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## HAN AND NON-HAN:

Identities, foreign influences and characters from  
the “Barbarian dynasties” of XI-XII century to  
contemporary China

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Francesca Fiaschetti

## TRADITION, INNOVATION AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF QUBILAI'S DIPLOMATIC RHETORIC\*

### ABSTRACT

The paper investigates some aspects of Yuan diplomatic rhetoric on the basis of diplomatic correspondence with Annam and Koryŏ, as reported in the *Yuan shi* and in other Chinese documents from the Yuan period. These sources show that Qubilai's diplomacy was constructed on Mongolian patterns of foreign relations and representations of charismatic rulership. At the same time, the founder of the Yuan dynasty promoted his imperial identity by adopting several *topoi* of Confucian rhetoric in order to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the neighbouring lands as successor to the Song dynasty. By showing the entanglement of these two perspectives, the paper demonstrates the necessity to go beyond the sole context of Chinese culture, and the idea of sinicization, when reading Chinese sources on the Yuan. In doing so, the paper contributes new ideas to the ongoing debate on the analysis of periods of non-Han rule in China.

One of the main challenges for the study of periods of non-Han rule in China is connected with the interpretation of the sources. The strong linkage between historiography and the process of empire-building is determined by two factors: on one side there is the

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perspective of the ruling elite, which wishes to construct its legitimacy by presenting its rule as universal: a world order beyond spatial borders or temporal boundaries.<sup>1</sup> On the other side the sources also represent the perspective of the subjects subsumed into this world order who try to integrate it into their own history and identity.<sup>2</sup> A third factor to take into account is the further compromise of the language in which the documents are redacted, and the cultural background it conveys.<sup>3</sup>

In the case of non-Han dynasties, the traditional reliance on the accounts of the Chinese sources had for a long time led to the interpretation of these moments of history in terms of sinicization and consequently in the context of a sinocentric worldview. Only in the last years the scholarly debate has started to challenge the limits of the Chinese world order and to analyse these empires according to their Inner and Northeast Asian elements. This has been possible mainly thanks to the more and more systematic analysis of vernacular sources.<sup>4</sup>

In this framework the Mongol Yuan 元 dynasty (1260-1368)<sup>5</sup> represents a particular case, as only a few sources in Mongolian have

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<sup>1</sup> On these as the main criteria defining an empire see: Hardt/Negri, 2000, especially: xiv-xv, 10 and note 15, 14-15. For a discussion of the relation between empire and historiography in Chinese tradition see: Mittag 2008.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion on the development of ideas of empire in early China see: Nylan 2008 and Pines 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Another aspect to take into consideration is the perspective of the literati class who were the authors of the historical documents. See for example the analysis by Skaff 2012: 52ff.

<sup>4</sup> The problem of how to approach the periods of non-Han rule in China has been at the center of the scholarly debate for the last few years, starting with the main contributions of the New Qing History School. For a summary of the main issues and theories see: Standen 1997; Fiaschetti/Schneider/Schottenhammer 2012 and especially Rawski 2012; Fiaschetti/Schneider 2014. This issue is also analysed in Skaff 2012: 4-8.

<sup>5</sup> The Yuan dynasty was officially founded in 1271. The choice of the year 1260, when Qubilai was elected *qayan* aims at underlining that the Yuan dynasty was ideologically and historically connected to previous moments of the history of Mongol Empire. On the ideology at the base of the foundation of the Yuan dynasty

survived, mostly in fragmentary form,<sup>6</sup> so that the necessity to rely on external sources in Chinese is still very strong. However, recent scholarship has aimed at analysing these documents in comparison to other examples of historiography about the Mongols, underscoring the necessity of looking beyond the boundaries of the Chinese context in which these documents were compiled.<sup>7</sup>

This has already proven useful in gaining a better understanding of the main source for the study of the Yuan dynasty, the *Yuan shi* 元史 (*History of the Yuan dynasty*),<sup>8</sup> a text which has often been interpreted as inaccurate: its hasty compilation (about one year) leading to mistakes and inconsistencies, both in the language as well as in the structure of the work.<sup>9</sup>

Moreover this source, which was presented in 1370,<sup>10</sup> at the beginning of the reign of Ming Taizu 明太祖 (the Hongwu 洪武 Emperor, r. 1368-98), has often been seen as influenced, even if in small measure, by the ideological purposes of legitimation of the Ming emperor and generally by the mediation of the Ming compilers.<sup>11</sup> The effect of these influences is, on the one side, that the composition of the text results in sometimes very dry narration, one aspect of this being the lack of commentaries (*lunzhan* 論贊).<sup>12</sup> On the other side there is the effort of the Confucian literati to present the period of

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see: Franke 1978. On the circumstances of the election of Qubilai as *qayan* see Rossabi 1988: 46-52.

<sup>6</sup> Most of these documents have been already studied and translated, for an overview see: Tumurtoogoo 2006.

<sup>7</sup> A possible solution has been found in the study of this dynasty in the broader context of Mongol Eurasia, through a comparative analysis of sources in different languages. This approach has become famous in the works of Allsen. See for example: Allsen 1987 and 2001. An interesting, more recent contribution is the volume edited by Rossabi (2013) on the *Eurasian Influences on Yuan China*.

<sup>8</sup> Song Lian 宋濂 [et al.], *Yuan shi* 元史, Repr. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976.

<sup>9</sup> See for example Mote 1994: 689.

<sup>10</sup> The redaction of the first 159 chapters took place between the 9th of March and the 19th of September 1369. Bira 2002: 77.

<sup>11</sup> See for example the analysis in: Wang Gungwu 1968: 45; Brose 2006: 328-330; Barrett 1999.

<sup>12</sup> Brose 2006: 329 and note 6.

Mongol rule in the sinocentric terms of a cultural assimilation of the Yuan dynasty and of its founder Qubilai (Shizu 世祖 Emperor, r. 1260-1294).<sup>13</sup>

However, to put the role of the Ming compilers into perspective, we should consider that the extremely quick editing of the text, as Bira correctly points out, wouldn't have been possible without reference to many sources compiled under the Yuan, and which have been often copied word by word in several parts of the *Yuan shi*.<sup>14</sup>

In this perspective, a significant example is provided by the last three chapters of the *Yuan shi*, which are devoted to the description of the foreign lands (*waiyi* 外夷, lit. 'foreign barbarians').<sup>15</sup> This part of the *Yuan shi* in fact relies strongly on the section *zhengfa* 征伐 ('punitive expeditions')<sup>16</sup> of the *Jingshi dadian* 經世大典 (*Compendium for governing the world*),<sup>17</sup> a text of Yuan compilation which has been partially preserved in the *Yuan wen lei* 元文類 (*Collection of literature from the Yuan period*),<sup>18</sup> compiled by Su Tianjue 蘇天爵

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<sup>13</sup> This is for example the representation of the Yuan dynasty in the *jìn Yuan shi biao* 進元史表, 1369 (*Memorial for presenting the Yuan shi*) by Song Lian 宋濂 (1310-1381), reproduced in *Yuan shi* vol.15: 4673 and translated by Cleaves 1988: 61-62. For other examples see the analysis in: Barrett 1999.

<sup>14</sup> Bira 2002: 78.

<sup>15</sup> These represent the *Yuan shi* chapters 208, 209 and 210, compiled by Song Xi 宋禧 (late Yuan/Ming). See: *Ming shi* 明史 285: 7317-8, quoted after Brose 2006: 332 note 10. The term *waiyi* to indicate the foreign lands has a long tradition in Chinese historiography, see for example: Wang Gungwu 1968: 41. The employment of this term to indicate the section on foreign lands is however a peculiarity of the *Yuan shi*. See on this: Brose 2006: 328 and Fiaschetti 2014a. For the usage of the term in the Ming period (1368-1644) see: Jiang Yonglin 2011: 103.

<sup>16</sup> Su Zhenshen 1984: 61.

<sup>17</sup> The *Jingshi dadian* was commissioned in 1329 and completed in 1331 by a commission of Chinese and Mongolian scholars. Bira 2002: 77. On the authors and compilation of the *Jingshi dadian* see: Yuan-chu Lam 1992. See also the mention in: Brose 2006: 329 note 5.

<sup>18</sup> Su Tianjue 蘇天爵, *Yuan wen lei* 元文類, Repr. Xiudetang 修德堂 (late Ming 1567-1644): <[http://ostasien.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/fs1/object/display/bsb00067093\\_00001.html?hl=true&mode=simple&fulltext=yuan+wen+lei](http://ostasien.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/fs1/object/display/bsb00067093_00001.html?hl=true&mode=simple&fulltext=yuan+wen+lei)> (12/2014). Sections of the *Jingshi dadian* have survived not only in the *Yuan wen lei*, but also in

(1294–1352).<sup>19</sup> The section on punitive expeditions is fully preserved, allowing a clear understanding of the redaction of the *waiyi* section.<sup>20</sup>

A second aspect is that the historical records of the lands with which the Yuan had diplomatic relations also contain information about these exchanges, providing a counterpart to, and useful sources for, amendments to the edicts and events reported in the *Yuan shi*. Notable examples are the *Koryōsa* 高麗史 (*Official History of the Koryō Dynasty*)<sup>21</sup> compiled in the first half of the fifteenth century for the kingdom of Koryō (918-1392), or the *Annan zhibilüe* 安南志略 (A Brief Treatise on Annam) compiled ca. 1335 by the Yuan loyalist Lê Tǎc 黎則, ca.1260s-1340s)<sup>22</sup> for Annam.

Whereas the first source has been analysed in a few studies revealing also the presence of Mongolian edicts within it,<sup>23</sup> the *Annan zhibilüe* still needs to be analysed in detail. This text was written on the base of Chinese sources by an official from Annam who surrendered to the Yuan and this is probably the reason why it has been neglected as a document of Vietnamese history.<sup>24</sup> A more detailed analysis of the text is however important for a better understanding of Yuan and Mongol diplomacy in general.

The diplomatic rhetoric of the Mongols has already been analysed in several works, especially with regards to correspondence with the Latin West. These studies have underlined the presence in the

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the *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 (*Great Canon of the Yongle Era*, 1408). See: Su Zhenshen 1984: 37-40.

<sup>19</sup> For his biography see: *Yuan shi* 183: 4224-4227.

<sup>20</sup> This section is reproduced in: *Yuan wen lei* 41: 15b-21b.

<sup>21</sup> *Koryōsa* 高麗史, compiled by Jong In-ji (1396-1478), Repr. Taibei: Wen shi zhe chu ban she, Minguo 101 [2012].

<sup>22</sup> Lê Tǎc 黎則 (aut.); Wu Shangqing; 武尚清 (ed.), *Annan zhibilüe* 安南志略, Repr. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000. On the author and his work see: Cadière/Pelliot 1904: 624-5 and Taylor 1983: 350. There is a French translation of the *Annan zhibilüe* (Sainson 1896) but it is based on an version of the text which presents some mistakes. See on it: Cadière/Pelliot 1904: 625.

<sup>23</sup> See: Ledyard 1963; Lee 2007. Reck 1968 compares the *Koryōsa* to the section on Koryō in the *Yuan shi*.

<sup>24</sup> Cadière/Pelliot 1904: 625; Taylor 1983: 350.



documents of elements, strategies and recurring phrases typical of Mongolian political ideology.<sup>25</sup>

In the case of the Yuan dynasty, however, the analysis of diplomacy is mostly related to the accounts on foreign countries, which have received increasing attention in recent years. The famous analysis by Wang Gungwu of Mongol Yuan foreign relations in the context of a Chinese world order is an example of the traditional view on this period of non-Han rule.<sup>26</sup> The main concern of his approach is in fact to show how the Mongol experience has been perceived in the framework of subsequent Chinese historiography, and in particular to build the case of the legitimation of the Ming dynasty, as compared to the rhetoric of foreign relations of, for example, the Tang 唐 (618-907) and Song 宋 (960-1279) dynasties.<sup>27</sup> A more recent approach has challenged this perspective, analysing Chinese foreign relations towards the several non-Han dynasties as ‘among equals’.<sup>28</sup> This perspective has proven useful in understanding how several non-Han dynasties adopted Chinese rhetoric and diplomatic protocol for their own purposes. However, as Mote correctly points out, “the acceptance of form should not be taken to signify the simultaneous acceptance of substance: the non-Chinese Northerners mostly remained true to their own cultural values”.<sup>29</sup>

A further important contribution is constituted by recent analyses of previous moments of Turko-Mongolian history and their influences on China, most notably in the case of the Tang dynasty. These have brought attention to some elements of Chinese foreign relations from this period, which share some similarities with the Yuan example.<sup>30</sup>

It is also pertinent to mention that recent studies on Yuan foreign relations have focused more on single regions, as in the case of Korea,

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<sup>25</sup> See, among others, Voegelin 2000 [1940–41]; Jackson 2003 and 2005; Aigle 2005.

<sup>26</sup> Wang Gungwu 1968.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> See: Rossabi 1983 and especially the contribution by Wang Gungwu 1983.

<sup>29</sup> Mote 1999: 381.

<sup>30</sup> See for example the analysis by Skaff 2012.

Burma, Java and Vietnam.<sup>31</sup> These studies show the limits of the *Yuan shi* as a source for Mongol history, especially if we understand it as a mere product of Chinese ideology, and consequently the necessity to rely on comparison with local sources. Most importantly, a closer look at the chapters on the foreign countries has shown that both in terms of foreign policy as well as in the rhetoric of describing foreign countries, the *Yuan shi* presents a mixture of Chinese and Mongolian elements.<sup>32</sup>

Following this critical approach to the sources, this paper will present some preliminary ideas on how the Yuan dynasty and especially its founder, Qubilai,<sup>33</sup> built a rhetoric of foreign relations. In particular, the aim of the analysis is twofold: firstly it will be shown that Qubilai's diplomacy was based on established patterns of Mongolian ideology, but adapted through references to stereotypical elements of Confucian political rhetoric. Although the Mongol rulers did adopt this kind of rhetoric to promulgate the legitimacy of their empire in the eyes of the sinic world,<sup>34</sup> this was not a sign of their sinicization, but simply one side of the construction of a multicultural political identity.

A second point is to show that this adaptation is a conscious attempt to present the Yuan dynasty as a legitimate alternative to the Southern Song 南宋 (1127-1279), the mention of which is a recurring element of the diplomatic correspondence of the Yuan and of Annam.

The main sources for the analysis will be the *Yuan shi* section on Koryō (chapter 208) and Annam (chapter 209), as the diplomatic exchange with these two kingdoms constituted an important element

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<sup>31</sup> Reck 1968 for Korea; Bade 2002 (revised 2013) for Java; Warder 2009 for Vietnam; Wade 2009 for Burma.

<sup>32</sup> Brose 2006; Fiaschetti 2014a; Lo Jung-Pang 2012 [1957].

<sup>33</sup> On his life and reign see: Rossabi 1988.

<sup>34</sup> The expression 'sinic' refers in this paper to those countries which were historically influenced by Chinese culture and language, and specifically Korea, Japan and Annam (Fairbank's 'Sinic zone': Fairbank 1968: 13). The critique of this term by Skaff, who proposes to include these countries in the context of 'Eastern Eurasia', should also be noted. See Skaff 2012: 6-7.

in the first phase of Qubilai's reign. As a consequence, the rhetoric used towards these two kingdoms presents many similarities but also a few discrepancies, the analysis of which will shed light on the elements of Mongolian tradition which influenced Qubilai's diplomatic practice and rhetoric. Moreover, some documents from the *Annan zhibilüe* will be compared with the corresponding sections of the *Yuan shi*, in order to show the peculiarities and gaps in the redaction of this dynastic history, and to put into perspective the image it conveys of Yuan political rhetoric.

### The historical background

The two kingdoms of Koryŏ and Annam had very different relations with the Mongols: Koryŏ had entertained diplomatic and military relations with the Mongols from the time of Činggis Qan (Taizu 太祖 Emperor, r. 1206-1227).<sup>35</sup> In the course of these relations, the Crown Prince (King Wonjong 元宗 r. 1259–1274) had been sent as a hostage to the Mongol court, and in 1259 he was established as ruler of Koryŏ by Qubilai himself.<sup>36</sup>

The case of Annam is different: the first Annam expedition took place in 1257-8 (contemporary to the last Koryŏ campaign) as a part of the strategy to defeat the Southern Song dynasty.<sup>37</sup> As Warder has shown, Annam made all sorts of efforts to maintain its relations with the Southern Song, despite accepting formal submission to the Mongols.<sup>38</sup> Moreover the military confrontation between the Mongols

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<sup>35</sup> It is here to note that, although Qubilai was the founder of the dynasty, in the whole *Yuan shi*, as well as in other documents from the Yuan period, the reference is to Činggis Qan as founder of the empire. See the examples below. On the history of Mongol-Korean relations see: Henthorn 1963, Ledyard 1963 and 1964.

<sup>36</sup> Rossabi 1988: 95-96. This early phase of the Mongol-Korean relations is briefly summarized at the beginning of chapter 208: 4607-10. The section on Koryŏ has been fully translated and commented by Reck 1968.

<sup>37</sup> The official reason for this campaign, as stated in the *Yuan shi* (209: 4633), was the mistreating of the Yuan envoys by the Annam ruler. See: Lo Jung-Pang 2012 [1957]: 284. On the Annam-Yuan relations see also: Buell 2009.

<sup>38</sup> Warder 2009. Some of the diplomatic exchanges between the Song and Annam are also described by Franke 1983.

and the Song had an important impact on the neighbouring territories, and especially on Annam and Champa which became the destination of many Song refugees.<sup>39</sup> This movement of people often influenced the political situation of these lands, through the formation, for example, of bands of rebels opposed to Mongol power.<sup>40</sup>

In this context, the issues of legitimacy were twofold: on the one hand Qubilai had just started to construct his role as future emperor of the Mongols and on the other the Mongols had to affirm their position in East Asia as a legitimate alternative to the Southern Song. In the case of Annam this strategy encountered firm resistance: the hostility of the rulers of Annam resulted in a long diplomatic dispute and in two more campaigns under Qubilai (in 1285 and 1287), mainly related to military expeditions against the kingdom of Champa.<sup>41</sup> The repeated military defeats, which in the *Jingshi dadian* are described in the traditional form of “punitive expeditions”,<sup>42</sup> are presented in the *Yuan shi* as the result of a very long diplomatic dispute and the exchange of edicts and letters, some of which will be analysed in this paper.

### Stating Qubilai's legitimacy

As soon as he was acclaimed *qayan*<sup>43</sup> and –according to Chinese sources– decided to adhere to the Chinese system of *nianhao* 年號

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<sup>39</sup> Salmon 2011.

<sup>40</sup> Lo Jung-Pang 2012 [1957]: 327-329.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 291-303.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.: 302. The Mongols didn't succeed in integrating Annam into the empire in the same way they incorporated other polities in the North (the Jurchen Jin 金 [1115-1234], Northern Song 北宋 [960-1127] dynasties, etc.), nor to obtain the same cooperation as in the case of Koryŏ. Nevertheless their engagement in Southeast Asia brought important contributions to the development of trade routes and maritime networks, whose influence is to be seen also in later phases of Chinese history. This topic, which has been already analysed in several studies, goes beyond the scope of the present paper. On it see, e.g., Lo Jung-Pang 2012 [1957], Chaffee 2013.

<sup>43</sup> On the title *qayan* see: de Rachewiltz 1983.

(‘reign name’)<sup>44</sup> proclaiming his first reign name (the first year of *zhongtong* 中統 [1260/1]), the Mongol Emperor issued an edict to the ruler of Koryŏ. The edict is included in the *Yuan shi* section on Koryŏ and a part of the text is of particular interest as it represents a statement of Qubilai’s political identity:<sup>45</sup>

我太祖皇帝肇開大業，聖聖相承，代有鴻勳，芟夷羣雄，奄有四海，未嘗專嗜殺也。凡屬國列侯，分茅錫土，傳祚子孫者，不啻萬里，孰非向之勍敵哉。觀乎此，則祖宗之法不待言而章章矣。<sup>46</sup>

Our Grand Progenitor the Emperor (Činggis Qan) founded the Great Enterprise. Sage after sage inherited [it]. Each generation had great merit. [They] eradicated the assembled heroes to possess all within the four seas.<sup>47</sup> We have never merely been fond of killing.<sup>48</sup> Among all the nobles of the vassal states who have been apportioned territories, given lands, and transmitted the throne to their progeny, in more than ten thousand *li*, which among them was not a formidable foe in the past? Considering this, the principles of Our Forefathers are obvious and require no explanation.<sup>49</sup>

Reck correctly points out that many of the elements in this edict refer to a traditional rhetoric of Chinese documents. One example is the reference to the feudal investiture by the Emperor and the consequent subordinate relations of the neighboring countries (and in this case of Koryŏ) to China.<sup>50</sup> Moreover Reck recognises in the structure and classical style of the text the work of the Confucian scholar Wang E 王鶚 (1190-1273),<sup>51</sup> as he finds some similarities

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<sup>44</sup> On the choice of Qubilai’s reign names see: Franke 1978: 26-28.

<sup>45</sup> On the problems concerning the datation of this edict see: Reck 1968 (vol 1): 60.

<sup>46</sup> *Yuan shi* 208: 4610.

<sup>47</sup> This is a quote from the *Shujing* 書經, chap. *da Yu mo* 大禹謨, I, 127, 8, quoted after Reck 1968 (vol. 2): 198 note 125.

<sup>48</sup> This is a quote from Mengzi 孟子, *Lianghuiwang zhangjushang* 梁惠王章句上, I, 47, 5/6. Quoted after Reck 1968 (vol. 2): 198-9 note 126.

<sup>49</sup> This translation is adapted from Reck 1968 (vol.1): 54.

<sup>50</sup> Reck 1968 (vol. 2): 199 note 127 and 128.

<sup>51</sup> For his biography see: *Yuan shi* 160: 3756-7.

with the style of another edict of the fourth month of *zhongtong* preserved in the *Yuan wen lei*.<sup>52</sup>

However, this text presents many similarities also with an edict which was sent to the ruler of Annam Trần Thái Tông 陳太宗 (Chen Rijiong 陳日昷, r. 1226–1258)<sup>53</sup> shortly afterwards, on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January 1261. The text is included both in the *Yuan shi* chapter 209<sup>54</sup> and in the *Annan zhibilie*,<sup>55</sup> with some slight, but significant, discrepancies. The edict reads:

我祖宗以武功創業，文德未修。朕纘承丕緒，鼎新革故，<sup>56</sup> 撫綏萬邦。遂於庚甲歲建元，為中統元年。誕敷詔赦，次第頒行。不泄邇，不忘遠，<sup>57</sup> 誠之所在，事有未遑也。適大理守臣安撫職聶陌丁馳驛表聞爾邦向風慕義之誠，及念卿在先朝已歸款臣附，遠貢方物，故頒詔旨，遣禮部郎中孟甲充安南宣諭使，禮部員外郎李文俊充副使，諭本國官僚、士庶：凡衣冠、典禮、風俗百事，一依本國舊例，不須更改。況高麗國比遣使來請，已經下詔，悉依此例。除戒雲南等處邊將，不得擅興兵甲，侵掠疆場，撓亂人民。卿國官僚士民，各宜安治如故。故茲詔示，念宜知悉。

Our Ancestors started the Imperial Work with military actions, but culture and virtue<sup>58</sup> are still not achieved. We inherited the throne; We

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<sup>52</sup> Reck 1968 (vol. 2): 203 note 155a. There are three edicts by Wang E from the first year of *zhongtong* in the *Yuan wen lei* (9: 1a-3b).

<sup>53</sup> He was of Chinese origin. See: Salmon 2011: 660.

<sup>54</sup> *Yuan shi* 209: 4634-5.

<sup>55</sup> *Zhongtong yuannian shi'eryue chu sanri Shizhu shengde shengong wenwu huangdi zhiyu Annanguo Chen Rijiong zhaohao* 中統元年十二月初三日世祖聖德神功文武皇帝旨諭安南國陳日昷詔. *Annan zhibilie* 2: 46.

<sup>56</sup> The *Zhouyi* 周易, 69, *zagua* 雜卦, Line 16 reports: 革, 去故也; 鼎, 取新也。 “*ge* is to go [out] of the old, *ding* is to embrace the new”. (*Zhouyi suyin* 1995: 89).

<sup>57</sup> This is a quote from Mengzi 孟子, *Lilou xia* 離婁下, 8.20 line 20 (*Mengzi suyin* 1995: 42).

<sup>58</sup> The *Yuan shi* (209: 4634) here has *bua* 化 (‘culture’) instead of *de* 德 (‘virtue’). However the variant of the *Annan zhibilie* seems more appropriate as also in other official communications of Qubilai there is the recourse to the rhetoric of *de* (see below). For the Ming interpretation of the rhetoric of *de* in connection to the Yuan dynasty see: Wang Gungwu 1968: 46.

‘discard the old ways in favour of the new’<sup>59</sup> and soothe the people of the ten thousand reigns. Thereupon We establish in this *gengjia* year [1261] the beginning [of Our reign], as the first year of the reign period *zhongtong*.<sup>60</sup> Through an edict We disposed an amnesty, which should be enforced in every place. So that ‘the near will not be neglected, the distant will not be forgotten’. Where there is truthfulness, there these affairs cannot rest.<sup>61</sup> Now Our defense officer of the land Dali,<sup>62</sup> the Pacification Officer *Niezhimoding* 聶陌丁 [Nejibudin?],<sup>63</sup> has reported to Us via courier, that Your land sincerely wishes to follow the wind,<sup>64</sup> and to admire the righteousness. We recall that You had already submitted under the previous ruler and sent local products as tribute. Therefore We issued an imperial decree, We sent the Director of the Ministry of Rites in the capacity of special appointee for the South, Meng Jia 孟甲,<sup>65</sup> and the Vice-director of the Ministry of Rites Li Wenjun 李文俊<sup>66</sup> as his deputy, to proclaim to the scholars, officials and common people of Your reign that in matters of uniforms and caps, ceremonies and customs everything will remain as before, there will be no change. As in the case of Koryŏ, when they sent envoys to ask [for submission] We already sent an edict. [You] should comply in every aspect with this

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<sup>59</sup> This idea of renovation is an important concept of Qubilai’s rhetoric of foreign relations and it is present also in the Koryŏ section of the *Yuan shi* (208: 4611): 施曠蕩之恩，一新遐邇之化 “If [We] succeeded in bestowing a boundless favor, this is solely the [result] of the transformation [of the relations] between far and near [countries]”. Tr. adapted from Reck 1968 (vol. 1): 56.

<sup>60</sup> Buell explains the choice of this reign name (lit. ‘reign from the center’), as Qubilai’s attempt to connect his reign to an idea of political center of the Mongol Empire. See: Buell 1977: 176 and 306–307 note 14. Franke however doesn’t recognize this connection to Mongol ideology, and reads the choice of this reign name in connection to the ‘Central plain’ (*zhongyuan* 中原), see: Franke 1978: 27.

<sup>61</sup> These two sentences are omitted in the *Yuan shi* (209: 4634).

<sup>62</sup> A Tai-polity in the territory of present-day Yunnan. For an analysis of this region during the Yuan see: Armijo-Hussein 1996: 151ff.

<sup>63</sup> The name is mentioned in Wang Deyi 1979-82: 2499 in another form. There is no further information on this person in the *Yuan shi*.

<sup>64</sup> Sainson translates differently (possibly due to a discrepancy in the text): “Votre royaume se tient prosterné vers le Nord [i.e. China]”, Sainson 1896: 100 and note 6.

<sup>65</sup> There is little information in the *Yuan shi* on this envoy. We know that he was involved in the diplomatic relations with Koryŏ and Japan: *Yuan shi* 208: 4614.

<sup>66</sup> There is no other information on this person in the *Yuan shi*.

example. We have already informed the Yunnan border general that he is not allowed to dispatch the army to invade Your borders and bring chaos among Your people. As for the scholars, officials and common people of Your land, they should be administered by You, my Minister, in peace as before. This is Our order and command, You should know and respect this.<sup>67</sup>

Also in this case, we see a profuse usage of Confucian rhetoric and quotes from the classics. This is not a peculiarity of the case of Koryŏ and Annam, but represents a common practice of the Mongol rulers. As noted by Jackson, they chose specialized personnel with knowledge of the cultural and rhetorical context of the neighbouring countries to compile their diplomatic documents.<sup>68</sup> A similar example can in fact be found in the case of the letter of the Il-Qan Hūlagū (r. 1256-1265) to King Louis IX of France (r. 1226-1270), which contains several references to the Bible.<sup>69</sup>

However these elements of traditional Chinese rhetoric are also mixed with other features, which can be traced back to Mongolian ideology and diplomatic tradition, and which will be discussed below.

### **Činggis Qan as ancestor and law-giver**

The first element of both edicts is the mention of the ancestors as a source of legitimation. This element is not new to the rhetoric of Chinese documents and it has been shown that this concept was common both to Chinese and to Turko-Mongol traditions.<sup>70</sup> However it should be noted that in the case of Koryŏ, with whom the Mongols had had relations since the time of Činggis Qan, the reference is explicitly to the founder of the Mongol Empire (*wo taizu* 我太祖)<sup>71</sup> as the initiator of charismatic rulership, and to the other

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<sup>67</sup> This is a standard formula at the end of Yuan edicts, which probably reflects an original Mongolian phrase. See: Yang Lien-Sheng 1956: 45.

<sup>68</sup> See Jackson 2003: 211-12.

<sup>69</sup> The letter is analysed in Meyvaert 1980 and in Jackson 2005: 182. I am very grateful to Dr. Angus Stewart for bringing these materials to my attention.

<sup>70</sup> Skaff 2012: 112-114.

<sup>71</sup> *wo* 我 ('Ours') is generally used when the Yuan refer to their Mongol origin, as in 我國家 ('Our kingdom', referring to the Mongol Empire). For example in one of



‘sage rulers’ (*sheng* 聖) or ‘law-givers’, following Atwood’s interpretation of the term.<sup>72</sup>

The mention of Činggis Qan and the following rulers can be also found in the *incipit* of later Yuan edicts. One example is an edict from the reign of Tugh Temür (Wenzong 文宗 Emperor, r. 1328-29 and 1329-1332), which is similar to the Koryŏ edict, and starts as follows:

惟昔上天啓我太祖皇帝肇造帝業列聖相承世祖皇帝即大一統即建儲貳<sup>73</sup>

In the past [Our] Grand Progenitor, the Emperor, with the favour of Heaven, started the Imperial Work. The wise rulers carried it on. Shizu unified the [world] and instituted the princes.

This follows the pattern of Mongolian documents, where the emperor states his authority by referring to the actions of previous rulers, and to the genealogical connection to them.<sup>74</sup>

In the context of Annam, on the other hand, we find that the figures of Činggis and of the following rulers are substituted by a more general mention of “the ancestors” (*zu* 祖宗), which is closer to the traditional rhetoric of Chinese documents.

In both cases, however, the figure of the ancestors gives legitimacy to the documents, which are understood by the Mongol rulers not only as diplomatic correspondence, but as proper acts of law.<sup>75</sup>

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the edicts from the *zhongtong* reign (*zhongtong yuannian wuyue she* 中統元年五月赦) we find the expression *woguojia liezu* 我國家烈祖 (“the meritorious ancestors of Our kingdom”), referring to the Mongol *qayans* before Qubilai. See: *Yuan wen lei* 9: 3a

<sup>72</sup> Atwood 2010: 97.

<sup>73</sup> *Jili zhaobao* 即立詔 (8<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1329). *Yuan wen lei* 9: 16b-17a.

<sup>74</sup> A very famous example is in the *Secret History of the Mongols* (*Mongyol-un niyuča tobčyan*, 1252), when Batu says: “By the strength of Eternal Heaven and the good fortune of my uncle the Qa’an, I have destroyed the city of Meget, I have ravaged the Orosut people and brought eleven countries and peoples duly under submission”. See: *Secret History* (tr. de Rachewiltz 2004, vol.1, §275, 206–207). Another example is the edict of Shaolin (1268) issued by Qubilai. The legitimacy of the edict is given through the mention of Činggis and Ögödei (r. 1229-1241) in the sentence: *Činggis qan-u ba qayan-u jrlj-dur* “by the order of Činggis Qans and of the *qayan*” [i.e. Ögödei]. Dobu 1994: 32. Tumurtogoo 2006: 13-14.

<sup>75</sup> In this aspect the Chinese edicts are similar to their Latin counterparts sent to

This is an important concept of Mongolian foreign relations, which is made evident through the usage, in the Chinese sources, of terms like *fa* 法 ('law' or 'principles'), *lifa* 立法 ('legislation'), *dingzhi* 定製 ('to issue an order'), *shengzhi* 聖製 ('Holy Command'), etc. A further example is to be found also in another edict to Annam (July/August 1267) in which the 'Six Affairs'<sup>76</sup> are communicated:

太祖皇帝聖製：凡有歸附之國，君長親朝，子弟入質；編民數，出軍役，輸納稅賦，仍置達魯花赤統治之；以數事以表來附之深誠也。<sup>77</sup>

Holy Command of Our Grand Progenitor the Emperor (Činggis Qan): from the kingdoms which submit to Our authority, the ruler has to come personally to Court,<sup>78</sup> sons and younger brothers should be sent as hostages, a census should be organized, troops should be provided, taxes should be collected,<sup>79</sup> moreover a *daruyaci*<sup>80</sup> should be established to administer [the territory]. To fulfill this list shows the profound righteousness of those who submit to [Our] authority.

These Six Affairs were also proclaimed to the kingdom of Koryŏ, therefore constituting another parallel in the structure of Yuan foreign relations with the two countries:

又太祖法制，凡內屬之國，納質、助軍、輸糧、設驛、編戶籍、置長官，已嘗明論之，而稽延至今，終無成言<sup>81</sup>

Moreover, although the law of [Our] Grand Progenitor, that all the vassal states have to 1) send hostages, 2) provide military assistance, 3) supply

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the West and analysed in detail by Voegelin 2000 [1940–41]: 76-125.

<sup>76</sup> The Six Affairs are mentioned in: Lo Jung-Pang 2012 [1957]: 284, Wang Gungwu 1968: 48.

<sup>77</sup> *Zhiyuan sinian qiye yu Annan zhaobao* 至元四年七月諭安南. *Annan zhibilie* 2: 47.

<sup>78</sup> This was a fundamental prerogative of nomadic vassal relations. See: Paul 2013: 91-92 and note 46.

<sup>79</sup> As a comparison and for further references see the detailed analysis of the census and taxation systems in Armenia under Mongol rule by Bayarsaikhan 2011: 107- 120.

<sup>80</sup> On the office of the *daruyaci* see, e.g., Endicott-West 1989; Buell 1977: 87ff.

<sup>81</sup> *Yuan shi* 208: 4614.

provisions [for the troops], 4) establish post stations, 5) compile a list of households, and 6) establish governors, had been already clearly proclaimed to You, You delayed [in fulfilling this] and even now You still have not been true to Your word.<sup>82</sup>

It is noteworthy that the mention of Činggis Qan is preserved in both edicts, to Koryŏ and to Annam, whereas in later edicts included in the *Annan zhibilüe* the *incipit* refers to ancestors more generally. The Six Affairs constitute the foundation of Yuan foreign relations and one of the main connections to Mongolian diplomatic practice. The figure of Činggis embodies this connection and reinforces the legal value of the Six Affairs, which in the case of Annam are being proclaimed for the first time. Therefore they are ritually pronounced as laws, or “Holy Commands”. In the subsequent edicts to Annam, this institutional aspect is still mentioned at the beginning as a source of legitimation, but it is not the main purpose of the edicts, hence the more general reference to the ancestors.<sup>83</sup> The same edict is also reported in the chapter 209 of the *Yuan shi*, but the figure of Činggis Qan is omitted.<sup>84</sup> However the omission in chapter 209 –and not in chapter 208 on

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<sup>82</sup> Transl. adapted from Reck, 1968 (vol.1): 79. It should be noted that, although the Affairs presented here are also six in number, the requests differ slightly from the ones to Annam. This is a further example of the flexibility and adaptation of Mongolian diplomatic practice. I am thankful to Christopher Atwood for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>83</sup> The mention of the ancestors is to be found in three other edicts, issued mainly to summon the Annam rulers to Court: an edict of the year 1275/6, *Zhiyuan shi`ernian zhibao* 至元十二年詔 (*Annan zhibilüe* 2: 48), another of the year 1281/2, *Zhiyuan shibanian zhibao* 至元十八年詔 (*Annan zhibilüe* 2: 49), and another of the year 1291/2, *Zhiyuan ershibanian yu shizhi Chen* 至元二十八年諭世子陳 (*Annan zhibilüe* 2: 52).

<sup>84</sup> The text reads:未幾，復下詔諭以六事：一，君長親朝；二，子弟入質；三，編民數；四，出軍役；五，輸納稅賦；六，仍置達魯花赤統治之。“Shortly afterwards, [the Emperor] again issued an edict [to proclaim] the Six Affairs: 1) the ruler has to come personally to Court 2) sons and brothers should be sent as hostages 3) a census should be organized 4) troops should be provided 5) taxes should be collected 6) a *daruyaci* should be established to administer [the territory]”. *Yuan shi* 209: 4635.

Koryŏ– is probably just a matter of brevity in the case of the long chapter on Annam.

### **Charisma and good fortune**

Charismatic authority was a main element of both Chinese and Mongolian political ideology, and in the case of Qubilai's rhetoric, we find two distinct references to it. The first one is related to the figure of Činggis Qan and the genealogical transmission of charisma.<sup>85</sup> From this perspective, Qubilai's legitimacy derives from his belonging to the Golden Lineage, and his heritage of the 'good fortune' of Činggis Qan (mong. *su*), thereby following a Mongolian representation of charisma.<sup>86</sup> Allsen has identified a reference to the Mongolian representation of good fortune in the Chinese term *yun* 運 ('fortune', but also 'to revolve').<sup>87</sup> Liu Zehua has analysed the usage of this term as a main element in the political rhetoric of Ming Taizu in the phrase "Serving Heaven and Following Predestination" (奉天承運).<sup>88</sup> As he points out, the term *yun* has a long history in Chinese political thought, one of its aspects being connected to the idea of 'predestination', and specifically to the predestination of the monarch or the founder of a dynasty.<sup>89</sup> In this respect it is relevant to note a connection to the idea of 'responding to time', which is treated as a synonym of 'following

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<sup>85</sup> For the idea of charisma among the Mongols see: Allsen 2009; Skrynnikova 1992/93; Franke 1978: 21-22. For the genealogical transmission of 'good fortune' in the framework of Turkish culture see: Golden 1982 especially: 46.

<sup>86</sup> For a recent survey on this and other elements as the basis of the construction of a Mongolian historical political identity see: Veit 2014.

<sup>87</sup> Allsen 2009: 2.

<sup>88</sup> Liu Zehua 2006: 3-5. See also the recent translation of the work of Liu Zehua by Yuri Pines (2013/2014). I am grateful to Yuri Pines for the reference to Liu Zehua's work and for giving me a copy of his article. The reference to *yun* as an element of the political discourse of Ming Taizu has been analysed also by David Robinson in his paper: "Meeting the Challenges of Memory and Movement: The Ming Court and the Changing Činggisid World", presented at the Conference "New Directions in the Study of the Mongol Empire, Jerusalem, June 29 - Jul 1, 2014. I am grateful to David Robinson for sending me a copy of his paper.

<sup>89</sup> Liu Zehua 2006: 4, Pines 2013/2014: 95.

predestination'.<sup>90</sup> It is exactly this idea of 'timely reaction' that we find in a later Yuan edict:

洪惟太祖皇帝膺期撫運肇開帝業世祖皇帝神機睿略統一四海<sup>91</sup>

Our Grand Progenitor the Emperor (Činggis Qan) reacted to the occasion; he grasped his good fortune and started the dynasty. The Founder of the Generation, the Emperor, [then] unified everything inside the four seas through wise plans and anticipatory strategies.

Moreover it is to note that the term *yun* is used mostly in connection with the figure of Činggis (and not of Qubilai), and it appears even in his posthumous name: *Fatian qiyun shengwu huangdi* 法天啟運聖武皇帝 ('Interpreter of the Heavenly Law, Initiator of the Good Fortune, Venerable and Martial Emperor').<sup>92</sup> Due to this connection with the figure of Činggis, it is plausible that in the Yuan period the term *yun* also came to assume the meaning associated with the Mongol idea of good fortune in a political context.

It should be mentioned that the term also appears, once, in connection with the figure of Qubilai, which is of course due to the fact that he is treated as the initiator of the dynasty.<sup>93</sup> But it is also part of a strategy through which the identity of the Yuan dynasty is constructed by underlying the linkage between Činggis and Qubilai, thereby following a pattern of Mongol ideology. This connection is, then, in the context of Chinese rhetoric, stereotypically represented through the dichotomy of Činggis Qan as a military conqueror and

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<sup>90</sup> Liu Zehua 2006: 4, Pines 2013/2014: 96.

<sup>91</sup> *jili zhaobao* 即立詔 (April/May 1320) *Yuan wen lei* 9: 13b-14a. It is to note that this is an edict for the establishment of Shidebala (Yingzong 英宗 Emperor, r. 1320-1323), showing that the figure of Činggis Qan was still used as a source of legitimation by the Yuan emperors long after Qubilai. See also the example of the aforementioned edict for the establishment of Tugh Temür (see above note 73).

<sup>92</sup> The name *shengwu huangdi* 聖武皇帝 was chosen by Qubilai in 1267. The appellative *fatian qiyun* 法天啟運 was added in 1309 by Haishan Külüg (Wuzong 武宗 Emperor, r. 1307-1311). See: Weiers 2006: 107.

<sup>93</sup> In the stele *chengxiang Huaian Zhongwu Wang bei* 丞相淮安忠武王碑 by Yuan Mingshan 元明善 (1269–1332), see: *Yuan wen lei* 24: 11a-b. The text has been translated by Cleaves, who clearly understands *yun* as 'the fortune [of T'ai-tsu]' (Cleaves 1956: 275). This document is also mentioned in Allsen 2009: 2.

Qubilai as the one who implements culture instead of force, as stated for example at the beginning of the aforementioned edict to Annam.<sup>94</sup>

In the framework of foreign relations, however, rather than to the concept of *yun*, Qubilai refers to the idea of *de* 德 ('virtue' or 'charisma')<sup>95</sup> as the basis of his rule. So for example in an edict to Annam of the 1288/9 we read:

朕君臨萬邦，德威並用。

In order to rule Our vast empire, We use both virtue and force.<sup>96</sup>

This refers to the rhetoric of *de* ('virtue' or 'majesty') as a long-established *topos* at the base of Chinese diplomacy. It is noteworthy that the combination of 'virtue and power' 德威 as the two aspects of a ruler's strategies of government is to be found in many examples of Chinese traditions, as well as in Turko-Mongol ideology.<sup>97</sup> We see therefore how the construction of Qubilai's political identity used two different representations of charisma connected to Inner Asian ideology, but also well known to Chinese tradition.

### **Inclusiveness and the universal empire**

Another common expression of Qubilai's foreign politics is the phrase *yishi tongren* 一視同仁 ('to look on all with equal benevolence') to describe Qubilai's attitude towards foreign lands. This particular expression, which has been identified as a *topos* of the Ming

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<sup>94</sup> For a discussion on this see: Fiaschetti 2014.

<sup>95</sup> The term *de* has assumed different meanings in the history of Chinese thought. For an analysis see: Pines 2002: 58f. See also Skaff 2012: 110.

<sup>96</sup> *Zhiyuan ershiwunian shi'eryue yu Annan shizij zhao* 至元二十五年十二月諭安南世子詔 *Annan zhilüe* 2: 51.

<sup>97</sup> For a brief analysis of the usage of the ideas of *de* 德 ('virtue') and *wei* 威 ('power') see: Wang Gungwu 1968: 43-49. See also Pines 2000: 290-294. Skaff points out that the ideas of bravery and wisdom were fundamental royal attributes also in Turkic ideology. Skaff 2012: 111-112.

representation of foreign relations,<sup>98</sup> is to be found twice in the *waiyi* chapters; in the case of the section on Pagan:

朕矜憫遠來，即使來使覲見，又令縱觀舍利。益詢其所來，乃知王有內附意。國雖云遠，一視同仁。<sup>99</sup>

We exercise compassion in respect of those who come from a distance, and thus when your envoy came, he was given an audience and it was ordered that he be permitted to gaze upon the Buddha relic. I then enquired of him as to the reason for his coming to the Court and it was then that I came to know that your king had the will to come to allegiance. Although your country is distant, We look on all with equal benevolence.<sup>100</sup>

And in the case of Koryō:

朕祇若天命，獲承祖宗休烈，仰惟覆燾，一視同仁，無遐邇小大之間也<sup>101</sup>

We venerate the Mandate of Heaven, [We] inherited the glorious achievements of the Ancestors, looking upward at the overlaying [Heaven], We look on all with the same benevolence, without difference between distant and near, small and big.<sup>102</sup>

In another edict to Annam we find a different representation of this idea:

朕即位以來，薄海內外，親如一家<sup>103</sup>

After We established [Our reign], everything inside and outside the seas is for Us as close as one family.

This last example represents an interesting variation on the common representation of inclusiveness, which is again a *topos* of traditional Chinese rhetoric of political authority.<sup>104</sup> The Yuan emperors, and

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<sup>98</sup> Wade 1997: 139. See also Wang Gungwu 1968: 50-54.

<sup>99</sup> *Yuan shi* 210: 4656.

<sup>100</sup> The translation is by Wade 2009: 33.

<sup>101</sup> *Yuan shi* 208: 4612.

<sup>102</sup> Translation adapted from Reck 1968 (vol.1): 61-62.

<sup>103</sup> *Zhijuan simian zhaobao* 至元四年詔 (year 1267/8). *Annan zhibilie* 2: 47.

<sup>104</sup> On the usage of this idea of inclusiveness in the case of the Ming dynasty see:

Qubilai in particular, adopted this rhetoric, presenting himself as ruler of 'everything within the [four] seas' ([*sz*] *hai z'hinei* [四]海之内). The idea of a world which 'reaches within and outside the seas' (*baohai neiwai* 薄海內外) is a slightly different rendering of this attribute, and probably one closer to the Mongolian *dalai-yin qayan* 'universal' or 'oceanic *qayan*'.<sup>105</sup> In this case, this would be a further example of the mixture of Mongolian and Chinese rhetoric.

### The representation of the Song and the order of submission

Another important element of the aforementioned Yuan edict to Annam is the reference to Koryō as an example of proper behaviour, and to the defeat of the Song as a proof of Mongolian power. The first feature is related to the display of loyalty, a key element in the Mongolian representation of the world, and also in the construction of a social and political hierarchy.<sup>106</sup>

The reference to the Song is likewise to be understood in the context of legitimation: on one hand it is a symbol of the military power of the Mongols in the framework of a 'legitimate war', for example in an edict addressed to the king of Koryō:

今也，普天之下未臣服者，惟爾國與宋耳。宋所恃者長江，而長江失險；所藉者川、廣，而川、廣不支。邊戍自徹其藩籬，大軍已駐乎心腹，鼎魚幕燕，亡在旦夕。<sup>107</sup>

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Wang Gungwu 1968: 54-60.

<sup>105</sup> I am grateful to Hans van Ess for bringing this to my attention. The appellative *dalai-yin qayan* is usually rendered in Chinese as *hainei de huangdi* 海內的皇帝 (Cleaves/Mostaert, 1952: 491-2).

<sup>106</sup> It is well known that the Mongols granted different privileges to their subjects according to their order of submission. See for example Qubilai's statement to the king of Koryō, as translated by Allsen 1983: 247: "You [the Korean monarch] submitted later, therefore [you] are ranked low among the princes (*wang*). During the reign of our T'ai-tsu [Chinggis Khan], the *Idiq qut* was the first to submit, accordingly it was ordered that [he] be ranked first among the princes, Arslan [A-ssu-lan] next submitted, therefore [he] was ranked below him [the *Idiq qut*]. You ought to know this." (汝內附在後，故班諸王下。我太祖時亦都護先附，即令齒諸王上，阿思蘭後附，故班其下，卿宜知之。 *Yuan shi* 7: 128).

<sup>107</sup> *Yuan shi* 208: 4610-4611.



At present in the whole world it is indeed only You and the Song who have not yet submitted [to Us]. The Song lean on the Changjiang 長江 but the Changjiang is not an obstacle anymore. They lean on the (provinces) Chuan 川 and Guang 廣 but Chuan and Guang aren't pillars anymore. The border guards retreat spontaneously from their borders, the imperial army lies already on their chest. As a fish in the offerings bowl, as a swallow in a tent, they will decay between sunrise and sunset.<sup>108</sup>

In the case of Annam, the relation to the Song is directly addressed by Qubilai:

爾嚙臣事亡宋，自揆氣力何如？<sup>109</sup>

You were a loyal subject of the Song. How do you consider [their] force, now that they are defeated?

It also shows Qubilai's awareness of the greater geopolitical context in which he wants to place himself:

且四方諸國，先爾來降者眾矣；在爾後者，惟亡宋，偏師一出，舉國悉平，計爾亦已聞知。[...] 昔爾與宋通好，固所素知；及宋乎之後，所以慕奉之禮，著之載籍，可覆視也。<sup>110</sup>

From all the reigns in the world, many submitted before you [Annam], and after you only the Song were defeated; [We] sent auxiliary forces, and the whole kingdom was pacified. This has been already reported to you in detail. [...] We have known for quite some time that in the past you and the Song had good relations. Even after We destroyed the Song, We could find the records of the ceremonies through which you showed them your reverence and respect.

On the other hand, the Annam ruler openly refers to the Song when refusing the conditions of submission to Qubilai:

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<sup>108</sup> This translation is adapted from Reck 1968 (vol.1): 54.

<sup>109</sup> *Zhijuan ershinunian shi'eryue yu Annan shizji [zhaobao]* 至元二十五年十二月諭安南世子[詔] (Dec. 1288/ Jan. 1289), *Annan zhibilie* 2: 51-52.

<sup>110</sup> *Zhijuan shimunian bayue zhaoyu Annan shizji Chen Rixiong* 至元十五年八月詔諭安南世子陳日暉 (Aug./Sept. 1278), *Annan zhibilie* 2: 49.

*Qubilai's Diplomatic Rhetoric*

竊聞宋主幼小，天子憐之，尚封公爵，於小國亦必加憐。若親朝之禮，予生長深宮，不習乘騎，不諳風土，恐死於道路。子弟太尉以下亦皆然。<sup>111</sup>

I most humbly heard that as the Song ruler [Emperor Gong 恭, r. 1274-76] was still very young, the Son of Heaven took pity on him and granted him the rank of Duke. He should also take pity on our small land. Moreover, regarding the ceremonial protocol, that I must come to court, I was born and grew up in the most remote rooms of the Palace,<sup>112</sup> and therefore I am not able to ride a horse. I don't know the land and the customs well and I am afraid to die on the road. It is the same for my younger relatives and my officials, starting from the one in charge of the military affairs."

In both cases, the reference to the Song is used as a statement of identity: in the case of the Mongol Yuan dynasty, to construct its political legitimacy, but also to establish a hierarchy of foreign relations based on the order of submission. From the side of the king of Annam, however, the request to be treated like the Song ruler is used to put himself in a precise context of foreign relations with the Song, and therefore as a statement toward the Mongol dynasty.

## Conclusion

On the basis of these few examples we can conclude that the diplomatic rhetoric of Qubilai shows his awareness of his double role as Mongol *qayan* and Chinese Emperor (*huangdi* 皇帝), by using metaphors of power relating both to Mongol tradition and to the Confucian context. The influence of Confucianism is more evident in the framework of the Yuan-Annam relations than in the communication with the kingdom of Koryŏ, in which case more explicit references to elements of Mongolian ideology are preserved. This flexibility of diplomatic rhetoric is due to the differing historical relations with the two kingdoms, and it shows the Mongol rulers' ability to adapt to the cultural context of the submitted people.

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<sup>111</sup> *Yuan shi* 209: 4639.

<sup>112</sup> This is a reference to the *Hanshu* (Ban Gu 班固, *Hanshu* 漢書, Repr. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975). See *Hanshu* 53: 2436.

Furthermore, Confucian rhetoric constitutes a sort of common language of communication between non-Han identities, and a way to express concepts of loyalty, disloyalty and legitimation. The encounter with Chinese culture therefore represented both an occasion of innovation as well as a challenge for the Mongols. In fact, in the case of the Yuan, it led to what Dardess has defined as ‘Confucianization’,<sup>113</sup> where in the case of the Annam rulers it was used as a statement of loyalty to the Song dynasty and their identification with the context they represented. The usage of Confucian rhetoric was therefore a fundamental strategy of legitimation in the eyes of the sinic world, which was accustomed to having relations with the Song dynasty. However the strong connection to Mongol ideology and traditions is still evident during the reign of Qubilai, who follows a long-established pattern of diplomacy based on a formal acknowledgment and fostering of charismatic rulership through the Six Affairs. Moreover the presence of some of the motifs related to the figure of Činggis Qan in later documents shows that Yuan sources are the product of the reciprocal influence of Mongolian and Chinese traditions, and they show how the Yuan experience not only brought innovations in the social, political, administrative organization of thirteenth and fourteenth century China, but also changed the way of describing and narrating that world.

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<sup>113</sup> Dardess 1973: 3. See also the discussion on other periods of non-Han ruler in Mote 1999: 378-89.

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