-ssu 桑哥答思

As he was styled "son of the king" we may take it for certain that he was the son of Ya-han-sha, king of Hsi-ning, and eventually succeeded his father as holder of that title. In our Mongolian letter fragment he is already King of Hsi-ning, *Sining Ong*. It is not possible to say when Sultān-šāh inherited the title. Ya-han-sha, his father, is styled as Hsi-ning wang in 1352 and 1353 (*Yüan-shih* ch. 43, 7a-b, see Louis Hambis, *Le Chapitre CVIII du Yuan Che*, Leiden 1954, p. 103 note 4) when he assisted the Mongol ruler of China in quelling a revolt in Hupei. The letter fragment might, therefore, have been written any year after 1353, as long as Sultān-šāh was holding the inherited title of Hsi-ning wang. In any case, we have in the Kyoto fragment for the first time attested the orthography of Sultān-šāh in Mongol script and a confirmation for Hambis' and Chavannes' reconstruction from the Chinese Su-tan-sha. The asterisk before Sultān-šāh can therefore be omitted henceforth with a tolerably good conscience. That the Chinese transcription leaves out the -l- need not trouble us; it seems to be a frequent procedure as is shown by the rendering *su-t'an* 速檀 (*Ming-shih* ch. 329, 21a-b; E. Bretschneider, *Mediaeval Researches* II, pp. 195, 200) of Sultān. The -l- is, on the other hand, preserved in the Chinese rendering *so-lu-tan* 鎖魯丹 (**soldan*) in *Ming-shih* ch. 330, 16a. It could, however, be argued that the Chinese transcription Su-tan-sha suggests rather a Suldān-šāh than Sultān-šāh because as a rule Chinese non-aspirated voiceless consonants render Mongolian (Turkish etc.) voiced consonants, and the Mongol-Uighur script does not differentiate between -t- and -d-. But these are points which I must leave for the specialists to decide.

A few more remarks on some of the names and persons of Sultān-šāh's family as found in the inscriptions of 1348 and 1351 may follow here although the reconstructions of the names proposed by Hambis are mostly correct.

Ya-han-sha 牙罕沙 (inscription of 1351), king of Hsi-ning who, as we have seen, was in all probability the father of Sultān-šāh, must be identical with the Crown Prince (*t'ai-tzu*) Yang-a sha 養阿沙 of the 1348 inscription and may well have been a son of Sulaimān who was made a king of Hsi-ning in 1330 (Hambis, *Le Chap. CVIII*, p. 102 n. 2 and 103 n. 3, following T'u Chi, *Meng-wu-erh shih-chi* ch. 150, 8a). To make the orthographic confusion complete we find a third Chinese rendering of this king's name in *Yüan-shih* ch. 42, 11b (1352/3, cf. Hambis, loc. cit.), viz. Ya-an-sha 牙安沙. The first element of the name is, therefore, attested in three different forms, leading to *Yaṅa, *Yaqa and *Ya'an. Yaṅa could render Turkish *yaya* (Mo. *Jayan*) "elephant". It would be tempting to consider both Ya'an and Yaqa as turkicized forms of Mo. *Jayan*, substituting Tu. *y*- for Mo. *j*- which is a regular sound correspondence between Tu. and Mo. On the other hand, there exists a Turkish word *yayan* meaning "big, great"

(S. E. Malov, *Pamjatniki Drevnetjurkskoi Pis'mennosti*, Moscow-Leningrad 1951, p. 383a s.v. *Jayan*).

Ch'ü-chu 屈 (1351: 曲) 朮, the name of the Royal Consort (妃子), suggests an original *Küjü which might be related to Mo: *kücü(n)* "power, strength".

T'o-hua-ch'ih 脫花赤 seems to render *Toqači. This may be related with Mo. *toya* "number, figure"; *toyači* is "astrologer, mathematician" (Lessing p. 813b, Kovalevski p. 1803a); on p. 1811b, K. lists an additional meaning "cook" ("cuisinier"), derived from *toyo(n)*, *toya* "kettle" (p. 1803b). On Persian *tovači* "inspector of troops" (< Middle Mo. *to'ači*) see Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und Mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen*, Bd. I, Wiesbaden 1963, p. 260-264. As the Middle Mongolian pronunciation of *toya* "number" was *to'a*, our *Toqači with its intervocalic -q- cannot easily be reconciled with this word. A more probable derivation seems to be from Middle Mongolian *toqo'an* "kettle" (Secret Hist., Haenisch, *Wörterbuch* p. 150), **toqo'ači* (with nomen actoris) > *toqāči*. In literary Mongolian "cook" is, in addition to Kovalevski's *toyači*, *toyoyači* (Kov. p. 1805; Lessing p. 817a *toyuyači*, Khalkha 100004).

A-su-tai 阿速歹 is Asudai, a name derived from the ethnic name of the Alans (Mo. As, pl. Asud) plus the ethnicon -*dai*. This person who is mentioned in both inscriptions of 1348 and 1351 has been identified by T. Haneda with Asudai Oyul "Prince Asudai" who occurs in the Uighur colophon of a Buddhist manuscript written in 1350 on Asudai's request (see Haneda Tōru, *Haneda Hakushi Shigaku Rombunshu*, Kyoto 1958, vol. II, p. 163 and 179-180; Matsumura Jun, *Mindai Gōmitsu Ōke no Kigen*, Tōyō Gakuhō 39 (1957) 368-384).

Chieh-lai-tai 結來歹 is, like Asudai, a personal name derived from a tribal name, the Kerait. The transcription given in the 1348 inscription suggests however *Geraidai rather than *Keraidai because Chin. *chieh* has a non-aspirate initial and therefore would correspond to a voiced consonant in the original form of the name.

Pu-lu-ha-chen 卜魯合眞, Buluqajin, has been correctly understood by Hambis as a female name. It is derived from Mo. *buluqaṅ* "sable", a word attested, inter alia, in the Secret History (Haenisch, *Wörterbuch* p. 22) where it also occurs in §202 (Haenisch's text edition p. 64) as a male personal name.

Ch'en-shih Miao-yin 陳氏妙因 seems to be a female name too, "Miao-yin, from the Ch'en family". Miao-yin has a definitely Buddhist ring; this lady was probably a Buddhist nun.

Kung-chu Pi-lieh-ch'ieh 公主必列怯 "Princess Pi-lieh-ch'ieh". I cannot explain this name satisfactorily. The Chinese form suggests something like *Bileke. This may be connected with the Uighur word *bilek* "gift" (A. v. Gabain, *Altürk. Gramm.* p. 303a: *biläk*).

Fu-ma Sang-ko-ta-ssu 駙馬桑哥答思 "the Royal son-in-law Sang-ko-ta-ssu", probably the husband of *Bileke. His name is Buddhist; the first two syllables are a rendering of Skt. *saṅgha. ta-ssu* = *-*das* may go back to Skt. *-dāsa* "slave, servant", so that the whole name **Saṅgādas* would signify "servant of the (Buddhist) community".

It seems that all these persons were members of the princely family of Sulaimān, Yaqaṅ-šāh and Sultān-šāh. But unfortunately it is not clear to which branch of Činggis Qan's clan this family belonged. The period under question is too late that we could expect information from the *Yüan-shih*. And the ch. 108 of *Yüan-shih* does not say who Sulaimān's ancestors were. If his predecessor as King of Hsi-ning, Qutadmiš (see Hambis, *Le Chapitre CVIII*, p. 102), was a relative of Sulaimān, the latter must be a descendant of Qaçi'un who, as son of Yesügei, was a brother of Činggis Qan. But T'u Chi (*Meng-wu-erh shih-chi* ch. 148, 57a-b; see Hambis, *Le Chapitre CVII*, tableau 40) makes both Sulaimān and Yaqaṅ-šāh (in his spelling Ya'an-šāh) brothers and descendants of Hülegü in the 7th generation. This assumption is probably erroneous.

2. Buyanquli. This is a Buddhist name, "servant of religious merits", *buyan* < skr. *puṇya*, Tu. *qul* "slave, servant" (with the possessive ending -i). This type of name is frequently attested in 13th and 14th century sources as well as its Chinese counterpart (names ending in -*nu* 奴 "slave"). It corresponds to the Indian names ending in *-dāsa*. We find a **Puyanquli* (P'u-yen-hu-li 普顏忽里) mentioned in *Yüan-shih* ch. 135, 12b but he was certainly not identical with the Buyanquli of our letter, being a Qangli who held military offices in China. In East Turkistan the name Buyanquli occurs in the list of the Čayatai rulers, see Hambis, *Le Chapitre CVII*, tableau 24 (according to Khondémir). Khondémir's بيان قلی خان is transcribed there as Bayān-qulī-ḥān, which should, however, rather be read as Buyān-qulī-ḥān. Bayan, "rich", does not make much sense here. According to E. de Zambaur, *Manuel de généalogie et de chronologie pour l'histoire de l'Islam*, Hannover 1927, p. 249, "Buyān Qulī" ruled the Čayatai dominion in 749 h, i.e. 1346-1347. In N. Elias and E. Denison Ross, *The Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, London, 1895, p. 49, the year 1348 is given for "Buyan Kuli", following Stanley Lane Poole's *Muhammedan Dynasties*. This is close enough to the dates that can be suggested for our letter to consider the possibility that he may be identical with the Buyanquli mentioned there.

Buyanquli was a king of Wei-wu and Hsi-ning. A holder of that title is listed in *Yüan-shih* ch. 108 (Hambis, *Le Chapitre CVIII*, p. 112-113), Ch'u-pai 出伯 (Čübei) who obtained the title in 1304. He was a grandson of Baidar and a great-grandson of Čayatai. He also figures in Marco Polo's account; see Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo I*, Paris 1959, pp. 262-263 s.v. Cibai. The form Čübei (Čübäi) is, according to Pelliot and Hambis (*Le*

Chap. CVII, p. 92, note 8), attested by the unpublished Sino-Uighur inscription of 1326 which gives a genealogy of Baidar's family. Three more holders of that title are mentioned elsewhere in the *Yüan-shih*, Nomquli (Čübei's son), Aqabai and Iliyiçi (see Hambis, *Le Chapitre CVIII*, loc. cit.). It is not impossible that Buyanquli was related to one of these but in view of the lack of corroborating sources the identity of Buyanquli cannot be established.

3. Sun-g(?) Günsi (?). This is the most difficult part of the whole letter. I am not even sure how to read it. Sun-a would also be a possible reading (cf. the orthography of Sultān-šāh in line 2 of the letter). In *Sining Ong* the final -ng is always written together, not with a detached -g. We have therefore the following possibilities, if we admit at all the orthography -n-g: Sun-g, Son-g, Sun-a, Son-a. Equally doubtful is the reading of the other word. Günsi could also be read Künsi, or - because our letter has no diacritical marks for n - Güesi, Küesi. Even Guansi or Kuansi is not impossible. From the context one would expect a name, not a title or office, apart from the fact that in the administrative system of the Yüan period no title of office is known to me which would even remotely correspond to one of the possible readings. At worst, one could think of the *tsung-kuan* (-*fu*) 總管府. But the normal Mongol orthography for this seems to be *sunngon* (Sino-Mongolian inscription of 1362, cf. Cleaves in *HJAS* 12 (1949) p. 121 note 171; Inscription of 1335 passim, cf. Cleaves in *HJAS* 13 (1950) p. 89, index; Inscription of 1338 passim, cf. Cleaves in *HJAS* 14 (1951) p. 64, index), and the -si of our letter would be difficult to explain. Under these circumstances it seemed best to regard these cryptic words as a personal name until a better explanation is offered.

II Titles and Offices

1. *Si ning ong* represents doubtlessly Hsi-ning wang 西寧王. This Mongolian orthography for the Chinese title is attested several times in the bilingual inscription in honour of Hindu (1272-1331) dated 1362 which has been thoroughly studied by F. W. Cleaves (*HJAS* 12 (1949) 1-133; cf. p. 38, note 3 and p. 94, note 5).

2. *Ong wuu*: This is the Mongolian rendering of Chin. *wang-fu* 王府, "princely household", that is, the administration of a fief. These offices are described in *Yüan-shih* ch. 89. For a translation of the relevant passages see Paul Ratchnevsky, *Un Code des Yuan*, Paris 1937, p. 245-246. They were headed by a "princely preceptor", *wang-fu* 王傅. *Ong wuu* as Mongolian orthography for the Chinese expression *wang-fu* 王府 is attested in the bilingual inscription of 1135 (F. W. Cleaves, *HJAS* 13 (1950), p. 49 note 143; p. 119 note 133; p. 120 note 138). The Chinese text of that inscription has *wang-fu fu* 王府傅 for Mong. *ong wuu*. In our letter *ong* and *wuu* are written together as one word.

Our letter is addressed to the commanders (*noyad*) of Sultān-šāh's *wang-fu*, princely residence of the king of Hsi-ning. For 1351 the names of two "princely preceptors" in that residence are attested, that is, under Yaqaṅ-šāh, who, as we have seen, was Sultān-šāh's predecessor. They are the *wang-fu* Man-tzu 蠻子 (*Manzi) and Ya-hu 牙忽 (*Yaqu[b]?). Chavannes, *op. cit.*, p. 291 apparently, to judge from the way he romanises, seemed to regard *wang-fu* as part of the names ("Wang-pou-man-tse" and "Wang-pou-ya-hou").

It should be added here that the Mongols under the Yüan dynasty followed to some extent the Sung and Chin system of administration for the households of imperial clan members. Under the Sung this office was called *Ch'in-wang-fu* 親王府, in theory headed by a princely preceptor, *fu* 傅. (*Sung-shih* ch. 162, 31b-33a; Chang Fu-jui, *Les fonctionnaires des Song*, *Index des Titres*, Paris-La Haye 1962, No. 3177). It seems, however, that the *fu* were never appointed under the Sung (*Sung-shih* ch. 162, 32a). The Chin (Jürčēn) too had *Ch'in-wang-fu* (*Chin-shih* ch. 57, 5a). Here the preceptor (*fu*) was the highest adviser of the prince and in charge of the residence when the prince himself was absent. Similar offices existed under the Ming for the households of imperial princes (*Ming-shih* ch. 116, 1a-b; Charles O. Hucker in *HJAS*, vol. 21 (1958), p. 8 and 26; David B. Chan in *Sinologica*, vol. VI (1961), p. 85, note 12).

3. *Uei uu sining ong* is the Mongol rendering of Chin. Wei-wu Hsi-ning Wang 威武西寧王. For *sining ong* see above. *Uei* for Chin. *Wei* seems to be a regular transcription. Chin. *wu* 武 is written *wuu* in the Sino-Mongolian inscription of 1335 (F. W. Cleaves, *HJAS* 13 (1950), p. 124, note 212), but *uu* is an equally faithful rendering of Chin. *wu*. For the title of Wei-wu Hsi-ning Wang see Hambis, *Le Chap. CVIII*, pp. 112-13 and Pelliot in TP 38 (1948), p. 134, note 103.

4. *Wuu ui* is certainly equivalent to Chin. *fu-wei* 傅尉, a title of officials in the administration of the princely households (Ratchnevsky, *Un Code des Yuan*, p. 245). They were styled *fu-wei* 傅尉 in the case of the highest ranked princes, *fu-wei* 府尉 in the princely households of inferior rank. *Ui* as Mongolian transcription of Chin. *wei* is attested in the Sino-Mongolian inscription of 1335 (F. W. Cleaves, *HJAS* 13 (1950), p. 121, note 159). The *fu-wei* office was not a part of the Sung princely household administrations; it occurs first under the Chin (*Chin-shih*, ch. 57, 5a) where the preceptor (*fu*) was assisted by a *t'ung-chih fu-wei* 同知府尉. The inscription of 1351 mentions a *fu-wei* 傅尉 named Hu-tu-la 忽都剌 (*Qudula) (Chavannes, *op. cit.*, p. 291). Another occurrence of that title is in *Ming-shih*, ch. 330, 12b: the king of Ning 寧, Pu-yen T'ieh-mu-erh 卜烟帖木兒 (Buyan Temür) in the 6th month of 1374 sent his *fu-wei* Ma-t'a-erh 麻答兒 (*Matar) with presents to the imperial court.

From the above it will be evident that in spite of the brevity of the Kyoto letter there are some points which require future study and clarification. But even the few lines that are preserved allow us to draw some conclusions. At a time when the official relations between the Čayatai dominion and the court of Peking were rather loose the persistence of Chinese feudal titles and of the Chinese type of princely administration as shown in the letter formula is remarkable. From the identification of Sultān-šāh it becomes clear that as late as the 1350's the local rulers from the family to whose administration the letter is addressed had a strong Buddhist background. It is further shown that Mongol was at that time in Eastern Turkistan still a language used for official correspondence (for further examples see H. Franke in *Oriens*, vol. 15 (1962), pp. 399-410).

Finally it should be mentioned that the Yürinkan in Kyoto preserves another Mongolian document (No. 1, "red" series). It is partly illegible but from the legible passages it appears to be a military document, a report on the available number of weapons and soldiers of a certain military unit.