

Islam and Buddhism in Mongol-ruled Hexi

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Qubilai Khan's third son, Manggala (忙哥剌 d. 1278) received from his father the title Anxi Wang in 1272. He ruled over North West China, including Hexi, the former Tangut land, and sources show that he was tolerant to a variety of religions. His son Ananda (阿難答 d. 1307), inherited most of his father's territory and the title of Anxi Wang. Both Manggala and Ananda were born Buddhists; they ruled over a region that was deeply Buddhist in the pre-Mongol period, and yet they were influenced by the Muslims who lived in their territory.

According to the Persian sources, in 1295 Ananda embraced Islam and his conversion allegedly led to the Islamization of about 150,000 soldiers, the majority of his troops.

The poster examines Manggala's and Ananda's relations with the various religions prevalent in their realm, focusing on Ananda's conversion and its impact on this primarily Buddhist region. It highlights the influence of the pre-Mongol Muslim community and the Muslim migrations – both forced and voluntary -during the United Mongol Empire period. It also refers to the impact Ananda's Islamization had on his chances to succeed Temür Oljeitu (r. 1294-1307) on the Yuan throne.