

Movement, Temporality, and Exchange:

Animals in Mongol Eurasia

International Workshop

February 26, 2017

Rabin Building Mt. Scopus Campus, room 2001

10:00-11:30 Panel 1: Use

Chair: **Michal Biran** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Timothy May (University of North Georgia): *Lambs to the Slaughter: Conflict and Culture Over Animals Slaughter in Mongol Eurasia*

During several periods of the Mongol Empire the issue how one slaughtered animals became a key point of contention between the Mongol elite and Muslim subjects. The traditional Mongol method of slaughter prevented blood from being spilled into the ground, whereas Islamic and Jewish methods did. While a seemingly small issue, it remained a source of anxiety for Muslims as they adapted to the new reality of Mongol Rule. While the tensions between the Mongols and Muslims over animal slaughter is well documented, there is no indication of other groups facing similar persecution. The question is whether the variances in animal slaughter created strain via religious differences or whether it was caused by cultural differences concerning the treatment of animals. While the Mongols' reputation for ferocity was merited, it is easy to forget they also considered their animals (of all sorts) differently than most sedentary groups.

Reuven Amitai (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem): *A Mamluk's Best Friend: Some Remarks on the Mounts of the Military Elite of Egypt and Syria in the Late Middle-Ages*

It should not come as a surprise that the Mamluks took their horses very seriously. The mainstay of their military might was a large mobile field army mostly composed of mounted archers. In this they were similar to the armies based on troopers of Eurasian Steppe provenance. However, unlike the Mongols and the Turkmen, the Mamluk horses were not primarily fed by grazing, but rather by fodder. Like the Mamluk soldiers, their mounts were "city dwellers", although they may have spent some time every year out in the country. This presented all kinds of logistical challenges, some of which will be discussed in this paper. In addition, we will review some of the evidence for the types of horses that the Mamluks used, comparing it to the mounts of their Mongol enemies. If there is time, other matters may be raised: training, veterinary health, and breeding.

Keith Knapp (The Citadel - The Military College of South Carolina): *The Use and Understanding of Domestic Animals in Early Medieval Northern China*

Given the predominance of grain agriculture, scholars have paid scant attention to animal husbandry in premodern China. Early Medieval China (220-589) furnishes two useful sources that shed light on this aspect of Chinese farming. One source is the painted bricks excavated from tombs in the Hexi corridor that depict animals; the other is the six fascicle of Jia Sixie's 賈思勰 (fl. ca. 530-544) *Qimin yaoshu* 齊民要術 (The Essential Techniques for Common People), which is devoted to animal husbandry. What can we learn from these two sources about early

medieval animal husbandry? The Hexi pictorial bricks indicate that stockbreeding was an important component of agriculture in northwest China. The animals raised there included horses, donkeys, cows, sheep, pigs, chickens, ducks, camels, and deer. The *Qimin yaoshu* chapter is substantial in length (8700 characters) and rich in contents. Its sections on raising sheep, chickens, pigs, ducks, and geese are filled with practical advice on how to pen, feed, and protect these animals. In contrast, the longest section on horses primarily focuses on the physiognomy of horses and treatments for illnesses that befall them. By closely scrutinizing a particular horse's physical characteristics, Jie Sixie thought one could determine its endurance, temperament, lifespan, auspiciousness, and even the health of its internal organs. This is similar to the early medieval period's prevalent belief that, through examining a man's face, one could determine his capabilities and nature. Interestingly, the chapter says much about raising domestic animals, but little about selective breeding.

12:00-13:30 Panel 2: Movement

Chair: **Dagmar Schäfer** (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science)

William G. Clarence-Smith (SOAS, University of London): *Mongols and Elephants*

Mongols had no experience of elephants in their homeland, and this paper seeks to explore how their encounters with the great beasts have been analysed. Some scholars contend that the Mongols quickly got over their initial shocked surprise, and devised efficient tactics to deal with troops mounted on elephants. The Mongols ruling China even collected a number of the beasts, although they never really used them for military purposes. Other scholars consider that the Mongols found it impossible to truly conquer areas that employed elephants for war, at a time when rudimentary firearms did not yet give the advantage to horses over elephants. This would then, in part, account for the Mongol inability to subdue Mainland Southeast Asia, or make any long-term conquest of India.

Masato Hasegawa (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science): *Animals and Transport in Koryō Korea*

This preliminary study examines the relationship between animals and overland transport in Koryō Korea and situates it in the context of Mongol Eurasia from the twelfth to the fourteenth century. While textual and archeological evidence remains fragmentary, this presentation juxtaposes selected primary sources from Eurasia, China, and Korea and surveys the conditions under which existing transport methods, including river and sea transport, were evaluated, compared, and employed. The report of the mission of the Franciscan William of Rubruck, for example, provides a rich and detailed account of how the Mongols were transporting loads—and even tented dwellings—using ox carts, camels, and pack horses in the mid-thirteenth century. Contrasted with the description by William of Rubruck are the early twelve-century description of Korean society by the Northern Song scholar Xu Jing, officially compiled records of Koryō history, and collected works of Koryō scholar-officials. Together, these records demonstrate the important role that oxen, horses, mules, and donkeys played in overland transport in Korea from the twelfth to the fourteenth century. Also illuminated in these records is the intricate and inseparable link between terrain conditions and human choices regarding overland transport. Mountain paths in Korea were often deemed unsuitable for carts, and such an observation and perception placed an increased emphasis on the role of animals in overland transport. Through examination of primary sources, this presentation suggests an approach integrating the

history of animals more fully into studies of technology and nature from a crossregional perspective.

Yokkaichi Yasuhiro (Waseda University): *Diffusion of Stone Lion, Shishi, and Koma-Inu in Eurasia and Maritime Asia*

Across Eurasia, placing two statues of lion on either side of a gate as guardians has been a widely practiced custom. Originally, in Egypt and Ancient Middle East, stone lion had been seen since before the Common Era. In China, the east end of Eurasia, lion has never lived. However, the iconography of shizi 獅子 (lion) and winged lion – that was called pixie 辟邪 or qilin 麒麟 – appeared since the Han period. Judging from the fact that before this Scythian and Xiongnu 匈奴 people had the iconography of winged lion, called Griffin in the western Eurasia, lion statues must had been brought from western Eurasia to China via the Eurasian Steppe. In fact, pairs of stone lion were also made in the Göktürks and Uigur Empires. Further, the lion statue was also transmitted to India and incorporated into Buddhism. Such Buddhist iconography of lion was, on the one hand, also transmitted to China via the Eurasian Steppe and on the other hand to Southeast Asia via the maritime route, where it transformed into makara (sea monster mixed with crocodile, elephant, and big fish or whale). The makara was transmitted to China as mojie 摩竭. It is interesting to note that some lion figures and makara or mojie have somethings in common, such as their appearance and posture.

The context of lion's iconographies changed in Mongol-ruled China. Whereas the Buddhist design of lions in China was deformed, the realistic design statues appeared after the Yuan period. There is a relatively many records which say that a lion was dedicated as a tribute to the Yuan court. According to Marco Polo, Qubilai Qa'an used to have a hunting session with his lion. Hence, it is considered that the appearance of the realistic lion design in Yuan China reflected the fact that real lions, often dedicated as tributes, existed in China then. At the same time, whereas lion statue was only provided for rulers and temples until then, such statues became popular among urban wealthy people and came to be placed in the front of their residence's gates. Such diffusion of lion statues in Yuan China is believed to be connected with "Pax Mongolica," under which many lions may have been brought to Yuan China from India, Iran, Middle East, and Africa.

Moreover, the custom of lion statue was transmitted from China to Japan in the Tang period and such lions were called koma-inu 狛犬. Then, in the Song period, lion statues were again brought to Japan by Buddhist monks especially from the Wuyue 吳越 district. However, it is generally believed that lion statues were not transmitted to Japan in the Yuan period. Is it really like that? This paper reviews the diffusion of lion statue in Maritime Asia during the Mongol period from Eurasian perspective.

14:30-16:00 Panel 3: Temporality

Chair: **Tamar Novick** (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science)

Brian Baumann (University of California, Berkeley): *Between Heaven and History: Zoomorphic Intercession in "The Secret History of the Mongols"*

Momentous events in the *Secret History of the Mongols* are frequently augured by zoomorphic signs, the barking of dogs, the bellowing of an ox, the alighting of a bird of prey, and so on.

Scholars have tended to take the animals that make these signs for tokens of Turko-Mongolian animism (and/or totemism), an aspect of an indigenous, tribal shamanism. This animism, they hold, bears an antiquity so great as to appear timeless. Whereas elsewhere in Eurasia the dictates of evolving civilization have moved peoples away from it, apart from the Mongols and other like peoples in Siberian Northern Asia, animism remains, scholars maintain, among tribal peoples on other continents, and it is with such tribes that Mongolian examples ought to be compared. Integral to such a view is the assumption that zoomorphic signs reflect an ontology comprised wholly of belief, devoid of fact, science, or history. My paper will present an epistemology whereby these animal signs are to be understood in terms wholly scientific, devoid of belief. This science is the science of orientation in space and time, manifest as symmetry between heaven and earth, expressed as allegory, and essential for promulgating government. My paper will demonstrate that, as expressions of Mongolian science, zoomorphic signs do not exist in a vacuum but, rather, manifest a syncretism derived from prevailing orders upon which the Mongols build their own and so bear history.

Shane McCausland (SOAS, University of London): *Animals in Art at the Yuan Court*

The values that different cultures of the Mongol-Yuan polity in East Asia attached to certain animals did not always coincide, but nevertheless created an important space or point of friction for intercultural dialogue, often relating to the practice of government centred on the Yuan court. Paintings of fine stallions by southern Chinese scholar-official artists like Zhao Mengfu (1254-1322) and Ren Renfa (1254-1327), for instance, would have held compelling visual appeal for Mongols, Central Asians and others, but also carried into the discourse of art a figurative purport from the heritage of Chinese statecraft in connection with probity in office and meritocracy in regard to appointments and promotions. This study examines the agency of contemporary and old master Chinese paintings of animals at the Yuan court, taking as its starting point the recent exhibition at the National Palace Museum, Taipei, about the 'elegant gathering' hosted in a Buddhist temple in Dadu in spring 1323 by one of the most important art collectors of the Yuan, Sengge Lagyi (c. 1283-1331), Grand Princess of the Principality of Lu and sister of two khans, Khaishan Külüg (r. 1307-11) and Ayurbarwada Buyantu (r. 1311-20). The Chinese scholar-official Yuan Jue (1266-1327) attended the banquet and inscribed colophons on some 41 picture-scrolls—many depicting animals—brought out for the occasion from the princess's collection. He later composed a record of the event which stands as an apologia, as insightful as it is bold, for Mongol royal collecting of Chinese art and its value to kingship and ruling.

Márton Vér (University of Szeged and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) and Francesca Fiachetti (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem): *Animals in the Service of the Khan: The Postal System of the Mongol Empire and its Animals*

The medieval Mongols created the largest animal based communication system of world history. Postal stations were established from the Korean peninsula to the Volga region, from the forest zone to Persia. The postal system played a key role in maintaining the highest possible speed for civil and military communication and it was therefore a main tool in the establishment of a cohesive empire. Animals were a fundamental component of this system: different animals were employed in different regions; their acquisition and maintenance originated a complex set of regulations, economic and bureaucratic networks. The paper analyses some aspects related to the animal component of the Mongol postal system. It firstly provides a philological analysis of the terminology used, by looking at a set of Chinese, Old Uyghur and Middle Mongolian documents, which are analysed here – comparatively- for the first time. Secondly, a broader

analysis of the data combines it with historical and narrative sources. In doing so, the paper traces patterns and peculiarities of the economical and bureaucratic realities beyond the maintenance of the Mongol postal system. This will show the long term impact of the innovations and structures that the Mongol approach to and usage of animals brought in Eurasia.

16:30-17:30 Panel 4: Exchange

Chair: **Shai Lavi**, Tel Aviv University and The Van Leer Institute

Na'ama Arom (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem): *Unicorn in the Woods, Tigers at the Gates: Different Stages in the Contacts between the Il-Khanate and the Delhi Sultanate*

It was a unicorn, speaking human words, which stopped the unstoppable army of Chinggis Khan on the north-western border of India, in 1222. But it will take more than a unicorn to keep the Mongols from trying to return.

The Mongol Empire and its successive Khanates never conquered the Indian subcontinent; yet they never stopped trying to subjugate certain powers in it, as the Delhi Sultanate in the north, and Pāndya Kingdom in the south-east. This was done by diplomacy – dotted all over with the paw prints of many different animals.

Tracking these prints, this paper attempt to line the evolving contacts between the Mongol Khanate of the Middle East, centered in Iran, Iraq and Azerbaijan – the IlKhanate, or Ulus Hülegü – and the Muslim Delhi Sultanate, situated in modern day northern India and eastern Pakistan. From a myth-like beginning ensued an unarmed contest of horses and elephants, in which each side described itself victorious; and it might be so, for people and trade continued to flow between the two. At the end of the road, tigers from Delhi awaited outside of the capital of the Il-Khan Abu-Sa'id (ruled 1316-1335). That contact hinted at a change in the Mongol attitude toward Delhi – from one seeking submission, into another, content with peace.

Sare Aricanli (Durham University): *Organizational Context of the 'Mongolian Doctors' in Qing Imperial Medicine*

Imperial medicine usually brings to mind the medical care of the emperor, pharmaceutical treatises, and the physicians of the Imperial Medical Bureau. The lens of institutional history, however, points to a number of organizations and posts including imperial physicians as well as officials at the pharmacy. There were also practitioners of bonesetting in an institution that managed horses. These specialists, who also treated humans, were referred to as 'Mongolian doctors'. Taking the post of the 'Mongolian doctor' as an example, this paper examines their differing organizational contexts from multi-institutional and intra-institutional perspectives. The pluralistic organization of the medical realm then reveals the richness of practitioners, practices, and their contexts in eighteenth century Qing imperial medicine.

17:30-18:00 General Discussion