

Dai Matsui
(Osaka University)

Uigur Migrations in Eastern Mongol Eurasia

The Turkic Uigurs, who had been based in the northeastern corner of the East Turkestan (modern Xinjiang), came under the Mongol dominion in the early thirteenth century, to serve the Mongol rulers as administrative officers or cultural advisors. Throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Uigurs enjoyed prosperity as constituents of the ruling stratum and broadened their sphere of activities along with the Mongol expansion. Such their activities are known from the historical source materials in Chinese and Persian, as well as the Old Uigur texts unearthed from the Turfan region of the East Turkestan or and the Dunhuang Buddhist caves.

In this paper, I would briefly overview those sources providing fundamental information on the Uigur migrations in the eastern half of Mongol Eurasia. Furthermore, I would introduce some result of my fieldwork on the Uigur wall inscriptions at the Buddhist sanctuary sites in Xinjiang, Gansu and Inner Mongolia, to display new data on various aspects of their Buddhist (and Christian) pilgrimages or religious migrations: the pilgrimage ranges; practices at the religious sanctuaries; influence of the Tibetan Buddhism and other cults; cultural contact with Buddhist Mongols; relation to the administrations and commercial activities, etc.