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Edited by
Noël GOLVERS
Sara LIEVENS



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HEAVEN, EARTH AND THE MONGOLS IN THE TIME OF ČINGGIS QAN AND HIS IMMEDIATE SUCCESSORS (ca. 1160-1260) – A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION*

Igor de Rachewiltz

Abbreviations

ar.	=	Arabic	mo.	=	Written (Script) Mongolian
chin.	=	Chinese	pers.	=	Persian
eng.	=	English	pmo.	=	Preclassical Mongolian
lat.	=	Latin	tu.	=	Old Turkic
mmo.	=	Middle Mongolian			

The religious beliefs of the 'steppe' Mongols in the 12th-13th century, i.e. before a large number of them settled in their vast dominions in Western and Central Asia, and in China, have so far not been the subject of a thorough, in-depth investigation.¹ The reason is that for a comprehensive survey it would be necessary to collect data scattered in a large number of sources (Mongol, Chinese, Persian, Armenian and Latin) requiring close scrutiny and much interpretation. In the present paper I shall only deal with the conception of Heaven (*Tengri*) and Earth (*Γaġar*, *Etügen* ~ *Ötögen*) as held by Činggis Qan (? 1162-1227) and his three immediate successors, viz. Ögödei (r. 1229-41), Güyüg (1246-48) and Möngke (1251-59).²

* For assistance in obtaining source material not available in Canberra I am much obliged to my friends John R. Krueger of Bloomington, Indiana, and Yüan-Chu Lam of Wellesley College, Mass. I wish to express my sincere thanks also to the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome, and the late Professor Mario Gout for supplying new photographs of the letter of Güyüg to Pope Innocent IV, and for the kind permission to publish them.

¹ Cf., e.g., W. Heissig, *The Religions of Mongolia*, translated by G. Samuel (London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), pp. 6-23, devoted to a brief and rather unsatisfactory survey of Mongol shamanism from the 12th and 13th centuries to modern times; and P. Ratchnevsky, *Činggis-khan. Sein Leben und Wirken* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner Verlag, 1983), pp. 137-142. See the English translation by Th. N. Haining: *Genghis Khan. His Life and Legacy* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991) [ČK], pp. 154-159. Ratchnevsky presents a perceptive sketch of Činggis' religious beliefs as an important facet and integral part of his personality and behaviour without, however, elaborating the subject. See also below, n. 75, for further studies.

² For the concept of Heaven among the early Mongols see the references contained in J.-P. Roux, "Tängri. Essai sur le ciel-dieu des peuples altaïques", *Revue*

In the case of Činggis Qan we have two important contemporary sources. The so-called *Secret History of the Mongols* (*Mongqol-un ni'uča tobčiyān*) [*MNT*], a native epic chronicle mostly devoted to the life and gesta of the conqueror, compiled soon after his death, is of course a document of prime importance.³ There is also a short Chinese account of the Mongols and their customs written in 1221 by the Southern Sung envoy Chao Hung 趙珙, who was charged with an official mission to Muqali (1170-1223),⁴ the Mongol commander-in-chief and governor general in North China. His report, entitled *Meng-Ta pei-lu* 蒙韃備錄 [*A Full Account of the Mongol-Tatars*] [*MTPL*], is a collection of brief notices on various aspects of Mongol life, culture and personalities based on information gathered during Chao Hung's stay in Peking from Chinese-speaking members of Muqali's entourage. Although much of the information is thus second-hand, the account as a whole is still a valuable source.⁵

de l'histoire des religions 150 (1956), pp. 49-82, 197-230; 150: 1956, 27-54, 173-212 – mostly devoted to the beliefs of the ancient Turks, and at times quite unreliable. Of more immediate relevance is M.-L. Beffa, "Le concept de *tānggāri*, 'ciel', dans l'*Histoire secrète des Mongols*", *Etudes mongoles et sibériennes* 24 (1993), pp. 215-236, and M.-L. Beffa & R. Hamayon, "The Concept of *Tānggāri* in the Secret History of the Mongols", in Š. Bira (ed.), *Mongolyn Nuuc Tovčoo'-ny 750 žilīin Oid Zoriulsan Olon Ulsyn Baga Xural*, I (Ulan Bator: Institute of History, Mongolian Academy of Sciences, 1995), pp. 185-194; and J. Fletcher, "The Mongols: Ecological and Social Perspectives", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 46 (1986), pp. 30-32. For the general literature on the subject see *The Secret History of the Mongols. A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*, translated with a historical and philological commentary by Igor de Rachewiltz (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2004, 2006) [*SHM(R)*], pp. 225-226; Fletcher, "The Mongols", p. 31, n. 13. On Etügen ~ Ötögen see the literature cited in *SHM(R)*, pp. 430-431, n. 113; and below, II.

³ See *The Secret History of the Mongols For the First Time Done into English out of the Original Tongue and Provided with an Exegetical Commentary* by Francis Woodman Cleaves, I (Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard University Press, 1982) [*SHM(C)*], and *SHM(R)*.

⁴ For this important personage see I. de Rachewiltz, Hok-lam Chan, Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing and P.W. Geier, eds, *In the Service of the Khan. Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period (1200-1300)*, *Asiatische Forschungen* 121 (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1993) [*ISK*], pp.3-8.

⁵ On the *MTPL* see P. Pelliot, "L'édition collective des oeuvres de Wang Kouo-wei", *T'oung Pao* 26 (1929), pp. 165-167. There are three modern translations of Chao's work into Western languages: 1) *Mên-da bê-lu* ("Polnoe opisaniie Mongolo-Tatar"). *Faksimile ksilografa, perevod s kitaiskogo, vvedenie, kommentarii i prilozheniya*, by N.C. Munkuev (Moscow: "Nauka", 1975); 2) *Meng-Ta pei-lu und Hei-Ta shih-lüeh. Chinesische Gesandtenberichte über die frühen Mongolen 1221 und 1237*, by E. Haenisch, Yao Ts'ung-wu, P. Olbricht and E. Pinks, edited by W. Banck, *Asiatische Forschungen* 56 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1980), pp. 1-84; 3)

Of the two leading Persian sources, Juvainī's *Ta'riḫ-i Jahān-Guṣāi* [*History of the World-Conqueror*] and Rašīd al-Dīn's *Jāmi' al-tavāriḫ* [*Collection of Chronicles*], the former was written some thirty years after Činggis' death, and the latter (i.e. the section concerned with the conqueror's life) about seventy years after his death. Rašīd al-Dīn (ca. 1247-1317) had access to early Mongol sources that were not available to Juvainī (? 1226-83), but Juvainī had the advantage of having lived much closer to the events he describes and, in many instances, having been an eye-witness. Discounting certain obvious biases and omissions in his work both sources are of immense value to the historian.⁶

For Ögödei Qayan, beside the relevant sections in the *MNT*, *HWC* and *CC*, there is a Chinese source of prime importance, viz. the *Hei-Ta shih-lüeh* 黑韃事略 [*A Summary of Matters (Relating to) the Black Tatars*] [*HTSL*] by the Sung envoy P'eng Ta-ya 彭大雅, who carried out a diplomatic mission to the Mongol court in 1232, with additional notes by another Sung envoy, Hsü T'ing 徐霆, who went to the Mongols on an analogous mission in 1235-36. The latter is responsible for the final editing of the text (in 1237) as we have it today. His valuable comments enrich P'eng's informative notices on numerous aspects of the government, customs, and the material and spiritual life of the Mongols. The topical arrangement is similar to that of the *MTPL*. It is a precious source.⁷

Wang Kuo-wei 王國維 of Hai-ning 海甯, *Meng-Ta Pei-lu Chien-cheng* 蒙韃備錄箋證 (*The Meng-Tai Pei-lu With Notes*), by F.W. Cleaves, 1954 (unpublished). This is Cleaves' translation of the critical and annotated edition of the *MTPL* by the great Chinese scholar Wang Kuo-wei (1877-1927; see Pelliot, *loc. cit.*) done, however, on the text published in *Hai-ning Wang Ching-an hsien-sheng i-shu* 海寧王靜安先生遺書, edited by Lo Chen-yü 羅振玉 (Shanghai, 1940), ts'e 37. Cf. D. Curtis Wright, "The Papers of Professor Francis Woodman Cleaves (1911-1995)", *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 28 (1998), p. 290. In the present article references to the *MTPL* are to this edition and to the German translation [*CG*].

⁶ Juvainī's work has been translated into English by J.A. Boyle: *The History of the World-Conqueror* by 'Ala-ad-Din 'Ata-Malik Juvaini, I-II (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958) [*HWC*]. Rašīd al-Dīn's history of Činggis Qan and his ancestors, which is Part 2 of Volume I of the *Collection of Chronicles*, is available in two Russian versions published in 1888 and 1952 respectively (see *HWC*, p. xliv), and in the recent English translation of W.M. Thackston: *Rashiduddin Fazlullah, Jami'u't-tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles*, I-III (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1998-99), II [*CC*].

⁷ On the *HTSL* see Pelliot 1929, pp. 167-169. It is known that N.C. Munkuev completed his annotated translation of the *HTSL* before his death in 1985; however, its present whereabouts are unknown. The German translation by E. Haenisch *et al.*, richly annotated, is found in *CG*, pp. 85-226. Cleaves' English translation of the *HTSL* is also unpublished. See Wright 1998, p. 289. As for the *HTSL*, references to the original Chinese text are to the critical edition by Wang Kuo-wei, *op.cit.*, ts'e 37, and to *CG*.

For Güyüg Qayan we are served even better. Beside the relevant sections of *HWC* and *CC*, we have the report on the Mongols (*Historia Mongalorum*) by the Franciscan friar John of Pian di Carpine (d. 1252) who went on a mission to Güyüg's court in 1245-47.⁸ His mission elicited a reply from Güyüg to Pope Innocent IV, written in Persian in November 1246 and sealed (twice) with the imperial seal; there is a Latin version of the text. All these documents contain important information relevant to our enquiry.⁹

As for Güyüg's successor Möngke Qayan, we are truly fortunate: not only do we have the accounts in *HWC* and *CC* as with the previous qans, but we also possess the exhaustive relation of Friar John's Flemish confrère William of Rubruck, whose eventful journey to the Mongol court and back (1253-55) is recorded in his *Itinerarium*. This, a detailed report for King Louis IX of France (St. Louis), is a true mine of information on the Mongols; for wealth of data and ac-

⁸ For Rašīd al-Dīn see also *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, translated from the Persian of Rashīd al-Dīn by J.A. Boyle (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971) [SGK], which covers the reigns of Ögödei to Qubilai (inclusive). On Friar John and his report see now Giovanni di Pian di Carpine, *Storia dei Mongoli*, a cura di P. Daffinà, C. Leonardi, M.C. Lungarotti, E. Menestò, L. Petech (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1989) [SM]. Regarding the parallel account of Friar John's companion Benedict the Pole edited by C. de Bridia, i.e. the *Historia Tartarorum* or *Tartar Relation*, I have not referred to it since it does not offer anything new to our investigation. See R.A. Skelton, Th. E. Marston, G.D. Painter, *The Vinland Map and the Tartar Relation* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1965), pp. 54-101 (Latin text and English translation by G.D. Painter). Constant references to it are found in P. Daffinà's commentary to *SM*.

⁹ For a photo-reproduction of the famous letter of Güyüg to Innocent IV see Pl. I-V. For an English translation by my late friend John Andrew Boyle see I. de Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khans* (London: Faber & Faber, 1971) [PE], pp. 213-214. Cf. P. Pelliot, *Les Mongols et la Papauté* (reprint in one volume of articles which appeared in the *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 23 (1922), 24 (1924) and 28 (1931), Paris, 1923 [1931]) [MP], pp. 14-21. On the Latin version of the letter see *ibid.*, pp. 11-12; and E. Voegelin's ground-breaking study "The Mongol Orders of Submission to European Powers, 1245-1255", *Byzantion. International Journal of Byzantine Studies* 15 (1940-41), pp. 386-388. For the legend of Güyüg's seal see *MP*, pp. 22-25; A. Mostaert et F.W. Cleaves, "Trois documents mongols des Archives Secrètes Vaticanes", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 15 (1952), pp. 485-495; I. de Rachewiltz, "Qan, Qa'an and the Seal of Güyüg", in K. Sagaster, M. Weiers (eds), *Documenta Barbarorum. Festschrift für Walther Heissig zum 70. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1983), pp. 272-281. Furthermore, we have the texts (in Latin) of a letter from the Mongol commander Baiju Noyan to Pope Innocent IV brought back by the Dominican Friar Ascelin (1247) together with a letter from Güyüg to Baiju of the same year, as well as of an earlier letter of the Mongol commander Eljigidei to King Louis IX of France (1245). See *MP*, pp. 118ff., 127-129; Voegelin 1940-41, pp. 388-390.

curacy it far surpasses the *Historia Mongalorum* as well as Marco Polo's account.¹⁰

To the above sources we must add for the period in question:

1. The relevant chapters of the standard history of the Mongol dynasty, the *Yüan-shih* 元史 [*History of the Yüan (Dynasty)*], the *Hsi-yu chi* 西遊記 [*Account of a Journey to the West*] by Li Chih-ch'ang 李志常 (1193-1256), which narrates the famous journey of the Taoist patriarch Ch'iu Ch'u-chi 丘處機 (1148-1227), alias Ch'ang-ch'un 長春, from China to Afghanistan and back (1221-4); and other Chinese works like the *Sheng-wu ch'in-cheng lu* 聖武親征錄 [*Record of the Personal Campaigns of the Holy and Martial (Emperor, i.e. Činggis Qan)*], which derive from contemporary or almost contemporary sources.¹¹
2. Epigraphical material such as imperial edicts and various rescripts issued by the Mongol court, and the already mentioned legend on the imperial seal.¹²

¹⁰ See *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck. His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke 1253-1255*, translated by Peter Jackson. Introduction, notes and appendices by Peter Jackson with David Morgan (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1990) [MFW]; C. Dawson (ed.), *The Mongol Mission. Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, translated by a nun of Stanbrook Abbey (London and New York: Sheed and Werd, 1955) [TMM], pp. 89-220. For the Latin text of the *Itinerarium* see A. Van den Wyngaert O.F.M. (ed.), *Sinica Franciscana I. Itinera et relationes Fratrum Minorum saeculi XIII et XIV* (Quaracchi-Firenze: Collegio S. Bonaventura, 1929) [SF], pp. 164-332. We possess also the text of a letter by the Regent Oyuł Qaimiš entrusted to King Louis' envoy Andrew of Longjumeau (1251), and that of the letter of Möngke to King Louis (1254). See *MP*, p. 213ff.; Voegelin 1940-41, pp. 390-391. The text of Möngke's letter is found in William of Rubruck's *Itinerarium* (SF, pp. 307-309). Cf. Voegelin 1940-41, pp. 391-392; *MFW*, pp. 248-250.

¹¹ For the *Yüan-shih*, references are to the Chung-hua shu-chü 中華書局 edition (Peking, 1976) [YS]; for the *Hsi-yu chi*, to the critical edition by Wang Kuo-wei, *op.cit.*, ts'e 39 [HYC], and the English translation by A. Waley, *The Travels of an Alchemist. The Journey of the Taoist Ch'ang-ch'un from China to the Hindukush at the Summons of Chingiz Khan Recorded by His Disciple Li Chih-ch'ang* (London: G. Routledge & Sons, 1931) [TA]; for the *Sheng-wu ch'in-cheng lu*, to the critical edition by Wang Kuo-wei, *op.cit.*, ts'e 38 [SWCCL]. For an annotated translation of sections I-XXI (= SWCCL, 1a-27b) see P. Pelliot et L. Hambis, tr. & ann., *Histoire des campagnes de Gengis Khan. Cheng-wou ts'in-tcheng lou*, I (Leiden: Brill, 1951) [HCG].

¹² See Ed. Chavannes, "Inscriptions et pièces de chancellerie chinoises de l'époque mongole", *T'oung Pao* 5 (1904), pp. 357-447; 6 (1905), pp. 1-42; 9 (1908), pp. 297-428; Ts'ai Mei-p'iao 蔡美彪, *Yüan-tai pai-hua-pei chi-lu* 元代白話碑集錄 [*Collection of Inscriptions in the Vernacular of the Yüan Period*] (Peking: K'o-hsüeh ch'u-p'an-she 科學出版社, 1955) [YTPHPL]; and Iriya Yoshitaka 入矢義高 in *Tōhō Ga-*

Undoubtedly, some additional information may be found in the works of other Persian authors such as Jūzjānī, and in Chinese sources such as the surviving texts of funerary inscriptions (*shen-tao pei* 神道碑, etc.). However, for the purpose of our preliminary inquiry the above sources may be deemed sufficient.

The information on the early Mongol rulers' concept of Heaven and Earth obtained from the sources listed above has led to certain conclusions which are summarized below. Even though the picture may not be complete, insofar as Heaven is concerned I think we can feel reasonably confident that it reflects the true state of beliefs *at the time*.

We should point out at the outset that, as with other peoples and cultures, the Mongols used the word 'heaven' to designate also the physical heaven, i.e. the sky, as well as the supreme power identified with it, even though they had another term for 'sky' (pmo. *oytorju[i]*; mmo. *hoqtorqu[i]*; mo. *oytarju[i]*).¹³ Since we are concerned here only with Heaven as a supernatural entity, we have not taken the firmament into consideration. When *specifically* referring to Heaven and Earth regarded as supernatural entities, the Mongol terms are capitalized.

I. Heaven

1. The Name of Heaven

The name of Heaven as it appears in the earliest native source, the *Secret History of the Mongols*, is *Tenggeri* ~ *Tenggiri*, which represents the Middle Mongolian pronunciation of the word written *tngrī* (= *tengri*) in

kuhō 東方學報 (*Journal of Oriental Studies*) 26 (1956), pp. 186-228, for a critical review of Ts'ai's contribution. For the legend of Güyüg's seal see above, n. 9.

¹³ For this word see I. de Rachewiltz, "Some Remarks on Written Mongolian", in Chang Chün-I 張駿逸 (ed.), *International Symposium on Mongolian Culture* (Taipei: Meng Tsang Wei-yüan-hui 蒙藏委員會, 1993), pp. 123-136; *SHM(R)*, p. 412. According to N. Poppe, in Middle Mongolian the word *dēngri* or *teŋri* did not denote the sky or firmament over the earth. Sky in the primary sense of the word is denoted by the word *kōke*, corresponding to the Turkic *kök*, as, for example, in the Dictionary *Mukaddimat al Adab* (*The Mongolian Monuments in kP'ags-pa Script*, second edition translated and edited by John R. Krueger, *Göttinger Asiatische Forschungen* 8 [Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1957] [*MM*], p. 69). Poppe ignores mmo. *hoqtorqu(i)*, and the fact that the word *kōke* 'sky' in the *Mukaddimat al-Adab* is simply an isolated borrowing from Turkic, the regular meaning of the word in Middle Mongolian being 'blue'. For tu. *kök* 'sky', see G. Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen*, I-IV (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner Verlag, 1963-75) [*TMEN*], II, pp. 578-579.

Uighur-Mongol script, i.e. in Preclassical Mongolian. It is, of course, the same word as tu. *tāngri* 'the physical sky; the deified sky: Heaven as an impersonal deity'. Much has been written on this word and its possible etymology, and we need not go into it.¹⁴ In Classical and Modern Literary Mongolian we find the two forms *tngrī* and *tegrī*, of which the former is, strictly speaking, the only correct one, the latter being a misreading of *tngrī* (the letter *n* read as *e*) consecrated by usage or, rather, misusage.¹⁵

2. The Attributes of Heaven

i. Above or On High (mmo. *de'ere*; pmo., mo. *degere*), to be understood also as Supreme, of course, by being above us and being all-encompassing. Cf. tu. *üzä tāngri* 'heaven on high' (*ED*, p. 280b) – definitely a supreme power since it 'decreed' (*yarliqadī*); chin. *shang-t'ien* 上天 'supreme Heaven'.¹⁶ The *MNT*, § 1, opens with a mention of *de'ere Tenggeri*, glossed in Chinese as *shang-t'ien*; the same expression occurring again in §§ 177, 199. In the first instance, it is associated with the decreeing or pre-ordaining of destiny (*jaya'a*, see below, 3.i); in the other two, with the bestowing of 'protection' (*ihe'el*, see below, 3.ii). In § 177, Heaven is mentioned jointly with Earth (*Qajar*); and another key expression, *medetigei* ('let [them] decide!'), is applied to both powers. Interestingly enough, for the period under investigation the designation Above or On High for Heaven, so common in Old Turkic texts, is virtually lim-

¹⁴ See *TMEN*, no. 944 (and the numerous references contained therein); L. Ligeti in *AOH* 1 (1950), pp. 168; 14 (1962), pp. 68; 18 (1965), pp. 267-269; G. Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth Century Turkish* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972) [*ED*], pp. 523b-524a; *SHM(R)*, p. 226.

¹⁵ E.g., in O. Kovalevskii's *Mongol'skaya khrestomatiya*, I-II (Kazan, 1836-37), p. 576a (Index), the form *tegrī* (*tēgri*) is the only one used. Cf. J.É. Kowalewski, *Dictionnaire mongol-russe-français*, I-III (Kazan, 1844-49) [*DM*], p. 1763b (*tegrī*, *tengri*); M. Haldot et al., *Mongol-English Practical Dictionary with English Word Reference List* ([Hong Kong]: Evangelical Alliance Mission, 1949-53), p. 409b; F. Lessing, gen. ed., *Mongolian-English Dictionary*, corrected re-printing (Bloomington, Ind.: The Mongolia Society, Inc., 1982), p. 809b (*tngrī* = *tenggeri*, *tegrī* [no mention of *tengri*] – I.R.J.). For the word *tengri* in the modern Mongolian dialects see N. Poppe, *Introduction to Mongolian Comparative Studies* (Helsinki: Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura, 1955), p. 46. For *tenggeri* ~ *tenggiri* (*e* ~ *i* in the second syllable) see A. Mostaert, "Quelques problèmes phonétiques dans la transcription en caractères chinois du texte Mongol du *Iuen tch'ao pi cheu*", edited by I. de Rachewiltz and P.W. Geier, in K. Sagaster, ed., *Antoine Mostaert (1881-1971) C.I.C.M. Missionary and Scholar*, I-II, *Louvain Chinese Studies* 4 (Leuven: F. Verbiest Foundation, 1999), II, p. 268.

¹⁶ J. Legge (tr.), *The Doctrine of the Mean in The Chinese Classics*, I-VII, second edition, revised (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1893), I, p. 433 (6).

ited to the above three instances in the *MNT* – a text which by and large reflects the spiritual culture and beliefs of the Mongols in the 12th century. In those texts which reflect their attitude to Heaven in the first half of the 13th century, the standard designation is *möngke*, i.e. the Eternal (see below, ii). One may then wonder whether *de'ere* (= tu. *üzä*) is not the remnant of an ancient cultural borrowing from the shamanistic Turks of Mongolia. There is no doubt, however, that the concept of Heaven Above was still alive among the Mongols in the second half of the 14th century.¹⁷

ii. Eternal or Everlasting (mmo. *möngke*; pmo. *möngke*; mo. *möngke*). This is the most frequent epithet of Heaven – indeed a formulaic one – in sources of the period. Eternal Heaven is mentioned thirteen times in the *MNT* as 1) granting protection: §§ 187, 203, 256, 265; 2) granting Fortune and success: § 208; 3) a source of strength: §§ 199, 224, 267, 275; 4) the One who decides: §§ 172, 265; 5) the One who decrees: § 244; 6) the One to whom one prays for success in war: § 240. As noted by previous investigators, the numerous imperial edicts and 'orders of submission' issued by Činggis Qan's successors regularly mention Eternal Heaven in a standard 'opening formula' (the so-called *invocatio*) containing a specific reference to Heaven's 'strength' (mmo. *gücü[n]*; pmo., mo. *kücü[n]*): *möngke Tngri-yin kücün-dür* 'By the strength of Eternal Heaven', thus using the identical phraseology of the *MNT*, § 275: *möngke Tenggeri-yin gücüntür*. The full formula contains also the words *Qayan-u suu-dür* '(and) by the Good Fortune of the Emperor'. In this form it is first mentioned by P'eng Ta-ya in the *HTSL*, where (11a) we read: 'Their (i.e. the Mongols') constant expression is "Relying on (= by) the strength of Eternal Heaven and the Good Fortune of the Emperor" (托着長生天底氣力皇帝福蔭)'.¹⁸ The first (and most important)

¹⁷ The expression *de'ere Tenggeri* appears four times in another famous Middle Mongolian text, the *Hua-i i-yü* 華夷譯語 or *Sino-Foreign (= Mongol) Vocabulary* of 1389, three times in documents which are translations of Chinese originals, and once in a petition addressed to the Ming court by Mongol chiefs, the original of which was in Mongolian. See A. Mostaert, *Le matériel mongol du Houa i i yü* 華夷譯語 de Houng-ou (1389), I, édité par I. de Rachewiltz avec l'assistance de A. Schönbaum, *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 18 (Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1977) [LMM I], pp. 2 (1r4), 4 (13r4), 6 (19v4); 8 (1r4). The expression *shang-t'ien* 上天 is found in the initial formula *shang-t'ien chüan-ming* 上天眷命 'Auguste édit de l'Empereur qui règne par le mandat bienveillant du Ciel souverain' (Chavannes 1908, p. 313 *et passim*) which occurs frequently in the imperial edicts of the Yüan written in Classical Chinese. However, this formula is purely Chinese and cannot be taken into account in our discussion. The same may be said for the expression *shang-t'ien chih ming* 上天之命 'the mandate of Heaven Above' in Qubilai's proclamation on his enthronement on 15 May 1260. See *YS* 4, 64 (*in fine*).

¹⁸ See *CG*, p. 141. In some of the later edicts we find some variations in the phraseology of the second element of the initial formula. See F.W. Cleaves, "The Mongolian Monuments in the Musée de Téhéran", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*

half of the formula opens the legend on Güyüg's seal (lines 1-2), the content of which is itself an order of submission: (1) *möngke Tngri-yin* (2) *kücündür yeke Mongyol* (3) *ulus-un dalai-yin* (4) *qanu jrly il bulya* (5) *irgen-dür kairbesü* (6) *büsiwetüüi ayutrayai* 'By the strength of Eternal Heaven, Order of the ruler of the Great Mongol Nation and of [all within] the seas (= the whole world). When it (i.e. the Order) reaches the subject and the rebel (= not yet submitted) people, let them respect and fear it!¹⁹ In the text of the very letter to which the seal is affixed, the 'strength of (Eternal) Heaven' is referred to twice, 'the order of Heaven' six times, and 'Eternal Heaven' and 'Heaven' *tout court* three times.²⁰ For the period with which we are concerned, besides the above two documents, the Latin version of Güyüg's letter, and other official communications from the Mongol authorities to the Papacy (also in their Latin translations) containing the *invocatio*, the texts of at least nine documents have survived which contain the same full or partial formula in its Chinese version.²¹ Many more are extant in both Mongolian (in 'Phags-pa script) and Chinese dating from the period of Qubilai Qayan (r. 1260-94) to the end of the Yüan dynasty, the last one being issued in 1363,²² as

16 (1953), pp. 23, 44, n. 6. The Chinese expression *fu-yin* 福蔭 (蔭) is usually taken as a binome meaning simply 'Fortune' or 'Good Fortune'; however, the literal meaning of this expression is actually 'Good Fortune (and) Protection', or 'Fortunate Protection' (protection bienheureuse). Cf. A. Mostaert et F.W. Cleaves, *Les Lettres de 1289 et 1305 des ilkhan Arjun et Öljeitü à Philippe le Bel* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962) [LAÖ], pp. 21-22; Chavannes 1908, pp. 369, 373, 376. I think that this expression was coined for the express purpose of rendering the two concepts *impliciti* in the Mongol term *su(u)*, and to translate it simply as '(Good) Fortune' diminishes its force.

¹⁹ Cf. Mostaert et Cleaves 1952, pp. 485-495; de Rachewiltz 1983, pp. 274-276.

²⁰ Cf. *MP*, pp. 16-21; Boyle in *PE*, pp. 213-214.

²¹ I.e., in the Chinese vernacular (*pai-hua* 白話) employed by the Mongol chancellery. See *YTPHPCL*, nos. 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19; *fu-lu* 附錄 1, no. 3; Chavannes 1904, nos. 5, 6; 1908, no. 40. For the Latin version of Güyüg's letter and the other documents in Latin see above, n. 9.

²² See *YTPHPCL*, pp. 21 (no. 20)-97 (no. 93); *fu-lu* 1, nos. 4, 5, 8; *fu-lu* 2, nos. 4, 5; Iriya 1956, pp. 225-226; Chavannes 1904, nos. 7, 9, 10, 13; 1905, p. 40; 1908, nos. 41-44, 46-47, 50, 52, 54-55, 57-58; G. Devéria, "Notes d'épigraphie mongole-chinoise", *Journal Asiatique* 8 (1896), pp. 396 (no. 3), 441 (no. 5); *MM*, Texts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; E. Haenisch, *Steuergerechsamkeit der chinesischen Klöster unter der Mongolenherrschaft* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1940), pp. 58, 59, 60 (cf. *MM*, p. 137); P. Pelliot, "Un rescrit mongol en écriture 'phags-pa'", in G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, I-II (Roma: Libreria dello Stato, 1949), II, p. 623; L. Ligeti, *Monuments en écriture 'phags-pa. Pièces de chancellerie en transcription chinoise, Monumenta linguae Mongolicae collecta* 3 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972) [MEP], p. 21 *et passim*; Chao-na-ssu-t'u 照那斯圖 (Junast), *Pa-ssu-pa tzu ho Meng-ku yü wen-hsien* 八思巴字和蒙古語文獻 [Documents in 'Phags-pa Script and Mongol Language], I-II (Tokyo: Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 1990-91), II: *Wen-hsien hui-chi* 文獻匯集 [Collection of Documents], p. 8 *et passim*; D. Tumurtogoo with the collaboration of G. Cecegdari, eds, *The Mongolian Monuments in 'Phags-pa Script. Transliteration, Tran-*

well as three in Uighur-Mongol script issued by the Mongol rulers of Iran and by a Mongol prince in China.²³ To these we must add the inscribed tablets of authority or *paizas* (mmo. *gere'e*; pmo. *gerege*; chin. *p'ai-tzu* 牌子) in Phags-pa script and in Uighur-Mongolian script in which the initial formulae 'By the strength of Heaven' and 'By the strength of Eternal Heaven' are also employed.²⁴ This initial formula and its variations have been the subject of much investigation.²⁵

Both *möngke* and *kücü(n)* are Mongol borrowings from tu. *bängü* ~ *mängü* and *küč* respectively;²⁶ and the Mongol expression *Tngri-yin küčün-dür* is a calque of tu. *Tängri küčünä* (or, better, *küčüntä*) 'grâce au pouvoir du Ciel';²⁷ however, *Tängri* is seldom qualified as 'Eternal' in genuine Turkic texts, in which the other epithet used, besides *üzä*, is *kök* 'Blue'.²⁸ On the

scription, *Word-Index and Bibliography with an Introduction, Monuments in Mongolian Language* 2 (Ulan Bator: Anxdugaar Xévlél, 2002), p. 1 *et passim*; Ts'ai Mei-piao in *Yüan-shih lun-ts'ung* 元史論叢 3 (1986), p. 232; etc. Further occurrences of the initial formula in Chinese may be found in the great administrative compendia and other texts of the Yüan period; however, for our purpose the above references will suffice.

²³ See L. Ligeti, *Monuments préclassiques 1. XIIIe et XIVe siècles, Monumenta linguae Mongolicae collecta 2* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972) [MP], pp. 59, 245, 256.

²⁴ See *MM*, Texts 7, 8, 9; *MEP*, pp. 109-114; *MP*, pp. 284-287; cf. E.A. Wallis Budge, tr., *The Monks of Kūblāi Khān Emperor of China* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1928), pl. 13 (facing p. 152); N.Ts. Münküyev, "A New Mongolian P'ai-tzu from Simferopol", *Acta Orientalia Hung.* 31 (1977), pp. 188 (fig. 1), 208.

²⁵ See Voegelin 1940-41, p. 393ff.; and the literature cited in Cleaves 1953, p. 40, n. 1. Cf. also *LAÖ*, pp. 18-22; and below, n. 35.

²⁶ See *TMEN*, nos. 1744, 1662.

²⁷ See J. Hamilton, "Le texte turc en caractères syriaques du grand sceau cruciforme de Mār Yahballāhā III", *Journal Asiatique* 260 (1972), p. 162. Mostaert et Cleaves 1952, pp. 482, 494, and *LAÖ*, p. 18, read instead 'Dans la force du Ciel éternel' (following Pelliot in *MP*, p. 22, and Pelliot 1949, p. 623) on the strength of the Chinese *literal* version in which the Mongolian *-dür* is rendered with the character *li* 裏 usually indicating the dative case. See *LAÖ*, pp. 18-19, and the expanded argument in F.W. Cleaves, "The Initial Formulae in a Communication of a Mongolian Viceroy to the King of Korea", *Journal of Turkish Studies* 3 (1979), p. 68. For a powerful counter-argument see Hamilton 1972, pp. 160-162; cf. *SHM(R)*, pp. 819-820.

²⁸ The epithet *m(ā)ngü* qualifying *t(ā)ngri* appears in the opening line of Güyüg's letter to the Pope, written in Arabic-Persian script but in the Turkic language. However, the initial formula of this document is nothing but a literal Turkic rendering of that found in the first four lines of Güyüg's seal apposed on it. See *MP*, pp. 22-23. Cf. de Rachewiltz 1983, pp. 274-275. As for *kök*, it is a specifically Turkish designation of Heaven, the word signifying in Turkic both 'sky' and 'blue' (see *TMEN*, no. 1677), eventually extended to the Turks themselves (*Kök Türük*, see T. Tekin, *A Grammar of Orkhon Turkic, Uralic and Altaic Series* 69 [Bloom-

other hand, the concept of 'strength' (*küč*) is central to the *Weltanschauung* of the ancient Turks. See below, 3.ii.

iii. Powerful or Mighty (mmo., pmo., mo. *erketü*). This is a rare epithet occurring only once (§ 113) in the *MNT*. However, the expression *Erketü Tngri* (cf. eng. 'Almighty God') is found in other ancient texts.²⁹

3. The Roles of Heaven

i. Heaven as Maker of Destiny. All individual creatures have a destiny (mmo. *ḡaya'a[n]*; pmo., mo. *ḡayaya[n]*)³⁰ which is determined by Heaven, and no one (whether an animal or a human being) can escape it.³¹ This is clearly enunciated in the first paragraph of the *MNT* where it is stated that the blue-grey wolf (*börte činō*), the totemic ancestor of the Mongols, was 'born with a destiny (ordained) by Heaven Above', and it is reiterated in §§ 65, 111, 113, 197, 201 (where Činggis Qan's 'destiny from Heaven' is confirmed), 194 and 248 (where the 'destiny of the Mongols' is mentioned),

ington, Ind.: Indiana University] [*GOT*], p. 264) as an ethnic-political entity. The discussion in Roux 1956, pp. 202-206, is worthless as it is based on a series of previous errors and misinterpretations by B. Vladimircov and R. Grousset. See B. Vladimirtsov, *Gengis-khan*, translated by M. Carsow (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1948), pp. 29, 55; R. Grousset, *L'empire mongol (Ire phase)* (Paris: E. De Boccard, 1941), pp. 181-182. The early Mongols never referred to Heaven or/and to themselves as 'Blue' (*köke*). This designation – applied only to the Mongols – is a later elaboration (see K. Sagaster [ed., tr. & ann.], *Die Weisse Geschichte. Eine mongolische Quelle zur Lehre von den Beiden Ordnungen Religion und Staat in Tibet und der Mongolei, Asiatische Forschungen* 41 [Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1976], pp. 304, 308, 311, 315), no doubt under Tibetan influence, and has no relevance whatsoever to the period we are investigating. Cf. Beffa & Hamayon 1995, p. 186.

²⁹ See, e.g., Lubsangdanjin's *Altan tobči* (Ulan Bator: Ulus-un keblel-ün ḡajar, 1990), 81b12-13, 177a10. However, in later texts it designates Indra (Qormusda). Cf. *DM*, p. 267a.

³⁰ In the *MNT*, the term *ḡaya'a(n)* is regularly rendered into Chinese as *ming* 命 'the will (of Heaven); fate' and only once as *chi-yün* 氣運 'luck, fate' – both definitions expressing the concept of 'destiny', but the former more specifically a destiny ordained from Above rather than mere luck. See E. Haenisch, *Wörterbuch zu Mangḡol un Niuca Tobca'an* (Yüan-ch'ao pi-shi). *Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen* (Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1939; repr. Wiesbaden: F. Steiner Verlag, 1962) [*WMNT*], p. 87. For a perceptive discussion on the Chinese concept of *ming* see M. Granet, *La pensée chinoise* (Paris: A. Michel, 1934), p. 404ff. (see also *ibid.*, p. 605c [Index]).

³¹ As shown by other investigators, and as clearly demonstrated by the *MNT*, the early Mongols firmly believed that to be endowed with a destiny preordained by Heaven (and Earth) was not the prerogative of single individuals, but a quality shared by all creatures. See *SHM(R)*, p. 225.

and 281. In § 111, the destiny of birds is mentioned twice, and in § 281 that of wild animals that are 'born with (their) destiny from Heaven and Earth (*Tenggeri Qajar*)'. This point is worth noting. Although Heaven has a pre-eminent position in determining destiny, Earth is involved too; indeed, in §§ 113 and 248 both powers are mentioned with regard to Činggis and to the Mongols. We shall have more to say about the role of Earth later on. In §§ 19-22 of the *MNT* we encounter the much-discussed story of Alan Qo'a and her supernatural conception of three of her five children, one of whom, Bodončar, will become the direct ancestor of Temüjin, the future Činggis Qan. Alan Qo'a calls these three supernaturally-born children 'the sons of Heaven' (*Tenggeri-yin kö'üt*). Thus, the story would seem to indicate that Heaven's participation in the affairs of man is so close that in exceptional circumstances it can intervene personally, as it were, rather than act on them as an impersonal force. This reminds us, of course, of the miraculous births of heroes in the legends and myths of other cultures. The entire anecdote, which includes the episode of the five arrow-shafts (§ 22), smacks of cultural contamination and I would not draw general conclusions from it. Moreover, I think that the expression 'son(s) of Heaven' used by Alan Qo'a should be understood in the sense of 'divine', like tu. *täŋri tæg* 'Heaven-like' and *täŋridä bolmiš* 'Heaven-born', and chin. *t'ien-tzu* 'son of Heaven' – all regular designations of a Heaven-appointed ruler. Alan Qo'a herself states further on in the poetical passage in § 21 that 'when they (i.e. the three sons in question) become the rulers (*qat*) of all, then the common people will understand!'³² This entire episode can simply be taken as another example of Heaven's role in determining the future course of events, hence of destiny-making (of which the kingmaker's function is an integral part), without further elaboration. It follows that the ruler thus appointed can only be the *executor* of Heaven's will or command, and that no one can act *except* in accordance with Heaven's order. Güyüg's famous letter to Innocent IV puts this article of faith in unequivocal terms. I shall quote the relevant passages, rendering pers. *x(u)dāi* 'God (= Allāh)' as 'Heaven' throughout since, as rightly pointed out by Pelliot, the Persian term is 'une traduction un peu infidèle à l'original mongol qui avait certainement *tängri*, le Ciel (divinisé)'.³³

1. 'You (= the great Pope) have sent words (saying): "Thou hast taken all the lands of the Mājar and the Christians; I am astonished. What was their crime? Tell us." These words of thine We have not understood ei-

³² See *SHM(R)*, pp. 4-5, 263-264.

³³ *MP*, p. 20, n. 4. In translating the passages of Güyüg's letter, I follow on the whole J.A. Boyle's English version (*PE*, pp. 213-214), taking into account, however, Pelliot's interpretation and comments (*MP*, pp. 16-21). For ar. *Allāh* = pers. *xudāi* = tu. *täŋri* = mo. *tengri* see below, n. 69.

ther. The command of Heaven, Čingiz Qān and the Qā'ān (= Ögödei), both of them, sent it to cause to be heard. They (= the Mājar and the Christians) have not trusted the command of Heaven. Just like thy words they too have been reckless; they have acted with arrogance; and they killed Our ambassadors. The people of those countries, (it was) Eternal Heaven (*x[u]dāi q(a)dīm*)³⁴ (who) killed and destroyed them. Except by the command of Heaven, how should anyone kill, how should (anyone) capture by his own strength (*quvvat*)?'

2. 'By the strength (*quvvat*) of Heaven,³⁵ (from) the going up of the sun to (his) going down, (He) has delivered all the lands to Us; We hold them. Except by the command of Heaven, how can anyone do (anything)?'
3. 'If you do not accept Heaven's command and act contrary to Our command We shall regard you as enemies!'
4. 'If you act contrary (thereto), what do We know (of it)? (It is) Heaven (who) knows!'

The recurrent theme of the letter is the 'command' (*f[a]rmān*) of Heaven, which is expressed in concrete terms (i.e. as immediate submission) through the command of the Heaven-appointed qan. Persian *farmān* renders pmo. *jrly* (mmo. *jarliq*; mo. *jarliŋ*),³⁶ another key word in the imperial seal's legend. The expression *möngke tenggeri-yin jarliq* 'the decree of Eternal Heaven' already occurs in § 244 of the *MNT* in relation to omens foretelling Heaven's appointment of the leader who will rule over the Mongol nation. Thus Heaven's decree or command and man's destiny are inseparable, but for man – the ruler in particular – to carry out Heaven's command and thus fulfil his destiny, it is essential to be endowed with power or 'strength' (pers. *quvvat*; pmo. *küčü[n]*; tu. *küč*) which is itself granted by Heaven and which ensures success. To be granted strength by Heaven is a clear indication of his favour and of the ruler's Good Fortune. However, before we discuss further these important concepts, we must complete our survey of contemporary sources with regard to Heaven's will.

³⁴ As noted by Pelliot (*op.cit.*, p. 20, n. 4), *xudāi qadīm* corresponds to pmo. *möngke tngri* 'Eternal Heaven'.

³⁵ In the original Mongol text of the letter, this expression was undoubtedly *tngri-yin küčün-dür*. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 21, nn. 2, 4. Pers. *quvvat* = pmo. *küčü[n]* = lat. *fortitudo*. Cf. the Latin version of the Güyüg's letter, *ibid.*, pp. 11-12. The term *potentia* is used in the letter of Eljigidei to Louis IX, see Voegelin 1940-41, p. 390.

³⁶ Tu. *jarliŋ*. For this word see *TMEN*, nos. 1292, 1889. It is another Mongol borrowing from Turkic.

The *HTSL*, 11a, reports that 'with regard to things that they (= the Mongols) wish to carry out, they say, "Heaven has caused it to be so (i.e., has willed it)." As for things that have already been done by other men, they say, "Heaven knows it." There is not a single thing which they do not attribute to Heaven. From the Mongol ruler (down) to his people, there is none who is not so.'³⁷ Ten years before this, Chao Hung (*MTPL*, 17a) had already remarked that with the Mongols 'every undertaking must be in the name of Heaven'.³⁸ Describing the Mongols' beliefs, John of Pian di Carpine declares that 'they believe in one God (*unum Deum*), Whom they believe to be the maker of all things visible and invisible; and they believe Him to be the dispenser of all good things in this world, as well as the hardships'.³⁹

In his simple 'profession of faith', Möngke (as reported by Friar William) states that 'We Mongols believe that there is but one God (*unus Deus*) by Whom (*per quem*) we live and by Whom we die, and towards Him we have an upright heart (*rectum cor*)'.⁴⁰ The 'one God' is, of course, Heaven – the 'maker of all things' and master of one's destiny ('by Whom we live and by Whom we die').

Turning now to the religious beliefs of the ancient Turks, Heaven's will/command/decreed (*yarlıy*) is well attested too in their inscriptions⁴¹ where, 'owing to some connotations of graciousness',⁴² it acquires the meaning of 'grace' – retaining, however, all its original force and significance. It is, indeed, 'by the grace (= will) of Heaven' (*tāyri yarlıq[q]adıq ücüm*)⁴³ that the great events in history and in the life of individuals take place, from the appointment of high officials, the elevation of a *qayan* and the governing of the nation, to the conquering of enemy lands, founding an empire and gaining the means of overcoming all difficulties on the way to success.⁴⁴

³⁷ See *CG*, p. 141.

³⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 77.

³⁹ See *SM*, pp. 236, 342.

⁴⁰ See *SF*, p. 298; *MFW*, p. 236 (but cf. *TMM*, pp. 195, where the English version is more accurate).

⁴¹ See *GOT*, pp. 397b-398a, s.v. *yarlıq[q]a*-. Cf. Roux 1956, pp. 32-39.

⁴² *ED*, p. 968a, s.v. *yarlıka*-.

⁴³ The wording of the Turkic formula varies slightly from passage to passage, but the meaning is the same.

⁴⁴ Cf. Mori Masao, "The T'u-chüeh Concept of Sovereign", *Acta Asiatica* 4 (1981), pp. 53-57. Cf. D. Sinor, "The Making of a Great Khan", in B. Kellner-Heinkele (ed.), *Altaica Berolinensia. The Concept of Sovereignty in the Altaic World. Permanent International Altaic Conference 34th Meeting. Berlin 21-26*

ii. Heaven as Giver of Strength and Protection. We have already touched on the concepts of 'strength' (mmo. *gücü[n]*; etc.) and 'protection' (mmo. *ihe'el* ~ *ihe'en*; pmo., mo. *ibegel*),⁴⁵ and mentioned several occurrences of them in our sources, including the four sections in the *MNT* in which Eternal Heaven is referred to as a source of strength, and the four sections where Heaven appears as the giver of protection (see above, 2.i). However, these instances were only cited to illustrate the use of the expression 'Eternal Heaven' in the *MNT*. In fact, there are other occurrences in this work of Heaven, Heaven Above, and Heaven and Earth (*Qajar* – occasionally left out) dispensing strength and protection to Činggis Qan, his followers and his army (§§ 113, 125, 145, 163, 177, 179, 208, 260), and of withdrawing its love (§ 167, 246) – 'to be loved' (*ta'alaqda*-) being the same as being protected.

From all these early references we can gain a fairly clear picture of this particular role of Heaven. The premise is that single individuals may have strength, but not enough to achieve success in war and in other great enterprises. Hence, their strength and power must 'be increased' (*nemekde*-) by Heaven and Earth or, more precisely, *by the strength* of Heaven and Earth. In § 224 of the *MNT* Činggis Qan says, 'By the strength of Eternal Heaven, (my) strength and power (*gücü auqa*) have been increased by Heaven and Earth'.⁴⁶ The 'increase of one's strength (and power)' through the agency of Heaven and Earth – one of the recurrent themes in the *MNT* – is a *sine qua non* for success, but the acquisition of this indispensable additional

July, 1991, Asiatische Forschungen 126 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993) [AB], p. 248f.

⁴⁵ For *gücü(n)* see above and n. 26 (*TMEN*, no. 1662); for *ihe'el* see *SHM(R)*, p. 329. The 14th century translators of the *MNT* rendered *ihe'el* and *ihe'e-* (*ihē-*) 'to protect' with chin. *hu-chu* 護助 'protection and support; to protect and support, to succour' (*WMNT*, p. 81). In the 13th century Mongol documents translated into vernacular Chinese (*pai-hua*), the usual term is *yin* 蔭 'to protect, shelter'. See *YTPHPCL*, p. 9 (no. 8) *et passim*; cf. above and n. 18. In the letter of Činggis Qan to Ch'iu Ch'u-chi of 1219, written in classical Chinese (almost certainly by Yeh-lü Ch'u-t'ai), we find the expressions '(I) therefore received Heaven's protection and obtained the supreme dignity' (是以受天之祐獲承至尊). See *ibid.*, p. 115 (no. 1); Chavannes 1908, p. 300 (cf. *TA*, pp. 159-160, where, on p. 160, '399' is a misprint for '299'). However, such expressions are purely Chinese and, in view of the formal literary context of the letter, this cannot be taken as a Chinese version of a Mongol original document. Nevertheless, the reference to 'Heaven's protection' must reflect an accepted idea at the Mongol court and one that Činggis may well have wished to convey in his message to impress the Taoist patriarch. Cf. also the expression 'We have been revealed (= sent) by Heaven' (朕天啓) in Činggis' subsequent letter (also in classical Chinese) to Ch'iu of 1220. See *YTPHPCL*, p. 116 (no. 2); Chavannes 1908, p. 306.

⁴⁶ See *SHM(R)*, pp. 152 and 819 (where for 'power has' read 'strength and power have'). Cf. *MNT*, § 199, for the same expression.

strength is only possible if one is fortunate enough 'to be protected' (*ihe'ekde-*) by Heaven and Earth. The individual who has thus been favoured by them is regarded and, indeed, referred to as 'fortunate' (mmo. *sutu, sutai*; pmo., mo. *suutu, suutai*), insofar as he is endowed with Good Fortune (mmo. *su*; pmo., mo. *suu*).⁴⁷ The measure of success achieved is the best indication of the extent of one's Good Fortune. There is, of course, no greater Good Fortune in the Mongol society of that time than that which enables a clan or tribal chief to conquer other tribes and peoples and to become the supreme leader (*qan, qa'an*).

Although it is nowhere specified in the *MNT*, we may assume by inference that such Good Fortune is part and parcel of one's destiny (*ᠵaya'a*) which, as we have seen, is duly preordained by Heaven Above. With regard to Činggis Qan and his Kiyat-Borjigin line there is no doubt that this is the case, starting with the earlier-mentioned Alan Qo'a legend, and Dei Sečen's prophetic dream (§ 63), to the even more specific dream of Qorči of the Ba'arin (§ 121) in which the prophecy is: 'Together Heaven and Earth have agreed: Temüjin shall be lord of the people!', and including Činggis Qan's statement in § 208 that Eternal Heaven had 'opened the door and loosened the reins' for him, i.e. Heaven had opened the way to Činggis' success.

However, the *MNT* uses the terms 'fortunate' and 'Good Fortune' sparingly and advisedly. Mother Hö'elün's sons and Temüjin's wife Börte are called 'fortunate' (§§ 74, 111), Činggis Qan is called 'fortunate' (§ 272), and in § 275 we find the following words uttered by Ögödei's nephew Batu: 'By the strength of Eternal Heaven and the Good Fortune of (my) uncle the Qa'an (= Ögödei)!' As noted earlier, this is the first occurrence of the standard opening formula of decrees and letters issued by the Mongol chancellery. In the Chinese version of some of these, the other element which we have reviewed, viz. 'protection', is also mentioned, resulting in a formula already attested in Ögödei's time, in which the concepts of Good Fortune and protection are combined (see above, 2.i and n. 18).⁴⁸ The Good Fortune of the Mongol world-ruling house has now become itself a 'protective'

⁴⁷ For these terms and the literature on the subject see *TMEN*, no. 217; *MM*, pp. 72-76, Note 1 (d); and *LAÖ*, pp. 19-22. For *küčü(n)* and *suu* cf. also T.D. Skrynnikova, *Kharizma i vlast v épokhu Čingis-khana* (Moscow: Vostočnaya literatura, 1997), p. 100ff. One must distinguish the term 'fortunate' = 'protected by Heaven' (*sutu, sutai*) from 'fortunate' in the ordinary sense (i.e. lucky), the Mongol term for which is *öljeitü*.

⁴⁸ For a good example of the combination of 'Heaven's strength' and 'Protection of Heaven' in a later document (the letter of Öljeitü to Philip the Fair of 1305) see *LAÖ*, p. 56.

quality, given the fact that the Qa'an is Heaven-appointed and his command reflects the will of Heaven. The phraseology of Güyüg's letter makes this perfectly clear: 'The command (= will) of Heaven, Činggis Qan and the Qā'ān, both of them, sent it to cause it to be heard', 'By the strength of Heaven, (from) the going up of the sun to (his) going down, (He) has delivered all the lands to Us', and 'If you do not accept Heaven's command and act contrary to Our command We shall regard you as enemies'. (*Ibid.*, 3.i.)

As with the other aspects of the ancient Mongols' concept of Heaven, that of 'strength' is not only well attested among the ancient Turks, but it plays an identical role. As already noted, the Mongol expression *mgri-yin küčün-dür* is a slavish calque of tu. *tāngri küčündä*. The Turkic inscriptions also ascribe the victories on the battlefield to Heaven's 'granting strength' (*küč bir-*) to their leaders.⁴⁹ Equally the 'fortune' (*qut* = mo. *suu*) that accompanies them in their enterprises is attributed to Heaven.⁵⁰ We are dealing with the same belief.

4. The Worship of Heaven

Our sources do not mention any formal cult of Heaven; the only type of worship of Heaven was, apparently, prayer of which there is but a single reference in the *MNT*. In § 240 we read that in the course of his campaign against the Qori Tumat – one of the People of the Forest (*hoi-yin irgen*) – in 1207 (corr. 1217), Činggis Qan said to Dörbei Doqšin of the Dörbet, 'Set the army in strict order, pray to Eternal Heaven and strive to subdue the Tumat people!'⁵¹ The verb for 'to pray' is *jalbari-* (pmo., mo. id.)⁵² Always for the period of Činggis Qan we have the testimony of the *Hsi-yu chi* which is, unfortunately, rather vague. According to Li Chih-ch'ang, Činggis Qan speaking to his sons and dignitaries at the end of January 1223 said with reference to the Taoist patriarch Ch'iu Ch'u-chi that 'the Chinese rev-

⁴⁹ See *GOT*, pp. 265 (E12), 257 (E11 → p. 265 [E12]), 277 (E32). For tu. *küč*, besides *TMEN*, no. 1662, and *ED*, p. 693, cf. also G. Clauson, 'The Concept of "Strength" in Turkish', in *Németh Armağanı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1962), pp. 93-101 (esp. pp. 95-96); and, especially, Mori 1981, pp. 50-51.

⁵⁰ See *GOT*, pp. 262 (S9), 268 (E29), etc. The most perceptive discussion of *qut* as conceived by the ancient Turks is in Mori 1981, pp. 58-69, 71-75. Mori's conclusion is that *qut* was 'the heavenly charismatic power (dignity)' through which the Turkish qayans ruled their state – a gift sent by Heaven containing the element of regality (*ibid.*, p. 74). Cf. Sinor 1981, p. 249.

⁵¹ See *SHM(R)*, p. 165.

⁵² On this word see *TMEN*, no. 1808.

erence (*tsun-chung* 尊重) the Holy Immortal (i.e. Ch'iu Ch'u-chi) just as you revere (*ching* 敬) Heaven.⁵³ Soon after Činggis issued an edict exempting from all taxes the monasteries depending from Ch'iu Ch'u-chi where monks spent their days reciting holy scriptures, invoking Heaven (*kao t'ien* 告天) and praying for the longevity of the Emperor.⁵⁴ The injunction for all monks in China to invoke Heaven and 'pray for the Good Fortune and longevity' of the Emperor is found in subsequent edicts issued in 1235, 1243 and 1244, i.e. before Qubilai's accession to the throne, as well as after his accession.⁵⁵

In 1221, Chao Hung had already noted in his report that '(Following) their custom, they (= the Mongols) reverence mostly Heaven and Earth'.⁵⁶ In the *Historia Mongalorum*, John of Pian di Carpine states that they do not worship Heaven 'with prayers, or praises or any kind of ceremony',⁵⁷ meaning simply that he saw no outward form of cult or worship of Heaven during his stay among the Mongols. As for his confrère William of Rubruck, we have already cited his account of Möngke's profession of faith. In another section of the *Itinerarium* he relates that a Nestorian monk called Sergius used to tell him that Möngke 'only believes in the Christians; however, he wishes them all to come and pray for him'.⁵⁸ While the first statement is an obvious exaggeration on the monk's part, the second is no doubt true, as evident from the general policy of the Mongol rulers.⁵⁹

⁵³ See *HYC*, B, 6b; *TA*, p. 116.

⁵⁴ See *YTPHPCL*, p. 1 (no. 1); Chavannes 1904, pp. 368-369. Cf. I. de Rachewiltz, 'The *Hsi-yu lu* 西遊錄 by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai 耶律楚材', *Monumenta Serica* 21 (1962), pp. 76-77, n. 188.

⁵⁵ See *YTPHPCL*, pp. 3 (no. 3), 8 (no. 7), 9 (no. 8); Chavannes 1908, pp. 308-309; *MM*, pp. 46-47, 49, 52, 54-55; etc. Cf. *HWC*, p. 599. In the later edicts in 'Phags-pa script, the members of the clergy (Buddhist, Christian, Taoist and Muslim) exempted from taxes are enjoined 'to pray to Heaven and pronounce benedictions' (*dēyriyi jalbariḡu hiru'er ög-*). For this expression see *MM*, pp. 46-47, 85, Note 11.

⁵⁶ *MTPL*, 17a; cf. *CG*, p. 77.

⁵⁷ See *SM*, pp. 236, 342. Cf. *TMM*, p. 161.

⁵⁸ See *SF*, p. 256; *TMM*, p. 160.

⁵⁹ Cf. *MFV*, pp. 187, n. 5, 24. Besides the documents already cited in Chinese and Latin, several of the official documents in Uighur-Mongol script issued by the imperial chancelleries include references to 'praying to (Eternal) Heaven'. See Mostaert et Cleaves 1952, pp. 452, 471; *LAÖ*, p. 18. For the Mongol rulers' attitude and policies towards other religions, see the important contribution of Peter Jackson, "The Mongols and the Faith of the Conquered", in R. Amitai and M. Biran (eds), *Mongols, Turks, and Others. Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005) [*MTO*], pp. 245-290.

It is apparent from the above that the Mongols or, at any rate, the ruling elite believed in the importance and efficacy of praying to Heaven, and that, irrespective of religion. As for the way the Mongols themselves carried out this type of worship, i.e. in their own traditional fashion, we are fortunately rather well informed. The *MNT* provides information on the worship of the sacred mountain Burqan Qaldun which is described as a morning sacrifice consisting of facing the sun with the belt hanging around the neck, the hat off and over the hand, beating the breast with the fist, kneeling nine times towards the sun, and offering a libation and a prayer.⁶⁰ We learn also about the communal (clan) ritual of ancestor worship – a ceremony called *Qajaru Inerü* consisting of an offering of burnt food and of a sacrificial meal shared by the participants.⁶¹ Finally a tantalizingly short invocation (*Abui babui*) is mentioned, possibly the beginning of a prayer, recited by a Kereyit chief to obtain a son, and accompanied by the making of 'magic strips'.⁶² The information thus provided is very interesting but cannot be specifically related to a prayer or invocation to Heaven. This is where Juvainī and Rašid al-Dīn come to our assistance. Juvainī informs us that immediately after hearing of the 'massacre' of his envoys at Otrar – the famous 'Otrar incident' of 1218 that led to the invasion of Khwārazm – Činggis Qan was so angered that 'he went up alone to the summit of a hill, bared his head, turned his face towards the earth and for three days and nights offered up prayer, saying: "I was not the author of this trouble; grant me strength to exact vengeance." Juvainī also relates how, just before the crucial battle against the Hungarians at Mohi in April 1241, Činggis' nephew Batu (Joči's son) 'went up on to a hilltop; and for one day and night he spoke to no one but prayed and lamented; and he bade the Moslems also to assemble together and offer up prayers'.⁶³

As for Rašid al-Dīn, his account is just as interesting. In the last section on Činggis Qan where various episodes are gathered which are not included in the previous sections, the great Persian historian relates how just before launching his campaign against the Jurchen Chin 金 state in north China in 1211, 'as was his custom he (i.e. Činggis Qan – I.R.) went up alone on a hill, unloosened his belt and threw it over his neck, opened the ties of his tunic, knelt and said, "O God (= Heaven – I.R.), you know all from long ago. You know that the Altan Khan (i.e. the Chin ruler – I.R.) initiated hostilities and began our enmity. Ökin Barqaq and Hambaqai Qa'an were abducted by the Tatars and sent before the Altan Khan, who killed them, my elders and ancestors,

⁶⁰ *MNT*, § 103. See *SHM(R)*, pp. 33, 406-407.

⁶¹ *MNT*, § 70. See *SHM(R)*, pp. 17, 341-344.

⁶² *MNT*, § 174. See *SHM(R)*, pp. 94, 629-630.

⁶³ See *HWC*, pp. 80-81, 270-271.

though they were innocent of any crime. [If you consider me right in what I think,] I ask for vengeance and retaliation for their blood. I want you to let men, fairies, and demons help and assist me." He prayed thus in all humility, and afterwards he arose and departed.⁶⁴

In my opinion, the rituals described by both Juvainī and Rašīd al-Dīn faithfully portray the personal, solemn entreaties to Heaven and, possibly, Earth on the part of the Mongol sovereign and of a prince of the blood. The importance of such occasions – in all cases decisive military engagements – required, beside 'prayers', i.e. a request for strength and help accompanied by an invocation and/or lamentation, also an act of complete submission to the supreme power which was carried out in the traditional way (beating of the breast, hanging the belt over the neck, removal of the hat, etc.), all elements already present in Činggis' worship of Burqan Qaldun.⁶⁵ Now, the same section (§ 103) of the *MNT* also records, in poetical form, the words of gratitude – a sort of 'lamentation' in fact – uttered by Činggis while he performed his act of submission.⁶⁶ We may then regard these words, like those recorded by the two Persian historians, as examples of the utterances that were such an integral part of the Mongols' worship of Heaven. In view of what we know of the popular worship of the Mongols

⁶⁴ CC, p. 298. Cf. C. D'Ohsson, *Histoire des Mongols, depuis Tchinguiz-khan jusqu'à Timour Bey ou Tamerlan*, I-IV (La Haye et Amsterdam: Les Frères Van Cleef, 1834-5; repr. T'ien-chin, 1940), I, pp. 123-124. A rather embellished version of the episode is found in B. Vladimirtsov, *Gengis-khan*, translated by M. Carsow (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1948), pp. 75-76, and has been adopted by subsequent authors (among them Roux 1956, p. 181). Cf. also H.D. Martin, *The Rise of Chingis Khan and His Conquest of North China* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press: 1950; repr. New York: Octagon Books, 1977), p. 121. The *YS* does not mention the event; however, we find a faint echo of it in the *SWCCL*, 61b, where we read that 'in the autumn (of 1211), the Emperor (= Činggis Qan) for the first time made a solemn pledge with the army on the occasion of (his) campaign in the South (i.e. against Chin).'

⁶⁵ For these ritual acts, cf. *HWC*, pp. 187-188; *SGK*, pp. 31, 182, 202. For the ritual beating of the breast with the fist to establish communication with the supernatural powers see L. Ligeti, tr., *A mongolok titkos története* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1962; 2nd rev. ed., Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2004), p. 134, n. 172. Cf. *MNT*, § 172; *SHM(R)*, p. 625. See also D. Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1986), p. 44.

⁶⁶ See *SHM(R)*, p. 103; cf. *SHM(C)*, pp. 36-37. The 'lamentation' or ritualised lament is a well-known oral and literary device – usually in poetic form – to express a grudge resulting from a perceived injustice or offence suffered and, generally, for an emotional outpouring, several examples of which are found in the *MNT* and other works, such as 'Hö'elün's Lament' and 'Toyon Temür's Lament'. See *SHM(R)*, p. 1279a (Index, s.v. 'lament'); H. Okada, 'An Analysis of the Lament of Toyon Temür,' *Zentralasiatische Studien* 1 (1967), pp. 55-78; C.R. Bawden, tr., *Mongolian Traditional Literature* (London, New York, Bahrain: Kegan Paul, 2003), pp. 47-48.

(which is very little, see below), I think that the worship of Heaven as illustrated above was confined only to the ruling elite.

The act of subjection deserves comment for it has implications that go beyond personal worship. Much has been written on the subject of the imperial Mongols' concept of world-domination, and on the orders of submission (*il*) issued by their rulers on the basis of their Heaven-sanctioned claim of supremacy.⁶⁷ However, we must not lose sight of the fact that such a concept was actually rooted in the Mongol rulers' own attitude of submission to Eternal Heaven: we can in fact say, on the evidence we possess, that the *universal* submission they exacted was essentially a derivative or extension of their *personal* submission to Heaven. This may account in part for the comparative ease with which, when they were still at the height of their power, the Mongol rulers of the West embraced Islām, the very meaning of which is 'Submission (to Allāh).'⁶⁸ It is interesting to note in this connection that pmo. *tngri* is regularly translated into Persian with 'Allāh' and into Latin with 'Deus', not only by Muslim and Christian writers, but *by the Mongols themselves*.⁶⁹ While Allāh had Muḥammad as His Prophet, and the Christian God the prophets of the Old Testament and Jesus as the Messiah, the Mongol Heaven had Činggis Qan and his successors as its appointed agents and enforcers of the Law (mmo. *jasag*; pmo., mo. *jasay*; pers.

⁶⁷ Besides the already cited Voegelin 1940-41, see also I. de Rachewiltz, 'The Ideological Foundations of Chingis Khan's Empire', *Papers on Far Eastern History* 7 (March 1973), pp. 21-36; *ČK*, pp. 141-142 (cf. *GK*, pp. 159-160); Sinor 1981, p. 248; A. Sárközi, 'Mandate of Heaven. Heavenly Support of the Mongol Ruler', in *AB*, pp. 215-221; R. Amitai-Preiss, 'Mongol Imperial Ideology and the Ilkhanid War against the Mamluks', in R. Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan, eds, *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy* (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 1999), pp. 57-72 (esp. p. 62ff.); Jackson 2005, p. 248; and below, n. 72.

⁶⁸ The first Ilkhān to convert to Islām was Ḡasan (Fāsān, r. 1295-1304) in 1295. See J.A. Boyle, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran, Volume 5: The Saljuq and Mongol Periods* (Cambridge: CUP, 1968) [*CHI*], p. 541ff.; and, especially, B. Spuler, *History of the Mongols. Based on Eastern and Western Accounts of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, translated by H. and S. Drummond (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 144-146, where Rašīd al-Dīn's account of Ḡasan's conversion is translated. Cf. also Roux 1956, pp. 197-204.

⁶⁹ As shown by the letter of Güyüg written in Persian (where *x[u]dāi* is the Persian for Allāh) and its Latin counterpart, both versions being carried out at the Mongol court. See *MP*, pp. 9-12, 15-21. Mongolian *tengri* is also translated as 'Allāh' in the *Rasūlid Hexaglot*, see P.B. Golden (ed. and com.), *The King's Dictionary. The Rasūlid Hexaglot. Fourteenth Century Vocabulaires in Arabic, Persian, Turkic, Greek, Armenian and Mongolian*, translated by T. Halasi-Kun, P.B. Golden, L. Ligeti and E. Schütz (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2000) (also for pers. *xudāi* = Allāh), pp. 198, no. 1, 61, no. 1.

γāsā).⁷⁰ In his letter to the Pope, Güyüg says: '... thou, who art the great Pope, together with all the kings, must come to do homage to Us. We shall then cause you to hear every command that there is of the *Yāsā* ("Law") ... Thou in person at the head of the kings, you must all together at once come to do homage to Us. We shall then recognize your submission. If you do not accept Heaven's command and act contrary to Our command We shall regard you as enemies.'⁷¹ And, with regard to the Mongol rulers' role as the chosen or, better, 'destined' agents and representatives of Heaven 'within the seas', the other, already cited passage from the same letter leaves us in no doubt: 'The command of Heaven, Čingiz Qān and the Qā'ān, both of them, sent it to cause it to be heard (= obeyed).'

Success in warfare may have confirmed in the emperor's mind his claim to suzerainty and his belief that the Mongol empire would extend over the entire world,⁷² but he himself was well aware that ultimately no one but Heaven 'knew'

⁷⁰ For the Mongol *jasay* see I. de Rachewiltz, "Some Reflections on Činggis Qan's *Jasay*" *East Asian History* 6 (December 1993), pp. 91-104; cf. D. Morgan "The 'Great *Yasa* of Chinggis Khan' Revisited", in *MTO*, pp. 291-308. According to Vaṣṣāf, Sa'd al-Daula, the physician and minister of the Ilkhān Arḡun (r. 1284-91), tried to gain the latter's favour by declaring that Činggis Qan 'was a prophet, that the gift of prophecy was hereditary, and that Arḡun should follow in the footsteps of the prophet Muḥammad and found a new *umma* (religious nation)'. See *CHI*, p. 541. Sa'd al-Daula was not successful but only a few years later Ğasan did convert to Islām.

⁷¹ *PE*, pp. 213, 214; cf. *MP*, pp. 18, 21.

⁷² There is some evidence that the Mongols' claim to *world* supremacy originates from the time of Činggis' conquest of Khwārazm, but this only comes from Juvainī (*HWC*, p. 145) and I doubt it. Cf. *ČK*, pp. 141-142; *GK*, p. 159-160. I am now of the opinion that while the seed of the world-domination ideology were sown by Činggis Qan from his firm belief that he enjoyed the protection of Heaven, the fruit matured under Ögödei as a result of the Mongol armies' victories in North China and in the West. *Post factum* references to Činggis Qan in later sources are due to the need of legitimising the conquest in the name of the dynasty's founder and as the latter's ideological legacy to his heirs. As for Juvainī's report on Teb Tenggeri's statement that 'God (= Heaven – I.R.) has spoken with me and has said: "I have given all the face of the earth to Temüjin and his children"', reproduced almost verbatim by Rašīd al-Dīn (see *HWC*, p. 39; cf. *CC*, pp. 89f., 289), this is a later elaboration of the original statement, which is found in the *MNT*, § 244 ('The decree of Eternal Heaven [concerning] the ruler has been [fore]told by [heavenly] signs [as follows]: once they say that Temüjin will hold the nation (*ulus barituqai*), once that Qasar will'). See *SHM(R)*, p. 168. In the *MNT* context, *ulus* can only mean the Mongol nation/people. See *ibid.*, pp. 873-874. With regard to the Qongqotan Kōkōčü, nicknamed Teb Tenggeri or 'The Very (or Most) Divine', about whom much has been made as a powerful shaman, see my reservations in *SHM(R)*, pp. 869-870. However, with regard to the world-domination ideology of the Mongols, one cannot ignore the possible correlation between that and the whole conception of a supreme sky god who 'may destine a single ruler to establish his dominion over the entire universal realm' (Fletcher 1986, p. 31). For this conception as elaborated by

and 'made decision' – two expressions which in Mongolian are rendered by the single verb *mede-*.⁷³ The closing formula of Güyüg's letter 'If you act contrary (thereto), what do We know (of it), (it is) Heaven (who) knows' really means: 'If you disobey the command, it will not be Us who will decide your fate, Heaven will decide it.' Heaven's ultimate 'decision' is regularly referred to: we encountered it in the *MNT* and in Güyüg's letter, and it also occurs in later documents like the letters of Arḡun and Öljeitü to Philip the Fair (1289 and 1305 respectively).⁷⁴

We may well ask then, how can one know apart from the *post factum* results, what Heaven has in store for us? This was a capital question also for the Mongol rulers who did their utmost to find out the will of the supernatural powers and their chances of success (or failure) *ante factum*. For this they had recourse to all sorts of prognostication and shamanistic techniques that are well documented because they were so prominent at the time. They are described, with a wealth of detail, in the *MNT* and in the reports of Chinese and Western travellers.

Description and analysis of these practices and the role of the shaman (mmo. *bō'e*; pmo., mo. *bōge* = tu. *qam*, pers. *sākīr*, böve = *bō'e* < mmo., *qām* < tu.) in early Mongol society are outside the scope of this paper. However, the following remarks are appropriate within the context of the present study.⁷⁵

Already in 1221 Chao Hung had observed the Mongols' practice of scapulimancy, which was widespread among them as confirmed by P'eng Ta-ya and Hsü T'ing, as well as by William of Rubruck and other sources.⁷⁶ From the *MNT*

the ancient Turks see Mori 1981, pp. 57ff., 68; O. Turan, "The Ideal of World Domination Among the Medieval Turks", *Studia Islamica* 4 (1955), pp. 77-90.

⁷³ See *SHM(R)*, pp. 624-625.

⁷⁴ See *LAÖ*, pp. 18, 57.

⁷⁵ On the subject see J.A. Boyle, "Turkish and Mongolian Shamanism in the Middle Ages", *Folklore* 83 (1972), pp. 177-193 (repr. in J.A. Boyle, *The Mongol World Empire 1206-1370* [London: Variorum Reprints, 1977], XXII); Jackson 2005, pp. 246, 253-258, and the literature cited therein. The following studies by J.-P. Roux must be used with caution because of the author's uncritical use of sources: "Éléments chamaniques dans les textes pré-mongols", *Anthropos* 53 (1958), pp. 441-456; "Le nom du chaman dans les textes turco-mongols", *ibid.*, pp. 133-142; and "Le chaman gengiskhanide", *ibid.*, 54 (1959), pp. 401-432. Cf. also A. Fedotov, "On Shamanistic Trends in 'The Secret History of the Mongols'", in G. Stary (ed.), *Proceedings of the 38th Permanent International Altaistic Conference (PIAC). Kawasaki, Japan: August 7-12, 1995* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1996), pp. 143-151 (I do not share the author's views on early Mongol 'shamanism', especially with regard to the role of Light, Sun and Moon).

⁷⁶ See *MTPL*, 17a; *HTSL*, 9b; *SF*, pp. 261-262. Cf. *CG*, pp. 77-78, 140; *TMM*, p. 164; *MFW*, p. 193 and n. 2 (for further references). See also N.C. Munkuev, *Ki-*

we learn that the Mongols practiced various forms of prognostication deriving omens from dreams (oniromancy) and from the inspection of the entrails of an animal, and that they made use of shamans (*bö'es*) and soothsayers (*tölgečün*) for the purpose.⁷⁷ 'Signs' (mmo. *ja'arin*; pmo. *ja'arin*), i.e. portents, indicating the will of Heaven could be obtained and interpreted from accidents and unexpected occurrences.⁷⁸ From the Chinese sources we learn that the Mongols regarded thunder and summer snowstorms as portents, and that Činggis Qan was not averse to more sophisticated forms of Chinese divination.⁷⁹ The use of divination, magic and shamans by the Mongols is amply attested also in the Persian sources.⁸⁰ By all accounts, no important undertaking was started without the prior observation of omens.⁸¹

Thus, the evidence from the primary sources summarized above shows that Činggis and his immediate successors had a profound reverence for Heaven. This, in turn, called for a constant need to interpret its will by any available divinatory means, and to pray in order to gain its favour, viz. strength and protection, the two indispensable ingredients of success. In the Mongol traditional way and in its more elaborate form (reserved for the ruling elite and special occasions), the prayer contained an *invocatio* and a *lamentatio*, and was accompanied by various ritual acts of submission. As for the prayers for the welfare of the ruler and his house, they were sought also from representatives of all the current faiths (Christians, Muslims, etc.) who could recite them in their own particular way. With regard to Christianity and Islām, the Mongol rulers had apparently no difficulty in identifying the Turco-Mongol *Tengri* with God Almighty and Allāh.

taiskii istočnik o pervykh mongol'skikh khanakh. Nadgrobnaya nadpis' na mogile Yelyui Ču-caya. Perevod i issledovanie (Moscow: "Nauka", 1965) [KIPMK], p. 71.

⁷⁷ See *MNT*, §§ 63, 121, 272.

⁷⁸ See *MNT*, §§ 80, 206, 189. An act of magic – such as that causing a rainstorm – gone wrong was also a negative portent. See *ibid.*, §§ 143, 189.

⁷⁹ See *MTPL*, 17a; *CG*, p. 77 (where Chao Hung points out that the Mongols call thunder 'Heaven Cries' and that when they hear it they do not go on campaign); *KIPMK*, p. 71; I. de Rachewiltz, "More About the Story of Činggis-qan and the Peace-Loving Rhinoceros", in A.R. Davies and A.D. Stefanowska (eds), *Austrina. Essays in Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Founding of the Oriental Society of Australia* (Sydney: Oriental Society of Australia, 1982), pp. 13-26; *ISK*, p. 141.

⁸⁰ See *HWC*, pp. 59, 251, 265; *SGK*, pp. 38, 167, 215; *TMEN*, III, p. 403; Boyle 1972, p. 181ff.

⁸¹ See *HTSL*, 8b (*CG*, p. 140), and *SF*, p. 261. Cf. *TMM*, p. 164; *MWR*, p. 193; and Guillaume de Rubrouk Envoyé de saint Louis, *Voyage dans l'empire mongol* (1253-1255), traduction et commentaire de C. et R. Kappler (Paris: Payot, 1985), pp. 261-262.

However, at this stage there was no official cult of Heaven.⁸² This was not the case of the Orkhon Turks whose qayans, as we know from the Chinese sources, held an official sacrifice to Heaven (lit. 'the Sky-god' 天神) every year, on a specific date (the second decade of the fifth month) and at a specific place (the unidentified river Ta-jen 大人 = *Tayin, *Tazin ?),⁸³ probably the Tes (tu. Tüz) River in northwestern Mongolia.⁸⁴ This is one of the major differences between the attitude of the ancient Turkish rulers and the 12th-13th century Mongols towards Heaven-worship. The lack of a royal cult of Heaven on the part of the latter may be explained in both historical and cultural terms, such as the abrupt rise of Mongol power from a minor tribal grouping with a comparatively 'uncultured' background, but the problem is complex and deserves further study.

II. Earth

1. The Names of Earth

Like *tengri*, *yačar* (mmo. *qačar*; pmo., mo. *yačar*) has both a physical meaning: 'earth, ground, land; distance', and the non-physical, numinous one of the deified earth, the Earth below as the counterpart of Heaven above. In the latter acceptation it occurs eleven times in the *MNT*.⁸⁵ *Gačar* is a purely Mongolian word. In the *MNT* the Earth-deity appears also under the name *Etügen* ~ *Ötügen*,⁸⁶ which corresponds to the *Ötegen*, *Ötögen* of other texts in Preclassical and Middle Mongolian,⁸⁷ and to the *Itoga* (**Itüge[n]*) <

⁸² With the glorification of Činggis Qan after his death, there gradually arose a cult of the founder of the ruling dynasty which assumed vast proportions among the Mongols in the following centuries. However, according to John of Pian di Carpine, Činggis Qan's image (*idolum*) placed on a cart before the imperial tent was an object of cult *already* in Güyüg's time. See *SM*, pp. 237, 343; *TMM*, p. 9. Friar John also claims that it was the lack of a formal cult of God which allowed the Mongols to tolerate other faiths. See *ibid.*, p. 10; *SM*, pp. 238, 343.

⁸³ See P. Pelliot, "Neuf notes sur des questions d'Asie Centrale", *T'oung Pao* 26 (1929), pp. 213-215. Cf. Roux 1956, p. 185ff.

⁸⁴ I.e., the Těsiin Gol at 49/51 N and 93/99 E. See below, n. 89.

⁸⁵ See *MNT*, §§ 113, 121, 125, 163, 177, 208, 224, 248, 260 (twice), 281.

⁸⁶ *MNT*, §§ 113, 245, 254 (*Etügen*); 255 (*Ötügen*). In §§ 190 and 245, *etügen* occurs as a synonym of *qačar* 'place'.

⁸⁷ See I. de Rachewiltz, "The Preclassical Mongolian Version of the Hsiao-ching", *Zentralasiatische Studien* 16 (1982), pp. 29 (5b2: *Ötegen*), 38 (32a2: *Ötegen*); F.W. Cleaves, "An Early Mongolian Version of the Alexander Romance", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 22 (1959), p. 40 (8r2: *ötögen*); Idem, "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1362 in Memory of Prince Hindu", *ibid.* 12 (1949), p. 68 (50.3: *ötegen*); *LMM* I, p. 1 (IIa, 1r2: *ötögen*); W. Heissig, *Die mongolischen*

Etügen) of John of Pian di Carpine.⁸⁸ This name, in its various forms, is the name of the holy mountains and ancestral land of the ancient Turks, Ötükän, identified with the Khangai range and the territory comprised between the Orkhon, Selenga and Tes rivers.⁸⁹ It is, therefore, an originally Turkic place-name with sacred connotations, later adopted by the Mongols and identified with *Γājar*. Another purely Mongolian variant (or, rather, corruption) of the name *Etügen*, etc. < tu. Ötükän, is *Načiyai*, which is found in Marco Polo's *The Description of the World* in the form *Nacigay*, and in a Mongol preclassical text of 1312 in the form *Načiyai*.⁹⁰ The fact that the Earth-deity was known by the Mongols under different names should not surprise us considering the many different names under which the same god or goddess was known in the classical world, especially in the case of feminine deities. Nor is it surprising that Ötükän should in time be identified with the Earth-deity since, as Pelliot pointed out long ago, Ötükän was the abode of the Earth-goddess and the place where the Turkish *qayans* sacrificed to her.⁹¹ In the Orkhon inscriptions 'earth' as land, place and soil is called *yer/yir*, corresponding to mo. *γajār*,⁹² but as a counterpart of Heaven Above (*üzä Täyri*) it is called *iduq Yer/Yir*, i.e. the Holy Earth (see below). There is a good deal of literature on the subject of both the Turkish Ötükän and the Mongolian Ötögen (and its variants).⁹³

Handschriften-Reste aus Olon Süme Innere Mongolei (16.-17. Jhdt.) (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1976), p. 266 (OS IV, 78v15: *ötügen* [corr. *ötögen*]).

⁸⁸ See *SM*, pp. 240, 345.

⁸⁹ See *SHM(R)*, p. 1004. Tu. *Ötükän* > mmo. *Ötögen* ~ *Ötegen* ~ *Etügen* > *Itügen*. Cf. N. Poppe, "Eine mongolische Fassung der Alexandersage", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 107 (1957), p. 117, n. 12. For the various theories on the etymology of tu. Ötükän see E. Lot-Falck, "A propos d'Ätügen Déesse mongole de la terre", *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 149 (1956), pp. 179-180. However, the origin of the place-name remains obscure.

⁹⁰ See A. Mostart, "Le mot *NATIGAY/NACIGAY* chez Marco Polo", in *Oriente Poliano. Studi e conferenze tenute all'Is.M.E.O. in occasione del VII centenario della nascita di Marco Polo (1254-1954)* (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1957), pp. 95-101; F.W. Cleaves, "The *Bodistw-a Čari-a Awatar-un Tayiibur* of 1312", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 17 (1954), p. 54 (4-167a2). Cf. also P. Pelliot, *Recherches sur les chrétiens d'Asie Centrale et d'Extrême-Orient* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1973) [CAC], p. 26.

⁹¹ See Pelliot 1929, pp. 218-219; Idem, *Notes on Marco Polo*, I-III (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1959-63), p. 791: 'Ötükän or Ütükän (the sacred mountain where the Earth-god or rather Earth-goddess of the Turks resided)'.

⁹² See *GOT*, pp. 401, 403-404 (Index s.vv. *yer*, *yir*). Cf. N.N. Poppe, *Mongol'skii slovar Mukaddimat al-Adab*, I-III (Moscow, Leningrad: Izd. Akad. Nauk SSSR, 1938; repr. Westmead: Gregg International, 1971), p. 288, s.v. *qajār*, *RH*, p. 246, no. 7. For tu. *yer/yir* see also *ED*, p. 954a-b; *TMEN*, no. 2126.

⁹³ For other references besides those given in the above notes and in *SHM(R)*, pp. 430-431 and 1004, see F.W. Cleaves, "The Third Chapter of an Early Mongolian Version

2. The Attributes of Earth

In the *MNT*, *Qajar* 'Earth' regularly occurs as the second element of the binome *Tenggeri* (~ *Tenggiri*) *Qajar* 'Heaven and Earth' (see below, 3) and, as such, Earth has no attribute of her own, unlike the Turkish *Yer/Yir* in the expression *iduq Yer Sub* 'The Holy (*iduq*) Earth and Water (Spirits below).⁹⁴ However, *Ötögen* ~ *Etügen* 'Earth' in combination with *Tenggiri* is qualified by her pre-eminent epithet of *eke* (pmo., mo. id.) 'Mother.' This attribute occurs twice in the *MNT* (§§ 113, 255). In the first instance, *eke Etügen* 'Mother Earth' is in combination with *erketü Tenggiri* 'Mighty Heaven' – both powers playing a vital role in helping Temüjin and his allies to defeat the Merkit.⁹⁵ In the second instance, *Ötögen eke* clearly designates Mother Earth in its physical aspect: *Ötögen eke a'ui bui, müret usut olon bui* 'Mother Earth is wide: (her) rivers and waters are many.'⁹⁶ This applies also to the other two attributes that we find in the *MNT*, viz. *dayir* (pmo. id.) 'brown' (§ 245: *dayir Etügen*) and *körösütei* (pmo. id.; mo. *körösütü*) 'crusty', lit. 'with epidermis' (§ 254: *körösütei Etügen*).⁹⁷

Thus, the term *Qajar* in the *MNT* seems to designate a more abstract power, one that does not require a qualifier insofar as it forms an inseparable unit with Heaven which, in the animistic conception of the Mongols, is also not qualified by any 'physical' attribute (like 'blue'). On the other hand, Earth, by its very nature, has a concrete aspect that cannot be ignored, and for this purpose *Etügen* ~

of the *Hsiao ching*", *Mongolian Studies* 14 (1991), pp. 136-138, n. 35; A. Mostaert, *Le matériel mongol du Houa i i iu* 華夷譯語 *de Houng-ou (1389)*, II: Commentaries, par A. Mostaert et I. de Rachewiltz, *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 18 (Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1995), p. 4. See also Roux 1962, pp. 197-206 (not very reliable).

⁹⁴ See *GOT*, pp. 244 (E35), 252 (II. W3), 277 (E35), 288 (II. W3). For *iduq* 'holy, sacred' see Mori 1981, pp. 69-71; *TMEN*, no. 1936; cf. Roux 1962, pp. 201-204. For *iduq Yer Sub* see *loc. cit.*

⁹⁵ See *SHM(R)*, p. 43, § 113. In this passage, which is in alliterative poetry, *eke* is placed before *Etügen* to match *erketü* qualifying *Tenggiri*. *Eke* 'Mother' as the regular appellation of Earth appears frequently in Mongol literature, from the preclassical period to modern times. See the texts cited in n. 87 above and A. Mostaert, "A propos d'une prière au feu", in N. Poppe (ed.), *American Studies in Altaic Linguistics* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1962), pp. 194 (2r1), 197, 201, 218, n. 21.

⁹⁶ See *SHM(R)*, p. 187, § 255.

⁹⁷ On these epithets see *SHM(R)*, pp. 885, 928, where further references are given. In the text studied by Mostaert (see Mostaert 1962, p. 194), Mother Earth (*Ötegen eke*) is qualified as *boro körösütü* 'à épiderme brun' (*ibid.*, p. 197). In the Orkhon inscriptions we also find the colour attribute *yayiz* 'brown' (or 'reddish-brown') for Earth. See *GOT*, p. 263 (E1).

Ötögen as 'Earth the Mother' fulfils a dual role. And, in its chthonian role it could, of course, also be made the object of a popular cult (see below, 4).

3. The Roles of Earth

In the *MNT*, *Qajar* – the Earth-deity – is inseparably joined to *Tenggeri* ~ *Tenggiri*, the Heaven-deity, and has no autonomous function. Therefore, the binome *Tenggeri* (~ *Tenggiri*) *Qajar* also occurs eleven times, with *Qajar* sharing the main roles of her heavenly counterpart, as follows:

- i. Earth as Maker of Destiny (*jaya'an*): *MNT*, §§ 121, 248 and 281. The first reference is a clear indication that both powers determine human events; the second, that they determine the existence of wild animals.
- ii. Earth as Giver (lit. 'Increaser') of Strength (*güčü*) and Power (*auqa*): *MNT*, §§ 113, 125, 208, 224 and 260 (twice).
- iii. Earth as Giver of Protection (*ihe'el*): *MNT*, §§ 125, 163 and 177.

The complementary role of Earth is well illustrated in *MNT*, § 121, where the two powers are said to have jointly decided Temüjin's fate: *Tenggiri Qajar eyetüldüjü Temüjin-i ulus-un ejen boltuqai* 'Together Heaven and Earth have agreed: Temüjin shall be lord of the people (or nation)!'⁹⁸

From the above references in the *MNT* it appears then that, for the Mongols, Heaven and Earth formed a 'dual unit' in playing those vital roles that are often ascribed to Heaven alone and that we have reviewed in I.3. This can only mean that in all those instances when Heaven decides destiny, increases strength, etc., Earth is simply subsumed, Heaven being the supreme power, hence the principal player. However, the ultimate decision as to the granting of protection, i.e. of assuring victory, is left to *both* Heaven Above and Earth (below). See *MNT*, §§ 163, 177.

A similar phenomenon is observed in the texts of the Orkhon inscriptions, with Heaven playing the central role and the Earth and Water spirits a secondary one; nevertheless, Earth and Water grant favour in insuring success just as Heaven does: *Täŋri* is, thus, *primus inter pares*.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ See *SHM(R)*, p. 48.

⁹⁹ See *GOT*, pp. 262 (S9), 265 (E10-12), 266 (E15), 267 (E25-26), 268 (E29), 277 (E33-35), 280 (N9), 283 (W6), 285 (S9), 288 (W3), 289 (E3). Cf. Roux 1962, p. 204.

As for Mother Earth (*Eke Etügen*) of *MNT*, § 113, her role is likewise linked with that of Mighty Heaven, the latter 'calling' Temüjin from above, with Mother Earth helping him (and his allies To'oril Qan and Jamuqa) to insure the success of the campaign to defeat the Merkit and rescue Temüjin's wife, Börte. Since, as the previous sentence of the passage in question informs us, Temüjin had his 'strength increased by Heaven and Earth (*Tenggiri Qajar*)',¹⁰⁰ one gains the impression that Mother Earth's role was a more practical one on the ground, reinforcing the view – already mooted – that *Etügen* ~ *Ötögen* is a more 'concrete' manifestation of the Earth-deity. This may have a bearing on the next issue.

4. The Worship of Earth

In the *MNT* there is no mention either of the worship of Earth, or of prayers to Earth. Neither the Chinese nor the Persian sources for this period actually refer to Earth, nor is there any reference to Earth in Güyüg's letter. However, we are luckier with the contemporary Western sources. There is a reference to a cult of Earth in the following somewhat confused account by John of Pian di Carpine in his *Historia Mongalorum*.¹⁰¹ 'They (i.e. the Mongols – I.R.) pay great attention to divination, auguries, sooth-sayings, sorceries and incantations, and when they receive an answer from the demons they believe that a god is speaking to them. This god they call Itoga – the Comans however call him Kam¹⁰² – and they have a wondrous fear and reverence for him and offer him many oblations and the first portion of their food and drink, and they do everything according to the answers he gives.' Friar John was not aware that his 'Itoga' was, in fact, our *Etügen*, and that the deity to whom the Mongols paid their respect was not a male but a female. It is undeniable, however, that they did worship her and that her cult was not confined to the ruling family; on the contrary, it was a general one. Furthermore, it is clear from what Friar John says that 'Itoga' was an important deity, second only to 'God', i.e. Heaven; hence it could only be the Earth-deity. The fact that there existed at the time a popular cult of the Earth-deity is confirmed by Marco Polo, who relates that this deity, called Nacigai, 'is a terrestrial god or god of the land who protects & cares for their wives and their sons and their cattle and their corn. And they do him great reverence and great honour, for each keeps him in an honourable place in his house. For they make this god of felt and of other cloth and they keep him in their houses; and they believe that this

¹⁰⁰ See *SHM(R)*, p. 43.

¹⁰¹ *SM*, pp. 240-241, 345.

¹⁰² This is an incorrect statement due to confusion on the nature of which see P. Daffinà, *ibid.*, p. 416, n. 9.

god of theirs has a wife and sons, and so they also make of cloth another feminine image & say that it is the wife of this god and they make other little images & say they are his sons ... And when they come to eat breakfast or supper, first they take some of the fat flesh and anoint the mouth of that god and also of his wife and his sons; ...'.¹⁰³ Here, again, the narrator claims that this terrestrial god was a male deity. Noting the discrepancy with what we know of *Načiyai/Etügen ~ Ötögen*, A. Mostaert expressed the opinion that 'il est évident que le culte de la Terre, tel qu'il est décrit par Marco Polo, n'était plus le culte primitif, mais une forme populaire de ce culte où la Terre, de déesse qu'elle avait été, était devenue dieu'.¹⁰⁴ This may be so, but there is another possible explanation for the discrepancy which we must not ignore. All the Mongol sources of the 13th-14th centuries that mention this deity, from the *MNT* to the *Hua-i i-yü* of 1389, refer to her as 'Mother' (*eke*), hence as a goddess, not as a god. It is, in my view, very unlikely that in the very same period the Mongols would have worshipped her as a male deity, particularly in view of her explicit role as a 'terrestrial god' protecting their wives, sons and cattle – i.e. as a tutelary and fertility goddess. I think that it is much more likely that both Friar John and Marco were mistaken and that what they took to be a god was, in fact, a goddess. I am sure that neither author could have made the same confusion had they been describing a god or goddess of, say, the Indian or the Greco-Roman pantheon, who would normally be presented naked or semi-naked, or at any rate with clear physical attributes of their sex (hair, beard, obvious presence or absence of breasts, etc.). A Mongol felt doll would not present such distinctive marks, neither shape-wise nor dress-wise, and the sex of the image would be ambiguous to the outside uninformed observer.¹⁰⁵ I therefore doubt the correctness of John's and Marco's reports, particularly since the latter's description of the other images he refers to as being the wife and the children of the terrestrial god may, in fact, be those of the tutelary genii – the so-called *ongyod* – described by both Friar John and William of Rubruck.¹⁰⁶

Be that as it may, we can say with certainty that Earth as a supernatural force not only played a capital role as the second power in the dualistic system of the Mongols at the time of Činggis Qan and his immediate successors, but that in its

¹⁰³ A.C. Moule & Paul Pelliot, *Marco Polo: The Description of the World*, I-II (London: Routledge, 1938), I, p. 170. See also *ibid.*, pp. 254 and 469. Cf. R. Latham (tr.), *The Travels of Marco Polo* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1958; several reprints), pp. 98, 160, 329, and Mostaert 1957, pp. 95-96.

¹⁰⁴ See *ibid.*, p. 99.

¹⁰⁵ For these felt images or 'dolls' see *CAC*, pp. 17-18; *The Travels of Marco Polo. The Complete Yule-Cordier Edition*, I-II (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1993), I, p. 250 (with illustration of the images).

¹⁰⁶ See *SM*, pp. 236-237, 342-343; *TMM*, p. 9; *SF*, pp. 174, 232; *MFW*, pp. 75, 156 (cf. *TMM*, pp. 9; 95-96, 141).

chthonian aspect it was the object of a popular domestic cult as a tutelary and fertility goddess or god.

As for the ancient Turks, the Chinese sources record the qayans' regular sacrifices to Earth to which we have already alluded,¹⁰⁷ while the Orkhon inscriptions mention, together with Heaven Above and Holy Earth, also a female deity called Umay, who was undoubtedly a fertility goddess. But we have no exact information as to the part she played in the life of the Turks.¹⁰⁸

Conclusion

The above preliminary survey will, I hope, contribute to a better understanding of the role played by Heaven and Earth in Mongol society in the second half of the 12th and the first half of the 13th century. It would be impossible to achieve such a task relying exclusively on the *Secret History of the Mongols*. This text, precious though it is and covering most of this period, is not a religious or quasi-religious treatise, or anything of the kind. It does not, nor is it meant to, provide a full answer to many vital questions, such as the religious beliefs and practices of the Mongols of that time. Fortunately, we have several genuine contemporary sources – the major ones dating from 1221, 1237, 1246, 1247 and 1255 – that help us to fill many of the gaps.

My general conclusion is that the Mongol ruling elite of the period under investigation held beliefs concerning Heaven and Earth – their two principal deities – that in spite of obvious formal differences, were in substance very similar to those of the ancient Turks. The relationship is so close, in fact, that we may regard the Mongols of Činggis Qan as the true spiritual heirs of the Orkhon Turks. We find thus a further confirmation of the fact that in religious matters, as in other cultural areas, the Turks played vis-à-vis the Mongols a role similar to that of Greece vis-à-vis Rome. In the famous 'Stone of Chingis', i.e. the stele in honour of Yisüngge, regarded by many as the first written monument of the Mongols, the text is inscribed with letters newly borrowed from the Uighur Turks.¹⁰⁹ The first

¹⁰⁷ See above, n. 91.

¹⁰⁸ See *GOT*, pp. 235 (E31), 252 (II. W3); 268 (E31), 288 (II. W3). On Umay see Lot-Falck 1956, pp. 163, 168-170; Roux 1962, pp. 204-206; Mori 1981, p. 66 and n. 81.

¹⁰⁹ See I. de Rachewiltz, "Some Remarks on the Stele of Yisüngge", in W. Heissig et al. (eds), *Tractata altaica: Denis Sinor sexagenario optime de rebus altaicis merito dedicata* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1976), pp. 487-508.

two words of the inscription, 'Činggis Qan', are both Turkic words.¹¹⁰ When the great conqueror died, his body was buried at Burqan Qaldun, in his ancestral land, but his soul, according to the *Secret History*, flew to Tengri¹¹¹ – no doubt to join those of Kül Tigin and Bilgä Qayan, whose golden crown and jewels were discovered only recently (2001) by a Mongolian-Turkish archaeological expedition near the qayan's monument, 45km north of Qara Qorum.¹¹² And it is here, at Qara Qorum (tu. 'Red Boulder'), in the very heart of the 'Land of Ötükan' (*Ötükan yir*), that Ögödei was to build his palace in 1235 and establish his capital,¹¹³ assuming for himself the Turkish title of *Qayan* (mmo. *Qa'an*) which will become his *personal epithet and posthumous designation*.¹¹⁴ One of his chief ministers and head of the Imperial chancellery was Čingqai (ca. 1169-1252), a man of Turkish cultural background.¹¹⁵ He was one of the three chancellors who drafted Güyüg's letter to the Pope, the *first* sentence of which (i.e. the earlier-mentioned 'opening formula') is – perhaps not surprisingly – written in Turkic, not in Mongolian or in Persian...¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ See I. de Rachewiltz, "The Title Činggis Qan/Qayan Re-examined", in W. Heisig and K. Sagaster (eds), *Gedanke und Wirkung. Festschrift zum 90. Geburtstag von Nikolaus Poppe* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1989), pp. 281-298.

¹¹¹ Lit., 'ascended to Heaven' (*tenggeri-tür qarba*). See *MNT*, § 268; *SHM(R)*, p. 200. The expression 'to fly (to Heaven)' (*uç-*) in Old Turkic is a euphemism for 'to pass away' – but only for exalted personages. See *ibid.*, pp. 979-980; *ET*, p. 19b.

¹¹² Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland GmbH (ed.), *Dschingis Khan und seine Erben. Das Weltreich der Mongolen* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2005) [DKSE], pp. 74-75.

¹¹³ On Qara Qorum see *SHM(R)*, pp. 1004-1007; and, more recently, *DKSE*, pp. 126-195.

¹¹⁴ See de Rachewiltz 1983, pp. 273-274; P. Daffinà in *SM*, pp. 474-476, n. 4. Cf. also *NMP*, p. 302.

¹¹⁵ See P. Buell in *ISK*, pp. 95-111; Idem, "Chinqai (ca. 1169-1252): Architect of Mongolian Empire", in E.H. Kaplan, D.W. Whisehunt (eds), *Opuscula Altaica. Essays Presented in Honor of Henry Schwarz* (Bellingham: Western Washington, 1994), pp. 168-185. Regarding Čingqai's ethnic origin (still doubtful but, in my opinion, probably Uighur), see my remarks in *ISK*, p. 111.

¹¹⁶ See above, n. 28. Much more can be said on the subject, but it would be beyond the scope of the present article. See, provisionally, A. Róna-Tas, "Some Notes on the Terminology of Mongolian Writing", *Acta Orientalia Hung* 18 (1965), pp. 119-147; G. Kara, "L'ancien ouïgour dans le lexique mongol", *Journal Asiatique* 269 (1981), pp. 317-323; Idem, *Books of the Mongolian Nomads. More than Eight Centuries of Writing Mongolian*, First English edition translated from the Russian by J.R. Krueger (Bloomington: Indiana University, 2005), *passim*; T. Gülensoy, "Moğolların Gizli Tarihi'ndeki Türkçe kelimeler üzerine bir deneme", *Türkoloji Dergisi* (Ankara) 5, 1 (1973), pp. 93-135 (to be used with caution); N. Poppe, "The Turkic Loan Words in Middle Mongolian", *Central Asiatic Journal* 1

The present contribution is not only aimed at a fuller understanding of 'heavenly' matters among the ancient Mongols. It is also offered, with respect and sincere friendship, to Father Jerom Heyndrickx, cism, on the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday. Father Heyndrickx has done, and is doing, so much for a better understanding of spiritual and human affairs between East and West with a dedication and love worthy of the great religious travellers of the thirteenth century. *Tümen tümen nasulaturyai!*

1955, pp. 36-42; and my contribution "Turks in China Under the Mongols: A Preliminary Investigation of Turco-Mongol Relations in the 13th and 14th Centuries", in M. Rossabi (ed.), *China Among Equals. The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbors, 10th-14th Centuries* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 281-310.

سلامه گویا
 کوه اوجون سارالو و سواد
 حارسان
 از میان دست
 در اندر جان و کند جاعت
 ولاهها در کاسه در لوقه

Plate I. Letter of Güyüg to Pope Innocent IV (1246) (Lines 1-6)

در اندر جان و کند جاعت
 ولاهها در کاسه در لوقه
 در ساه لرا الحسان سوا
 و اگر چون سید منوکی با او کلا با لرا لرا
 کوه سارالو در میان سارالو و سواد
 در کوه اندر سارالو در سارالو
 در اندر جان و کند جاعت
 در اندر جان و کند جاعت
 در اندر جان و کند جاعت

Plate II. Letter of Güyüg to Pope Innocent IV (1246) (Lines 5-13)

خطای را اعمال کرده اند هر جا که سخن بود
 سردار کلان راسته اند کرده انشی کرده اند و کسی
 انبساط مارا کو سدران که بهما را نمردان اصول
 در کوه سون بستند که آمدند در میان خود ای
 وقت حق می شود که سدها بر کبره مکرم بجای
 می کوی که از ساینده خدای برای سینه لاری کوی
 ای نام نوی درای که حدای که برای اهورها
 حق که مین و در سون حای در ای که هر جا
 می کوی نو حدای امان را صدق تا همه در علم
 و انبساط را بهر امس که کرده است می در این حدای

Plate III. Letter of Güyüg to Pope Innocent IV (1246) (Lines 10-18)

خطای را اعمال کرده اند هر جا که سخن بود
 سردار کلان راسته اند کرده انشی کرده اند و کسی
 انبساط مارا کو سدران که بهما را نمردان اصول
 در کوه سون بستند که آمدند در میان خود ای
 وقت حق می شود که سدها بر کبره مکرم بجای
 می کوی که از ساینده خدای برای سینه لاری کوی
 ای نام نوی درای که حدای که برای اهورها
 حق که مین و در سون حای در ای که هر جا
 می کوی نو حدای امان را صدق تا همه در علم
 و انبساط را بهر امس که کرده است می در این حدای

Plate IV. Letter of Güyüg to Pope Innocent IV (1246) (Lines 16-25)

ی کوی لاریوسا هر حدای که از اسمان است
ی نام لوی در ای که حدای که نامی امورها در
حی که زمین و ما در میان که هر جان
می کوی لوی حدای امان ما در و تا در و
و اما ما را ما را اسم که است می در این حدای
حدای که حکوم و اند که لوری ما در ای کوی
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Plate V. Letter of Güyüg to Pope Innocent IV (1246) (Lines 21-31)