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**EVALUATIONS OF SOURCES ON THE HISTORY OF THE
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE YUAN DYNASTY AND THE
GOLDEN HORDE***

Abstract: As it is known, there are some sources that we can learn about the history of the relations between Yuan Dynasty and Golden Horde. However, it is necessary to understand the nature of these detailed, regular, and sometimes even incomprehensible records, and to be familiar with the purposes of writing them. There are few scattered Chinese records about the Golden Horde and historians don't have many choices to write a history. Although we have some Yuan sources, it is impossible to write a general history of the relations between the Golden Horde and Yuan based on Chinese sources only, albeit in general terms. We will make some evaluations on this issue in our article.

Keywords: Yuan Dynasty, Golden Horde, Chinese Sources, Records, Historiography

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**ЮАНЬ ӘУЛЕТІ МЕН АЛТЫН ОРДА ҚАТЫНАСТАРЫ
ТАРИХЫНЫҢ ДЕРЕККӨЗДЕРІНЕ БАҒА БЕРУ**

Аңдатпа: Өздеріңіз білетіндей, Юань әулетінің тарихы мен Алтын Орданың қарым-қатынасы туралы мәліметтер алуға болатын дереккөздер бар. Дегенмен, егжей-тегжейлі, реттелген, тіпті түсініксіз жазбалардың табиғатын және оларды жүргізудің мақсатын түсіну маңызды. Алтын Орда тарихына қатысты қытай жазбалары аз және шашыраңқы. Сәйкесінше тарихшылардың зерттеу әрі тарих жазу үшін мүмкіндіктері көп емес. Қолымызда

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біраз Юань деректері болғанымен, Алтын Орда мен Юань әулеті арасындағы қарым-қатынастың жалпы тарихын тек қытай деректеріне сүйеніп жазу мүмкін емес. Мақаламызда осы тақырып бойынша баға беретін боламыз.

Кілт сөздер: Юань әулеті, Алтын Орда, Қытай деректері, жазбалар, тарихнама

Numerous historical sources about the Golden Horde are in Chinese. However, these sources, which are limited, scattered, and sometimes even irrelevant, are often insufficient for historians. In this respect, it is necessary to understand the content of sources associated with the history of the Golden Horde. Those from the Yuan period are our main records on the Golden Horde and its geography. The sources from the Ming Empire are silent about the remote regions of China and the Golden Horde's dominions. Up to a specific period in the history of the Mongol Empire, the records are primarily concerned with the relations between the two "nations" (*ulus*) at the two geographical extremes, east and west. The Yuan records do not contain much information about ties between the central nation and the Juchi nation until Kublai's takeover of the empire. Again, there is very little information on the structure, geography, and people ruled by the Golden Horde.

There are, of course, plausible reasons why the Chinese, with their tradition of recording even the smallest detail, kept silent about such a significant political dominance: i) First of all, the geography was very remote. Chinese sources generally reported on events occurring within the borders of the dynasty that ruled China; throughout the region's history, records on distant geographies have tended to be very limited and ambiguous. For example, those writing historical accounts in China then did not even mention the Ottoman Empire, a world power; ii) Chinese historical records in the Yuan Empire about non-Chinese people in distant lands are often confusing, incomplete, and inaccurate. This made it difficult to establish connections and continuity between events and individuals and prevented the writing of a regular history, especially dynastic histories, by adding on top of the previous record, which is why the records remained quite scattered and unrelated to each other; iii) Another reason the Chinese neglected to mention considerable political powers in the region was that it was a purely political maneuver. After Batu died in 1255, relations between the center of the Mongol Empire and the Golden Horde deteriorated. The two khans immediately appointed by the Great Khan, Möngke, to replace Batu died one after the other. The central nation did not look favorably on

Berke because his mother was a Khwarezmshah princess. Berke ascended the throne in 1257, despite Möngke objection. Following Möngke's death in 1259, a struggle for the throne occurred between Kublai and Arik Böke. The Golden Horde khan, Berke, supported Arik Böke in this process. Kublai, who later emerged victorious from the struggle and who became khan, severed his ties with the Golden Horde. After Kublai's reign, the records and any information about the Juchi nation were scaled down. Berke's name was not even included in the imperial genealogy in dynastic history and biographies of khans of the Juchi nation, probably due to Kublai's anger toward Berke. In the Yuan Shi record of rewards distributed in 1260 after Kublai became khan, no one from the Juchi nation is ever mentioned (Yuan Shi, 1997, p. 68–69); iv) The last reason for the political rupture was that Berke had become a Muslim, began to act independently from the great khanate in Mongolia, and issued coins in his name. According to several statements from various Islamic sources, Kublai's oppression of Muslims in China—for instance, forbidding circumcision and sacrifice (Atwood, 2004, p. 251; Qiu, 2018, p. 39) – must have also contributed to the gradual deterioration of relations between the Golden Horde, whose khan and inhabitants were Muslims, and the Yuan. However, the religious motive should not be given too much importance.

Although Chinese sources on the history of the Golden Horde are scarce, several remarkable records certainly exist. The first and most important of these is the Yuan Shi (元史). In this source, scattered information on the Juchi nation can be found in the first three volumes, which contain the emperor's records (benji 本紀) on the Mongol emperors Genghis, Ögedey, Güyük, and Möngke – up to Kublai, who was now an enemy of the Juchi nation. There are a few minor entries in sections of the source, such as those about “geography” (地理). For example, in volume 63, there is very little information, mainly place names, about the lands of the Kipchak, Khwarezm, Alan, Cend, Bulgar, and Rus. The biographies (liechuan 列傳) of Juchi, Subedey, and other prominent members of the Mongol dynasty and state are important in this source. The next source is the Xin Yuan Shi (新元史), the “New History of the Yuan.” Relevant information in the Yuan Shi is repeated, but the records and biographies of the emperors are more detailed. Although the New History of the Yuan was completed in 1921, based on primary sources and documents to correct the deficiencies and inaccuracies in the Yuan History, it is often not considered a primary source. After all, the records in this dynastic history are not complete enough to write a history of the Golden Horde. We are dealing with brief records consisting of only several textual details. For example, a

biography of Batu is not even part of the record. Besides the dynastic chronicles, other primary sources include local chronicles, inscriptional corpus, geography books, and special chronicles, such as Zhili Huozhou Zhi (直隸霍州志), Zhongxiu Miao Xuebei (重修廟學碑), Haowen Zhonggong Linchuan Wenji (郝文忠公陵川文集), and Ju An Ji (槩菴集), which mention the period up to Kublai's reign.

There is some information in Chinese sources about the Juchi's position and his progeny in the empire. In Yuan Shi, the princes from Juchi's line who were advancing in the west are recorded as xidao zhuwang (西道諸王; "lords of the west wing")¹. Sometimes, they are referred to as xibei zhuwang (西北諸王; "northwestern lords"). In an inscription from 1254 in Zhongxiu Miao Xuebei (重修廟學碑), Juchi is called zhengong (震宮)², which can be translated as "crown prince." Ultimately, it is known that Juchi held a superior position among his brothers. In Chinese sources, the records about the Juchi nation are generally related to the Kipchak steppe. No detailed information about the Golden Horde, its state, or political history exists. However, the records about the share of the Juchi nation of the newly captured lands in China and their administration are perhaps the most detailed evidence about the Golden Horde in Chinese sources. According to the earliest records in the Yuan Shi, the Great Khan appointed Saidianchi Zhangsiding (賽典赤瞻思丁; Sayyid Ajall Shams al-Din) as *daru-gaji* in 1229 in Pingyang, a Juchi nation possession in Shanxi, China (Yuan Shi, 1997, p. 3063). In 1238, Ögedey separated the city of Gucheng (鼓城) from Zhending (真定) and gave it to the Juchi nation. Batu received 10,000 households in Zhending and established an administrative entity called junmin wanhuifu (軍民萬戶府; "Administration of Soldiers and Divisional Household") to manage his property there (Yuan Shi, 1997, p. 1358, 2414). After the fall of the Jin Dynasty in 1236, Ögedey divided the territory of this state and gave it to his imperial family; Batu, as the head of the Juchi nation, received 41,302 households in Pingyang Lu (平陽路) (Yuan Shi, 1997, p. 2414). The Yuan Shi also explicitly mentions that the Juchi nation also owned territory in China, which it occupied and acquired through conquest. In 1227, Batu captured and took possession of Shazhou (沙州) (Yuan Shi, 1997, p. 1450). According to a record from the year 1251, Batu renounced some of his rights in China, and, accordingly, the annual income to the Juchi nation from this domain decreased (Yuan Shi, 1997, p. 47).

¹ Yuan Shi, 1997, p. 36: "Azhiji (阿只吉) gathered xidao zhuwang (西道諸王)".

² From Ma, 1998, p. 236; Qiu, 2018, p. 31.

The Chinese scholar Qiu Yihao analyzed the epitaphs of individuals who held high positions in the Mongol Empire and extracted some records on the Juchi estates in China. According to the *Zhongshu Zuoyou Silangzhong Li Gong Xin Qianbiao* (中書左右司郎中李公新阡表; “New Inscription of General Li of the Right and Left Silangzhong of the Central Secretariat”), recorded in the *Ju An Ji* (槩菴集) of Tong Shu (同恕; 1254-1331), Hu Tianlu, the former “secretary” of Ögedey, was appointed in 1231 to administer Juchi’s estates in China. According to a decree from Batu recorded in volume XXV of the *Zhili Huozhou Zhi* (直隸霍州志), his representatives met and consulted with the Great Khan’s representatives, Taraqudai and Hu Tianlu in 1237 before implementing the orders. According to the “Tomb Inscription of Master Su,” Mr. Su, one of Batu’s servants, was appointed *daruyaji* of various artisans in Pingyang, a property of the Juchi. He was to be in charge of sending revenues to Batu’s headquarters. The *Haowen Zhonggong Linchuan Wenji* contains a complaint sent to the Great Khan, Möngke, in 1255. According to this complaint, Batu re-divided estates in Pingyang among the Juchi princes, allowed all of his relatives to collect taxes directly, and put Chinese subjects in a difficult place by ordering them to pay an annual tax, specifically in gold. According to the same source, Kublai’s advisors were worried that the link between China and Iran would be cut by the “Foreigners in the Western Lands” (*xiyu zhu hu* 西域諸胡), who turned out to be Berke and his followers (Yuan Shi, 1997, p. 311). The enmity between the two sides had reached its peak, and thus, Kublai largely severed his ties with the western nation. In 1288, Kublai changed the status of the institution administering the Golden Horde’s territory in Pingyang and ceased making payments altogether (Yuan Shi, 1997, p. 311). Therefore, unless a new source is discovered, it is difficult to speak of any document of importance on the history of the Golden Horde after this period, except for a few minor, inconsequential records.

Finally, it should be noted that the sources on the Golden Horde are not very exploitable in terms of political history. Except for a few records, the information mainly concerns the Kipchak steppes. Moreover, there is a tendency in the historical sources of the Golden Horde to include various records of the Song, Liao, and Jin dynasties about the tribes residing in the east before the political dominance of the Golden Horde had taken shape—and even about the tribes of the Genghis Khan period in the Yuan Shi.

Sources such as Heida Shilue³ and Yelü Chucai's Xi You Lu⁴ on the Genghis Mongol period, written by Southern Song envoys, translated into various languages, and considered by some to be "Golden Horde historical materials," actually have nothing to do with the Golden Horde. Texts such as Chen Cheng's embassy report from the Timurid period, which provide information about goods coming from the Golden Horde to large trade centers such as Samarkand (Atik, 2016, p. 11-12), are not adequate as primary sources of the Golden Horde's history as they are quite brief and incomplete. If new details and, if possible, new interpretations of the Golden Horde's history are to be uncovered, the biographies and tomb inscriptions of officials assigned to the Golden Horde's properties in the Yuan Empire should also be consulted.

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Öz: Bilindiği gibi Yuan Hanedanlığı ve Altın Orda ilişkilerinin tarihi hakkında bilgi alabileceğimiz bazı kaynaklar vardır. Bununla birlikte ayrıntılı, düzenli ve bazen de anlaşılmaz olan kayıtların doğasını anlamak ve bunların tutulma maksadına vakıf olmak lazımdır. Altın Orda tarihi hakkında az ve dağınık Çin kayıtları bulunmaktadır, bu

³ For example, look at: Zolotaya Orda v Istorçnikah, III, Kitayskiye i Mongolskiye Istoçniki, 2009, p. 27-120. In about 100 pages translated and annotated on the grounds that they are about the history of the Golden Horde, it is not possible to find any information about the Golden Horde.

⁴ Look at: Bretschneider, 2013, p. 198-208.

bakımdan tarihçiler bir tarih yazmak için çok fazla seçeneğe sahip değildir. Elimizde bazı Yuan kaynakları olsa da Altın Orda ve Yuan ilişkilerinin genel bir tarihini sadece Çin kaynaklarına dayanarak yazmak imkansızdır. Makalemizde bu konu hakkında bazı değerlendirmeler yapacağız.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yuan Hanedanlığı, Altın Orda, Çin Kaynakları, Kayıtlar, Tarihçilik

(Kürşat YILDIRIM. YUAN HANEDANLIĞI VE ALTIN ORDA İLİŞKİLERİ TARİHİNİN KAYNAKLARI ÜZERİNE DEĞERLENDİRMELER)

Аннотация: Как известно, имеются источники, предоставляющие информацию о истории взаимоотношений династии Юань и Золотой Орды. Однако необходимо осознать природу этих детальных, систематических и иногда непрозрачных записей, а также понимать цели их введения. Китайские архивы, касающиеся истории Золотой Орды, оказываются ограниченными и дисперсными, что существенно сужает возможности историков в создании единообразного повествования. Несмотря на наличие некоторых источников из периода династии Юань, составление всеобъемлющей истории взаимодействия Золотой Орды и Юаней, ориентируясь исключительно на китайские материалы, даже в общих чертах, представляется невозможным. В рамках данной статьи предпринимается попытка анализа и оценки данной темы с учетом указанных ограничений.

Ключевые слова: династия Юань, Золотая Орда, китайские источники, летописи, историография

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