

BIOGRAPHICAL RHETORICS: NARRATIVE AND POWER IN  
*YUANSHI* BIOGRAPHY

by  
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## ABSTRACT

The *Yuanshi* (*Yuan History*) – a Chinese-language account of Mongol rule in East Asia compiled in haste between 1368 and 1370 – presents hundreds of *liezhuan* biographical narratives on imperial subjects. Vital primary sources for reconstructing Mongol and Chinese history, these are viewed as chaotic texts receiving limited rhetorical input. Taking the 47 subjects of an influential fourteenth-century biographical collection as a sample, this study demonstrates the considerable rhetorical fashioning undergone by some of these biographies, exposing narrative tools employed by the fourteenth-century Chinese historian-compiler. Starting from a case study on the biographies of Yelü Chucai (1189-1243), we identify three themes to the compilers' edits, which three thematic chapters follow across the sample texts. The first of these sees narrative scope narrowed, marginalizing non-‘Chinese’ elements of the imperium to impose a ‘Yuan’ shape on Mongol East Asia. The second situates bureaucratic governing institutions as a moral good, imposing a negative positioning on rival approaches. Finally, we demonstrate the characterization of the deserving populace as beneficiaries of moral rule. Though none of these themes emerge in full coherence across the work, the broad tendencies are clear, as is the all-embracing, shaping influence of the storytelling imperative toward vivid juxtaposition of ideal and deviant.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- CHC* Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett (eds), *The Cambridge History of China, Volume Six: Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
- FG* Farquhar, David M., *The Government of China under Mongolian Rule: A Reference Guide*, (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1990).
- HD* Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985).
- ISK* Igor de Rachewiltz and others (eds), *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period (1200-1300)*, Asiatische Forschungen, 121 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993).
- QYW* Li Xiusheng 李修生 (ed.) *Quanyuanwen* 全元文 (*Complete Yuan Literature*), 60 vols (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1999).
- RPN* de Rachewiltz, Igor, May Wang, *Repertory of Proper Names in Yuan Literary Sources*, 3 vols (Taipei: Oriental Bookstore, 1988).
- YR* Wang Deyi 王德毅, Li Rongcun 李榮村, Pan Bochong 潘柏澄, *Yuanren Zhuanji Ziliao Suoyin* 元人傳記資料索引 (*Biographical Index for the Yuan Dynasty*), (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1987).
- YRCK* *Yuanren wenji zhenben congkan* 元人文集珍本叢刊, 8 vols. (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1985).
- YWL* Su Tianjue, *Yuanwenlei* 元文類 ("Categorized literature from the Yuan period"), late Ming (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century) edition held at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, 2 vols. These are found at <http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/0006/bsb00067093/images/> and <http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/0006/bsb00067094/images/>, respectively, both accessed 16/01/17.

## A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION

Chinese characters are transliterated using *Hanyu pinyin*, except in cases where citations of other scholars' translations employ the Wade-Giles system. Mongolian names and terms, where these can be reconstructed, are transliterated following an amended Library of Congress romanization chart replacing the *o* *e* *ls* *u* with *ö/ü* for clarity for the general reader and *c* (*ch*) with *č* *f* for the same reason and to prevent confusion with *pi* *nyin* *c* (*ts*).<sup>1</sup> Transliteration of Persian and Arabic terms and names follows the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* scheme.<sup>2</sup> Uncertain transliterations from Chinese-language texts are presented in *pinyin*, and all names and other terms are preserved in their various Chinese transliteration versions in full-text footnotes. Dating conventions, such as regnal eras and use of the Chinese *gan**zhi* 干支 sexagenary cycle, are preserved, alongside the equivalent years, and where provided, months and days, in the Christian Era (CE); the use of intercalary months kept the lunar calendar close enough to the solar for a rough equivalence. Translations are intended to retain, as far as possible, the structure and concepts of the Chinese texts, an approach that may sacrifice English style for communication of our writers' content and ideas.

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<sup>1</sup> For this see <https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsa/romanization/mongolia.pdf> (accessed 22/11/17).

<sup>2</sup> For this see <https://ijmes.chass.ncsu.edu/docs/TransChart.pdf> (accessed 22/11/17).



## Introduction

Perhaps due to its canonical position, and despite well-known flaws, the *Yuanshi* 元史 (*Yuan History*, compiled 1368-70 CE), and especially its substantial *liezhuan* biographical section, has served an extremely prominent role among our sources on the history of Mongol rule in eastern Eurasia. The exaggerated centrality of these biographical narratives to present-day scholarship parallels to some degree the prominence afforded to the two best-known Persian-language works on the Mongol empire, namely *Tārīkh-e Jahāngushāī*, or *History of the World Conqueror*, composed in ornate Persian by ‘Alā al-Dīn ‘Aṭā Malik Juvaynī (c.1226-1283) between around 1252 and 1260 and the *Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh* compiled by Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl-Allāh (c.1247-1317) and completed in 1310. The *liezhuan* biographies owe this position to a combination of factors, among which not the least is the work’s ‘official’ status as one of the court-sponsored ‘Standard History’ *zhengshi* 正史 and the importance of that genre to the self-image of Confucian officialdom.

Alongside, and closely linked to, this claim of orthodox rectitude, a feature these *liezhuan* share with the two Persian works is their accessibility (the *Yuanshi* was repeatedly reprinted in the Ming and Qing eras as one of the canonical dynastic histories) and vivid narrative style. This thesis, through a close comparative reading of a sample of *liezhuan* narratives for which we possess 14<sup>th</sup>-century comparator texts, interrogates that treatment in narratological terms, demonstrating that a significant portion of these narratives betray signs of concerted activist editing during the work’s Ming-era compilation period, and that these show substantial concern with rhetorical impact through vivid story-telling. This prioritization of narrative effect has substantial consequences for the value of

*Yuanshi liezhuan* as reconstructive source material on twelfth and thirteenth century Eastern and Inner Eurasia, with, in some cases, every aspect of the episodes portrayed being altered to some degree.

This thesis is tightly bounded in scope, dealing exclusively with Chinese-language portrayal of events, and not attempting a positivist reconstruction of them. As such it does not engage with other historiographical traditions of the multiple language cultures with which the Mongols came into contact – such as, for example, the voluminous Persian historiographical tradition – in their own right.<sup>1</sup> Where selected works from these traditions are mentioned, those, such as the *Secret History of the Mongols*, *Tārīkh-e Jahāngushāī*, and *Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh*, which bear directly on Mongol rule, serve as cross-references on individuals and events. Other texts, such as biblical narratives, eighth-century Turkic inscriptions, early Arabic histories and works by Bayhaqī and al-Ṭabarī, among others, are mentioned exclusively in relation to their use by scholars providing methodological insights into historical narrative and rhetoric.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed summary of historiography on Mongol rule from the Islamicate world, see especially Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), pp. 16-40. More specifically on the Persian tradition, see Charles Melville, ‘Historiography: IV. Mongol Period’, in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition, 2003, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/historiography-iv> (accessed online at 11th December 2017); David Morgan, ‘Persian and Non-Persian Historical Writing in the Mongol Empire’, in *Ferdowsi, the Mongols and the History of Iran: Art, Literature and Culture from Early Islam to Qajar Persia: Studies in Honour of Charles Melville*, ed. by Robert Hillenbrand, A.C.S. Peacock and Fīruza Abdullaeva (London: I.B. Tauris / The Iran Heritage Foundation, 2013), pp. 120-25. On the Persian historical tradition more generally, see Julie Scott Meisami, *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999); various articles in Charles Melville (ed.), *Persian Historiography, A History of Persian Literature*, 10 (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> A more distinct parallel might be found in a comparative study of Standard History treatment alongside the didactic, rhetorical and political nature of the Persian and Arabic (and other literary traditions’) ‘Mirrors for Princes’ genre. On this see especially L. Marlow, ‘Surveying Recent Literature on the Arabic and Persian Mirrors for Princes Genre’, *History Compass*, 7 (2009): 523-38; Neguin Yavari, ‘Mirrors for Princes or a Hall of Mirrors? Nizām al-Mulk’s “Siyar al-mulūk” Reconsidered’, *al-Masāq*, 20 (2008), 47-69.

Although the Ming compilation teams had access to the *Guochao mingchen shilue*, the 1327 biographical collection that defines the scope of this thesis, they did not rely on its compiler's edits or arrangement, rather pursuing a distinct set of priorities. These primarily involved the delimitation and centring of a 'Chinese' cultural space, a newly claimed 'Chinese' Ming space decoupled from broader Mongol territories. This was complemented by the specification of idealized methods for governing that space, and the definition of a meritorious populace as deserving beneficiaries for whom rule should be undertaken. Selected for particular attention, the biography of Yelü Chucai 耶律楚材 (1189-1243) displays detailed, coherent and thorough-going editorial adjustment to all elements of its narrative, which functioned as raw material. Although other texts display less concerted intervention, all elements of our sample were edited and altered to some degree during the compilation process. The impact of these edits on our understanding of Mongol-era East Asia is profound and deserving of our attention, as is the editorial focus on drama and moral impact over dryness, precision and record. The framing of secondary characters in particular, especially in regard to their official bureaucratic standing, is, besides being a key data point for historians, a vital narrative tool and one manipulated freely in pursuit of this effect.

Within months of his capture of Daidu (Beijing), capital of the Great Yuan *Ulus*, in 1368, and while substantial loyalist forces held power near and far, Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328-98), the emperor of the nascent Ming 明 polity, ordered the compilation of a substantial history of those he had so recently dislodged. Relating events across a century of Činggisid Mongol rule in North and East Asia, this project was, as much as were the huge diplomatic and military efforts made in those founding years, an essential element of the legitimating and stabilizing activity of the new regime. Fitting the Great Mongol

Nation (*Yeke Monggol Ulus*) into a ‘Yuan Dynasty’ straitjacket, the Chinese-language *Yuanshi* 元史 (*Yuan History*) trammelled Eurasia-wide imperial activity into Sinocentric ‘Standard History’ *zhengshi* 正史 form.<sup>3</sup> Positioning Činggisid rule as a ‘dynasty’ among dynasties, this both granted the Great Yuan *Ulus* (the territory held, and perhaps defined, by Qubilai Qagan and successive monarchs in East Asia) past legitimacy as holders of the Mandate of Heaven, and demonstrated their failure to maintain this, situating the Ming as their legitimate successors.<sup>4</sup>

In so doing, as this thesis demonstrates, the work served to define both past and future, in part through narrative editing – effectively story-telling. This story-telling, especially as it relates to the work’s considerable range of biographical material, has a substantial impact on our understanding of events and figures associated with Činggisid rule. Interrogating the nature and effect of that story-telling, we demonstrate its direct impact on the history of the Mongol Empire and Inner Asia, exposing the influence of its framing of events and individuals and the power of editorial technique in historical recording.

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<sup>3</sup> This genre of composite annals-biography historical writing went through a lengthy and uneven evolution, and developed a legitimizing function during the Tang era (618-907 C.E.), providing a backwards-projecting set of lineage politics. It is discussed in detail in Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A New Manual* (Cambridge, MA / London: Harvard University Press, 2012), at pp. 620-22. This study refers to the paperback Zhonghua Shuju edition of the *Yuanshi*, currently accepted as the academic standard: Song Lian 宋濂 et al., *Yuanshi* 元史 (*Yuan History*), 15 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1976). On the project and the final presentation of the work, see Francis Woodman Cleaves, ‘The “Postscript to the Table of Contents of the *Yuan Shih*”’, *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, 33 (1993), 1–18; Francis Woodman Cleaves, ‘The Memorial for Presenting the *Yüan Shih*’, *Asia Major*, 3rd Series, Volume 1 (1988), 59–69; Wang Shenrong 王慎荣, *Yuanshi tanyuan* 元史探源 (*A Detailed Exploration of “Yuanshi” Sources*), (Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> Here we follow David Robinson’s neat approach to terminology. See Robinson, David M., *Empire’s Twilight: Northeast Asia under the Mongols*, Harvard-Yenching Monograph Series, 68 (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), p. 3, n. 2. John Dardess has highlighted links between the shifting nature of the first Ming emperor’s views on the Činggisid polity and the immediate challenges faced by his own rule, underlining the purpose served by Yuan history as a negative exemplar; a symbol of rejected paths and deviance. See John Dardess, ‘Ming T’ai-tsu on the Yüan: An Autocrat’s Assessment of the Mongol Dynasty’, *The Bulletin of Sung and Yüan Studies* 14 (1978), 6-11 (10).

The *Yuanshi* sits alongside a number of other substantial historical works originating (to varying degrees) within the imperial territories. These include, most prominently, the *Secret History of the Mongols*, composed and edited in the thirteenth century and subsequently transmitted in a convoluted manner via a combination of Chinese translation and phonetic transcription into Chinese characters.<sup>5</sup> A semi-mythical ancestor story and account of Činggisid origins, this shares content with the *Shengwu qinzheng lu* and the first sections of the *Yuanshi*. These works are related via a lost Činggisid family history, referred to as the *Tobčiyān* (Mong. ‘History’).<sup>6</sup> Alongside this, the lost *Altan Debter* (Mong. ‘Golden book’) seems to have provided an imperial genealogy.<sup>7</sup> The prominent Persian-language history *Jāmi ‘al-Tavārīkh*, compiled by Rashīd al-Dīn Faḡl-Allāh (c.1247-1317) and completed in 1310, likewise draws on this source, mentioning its importance. Rashīd al-Dīn’s work also drew on, and in some places simply reworked, ornate and vivid Persian material from the *Tārīkh-e Jahāngushāī*, or *History of the World Conqueror*, composed in ornate Persian by ‘Alā al-Dīn ‘Aṭā Malik Juvaynī (c.1226-1283) between around 1252 and 1260.<sup>8</sup> We see considerable overlap and parallels between these works, particularly in accounts of the first decades of Činggisid conquest, and alongside

<sup>5</sup> E’erdengtai 额尔登泰, and Wuyundalai 乌云达赉, eds., *Menggu Mishi Jiaokan Ben* 蒙古秘史校勘本 (*The Secret History of the Mongols: A Collated Edition*) (Hohhot: Nei Menggu renmin chubanshe, 1980).

<sup>6</sup> On these connections, see Igor de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts in the XIII Century: A Study on Yeh-Lü Ch’u-Ts’ai’ (Australian National University, 1960), p. 10; Zhao Qi 赵琦, “‘Yuanshi: Xu Guozhen zhuan’ zengbu” 《元史·许国祯传》增补 (A Supplement to the Yuanshi Biography of Xu Guozhen), *Neimenggu daxue xuebao (renwen shehui kexueban)*, 36 (2004), 30–36 (32); Atwood, Christopher P., ‘The Date of the “Secret History of the Mongols” Reconsidered’, *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies*, 37 (2007), 1–48.

<sup>7</sup> See Christopher P. Atwood, ‘Commentary on the Shengwu Qingzheng Lu’ <<http://cces.snu.ac.kr/com/18swqe.pdf>> [accessed 24 October 2013], 14.

<sup>8</sup> See Charles Melville, ‘Jahāngosā-ye Jovayni, Tārīkh-e, title of the history of the Mongols composed in 1252-60 by the Il-khanid Persian vizier, ‘Alā’-al-Dīn Abu’l-Mozaḡfar ‘Aṭā-Malek Jovayni,’ *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 14 (2008), pp. 378-382; available online at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jahangosa-ye-jovayni> (accessed online at 13 March 2013). On Juvaynī’s rhetorical handling of Mongol governance, see Beatrice Forbes Manz, ‘Juvayni’s Historical Consciousness’, in *Ferdowsi, the Mongols and the History of Iran: Art, Literature and Culture from Early Islam to Qajar Persia: Studies in Honour of Charles Melville*, ed. by Bruno De Nicola, Robert Hillenbrand, A.C.S. Peacock, and Fīruza Abdullaeva (London: I.B. Tauris / The Iran Heritage Foundation, 2013), 114–19.

the *Yuanshi* these works have been treated as the central stars in a Eurasia-wide constellation of multi-lingual records of the imperium.

Although clearly linked to these works, the *Yuanshi* sits some distance apart in terms of genre and structure. Beyond staking a specific type of legitimacy claim, the ‘Standard History’ format carries other implications. The 210 *juan* 卷 (somewhat analogous to ‘chapters’) of the *Yuanshi* follow an established pattern and are presented in discrete sections. 47 *juan* of *benji* 本紀 annals record the life of the founder, Činggis Qan (c.1165–1227) and the rules of subsequent ‘emperors’.<sup>9</sup> 53 *juan* of *zhi* 志 treatises present compendia on aspects of geography, governance and society.<sup>10</sup> 8 *juan* of *biao* 表 tables record genealogies and titles.<sup>11</sup> Finally, the *Yuanshi* presents hundreds of *liezhuan* 列傳 ‘arrayed accounts’ narratives.<sup>12</sup> Comprising chapters 114 to 210 of the *Yuanshi*, *liezhuan* include the majority of its biographical material. Often simply rendered as ‘biographies’,

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<sup>9</sup> Substantial translations into European languages include: F.E.A. Krause, *Cingis Han: die Geschichte seines Lebens nach den chinesischen Reichsannalen* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1922); Waltraut Abramowski, ‘Die chinesischen Annalen von Ögödei und Güyük: Übersetzung des 2. Kapitels des Yüan-shih’, *Zentralasiatische Studien*, 10 (1976), 117–67; Abramowski, Waltraut, ‘Die chinesischen Annalen des Möngke: Übersetzung des 3. Kapitels des Yüan-shih’, *Zentralasiatische Studien*, 13 (1979), 7–71.

<sup>10</sup> Substantial translations into European languages include Song Lian, *Economic Structure of the Yüan Dynasty*, trans. by Herbert Franz Schurmann (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956); Hsiao Ch’i-ch’ing, *The Military Establishment of the Yuan Dynasty*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 77 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978).

<sup>11</sup> Substantial translations into European languages include the invaluable genealogical tables, found at Louis Hambis, ‘Le Chapitre CVII Du Yuan Che’, *T’oung Pao*, 38, Supplément (1945), I–VII+IX–XII+1–7+9–181.

<sup>12</sup> Substantial translations into European languages include: George Qingzhi Zhao, *Marriage as Political Strategy and Cultural Expression: Mongolian Royal Marriages from World Empire to Yuan Dynasty*, Asian Thought and Culture, 60 (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2008); Francis Woodman Cleaves, ‘The Biography of Bayan of the Bārin in the Yüan Shih’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 19 (1956), 185–303; N. Ts. Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik o pervykh mongol’skikh khanakh: Nadgrobniaia nadpis’ na mogile Eliui Chutsaia: perevod i issledovanie* (Moscow: Nauka, 1965); Geoffrey Humble, ‘Princely Qualities and Unexpected Coherence: Rhetoric and Representation in *Juan* 117 of the “Yuanshi”’, *The Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 45 (2015), 307–37. The vital 1993 biographical collection *In the Service of the Khan* draws together a very substantial range of material, too, although as summaries rather than direct translations. See Igor de Rachewiltz and others (eds), *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period (1200–1300)*, Asiatische Forschungen, 121 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993) (hereafter *ISK*). The volume of translations can be expected to increase through the efforts of the ERC Mobility, Empire and Cross-Cultural Contacts in Mongol Eurasia Project.

reflecting the majority of their content, each *liezhuan* contains records for a number of individuals (for example *juan* 114 is labelled the ‘first *liezhuan*’, but contains twenty-four biographical entries).<sup>13</sup> The biographies work their way outwards from Börte, wife of Činggis Qan, in *juan* 114, through princes, generals, officials and scholars – categorized first under the Great Yuan *Ulus*’ personal law system as ‘Mongol’ and ‘*semu*’ (‘various’)<sup>14</sup> and second as ‘Han’ and ‘Nan’ (‘southern’) – virtuous women and others to traitors and, finally, foreign lands, and can be read as an ordering of the human world (i.e., the elite below the emperor) from centre to edge.

These biographical narratives operate rather differently to the narratives we find in our other source texts. Although these Persian works present reports on specific people or groups, these are clearly placed within an overarching structure.<sup>15</sup> The narratives of the ‘meritorious minister’ *liezhuan* retain a far greater focus on each individual subject’s glorification, and, arrayed around the governing centre, cumulatively provide a wide range of perspectives on it. There is a temptation to see the compilation of the *Standard Histories* as a structured bureaucratic writing process, a temptation that is perhaps exacerbated by their formal division into dry, strictly chronological annals, subject-

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<sup>13</sup> Arguing from the perspective of the earlier histories, William Nienhauser has suggested that a more satisfactory translation of 列傳 *liezhuan* would reflect the concepts inherent in the two characters, and might therefore be closer to ‘juxtaposed’ (列) ‘traditions’ (傳). While perhaps more faithful to Sima Qian’s formulation, this rendering would make little sense to most readers, and would fail to reflect that fact that, page for page, biographical material makes up some ninety-six percent of the *liezhuan* of the *Yuanshi*. Only 64 (*Yuanshi* 208.4607-210.4670) of the 1801 pages devoted to *liezhuan* in the *Yuanshi* (pp. 2869-4605) refer to foreign lands, and all the rest are comprised of biographical material of one kind or another. See William J. Nienhauser, ‘Early Biography’, in *The Columbia History of Chinese Literature*, ed. by Victor H. Mair (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2001), pp. 511-26 (p. 517). To minimize confusion this study refers to material in a *liezhuan* on a specific individual as the biography of that person.

<sup>14</sup> On the concept of the *semuren* 色目人 (‘various peoples’), see especially Funada Yoshiyuki, ‘The Image of the *Semu* People: Mongols, Chinese, and Various Other Peoples under the Mongol Empire’, (presented at The Nature of the Mongol Empire and its Legacy, Vienna, 2010).

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, the handling of Töregene’s regency, which is clearly subordinated to an account of Ögödei’s reign (in Juvaynī’s report) and Güyük’s (in the *Jāmi al-Tavārikh*). These are found at *History of the World-Conqueror*, 239-44; *Tārīkh-e Jahāngushāi*, 195-200; *Compendium of Chronicles*, pp. 383-85; *Jāmi al-Tavārikh*, pp. 799-803.

specific (and heavily administrative) treatises, formal tables and formulaic *liezhuan*.

When compared to the semi-mystical feel and dynastic focus of the *Secret History* and the lively and personal narratives of the Persian works, the *Yuanshi* can look distinctly functional, a perception that might lead readers to see dependability in its dullness.

Vital primary sources for reconstructing Mongol and Chinese history, the *liezhuan* have been viewed as chaotic texts receiving limited rhetorical input, and therefore of great value as relatively pristine source texts.<sup>16</sup> This is, to some degree, the case, but as this thesis demonstrates, where we have extant comparator texts considerable creative intervention can be detected. Although not all *liezhuan* were developed in the same way, funerary and other commemorative inscriptions served as source texts for a considerable proportion of these narratives, and scholars enjoy access to many such related works.<sup>17</sup>

The fairly comprehensive punctuated compendium *Quanyuanwen* 全元文 (*Complete Yuan Literature*) provides primary access to these texts; these are further compared against the 1328 collection *Yuanwenlei* 元文類 (*Categorized Yuan Literature*), and the

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<sup>16</sup> See, for example, F.W. Mote, 'A Note on Traditional Sources for Yüan History', in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume Six: Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368*, ed. by Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 689-726 (p. 689). Francis Woodman Cleaves has highlighted the importance, and some of the challenges, of working with biographical material in the *Yuanshi*. He argued that it not only remains the best single source we have on the life of prominent and influential individuals, but that, while the biography does not reflect the highest style (a barrier to sinological interest in the past), the lack of literary sheen indicates a relative closeness to its sources and thus increased historiographical value. See Cleaves, 'The Biography of Bayan of the Bārin', 196, 198.

<sup>17</sup> The primary means for identifying extant commemorative writings is via the biographical index prepared by Wang Deyi, et al., although this has a number of issues, including the inappropriate abbreviation of titles; alongside this de Rachewiltz and May Wang's *Repertory* is useful, although in some ways too comprehensive, providing exhaustive lists of texts mentioning each subject. See Wang Deyi 王德毅, Li Rongcun 李榮村, Pan Bochong 潘柏澄, *Yuanren Zhuanji Ziliao Suoyin* 元人傳記資料索引 (*Biographical Index for the Yuan Dynasty*), (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1987) (hereafter *YR*) and De Rachewiltz, Igor, and May Wang, *Repertory of Proper Names in Yuan Literary Sources*, 3 vols, (Taipei: Oriental Bookstore, 1988) (hereafter *RPN*). Wang Shenrong's monograph provides an impressively detailed survey of source material for *Yuanshi* biographies, *juan* by *juan*. See Wang Shenrong 王慎榮, *Yuanshi tanyuan* 元史探源 (*A Detailed Exploration of "Yuanshi" Sources*), (Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 1991), pp. 149-275.



*Yuanren wenji zhenben congkan* 元人文集珍本叢刊 (*Collected Prints of Precious Yuan Literary Works*).<sup>18</sup>

Though obviously composed before the *liezhuan*, sometimes by writers with privileged access to persons and events depicted, these texts are, of course, no more pristine or distant from rhetorical imperatives in their portrayal of life in Mongol-era East Asia than are the *liezhuan*.<sup>19</sup> As Iiyama Tomoyasu and others have demonstrated, these commemorative works function precisely to situate their subjects in specific relation to sets of social and political status markers, in court and family settings.<sup>20</sup> They therefore provide opportunities to interrogate social practices in which they are embedded and which they in turn define, along with the audiences they seek to address.<sup>21</sup>

The narrative theorist Paul Ricoeur argues that, in terms of historical authority, we can distinguish ‘monuments’, which suffer from their status as the final result of social processes based in power, from ‘documents’, works sometimes taken “to possess an objectivity opposed to the intention of the monument, which is meant to be edifying.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Li Xiusheng 李修生 (ed.), *Quanyuanwen* 全元文 (*Complete Yuan Literature*), 60 vols. (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1999) (hereafter *QYW*); *Yuanren wenji zhenben congkan* 元人文集珍本叢刊, 8 vols. (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chubanshe, 1985) (hereafter *YRCK*); Su Tianjue, *Yuanwenlei* 元文類 (“Categorized literature from the Yuan period”), late Ming (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century) edition held at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, 2 vols. These are found at <http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/0006/bsb00067093/images/> and <http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/0006/bsb00067094/images/>, respectively, both accessed 16/01/17 (hereafter *YWL*).

<sup>19</sup> Despite Angela Schottenhammer’s bold suggestion that “eulogies and exaggerations in Chinese funerary inscriptions normally do not touch anything else but items of minor interest, such as moral conduct and other virtues.” See Angela Schottenhammer, ‘Characteristics of Song Epitaphs’, in *Burial in Song China*, ed. by Dieter Kuhn (Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1994), pp. 253–306 (pp. 253–54).

<sup>20</sup> See Iiyama Tomoyasu, ‘Steles and Status: Evidence for the Emergence of a New Elite in Yuan North China’, *Journal of Chinese History* 1 (2017), 3–26.

<sup>21</sup> On historiographical narrative texts’ negotiation and construction of social structures, see Gabrielle Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), p. 10; Barbara Herrnstein Smith, ‘Afterthoughts on Narrative III: Narrative Versions, Narrative Theories’, in *On Narrative* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1981), pp. 209–32 (p. 230).

<sup>22</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988), volume 3, p. 118.

The *Yuanshi* is clearly more monumental, in these terms, than documentary, but any contrast between the monumental nature of this work and its foundation texts should be made with caution. Unlike, for example, the administrative orders and other scattered documents found in Central Asian sites, our social biography texts are also monumental, carefully worked pieces of rhetorical preparation, rather than instant documentary snippets.<sup>23</sup> As Denise Aigle notes, the historian “recounts events that structure the text, while placing them in an overall framework of cultural references”; this framework is amenable to investigation, and, as we will see, accessible through the story-telling employed in its presentation.<sup>24</sup>

This thesis takes a broadly narratological approach to these texts, intending, not to reconstruct a reality for events portrayed in them, but rather the processes of their compilation. As such it follows the narratologist Mieke Bal, who argues that narratology “cautions against a confusion of understanding and axiology, against a sense of value inherent in narrative; either as intrinsically true, hence, good, or as intrinsically false, fictional, manipulative, hence, bad.”<sup>25</sup> The moral binary against which Bal warns us is made prominent by the operation of narrative technique in our sample biographies. These, being, as Baumann and Gingrich put it, “aesthetic productions”, depend on the creation of two things at once: a self that the reader or viewer or listener can identify with, as well as an Other that the consumer, or de-coder, of the work can comprehend as the self-defining

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<sup>23</sup> Wu follows Ricoeur in seeing documents as retaining more authority than monuments, via a kind of “objectivity” as opposed to “intention” – this case can certainly be made for a rubbing, inasmuch as the operation of capture is more akin to the instant and non-selective nature of a photographic scan than is the commissioning, compilation, carving and erection of an inscription-bearing stele. See Wu, ‘On Rubbings’, pp. 57-58. For a detailed summary of administrative orders found in Central Asia, see especially Márton Vér, ‘The Postal System of the Mongol Empire in Northeastern Turkestan’, (unpub. PhD thesis, University of Szeged, 2016).

<sup>24</sup> Denise Aigle, *The Mongol Empire between Myth and Reality: Studies in Anthropological History*, Iran Studies, 11 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2014), p. 38.

<sup>25</sup> Bal, *Narratology*, p. 228.

counter-pole.”<sup>26</sup> This binary, between a meritorious subject with whom readers are expected to identify and a range of condemnable others, plays a vital role in all of our texts, and is employed and intensified in many places by the *Yuanshi* compilers to lend vividness, readability and, ultimately, rhetorical and moral power to the work.

As becomes clear, the portrayal of people and events is always tailored to some degree by the Ming-era compilers. Furthermore, as these portrayals are idealized, intended to carry imitable model features they must bear a degree of philosophical weight. Edits therefore speak to changing ideals rather more than they do to reconstructive historical reality. This is not to throw our hands up and abandon the *Yuanshi* – as we still need these narratives, we need to interrogate them, in order to make more intelligent and nuanced use of all they offer. Further understanding of the processes and techniques employed in *Yuanshi* compilation feed into our understanding of premodern Chinese historiography more generally; while far from immutable, the durable conventions of history-writing cannot but have affected our compilation teams of Neo-Confucians, writing as they were for an activist monarch seeking legitimacy and social order through a claim to defining a ‘Chinese’ antiquity.

Certain biographies received considerable investment in terms of time and attention. The result of this is a text that covers much of the same or similar ground to its foundation texts but in a different way. Moreover, these edits and resultant differences are deliberate and made with a view to their rhetorical impact. Where we have extant related texts these differences can be interrogated and the principles informing them teased apart. As Sarah

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<sup>26</sup> Gerd Baumann and Andre Gingrich, ‘Grammars of Identity/Alterity: A Structural Approach’, in *Grammars of Identity/Alterity: A Structural Approach*, ed. by Gerd Baumann (New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2004), pp. 18–50 (p. 31).

Schneewind and Charles Hartman have argued, the potential to intensify and clarify through careful editing is significant, and deserves attention.<sup>27</sup>

These interventions are manifested in various ways, including, at the largest or macro level, the arrangement and juxtaposition of biographies; thus, for example, Yelü Chucai's *Yuanshi* biography was brought forward, out of strict chronology, to head the 'Han and Nan' section. At the meso-level, incidents within biographies are omitted or, less often, rearranged, revisions to their juxtaposition having substantial effects on our reading of their nature and significance. This has obvious implications for historians' attempts to discern and reconstruct causal relationships between events. Micro-level interventions, which are the most common type, involve detailed, fine-grained edits and often address the question of how something was said or done than whether or when the event took place.

In approaching these biographical texts as narrative, we draw on a substantial range of recent scholarship. Mieke Bal's *Narratology* provides an indispensable guide to the taxonomy of narrative elements.<sup>28</sup> Scholars of Arabic and Persian-language works such as Julie Scott Meisami, Albrecht Noth, Lawrence Conrad and Marion Waldman have made huge strides in exposing the techniques and effects of rhetorical storytelling in prose historiography.<sup>29</sup> In terms of more detailed aspects within these narratives, work by

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<sup>27</sup> See Charles Hartman, 'A Textual History of Cai Jing's Biography in the Songshi', in *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics*, ed. by Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 517–64 (535–36); Sarah Schneewind, 'Reduce, Re-Use, Recycle: Imperial Autocracy and Scholar-Official Autonomy in the Background to the Ming History Biography of Early Ming Scholar-Official Fang Keqing (1326–1376)', *Oriens Extremus*, 48 (2009), 104–52 (151).

<sup>28</sup> See Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 2nd edn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

<sup>29</sup> See Albrecht Noth, Lawrence I. Conrad, Michael Bonner (tr.), *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: a Source-Critical Study* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1994); Julie Scott Meisami, *Persian Historiography to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999); Marilyn Robinson

Nathan Light has been invaluable in exposing the repeated structure of episodic texts.<sup>30</sup> Scholars such as Deborah Beck and Meir Sternberg have provided considerable insight into the deployment and operation of reported speech within narratives.<sup>31</sup> The application of these tools to *liezhuan* is facilitated by their episodic structure; the phrasing constructing each stage implicitly proposes what problems, solutions and success look like. Reported speech can be a powerful tool, and is deployed in several ways, being denied to some morally problematic individuals to censor them, while elsewhere we find speech used to condemn others. Selective naming of individuals feeds into this effect – *liezhuan* regularly report opposition to virtuous proposals from groups of anonymous transgressors, a selective specificity facilitating comment on either individuals or the court at large, rather than necessarily indicating the extent of the historical record.

The selective framing of individuals via identifiers such as posts and ranks – or their absence – has both narrative effect and direct significance for our understanding of events and processes. Chronology – both absolute and relative – permits the manipulation of causal relationships by exploiting juxtaposition, most commonly by pairing activity and outcome.

The scope of the material covered is defined by the *Yuanchao Mingchen shilue*, originally titled *Guochao Mingchen shilue*, compiled by the writer and official at the Yuan court Su

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Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative: A Case Study in Perso-Islamicate Historiography* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1980).

<sup>30</sup> See Nathan Light, 'An 8th Century Turkic Narrative: Pragmatics, Reported Speech and Managing Information', *Turkic Languages*, 10 (2006), 155–86.

<sup>31</sup> See Deborah Beck, 'Narratology and Linguistics: An Interdisciplinary Perspective on Homeric Speech Representation', *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 138 (2008), 351–78; Meir Sternberg, 'Proteus in Quotation-Land: Mimesis and the Forms of Reported Discourse', *Poetics Today*, 3 (1982), 107–56.

Tianjue 蘇天爵 (1294-1352) and compiled between 1317 and 1328.<sup>32</sup> Consisting of 15 *juan*, 47 biographies are assembled from labelled excerpts of commemorative texts.

Although some subjects, such as Muqali, Yelü Chucai and Yang Weizhong, served under the first Činggisid rulers, and others, such as Yao Shu and Shi Tianze, spanned several courts, the focus of the biographies is very much on officials active during the reign of Qubilai Qa'an (r. 1260-1294). The *Mingchen shilue* has been seen as a template for *Yuanshi* portrayals, and its composite biographies do seem, in some cases, to have served this purpose.<sup>33</sup> Overall, however, the relationship between these two works is more complex than this.

It should be noted that the *Mingchen shilue* biographies, which were built on three stages of Mongol-era *liezhuan* compilation (in 1321, 1335 and 1348),<sup>34</sup> do not constitute a representative sample of *Yuanshi* biographical *liezhuan* overall; they do, however, provide a productive set of intertexts and a bounded set of related texts and therefore indicate options available to the *Yuanshi* compilers for the telling of stories.<sup>35</sup> We know the *Yuanshi* compilation team had access to Su Tianjue's biography versions and can therefore assess their choices in handling his subjects with considerable certainty. This scope does not allow us to approach the macro-level arrangement of *liezhuan* within the *Yuanshi*, but rather facilitates meso-level (dealing with whole episodes) and micro-level

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<sup>32</sup> See Yao Jing'an, 'Su Tianjue ji qi "yuanchao mingchen shilue"', 105.

<sup>33</sup> Xiao Qiqing estimates a sixty to seventy percent correlation between *Mingchen shilue* biographies and *Yuanshi liezhuan* content. See Xiao Qiqing 蕭啟慶, 'Su tianjue he tade yuanchao mingchen shilue 蘇天爵和他的元朝名臣事略 (Su Tianjue and his Eminent Officials of the yuan Dynasty)', in *Yuandai shi xintan* 元代史新探 (*New Light on the Yuan Dynasty*) (Taipei: Xinwenfen chuban gongsi, 1983), pp. 323–32 (p. 329).

<sup>34</sup> See Xiao Qiqing, 'Su tianjue he tade yuanchao mingchen shilue', pp. 330-31.

<sup>35</sup> Xiao Qiqing stresses the importance of *Mingchen shilue* material alongside Mongol-era content for the final compilation. See Xiao Qiqing, 'Su tianjue he tade yuanchao mingchen shilue', pp. 330-31.

(dealing with clause or character-level detailed edits) interrogation of the narrative handling.

In terms of structure, the thesis first lays out the texts and methodologies outlined above, and then moves on, in its second chapter, to its major case study. Chapter 2 is devoted to the portrayal of Yelü Chucai (1189-1243), a polymath who served the Jin, Činggis Qan, Ögödei Qa'an and Töregene Qatun's regency. Chucai has received a great deal of scholarly attention. His portrayal is dominated by a funerary inscription composed two decades after his death, which serves as the principal source for both *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* biographies. Both of these subsequent versions show substantial and detailed interventions at every level and of every type; the attention lavished on Chucai's portrayal by Su Tianjue, and the *Yuanshi* compilers, and the sheer range of techniques employed, making his biographies the ideal study of both editing and impact.

Chucai's biographies portray a consistently central role at the Činggisid court, but one that nonetheless changes as the nature of imperial rule developed, from a divination specialist to a government generalist and, as our compilers construct him, the imperial conscience in northern China. Three key themes emerge from the compilers' treatment of Chucai. First, the delimiting of a Ming 'China' by repeatedly omitting and reshaping non-Chinese motifs, down-playing familiarity with the non-Sinitic world to make Chucai conform more closely to 'Chinese' or 'Han' models and effectively 'sinicizing' Chucai positions actions with regard to a bounded sinocentric sphere.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> There are notable parallels between *Yuanshi* placement of Činggisids within history of 'China' and what Aigle identifies as Juwaynī's placement of them within Iranian patterns by making Činggis Qan "a new Afrāsiyāb", i.e., shifting the Činggisids into a frame of reference defined by the *Shāhnāma*. See Aigle, *The Mongol Empire Between Myth and Reality*, p. 23.

Second is the removal of patrimonial elements from Chucai's career and the development of a centralized bureaucratic ideal shift the basis of a number of incidents towards a specific centre. Third, reformulation of problems and outcomes positions the humanitarian imperative as the most important determinant of action and success. The omissions and other alterations required for this demonstrate the willingness of both Su Tianjue and the *Yuanshi* compilers to edit their source material in pursuit of rhetorical effect.

This is followed by three chapter-length thematic studies, each interrogating a theme drawn from the case study, and assessing the consistency of handling across our sample texts. The first of these, chapter three, deals with the cultural, ethnic and geographic scope of *Yuanshi* biography, asking how, and the extent to which, narrative edits define a field of appropriate action and discussion within the bounds of Ming territory and thus lay out new visions of 'Chinese-ness' on the one hand, and foreign-ness and alterity on the other. The handling of this theme is only partially coherent, but we do see a broad shifting of non-'Han' subject groups internal to the Great Yuan *Ulus*, such as the Huihu, moved outwards, usually towards the vaguely defined expanse of the Western Regions 西域. Further de-centring operates in relation to northern places such as the former Činggisid capital Qaraqorum. Other aspects, such as the discussion and explanation of Turco-Mongol institution, names and titles, are handled far less consistently. Alongside this broad, but not entirely consistent, tendency to move selected elements out of the centre, we see a similarly suggestive, but by no means definitive, tendency to centralize Zhongguo 中國 as a historical fulcrum. We thus see the shifting in assessment of some events from strategic issues to an exclusive preoccupation with the populace of



Zhongguo. On the other hand, however, we also see the compilers emphasizing criticism of the Tang and Song polities in subjects' arguments against policy decisions.

Having laid out one set of boundaries, chapter 4 turns to interrogate the appropriate means for action within these and what our texts posit as the centre of governing activity. This focusses on the contrasts established between, on the one hand, positive advice for governance and virtuous action from meritorious subjects set in a bureaucratic framework of central governance, and, on the other, the construction of transgressive subjects through their opposition to, and action against, key elements of this framework. As we will see, the handling of this theme is fairly consistent, the compilers' interventions providing a largely coherent vision of governance through a compartmentalized bureaucracy dominated by the Central Secretariat and scrutinized by the surveillance agencies, which are granted a strongly punitive role.

The final thematic study, in chapter five, interrogates the consistency of principles espoused as the aims for such governing action, and, specifically, the place of humanitarian concern within the hierarchy of governing priorities. Here, again, the handling is less than entirely coherent and consistent, but we see the texts repeatedly emphasizing the moral primacy of popular welfare and the indefensible exteriority of those positioned against this. Again, the theme of marginalization and punitive might is prominent.

As we will see, the *Yuanshi* compilers' interventions were not consistent, but rather targeted, partial and limited. Their rhetoric was both backward and forward-facing, establishing models for a bureaucratized, humanitarian 'China', often by the punitive

identification of ‘scapegoat’ marginalized transgressors, and the cumulative definition of social boundaries. Several key narratorial elements are affected by these interventions, which prominently include a somewhat free and easy approach to reported speech, the treatment of chronology and the framing of secondary subjects of all types by the award or denial of official rank.

On the face of it, Činggisid Mongol rule in East Asia lends itself to characterization as a protracted ethnic conflict, ranging indigenous people, however loosely defined, against an extractive Turko-Mongol ruling class, and this has been the flavour of many popular and academic discourses ever since.<sup>37</sup> As we will see, however, such ethnically determinist positioning is, although by no means absent, not necessarily the dominant theme in our texts. Činggisid monarchs from across the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are presented as redeemable characters amenable, at their best, to good advice and improvement. These biographical narratives do nonetheless portray a broad range of conflicts and tensions involving constituent elements of the Činggisid polity. This thesis interrogates a sample of these and demonstrates the compilers’ interventions and the way in which the representation of conflict reflected models of the acceptable and transgressive while seeking to maximize the authority of the work’s truth-claims through vivid story-telling power.

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<sup>37</sup> See, for example, the offhand mention of “irreconcilable ethnic differences” 不可调和的民族矛盾 by Luo Xianyou 罗贤佑 in the detailed but problematic article ‘Xu Heng, Ahema yu Yuanchu Hanfa, Huihuiifa zhi cheng 许衡、阿合马与元初汉法、回回法之争 (Xu Heng and Ahmad and Conflict Between Hanfa (Han Ways) Huihuiifa (Central Asian Ways) in the Early Yuan Dynasty)’, *Minzu Yanjiu*, 5 (2005), 78–86, 78.

## 1. Texts and processing: from social biography to *liezhuan*

Having laid out our question, key aspects of the texts concerned and our approach to them, this chapter lays further groundwork for the examination of the development of *Yuanshi liezhuan* from ‘social biography’ foundation texts. Social biography is a useful label for a category of life writing commissioned in connection to a specific subject or family.<sup>1</sup> It is distinct from our other two forms – ‘official’ court-compiled *liezhuan* and closely related private but career-focused biographical works like the *Mingchen shilue* – in its subsequent rootedness in the social and the familial. We return to Schottenhammer’s suggestion that “exaggerations in Chinese funerary inscriptions normally do not touch anything else but items of minor interest”, and that these items of limited relevance include “moral conduct and other virtues”.<sup>2</sup> From the point of view of reconstructive historical inquiry this point can be conceded in part, to the extent that the central framework of official rank and office and – very broadly – of incidents around which subjects’ careers are recorded, changes little between versions. Our interrogation of life-writing genres will demonstrate that Schottenhammer is also correct in noting the manipulation of moral issues in these narratives.

Readers must be cautious, however, in treating these aspects as secondary elements, for either textual or historically reconstructive purposes. The moral aspect of such portrayals is so central to life writing that its tailoring and rhetorical deployment may involve

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘social biography’ is borrowed from Christopher Atwood’s paper at the AAS Annual Conference in April 2016. This broad textual genre primarily includes funerary inscriptions but also other celebratory and commemorative forms, largely composed for carving in stone and often commissioned by families and heirs. Wilkinson uses the term ‘commemorative writings’; see his *Chinese History: A New Manual* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012), pp. 148-51.

<sup>2</sup> Angela Schottenhammer, ‘Characteristics of Song Epitaphs’, in *Burial in Song China*, ed. by Dieter Kuhn (Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1994), pp. 253–306 (pp. 253-54).

adjustments to any and all aspects of a subject's life and circumstances. Such adjustments have considerable impact on our understanding of events, extending well beyond an individual subject's character. As this chapter demonstrates, the social biography and *liezhuan* life-writing genre is inherently malleable, its characteristically episodic components, presenting situation, action and outcome, enabling small-scale interventions to significantly reshape the events related.

Such interventions should not be considered the deformation of a pristine record. Social biographies, though temporally closer to events than *liezhuan*, and the source of narrative material for them, are rhetorical works too. Where we have parallel versions from the same family, the differences can be startling, and reconciling these sometimes required careful selection by *liezhuan* compilers, choices producing a new narrative version. These choices were constrained by haste, and some reflect generic differences between *liezhuan* and social biography, but others act to alter the shape of events and subjects, altering the fabula, and therefore the diegetic (or in-story) world. All such alterations have an impact on the impression given of a subject's actions and circumstances, whether their force is manifested through event order, framing of individuals or reported speech. The same applies to the composite biographies of the *Mingchen shilue*, where a theoretically limited palette of editorial interventions permitted substantial reformulation. Su Tianjue, Song Lian and Wang Wei were all deeply committed to the writing of history and the literary activism of the engaged scholar; both sets of edits and arrangements must be interrogated for technique and effect.

In approaching these adjustments, this introductory chapter first interrogates the range of biographical narratives comprising our source material, and then the narrative techniques involved in, and potential effects achieved by, their editing. Section 1.1 examines how social biography foundation texts work, focusing on the narratives' episodic structure, implied chronology and the use of formal position as the central framework around which the narrative is constructed. We next interrogate the mechanics behind the text's development, in particular commissioning relationships, including those between writers, their subjects (and those subjects' heirs), the involvement of the court in the commissioning process, and the question of timing after a subject's death. This leads us to the rhetorical function served by such texts, in recording, constructing and tailoring a celebration of both moral principle and loyal service to the court. As we will see, these biographical texts are rhetorical works within which narrative serves to position subjects between family, career and principle.

The following section (1.2) focusses on the *Mingchen shilue* and Su Tianjue's excerpting, juxtaposition and classification of these social biography narratives, employing a – theoretically – limited palette of editing tools to position his subjects on a primarily central, and governmental, rather than familial, stage. Introducing Su Tianjue's work, we interrogate its structure and the range of his interventions, in both his overt summarization and arrangement of material, and his covert deletion of specific elements. Section 1.3 introduces key aspects of the *Yuanshi* compilers' treatment of the same narrative texts, laying this out from two angles. We first examine the implementation of standard edits involved in turning social biography into *liezhuan*, and second the combination of specific factors likely to affect the compilation as a whole. These include, on the one hand, the haste of *Yuanshi* production, and, on the other, the positions professed by the

senior historian-compilers – and influential Jinhua Neo-Confucian scholars – Song Lian and, to a lesser degree, Wang Wei.

Having established a range of key edits and interventions, and laid out likely aims, principles and constraints, the final section (1.4) examines ways in which narrative edits can illuminate compilers' intentions. Introducing key elements of terminology and scholarship concerning both narratology in general and historical narrative in particular, this stresses the vital function of episode structure, chronology and causality on the one hand, and the handling and framing of reported speech, in tailoring subjects, situations, and value hierarchies, on the other. As such we will be prepared to approach Chucai's portrayal in chapter 2, where, as we will see, little remains unaffected by authors' and historian-compilers' rhetorical tailoring, with the possible exception of the essential sinophone framework of formal rank and office.

### 1.1 Approaching social biography as source text

Charles Hartman has described the *liezhuan* compilation process as one “designed to transform routine bureaucratic careers into uplifting examples of moral probity.”<sup>3</sup> This, I would argue, is a better description of the compilation of social biography than of the *liezhuan* narrative genre. The process of compiling *liezhuan* for the *Yuanshi* goes – albeit to varying degrees – beyond the development of moral exemplars to produce life narratives that focus less exclusively on the individual and instead make rhetorical statements on the nature of their times. This is not to say that *liezhuan* compilation

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<sup>3</sup> Charles Hartman, ‘A Textual History of Cai Jing’s Biography in the Songshi’, in *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics*, ed. by Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 517–64 (p. 519).

involves the dreaming up of fictional content beyond that found in foundation texts. In many cases these celebratory narratives' episodic structure and career-focused anecdotes provide material suitable for incorporation into a *liezhuan* with only light editing. This partial congruence of form and function should not, however, be overstated. However linked their episodic content, Mongol-era social biography and *Yuanshi liezhuan* represent different textual genres, their differences resulting in part from their differing functions and in part from concerted effort on the part of Ming Taizu's compilers.

Social biography in the form of funerary inscriptions has received substantial scholarly interest over recent years. Monumental and textual genres such as *muzhi* and *shendaobei* were well established by the thirteenth century, and sinophone histories contain numerous criticisms of such commemoration, along with attempts to impose court control on stela erection.<sup>4</sup> In terms of the social biography narratives drawn on by *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*, we see the dominance of funerary inscriptions such as *shendaobei* and *muzhiming*, and a number of *jiazhuan* family records and *xingzhuang* accounts of conduct, alongside *xundebei* and similar celebrations of individual merit and other texts such as memorials to the throne.<sup>5</sup> Aside from memorials, these interrelated genres all

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<sup>4</sup> The origins of funerary inscription genres are unclear, the earliest surviving examples of *muzhi* dating from the fifth century CE. The earliest *muzhi* present just ten to twenty characters, but by the sixth century inscriptions are documented at ten thousand characters in length, with a formal idiom developing alongside this length, and from the first centuries CE being couched in bureaucratic Confucian hierarchical terms. See Angela Schottenhammer, 'Einige Überlegungen zur Entstehung von Grabinschriften', in *Auf den Spuren des Jenseits: Chinesische Grabkultur in den Facetten von Wirklichkeit, Geschichte und Totenkult*, Europäische Hochschulschriften, 89 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003), pp. 21–59 (pp. 22, 24, 34); Angela Schottenhammer, 'A Buried Past: The Tomb Inscription (*Muzhiming*) and Official Biographies of Wang Chuzhi (863-923)', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 52 (2009), 14–56 (25–26, n. 36); C.E. Albert E. Dien, *Six Dynasties Civilization* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 206.

<sup>5</sup> The *muzhiming* in particular has received substantial scholarly attention as a form, and many observations on commissioning, structure and purpose apply equally to the other text types; see especially Timothy M. Davis, *Entombed Epigraphy and Commemorative Culture in Early Medieval China: A Brief History of Early Muzhiming* (Leiden: Brill, 2015); Nicolas Tackett, *The Destruction of the Medieval Chinese Aristocracy* Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series, 93 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2014), pp. 13–25; Angela Schottenhammer, 'Einige Überlegungen zur Entstehung von Grabinschriften', in *Auf den Spuren des Jenseits: Chinesische Grabkultur in den Facetten von Wirklichkeit*,

present idealized accounts of their subjects' careers, their narrative episodes highlighting moral conduct and proximity to the imperial centre, alongside varying amounts of family-related detail on ancestors, offspring and marriage relations.<sup>6</sup>

In terms of the operation of these foundation texts, and how readers approach these textually transmitted biographical narratives, we need to consider several aspects, including their episodic structure, the use of implied chronology and their reliance on (investment in and consequent reification of) the framework of formal appointment. Social biography texts usually follow a roughly similar plan and include a related range of subject matter. Typically, a *muzhi* or *shendaobei* text comprises a lengthy prose introduction and verse eulogy. The prose section, from which our narrative elements are taken, can be divided into two broad thematic areas. The first of these features the narrative arrangement of (broadly) chronological episodes from the subject's career and life, in an episodic structure facilitating a cut-and-paste approach. Each of these episodes usually begins with a date and lays out a situation, the subject's response and an assessment of the outcome, usually positive, either in terms relating to the situation defined or imperial recognition. For example, the *shendaobei* composed by Cheng Jufu

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*Geschichte und Totenkult*, Europäische Hochschulschriften, 89 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003), pp. 21–59; Angela Schottenhammer, 'Characteristics of Song Epitaphs', in *Burial in Song China*, ed. by Dieter Kuhn (Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1994), pp. 253–306; Angela Schottenhammer, 'A Buried Past: The Tomb Inscription (Muzhiming) and Official Biographies of Wang Chuzhi (863-923)', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 52 (2009), 14–56; David L. McMullen, 'The Death of Chou Li-Chen: Imperially Ordered Suicide or Natural Causes?', *Asia Major*, 3, 2 (1989), 23–82; Wu Hung, *The Art of the Yellow Springs: Understanding Chinese Tombs* (London: Reaktion Books, 2009); Jie Shi, "'My Tomb Will Be Opened in Eight Hundred Years': A New Way of Seeing the Afterlife in Six Dynasties China", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 72 (2012), 217–57; Takashi Sue, 'Revelations of a Missing Paragraph: Zhu Changwen (1039-1098) and the Compilation of Local Gazetteers in Northern Song China', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 52 (2009), 57–84; Beverley J. Bossler, *Powerful Relations: Kinship, Status, & the State in Sung China (960-1279)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series, 43 (Cambridge, MA: The Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1998). On Tang-era complaints of self-aggrandizing exaggeration in social biography, see Denis Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History Under the T'ang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 70-76.

<sup>6</sup> Denis Twitchett, 'Problems of Chinese Biography', in *Confucian Personalities*, ed. by Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), pp. 24–39 (p. 35).



程鉅夫 for the Uighur Mungsus (d. 1267), provides an example of one sort of outcome, that of praise from the monarch:

Several times [Mungsus] was ordered to gather people of prominent ability, and he netted the ‘poor and mean’ [i.e., scholars living in seclusion]. Dispatching carriages to the most distant places, all those recommended were selected [for appointment] at the highest level. Summoned to be appointed Grand Councillor 丞相 alongside Hantum, he firmly declined once more.

The emperor spoke to the Grand Councillor Hantum, the Grand Councillor Bayan, the Censor-in-Chief Örlüg Noyan and others, saying, “How virtuous Mungsus is; finding such people in another clan is rare indeed!”<sup>7</sup>

The presentation of these incidents serve to demonstrate a subject’s rank and position, and their performance in that position, from the standpoints of both loyal service and morality.

The second thematic area deals with the subject’s family background, being dominated by the situating of the subject in a – primarily agnatic – lineage structure, to varying degrees of depth.<sup>8</sup> This is complemented by an, often limited, account of recent affinal ties,

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<sup>7</sup> Cheng Jufu 程鉅夫, ‘Wudu zhimin wang shude zhi bei’ 武都智敏王述德之碑, in *QYW*, xvi, pp. 343–45 (p. 344):

數命收召豪俊，罔羅側陋。使車所至，凡所引薦，皆極其選。詔與安圖並拜爲丞相，又固辭。上語丞相安圖、丞相巴延、御史大夫伊囉勒諾延等曰：「賢哉默色斯，求之彼族，誠鮮矣夫！」

On Mungsus, see *Yuanshi* 124.3059; *YR*, p. 2482; Cheng Jufu 程鉅夫, ‘Wudu zhimin wang shude zhi bei’ 武都智敏王述德之碑 (Stele Recounting the Virtue of Prince Zhimin of Wudu), in *QYW*, xvi, pp. 343–45. A blockprint image of Mungsus’ family survives; see Annemarie von Gabain, ‘Ein chinesisch-uygurischer Blockdruck’, in *Tractata Altaica: Denis Sinor, sexagenario optime de rebus altaicis merito dedicata*, ed. by Walther Heissig and Denis Sinor (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1976), pp. 203–10; Herbert Franke, ‘A Sino-Uyghur Family Portrait: Notes on a Woodcut from Turfan’, *Canada-Mongolia Review*, 4 (1978), 33–40, repr. in Franke, *China Under Mongol Rule* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), XIII. In the former article the blockprint is identified as the five fragments - III 4633a, b, c, 7483 and 7773c - in the Miniatures collection of the Museum für Indische Kunst in Berlin-Dahlem. The name comes from Muṣṣuz, Turk. “woriless, carefree”; see Gyorgy Kara, *Books of the Mongolian Nomads* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 2005), p. 36.

<sup>8</sup> Not all inscription texts provide details of multiple preceding generations. The Jia family biographies provide only very limited details of even the first subject’s father, which may reflect the imperative to reflect new success after chaotic and profound social change. See *Yuanshi* 169.3969–72; Wang Yun 王惲, ‘Dayuan jiayi daifu qianshu xuanhuiyuan shi jiashi shide zhi bei’ 大元嘉議大夫簽書宣徽院事賈氏世德之碑, in *QYW*, vi, 394–97; *Qiuqianji* 51.1a–5b, at *YRCK*, ii, pp. 111–13; Yu Ji 虞集, ‘Jia Zhongyingong shendaobei’ 賈忠隱公神道碑, in *QYW*, xxvii, pp. 276–80; *Daoyuan leigao*, 40.24b–32a; *YRCK*, vi, pp. 234–38. On this see also Iiyama Tomoyasu, “Genealogical Steles in North China during the Jin and Yuan Dynasties”, *International Journal of Asian Studies*, 13 (2016), 151–96. Hugh Clark notes parallel processes in tenth-century Chinese genealogies. See Hugh R. Clark, ‘Reinventing the Genealogy: Innovation in

usually highlighting daughters' marriages to men in high status posts, and, sometimes, to similarly connected women.<sup>9</sup> This second category of family- rather than court-facing, elements, such as the circumstances of the text's commissioning and burial circumstances, serve to place the subject in a wider court and familial context and are largely discarded by the historian-compilers.<sup>10</sup> Inscriptions provide varying (and sometimes contradictory, where we have multiple texts relating to the same family) detail on family lines and relationships, and some subjects seem to fall outside the bounds of *liezhuan* compilers' interest.<sup>11</sup>

Writers were often directly connected to subjects and their survivors, too; while many wrote for acquaintances and relatives, some were commissioned, with payment either monetary or via high-status gifts, families therefore invested in retention of control over

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Kinship Practice in the Tenth to Eleventh Centuries', in *The New and the Multiple: Sung Senses of the Past*, ed. by Thomas H.C. Lee (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press), pp. 237–86 (pp. 260–62).

<sup>9</sup> The family history recorded in the Ancestral Grave Stele for Qangli Togtoğa 康里脫脫 (1272–1327) records 48 family members over five generations. Of these, fourteen out of eighteen women are named, with lacunae indicating doubt in areas. Seven husbands are identified, none of whom bear Chinese names. See *Yuanshi* 138.3321–26; *YR*, p. 2405; Huang Jin 黃潛, 'Chici kangli shi xianrongbei' 勅賜康里氏先塋碑, *QYW*, xxx, p. 58. Returning to the Jia family biographies, Jia Qurimči's wife Qubača was, Yu Ji reports, the daughter of the nursemaid to Qubilai's son Manggala, or, according to Wang Yun, Manggala's foster-sibling (lit., fed at the same breast) a relationship (T-Mo. *kökeldes*) bearing considerable significance across the Činggisid politics. See Wang Yun 王惲, 'Dayuan jiayi daifu qianshu xuanhuiyuan shi jiashi shide zhi bei' 大元嘉議大夫簽書宣徽院事賈氏世德之碑, in *QYW*, vi, 394–97 (p. 396); Yu Ji 虞集, 'Jia zhongyingong shendaobei' 賈忠隱公神道碑, in *QYW*, xxvii, pp. 276–80, p. 299. On this relationship, see Vásáry (1982) and the *Yuanshi* biography of Širegis, who was permitted imperial prerogatives through marriage (arranged by Sorqaqtani Beki) to the Toluid princes' nursemaid, at *Yuanshi* 122.3015.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Schottenhammer, 'A Buried Past', 17–18, 21, 22; David L. McMullen, 'The Death of Chou Li-Chen: Imperially Ordered Suicide or Natural Causes?', *Asia Major*, 3, 2 (1989), 23–82 (29). Schottenhammer notes that, while accepted norms were recognized, a degree of flexibility in terms of "standard rules and criteria for the style, form and structure of epitaphs" developed during the Song era. See Schottenhammer, 'Characteristics of Song Epitaphs', pp. 265, 276.

<sup>11</sup> The Jia family inscriptions provide irreconcilable lists of the fourth and fifth generations; see Wang Yun 王惲, 'Dayuan jiayi daifu qianshu xuanhuiyuan shi jiashi shide zhi bei' 大元嘉議大夫簽書宣徽院事賈氏世德之碑, in *QYW*, vi, 394–97; *Qiuqianji* 51.1a–5b, at *YRCK*, ii, pp. 111–13; Yu Ji 虞集, 'Jia zhongyingong shendaobei' 賈忠隱公神道碑, in *QYW*, xxvii, pp. 276–80; *Daoyuan leigao*, 40.24b–32a; *YRCK*, vi, pp. 234–38. Inscriptions recording the Uighur family of Mungsus and his descendants likewise provide very different pictures of the family. See Cheng Jufu 程鉅夫, 'Wudu zhimin wang shude zhi bei' 武都智敏王述德之碑, in *QYW*, xvi, pp. 343–45; Cheng Jufu 程鉅夫, 'Wudu zhongjian wang shendaobei' 武都忠簡王神道碑, in *QYW*, xvi, pp. 356–57.

relations' commemoration.<sup>12</sup> In some cases we can trace clear familial and personal links between writer and subject. For example, Yao Sui composed the *shendaobei* for his uncle Yao Shu, and Yuan Haowen, whose *shendaobei* comprises two-thirds of the *Mingchen shilue* biography for Yang Huan 楊奐 (1186-1255), was closely associated with his subject.<sup>13</sup> Likewise Song Zizhen, author of Chucai's *shendaobei* and thus of the version of his life that came to dominate not only perceptions of Chucai but very much of his times, was apparently a friend of his subject and professionally connected to Chucai's son Yelü Zhu 耶律鑄, alongside whom he served in Shandong.<sup>14</sup> Personal connection did not always lead to verbose celebration; Ma Zuchang 馬祖常 (1279-1338), composed a spirit-way inscription for his great-grandfather Uquna of the Önggüt (1216-63), and remarked that "because the various daughters are mostly recorded in the *jiazhuan* 家傳, [they] will not be set out again now".<sup>15</sup> By contrast, a stele for Mungsus highlights marital links

<sup>12</sup> Bossler, *Powerful Relations*, p. 11; Davis, *Entombed Epigraphy*, p. 90; Nicolas Tackett, 'The Transformation of Medieval Chinese Elites (850-1000 C.E.)' (unpublished PhD, Columbia University, 2006), p. 27, n. 29.

<sup>13</sup> On Yao Sui and Yao Shu, see *Yuanshi* 158.3716. Yang Huan, who had the alternative *ming* of Zhizhang 知章, courtesy names Huanran 煥然, and Huanruo 煥若, known to his Jin-era students as Guanxi fuzi 關西夫子 due to his place of origin and later adopted the 'studio name' Fengtian laomin 奉天老民, was from Fengtian 奉天 in Ganzhou 乾州. See *Mingchen shilue*, 13.256-59; *YR*, p. 1517; *Yuanshi* 153.3621-22; Hok-lam Chan, 'Yang Huan (1186-1255)', *Papers in Far Eastern History*, 14 (1976), 37-59; Chan Hok-lam, 'Yang Huan (1186-1255)', in *ISK*, pp. 195-207; Chi Meng 郝蒙, 'Jinyuan zhiji deguan xuejia yanghuan 金元之际的关学家杨奐 (The Jin-Yuan Scholar Yang Huan)', *Lilun xuekan*, 6 (1987), 48. On his relationship with Yuan Haowen, see Huang Shijian 黄时鉴, 'Yuan haowen yu mengguguo guanxi kaobian' 元好问与蒙古国关系考辨 (Verifying Yuan Haowen's Relationship with the Mongol Polity), in *Yuanhaowen yanjiu wenji* 元好问研究文集 (*Collected Research Papers on Yuan Haowen*), (no named editor), (Taiyuan: Shanxi remin chubanshe, 1987) pp. 253-73 (p. 257).

<sup>14</sup> Song Zizhen 宋子貞 (d. 1267), courtesy name Zhouchen 周臣, of Changzi 長子 in Luzhou 潞州. See *Mingchen shilue* 10.199-203; *Yuanshi* 159.3735-37; *YR*, pp. 440-41; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 216-17. See especially the substantial note by de Rachewiltz. See Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts in the XIII Century: A Study on Yeh-Lü Ch'u-Ts'ai' (Australian National University, 1960), pp. 73-76, n. 19. Yelü Zhu 耶律鑄 (1221-85), style-name Chengzhong 成仲, hao Shuangqi 雙溪, son of Yelü Chucai by his second wife, née Su 蘇, inherited his father's post at Qaraqorum and took part in Möngke Qa'an's campaign in Sichuan, later serving prominently as an official under Qubilai. See *YR*, pp. 776-77; de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-lü Ch'u-Ts'ai (1189-1243), Yeh-lü Chu (1221-1285)', in *ISK*, pp. 172-73; de Rachewiltz, 'A Note on Yelü Zhu 耶律鑄 and His Family', *East Asian History* 31 (2006), 65-74.

<sup>15</sup> See Ma Zuchang 馬祖常, 'Gu libushangshu magong shendaobeiming' 故禮部尚書馬公神道碑銘, in *QYW*, xxxii, pp. 499-502 (p. 501):

諸女孫以多載於家傳，茲不重出。

between his son's daughters and high status individuals at the early fourteenth-century Yuan court.<sup>16</sup> The plastic nature of lineage and affinal relationship descriptions, and the likelihood of close family involvement in compilation, highlights the situational nature of social biographies' portrayals, and the likelihood of pressures to fit ancestors to changing ideals.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, once an excessively laudatory norm is established, presenting an ancestor 'unvarnished' may end up looking negative.<sup>18</sup>

The persistence of criticism resting on a combination of disquiet over extravagance and suspicion of "fallacious" accounts suggests the inscriptions played a substantial role in, and were certainly not fully separated from, immediate issues of status and court politics.<sup>19</sup> This emphasis on the danger of uncontrolled inscription production and the benefits of court control over these speaks to the perceived power of such inscribed

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On Uquna, who served variously as a judge and in the Ministry of Rites, and whose biographies show an enticing gap between 1233 and 1252, see *Yuanshi* 134.3244-46; *YR*, pp. 994, 2717. Ma Zuchang 馬祖常 (1279-1338), style-name Boyong 伯庸, contributed to the compilation of the veritable records of Yingzong 英宗, and his works are collected in the 15-volume *Shitian wenji* 石田文集. On him see *QYW*, xxxii, p. 363; *YR*, pp. 989-91; *Yuanshi* 143.3411-13; Ch'ên Yüan 陳垣, *Western and Central Asians in China Under the Mongols: Their Transformation into Chinese*, trans. by Ch'ien Hsing-Hai 錢星海 and L. Carrington Goodrich (Los Angeles, CA: Monumenta Serica, 1966), pp. 41-51.

<sup>16</sup> Cheng Jufu, 'Wudu zhimin wang shude zhi bei', pp. 344-45:

Mainu's sons were called: Altan 阿兒灘, who died young and Dorjibal, [345] [who was] Reader of the Hanlin Academy 翰林侍讀學士; of his daughters, the eldest married Temüge, Junior Director of the Directorate of Waterways 都水監卿; the next married Wang Qara Buqa, Compiler of the First Class at the Hanlin Academy 翰林待制; the next married the Grand Instructor 大司徒 Asingga. 買奴子，曰阿兒灘，早世，朵兒 [345] 只班翰林侍讀學士；女，長適都水監卿帖木哥，次適翰林待制王合刺不花，次適大司徒阿僧哥。

On Asingga, son of the famous Nepalese artisan Anige 阿尼哥, see *YR*, p. 2238; *Yuanshi* 203.4546.

<sup>17</sup> Other situational factors may play a role, too; Walton highlights likely exaggeration in the scholarly attributes ascribed to the founders of local academies. See Linda Walton, 'Family Fortunes in the Song-Yuan Transition: Academies and Chinese Elite Strategies for Success', *T'oung Pao*, 97 (2011), 37-103 (80-81).

<sup>18</sup> McMullen argues that a combination of payment-based commissioning and social or political pressure on epitaph writers led to an excessively laudatory norm and therefore to a widespread cynicism among literati and especially court historians. See McMullen, 'The Death of Chou Li-Chen', 72.

<sup>19</sup> See Angela Schottenhammer, 'Characteristics of Song Epitaphs', in *Burial in Song China*, ed. by Dieter Kuhn (Heidelberg: Edition Forum, 1994), pp. 253-306 (pp. 255-56); Albert E. Dien, *Six Dynasties Civilization* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 205; for a decree condemning these inscriptions proposed by Pei Songzhi 裴松之 (360-439), see *Songshu*, 15.407, 64.1699 and (an abbreviated version) *Nanshi* 33.863.

stones, in both the immediate and longer terms, suggesting that their content was not thought to be aimed exclusively at eternity, but also potent in the here and now.<sup>20</sup>

Iiyama highlights the importance of inscriptions (and the portable rubbings made from them) in establishing descendants' bona fides as inheritors of position and access due to their ancestors' meritorious service, especially in the *kešig* household guard and administration.<sup>21</sup> This, Iiyama argues, reflected the importance of *genjiao* 根腳, a term he links to the Mongolian concept of *hujagur*, 'origin, root, source, beginning', used in the opening lines of the *Secret History*.<sup>22</sup> As Iiyama has demonstrated, a key function of such texts in the Mongol era was to prove "close connection and loyalty to the imperial household" on which further patronage depended.<sup>23</sup> This was accomplished in part by the carrying of stele rubbings by subjects' descendants; a variation on the paper-based transmission, via authorial collections, of such textual material.<sup>24</sup> The degree to which these texts can be read as their authors and commissioners intended without juxtaposition with tomb structures, artwork, and other material aspects of the setting of a stele or plaque

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<sup>20</sup> Harrist argues that an increase in Han inscriptions can be linked directly to political conditions calling for "the oblique expression of oppositional views and for the public demonstration of bonds linking the donors and honorees of inscriptions", thereby positioning the inscription as a kind of liminal space available for complex political and social expression. See Robert E. Harrist Jr., *The Landscape of Words: Stone Inscriptions from Early and Medieval China* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2008), p. 275. For Tang-era condemnations of inscription narratives, see Twitchett, 'Chinese Biographical Writing', pp. 70-76. For an example of political polemic in *muzhi* form, see Walton, 'Family Fortunes in the Song-Yuan Transition', 48, n. 22.

<sup>21</sup> See Tomoyasu Iiyama, 'Steles and Status: Evidence for the Emergence of a New Elite in Yuan North China', *Journal of Chinese History* 1 (2017), 3-26 (20, 21). As Wu notes, rubbing removes context and place from a stele, both in terms of "transforming the stele into a material form analogous to a printed text" and moving it into a collection. See Hung, 'On Rubbings', p. 37.

<sup>22</sup> Iiyama, 'Steles and Status', 8, n. 16; on *hujagur*, see de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, i, p. 223-24; de Rachewiltz, *Index to the Secret History of the Mongols, The Uralic and Altaic Series* 121 (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 1972, Repr. Richmond: Curzon, 1997), p. 13. On this see also Xiao Qiqing, 'Yuandai si da menggu jiazhu' 元代四大蒙古家族 (The Four Great Mongol Lineages of the Yuan Dynasty), in *Yuandai shi xintan*, pp. 141-230 (p. 142).

<sup>23</sup> Iiyama, 'Steles and Status', 21.

<sup>24</sup> Iiyama, 'Steles and Status', 20, 21. On the effect of converting stone to paper by rubbing, see Wu Hung, 'On Rubbings: Their Materiality and Historicity,' in *Writing and Materiality in China: Essays in Honor of Patrick Hanan*, ed. by Judith T. Zeitlin and Lydia H. Liu, with Ellen Widmer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 2003), pp. 29-72 (pp. 37, 59).

is the subject of some discussion.<sup>25</sup> Our foundation texts clearly *were* circulated, read and utilized in paper form, however, both employed in this way by our historian-compilers, and expected to be so used by their writers.<sup>26</sup> Social biography can thus be viewed as a kind of cross-generational curriculum vitae in which service to the Činggisid centre (as Iiyama notes, the earlier and more central the better) lent further access to later generations of a descent line.<sup>27</sup> These texts are, therefore, rhetorical texts within which narrative is a vital element. Their focus, we will see, lies in positioning their subject between family, career and principle; a nexus that shifts with changing social circumstances and developments in political thought.<sup>28</sup>

Wu Hung argues that epitaphs act to provide “a definitive ‘public persona’ for the dead”, having in common with dynastic histories their attempt to provide a final word on a life and their operation in “grandiose and impersonal” registers, leaving limited room for the personal.<sup>29</sup> With an imperative for writers to “tastefully borrow from classical sources suited to the dedicatee’s life experience”, this leaves inscription texts at something of an intersection between credibility, individuality and trope.<sup>30</sup> These texts have more often

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<sup>25</sup> Jie Shi and Angela Schottenhammer have been particularly keen to underline the linkage between the textual element of funeral inscriptions and their broader context, physical, artistic and spiritual. See Jie Shi, “‘My Tomb Will Be Opened in Eight Hundred Years’”, 245; Schottenhammer, ‘A Buried Past’, 21-22. On the power of carving and context, see also Harrist, *The Landscape of Words*, p. 18.

<sup>26</sup> Davis emphasizes the normative circulation of manuscript versions by both commissioning families and fans of their composers. See Davis, *Entombed Epigraphy*, pp. 79-80. On the possibility of reworking and variation creeping in to texts through the chain of literary transmission, see Takashi Sue, ‘Revelations of a Missing Paragraph’, 68. In other cases these texts were altered by the court, particularly during the Qianlong era in the Qing (1735-96), during which a policy of re-transliterating certain non-Chinese names has wreaked havoc among transmitted records of the Liao and Yuan dynasties in particular. On the Qing re-transliteration, see Francis Woodman Cleaves, ‘The Biography of Bayan of the Bārin in the “Yuan Shih”’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 19 (1956), 185–303 (191).

<sup>27</sup> Iiyama, ‘Steles and Status’, 21.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Standen, ‘Integration and Separation’, 159. Iiyama notes the strategic use of both patronage and literati networks around the Yuan court, and demonstrates the manifestation of this in textual form. See Iiyama Tomoyasu, ‘A Career between Two Cultures: Guo Yu, a Chinese Literatus in the Yuan Bureaucracy’, *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, 44 (2014), 471-501.

<sup>29</sup> Wu Hung, *The Art of the Yellow Springs: Understanding Chinese Tombs* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2010), p. 174.

<sup>30</sup> Davis, *Entombed Epigraphy*, p. 79.

received attention as either providing corrections to *liezhuan* portrayals (due to their relative temporal proximity to events reported) or been dismissed as idealized and parochial semi-fictions.<sup>31</sup> Schottenhammer and McMullen take usefully divergent approaches to our life-writing genres, the former regarding *liezhuan* as distorted in their focus on empire-wide politics and compilers' rhetorical aims.<sup>32</sup>

McMullen sees inscription texts as overly parochial and insufficiently connected to the key issues of their time.<sup>33</sup> As Ebrey notes, however, this situational and local focus can also be seen as a strength, opening source repertoires to concern and nuance beyond dynastic histories' fixed central focus.<sup>34</sup> Comparison of multiple and overlapping texts can also, however, illuminate something of the social background to their production. As Schottenhammer notes, analyzing multiple life accounts "reveals in a general fashion what kind of behavior was considered evil, and which kinds of behavior were criticized as disruptions of the regular order", therefore exposing the "shifting moral geography" within which these texts operated.<sup>35</sup>

Our compilers seem to have treated these texts as broadly equal in value as source material, drawing upon them freely. Subsequent scholarship has sometimes privileged social biography texts as more pristine versions of their subjects' lives, noting that some

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<sup>31</sup> See David L. McMullen, 'The Death of Chou Li-Chen: Imperially Ordered Suicide or Natural Causes?', *Asia Major*, 3, 2 (1989), 23–82, 24; Patricia Ebrey, 'Later Han Stone Inscriptions', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 40 (1980), 325–53, 353.

<sup>32</sup> See Schottenhammer, 'A Buried Past'; 28.

<sup>33</sup> See McMullen, 'The Death of Chou Li-Chen', 24.

<sup>34</sup> See Patricia Ebrey, 'Later Han Stone Inscriptions', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 40 (1980), 325–53 (353).

<sup>35</sup> Angela Schottenhammer, 'A Buried Past: The Tomb Inscription (Muzhiming) and Official Biographies of Wang Chuzhi (863–923)', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 52 (2009), 14–56 (17).

of their writers were contemporary to events portrayed.<sup>36</sup> Other scholars emphasize their idealized and eulogistic features, noting the imperative for commissioning families to control the portrayal of their ancestors.<sup>37</sup> Chu Ming-kin argues that the *Yuanshi* biography of Wang Shixian 汪世顯 (1195–1243) swallows whole a rather idealized inscription version of his life, transmitted via the *Mingchen shilue* and contradicted by the *Jinshi*.<sup>38</sup> Despite some scholars' suggestions that "biographical truth should be recorded in order to serve the ancestors"<sup>39</sup> and that authors, in closer temporal proximity to subjects' lives than *liezhuan* compilers, may have witnessed events personally, social biography narratives served to lend prestige to subject and family alike, operating with regard to court, lineage and principle.<sup>40</sup> Compilers' willingness, highlighted by Chu, to include narrative elements from social biography, and in this case, apparently what Bossler describes as epitaphs' 'purple prose' was transmitted to the work in the form of narrative episodes.<sup>41</sup>

What these texts tried to prove has also varied over time, with normative values among literary elites shifting from a basis in Tang aristocratic and genealogical status indicators to Neo-Confucian behavioural ethics, characterized by Schottenhammer as "scholarship

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<sup>36</sup> It is always tempting to argue that inscription texts, being prior to *liezhuan*, are therefore the more authoritative versions. For an example of such treatment, see Wang Jiuyu 王久宇 and Sun Tian 孙田, 'Wanyan Xiyin shendaobei beiwen de shiliao jiazhi' 完颜希尹神道碑碑文的史料价值 (The Historical Value of Wanyan Xiyi's Shendaobei Text), *Guji zhengli yanjiu xuekan*, 4 (2015), 39–42.

<sup>37</sup> Charles Hartman emphasizes the importance of subjects' 'personnel files' 印紙, over which the subject held control, and which were then turned into funerary inscriptions by their heirs' commissioning, underlining the approval and control of family members. See Hartman, 'A Textual History of Cai Jing's Biography in the Songshi', p. 519.

<sup>38</sup> See Chu Ming-Kin, 'The Making of Iconic Disloyalty: The Evolution of Liu Mengyan's (1219 — ca. 1295) Image since the Thirteenth Century', *Frontiers of History in China*, 10 (2015), 1–37 (5-6).

<sup>39</sup> Schottenhammer, 'Characteristics of Song Epitaphs', p. 275

<sup>40</sup> Schottenhammer, 'Einige Überlegungen', pp. 23-25; Twitchett, 'Problems of Chinese Biography', p. 29.

<sup>41</sup> Beverley J. Bossler, *Powerful Relations: Kinship, Status, & the State in Sung China (960-1279)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series, 43 (Cambridge, MA: The Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1998), pp. 9-10; see also Chu, 'The Making of Iconic Disloyalty', 5-6.



and education and moral uprightness and integrity”.<sup>42</sup> The need to provide such proof helps explain the highly selective and glorified nature of epitaph narratives.<sup>43</sup> Importantly for our purposes, a number of scholars also highlight the value of interrogating subjects’ idealization in assessing shifting value hierarchies, and it is indeed such comparative treatment we pursue across the genre boundaries of our text groups and as manifested in our compilers’ decisions.<sup>44</sup> As noted previously, this thesis does not seek to identify the ‘pristine’ or the ‘reliable’ for the purposes of reconstructing events portrayed, but rather the interventions made to narratives to understand the process and aims of compilation and editing. As such we need to develop a feel for how our foundation texts work, in the sense of what kind of narratives they employ and how they do this.

Social biographies were intended to operate in a setting of the posthumous world and address audiences of that world. Although probably also intended to resonate in a timescale extending beyond the immediate context of their commissioning, it is inconceivable that their texts were not informed by shifts in the cultural and intellectual currents around their composers and commissioners.<sup>45</sup> In some cases, where parallel versions are available for comparison, we can identify elements of these currents. One example is the set of biographies relating to the Jia 賈 family, who established themselves as provisioners in the Toluid *kešig* over four generations and almost a century.<sup>46</sup> Recorded

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<sup>42</sup> Schottenhammer, ‘Characteristics of Song Epitaphs’ pp. 267, 269; see also Bossler, *Powerful Relations*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>43</sup> Bossler, *Powerful Relations*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>44</sup> As Ebrey argues, “[a]lmost all writers of epitaphs found qualities in their subjects worthy of praise, and the ones they chose to stress reveal their own values.” See Ebrey, ‘Later Han Stone Inscriptions’, 334.

<sup>45</sup> Davis argues that embellishment to funerary inscriptions is usually characterized by a conservative conformity, something that seems to point to a concern with social status and acceptability. See Richard L. Davis, ‘Chaste and Filial Women in Chinese Historical Writings of the Eleventh Century’, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 121 (2001), 204–18 (210).

<sup>46</sup> The biographies are found at *Yuanshi* 169.3969-72; Wang Yun 王惲, ‘Dayuan jiayi daifu qianshu xuanhuiyuan shi jiashi shide zhi bei’ 大元嘉議大夫簽書宣徽院事賈氏世德之碑, in *QYW*, vi, pp. 394–97; *Qiuqianji* 51.1a-5b, at *YRCK*, ii, pp. 111-13; Yu Ji 虞集, ‘Jia zhongyin gong shendaobei’ 賈忠隱公神道碑, in *QYW*, xxvii, pp. 276-80; *Daoyuan leigao*, 40.24b-32a; *YRCK*, vi, pp. 234-38. The Jia family have

in a 1296 ‘Stele Recording Ancestral Virtue’ by Wang Yun 王惲, a 1330 *shendaobei* by Yu Ji 虞集 and a *Yuanshi liezhuan*, the divergences between these texts’ presentation of the first Jia generations’ careers at the Činggisid courts are substantial. The function of Yu Ji’s alterations appears to lie in repositioning Jia ancestors closer to Činggis Qan and the centre more broadly; precisely the tendency noted by Iiyama.<sup>47</sup>

The *Yuanshi* historian-compilers picked a winding path between these versions in developing the *liezhuan* account.<sup>48</sup> They avoided transmitting what appears a willful mangling of the historical record in Yu Ji’s *shendaobei*, but still at times chose his version over Wang Yun’s family biography. Comparison of these extant texts lays bare decisions made by Ming Taizu’s compilers, and therefore the shaping of our historical source material. Social biography like this should therefore be viewed as a functional genre of rhetorical texts with a familial focus, a key section of which is presented in an episodic fashion and arranged around a framework of meritorious and loyal performance in formal, named positions, intended to reflect positively on both a subject and their descendants. The court-facing elements of these rhetorical and familial life narratives provide rich material to be reworked and re-presented in the second stage of our compilation story. Transmitted in excerpts and segments in the *Mingchen shilue*, separated from familial and social links, they serve a closely related but separate purpose.

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received little attention in scholarship, notable exceptions being Li and Zhang, who primarily highlight the ‘Mongolization’ implied by name grants; see Li Zhi’an 李治安, ‘Yuandai hanren shou menggu wenhua yingxiang kaoshu’ 元代汉人受蒙古文化影响考述 (Mongol Influence on Ethnic Han Chinese in the Yuan Dynasty) *Lishi Yanjiu* 历史研究 1 (2009), 24–50; Zhang Dandan 张丹丹, ‘Mengyuan zaoqi mengguhua hanren jinchen qunti yanjiu’ 蒙元早期蒙古化汉人近臣群体研究 (Research on Mongolised Han Courtiers in the Early Mongol Empire) (Unpub. MA thesis, Nanjing University, 2012).

<sup>47</sup> See Iiyama, ‘Steles and Status’, 7.

<sup>48</sup> Compare, for example, the account of Jia Shira’s first appearance at the court in Wang Yun, ‘Dayuan jiayi daifu qianshu xuanhuiyuan shi jiashi shide zhi bei’, p. 394; Yu Ji, ‘Jia Zhongyingong shendaobei’, p. 276, and *Yuanshi*: 169.3969.

## 1.2 Excerpting, juxtaposing, classifying: approaching the *Mingchen shilue*

Su Tianjue 蘇天爵 (1294-1352), the compiler of the *Mingchen shilue*, was a scholar, official, poet, historian, Record Keeper and later Compiler of the Second Class at the Hanlin Academy, also serving in Branch Censorates and Branch Secretariats, apparently organizing the suppression of rebellion in Zhejiang at his death in 1252.<sup>49</sup> Compiling, as a private scholar, the seventy-juan *Yuanwenlei* 元文類 (*Classified Literary Works from the Yuan*, originally *Guochao wenlei* 國朝文類, or *Classified Literary Works from the Present Dynasty*), in which many of our foundation texts were preserved, alongside the *Mingchen shilue*, which were both drafted in 1328, his output preserved and presented a substantial range of social biography material.<sup>50</sup> Su is generally regarded as a moralist in his output: his aim in compiling both works is taken to be didactic and moral, presenting events and individuals for posterity to avoid repeating the mistakes of others.<sup>51</sup> Wishing to avoid the determination of readings through biographical and intellectual specification, this thesis retains a focus on the content of the *Mingchen shilue*, rather than Su's person.

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<sup>49</sup> Su Tianjue 蘇天爵 (1294-1352), courtesy name Boxiu 伯修, from Zhending 真定 (present-day Zhengding 正定, in Hebei), also known as *Zixi xiansheng* 滋溪先生. Tianjue's biography is found at *Yuanshi* 183.4224-27. See also *YR*, pp. 2114-17 and, among other works, Yan Peijian 顏培建, 'Yuandai shixuejia su tianjue yanjiu chuyi 元代史学家苏天爵研究刍议 (Summary of Research on the Yuan Dynasty Historian Su Tianjue)', *Nanjing xiaozhuang xueyuan xuebao*, 1 (2011), 111-15; Xiao Qiqing, 'Su tianjue he tade yuanchao mingchen shilue'; Yao Jing'an 姚景安, 'Su Tianjue ji qi yuanchao mingchen shilue 苏天爵及其《元朝名臣事略》 (Su Tianjue and his "Yuanchao mingchen shilue")', *Wenxian*, 3 (1989), 101-11; Liu Yonghai 刘永海, 'Lun Yuanchao mingchen shilue de bianzuan yili' 论《元朝名臣事略》的编纂义例 (A Discussion of Meaning and Precedent for the Compilation of the Yuanchao mingchen shilue)', *Tushuguan lilun yu shijian*, 3 (2013), 58-61; Liu Yonghai 刘永海, 'Lun Su Tianjue de shigong shiguan' 论苏天爵的事功史观 (On Su Tianjue's Pragmatic View of History), *Tangshan shifan xueyuan xuebao*, 4 (2011), 58-60; Liu Yonghai, 'Lun Su Tianjue shixue sixiang de lixue qingxiang 论苏天爵史学思想的理学倾向 (A Discussion of the Philosophical Orientation of Su Tianjue's Historiographical Thought)', *Jinan daxue xuebao*, 23 (2013), 34-40.

<sup>50</sup> On this dating see Xiao Qiqing, 'Su tianjue he tade yuanchao mingchen shilue', p. 327.

<sup>51</sup> See On-cho Ng and Q. Edward Wang, *Mirroring the Past: The Writing and Use of History in Imperial China* (Honolulu, The University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), pp. 182-83. For more specific discussion of Su's position and intellectual heritage, see the works by Liu Yonghai listed above.

Key writers cited by Su Tianjue in the *Mingchen shilue* prominently include Yao Sui 姚燧 (1238-1313),<sup>52</sup> Yuan Mingshan 元明善 (1269-1322),<sup>53</sup> Yuan Haowen 元好問 (1190-1257),<sup>54</sup> Yan Fu 閻復 (1236-1312)<sup>55</sup> and Wang Yun 王惲 (1227-1304).<sup>56</sup> Many of the most important foundation texts drawn upon by the *Mingchen shilue* and later the *Yuanshi* compilers, including a number by these writers, are preserved in Su Tianjue's *Yuanwenlei* collection, completed in 1328.<sup>57</sup> The fourteenth-century master propagandist Yu Ji 虞集 (1272-1348) is also cited, and in some cases his later works of social biography, completed after the *Mingchen shilue* biographies were completed, were clearly consulted by the *Yuanshi* compilers too.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>52</sup> On Yao Sui, courtesy name Duanfu 端甫, the nephew of Yao Shu, see *Yuanshi* 174.4057-60; *YR*, p. 733. His collection, the *Mu'anji* 牧庵集, is available in Yao Sui 姚燧, Zha Hongde 查洪德 (ed.), *Yaosuiji* 姚燧集 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2011).

<sup>53</sup> On Yuan Mingshan, courtesy name *Fuchu* 復初, from Qinghe 清河 in Daming 大名, a celebrated writer and *guwen* specialist serving in the Hanlin Academy under Ayurbarwada and Šidebala Qa'ans, see *Yuanshi* 181.4171-74; *YR*, p. 30. His collection, the *Qingheji* 清河集, is available in *YRCK*, v, pp. 159-210, in seven *juan*.

<sup>54</sup> On Yuan Haowen, see *YR*, p. 28; *QYW*, i, p. 272; Jinping Wang, 'Between Family and State: Networks of Literati, Clergy, and Villagers in Shanxi, North China, 1200-1400' (Unpub. PhD Dissertation, Harvard, 2011), pp. 20-64.

<sup>55</sup> On Yan Fu, courtesy name Zijing 子靖, whose ancestors came from Hezhou 和州, in Pingyang 平陽, see *Yuanshi* 160.3772-74; *YR*, p. 1995.

<sup>56</sup> On Wang Yun, courtesy name Zhongmou 仲謀; alternative name (*hao*) Qiujian 秋澗, see *YR*, pp. 113-15; Herbert Franke, "Wang Yün (1227-1304): A Transmitter of Chinese Values", in *Yüan Thought: Chinese Thought and Religion Under the Mongols*, edited by Hok-lam Chan and Wm. Theodore de Bary (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), pp. 153-196; D. Gedalecia, 'Wang Yün', in *ISK*, pp. 371-86; Lao Yan-shuan, 'The Chung-T'ang Shih-Chi of Wang Yün: An Annotated Translation with an Introduction' (unpublished PhD thesis, Harvard University, 1962). Wang Yun's collection *Qiujian daquanji* 秋澗大全集 is preserved at *YRCK*, i, pp. 107-544, ii, pp. 1-536, in 100 *juan*.

<sup>57</sup> On this dating see Xiao Qiqing, 'Su tianjue he tade yuanchao mingchen shilue', p. 327.

<sup>58</sup> Compare, for example, Yu Ji 虞集, 'Jurong junwang shijibei' 句容郡王世績碑, in *QYW*, xxvii, pp. 229-36; *Daoyuan leigao* 38.1a-13, in *YRCK*, vi, pp. 199-206, completed 1329-30, with the *Yuanshi* biography for Toqtoq (*Yuanshi* 128.3131-38) and his biography at *Mingchen shilue* 3.47-51. On Yu Ji, see *Yuanshi* 181.4174-4184; *YR*, pp. 1616-18; John D. Langlois, Jr., "Yü Chi and His Mongol Sovereign: The Scholar as Apologist", *The Journal of Asian Studies* 38 (1978): 99-116. Yu Ji's fifty-*juan* collection *Daoyuan leigao* 道園類稿 is preserved at *YRCK*, v, pp. 247-644 and vi, pp. 1-472.

As Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing notes, *Mingchen shilue* subjects tend towards the civilian (Hsiao identifies three quarters as such) and the Han (Hsiao identifies 34 *Hanren*, alongside 8 Mongols and 5 *Semu*), and they belong to the same peak of imperial authority posited by the *Yuanshi* compilers; 41 subjects served Qubilai Qaghan, and the service of the latest subject, the astronomer Guo Shoujing 郭守敬 (1231-1316), extends only to the reign of Ayurbarwada (Renzong 仁宗, r. 1312-20).<sup>59</sup>

Su Tianjue's subjects are divided ethnically, the first four *juan* relating lives of Mongol and *Semu* figures, and the remaining eleven *juan* the lives of people classed as 'Han' under the Yuan grading (see Table 1, below).<sup>60</sup> An exception is Lian Xixian, of Uighur origin – his treatment as 'Chinese' is not mirrored in the *Yuanshi*, where he is found squarely in the 'Mongol and *Semu*' section, at *juan* 126. Within these two sections, subjects are grouped as follows. Muqali is followed by his descendant Hantum in *juan* 1, *juan* 2 collects Turko-Mongol generals of the decisive Song campaign, *juan* 3 Turko-Mongol members of Qubilai's retinue, *juan* 4 Turko-Mongol figures involved in central government and opposed to the activity of Aḥmad Fanākatī and Sangha.

*Juan* 5, beginning the 'Han' section, contains a pairing illustrating pre-Qubilai Mongol governance and *juan* 6 northern Chinese commanders in Činggisid service. *Juan* 7 brings together Liu Bingzhong and Zhang Wenqian, part of a group within Qubilai's retinue identified by de Rachewiltz as "non-orthodox Confucian scholars" with practical skills in

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<sup>59</sup> See Xiao Qiqing, 'Su tianjue he tade yuanchao mingchen shilue', p. 326; Yao Jing'an 姚景安, 'Qianyan' 前言 (Preface), in Su Tianjue 蘇天爵, *Yuanchao Mingchen Shilue* 元朝名臣事略 (*Short Biographies of Eminent Officials of the Yuan Dynasty*) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), pp. 1-18 (10). On this periodization, see Humble, 'Princely Qualities and Unexpected Coherence', 312.

<sup>60</sup> Mu Dequan reads this slightly differently, seeing the 'Han' section start at Yang Weizhong, rather than Yelü Chucai. See 'Yuandai Shijiazhuang shixuejia Su Tianjue', 50.

governance, alongside Lian Xixian and the general and statesman Shi Tianze.<sup>61</sup> *Juan* 8 presents another grouping, strongly influenced by Neo-Confucian thought, heavily involved in education and instrumental in embedding southern Neo-Confucianism at Qubilai's court.<sup>62</sup> *Juan* 9 unites a pair of technical specialists, *Juan* 10 and 11 scholarly officials with a mixture of regional and central government careers. *Juan* 12 presents Hanlin Academy scholars and *juan* 13 a collection of more varied advisory and intellectual careers. The Dong family are grouped in *juan* 14, and the final *juan* combines an influential thinker in government and a retiring scholar, both of whom presented advice to Qubilai.

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<sup>61</sup> See de Rachewiltz et al., 'Introduction', in *ISK*, p. xxvi.

<sup>62</sup> See de Rachewiltz et al., 'Introduction', p. xxvi.

**Table 1: *Mingchen shilue* content summary and *Yuanshi* biography comparison**

Subject		<i>Mingchen shilue</i> biography		Characters		<i>Yuanshi</i> biography	
		Title	<i>Juan</i> / page	Body text	Notes	<i>Juan</i> / page	Characters (inc. memorials)
Muqali	1170-1223	太師魯國忠武王	1.1-8	2875	694	120.2955-60	3078
Hantum	1245-1293	丞相東平忠憲王	1.8-14	2187	127	126.3081-84	1306
Bayan	1236-1294	丞相淮安忠武王	2.16-23	2923	180	127.3099-3116	7815
Ajuqan	1227-1287	丞相河南武定王	2.23-31	2401	1077	128.3119-24	2082
Ariq Qaya	1227-1286	丞相楚國武定公	2.31-37	2634	-	128.3124-28	1945
Örlüg Noyan aka Öz Temür	1242-1295	太師廣平憲王	3.41-43	719	194	119.2945-48	739
Öčičer	1249-1311	太師淇陽忠武王	3.43-47	1489	84	119.2949-53	1377
Toǵtoǵ	1237-1297	樞密句容武毅王	3.47-51	1764	-	128.3131-38	1803
Öljei	1246-1303	丞相興元忠憲王	4.53-55	547	164	130.3173-74	439
Harqasun [Darqan]	1257-1308	丞相順德忠獻王	4.55-61	2327	142	136.3291-95	1867
Boqum	1255-1300	平章魯國文貞公	4.61-67	2697	-	130.3163-73	4325 (976)
Čerig	1260-1306	平章武寧正憲王	4.67-71	1405	261	130.3161-63	947
Yelü Chucai 耶律楚材	1189-1243	中書耶律文正王	5.73-84	3989	1144	146.3455-65	4106
Yang Weizhong 楊惟中	1206-1260	中書楊忠肅公	5.85-86	691	92	146.3467-68	548
Wang Shixian 汪世顯	1195-1243	總帥汪義武王	6.88-91	1211	210	155.3649-57	633
Yan Shi 嚴實	1182-1240	萬戶嚴武惠公	6.91-95	1645	-	148.3505-8	1017
Zhang Rou 張柔	1190-1268	萬戶張忠武王	6.95-100	1935	464	147.3471-78	2353
Zhang Hongfan 張弘範	1238-1280	元帥張獻武王	6.100-8	3450	309	156.3679-84	2211
Liu Bingzhong 劉秉忠	1216-1274	太保劉文正公	7.111-14	1199	89	157.3687-95	3037 (1952)
Shi Tianze 史天澤	1202-1275	丞相史忠武王	7.114-24	4313	72	155.3658-65	2498
Lian Xixian 廉希憲	1231-1280	平章廉文正王	7.124-42	7574	-	126.3085-97	5423
Zhang Wenqian 張文謙	1217-1283	左丞張忠宣公	7.142-48	2354	84	157.3695-98	1169

Dou Mo 竇默	1196-1280	內翰竇文正公	8.151-54	1442	228	158.3730-33	1395 (243)
Yao Shu 姚樞	1203-1280	左丞姚文獻公	8.155-64	4171	110	158.3711-16	2236 (360)
Xu Heng 許衡	1209-1281	左丞許文正公	8.164-80	6014	552	158.3716-30	6134 (3688)
Wang Xun 王恂	1235-1281	太史王文肅公	9.182-85	1180	-	164.3843-45	827
Guo Shoujing 郭守敬	1231-1316	太史郭公	9.185-95	5075	-	164.3845-52	3218 (1360)
Liu Su 劉肅	1188-1263	尚書劉文獻公	10.197-99	1034	-	160.3763-65	514
Song Zizhen 宋子貞	d.1268	平章宋公	10.199-203	1375	227	159.3735-37	1059
Yang Guo 楊果	1197-1271	參政楊文獻公	10.203-4	533	61	164.3854-55	312
Zhang Dehui 張德輝	1195-1274	宣慰張公	10.205-10	2724	-	163.3823-26	1475
Li Dehui 李德輝	1218-1280	左丞李忠宣公	11.212-17	2335	-	163.3815-19	1684
Shang Ting 商挺	1209-1288	參政商文定公	11.217-23	2096	733	159.3738-42	1793
Zhao Liangbi 趙良弼	1217-1286	樞密趙文正公	11.224-29	2205	306	159.3743-46	1721
Jia Juzhen 賈居貞	1218-1280	參政賈文正公	11.229-35	2175	296	153.3622-25	985
Wang E 王鶚	1190-1273	內翰王文康公	12.237-41	1715	-	160.3756-57	768
Wang Pan 王磐	1202-1293	內翰王文忠公	12.241-47	2570	-	160.3751-56	2079
Li Chang 李昶	1203-1289	尚書李公	12.247-49	957	-	160.3761-63	1080
Xu Shilong 徐世隆	d. 1285	太常徐公	12.249-54	2005	-	160.3768-70	981
Yang Huan 楊奐	1186-1255	廉訪使楊文憲公	13.256-59	1136	138	153.3621-22	572
Li Ye 李冶	1192-1279	內翰李文正公	13.259-64	1251	140	160.3759-61	757
Yang Gongyi 楊恭懿	1225-1294	太史楊文康公	13.264-68	2252		164.3841-43	944 (283)
Dong Wenbing 董文炳	1217-1278	左丞董忠獻公	14.270-79	3848	94	156.3667-79	3430
Dong Wenyong 董文用	1224-1297	內翰董忠穆公	14.279-87	3541	50	148.3495-3501	2832
Dong Wenzhong 董文忠	1231-1281	樞密董正獻公	14.287-91	1954	-	148.3501-5	1472
Hao Jing 郝經	1223-1275	國信使郝文忠公	15.294-99	1344	1201	157.3698-709	5058 (3854)
Liu Yin 劉因	1249-1293	靜脩劉先生	15.299-301	1165	-	171.4007-10	1551 (728)



The composite biographies of the *Mingchen shilue* lie somewhere between social biography and *liezhuan* (but rather closer to the latter). Su Tianjue's compilation process both parallels and departs from the *Yuanshi* historian-compilers' approach to editing subsequent *liezhuan* narratives. Su Tianjue's selection from foundation texts of narrative elements focusing on subjects' careers, moral character, education and childhood, and discarding of material on family and marriage relationships, parallels the usual *liezhuan* subject matter. As a result his work provides a valuable resource for comparative study of both the subjects for whom he compiled biographies and the broader handling of social biography in *liezhuan*.

Numerous differences are, however, immediately apparent between Tianjue's work and *Yuanshi* biography. As can be seen from the table, the lengths of these biographies vary greatly across both *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*, from the 7,815 characters of Bayan's *liezhuan* to the mere 312 afforded to Yang Guo. The second longest *Yuanshi* biography in this sample is that for Xu Heng, and this, only slightly longer than Su's version, includes more than 3,500 characters of court memorials; the somewhat shorter biography for Hao Jing includes a similar proportion of such elements. Bayan aside, the *liezhuan* for Lian Xixian, at over 5,400 characters, is the longest *Yuanshi* biography in our sample that can be considered purely narrative in terms of content. There is a general tendency for the *liezhuan* versions to be shorter than Su Tianjue's texts, 35 of 47 texts (three quarters) being so reduced. Moreover, when compared to biography lengths in the *Mingchen shilue*, slightly more clustering is visible in the *Yuanshi* character counts, although counts still vary by hundreds of characters; there is no clear sign of editing to, for example, one, to or three thousand. Further surveys of *Yuanshi* biographies will be required to establish

whether, as seems quite feasible, some set or other of agreed character-counts guided the compilation process.

There are also key formal differences between *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* biographies. Each of the former is headed by a career summary, comprising between fifty and two hundred characters. These short accounts provide the subject's tabooed name, courtesy name and place of origin, followed by a summary of key appointments with dates, and a report on their death. Their function lies in positioning the subject in a framework of formal appointments, underlining once again the centrality of this to expressions of status. The fixed nature of this framework is notable. Yelü Chucai's summary is very brief, devoting more characters to his ancestors and employment under the Jin than to the two and a half decades of service to Mongol courts:

The prince was named Chucai 楚材, courtesy name Jinqing 晉卿, descended from the Liao Dongdan Wang 東丹王 Tuyu 突欲 in the eighth generation; son of Lü 履, the Wenxian Duke 文獻公 and Junior Vice Councillor of the Department of State Affairs under the Jin, he served as Second Secretary of the Yanjing Branch Secretariat. In the year *yihai* 乙亥 [1215], the city surrendered, and he subsequently joined the [current] court, accompanying expeditions against various countries. In *xinmao* 辛卯 [1231] he was appointed Head of the Secretariat. In *guimao* 癸卯 [1243] he passed away, aged 55.<sup>63</sup>

This seems to be the case because Chucai held few formal posts, although the functions and status at the early Činggisid courts claimed for him by his biographers were complex and multiple. This seems to speak to a broader reluctance on Su Tianjue's part to recognize service beyond a narrowly defined range of posts – as we will see, honorary positions are often omitted from the *Mingchen shilue*.

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<sup>63</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 5.73:

王名楚材，字晉卿，遼東丹王突欲八世孫，金尚書右丞文獻公履之子，為燕京行省員外郎。歲乙亥，城降，遂屬國朝，扈從征伐諸國。辛卯，拜中書令。癸卯，薨，年五十五。

After each summary the biography is presented as a compilation of labelled quotations from a range of Mongol-era Chinese-language works, citing 123 in total, a significant number of which are now lost.<sup>64</sup> This presentation of snippets, or excerpts, from foundation texts (primarily funerary inscriptions), rather than the *liezhuan*'s continuous, pre-digested and definitive-seeming narratives, is the second key difference between *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* narratives. This has an effect on the truth-claims made by the two works. Unlike the definitive version of the past presented by *liezhuan* narratives, Su Tianjue's approach effectively places him in a humble position; appearing only as selector and transmitter of others' narratives, he seems not to presume to draw his own conclusions.<sup>65</sup>

Tianjue does, however, take on a further decisive role, and here we find our third difference between *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*. Most biographies are based on a central text that serves as a narrative 'spine', arranged into a coherent flow with elements from other complementary works added on.<sup>66</sup> The 'spine' texts tend to be forms of social biography such as commemorative inscriptions of various forms or *xingzhuang* accounts of conduct. Some of these complementary excerpts are presented as *kaoyi* notes, in characters smaller than those of the main text, occasionally inserted into the middle of the primary narrative spine sections, but more usually following these.<sup>67</sup> The function of

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<sup>64</sup> For examples of lost texts, see Liu Yonghai, 'Lun Yuanchao mingchen shilue de bianzuan yili', 59; Xiao Qiqing, 'Su tianjue he tade yuanchao mingchen shilue', pp. 328-29; Yao Jing'an, 'Qianyan', p. 7.

<sup>65</sup> Jeffrey Rice, comparing the New Tang History and *Tang Mirror*, notes that the latter also presents labelled excerpts, rather than summaries. See Jeffrey Rice, 'Northern Song Reflections on the Tang', *Publicly Accessible Penn Dissertations*, Paper 920, 2013 <http://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AAI3594847>, p. 10.

<sup>66</sup> This is not always the case; the biography for Liu Yin 劉因 (1249-1293), for example, provides four excerpts from four texts. See *Mingchen shilue* 15.299-301.

<sup>67</sup> Muqali's biography sees numerous interpolations in the middle of sections, such as at *Mingchen shilue* 1.6, where extra information is added on incidents in 1221. Yelü Chucai's biography features a *kaoyi* section from Chucai's lost *muzhi* that shines a kind of side-light on Ögödei's enthronement and the subsequent amnesty. See *Mingchen shilue* 5.76.

these annotations is hard to pin down – sometimes they are presented as cross references and comparisons; they are not quite equivalent to footnotes as they interrupt narrative flow.<sup>68</sup>

The arrangement into this format does, clearly, selectively award certain elements primary status, positioning others as secondary, complementary and of comparative, rather than directly informative, value. As Marion Waldman argues, the inclusion of multiple points of view through such parallel accounts should be read as implicit statements about “beliefs and favored interpretations” via structural arrangement rather than overtly in words.<sup>69</sup> Su Tianjue’s insertion of lengthy sections of *kaoyi* notes from Yelü Chucai’s own writings on astronomy and calendrical studies, for example, disrupts the strong binary structure established by Chucai’s *shendaobei*, sacrificing vivid narrative for a display of expertise.<sup>70</sup> In several cases Su Tianjue inserted his own commentary, in one instance pointing out the discrepancies between two cited accounts of the same incident.<sup>71</sup>

A final category of interventions is less prominent or overt, and these undermine somewhat the humility implicit in Tianjue’s presentation of others’ writing rather than his own conclusions. Careful comparison of our texts reveals widespread unannounced

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<sup>68</sup> A clear example of this is Su Tianjue’s insertion of the lengthy and highly technical segments on Chucai’s astronomical and calendrical work at *Mingchen shilue* 5.74 and 5.75.

<sup>69</sup> Marilyn Robinson Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative: A Case Study in Perso-Islamicate Historiography* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1980), pp. 13-14.

<sup>70</sup> See section 2.1 below.

<sup>71</sup> We see, for example, a note in Muqali’s biography (at *Mingchen shilue* 1.5) stating that:

The two inscriptions were both compiled by Duke Yao 姚, [but] that which is recorded on the events of Lizhou 蠡州 differs as this [shows].

二碑皆姚公撰，所載蠡州事不同如此。

This is comparable to Sima Qian’s presentation of multiple and conflicting perspectives, as demonstrated by Hardy. See Grant Hardy, ‘Can an Ancient Chinese Historian Contribute to Modern Western Theory? The Multiple Narratives of Ssu-Ma Ch’ien’, *History and Theory* 33 (1994), 20-38 (37).

interventions in the cited source material, indicating that Su Tianjue made numerous changes within his excerpts without alerting the reader. These stealthy edits fall into two categories. The first is alterations that seem intended to clarify understanding, by, for example, removing confusing anachronisms. An example of this is Tianjue's dropping of the character *jin* 今 ('today, now, present') in Yang Weizhong's biography from its usage in the *shendaobei* to identify the monarch at the time of composition (Qubilai Qagan), no longer on the throne at the time of *Mingchen shilue* compilation in 1329.<sup>72</sup> Other such changes serve primarily to standardize dating and chronology, often indicated, as noted above, by such constructions as 'the following year' 明年 in the opening characters of a given episode.<sup>73</sup>

The second type of covert intervention is less easily justified, and constitutes a significant adjustment to the transmitted record. These interventions prominently and repeatedly include the wholesale removal of references to honorary ranks, imposing a strict division between honorary and 'true' office; whether actual activity observed these differences remains open to question.<sup>74</sup> Removal of references to other types of reward are also

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<sup>72</sup> Hao Jing 郝經, 'Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei' 故中書令江淮京湖南北等路宣撫大使楊公神道碑銘, in *QYW*, iv, p. 441:

歲己未，今上總統東師，奏公為江淮京湖南北等路宣撫大使，  
*Mingchen shilue* 5.86:

歲己未，上總統東師，奏公為江淮京湖南北等路宣撫使，

<sup>73</sup> See, for example, the cuts to Ajuqan's biography at *Mingchen shilue* 2.30, in comparison to Wang Yun 王惲, 'Dayuan guangludaifu pingzhangzhengshi wuliang shixianmiao beiming' 大元光祿大夫平章政事兀良氏先廟碑銘, in *QYW*, vi, pp. 389-90; see also Ariq Qaya's biography, at *Mingchen shilue* 2.33, in comparison to Yao Sui 姚燧, 'Huguang xingsheng zuochengxiang shendaobei' 湖廣行省左丞相神道碑, in *QYW*, ix, p. 553; Örlüg Noyan's biography at *Mingchen shilue* 3.42, in comparison to Yan Fu 閻復, 'Taishi guangping zhenxian wang bei' 太師廣平貞憲王碑, in *QYW*, ix, p. 258; Čerig's biography, at *Mingchen shilue* 4.68, in comparison to Yao Sui 姚燧, 'Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei' 平章政徐國公神道碑', in *QYW*, ix, p. 566. These amendments do not always seem entirely helpful. A date is removed in Harqasun's biography with no obvious clarificatory result, seeming rather to interfere in readers' understanding of events. See *Mingchen shilue* 4.55; Liu Minzhong 劉敏中, 'Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei' 敕賜太傅右丞相贈太師順德忠獻王碑, *QYW*, xi, p. 538.

<sup>74</sup> See, for example, the cuts to Ariq Qaya's biography, at *Mingchen shilue* 2.32-34, in comparison to Yao Sui, 'Huguang xingsheng zuochengxiang shendaobei', pp. 553-54; to Öčič'er's biography at *Mingchen*

common – Su Tianjue seems to have taken a position on acceptable recompense.<sup>75</sup> The omission of whole clauses, such as the explanation of the title ‘Bağatur’ in Zhang Hongfan’s *miaotangbei*, are more unusual.<sup>76</sup> These interventions can at times have a significant impact on our understanding of events portrayed. In Yang Weizhong’s biography, for example, Su Tianjue removed detail from the *shendaobei*’s claim that Weizhong led the Central Secretariat soon before Ögödei Qağan’s death, a change transmitted to the *Yuanshi*.<sup>77</sup> The *Mingchen shilue* also reduces the range of artisans gathered by Yao Shu and others under Ögödei’s orders in 1235, removing winemakers 酒工 and musicians 樂人 from the list.<sup>78</sup> In Liu Yin’s biography Tianjue cites a substantial memorial to Qubilai, the ‘Shang zaixiang shu’ 上宰相書, and – despite also including the full text in his *Yuanwenlei* – substantially condenses this in unannounced edits; the *Yuanshi* compilers, by contrast, include the full text.<sup>79</sup>

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*shilue* 3.47, in comparison to Yuan Mingshan 元明善, ‘Taishi Qiyang Zhongwuwang Bei’ 太師淇陽忠武王碑, in *QYW*, xxiv, pp. 332–39 (p. 336); Čerig’s biography, at *Mingchen shilue* 4.69, in comparison to Yao Sui, ‘Pingzhangzheng Xu Guogong Shendaobei’, p. 567.

<sup>75</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.156; Yao Sui 姚燧, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxiangong shendaobei’ 中書左丞姚文獻公神道碑, in *QYW*, ix, pp. 573–85 (p. 575).

<sup>76</sup> Su Tianjue cuts an explanation of the title ‘Bağatur’ from his quote of Zhang Hongfan’s *Miaotangbei*; see *Mingchen shilue* 6.104; Yu Ji, ‘Huainan xianwu wang miaotangbei’ 淮南憲武王廟堂碑, *QYW*, xxvii, pp. 215–20 (p. 219). See also, for example, the cuts to Ariq Qaya’s biography, at *Mingchen shilue* 2.32,33, in comparison to Yao Sui, ‘Huguang xingsheng zuochengxiang shendaobei’, pp. 553,534; cuts to Čerig’s biography, at *Mingchen shilue* 4.68, in comparison to Yao Sui, ‘Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei’, p. 566.

<sup>77</sup> Hao Jing, ‘Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei’, p. 441: When Yelü Chucai was dismissed, it was then [decided that Weizhong] serve as Secretary-General, managing government affairs. 邪律楚材罷，遂以公為中書令，領省事。

*Mingchen shilue* 5.85:

When Yelü Chucai was dismissed, it was then [decided that Weizhong] serve as Secretary-General. 耶律楚材罷，遂以公為中書令。

<sup>78</sup> See *Mingchen shilue* 8.156; Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’, p. 575.

<sup>79</sup> Liu Yin 劉因 (1249–1293), courtesy name Mengji 夢吉, from Rongcheng 容城 in Xiongzhou 雄州, lived in seclusion and avoided government service. Summoned to serve as Right Admonisher to the Heir Apparent’s Office 右贊善大夫 In 1283, he resigned and when summoned again as Academician of the Jixian Academy 集賢學士, he retired due to illness. See *Yuanshi* 171.4007–10; *Mingchen shilue* 15.299–301; *YR*, p. 1773. This is Liu Yin, ‘Shang zaixiang shu’ 上宰相書, in *QYW*, xiii, pp. 332–34; *YWL*, 37.10a–12a; *Yuanshi* 171.4008–10.

We also see some cases of the unannounced rearrangement of clauses within a quoted excerpt. See, for example, Örlüg Noyan's biography where the element "broad-minded and profound, none could measure his limits" was moved backwards by Su, inserted from the previous section of the *wangbei* text.<sup>80</sup> If such profuse changes are visible in a survey of Su Tianjue's use of texts available for comparison today, the degree of intervention across texts for which we have no comparators can, of course, only be guessed at. Some of these alterations may, of course, reflect errors during copying, but where we have a clear pattern, such as that related to honorary ranks, we can only conclude that Su Tianjue was an activist and interventionist compiler and editor.

### 1.3 *E pluribus unum*: *Yuanshi* compilation as unification and definitive version?

The *Yuanshi* presents a huge range of individual biographies, the 'meritorious ministers' that provide the majority of subjects being arranged into two sections – 'Mongol - Semu' (*juan* 118 to 145) and 'Han – Nan' (*juan* 146 to 188).<sup>81</sup> As noted above, in contrast to the *Mingchen shilue*, *Yuanshi* biographies present unified narratives, clearly drawing on elements from other texts, but smoothing them into seamless (and shorter) wholes.<sup>82</sup> The compilation of these *liezhuan* accounts was a large and far from straightforward project, and one conducted in considerable haste, driven by the need to consolidate Ming rule.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Cf. *Mingchen shilue* 3.41:

公弱歲襲爵，統按台部衆。器量宏達，襟度淵深，莫測其際。世祖聞其賢，驛召赴闕，見其風骨龐厚，解御服銀貂以賜。

Yan Fu, 'Taishi Guangping Zhenxian Wang Bei', p. 258:

貞憲王月呂魯公，器量宏達，襟度淵深，莫測其際。弱歲襲爵，統按台部衆。世祖皇帝聞其賢，驛召赴闕，見其風骨龐厚，解御服銀貂以賜。

<sup>81</sup> On this see also Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 149-50.

<sup>82</sup> Wang provides an impressively detailed and extremely survey of source material for *Yuanshi* biographies, *juan* by *juan*. See Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 149-275.

<sup>83</sup> For a detailed exploration of the compilation process, see Wang Shenrong 王慎榮, *Yuanshi tanyuan* 元史探源 (A Detailed Exploration of *Yuanshi* Sources), (Changchun: Jilin wenshi chubanshe, 1991). On the

*Yuanshi* biographies were drawn from multiple source types – as Bira argues, a number of *liezhuan* narratives, such as those of Belgütei and Tolui’s biographies, are clearly taken from Mongol-language Inner Asian records, and reflect the narrative handling and themes found in the *Shengwu qingzheng lu* and *Secret History*.<sup>84</sup> The same is true of elements of Harqasun’s biography (examined in detail in chapter 3) such as Kišiliq’s warning to Temüjin and, probably, the defiance shown by Toġtoġ’s ancestor Yīnas in his protection of the Merkit fugitive Ġodu, which, though transmitted via Chinese-language social biography, clearly draw on earlier Mongol-language records. Bira also suggests, incorrectly, that the ‘biography’ of Joči is likewise developed from a Mongol-language template. This seems baffling, as the biography only really provides an incomplete summary of Jočid rulers, and the focus is clearly on the distance between an (eastern) political centre and the distant western *ulus*.<sup>85</sup> It is clear, however, that a long process of recording took place over a century at the Yuan court, in both Turco-Mongol and Chinese languages.<sup>86</sup>

A *Yuanshi* biography typically opens with name, courtesy name (*zi* 字) where relevant, and background (tying the subject to either a toponym or an ethnonym).<sup>87</sup> This is usually

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reasons behind Zhu Yuanzhang’s haste, see especially pp. 25-28. See also Edward L. Dreyer, *Early Ming China: A Political History, 1355-1435* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982), p. 94.

<sup>84</sup> Shagdaryn Bira, *Mongolian Historical Writing from 1200 to 1700 / Shagdaryn Bira; Translated from the Original Russian by John R. Krueger and Revised and Updated by the Author*, trans. by John Richard Krueger, Studies on East Asia, 24, 2nd edn (Bellingham, WA: Center for East Asian Studies, Western Washington University, 2002), p. 84.

<sup>85</sup> Bira, *Mongolian Historical Writing from 1200 to 1700*, p. 84. See *Yuanshi* 117.2906; on Joči see also Atwood, *Encyclopedia*, pp. 278-79; YR, 2421; ‘Jochi and the Early Western Campaigns’, in *How Mongolia Matters: War, Law and Society*, ed. by Morris Rossabi (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 35-56. On Joči’s *Yuanshi* biography, see Humble, ‘Princely Qualities and Unexpected Coherence’, 315-17.

<sup>86</sup> On this, see Christopher P. Atwood, ‘Commentary on the Shengwu Qingzheng Lu’ <<http://cces.snu.ac.kr/com/18swqe.pdf>> [accessed 24 October 2013]; Zhao Qi 赵琦, “‘Yuanshi: Xu Guozhen zhuan’ zengbu 《元史·许国祯传》增补 (A Supplement to the “Yuanshi” Biography of Xu Guozhen)”, *Neimenggu daxue xuebao (renwen shehui kexueban)*, 36 (2004), 30–36 (32-33).

<sup>87</sup> See, for example the biography of Boralqi, at *Yuanshi* 133.3235:



followed by a brief sketch of the subject's ancestry, usually extending to one or two generations.<sup>88</sup> After a short description of the subject's childhood and education, the bulk of the *liezhuan* usually takes the form of a career account, broadly chronological in order.<sup>89</sup> The primary landmarks here are formal posts and the secondary landmarks are dates, the latter typically abbreviated to provide years only. Many postings are illustrated with episodes reflecting virtuous conduct or approbation from the monarch.<sup>90</sup> Some episodes are presented as 'flashbacks', usually signaled by the character *chu* 初 'initially',

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Boralqi was of the Qunqirat lineage, and his ancestors had lived in Yingchang 應昌。字蘭奚，雍吉烈氏，世居應昌。

<sup>88</sup> See the example of Boralqi again, at *Yuanshi* 133.3235:

His grandfather Möngke was enrolled in the Imperial Guard by Taizu [Činggis Qan] as a member of the empress' clan. His father \*Resi was of stalwart and imposing stature, resourceful and good at riding and archery. Taizong [Ögödei Qa'an] once asked him about military matters; his reply accorded with the Qa'an's ideas, and he was then ordered to serve as Chiliarch. Soon after he served as Adjutant in the establishment of the Prince of Qi. He later followed Ruizong 睿宗 [Tolui] in attacking the Jin, and gained merit; returned to the imperial guard by decree, he died of illness. 祖忙哥，以後族備太祖宿衛。父律實，狀貌魁偉，有謀，善騎射。太宗嘗問以軍旅之事，應對稱旨，即命為千戶。尋以為齊王府司馬。後從睿宗伐金有功，詔還宿衛，以疾卒。

<sup>89</sup> Franke notes a number of typical *topoi* in the childhood and education stage, namely descriptions of great intelligence, precocious skill with weapons, etc. See Herbert Franke, 'Some Remarks on the Interpretation of Chinese Dynastic Histories', *Oriens*, 3 (1950), 113–22 (121). Again, taking the biography of Boralqi for an example, at *Yuanshi* 133.3235:

Boralqi was exceptionally able and had his father's spirit; orphaned when young, he had the self-discipline of an adult; on free days he practiced archery and riding, and at night he studied. His mother once instructed him, "Your father was exceptionally loyal and brave, dying young in service; if you can be self-reliant, your father will have died without complaint." Due to this Boralqi felt indebted, hoping to fulfil his father's ambitions when he grew up. Following the army he accrued merit, inheriting his father's post and serving as Adjutant to the Prince of Qi.

字蘭奚英邁有父風，幼孤，能自刻厲如成人，暇日習弓馬，夜則讀書。其母嘗訓之曰：「汝父忠勇絕人，天不假年，汝能自立，則汝父歿無憾矣。」字蘭奚由是感激，期以成父之志。從軍有功，襲父官，為齊王司馬。

<sup>90</sup> For a final example from Boralqi's biography, see *Yuanshi* 133.3235:

When Shizu [Qubilai Qagan] went on campaign in person against Nayan [Boralqi] followed the Prince of Qi in his army; when the armies first clashed, Boralqi spurred his horse forward, taking the enemy position, chopping away their banner and driving them before him; Shizu looked on from a distance and admired him. Shortly after, Nayan's troops fled, and Boralqi hastened back to report the victory. Shizu was greatly pleased, praising him, "Your father has nothing to be ashamed of." He was granted 50 taels of gold and two bolts of gold brocade, appointed General of the Second Class and *Darugači* of Xinzhou Circuit 信州路. At that time Jiangnan had only recently submitted, and he disseminated the emperor's intentions, reforming and making a fresh start with the people. After a year, great order had been established in the prefecture; when the relevant authorities reported this the emperor praised him and exclaimed in admiration at length, then sent an envoy to bestow further honours upon him.

世祖親征乃顏，以齊王兵從，兵始交，字蘭奚躍馬陷陣，斬其旗，所嚮披靡，世祖遙望見壯之。有頃，乃顏兵遁走，字蘭奚馳歸以捷聞。世祖大悅，勞之曰：「無忝汝父矣。」賜黃金五十兩、金織文二匹，授宣威將軍、信州路達魯花赤。時江南初附，布宣上意，與民更始。期年，郡中大治，部使者以聞，帝獎嘆久之，即遣使賜以上尊。

‘in the beginning’, and providing what Standen calls a ‘back-story’ to explain or contrast against specific episodes.<sup>91</sup> A brief discussion of retirement and death is followed by reports of posthumous honours, and a mention of notable male children and their careers; some of these receive full biographies in their own right.

When the *Yuanshi* compilers drew on these social biography texts, the standard interventions, those required simply for transference from the social biography form to that of the *liezhuan*, can be divided into two broad areas, at the meso and micro levels. At the meso level, the elements from the above list typically selected for inclusion would be episodes from the subject’s childhood, career and retirement. Reflecting the generic shift from ‘social’ to ‘official’ biography, familial detail is usually removed, in terms of both contemporaries – siblings and spouses – and ancestry, often down to one or two generations.<sup>92</sup> Female relatives are therefore seldom visible in *liezhuan* unless they can be portrayed in a particular role, widowed mothers seeming very popular in this regard.<sup>93</sup> We find substantial variation in handling family status and ancestors between social biography and *liezhuan*. The *shendaobei* for Uquna of the Önggüt, composed by his descendant Ma Zuchang (1279-1338) in or after 1322, runs largely in parallel with his *Yuanshi* biography, describing three generations of forebears, though ranks and offices do

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<sup>91</sup> Standen, ‘Standards of Validity’, 9.

<sup>92</sup> Crossley notes the contrast between genres in an example from the Liao era. See Pamela Kyle Crossley, ‘Outside In: Power, Identity and the Han Lineage of Jizhou’, in *Perspectives on the Liao* (presented at the Perspectives on the Liao, Bard Graduate Center & The Council On East Asian Studies at Yale University, 2010), pp. 121–55 (p. 127). As ever, there are exceptions to this tendency.

<sup>93</sup> Exceptions to this include the ‘consort clan’ biographies of *Yuanshi* 118, which detail the links between the Qonggirat, Ikires and Önggüt and the imperial clan as much as any given individual’s life. See *Yuanshi* 118.2915–26, and the translations in George Qingzhi Zhao, *Marriage as Political Strategy and Cultural Expression: Mongolian Royal Marriages from World Empire to Yuan Dynasty*, Asian Thought and Culture, 60 (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2008). On sources for women’s history, see Yi Jo-lan, ‘Social Status, Gender Division and Institutions: Sources Relating to Women in Chinese Standard Histories’, in *Overt and Covert Treasures: Essays on the Sources for Chinese Women’s History*, ed. by Clara Wing-chung Ho (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2012), pp. 131–155.

not compare so neatly.<sup>94</sup> A *shendaobei* for the administrator and scholar 'Isa (1227-1308), composed in 1312 by Cheng Jufu (1249-1318) on the emperor's order, provides names for his father and grandfather; these ancestors are omitted from his *Yuanshi* biography.<sup>95</sup> The *liezhuan* for Čerig (1260-1306), descended from Činggis Qan's nephew Eljigidei, draws on a *shendaobei* by Yao Sui (1238-1313) which names and summarizes careers for great-grandfather, grandfather and father, and discusses Čerig's mother, née \*Puča, who, widowed, raised and educated him in the Chinese Classics as well as Buddhist and Daoist works.<sup>96</sup> The *Yuanshi* simplifies this considerably, mentioning only one male ancestor, his great-grandfather Taš, and summarizing his service under Činggis Qan (rather than Ögödei Qa'an) in suppressing the Central Plains of China.<sup>97</sup> The *Yuanshi* trimming of ancestry and revisions to ancestors' careers has a significant impact on our understanding of the early Qa'ans and their retinues, for whom Chinese-language sources are relatively scarce.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Ma Zuchang 馬祖常, 'Gu libushangshu magong shendao beiming' 故禮部尚書馬公神道碑, in *QYW*, xxxii, pp. 499–502; On Uquna (1216-1263), see *Yuanshi* 134.3244-46; *YR*, pp. 994, 2717.

<sup>95</sup> On 'Isa (1227-1308), see *Yuanshi* 134.3249-50; *YR* p. 2407; Cheng Jufu 程鉅夫, 'Fulin zhongxianwang shendaobei' 弗林忠獻王神道碑, in *QYW*, xvi, 324–26. On Cheng Jufu 程鉅夫 (1249-1318), see *Yuanshi* 172.4015-18; *YR*, p. 1430. The *liezhuan* for Čulčaqai of the Saljigut, who died during the early thirteenth century, draws on an inscription composed by Liu Mingzhong 劉敏中 (1243-1318) in 1312. The inscription briefly reports on posts held by Čulčaqai's un-named great-grandfather and grandfather, but his *Yuanshi* biography omits ancestors entirely. On Čulčaqai, see *Yuanshi* 123.3030-31; *YR*, p. 2338; Liu Minzhong 劉敏中, 'Chici yidu xingsheng daluhuachi zengtui zhongxuan ligongchen jinzi guanglu daifu taiwei shangzhuguo shi zhongliang shanzhugong shendao beiming' 敕賜益都行省達魯花赤贈推忠宣力功臣金紫光祿大夫太尉上柱國諡忠襄珊竹公神道碑銘, in *QYW*, xi, pp. 582–84.

On Liu Mingzhong 劉敏中 (1243-1318), courtesy name Duanfu 端甫; hao Zhongan 中庵, see *Yuanshi* 178.4136-37; *YR*, p. 1849; *QYW*, xi, pp. 358-692.

<sup>96</sup> The inscription unusually lacks a preamble discussing the circumstances of its composition, see Yao Sui 姚燧, 'Pingzhangzheng Xu Guogong Shendaobei' 平章政徐國公神道碑, in *QYW*, ix, pp. 566–69 (p. 566); *Mu'anji* 牧庵集 (*Yaosuiji*), 14.206-9 (14.206). Walton highlights mothers' roles in providing education to their sons; see Walton, 'Family Fortunes in the Song-Yuan Transition', 45-46.

<sup>97</sup> If we accept the chronology implied by the text, which places this service before his encounter with the Song general Peng Yibin 彭義斌, who was active in the 1220s, Taizu seems more likely, but this serves to highlight the difficulties of dealing with texts with limited transmission data.

<sup>98</sup> *Yuanshi* 130. 3161.

On the micro level, there are several distinct changes that are almost always made. Names tend to change in two ways. First, taboo names are restored – subjects in social biographies are usually referred to as ‘the gentleman’ 公, or ‘the prince’ 王, depending on rank – and monarchs as *shang* 上, and the *liezhuan* compilation process typically involves the reinstatement of given names.<sup>99</sup> Secondly, there is usually an attempt to standardize the transliteration of non-Chinese names; this is not always entirely successful or consistent, as we see, for example, with the example of Shimo Mingan 石抹明安 (1164–1216), a Kitan who joined Činggis Qan and fought at the siege of Zhongdu, governing that city after its fall in 1215. The transliteration of his name – in the *Yuanshi* biography for Wang Ji 王楫 as Meng’an 猛安, and elsewhere in the *Yuanshi* as Ming’an 明安 – suggests that this had a phonetic value rather than necessarily being a ‘Chinese’ name based in characters, and relates to Mongol (and Jurchen) *mingqan* ‘thousand’.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>99</sup> On this process, see also Naomi Standen, ‘Standards of Validity in Histories of the Tenth to Twelfth Centuries: Very Preliminary Observations’ (unpublished paper proposal, 2012), 5. In our sample, see, for example, the biographies of Harqasun at *Mingchen shilue* 4.58; *Yuanshi* 136.3293. Dong Wenbing’s biographies provide a partial counter-example to this tendency, however; see Yuan Mingshan 元明善, ‘Gaocheng dongshi jiazhuang’ 藁城董氏家傳, in *QYW*, xxiv, pp. 312–21 (p. 315); *Qingheji* 7.74a–83a (*YRCK*, v, pp. 199–204, at 7.76b / p. 200) in that the *jiazhuang* refers to Qubilai as *Shizu huangdi* 世祖皇帝. The *Mingchen shilue* omits the *huangdi* here in an unannounced edit, and the *Yuanshi* follows this, too; see *Mingchen shilue* 14.271; *Yuanshi* 156.3668.

<sup>100</sup> See *Yuanshi* 150.3555–57, 153.3611–12, and on Ming’an, see *YR*, p. 277. Related inconsistencies are visible in the recording of the titles for Tolui’s widow Sorqaqtani Beki. Both inscription texts on the family of the Uyghur *Jarguči* Mungsus refer to as the *Shixian zhuangsheng* Empress 顯懿莊聖皇后, a full recounting of the title which is not usually seen in the *Yuanshi liezhuan*, only occurring here, in Sorqaqtani’s own biography, and in the biography of Shimo Mingli 石抹明里 (at *Yuanshi* 116.2897 and 169.3976 respectively). The abbreviated version, *Zhuangsheng* Empress 莊聖皇后, occurs in biographies for Boqomu and Tang Renzu 唐仁祖 (at *Yuanshi* 130.3163 and 134.3253 respectively). Elsewhere in the *liezhuan*, and in the Annals of Shizu (Qubilai Qagan), she is referred to as the *Zhuangsheng* Empress Dowager, 莊聖太后. See *Yuanshi* 4.57, 125.3070, 125.3071, 126.3086, 134.3263, 148.3495, 153.3613, 168.3962, 168.3964 and 169.3969. On Sorqaqtani Beki, see *Yuanshi*: 116.2897–2898; Morris Rossabi, ‘Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family’, in *Studia Sino-Mongolica: Festschrift für Herbert Franke*, Edited by Wolfgang Bauer (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1979), pp. 153–180 (pp. 158–166); Li Tang, ‘Sorkaktani Beki: A Prominent Nestorian Woman at the Mongol Court’, in *Jingjiao: The Church of the East in China and Central Asia*, ed. by Roman Malek, in connection with Peter Hofrichter (Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica, 2006), pp. 349–55.

Dating methods are usually standardized, and often any precision is removed – the specific days and months we frequently see identified in ‘social biographies’ tend to be removed in *liezhuan*.<sup>101</sup> There are, again, exceptions to this norm, highlighting the difficulty in pinning down the *Yuanshi liezhuan*. The *Yuanshi* biography of Üyer of the Saljigut (d. 1258) is unusual in referring to dates as ordinal years under Činggis Qan and Ögödei Qagan, rather than employing the sexagenary *ganzhi* cycle more usually applied to periods before Qubilai’s 1260 introduction of regnal eras.<sup>102</sup> Song Zizhen’s *Yuanshi* biography likewise shows a surprising usage parallel to this, describing 1232, for example, as the ‘fourth year of Taizong’ 太宗四年 (i.e., of Ögödei Qagan’s reign) rather than, as the *Mingchen shilue* (and most other *Yuanshi* biographies dealing with that period) have it, ‘the year *renchen* 壬辰’.<sup>103</sup> This latter example in particular suggests the active choice of this non-standard dating system. Even were the *Mingchen shilue* version another example of Su Tianjue’s interventionist approach to dates, the compiler or compilers working on Song Zizhen would have had an alternative version available to choose. These variations, indicating a lack of coordination in *Yuanshi* edits, may also serve as ‘seams’ indicating the operation of different editors or compilation phases.<sup>104</sup> Further comparison of *liezhuan* and foundation texts may reveal more of these processes.

<sup>101</sup> See, for example, the dating of Mungsus’ death, at Cheng Jufu, ‘Wudu zhimin wang shude zhi bei’, p. 344; *Yuanshi* 124.3059.

<sup>102</sup> See *Yuanshi* 120.2967-69. On Üyer of the Saljigut (1163-1258), a general whose biography records service in East Asia under Činggis, Ögödei and Möngke, see also *YR*, p. 2724. On the sexagenary cycle, see Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A New Manual*, pp. 496-98. On the ideology of regnal era names, see James M. Hargett, ‘A Chronology of the Reigns and Reign-Periods of the Song Dynasty (960-1279)’, *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies*, 19 (1987), 26–34.

<sup>103</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.200:

歲壬辰，行臺戍黃陵，金兵悉力來攻，我師不利，敵勢頗張，曹、濮以南皆震懾。

*Yuanshi* 159.3735:

太宗四年，實戍黃陵，金人悉力來攻。

<sup>104</sup> Christopher Atwood has exploited just such ‘seams’ to untangle issues relating to the duplicated biography for Sübe’edei. See Christopher P. Atwood, ‘Pu’a’s Boast and Doqolqu’s Death: Historiography of a Hidden Scandal in the Mongol Conquest of the Jin’, *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, 45 (2015), 239-78 (253-57).

These inconsistencies have been taken to relate to haste of compilation. As Mote notes, Song and Wang Wei have been widely criticized for the results of the *Yuanshi* project, but deserve praise for bringing the work to completion in a remarkably brief working period.<sup>105</sup> This should not be taken to indicate a consistent lack of attention or intervention, however. As Waldman notes, coherence and consistency should not be expected to extend right across anyone's thinking.<sup>106</sup> Zhu Yuanzhang had several reasons for expediting *Yuanshi* compilation in 1368. The most obvious of these is the widest cited; the urgency of settling Ming rule after decades of turbulence, even, or perhaps especially when, as Dreyer notes, the last Mongol ruler was still alive in the northwest.<sup>107</sup>

A second factor was the need to involve Confucian elites prominently in the Ming project while keeping them away from sensitive matters of governance – Dreyer suggests that historiography and ritual matters presented ideal employment for such figures.<sup>108</sup> This is perhaps supported by the apparent expendability of many *Yuanshi* compilers after the completion of each stage; few worked across both phases or remained in government once the work was complete. The first compilation stage involved some sixteen named scholars (and presumably an army of anonymous support staff), and the second fourteen named scholars, only one of whom, besides the directors, worked across both stages. Of these twenty-nine senior compilers, twenty-seven receive biographies in the *Mingshi*.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Mote, 'Sung Lien,' p. 1230.

<sup>106</sup> Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative*, p. 87.

<sup>107</sup> See Edward L. Dreyer, *Early Ming China: A Political History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982), p. 94.

<sup>108</sup> See Dreyer, *Early Ming China*, p. 94. Chen Gaohua likewise notes the externality of the compilation teams. See Chen Gaohua 陈高华, "'Yuanshi' zuanxiu kao' 《元史》纂修考 (An Examination of the Compilation of the History of the Yuan Dynasty), *Lishi Yanjiu*, 4 (1990), 115–29, 116–17.

<sup>109</sup> For the compilers' biographies, see *Mingshi* 136.3934–36; 282.7226–27; 285.7317–19. For a detailed breakdown of the teams, see Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 8–15. An example of these biographies illustrates both an apparent personal connection to the Ming emperor through advice and a subsequent low-grade posting (as county magistrate). *Mingshi* 285.7319:

Fu Shu 傅恕, appellative Ruxing 如心, was from Yin 鄞. Thoroughly versed in the study of the Classics, alongside his fellows from the same *jun* 郡 Wu Sidao 烏斯道 and Zheng Zhen 鄭真 he

Zhu Yuanzhang's aim in sponsoring *Yuanshi* compilation seems primarily to have been on the one hand to place the Mongol polity in, as Farmer puts it "a safe place in the historical past".<sup>110</sup> Compilation also, following the dynastic history logic, placed both Mongol rule and the new Ming polity into a succession of central polities claiming the mandate of heaven.<sup>111</sup> This presented an opportunity to define the new Ming polity for the future, and the *Yuanshi*, in describing both Činggisid success and failure, fit within this broader project. Farmer emphasizes Zhu Yuanzhang's flexibility in developing his new polity and "freedom to decide which strands of the indigenous Chinese tradition to stress".<sup>112</sup>

This was not only a matter of choosing among 'indigenous Chinese' elements, however; many 'foreign' peoples and practices had (by no means for the first time) become intimately connected with all aspects and all levels of sinophone societies across the territory of the Great Yuan, defining the space occupied by the new polity.<sup>113</sup> As such the

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was known for his writing. In the second year *Hongwu* 洪武 [1369], he attended court and laid out twelve policies for governance, saying: rectify the court, value local governors, control external dependants, increase official rank and salaries, equalize farmland among the populace, reform labour service, dismiss the heterodox, change the system of dress, promote schools, be cautious in selecting [officials], cancel salt taxes, stop taxing tea. Taizu accepted this with admiration, later decreeing that he edit the *Yuanshi* 元史. When the matter was completed, he accepted the County Magistracy 知縣 of Boye 博野; later he was implicated [in wrongdoing] and died.

傅恕，字如心，鄞人。學通經史，與同郡烏斯道、鄭真皆有文名。洪武二年詣闕陳治道十二策，曰：正朝廷、重守令、馭外蕃、增祿秩、均民田、更法役、黜異端、易服制、興學校、慎選舉、罷榷鹽、停榷茶。太祖嘉納之，遂命修元史。事竣，授博野知縣，後坐累死。

<sup>110</sup> Edward L. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation: The Reordering of Chinese Society Following the Era of Mongol Rule*, Sinica Leidensia, 34 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 34-35.

<sup>111</sup> See Standen, 'Integration and Separation', 154.

<sup>112</sup> Edward L. Farmer, 'Social Regulations of the First Ming Emperor: Orthodoxy as a Function of Authority', in *Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China*, ed. by Kwang-Ching Liu, Studies on China, 10 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 103-25, p. 106.

<sup>113</sup> On the multi-directional flow of cultural influence, see, for example, Jennifer Holmgren, 'Observations on Marriage and Inheritances Practices in Early Mongol and Yüan Society, With Particular Reference to the Levirate', *Journal of Asian History*, 20 (1986), 127-92 (190-92); Bettine Birge, *Women, Property, and Confucian Reaction in Sung and Yuan China (960-1368)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 277; Xiao Qiqing 萧启庆, 'Yuandai duozu shiren wangluozhong de shisheng guanxi 元代多族士人网络中的师生关系 (The Master-Disciple Relationship in the Multi-Ethnic Networks of the Yuan Dynasty

history has especial resonances with Zhu Yuanzhang's policies to legislate away elements prominently associated with Mongol and *semu* identities and establish a new social order. The new monarch began a significant and sustained programme intended to develop Ming ritual in 1369, in parallel with the *Yuanshi* compilation, and Farmer stresses the search for "classical and historical precedents" to employ as part of this new system.<sup>114</sup> This endeavour was strongly influenced by both the horrors of the mid-fourteenth century and the Neo-Confucian thought that emerged in response to it.<sup>115</sup> Farmer links Ming recognition of (past) legitimacy of the Yuan, essential to the *Yuanshi* project, to a scholarly identity, arguing that the recruitment of Jinhua scholars represents a key stage in Zhu Yuanzhang's development away from his polity's messianic origins, the adoption of Confucian values functioning not only to recruit advisors but also, through their social status, the local elites essential for long-term stability.<sup>116</sup> Bol reads Ming Taizu's self-positioning as reflecting the image of a conscientious official working for the common good, highlighting concerns with "the dangers of flattery from below and arbitrariness from above", important themes in our texts.<sup>117</sup>

Having established that opportunity for editing was limited, what philosophical and political direction might interventions have taken, if the *Yuanshi* compilation team had possessed the time, freedom and resources to indulge themselves? It should not be supposed that Neo-Confucian thinkers were united in the fourteenth century, and we do

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Literati)', *Lishi Yanjiu*, 1 (2005), 119–41; Li Zhi'an 李治安, 'Yuandai hanren shou menggu wenhua yingxiang kaoshu 元代汉人受蒙古文化影响考述 (Mongol Influence on Ethnic Han Chinese in the Yuan Dynasty)', *Lishi Yanjiu*, 1 (2009), 24–50; Nancy Shatzman Steinhardt, 'Yuan Period Tombs and Their Inscriptions: Changing Identities for the Chinese Afterlife', *Ars Orientalis*, 2009, 140–74.

<sup>114</sup> Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, pp. 34–35.

<sup>115</sup> Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, p. 264.

<sup>116</sup> Farmer, 'Social Regulations,' pp. 108–10.

<sup>117</sup> Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 307 (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), p. 146.



not have the space here to define a representative Jinhua position on the issues faced in our texts. What we will lay out, however, is a brief set of elements that may have influenced our writers, focusing on the two chief editors, Song Lian and, to a lesser extent, Wang Wei.

Song Lian 宋濂 (4<sup>th</sup> November 1310 – 12<sup>th</sup> June 1381), a Jinhua native, achieved considerable prominence as a Confucian writer in the late Mongol period.<sup>118</sup> He is credited with considerable influence over Zhu Yuanzhang, whom he served for nineteen years until his retirement in 1377. Song Lian served variously as regional director of Confucian studies, long-term teacher to Zhu Yuanzhang's eldest son Zhu Biao 朱標, court diarist and Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy, among other roles; his impact on early Ming government and historiography was considerable.<sup>119</sup> Swept up in the widespread purge following the 1379 execution of Hu Weiyong 胡惟庸 after the latter's so-called coup attempt (which saw Song Lian's grandson Song Shen 宋慎 and many of his family killed), Song Lian died on his way to exile in Sichuan, possibly by suicide.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> On Song Lian, see *Mingshi* 128.3784-88; F.W. Mote, 'Sung Lien', in *Dictionary of Ming Biography 1368-1644*, ed. by L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, (New York : Columbia University Press, 1976), pp. 1225-31; *YR*, pp. 437-39; C. Bradford Langley, 'Sung Lien', *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 735-36. On his thought and writing, see in particular John W. Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy: Professional Elites in the Founding of the Ming Dynasty* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 156-73.

<sup>119</sup> See Mote, 'Sung Lien', pp. 1226-27; Xiang Yunnan 向燕南, 'Song Lian de Shixue Sixiang 宋濂的史学思想 (The Historical Theory of Song Lian)', *Zhanjiang Shifan Xueyuan Xuebao*, 29 (2008), 22-28 (22).

<sup>120</sup> See Mote, 'Sung Lien', pp. 1228-29. On the fate of Hu Weiyong and the purge, see Edward L. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation: The Reordering of Chinese Society Following the Era of Mongol Rule*, Sinica Leidensia, 34 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), p. 48; Hok-Lam Chan, "Hu Wei-yung," in *DMB*, I, pp. 638-41; John D. Langlois Jr., 'The Hung-Wu Reign, 1368-1398', in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 7: The Ming Dynasty, 1368-1644, Part I*, ed. by Frederick W. Mote and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 107-81, pp. 137-42. On Song Lian's access to the centre, see Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, pp. 132-33. On his meeting with Ming Taizu, see Mote, 'Sung Lien', p. 1226. Song Lian's collected works are preserved in four volumes as Song Lian 宋濂, Luo Yuexia 羅月霞 (ed.), *Songlian quanji* 宋濂全集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1999). Song Lian's *Yan Shu* 燕書 is found in *Songlian quanji*, i, pp. 151-80. See Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, p. 157; Xiang Yunnan 向燕南, 'Song Lian de Shixue Sixiang' 宋濂的史学思想 (Song Lian's Historical Theory), *Zhanjiang Shifan Xueyuan Xuebao* 29 (2008), 22-28 (27). On Song's interest in the supernatural, see John

Described by Bol as “one of the greatest literary intellectuals of the fourteenth century”, Song Lian drew on an eclectic intellectual background and wrote widely, leaving a substantial literary collection. Song’s tutor role at the celebrated Cheng family commune placed him at the centre of the Jinhua movement, and he served as a key figure bringing together the young Ming court and the Jinhua school.<sup>121</sup> Song Lian had already established broad fame by the final Yuan collapse, recognized as the leading Confucian writer of his day.<sup>122</sup> Aside from the good fortune of being on hand when Zhu Yuanzhang sought philosophical backing, Dardess identifies several factors contributing to Song Lian’s rise, namely ambition, literary ability, commitment to personal moral cultivation and support from existing Confucian figures.<sup>123</sup> Song Lian also represented a stage in the development of the Jinhua school that favoured pragmatic involvement in policy and society.<sup>124</sup>

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D. Langlois Jr. and Sun K’o-k’uan, ‘Three Teachings Syncretism and the Thought of Ming T’ai-Tsu’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 43 (1983), 97–139, 103-6. While committed to Neo-Confucianism, Bol argues that Song Lian “did not grant that it was the only thing he wanted to know about.” Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 307 (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), pp. 108-9. John D. Langlois, Jr., ‘Chin-Hua Confucianism under the Mongols (1279-1368)’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Princeton University, 1974), pp. 197-98.

<sup>121</sup> On this, see John W. Dardess, ‘The Cheng Communal Family: Social Organization and Neo-Confucianism in Yüan and Early Ming China’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 34 (1974), 7–52.

<sup>122</sup> Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, p. 131.

<sup>123</sup> Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, p. 265.

<sup>124</sup> See Yuan Zonggang 袁宗刚, ‘Yuandai jinhua xuepai liliu weiwen kao 元代金华学派“理流为文”考 (On the Jinhua School of the Yuan Dynasty)’, *Sichuan shifan daxue xuebao (shehui kexue ban)*, 41 (2014), 143–48 (145). Both Song Lian and Wang Wei were taught by Huang Jin 黄潛 (1277-1357), and both composed inscription and biographical texts for him. Bol highlights Wang Wei’s praise of Song Lian as a figure central to the development of Wuzhou scholarship, and notes that Wei also underlined the importance of writing to Song Lian’s thought. Peter K. Bol, ‘Neo-Confucianism and Local Society, Twelfth to Sixteenth Century: A Case Study’, in *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*, ed. by Paul Jakov Smith and Richard Von Glahn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), pp. 241–83 (p. 266). On Huang Jin, see Wang, *Yuanren*, pp. 1474-76; *Yuanshi* 181.4187-89; Zhao Wei 赵伟, ‘Huang Jin Yuyi Shengxue de Wendao Guannian 黄潛“羽翼圣学”的文道观念 (Huang Jin’s Literary Thoughts on Upholding the Confucian Doctrine through Literature)’, *Dongfang Luntan*, 3 (2013), 62–69.

Song Lian's colleague Wang Wei 王禕 (also read Wang Yi)<sup>125</sup> (1323-74), courtesy name Zichong 子充, from Wuyi 義烏, was according to his *Mingshi* biography, taught by Liu Guan 柳貫 (1270-1342)<sup>126</sup> and Huang Jin 黃潛 (1277-1357), who Davis describes as “the last in the list of famous scholars” of the Jinhua Confucian circle through Song and Mongol rule, and who, like Song Lian, was committed to the power of the written word.<sup>127</sup> Wei followed Huang Jin to the Yuan court in 1347, submitting a memorial of advice the following year, but not finding favour returned to Wuyi in 1350, where he was connected to a Jinhua circle alongside Song Lian and others.<sup>128</sup> Joining Zhu Yuanzhang in 1359, Wei occupied a variety of posts before and after the *Yuanshi* compilation, was briefly rusticated in 1368, and killed in 1372 on a mission to accept the submission of Yuan loyalists in Yunnan.<sup>129</sup>

Dardess argues that “dynastic loyalty” was less of an issue to the Jinhua Neo-Confucians than “the terms and conditions of official service in general”, and that “the identity of a dynasty was less important to them than the kind of environment and opportunity it provided, or promised to provide, for the advancement of the Confucian profession.”<sup>130</sup> Bol likewise suggests that Neo-Confucian scholars “believed that they

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<sup>125</sup> On Wang Wei 王禕 (1322-1373), from Wuyi 義烏, see *YR*, pp. 135-36; *Mingshi* 289.7414-17; A. R. Davis, ‘Wang Wei,’ in *DMB*, ii, pp. 1444-47. As Cleaves notes, Davis refers to him as Wang Wei as does K’uan Sun in ‘Yü Chi and Southern Taoism in the Yüan Period,’ in *China Under Mongol Rule*, ed. by John D. Langlois Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 212-53. Davis highlights the use of wei/hui 禕 rather than yi 禕, a distinction that does not seem to be made by the *Mingshi* or *Yuanshi*. On this reading see Francis Woodman Cleaves, ‘The Memorial for Presenting the “Yüan Shih”’, *Asia Major*, 3rd Series, Volume 1 (1988), 59–69, 66, n. 116.

<sup>126</sup> On Liu Guan 柳貫, courtesy name Daochuan 道傳, see *Yuanshi* 181.4189; *YR*, pp. 753-55.

<sup>127</sup> Davis, ‘Wang Wei,’ p. 1444. On Huang Jin, see *Yuanshi* 181-4187-89; *YR*, pp. 1474-76. See also Zhao Wei 赵伟, ‘Huang Jin Yuyi Shengxue de Wendao Guannian’ 黄潛“羽翼圣学”的文道观念 (Huang Jin’s Literary Thoughts on Upholding the Confucian Doctrine through Literature), *Dongfang Luntan*, 3 (2013), 62–69.

<sup>128</sup> See Davis, ‘Wang Wei,’ pp. 1444-45, 1445-46.

<sup>129</sup> On Wei’s career and death see Davis, ‘Wang Wei,’ pp. 1445-46.

<sup>130</sup> Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, p. 10.

could, in a socially responsible way, work for or cooperate with a government whose subscription to literati values was often in doubt”, relating this flexibility to an identification of “moral authority with cultivated individuals, not with the political system.”<sup>131</sup> Dardess characterizes Song Lian as a prominent member of Ming Taizu’s “militant and mobilized community of scholarly ideologues ... able and eager to lay out a comprehensive agenda for the new Ming state”, numbered among those with most impact on the nascent polity.<sup>132</sup> These ideologues, from a scholarly tradition based around Jinhua 金華 in Zhejiang 浙江, had developed analyses of Yuan failure and prescriptions for change well before 1368.<sup>133</sup>

The Jinhua intellectual and political project did not reject all patterns and forms of Mongol-era rule, but certainly found motivation in the governmental failure of the mid-fourteenth century, motivation that can only have influenced the composition of the *Yuanshi*.<sup>134</sup> Discussion of rulership and governance in the ‘Memorial for Presenting the *Yuanshi*’ includes a usefully vivid and condemnatory analysis of Yuan collapse, presented here in Cleaves’ translation:

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<sup>131</sup> Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 307 (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), p. 265.

<sup>132</sup> See John W. Dardess, *Governing China 150-1850* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2010), p. 54; Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang*, pp. 29-30; John D. Langlois Jr., ‘Song Lian and Liu Ji on the Eve of Joining Zhu Yuanzhang’, *Asia Major*, 22 (2009), 131–62.

<sup>133</sup> Dardess, *Governing China*, pp. 54-55. On the Jinhua school, see in particular John D. Langlois, Jr., ‘Chin-Hua Confucianism under the Mongols (1279-1368)’ (unpublished PhD thesis, Princeton University, 1974); Yuan Zonggang, ‘Yuandai jinhua xuepai liliu weiwen kao’; Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, p. 265. The Chinese term most often used for such communities is *xuepai* 學派, which as Furth notes, is often rendered as ‘school of thought’ or ‘lineage of learning.’ Furth adopts “lineage-like ‘scholarly currents’” to represent this. See Charlotte Furth, ‘The Physician as Philosopher of the Way: Zhu Zhenheng (1282-1358)’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 66 (2006), 423–59 (429, n. 11).

<sup>134</sup> On Mongol-era institutional and governmental elements surviving into the Ming, see Dardess, *Governing China*, p. 53; David M. Robinson, “The Ming Court and the Legacy of the Yuan Mongols,” in *Culture, Courtiers, and Competition: The Ming Court, 1368-1644*, ed. by David M. Robinson, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 301 (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), pp. 365–421, pp. 367-68. On the evidence for strong loyalty to the Yuan cause felt by Song Lian and Liu Ji up until the 1350s, see John D. Langlois Jr., ‘Song Lian and Liu Ji on the Eve of Joining Zhu Yuanzhang’, *Asia Major*, 22 (2009), 131–62, 132, 133-38.

Let the words “Worry not!” and “Doubt not!” [but] once set the tune in the T’ien-li period, and the disaster of “Separating and Splitting” and “Dispersing and Stampeding” gradually came to the Chih-cheng court. They only indulged in petty pleasures and gradually forgot distant concerns. The powerful and wicked deceived abroad. The favorites and intimates deluded them within. The discipline of the Chou was suddenly brought to deterioration. The laws of the Han truly were thereby in [a state of] looseness.<sup>135</sup>

This places the collapse, perhaps unsurprisingly, within the *Zhizheng* 至正 regnal period (1341-68) and emphasizes the role of ‘petty pleasures’, deceit by powerful figures outside the court and ‘favourites and intimates’ within it, failure ultimately being described as a loss of ‘Zhou’ self-discipline and ‘Han’ law. The Memorial posits a decline beginning rather earlier, dating this to the *Tianli* 天曆 regnal period (1328-30), and characterizing this as a time of decadence and loss of interest in rule.<sup>136</sup>

Bol highlights two major impacts of Neo-Confucian thought on political practice under Song and Yuan – the increased role of local literati figures in governance, and the humanization of the figure of the emperor, the latter change particularly stressing the universality of the human need for education and virtue and the imperial function for “managing the government so that it served the common good.”<sup>137</sup> Henderson highlights Wang Wei’s formalizing influence on Neo-Confucian study, requiring a specific order of reading and, like Song Lian, pushing towards a formalization and rejection of the heterodox.<sup>138</sup> Song Lian’s writings provide insights into his views on governance, and from these we follow Xiang Yunnan in highlighting five key principles of a ruler’s moral character; reflection on error; acceptance of advice; veneration of scholars 士; expulsion

<sup>135</sup> Cleaves, ‘Memorial for Presenting the *Yüan Shih*’, 63-64. *Yuanshi* p. 4673:

豐亨豫大之言，壹倡於天曆之世；離析渙奔之禍，馴致於至正之朝。徒玩細娛，浸忘遠慮。權姦蒙蔽於外，嬖倖蠱惑於中。周綱遽致於陵遲，漢網實因於疏闊。

<sup>136</sup> On this assessment see also Humble, ‘Princely Qualities and Unexpected Coherence’, 311-12.

<sup>137</sup> Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, p. 119.

<sup>138</sup> John B. Henderson, *Scripture, Canon, and Commentary: A Comparison of Confucian and Western Exegesis* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 52.

of arrogance and promotion of benevolence.<sup>139</sup> This aligns closely with the list of ideal characteristics highlighted by Dardess and ascribed to a broader Neo-Confucian scholarly prescription for rulers, namely "...self-examination; acceptance of advice; disregard for social standing ...; removal of arrogance ...; and the extension of benevolence."<sup>140</sup> These repeatedly highlight the emphasis on the employment of virtuous individuals and their placement in the service of benevolent, i.e., humanitarian, rule. Song Lian's *Yanshu* 燕書 collection also repeatedly emphasizes the humanitarian imperative, and the central position of popular welfare to rulership.<sup>141</sup> Dardess and Yuan Zonggang likewise highlight Song Lian's vision of the practical use of *wen* and its mutually reinforcing relationship with ordered government, regarding this as essential to court and subjects, who relied on it to fulfil their respective roles.<sup>142</sup>

Both Song Lian and Wang Wei wrote on the importance of the *Ru* 儒 calling, situating the activist implementation of classical principle at a moral apex of service to society. Dardess suggests that Song Lian subscribed to a concept of 'national reform' of sweeping scope and based on "the process of psycho-behavioral rectification, or the process of destroying the deviant", thereby highlighting a strong punitive and exclusionary element to his thought.<sup>143</sup> The *Yanshu* included a number of tellingly punitive tales, such as that

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<sup>139</sup> Xiang Yannan 向燕南, 'Song Lian de Shixue Sixiang 宋濂的史学思想 (The Historical Theory of Song Lian)', *Zhanjiang Shifan Xueyuan Xuebao*, 29 (2008), 22–28 (27).

<sup>140</sup> Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, p. 171.

<sup>141</sup> See, for example, *Song Lian quanji*, i, pp. 166–67:

The junzi said: "Quboyu's words have passion. A lord rules the populace, the populace follow the lord even as flowing water. Courts in antiquity were thus, and although [some might] say why should the populace be the lord's heaven, as heaven bears the populace and causes the lord to rule them, it did not cause cruelty to them; the cruel are not lords. This means that lords are established for the populace and the populace are indeed important too."

君子曰：蘧伯玉之言，其有激哉。君者，主民；民之從君，猶水朝宗；振古然也。而曰民為君之天何耶？雖然，天之生民，使君主之，不使虐之，虐之非君也。是則君為民立，民亦重矣哉。

<sup>142</sup> Yuan Zonggang, 'Yuandai jinhua xuepai liliu weiwen kao', 146.

<sup>143</sup> Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, p. 171.

noted by Dardess in which a monarch executes ministers who secretly indulge in luxury while publicly supporting his extreme frugality.<sup>144</sup> We should also consider the images of failure that are picked out here: the virtuous avoiding service, deceit and ingratiation, posts neglected, the indulgence of extravagant desire, flaring conflict and the advancement of intimates. These should be borne in mind as an image of the undesirable and the perils of poor governance.

Writing was vital to Song Lian, and scholars have highlighted his belief in the activism of the writer and of *wen* 文, i.e., culture, writing and the written word.<sup>145</sup> Yuan Zonggang underlines the role Song afforded to *wen* as the ideal and a flexible instrument for ‘rectifying popular norms, ordering state systems, establishing cardinal relationships and constructing cardinal principles’ and, in its communicative role as the *wenzhang*, an essentially practical tool for social transformation, something that Yuan emphasizes as a Jinhua departure from Zhu-Zheng preoccupations with ideal philosophy.<sup>146</sup> The *Yuanshi* compilers can therefore be expected to have employed the written word to social and

<sup>144</sup> Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, p.168. *Song Lian quanji*, i, pp. 158-59:

齊景公懲奢而好儉。諸大夫復日浸乎淫靡，然懼景公之知，矯情事焉。每入朝，駕羸馬樸車以從，衣惡甚，冠纓殆欲絕也，齊景公謂其誠也，憐焉，召群臣曰：「寡人使子囊帶賜爾等錦衣一襲，及鞞琫容刀各一以為身章，而等毋過儉也。」皆對曰：「臣等藉君威靈，得從大夫之後，食雖弗鑿，不我餒也；衣雖弗華，未嘗冽也。願君久有此土，俾萬子孫食君之儉。傳曰『儉德之共也』，共則一和，儉則從康；從康 [159] 則豫，一和則輯，唯君圖之。」景公悅。一日出游，會諸大夫饗于鹿門，入而觀焉，其車則澤而煥也，其馬則矯而騰也，其服食器用則豐明精腴也。景公以其給己，大怒曰：「叱嗟！而吾臣也，敢爾乎！」盡收而戮之。

君子曰：書云「作偽心勞日拙」，其齊大夫之謂乎。

<sup>145</sup> Yuan Zonggang cites a discussion of the importance and multiplicity of *wen* in Song Lian's 'Huachuan shushe ji' 華川書舍記, a text that illustrates not only the importance he placed on *wen* but also the breadth of that concept in his thought. Yuan Zonggang, 'Yuandai jinhua xuepai liliu weiwen kao', 143-48, 146. The text is found at Song Lian, 'Huachuan shushe ji' 華川書舍記, *Wenxianji* 文憲集 (Sikuquanshu Wenyuange Electronic edition) 2.22b-25b, at 2.23a-23b:

嗚呼文豈易言哉日月照耀風霆流行雲霞卷舒變化不常者天之文也山嶽列峙江河流布草木發越神妙莫測者地之文也羣聖人與天地參以天地之文發為人文施之卦爻而陰陽之理顯形之典謨而政事之道行咏之雅頌而性情 [2.23b] 之用著筆之春秋而賞罰之義彰序之以禮和之以樂而扶導防範之法具雖其為教有不同凡所以正民極經國制樹彝倫建大義財成天地之化者何莫非一文之所為也

<sup>146</sup> Yuan Zonggang, 'Yuandai jinhua xuepai liliu weiwen kao', 143-48, 145, 146.

intellectual effect, aligning with the Ming imperative to deliver a renewed ‘Chinese’ polity, excluding ‘foreign’ elements and focusing on benevolence as a measure of virtuous governance. The tools in their hands were a wide variety of episodic foundation texts (and the *Mingchen shilue*) and a range of narrative interventions, but the time available to them was greatly limited.

Before turning to discuss narrative effect, it is necessary to introduce some paragraphs on the transmission and expected audience for these works. The 1976 Zhonghua Shuju edition of the *Yuanshi*, the current academic standard, has, for a text produced in the fourteenth century, a remarkably straightforward textual pedigree.<sup>147</sup> The blocks carved for the work’s original 1370 print (known as the *Hongwu* 洪武 edition, after the regnal era proclaimed by Zhu Yuanzhang) were re-used for the 1532 ‘Jiajing’ 嘉靖 court-sponsored reprint of the ‘21 Histories’ (*Ershiyi shi* 二十一史), with unclear pages re-carved between 1529 and 1531, resulting in the *Nanjianben* 南監本 edition. A further, Beijing-based production of the ‘21 Histories’ between 1596 and 1606 produced a new *Yuanshi* version known as the *Beijianben* 北監本, likewise working from *Hongwu* blocks. In 1739, the Qing court under emperor Qianlong made a further copy of the *Beijianben*, called the *Beidianben* 北殿本.

In 1781 a further process produced new versions of the *Liaoshi*, *Jinshi* and *Yuanshi*, altering the *Beidianben* to reflect a new approach to Chinese transliteration, resulting in a new *Beidianben* deliberately distanced from the original text. This was followed in 1824

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<sup>147</sup> For a summary of the process, paraphrased here, see the publisher’s foreword (*Chuban shuoming* 出版說明), at *Yuanshi*, pp. 4-5.



by a new print, known as the *Daoguangben* 道光本. In 1935, the Commercial Press made a photographic reproduction known as the *Bainaben* 百衲本. This edition combined an incomplete 99-juan *Hongwu* print with the *Nanjianben* version, but retained the *Hongwu* edition as its primary informant. The Zhonghua Shuju compilers used the *Bainaben* text as their primary version, incorporating material from the Beijing University Library's 144-juan incomplete *Hongwu* edition, supplemented with another *Nanjianben* edition, and, where necessary, copies of the *Beijianben*, *Beidianben* and *Daoguangben* editions. These were further supplemented by reference to related surviving source texts. The result is a work the vast majority of which retains direct links to the Ming original, but which still requires considerable care in detailed reading. This is facilitated somewhat by the detailed compilers' notes appended to the text.

The transmission of the *Mingchen shilue*, a work beyond the central civilizational canon of the Standard Histories, is rather more complex than this.<sup>148</sup> The present Zhonghua Shuju edition is based on a reproduction of a surviving 1335 blockprint edition.

Transmission of the *Mingchen shilue* was interrupted during almost three centuries of Ming rule, when its Mongol content remained politically sensitive. Under the Qing prolific copying of the work in manuscript form alongside vigorous scholarly attention both multiplied errors and omissions and drew readers' attention to them. As with the *Yuanshi*, Qianlong-era re-transliteration added further layers of both scrutiny and textual problems. The production of the present 1996 edition demanded collation of these numerous survivors, and, like the Zhonghua Shuju *Yuanshi*, represents twentieth-century

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<sup>148</sup> For a summary of these processes, paraphrased here, see Yao Jing'an's preface to the present edition, at *Mingchen shilue*, pp. 11-19.

scholars' best attempt to recreate an original text, in the existence of which we can, unusually in 'medieval' terms, have a deal of faith.

Finally, a note on the projected audiences for these works. As is clear from the brief discussion of the *Yuanshi* reprints, court production of the Standard Histories as a historical canon was ongoing throughout the centuries after its compilation. As printing technology and commercial output grew during the Song era, so did private scholarly collections. It is estimated that between five and seven hundred scholars held libraries extending into the thousands of *juan*, compared to perhaps thirty to a hundred in the Tang, and histories, including Standard Histories alongside various current biographical and other collectanea, were prominent among these.<sup>149</sup> The Standard Histories were also taken, as a genre, to represent, or to aspire to the representation of, a gold standard of truth-telling and reportage.<sup>150</sup> The *Mingchen shilue*, falling outside this Standard Histories canon, nevertheless sits, in its time, squarely within the secondary category of current collections. The Ming hiatus aside, the subsequent status of Su's work is underlined by its prolific copying under Qing rule.

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<sup>149</sup> See Hilde De Weerdt, *Information, Territory and Networks: The Crisis and Maintenance of Empire in Song China*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 388 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2015), p. 50.

<sup>150</sup> On the difficult business of drawing lines between 'history' and not-history, and the importance of this to premodern Chinese scholars, and therefore the prominence of the Standard Histories in their deliberations, see Daria Berg, 'What the Messenger of Souls Has to Say: New Historicism and the Poetics of Chinese Culture', in Michel Hockx, Ivo Smits (eds), *Reading East Asian Writing: The Limits of Literary Theory* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), pp. 171-203 (pp. 176-80).

### 1.4 Reading processes; narrative tools and effect

Having laid out what kind of texts we are dealing with, we move on to consider how to interrogate the narratives these transmit and the meaning generated through their construction. Several key themes emerge here, the first being the idea of ‘vividness’, relating to the effect and power of storytelling in its broadest sense to create meaning and make an impression. We follow De Fina and Georgakopolou in arguing that “vividness” can function as a type of indirect and implied truth-claim. This exploits the “primacy of personal experience over other forms of experience and knowledge”, and deflecting “questions about evidence and truth” by appearing ‘unmediated’.<sup>151</sup>

Julie Scott Meisami also makes a particularly striking point here with regard to her examination of the eleventh-century Persian history *Tārīkh-e Bayhaqī*, where, she argues, an “abundant use of circumstantial detail” makes a claim to comprehensiveness while also increasing the effects of immediacy and vividness.<sup>152</sup> In some ways, however, our texts exploit the direct reported speech and dry-seeming, description-free narrative (something of a hallmark of sinophone biographical narratives), in a related manner to efface and externalize the narratorial voice. The purposeful deployment of this register suggests record rather than composition; the extent of narrative tailoring, as we will see, suggests that this is part of a constructed claim to authority.<sup>153</sup> We note Gabrielle

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<sup>151</sup> Anna De Fina and Alexandra Georgakopolou, *Analyzing Narrative: Discourse and Sociolinguistic Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). pp. 137-38. As Leder notes in his analysis of early Arabic historiography, “the succinctness of narrative presentation assigns to the narrator the part of a seemingly indifferent medium that invisibly remains in the background.” See Stefan Leder, ‘Features of the Novel in Early Historiography: The Downfall of Xālid Al-Qasrī’, *Oriens*, 32 (1990), 72–96 (73).

<sup>152</sup> On Bayhaqī, see Ġ.-H. Yūsofī, ‘Bayhaqī, Abu’l-Fazl’, in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition, 1988, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bayhaqi-abul-fazl-mohammad-b> (accessed online at 1st June 2017).

<sup>153</sup> Other historical narrative genres deploy spatial description as part of the development of immediacy and vividness; see, for example, Shoshan’s discussion of Ṭabarī’s *History*. See Boaz Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography: Deconstructing Ṭabarī’s History*, *Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts*, 53 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), p. 11.

Spiegel's argument that, in the context of medieval Europe, "historical writing, precisely to the degree that it claimed to be free of imaginative elaboration, served as a vehicle of ideological elaboration."<sup>154</sup>

As we discussed in section 1.2 above, Su Tianjue's cut-and-paste approach likewise overtly positions him as humble transmitter rather than intervening composer or author. This positioning is partially undermined by his covert interventions, but perhaps underlined by the fact of their covert nature – Su Tianjue does not admit to making these changes. Stefan Leder argues that "[a]uthorship in a wider acceptance of the term is implied when we can trace the author's creativity in the narrative structure and plot of his narration."<sup>155</sup> This creativity is exactly what both sets of compilers attempt to remove, and the same might be said of the composers of funerary inscriptions, too, as these often preface their subjects' career anecdotes with a formulaic expression such as *jin'an* 謹按, i.e., 'cautiously' (or 'reverently') 'following' a pre-existing record.<sup>156</sup>

As Boaz Shoshan argues, we need to interrogate our texts' "narratological conventions and rhetorical strategies, the modes in and through which the historical 'facts' are portrayed" and their "emplotment".<sup>157</sup> With a particular focus on the deployment of reported speech, this also requires insight into the manipulation of chronology and definition of actors, both speaking and addressed.<sup>158</sup> As we approach Chucai's portrayals,

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<sup>154</sup> Gabrielle Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), p. 5.

<sup>155</sup> Leder, 'Features of the Novel in Early Historiography', 74. As Shoshan notes, "the absence of an explicit editorial voice is no guarantee of a constantly neutral stand, when other mechanisms of representation, such as the very selection ... and ... suppression of information, are at work." Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography*, p. 120.

<sup>156</sup> See, for example, Isu's *shendaobei*, at Cheng Jufu, 'Fulin zhongxianwang shendaobei', p. 324.

<sup>157</sup> Boaz Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography: Deconstructing Ṭabarī's History*, Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts, 53 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), p. xxiv.

<sup>158</sup> Standen observes that reported speech is a key element of narrative in *liezhuan*, making a vital contribution to the dramatization of events that lends rhetorical power. See 'Standards of Validity', 10.

we will have in mind the disparate purposes and structures of our biographical texts alongside an appreciation of both the *Yuanshi* compilers' need to prioritize their interventions, and the potential impact of edits upon readers' impressions. The inconsistent application of the 'default' interventions identified in the previous section cannot be taken to represent haste alone, and require interrogation. Where these are considered and deliberate – if not always harmonized or coordinated – acts of tailoring, they measure the *Yuanshi* compilers' acceptance of social biography narrative for deployment in their new *liezhuan* context and form.

In terms of the narrative mechanisms of our texts, a key term is that of the *fabula*, defined by Bal as “a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors” and therefore defining the combined ingredients of the diegetic ‘story world’ presented to the reader by our texts.<sup>159</sup> Bal defines six key processes, or ‘aspects’ involved in ordering these elements into a story. These are sequence (not necessarily chronological); the time deployed for each element; the distinction of characters and then locations by the ascription of description; the establishment of relationships between these elements and beyond the *fabula* (including symbolism and allusion), and finally ‘focalization’, i.e., “the relation between ‘who perceives’ and what is perceived”.<sup>160</sup>

Aspects of the *fabula* treated in our texts are effectively limited to chronology and its associated causality, reported speech and the framing of individuals involved, this latter typically via the status framework of formal office. In terms of chronology, *Yuanshi*

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<sup>159</sup> Bal, *Narratology*, p. 5.

<sup>160</sup> Bal, *Narratology*, p. 8.

biographies often display a tantalizing looseness, perhaps in part reflecting the compilers' habit of removing specific dates from their foundation texts, although in social biography many events float rather loosely, possibly due to origins in an oral tradition.<sup>161</sup> *Liezhuan* are nominally chronological in arrangement, with frequent use of analepsis ('flashback') to position incidents in an extended chronology. Involving a return to a previous time, this often serves "to highlight the background to or elucidate a particular historical event, thereby throwing into relief the operation of causality in reverse."<sup>162</sup> In our idealized biographies this frequently highlights a subject's success in improving a previously problematic situation or policy.<sup>163</sup>

This implied temporal relationship is particularly open to manipulation of order and, therefore, causality and significance. This can be deliberate; Rice notes Northern Song compilers' use of conflation and combination to impose a coherence and causality absent from previous versions of their texts.<sup>164</sup> Developing chronologically coherent narratives from isolated reports always involves arranging a sequence of events, leaving an opportunity, identified by Standen, for compilers to exploit lacunae and ambiguity, allowing the unsaid, via conjunction and juxtaposition, to speak without making overt

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<sup>161</sup> For an argument that dating is vital to historical narrative's reconstructive truth-claims, see C. Behan McCullagh, 'The Truth of Historical Narratives', *History and Theory* 26 (Beiheft 26: The Representation of Historical Events) (1987), 30-46 (46). For an impressive analysis of the effect of reworked chronology in the *Mingshi* biography of Li Shimian 李時勉 (1374-1450), see Hung-Lam Chu, "Textual Filiation of Li Shimian's Biography: The Part About the Palace Fire in 1421", *The East Asian Library Journal* 13 (2008), 66-126. Li Shimian's biography is in *juan* 163 of the *Mingshi*. See Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉, et al., *Mingshi* 明史 (*History of the Ming Dynasty*) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), pp. 4421-24.

<sup>162</sup> Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography*, p. 61.

<sup>163</sup> See, for example, the biography of Liu Min 劉敏 (1201-59), at *Yuanshi* 153.3610:

In the early days 初, when Yelü Chucai was Director-General of the capital, there were many Kitan people resident there; their followers frequently carried bows and arrows in the middle of the night and coerced people [to hand over] property; the officials were unable to prevent this, but [Liu] Min killed the ringleaders, and established order in the markets.

初, 耶律楚材總裁都邑, 契丹人居多, 其徒往往中夜挾弓矢掠民財, 官不能禁, 敏戮其渠魁, 令諸市。

<sup>164</sup> See Rice, 'Northern Song Reflections on the Tang', pp. 26-27.

statements, using what we might call constructive lacunae.<sup>165</sup> As Smith notes, “what must be described and explained is not how (or within what limits) a narrator can *rearrange* the chronology of a given set of events but rather how, on what basis, and sometimes whether his audience will infer from his narrative the chronology of some set of events that is *not given*.”<sup>166</sup>

Another example is the un-signalled reordering of events at the meso level. While we should not read a foundation text’s order as more valid than an edited version, alterations to that order must be interrogated as deliberate deployments of a new sequence.<sup>167</sup> As we will see in the next chapter, a *Yuanshi* modification to the sequence of Chucai’s biography effectively portrays one of his opponents taking on the hero not as an individual, but in his newly granted official capacity, heading a government office, and thereby shifts the impact of their opposition to the institutional rather than the personal. Regardless of the historical situation at the root of this portrayal, chronology serves as a tool in our compilers’ hands.

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<sup>165</sup> See Standen, ‘Standards of Validity’, 11. Working on early Arabic historiography, Noth and Conrad have likewise identified what they refer to as “pseudo-causes” introduced by the creative positioning of “transitional formulae”. See Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition*, pp. 173-78, 188-89. Waldman likewise argues that authorial standpoints are to be found in “structure - organization, pace, arrangement, focus, selection, repetition, juxtaposition, omission, and emphasis” rather than “explicit declarations.” See Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative*, p. 12.

<sup>166</sup> Barbara Herrnstein Smith, ‘Afterthoughts on Narrative III: Narrative Versions, Narrative Theories’, in *On Narrative* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1981), pp. 209–32 (p. 226).

<sup>167</sup> Smith argues “... it can be demonstrated not only that absolute chronological order is as rare in folkloric narratives as it is in any literary tradition but that it is virtually *impossible* for any narrator to sustain it in an utterance of more than minimal length. In other words, by virtue of the very nature of discourse, nonlinearity is the rule rather than the exception in narrative accounts.” Moreover, she suggests, that the idea of distorted sequence contains implicit notion that a basic sequence exists or existed prior to twisting - Smith suggests that in most cases that is unlikely. See Smith, ‘Afterthoughts on Narrative III: Narrative Versions, Narrative Theories’, pp. 223-24.

Another key narrative feature of our biographies is their episodic nature, and we follow Light's analysis of the eighth-century Turkic Toñuquq inscription in dividing these into three broad stages;

The first segment briefly presents an initial situation. The second segment describes the process of gathering and reporting information, discussing and assessing the information, and arriving at decisions. The third segment describes the actions and events that occur as consequences of the decisions.<sup>168</sup>

As Light notes, the segments effectively propose what problems, solutions and success look like.<sup>169</sup> In a slightly cruder division than Light's, we refer to these segments as 'problem', 'action' or 'solution' and 'result' or 'outcome'. Such constructions, especially when we have comparator versions and can therefore expose tailoring, reveal shifting value hierarchies and priorities. Shoshan's analysis of the selective deployment of information to present a specific point of view works in a way parallel to this, "introducing or concluding a particular narration with information that affects, in some way, the matter in focus."<sup>170</sup> The action taken by a subject is thus framed by the tailoring of the situations to which they respond and the consequences presented as their product.

*Liezhuan* narratives are generally somewhat bare of description, either of locations or of individuals, the latter generally being qualified by a note indicating their post or status alone. All of our biographical narratives are generally more concerned with events than description; lyrical style and embellishment is more likely to be found in reported speech than in descriptive texturing. This tendency is even more marked when compared to Juwaynī's frilly evocations of scenes such as enthronement feasts.<sup>171</sup> We see little description, in the way it is defined by Bal, ("as a textual fragment in which features are

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<sup>168</sup> Light, 'An 8<sup>th</sup> Century Turkic Narrative', 161.

<sup>169</sup> See Light, 'An 8<sup>th</sup> Century Turkic Narrative', 163.

<sup>170</sup> Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography*, p. 120.

<sup>171</sup> See, for example, Juwaynī's lyrical description of Güyük's enthronement, at Juwaynī, *History of the World-Conqueror*, pp. 252-54; Juwaynī, *Tārikh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, pp. 207-209.



attributed to objects ... [w]e consider a fragment as descriptive when this function is dominant”) in *Yuanshi* biographies or their source texts.<sup>172</sup> Items, particularly in discussing imperial rewards, are described in terms of their materials, but rarely in much detail, and this descriptive aspect of the discussion is usually secondary to, and serving, an emphasis on value rather than the objects themselves.<sup>173</sup> The biographies of the Jia family employ a repeated motif emphasizing the acceptance of the Qagan’s robes rather than other, more directly transferable, forms of wealth or property.<sup>174</sup> Many of our biographies include some degree of physiognomic description, but this is usually limited to their (meritorious) subjects, and then to a couple of clichéd characters at the very beginning – it does not usually intrude on the narrative.<sup>175</sup>

Other mechanisms can also affect readings of causality, as noted by Julie Scott Meisami, Marilyn Waldman, Albrecht Noth and Lawrence Conrad, among others, in their examinations of Arabic and Persian historiographical narratives.<sup>176</sup> Noth suggests that such interventions are as likely to be based in considerations of “entertainment value and general edification” as political effectiveness.<sup>177</sup> Such distinctions are problematic; the power of vividness in narrative presentation – and thus in conditioning readers’

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<sup>172</sup> See Bal, *Narratology*, pp. 36, 41-42.

<sup>173</sup> Rewards often take the form of gold, silver, strings of cash, horses and various types of robes; most of these receive only one or two characters of description; such as, for example, the ‘stabled horses and lined gown strung with pearls’ 中廐馬十匹、貫珠袍一 reportedly given to Nienhe Zhongshan by Ögödei in 1235, at *Yuanshi* 146.3466. On the business of granting robes, see also Thomas T. Allsen, ‘Robing in the Mongolian Empire’, in *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture*, Edited by Stewart Gordon (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 305–313.

<sup>174</sup> See *Yuanshi* 169.396972.

<sup>175</sup> Cf. Boaz Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography: Deconstructing Tabarī’s History*, Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts, 53 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 13-14; Shoshan notes that such description is not common in Tabarī’s history, though used for some prominent figures. Chucai’s son Yelü Zhu, for example, is described as “very intelligent, skilled in composition, and especially good at riding and shooting” (聰敏，善屬文，尤工騎射); see *Yuanshi* 146.3464.

<sup>176</sup> Scott Meisami, *Persian Historiography*; Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative*; Albrecht Noth, Lawrence I. Conrad, Michael Bonner (tr.), *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: a Source-Critical Study* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1994).

<sup>177</sup> See Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition*, pp. 173-78, 188-89.

understanding – needs to be taken more seriously. De Fina and Georgakopolou take this on directly, highlighting the political imperative behind the truth-claim and the need for credibility, arguing that those in power have always to demonstrate “that they have the right to tell stories and that their narratives are credible depictions of events, agents, motives and circumstances.”<sup>178</sup> This leads us back to what Bal stresses as the key question for narratologists, which is “[t]o ask, *not* primarily where the words come from and who speaks them, but what, in the game of make-believe, is being proposed for us.”<sup>179</sup> Here we follow Light in arguing that it is possible, especially where we have multiple comparator versions, to infer a great deal about authors’ and compilers’ “strategies for managing access to information and expectations about audience understandings”.<sup>180</sup> Where the story-teller’s tools can be detected in action, the “social effects” in pursuit of which these tools are employed can be discerned; this is precisely where the ‘entertainment value’ and ‘general edification’ find their effect.<sup>181</sup>

One aspect that can perhaps be considered descriptive is the selective use of explanation of non-‘Chinese’ cultural and linguistic elements, an aspect that sees substantial variation between our texts and can be read as an indicator of a writer’s expected audience, in terms of what the writer expects the readers to value and with what frames of reference they expect readers to be familiar. Waldman argues that Bayhaqī’s framing of caliphal institutions through Turkic Ghaznavid terms indicates that, at least in his eyes, readers were expected to be considerably more familiar with these categories of terminology than

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<sup>178</sup> Anna De Fina and Alexandra Georgakopolou, *Analyzing Narrative: Discourse and Sociolinguistic Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). p. 125.

<sup>179</sup> Bal, *Narratology*, p. 229.

<sup>180</sup> See Light, ‘An 8<sup>th</sup> Century Turkic Narrative’, 159.

<sup>181</sup> See Light, ‘An 8<sup>th</sup> Century Turkic Narrative’, 159.

the Arabic terms in use at the Caliphal court; she also suggests that such explanation implies status in possessing expertise in such ‘foreign’ arrangements.<sup>182</sup>

The narration in our biographies is performed by what Bal refers to as an ‘external narrator’, someone not personified in the text, this being opposed to a class of ‘character-bound’ narrators, who refer to themselves. As Bal notes, these narrator types involve different sorts of truth claims; while the character-bound narrator asserts truthful recording, the external narrator of our biographies seems to assume this; as with the difference between *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*, the truth-claim is situated differently.<sup>183</sup> In terms of agency, our texts’ external, and perhaps invisible, narratorial subjects shift much of this to the actors in the diegetic world of the fabula.<sup>184</sup> As we have seen, one of the key changes made in preparing a narrative for inclusion in the *liezhuan* is the distancing of the narrator and the privileging of apparently unmediated reporting, removing Spiegel’s “imaginative elaboration” from the reader’s view in favour of dry-seeming, description-free reportage. As we will see, reported speech acts as a key tool in creating this impression of unmediated and un-created recording.

Turning to reported speech, there are several aspects to note in our sample texts, i.e., framing, report type and content. Direct reported discourse in the *Yuanshi* is indicated in two ways. On the one hand, it is indicated via conventions for indicating direct reported speech in Classical Chinese, most commonly the character *yue* 曰, but also including *yun* 云, *wei* 謂, and others. These are contemporary with texts’ composition and reflect their composers’ intent directly. More recently texts have been punctuated, too, with editors

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<sup>182</sup> See Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative*, p. 47.

<sup>183</sup> See Bal, *Narratology*, p. 22.

<sup>184</sup> See Bal, *Narratology*, pp. 8, 9.

typically adding the conventional symbols 「」 to indicate the beginning and end of a quote, along with commas, periods, and other symbols. Constituting a major intervention, the grounds for these decisions are not always uncontroversial, and as such both punctuation and characters must be examined in any interrogation of these texts.<sup>185</sup>

As Bal argues, quotations shift the basis of a text's truth-claim by switching to another voice; "[w]henver direct speech occurs in the text, it is as if the narrator temporarily transfers this function to one of the actors."<sup>186</sup> In this way our biographical narratives seem to accord with the Arabic *Akhbār* ('narratives' or 'reports') genre, a form, as described by Leder, that "seem[s] to be objective in character: the narrator functions like a machine that records every movement and every spoken word."<sup>187</sup> As Leder notes, direct speech is central to such texts, as it "serves to minimize the narrator's account and to avoid any comment or interpretation".<sup>188</sup> Effectively effacing the narrator and reducing them to a transmitter, characters therefore speak to the reader as if for themselves. The truth-claim made by the narrator, by the text, applies to their speech having been made, rather than to the veracity or moral appropriateness of its content. This handling thus absolves the narrator of sympathy for, or control over, opinions expressed.

This distancing of the narrator from the message can also distance a speaker from the reader. We should be alert to what Shoshan identifies in Ṭabarī's history, which sees verbatim speeches, stylized if not invented, serving as "a means of artfully focusing on

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<sup>185</sup> See for example the divergent treatment of the text of a decree between the Zhonghua Shuju edition of the *Yuanshi* and the *Quanyuanwen* punctuated edition of Yelü Chucai's *shendaobei*, discussed in the case study on Chucai, at section 2.2.

<sup>186</sup> Bal, *Narratology*, p. 8.

<sup>187</sup> See Leder, 'Features of the Novel in Early Historiography', 92.

<sup>188</sup> See Leder, 'Features of the Novel in Early Historiography', 92.

the nature of the historical figure.”<sup>189</sup> Reported speech is also liable to involve descriptive elements, if only the briefest and most economical, being characterized as, ‘admonitory’, or ‘angry’, or ‘smiling/laughing’; as we will see, it is in the handling of speech acts that our writers and compilers seem to allow themselves most narrative freedom.<sup>190</sup> As we will see, there is little stability in the transmission of reported speech between social biography and *liezhuan*. Rice provides examples of rephrasing and reframing speech presented as verbatim direct discourse, and demonstrates the range of meanings that such interventions can transmit; including emphasizing a character’s duplicity.<sup>191</sup> This focus is selective; the reader does not get to examine what the compiler-historian is doing. A further function will be noted in our sample narratives, which, through the creative employment of responses in reported conversation, allows the compilers to hint at the content of an unreported speech without requiring overt commitment. It should be noted that direct speech in our narratives is routinely manipulated and edited, partly reflecting the likelihood of many speeches having actually been made in languages other than Chinese, and partly through the application of rhetorical edits.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography*, p. 50.

<sup>190</sup> We find people laughing while speaking (笑曰) relatively infrequently, but including in a description of Qubilai Qa’an addressing a subject at *Yuanshi* 173.4048, people speaking angrily (怒曰) more often (but still not very frequently), in episodes including *Yuanshi* 139.3357, 139.3358, *Shengwu qinzheng lu* 1.46 and even ‘glaring angrily’ (瞋目) at *Yuanshi* 117.2907.

<sup>191</sup> See Rice, ‘Northern Song Reflections on the Tang’, pp. 33-35.

<sup>192</sup> On the languages in use at court, see Herbert Franke, “Could the Mongol Emperors Read and Write Chinese?”, *Asia Major*, New Series 3 (1953), 28-41; Haw, Stephen G., ‘The Persian Language in Yuan-Dynasty China: A Reappraisal’, *East Asian History*, 39 (2014), 5-32. Shi Peilei notes concerns expressed in 1283 that memorials to the throne were not being recorded verbatim, and that imperial speech was receiving even less careful attention. See Shi Peilei 時培磊, “Shilun Yuandai guanfang shixue de liangzhong tizhi 試論元代官方史學的兩重體制 (An Analysis of the Dual System for Compiling Official History in the Yuan Dynasty)”, *Hanxue yanjiu* 26 (2008), 123-55 (138). On the impact of transliteration between regional Persian dialects and Mongol-era Chinese in particular, see Ho Kai-lung 何启龙, ‘Shenyin yu kantong: Shijie zhengfuzhe shi Ghayir ĩnalčuq yu Yuanshi hazhi’er zhilantu de zaiyanjiu 审音与勘同: 《世界征服者史》Ghayir ĩnalčuq 与《元史》哈只儿只兰秃的再研究 (A Re-Examination of the Name Ghayir ĩnalčuq in the History of the World-Conqueror and the Yuanshi)’, *Yuanshi ji minzu yu bianjiang yanjiu jikan*, 11 (2008), 67-81.

Beck highlights the deployment of indirect speech to position individuals and even episodes in relation to one another. She argues that the individuality and situation of speakers and of addressees is subjected to subtle manipulation, the tailoring of who is heard, who the reader ‘hears’ being told, and how the telling is presented all affecting readers’ understandings of all these aspects of the fabula.<sup>193</sup> Sternberg has likewise demonstrated the use, value and impact of mimesis and reported speech, linking, on the one hand, Platonic warnings of the moral dangers of mimicking unworthy characters, and on the other, biblical examples where framing portrays one subject condemning himself ‘before the camera’ in direct discourse, while elsewhere indirect discourse summarizes, minimizes and excuses questionable behaviour.<sup>194</sup>

To take an example from the *Yuanshi*, Tegši, the person blamed for the 1323 assassination of the Great Qa’an Šidiibala (Yingzong 英宗, r. 1321-23), is never quoted in his own condemnatory ‘rebellious minister’ 逆臣 biography.<sup>195</sup> The impression given in that case is one of censoring a morally problematic individual, with speech denied to Tegši as part of his condemnatory portrayal. The power of expression was instead awarded to his victim, Šidiibala, whose repeated speeches appear intended to build significant sympathy in the reader.<sup>196</sup> Elsewhere, however, speech is used to condemn

<sup>193</sup> Deborah Beck, ‘Narratology and Linguistics: An Interdisciplinary Perspective on Homeric Speech Representation’, *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 138 (2008), 351–78 (354).

<sup>194</sup> Sternberg, ‘Proteus in Quotation-Land’, 113-15, 118. The complex effects of relative proximity between textual event and reader chimes with elements of Anna De Fina and Alexandra Georgakopoulou’s work, emphasizing the importance of ‘vividness’ and the close linking of text to event on readers’ judgments of validity and credibility. See De Fina and Georgakopoulou, *Analyzing Narrative*, pp. 137-38. For of

<sup>195</sup> Tegši, of the Ikires lineage, grandson of Temür Öljeitü and brother of Šidiibala’s wife Sugabala, censor-in-chief and commander of the Asud Guard, was executed on the enthronement of Yesün Temür. See *Yuanshi* 207.4599-600; *YR*, p. 2660; Hsiao Ch’i-Ch’ing, ‘Mid-Yüan Politics’, in *CHC*, p. 533. With thanks to Christopher Atwood for pointing me towards the ‘Šidiibala’ form in Yuan-era Mongolian.

<sup>196</sup> See, for example, the presentation of Šidiibala’s impassioned speech denouncing court corruption and dubious appointment practice, at *Yuanshi* 207.4600:

既而御史臺請降旨開言路，英宗曰：「言路何嘗不開，但卿等選人未當爾。朕知嚮所劾者，率因宿怨，羅織成獄，加之以罪，遂玷其人，終身不得伸。監察御史嘗舉八思吉思可任大事，未幾，以貪墨伏誅。若此者，言路選人當乎，否乎？」時鐵木迭兒既死，罪惡日彰，英

individuals – something we certainly see deployed in Chucai’s biographies. Sternberg argues that quotation’s “recontextualizing structure” means that all speech is placed within “a different network of relationships” which encompass “the whole scale of response, from identification to caricature and condemnation.”<sup>197</sup>

The selective ‘omniscience’ of some narrators must also be noted; expressed through their apparent access to the full detail of causality, this includes the private thoughts of actors. Shoshan neatly characterizes this as a method by which “what is in all likelihood at best the narrator’s hindsight speculation or *post-factum* conclusion is disguised.”<sup>198</sup> This is utilized occasionally in our narratives, where the thoughts of – usually – transgressive characters are displayed to the reader in several places, mostly scheming to prevent the exposure of their wrongdoing. For example, in the biography of Liu Min 劉敏, we read that Maḥmūd Yalavač, “*humiliated* [by his] inability to act arbitrarily ... had his subordinate \*Mönggör slander [Liu] Min via rumours.”<sup>199</sup> We likewise learn of the envy felt by Jia Tingrui 賈廷瑞, an enemy of the final member of the Jia family to serve the Činggisid court at a senior level who is portrayed negatively in the latter’s biography.<sup>200</sup> By contrast, meritorious opponents are usually quoted in direct speech, and express their concerns in the open.

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宗委任拜住為右丞相，振立紀綱，修舉廢墜，以進賢退不肖為急務。鐵失以姦黨不自安，潛蓄異圖。

<sup>197</sup> Sternberg, ‘Proteus in Quotation-Land’, 114-15.

<sup>198</sup> Shoshan, *Poetics of Islamic Historiography*, p. 56.

<sup>199</sup> *Yuanshi* 153.3610:

恥不得自專，遂俾其屬忙哥兒誣敏以流言

On Liu Min, see *Yuanshi*: 153.3609–11; *YR*, p. 1789.

<sup>200</sup> See *Yuanshi* 169.3971-72. Jia Tingrui 賈廷瑞, from Boxiang 柏鄉 in Zhaozhou 趙州, was apparently an official serving under Qaišan, and rival of Jia Tükel Buqa. On him, see *YR*, p. 1635 (under 賈廷瑞); Wu Cheng 吳澄, ‘Zhaojun jia shixian yingbei’ 趙郡賈氏先塋碑, in *QYW*, xv, 406–7.

Exactly who we see portrayed also needs examination. Bal distinguishes between an ‘opponent’, an ‘anti-subject’, and ‘autonomous subjects’.<sup>201</sup> The former act in opposition to the primary subject and their intention, autonomous subjects act independently of the primary subject’s actions, and the anti-subject’s actions, in pursuit of a separate goal, only oppose the primary subject’s intent when they cross over with that subject’s actions.<sup>202</sup> As we will see, our narratives leave little room for independent actors, or what Bal calls ‘autonomous subjects’, and the *Yuanshi liezhuan* even less room than the foundation texts.<sup>203</sup> In most cases such individuals and their actions are altered to construct a story of all-or-nothing factional struggle, thereby being lent an exaggerated significance. The very fact that we are far more likely to find ‘opponents’ to our subjects than anti-subjects or autonomous agents is something which should immediately attract our suspicion.

Moving beyond the diegetic, Bal highlights the role of ‘argumentative’ statements referring to issues outside the scope of the fabula, and, together with other forms of argumentative handling, constructing what she calls the text’s ‘ideological tenor’.<sup>204</sup> Our external narrators rarely indulge in this, preferring to remain invisible, but an example is again found in the Jia family biographies, when the narrator emerges from the diegetic world of the subjects’ lives to address the reader directly, expressing an opinion on the morality of giving and receiving in court and government service; the *Yuanshi* edit making this more pointedly rhetorical than Yu Ji’s *shendaobei* version.<sup>205</sup> Examining Persian historiography, Julie Meisami identifies two ‘novelistic’ features –

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<sup>201</sup> See Bal, *Narratology*, p. 209.

<sup>202</sup> See Bal, *Narratology*, p. 209.

<sup>203</sup> See Bal, *Narratology*, pp. 204, 209:

<sup>204</sup> See Bal, *Narratology*, pp. 8, 32, 34.

<sup>205</sup> Yu Ji, ‘Jia Zhongyingong shendaobei’, p. 279; *Daoyuan leigao* 40.29b, in *YRCK*, vi, p. 237:

托恩幸以求泛賞，輒裁正之，小人固已多不悅矣

*Yuanshi*: 169.3972:

托恩幸以求賞者，輒抑弗予。



characterization and direct discourse – at work, arguing that authors’ stylistic decisions on direct and indirect discourse and description were the means by which those texts provide dramatic tension and motivation to characters.<sup>206</sup>

In some historical narratives it seems that marginal characters have been utilized to deliver ‘safe’ criticism – home truths from beyond the court – and this may at times be a kind of gendered licence. Marion Robinson Waldman has highlighted Bayhaqī’s employment of marginal figures to make potentially risky criticism in direct speech, putting “the most serious critiques” of the monarch Mas‘ūd into speeches by other, especially female, characters, and ties this to a widespread folklore narrative tendency to place older women in a liminal position as both bearers of secrets and ‘silly’ people without influence.<sup>207</sup> In contrast the *Standard Histories* biographies’ focus on rank and office provides an axis on which to plot relative status, and the denial of formal titles often functions to place characters – and their speeches and suggestions – outside status groups, if not beyond the pale.<sup>208</sup>

Skaff identifies a common practice of selective framing of secondary characters in Standard History narratives within works such as *Old Tang History* and *New Tang History*, which, he argues, “typically made value judgements about the followers of imperial family members involved in power struggles”, dividing these into, on the one hand, “trusted subordinates” and on the other, “cabals (*dang*) of opportunist sycophants.”<sup>209</sup> Such framing tools certainly saw use in our *liezhuan* narratives, and are

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<sup>206</sup> Julie S. Meisami, ‘History as Literature’, in *Persian Historiography*, ed. by Charles Melville, *A History of Persian Literature*, 10 (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), pp. 1–55 (pp. 53–54).

<sup>207</sup> See Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative*, pp. 102, 104.

<sup>208</sup> See, for example, the treatment of Beter and ‘Abd al-Rahmān in the biography of Yelü Chucai, at *Yuanshi* 146.3458, 3463.

<sup>209</sup> Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, p. 104

also prominent in the Persian-language narratives of Juvaynī and Rashīd al-Dīn.<sup>210</sup> This framing, inasmuch as it adjusts the record of posts filled, is not without consequences for our understanding of historical events.

### 1.5 Conclusions: key issues and tools

To sum up this introductory chapter, what readers need to know for our interrogation of Chucai's biographies is as follows. Social biography is a genre with worldly aims and these are idealizing and intended to operate at both familial and court levels; Iiyama's point about portable stela rubbings functioning as proofs of meritorious ancestry is vital here. Our compilers, well aware of the shortcomings of these texts as source material for reconstructive history, knew how to exploit their episodic structure to rhetorical effect. Su Tianjue's work may appear a relatively neutral presentation of intact excerpts, but, as we have seen, his interventions go beyond the already significant power of juxtaposition and selection.

The *Yuanshi* compilation process, while rushed and far from coherent overall, involves a broad generic set of amendments, many of which, as we will see, were made to our sample texts, if not to all the *liezhuan* for which we have comparators. Beyond these, aside from a general need to condense, all interventions can be considered deliberate tailoring of the narrative. Were the compilation team to have free rein with these, we might well expect a degree of engagement with concepts of centralized government, frugality, humanitarian concern and the punishment of deviance and transgression. The

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<sup>210</sup> See, for example, the contrasting treatment of Ögödei's and Töregene's appointees, at *History of the World-Conqueror*, p. 245; *Tārīkh-e Jahān-gushāy*, i, p. 200; *Compendium of Chronicles*, pp. 383-84; *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, pp. 799-800

episodic nature of the social biography and *liezhuan* forms leaves numerous opportunities for rhetorical presentation at the meso and micro levels, including the tailoring of reported speech and the exploitation of vagueness in chronology and causality. As we will see, these are employed fully in the following case study.

Having laid out the key elements of our study in terms of text, processes and tools, the next chapter turns to biographies of Yelü Chucai. These lead the ‘Han-Nan’ subjects in both *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*, and, brought to the front, the life receives very considerable interventions from both Su Tianjue and the *Yuanshi* compilation teams. These interventions involve the full range of editors’ tools, including altering chronology at both the meso level of incident order and at the micro level of reported speech and the identification and framing of individuals. As such his life forms the most detailed case study of this thesis, and it is from the handling of Chucai’s life narratives that we draw our key themes.

## 2. Primary case study: narratives of Yelü Chucai

This chapter demonstrates how the *Yuanshi* portrayal of Yelü Chucai's career not only idealizes Chucai as an individual, but utilizing the full array of narrative techniques examined above, constructs a strongly rhetorical and thoroughly tailored commentary on the operation of the early Mongol courts.<sup>1</sup> The biography's placement as the first of the 'Han' and 'Nan' *liezhuan* lend it considerable prominence as an exemplar for 'Chinese' ministerial lives to come, and the extent and detail of the interventions by the *Yuanshi* compilers (and, for that matter, by Su Tianjue) speak to the significance of the text in the eyes of these historians.<sup>2</sup> Constructing ideals of governance through the narrative handling of a series of episodes Chucai's *Yuanshi* biography comments on the reigns of Činggis Qan, Ögödei and Töregene. Selectively assigning authority and legitimacy to these figures, it thereby defines the nature and limits of imperial governance and the 'Mandate of Heaven'. It is important to note that *shendaobei*, *Mingchen shilue* biography

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<sup>1</sup> This case study centres on a comparative analysis of Chucai's *Yuanshi* biography, found at 146.3455-65, Su Tianjue's composite biography for Chucai, and his spirit-way inscription, by Song Zizhen. See *Yuanshi* 146.3455-65; *Mingchen Shilue*, 5.73-84; Song Zizhen 宋子貞, 'Zhongshuling yelü Gong shendaobei 中書令耶律公神道碑 (The Spirit-Way Inscription of Secretary General Duke Yelü),' in *QYW*, i, pp. 169-79; *YWL* 57.10a-25a. The *shendaobei* is translated in full with notes in de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts in the XIII Century: A Study of Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai,' (PhD diss., The Australian National University, 1960), and a Russian translation of both texts with substantial commentary is found in N. Ts. Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik o pervykh mongol'skikh khanakh: Nadgrobnaya nadpis' na mogile Eliui Chu-tsaia: perevod i issledovanie* (Moscow: Nauka, 1965).

For further detailed consideration of Chucai's life and career, see Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-Lü Ch'u-Ts'ai (1189-1243), Yeh-Lü Chu (1221-1285),' in *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period (1200-1300)*, ed. by Igor de Rachewiltz and others, Asiatische Forschungen, 121 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), pp. 136-75; Liu Xiao 劉曉, *Yelü Chucai pingzhuan* 耶律楚材評傳 (*A Critical Biography of Yelü Chucai*) (Nanjing: Nanjing Daxue Chubanshe, 2001); Sugiyama Masaaki 杉山正明, *Yaritsu Sozai to sono jidai* 耶律楚材とその時代 (*Yelü Chucai and His Times*), Chūgoku rekishi jinbutsu sen, 8 (Tokyo: Hakuteisha, 1996); for occurrences of Chucai in other Mongol-era Chinese texts, see de Rachewiltz, *Repertory*, III, pp. 2294-95.

<sup>2</sup> The 'meritorious ministers' *liezhuan* of the *Yuanshi* are divided between subjects of Mongol and *Semu* background, including Tanguts (*juan* 117 to 145), and those whose subjects might have been classed under the *Han* and *Nan* categories under the Yuan system (*juan* 146-88). These compare with the categories outlined by the fourteenth-century writer Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀. See Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀, *Nancun chuogeng lu* 南村輟耕錄 (*Notes Taken by Nancun While at Rest from Ploughing*), (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1959), p.13.

and *liezhuan* here all function as expressions of an ideal. The resultant portrayal of their subject was intended to be unerringly positive in the eyes of its projected audience, and therefore the criteria for success and warnings of failure and shortcomings reflect shifting concerns around such roles at the time of each text's preparation.

Chuc'ai's significance to our compilers is underlined by Song Lian's colophon to the Kitan minister's only surviving piece of autograph calligraphy, the 'Poem of Farewell to Liu Man' 行書贈別劉滿詩, now held at the Metropolitan Museum.<sup>3</sup> Chuc'ai's poem highlights Liu Man's administrative success, characterizing this in terms of the defence of popular wellbeing.<sup>4</sup> Song Lian picked up this humanitarian theme and his praise for both figures, focussed on the depth of Chuc'ai's regard for his subjects, makes this the primary element of virtuous administration.<sup>5</sup> As this chapter demonstrates, this humanitarian imperative is a vital aspect of the *Yuanshi* compilers' approach to Chuc'ai's career, and – alongside a concern to define a 'Chinese' cultural space, removed from the rest of

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<sup>3</sup> See the translation of the colophon on the website of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Collections, Poem of Farewell to Liu Man, Yelü Chuc'ai (Khitán, 1190-1244), <http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/search-the-collections/40105?img=4>, accessed 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2017. See also Yang Rengkai, Stephen Little (tr.), 'Masterpieces by Three Calligraphers: Huang T'ing-chien, Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai, and Chao Meng-fu,' in Wen Fong and Alfreda Murck (eds.), *Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), pp. 21-44 (especially pp. 30-35). I am grateful to Eiren Shea for access to her unpublished essay on this work: Eiren Shea, 'The Cultural Contributions and Calligraphy of Yelü Chuc'ai (1189-1244)' Chinese Object Study Workshop: Calligraphy (Metropolitan Museum, August, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> See Yang Rengkai, 'Masterpieces by Three Calligraphers', p. 33. The first two lines of the poem are as follows:

雲宣黎庶半逋逃，獨爾千民按堵牢。

Metropolitan Museum of Art, Collections, Poem of Farewell to Liu Man, Yelü Chuc'ai (Khitán, 1190-1244), <http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/search-the-collections/40105?img=4>, accessed 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Metropolitan Museum of Art, Collections, Poem of Farewell to Liu Man, Yelü Chuc'ai (Khitán, 1190-1244), <http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/search-the-collections/40105?img=4>, accessed 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2017:

Since no pacification policy was implemented, most people ran away, to which [the poetic line about] people fled their homes seems to refer. How deeply the Prince cared about his subjects! The Prince was a profound, serious man, who did not commend people casually. Since he singled out Yangmen as an able administrator worthy of praise, we could tell how well Yangmen governed. 撫綏之道不至，民多亡去，所謂黎庶逋逃，似指此也。王之不忘吾民者，何其至哉。王沈毅慎許可，而獨以能吏稱陽門，則陽門之為政可知矣。

Činggisid Eurasia, and an emphasis on ‘ancient’ bureaucratic means – a defining element of his *liezhuan*. Interrogating, through comparative close reading, the representation of Chucai’s career across three layers of portrayal – funerary inscription, *Mingchen shilue* biography and *Yuanshi liezhuan* – we illustrate the centrality of these three themes to the *Yuanshi* compilers’ revised narrative.

The chapter is divided into three chronological sections, following the division of Chucai’s career under Činggisid monarchs. The first of these interrogates episodes in which we see Chucai’s expertise demonstrated in a highly symbolic and limited role as a technical specialist. Here he is portrayed identifying, confirming, defining and limiting the Heavenly Mandate under the dynastic ancestor Činggis Qan, over a period extending from his first meeting with the conqueror in around 1218 up to the Qan’s death in 1227.<sup>6</sup> The second examines episodes during the regency of Činggis Qan’s fourth son Tolui (1227-1229) and then under the formal succession of Ögödei Qaġan (r. 1229-1241) through the first half of the 1230s, interrogating the portrayal of governing ideals via Chucai’s recommendations.<sup>7</sup> The final section interrogates the characterization of a deteriorating relationship between minister and ruler through Chucai’s latter years, most episodes here (including, to a degree, Chucai’s own death) being only vaguely dated.<sup>8</sup> Here he is depicted – to varying degrees – as a marginalized figure through Ögödei’s latter years and into the regency of Töregene Qatun (r. 1241-1246).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> For this period, see Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, pp. 170-71; *YWL* 57.11b-12b; *Mingchen shilue*, 5.74-75; *Yuanshi* 146.3455-56.

<sup>7</sup> For this period, see Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, pp. 171-75; *YWL* 57.12b-19b; *Mingchen shilue*, 5.76-82; *Yuanshi* 146.3456-62.

<sup>8</sup> For this period, see Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, pp. 175-77; *YWL* 57.19b-22b; *Mingchen shilue*, 5.82-84; *Yuanshi* 146.3462-64. Chucai’s dates are variously taken to be 1189 or 1190 to either 1243 or 1244. On the debate over these, see de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, p. 96, n. 46; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 167-71.

<sup>9</sup> Married to Ögödei, Töregene was regent of the empire from his death in 1241 until 1246 and is regarded as the power behind the election of her son Güyük (r. 1246-48). For a thorough survey of the sources on Töregene, see Cai Meibiao 蔡美彪, ‘Tuoliegena hadun shishi kaobian 脱列哥那哈敦史事考辨 (Töregene

The *Yuanshi* construction of Chucai as an ideal official is achieved via multiple and detailed interventions in the primary foundation text, his *shendaobei*, or spirit-way inscription, written in 1267 by Song Zizhen 宋子貞. The *liezhuan* compilation also incorporated elements from Chucai's *muzhiming* tomb inscription and *xingzhuang* account of conduct, both now lost, although excerpts are preserved in the *Mingchen shilue*.<sup>10</sup> These interventions sharpen and reinforce a binary structure established by Song Zizhen that repeatedly contrasts his idealized subject against condemned others. As such Chucai's *Yuanshi* biography is linked to, probably informed by, but definitely developed separately from, the *Mingchen shilue* version of his life, which if anything dilutes Song's binaries and reduces their vividness and impact. Drawing on similar material but focussing on different themes, comparison with the *Mingchen shilue* confirms the centrality of the *shendaobei* to Chucai's *Yuanshi* biography, but Su Tianjue's work should

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Qatun: An Investigation and Correction of Historical Events'), in *Liao jin yuan shi kaosuo* 辽金元史考索 (*Explorations in Liao, Jin and Yuan History*) (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2012), pp. 286–316. See also R. Amitai, 'Töregene Khātūn', ed. by P. Bearman and others, *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition* (Brill Online, 2013) <[http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/toregene-khatun-COM\\_1239](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/toregene-khatun-COM_1239)> [accessed 10 September 2013]; Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Was Töregene Qatun Ögödei's "Sixth Empress"?', *East Asian History*, 17/18 (1999), 71–76, 73–74. Töregene receives a biography in the *Yuanshi*, and like most biographies of 'empresses,' this is brief and bland, mentioning the regency, but not commenting on it directly. For this see *Yuanshi* 114.2870; George Qingzhi Zhao, *Marriage as Political Strategy and Cultural Expression: Mongolian Royal Marriages from World Empire to Yuan Dynasty*, Asian Thought and Culture, 60 (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2008), p. 238. The biography dates her death to 1265, something that highlights the state of our sources - Juvaynī places this in late 1246, see Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-e jahān-gushāy*, I, p. 200; Juvaynī, *History of the World Conqueror*, p. 244.

<sup>10</sup> Chucai's *muzhi* was composed by Li Wei 李微 (on whom, see de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 77, n. 21), and his *xingzhuang* by Zhao Yan 趙衍, who might be the official to whom Chucai's grandson Yelü Xiliang 耶律希亮 was sent by Möngke Qaġan's order (see *YR*, p. 1694; *Yuanshi* 180.4159). They together contribute only 5% of his *Mingchen Shilue* biography, however, compared to the dominance, at almost 5,000 characters, and 75%, of excerpts from his *shendaobei*. Aside from these sources the 1233 letter to Chucai from Yuan Haowen contributes a further 651 characters (10%; this is preserved as Yuan Haowen 元好問, 'Guīsi suī jī zhōngshū Yelü gōng shū' 癸巳歲寄中書耶律公書, in *QYW*, i, pp. 285–86; a comparison with which exposes a number of unannounced cuts by Su Tianjue). Chucai's own writings provide a further 458 characters, or 7%, in two lengthy excerpts, presented as *kaoyi* notes, on Chucai's calendrical work in Samarqand (at *Mingchen Shilue* 5.74 and 5.75). The collected works of Hao Jing present a further 99 characters, or 1.5%, and a final 69 characters, or 1%, are drawn from the collected works of Wang Yun 王惲 (1227–1304). See Wang, "'Yuanshi' liezhuan shiyuan zhi tantao', 5.

be seen as a distinct and discrete characterization of his life rather than as a pattern for the Ming version.

Alongside this moral binary, the *Yuanshi* compilers adopted an ethnic-geographic binary, limiting the *liezhuan*'s cultural and geographical terrain to a 'Chinese' landscape, mapping his life onto a particularly sinocentric frame.<sup>11</sup> The inscription, a family production, is concerned with the position of the Yelü lineage at a time of threat to the status of imperial servants identified as Kitan.<sup>12</sup> Whether Qubilai's 1268 decree – dismissing Han, Jürchen and Kitan *darugačis* in favour of 'Huihui,' Uighur, Hexi and Tangut officials – was implemented or not, prominent Kitan houses such as the Yelü must have felt pressure to demonstrate their value to the Činggisid court.<sup>13</sup> The *shendaobei* repeatedly emphasizes Chucai's skill as an intermediary between Inner and East Asian groups alongside his loyalty, expertise and humane morality.<sup>14</sup> This specific balance of emphasis seems intended to underline his (and his family's) service to the imperial house (i.e., his *genjiao*) alongside his intellectual and moral rectitude.

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<sup>11</sup> The *shendaobei* narrative only once goes into the west, despite Chucai's substantial involvement in Central Asian campaigning. Cf. the discussion of his calendrical observations in Samarqand at *Mingchen shilue* 5.75.

<sup>12</sup> As the *shendaobei* makes clear, Chucai's family traced their lineage from the Liao imperial house – see See Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 170; *YWL* 57.10b-11a; *Yuanshi* 146.3455.

<sup>13</sup> *Yuanshi* 6.118 reports:

罷諸路女直、契丹、漢人為達魯花赤者，回回、畏兀、乃蠻、唐兀人仍舊。

On this decree see also Elizabeth Endicott-West, *Mongolian Rule in China: Local Administration in the Yuan Dynasty* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1989), p. 79; Michal Biran, 'The Mongols and Nomadic Identity: The Case of the Kitans in China', in *Nomads as Agents of Cultural Change: The Mongols and Their Eurasian Predecessors*, ed. by Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), pp. 152–81, p. 180, n. 81. Biran also highlights the impact on Kitan aristocratic status of Qubilai's policies separating military and civil spheres in the 1260s; policies that *shendaobei* and biography celebrate and ascribe to Chucai. See 'The Mongols and Nomadic Identity,' p. 168.

<sup>14</sup> Allsen identifies the Kitan, alongside other groups such as the Önggüt, as particularly valuable intermediaries between Činggisid conquerors and their subject populations. See Allsen, 'Technologies of Governance', p. 121. On the comparable range of intermediary services performed by both Sogdians and Han figures able to operate in the region during the Tang era, see Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, pp. 70, 75, 133. Biran argues that Kitan 'Chineseness' developed during Mongol rule due to factors including not only their classification as 'Han' under the Yuan but also the normalization of Inner Asian ways in East Asia. See Biran, 'The Mongols and Nomadic Identity', pp. 152, 166-71.



Such ‘middle-man’ experience is demonstrated by the *shendaobei*’s handling of Inner and West Asian themes. This does not simply suggest that readers were familiar with such matters due to experiencing non-Han rule, the explanation of some ‘Mongol’ and Middle Eastern cultural elements, such as the Arabic term *sulṭān*, suggesting rather that this display of knowledge was a claim to status.<sup>15</sup> As we will see, the *liezhuan*, in contrast, repeatedly omits or reshapes non-Sinitic motifs, down-playing this familiarity with a wider world to make Chucai conform more closely to ‘Chinese’ or ‘Han’ models. Severing many of the western and northern cultural links made in the *shendaobei*, the *Yuanshi* effectively ‘sinicizes’ Chucai and thus positions the actions of others with regard to a bounded sinocentric sphere.

Chucai’s activity changes shape across all three versions, following the Činggisid polity from the definition of a mandate to establishing and reforming governance. The shaping of this expansion functions to avoid implicating Chucai directly in conquest or administration during Činggis’ rule, seemingly casting that period as a stage of ‘pure’ conquest. This periodization is also reflected in Song Zizhen’s preface to the *shendaobei*, which places Chucai’s direct governing activity in Ögödei’s reign and links it to post-Jin rule over the Central Plains. Chucai’s contribution is thus marrying the prestige of the imperial ancestral temple with Confucian influence, and “employing the able in the way of aiding humanity.”<sup>16</sup> These themes – heavenly-mandated conquest under Činggis, and

<sup>15</sup> On this see section 1.4 above.

<sup>16</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, pp. 169-70/157.10a-10b:

太宗承之，既懷八荒，遂定中原，薄海內外，罔不臣妾。於是立大政而建皇極，作新宮以朝諸侯，蓋將樹不拔之基，垂可繼之統者也。而公以命世之才，值興王之運，本之以廊廟之器 [10b]，輔之以天人之學，纏綿二紀，開濟兩朝，贊經綸於草昧之初，一制度於安寧之後，自任以天下之重，屹然如砥柱之在中流，用能道濟 [170] 生靈，視千古爲無愧者也。

For this section, see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, p. 94; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, p. 68.

governing activity in the Central Plains under Ögödei, emphasizing the humanitarian imperative and recruitment of the right people, run through *shendaobei* and biography. Overall, as characterized by Song's preface, Chucai's reported activity under Činggis largely relates to proving his own value as an interpreter of the heavenly mandate, and under Ögödei to administrative reform, with particular reference to taxation and the civil-military division. It is notable that the preface's summary makes no mention of Ögödei's widow and regent Töregene, whom Chucai served through the latter years of his life.

Many episodes are similarly structured, the episodic arrangement of all three texts presenting a problem, Chucai's solution and an outcome, the latter generally seeing him either being proved correct by circumstance or endorsed by the monarch.<sup>17</sup> Repeatedly aligning Činggis Qan and (for a while) Ögödei Qağan with Chucai's wisdom, this second type of outcome depicts the rulers recognizing virtue and therefore being suited to their role as arbitrators; a key criterion of authority.<sup>18</sup> When, in the mid- or late 1230s, Ögödei's shift from the virtuous side (i.e., Chucai's) to the Other is clear and episodes are no longer closed by the Qağan's endorsement; this same structure serves to ascribe a kind of moral bankruptcy to the court. Tailoring of the above aspects situates the boundaries between ideal and transgression.

The narratives portray first Chucai and later his rival 'Abd al-Raḥman<sup>19</sup> as individuals dominating court affairs, granting little agency to the rulers they served. This vision of the

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<sup>17</sup> See Chapter 1.4 on Light's discussion of the tripartite episodic structure in the eighth-century Turkic inscription of Toñuquq.

<sup>18</sup> This chimes with Bickford and Hartman's characterization of an ideal ruler in the literary imagination of 10-14<sup>th</sup> century China. See Maggie Bickford and Charles Hartman, 'The Purloined Plum and the Heart Of Iron: A Contribution to the History of Flowering-Plum Imagery in the Sung and Yuan Dynasties', *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, 26 (1996), 1-54 (31, 33).

<sup>19</sup> This transliteration reflects the version (عبد الرحمان) found at, for example, *Tārīkh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, p. 199; *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, p. 800. The name is usually transliterated 'Aodulaheman' 奥都刺合蠻 in Chinese-

Mongol court contrasts strongly with Juvaynī's, and, to a degree, Rashīd al-Dīn's, Persian accounts which portray Ögödei and later Töregene acting quite independently, and, for that matter, all portrayals of Činggis Qan in Chucai's biographies.<sup>20</sup> For example, all three Chinese texts report that Töregene feared Chucai as a long-standing member of the court, a narrative which works for both *shendaobei* and biography in that it highlights his enduring proximity to the throne.<sup>21</sup> Both Juvaynī's and Rashīd al-Dīn's accounts of the regency likewise place such long-term appointees – primarily Činqai and Maḥmūd Yalavač – in opposition to the regent. The rhetorical structure of those accounts (especially Juvaynī's) emphasizes Töregene's disregard for those people precisely because they were Ögödei's appointees, however. By making this long service the basis of Chucai's safety from her, the *Yuanshi* employs a logic counter to those reports.<sup>22</sup>

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language texts. On 'Abd al-Rahman, see particularly Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-lü Ch'u-Ts'ai (1189-1243), Yeh-lü Chu (1221-1285)', pp. 160-62, 170. His role and tax-farming policies are also discussed in Chan Hok-lam, 'Yang Wei-chung (1206-1260)', in *ISK*, pp. 185-94 (p. 190); and 'Yang Huan (1186-1255)', in *ISK*, pp. 195-207 (p. 202); Thomas T. Allsen, 'Maḥmūd Yalavač (?-1254), Mas'ūd Beg (?-1289), Alī Beg (?-1280); Bujir (fl. 1206-1260)', in *ISK*, pp. 122-35 (pp. 123-26). See also *YR*, pp. 2243-44 (under 'Audura Qaman' 奥魯刺合蠻).

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, the petulant reaction of Ögödei to Chucai's attempted ban on gifts to the Qaḡan as reported in Chucai's biography at *Yuanshi* 146.3457 and section 2.2 below.

<sup>21</sup> See Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 177; *YWL* 57.22b; *Mingchen shilue* 5.84; *Yuanshi* 146.3464.

<sup>22</sup> For accounts of Töregene's apparent persecution of experienced members of Ögödei's retinue, see Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-e jahān-gushāy*, I, pp. 196-97, 200; Juvaynī, *History of the World Conqueror*, pp. 241, 245; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, ed. by Muḥammad Rawšan and Muṣṭafā Mūsavī, 2 vols. (Tehran: Nashr-i Alburz, 1373 (1994 CE)), pp. 799-800; Rashīd al-Dīn, Wheeler M. Thackston (tr.), *Classical Writings of the Medieval Islamic World: Persian Histories of the Mongol Dynasties, Volume III, Jami'u't-Tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles (Tome 1)*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), pp. 383-84. Both of these accounts underline the importance of joint rule and princely consultation, something entirely rejected by Chucai's biographies, which repeatedly position vaguely defined 'masses' around the court in opposition to their subject's rightful actions. On this principle, see, for example, Elizabeth Endicott-West, 'Aspects of Khitan Liao and Mongolian Yüan Imperial Rule: A Comparative Perspective', in *Rulers from the Steppe*, ed. by Gary Seaman and Daniel Marks (Los Angeles: Ethnographics Press, Center for Visual Anthropology, University of Southern California, 1991), pp. 199-222 (pp. 199-200). On the importance of the *quriltai* mechanism in this regard, see Stephen G. Haw, 'The Deaths of Two Khaghans: A Comparison of Events in 1242 and 1260', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 76 (2013), 361-71 (370); Florence Hodous, 'The Quriltai as a Legal Institution in the Mongol Empire', *Central Asiatic Journal* 56 (2012/2013), 87-102; Michael Hope, 'The Transmission of Authority through the *Quriltai*s of the Early Mongol Empire and the Ilkhanate of Iran (1227-1335)', *Mongolian Studies* 34 (2012), 87-115; István Vásáry, 'The Jochid Realm: The Western Steppe and Eastern Europe', in *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia: The Chinggisid Age*, ed. by Nicola Di Cosmo, Allen J. Frank, and Peter B. Golden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 67-85 (p. 67).

While in Ögödei's early years the Qaġan is able to distinguish between Chucai's virtue and his rivals' inferiority, later both he and his widow Töregene fail as arbitrators. Placing the later stages of Ögödei's rule and the regency of Töregene in opposition to Chucai's concern for the populace, the text takes a strong moral stand against them based on humanitarian concern, making this the key to moral authority. The biography, via a series of positive and negative examples, highlights the importance of humanitarian governance via 'Han' means, repeatedly stressing the need to employ former Jin officials approved by Chucai. First of all, however, the biographies set out and demonstrate Chucai's expertise, underlining Činggisid power and divinely-granted moral authority, and positioning Chucai as the indispensable interpreter of that grant.

## 2.1 Construction of a specialist: definition of a mandate

As noted above, the role overtly assigned to Činggis Qan by Song Zizhen is that of a charismatic, unstoppable conqueror from the north.<sup>23</sup> In his service Chucai is portrayed as a specialist advisor, whose activity, although gradually widening, is kept at a distance from active conquest.<sup>24</sup> Our texts give different reasons for Činggis Qan's initial summons to Chucai, the *shendaobei* linking this to Chucai's Liao imperial descent, and the biography to the Qan having heard of Chucai's reputation as an individual.<sup>25</sup> As we

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<sup>23</sup> The *Yuanshi* compilers' characterization of the period contrasts with this. In their formulation, the first stage of empire was one of establishment and conquest, with the Mongols under Činggis Qan starting to value "positions and titles" and "to formulate orders and regulations". See *Yuanshi* 4673-74; Cleaves, 'The Memorial for Presenting the Yüan Shih', 62.

<sup>24</sup> Liu Xiao argues optimistically that, although Chucai had a limited role as interpreter of portents under Činggis, his experiences underlined the importance of Confucian governance. See *Pingzhuan*, pp. 301-2.

<sup>25</sup> On the first meeting between Chucai and Činggis, which de Rachewiltz dates to 1218, see de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 98. On the meeting see also Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 58-63; Sugiyama, *Yaritsu Sozai*, p. 241; Munkuev, *Kitaikii istochnik*, pp. 70, 186. On the strategic value of senior Kitan figures at this point in the Mongol campaigns, see Biran, 'The Mongols and Nomadic Identity', p. 162; de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 98, n. 67.

Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 170; *YWL* 57.11b:

太祖素有并吞天下之志，嘗訪遼宗室近族，至是徵詣行在。

have established, such funerary inscriptions were family commissions, and concern for the status of the lineage – extending forwards, as well as back – is central to their logic, perhaps especially in the 1260s with growing ethnic classification and the Yelü clan's influence and status under threat due to their Kitan classification. Making his lineage the primary reason for Činggis Qan's interview with Chucai connects both individual subject and commissioning family to the charismatic conqueror and dynastic founder, perhaps broadening the *genjiao* further than might otherwise have been the case.

The biography, however, places Chucai's value to Činggis Qan in his conduct, defined by scholarship and education, on which it is also more specific than is the *shendaobei*, providing a list of subjects studied, including “astronomy, geography, calendrical mathematics, calculating fortunes, Buddhism, Daoism, medicine and divination” alongside the Classics.<sup>26</sup> The biography is fairly typical in its abbreviation of its subject's ancestors, describing him only as “a descendant of the Liao Dongdan Wang 東丹王 in the eighth generation.”<sup>27</sup> Both texts repeatedly emphasize Chucai's superiority through applied expertise, but where the *shendaobei* tied this expertise to his lineage, the *Yuanshi* severed this connection.

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*Yuanshi* 146.3455:

太祖定燕，聞其名，召見之。

<sup>26</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3455:

及長，博極羣書，旁通天文、地理、律曆、術數及釋老、醫卜之說，下筆為文，若宿構者。

The inscription merely states that by the age of seventeen “there were no books he had not read, and in terms of literature he had fame as an author.”

Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 170; *YWL* 57.11a:

年十七，書無所不讀，為文有作者氣。

On this section, see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, p. 97; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 44-45; Sugiyama, *Yaritsu Sozai*, p. 142; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, pp. 69-70, 185.

<sup>27</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3455:

耶律楚材字晉卿，遼東丹王突欲八世孫。

The inscription, on the other hand, follows this by briefly listing the intervening generations of male ancestors in a manner typical of such lineage-focussed texts. See Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 170; *YWL* 57.10b-11a.

Our texts describe an exchange on the nature of loyalty, Chucai rejecting the Qan's suggestion that he, as a Kitan, welcome Mongol vengeance against the Jurchen overlords on the basis that his forebears had served the Jin, and such enmity would therefore be disloyal to them.<sup>28</sup> Liu Xiao reads this as placing Confucian ministerial loyalty to emperors over kin ties to a defeated polity, and links it to Činggis Qan's strict hierarchical principles as reported in the *Secret History*.<sup>29</sup> This is perhaps the intention behind the biography's rephrasing of this incident. The *shendaobei* has Chucai characterize acceptance of such vengeance as disloyalty to 'lord and father,' but the *Yuanshi* removes 'father'.<sup>30</sup> This micro-level adjustment identifies filial-ministerial loyalty as the key principle, rather than combining this, as did the *shendaobei*, with the filial-familial. It thus again shifts the frame of reference away from the familial and towards the bureaucratic and, inasmuch as ministerial service is personal, the individual.

The biography portrays Činggis admiring Chucai's physique, beard and voice, elements not discussed in the inscription and again aspects specific to the individual rather than relating to family or lineage.<sup>31</sup> This may be a generic difference between *Standard History* biographies, which often mention physical appearance, and inscription texts,

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<sup>28</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 170; *YWL* 57.11b (and cited at *Mingchen shilue* 5.74):

入見，上謂公曰：「遼與金爲世讎，吾與汝已報之矣。」公曰：「臣父祖以來皆嘗北面事之，既爲臣子，豈敢復懷貳心，讎君父耶！」上雅重其言，處之左右，以備咨訪。

*Yuanshi* 146.3455:

帝偉之，曰：「遼、金世讎，朕爲汝雪之。」對曰：「臣父祖嘗委質事之，既爲之臣，敢讎君耶！」帝重其言，處之左右

On this section, see also de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 98; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, p. 62; Sugiyama, *Yaritsu Sozai*, pp. 235-42; Munkuev, *Kitaikii istochnik*, pp. 70, 186.

<sup>29</sup> Liu Xiao links this to the Qan's reported condemnation of disloyalty by Jamuqa's men in the *Secret History*. See *Pingzhuan*, p. 62, n.3, pp. 219-20; de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, §200, pp. 128-29.

<sup>30</sup> The incident as reported sits uneasily alongside the fact that Chucai did of course leave Jin service and align himself with the new Činggisid power, whether for reasons of vengeance or otherwise.

<sup>31</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3455:

太祖定燕，聞其名，召見之。楚材身長八尺，美髯宏聲。

which mostly seem not to, as noted by de Rachewiltz.<sup>32</sup> The *Yuanshi* also reports that Chucai received the Mongol-language nickname *Urtu Saqal*, ‘Longbeard,’ from Činggis at or after this point.<sup>33</sup> This is an exception to the trend noted above where the biography drops demonstrations of familiarity with alien terms and places.<sup>34</sup>

Chucai’s role under Činggis is primarily technical; that of an astronomer, astrologer and diviner of omens, though he is also portrayed healing the sick. During Činggis Qan’s reign Chucai only once claims expertise in governance, and is once assigned such expertise.<sup>35</sup> Between 1220 and 1224 he is portrayed performing divinatory feats, interpreting strange weather, eclipses, a comet and a supernatural animal, and the portrayal of these episodes betrays a significant series of interventions. In July-August 1219 we see Chucai explain a freak snowfall as a victory omen.<sup>36</sup> In the inscription

<sup>32</sup> See ‘Sino-Mongol Contacts’, p. 98, n. 73, where de Rachewiltz argues that the inscription omits the nickname as a matter of course. This is not such a clear-cut norm, however. Cf., for example, the biographies of the Jia family discussed in section 1.3 above, and the range of treatment of Turco-Mongol names between social biography and *Yuanshi* discussed in section 3.2 below.

<sup>33</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3455-56:

長髯人。帝重其言，處之左右，遂呼楚材曰吾 [3456] 圖撒合里而不名，吾圖撒哈里，蓋國語長髯人也。

On the naming, see also Munkuev, *Kitaiskii Istochnik*, p. 186. On Mongolian *Urtu* ‘long (in time and space); length’, and *Saqal* ‘beard; beard of grain; fibres of roots’, see Lessing, *Dictionary*, pp. 884-85 and 677 respectively. As de Rachewiltz notes, the *Shengwu qingzheng lu* also names Chucai in this way, although with a different orthography (兀都撒罕). See Wang Guowei, *Menggu shiliao sizhong*, 1.202; 1.205; de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, pp. 10, 23, 98, n. 73. It is interesting to note the parallel treatment in the *Liaoshi* of Han Yanhui 韓延徽 (882-959), a Han official who served the first four Liao monarchs and who received the Kitan nickname transliterated as *Xialie* 匣列, and explained as meaning ‘one who returned’, referring to their rather complex early relationship. Toqto et al., *Liaoshi* 遼史 (*Liao History*) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 74.1231:

上大悅，賜名曰匣列。「匣列」，遼言復來也。

I am grateful to Naomi Standen for making me aware of this (private communication, May 2017).

<sup>34</sup> On such naming practices, see also Li Zhi’an 李治安, ‘Yuandai hanren shou menggu wenhua yingxiang kaoshu 元代汉人受蒙古文化影响考述 (Mongol Influence on Ethnic Han Chinese in the Yuan Dynasty)’, *Lishi Yanjiu*, 1 (2009), 24–50 (34-36). *Yuanshi* biographies and Mongol-era Chinese inscriptions are inconsistent in their handling of such Turco-Mongol nicknames; something we examine in more detail in the following chapter.

<sup>35</sup> The episodes claiming such expertise are Chang Bajin’s challenge and that in which we see Činggis Qan instructing Ögödei to entrust governmental affairs to him. See Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 170; *YWL* 57.11b-12a, 174; *YWL* 57.17b; *Yuanshi* 146.3456, 3460; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii Istochnik*, pp. 70-71, 78, 186, 193. These episodes are both omitted from the *Mingchen shilue*.

<sup>36</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 170; *YWL* 57.11b:

己卯夏六月，大軍征西，襍旗之際，雨雪三尺，上惡之。公曰：「此克敵之象也。」

Chucaï merely interprets this by predicting victory; the *Yuanshi* expands his speech to specify *xuanming* 玄冥 “water-spirits” as agents of the portent. *Xuanming*, found nowhere else in the *Yuanshi*, occur across several other Standard Histories, and are associated with the north; this adjustment thus makes the portent a phenomenon both northern and familiar, encompassing it within the Chinese canon.<sup>37</sup>

Chucaï likewise interprets a thunderstorm in winter 1220 as portending death for the enemy ‘*sultān*’ (*suolitan* 梭里檀), an Arabic term the *shendaobei* explains and the biography omits, a cut that both discards explanation of non-Sinitic terminology and minimizes narratorial prominence.<sup>38</sup> Our texts also provide identical portrayals of a parallel incident dated to 1222 (in either the fifth or eighth moon) in which Chucaï interpreted a comet as heralding the death of the Jin emperor Xuanzong.<sup>39</sup> These portents

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(Su Tianjue also cites this passage in full; see *Mingchen shilue* 5.74)  
*Yuanshi* 146.3456:

己卯夏六月，帝西討回回國。禡旗之日，雨雪三尺，帝疑之，楚材曰：「玄冥之氣，見於盛夏，克敵之徵也。」

<sup>37</sup> In an annotation to the *Hanshu* (at 22.1056) the Tang writer Yan Shigu 顏師古 (581-645 CE) identifies them as spirits of the north 師古曰：「玄冥，北方之神也。」 Most other references relate to offices and events tied to official veneration of these. An annotation in the *Shiji* states that the *Book of Rites* explains that *xuanming* denotes the Official of Water *shuiguan* 水官, who would presumably administer such rites. See *Shiji* 24.1178. See also Lihui Yang and Deming An, *Handbook of Chinese Mythology* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 191. Neither office is found in either Hucker or Farquhar’s reference works.

<sup>38</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 170; *YWL* 57.11b:

庚辰冬，大雷，上以問公。公曰：「梭里檀當死中野。」已而果然。梭里檀，回鶻王稱也。

*Yuanshi* 146.3456:

庚辰冬，大雷，復問之，對曰：「回回國主當死于野。」後皆驗。

On this incident, see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts,’ p. 98; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, p. 65; Sugiyama, *Yaritsu Sozai*, p. 276; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, pp. 70, 186. On the use of the term ‘*sultān*’ in Middle Mongolian (as *soltan*), see Nicholas Poppe, ‘The Turkic Loan Words in Middle Mongolian’, *Central Asiatic Journal*, 1 (1955), 36-41 (41) de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, i, pp. 190, 192; ii, p. 341.

<sup>39</sup> This refers to Xuanzong 宣宗 (1163-1223, r. 1214-23); see Herbert Franke, ‘The Chin Dynasty,’ in *CHC*, pp. 215-320 (p. 252). Reports in inscription and biography are close, the only striking difference being the use of *nüzhi guo* (the Jurchen ‘realm’) 女直國 in the *shendaobei* to describe the Jin, suggesting that they had been a separate polity. The biography merely reports that the lord of the Jurchen would change, without affording them this distinction, a change that also saves space. *Mingchen shilue* 5.74 quotes the *shendaobei* text here.

Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 171; *YWL* 57.12a:

壬午夏五月，長星見西方，上以問公，公曰：「女直國當易主矣。」逾年而金主死。



of rivals' deaths confirm the Činggisid mandate, and their revelation to the Qan signify heaven's abandonment of the Jin and Khwārazmshāh polities in his favour.

Development of the relationship between Qan and minister comes at the close of the latter episode, where both texts report that Činggis Qan had Chucai perform divination before every campaign, performing scapulimancy himself to check the results.<sup>40</sup> Placed very close to the conqueror, Chucai is not an administrator, but a specialist directly involved in the operation of the Heavenly Mandate in its assurance of the Qan's success. It should also be noted that this account implicitly accepts the accuracy of Činggis Qan's own prognostications. The *Yuanshi* compilers made a technical change, and perhaps corrected an error in the *shendaobei*, when they replaced heating a sheep's thighbone 燒羊髀骨 with scorching a sheep's shoulder blade 灼羊胛 (three quite different characters, which are hard to read as regard as a mere copying error) in their description of Činggis' divination technique.<sup>41</sup>

A pair of episodes further demonstrate Chucai's expertise, contrasting him against unnamed astronomers.<sup>42</sup> The first, in the inscription's brief report, states in an analepsis

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*Yuanshi* 146.3456:

壬午八月，長星見西方，楚材曰：「女直將易主矣。」明年，金宣宗果死。

On this episode, see also de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 100; Sugiyama, *Yaritsu Sozai*, p. 276; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, pp. 71, 187.

<sup>40</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 171; *YWL* 57.12a:

於是每將出征，必令公預卜吉凶，上亦燒羊髀骨以符之。

*Yuanshi* 146.3456:

帝每征討，必命楚材卜，帝亦自灼羊胛，以相符應。

<sup>41</sup> Scapulimancy seems more typically to be performed on a shoulder-bone than a thighbone among the Mongols. Bawden's article on scapulimancy is informative but confuses this account, stating that Činggis used the charred bone "as an amulet" rather than checking Chucai's calculations. See Charles R. Bawden, 'On the Practice of Scapulimancy Among the Mongols', *Central Asiatic Journal*, 4 (1958), 1–44 (4). On this event, see Munkuev, *Kitaiskii Istochnik*, pp. 71, 187; de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 100. On Chucai's calendrical and divinatory successes more generally, see also Sugiyama, *Yaritsu Sozai*, pp. 260–75.

<sup>42</sup> On these episodes, see also de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', pp. 99–100; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii Istochnik*, pp. 71, 186–87.

that the court had been without astronomical or calendrical studies, but Huihu people 回鶻人 came forward to predict an eclipse on the 17th of June 1220, a prediction that Chucai correctly contradicted.<sup>43</sup> The *Yuanshi* omits the analepsis, describes the incorrect prediction as having been made by ‘Astronomers from the Western Regions’ 西域曆人, and portrays Chucai responding to this abruptly in direct speech: “No” 否.<sup>44</sup> In autumn 1221, Chucai’s correct eclipse prediction is similarly contradicted by people described in the *shendaobei* as Huihu and in the *liezhuan* as from the Western Regions.<sup>45</sup> Altering the status of Chucai’s opponents transfers emphasis from a failed prediction by imperial subjects ‘who were Huihu’ to an incorrect reading by geographically defined astronomers from the west, linked to territories beyond those of the newly established Ming.

The inscription’s repeated use of ‘Huihu’ to label discredited opponents may also reflect pressure felt by the Yelü family to maintain their standing in the 1260s in the face of the demotion of Kitan and other ‘Han’ *darugačis* in favour of the *Semuren* class, among

<sup>43</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 171; *YWL* 57.12a:

初，國朝未有曆學，而回鶻人奏五月望夕月食。公言不食，及期果不食。The *Mingchen shilue* cites this version, too (at 5.75), with a very slight rearrangement of the initial characters, replacing 初，國朝 with 國初. On this incident, see also Munkuev, *Kitaiskii Istochnik*, p. 71, which includes the mistaken translation of *Huihu* as *Musulmany*, i.e., Muslim. On the complexities of this usage, see especially Zhong Han, ‘Minzu shi yanjiu zhong de “tazhe” shijiao’, 66; Sugiyama, *Yaritsu Sozai*, p. 266.

<sup>44</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3456:

西域曆人奏五月望夜月當蝕。楚材曰：「否。」卒不蝕。

<sup>45</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, pp. 170-71; *YWL* 57.12a:

明年，公奏十月望夜月食。回鶻人言 [171] 不食，其夜月食八分。The *Mingchen shilue* (at 5.75) also cites this section of text.  
*Yuanshi* 146.3456:

明年十月，楚材言月當蝕，西域人曰不蝕，至期果蝕八分。

On this episode, see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, p. 100; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, pp. 71, 186-87.

According to the table of moon phases published online by NASA, a lunar eclipse should have been observed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1221 – it is unclear where one draws the line between one day and the next at this point, but this record seems accurate. See <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/phase/phases1201.html>, accessed 30/01/2014.

whom those labelled ‘Huihu’ would certainly be numbered. The inscription closes the incident with an endorsement from Činggis, who,

marvelled greatly at him [Chucai], saying, “There has not yet been anything of the heavens’ business that you do not know, let alone the affairs of the world!”<sup>46</sup>

The *Yuanshi* omission of this suggests that it connected Chucai too closely to Činggis’ worldly business; that of conquest.

These episodes are the first in Chucai’s biographies to display the binary structure, seen across *shendaobei* and biography, of constructing superiority by presenting repeated contrasts against other, inferior, secondary characters, many of whom are treated either as opponents, or, at best, anti-subjects. The *Mingchen shilue*, by contrast, discusses Chucai’s technical expertise in two lengthy and detailed *kaoyi* sections on Chucai’s astronomical and calendrical work, seemingly intended to further demonstrate his credentials in the field.<sup>47</sup> These interpolations, which blunt the contrast between Chucai and his inferior opponents, are not transmitted to the *liezhuan*.

Chucai’s most spectacular divinatory incident is the picturesque encounter with the unicorn-like *jiaoduan*, an animal “shaped like a deer [with] the tail of a horse, green in colour and with a single horn, that could speak like a human” and which addressed the

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<sup>46</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, pp. 170-71; *YWL* 57.12a:

上大異之，曰：「汝於天上事尚無不知，況人間事乎！」

On this episode, see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, p. 100; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, pp. 71.

<sup>47</sup> For these see *Mingchen shilue*, 5.74, 75.

*kešig*, or imperial bodyguard,<sup>48</sup> on their arrival in ‘East India’.<sup>49</sup> Chucai’s explanation of the incident can be read as a natural endorsement of his experience and wisdom in interpreting portents, and as a suggestion that change is in the air. The episode recalls Confucius’ interpretation of the unicorn-like *lin* animal in 481 BCE and the capture of the *lin* during Han Wudi’s reign in 122 BCE, both cases thought to herald change, and the coming of virtuous rule, and Roel Sterckx reads the naming of such animals as an indication of sagehood.<sup>50</sup> The animal’s brief speech is followed in our texts by a more substantial speech from Chucai interpreting its significance as a message to the conqueror.

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<sup>48</sup> On the *kešig* and their duties, see de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, pp. 160, 838; Charles Melville, ‘The *Keshig* in Iran: The Survival of the Royal Mongol Household’, in *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, edited by Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 135–164 (pp. 135–138); Christopher P. Atwood, ‘Ulus Emirs, Keshig Elders, Signatures, and Marriage Partners: The Evolution of a Classic Mongol Institution’, in *Imperial Statecraft: Political Forms and Techniques of Governance in Inner Asia, Sixth - Twentieth Centuries*, ed. by David Sneath (Bellingham, WA: Center for East Asian Studies, Western Washington University / Mongolian and Inner Asian Studies Unit, University of Cambridge, 2006), pp. 141–73.

<sup>49</sup> This incident is found at Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 171; *YWL* 57.12a-12b; *Mingchen shilue*, 5.75; *Yuanshi* 146.3456. See also, among other works, de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts,’ pp. 24–26; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 174–77; Munkuev, *Kitaiiskii Istochnik*, pp. 71, 187; Sugiyama, *Yaritsu sozai*, pp. 277–82; de Rachewiltz, ‘More About the Story of Činggis-Qan and the Peace-Loving Rhinoceros’, in *Austrina: Essays in Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Founding of the Oriental Society of Australia*, ed. by A.R. Davis and A.D. Stefanowska (Sydney: Australian Oriental Society, 1982), pp. 13–26; Ho Kailung 何启龙, ‘Jiaoduan, yelü chucai yu liu bingzhong: yi yaoyan lilun yanjiu chuanshuo liubian 角端、耶律楚材与刘秉忠：以谣言理论研究传说流变 (‘The Unicorn-Jiaoduan, Yelü Chucai and Liu Bingzhong: using the Rumor Theory to Investigate the Change of Legend’, *Yuanshi luncong* 13 (2010), 294–302; Chun-chiang Yen, ‘The Chüeh-Tuan as Word, Art Motif and Legend’, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 89 (1969), 578–99. Despite not featuring in Persian sources, an indication that the story may have had some currency further west across the Mongol empire are found in Abolala Soudavar, ‘The Han-Lin Academy and the Persian Royal Library-Atelier’, in *History and Historiography of Post-Mongol Central Asia and the Middle East: Studies in Honour of John E. Woods*, ed. by Judith Pfeiffer and Sholeh A. Quinn (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 467–84 (pp. 476–77).

Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 171; *YWL* 57.12a-12b:

行 [12b] 次東印度國鐵門關，侍衛者見一獸，鹿形馬尾，綠色而獨角，能爲人言，曰：「汝君宜早迴。」上怪而問公。

*Yuanshi* 146.3456:

甲申，帝至東印度，駐鐵門關，有一角獸，形如鹿而馬尾，其色綠，作人言，謂侍衛者曰：「汝主宜早還。」

<sup>50</sup> See Ho Kailung, ‘Jiaoduan’, 298; Roel Sterckx, *The Animal and the Daemon in Early China*, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture, 9 (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), p. 219.

Both texts render the animal's speech in direct discourse as, "Your lord should return early," but the *shendaobei* has it refer to Činggis as *jun* 君, and the *Yuanshi* as *zhu* 主, seeming to shift the Qan away from the positive Confucian overtones of the first term and towards a more simple dominance. After reporting the animal's address, its nature and mission are interpreted via direct speech from Chucai. Each text presents a slightly different version of his explanation, and each therefore presents a different vision of the Heavenly Mandate. The *shendaobei* quotes Chucai as characterizing the *jiaoduan* as symbolizing "the abhorrence of taking life," linking humanitarianism to heavenly will.<sup>51</sup> Here his explanation places a geographic limit to Činggis' divinely confirmed authority, stating "I hope [you] uphold the will of heaven, [and so] spare the people of these several countries," effectively locating a boundary to the Činggisid mandate at 'East India'.<sup>52</sup>

The *Yuanshi* lays the stress differently:

This is a sign from Heaven to your majesty. Your majesty is Heaven's first son, people under Heaven are all your Majesty's sons, and I wish you would follow Heaven's will; this is to protect the lives of the populace.<sup>53</sup>

Here the animal is similarly linked to the will of heaven and to protecting life. No longer tied to 'East India', however, this humanitarian imperative now applies to all peoples 'under Heaven', and is expressed in more Confucian filial and thus reciprocal terms. The outcome in all three versions is Činggis' immediate withdrawal (the *Mingchen shilue* omits mention of the Qan (上, i.e., 'emperor', 'monarch') here, making it seem a passive construction, but this edit was not adopted by the *Yuanshi* compilers).<sup>54</sup> This response

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<sup>51</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; *YWL* 57.12b:

公曰：「此獸名角端，日行一萬八千里，解四夷語，是惡殺之象，蓋上天遣之以告陛下。

<sup>52</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; *YWL* 57.12b:

願承天心，宥此數國人命，實陛下無疆之福。

<sup>53</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3456:

帝此天降符以告陛下。陛下天之元子，天下之人，皆陛下之子，願承天心，以全民命。

<sup>54</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; *YWL* 57.12b:

from the Qan implicitly accepts both Chucai and Chucai's definition of the Mandate, thereby recognizing the expertise of the former and, in the *Yuanshi*, the limited, conditional and essentially humanitarian basis for the latter.<sup>55</sup> Representing a (super-) natural response to the Činggisid campaigns, the animal and its interpretation effectively characterize the Qan and his mandate and the manner of this characterization is subtly tailored.

The above incidents see Chucai demonstrate expertise in reading the world around the Qan, whose own divination places some such skills within the monarch's role, too. The eclipses demonstrate Chucai's knowledge, the portents confirming both this and the Qan's mandate (via the fall of his enemies). This mandate is confirmed again but also limited and made conditional by the *jiaoduan*. The biographies therefore project Chucai into the heart of imperial authority, but the *liezhuan* hems this authority in geographically, linking the heavenly mandate firmly to humanitarianism rather than conquest.

Another incident highlighting Chucai's moral and technical superiority is dated to 1226, after the fall of Lingwu in the Xixia campaign.<sup>56</sup> While generals squabbled over loot, Chucai is portrayed taking only books and rhubarb medicine, the latter subsequently

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上即日下詔班師。  
*Mingchen shilue* 5.75:  
 即日下詔班師。  
*Yuanshi* 146.3456:  
 帝即日班師。

<sup>55</sup> de Rachewiltz notes that Persian historians cited more down-to-earth practical and climatic reasons for the Qan's withdrawal. See 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 85, n. 73; de Rachewiltz, 'More About the Story of Činggis-Qan and the Peace-Loving Rhinoceros', pp. 19-20; Juvaynī, *History of the World-Conqueror*, i, pp. 137-38; Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, p. 109; *Compendium of Chronicles*, p. 255. Luc Kwanten argues that this withdrawal probably related to reports of Muqali's death and the failure of the Tangut alliance. See Luc Kwanten, 'The Career of Muqali: A Reassessment', *The Bulletin of Sung and Yüan Studies* 14 (1978), 31-38 (35).

<sup>56</sup> Lingwu here is Lingzhou 靈州, Mongolian name Dörmegei, in present-day Ningxia Prefecture; see de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, p. 973. On this incident, see de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 101; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 72, 354-55; Munkuev, *Kitaiiskii Istochnik*, pp. 71-72.

curing an epidemic among the troops. The *Yuanshi* compilers' intervention here is small but noteworthy – the addition of further emphasis to show that books taken by Chucai had been abandoned and so were not looted, but perhaps even rescued.<sup>57</sup> The contrast between Chucai and the military displays his superiority, on both moral and technical grounds. Compared to squabbling looters, Chucai saves abandoned books. When he takes medicine the reason for this soon emerges as a skilled physician's imperative to save life. Again, the *shendaobei* establishes a clear binary of moral superiority over Chucai's peers. The *Yuanshi* compilers' intervention here is small but noteworthy – the addition of further emphasis to show that books taken by Chucai had been abandoned and so were not looted, but perhaps even rescued.<sup>58</sup> Again, the moral binary is sharpened by the *Yuanshi* compilers.

Such superiority is also found in an element the compilers moved from its placement within the *shendaobei* – and which is omitted from the *Mingchen shilue* – which sees Činggis addressing Ögödei and instructing him to trust Chucai with his government:

Indicating Chucai [the emperor] said to Taizong, “This man is Heaven's gift to our family. From now on the various matters of state and military should all be entrusted to him.”<sup>59</sup>

Undated, this appears to be a single incident. The lack of a clear subject in the biography version – not unusual in such Chinese texts – is perhaps suspicious in that it does not overtly identify Činggis Qan as the speaker, but only hints at this identification.

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<sup>57</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; *YWL* 57.12b; *Mingchen shilue* 5.75:

丙戌冬十一月，靈武下，諸將爭掠子女財幣。公獨取書數部、大黃兩駝而已。既而軍士病疫，唯得大黃可愈，所活幾萬人。

<sup>58</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3456:

丙戌冬，從下靈武，諸將爭取子女金帛，楚材獨收遺書及大黃藥材。既而士卒病疫，得大黃輒愈。

<sup>59</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3456:

指楚材謂太宗曰：「此人，天賜我家。爾後軍國庶政，當悉委之。」

On this episode, see also de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 115; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, pp. 187.

Following the previous account of Chucai's expertise and proximity to the Qan, however, the reader understands that in context Činggis is the only individual likely to make such a statement. The account is clearly developed from a parallel anecdote found in the inscription:

This is because Taizu [Činggis Qan], in his later years, repeatedly told [Ögödei] that, "This person is Heaven's gift to our family; in the future you should entrust all affairs of government to him."<sup>60</sup>

Both content and context differ here; the *shendaobei* employs this as analepsis after a 1236 speech in which Ögödei pays tribute to Chucai, its repetition highlighting the Qagan's regard. The claim to authority over both civil and military arms is reflected in Chucai's later protests against 'Abd al-Rahman in both texts. Alongside the Lingwu incident it suggests that, first, civil and military matters are separate, and, second, that Chucai's civil authority should extend over the military. The biography's apparent chronological reconstruction, and the addition of a specific military element, changes its nature considerably.

The *Yuanshi* placement of this episode makes it one of only two linking Chucai to governance under Činggis, of which only the Chang Bajin 常八斤 incident is ascribed a clear chronology and a claim to such responsibility. Stressing Chucai's civil, rather than military, inclination, the episode separates him from the business of conquest while implicitly placing the military beneath his authority, and, found in both *shendaobei* and *Yuanshi*, is again omitted from the *Mingchen shilue*.<sup>61</sup> Chucai's authority is challenged by

<sup>60</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 174; YWL 57.17b:

蓋太祖晚年，屢屬於上曰：「此人天賜我家，汝他日國政當悉委之。」

<sup>61</sup> The other anecdote is undated and only found in the *Yuanshi*. It describes Chucai's response to abuses carried out by the Kitan Shimo Xiandebu, and immediately precedes – and sets up – an incident taking place during the regency of Tolui. The 1221 Song envoy account *Mengda beilu* 蒙鞑備錄 reports that Chucai was acting in a more general official capacity at this time, however, suggesting that this presentation is rather selective. See Zhao Hong 趙珙, Peng Daya 彭大雅, and Xu Ting 徐霆, *Meng-ta pei-lu und Hei-ta shih-lueh: chinesische Gesandtenberichte über die frühen Mongolen 1221 und 1237*, trans. by Erich



the bowmaker Bajin, whose phrasing, differing between the texts, reveals a kind of negative image of the civil ideal.<sup>62</sup> The inscription quotes Bajin saying, “This dynasty reveres military skill, but this gentleman wishes to advance by culture; is this not misguided?”<sup>63</sup> The *Yuanshi* version differs: “Just now the state needs its military; what use is Yelü the *Ruzhe* 儒者?”<sup>64</sup>

Underlining the contrast between martial and civil, each portrayal nonetheless defines the latter differently. In the inscription Chang Bajin describes Chucai as trying to “advance by culture” 以文進. In the *Yuanshi* he describes Chucai as a *Ruzhe* 儒者, a term often translated as ‘classicist,’ or ‘Confucian,’ the idealization of which, as we have seen, was of concern to both Song Lian and Wang Wei.<sup>65</sup> Chucai’s response, across both texts, argues that as one needs an artisan of bow-making for bows, in order to govern ‘all under heaven’ one cannot be without ‘an artisan of governance’; thereby claiming that status for himself.<sup>66</sup> The construction of the incident employs a kind of mirroring, comparable to the *Yuanshi* handling of Ögödei’s speech examined later in this chapter, where

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Haenisch, Congwu Yao, Peter Olbricht, and Elisabeth Pinks, *Asiatische Forschungen*, 56 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1980), p. 48.

<sup>62</sup> The incident is found at Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 170; *YWL* 57.11b-12a; *Yuanshi* 146.3456; see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts,’ p. 99 and n. 85; Munkuev, *Kitaikii istochnik*, pp. 70-71, 186.

<sup>63</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 170; *YWL* 57.11b-12a:

夏人 [12a] 常八斤者，以治弓見知，乃詫於公曰：「本朝尚武，而明公欲以文進，不已左乎？」

<sup>64</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3456:

夏人常八斤，以善造弓，見知於帝，因每自矜曰：「國家方用武，耶律儒者何用。」

<sup>65</sup> The translation ‘classicist’ is borrowed from Anne E. McLaren’s translation of an essay by Su Tianjue. Walking a fine and useful line between ‘scholar’ and ‘Confucian’, it emphasizes learning based in the ancient canon while avoiding confusion with *shi* 士 ‘scholar’, ‘gentleman’. The two terms were, as we will see, employed distinctly in Chucai’s biographies. See Anne E. McLaren, ‘Challenging Official History in the Song and Yuan Dynasties: The Record of the Three Kingdoms’, in *Knowledge and Text Production in an Age of Print: China, 900-1400*, ed. by Hilde De Weerdt and Lucille Chia (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 317-48 (p. 333). See also Walton, ‘Family Fortunes in the Song-Yuan Transition’, 31-32.

<sup>66</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 170; *YWL* 57.12a:

公曰：「且治弓尚須弓匠，豈知天下不用治天下匠耶？」上聞之喜甚，自是用公日密。

*Yuanshi* 146.3456:

楚材曰：「治弓尚須用弓匠，為天下者豈可不用治天下匠耶。」帝聞之甚喜，日見親用。

transgressive reported speech highlights, through complaining about them, desirable characteristics. As Chucai's response effectively accepts Bajin's identification of his non-martial alignment, the divergent constructions of the bow-maker's challenge each provide a different definition of Chucai's civilian 'artisan of governance'. Song Zizhen characterizes this as operating through *wen*, but the *Yuanshi* compilers make this depend on the *Ru*, precisely the activist scholar ideal we saw articulated by both Song Lian and Wang Wei in section 1.3 above. Both texts complete the episode with Činggis Qan's approval of this speech, and reports that he employed Chucai more closely – the *Yuanshi*'s Qan is thus made to recognize the *Ru* as the 'artisan' required for governance.

The narrative answers Bajin on its own terms, and as with the astronomers uses his challenge to demonstrate Chucai's superiority. It also shifts Chucai towards governance and defines an ideal of governance, by *Ruzhe*, through the Classics, although without quite overtly claiming the exalted *Ru* status for Chucai. By the end of Činggis' rule, therefore, Chucai's expertise has been established before the reader in both the technical specialism required to recognize and define the Mandate of Heaven and in the broader business of governance. The Mandate has been awarded to the Qan, but it has also been firmly linked to humanitarian concern and the ancestral founder has twice endorsed Chucai's candidacy for, and methods of, administration. There is a clear contrast between *shendaobei* and *liezhuan* on the one hand, which indirectly establish governmental competence for Chucai, and the *Mingchen shilue* on the other, which, while expanding on his technical expertise with its lengthy *kaoyi* notes on Chucai's calendrical work, omits both the Chang Bajin incident and Činggis' instructions to Ögödei.

In contrast, the *Yuanshi* compilers' interventions reinforced the binary contrasts employed by Song Zizhen to demonstrate not only Chucai's superiority but the inferiority of others, a pattern continuing in the following sections. This superiority, both technical and moral, grants Chucai *Ru* status through the mouth of a discredited secondary subject, so indirectly positioning both him and the *Ru* class more generally as essential experts in governance. This has also been achieved while separating Chucai from the business of conquest – although present at Lingwu, his involvement is, again, technical and moral.

## 2.2 An ideal relationship: Chucai and Ögödei up to the mid-1230s

Our texts further broaden Chucai's responsibilities and expertise through an episode which portrays him dealing with robbery in Yanjing during the regency of Tolui (1227-1229), the culprits of which were linked to prominent families.<sup>67</sup> Chucai, sent with an imperial commissioner to deal with the matter, finds the latter tempted by bribes from those families, after which our texts diverge.<sup>68</sup> While the inscription reports that local officials were unable to stop the robberies, the biography drops this element, stating instead that those victims who did not give up property were killed, making the crimes

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<sup>67</sup> The incident is found at Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; *YWL* 57.12b-13a; *Yuanshi* 146.3456-57; *Mingchen shilue* 5.75. On this episode, see also de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', pp. 101-2; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 79-82; Munkuev, *Kitaikii istochnik*, pp. 72.

<sup>68</sup> This commissioner appears to have been Tačar 塔察兒 (d. 1238), a descendent of Boroquul of the Hū'ūšīn, on whom see *Yuanshi* 119.2952-53; *YR*, p. 2638. Cf. the brief account of this affair in his biography (*Yuanshi* 119.2952) and that for Tolui (at *Yuanshi* 115.2885). Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; *YWL* 57.12b-13a:

其後燕京多盜，至駕車行劫，有司不能禁。時睿宗監國，命中使偕公馳傳往治。既至，分捕得之，皆勢家子。[13a] 其家人輩行賂求免。中使惑之，欲爲覆奏。

*Yuanshi* 146.3456-57:

燕多劇賊，未夕，輒曳 [3457] 牛車指富家，取其財物，不與則殺之。時睿宗以皇子監國，事聞，遣中使偕楚材往窮治之。楚材詢察得其姓名，皆留後親屬及勢家子，盡捕下獄。其家賂中使，將緩之，楚材示以禍福，中使懼，從其言，獄具，

both more extreme and also, effectively, unopposed. This can be linked to the *liezhuan*'s identification of the culprits as relations of the *liuhou*, deputy or agent (i.e., a local official).<sup>69</sup> Moreover, the biography precedes this incident with a section (not found in either *shendaobei* or *Mingchen shilue*) identifying the Kitan official Shimo Xiandebu as the particularly brutal *liuhou* of an area including Yan, whose actions, characterized as “killing so many people that [their bodies] filled the marketplace” were curbed by Chucai's limitation of local autonomy in requisitions and capital punishment.<sup>70</sup> This juxtaposition implicitly identifies Xiandebu as this cruel *liuhou* with criminal relations, and therefore links him, if indirectly, to the bribery.

The inscription quotes Chucai addressing the hesitant commissioner, “if they are not punished I fear this may result in rebellion.”<sup>71</sup> By contrast, Chucai's biography cuts this reported speech to a diegetic summary and changes its nature. Stating that Chucai “explained calamity and fortune”, a set phrase suggesting a stern warning, this reduces the importance of their communication, removing his uncertainty and involvement in

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<sup>69</sup> On *liuhou* 留後, see *HD*, p. 317. This individual is identified elsewhere as Shimo Xiandebu, who, as we will see, is a prominent opponent of Chucai in the biography. On Xiandebu, son of Shimo Ming'an 石抹明安, see Liu Xiao, *Yelü Chucai pingzhuan*, pp. 80-81 and the brief notice in his father's biography at *Yuanshi* 150.3557. Buell posits that Xiandebu was too successful at consolidating Kitan rule in Zhongdu for Ögödei's reform plans to succeed. See Buell, 'Tribe, Qan and Ulus', p. 88. de Rachewiltz notes that Xiandebu reportedly corresponded with the Daoist dignitary Changchun, potentially opposing him to Chucai in another aspect. See 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts,' p. 87, n. 95. Shimo Xiandebu, a Kitan, was appointed *daruğači* of Beijing by Činggis Khan in 1216, succeeding his father, Shimo Ming'an 石抹明安 (1164-1216). Igor de Rachewiltz suggests that Xiandebu was supported by Temüge Otčigin in this campaign against Chucai, and that Xiandebu remained in office until 1235. See de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-Lü Ch'u-Ts'ai (1189-1243), Yeh-Lü Chu (1221-1285),' p. 151.

<sup>70</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3456:

帝自經營西土，未暇定制，州郡長吏，生殺任情，至孥人妻女，取貨財，兼土田。燕薊留後長官石抹咸得卜尤貪暴，殺人盈市。楚材聞之泣下，即入奏，請禁州郡，非奉璽書，不得擅徵發，囚當大辟者必待報，違者罪死，於是貪暴之風稍戢。

<sup>71</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 171; *YWL* 57.13a:

「信安咫尺未下，若不懲戒，恐致大亂。」

peer-to-peer consultation.<sup>72</sup> This moves the focus onto the contrast between Chucai's decisive action and commissioner's vacillation and connection to criminals.<sup>73</sup>

Our texts all report the execution of sixteen people in the marketplace, but the results, and thus criteria for success, vary. The inscription reports that “the capital city was obedient, and all were able to rest easy”, while the biography, omitting reference to obedience, mentions only the effect on the population.<sup>74</sup> Strikingly, the *Mingchen shilue* cuts mention of peace, using only obedience to measure success.<sup>75</sup> The biography's decisive shifting of the definition of Chucai's success from concern about obedience and the possibility of rebellion to the wellbeing of ‘the people of Yan’ rejects Su Tianjue's intervention. Making Chucai the defender of popular welfare, rather than of order, the *Yuanshi* edits, in emphasizing Tačar's deficiency, position Chucai as the only agent of humanitarian success, hampered by others, again reinforcing the binary structure of the narrative.

In reports describing Ögödei's enthronement in 1229 Chucai's authority is still based on his command over auspicious dates, but this seems to encompass the whole enthronement process.<sup>76</sup> The texts all claim considerable influence for him, but the level of dramatization – and the involvement of Činggisid princes – vary greatly. The *shendaobei* version, though brief and diegetic, gives Chucai the lead in settling the enthronement date

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<sup>72</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3456-57:

楚材示以禍福，中使懼，從其言，獄具，戮十六人于市，燕民始安。

<sup>73</sup> The adjusted extremity of the robberies serves to explain Chucai's unhesitating executions, something that stands out against the overall tone of the biography.

<sup>74</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 171’ *YWL* 57.13a:

遂刑一十六人，京城帖然，皆得安枕矣。

*Yuanshi* 146.3457:

戮十六人于市，燕民始安。

<sup>75</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 5.75:

遂刑一十六人，京城帖然。

<sup>76</sup> This episode is found at Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 171/13a-b; *Mingchen shilue* 5.76; *Yuanshi* 146.3457; see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, p. 102; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 83-85; Sugiyama, *Yaritsu Sozai*, pp. 293-95; Munkuev, *Kitaikii istochnik*, pp. 72.

and establishing ritual precedents.<sup>77</sup> While the *Mingchen shilue* presents the same *shendaobei* text in a parallel placement, appending a *kaoyi* note to which we will turn later, the *Yuanshi* adds direct speech to make events more vivid. Here Chucai intervenes when the imperial clan disagreed on the succession, addressing Tolui and insisting, on the basis of his own calculations, that the date remain unchanged.<sup>78</sup> This reflects the more detailed record of the exchange in Chucai's *muzhi*, cited in the *Mingchen shilue* as a note; here Chucai ensured that his chosen date is adopted, and then, along with Tolui, flanked the Qaghan as he ascended the throne.<sup>79</sup> With this element, both Su Tianjue and the *Yuanshi* compilers again reduced the agency of the imperial family in comparison to the *shendaobei* formulation and favour of Chucai as the informed advisor. Chucai's authority here is again expressed through astrological expertise; as we will see later, his biographers carefully separate him from 'clan' affairs.

After giving Chucai credit for ensuring a timely succession, the biography focusses on ceremony, portraying him instructing Čağadai, dramatizing the establishment of ritual precedent through direct speech, and quoting the prince's endorsement.<sup>80</sup> The account has several implications for reading Ögödei Qaghan's position *vis-a-vis* minister, clan and

<sup>77</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; YWL 57.13a:

己丑，太宗即位，公定冊立儀禮，皇族尊長皆令就班列拜，尊長之有拜禮蓋自此始。

<sup>78</sup> *Yuanshi* 46.3457:

己丑秋，太宗將即位，宗親咸會，議猶未決。時睿宗為太宗親弟，故楚材言於睿宗曰：「此宗社大計，宜早定。」睿宗曰：「事猶未集，別擇日可乎？」楚材曰：「過是無吉日矣。」遂定策，立儀制，乃告親王察合台曰：「王雖兄，位則臣也，禮當拜。王拜，則莫敢不拜。」王深然之。及即位，王率皇族及臣僚拜帳下，既退，王撫楚材曰：「真社稷臣也。」國朝尊屬有拜禮自此始。

<sup>79</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 5.76:

又李微撰墓志云：「己丑秋，公奉遺詔立太宗，擇定八月二十四日，諸皇族畢至。至二十二日，尚猶豫不決，公曰：「此社稷大計，若不早定，恐生他變。」睿宗曰：「再擇日如何？」公曰：「過此日皆不吉。」至日，公與睿宗翼太宗登寶位。」

<sup>80</sup> *Yuanshi* 46.3457:

遂定策，立儀制，乃告親王察合台曰：「王雖兄，位則臣也，禮當拜。王拜，則莫敢不拜。」王深然之。及即位，王率皇族及臣僚拜帳下，既退，王撫楚材曰：「真社稷臣也。」國朝尊屬有拜禮自此始。

empire. Firstly, the succession is contested; the opposition is unclear, but the fact that it is Tolui and Čaġadai who feel the weight of Chucai's authority might imply a challenge from that quarter, and perhaps also a concern to downplay the influence of Čaġadai, portrayed elsewhere as a champion of the *jasag* as a framework of governing rules and law.<sup>81</sup> Chucai's initiation of discussion over the date arrogates responsibility over the succession, and the biography has him dominate proceedings, setting new patterns for interactions with the Qaġan.<sup>82</sup> His direction of the enthronement ritual seems an encompassment of imperial forms by the – implicitly 'Han' – cultural mores ascribed to Chucai by the compilers.

Inscription and biography follow this by reporting Chucai's successful appeal for a pardon for those arriving late to the ceremony, but diverge in their presentation of his case.<sup>83</sup> The *shendaobei* presents Mongol cultural material to the reader, reporting:

[Chucai] said, "Your Majesty is newly mounted on the precious throne, and will wish to avoid polluting the 'white path' 白道子." This [advice] was followed. This dynasty's custom is to venerate white, by reason of white being propitious.<sup>84</sup>

This cross-cultural rhetoric again highlights Chucai's intermediary status, the explanation, in the narratorial voice, suggesting that readers were not expected to understand the reference. The *Yuanshi* drops this, with Chucai instead merely saying Öġödei 'ought' 宜 to offer a pardon, reducing the explanation of non-Sinitic terminology and perhaps

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, the portrayal of Čaġadai at Juvaynī, *History of the World Conqueror*, pp. 204-6; Juvaynī, *Tārikh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, pp. 211-12.

<sup>82</sup> Compare this to Chucai's response to Töregene's inquiry about the succession to Öġödei (discussed below in section 2.3); in both *shendaobei* and *muzhiming*, where Chucai deflects her inquiry but recommends following the Qaġan's posthumous decree. Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 177; *YWL* 57.22a; *Mingchen shilue* 5.83.

<sup>83</sup> The episode is found at Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; *YWL* 57.13a; *Mingchen shilue* 5.76; *Yuanshi* 146.3457.

<sup>84</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; *YWL* 57.13a:

公言：「陛下新登寶位，願無污白道子。」從之。蓋國俗尚白，以白爲吉故也。The *Mingchen shilue* cites the same passage at 5.76.

reflecting a ‘Han’ ceremonial norm of amnesties following enthronements, tying a form of humanitarianism to succession.<sup>85</sup> The omission also facilitates the avoidance of editorial explanation and the minimizing of compilers’ visibility by narrating at a diegetic level, explaining only through reported speech. The *Mingchen shilue* placement of the *kaoyi* note on the coronation after this incident suggests that Su Tianjue too saw enthronement and amnesty as a single event.

Another primarily humanitarian episode follows this report, the inscription describing chaos in recently conquered territory, with arbitrary violence employed by officials against opposition and between officials and territorial units, and reporting that Chucai prohibited this.<sup>86</sup> In a parallel account the *Yuanshi* discusses a different issue; the punishment of people for misunderstanding new laws, and the lack of an amnesty mechanism in the realm’s (i.e., Činggisid) law 國法.<sup>87</sup> Chucai’s proposed amnesty faces anonymous (and therefore effectively generalized) opposition, but he persuades the Qagan that all crimes committed after the 16th of January 1230 be unpunished, implicitly making the ‘Han’ amnesty mechanism the only solution to such problems.<sup>88</sup> The *Yuanshi* places the focus on the contrast between Chucai and the unnamed mass 衆 placed in opposition to his humanitarian concern.

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<sup>85</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3457:

楚材奏曰：「陛下新即位，宜宥之。」太宗從之。

On the practice of amnesties more broadly, see especially Brian McKnight, *The Quality of Mercy: Amnesties and Traditional Chinese Justice* (Honolulu: Hawai’i University Press, 1981).

<sup>86</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 171; *YWL* 57.13a-13b; *Mingchen shilue* 5.76:

時天下新定，未有號令，所在長吏皆得自專生殺，少有忤意則刀鋸隨之，至有全室被戮，襁褓不遺者。而彼州此郡動輒兵興相攻，公首以爲言，皆禁絕 [13b] 之。

<sup>87</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3457:

中原甫定，民多誤觸禁網，而國法無赦令。

<sup>88</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3457:

楚材議請肆宥，衆以云迂，楚材獨從容爲帝言。詔自庚寅正月朔日前事勿治。



The *liezhuan* extends the episode, recording new regulations Chucai appended to the decree addressing these issues, and describing Ögödei's reaction to them.<sup>89</sup> The measures address concerns recurring throughout the biography, namely separating and balancing civil and military authority; punishing excessive taxation, trade in government resources, and embezzling officials; incorporating Mongol, Huihu and Hexi populations in the tax system and imposing central control over punishment by requiring court approval for executions; the latter seeming to clash with Chucai's approach to punishing the Yanjing bandits. All of these, we read, were approved. Finally, gifts to the Qagan were specifically banned, directly challenging patrimonial governance in which the monarch is the centre of gift exchange and consumption.<sup>90</sup> Both the item and the exchange over it are significant:

“... [regarding] presenting gifts to the emperor, the harm caused is not insubstantial, and it is essential that this ceases.” The emperor followed all of this. [He] only objected on the single matter of gifts, saying, “Those that voluntarily decide to make an offering, they should be permitted.” Chucai said, “Extremes of corruption, they are definitely caused by this.” The emperor said, “Every single recommendation submitted to me by the minister [you] I follow; can't the minister follow me in one matter?”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3457:

且條便宜一十八事頒天下，其略言：「郡宜置長吏牧民，設萬戶總軍，使勢均力敵，以遏驕橫。中原之地，財用所出，宜存恤其民，州縣非奉上命，敢擅行科差者罪之。貿易借貸官物者罪之。蒙古、回鶻、河西諸人，種地不納稅者死。監主自盜官物者死。應犯死罪者，具由申奏待報，然後行刑。貢獻禮物，為害非輕，深宜禁斷。」帝悉從之。唯貢獻一事不允，曰：「彼自願饋獻者，宜聽之。」楚材曰：「蠹害之端，必由於此。」帝曰：「凡卿所奏，無不從者，卿不能從朕一事耶？」

<sup>90</sup> A glance at Juvayni's anecdotes of Ögödei's character will highlight the centrality afforded to this concept by other historians of his court. See, for example, the example of Möge Qatun's pearls, at *History of the World Conqueror*, pp. 211-12; *Tārikh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, pp. 168-69. On the mechanics of giving, see also Thomas T. Allsen, 'Ever Closer Encounters: The Appropriation of Culture and the Apportionment of Peoples in the Mongol Empire', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 1 (1997), 2-23, (20-21); J. Daniel Rogers, 'Empire Dynamics and Inner Asia', in *Complexity of Interaction along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE*, ed. by Jan Bemmman and Michael Schmauder, Bonn Contributions to Asian Archaeology, 7 (Bonn: Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie, 2015), pp. 73-88 (p. 83).

<sup>91</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3457:

貢獻禮物，為害非輕，深宜禁斷。」帝悉從之。唯貢獻一事不允，曰：「彼自願饋獻者，宜聽之。」楚材曰：「蠹害之端，必由於此。」帝曰：「凡卿所奏，無不從者，卿不能從朕一事耶？」

The account presents a clash between patrimonial and bureaucratic modes of governance, the latter symbolized by Chucai, who we see suggesting that the only alternative to his system is corruption. Distancing income from the monarch, this places him under his advisor's control. The *Yuanshi* framing makes the matter one of morality rather than differing political norms, and the Qagan's response makes him appear querulous, petulant and disengaged from governance.

The *Yuanshi* account focusses, from this point on, on Chucai's interaction with two long-term opponents, Shimo Xiandebu and 'Abd al-Rahman, along with several other secondary subjects, named or otherwise.<sup>92</sup> Xiandebu, like Beter and Chang Bajin, is quoted in direct speech, while 'Abd al-Rahman is kept silent; as we will see, Ögödei speaks for him, having adopted his stance. It seems likely that this handling relates to their contrasting positions. On the one hand, Beter (and unnamed others) suggest the extreme policy of turning all 'Han lands' into pasture, while Xiandebu, a regional figure based in Yanjing, slanders Chucai, attempting, in the *Yuanshi* account, to have him executed, so both condemn themselves through quoted speech. In the case of Xiandebu the *Yuanshi* compilers made use of both dramatization through direct speech and selective framing of quotations to highlight Chucai's moral superiority over his opponent.<sup>93</sup> Both texts report Xiandebu's attempts to slander Chucai, followed by the exposure of his own wrongdoing and merciful treatment by Chucai.<sup>94</sup> As noted above, unlike the inscription,

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<sup>92</sup> On Shimo Xiandebu, see above. On the idea of the 'anti-subject', see section 1.4 above.

<sup>93</sup> Aside from Beter and Xiandebu, we have already seen these pairings illustrate Chucai's superiority to figures such as the Xia bowmaker Chang Bajin, astronomers from the Western Regions, unnamed generals at the fall of Lingwu and the imperial commissioner Tačar.

<sup>94</sup> These episodes are found at Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 172; *YWL* 57.14a; *Mingchen shilue* 5.76-77; *Yuanshi* 146.3458. See also de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', pp. 104-6; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 95-96; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, pp. 74, 191.

the biography has also already discredited Xiandebu by linking him to brutality, robbery and bribery in Yanjing during Tolui's regency.<sup>95</sup>

The inscription (and *Mingchen shilue*), starts the slander account with Chucai's solution to another report of abuses by powerful local figures, his proposal being a tripartite division of governance between the military, civil administration, and revenue collection, implementing safeguards to prevent any function interfering with the others.<sup>96</sup> The biography records a similar recommendation, omitting the report of abuses, and adds a request from Chucai that Činqai and the Jurchen official Nianhe Zhongshan be appointed to assist him because they were not vulnerable to pressure from influential figures.<sup>97</sup>

The texts unite in reporting Xiandebu's attack on Chucai, but describe this quite differently. The inscription depicts Xiandebu provoking an 'imperial uncle'<sup>98</sup> to send an envoy accusing Chucai of disloyalty and cross-border contact with the Jin, recommending that he be kept away from sensitive positions.<sup>99</sup> Here the inscription could again be addressing concerns related to Kitan status. The discredited allegations of 'Han' solidarity

<sup>95</sup> On the banditry in Yanjing, see Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; *YWL* 57.12b-13a; *Yuanshi* 146.3456-57; Su Tianjue, *Mingchen shilue*, 5.76 and the detailed discussion above.

<sup>96</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 172; *YWL* 57.14a; *Mingchen shilue* 5.76-77:

先是，諸路長吏兼領軍民錢穀，往往恃其富強，肆爲不法。公奏長吏專理民事，萬戶 [77] 府總軍政，課稅所掌錢穀，各不相統攝，遂爲定制，權貴不能平。

<sup>97</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3458:

楚材奏：「凡州郡宜令長吏專理民事，萬戶總軍政，凡所掌課稅，權貴不得侵之。」又舉鎮海、粘合，均與之同事，權貴不能平。

On Činqai see *Yuanshi* 120.2963-64; *YR*, p. 2418; P.D. Buell, 'Činqai', in *ISK*, pp. 95-111; Xu Youren 許有壬, 'Yuan gu youchengxiang qielieshi shendaobei' 元故右丞相怯烈神道碑銘, in *QYW*, xxxviii, 482-84. On Nianhe Zhongshan 粘合重山 (d.c. 1235?), see *Yuanshi* 146.3465; *YR*, p. 1216.

<sup>98</sup> The identity of this figure is not overtly stated, but de Rachewiltz, Munkuev and Liu identify him as Činggis Qan's younger brother Temüge Otčigin, also known as Otči Noyan (d. 1246). See de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-Lü Ch'u-Ts'ai', p. 151; 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 105; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, p. 95; Munkuev, *Kitaïskī istochnik*, p. 191.

<sup>99</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 172; *YWL* 57.14a:

燕京路長官石抹咸得不激怒皇叔，俾專使來奏，謂公「悉用南朝舊人，且渠親屬在彼，恐有異志，不宜重用。」且以國朝所忌，誣搆百端，必欲置之死地。事連諸執政。

with a southern polity as slander by an ‘evil’ individual may represent an attempt to reduce political pressure linked to comparable suspicions in the 1260s. The fact that Xiandebu was himself Kitan may reflect an attempt to demonstrate that ethnic (Kitan, and hence ‘Han’) solidarity did not affect the Yelü clan’s commitment to either loyal service or moral principle.

The affair seems a general conflict across the court, and while the situation is dangerous it is not made clear who, apart from Xiandebu, was opposed to Chucai. The threat leads to discussion between Chucai, Činqai and Zhongshan, which allows Song Zizhen to have Chucai claim historical and current precedence over them:

At that time, Činqai and Nianhe Zhongshan 粘合重山 were the same rank, and trembled with fear, saying, “Why be so stubborn with regard to reforming; there is certainly the present trouble [to deal with]!” [Chucai] said, “From the establishment of the court on, every affair has been mine to deal with; what has it to do with you gentlemen? If there has been a crime, it is for me to resolve, and [we] must not fatigue one another.” When [Ögödei] had investigated this slander, he angrily drove out the messenger.<sup>100</sup>

The speeches attributed both to Chucai and corporately to Činqai and Zhongshan are loaded with expressive references, emphasizing the immediacy and danger of the moment, the timorous response of Chucai’s colleagues, and his own apparent lack of concern. By contrast, the account of Ögödei’s resolution of the matter, which, as noted, is

<sup>100</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 172; *YWL* 57.14a:

時鎮海、粘合重山實為同列，為之股慄曰：「何必強為更張，計必有今日事！」公曰：「自立朝廷以來，每事皆我為之，諸公何與焉！若果獲罪，我自當之，必不相累。」上察見其誣，怒逐來使。

*Mingchen shilue* 5.76-77:

時鎮海、粘合重山實為同列，為之股慄，曰：「何必強為更張，計必有今日事！」公曰：「自立朝廷以來，每事皆我為之，諸公何與焉？若果獲罪，我自當之。」上察見其誣，怒逐來使。

Here the *Mingchen shilue* again cuts elements of the *shendaobei* text. The earlier version has “[we] must not fatigue one another,” 必不相累 but this was omitted by Su Tianjue. Igor de Rachewiltz argues that this claim to precedence is specifically exaggerated, especially in view of Činqai’s status as a Baljuna comrade of Činggis Qan. See ‘Yeh-Lü Ch’u-Ts’ai (1189-1243), Yeh-Lü Chu (1221-1285)’, p. 152.

an important structural component of the episode, is perfunctory and might be seen as merely providing a confirmation of a pattern the reader already appreciates.

The *Yuanshi* compilers present a considerably different report, in which the allegations against Chucai emanate solely from Xiandebu, who, acting on personal dislike, presents charges of nepotism and family influence, and calls for Chucai's execution. As with Beter, who speaks before the reader to demonstrate his enmity to the Han people, Xiandebu here commits himself to Chucai's death. The idea that Xiandebu was acting on an old grudge only makes sense when following the previous two episodes, through which the *Yuanshi* compilers built up an enmity between the two officials. Princely involvement is, again, even more peripheral:

Xiandebu, because of an old grievance, especially disliked this [situation], and slandered [Chucai] before the clan princes, saying, "Secretary-General Yelü mostly employs his relatives and friends; he must be disloyal, [and we] ought to recommend that he be killed." The princes sent an envoy to ask [the emperor], and the emperor investigated this slander, reprimanding the envoy, dismissing and deporting him.<sup>101</sup>

This version omits the speeches by Chucai and his colleagues to place Xiandebu's attack centre-stage, everything else taking place diegetically. Xiandebu's allegations in the *Yuanshi* can also be read as an attack on Činqai and Zhongshan, as immediately preceding this both are recommended by Chucai as officials not vulnerable to pressure and therefore suited to implementing his policies separating civil and military spheres.<sup>102</sup>

Elements of Xiandebu's allegations – that Chucai employed former Jin officials and promoted candidates from a rather narrow social group – are not really in doubt, but the

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<sup>101</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3458:

咸得卜以舊怨，尤疾之，譖於宗王曰：「耶律中書令率用親舊，必有二心，宜奏殺之。」宗王遣使以聞，帝察其誣，責使者，罷遣之。

<sup>102</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3458:

又舉鎮海、粘合，均與之同事，權貴不能平。

reader is supposed to recognize that these are the *right people*; Chucai is celebrated as a promoter of the Confucian profession in this period. These allegations being rejected – both versions close with Ögödei punishing the unfortunate messenger 使, Xiandebu himself seemingly escaping – only underlines this further.<sup>103</sup> The striking difference in the punishments Xiandebu is portrayed recommending, quoted in direct speech, might reveal differing political conditions at the time of the inscription's composition and *Yuanshi* compilation, but the *liezhuan* formulation certainly adds increased drama to the account, confirming both Xiandebu's condemnation and Chucai's peril. As becomes clear when we consider the next episode, the corrupt and partisan personal nature of Xiandebu's accusations in the biography is part of an overall personal enmity against Chucai constructed in stages by the *Yuanshi* compilers.

This hostility is apparently brought to an end in an episode immediately following the slander crisis. Here *shendaobei* and *liezhuan* display their core tendencies in portraying the relationship between Chucai and the Qagan. The *shendaobei* highlights the personal aspect of their partnership:

Not more than a few months later, at a meeting there was a petition against Xiandebu because of some affair; [Ögödei] knew that [Chucai] did not get along [with him], and specially ordered him to interrogate and judge [the matter]. [Chucai] presented a memorial, saying, "This man is arrogant and haughty, without etiquette; his associates are a base crowd and he easily provokes slander among others. Now there is about to be business in the south [i.e., the attack on the Jin], [if] he is dealt with another day it will not be too late." [Ögödei] was rather annoyed, [but] later addressed his attendants saying "[Chucai] is truly a gentleman 君子; you people should imitate him."<sup>104</sup>

<sup>103</sup> See Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 172; *YWL* 57.14a-14b; *Yuanshi* 146.3458. de Rachewiltz notes that Xiandebu was not himself punished at this point, and was still in office in 1235. See de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-Lü Ch'u-Ts'ai,' p. 151.

<sup>104</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 172; *YWL* 57.14b:

不數月，會有以事告咸得不者，上知與公不協，特命鞠治。公奏曰：「此人倨傲無禮，狎近羣小，易以招謗。今方有事於南方，他日治之，亦未爲晚。」上頗不悅，已而謂侍臣曰：「君子人也，汝曹當效之。」

The biography removes all personal links to Chucai, and, adjusting the Qaghan's praise, underlines the minister's formal bureaucratic impartiality:

[When] some subordinates complained that Xiandebu was breaking the law, the emperor ordered Chucai to interrogate him, and the [resultant] memorial said, "This man is arrogant and haughty, so easily provokes slander among others. Now there is about to be business in the south [i.e., the attack on the Jin], [if he is] dealt with another day it will not be too late." The emperor spoke privately to a servant, saying "Chucai does not pursue private grudges; he is truly magnanimous 真寬厚長者, and you people should imitate him."<sup>105</sup>

The allegations against Xiandebu reported in the *Yuanshi* are more specifically criminal than those in the inscription. Omitting the reference to Xiandebu's associates, Chucai's speech confines the focus to Xiandebu himself.<sup>106</sup> The biography also omits the report that Chucai's personal relationship with Xiandebu was known to Ögödei and a factor in the case, and omits the Qaghan's annoyance at his restraint. This makes Chucai's involvement bureaucratic rather than personal with regard to both Xiandebu and the Qaghan, something reflected in the praise from Ögödei that winds up the episode. The inscription quotes him describing Chucai using the general term *junzi* 君子, but in the biography he praises Chucai's avoidance of grudges, focussing on impartiality.<sup>107</sup> This also more effectively counteracts the allegations – nepotism, and therefore subordinating duty to personal interest – made against Chucai in the *Yuanshi* version. This rebounds on

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<sup>105</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3458:

屬有訟咸得卜不法者，帝命楚材鞠之，奏曰：「此人倨傲，故易招謗。今將有事南方，他日治之未晚也。」帝私謂侍臣曰：「楚材不較私讎，真寬厚長者，汝曹當效之。」

Difficulties faced by officials in implementing the Neo-Confucian virtue of 'magnanimity' 寬 in the Southern Song administration have been explored by James T. C. Liu; see 'The Sung Views on the Control of Government Clerks', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 10 (1967): 317-44 (339-40).

<sup>106</sup> The expression used to describe Xiandebu's associates is 狎近羣小. This is also found in the *Liangshu* (at 26.395), where it is part of a lengthy tirade against moral ills. The employment of this in the inscription is intriguing, as it could be read as denigrating unnamed members of the imperial house apparently involved in the slander. This might seem rather daring for a potentially prominent text composed under Mongol rule, and could be taken either to indicate veiled criticism of either the imperial family as a whole, or Ögödei's control over it, or to be overt criticism of an individual known at the time and perhaps safely out of power.

<sup>107</sup> On this see Bickford and Hartman, 'The Purloined Plum and the Heart Of Iron', 33.

Xiandebu, too; the pursuit of a grudge against Chucai, as presented by the *liezhuan*, can only be read as personal.

The framing of each account differs; as noted above, the *shendaobei* presents the event in the context of an attempt by Chucai to separate civil and military functions in government, especially with regard to taxation. The inscription places the episode before a section common to all three texts and dated to 1231 in which we see Chucai demonstrating substantial tax receipts, Ögödei praising him via a question about whether the Jin had officials like him, and appointing him to administer a – probably nominal – Central Secretariat.<sup>108</sup> In the inscription Chucai receives the Secretariat seal, but the *Yuanshi* reports that he was appointed *Zhongshuling* 中書令, Secretary-General of the Central Secretariat, placing him in a more formal bureaucratic structure.<sup>109</sup> This meso-level alteration to chronology in the *Yuanshi*, placing Xiandebu's attack after Chucai's apparently formal appointment, makes the slander an assault on this new bureaucratic structure – the Central Secretariat – rather than against Chucai's person or programmes.<sup>110</sup>

The undated report of Beter's proposal to remove the populace from the 'Han lands' and clear them for pasture is, at first glance, presented in a similar way across *shendaobei* and *Yuanshi*.<sup>111</sup> One of the clearest portrayals of Mongol alterity in our texts, this has been

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<sup>108</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 172; *YWL* 57.15a. Buell argues that Chucai's employment as head of a 'Central Secretariat' was a fiction designed to impress former Jin subjects in northern China; therefore a 'middleman' establishment, headed by a Kitan, rather than a 'native' institution, very much, Buell argues, within the *kesig* household-retinue framework. See Buell, *Tribe, Qan and Ulus*, pp. 103-8.

<sup>109</sup> On this post, see *FG*, p. 170.

<sup>110</sup> See *Yuanshi* 146.3458.

<sup>111</sup> The Beter episode is found at Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' pp.171-72; *YWL* 57.13b; *Mingchen shilue* 5.76; *Yuanshi* 146.3458; see also de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', pp. 103-4; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 88-89; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, pp. 73, 190.



taken to exemplify Mongol anti-urban and anti-sedentary tendencies.<sup>112</sup> The *Mingchen shilue* follows the *shendaobei* in presenting the problem of a lack of resources dating back to Činggis' reign as the prompt for this unpalatable solution. The proposal is defeated by Chucai's pragmatic description of the region's tax potential and the episode finishes with Ögödei's approval of Chucai's proposed fiscal administration. The texts diverge on every other aspect of the episode, however, characterizing problem and solution very differently.

The inscription describes the shortages without assigning cause or responsibility but the *Yuanshi* tells a different story.<sup>113</sup>

When Taizu [Činggis Qan] was alive, every year he was occupied in the Western Regions, and had no time to handle the Central Plains; many government officials increased taxes for their own selfish gain, when calculated the money reached huge sums, but the government did not receive these to store in reserve.<sup>114</sup>

Our texts have all therefore established a similar problem – neglect and lack of government resources – but the compilers' intervention suggests an ongoing situation of excessive taxation and embezzlement by government officials, abuse permitted by neglect from the centre.<sup>115</sup> This passage can be read as underlining a problematic lack of central government, and as a suggestion that the encompassment of northern China within a greater empire worked to nobody's satisfaction. *Yuanshi* biographies make relatively few

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<sup>112</sup> On this incident, see Liu Xiao, *Yelü Chucai pingzhuan*, pp. 88-89. Liu sees the incident as an example of Mongol failure to understand the management of sedentary agricultural land, but fails to analyze differences between the source texts. See also de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-Lü Ch'u-Ts'ai (1189-1243), Yeh-Lü Chu (1221-1285)', p. 149; 'Sino-Mongol Contacts', pp. 103-4; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii Istochnik*, pp. 73, 190.

<sup>113</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 171; *YWL* 57.13b:

From the time of Taizu's [i.e., Činggis Qan's] westward expedition onward, the granaries and repositories had been without a *dou* of millet or a *chi* of silk, ...

自太祖西征之後，倉廩府庫無斗粟尺帛

<sup>114</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3458:

太祖之世，歲有事西域，未暇經理中原，官吏多聚斂自私，貲至鉅萬，而官無儲待。

<sup>115</sup> This is a period in which, as we have seen, all of our texts avoid implicating Chucai himself in governance. On early Činggisid taxation systems elsewhere, see Judith Kolbas, *The Mongols in Iran: Chingiz Khan to Uljaytu 1220-1309* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 49, 68.

positive links between the ‘Chinese’ realm of East Asia and the expanses of Mongol territory to the west. The framing and content of the *Yuanshi* biography formally assigned to Činggis Qan’s son Joči (although merely providing a thin summary of his descendants), as well as the effective downgrading of the Jočids to a junior line, seems designed to highlight the unbridgeable separation of ‘Yuan’ territory from such apparently trivial and distant outposts, and in other places a vaguely defined Western Regions are largely presented as a source of trouble.<sup>116</sup>

This problem having been established, our texts frame Beter’s speech recommending turning the region to pasture as a transgressive response to it. The texts also, however, frame the speaker himself. The inscription gives Beter official standing, describing him as an ‘imperial commissioner’ 中使, but the biography describes him as an “intimate servant” 近侍, a member of the Qaġan’s retinue.<sup>117</sup> This adjustment positions Beter in a patrimonial rather than bureaucratic sphere of court politics, a tactic repeated elsewhere with regard to Chucai’s rivals.<sup>118</sup> In a genre in which status is based on formal position this both downgrades Beter and comments negatively on the operation of the court. Both texts report that it is Beter *deng*, ‘Beter and (anonymous) others’ who recommend converting the territory to pasture, generalizing a position across the court while remaining vague as to who its supporters were.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> See *Yuanshi* 117.2906; Humble, ‘Princely Qualities and Unexpected Coherence’.

<sup>117</sup> On the post of Imperial Commissioner, see *HD*, p. 192. Liu Xiao accepts the *Yuanshi* reading here, referring to Beter as a *jinshi* 近侍, ‘intimate attendant.’ See *Yelü Chucai pingzhuan*, p. 88.

<sup>118</sup> This opposes Beter to Chucai in what Bickford and Hartman have characterized as “the continual struggle between the jealous and slanderous retainer and the righteous minister,” a theme visible elsewhere throughout Song and Yuan literary culture, and which requires a sovereign who is able to tell the difference. See Bickford and Hartman, ‘The Purloined Plum and the Heart of Iron’, 33.

<sup>119</sup> See, for example, ‘Shigi Qutuqu and others’ who reportedly proposed alternative census practices and the vague discussion of tax-farmers at *Yuanshi* 146.3459, 3462 respectively and in the two sections below.

The inscription quotes Beter, along with these others, in direct speech, demonstrating his transgression to the reader:

Though the Han people have been gained, in fact they are useless; it would be better to drive them all away and use the luxuriant grass and trees as pasture.<sup>120</sup>

In reporting the same speech, the biography omits both the idea that the Han people had been obtained by conquest and the expressive description of ‘luxuriant grass and trees’.

This goes straight to the point:

The Han people are of no benefit to the dynasty; [we] could get rid of all the people and use it [the territory] as pasture.<sup>121</sup>

The direct quote makes this threat to the Han immediate and vivid. In condensing it and shedding details the *Yuanshi* compilers have reduced the definition of Beter as an individual, a tactic linked to the downgrading of his standing on the bureaucratic scale, making him and his amorphous allies a cipher for anti-Han nomads in Ögödei’s retinue.

In each text Chucai’s response to the proposal is pragmatic, but this pragmatism varies in nature. The *shendaobei* sees him arguing that following a conquest by discarding its produce would not make sense, and offering a solution to shortages by quantifying taxable resources.<sup>122</sup> The *Yuanshi*, cutting the reference to past conquests, lists the same resources but stresses their applicability to the upcoming campaign against the Jin.<sup>123</sup> This formulation is striking in that, as noted above, the text distances both Chucai and the

<sup>120</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 171; *YWL* 57.13b:

而中使別迭等僉言：「雖得漢人亦無所用，不若盡去之，使草木暢茂，以為牧地。」

The use of *caomu changmao* 草木暢茂 ‘luxuriant grass and trees’ may be ironic, echoing discussion of seasonal products in the *Shiji* and *Hanshu*. See *Shiji* 28.166; *Hanshu* 64 下.2810.

<sup>121</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3458:

近臣別迭等言：「漢人無補於國，可悉空其人以為牧地。」

<sup>122</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 171; *YWL* 57.13b:

公即前曰：「夫以天下之廣，四海之富，何求而不得，但不為耳，何名無用哉！」因奏地稅、商稅、酒醋、鹽鐵、山澤之利，周歲可得銀五十萬兩、絹八萬匹、粟四十萬石。

<sup>123</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3458:

楚材曰：「陛下將南伐，軍需宜有所資，誠均定中原地稅、商稅、鹽、酒、鐵冶、山澤之利，歲可得銀五十萬兩、帛八萬匹、粟四十餘萬石，足以供給，何謂無補哉？」

narrative from campaigns under Činggis but here involves him – if indirectly – in strategy against the Jin under Ögödei.<sup>124</sup> Effectively endorsing the campaign, this seems to separate the Jurchen ‘conquest dynasty’ from ‘Han’ people and lands. In the inscription these have been conquered, but in the *Yuanshi* this might seem not to be the case.

Both texts record the Qağan’s approval of Chucai’s proposed collections, quoting Ögödei’s order to implement them.<sup>125</sup> The inscription portrays the monarch stating that they would deliver “more than the realm’s requirements”, but the *Yuanshi* omits this, condensing the speech substantially; in the *liezhuan* Ögödei never thinks the treasury full enough.<sup>126</sup> Both texts describe Chucai’s proposal to establish tax offices in each of the ten circuits, but the details vary considerably. The inscription states,

[Chucai] therefore presented a memorial setting up ten circuit tax collection offices and establishing a [tax collection] officer with two deputies; all of these were to be

<sup>124</sup> Albeit with several exceptions, both versions of Chucai’s life seem concerned to distance their subject from the business of conquest under Činggis.

<sup>125</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 171; *YWL* 57.13b:

上曰：「誠如卿言，則國用有餘矣。卿試爲之。」

*Yuanshi* 146.3458:

帝曰：「卿試為朕行之。」

<sup>126</sup> See also the *shendaobei* reports of drought and locusts in 1238, where Chucai proposes suspension of the land tax, and when Ögödei opposes this reassures him that the storehouses have a decade’s worth of surplus. This too is dropped from the biography, although it is recorded in the Annals of Taizong. See Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 175; *YWL* 57.20a, *Yuanshi* 2.36. For a parallel account of this failed harvest, see the biography of Shi Tianze in *Mingchen shilue* 7.114-24, at 7.117. The *liezhuan* characterization of the Qağan contrasts sharply against Juvaynī’s portrayal of his reckless generosity; see, for example, an example where the Qağan reportedly rejects buried treasure and another where he prefers to dispense gold rather than guard it; at Juvaynī, *History of the World Conqueror*, pp. 209, 212-13; Juvaynī, *Tārikh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, pp. 166 and 169, respectively.

*Ruzhe*. For example [for] Yanjing 燕京 Chen Shike 陳時可<sup>127</sup> and for Xuande Circuit 宣德路 Liu Zhong 劉中<sup>128</sup> [172], all the best of the empire.<sup>129</sup>

The *Yuanshi* makes considerable alterations,

Thus a memorial established tax collection officials for Yanjing and others, ten circuits; all of the Executive Officials 長貳 should employ scholars [who] like Chen Shike and Zhao Fang 趙昉<sup>130</sup> and others are all honest, kind and mature, choosing the best of the empire; for advisors use those formerly employed in the ministries and prefectures [i.e., under the Jin].<sup>131</sup>

Here the compilers expanded on and altered Chucai's recommendations. His 'best of the empire'; described in the inscription as *Ruzhe* 儒者, are, in the biography, the more general *shiren* 士人, scholars, perhaps because they include Daoists like Shike.

Moreover, they are additionally described as 'honest, kind and mature' 寬厚長, a characterization repeated in the biography when the Qagan is later quoted describing Chucai in this same manner.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>127</sup> Chen Shike 陳時可, courtesy name Xiuyu 秀玉, pen-names Qingxi jushi 清溪居士 and Jitong laoren 寂通老人, was from Yan 燕 and was a very close friend of Yelü Chucai from his Yanjing days despite being a Daoist from the Quanzhen sect who was also close to Qiu Chuji. Under the Jin he served as an Academician of the Hanlin Academy 翰林學士, and was later appointed tax official in Yanjing by Chucai. See *YR*, p. 1329; Liu Xiao, *Yelü Chucai pingzhuan*, pp. 89,90,186; de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol,' p. 104, n. 130.

<sup>128</sup> Liu Zhong, courtesy name Yongzhi 用之, like Chen Shike a friend of Yelü Chucai from his Yanjing days, having served as a Vice Minister 侍郎 under the Jin. Employed as a tax official in Xuande in 1230, his appointment to Ögödei's administration is also mentioned in the Annals of Taizong in the *Yuanshi* in relation to establishing the examinations held in 1237, and in the *Yuanshi* biography of Yang Huan 楊奐, where he is called Liu Yongzhi 劉用之. He is not found in Wang's index. See Liu Xiao, *Yelü Chucai pingzhuan*, pp. 90, 187-88; *Yuanshi* 2.35; 153.3621; Waltraut Abramowski, 'Die chinesischen Annalen von Ögödei and Güyük: Übersetzung des 2. Kapitels des Yüan-shih', *Zentralasiatische Studien*, 10 (1976), 117-67, 147, ref. 152; *Jinshi* 128.2771; de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol,' p. 104, n. 131.

<sup>129</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' pp. 171-72; *YWL* 57.13b:

乃奏立十路課稅所，設使副二員，皆以儒者爲之。如燕京陳時可、宣德路劉 [172] 中，皆天下之選。

<sup>130</sup> Zhao Fang 趙昉 was a Daoist of the Quanzhen sect and an old friend of Yelü Chucai's from his Yanjing days, when he was a student at the Jin National University 太學. Chucai had him appointed as a tax official in Yanjing in 1230, alongside Chen Shike. See *YR*, p. 1692; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 89-90.

<sup>131</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3458:

乃奏立燕京等十路徵收課稅使，凡長貳悉用士人，如陳時可、趙昉等皆寬厚長者，極天下之選，參佐皆用省部舊人。

<sup>132</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3458:

帝私謂侍臣曰：「楚材不較私讎，真寬厚長者，汝曹當效之。」

The same phrasing was added to the biography of Yan Shi 嚴實 in a context of impartiality and magnanimity (as opposed to bearing grudges); it is not found in the parallel section in his *shendaobei* as quoted in the *Mingchen shilue*. Igor de Rachewiltz translates this as 'liberal and superior men', and

The named examples diverge too – both texts name Chen Shike, but the biography replaces Liu Zhong with Zhao Fang. All three are recorded elsewhere as friends of Chucai during his service to the Jin in Yanjing and having been appointed to tax offices under him.<sup>133</sup> Differing in their previous experience and religious affiliations, Zhong served in the Jin administration, unlike Shike, who was involved with the Hanlin Academy, or Fang, a student at the Jin National University. It would seem odd to remove Zhong for this reason, as the compilers' final intervention here is the addition of a recommendation to employ "those formerly employed in the ministries and prefectures."<sup>134</sup> Although not stated overtly, this can only refer to those who had formerly served as officials under the Jin, building on the biography's emphasis on Chucai's experience.<sup>135</sup>

Both versions thus effect the conversion of a threat to the populace of the Central Plains, blamed on neglectful governance as part of a wider empire and the introduction of a nomad retinue to court, into an opportunity to establish a new centralized tax

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Munkuev 'generous and noble' (великодушными и благородными); see de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 104, n. 132; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii Istochnik*, p. 190.

*Mingchen shilue*, 6.94:

河南破，公獲義深妻子，厚為調恤之，送還鄉里，終不以舊事為嫌。其能人之所難能又如此。

*Yuanshi* 148.3507:

河南破，實獲義深妻子，厚周卹之，送還鄉里，終不以舊怨為嫌。其寬厚長者類若此。

<sup>133</sup> See Liu Xiao, *Yelü Chucai pingzhuan*, pp. 89, 90.

<sup>134</sup> Another possible reason might be that Fang, like Shike but unlike Zhong, is named elsewhere as a member of the Quanzhen Daoist sect, with which Chucai had famously disagreed in the 1220s, a conflict based within the Sinitic cultural realm that both texts omit, but which the biography perhaps takes more pains to hide. On this, see Igor de Rachewiltz, 'The Hsi-Yu Lu 西遊錄 by Yeh-Lü Ch'u-Ts'ai 耶律楚材', *Monumenta Serica*, 21 (1962), 1–128 (4, 5, 29).

<sup>135</sup> The importance of such experience, and the need for centralized control, is emphasized elsewhere in an undated episode, found only in the *Yuanshi*, where Chucai responds to proposals to print paper money by warning that corruption after an issue under the Jin led to inflation.

*Yuanshi* 146.3460:

有于元者，奏行交鈔，楚材曰：「金章宗時初行交鈔，與錢通行，有司以出鈔為利，收鈔為諱，謂之老鈔，至以萬貫唯易一餅。民力困竭，國用匱乏，當為鑒戒。今印造交鈔，宜不過萬錠。」從之

administration. Centred in northern China, this is staffed by Chucai's own network of scholars. The *Yuanshi* formulation makes it very clear that this is not following the policies of the (soon to be) conquered Jin dynasty, but rather separates that polity from 'Han' people and land. The Qağan's approval of Chucai's programme, though reflecting well on him for recognizing Chucai's superiority, is also noticeably less enthusiastic than in the inscription version.

Another report of Mongol alterity is found in reports of arguments in 1234 over the best way to conduct a census in the former Jin territory, a process taking place under Šigi Qutuqu, Činggis Qan's adoptive 'fifth son'.<sup>136</sup> Here Chucai insists on counting households, while others propose counting adult males.<sup>137</sup> Both reports, perhaps betraying a kind of administrative shorthand, state that Chucai's opponents wanted an 'individual' (i.e., an adult male) *ding* 丁 to count as a 'household' *hu* 戶, contrasting the latter, as a normative unit of measurement, against an alternate, and implicitly less suitable, unit. While previous sinophone polities had apparently counted by household, authorities elsewhere did not.<sup>138</sup> This apparent inability to describe other means of counting the

<sup>136</sup> On Šigi Qutuqu, (c.1178-1180-1262), who served as *yeke jarquči* during the reign of Ögödei and has been proposed as an author of the *Secret History*, see de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, I, pp. xxxvi-xxxviii; Buell, *Historical Dictionary of the Mongol World Empire*, pp. 243-44; Atwood, *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire*, p. 464; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 109-10; P. Ratchnevsky, "Šigi Qutuqu," in *ISK*, pp. 75-94. On the census and this report, see also de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', pp. 113-14; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 108-12; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, pp. 77-78, 193.

<sup>137</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' pp. 173-74; *YWL* 57.16b-17a:

甲午，詔 [17a] 括戶口，以大臣忽覲虎領之。國初方事進取，所降下者，因以與之。自一社一民各有所主，不相統屬，至是始隸州縣。朝臣共欲以丁爲戶，公獨以爲不可。皆曰：「我朝及西域諸國莫不以丁爲戶，豈可捨大朝之法而從亡國政 [174] 耶！」公曰：「自古有中原者，未嘗以丁爲戶，若果行之，可輸一年之賦，隨即逃散矣。」卒從公議。

*Yuanshi* 146.3459-60:

甲午，議籍中原民，大臣忽都虎等議，以丁爲戶。楚材曰：「不可。丁逃，則賦無所出，[3460] 當以戶定之。」爭之再三，卒以戶定。

On this see also Liu Xiao, *Yelü Chucai pingzhuan*, pp. 108-12.

<sup>138</sup> Denis Twitchett notes that the Tang polity levied taxes on individual adult males, via registered households (and suggests that the taxable unit was actually intended to be the married couple), requiring the counting of both adult males and the households to which they were attached. The phrasing of Chucai's biographies is however quite clear in separating and opposing these counting practices, *shendaobei* and

populace again highlights these texts' sinocentric frame of reference. Chucai's argument assumes that adult males are more likely to flee fiscal responsibilities than entire households, and this argument is found in both texts.<sup>139</sup>

The *shendaobei* presents this debate as a clash between geographical and temporal encompassment, as unnamed courtiers are quoted in direct speech stressing northern China's subordination within a greater imperial space:<sup>140</sup>

"Our court and the various countries of the Western Regions without exception treat an individual as a household; how can it be appropriate to abandon the ways of the Empire 大朝 and follow the policies of a conquered dynasty?"<sup>141</sup>

Chucai counters this with an appeal to a 'Chinese' past:

[Chucai] said, "From ancient times the people of the Central Plains have never counted an individual as a household; if this is implemented, they may contribute one year's taxes, then flee and be scattered."<sup>142</sup>

The discussion as recorded in the inscription challenges one of the central messages of the *Yuanshi*, that the 'Chinese' space of the Central Plains, territory inherited by the Ming, is distinct and central, rather than an element of a greater polity.

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*Mingchen shilue* versions both contrasting a 'Central Plains' household method against a 'foreign' individual count. See Denis Twitchett, *Financial Administration under the T'ang Dynasty*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 26-27; de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', pp. 113-14.

<sup>139</sup> de Rachewiltz reads this Mongol preference for counting individuals as a measure designed to maximise revenue and writes of it being "the one enforced in the Western Region" this 'enforcement' not quite being found in the text, which speaks rather of it being in universal usage. See 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', p. 46.

<sup>140</sup> On encompassment, see Gerd Baumann and Andre Gingrich, 'Grammars of Identity/Alterity: A Structural Approach', in *Grammars of Identity/Alterity: A Structural Approach*, ed. by Gerd Baumann (New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2004), pp. 18-50 (p. 25).

<sup>141</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 173-74; *YWL* 57.17a:

皆曰：「我朝及西域諸國莫不以丁爲戶，豈可捨大朝之法而從亡國政 [174] 耶！」

<sup>142</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 174; *YWL* 57.17a:

公曰：「自古有中原者，未嘗以丁爲戶，若果行之，可輸一年之賦，隨即逃散矣。」卒從公議。



The *Yuanshi* simplification discards these elements entirely, downgrading Chucai's opponents' reported speech to a diegetic summary and only reporting his response:

In *jiawu* 甲午 [1234], [the court] discussed recording the population of the Central Plains; the Minister 大臣 [Šigi] Qutuqu and others were of the opinion that [each] adult male 丁 be treated as a household 戶. Chucai said, "No. If the man escapes, then there will be nobody liable for tax; [3460] this ought to be fixed by household." They argued about this repeatedly, and finally counted by household.<sup>143</sup>

Here we only see Chucai's pragmatic argument on revenues, which presumably related more directly to the difficulties involved in administering a census by unfamiliar means than to the likelihood of tax-payer flight. It seems unlikely that even recording an argument subordinating the Central Plains to a wider empire (or describing an alternative way of doing things) was thought desirable by our compilers. Neither text elaborates on Chucai's success, but merely state that his suggestion was followed in the end. The *Yuanshi* formulation again downgrades Chucai's opponents, taking the operation of the census away from Šigi Qutuqu by depicting him discussing census policy rather than implementing it, a subtle change that nonetheless significantly alters our understanding of events.<sup>144</sup>

This treatment may also have helped conceal a further purpose for the census beyond taxation for the centre. This relates to the established policy of distributing appanage territories (and populations) among Činggisiid family and loyal retainers, which in all

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<sup>143</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3459-60:

甲午，議籍中原民，大臣忽都虎等議，以丁為戶。楚材曰：「不可。丁逃，則賦無所出，[3460] 當以戶定之。」爭之再三，卒以戶定。

<sup>144</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling,' p. 173; *YWL* 57.16b-17a:

In *jiawu* 甲午 [1234], there was a decree to register households, with the Minister 大臣 [Šigi] Qutuqu 忽覲虎 in charge of it.

甲午，詔 [17a] 括戶口，以大臣忽覲虎領之。

*Yuanshi* 146.3459-60:

In *jiawu* 甲午 [1234], [the court] discussed recording the population of the Central Plains; the Minister 大臣 [Shigi] Qutuqu 忽都虎 and others were of the opinion that [each] adult male 丁 be treated as a household 戶.

甲午，議籍中原民，大臣忽都虎等議，以丁為戶。

three versions Chucai effectively overrules, persuading Ögödei to grant only a portion of revenues to those in receipt of land grants.<sup>145</sup> It is notable that the *liezhuan* phrasing puts a different solution in Chucai's mouth here; unlike *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue*, this proposes central collection and annual disbursements to appanage holders, a very different, and much more central, siting of economic control.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 174; YWL 57.17b-18a; *Mingchen shilue* 5.80:

[Ögödei] discussed the division of the various prefectures to grant and share among the Princes of the Blood and the aristocratic clans, in order to use as appanages. [Chucai] said, "A large tail obstructs action; [this will] easily breed resentment. It would be better to give more gold and silk; that will suffice as favours." [Ögödei] said, "It has already been permitted." He replied, "If officials are established who must follow the orders of the court, and, except for the established tax, not be ordered to levy or collect unlawfully, *chai[fa]* [tax collection] is feasible over the long term." This was followed.

上議割裂諸州郡分賜諸王貴族，以爲湯沐邑。公曰：「尾大不掉，易以生隙。不如多與金帛，足以爲恩。」上曰：「業已許之。」復曰：[18a]「若樹置官吏，必自朝命，除恒賦外，不令擅自徵歛，差可久也。」從之。

*Yuanshi* 146.3460-61:

The emperor discussed dividing the prefectures and counties among the Princes of the Blood 親王 and meritorious ministers 功臣. Chucai said, "Dividing the land and sharing the people easily provokes ill-will. It is not as good as giving them more gold and silk." The emperor said, "I have already permitted [this]; what can be done?" Chucai said, "If the court installs officials who collect their tribute and issue this at year's end, this will prevent excessive taxation; this is appropriate." The emperor assented to his plan,

帝議裂州縣賜親王功臣。楚材曰：「裂土分民，易生嫌隙。不如多以金帛與之。」帝曰：「已許奈何？」楚材曰：「若朝廷置吏，收其貢賦，歲終頒之，使毋擅科徵，可也。」帝然其計，

On this incident, see de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', pp. 46-47; on the appanage divisions, see Matsuda Kōichi 松田孝一, 'Ogodei han no "hinoe saru nen bun bachi" saikou (1) - "kotae sato shin kan jini" no yasushi umi shū bunchi nitsuite 窩闊台汗の「丙申年分撥」再考(1)-「答里真官人位」の寧海州分地について - (A re-examination of Ogodei Qan's "Distribution in the Bingshen Year" (1) Daritai Otčigin's allotment in Ninghai Prefecture)', *Seiki rekishi gogen kenkyū shūkan*, 4 (2010), 115-34; Matsuda Kōichi 松田孝一, 'Ogodei kan no "hinoe saru nen bun bachi" saikou (2): bun bachi kiji koushou オゴデイ・カンの「丙申年分撥」再考(2): 分撥記事考証 (A re-examination of Ogodei Qan's "Distribution in the Bingshen Year" (2) Comments of each fief allotment)', *Ritsumeikan daigaku jinbun gakkai hen*, 619 (2010), 707-22. On the significance and nature of the appanage grant, see Christopher P. Atwood, 'Banner, *Otog*, Thousand: Appanage Communities as the Basic Unit of Traditional Mongolian Society,' *Mongolian Studies* 34 (2012), 1-76. On the complexity and multiplicity of such divisions, see Jackson, Peter, 'From Ulus to Khanate: The Making of the Mongol States c. 1220 - c. 1290', in *The Mongol Empire and Its Legacy*, ed. by Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 1999), pp. 12-38, especially pp. 21-23.

<sup>146</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 174; YWL 57.18a; *Mingchen shilue* 5.80:

If officials are established who must follow the orders of the court, and, except for the established tax, not be ordered to levy or collect unlawfully, *chai[fa]* [tax collection] is feasible over the long term.

若樹置官吏，必自朝命，除恒賦外，不令擅自徵歛，差可久也。

*Yuanshi* 146.3460:

If the court installs officials who collect their tribute and issue this at year's end, this will prevent excessive taxation; this is appropriate.

若朝廷置吏，收其貢賦，歲終頒之，使毋擅科徵，可也。

In a report omitted from the *Mingchen shilue* but found in both inscription and *liezhuan*, we next read that Chucai laid out ten policies for Ögödei. Both texts list these methodically, and the items focus on taxation and other obligations, examinations, meritocratic appointment and salaries, prioritizing agriculture, selecting artisans and promoting waterborne transport. The lists are broadly identical, the biography abbreviating the account slightly.<sup>147</sup> The interesting element comes at the close, the *shendaobei* finishing by stating that, “although the emperor 上 was not able to implement all of them, he nevertheless selectively employed them at that time.”<sup>148</sup> This places Chucai in an advisory, rather than a governing, position, associating the Qağan with the outcome of these recommendations, and therefore perhaps criticizing him for their limited success.<sup>149</sup> The *Yuanshi*, although stating that the policies were implemented fully, makes it appear, by removing the reference to the Qağan, that Chucai was the agent of their implementation, moving Ögödei away from direct involvement in governance.<sup>150</sup>

A collection of further incidents dated contextually to the mid-1230s both highlight Chucai’s virtuous pre-eminence and hint at further dangers. These include apparent success in controlling high-interest ‘lamb profit’ lending by merchants, and arranging for

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<sup>147</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, pp. 175; *YWL* 57.19a-b:

因陳時務十策：一曰信賞罰，二曰正名分，三曰給俸祿，四曰封功臣，五曰考殿最，六曰定物力，七曰汰工匠，八曰務農桑 [19b]，九曰定土貢，十曰置水運。上雖不能盡行，亦時擇用焉。

*Yuanshi* 146.3462:

楚材因陳時務十策，曰：信賞罰，正名分，給俸祿，官功臣，考殿最，均科差，選工匠，務農桑，定土貢，制漕運。皆切於時務，悉施行之。

<sup>148</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 175; *YWL* 57.19b:

上雖不能盡行，亦時擇用焉。

<sup>149</sup> Liu certainly reads it this way, blaming Mongol conservatism and the power of the ‘Huihu’ for this. See *Pingzhuan*, p.377.

<sup>150</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3462:

皆切於時務，悉施行之。

government funds to retrieve families and communities from bankruptcy.<sup>151</sup> The *Yuanshi* handling of this is notable; first, the incident is shifted in the narrative order, from immediately after the census and Chucai's 1236 establishment of tax rates, to some time in or after 1237; the *liezhuan* therefore places it closer to the decline of Chucai's authority. The identity of the lenders, specified as *Huihu* in *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue*, is also omitted, in a significant move that again seems to suggest a general decline rather than ethnic antagonism.

In describing Chucai's success through the early years of Ögödei's rule, both texts portray the establishment of a 'Chinese' administration in northern China, claiming native rationale for Chucai's policies. These policies are – largely – supported by Ögödei, in the face of opposition from interested parties, with Beter and especially Xiandebu proving particularly dangerous opponents. The *Yuanshi* compilers, via a range of interventions

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<sup>151</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', pp. 174; *YWL* 57.18a-b:

Also [at that time] when officials took loans from Huihu 回鶻 their debt, in silver, was doubled after a year, and the next year the interest doubled it again; this was called 'lamb profit' 羊羔利, increasing endlessly, often ruining households and scattering clans, reaching the point where even after the enslavement of wives and children the debt still could not be cleared. [Chucai] therefore requested of [Ögödei] that these all be paid back out of government silver, in all 76,000 *ding*. He further memorialized to regulate so that currently and in future no matter [how many] years and months, [once] the capital and interest were equal, no more interest could be charged, and then this became the system.

及所在官吏取借回鶻債銀，其年則倍之，次年則 [18b] 并息又倍之，謂之羊羔利，積而不已，往往破家散族，至以妻子為質，然終不能償。公為請於上，悉以官銀代還，凡七萬六千定。仍奏定今後不以歲月遠近」子本相侔，更不生息，遂為定制。

*Mingchen shilue* 5.81:

及所在官吏取借回鶻借銀，周年則倍之，次年則並息又倍之，謂之羊羔利，積而不已，往往破家散族，至以妻子為質，終不能償。公請於上，悉以官銀代還，凡七萬六千定。仍奏定，今後不以歲月近遠，子本相侔，更不生息，遂為定制。

*Yuanshi* 146.3461:

Before this, of the officials in the prefectures many had borrowed silver from merchants to buy their positions; the accumulated interest [exceeding the principal] several fold. This was known as 'lamb profit' 羊羔兒利, and reached the point where even after the enslavement of wives and children the debt still could not be cleared. Chucai submitted a memorial ordering that interest would be limited to an amount equal to the principal, following the long-established system, and that debts incurred between the people would be repaid on their behalf by the government.

先是，州郡長吏，多借賈人銀以償官，息累數倍，曰羊羔兒利，至奴其妻子，猶不足償。楚材奏令本利相侔而止，永為定制，民間所負者，官為代償之。

including meso-level rearrangement and micro-level reworking, dissociated events from the wider context of Eurasian empire to focus on conflict between Chucai and morally compromised opponents. Much of this was achieved through deletion of complicating commentary and the shifting of emphasis onto reported speech. The Qaġan is repeatedly moved back from active governance in favour of Chucai, and, especially after the ‘full’ implementation of Chucai’s reforms, readers are primed to expect broad success, if not triumph. This latter alteration is particularly effective in making the reverses of later years seem all the more dramatically tragic.

### 2.3 Writing decline: Öġödei’s latter years and the regency of Töreġene

The binary structure contrasting Chucai’s superiority against (and constructing) his opponents, continues across the biography, and, as we have seen, this structure also comments on the role of the ruler. As noted above, early episodes are often capped with reports that first Činggis, and then Öġödei in his turn, were impressed by Chucai’s performance, placing both leaders in the position of wise arbiter (because readers know that Chucai was correct). This status is lost when the Qaġan sides with Chucai’s opponent, showing the reader a distance between the minister’s superiority and the association of the ruler with inferior Others.<sup>152</sup> This is continued in reports of Töreġene’s regency, a period widely read as chaotic and damaging to Öġödeid authority.<sup>153</sup> Having

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<sup>152</sup> de Rachewiltz sees things sliding from 1235, when, he suggests, Öġödei’s drinking really began to affect his control of the court, and exacerbated considerably, in 1236, when Chucai’s reforms placing a cap on taxation in northern China clashed with “the lavish use of revenues” by the Qaġan and his retinue. See de Rachewiltz, ‘Yeh-lü Ch’u-Ts’ai,’ p. 159.

<sup>153</sup> Beatrice Forbes Manz concludes that Juvayni’s “biography of Töreġene revolves around her faulty rule, in particular the grudges she harboured and the illegitimate power held by her advisor Fatima.” See Beatrice Forbes Manz, ‘Juvaini’s Historical Consciousness’, in *Ferdowsi, the Mongols and the History of Iran: Art, Literature and Culture from Early Islam to Qajar Persia: Studies in Honour of Charles Melville*, ed. by Bruno De Nicola, Robert Hillenbrand, A.C.S. Peacock, and Firusa Abdullaeva (London: I.B. Tauris / The Iran Heritage Foundation, 2013), pp. 114–19 (p. 117).

shifted Chucai's moral authority to make him a champion of the populace, and backed him up with instructions from the dynastic founder, the *Yuanshi* biography contrasts this with a loss of influence to establish a picture of moral decline at the court, and characterize this in terms of moral authority based on humanitarian criteria.

This begins partway through Ögödei's reign when he is portrayed rejecting Chucai's dominance in favour of the Central or West Asian figure identified only as 'Abd al-Rahman'.<sup>154</sup> It should be noted that the Persian accounts position 'Abd al-Rahman (who seems to be treated as something of a narrative pawn) as a creature exclusively connected to Töregene via her chamberlain Fāṭima, placing his arrival at court after Ögödei's death. This is probably part of Juvaynī's carefully crafted rhetoric condemning Töregene for breaking the conditions of her regency, a construction partially (and somewhat clumsily) adopted by the *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*.<sup>155</sup> Returning to our sinophone accounts, the story this time is not one of victory for Chucai, but a dramatic and tragic switch from a virtuous domination by the Kitan and his scholar bureaucrats to one by his inferior opponent. The vagueness of the latter's portrayal and his lack of a formal post reflects the same framing tactics we have seen applied to Beter. It is notable that, aside from these texts and mentions in the Annals of Taizong, we find little substantial discussion of 'Abd al-Rahman elsewhere in contemporary Chinese-language sources, and that he is now

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<sup>154</sup> On 'Abd al-Rahman, see particularly Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-lü Ch'u-Ts'ai (1189-1243), Yeh-lü Chu (1221-1285)', pp. 160-62, 170. His role and tax-farming policies are also discussed in Chan Hok-lam, 'Yang Wei-chung (1206-1260)', in *ISK*, pp. 185-94 (p. 190); and 'Yang Huan (1186-1255)', in *ISK*, pp. 195-207 (p. 202); Thomas T. Allsen, 'Mahmūd Yalavač (?-1254), Mas'ūd Beg (?-1289), Alī Beg (?-1280); Bujir (fl. 1206-1260)', in *ISK*, pp. 122-35 (pp. 123-26). See also *YR*, pp. 2243-44 (under 'Audura Qaman' 奧魯刺合蠻).

<sup>155</sup> Juvaynī's summary of Töregene's regency is beautifully rhetorical in its framing and structure, awarding as it does a conditional authority to the regent and then methodically illustrating her breaking of those conditions. The parallel treatment by Rashīd al-Dīn is disappointingly crude by comparison. Cf. Juvaynī, *History of the World-Conqueror*, pp. 211-12; 218; Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, pp. 168-69; 174-75; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, pp. 799-800; *Compendium of Chronicles*, pp. 383-84.

routinely described as a financier or merchant and rarely an official, despite the Annals of Taizong recording his appointment as a tax administrator.<sup>156</sup>

This new order is signaled by what is portrayed as the replacement of Chucai's fiscal arrangements – based, apparently, on fixed tax rates for differing field types – by 'Abd al-Rahman's tax-farming policy, and a conflict continuing through the regency of Töregene, who, apparently fearing Chucai, did not value his advice. While the *shendaobei* highlights its subject's continued, if challenged, influence at the imperial centre, a vital aspect of the compilers' amendments to the text is the emphasis on Chucai's tragic loss of power and agency despite his moral superiority. Here, from the mid-1230s onwards, he is isolated within the court, his power limited to the maintenance of a mostly unheeded presence.

De Rachewiltz estimates that problems began from 1235, when, he suggests, Ögödei's drinking began to affect his control of the court, and exacerbated considerably in 1236, when Chucai's reforms placing a cap on taxation in northern China clashed with "the lavish use of revenues" by the Qaghan and his retinue.<sup>157</sup> It is notable that the picture of continuous decline through Ögödei's latter years and into Töregene's regency clashes with the Persian narratives presented by Juvaynī and Rashīd al-Dīn. Their accounts both present a sharp transition after the Qaghan's death, associating this with the figure of Fāṭima, not mentioned in Chinese-language texts, and who, restrained by Ögödei, is

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<sup>156</sup> For mentions in the Annals, see *Yuanshi* 2.36-37; Waltraut Abramowski, 'Die chinesischen Annalen von Ögödei und Güyük: Übersetzung des 2. Kapitels des Yüan-shih', *Zentralasiatische Studien*, 10 (1976), 117–167 (134). *Yuanshi* 2.36:

十二年庚子春正月，以奧都剌合蠻充提領諸路課稅所官。

Allsen notes that the Song envoy Xu Ting reported that Mongol trade was carried out by their handing silver to Muslims. See Allsen, "Mongol Princes and their Merchant Partners, 1200-1260", *Asia Major*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, 2 (1989), 83-126, 95. This is the background to our texts' portrayal of 'Abd al-Rahman, most clearly, but not exclusively, in Chinese sources, as taxation policy was closely linked to merchant activity.

<sup>157</sup> See de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-lü Ch'u-Ts'ai,' p. 159.

portrayed taking control of the regent after his passing.<sup>158</sup> In these accounts, ‘Abd al-Raḥman is subordinated to Fāṭima; both narratives establish a strong contrast between Töregene, Fāṭima and ‘Abd al-Raḥman on the one side and Ögödei’s appointees – prominently including Činqai – on the other.<sup>159</sup>

If we seek a comparable tipping point in Chucai’s biographies we might well select their highlighting of the Qağan’s insobriety, portraying Chucai warning an increasingly inebriated Ögödei that if wine could corrode an iron jar it would do worse to his human organs.<sup>160</sup> This can be regarded as something of a tipping-point in the *shendaobei* and especially the biography, because after this Chucai’s authority is challenged, and to varying degrees eroded, by characters portrayed as retainers and hangers-on. This compares to the trope, highlighted by Bickford and Hartman, that a ruler should have a “heart of iron and bowels of stone” 鐵石心腸, as this characterized “a man of unshakable principle and fortitude”, able to distinguish between “the jealous and slanderous retainer and the righteous minister”.<sup>161</sup>

<sup>158</sup> Juvaynī reports that Fāṭima took over from the *arkān* اركان, ‘pillars’ of Ögödei’s reign only after the Qağan’s passing. See *History of the World Conqueror*, p. 245; *Tārīkh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, p. 200. Steingass notes that the term *arkān*, translated by Boyle as “ministers”, is often combined with terms like *daulat* to indicate “Nobles (pillars of the state)”. See Steingass, *Dictionary*, p. 38. Michael Hope notes a comparable contrast employed in the *Ẓafarnāma* where Ḥamd Allāh Mustaufī makes a distinction, when discussing the Ilqan Abaqa (r. 1265-82), between ‘companions’ of the new ruler and the ‘pillars of the state’ who had belonged to his father’s staff. See Michael Hope, “The Pillars of State:” Some Notes on the Qarachū Begs and the Kešikten in the Īl-Khānate (1256-1335)’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 27 (2017), 181-99 (184).

<sup>159</sup> See especially Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, p. 200; Juvaynī, *History of the World Conqueror*, p. 245; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh*, p. 800; *Compendium of Chronicles*, p. 384.

<sup>160</sup> Song Zizhen 宋子貞, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 175; YWL 57.20b:

上素嗜酒，晚年尤甚，日與諸大臣酣飲。公數諫不聽，乃持酒槽之金口曰：「此鐵爲酒所蝕，尚致如此，況人之五臟，有不損耶？」上悅，賜以金帛，仍勅左右，日進酒三鍾而止。

*Yuanshi* 146.3462:

帝素嗜酒，日與大臣酣飲，楚材屢諫，不聽，乃持酒槽鐵口進曰：「麴蘖能腐物，鐵尚如此，況五臟乎！」帝悟，語近臣曰：「汝曹愛君憂國之心，豈有如吾圖撒合里者耶？」賞以金帛，敕近臣日進酒三鍾而止。

See also Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 356-57. The anecdote has also been translated by Thomas Allsen. See his article ‘Ögedei and Alcohol,’ *Mongolian Studies* 29 (2007), 3-12 (4).

<sup>161</sup> Bickford and Hartman, ‘Purloined Plum and the Heart of Iron’, especially 4, 31, 33.



It is possible to see, in the corrosion of iron by wine and the contrast made between even corroded iron and the Qağan's own innards, a comment on Ögödei's judgement before and especially after this point.<sup>162</sup> Both *shendaobei* and biography report, in a very similar manner, that Chucai successfully intervened to curb the Qağan's drinking, the major difference between the two being that the biography includes a direct quote in which Ögödei praises Chucai before the court, referring to him by his 'Longbeard' nickname and contrasting him against 'intimate courtiers,' again highlighting the contrast between his Kitan 'minister' and a vaguely defined class of 'retainers'.<sup>163</sup>

As noted above, much of the focus of the later part of Chucai's biography, and, to a degree, the *shendaobei*, is on the influence and activities of 'Abd al-Rahman in northern China, and his rivalry with Chucai. All three texts precede this by reporting a spate of tax-farming schemes, perpetrated by a wide range of people.<sup>164</sup> Chucai's warning is the same across all these narratives, asserting that the tax-farmers were "evil people who bully those below and hoodwink those above."<sup>165</sup> While Chucai succeeds in preventing all of these, this effectively sets the scene for the arrival of 'Abd al-Rahman, portrayed employing a similar scheme on a much grander scale and with rather more success.

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<sup>162</sup> The 'five organs' 五臟 are heart, lungs, liver, spleen, and kidney. On this, see Bickford and Hartman, 'Purloined Plum and the Heart of Iron', especially 4, 31, 33.

<sup>163</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3462:

帝悟，語近臣曰：「汝曹愛君憂國之心，豈有如吾圖撒合里者耶？」賞以金帛，敕近臣日進酒三鍾而止。

<sup>164</sup> For this spate of tax-farming attempts, see Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', pp. 175-76; *YWL* 57.20a-b; *Yuanshi* 146.3462; *Mingchen shilue* 5.82; see also de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts', pp. 122-23; Munkuev, *Kitaiskii istochnik*, pp. 83, 198. Liu notes that such tax-farming measures had been implemented previously under Song Taizu; see Liu, *Pingzhuan*, p. 145. On such schemes, see Thomas T. Allsen, 'Mongolian Princes and Their Merchant Partners, 1200-1260', *Asia Major*, 2 (1989), 83-126 (99-100).

<sup>165</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', pp. 175-76; *YWL* 57.20a-b; *Mingchen shilue* 5.82:

公曰：「此皆姦人欺下罔上，為害甚大。」

*Yuanshi* 146.3462:

楚材曰：「此貪利之徒，罔上虐下，為害甚大。」

*Shendaobei* and biography both provide accounts of the introduction of ‘Abd al-Raḥman to the court, preceded by short passages reporting surpluses under Chucai’s administration, suggesting that further taxation was unnecessary.<sup>166</sup> The inscription prepares the reader for ‘Abd al-Raḥman’s arrival with a short narrated assessment of the situation, omitted from the *liezhuan*:

At that time, the ‘four directions’ were free from suffering, and [Ögödei] was rather lax on matters of governance; treacherous and evil people took advantage of this and entered the court.<sup>167</sup>

This short piece can be read as, on the one hand, criticism of the Qaḡan for not paying attention to matters of state, and, on the other, setting the scene for the introduction of ‘Abd al-Raḥman by indirectly identifying him as one of these ‘treacherous and evil people’. Omission of this element suggests that the *Yuanshi* compilers rejected its implication that Ögödei was inadvertent rather than involved.

Biography and inscription hold a translator, one ‘Antienhe’ 安天合 (Altınqa?), responsible for introducing ‘Abd al-Raḥman to court, and encouraging him to begin tax-farming, and both texts connect Antienhe to Chucai’s colleague Činqai.<sup>168</sup> The *shendaobei* reports that Antienhe exhausted Chucai’s patronage before joining Činqai, plotting to sow discord between them:

But then a Huihu translator, Antienhe, arrived from Bianliang 汴梁, prostrating himself to serve [Chucai], to seek promotion. [Chucai], despite increasingly rewarding and promoting [him], ultimately could not satisfy [him]. He then rushed to see Činqai, and devised many plans to estrange them. He immediately induced

<sup>166</sup> See Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 176; *YWL* 57.20b-21a; *Yuanshi* 146.3463.

<sup>167</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, pp. 176; *YWL* 57.20b:

時四方無虞，上頗怠於政事，姦邪得以乘間而入。

<sup>168</sup> On Antienhe, see de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, pp. 124-25; Buell, ‘Činqai’, p. 106. Liu identifies the interpreter rather as An Tianhe 安天合, the nephew of Ma Qingxiang 馬慶祥, as named in the latter’s *shendaobei*, composed by Yuan Haowen and preserved as ‘Hengzhou cishi majun shendaobei’ 恒州刺史馬君神道碑, in *QYW*, i, p. 605; see Liu, *Pingzhuang*, p. 146.

the Huihu ‘Abd al-Rahman to buy up the entirety of the taxes, increasing [revenue] again to 44,000 *ding*.<sup>169</sup>

This effectively implicates Chucai in a patrimonial court culture, and it is no surprise that the biography cuts the text to associate Antienhe with Činqai alone:

The translator Antienhe, having ingratiated himself into the service of Činqai, immediately induced ‘Abd al-Rahman to buy up the entirety of the taxes, increasing [revenue] again to 2,200,000 taels.<sup>170</sup>

The inscription criticizes Antienhe’s ambition and manipulation rather than Činqai, and disrupts the binary structure of moral judgement by involving Chucai in his career.

Returning to this structure, the biography implicates Činqai and Antienhe alongside ‘Abd al-Rahman to keep Chucai’s authority unique and untainted by links to patronage or to transgressive individuals. The complete omission of Antienhe and Činqai from the *Mingchen shilue* account of the affair, in an unannounced cut to the *shendaobei* excerpt, both demonstrates Su Tianjue’s willingness to make drastic edits to his source material and, for once, sharpens the moral binary, placing the narrative’s critical focus on ‘Abd al-Rahman without involving other distracting individuals.<sup>171</sup>

As ‘Abd al-Rahman is never quoted in our texts, his rise is portrayed vividly by Chucai losing an argument with the Qagan over raising tax quotas.<sup>172</sup> Analysis of their discussion again reveals significant reworking of inscription material by the *Yuanshi* compilers. The

<sup>169</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 176; *YWL* 57.21a:

而回鶻譯史安天合至自汴梁，倒身事公，以求進用。公雖加獎借，終不能滿望。即奔詣鎮海，百計行間。首引回鶻奧都刺合蠻撲買課稅增至四萬四千定。

<sup>170</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3463:

譯史安天合者，諂事鎮海，首引奧都刺合蠻撲買課稅，又增至二百二十萬兩。

<sup>171</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 5.82:

而回鶻奧都刺合蠻撲買課稅，增至四萬四千定，

<sup>172</sup> This episode is found at Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 176; *YWL* 57.21a; *Mingchen shilue* 5.82-83; *Yuanshi* 146.3463. See also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts,’ pp. 124-25; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 146; Munkuev, *Kitaiiskii Istochnik*, pp. 84, 198.

first speech in this sequence, found only in the *shendaobei*, reports Chucai's initial arguments against an increase:

[Chucai] said, "Though it would be possible to take 440,000 [ingots of silver], this would however be through the imposition of strict laws, and just a stealthy means of seizing the people's wealth. If the people are destitute, they will steal; this will not enrich the dynasty."<sup>173</sup>

This argument again links the wellbeing of the populace and dynastic interests. The *shendaobei* also takes a position here which effectively separates dynastic and private possessions. This clashes with the boundlessness of the Qağan's ownership portrayed in Juvaynī's Persian anecdotes on Ögödei's character.<sup>174</sup>

The texts are then united in continuing Chucai and Ögödei's debate, but each handles this quite differently. The inscription reports a spirited argument, with the Qağan mocking Chucai's impassioned opposition and Chucai's arguments again based on popular welfare:

[Chucai] repeatedly argued [over it], 'stern in voice and countenance,' [Ögödei] said, "Do you wish to come to blows?" [Chucai] made every effort but could not prevail, so sighed deeply and said, "The profits of tax-farming have already prevailed; there shall certainly be after-effects and those who usurp in the future. The impoverishment of the people, it will start from this."<sup>175</sup>

This is followed by Song Zizhen's diegetic description of the subsequent situation:

<sup>173</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 176; *YWL* 57.21a:

公曰：「雖取四十四萬亦可得，不過嚴設法禁，陰奪民利耳。民窮為盜，非國之福。」

<sup>174</sup> see, for example, the episode demonstrating that the Qağan's property, in the form of pearls belonging to Möge Qatun, could not leave his realm, at *History of the World Conqueror*, pp. 211-12; *Tārikh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, pp. 168-69.

<sup>175</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 176; *YWL* 57.21a:

而近侍左右皆為所陷，上亦頗惑眾議[YWL: 試]，欲令試行之。公反復爭論，聲色俱厲。上曰：「汝欲鬪搏耶？」公力不能奪，乃太息曰：「撲買之利既興，必有躡跡而篡其後者。民之窮困，將自此始，

After this ‘policies came from many gates’ [i.e., the centre lost power].<sup>176</sup> [Chucui] stood sternly in court, unwilling to bend even slightly, wishing to sacrifice himself for ‘all under heaven’.<sup>177</sup>

Several elements dramatize the exchange, with Chucui ‘stern in voice and countenance,’ an expression found in other *Standard Histories* portraying officials making a stand against imperial excess.<sup>178</sup> Chucui’s later arguments do refer to popular wellbeing, predicting poverty. Following the assertion that desperation will cause theft and damage the polity, however, this is not a purely charitable argument. Moreover, the assessment that “from this ‘policies came from many gates’” asserts that the adoption of tax-farming sacrificed central control. Song’s ideal is thus centralized authority defended by ministers prepared to speak sternly against excess, and tax farming with increased fiscal quotas is presented as a threat to all aspects of this, including, but not dominated by, the humanitarian.

The parallel section of the *liezhuan* utilizes this text selectively, retaining references to standing against excess, and to the wellbeing of the populace. Cutting links to dynastic interests, it incorporates and re-frames a speech from a later section of the *shendaobei*, however. In its original form this reads:

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<sup>176</sup> This expression, 政出多門, originates in the *Zuozhuan* as 政多門, as: 晉政多門, 不可從也

Legge translates this speech as “The government of Tsin issues from many gates; Tsin is not to be followed.” See Legge, *The Chinese Classics* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960), v, p. 399. It is also found in the *Hanshu* (83.3408) and *Jinshu* (90.2328). The *Quanyuanwen* punctuation makes it part of Chucui’s rhetoric, but aside from that there is no clear indication of whether the clause should be considered speech or diegetic description of the circumstances; we follow de Rachewiltz and Munkuev in reading it as the latter. This also aligns better with Su Tianjue’s selection of incidents, as the *Mingchen shilue* omits the clause, ending its account of the discussion with Chucui’s reference to impoverishment. See de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol,’ p. 125; Munkuev, *Kitaiiskii Istochnik*, p. 84.

<sup>177</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 176; YWL 57.21a-b:

而近侍左右皆爲所陷，上亦頗惑衆議，欲令試行之。公反復爭論，聲色俱厲。上曰：「汝欲鬪搏耶？」公力不能奪，乃太息曰：「撲買之利既興，必有躡跡而篡其後者。民之窮困，將自此始，於是政出多門矣。」公正色立[21b]朝，不爲少屈，欲以身徇天下。

<sup>178</sup> The expression 聲色俱厲 is also found at *Jinshu* 6.159; *Jiu wudai shi* 58.778, 67.896, 80.1060; *Beishi* 71.2463; *Suishu* 45.1234.

Whenever [Chucui] explained the profits and problems of the dynasty and the joys and sorrows of the populace, his tone was earnest and sincere, he was diligent and assiduous. [Ögödei] said, “Do you want to weep for the common people?” Nonetheless he treated [Chucui] with increased respect.<sup>179</sup>

This again balances humanitarian and dynastic concerns, and Ögödei’s respectful treatment indicates recognition of the importance of these scruples. The use of “whenever” 每 leaves the time-frame ambiguous while clearly suggesting repetition. The episode’s placement, after the tax-farming debate and as the final anecdote recording contact between Chucui and Ögödei before the Qağan’s death, makes it function as a summary of their relationship. As such it neatly suggests a continued personal relationship between the two, a consistent focus on the humanitarian from Chucui and a constant need to remind the monarch of this imperative.

Returning to the biography, the compilers’ incorporation of elements from this episode into a condensed exchange over tax-farming has a very different significance and again removes the suggestion of a personal relationship:

Chucui did his utmost to argue against [this], ‘stern in voice and countenance,’ and sobbing as he spoke. The emperor said, “Do you wish to come to blows?” and went on, “Do you want to weep for the common people? For the order is to implement this.” Chucui doing his utmost was unable to prevent it, so sighing said, “The impoverishment of the people, it will start from this!”<sup>180</sup>

Here Ögödei’s almost identical speech “Do you want to weep for the common people?” has been shifted to a quite different context. Tied specifically to the tax-farming debate rather than repeated over the longer term, and dismissive in tone, it places the Qağan on the side of profit and in opposition to popular welfare.

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<sup>179</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 176; *YWL* 57.21b:

每陳國家利病、生民休戚，辭氣懇切，孜孜不已。上曰：「汝又欲為百姓哭耶？」然待公加重。

<sup>180</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3463:

楚材極力辨諫，至聲色俱厲，言與涕俱。帝曰：「爾欲搏鬪耶？」又曰：「爾欲為百姓哭耶？姑令試行之。」楚材力不能止，乃歎息曰：「民之困窮，將自此始矣！」

This neat formulation uses Ögödei's direct speech against him in other ways, too. The appeal linking poverty to theft having been omitted, the *Yuanshi* reader has not seen Chucai's initial argument, having instead to reconstruct it from the Qağan's response. This, referring to 'the common people', seems entirely humanitarian, an impression reinforced by Chucai's despairing closing statement. The biography has therefore placed a purely humanitarian argument in Chucai's mouth, and placed unpalatable sentiments into the Qağan's. The idealized minister acts for the populace, but now the compilers use speech to place Ögödei in opposition to this; as with Beter and Xiandebu, this portrayal manipulates direct reported speech to condemnatory effect.

Our texts all portray an empress 皇后 summoning Chucai for advice in connection with Ögödei's sudden illness on the 16th of March 1241, and he responds by recommending an amnesty to propitiate the heavens.<sup>181</sup> This unnamed woman might be Töregene; Liu, Munkuev and de Rachewiltz are both unequivocal in this identification, but it should be noted that this clashes with Juvaynī's (probably rhetorical) positioning of Möge Qatun as the Qağan's most senior and intimate wife, a status he claims she retained until his death.<sup>182</sup> While Juvaynī's statement seems to form part of a concerted attack on Töregene's reputation, there are no grounds for a clear identification; in fact, the overt reference to Töregene in *shendaobei* and *Yuanshi* as *Naimazhen shi* (i.e., Madame Naimajin) when discussing her regency could even be read as making a distinction between 'the empress' at this moment and the regent later on.

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<sup>181</sup> This episode is found at Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 176; *YWL* 57.21b-22a; *Mingchen shilue* 5.83; *Yuanshi* 146.3463.

<sup>182</sup> See Liu, *Pingzhuan*, p. 150; de Rachewiltz, 'Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts,' p. 469, n. 317; Juvaynī, *History of the World-Conqueror*, pp. 211-12; 218; Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, pp. 168-69; 174-75; Munkuev, *Kitaiiskii Istochnik*, p. 123, n. 202.

Chuc'ai's answer to the 'empress' in the biography is more pointed than in the inscription, accusing the court not only of appointing inappropriate people and imprisoning the innocent, but of presiding over corruption.<sup>183</sup> Here the *Mingchen shilue* draws on Chuc'ai's *xingzhuang*, as did the *Yuanshi* compilers, either directly or via Su Tianjue's excerpt.<sup>184</sup> Both *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* portray Chuc'ai making a slightly different analysis of the problems facing the empire. The *shendaobei* quotes Chuc'ai's reply:

At the moment the court employs unsuitable candidates, across the empire there are certainly many prisoners who are unjustly accused; hence the Heavens change repeatedly as has been seen. There ought to be a great amnesty across the empire.<sup>185</sup>

The *Mingchen shilue* cites Chuc'ai's *xingzhuang*, which includes an identical speech, but precedes this with a negative assessment of the state of the empire, delivered in the narratorial voice:

At that time, treacherous officials had usurped political power, judgements were sold for bribes, and power was monopolized by the *Huihu* 回鶻, who controlled the governance of the various countries.<sup>186</sup>

The *Yuanshi*, predictably enough, drops this narratorial voice, retaining only an amended version of Chuc'ai's speech, which notably adds the sale of official posts to its list of the realm's problems:

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<sup>183</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3463:

「對曰：「今任使非人，賣官鬻獄，囚繫非辜者多。古人一言而善，熒惑退舍，請赦天下囚徒。」

Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 176; *YWL* 57.21b:

「今朝廷用非其人，天下罪囚必多冤枉，故天變屢見。宜大赦天下。」

<sup>184</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 5.83:

辛丑春二月，上疾篤，脈絕，諸藥不能療，皇后不知所以，召公問之。時姦臣竊政，鬻獄賣官，專令回鶻控治諸國，公對曰：「今朝廷用非其人，天下罪囚必多冤枉，故天變屢見，宜赦天下。」因引宋景公熒惑退舍之事，以為證。后亟欲行之，公對曰：「非君命不可。」頃之，上少蘇，后以為奏，上不能言，首肯而已。赦發，脈復生。

<sup>185</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 176; *YWL* 57.21b:

「今朝廷用非其人，天下罪囚必多冤枉，故天變屢見。宜大赦天下。」

<sup>186</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 5.83:

時姦臣竊政，鬻獄賣官，專令回鶻控治諸國



He replied, “At the moment posts are assigned to unsuitable candidates, appointments are sold, bribes are accepted from prisoners; many are imprisoned for no offence.”<sup>187</sup>

After recommending the medicinal amnesty, Chucai points out to the empress that only the Qagan could pass such a decree. Once the enfeebled Ögödei has done so, however, he recovers. This anecdote, as presented in both texts, reinforces Chucai’s authority via his expertise in linked moral and physical elements of imperial wellbeing, and his regard for due process. The empress is criticized for wanting to take matters into her own hands, but nonetheless listens to Chucai. The biography’s additional allegations of corruption again suggest an Ögödeid decline beginning during the Qagan’s lifetime, in direct contrast to the message of the Persian writers.

Our texts blame Ögödei’s death, in December 1241, on un-named members of his retinue with whom he goes hunting, disregarding Chucai’s advice against this.<sup>188</sup> The accounts differ somewhat; while the *shendaobei* portrays Chucai submitting a memorial (or, in the *Mingchen shilue* account, several) advising against hunting in general (advice that seems unlikely to be well-received), the biography presents this advice as a response to a specific hunt. After his warning, based on calculations of Ögödei’s future, the courtiers responded by saying, “Without riding and shooting there is no way to have fun”.<sup>189</sup> The

<sup>187</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3463:

對曰：「今任使非人，賣官鬻獄，囚繫非辜者多。古人一言而善，焚惑退舍，請赦天下囚徒。」

<sup>188</sup> This episode is found at Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, pp. 176-77; *YWL* 57.22a; *Mingchen shilue* 5.83; *Yuanshi* 146.3463; see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, p. 127; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, p. 150; Munkuev, *Kitaikii istochnik*, pp. 72.

<sup>189</sup> de Rachewiltz reads this as specifically relating to the condition of the Qagan, who had suffered a serious illness a few months before. See de Rachewiltz, ‘Yeh-lü Ch’u-Ts’ai (1189-1243)’, p. 161.

Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, pp. 176-77; *YWL* 57.22a:

冬十一月，上勿藥已久，公以太 [177] 一數推之，奏不宜畋獵。左右皆曰：「若不騎射，何以爲樂？」獵五日而崩。

*Mingchen shilue* 5.83:

冬十一月，上勿藥已久，公以太一數推之，不宜畋獵，奏之數回，左右皆曰：「若不騎射，何以爲樂！」獵五日而崩。[行狀]

*Yuanshi* 146.3463:

Qağan died soon after.<sup>190</sup> This contrasts Chucai’s formal and technical authority against people with personal influence, chiming once again with Bickford and Hartman’s “continual struggle between the jealous and slanderous retainer and the righteous minister”.<sup>191</sup> Chucai’s rivals’ reported speech once more condemns them – choosing fun over duty – before the reader, without overt narratorial comment.

The *shendaobei* reports that, in a rather later episode dated to 1243, an empress (presumably Töregene) asked Chucai about the succession. He answered that, as a minister outside the imperial family, this was not a matter for him to discuss, but that following the orders of the previous emperor (without elaborating on these, this is usually taken to reflect support for Širemün’s candidacy) would be fortunate for the empire.<sup>192</sup> For the purposes of the *shendaobei*, this consultation indicates Chucai’s retention of a trusted position, two years into the regency and the year before his death.<sup>193</sup> An account from Chucai’s *muzhi* cited in the *Mingchen shilue* places the event in the previous year,

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冬十一月四日，帝將出獵，楚材以太乙數推之，亟言其不可，左右皆曰：「不騎射，無以為樂。」獵五日，帝崩于行在所。

<sup>190</sup> Contrastingly, in the *Annals of Taizong* it is ‘Abd al-Rahman himself who is placed in a position of blame for Ögödei’s death, having apparently got the emperor drunk the night before – in de Rachewiltz’s translation, “‘Abd al-Rahman offered him liquor and the Emperor drank merrily all through the night.” See de Rachewiltz, ‘Yeh-lü Ch’u-Ts’ai (1189-1243)’, p. 161; *Yuanshi* 2.37:

奧都刺合蠻進酒，帝歡飲，極夜乃罷。

<sup>191</sup> Bickford and Hartman, ‘The Purloined Plum and the Heart of Iron’, 33.

<sup>192</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 176; *YWL* 57.22a:

癸卯，后以儲嗣問公。公曰：「此非外姓臣所當議，自有先帝遺詔在，遵之則社稷幸甚。」

Taking any kind of overt position on the succession would seem likely to have direct consequences for relations with Töregene, and would have fed into subsequent discussions of Möngke Qağan’s, and hence Qubilai’s, claim to the throne. On this episode, see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, p. 127; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, p. 151; Munkuev, *Kitaikii istochnik*, pp. 85-86. On Širemün, the eldest son of Ögödei’s third son Köčü, see Zhou Sicheng 周思成, ‘Damenggu guo hanwei zhi zheng zhong de huangsun shiliemen - ‘shiji’ zhong guanyu shiliemen de bosi wen shiliao de ruogan kaoding’ 大蒙古國汗位之爭中的皇孫失烈門。--《史集》中關於失烈門的波斯文史料的若干考訂 (The Imperial Grandson Širemün in the Succession Struggle for the Great Mongol Ulus: A Number of Verifications and Corrections to the Persian Historical Material in the “Jami’ al-Tawarikh”), *Yuandai wenxian yu wenhua yanjiu*, 2012, 114-29.

<sup>193</sup> Cai Meibiao reads this as a sign of Chucai successfully retaining continuing status at Töregene’s court, while Liu takes a different position, arguing that support for Širemün provoked the regent’s suspicion. See ‘Tuoliegena’, p. 300; *Pingzhuan*, p. 151. De Rachewiltz notes the incident as Song Zizhen’s cautiously reporting his subject’s support for Širemün’s candidacy; see de Rachewiltz, ‘Yeh-Lü Ch’u-Ts’ai (1189-1243), Yeh-Lü Chu (1221-1285)’, p. 161.

however, perhaps suggesting that the *shendaobei* manipulated chronology to extend Chucai's influence.<sup>194</sup> Chucai's speech differs slightly between these versions, too – the *muzhi* version portrays Chucai suggesting that Ögödei's wishes ought not only to be respected but implemented, taking a stronger stand on the matter than the *shendaobei*.

Such a statement of respect for Ögödei's judgement in his later years, along with the implication of continuing influence for Chucai, may explain the *Yuanshi* compilers' omission of this episode. The biography instead follows its report of the Qagan's death with a very different report, a brief and condemnatory summary of Töregene's rule, delivered, unusually, in the voice of the external narrator:<sup>195</sup>

The empress *Naimazhen shi* [Madame Naimajin, i.e., Töregene] acted as regent, revering and trusting the evil and the criminal, and many affairs of state became disordered.<sup>196</sup>

These rather divergent elements also implicitly diverge in chronology. The inscription dates the consultation to 1243. The criticism of the regent is undated but its phrasing and placement – immediately after the Qagan's death and announcing the regency – suggests an earlier and perhaps immediate shift into further decline, bearing in mind the earlier presentation of 'Abd al-Rahman's influence, underlining Töregene's distance from the *liezhuan*'s virtuous subject.

After this summary, the biography vaguely sketches a disturbance, dated to May-June 1243, predicted by Chucai from astrological phenomena, and presumably referring to the approach of Činggis Qan's brother Temüge Otčigin, widely interpreted as an attempted

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<sup>194</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 5.83:

壬寅春，後[后]以儲嗣問公，公曰：「此非外姓臣所敢知，自有太宗遺詔在，遵而行之，社稷幸甚。」[墓志。]

<sup>195</sup> On this omission, see also Cai Meibiao, 'Tuoliegena', p.299.

<sup>196</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3463:

皇后乃馬真氏稱制，崇信姦回，庶政多紊。

coup.<sup>197</sup> Here, in response to an undefined threat – Otčigin is not mentioned – the Qatun is flustered and contemplates flight, but Chucai, on an astrological basis, has predicted the incident and advises calm.<sup>198</sup> This incident, found in neither inscription nor *Mingchen shilue*, appears to function to restate the importance of Chucai’s technical expertise and the regent’s poor character. It also contrasts strongly with Persian portrayals of the incident, which, as usual, afford the Činggisid imperial centre far more agency than does the *Yuanshi*.<sup>199</sup>

Biography and *shendaobei* report that ‘Abd al-Raḥman used his wealth to buy power during Töregene’s regency, though each description varies at the micro level.<sup>200</sup> The *Yuanshi* placement of this immediately after a report that the empress favoured “the evil and the criminal” effectively identifies ‘Abd al-Raḥman as one of those, as did the *shendaobei* in its preparation of the reader for the tax-farming controversy. The inscription and biography both make the same kind of accusations against ‘Abd al-Raḥman – that he bought influence – but frame these differently.<sup>201</sup> The *shendaobei* reports that Chucai was able to halt ‘Abd al-Raḥman’s measures when they were

<sup>197</sup> On Temüge Otčigin’s approach, see Juvaynī, *History of the World-Conqueror*, p. 244; Juvaynī, *Tārikh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, pp. 199-200. See also Cai Meibiao, ‘Tuoliegena’, pp. 300-1; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, p. 152; Munkuev, *Kitaikii istochnik*, p. 200.

<sup>198</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3464:

癸卯五月，熒惑犯房，楚材奏曰：「當有驚擾，然訖無事。」居無何，朝廷用兵，事起倉卒，后遂令授甲選腹心，至欲西遷以避之。楚材進曰：「朝廷天下根本，根本一搖，天下將亂。臣觀天道，必無患也。」後數日乃定。

<sup>199</sup> The contrast is especially strong with Rashīd al-Dīn’s account, found at Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi‘ al-Tavārīkh*, pp. 801-2; *Compendium of Chronicles*, p. 385.

<sup>200</sup> The episode is found at Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 177; YWL 57.21b; *Mingchen shilue* 5.83-84 (citing the *shendaobei*) and *Yuanshi* 146.3463-64; see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, pp. 101-2; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 79-82; Munkuev, *Kitaikii istochnik*, pp. 72.

<sup>201</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 177; YWL 57.21b:

奧都刺合蠻方以貨取朝政，執政者亦皆阿附。

*Yuanshi* 146.3463-64:

奧魯刺合蠻以貨得政柄，廷中悉畏附之。

‘Abd al-Raḥman is more usually transliterated 奧都刺合蠻 – this mistake is not carried over from the *shendaobei*, which retains the more common form.

disadvantageous to the populace, to the extent that the latter offered him 50,000 taels of silver, apparently to buy his compliance.<sup>202</sup> This claims continued influence and dedication to the wellbeing of the populace. Stating that ‘those in office’ succumbed to ‘Abd al-Rahman’s persuasion, it also mixes official status with irregular influence.

In the *shendaobei*, therefore, Chucai retains agency, representing an (expensive) threat to his rival’s affairs and able to halt his measures, possibly as late as 1243, if we follow the chronology implied by the placement of this ‘bribe’ account after the consultation on the succession. The biography again simplifies things:

Chucai argued with him before the court, saying things that people felt embarrassed to mention, so everyone worried about him.<sup>203</sup>

Here ‘Abd al-Rahman’s influence seems invincible, Chucai has been entirely marginalized soon after, if not before, Ögödei’s passing, and the court are all on the wrong side.

This impression of complete defeat for Chucai is partially undermined in a curious and complex episode. Here our texts all describe Töregene stamping blank paper with the imperial seal, and allowing ‘Abd al-Rahman to write decrees himself.<sup>204</sup> Chucai was able

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<sup>202</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling’, p. 177; *YWL* 57.21b:

唯憚公沮其事，則以銀五萬兩賂公。公不受，事有不便於民者，輒中止之。

<sup>203</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3463-64:

楚材面折廷爭，言人所難言，人皆危之。

<sup>204</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 177; *YWL* 57.21b-22a:

時后已稱制，則以御寶空紙付奧都剌合蠻，令從意書填。公奏曰：「天下先[22a]帝之天下，其章號令自先帝出。必欲如此，臣不敢奉詔。」尋復有旨，奧都剌合蠻奏準事理，令史若不書填則斷其手。公曰：「軍國之事，先帝悉委老臣，令史何與焉？事若合理，自是遵行，若不合理，死且不避，況斷手乎！」因厲聲曰：「老臣事太祖、太宗三十餘年，固不負於國家，皇后亦不能以無罪殺臣。」后雖怨其忤己，亦以先朝勳舊曲加敬憚焉。

The *Mingchen shilue* cites the *shendaobei* here but omits the final element of Chucai’s rhetoric. The *Mingchen shilue*, by contrast, only records the empress’ response, and this too is abbreviated, with the reference to her irritation, which is carried over into the *Yuanshi* biography, being dropped by Su Tianjue:

后以公先朝勳舊，曲敬憚焉。

*Yuanshi* 146.3464:

to prevent their implementation, seemingly due to influence over the administrators, resulting in a further decree threatening obstructive clerks with punishment by severing their hands.<sup>205</sup> If, as seems likely, the text of this threat is intended as direct discourse, this would fit the pattern seen in the quotes from Xiandebu, Beter and Ögödei, in expressing an extreme position which condemns the speaker; in this case a vague combination of the regent and ‘Abd al-Rahman. The latter is complicated by contrasting punctuation decisions; the *Zhonghua Shuju* punctuators have tagged it as a decree in the *Yuanshi*, and a direct quote, but the punctuator of the inscription text in the *Quanyuanwen* treated it as a decree originating from a memorial by ‘Abd al-Rahman and an indirect quote. Without overt indication in the text we cannot be certain that it was necessarily intended to be read as direct discourse in either version, but the *Yuanshi* text does have the immediacy of an order: “those 者, ... sever their hand 斷其手.” This contrasts with the closely related but slightly less immediate phrasing of the inscription text: “clerks, if 令史若 ... then their hands *would be* severed 則斷其手.” Both versions highlight the brutal lengths to which Chucai’s opponents were apparently prepared to go, their punishments enforcing informal bad practice.

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后以御寶空紙，付奧都刺合蠻，使自書填行之。楚材曰：「天下者，先帝之天下。朝廷自有憲章，今欲紊之，臣不敢奉詔。」事遂止。又有旨：「凡奧都刺合蠻所建白，令史不為書者，斷其手。」楚材曰：「國之典故，先帝悉委老臣，令史何與焉。事若合理，自當奉行，如不可行，死且不避，況截手乎！」后不悅。楚材辨論不已，因大聲曰：「老臣事太祖、太宗三十餘年，無負於國，皇后亦豈能無罪殺臣也。」后雖憾之，亦以先朝舊勳，深敬憚焉。

Based on the chronology suggested in both the *shendaobei* and biography, Chucai could not have served Chinggis before 1215 at the very earliest (de Rachewiltz dates his summons to the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 1218), and died in 1243 or 1244, so regardless of the date of this supposed conversation, ‘over thirty years’ is a substantial exaggeration. See de Rachewiltz, “Yeh-lü Ch’u-ts’ai (1189-1243), Yeh-lü Chu (1221-1285)”, p. 140. On the incident, see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Sino-Mongol Culture Contacts’, pp. 128-29; Liu, *Pingzhuan*, pp. 152-53; Munkuev, *Kitaikii istochnik*, pp. 86, 200.

<sup>205</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 177; YWL 57.2XX:

尋復有旨，奧都刺合蠻奏準事理，令史若不書填則斷其手。

*Yuanshi* 146.3464:

又有旨：「凡奧都刺合蠻所建白，令史不為書者，斷其手。」

Here inscription and biography are in fairly close agreement, and this narrative works for both purposes to some extent. The incident allowed Song Zizhen to highlight Chucai's status as an official, appointed by Ögödei, and responsible for matters of government (and, in the biography, of the military).<sup>206</sup> For the purposes of the *Yuanshi*, this incident is another example of authority being trumped by informal influence.<sup>207</sup> It should be noted, however, that the threats of punishment for officials suggest that 'Abd al-Rahman, though enjoying the confidence of the regent, was not having things all his own way, and perhaps that Chucai retained influence over government channels.

A final element of this exchange stands out against the Persian narratives. After a lengthy speech from Chucai emphasizing long service, the texts are united in reporting that Töregene respected and feared him because of his link to previous courts.<sup>208</sup> This narrative works for both *shendaobei* and biography in that it highlights Chucai's long-term proximity to the Qaġan's throne. Like both Juvaynī and Rashīd al-Dīn's accounts of the regency it places such long-term appointees in opposition to the regent – an opposition that lies at the heart of the Persian reports' rhetorical structure.<sup>209</sup> Making this

<sup>206</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 177; *YWL* 57.22b:

時后已稱制，則以御寶空紙付奧都剌合蠻，令從意書填。公奏曰：「天下先帝之天下，典章號令自先帝出。必欲如此，臣不敢奉詔。」尋復有旨，奧都剌合蠻奏準事理，令史若不書填則斷其手。公曰：「軍國之事，先帝悉委老臣，令史何與焉？事若合理，自是遵行，若不合理，死且不避，況斷手乎！」因厲聲曰：「老臣事太祖、太宗三十餘年，固不負於國家，皇后亦不能以無罪殺臣。」后雖怨其忤己，亦以先朝勳舊曲加敬憚焉。

<sup>207</sup> Cai Meibiao suggests that the episode of the blank decrees is best read as an element of the rivalry between Chucai and 'Abd al-Rahman that has been exaggerated by the compilers, and that, technically, Chucai outranked his rival. See Cai Meibiao, 'Tuoliegena', pp. 302-3. The first point is reasonable, but the second runs the considerable risk of expecting rank and office to match formal patterns in any period, and perhaps most of all at the early Činggisid courts. On this see Chan Hok-lam, 'Yang Wei-Chung (1206-1260)', in *ISK*, pp. 185-94 (p. 190).

<sup>208</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 177; *YWL* 57.22b:

后雖怨其忤己，亦以先朝勳舊曲加敬憚焉。

*Yuanshi* 146.3464:

后雖憾之，亦以先朝舊勳，深敬憚焉。

<sup>209</sup> Accounts of Töregene's regency in the *Tārīkh-e Jahāngūšāī* and *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh* employ a strong contrast between Ögödei's appointees, most prominently Činqai and Maḥmūd Yalavač, whose status is repeatedly highlighted by honorifics rooted in Islamicate polities, and the regent's appointees, most prominently Fāṭima and 'Abd al-Rahman, who receive none. See Juvaynī, *History of the World Conqueror*,

long service the basis of Chucai's safety from Töregene, however, runs counter to the logic of those accounts.

## 2.4 Conclusion: edits, themes, impact

As we have seen, all elements of Chucai's portrayal seem to have been fair game for the *Yuanshi* compilers in developing the binary structure of his moral superiority. The *Yuanshi* compilers tailored the narrative of Chucai's life considerably, overhauling and sharpening Song Zizhen's rhetorical structure of repeated contrasts between superior subject and inferior anti-subjects and opponents in an episodic structure of problem – solution – result. Their adjustments deliver a strengthened condemnation of Ögödei's later years and Töregene's regency, by at first emphasizing the monarch's role in endorsing the idealized subject's action in the outcome phase and then, removing the later rulers from it, moving them over to the inferior side of the binary. Exploiting a specifically humanitarian basis for Chucai's actions, the resultant narrative sees these rulers not only opposed to Chucai, whose virtue is guaranteed both by the genre and the repeated demonstration of his perfection, but to the welfare of their subject population. The importance of this humanitarian theme is seen from the incident of the *jiaoduan* onwards – even the rule of Činggis, the charismatic ancestor, is defined, and made conditional, by this. Chucai's humanitarianism in the *Yuanshi* is always direct; policies are exclusively intended for humanitarian purposes, and in a number of occasions, such as the Yanjing bandits episode, success is only measured through the effect on the

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pp. 240-41, 243-45; *Tārikh-e jahān-gushāy*, I, pp. 195-96, 199-200; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi' al-Tavārīkh*, pp. 799-800; *Compendium of Chronicles*, pp. 383-84.



population, a position quite different to that taken by the *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue*.

Editorial interventions by the *Yuanshi* compilers are multiple, detailed and subtle, drawing on a range of techniques and leaving little unaltered. Direct speech is selectively employed to highlight certain incidents, condemning inferiors and opponents ‘before the camera’. Speeches left almost intact are re-framed, episodes are moved, individuals’ posts are adjusted and the storytelling builds a simpler and more focused version of Chucai’s life, resembling, but not identical to, that of the inscription. The *liezhuan* version, discarding much of the complicating detail of the *Mingchen shilue* biography, is far more focussed on moral status and oppositional court dynamics than were either of its antecedents, and the compilers were prepared to manipulate a considerable range of material in order to effect this.

Alongside this, the biography repeatedly removes or downplays many aspects of the inscription text that might be identified as non-Chinese, encompassing Mongols, spirits and all other aspects (apart from Chucai’s nickname) within a frame reaching back in time rather than out in space. This serves the work’s purpose of establishing the new Ming polity as complete and sovereign while effectively laying claim (both political and cultural) to all Yuan possessions in East Asia without subordinating those possessions to Inner Asian conquerors, including the exiled court to the north.

Alongside trimming the frame of reference to define a Sinitic sphere, the compilers’ amendments tighten the focus on formal bureaucratic ways of being and definitions of status. Repeatedly emphasizing the importance of formal posts and structures, these

interventions distance the idealized subject and his activity from patrimonial rule and shift agency away from the imperial family and towards the bureaucracy, most prominently the Central Secretariat and Chucai's post-Jin staffers. Opponents such as 'Abd al-Rahman are denied official standing and Chucai's personal links to both Ögödei and Antienhe are carefully downplayed. Advice is always to compartmentalize and formalize, with retinue and military consistently subordinated to the technical and moral superiority of governance through a *Ru* class of informed activists.

The compilers' definition of success can be discerned where Chucai is portrayed enjoying influence, and likewise in the specific types of costs to challenging this influence. The compilation process sees this shifted, subtly but significantly, towards a purely humanitarian imperative. While the *shendaobei* sees the welfare of the populace balanced against political stability and court income, this is entirely removed in the biography. The effect of this is to turn those opposing Chucai or his measures, for whatever reason, into morally situated opponents of the populace and their interests. The following chapters interrogate the consistency of the compilers' application of these three themes; definition of a pre-Ming territory, formal bureaucracy and the humanitarian, in the other biographies from our sample. As we will see, while less consistent than Chucai's, there is strong evidence of the deliberate implementation of a rhetorical programme with significant effects on the portrayal of these key figures and the courts and events among which they lived.

### 3 Defining Ming space? Centres, territory and identities

The previous chapter identified three principal themes of interventions to the narrative of Chucai's *Yuanshi* biography, namely, delimitation of a Sinitic space, reinforcement of a compartmentalized bureaucratic government and promotion of a purely humanitarian rationale for action. This chapter interrogates the handling of the first theme, centred on territory and identity, across our sample texts to establish the consistency of this treatment. There is some evidence beyond our sample to suggest that the compilers attempted to make Yuan – and therefore Ming – territory the centre of the Mongol project, rather than, as Robinson puts it, “the entire Mongol imperium”.<sup>1</sup> The handling of, for example, the *liezhuan* of the Jočid Qans in *Yuanshi* 117 seems primarily intended to emphasize the distance and triviality of western conquests, despite Shagdaryn Bira's identification of the biography as a ‘Mongol’ production.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter interrogates the further application across our sample of this narrowing of focus onto the Great Yuan *ulus*. The geographical and cultural marginalization in Chucai's *liezhuan* of elements and individuals associated with the central and western regions of the broader imperial space was achieved via a broad range of narrative interventions. Their cumulative impact is the projection of a ‘Yuan’ identity backwards onto Mongol-era East Asia and the positioning of ‘China’ as a geographically, culturally

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<sup>1</sup> See David M. Robinson, *Empire's Twilight: Northeast Asia under the Mongols*, Harvard-Yenching Monograph Series, 68 (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), p. 3, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See *Yuanshi* 117.2906; Shagdaryn Bira, *Mongolian Historical Writing from 1200 to 1700 / Shagdaryn Bira; Translated from the Original Russian by John R. Krueger and Revised and Updated by the Author*, trans. by John Richard Krueger, Studies on East Asia, 24, 2nd edn (Bellingham, WA: Center for East Asian Studies, Western Washington University, 2002), p. 84; Humble, ‘Princely Qualities and Unexpected Coherence’, 315-17.

and ethnically coherent entity for Ming rule.<sup>3</sup> We have already identified three key ways in which the *Yuanshi* compilers attempted, through their edits to Chucai's biography, to consolidate a 'Chinese' historical entity in the lands formerly held by the Yuan. The first involves downplaying or removing 'foreign' cultural elements involved in Mongol-era lives, including names, titles and institutions. The second is the geographic (and moral) shifting of 'Huihu' and other ethnically defined Others outwards to a geographical association with the Western Regions and therefore literally beyond the imperial pale. The third is the centring of 'Chinese' institutions and historical examples, visible in Chucai's combat of empire-wide census practices by subsuming geographical breadth within temporal continuity. As we will see, common threads are discernible in the compilers' treatment of this theme across our sample, but this is by no means as consistent as its careful and methodical handling in Chucai's biography might suggest.

Viewing our sample biographies as a series of ministerial lives presented as models for future harmony in a post-Mongol, self-consciously 'Chinese' polity can explain some of the features identified in Chucai's handling. The broad eastward re-centring seems to indicate a conscious discarding of subsumation within the great extent of imperial Činggisid space in favour of asserting the centrality of a more limited Yuan territory inherited by the Ming polity and suited to unification via claims to a 'Chinese' past. This manifests itself as an adjustment of frames of reference, sometimes very subtle, its

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<sup>3</sup> See Kim Hodong, 'Was "Da Yuan" a Chinese Dynasty?', *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 45 (2015), 279-305. As Franke argues, the 'Yuan' polity, however rooted in China, clearly formed part of a larger imperial space and claimed a position at the head of a pan-Eurasian project rather than as a 'dynasty' within a continuous 'Chinese' context. Thus, Franke argues, despite the attempts of "Chinese advisors" (a label he applies to Yelü Chucai) the Činggisid polity did not make use of 'Chinese' authoritative symbolic until it had achieved dominance of Chinese territory, and then employed this in an essentially conservative fashion, claiming "restoration" rather than "innovation", and following Tang, Song and Jin models where possible. See Franke, "From Tribal Chieftain", 28-29, 78. The Chinese-language text of Qubilai's declaration of the *Zhiyuan* regnal period is preserved as *Jian guohao zhao* (*Zhiyuan ba nian, shiyi yue*) 建國號詔至元八年十一月, *YWL* 9.4b-5b. For a translation, see Otto Franke, *Geschichte des chinesischen Reiches* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1952), iv, pp. 431-32.

elements requiring close reading to identify, but contributing cumulatively to a significant change in overall impression. This treatment is not, moreover, consistently applied across our texts. Few received nearly the level of attention clearly devoted to Chucai's portrayal, and in some cases, either by accident or design, complexities of handling indicate a multiplicity of approaches. Overall, however, we do see, albeit to varying degrees, a general de-centring of 'foreign' institutions and of 'other' elements of ethnic identity. This is combined with a broad centring of the 'Central Plains' 中原 and *hanfa* 漢法 'Han method or ways', that attempts to define the elements of these for the Ming future.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the adjustments involved in recasting events have effects on readers' appreciation of whom and what these involved. Luo Xianyou's problematic portrayal of factional conflict between Xu Heng and 'Ahema' 阿合馬 (i.e., Aḥmad Fanākatī) at Qubilai's court serves us well as a case study in the effects of rhetorical narrative on our perceptions of individuals and context.<sup>4</sup> Luo's introductory description on the two officials falls straight into our compilers' trap, characterizing Xu Heng as a 'great *Ru* 儒 of the Han race deeply versed in Neo-Confucianism', and dismissing Aḥmad as a 'powerful *Semu* minister skilled at speaking of profit.'<sup>5</sup> This clearly reflects our texts' handling of court conflict as ethnic and cultural rather than factional, economic or otherwise more complex, something which should be borne in mind when we examine portrayals of Aḥmad Fanākatī in the following chapter. This interlocks with our compilers' general tendency to make more vivid, coherent and compelling narratives through the scapegoating of individuals as representatives of

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<sup>4</sup> Luo Xianyou 罗贤佑, 'Xu Heng, Ahema Yu Yuanchu Hanfa, Huihuiifa Zhi Cheng 许衡、阿合马与元初汉法、回回法之争 (Xu Heng and Ahmad and Conflict Between Hanfa (Han Ways) Huihuiifa (Central Asian Ways) in the Early Yuan Dynasty)', *Minzu Yanjiu*, 5 (2005), 78–86.

<sup>5</sup> These characterizations are 深研理学的汉族硕儒 and 善于言利的色目权臣, respectively. See Luo Xianyou, 'Xu Heng, Ahema Yu Yuanchu Hanfa, Huihuiifa Zhi Cheng', 78.

specific collections of transgressive actions, rather than actors in complex sets of interlocking situations.<sup>6</sup> Such textual curation of ‘Chinese’ identities by separating the praiseworthy from the Other is a key element of our texts.

As Wang Mingsun has noted, reconstructing Mongol practices from Chinese-language texts is challenging.<sup>7</sup> Reconstructing the full repertoire of textual elements identifiable to our compilers as references to cultural alterity would be a further project in itself. This chapter does not seek to perform either feat, but rather interrogates the handling of a manageable sample of themes and elements overtly and recognizably distinct from the ‘Chinese’ background of our *Yuanshi* compilers.<sup>8</sup> We therefore take a somewhat blunt-edged approach to identifying elements of ethnic identities in the texts sampled, assessing the handling of episodes featuring groups and individuals linked directly to ethnonyms or toponyms placing them outside an implicitly Sinitic space. This allows the inclusion of, to take an example we will encounter later in this chapter, a general serving on the Inner Asian border, and his framing and classification, both when identified with, and left without, a Turko-Mongol name.

### 3.1 Geographies of difference: *Huihu*, *Huihui* and *Xiyu*

One difficulty presented by the nature of our source material is a broad tendency in the *Yuanshi* compilation towards removal and omission alongside, and sometimes instead of,

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<sup>6</sup> As Wei-chieh Tsai argues, narratives of ethnic violence under Činggisid rule “could shape a memory of common trauma and be seen as a way to confirm local elites’ own identities and distinguish themselves from the Mongols and the foreigners.” Wei-Chieh Tsai, ‘Ethnic Riots and Violence in the Mongol Empire: A Comparative Perspective’, *Mongolian Studies* 33 (2011), 83–107 (101).

<sup>7</sup> Wang Mingsun 王明蓀, ‘Yuanshi zhong suozaizhi menggu jiu su 元史中所載之蒙古舊俗 (Old Mongol Customs Recorded in the *Yuanshi*)’, in *Liao Jin Yuan shilun wengao* 遼金元史論文稿 (*Drafts on Liao, Jin and Yuan History*) (Yonghe City: Huamulan wenhua gongzuofang, 2005), pp. 289–319 (p. 292).

<sup>8</sup> Wang Mingsun, ‘Yuanshi zhong suozaizhi menggu jiu su’, p. 292.

editing and reworking, leaving us with the risk of arguing from silence. Where we have a clear parallel between foundation text and *liezhuan*, and an omission from within a section otherwise transmitted intact, we can, however, point to this as an example of deliberate rejection on the compilers' part. An example of such rejection with direct relevance to the question of defining ethnically 'Chinese' populations is found in the biography of Li Zhi 李治.

The writer, educator and mathematician Li Zhi 李治 (or Li Ye 李冶) (1192-1279), appellative Renqing 仁卿, from Luancheng 樂城 in Zhending 真定, achieved the *jinshi* degree under the Jin in the late *Zhengda* 正大 (1224-34) period, crossing north in 1232, and perhaps changing his *ming* to Ye, like other scholars who took up pseudonyms in that chaotic period.<sup>9</sup> Zhi served briefly as Academician of the Hanlin Academy 翰林學士 in the 1260s, but withdrew to Longshan 龍山, in Shandong.<sup>10</sup> The *Mingchen shilue* presents a lengthy question-and-answer advice dialogue between Zhi and Qubilai dealing with issues of governance and dated to June or July 1257.<sup>11</sup> Li Zhi's *Yuanshi* biography is greatly condensed from the *Mingchen shilue* material, and focuses on the exchange with Qubilai to the exclusion of almost all other content, yet still drops two elements of this

<sup>9</sup> On Li Zhi 李治 (or Li Ye 李冶) (1192-1279), see *Mingchen shilue* 13.259-64; *Yuanshi* 160.3759-61; *YR*, p. 464; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, p. 219; H.L. Chan and P.Y. Ho, 'Li Chih', in *ISK*, pp. 316-35; Li Zhi'an, *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 40. On the debate over his names, see Du Hongquan 杜宏权, and Zhao Pingfen 赵平分, 'Li Zhi Li Ye Bian 李治李冶辨 (Distinguishing Li Zhi from Li Ye)', *Harbin Xueyuan Xuebao (shehuikexue)*, 24 (2005), 87-90.

<sup>10</sup> After a 64-character preface, Li Zhi's *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged into 9 sections, with 1,895 characters of main text. These are drawn from the *Wangting wendui* 王庭問對, by an unknown author, recording a fascinating question and answer session with Qubilai (708 characters, 37%), the *Jingzhai shiji* 敬齋事跡 (author unknown, 126 characters, 7%), the *Shuyuanji* 書院記 by Wang Pan (229 characters, 12%), an unlabelled summary of Li Ye's literary output (47 characters, 2%), four sections from the *Jingzhai fanshuo* 敬齋泛說 by Li Ye himself (270 characters, 14%) and a substantial closing section from a *Sixian tangji* 四賢堂記 by Xu Shilong (298 characters, 16%). A further 140 characters of annotation, taken from an unidentified text (公與翰苑諸公書), are appended to the discussion of Li Ye's establishment of a Hanlin office in Yanjing.

<sup>11</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 13.261, and the 'gap' between incidents is at *Yuanshi* 160.3760.

discussion. Part of this dialogue, one of only two sections omitted from the exchange by the *Yuanshi* compilers, directly addresses ethnic distinctions.

In the *Mingchen shilue* we see Qubilai asking “Should Huihu 回鶻 people be employed or not?”<sup>12</sup> To this Zhi responds in a measured but slightly ambiguous manner, arguing that both ‘Han’ and ‘Huihu’ populations included “virtuous ones and base people.”<sup>13</sup> This response seems to divide the pool of employable people into ‘Huihu’ and ‘Han’, terminology that perhaps reflects the situation in this period before the conquest of the Southern Song led to the internal categorization of ‘Nan’ southerners as a new group of imperial subjects.<sup>14</sup> Its binary application also either overlooks or anachronistically includes the complex array of non-Mongol northern groups – such as the Kitan, who were later categorized as ‘Han’, or the Tangut, categorized as ‘Semu’ – in favour of a blunt

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<sup>12</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 13.261:

又問：「回鶻人可用否？」

<sup>13</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 13.261:

對曰：「漢人中有君子小人，回鶻人亦有君子小人。」

Chan and Ho incorrectly translate the inconsistently employed term *Huihu* as ‘Uighur’ in reporting this discussion; see Chan and Ho, ‘Li Chih’, p. 321. On the variability in its usage, see Ch’ên Yüan, *Western and Central Asians in China Under the Mongols*, pp. 6, 152-53, 216.

<sup>14</sup> On the Yuan division of social castes by ethnic identification, see Funada Yoshiyuki 船田善之, ‘Mongoru jidai niokeru minzoku sesshoku to aidentiti no shosō モンゴル時代における民族接触とアイデンティティの諸相 (The Contacts Among Ethnicities and Aspects of their Identities in the Mongol Period)’, in *Kyūshū Daigaku 21-seiki COE purogramu Higashi Ajia to Nihon, Kōryū to Hen’yō Tōkatsu Wākushoppu hōkokusho*, ed. by Yūichirō Imanishi (Fukuoka-shi: Kyūshū Daigaku 21-seiki COE purogramu, Jinbun Kagaku, 2007), pp. 18–29; S. Murayama, “Sind die Naiman Türken oder Mongolen?” *Central Asiatic Journal* 4 (1958-59), 180-98, 196-98; Frederick W. Mote, ‘Chinese Society Under Mongol Rule, 1215-1368’, in *CHC*, pp. 616-64 (pp. 631-33); Paul Ratchnevsky, “Jurisdiction, Penal Code, and Cultural Confrontation under the Mongol-Yuan Law”, *Asia Major* 6 (1993), 161-79 (178-79). For a detailed discussion of the system, its effects on constituent peoples, and the development of scholarship on the subject, see Michael Brose, *Subjects and Masters: Uyghurs in the Mongol Empire* (Bellingham, WA: Center for East Asian Studies, Western Washington University, 2007), pp. 33-51. For an assessment of the effect of the system on the development of the civil examination system, see Benjamin A. Elman, “The Transformation of the Civil Service Curriculum Between 1250 and 1400 and the Role of the Yuan Dynasty in Classical Studies”, in *Yuandai jingxue guoji yantao huilun wenji* 元代經學國際研討會論文集, ed. by Yang Jinlong 楊晉龍 and Chen Shuyi 陳淑誼 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan zhongguo wenzhe yanjiusuo choubiechu yinxing, 2000), vol. 1, pp. 23-47. For a fourteenth-century writer’s lists of ethnonyms to which these measures applied, see Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀, *Nancun Chuogeng Lu* 南村輟耕錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1959), pp. 12-14. On Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀, see Peter Chang and Chaoying Fang, “T’ao Tsung-i 陶宗儀” in *DMB*, vol. 1, pp. 1268-72.



division into internal and external, comparable to Song Zizhen's repetition of 'Huihu' as an identifier for those whom his narrative proved inferior to Chucai's expertise.

Zhi's advice on how to deal with this issue is intriguing in its ambiguity. He states that "those people", referring to the Huihu at large "covet money and are addicted to profit", a theme we return to later in the chapter.<sup>15</sup> Zhi's final clause has two key elements: the first explains that "the prudent and cautious [among them] are rare" and the last "select and employ only those".<sup>16</sup> Here, the standard Confucian contrast between the various *junzi* and the petty *xiaoren* is directly related to the categories of 'the prudent and cautious' on the one hand, and those concerned with profit on the other. Between this identification of a problem and Zhi's recommendation we find "in the realm" 在國家, an element the *Mingchen shilue* punctuator attached to the final element, selecting a reading that can be translated as "employ only those people in the realm." An alternative punctuation attaching "in the realm" to the previous statement would see Zhi argue that the "prudent and cautious" among the Huihu were *rare in the realm* (i.e., Činggisid northern China), an argument with a distinct logic suggesting that the Huihu people resident in Yuan territory were adventurers and not necessarily typical of Huihu populations overall.<sup>17</sup>

The omission of the episode portraying Zhi's advice on Huihu employment from the *liezhuan* account of the discussion indicates the compilers' specific rejection of it. This intervention may reflect the forward-looking focus of the text, and in particular Ming

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<sup>15</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 13.261:

但其人貪財嗜利

<sup>16</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 13.261:

廉謹者少，在國家擇而用之耳。」

<sup>17</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 13.261:

廉謹者少，在國家擇而用之耳。」

廉謹者少在國家，擇而用之耳。」

Taizu's ethnic legislation that in effect banned the preservation of distinctive ethnic identities related to Mongol and 'semu' identification.<sup>18</sup> While in Chucai's biography the externalizing use of *Xiyuren* as an inferior Other could suit a polity engaged in an eastward rebalancing of its ethnic composition, transmission of Li Zhi's advice might have moved towards a re-validation of the Huihu identity and the placement of such people in government office. The ambiguity of the *Mingchen shilue* treatment leaves room for cautious openness to at least some of these people, despite their clear categorization as 'not-Han', although other biographies, such as Chucai's, are consistent in opposing this. Omission by the *Yuanshi* compilers suggests that such ambiguity was not thought desirable. As we will see, there is a general tendency to link ethnically separated people and precisely such *xiaoren* 'petty people' materialism, already present in the foundation texts but underlined in the *liezhuan*.<sup>19</sup>

Ambiguity is nonetheless a well-used tool in the compilers' hands. It is exploited frequently in connection to slander, a transgression often, like greed, indirectly associated with ethnically distinct groups, and perhaps especially the *Huihu* and others connected to the Western Regions. An incidence of such indirect association is found in the biographies for Boqum (1255-1300), a senior official of Qangli Turkic origin who served under Qubilai Qağan and Temür Öljeitü Qağan, variously as Regional Surveillance Commissioner 提刑按察使 in Yunnan 燕南, Advisor to the Central Secretariat 參議中書

<sup>18</sup> On Zhu Yuanzhang's ethnic policies, see Edward L. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation: The Reordering of Chinese Society Following the Era of Mongol Rule*, Sinica Leidensia, 34 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 82-83.

<sup>19</sup> The deployment of this moral binary between inside and out is nothing very new – for an interrogation of Tang-era selective employment of 'barbarian' stereotypes see Shao-yun Yang, "What Do Barbarians Know of Gratitude?" The Stereotype of Barbarian Perfidy and its Uses in Tang Foreign Policy Rhetoric', *Tang Studies*, 31 (2013) 28–74.

省事 and Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy 翰林學士承旨, among other posts.<sup>20</sup>

Boqum's *Mingchen shilue* biography draws primarily on a lost *shendaobei* by Yao Sui and a lost *muzhi* of unidentified authorship.<sup>21</sup>

The handling of one particular incident in Boqum's biographies shines an intriguing sidelight on the ethnic determination of populations and the ascription of slanderous tendencies to ethnically defined Others.<sup>22</sup> The episode, dated by context to either 1286 or soon after, and perhaps relating to the establishment of the Right Qipčaq Guard, portrays a general, wishing to recruit more troops from the Qipčaq Turk slave population that apparently existed at that time, and receiving a decree from Qubilai Qagan permitting this.<sup>23</sup> The *Mingchen shilue*, citing Boqum's lost *shendaobei*, leaves this general unnamed.<sup>24</sup> The decree leads to two linked problems; first, recruitment of people from the

<sup>20</sup> Following Atwood's transliteration of this Turkic name. See Atwood, 'Jochi and the Early Western Campaigns', 43. On Boqum, also known as Shiyong 時用 (1255-1300), courtesy name Yongchen 用臣, of the Qangli, see *Mingchen shilue* 4.61-67; *Yuanshi* 130.3163-73; *YR*, p. 2292; Ch'ên Yüan, *Western and Central Asians in China Under the Mongols*, pp. 23-24; Xiu Xiaobo 修晓波, "'Yuanshi" Tutuha, Buhumu Liezhuan Dingwu 《元史》土土哈、不忽木列传订误 (An Error Correction in the *Yuanshi* Biographies of Toqtoq and Boqum)', *Wenxian*, 4 (1997), 170-77. On these posts, see *FG*, pp. 242, 171 and 128, respectively.

<sup>21</sup> After a 113-character preface the *Mingchen shilue* biography presents twenty sections of main text (2,635 characters in total) draws on a lost *shendaobei* for Boqum compiled by Yao Sui (17 sections, 2,210 chars, 84%) and a *muzhi* by an unidentified author (瓠山王公撰墓誌) (3 sections, 425 chars, 16%). A further inscription for Boqum by Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 is not identified as a source by Su Tianjue, but merits comparison to the *Yuanshi* biography, which also incorporates a lengthy memorial not found in the *Mingchen shilue*. See Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫, 'Gu zhaowenguan daxueshi ronglu daifu pingzhang junguoshi xingyushi zhongcheng ling shiyisi shi zeng chuncheng zuoligongchen taifu kaifu yitong sansi shangzhuguo zhufeng luguogong shi wenzhen kangligong bei' 故昭文館大學士榮祿大夫平章軍國事行御史中丞領侍儀司事贈純誠佐理功臣太傅開府儀同三司上柱國追封魯國公謚文貞康里公碑, in *QYW*, xix, pp. 235-39. On Zhao Mengfu, see *Yuanshi* 172.4018-23; *YR*, pp. 1736-41. On the sources for Boqum's biography, see Liu Yonghai, 'Lun yuanchao mingchen shilue de bianzuan yili', 59.

<sup>22</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 4.63; *Yuanshi* 130.3168.

<sup>23</sup> The Right Qipčaq Guard 右欽察衛 was established in 1286; see *Yuanshi* 86.2176, 99.2529; Hsiao Ch'ich'ing, *The Military Establishment of the Yuan Dynasty*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 77 (Cambridge, MA, Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1978), pp. 99-100; Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Turks in China Under the Mongols: A Preliminary Investigation of Turco-Mongol Relations in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries', in M. Rossabi (ed.), *China Among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbours, 10<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 281-310 (pp. 289, 306, n. 55).

<sup>24</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3168:

general population registers into the military, and second, conflict between the general and a civil official who acted to prevent this recruitment. In the *Mingchen shilue*, the first problem is described as follows:

The experienced general 戰將 (someone) 某 had gained merit on the northern frontier, and sought enslaved Qipčaq people; all the able, to serve as soldiers, registered under his command; this was approved as a decree, and therefore many were recruited from the civilian registers.<sup>25</sup>

The *Yuanshi* version of this is somewhat different; note the strong contrast between the *Mingchen shilue* version's framing of the anonymous person at the centre of the affair as an 'experienced general' and the *Yuanshi* approach, which, although adding his name, removes even this relatively vague description of an official post:

Tutuha 吐土哈 requested the increased recruitment of Qipčaq people who had served people as slaves for his army, but many taken were from the general registered populace.<sup>26</sup>

The *Yuanshi* compilers' treatment, in dropping the professional description ascribed to this secondary subject, is comparable to that denial of a place in the official framework applied to 'Abd al-Rahman and Beter examined in the previous chapter. It should be remembered that the vast majority of secondary subjects mentioned in *liezhuan*, no matter how well-known, are linked to a post. By removing the description of the request, approval and decree process, the compilers' intervention also hints that this figure took recruits without following any kind of due process. The *Yuanshi* addition of specific new

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吐土哈求欽察之為人奴者增益其軍，而多取編民。中書僉省王遇驗其籍改正之。吐土哈遂奏遇有不臣語。帝怒欲斬之，不忽木諫曰：「遇始令以欽察之人奴為兵，未聞以編民也。萬一他衛皆倣此，戶口耗矣。若誅遇，後人豈肯為陛下盡職乎？」帝意解，遇得不死。

*Mingchen shilue* 4.63:

戰將某有功北陲，求欽察之奴人者，皆良為兵，隸已麾下，制可，乃多取編氓入籍。中書遣僉行省臣王國用覈之，為所釐正什七。彼遂讒其專行，不奉詔。帝怒斬之，刑曹受成命矣，公入陳：「勅惟以欽察之奴人者出而為兵，未聞以編氓奴籍欽察。或西域、河西諸人例此，雜取編氓以益其軍，則天下之戶耗矣。國用之忠宜旌，何罪而誅。」譬解數四而免。[神道碑]

<sup>25</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.63:

戰將某有功北陲，求欽察之奴人者，皆良為兵，隸已麾下，制可，乃多取編氓入籍。

<sup>26</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3168:

吐土哈求欽察之為人奴者增益其軍，而多取編民。

information in the form of the name Tutuha 吐土哈 is also a significant aspect of this individual's narrative framing. This almost certainly refers to the Qipčaq general Toǵtoǵa, who, receiving his own biography in both *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*, is introduced in greater detail later in this section.<sup>27</sup> The general, left anonymous in Boqum's *Mingchen shilue* biography, even if associated with Qipčaq troops, has, in the *Yuanshi* reformulation, been more directly culturally pegged to both a conspicuously non-Han identity and informal, if not irregular, action.

The events portrayed diverge further as we move to the second problem, described in the *Mingchen shilue* as follows:

The Junior Assistant Director of the Central Secretariat 中書遣僉行省臣 Wang Guoyong 王國用 investigated the matter, and of these [recruitments] only seven tenths were correct. He [the general] then slandered [Guoyong] for acting arbitrarily, and for not upholding the decree. The emperor was angry and [decided to] behead him, and the judicial authority had accepted and undertaken the order,<sup>28</sup>

This account again places the affair within the stages of an administrative process. The official of the Central Secretariat – called Wang Guoyong in the foundation texts, presumably reflecting a respectful use of his appellative, and Wang Yu 王遇 in the *Yuanshi* – is portrayed discovering a substantial problem with the decree, which was then not fulfilled, or at least not in its entirety.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> We follow Atwood's article on the western campaigns in this transliteration. See Atwood, 'Jochi and the Early Western Campaigns', 43, n. 17. On other possible versions of the name, see Rybatzki, 'Die Personennamen', pp. 352-53.

<sup>28</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.63:

戰將某有功北陲，求欽察之奴人者，皆良為兵，隸已麾下，制可，乃多取編氓入籍。中書遣僉行省臣王國用覈之，為所釐正什七。彼遂讒其專行，不奉詔。帝怒斬之，刑曹受成命矣，

<sup>29</sup> Wang Yu 王遇 is as yet unidentified. He is referred to as Wang Guoyong 王國用 in the foundation texts, probably a respectful use of his courtesy name. He is not recorded in *YR*, but receives a brief note in Qiu Shusen 邱樹森, *Yuanshi cidian* 元史辭典 (*Dictionary of Yuan History*) (Jinan: Shandong jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000), p. 85.

This leads to a complaint, described as a slander 讒, from the general, accusing Wang of arrogating authority and failing to implement the decree. This can be regarded as a condemnatory narrative description of the general's strong reaction to an official halting a problematic measure. Nonetheless, the account, in describing Qubilai's anger and formal submission of an order to behead Wang, indicates real peril for the official, and a privileged position for the general, whose problematic account appears to have been believed without challenge. The *Mingchen shilue* narrative thus describes issues with the initial decree, uncovered in its formal processing, being compounded by the approaches taken by both the general and the Qagan to the administrator involved in that process, and eventually causing an official execution process to swing into action.

The *Yuanshi* treatment of this second problem is as follows:<sup>30</sup>

The Junior Assistant Director of the Central Secretariat Wang Yu 王遇 investigated his registers and corrected them. Toqto'a then presented a memorial [reporting that] Yu had spoken inappropriately for an official (or subject) 不臣語. The emperor, angered, wished to behead him [Yu],

The compilers' interventions not only condense the description of events, but alter their nature quite radically. Here the official concerned is described as investigating the general's recruitment, rather than the decree – the administrative processes described in the *Mingchen shilue* are not visible here. Moreover, Toqto'a's response to the official's intervention, submitting a memorial accusing Yu of speaking inappropriately to his station, changes the nature of the (now 'foreign') general's involvement. As this allegation does not appear to fit the situation narrated to the reader, it instead appears to be a personal attack on Wang Yu or Guoyong and an actual slander against him, disconnected from the disagreement developing from the first problem.

<sup>30</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3168:

中書僉省王遇驗其籍改正之。吐土哈遂奏遇有不臣語。帝怒欲斬之，

Moreover, the Qağan's response here is more emotional and is again unconstrained by the processes outlined in the *Mingchen shilue* account, suggesting a different logic to the operation of the court. The *Yuanshi* therefore presents a more transgressive figure, more directly tied to foreign identities and less tied to official frameworks and who is more able to act informally, dishonestly and freely against a civil official with a Chinese name. Here, an absolute monarch responds emotionally and without question to this transgressor's actions, and all this bears down on an innocent official.

The incident is resolved in both versions through Boqum's intervention on the administrator's behalf, and this too is reported and characterized differently in our two texts. It is portrayed in the *Mingchen shilue* as follows:

... [Boqum] entered and admonished: "The decree was only to have Qipčaq slaves removed as soldiers; it is unheard of to have the registered populace re-registered as Qipčaq. If various of the Xiyu 西域 and Hexi 河西 people take this as a precedent, randomly taking from registered populace in order to increase their armies, then the households of all-under-heaven will be squandered. Guoyong's loyalty ought to be highlighted; how [can this be] a crime leading to execution?"<sup>31</sup>

This was greatly condensed by the *Yuanshi* compilers:

Boqum spoke in admonition: "Yu was initially ordered that people serving as slaves to the Qipčaq serve as soldiers; it has never been heard of to employ the registered populace. If others should follow this example, the populace will be squandered. If one executes Yu, how can later people be fully dedicated to Your Majesty's service?"<sup>32</sup>

Boqum's speech, as reported in these two versions, says very different things about the use of ethnic categories. The *Mingchen shilue* version's record of Boqum's argument that,

<sup>31</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.63:

公入陳：「勅惟以欽察之奴人者出而為兵，未聞以編氓奴籍欽察。或西域、河西諸人例此，雜取編氓以益其軍，則天下之戶耗矣。國用之忠宜旌，何罪而誅。」

<sup>32</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3168:

不忽木諫曰：「遇始令以欽察之人奴為兵，未聞以編民也。萬一他衛皆倣此，戶口耗矣。若誅遇，後人豈肯為陛下盡職乎？」

“it is unheard of to have the registered populace re-registered as Qipčaq” draws a hard line between populace and Qipčaq, rather than recognizing the latter as part of the former; presumably here the implication is that Qipčaq equals military.<sup>33</sup>

The *Yuanshi* reformulation of this makes this more specifically to do with the military recruitment of the populace in general. Moreover, the *Yuanshi* retains Boqum’s final warning, which is based in precisely this concern with militarization of civilian populations, but drops the warning about *Hexi* (Tangut) and *Xiyu* (Western) generals taking advantage. The *Yuanshi* also quotes Boqum’s speech summing up the root cause of the conflict rather differently: “Yu was initially ordered that Qipčaq people serving as slaves serve as soldiers; it has never been heard of to employ the registered populace.”<sup>34</sup> The *Mingchen shilue* version suggests the possibility that ‘the populace’ might be *ethnically* re-classified as ‘Qipčaq’. The *Yuanshi* drops this ethnic aspect to warn that the populace might undergo militarization.

Moreover, departing from a more general tendency, it is the earlier work that sees people categorized by geographic (*Xiyu* and *Hexi*) labels, rather than ethnonyms, something more usually restricted to reported speech within earlier texts, and moved into the narratorial voice in the *Yuanshi*.<sup>35</sup> The final element of Boqum’s appeal again rests, in the *Mingchen shilue* portrayal, on a formal court process, in that he lauds the official’s loyalty

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<sup>33</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.63:

勅惟以欽察之奴人者出而為兵，未聞以編氓奴籍欽察。

<sup>34</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3168:

「遇始令以欽察之人奴為兵，未聞以編民也。

<sup>35</sup> Note too the differing versions of the second half of Boqum’s speech:

*Mingchen shilue* 4.63:

Guoyong’s loyalty ought to be highlighted; how can [this] be a crime leading to execution?

國用之忠宜旌，何罪而誅。

*Yuanshi* 130.3168:

If one executes Yu, how will later officials commit to serve Your Majesty?

若誅遇，後人豈肯為陛下盡職乎？



and then asks “how can this be a crime *leading to* execution?” This again places Wang Yu’s actions (and potential punishment) in a space of formal activity. The *Yuanshi* again shifts the matter away from this formality to ask only about the effect of execution, as if this were an entirely arbitrary matter. Both versions report that the official was eventually spared.<sup>36</sup>

Overall, the *Yuanshi* compilers’ interventions in this incident have functioned to pick out an individual with a ‘foreign’ name, separating them from official rank and function, and, removing references to formal processes, linked them to the uncontrolled military recruitment of civilian households. A conflict emerging from this issue has been recast into a personal attack by the ‘foreign’ individual upon a civil official, an attack that has likewise been shifted outside the constraints of formal process and made personal, dishonest and disconnected from the problem at its root. The effect has been to strip away formal processes from transgressive court operations, and rest these instead on personality and slander, resulting in danger to an official of named position from slander by a Turko-Mongol person of no such seniority; something Qubilai also failed to curb. It should be noted that Boqum himself also had a northern, Turko-Mongol, name, and he is described as a Qangli, an ethnonym denoting a group closely associated with the Qipčaq, distinctions between the groups sometimes being blurred in modern scholarship.<sup>37</sup> Here, however, Boqum saves both Wang Yu, someone assigned a Chinese name and Chinese

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<sup>36</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.63:

After repeated persuasion [Wang] was eventually spared.

譬解數四而免。

*Yuanshi* 130.3168:

The emperor understood and Yu was spared.

帝意解，遇得不死。

<sup>37</sup> See, for example “On the Qipchaq (Qangli) and other foreign guards of the Mongol qans of China...”, Paul D. Buell, “Mongol Empire and Turkicization: The Evidence of Food and Foodways”, in Reuven Amitai-Preiss and David O. Morgan (eds) *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 200-23 (p. 200, n. 1).

civil post, and those elements of the populace vulnerable to the incorrect recruitment at the heart of the original problem.

We find a comparable association of slander and ethnically distinct individuals in the biographies of Lian Xixian 廉希憲 (1231-1280). Xixian was a senior Uyghur minister and influential Confucian under Qubilai, and his biographies vary in their ethnic categorization.<sup>38</sup> In the *Mingchen shilue* Xixian is effectively categorized as ‘Chinese’, being found in *juan* 7, alongside the northern Chinese figures Liu Bingzhong, Shi Tianze and Zhang Wenqian. This is not, however, the case in the *Yuanshi*, where he is found in *juan* 126, well within the ‘Turco-Mongol-*semu*’ first section of the ‘meritorious minister’ biographies, placed alongside Hantum and Bayan of the Bārin.<sup>39</sup>

In another example of our texts associating ethnically othered subjects with slander, in a manner that might suggest a kind of transgressive tendency, Xixian’s biography presents an odd anecdote. Centring on his handling of a false accusation against a secondary subject, both versions insist that the secondary subject in question was falsely accused without really discussing the nature or the source of that accusation.<sup>40</sup> The incident is

<sup>38</sup> On Lian Xixian 廉希憲 (1231-1280), courtesy name Shanfu 善甫, the son of Buyruq Qaya 布魯海牙, see *Mingchen shilue* 7.124-42; *Yuanshi* 126.3085-97; *YR*, p. 1507; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 175-76; C.C. Hsiao, “Lien Hsi-hsien (1231-1280)”, in *ISK*, pp. 480-99; Brose, *Subjects and Masters*, pp. 124-29; Ch’ên Yüan, *Western and Central Asians in China Under the Mongols*, pp. 21-23; Zhao Yongchun 趙永春, ‘Yuanchu Weiwu’erzu Zhengzhijia Lian Xixian 元初畏兀儿族政治家廉希憲 (The Early Yuan Uyghur Administrator Lian Xixian)’, *Songliao Xuekan*, 2 (1984), 77–81, 86.

<sup>39</sup> After a 122-character preface Lian Xixian’s substantial *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged in 75 sections of main text (7,376 characters), 46 sections of which come from a lost *jiazhuan* (by Gao Ming 高鳴, 4,888 characters, 66%) and 29 from the *shendaobei* by Yuan Mingshan (2,488 characters, 34%). Twenty-five excerpts from the *jiazhuan* make up all of the first third of the biography, the remainder seeing more balance between the source texts. The *shendaobei* is preserved as Yuan Mingshan 元明善, ‘Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei’ 平章政事廉文正王神道碑, in *QYW*, xxiv, pp. 352-63; *Qingheji* 5.45b-55b, in *YRCK*, v, pp. 185-90.

<sup>40</sup> Yuan Mingshan, ‘Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei’, p. 357; *Qingheji* 5.50b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 187:

匿贊馬丁者，嘗用事先朝，以告者被執。會詔釋大都囚，上還，告者復訴。

notable in that the ethnically distinguished subject is not himself responsible for these slanderous accusations, but rather subjected to them (this also clearly being a form of involvement). Xixian's involvement is not connected to ethnic identities as such, and the element of interest here is the ethnic classification of one 'Nizanmading' 匿贊馬丁 (taken to be Nizām al-Dīn), a secondary subject in the anecdote, whose pardon under an amnesty became controversial, apparently due to pressure on Qubilai from a rival faction.<sup>41</sup>

Xixian's *shendaobei* reports:

One Nizām al-Dīn, who had once served previous courts, had been imprisoned due to a denunciation. At that time a decree released the prisoners in Daidu, [but] when the emperor returned, the informant denounced him again.<sup>42</sup>

Su Tianjue chose to transmit the *jiazhuan* version of the account, one that underlines Nizām al-Dīn's ethnicity, specifies that his imprisonment was due to a grudge, and makes a point of separating Xixian from his release. The *Mingchen shilue* relates:

A *Huihu* official, one Nizām al-Dīn, who had served previous courts, had been the subject of a complaint by a personal enemy and imprisoned. Before long, a decree released those imprisoned in Dadu; when the decree arrived, [Xixian] was away on leave, and the tribunal resolved the matter without the gentleman.<sup>43</sup>

The *Yuanshi* compilers followed Su Tianjue in drawing on the *jiazhuan* rather than the *shendaobei*. Their interventions reclassify Nizām al-Dīn as a geographically defined individual, removing links to official posts, and added a far from neutral aside on his personal wealth:

In the seventh year [1270], a decree released those imprisoned in the capital. A person from the Western Regions, Nizām al-Dīn, who had served previous courts, and had assets accumulated to many tens of thousands, had been reported on by an

<sup>41</sup> Nizām al-Dīn, transliterated *nizanmading* 匿贊馬丁 in *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* versions of Xixian's biography, is recorded under *nizhimading* 匿智馬丁 by Qiu Shusen, who reports that he served under Möngke and Qubilai as Junior Vice Councillor for the *xingsheng* of Yanjing and other places. See *Yuanshi cidian*, p. 658.

<sup>42</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 7.135-36; *Yuanshi* 126.3085. It is also mentioned at Yuan Mingshan, 'Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei', p. 357; *Qingheji* 5.50b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 187, but the *Yuanshi* compilers appear to have drawn on the lost *jiazhuan* or *Mingchen shilue* version here.

<sup>43</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.135-36:

回鶻官匿贊馬丁者，用事先朝，為怨家所訴，繫獄。未幾，詔釋大都見禁囚，詔至，公適在告，堂判無公署。

enemy household, and imprisoned in Dadu; he was then released, and at that time Xixian was on leave, and in truth not involved in the matter.<sup>44</sup>

As with Chucai's portrayals, we see a contrast between the *Mingchen shilue* categorization of Nizām al-Dīn by the *Huihu* 回鶻 ethnonym and his geographically-tied description in the *Yuanshi* as a *Xiyuren* 西域人, or 'person from the Western Regions'.<sup>45</sup>

Nizām al-Dīn has thus been shifted out of formal office, out of the bounds of empire and out of the moral pale, recast as an accumulator of wealth through court service. These shifts have not materially altered his connection (as the victim) to slanderous accusations, but this victimhood is modified considerably by the modification of his moral standing. Nāzīm al-Dīn's *Yuanshi* portrayal is thus shifted both geographically and, perhaps, morally, the added report of his accumulated wealth again reinforcing notions of *Xiyu* greed.

This notion of ethnically ascribed greed in Othered populations is persistent around accounts of Xiyu and Huihu people. The 'lamb profit' description of high-interest credit associated particularly with merchants from the west and northwest in this period echoes the portrayal of 'Abd al-Rahman in Chucai's biographies.<sup>46</sup> Alongside Chucai's biographies, which give the Kitan credit as the resolver of the high-interest lending issue, several other biographies award precisely the same merit to their subjects. Another episode in Xixian's *Mingchen shilue* biography is significant in that it discusses 'lamb

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<sup>44</sup> *Yuanshi* 126.3085:

七年，詔釋京師繫囚。西域人匿贊馬丁，用事先朝，資累鉅萬，為怨家所告，繫大都獄，既釋之矣，時希憲在告，實不預其事。

<sup>45</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 7.135-36; *Yuanshi* 126.3085.

<sup>46</sup> On this lending practice, see especially Thomas T. Allsen, 'Mongolian Princes and Their Merchant Partners, 1200-1260', *Asia Major*, 2 (1989), 83-126 (99-100, 102-3).

profit' without mentioning ethnonyms or geographical backgrounds, merely connecting extortive lending practices to 'rich elements of the populace' 富民:

Wealthy [elements of] the populace lent money among the people, and when the interest equalled the principal, demanded this be included in the principal, therefore redoubling the interest, demanding payment in harvest month, calling this 'lamb profit' 羊羔利. The violence of their extortion [126] was like fiery pressure in summer and building an ice room in winter; the populace could not stand their poison. [Xixian] rectified their crimes, and even though [a debt period] might exceed years, interest repayments would not exceed the capital; excessive contracts would all be seized and burnt, later making this a general order. [*Jiazhuan*]<sup>47</sup>

The omission of this episode from the *Yuanshi* again leaves us arguing from silence, but can be read as suggesting that the compilers were unwilling to see this 'lamb profit' dissociated from ethnically specified Others.

The biographies of the general and official Shi Tianze also give their subject credit for solving a problem relating to 'lamb profit', linking this to Othered merchants. Shi Tianze 史天澤 (1202-1275) succeeded to his brother Shi Tianni's 史天倪 post of General Regional Military Commander in 1225, later serving as Myriarch for the five *lu* of Zhending 真定, Daming 大名, Hejian 河間, Jinan 濟南 and Dongping 東平.<sup>48</sup> In 1252 he was appointed Military Commissioner 經略使 for Henan, later serving as Junior Vice Councillor to the Central Secretariat under Qubilai and commanding troops under Bayan on campaign against the Song.<sup>49</sup> The *liezhuan* shows indications that the compilers

<sup>47</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.125-26:

富民貸錢民間，至本息相當，責入其本，又以其息為券，歲月責償，號羊羔利。其徵取 [126] 之暴，如夏以火迫，冬置凌室，民不勝其毒。公正其罪，雖歲月逾久，毋過本息對償，餘皆取券焚之，後著之令。[家傳]

<sup>48</sup> On Shi Tianze 史天澤 (1202-1275), courtesy name Runfu 潤甫, from Yongqing 永清 in present-day Hebei, see *Mingchen shilue* 7.114-24; *Yuanshi* 155.3658-65; *YR*, p. 235; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 210-11. See also C.C. Hsiao, 'Shih T'ien-tse' in *ISK*, pp. 27-45.

<sup>49</sup> Shi Tianze's *Mingchen shilue* biography, after a 141-character preface, is arranged into 36 sections, totalling 4,172 characters, 2,472 (59%) of which come from the Shi family *jiazhuan* by Wang Yun, and 1,468 (35%) from a lost *xingzhuang* by Wang Bowen 王博文 (1223-1288). A further 232 characters, comprising only six percent, come from Tianze's *shendaobei*, by Wang Pan 王磐. We only find a single section of notes (72 characters), excerpted from Yao Sui's *Mu'an wenji*. See Wang Yun 王惲, 'Kaifu

sometimes drew on the *jiazhuan* directly rather than via the *Mingchen shilue*, visible in the *Yuanshi* reporting Tianze's 1264 promotion to Grandee of the Third Class 光祿大夫, an honorary post carried across to the *Yuanshi* biography despite its (typical) omission by Su Tianjue.<sup>50</sup>

Shi Tianze's biographies describe poverty and demands on the populace, and link these to merchants described as *Hu* 胡 in both *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue*, and 'northwestern' 西北 in the *Yuanshi*, the compilers' edits again shifting problematic practices out of Ming territory.<sup>51</sup> Comparison of Tianze's *jiazhuan*, by Wang Yun, with the excerpt in the *Mingchen shilue* and the edited *liezhuan* account reveals two stages of intervention and simplification, separating a set of issues, linked in the earlier versions, to provide a clear northwestern focus for blame.

Tianze's *jiazhuan* first reports:

When the Jin had fallen, [Tianze] returned to Zhao 趙 [i.e., Hebei and region] to command the army. From the *yiwei* 乙未 [1235] census onwards, government was bothersome and taxation heavy, and 'urgent as a shooting star' and therefore the populace was in a depressed state, distressed and without easy solutions. Those in authority borrowed *Hu* 胡 merchants' money to pay [tax] on their behalf; the principal increased twofold, and this was called 'lamb profit.' Over the years this gradually accrued, examining the registers for conscripts, the populace reached [the

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yitong sansi zhongshu zuochengxiang zhongwu shigong jiazhuan' 開府儀同三司中書左丞相忠武史公家傳, in *QYW*, vi, pp. 343–51; *Qiuqianji* 48.11a-21b at *YRCK*, ii, pp. 84–89; Wang Pan 王磐, 'Zhongshu youchengxiang shi gong shendaobei' 中書右丞相史公神道碑, *QYW*, ii, pp. 273–7. On Wang Bowen 王博文 (1223–1288), courtesy name Xixi 西溪, see *YR*, p. 199.

<sup>50</sup> See Wang Yun, 'Kaifu yitong sansi zhongshu zuochengxiang zhongwu shigong jiazhuan', p. 347; *Qiuqianji* 48.17b, *YRCK*, ii, p. 87; *Yuanshi* 155.3662.

<sup>51</sup> Shi Tianze 史天澤 (1202–1275), courtesy name Runfu 潤甫, from Yongqing 永清 in present-day Hebei, succeeded to his brother Shi Tianni's 史天倪 post of General Regional Military Commander in 1225, later governing the five *lu* of Zhending 真定, Daming 大名, Hejian 河間, Jinan 濟南 and Dongping 東平. In 1252 he was appointed Military Commissioner 經略使 for Henan, later serving as Junior Vice Councillor to the Central Secretariat under Qubilai and commanding troops under Bayan on campaign against the Song. See *Yuanshi* 155.3658–65; *YR*, p. 235; *Mingchen shilue* 7.114–24. See also C.C. Hsiao in *ISK*, pp. 27–45. The 'lamb profit' episode is found at Wang Yun, 'Kaifu yitong sansi zhongshu zuochengxiang zhongwu shigong jiazhuan', p. 345; *Qiuqianji* 48.13b at *YRCK*, ii, p. 85; *Mingchen shilue* 7.116–17; *Yuanshi* 155.3658.

point where even] selling their fields and businesses, enslaving wives and children, some could not pay.<sup>52</sup>

The *Mingchen shilue* cites the *jiazhuan*, but unannounced edits were made to this section, removing some complexity.<sup>53</sup> This simplification continues, as Su Tianjue cut a short section from the middle of this account, which in the *jiazhuan* reads as follows:

At that time military and populace were not yet separated, taxation and corvée duties accumulated on top of one another; repeatedly encountering campaigns and garrisons, these were then dealt with hurriedly, inside and outside [court] becoming disturbed over trifles, it approached the point at which people were unable to survive.<sup>54</sup>

This unannounced meso-level edit, removing a further list of issues, narrows the problems faced by Tianze, helping to focus these on the loans. *Jiazhuan* and *Mingchen shilue* provide very similar versions of Tianze's response to this problem. The *jiazhuan* reports:

The gentleman sympathized with this; attending the court and memorialized on these matters altogether; the debt of the populace and interest on official repayments should only equal the principal and then stop [accumulating]; the army should fill its registers from the 'middle households,' and differential quotas were set for rich and poor; the emperor followed all of this, announcing it to all the *lu* 路, and this became the permanent system.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Wang Yun, 'Kaifu yitong sansi zhongshu zuochengxiang zhongwu shigong jiazhuan', p. 345; *Qiuqianji* 48.13b at *YRCK*, ii, p. 85:

金亡，公還趙視師。自乙未版籍後，政煩賦重，急於星火，以民蕭條，悴不易辦。有司貸賈胡子錢代輸，積累倍稱，謂之羊羔利，歲月稍集，驗籍來徵，民至賣田鬻妻子，有不能給者。時兵民未分，賦役互重，復遇征戍，則趨辦一時，中外騷屑，殆不聊生。公憫焉，詣闕併奏其事：民債官為代償，一本息而止；軍則中戶克籍，其征賦差貧富為定額。上皆從之，布告諸路，永為定制。

<sup>53</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.117:

When the Jin fell, the gentleman returned to Zhao to command the army. From the *yiwei* 乙未 [1235] census onwards, government was bothersome and taxation heavy, and 'urgent as a shooting star' and because the populace was suddenly unable to manage, those in authority borrowed *Hu* 胡 merchants' money to pay [tax] on their behalf; the principal increased twofold, and this was called 'lamb profit.' Over the years this was gradually accrued, examining the registers for conscripts, the populace reached [the point where even] selling their fields and enslaving wives and children some could not pay.

金亡，公還趙視師。自乙未版籍後，政煩賦重，急於星火，以民猝不能辦，有司貸賈胡子錢代輸，積累倍稱，謂之羊羔利。歲月稍集，驗籍來徵，民至賣田鬻妻子有不能給者。

<sup>54</sup> Wang Yun, 'Kaifu yitong sansi zhongshu zuochengxiang zhongwu shigong jiazhuan', p. 345; *Qiuqianji* 48.13b at *YRCK*, ii, p. 85:

時兵民未分，賦役互重，復遇征戍，則趨辦一時，中外騷屑，殆不聊生。

<sup>55</sup> Wang Yun, 'Kaifu yitong sansi zhongshu zuochengxiang zhongwu shigong jiazhuan', p. 345; *Qiuqianji* 48.13b at *YRCK*, ii, p. 85:

公憫焉，詣闕併奏其事：民債官為代償，一本息而止；軍則中戶克籍，其征賦差貧富為定額。上皆從之，布告諸路，永為定制。

The *Mingchen shilue* again presents some micro-level alterations to the phrasing of this account, but these are limited to some minor condensing and alterations to leave the report coherent despite the removal of the paragraph above.<sup>56</sup>

In both *Jiazhuan* and *Mingchen shilue* this report, which credits Tianze with the solution to serious problems stemming from a varying combination of tax, corvée and military demands, exacerbated by lending, is followed by another describing Tianze's response to failed harvests. The *jiazhuan* reports:

Between *wuxu* 戊戌 [1238] and *jihai* 己亥 [1239] there were successive years of locusts and drought; borrowing again to fulfill the tribute, [debts] accumulated to more than 13,000 *ding* 錠. [Tianze] calculated that the populace must not face further hardship, so first took from his family's coffers, then had his clansmen and subordinates match to make the repayments, thereby fulfilling the bond.<sup>57</sup>

This is edited slightly in the *Mingchen shilue*, but treated very differently by the *Yuanshi*, in a partial parallel to the omission of a report on the same failed harvests from Chucai's *liezhuan*.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>56</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.116-17:

The gentleman [117] attended the court and memorialized on the matter; interest on official repayments should only equal the principal and then stop [accumulating]; the army filled its registers from the 'middle households,' and differential quotas were set for rich and poor; it was decreed that all of this be followed, and all the *lu* 路 were forever ordered. [*Jiazhuan*]

公 [117] 詣闕奏其事，官為代償一本息而止；軍則中戶充籍，其征賦差貧富為定額，詔皆從之，諸路永為定制。[家傳]

<sup>57</sup> Wang Yun, 'Kaifu yitong sansi zhongshu zuochengxiang zhongwu shigong jiazhuan', p. 345; *Qiuqianji* 48.13b at *YRCK*, ii, p. 85:

迨戊戌己亥間，仍歲蝗旱，復假貸以足貢數，積銀至萬三千餘錠。公度民不可重困，乃先出其家資，次及族屬，官吏均配以償，遂折其券。

<sup>58</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.117:

Between *wuxu* 戊戌 [1238] and *jihai* 己亥 [1239] there were successive years of locusts and drought; borrowing again to fulfill the tribute, [debts] accumulated to more than 13,000 *ding* 錠. [Tianze] calculated that the populace must not face further hardship, so first emptied his family's coffers, then had his clansmen and subordinates match to make the repayments, thereby fulfilling the bond. [*Jiazhuan*]

戊戌己亥間，仍歲蝗旱，復假貸以足貢賦，積銀至萬三千餘錠。[五] 公度民不可重困，乃先傾其家資，次及族屬官吏，均配以償，遂折其券。[家傳]



The *liezhuan* presents exceptional amendments to the foundation text reports, reworking problem, solution and result from multiple incidents into one combined account. The compilers' version of this problem again shifts the problematic lenders away from association with an ethnonym to a geographical label; in this case adopting a general 'northwest' indicator:

At that time the political situation was disordered and the land tax heavy; [some] borrowed money from the northwestern merchants 西北賈, who paid on their behalf; interest accumulated several times over, something called 'lamb profit' 羊羔利, and the populace were unable to pay it off.<sup>59</sup>

The *Yuanshi* description of the problems faced here is altered to focus purely on indebtedness, and those blamed for these loans are shifted out of the imperial space to the west.

The *Yuanshi* description of Tianze's response to these problems also shows a reworking of the problems:

Tianze presented a memorial requesting that the officials should compensate at once for the principal and interest and stop [the practice].<sup>60</sup>

This is followed immediately by the *Yuanshi* mention of the following years' problems, greatly condensed, and which, following an undated item, itself following a discussion of the Jin collapse in 1234, is quite dissociated from the 1238-39 harvests. This is then followed by a – substantially reworked – account of Tianze's attempts to reform military recruitment:

The following year the harvest failed; [the populace] had to borrow to fulfil their tribute quota, and the silver accumulated to 13,000 *ding* 錠. Tianze sold all his family property, and led his family, clan and officials in paying it off. He also requested that middle-grade households be registered in the army, and upper- and

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<sup>59</sup> *Yuanshi* 155.3658:

時政煩賦重，貸錢於西北賈人以代輸，累倍其息，謂之羊羔利，民不能給。

<sup>60</sup> *Yuanshi* 155.3658:

天澤奏請官為償一本息而止。

lower-grade households as populace, registering them according to the regulations, so that there would be peace within the borders.<sup>61</sup>

The *Yuanshi* treatment of this incident seems to have built on Su Tianjue's (unannounced) edits to shift the reader's focus away from the complexity of problems laid out in the *jiazhuan*, leaving the economic issue – debt to 'foreign' merchants – front and centre. Altering the account of Tianze's actions by separating the recruitment issue likewise makes his intervention on lending appear primary. Indeed, the positioning of these measures after the discussion of his personal sacrifices in 1238-39 makes fiscal and financial issues entirely paramount, and all other themes somewhat secondary, again suggesting that the central problem was usurious loans associated with external commercial interests.

Lian Xixian's biographies provide further examples of non-Han transgression from Qubilai's reign, most prominently in parallel and closely related accounts of an undated and frustrated attempt to prosecute an anonymous individual for extortion.<sup>62</sup> The portrayal of that secondary subject links extortion, deceit, 'western' people and a kind of imperial impunity from punishment. The *Mingchen shilue* relates this via an excerpt transmitted verbatim from Xixian's *shendaobei*. The *Yuanshi* account of this dramatic incident has undergone numerous micro-level interventions, including, unusually, the removal of reported speech in favour of description in the external narrator's voice. Here, both texts define Xixian's target as a *Xiyuren*, someone from the Western Regions, who claimed the status of a *Fuma* 駙馬, a title commonly abbreviated from *fuma duwei* 駙馬都尉,

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<sup>61</sup> *Yuanshi* 155.3658:

繼以歲饑，假貸充貢賦，積銀至一萬三千錠，天澤傾家貲，率族屬官吏代償之。又請以中戶為軍，上下戶為民，著為定籍，境內以寧。

<sup>62</sup> The episode is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei', p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188; *Mingchen shilue* 7.137; *Yuanshi* 126.3093. It is summarized briefly at Ye Xinmin 叶新民, 'Touniange shiji kaolue' 头辮哥事迹考略 (An Outline of the Deeds of Touniange), *Neimenggu daxue xuebao (zhexue shehui kexueban)* 4 (1992), 1-6 (5).

translated by Hucker as ‘Commandant-Escort’ and granted to the male consorts of imperial princesses so commonly as to become an equivalent identifier for ‘imperial son-in-law’.<sup>63</sup> Tantalizingly, neither text identifies this man further. The focus of the narrative is on this individual’s transgressive and deceitful behaviour, his humiliation by Xixian and his impunity from full punishment, the latter due to links with a senior figure in the court.<sup>64</sup>

The construction of this description differs, however. The *Mingchen shilue* and *shendaobei* account presents its description of the transgressor as direct reported speech from the populace of Beijing 北京,<sup>65</sup> following an introductory section which sees Xixian inquire after the troubles affecting them:

When [Xixian] arrived in Beijing 北京 he asked the populace what caused them suffering, and all said, “There is a person from the Western Regions 西域 who styles himself *Fuma*; camping outside the city walls, he arrests rich households 家, falsely alleging that his forebears lent them money with interest; claiming reimbursement with great urgency; there is nowhere to appeal.”<sup>66</sup>

The *Xiyuren* description is not, therefore, voiced by the implied narrator of the source text but rather by the Beijing residents. The phrasing immediately suggests that this

<sup>63</sup> See *HD*, p. 219. For further discussion of the term and the status of imperial sons-in-law in the Mongol era, see especially Ishayahu Landa, ‘Imperial Sons-In-Law on the Move: Oyirad and Qonggirad Dispersion in Mongol Eurasia’, *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 22 (2016), 161-198 (162-64).

<sup>64</sup> Yuan Mingshan, ‘Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei’, p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188; *Mingchen shilue* 7.137:

王至北京，問民所苦，皆曰：「有西域人，自稱駙馬，營於城外，繫富家，誣其祖父嘗貸子錢，訊之使償，無所於訴。」旦日，持牒告王，王即遣吏逮駙馬者，其人怒，乘馬而來，直入省堂，徑坐榻上，王令曳下跪，而詰之曰：「制無私獄，汝何人，敢爾繫民？其械繫之。」哀禱請命，國王亦為之言，稍寬待對，一夕拔營遁去。[神道碑]

*Yuanshi* 126.3093:

有西域人自稱駙馬，營于城外，繫富民，誣其祖父嘗貸息錢，索償甚急，民訴之行省，希憲命收捕之。其人怒，乘馬入省堂，坐榻上，希憲命摔下跪，而問之曰：「法無私獄，汝何人，敢擅繫民？」令械繫之。其人惶懼求哀，國王亦為之請，乃稍寬，令待對，舉營夜遁。

<sup>65</sup> This refers to a settlement west of Ningcheng in present-day Inner Mongolia.

<sup>66</sup> Yuan Mingshan, ‘Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei’, p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188; *Mingchen shilue* 7.137:

王至北京，問民所苦，皆曰：「有西域人，自稱駙馬，營於城外，繫富家，誣其祖父嘗貸子錢，訊之使償，無所於訴。」

anonymous person was not actually an imperial son-in-law, and on top of this implied pretence, he is accused of claiming money by false pretences. The transgression described is again linked to greed, moneylending and exactions in pursuit of interest. This time, however, it is associated with criminality and fraud rather than questioning the morality of collections made on behalf of the polity.

The *Yuanshi* compilers cut the introductory section and therefore removed the populace of Beijing from involvement in characterizing this transgressor. This intervention effectively, and unusually, shifts burden of the truth-claim behind the description of this pseudo-*Fuma* from the reported content of the population's complaint and onto the authoritative narratorial voice of the *Yuanshi* itself:

There was a person from the Western Regions 西域 who styled himself *Fuma* 駙馬; camping outside the city walls, he arrested rich [members of the] populace 民, falsely alleging that his forebears lent them money with interest; claiming reimbursement with great urgency; the populace appealed to the *xingsheng*, and Xixian ordered them to arrest him.<sup>67</sup>

The problem with this particular *Xiyuren* in both texts is extortion linked to moneylending, a familiar theme from Chucai's biographies, especially relating to 'Abd al-Rahman.

This problem is slightly intensified in the *Yuanshi* version, which has this pseudo-*Fuma* extorting from wealthy members within the 'populace' 民, rather than from wealthy 'households' 家, a distinction to which we return in chapter five. Both versions of the account again underline the apparent norm for people from the Western Regions to be involved in such transgressive lending in reporting the (apparently false but perhaps

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<sup>67</sup> *Yuanshi* 126.3093:

有西域人自稱駙馬，營于城外，繫富民，誣其祖父嘗貸息錢，索償甚急，民訴之行省，希憲命收捕之。

feasible) claim that this pseudo-*fuma*'s forbears were still owed interest. The 'problem' element of the episode therefore establishes a background of fraudulent activity by a *Xiyuren* secondary character, and the *Yuanshi* compilers' edits altered this from a hearsay report of financial transgression against households to a report of extortion against 'the populace' bearing the full weight of the *Yuanshi*'s narratorial truth-claim.

This is not the focus of the overall account, however, as the report centres instead on the drama of this person's arrest and humbling by Lian Xixian. Both versions characterize a kind of swaggering arrogance in the pseudo-*Fuma*, the *Mingchen shilue* account highlighting the villain's actions in going straight in and sitting on the bench:

[Xixian] sent clerks to capture the *Fuma*; he was angry, mounted a horse and came, going straight into the administrative hall, and sitting directly on the bench. [Xixian] ordered that he be dragged down to kneel, and questioned him, saying, "It has been decreed that there be no private prisons; who are you to dare arrest the populace? Imprison and shackle him."<sup>68</sup>

The *Yuanshi* amendments can be read to suggest that the '*Fuma*' rode straight into the administration hall, something not claimed in the *Mingchen shilue*:

He was angry, riding his horse into the administration hall and sitting on the bench; Xixian ordered that he be seized and [made to] kneel, questioned him, saying, "The law permits no private prisons; who are you to dare arrogate the authority to arrest the populace?" [Xixian] ordered his imprisonment and shackling.<sup>69</sup>

The compilers' intentions here have again had the unusual effect of shifting some descriptive content away from Xixian's reported speech and into the narratorial voice.

<sup>68</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei', p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188; *Mingchen shilue* 7.137:

王即遣吏逮駙馬者，其人怒，乘馬而來，直入省堂，徑坐榻上，王令曳下跪，而詰之曰：「制無私獄，汝何人，敢爾繫民？其械繫之。」

<sup>69</sup> *Yuanshi* 126.3093:

其人怒，乘馬入省堂，坐榻上，希憲命掙下跪，而問之曰：「法無私獄，汝何人，敢擅繫民？」令械繫之。其人惶懼求哀，國王亦為之請，乃稍寬，令待對，舉營夜遁。

In both texts Xixian's prosecution attempt is foiled by the intervention of a high-ranking military figure, identified only indirectly by a princely title.<sup>70</sup> Due to subsequent delays and leniency, the pseudo-*Fuma* was able to flee.<sup>71</sup> This seems to suggest a kind of ultimate impunity for such *Xiyuren* – although Xixian could arrest the transgressor, he could not punish him fully.<sup>72</sup> This impunity is emphasized by the humiliation imposed on the pseudo-*fuma* by Xixian before his escape, which the *Yuanshi* compilers adjusted to make more pronounced. In the *Mingchen shilue* biography, the transgressor is described as having “prayed and pleaded his case”.<sup>73</sup> Edits to the *liezhuan* describe him more vividly as “greatly frightened”, “begging them to pity him”.<sup>74</sup> This adjustment makes Xixian a more effective scourge of such wrongdoers, by inflicting a greater level of suffering on the accused.

This is a curious anecdote; the transgressive secondary subject is reported as having styled himself ‘*Fuma*’, but this claim, although declared suspect in the narrative, is not explored further. The impression given by both versions is that the identity of this ‘son-in-law’ is immaterial, as is the identification of his sponsor. The focus of this drama is on the arrest and arrogance of the ‘*Fuma*’, and his incomplete humbling by Xixian. The

<sup>70</sup> This seems to have been Törelge 頭輦哥, a descendant of Muqali and commander of the Jalayir in northern China, who commanded forces in Koryo and was appointed to command the Beijing and Dongping Branch Secretariat in 1271. On him, see Ye Xinmin, ‘Touniange shiji kaolüe’, 1-6.

<sup>71</sup> Yuan Mingshan, ‘Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei’, p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188; *Mingchen shilue* 7.137:

國王亦為之言，稍寬待對，一夕拔營遁去。[神道碑]

*Yuanshi* 126.3093:

國王亦為之請，乃稍寬，令待對，舉營夜遁。

<sup>72</sup> Such ethnically-defined impunity has been identified as a major issue under the Il-Qanate. See Tsai, ‘Ethnic Riots and Violence in the Mongol Empire’, 102.

<sup>73</sup> Yuan Mingshan, ‘Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei’, p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188; *Mingchen shilue* 7.137:

哀禱請命，國王亦為之言，稍寬待對，一夕拔營遁去。[神道碑]

<sup>74</sup> *Yuanshi* 126.3093:

索償甚急，民訴之行省，希憲命收捕之。其人怒，乘馬入省堂，坐榻上，希憲命猝下跪，而問之曰：「法無私獄，汝何人，敢擅繫民？」令械繫之。其人惶懼求哀，國王亦為之請，乃稍寬，令待對，舉營夜遁。

*Yuanshi* edits, moving the description of the problem from reported speech to narrated reportage make both the ‘Western Regions’ identification and the account of crimes committed definitive, rather than hearsay or accusation. Edits to the description of the pseudo-*fuma*’s arrest intensify both the arrogance exhibited, and the fear and humiliation felt, by that transgressor. As with their interventions in the Xiandebu slander incident examined in chapter two, the compilers made the situation appear more extreme, vivid and dramatic. His crimes presented as definitive events, the humiliation of the *Yuanshi* pseudo-*Fuma* is more clearly justified, and his rescue by Törelge more shocking and corrupt in its suggestion of *Semu* impunity than is the transgression in the *Mingchen shilue*. Moreover, links made between *Xiyuren* and fraud or slander are further reinforced.

This selective condemnation of ‘foreign’ people via connection to crimes and transgressions, especially those linked to greed and extortion, is very prominent, as is slander, as we have seen with Nāẓim al-Dīn. The biographies of Yao Shu likewise make a similar connection to a similarly northwestern individual. Yao Shu 姚樞 (c.1203-1280), a writer, Confucian official, advisor to Mongol courts from 1235 to 1241 and later to Qubilai, served as Grand Supervisor of Agriculture 大司農 and later Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy 翰林學士承旨.<sup>75</sup> Shu’s portrayal draws primarily on the *shendaobei* composed by Shu’s nephew Yao Sui.<sup>76</sup> Su Tianjue made a considerable number of stealthy cuts to his source material, and much of the elements of interest to this study due to their dealing with *Xiyuren* and *Huihui* identities were subsequently omitted from the

<sup>75</sup> On Yao Shu, courtesy name Gongmao 公茂, originally from Liucheng 柳城, see *Yuanshi* 158.3711-16; *Mingchen shilue* 8.155-64; *YR*, p. 731; Hok-lam Chan, ‘Yao Shu (1201-1278)’, *Papers on Far Eastern History*, 22 (1980), 17–50; H.L. Chan, ‘Yao Shu’, in *ISK*, pp. 387-406.

<sup>76</sup> Yao Sui 姚燧, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’ 中書左丞姚文獻公神道碑, in *QYW*, ix, pp. 573-85 / *Mu’ANJI* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.215-25. Unfortunately both *QYW* and *Yaosuiji* editions show signs of Qianlong-era re-transliteration.

*Yuanshi*. The *liezhuan* does present a condemnatory portrayal of Maḥmūd Yalavač, a highly influential figure of the early empire period, adding emphasis to its connection between him, and anonymous others, to greed and embezzlement.<sup>77</sup>

Yalavač was celebrated by both Juvaynī and Rashīd al-Dīn as an upstanding and formally appointed member of Ögödei Qaḡan's government, being described by the latter as *ṣāhib-dīvān*, translated by Thackston as “chief of the administration”, and seems to have been involved in the construction of a sophisticated tax system in Central Asia even before Činggis' death.<sup>78</sup> Yao Shu's biographies do not offer an ethnic classification of Yalavač, but as with the *Yuanshi* compilers' choice to name Toḡtoḡa as the offending general in Boqum's biography, the mention of such a clearly ‘foreign’ name already functions to shift the secondary subject away from ‘Han’ norms. Shu's *shendaobei* reports the matter as follows:

In the year *xinchou* 辛丑 [1241], he was awarded robes and a gold tally as Senior Supervisor 郎中. Yalavač [was in charge of] the Branch Censorate for Yan, and at that time only engaged in bribery; the various dukes and princes of all-under-heaven vied to extort from the populace to gain favour; because [Shu] was in charge they shared with him; he therefore refused all their offers. Some people came to see [Shu] with two silver tablets but he then politely declined and then erected a felt curtain to separate him from these people sent to pursue him.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>77</sup> This incident is found at Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’, p. 575 / *Mu'anji* (Yaosuiji) 15.216; *Mingchen shilue* 8.156-57; *Yuanshi* 158.3711; see also Chan, ‘Yao Shu’, p. 389.

<sup>78</sup> See *Compendium of Chronicles*, p. 384; Boyle, *Successors*, pp. 176-77; Judith Kolbas, *The Mongols in Iran: Chingiz Khan to Uljaytu 1220-1309* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 49, 68. The office of *ṣāhib-dīvān* is translated elsewhere by Boyle as Minister of Finance, though these terms are used rather loosely. See *History of the World Conqueror*, p. xxviii. Steingass defines this as, among other things, “Superintendent of the finances”, or “a registrar”. See Steingass, *Dictionary*, p. 778. On Maḥmūd Yalavač (d. c. 1254) more generally, see Thomas T. Allsen, ‘Maḥmūd Yalavač (?-1254), Mas'ūd Beg (?-1289), Alī Beg (?-1280); Bujir (fl. 1206-1260)’, in *ISK*, pp. 122–35; C. E. Bosworth, ‘Maḥmūd Yalawač’, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, *Second Edition*, ed. by P. Bearman and others (Brill Online, 2013)

<[http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/mahmud-yalawac-SIM\\_4804](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/mahmud-yalawac-SIM_4804)> [accessed 10 September 2013]. Allsen uses his transfer to Yanjing as an example of the Činggisid view that all regions of their empire could be interchangeably governed by a transferable *xingsheng* Secretariat; not the message our compilers are trying to put across. See Thomas T. Allsen, ‘Technologies of Governance in the Mongolian Empire: A Geographic Overview’, in *Imperial Statecraft: Political Forms and Techniques of Governance in Inner Asia, Sixth - Twentieth Centuries*, ed. by David Sneath (Bellingham, WA: Center for East Asian Studies, Western Washington University / Mongolian and Inner Asian Studies Unit, University of Cambridge, 2006), pp. 117–40 (pp. 125-26).

<sup>79</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’, p. 575; *Mu'anji* (Yaosuiji) 15.216:



Edits by both Su Tianjue and the *Yuanshi* compilers accumulate to tighten the focus on Yalavač as a transgressive secondary subject. The *Mingchen shilue* edits to the *shendaobei* account shedding detail to focus on the contrast between these individuals and their conduct:

In the year *xinchou* 辛丑 [1241], he [Shu] was awarded a gold tally as Senior Supervisor 郎中. Yalavač [was in charge of] the Branch Censorate for Yan, and at that time only engaged in bribery; the various dukes and princes of all-under-heaven vied to extort from the populace to gain favour; because [Shu] was in charge they shared with him; he therefore refused all their offers.<sup>80</sup>

The *Yuanshi* adopts Su Tianjue's edits, and makes numerous micro-level changes, further tightening the focus on Shu and Yalavač:

In *xinchou* 辛丑 [1241], Shu was granted a golden tally and appointed Senior Supervisor of the Yanjing Branch Censorate. At that time Yalavač was Branch Censor and only collected money and bribes. Because Shu was in charge of the headquarters, he shared [them] with him. Shu refused all his offers, and therefore resigned his post and departed.<sup>81</sup>

Su Tianjue's unannounced edit, removing mention of the robes granted to Shu, makes his receipt of the tally a straightforward appointment without the distraction of extra gifts; his dropping of the final discussion involving various unidentified people placing pressure on Shu tightens the focus on Yalavač. Finally, the *Yuanshi* compilers' removal of "the various dukes and princes" finishes turning a conflict involving all sorts of transgressors into one with a single scapegoat, namely Yalavač.

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歲辛丑，賜衣金符以郎中。伊魯幹齊行臺于燕時，惟事貨賂，天下諸侯競以掊克入媚，以公幕長必分及之，乃一切拒絕。人有以銀二笏來見，既謝却，乃出置氊簾間，遣人追及與之。

<sup>80</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.156:

歲辛丑，賜金符。以郎中牙魯瓦赤行臺于燕，時惟事貨賂，天下諸侯競以掊克入媚，以公幕長必分及之，乃一切拒絕。

<sup>81</sup> *Yuanshi* 158.3711:

辛丑，賜金符，為燕京行臺郎中。時牙魯瓦赤行臺，惟事貨賂，以樞幕長，分及之。樞一切拒絕，因棄官去。

The *Yuanshi* compilers did not, however, take advantage of all opportunities presented by foundation texts to establish condemnatory links between northwestern peoples and transgressive lending. The *Mingchen shilue* biography for Zhang Dehui 張德輝 (1195-1274) presents a similar incident.<sup>82</sup> This blames *Hu* 胡 merchants' usurious loans for bankrupting the populace, and the idealized subject's success similarly lies in restricting interest to equal the principal.<sup>83</sup> Considering how closely Dehui's *liezhuan* follows the *Mingchen shilue* and its *Jiazhuan* excerpts, the omission of the entire incident might either suggest that 'proving' northwestern merchants' business practices transgressive did not always represent the highest priority. It is possible that the compilers wished to suggest that Chucai had succeeded, although for this to be the case would require a substantial degree of coordination across the work.

The omission might also, however, relate to the macro-level treatment of Dehui's *liezhuan*, placed as it was alongside a clutch of other figures whose service primarily took place during Qubilai's reign.<sup>84</sup> Zhang Dehui's biography does, like Yao Shu's, transmit an episode opposing its subject to a transgressive taxation proposal, but this is dated

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<sup>82</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 10.205-6, but is omitted from the parallel part of the *liezhuan*, at *Yuanshi* 163.3823. Zhang Dehui 張德輝, courtesy name Yaoqing 耀卿, from Jiaocheng 交城 in Jining 冀寧, wrote a detailed account of his travels in the north and served Qubilai before and after his succession, in posts including Control Officer for Hedong 河東宣撫使, Academician in the Hanlin Academy 翰林學士, Advisor to the Central Secretariat 參議中書省事, Pacification Commissioner for Dongping 東平宣慰使, and Associate Censor 侍御史. His *Mingchen shilue* portrayal is entirely drawn from Dehui's lost *xingzhuang* by Wang Yun. On him see *Mingchen shilue* 10.205-10; *Yuanshi* 163.3823-26; *YR*, p. 1167; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 224-25.

<sup>83</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.205-6:

板蕩後，民耗弱不任差役，官從胡商貸子錢，以充貢賦，謂之羊羔利，歲久來責所負，例配徵民伍，有破產不能償者。公言於開府，請於朝，止一本息付之。

<sup>84</sup> *Yuanshi* 163 comprises the biographies of Li Dehui 李德輝 (163.3815-19), Zhang Xiongfei 張雄飛 (163.3819-23), Zhang Dehui 張德輝 (163.3826-29), Cheng Silian 程思廉 (163.3829-31), Wugusun Ze 烏古孫澤 (163.3831-35) and Zhao Bing 趙炳 (163.3835-38). The focus of these *liezhuan* is clearly on service under Qubilai, both before, but especially after, his enthronement on 1260.

(contextually) to the first half of the 1260s, when Dehui was serving as Pacification Commissioner 宣慰使 for Dongping 東平 *lu*:<sup>85</sup>

\*Bahā' al-Dīn<sup>86</sup> consulted on whether they should 'peel silk from the cocoon' [i.e. extort from the populace], taking taxes and making them transport [their quota]. Dehui said, "This would be slandering those above and poisoning those below; moreover, later on who will take the responsibility for this?" It was then cancelled.<sup>87</sup>

This again shows a readiness to implicate 'foreign' individuals in extortionate demands.

Its employment in the *liezhuan* with limited edits is, when viewed against the treatment of the rest of Dehui's material, less exceptional than the omission of the previous episode.

This suggests that the *Yuanshi* editing was somewhat selective in moving the centre of gravity – in the form of conflict and governmental engagement – of Dehui's biography back towards Qubilai's reign, sacrificing a degree of detail in the process.

There is some evidence, although again usually based on omissions and silences, that the compilers made edits removing 'Other' ethnonyms from 'Chinese' space in other ways, too. The biographies of Zhang Hongfan include just this kind of suggestive omission.

Zhang Hongfan 張弘範 (1238-1280), appellative Zhongchou 仲疇, the ninth son of

Zhang Rou 張柔 (of whom we will hear more later), fought against Li Tan in 1262 and

<sup>85</sup> The last dated incident before this in Dehui's biographies relates to praise received in 1261; his opponent seems to have been transferred out of Dongping in 1265. See the following note.

<sup>86</sup> Baohedin 寶合丁. Uncertain reading - Wang calls him Baoqadin. See *YR*, p. 2264. Qiu Shusen identifies him as the 'Huihui ren' and Associate Administrator 同知 (see *FG*, pp. 348, 418) for Dongping recorded in the Annals of Shizu as having been promoted to Privy Councillor on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 1265 on the replacement of Lian Xixian and Shang Ting. See Qiu Shusen, *Yuanshi cidian*, p. 1177. *Yuanshi* 6.106:

甲子，以蒙古人充各路達魯花赤，漢人充總管，回回人充同知，永為定制。以同知東平路宣慰使寶合丁為平章政事，山東廉訪使王晉為參知政事。廉希憲、商挺罷。

<sup>87</sup> *Yuanshi* 163.3825:

寶合丁議賦繭絲，令民稅而後輸。德輝曰：「是誣上以毒下也，且後期之責孰任之！」遂罷其事。

This is transmitted fairly closely from the *Mingchen shilue* version. *Mingchen shilue* 10.209:

寶合丁議欲官賦繭絲，令民稅之而後輸，公曰：「是無上以毒下也，且輸納後期之責孰任之？」遂罷其事。

served with distinction during the decisive campaign against the Song.<sup>88</sup> Hongfan's biographies describe a 1275 encounter with Song forces near the Yangzi Bridge 楊子橋.<sup>89</sup> According to Zhang Hongfan's *miaotangbei*, composed by Yu Ji and excerpted in the *Mingchen shilue*, he unhorsed a Song general who was of 'Uighur' 回紇 origin, incidentally employing a combination of characters rarely seen in the *Yuanshi*, and most commonly employed in the *Xin Tangshu*.<sup>90</sup> The omission of this detail in the *Yuanshi* version of the same event removes this ethnically othered secondary subject from the *Yuanshi* record of Song, and therefore perhaps more normatively 'Chinese', society.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>88</sup> On Zhang Hongfan, see *Yuanshi* 156.3679-84; *Mingchen shilue* 6.100-8; *YR*, p. 1125; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 212-13; Zhang Hongyin 张洪印, 'Hebei yixian faxian yuandai zhang hongfan muzhi' 河北易县发现元代张弘范墓志 (The *Muzhi* for Zhang Hongfan Discovered in Yi County, Hebei), *Wenwu*, 2 (1986), 72-74. After a 110-character preface, the main text of Zhang Hongfan's *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged into fourteen sections, all taken from a *miaotang bei* by Yu Ji. A single section of notes, from a *miaobei* by Yao Sui, provides an alternative perspective on the end of the young Song emperor. See Yu Ji, 'Huainan xianwu wang miaotangbei' 淮南憲武王廟堂碑, *QYW*, xxvii, pp. 215-20; *Daoyuan leigao*, 37.15b-30a, at *YRCK*, vi, pp. 188-95; Wang Pan 王磐, 'Zhang hongfan mubei' 張弘範墓碑, *QYW*, ii, pp. 296-99.

<sup>89</sup> This was located to the northwest of Nanshi Bridge 南施橋 in Hanjiang, in present-day Jiangsu Province. On this location, see Qiu Shusen, *Yuanshi cidian*, p. 846.

<sup>90</sup> The episode is found at Yu Ji, 'Huainan xianwu wang miaotangbei', pp. 218-19; *Daoyuan leigao*, 37.15b-30a, at *YRCK*, vi, pp. 188-95; *Mingchen shilue* 6.103-4; *Yuanshi* 156.3681.

Yu Ji, 'Huainan xianwu wang miaotangbei', pp. 218-19; *Daoyuan leigao*, 37.21a, at *YRCK*, vi, p. 191: 十二年，師次瓜州，分兵立柵，奪其要害守之。揚州都統姜才者，宋之名將也。所統士，有部落種，人自爲一軍，勁悍善戰。至是，以二萬人出揚子橋，都元帥阿朮與王當之。兩軍夾水而陳，王以十三騎絕渡，衝之，陣堅不動。王引卻以誘之，其驍將，本回紇人，鎧仗甚異，躍馬出衆，奪大刀出前趣王，王還轡反迎刺之，應手頓殪馬下。立陣者，同口驪叫，震動天地，而敵人亦不覺失 [219] 聲。

*Mingchen shilue* 6.103-4:

十二年，師次瓜洲，分兵立柵，奪其要害守之。揚州都統姜才者，宋之名將也，所統士有部落種人，自爲一軍，勁悍善戰，至是以二萬人出揚子橋，都元帥阿朮與王當之，兩軍夾水 [104] 而陳。王以十三騎絕渡衝之，陣堅不動，王引卻以誘之，其驍將本回紇人，鎧仗甚異，躍馬出衆，奮大刀直前趣王，王還轡反迎刺之，應手頓殪馬下，立陣者同口驪叫，震動天地。

<sup>91</sup> *Yuanshi* 156.3681:

十二年，次瓜洲，分兵立柵，據其要害，揚州都統姜才所統兵勁悍善戰，至是以二萬人出揚子橋。弘範佐都元帥阿朮禦之，與宋兵夾水陣。弘範以十三騎徑度衝之，陣堅不動，弘範引却。一騎躍馬揮刀，直趣弘範，弘範旋轡反迎刺之，應手頓斃馬下，其衆潰亂，追至城門，斬首萬餘級，自相蹂藉溺死者過半。

Alongside a broad tendency to downgrade – in moral and cultural terms – people marked by ethnic terms and to move them away from the imperial centre, we also see some comparable de-centring of people and institutions linked to Mongol Inner Asia. Some examples of this are found in the biographies of the Oronar official Harqasun. Harqasun Darqan (1257-1308), best known as a Confucian advisor to the Great Qağans Qubilai (r.1260-94) and Temür Öljeitü (r. 1294-1307), inherited *Darqan* status, and served across the Great Yuan *ulus*, from Huguang to Qaraqorum, also playing a substantial role in the 1307 succession controversy.<sup>92</sup> Harqasun's *Mingchen shilue* biography draws exclusively on an inscription by Liu Minzhong, referred to as a *Xundebei* (stele celebrating virtue) by Su Tianjue, but surviving as a *Wangbei*), and his *Yuanshi* biography, while following a largely parallel structure to that of the *Mingchen shilue*, condenses and rephrases this material considerably.<sup>93</sup>

Harqasun's biographies report that he was sent to Qaraqorum in about 1307.<sup>94</sup> No reasons are given for this in either *Wangbei* or *Mingchen shilue*, presumably because this posting, after intimate service to Temür Öljeitü Qağan, was a substantial demotion. The *Yuanshi* describes it as exile, due to Harqasun's criticism of the newly enthroned great Qağan Qaišan (Wuzong 武宗, r. 1307-11) for excessive generosity in rewarding the Ča'adaid prince Tura (d. 1309) for his support during the 1307 succession crisis, thereby

<sup>92</sup> On Harqasun, see *Yuanshi* 136.3291-95; *Mingchen shilue* 4.55-61; *YR*, p. 2542; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 188-89; Atwood, *Encyclopedia*, p. 215; Li Shuhui 李树辉, "'Dalahan" xinkao "答剌罕"新考 (A New Examination of "Darqan")', *Xibei menggu luntan*, 3 (2008), 17-21. On the name Harqasun, see Rybatzki, 'Die Personennamen', p. 155.

<sup>93</sup> After a 106-character preface, Harqasun's *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged into 21 sections, all of which draw on the *xundebei* by Liu Minzhong 劉敏中. See Liu Minzhong 劉敏中, 'Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei' 敕賜太傅右丞相贈太師順德忠獻王碑, *QYW*, xi, pp. 537-44; *YWL* 25.1a-10b.

<sup>94</sup> The episode is found at Liu Minzhong, 'Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei', pp. 541-42; *YWL* 25.8a-8b; *Mingchen shilue* 4.59-60; *Yuanshi* 136.3294-95.

addressing issues that go beyond the ostensible subject of the biography.<sup>95</sup> In contrast, the other texts, probably concerned to highlight Harqasun's seniority, emphasize Qaraqorum's strategic importance on the northern border, although none mention its former role as the imperial capital.<sup>96</sup>

The *Yuanshi* compilers, having already de-centred Qaraqorum to the extent of making it a place of exile, make small adjustments to the record as transmitted from inscription and *Mingchen shilue* with the cumulative effect of making northern people dwelling there seem more unsophisticated and peripheral than was suggested in the foundation text. On Harqasun's arrival he faces a series of problems, including famine, banditry and corruption among administrators, although these are characterized slightly differently by the two versions. Both sets of texts emphasize the practical measures Harqasun implemented on his arrival, including executing thieves and bringing aid to the populace. A small but significant tweak in the *Yuanshi* version changes the emphasis slightly for one of these measures. Where the *Mingchen shilue*, transmitting the *Wangbei*, reports that

<sup>95</sup> On Tura, see *Yuanshi* 117.2907 and Humble, 'Princely Qualities and Unexpected Coherence'. On the impact of Qaišan's succession see Hsiao Ch'i-Ch'ing, 'Mid-Yüan Politics,' in *CHC*, pp. 490-560 (pp. 507-12), and for a discussion of the subsequent loosening of controls on princely titulature, see Li Zhi'an 李治安, 'Guanyu yuandai zhuwang fengjue dengji he wangwei jicheng wenti' 關於元代諸王封爵等級和王位繼承問題 (Regarding Questions on the Grading and Succession of Lesser Princes During the Yuan Dynasty), *Wenshi*, 35 (1992), 139-52.

<sup>96</sup> Liu Minzhong, 'Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei', pp. 541-42: *YWL* 25.8a-8b; *Mingchen shilue* 4.59-60:

至和林，獲盜米商衣者，即斬以徇，攘竊屏息，行旅為便。分遣使發廩賑降口，復奏請錢七千三百萬緡，帛稱是，易牛、羊給之，又給網數千，令取魚食。遠者厄大雪金山，命諸部置傳車，相去各三百里，凡十傳，餽米數萬石，牛、羊稱之。又度地立兩倉，積米以待來者，全活不可勝紀。有飢乏不能達和林，往往 [8b] 以其男女弟姪易米以活，皆贖歸之。和林歲糴軍餉恒數十 [60] 萬，主吏視利繆出納囊橐，滋弊久矣，立法遏其源。稱海屯田廢弛，重為經理，歲得米二十餘萬斛。益購工治器，擇軍中曉耕稼者，雜教部落。又浚古渠，溉田數千頃。穀以恒賤，邊政大治。[勳德碑]

*Yuanshi* 136.3294-95:

至鎮，斬為盜者一人。分遣使者賑降戶。奏出鈔帛易牛羊以給之，近水者教取魚食。[3295] 會大雪，民無取得食，命諸部置傳車，相去各三百里，凡十傳，轉米數萬石以餉饑民，不足則益以牛羊。又度地置內倉，[四] 積粟以待來者。浚古渠，溉田數千頃。治稱海屯田，教部落雜耕其間，歲得米二十餘萬。北邊大治。

Harqasun “gave out several thousand nets, and ordered [the populace] to catch fish for food”,<sup>97</sup> the *Yuanshi* drops the reference to nets and edits the remainder to state that “those close to water were *taught to catch fish for food*”.<sup>98</sup> This micro-level amendment plays into a tendency to see such peripheral northern peoples as unsophisticated and unskilled.<sup>99</sup>

Alongside a general tendency to downgrade these geographically marginal people in moral, intellectual and pragmatic terms, the *Yuanshi* compilers also de-centre a number of northwestern cultural features. This includes their reduction of the status of the tent as a location for feasting and governance.<sup>100</sup> Soon after the Qaraqorum episode, in 1308, we read that the Qaġan Qaišan granted Harqasun a large tent. The source text, Harqasun’s *Wangbei*, is transmitted relatively completely by the *Mingchen shilue* (omitting references to further royal gifts), which tells us:

In the first year *Zhida* 至大 [1308], the emperor [Qaišan] granted [Harqasun] a great tent, as usually granted to princes of the blood, so that he could entertain those who fulfilled military orders in the marches; further, he was granted a hundred *dou* 斛 of wine-making rice; ‘all-under-heaven’ pricked up its ears and awaited his recall [to court].<sup>101</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Liu Minzhong, ‘Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei’, p. 541 / *YWL* 25.8a; *Mingchen shilue* 4.59:

又給網數千，令取魚食。

<sup>98</sup> *Yuanshi* 136.3294:

近水者教取魚食。

<sup>99</sup> It should be noted that fishing plays a prominent role in the *Secret History* account of Činggis Qan’s childhood, and the verses and prose in §§ 75-76 describe both hooking and netting fish; it is hard to see such techniques as alien to the northern peoples. See de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, i, pp. 19-20, 360-61.

<sup>100</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn describes the use of a richly decorated tent by Hūlegū in 1256, and Juvaynī provides a lyrical description of a tent erected by Maḥmūd Yalavač for Möngke Qaġan’s enthronement *quriltai* in 1251; see, for example Juvaynī, *History of the World-Conqueror*, pp. 570-71; Juvaynī, *Tārikh-e jahān-gushāy*, iii, p. 34. Ögödei’s commissioning of Liu Min to construct “mobile palaces and tent halls 造行宮幄殿” in the early 1230s is mentioned in Min’s *Yuanshi* biography; see *Yuanshi* 153.3610.

<sup>101</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.60:

至大改元，帝賜大帳如親王制，諸藩稟命戎事，則以宴之，仍賜酒米百斛，天下傾耳以俟復召。

This excerpt makes several unannounced cuts; the inscription text version is as follows (at Liu Minzhong, ‘Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei’, p. 542 / *YWL* 25.8b):

In the first year of the new *Zhida* 至大 [period], *wushen* 戊申 [1308], the emperor [Qaišan] granted [Harqasun] a great tent, as usually granted to princes of the blood, so that he could entertain those

Here tents are routinely granted to *qinwang*, senior princes or princes within the line of succession, and facilitating feasting to reward military service on the frontiers. This appears normative and fairly central to the polity's operation, if perhaps located on the frontier. The logic of the account here underlines the favour signified by such a gift, and the suggestion that this type of generosity signalled a 'return to court' (wherever that might be – the 'return' concept implicitly places it at some distance from Qaraqorum) might also indicate the centrality of such structures and their function.

The *Yuanshi* treatment of this account not only condenses it considerably, but alters the logic behind the grant, effectively leaving the tent on the frontier. We read that:

In the first year *Zhida* 至大 [1308], [Harqasun] was granted a great tent, as is customary for lesser princes *zhuwang* 諸王 and various outsiders *zhufan* 諸藩.<sup>102</sup>

This intervention, taking the form of substantial condensation and abbreviation and minor additions, alters the reader's understanding of the position of the tent in Mongol-era society, moving its function out of the inner ranks of the palace and, moreover, assigning it to the 'fan' outsiders.<sup>103</sup> The *Yuanshi* compilers have neatly moved such tents and their feasting a step away from the imperial centre, restricting their use to more junior royalty and foreign groups.

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who fulfilled military orders in the marches; further, he was granted a hundred *dou* 斛 of wine-making rice. The empress dowager and the present emperor both made grants to him too. 'All-under-heaven' pricked up its ears and awaited his recall [to court].

至大改元戊申，帝賜大帳，如親王制，諸藩稟命戎事，則以宴之。仍賜酒米佰斛。皇太后、今上咸有賜焉。天下傾耳以俟復召。

<sup>102</sup> *Yuanshi* 136.3295:

至大元年，賜大帳，如諸王諸藩禮。

<sup>103</sup> On the symbolism of 'fan' 藩 in this broader period, see Yang Shao-yun, 'Fan and Han: The Origin and Uses of a Conceptual Dichotomy in Mid-Imperial China, Ca. 500-1200', in *Political Strategies of Identity Building in Non-Han Empires in China*, ed. by Francesca Fiaschetti and Julia Schneider (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014), pp. 9–35, especially p. 30. Elliott notes that some Song writers referred to 'Hanren' living under Kitan rule as *Fan*, too. See Mark Elliott, 'Hushuo: The Northern Other and the Naming of the Han Chinese', in *Critical Han Studies: The History, Representation, and Identity of China's Majority*, ed. by Thomas S. Mullaney and others (Berkeley, CA: Global, Area, and International Archive, University of California Press, 2012), pp. 173–90 (p. 186).



As ever, it is possible to find confusing counter-examples, where the *Yuanshi* compilers invest more content and emphasis on Inner Asian cultural material. Among these we find the account of Toǵtoǵa's Qipčaq ancestors and the Turco-Mongol 'bird in the bush' trope of succour for refugees.<sup>104</sup> Toǵtoǵa (1237-97) served in operations against Qubilai's brother Arıǵ Böke, the Ögödeid prince Qaidu, Temüǵe Otčigin's descendant Nayan and others on the northern frontier.<sup>105</sup> He occupied military and household posts as Marshal of the Second Class 昭勇大將軍, Associate Administrator of the Bureau of the Imperial Treasuries 同知太僕院事, Associate Administrator of the Imperial Equipage Bureau 同知衛尉院事 and the Director of the Directorate for the Dowager Empress' Herds 領羣牧司, among other posts.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>104</sup> We follow Atwood in this transliteration. See Christopher Atwood, 'Jochi and the Early Western Campaigns', in *How Mongolia Matters: War, Law and Society*, ed. by Morris Rossabi (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 35-56 (p. 43, n. 17).

<sup>105</sup> On Toǵtoǵa, see *Mingchen shilue* 3.47-51; *Yuanshi* 128.3131-38; *YR*, p. 2689; Michael C. Brose, 'Qipchak Networks of Power in Mongol China', in *How Mongolia Matters: War, Law and Society*, ed. by Morris Rossabi (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 69-86; Atwood, *Encyclopedia*, p. 556; Xiu Xiaobo, 'Yuanshi Tutuha, Buhumu Liezhuan Dingwu', 170-77; Zhang Peizhi 张沛之, *Yuandai semu ren jiazhu jiqi wenhua qingxiang yanjiu* 元代色目人家及其文化倾向研究 (*Research on the Families, Clans and Cultural Alignments of Yuan-Era Semuren*) (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 2009), pp. 1-34. For a brief sketch of the illustrious careers of Toǵtoǵa and his illustrious descendants \*Chuangwu'er and El Temür, see Yang Jihong 杨继红, 'Lun mengyuan shiqi qincha ren tutuha jiazhu 论蒙元时期钦察人土土哈家族 (On the Family of the Qipchaq Toqtoq During the Mongol Yuan Era)', *Neimenggu nongye daxue xuebao: shehui kexue ban*, 11 (2009), 317-18. On Qaidu (1230-1301), see especially Michal Biran, *Qaidu and the Rise of the Independent Mongol State in Central Asia* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1997). On Nayan and his rebellion, see Hambis, 'Chapitre CVII', 39, n. 16; Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo*, p. 789; Cleaves, 'Bayan', 265-266; Biran, *Qaidu*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>106</sup> After a 90-character preface, Toǵtoǵa's *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged in sixteen sections, all drawing on a lost *jinianbei* by Yan Fu 閻復. A stele recording Toǵtoǵa's family's accomplishments by Yu Ji, although showing some crossover with the *Mingchen shilue* account, was composed 1329-30, well after the compilation of Su Tianjue's work; the *Yuanshi* compilers appear to have drawn on all of these to some degree. Much of Toǵtoǵa's *Yuanshi* biography appears to have been developed from the *Mingchen shilue* or from its foundation text, rather than Yu Ji's stele, but some events of the 1280s, such as his receipt of a golden tiger tablet in 1284, the revolt of Nayan in 1287, and rewards on Temür Öljeitü's enthronement, show strong (and in some cases stronger) connections between Yu Ji's text and the final biography, probably suggesting that the *Yuanshi* compilers made complex use of both stelae and perhaps also the *Mingchen shilue* composite biography. It may be that Yu Ji also drew on the first version, to transmit details omitted by Su Tianjue, but the incidents transmitted via Yu Ji do not seem to fit the pattern of Su's omissions elsewhere. See Yu Ji 虞集, 'Jurong junwang shijibei' 句容郡王世績碑, in *QYW*, xxvii, pp. 229-36; *Daoyuan leigao*, 38.1a-13b (in *YRCK*, vi, pp. 199-206). On the influential court propagandist Yu Ji 虞集 (1272-1348), see *Yuanshi* 181.4174-4184; John D. Langlois, Jr., 'Yü Chi and His Mongol Sovereign: The Scholar as Apologist', *The Journal of Asian Studies* 38 (1978): 99-116.

Like that of Harqasun, Toġtoġa's *Yuanshi* biography records anecdotes of ancestors from the early years of the Činggisid project, and their treatment adds nuance to this study. The first of these sees the *Yuanshi* biography provide a substantial amount of more specific information on a distinctly Turko-Mongol cultural theme than does the alternative source text, in this case Yu Ji's inscription. The second indicates the opposite approach, favouring Yu Ji's text and resulting in a more condensed summarizing report. The first relates to the refusal on the part of the Qipčaq leader (and Toġtoġa's great-grandfather) Yīnas to return the Merkit fugitive Ġodu to his Činggisid pursuers after the Merkit defeat in 1219.<sup>107</sup> Yu Ji's *Shijibei* text provides a brief and straightforward account of this:

When emperor Taizu [Činggis Qan] campaigned against the [Mer]kit 乞思 Ġodu, Ghodu fled to Yīnas; [Činggis Qan] sent envoys to instruct [the Qipčaq] and take him, but this was not obeyed.<sup>108</sup>

This account mentions Yīnas' refusal, but only briefly. The *Mingchen shilue*, citing the lost inscription by Yan Fu, draws on the 'bush protects the little bird' trope of praise for hospitality to refugees apparently widespread among Turko-Mongol societies, and praises Yīnas for his hospitality to, and defence of, the fugitive.<sup>109</sup> This is expressed in decidedly Mongol terms, echoing narratives found in Juvaynī's *Tārīk -e Jahāngush*, the *Secret History* and, to a lesser extent, the *Jāmi' al-Tavārīk* :

When emperor Taizu [Činggis Qan] campaigned against the Merkit realm, their leader Ġodu fled to the Qipčaq; [Činggis] sent envoys to instruct Yīnas saying, "Why do you shelter the deer that carries my arrow? Return him urgently; if not,

<sup>107</sup> On this conflict, see *Secret History* § 197, at de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, i, p. 123; ii, pp. 721, 723-27. On the reconstruction of the name Yīnas, we follow Atwood, 'Jochi and the Early Western Campaigns', p. 43, n. 18.

<sup>108</sup> Yu Ji, 'Jurong junwang shijibei', p. 229; *Daoyuan leigao*, 38.1b, in *YRCK*, vi, p. 199:

太祖皇帝征乞思火都，火都奔亦納思，遣使諭取之，弗從。及我師西征，亦納思老，不能理其國。

<sup>109</sup> On this episode see Atwood, 'Jochi and the Early Western Campaigns', pp. 42-44; Ruth I. Meserve, 'The *Yüan Shih* and Middle Mongolian', *Mongolian Studies*, 13 (1990), 117-31 (129). On the 'bird in the bush' trope more generally see especially György Kara, "The Bush Protects the Little Bird", *AOH* 48 (1995), 421-28. On Ġodu, eldest son of Toġtoġa Beki, his flight from Temüjin's forces, and their pursuit, see Atwood, 'Jochi and the Early Western Campaigns', pp. 38-44; *Secret History* §§ 197, 199, 236 (at de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, i, pp. 123, 126-27, 162).

calamity will reach you too.” Yīnas addressed the [48] envoys, saying, “If a sparrow flees the hawk, the screen of luxuriant growth is enough to preserve its life; are we not considered equal to plants?”<sup>110</sup>

This section is transmitted very faithfully by the *Yuanshi*:

When Taizu campaigned against the Merkit, their lord Ġodu fled to Qipčaq, and Yīnas received him. Taizu sent envoys to instruct them: “Why do you shelter the deer that carries my arrow? Return him urgently; if not, calamity will reach you [too].” Yīnas replied “If a sparrow flees the hawk, even a sparse thicket is enough to preserve its life; are we not considered equal to plants?”<sup>111</sup>

This is a distinctly Turco-Mongol cultural trope.<sup>112</sup> A parallel story is also reported by Juvaynī, who makes a bold parallel between the response of Ögödei’s son Kōten to his mother Töregene during her regency, when she wished him to give up fugitives, and, more famously, the response of Čimbai and Čilaġun to their father Sorqan Šira’s order to turn away the fugitive Temüjin in the *Secret History*; again using the metaphor of a bird sheltering in a bush.<sup>113</sup> These motifs appear to emphasize a kind of duty of protection to refugees that positioned challenges to that sanctuary as assaults on a ruler’s authority,

<sup>110</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 3.47-48:

太祖征蔑乞國，其主火都奔欽察，遣使諭亦訥思曰：「汝奚匿予負箭之麋？亟以相還，不然禍且及汝。」亦訥思謂使 [48] 者曰：「逃鷗之雀，翳薈猶能生之，吾顧不如草木耶！」

<sup>111</sup> *Yuanshi* 128.3131:

太祖征蔑里乞，其主火都奔欽察，亦訥思納之。太祖遣使諭之曰：「汝奚匿吾負箭之麋？亟以相還，不然禍且及汝。」亦訥思答曰：「逃鷗之雀，叢薄猶能生之。吾顧不如草木耶」

<sup>112</sup> Boyle highlights Barthold’s reference to this as evidence that Juvaynī drew on Mongol material for his narratives. See Juvaynī, *History of the World Conqueror*, p. 242, n. 8. Barthold, *Turkestan*, p. 41, n. 3.

<sup>113</sup> Juvaynī, *History of the World Conqueror*, p. 242:

Töregene Khatun sent a messenger to demand their return, and Kōten replied: ‘The kite that takes refuge in a thicket from the talons of the falcon is safe from its fury. These too have sought sanctuary with us and touched the skirt of our authority. To send them back is forbidden by the code of magnanimity and humanity and is remote from the practice of generosity and liberality: I should find excuse with neither far nor near, [198] neither Turk nor Tazik.

Juvaynī, *Tārikh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, pp. 197-98:

تورکینا غئون در لیتردادیش ان طایفه سیادت جواب داد که مغبغات لطیور که از مغللباب ازبک اینی بینا هد از صلیت او امان  
یابیش ان نیز چون بمالسی مان کرد دل و بدامان دلیت مت مکن مودم اف سیادت ان طیش ان در آفین همت و حرورت محظور لیت و  
زاش یوه کفرمت وفتوت دور و نزد دور و نردیک  
[198] و تیرک و تازی که نه معذوب اش م

de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, § 85, i, p. 25:

Sorqan Šira said, ‘Didn’t I tell you to go and look for your mother and younger brothers? Why did you come here?’ But his two sons Čimbai and Čila’un said, ‘When a sparrow-hawk causes a sparrow to take shelter into a bush, the bush saves *its* life. How can you speak to him in this way, now that he has come to us?’

See also de Rachewiltz’ commentary at p. 380. Sorqan Šira’s release of Temüjin is mentioned in the *Shengwu qinzheng lu*, too, but without the vividly symbolic speech. See Wang Guowei, *Menggu shiliao sizhong*, 1.34-35.

<sup>116</sup> The episode is found at Yu Ji, 'Jurong junwang shi jibei', p. 231; *Daoyuan leigao*, 38.5a, in *YRCK*, vi, p. 201; *Mingchen shilue* 3.50; *Yuanshi* 128.3134. On the Baljuna incident, see de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, ii, pp 655, 657-58; Francis Woodman Cleaves, 'The Historicity of The Baljuna Covenant', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 18 (1955), 357-421.

In the seventh moon [19<sup>th</sup> July to 16<sup>th</sup> August], Shizu personally made an inspection tour of the northern border, summoning the prince to an audience and comforting him, saying: “In the past Taizu, with his ministers who had suffered adversity together, drank the waters of the Baljuna River in order to record their merit. How could today’s events shame those people of the past? This is all due to my minister’s efforts.”<sup>117</sup>

The *Yuanshi* version is, to all intents and purposes, identical to Yu Ji’s inscription version, showing that the compilers picked elements from multiple sources, and that their selections were not dictated by Su Tianjue’s work.<sup>118</sup> In this case, moreover, the *Yuanshi* compilers chose a less detailed account of events at Baljuna than that found in the *Mingchen shilue*, which, based on the *Jijibei*, is as follows:

In autumn, the seventh moon [19<sup>th</sup> July to 16<sup>th</sup> August], Shizu personally made an inspection tour of the northern border, instructing the gentleman in praise: “Only, in the past when the divine ancestor first established the base, he lost to Ong Qan, and with one or two loyal servants who drank the Baljuna River water with him; their praise extends until today. My minister has defended the realm with a loyal (lit. ‘red’) heart, [his] praise galloping to north and south; even if on the day of death [we] still [face] such times, my minister’s efforts are [like] a banner.”<sup>119</sup>

Both accounts employ Qubilai’s direct reported speech, but the *Yuanshi* compilers choice of the simplest of these accounts grants less space and detail to events around the Baljuna incident. Together these indicate a substantial willingness to illustrate Turko-Mongol cultural and political themes, although it should be recognized that the former episode did

<sup>117</sup> Yu Ji, ‘Jurongjun wang shi jibei’, p. 231; *Daoyuan leigao*, 38.5a, in *YRCK*, vi, p. 201:

In the seventh moon [19<sup>th</sup> July to 16<sup>th</sup> August], Shizu personally made an inspection tour of the northern border, summoning the prince to an audience and comforting him, saying: “In the past Taizu, with his ministers who had suffered adversity together, drank the waters of the Baljuna River in order to record their merit. How could today’s events shame those people of the past? This is all due to my minister’s efforts.”

七月，世祖親巡北邊，召見王而慰之曰：「昔太祖與其臣之同患難者，飲班木河水以記功。今日之事，何愧昔人，卿其勉之。」

Cleaves’ translation of this passage is found at ‘The Historicity of The Baljuna Covenant’, 400.

<sup>118</sup> *Yuanshi* 128.3134:

秋七月，世祖巡幸北邊，召見慰諭之，曰：「昔太祖與其臣同患難者，飲班朮河之水以記功。今日之事，何愧昔人，卿其勉之。」

<sup>119</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 3.50:

秋七月，世祖巡幸北邊，褒諭公曰：「惟昔聖祖肇基，失利於王罕，一二蓋臣同飲班朮河水者，至今稱之。卿赤心衛社稷，馳譽朔南，雖死之日猶生之年，卿其勉旃。」

not flatter the Činggisids, and the second showed the most basic portrayal of the two available versions.

Overall, then, the *Yuanshi* compilers' edits have been widespread and detailed, with a substantial, though far from entirely consistent, tendency to distance 'foreign' elements from the moral and cultural centre. They show a strong tendency towards condemnation of figures identified as *Huihu* or *Hu*, sharpening focus on their links to transgression, especially in the form of deceit and greed. These figures are also routinely shifted beyond the cultural pale by the replacement of ethnic labels with geographic tags.

### 3.2 Selective explanation? Recognition of Other forms and institutions

As we have seen, the explanation of 'foreign' terms (such as '*sulṭā*' in Chucai's biography) is in some cases discarded in the preparation of *Yuanshi* biographies. This may reflect, in part, the tendencies identified in chapter one towards brevity on the one hand, and on the other, the reduced employment of narratorial exposition, with its implication of the narrator's increased visibility to readers, in favour of direct speech, with its combination of vividness and suggestion of unmediated reportage.

We find a brief explanation of the term *kešig* in the *Mingchen shilue* biography of Öčičer of the Hū'ūšin. The *kešig* was a vital element of Činggisid rule, combining imperial guard and household management duties with substantial political influence. Its commanders occupied their posts as descendants of Činggis Qan's four senior generals, and

countersigned imperial decrees.<sup>120</sup> Öčičer (1247-1311), grandson of Muqali's fellow general Boroqul, was appointed head of the Palace Provisions Commission 宣徽使 in 1281, heading the Bureau of Military Affairs from 1293 and made Grand Preceptor 太師 in 1300, defending the northern border from Qaidu and Du'a, and serving in Qaraqorum.<sup>121</sup> A passage explains an undated report of his promotion to serve as provisioner to the four *kešigs*, and the report of this appointment is presented identically across *Wangbei*, *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*.<sup>122</sup> The *Mingchen shilue* also cites Öčičer's *Wangbei* in explaining to its readers:

.... On the *kešig*; the system of the realm divides the palace guard into four categories: three types are [on duty] day and night, and [those] above all of these work on residences, drink and food, various decrees and orders relating to the imperial carriage; the leaders of the *kešig* direct all of these.<sup>123</sup>

The *Yuanshi* compilers omitted this, seeming either to have expected their readers to understand the *kešig* reference – the system is explained in some detail in the treatise on

<sup>120</sup> On the *kešig*, see, among other works, Atwood, 'Ulus Emirs, Keshig Elders'; Atwood, *Encyclopedia*, pp. 297-98; de Rachewiltz, 'Muqali, Bōl, Tas and An-T'ung', p. 9; de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, pp. 160, 838; Charles Melville, 'The *Keshig* in Iran: The Survival of the Royal Mongol Household', in *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, edited by Linda Komaroff (Leiden: Brill, 2006) pp. 135-164 (pp. 135-138); Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 127-28; Xiao Qiqing, 'Yuandai de suwei zhidu' 元代的宿衛制度 (The Yuan Dynasty Imperial Guard System), in *Yuandai shi xintan*, pp. 59-111.

<sup>121</sup> On Öčičer, see *Yuanshi* 119.2949-53; *Mingchen shilue* 3.43-47; *YR*, p. 2507; *RPN*, p. 2402; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 162-63; Atwood, *Encyclopedia*, p. 415. After an 82-character preface Öčičer's *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged in twelve sections, all based on the inscription composed by Yuan Mingshan, the first section being interrupted by an unlabelled note on Boroqul and his son Širemün, which, as with the notes on Örlüg Noyan and Ajuqan's ancestors, shows a fairly free hand in condensing and deleting details. Yuan Mingshan 元明善, 'Taishi qiyang zhongwu wangbei' 太師淇陽忠武王碑, in *QYW*, xxiv, 332-39; *Qingheji*, 2.10b-17a, in *YRCK*, v, pp. 167-71. The *Yuanshi* follows Su Tianjue fairly closely, while omitting an account of Öčičer's 1307 marriage to Čabar's daughter El Temür and a passage on the operation of the *kešig*.

<sup>122</sup> Yuan Mingshan 元明善, 'Taishi qiyang zhongwu wangbei', p. 333; *Qingheji*, 2.11a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 168; *Mingchen shilue* 3.44; *Yuanshi* 119.2949:

即命領四怯薛太官。

<sup>123</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Taishi qiyang zhongwu wangbei', p. 333; *Qingheji*, 2.11a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 168: 即命領四怯薛太官。怯薛者，國制，分宿衛供奉之士為四番，番三晝夜，凡上之起居飲食諸服御之政令，怯薛之長皆總焉。

*Mingchen shilue* 3.44:

即命領四怯薛太官。怯薛者，國制分宿衛供奉之士為四番，番三晝夜，凡上之起居飲食，諸服御之政令，怯薛之長皆總焉。

the imperial guard – or opting to deny it the validity and attention that might be granted by an explanation.<sup>124</sup>

Handling of non-Chinese, and especially Turko-Mongol, titles and names is notably uneven across the *Yuanshi*. These non-Sinophone elements receive varying degrees of explanation. Biographies for numerous subjects mention grants of the title *Bagatur*, an honorific with a long history in the Eurasian steppe, widely associated with aristocratic lineage or military service, and with meanings including ‘brave, valiant’ and ‘picked warrior.’<sup>125</sup> This seems to have been awarded to a substantial number of imperial subjects, and is usually mentioned as a type of reward from the monarch’s person, much like the symbolic robes whose award are celebrated in many biographies. As such these grants might seem perfectly suited to illustrate the *genjiao* record of loyal service highlighted by Iiyama, and therefore be more visibly celebrated in social biography than *liezhuan*. As we have seen, however, Chucai’s *Urtu Saqal* ‘Longbeard’ nickname, used across the *Yuanshi*, is not found in either his *shendaobei* or his *Mingchen shilue* biography. An examination of such names and titles in our sample – and beyond it – shows an uneven handling of these Turko-Mongol linguistic elements.

We see contrasting handling between the biographies for Zhang Hongfan, whom we have already introduced, and his father Zhang Rou 張柔 (1190-1268). Rou, a senior Jin general captured by Mongol forces and later serving against both Jin and Song, was involved in

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<sup>124</sup> See *Yuanshi* 99.2523-25; Hsiao Ch’i-ch’ing, *The Military Establishment of the Yuan Dynasty*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 77 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), pp. 92-94.

<sup>125</sup> On this title, see de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, p. 292; Clauson, *Etymological Dictionary*, p. 313; Rybatzki, ‘Die Personennamen’, pp. 209-10. Occurrences in our texts involve various transliterations, of which 拔都 is by far the most commonly seen in the *Yuanshi*, followed by 拔都兒 and the less common forms 拔突 and 霸都.



the fortification of Daidu and served as Supervisor of the Branch Ministry of Works 判行工部事.<sup>126</sup> Zhang Rou's *Yuanshi* biography reports a grant of the title *Bagatur* at some point dated by context between 1219 and 1225, following his suppression of a troop mutiny among the Yizhou 易州 garrison, but neither mutiny nor grant are visible in his *Mingchen shilue* biography.<sup>127</sup> His son Zhang Hongfan's *Bagatur* title, granted in 1275, is, however, explained in the *Miaotangbei* composed by Yu Ji.

Hongfan's *shendaobei* explains the name (*ming*) grant by linking the grant to his father:

The *Zhongwu Wang* [Zhang Rou], having served the Xiangzong Emperor [Möngke Qağan], had once been granted the *ming* 'Bagatur'. A *Bagatur* is, in the language of the realm, the name for a daring brave whom none can face. Due to this, the emperor also granted the prince this and called him by it.<sup>128</sup>

Explanation of the name is omitted from the *Mingchen shilue* excerpt of the same text in an unannounced edit, thereby connecting it entirely to a preceding account of success against Song forces:

<sup>126</sup> Zhang Rou, courtesy name Degang 德剛, from Dexing 定興 in Yizhou 易州, posthumously named Wukang 武康, later renamed Zhongwu 忠武. See *Mingchen shilue* 6.95-100; *Yuanshi* 147.3471-78; *YR*, p. 1061; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 200-1; Yuan Haowen 元好問, 'Shuntian wanhu zhanggong xunde di'er bei 順天萬戶張公勳德第二碑 (The Second Inscription on the Virtuous and Meritorious Service of Duke Zhang, Myriarch of Shuntian)', in *QYW*, i, pp. 591-97; Meng Fanfeng 孟繁峰, and Sun Dailin 孫待林, 'Zhang Rou mu diaocha ji 張柔墓調查記 (Record of Investigation into Zhang Rou's Tomb)', *Wenwu chunqiu*, 3 (1996), 5-15. On the post Supervisor of the Branch Ministry of Works 判行工部事, see *FG*, pp. 97-98. The *Mingchen shilue* biography, after a 90-character preface, is arranged into eighteen sections of main text (1,779 characters) and three sections of notes (464 characters). The main text draws on the *muzhi* by Wang E (9 sections, 1,033 characters, 58%), the lost *shendaobei* by Wang Pan (5 sections, 426 characters, 24%) and the *xundebei* by Yuan Haowen (2 sections, 220 characters, 12%), along with a single unidentified section (100 characters, 6%). Three sections of notes are taken from Hao Jing's collected works (122 characters, 26%), the \*Deb (164 characters, 35%) and the *xundebei* (178 characters, 38%). No substantial texts remain. Meng Fanfeng and Sun Dailin report that most of Zhang Rou's *shendaobei* text is lost. See 'Zhang Rou mu diaocha ji', 10.

<sup>127</sup> *Yuanshi* 147.3473:

He was promoted to Grandee of the Fourth Class 榮祿大夫 and General Regional Military Commander of Hebei Eastern, Western and Other Circuits 河北東西等路都元帥, and was [granted] the title *Bagatur* 拔都魯; when he established his office his generals and officers all received different roles.

加榮祿大夫、河北東西等路都元帥，號拔都魯，置官屬，將士遷授有差。

<sup>128</sup> Yu Ji, 'Huainan xianwu wang miaotangbei', p. 219; *Daoyuan leigao*, 37.21b-22a, at *YRCK*, vi, p. 191: 王以爲請，遂還之。忠武王之事憲宗皇帝，嘗賜名曰拔突。拔突者，國語勇敢無敵之名也。於是，上又以賜王爲名云。

When his merit was reported, he was transferred to Myriarch of Bozhou 亳州, and awarded the *ming* Bagatur to be addressed by.<sup>129</sup>

This omission was transmitted to the *Yuanshi*, which reports:

When his merit was reported, he was transferred as Myriarch of Bozhou 亳州, and later awarded the *ming* Bagatur.<sup>130</sup>

Su Tianjue's unannounced edits here have removed the hereditary logic of the *Miaotangbei* account of the name grant. The *Yuanshi* version likewise presents the grant as a reward for merit, but also, for reasons that are not clear, partially dissociate the merit accrued in battle from the name grant.

To quote further examples somewhat beyond our sample, biographies for Liu Guojie 劉國傑, of Jurchen origin, report a *Bagatur* 霸都 title grant by Qubilai in 1274, in recognition of service against the Song.<sup>131</sup> Unusually, and in contrast to the biography, Guojie's inscription opens by declaring that "Emperor Shizu had a famous general named Duke Liu, who was granted the title *Bagatur*; a *Bagatur* is one whose bravery is peerless."<sup>132</sup> The biography, condensing the inscription text considerably, moves the translation of the title to the end of the section. The biography for Zheng Ding 鄭鼎 records that he received the *ming* Yeke Badu[r], that is, 'Great *Bagatur*', from Möngke

<sup>129</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 6.104:

上功，改亳州萬戶，賜名拔突云。[廟堂碑]

<sup>130</sup> *Yuanshi* 156.3681:

上其功，改亳州萬戶，後賜名拔都。

<sup>131</sup> The episode is found at Huang Jin 黃潛, 'Huguang dengchu xing zhongshuzhe pingzhang zhengshi zeng tui'en xiaoli dingyuan gongchen guanglu daifu dasitu zhuguo feng qiguo gong shi wuxuan liugong shendaobei' 湖廣等處行中書者平章政事贈推恩效力定遠功臣光祿大夫大司徒柱國封齊國公諡武宣劉公神道碑, in 金華黃先生文集, *QYW*, xxx, pp. 205-16: *Yuanshi* 162.3808. We read that Guojie was "promoted to Marshal of the Sixth Class 懷遠大將軍 and granted the title Badu 霸都 (Bagatur); Guojie was the second-born, so he was called Liu-two-Bagatur." Then the biography explains that Bagatur means "courageous soldier." *Yuanshi* 162.3808:

帝壯之，詔加懷遠大將軍，賜號霸都，國傑行等二，因呼之曰劉二霸都而不名。霸都，華言敢勇之士也。

<sup>132</sup> Huang Jin, 'Huguang dengchu xing zhongshuzhe pingzhang zhengshi zeng tui'en xiaoli dingyuan gongchen guanglu daifu dasitu zhuguo feng qiguo gong shi wuxuan liugong shendaobei', p. 205:

昔在世祖皇帝，有名將曰劉公，賜號霸都。霸都者，言其勇敢無敵也。

Qağan after commanding the rearguard on their return from Dali in the early 1250s, and discussing current affairs with the Qağan.<sup>133</sup> This name is not explained and neither the name grant nor the discussion feature in the inscription.<sup>134</sup> The *Yuanshi* biography for Öljeitü of the Qipčaq reports a 1276 grant of the *ming* ‘Bağatur’ from Qubilai Qağan,<sup>135</sup> but his *shendaobei* makes no mention of this.<sup>136</sup>

*Ming*, or name, grants are more varied than title grants, and can be roughly categorized as nicknames, personal and to some degree descriptive, and ethnonyms, or names related to

<sup>133</sup> *Yuanshi* 154.3635:

庚戌，從憲宗征大理國，自六盤山經臨洮，下西蕃諸城，抵雪山，山徑盤屈，舍騎徒步，嘗背負憲宗以行。敵據扼險要，鼎奮身力戰，敵敗北，帝壯之，賜馬三匹。至金沙河，波濤洶湧，帝臨水傍危石，立馬觀之。鼎諫曰：「此非聖躬所宜。」親扶下馬，帝嘉之。俄圍大理，晝夜急攻，城陷，禽其主，大理平。師還，命鼎居後。道經吐蕃，全軍而歸。辛亥，入朝，帝問以時務，鼎敷對詳明，帝嘉納之，賜名曰也可拔都。

According to the Annals of Xianzong, Qubilai returned from Dali in 1254 - whether or not Zheng Ding returned with him is unclear. See *Yuanshi* 3.47.

<sup>134</sup> Wang Pan 王磐, ‘Yuan zhongshu youcheng shi zhongyi zhengong shendaobei’ 元中書右丞諡忠毅鄭公神道碑, in *QYW*, ii, 279–82 (pp. 279–80):

庚戌歲，扈從今上征大理國，自六盤山經臨洮府，出殺馬關、海子川、無定河，收訖西番慢達里蕩蕩國。至白蠻 [280] 其地，□江湖舊環迴圍遶，我軍驅船棧四面並進，破之。又破白寨子土勞蠻察罕章。前至雪山，其高遠盤屈，一上三月餘方至其頂。嘗遇隘險，敵兵據守，公挺身前關，敵兵敗走。上壯之，賜馬三疋。又至金沙河，波濤洶湧，船棧未辦，上立馬岸側危石觀之，公前奏曰：「此非聖主宜立之地。」即扶策下岸，上之心善之。至大理國，國人迎戰，破其兵，擒國主。還師之日，車駕先回，委公爲殿，且論之曰落後蒙古漢軍□都管領者。

The *Yuanshi* version also carries across a dating errors – the campaign was not launched until two years later; see The Annals of Xianzong at *Yuanshi* 3.46.

<sup>135</sup> *Yuanshi* 131.3193:

In the spring of the thirteenth year [1276], they entered Lin'an 臨安, seizing Yangzhou 揚州, and [Öljeitü] earned merit at both of these. When Jiangnan had been pacified, he went for an audience, and the emperor [Qubilai Qağan] turned to address his courtiers, saying, “[This] is a true hero.” He was thus granted the name Bağatur 拔都兒, and appointed General of the Fourth Class 信武將軍, Military Official, Assistant Brigade Commander 管軍總管 and *Daruğāči* of the Gaoyou 高郵 army, bearing a tiger tablet. Before long, the army 軍 was upgraded to a Circuit 路, and [Öljeitü] was promoted to Marshal of the Sixth Class 懷遠大將軍 and *Daruğāči* of Gaoyou Circuit Administration Office 高郵路總管府達魯花赤.

十三年春，入臨安，下揚州，皆有功。江南平，入見，帝顧謂侍臣曰：「真壯士也。」因賜名拔都兒，授信武將軍、管軍總管、高郵軍達魯花赤，佩虎符。既而軍升爲路，遂進懷遠大將軍、高郵路總管府達魯花赤。

<sup>136</sup> Cheng Jufu 程鉅夫, ‘Linguo wuxuan gong shendaobei’ 林國武宣公神道碑, in *QYW*, xvi, 340–43 (p. 341):

明年夏，攻泰州、新城，功尤多。江南平，策勳，賜虎符，遷信武將軍、管軍總管、高郵軍達魯噶齊。軍陸路，仍達魯噶齊，進懷遠大將軍，加昭勇大將軍。

them. The biographies of Örlüg Noyan provide another useful example of this.<sup>137</sup> Örlüg Noyan, also known as Öz Temür (1242-1295), a grandson of Činggis Qan's close companion Boğorču of the Arulat, initially served in Qubilai's *kešig*, waiting upon banquets, and was later appointed Censor-in-chief, receiving the title Örlüg Noyan.<sup>138</sup> After a 78-character preface, his *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged in nine sections, labelled as coming from a *xundebei* but seemingly excerpted from the *Wangbei* by Yan Fu 閻復 (1236-1312).<sup>139</sup> The first section is interrupted by a 118-character note on Boğorču and his son Boroldai, clearly originating from the same text, but greatly condensed. There are signs that the *Yuanshi* compilers either made use of the *Mingchen shilue* version, or treated the foundation text in a parallel manner; the compilers followed Su in adding a specific date to Örlüg Noyan's appointment as Censor-in-chief 御史大夫, and partially followed his version of Örlüg Noyan's inheritance of his father's posts.<sup>140</sup>

Here both *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* explain a Mongol name, the *Mingchen shilue* 'translating' this term for an unidentified class of readers assumed to have Chinese but not Mongol language competence:

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<sup>137</sup> Örlüg Noyan (1242-1295), also known as Öz Temür 玉昔帖木兒, of the Arulat, a grandson of Boğorču, served as Censor-in-chief 御史大夫, among other posts, during Qubilai's reign, being granted the title of Örlüg Noyan. See *Mingchen shilue* 3.41-43; *Yuanshi* 119.2947-48; *YR*, p. 2723 (under Öz Temür 玉昔帖木兒); Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 161-62.

<sup>138</sup> On Boğorču, Činggis Qan's first *nökör* companion and one of the 'four steeds', see Atwood, *Encyclopedia*, p. 44; *Yuanshi* 99.2523; Hsiao, *Military Establishment*, pp. 92-93; de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, §§ 90-95, 203, 205, pp. 27-29, 134-36, 137-38; *Shengwu qinzheng lu*, 1.61-65.

<sup>139</sup> Yan Fu 閻復, 'Taishi guangping zhenxian wangbei' 太師廣平貞憲王碑, in *QYW*, ix, pp. 257-61; *Jingxianji* 靜軒集, 3.10a-13b, *YRCK*, ii, pp. 545-47. On Yan Fu, courtesy name Zijing 子靖, from Gaotang 高唐 in Shandong, appointed Auxiliary Academician of the Hanlin Academy in 1279, Academician of the Hanlin Academy in 1286, then in 1300, Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy, retiring in 1307, see *Yuanshi* 160.3772-74; *YR*, pp. 1996-97. Yan Fu's six-juan collection *Jingxianji* 靜軒集 is found at *YRCK*, ii, pp. 537-70.

<sup>140</sup> They did not, however, follow Su's omission of a report, found in the *Wangbei*, on his receiving an appanage after the conquest of Jiangnan. See Yan Fu, 'Taishi Guangping Zhenxian Wang Bei', p. 258; *Mingchen shilue* 3.41-42; *Yuanshi* 119.2947-48.

The gentleman was called 玉昔 when young, but when he became eminent he was favoured and addressed, not by his name, but by the granted title *Örlüg Noyan*, which translated means ‘capable official’.<sup>141</sup>

The *Yuanshi* edit, on the other hand, implicitly contrasts this Mongol term against a normative *Hua* 華 language group:

Öz Temür, in Shizu’s [Qubilai’s] time was once favoured by being addressed, not by his name, but by the granted title *Örlüg Noyan*, which is like the *Hua* 華 say ‘capable official’.<sup>142</sup>

This subtle reformulation implicitly positions the sinophone *Hua* as the centre; this is perhaps also the case to some degree in the earlier version, but that did not name the centre, rather talking of a translation process. Both accounts see *Örlüg Noyan* translated as ‘capable official’ 能官, which seems something of a stretch in the direction of bureaucratic formalization; although the meaning of *örlüg* is not entirely clear, it seems as likely to refer to valiant martial ability as civil capability.<sup>143</sup> This intervention therefore shifts the explanation to rest in both a Sinophone and civil centre of gravity.

Yelü Chucai’s colleague Liu Min reportedly received the Mongol name *Öčüken* ‘Little, Small’ from Činggis Qan, who was impressed by Min’s physique, and later by his successful study of various languages.<sup>144</sup> The biography narrative roughly parallels Min’s

<sup>141</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 3.41:

公小字玉昔，迨至貴顯，寵以不名，賜號月呂祿那演，譯云能官也。[高唐閻公撰勳德碑]

<sup>142</sup> *Yuanshi* 119.2947:

玉昔帖木兒，世祖時嘗寵以不名，賜號月呂魯那演，猶華言能官也。

<sup>143</sup> On the term *Örlüg*, see Rybatzki, ‘Die Personennamen’, p. 143; Lessing, *Dictionary*, p. 642. Atwood notes a Sinophone tendency to translate *noyan* as ‘official’, rather than ‘commander’, and May argues that examples such as its application to Tolui (*Uluğ Noyan*) indicate a specifically martial celebratory role for the term. See Atwood, *Encyclopedia*, p. 412; Timothy May, *The Mongol Empire: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC CLIO, 2016), p. 47. On the use of the title as a taboo name for Tolui, see John A. Boyle, ‘On The Titles Given in Juvainī to Certain Mongolian Princes’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 19 (1956), 146-54.

<sup>144</sup> *Yuanshi* 153.3609:

一日，帝宴諸將於行營，敏隨之入，帝見其貌偉，異之，召問所自，俾留宿衛。習國語，閱二歲，能通諸部語，帝嘉之，賜名玉出干，出入禁闥，初為奉御。帝征西遼諸國，破之，又征回國，破其軍二十萬，悉收其地，敏皆從行。

*shendaobei*, written by Yuan Haowen, in discussing Min's meeting with the Qan and linguistic success, but, drastically condensing this material, seems to insert the name grant report to replace praise for Min's competence and understanding of the Qan's point of view.<sup>145</sup> The *liezhuan* also notes grants of the ethnonym-related names Tatartai ('of the Tatars') and Salji'utai ('of the Salji'ut') to Min's sons Liu Shiheng 劉世亨 and Liu Shiji 劉世濟 respectively, neither grant being found in the inscription.<sup>146</sup>

The granting of the name *Menggudei* 'of the Mongols' to Shi Tianlin 石天麟 shows similarities in its portrayal to the grant to Liu Min in that it was connected to the subject's successful language study.<sup>147</sup> Tianlin's *shendaobei*, written by Xiao Hu 蕭斛 and probably composed between 1309 and 1318, also mentions this name, explaining its meaning for the reader: "in Chinese it means the dynastic clan", remarking that this was a convention like previous dynasties' grants of *xing* family names, and stating that it was done by imperial decree.<sup>148</sup> This seems to assume that readers would operate in a milieu

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On *üjüken*, *oçüken*, see Rybatzki, 'Die Personennamen', pp. 22-23; Lessing, *Dictionary*, p. 629. The biography of Li Zhen 李楨 describes the same name being granted to him by Ögödei under parallel conditions. See *Yuanshi* 124.3050-51.

<sup>145</sup> Yuan Haowen 元好問, 'Dachengxiang liushi xianying shendaobei 大丞相劉氏先塋神道碑 (The Ancestral Grave Spirit Way Inscription of Grand Councillor-in-Chief Liu)', in *QYW*, i, 615-18 (p. 615): 一日，避役御營。犒宴之人，什伍爲偶。公輒入座共食，意態自如。上舉目見之，親問姓名及所以來者。公跪自陳主帥不見卹，無以自存，願留止營中。上召主帥，名索公，得之，隸中宮帳下。不三四年，諸部譯語無不閑習，稍得供奉上前。公資稟聰悟，異於常人，進退應對，無不曲中聖意。未幾，擢之奉御之列，出入帷幄，寒暑旦暮，斯須不少離，千載之會，實始於此。

<sup>146</sup> *Yuanshi* 153.3610:

... 又賜其子世濟名散祝台，爲必閣赤，入宿衛。...

... 甲寅，請以子世亨自代，帝許之，賜世亨銀章，佩金虎符，賜名塔塔兒台。...

<sup>147</sup> See *Yuanshi* 153.3620:

石天麟字天瑞，順州人。年十四，入見太宗，因留宿衛。天麟好學不倦，於諸國書語無不習。帝命中書令耶律楚材釐正庶務，選賢能爲參佐，天麟在選，賜名蒙古台。宗王征西域，以天麟爲斷事官。

On the '-dai' suffix in Middle Mongolian names, see Lajos Bese, "On Some Ethnic Names in 13<sup>th</sup> Century Inner-Asia", *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 42 (1988), 17-42.

<sup>148</sup> Xiao Hu 蕭斛, 'Yuan gu teshou dasitu zeng taishi kaifu yitong sansi shangzhuguo jiguogong tuizheng xuanli baode yidai gongchen shi zhongxuan shigong shendaobei' 元故特授大司徒贈太師開府儀同三司上柱國冀國公推誠宣力保德翊戴功臣諡忠宣石公神道碑銘, in *QYW*, x, pp. 757-60 (pp. 757-58):

where previous dynastic practice would be more valid and familiar than Mongolian terms. The biography drops both explanation and discussion of precedents. Biographies of Yan Gongnan 燕公楠 report a 1285 grant to him of the Mongolian name (*ming*) *Sain Nanggiyadai* 賽因囊加帶 (literally, Good of-the-(Southern)-Chinese, so ‘Good Person of the Song Realm’).<sup>149</sup> Neither text comments on or explains the grant, its meaning either obvious or of less interest than the fact of the grant itself. The account given in Gongnan’s *shendaobei*, written by Cheng Jufu, has clearly been pasted into the *Yuanshi* biography with only light editing.<sup>150</sup>

Chucui’s biography translates his nickname, as do inscription and biography in the case of Liu Guojie and, to a degree, in that of Jia Šira. In other cases, such as Shi Tianlin, only the inscriptions explain their epithets. In all cases these are explained in purely descriptive terms, this treatment presumably reflecting contemporary understanding, but perhaps with further implications. Recognizing epithets such as Baġatur as titles might imply recognition of steppe cultural and political systems, and neither inscriptions nor biographies do this so far. Shi Tianlin’s inscription emphasizes Chinese precedents for grants of names linking subjects to the imperial family, but this is dropped in his biography. In the two places where the *Yuanshi* compilers emphasize that granted epithets

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太宗皇帝在御，公年十四，侍父順國公從行在所，因得拜覲，蒙睿眷備警衛。公勤慤英悟，不數歲，學問有成，詩禮陰陽固傳家學，而旁及諸國書，言無不通，習聞義勇，為同列推服。時天造之初，條綱未完，上命中書耶律公興舉釐革庶務，而毗贊難其人，僉議以命公。事或崢嶸，每賴以濟，因賜名蒙古達，華言猶國族也，前代賜姓之 [758] 通例。詔名。

On Xiao Hu 蕭斛 (1241-1318), courtesy name Weidou 惟斗, see *QYW*, x, p. 719; *YR*, pp. 1971-72.

<sup>149</sup> *Yuanshi* 173.4051:

至元十三年，世祖既平江南，帥臣板授同知贛州事。十四年，以平廣南功，遷同知吉州路總管府事。二十二年夏，召至上都，奏對稱旨，世祖賜名賽因囊加帶，命參大政，辭，乞補外。

See Lessing, *Dictionary*, p. 564: Nanggijad / Нанхиад, ‘Adj. Chinese’.

<sup>150</sup> Cheng Jufu 程鉅夫, ‘Zide daifu huguang dengchu xing zhongshusheng youcheng yangong shendao beaming’ 資德大夫湖廣等處行中書省右丞燕公神道碑銘, in *QYW*, xvi, 503-5 (p. 503):

至元十三年，皇有江南，帥府版同知本州事。明年下廣南，有功，授同知吉州路總管府事。二十二年夏，召至上都，奏對稱旨，賜名賽音囊嘉岱，命參大政，辭，乞補外。

do not count as formal *ming* naming we see the edges of contrasting practices, but we do not find an explanation of what such grants actually represented. It is difficult to read a clear difference between *Yuanshi* and related accounts. This seems likely to attest to a significant degree of inconsistency in the *Yuanshi* compilers' interventions. Accounts were consistently edited, in that all narratives received some attention, but the rhetorical direction is not consistent, and leaves substantial room for further large-scale investigation.

The Oronar official Harqasun is identified several times in his biographies by the title *Tarqan*, referring to a specifically Turko-Mongol institution. The foundation text – an inscription composed by Liu Minzhong 劉敏中 on the grant of posthumous titles to Harqasun soon after his death in 1308 – explains the term for its readers. Broadly, both accounts relate that, in the very early days, Harqasun's great-grandfather Kišlik discovered a plot being hatched against Činggis Qan (or, to be strictly accurate, against Temüjin, as he had not yet adopted the Činggis Qan title) by his close ally Ong Qan. Warned by Kišlik, Temüjin was able to defeat Ong Qan, and Kišlik was rewarded with *darqan* status.<sup>151</sup>

Our texts diverge in what they choose to explain and how, however; Su Tianjue citing the inscription text expanding on the nature of this *darqan* status, which, we read, “translates as the leader (or elder) of a realm 國之長.”<sup>152</sup> This does not match definitions we find

<sup>151</sup> Liu Minzhong, ‘Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei’, p. 538; *Mingchen shilue* 4.55 (presented as *kaoyi* notes):

王曾祖啟昔礼，以英才遇太祖於龍飛見躍之際，知可汗將襲之，趣告帝為備，果至，我兵縱擊，大破之，尋併其衆。以功擢千戶，錫號答刺罕。

<sup>152</sup> Liu Minzhong, ‘Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei’, p. 538; *Mingchen shilue* 4.57:

時官制惟左、右萬戶，次千戶，非勳戚不與。答刺罕，譯言一國之長。



elsewhere.<sup>153</sup> *Darqan* status, as understood by present-day scholars of Mongol history, freed individuals from service obligations and carried hereditary immunity from tax demands and even from prosecution for up to nine offences.<sup>154</sup> The explanation suggests that Liu Minzhong, writing Harqasun's inscription under Mongol rule but in a self-consciously 'Chinese' genre, both thought the raised status significant enough to warrant discussion and had a different take on it than scholars do now.

In contrast, the *Yuanshi* uses the term to refer to Harqasun, sometimes instead of his name, but makes no attempt to explain it to readers. The *Yuanshi*, introducing Harqasun's ancestry, tells the story of how the family came to gain the *tarqan* title, and this shows a different focus to the inscription account cited in the *Mingchen shilue*.<sup>155</sup> The *Yuanshi* compilers instead expanded on the immoral nature of Ong Qan's plot against Temüjin, in another example where a *liezhuan* focuses on situation over subject.<sup>156</sup> Framing the

<sup>153</sup> For example, Juvaynī's explanation of the status is as follows (in Boyle's translation):

*Tarkhan* are those who are exempt from compulsory contributions, and to whom the booty taken on every campaign is surrendered: whenever they so wish they may enter the royal presence without leave or permission.

Juvaynī, *History of the World-Conqueror*, pp. 37-38. Juvaynī, *Tārīkh-e jahān-gushāy*, i, pp. 27:

تارخانان آن بودند که از همه مؤنات معافبود و در هر لشکر که میبرد هر غنیمت که چیلند ایشان را میبردند و هرگاه که خواقد درگاه بپایان دستور در میزدند

<sup>154</sup> On *Darqan*, see Atwood, *Encyclopedia*, p. 133; Rybatzki, 'Die Personennamen', pp. 422-25; Clauson, *Etymological Dictionary*, pp. 539-40; Seng Ge 僧格, "'Dalahan" yu gudai menggu shoulie wenhua' "答刺罕"与古代蒙古狩猎文化 ("Darqan" and Ancient Mongolian Hunting Culture), *Xibei Minzu Yanjiu*, 3 (2011), 217-23; Thomas T. Allsen, 'Spiritual Geography and Political Legitimacy in the Eastern Steppe', in *Ideology and the Formation of Early States*, ed. by H. Claessen and J. Oosten (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 116-35 (p. 130); Han-Woo Choi, 'Evidences of the affinity of Korean and Turkic', *International Journal of Central Asian Studies* 10 (2005), 29-52 (41-42). The Qipčaq commander and official El Temür was reportedly also awarded the *Darqan* title by Jayaatu Qaḡan (Wenzong 文宗, r. 1328-32), an award interpreted by Yang Jihong as relating directly to El Temür's help in gaining him the throne. Yang suggests that *Darqan* status was reserved for those who had saved the lives of Činggis Qan and his descendants. See Yang Jihong, 'Lun mengyuan shiqi qincha ren tutu ha jiazuo', 317-18. De Rachewiltz argues that "the institution of *darqan* is one of the cornerstones of Mongol medieval society", and suggests 'privileged' as a better translation than the more frequently seen 'freeman'. See de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, i, p. 295. Sneath, however, adopts the 'freeman' reading in his discussion of Harqasun's great-grandfather's exploits. See David Sneath, *The Headless State: Aristocratic Orders, Kinship Society and Misrepresentations of Nomadic Inner Asia* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007), p.193.

<sup>155</sup> The explanation is found at Liu Minzhong, 'Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei', p. 538; *Mingchen shilue* 4.55.

<sup>156</sup> *Yuanshi* 136.3291:

relationship between Ong Qan and Temüjin in filial terms as that of elder and younger brother, the *Yuanshi* places further emphasis on Temüjin's moral superiority, expressed in a frame of reference more familiar to Confucian scholars; filial responsibility.

When it comes to explaining Turko-Mongol and other non-‘Chinese’ institutions to readers, our sample texts show substantial variation in the prominence and detail granted by the *Yuanshi* compilers. It seems that name grants are more likely to receive explanation than are titles or the names of institutions, possibly due to the more direct linkage of political connotations to the latter. The presence of so many explanations does also suggest that linguistic elements internal to the Mongol imperium and likely employed at the political centre were not familiar to the projected elite Sinophone readership of the late fourteenth century.

### 3.3 Centring the Han and the ‘Ancient’?

Alongside this broad, if not consistent, de-centring of, and general reduction in description for, ‘non-Chinese’ or Other elements, we see a related intensification of focus on ‘Chinese’ elements and a central positioning of these.<sup>157</sup> Once again, this is neither a straightforward process nor a thoroughly consistent application of principles. The ‘Memorial for Presenting the *Yuanshi*’, which can be seen as a kind of authorial summary, or abstract, for the *Yuanshi* overall, credits Qubilai Qagan with having

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曾祖啟昔禮，始事王可汗脫斡璘。王可汗與太祖約為兄弟，[一]及太祖得衆，陰忌之，謀害太祖。啟昔禮潛以其謀來告，太祖乃與二十餘人一夕遁去，諸部聞者多歸之，還攻滅王可汗，併其衆。擢啟昔禮為千戶，賜號答剌罕。從平河西、西域諸國。

The incident is also related in the *Shengwu qinzheng lu* (see Wang Guowei, *Menggu shiliao sizhong*, 1.92-100) and in the *Secret History*, §§ 169-70 (at de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, pp. 87-91).

<sup>157</sup> Farmer also stresses that the “new empire claimed descent from its Chinese predecessors and sought to distance itself from the Mongol Yuan. It was consciously modelled on the historical past, especially the Han, Tang and Song dynasties.” Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, pp. 82-83.

(adapting Cleaves' translation), "established *jing* (principles) and set forth *ji* (regulations) and used the *xia* to reform the *yi*".<sup>158</sup> This latter element asserts, in no uncertain terms, the primacy of sinocentric markers and makes them the key to Qubilai's success: his institution of *jing* 經, and *ji* 紀, and transforming the 'barbarian' *yi* 夷 by means of the 'Chinese' *xia* 夏. These themes are also found in the summary of the Basic Annals of Shizu, which, however, expands this assessment to credit the Qagan with "trusting and employing the arts of the *Ru* 儒術, employing the capable to use the *xia* in reforming the *yi*, establishing principle and regulation."<sup>159</sup>

The biographies for Jia Juzhen 賈居貞 (1218-1280) include an incident in which the centrality of the Hua seems to be questioned. Juzhen, appellative Zhongming 仲明, from Huolu 獲鹿 in Zhending 真定, served as Senior Supervisor of the Office of the Left and the Right for the Central Secretariat 中書左右司郎中 in 1260, and later Director-General for Xiangyang 襄陽, among other posts.<sup>160</sup> The episode, included in Jia Juzhen's *Mingchen shilue* biography as an excerpt from his lost *xingzhuang* and not found in Juzhen's *shendaobei*, is undated but contextually placed in the early 1260s. In it Juzhen responds to suspicions of 'Huaren'.<sup>161</sup> The people who raised these suspicions are implicitly understood to be both 'not-Hua'; not 'Chinese' and transgressive – in that they express a mistrust of *Hua* people, and, typically, remain an unidentified mass. They asked

<sup>158</sup> Cleaves, 'Memorial for Presenting the *Yüan Shih*', 62-63. *Yuanshi* p. 4673: 立經陳紀，用夏變夷。

<sup>159</sup> *Yuanshi* 17.377:

世祖度量弘廣，知人善任使，信用儒術，用能以夏變夷，立經陳紀，所以為一代之制者，規模宏遠矣。

<sup>160</sup> On Jia Juzhen, see YR, p. 1634, *Mingchen shilue* 11.229-35, *Yuanshi* 153.3622-25.

<sup>161</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 11.230:

有言華人富且反者，上以問公，

whether *Hua* people weren't "rich and rebellious", using the rebel general Li Tan as an example:

Some said that *Huaren* were both rich and rebellious, and the emperor asked the gentleman. The gentleman replied, "Banditry arises through poverty; being rich and yet rebelling is unheard of." Some said, "Did not Li Tan of Shandong use wealth in betrayal?" [Juzhen] said, "Tan's turning lay in his power being too strong. Now, among the people of outlying areas, some wish for death due to cold and hunger, why do you only speak of their wealth?" The emperor deeply approved of his words. [*xingzhuang*]<sup>162</sup>

The episode was omitted from the *Yuanshi*, among anonymous individuals, and the links made by these individuals between the rebellious general Li Tan and the broader 'Han' identity. The *Yuanshi* omission of this hints at either an unwillingness to countenance such suspicion against 'Chinese' people or as a whole or against the wealthy among the populace.

In Harqasun's biography, we find the *Yuanshi* – in fact all three texts but especially his *liezhuan* – doing something unexpected. In one episode, undated but placed roughly in the mid-1290s by the incidents surrounding it, Harqasun is portrayed dismissing the proposed extension of a tax measure to include Huguang Province, over which he held jurisdiction at the time.<sup>163</sup> This seems to refer to the 'Twice-a-Year' tax collection, originally proposed by Yang Yan 楊炎 (727-81) in 780 C.E. under the Tang polity and reportedly intended to extend tax liability to estates held by the nobility, high officials and clergy.<sup>164</sup> Implementation seems to have been patchy over the succeeding centuries, but it

<sup>162</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 11.230:

有言華人富且反者，上以問公，公曰：「盜由貧起，未聞富而反。」或曰：「山東李璫非富以叛耶？」公曰：「璫之變，在於權太重。今郊遂之民，或凍餒欲死，子獨言其富，何耶？」上深是其言。[行狀]

<sup>163</sup> According to Schurmann, despite the formal implementation of the "two-tax-system" only the Jiangdong and Zhexi regions saw summer and autumn collections at the time of the Mongol conquest of the south, the rest contributing grain in autumn collections only. See Schurmann, *Economic Structure of the Yüan Dynasty*, p. 70.

<sup>164</sup> On this see Brian E. McKnight, 'Fiscal Privileges and the Social Order in Sung China', in *Crisis and Prosperity in Sung China*, ed. by John Winthrop Haeger (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1975),

appears that additional summer collections became the norm in southern Yuan provinces from 1296, Harqasun's Huguang and Guangdong regions being exempted from this due to the effects of "turmoil".<sup>165</sup>

Harqasun's response does not, however, address that issue, but instead takes the form of an attack on those polities that had previously implemented the measure – the Tang and Song.<sup>166</sup> The *Mingchen shilue* cites Liu Minzhong's inscription text here:

Huguang 湖廣 had long been without a summer tax collection, but an influential official cited the late Tang and Song practice of holding such collections. [Harqasun] said: "[These are] policies of the weak and defeated; should the heavenly court implement them?" In the end a memorial prevented [this].<sup>167</sup>

The *Yuanshi* compilers added detail and made Harqasun's rhetoric more pointed:

The Hunan Pacification Commissioner 湖南宣慰 Zhang Guoji 張國紀 recorded a proposal that he wished to follow the late Tang and Song practice of collecting taxes from the populace in the summer. Harqasun said: "Such weak policies of vanquished polities, with their loss of grand vision; ought the heavenly court to implement these?" A memorial halted this consultation.<sup>168</sup>

While the inscription by Liu Minzhong and the *Mingchen shilue* portray Harqasun characterizing the Tang and late Song as "weak and defeated" 衰弊, the *Yuanshi* compilers seem to have added further criticism. On top of a clause describing summer

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pp. 79-100, especially pp. 84-88. The measure has been read by McKnight as one reflecting a more southern Chinese bureaucratic than northern aristocratic tendency, and McKnight argues that subsequent adoption of varied forms of this system under Song rule was diluted at best and effectively sidelined by Mongol rule, influenced primarily, he argues, by Jin policy, and the Ming polity's subsequent adoption of Mongol-era approaches. See McKnight, 'Fiscal Privileges and the Social Order in Sung China', p. 99.

<sup>165</sup> See Schurmann, *Economic Structure of the Yüan Dynasty*, p. 70.

<sup>166</sup> The incident is found at Liu Minzhong, 'Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei', p. 540; *Mingchen shilue* 4.57; *Yuanshi* 136.3292.

<sup>167</sup> Liu Minzhong, 'Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei', p. 540; *Mingchen shilue* 4.57:

湖廣舊無夏稅，柄臣援唐、宋末世為徵，王曰：「衰弊之政，聖朝可行耶！」竟奏罷。

<sup>168</sup> *Yuanshi* 136.3292:

湖南宣慰張國紀建言，欲按唐、宋末徵民間夏稅。哈刺哈孫曰：「亡國弊政，失寬大之意，聖朝其可行耶？」奏止其議。

collections as “the weak policies of defeated dynasties” 亡國弊政 they add a description of the Tang and Song polities as having “lost greatness of vision” 失寬大之意.

In all versions it appears that a proposal to adopt ‘Chinese’ methods is the problem; Harqasun’s solution is to present a memorial to the throne based in ‘defeated polity’ logic, and the outcome is characterized as his successful prevention of the measure’s adoption. This involves the substantial addition of reported speech, and it is not clear whether the *Yuanshi* compilers had an independent source of information for this, and, if so, whether Liu Minzhong’s inscription tried to downplay Harqasun’s criticism of the Tang and Song. The text leaves room for ambiguity – one reading might be that the summer collections would simply equal a further tax burden on the populace – but the flat rejection of Tang and Song policies because of the polities in which they originated is striking.

The episode contrasts with the report of Yelü Chucai’s argument over census-taking methods.<sup>169</sup> As we have seen, Chucai’s argument rests on two legs; one practical and the other, in *Mingchen shilue* and inscription, on the historical practices of the ‘Central Plains’, i.e., previous Sinophone polities, among which the Tang and Song would be prominent. In that version it is unnamed courtiers, the opponents of the meritorious subject, who stress northern China’s subordination within a greater imperial space. The *Yuanshi* handling is especially confusing, in that the Tang in particular are identified as a key influence on the new Ming emperor’s cultural policy.<sup>170</sup> As we have seen, a key

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<sup>169</sup> See section 2.2.

<sup>170</sup> Farmer argues that “[i]t was to the Tang that Zhu Yuanzhang turned when he ordered that Ming subjects abandon the use of the Mongol language, Mongol names, hair styles and conventions of dress.” Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, p. 35.

motivation ascribed to the Ming founder relates to an intense concern with establishing orthodoxy, particularly via the restoration of a specifically Tang antiquity.<sup>171</sup> The incident may perhaps serve to remind readers of Harqasun's alterity, despite his essentially positive portrayal.

The treatment of another episode from Harqasun's biography concerning the planning of a 1301 military expedition towards Southeast Asia illustrates the centrality of territory labelled 'Zhongguo' to the *Yuanshi*.<sup>172</sup> Here the problem is that people, again unidentified in the *Mingchen shilue* but named in the *Yuanshi*, encouraged Qubilai to engage in the long-distance extension of force to trivial distant places.<sup>173</sup> The basis of Harqasun's argument against the expedition varies between our texts. The *Xundebei* and its cited excerpts in the *Mingchen shilue* stress the target's distance from Zhongguo 中國 and the lack of benefit from an expedition, which is mirrored in the aspects those texts highlight in reporting the outcome:

Harqasun said, "The high mountains of these minor Yi 夷, they are extremely distant from Zhongguo 中國, and it would be best and most virtuous to instruct [them] to come and submit. If this requires any involvement by other people, then no benefit will be seen." This [advice] was not heeded.<sup>174</sup>

<sup>171</sup> See Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*, p. 35, and the discussion at section 1.3 above.

<sup>172</sup> The episode is found at Liu Minzhong, 'Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei', p. 540; *YWL* 25.6b; *Mingchen shilue* 4.58; *Yuanshi* 136.3293.

<sup>173</sup> Liu Minzhong, 'Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei', p. 540 / *YWL* 25.6b: 辛丑，同列以或者議倡言：「世祖皇帝以神武開一統，功蓋萬世。陛下未有伐國拓地之舉，以彰休烈。西南夷八百媳國弗率，可命將往征。」

*Mingchen shilue* 4.58:

辛丑，同列以或者議倡言：「世祖以神武開一統，功蓋萬世。陛下未有伐國拓地之舉，以彰休烈。西南夷八百媳[婦]國弗率，可命將往征。」

*Yuanshi* 136.3293:

五年，同列有以雲南行省左丞劉深計倡議曰：「世祖以神武一海內，功蓋萬世。今上嗣 大歷服，未有武功以彰休烈，西南夷有八百媳婦國未奉正朔，請往征之。」

<sup>174</sup> Liu Minzhong, 'Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei', p. 540 / *YWL* 25.6b; *Mingchen shilue* 4.58:

王謂：「山嶠小夷，去中國遼絕，第可善諭向化。苟將非其人，未見所利。」弗聽。

Implicitly makes ‘Zhongguo’ the centre, but the *Yuanshi* compilers’ intervention takes the ‘Zhongguo’ characters and moves them to create another idea. The expedition, in this formulation of Harqasun’s opinion, is not only without profit, but likely to cause *unnecessary bother* to Zhongguo:

Harqasun said: “The minor Yi of the highest peaks are a thousand *li* in the distance; [we] ought to instruct them to come with envoys; [they] are not sufficient [cause] to bother Zhongguo.” [He] was not heeded,...<sup>175</sup>

Our subject’s solution having been ignored, the outcome is negative. This result, in inscription and *Mingchen shilue*, is a straightforward policy failure, seeing a substantial force returning ingloriously from their expedition:

In the end a memorial proposed sending two myriads of the Huguang 湖廣 army, with several tens of thousands of strong corvée labourers for provisioning; losing discipline, they ultimately returned without merit.<sup>176</sup>

In the *Yuanshi* the outcome is discussed in very different terms, describing the heavy burden placed on the populace in the region through which the expeditionary force passed:

This was not heeded; they finally sent out two myriads of troops, ordering the general Shen 深 to go and lead them. Their route led out through Huguang, and the populace were wearied by provisioning them.<sup>177</sup>

The *Yuanshi* assessment of results is thus tailored to bear out Harqasun’s local concerns, as the success of the expedition in military terms, the only criteria recorded in *Wangbei* and *Mingchen shilue*, is immaterial in the *liezhuan*. The negative impact of the campaign on the populace of Huguang, an area internal to Zhongguo and thus Ming territory, is the

<sup>175</sup> *Yuanshi* 136.3293:

哈刺哈孫曰：「山嶠小夷，遼絕萬里，可諭之使來，不足以煩中國。」不聽，

<sup>176</sup> Liu Minzhong, ‘Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei’, p. 540; *YWL* 25.6b; *Mingchen shilue* 4.58:

竟奏發湖廣兵二萬人，丁壯役餽輓數十萬，將失紀律，果無功而還。

<sup>177</sup> *Yuanshi* 136.3293:

不聽，竟發兵二萬，命深將以往。道出湖廣，民疲於餽餉。



only aspect of the outcome important to the *Yuanshi* compilers, who matched their tailored outcome to their tailored problem.

The biographies of Xu Shilong 徐世隆 (1206-1285) also include an episode which discusses ‘Zhongguo’ and the ways of rule it requires, making the region a centre rather than an element, and underlining the place of ritual formality in this ‘Zhongguo’ way of being. Xu Shilong served in Yanjing and Dongping and later in the Hanlin Academy.<sup>178</sup> The incident sees Xu Shilong recommending that, being the emperor of ‘Zhongguo’, Qubilai ought to implement Zhongguo matters.<sup>179</sup> This is dated to 1269 in the *Mingchen shilue*, before the conquest and absorption of the Southern Song, so must be taken as referring primarily to the post-Jin territories of northern China. Here our texts accord closely, emphasizing sacrificial ritual as the key to rule, this requiring a temple for its performance.

The *Mingchen shilue* characterizes this problem by stating that, in the sixth year *Zhiyuan* (1269), there had not yet been any discussion of establishing an ancestral temple, and the argument put forward in Shilong’s quote makes solemn rites an essential element of such imperial governance.<sup>180</sup> The passage in the *Yuanshi* follows the *Mingchen shilue* (and

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<sup>178</sup> On Xu Shilong 徐世隆 (d. 1285), courtesy name Weiqing 威卿, from Xihua 西華 in Chenzhou 陳州, see *Mingchen shilue* 12.249-54; *Yuanshi* 160.3768-70; *YR*, p. 905; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 220-21. The 22 sections of his *Mingchen shilue* biography all draw on a lost *mubei*, by Xu Chenping 徐陳平.

<sup>179</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 12.252; *Yuanshi* 160.3769-70. At that time, Shilong was reportedly involved in preparing new ritual forms with Xu Heng and Liu Bingzhong; see H.L. Chan, ‘Hsü Heng’, p. 432.

<sup>180</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 12.252:

六年，作新大都于燕，宗廟之制未有議者，公奏曰：「陛下帝中國，當行中國事。事之大者，首惟祭祀，祭祀必有清廟。」因以圖上，乞勅有司以時興建，從之。踰年而廟成，公之所教太常禮樂亦備，遂迎祖宗神御，入藏太室，因奉安而大饗焉。禮成，上悅，賞賜良渥。

[墓誌]

*Yuanshi* 160.3769-70:

therefore the *Mubei*) text, abbreviating it slightly and dropping a clause referring to Shilong's own contribution to rites and music, another example of *liezhuan* privileging situation over individual. The *Yuanshi* characteristically omitted the foundation text's narratorial introduction to the problem, instead quoting Shilong's advice, itself reporting a lack. In employing the subject's voice the compilers reduced narratorial visibility and increasing vividness. The results of Xu Shilong's advisory efforts are threefold; implementation (and in the *Mingchen shilue* Xu Shilong's own contribution, too), pleasing the monarch and receiving an unspecified but generous reward. Aside from omitting the *Mingchen shilue* introduction, the *Yuanshi* follows the text closely, but drops a clause highlighting Xu Shilong's personal contribution to rites – again emphasizing situation over subject, and perhaps rejecting the idealization of individuals innovating in ritual affairs.<sup>181</sup>

This concern for formality at court finds echoes in the biographies for Wang Pan 王磐 (1202-1293), where we see a negative comparative characterization of informality at the Mongol courts. Pan achieved *Jinshi* status during Jin *Zhengda* 正大 (1224-34), was attached to Yan Shi's staff in northern China and at the beginning of *Zhongtong* 中統 (c. 1260), was selected as Deputy Control Officer 宣撫副使 of Yidu 益都 and other circuits, later serving as Auxiliary Academician of the Hanlin Academy 翰林直學士 and

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世隆奏：「陛下帝中國，當行中國事。事之大者，首惟祭祀，祭必有廟。」因以圖上，乞敕有司以 [3770] 時興建，從之，踰年而廟成。遂迎祖宗神御，奉安太室，而大饗禮成。帝悅，賞賜優渥。

<sup>181</sup> On this see also section 1.3 above. On the repeated contrasts made by Chinese historians between collegial forms among Turko-Mongol polities and the hierarchy of ritual, see Elizabeth Endicott-West, 'Aspects of Khitan Liao and Mongolian Yüan Imperial Rule: A Comparative Perspective', in *Rulers from the Steppe*, ed. by Gary Seaman and Daniel Marks (Los Angeles: Ethnographics Press, Center for Visual Anthropology, University of Southern California, 1991), pp. 199–222 (pp. 199-200).

Pacification Commissioner 宣慰使 for Zhending 定宣, among other posts.<sup>182</sup> Pan's biographies portray their subject contributing formal ritual practice to the Činggisid court.

The *Mingchen shilue* expresses his identification of a problem as follows:

... at that time the palace was not yet established, the court discussed [matters] without settling [them], and all were praised and rewarded, no matter whether noble or base, all gathered before the imperial tent; when the enforcers of the law grew disgusted with their numbers, they wielded their canes and beat them; chased away they came again, this was repeated several times over a short period. [Pan] considered that people from foreign countries would find this ridiculous,<sup>183</sup>

The *Yuanshi* formulation of the problem identified by Pan differs slightly:

At that time the palace had not yet been built, and court ceremonial was not yet established; all who were received were congratulated; the ministers 臣 and commoners mixed even up to the screen of the palace hall, and those who enforced the law were worried by the noise and turmoil, but could not curb them.<sup>184</sup>

Pan's response to the problem is very similar in both accounts, drawing on an 'old system' 舊制.<sup>185</sup> The major difference between the accounts relates to the degree of trespass and the nature of the trespasser's transgression, described in differing spatial terminology:

<sup>182</sup> On Wang Pan, courtesy name Wenbing 文炳, from Yongnian 永年 in Guangping 廣平, see *Yuanshi* 160.3751-56; YR, p. 133; *Mingchen shilue*, 12.241-47; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, p. 218. After a 102-character preface, the *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged in 18 sections (2,290 characters), eleven sections (1,473 characters, 64%) taken from the *muzhi* by Li Qian (not in Wang), six sections (776 characters, 34%) from the *mubei* and a single section labelled 'Yutang jiahua' 玉堂嘉話 (41 characters, 2%).

<sup>183</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 12.243:

兼太常少卿，時宮闕未立，朝議未定，凡遇稱賀，臣庶無問貴賤，皆集帳殿前，執法者厭其多，揮杖擊之，逐去復來，頃刻數次。公慮為外國笑

<sup>184</sup> *Yuanshi* 160.3753:

時宮闕未建，朝儀未立，凡遇稱賀，臣庶雜至帳殿前，執法者患其誼擾，不能禁。

<sup>185</sup> Cf. the contrasting selection of this 'old system' 舊制 phrase in Chucai's *Yuanshi* biography to refer to the problematic Činggisid 'massacre policy'. *Yuanshi* 146.3459:

[Under the] old system, whenever a city was attacked, those of the enemy who used arrows and stones [in its defence], were resisting the order [to submit] and must be killed once the city was taken.

舊制，凡攻城邑，敵以矢石相加者，即為拒命，既克，必殺之。

Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling', p. 173:

According to the rules of the dynasty, all enemy people resisting the order [to submit], who threw arrows or stones, must be killed without pardon.

國制，凡敵人拒命，矢石一發，則殺無赦。

those who entered would be called trespassers, the degree of their crime differentiated by whether it was an interior or exterior [gate].

The *Yuanshi* account takes on much of this, but substantial edits reshape the spatial grading of the trespasser's crime:

The degree of the trespassers' crime, from light to severe, [would] depend on whether it which gate [it was], from first to third.<sup>186</sup>

Drawing a different mental map of the court, this imposes a greater degree of retrospective formalization on Qubilai's court than did the *Mingchen shilue*.

The outcome of Pan's intervention varies between our texts; the *Mingchen shilue* reports that "it was thus settled that court discussions would accord with [Pan's] words."<sup>187</sup> The *Yuanshi* indicates a broader impact, reporting that, "as a result ceremonial systems began to be settled."<sup>188</sup> Both versions suggest that palace space must by necessity be controlled and layered into zones of graded access. The *Yuanshi*, however, reflects a more specific arrangement of these zones than is suggested in the *Mingchen shilue* account. Moreover, the *Yuanshi* again alters the type of impact ascribed to Pan, making him more of a general agent of court formalization than does the *Mingchen shilue*. This can again be seen as a shift of focus away from the individual and towards the broader setting.

With the conspicuous exception of the increased emphasis on Harqasun's dismissal of the Tang and Song polities, we see a clear tendency to make Zhongguo, and in particular the populace of Zhongguo, the most important element in considering action. Xu Shilong and

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<sup>186</sup> *Yuanshi* 160.3753:

磐上疏曰：「按舊制：天子宮門，不應入而入者，謂之闌入。闌入之罪，由第一門至第三門，輕重有差。宜令宣徽院，籍兩省而下百官姓名，各依班序，聽通事舍人傳呼贊引，然後進。其越次者，殿中司糾察定罰，不應入而入者，準闌入罪，庶朝廷之禮，漸可整肅。」

<sup>187</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 12.243:

後遂定朝儀如公言。

<sup>188</sup> *Yuanshi* 160.3753:

於是儀制始定。

Wang Pan's biographies provide a related but different set of 'Chinese' criteria for governance, Shilong's overtly identifying formalized ritual practice as the key to dealing with the issues of Zhongguo. Pan's *liezhuan*, building on foundation texts identifying a closely related issue of insufficient formality in court access, alter the nature of this recommended formality by adding architectural specificity to the prescription of multiply restricted palace zones.

### **3.4 Conclusions: selective inclusion, selective marginalization**

To sum up, in comparison to Chucai's biography, we see rather less consistency in the *Yuanshi* handling of 'foreign' elements and in their bounding of a 'Chinese' cultural sphere. Broad tendencies can, however, be discerned in the compilers' treatment of these issues. Numerous episodes see people labelled under the vague ethnic 'Huihu' tag in the foundation texts reclassified in relation to the geographic, and also vague but clearly external, 'Western Regions'. Many such people are also linked to transgression, especially fraud connected to taxation and lending. In numerous cases where such links were already established in the *Mingchen shilue* or the foundation texts, these links are strengthened by the *Yuanshi* edits, and here we see narrative techniques in action as the compilers manipulated chronology and reframed secondary subjects to alter readers' focus. This reinforcement of scapegoating is also, as we have seen, a fairly standard technique employed by our compilers, constructing more extremity of transgression, and tightening the focus on a given secondary individual; this seems to have been a key editorial strategy.

Alongside this broad tendency to downgrade ethnic Others in moral terms and shift many of them out of the imperial centre, we see a degree of downplaying other cultural and linguistic elements. This applies to the discussion of the *kešig* and *darqan* in biographies for Öčičer and Harqasun. It does not, however, extend to discussions of name grants; as with Yelü Chucai, whose *Yuanshi* biography provides information on his ‘Longbeard’ Mongol nickname while extant foundation texts exclude it, a number of biographies provide more information on name grants than do foundation texts, while the opposite is true for several others. It should be stressed that these interventions, while inconsistent, are ever-present; their extent and marked inconsistency seems to suggest a degree of importance alongside a distinct lack of coordination in handling.

Moving away from the edges, the tendency to mark a positively desirable centre, to place this in Zhongguo and to define this through ritual, is somewhat more consistent. Stated baldly in Xu Shilong’s advice to Qubilai, this also lies in the background to Wang Pan’s biographies and the *Yuanshi* compilers’ interventions distinguishing additional degrees of spatial division within the court precincts. Harqasun’s biographies add nuance to this, the *Yuanshi* compilers’ additional condemnation of Tang and Song polities making assumptions about the shape and nature of ‘Chinese’ models for government difficult to sustain. Overall then, we identify a general tendency to shift certain types of transgression, primarily slander, greed and fraud, westward and out of the central imperial space by associating them with external geographic markers. The remaining territory, partially cleansed by this expulsion, is given a centre of cultural gravity through a prescription of formal ritual, office and access, but this is, so far, only sketched out. The following chapter interrogates the compilers’ further construction of this desirable governing centre.

#### **4 Rebalancing bureaucratization and patrimonialism? Representing and re-presenting the means of court and government**

As we have seen, the *Yuanshi* compilers' interventions largely, if not consistently, narrowed the cultural and geographical scope of their narratives, pushing much of the Činggisid imperium beyond the margins of the acceptable. Having located a set of bounds and limits to normative pre-Ming history and the placement of peoples and practices outside those, we now turn to examine what is placed within them, and more particularly how the governing centre is defined. As such we interrogate our texts' portrayal of the means of government, and here we find another set of limits, defined through narrative treatment that places a limited set of institutional arrangements at a central region of moral acceptability, primarily by situating alternatives beyond the margins of the appropriate. This leaves the question of why and for whom governance should be attempted to our final thematic chapter.

We make no attempt to reconstruct the reality of Mongol governance in the Great Yuan *ulus*; this has been tackled to great effect in Farquhar's summary of formal posts and structures and by Elizabeth Endicott-West, among others.<sup>1</sup> Rather we reconstruct the intent and consistency of changes made during *Yuanshi* compilation to episodes concerning governing institutions within our sample narratives. Key questions here relate to the positioning of idealized subjects and their administrative solutions against a background of flexible and shifting policy.<sup>2</sup> As will become clear, the narrative tailoring

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<sup>1</sup> On this broad subject, see especially Endicott-West, 'The Yüan Government and Society'; David M. Farquhar, 'Structure and Function in the Yüan Imperial Government', in *China under Mongol Rule*, ed. by John D. Langlois, Jr. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 25-55.

<sup>2</sup> David Robinson follows Joseph Fletcher in suggesting that a highly pragmatic situational and provisional approach to alignments was deeply entrenched in Mongol habits of political formation; this reading runs the

of such institutional history has significant impact on historians' understanding of bureaucratic institutions and their function, a tendency to exaggerate formal stability leads to difficulties in appreciating their malleability and complexity.<sup>3</sup>

The generic tendency – in all of our narratives, but especially the *liezhuan* – to express status via links to formal bureaucratic frameworks, and to claim roots for these in a morally superior antiquity, has the effect of portraying opposition or alternative approaches as transgression and the deformation of stable, normative arrangements.<sup>4</sup> In framing parallel to *Yuanshi* adjustments to Begder and Xiandebu's opposition to Chucai and the formal arrangements ascribed to his influence, challenges to the primacy of bureaucratic institutions, most prominently the Central Secretariat and investigative agencies, are repeatedly made to appear the immoral acts of individuals.<sup>5</sup> These acts having been turned into opposition to an 'ancient' logic, proposals for rival institutions

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risk of essentialism, however, and must be treated with some caution. See Robinson, *Empire's Twilight*, p. 253; Joseph Fletcher, 'Turco-Mongolian Monarchic Tradition in the Ottoman Empire', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3-4 (1979-80), 236-52 (240-41). Li Zhi'an identifies a trend among Yuan monarchs to rely on small groups of Mongolian-speaking advisors (rather than relying on regular audiences with the broader court), thereby potentially increasing a tendency towards shifting structures as advisor groups altered composition. See Li Zhi'an 李治安, 'Yuandai "changchao" yu yuqian zouwen kaobian' 元代“常朝”与御前奏问考辨 (An Investigation of "Regular Court" and Presenting Memorials Before the Throne during the Yuan Dynasty), *Lishi Yanjiu*, 5 (2002), 45–52 (52).

<sup>3</sup> Naomi Standen has noted a comparable tendency in the editing of the *Liaoshi*, i.e., the emphasis on institutional solutions rather than principles in characterization of virtuous governance. See Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty*, p. 111.

<sup>4</sup> This is exacerbated by an apparently 'typical' tendency to rename and redesignate institutions during the Mongol era, the 'messiness' of Yuan institutional history and the "creative manipulation of chaos" to which Dardess has credited Mongol success; differences between this and the 'ad hoc manner' in which Song institutions developed may of course be questioned. See Endicott-West, 'The Yüan Government and Society', p. 593; John W. Dardess, 'Did the Mongols Matter? Territory, Power, and the Intelligentsia in China from the Northern Song to the Early Ming', in *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*, ed. by Paul Jakov Smith and Richard von Glahn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), pp. 111-34 (p. 125); Charles Hartman, 'Sung Government and Politics', in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part Two, Sung China, 960-1279*, ed. by John W. Chaffee and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 19-138 (p. 30). Endicott-West likewise notes that the nominal existence of a 'Chinese' bureaucratic structure may suggest a much more rigidly normative function than actually took place; see 'The Yüan Government and Society', p. 593. Farquhar likewise notes the tendency to read 'Chinese' government as "autocratic, highly centralized, bureaucratic", without questioning the effective function of and tensions between its constituent bodies. See Farquhar, 'Structure and Function in the Yüan Imperial Government', p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> See section 2.2 above.



and arrangements are routinely treated as Trojan horse assaults on good governance. This treatment – itself a disguise of compilers’ perspectives – imbues such acts with a specific cultural significance, thereby closing off some types of reform by portraying them as unacceptable moral deviance, placing them beyond the civilizational pale and thus delineating a further set of cultural bounds, an enemy within those limits established in the previous chapter.

Tao’s analysis of issues facing Jin government, although problematically essentializing, is useful in identifying some of the issues addressed in our sample of *Yuanshi* biographies:

... the establishment of a prototype of the provincial system, the abolition of important government councils, the monopoly of state affairs by a single administrative branch of the government, the degradation of the scholar-officials by inflicting corporal punishment, and the transformation of the censorate into an imperial instrument. These changes were mostly negative, entailing the brutalization of the political process and the simplification of political institutions.<sup>6</sup>

Leaving aside the role and degree of brutality in punishing deviance (examined in the following chapter), Tao ascribes to the Jin ‘conquest dynasty’ monopolizing and simplifying tendencies, the displacement of the ‘scholar-official’ class and the effective removal of the Censorate as a check to abuse.<sup>7</sup> These concerns, in combination with parallel developments at the Southern Song court that increased monarchical involvement in governance, align closely with the key themes of this chapter.<sup>8</sup> It is perhaps ironic that these key recommendations – distancing the monarch from administration, maintaining institutional balance and the independence of the Censorate – were all abandoned for

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<sup>6</sup> Tao, ‘The Influence of Jurchen Rule’, 130.

<sup>7</sup> James T.C. Liu argues, in contrast, that Jin rule improved on a post-Tang Liao administration by bringing in technocratic staff from outside the administration and allowing skilled clerks to ascend the hierarchy in a more openly meritocratic arrangement than that imposed under Song rule. See Liu, ‘Sung Views on the Control of Government Clerks’, 341–42.

<sup>8</sup> Tao characterizes growing centralization at the Song court and the increasing involvement of emperors in policy as problems suggesting an ongoing drift towards despotism, but without exploring these questions in detail; see ‘The Influence of Jurchen Rule’, 130.

several years by Zhu Yuanzhang in the aftermath of Hu Weiyong's 'coup' and the Ming emperor's flirtation with direct rule.<sup>9</sup>

These concerns are examined as follows: section 4.1 interrogates the transmission of general governing advice offered by our idealized subjects, demonstrating that, although the broad thrust of these is very similar, the accounts situate the scope of monarchical activity quite differently. Section 4.2 pursues this theme further, demonstrating a tendency in *Yuanshi* edits to distance the monarch from active policy-making. Section 4.3 demonstrates the compilers' development of an extant tendency to position the Central Secretariat as an idealized locus for governing activity. Finally, section 4.4 interrogates the portrayal of institutions not visible in Chucai's biographies; the Censorate and its associated surveillance bodies, the punitive-investigatory role of which is made particularly prominent by the *Yuanshi* handling of our sample narratives.

The episodes examined here mostly date to the lengthy reign of Qubilai Qagan (1260-1294), a period which saw Činggisid rule become deeply entrenched in East Asia, and which, as we have seen, was characterized by the *Yuanshi* compilers in terms of establishing "principles" and "regulations", and using "the *xia* to reform the *yi*."<sup>10</sup> Sent east in 1253, Qubilai built up the Toluid retinue and household in northern China; as Buell notes, the amount of information preserved on its membership is linked to their eventual integration into Yuan government and subsequent prominence in the history.<sup>11</sup> Whenever possible the portrayal of these individuals fixes them firmly to named formal posts in a compartmentalized bureaucratic structure, thereby representing rather more

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<sup>9</sup> See Langlois, 'The Hung-Wu Reign, 1365-1395', pp. 139-40.

<sup>10</sup> Cleaves, 'Memorial for Presenting the *Yüan Shih*', 62-63. *Yuanshi* p. 4673:

立經陳紀，用夏變夷。

<sup>11</sup> See Buell, *Tribe, Qan and Ulus*, pp. 134-35.

than just themselves.<sup>12</sup> Confirming importance via that bureaucratic framework, this treatment simultaneously acts to embed that framework in readers' coding of success, validity and importance.

This household, Qubilai's princely retinue, was largely assembled in the 1240s and 1250s and dominated by – though by no means limited to – post-Jin 'Han' individuals. Forming the core of his early governmental apparatus, they were, however, far from the only people drawn on for administrative advice and support.<sup>13</sup> The Qaḡan seems to have switched between approaches to governance, as circumstances, changed court priorities. Such shifting alignments are reminiscent of those taking place in the background to Chucai's biographies, and receive similar morally tinged treatment from our compilers, who, via numerous and detailed interventions, sharpened the foundation texts' treatment of these as threats to their subjects' virtuous dominance.<sup>14</sup>

The key administrative transgressors, who dominate our sample texts and define the margins to acceptable governance, all date to Qubilai's reign. These are Aḡmad Fanākati (d. 1282), Sangha (d. 1291) and, to a degree, Lu Shirong 盧世榮 (d. 1285). All receive 'evil minister' *liezhuan* in their own right in the *Yuanshi*. Lying outside the *Mingchen shilue*, these fall beyond the scope of our investigation; we focus instead on their deployment in our sample narratives' as transgressive secondary figures, a supporting cast to highlight aspects of the primary subjects' behaviour. Aḡmad is portrayed as a monopolizer of power, diametrically opposed to the investigative agencies and, in the

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<sup>12</sup> Although Dardess argues that Confucian ministers never dominated the Mongol court, their biographies do not give this impression. See 'Did the Mongols Matter?', p. 128.

<sup>13</sup> See Ōshima Ritsuko 大島立子, *Mongoru no seifuku ōchō* モンゴルの征服王朝 (*Mongol Conquest and Imperial Court*) (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1992), p. 56.

<sup>14</sup> This is nicely expressed in de Rachewiltz et al., 'Introduction', in *ISK*, at p. xxxiv.

*Yuanshi* formulation, the idealized ‘ancient’ system of governance (and moral authority) they are made to represent.<sup>15</sup> Sangha is portrayed in similar terms, although, like Lu Shirong, he is more specifically associated with extortion and greed.<sup>16</sup> The portrayal of these figures is effective and emotive, and tending toward empty caricature.<sup>17</sup> Those associated with Aḥmad and Sangha are routinely reduced to stereotyped ‘evil ministers’ or members of pernicious factions, and their intentions and motivations are universally portrayed as immoral, selfish and, vitally for our purposes, opposed to ‘ancient’ ways.<sup>18</sup> The political and administrative episodes examined in this chapter mostly involve one or

<sup>15</sup> On Aḥmad, his name associating him with Fanākat, or Banākat, the ruins of which are found southwest of the present-day Uzbek capital Tashkent, see especially Herbert Franke, “Aḥmad (?-1282)”, in *ISK*, pp. 539-57; ‘Aḥmed: Ein Beitrag zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte Chinas unter Qubilai’, *Oriens*, 1 (1948), 222-36; Yang Zhijiu 杨志玖, and Yang Dehua 杨德华, ‘Yuandai huizu zaixiang ahema xinlun’ 元代回族宰相阿合马新论 (A New Discussion of Ahmad, Hui Prime Minister under the Yuan Dynasty), *Huizu yanjiu*, 17 (1995), 13-17; Paul Balaran, ‘The Biographies of Three “Evil Ministers” in the “Yüan Shih”’ (unpublished PhD Thesis, Harvard, 1978); Li Zhi’an, *Hubilie zhuan*, pp. 179-211. The normative narrative is laid out unquestioningly and rather problematically in Luo Xianyou 罗贤佑, ‘Xu Heng, Ahema yu Yuanchu Hanfa, Huihuifa zhi zheng 许衡、阿合马与元初汉法、回回法之争 (Xu Heng and Ahmad and Conflict Between Hanfa (Han Ways) and Huihuifa (Central Asian Ways) in the Early Yuan Dynasty)’, *Minzu Yanjiu*, 5 (2005), 78-86; Ma Juan, ‘The Conflicts between Islam and Confucianism and Their Influence in the Yuan Dynasty’, in *Eurasian Influences on Yuan China*, ed. by Morris Rossabi (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2013), pp. 60-74 (pp. 64-66); Xiu Xiaobo 修晓波, *Yuan dai de semu shang ren* 元代的色目商人 (‘Semu’ Merchants of the Yuan Dynasty) (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 2013), pp. 233-40.

<sup>16</sup> On Sangha 桑哥, an official of Tibetan background who gained considerable influence under Qubilai, but was executed on charges of corruption in 1291, see *Yuanshi* 205.4570-76; Paul Balaran, ‘The Biographies of Three “Evil Ministers” in the *Yüan Shih*’ (unpublished PhD Thesis, Harvard, 1978), pp. 213-76; Herbert Franke, ‘Sangha (?-1291)’, in *ISK*, pp. 558-583; Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, pp. 192-99; Atwood, *Encyclopedia*, p. 488; *YR*, p. 2605; Elizabeth Endicott-West, *Mongolian Rule in China: Local Administration in the Yuan Dynasty* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1989), pp. 14-15, 97; *The Successors of Genghis Khan*, pp. 293-97; Rashīd al-Dīn, *Jāmi‘ al-tavārīkh*, pp. 921-24; *Compendium of Chronicles*, pp. 319-21.

On Lu Shirong 盧世榮 (erroneously referred to as Lu Shih-yung – *pinyin* Shiyong – in *ISK*), who went by his courtesy name (his *ming* was Mao 懋), see *Yuanshi* 205.4564-70; Balaran, ‘The Biographies of Three “Evil Ministers” in the *Yüan Shih*’, pp. 150-212; *YR*, p. 1963; Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, pp. 190-92; Hung, ‘The Tung Brothers’, pp. 637-38; Franke, ‘Sangha (?-1291)’, pp. 559-60; Morris Rossabi, ‘The Reign of Khubilai Khan’, in *CHC*, pp. 414-89 (p. 475); D. Gedalecia, ‘Wang Yün (1227-1304)’, p. 375.

<sup>17</sup> As Ōshima Ritsuko notes, there is little clarity on the backgrounds of either Aḥmad or Sangha; see *Mongoru no seifuku ōchō*, p. 85; see also Balaran, ‘The Biographies of Three “Evil Ministers” in the *Yüan Shih*’, pp. 102-3, n. 2.

<sup>18</sup> As de Rachewiltz et al. put it, “the continuous strife between Qubilai’s Confucian counsellors and his financial experts is one of the most characteristic features of his reign”. See ‘Introduction’, in *ISK*, p. xxvi. Rossabi notes that all three were under substantial pressure to deliver increased revenues for Qubilai. See Rossabi, ‘The Reign of Khubilai Khan’, p. 473. In an intriguing contrast, Endicott-West sees Aḥmad and Sangha’s legacy as a commitment to revenue at the expense, not of populace or bureaucracy, but rather the appanage holders. See *Mongolian Rule in China*, p. 97.

other of these transgressive exemplars. This reflects a carefully selective focus – although Qubilai had multiple constituencies to please, our texts choose to portray a limited range of these.

Even in Franke's relatively balanced treatment, Aḥmad, the most dramatically transgressive of our secondary subjects, is characterized as deeply rooted in a "near-eastern tradition" of all-powerful ministers allied to an all-powerful ruler. Franke's positioning of those opposed to Aḥmad is likewise telling, describing them as "Chinese advisors", supposedly "steeped in the tradition of a proper chain of command".<sup>19</sup> This phrasing shows the influence of our source texts, 'proper' betraying a moral judgment accepting their bureaucratizing imperative.<sup>20</sup> Interrogating the treatment of Aḥmad and others as transgressive secondary characters exposes both the construction of moral superiority and the alignment of *Yuanshi* biography with an ideal of compartmentalized bureaucracy, based on a specific template built around the Central Secretariat 中書省 and Censorate 御史臺.<sup>21</sup>

Positively portrayed figures in *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* whose biographies are considered here prominently include those members of Qubilai's 'princely residence'

<sup>19</sup> Franke, 'Aḥmad (?-1282)', pp. 540, 556.

<sup>20</sup> Brose slips into comparable terminology in discussing Lian Xixian's aims. See *Subjects and Masters*, p. 126.

<sup>21</sup> On the Mongol-era Central Secretariat 中書省, see *FG*, pp. 169-75; Farquhar, 'Structure and Function', pp. 30, 35-40; Ōshima Ritsuko, *Mongoru no seifuku ōchō*, pp. 45-58. On the Central Secretariat under Qubilai, see Li Zhi'an, *Hubilie zhuan*, pp. 133-37. When Chan discusses Liu Bingzhong's recommendation of "the adoption of the traditional Chinese offices of state under T'ang and Sung and modified by the Jurchen Chin to complement the existing Mongol establishment", he identifies these 'traditional Chinese offices of state' as the Central Secretariat, Bureau for Military Affairs and Censorate. See H.L. Chan, 'Liu Ping-chung (1216-1274)', in *ISK*, pp. 245-69 (p. 255).

On the Mongol-era Censorate 御史臺, see *FG*, pp. 241-42; Endicott-West, 'The Yüan Government and Society', pp. 602-4; Farquhar, 'Structure and Function', pp. 53-54; Ōshima Ritsuko, *Mongoru no seifuku ōchō*, pp. 64-66; Charles O. Hucker, *The Censorial System of Ming China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1966), pp. 25-28. For a summary of the Censorate under Qubilai, see Li Zhi'an, *Hubilie zhuan*, pp. 141-47; Rossabi, 'The Reign of Khubilai Khan', in *CHC*, pp. 414-89 (pp. 428, 471).

advisor groups we mentioned above, among whom we follow de Rachewiltz et al. in distinguishing three key elements.<sup>22</sup> These are, firstly, Liu Bingzhong<sup>23</sup> and associated “non-orthodox Confucian scholars” such as Zhang Wenqian<sup>24</sup> and Guo Shoujing,<sup>25</sup> who brought practical governing skills to the court alongside their scholarship.<sup>26</sup> The second group were post-Jin scholars recruited via military commanders based in northern China such as Yan Shi 嚴實 and continuing a Jin movement emphasizing “literary and bureaucratic excellence” alongside classical studies. Prominent in the Hanlin Academy, these included Wang E,<sup>27</sup> Li Zhi,<sup>28</sup> Shang Ting,<sup>29</sup> Hao Jing<sup>30</sup> and Wang Yun.<sup>31</sup> The third element were strongly influenced by Neo-Confucian thought, heavily involved in education and instrumental in embedding southern Neo-Confucianism at Qubilai’s court. This group included Yao Shu,<sup>32</sup> Dou Mo,<sup>33</sup> Xu Heng<sup>34</sup> (whom Su Tianjue grouped

<sup>22</sup> Following de Rachewiltz et al.; see ‘Introduction’, in *ISK*, pp. xxvi-xxix.

<sup>23</sup> On Liu Bingzhong 劉秉忠 (1216-1274), see *Mingchen shilue* 7.111-14; *Yuanshi* 157.3687-95; Hok-lam Chan 陳學霖, “Liu Ping-chung 劉秉忠 (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman at the Court of Khubilai Khan,” *T’oung pao*, 53, (1967): 98-146; H.L. Chan, ‘Liu Ping-chung (1216-1274)’, in *ISK*, pp. 245-69; *YR*, p. 1840; Li Zhi’an, *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 37.

<sup>24</sup> On Zhang Wenqian 張文謙 (1217-1283), see *Yuanshi* 157.3695-98; *Mingchen shilue* 7.142-48; *YR*, p. 1118; H.L. Chan, ‘Chang Wen-ch’ien (1217-1283), in *ISK*, pp. 270-82; Li Zhi’an, *Hubilie zhuan*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>25</sup> On Guo Shoujing 郭守敬 (1231-1316), see *Yuanshi* 164.3845-52; *Mingchen shilue* 9.185-95; *YR*, p. 1258; P.Y. Ho, ‘Guo Shoujing’, in *ISK*, pp. 282-99.

<sup>26</sup> See de Rachewiltz et al., ‘Introduction’, p. xxvi.

<sup>27</sup> On Wang E 王鶚 (1190-1273), see *Mingchen shilue* 12.237-41; *Yuanshi* 160.3756-57; *YR*, p. 145; Hok-lam Chan, ‘Wang O (1190-1273)’, *Papers in Far Eastern History*, 12 (1975), 43-70; H.L. Chan, ‘Wang E’, in *ISK*, pp. 300-15; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 218-19.

<sup>28</sup> On Li Zhi 李治, see the discussion in section 3.1 above.

<sup>29</sup> On Shang Ting 商挺 (1209-1288), see *Yuanshi* 159.3738-42; *Mingchen shilue* 11.217-23; *YR*, p. 1027; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, p. 217.

<sup>30</sup> On Hao Jing 郝經 (1223-1275), see *Yuanshi* 157.3698-709; *Mingchen shilue* 15.294-99; *YR*, p. 967; R.J. Lynn, ‘Hao Jing’, in *ISK* pp. 348-70; Li Zhi’an, *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 40.

<sup>31</sup> See de Rachewiltz et al., ‘Introduction’, p. xxvi. On Wang Yun 王恽 (1227-1304), see *Yuanshi*: 167.3932-35; *YR*, pp. 113-15; D. Gedalecia, ‘Wang Yün (1227-1304)’, in *ISK*, pp. 371-86; Herbert Franke, ‘Wang Yün (1227-1304): A Transmitter of Chinese Values’, in Hok-lam Chan and Wm. Theodore de Bary (eds) *Yüan Thought: Chinese Thought and Religion Under the Mongols*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), pp. 153-96.

<sup>32</sup> On Yao Shu 姚樞 (1201-1280), see *Yuanshi* 158.3711-16; *Mingchen shilue* 8.155-64; *YR*, p. 731; Hok-lam Chan, ‘Yao Shu (1201-1278)’, *Papers on Far Eastern History*, 22 (1980), 17-50; H.L. Chan, ‘Yao Shu (1203-1280)’, in *ISK*, pp. 387-406; Li Zhi’an, *Hubilie zhuan*, pp. 38-39.

<sup>33</sup> On Dou Mo 竇默 (1196-1280), see *Yuanshi* 158.3730-33; *Mingchen shilue* 8.151-54; *YR*, p. 2108; H.L. Chan, ‘Tou Mo (1196-1280)’, in *ISK*, pp. 407-15; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, p. 216.

<sup>34</sup> On Xu Heng 許衡 (1209-1281), see *Yuanshi* 158.3716-30; H.L. Chan, ‘Hsu Heng (1209-1281)’, in *ISK*, pp. 416-47; *Mingchen shilue* 8.164-80; *YR*, pp. 1225-27; Luo Xianyou 羅賢佑, ‘Xu Heng, ahema yu yuanchu hanfa, huihuifa zhi zheng 许衡、阿合马与元初汉法、回回法之争 (Xu Heng and Ahmad and

together) and Liu Yin, whom he treated separately, alongside Hao Jing.<sup>35</sup> Beyond these groupings, other important and heroic subjects include Lian Xixian,<sup>36</sup> Shi Tianze,<sup>37</sup> the Dong brothers (Dong Wenbing,<sup>38</sup> Dong Wenzhong<sup>39</sup> and Dong Wenyong<sup>40</sup>) and Muqali's descendant Hantum.<sup>41</sup> Portrayals of all these figures involve advice on, or the manipulation of, institutions and means of rule in the imperial centre.

#### 4.1 General 'Confucian' advice?

Several of the biographies in our sample feature general assessments or general advice delivered by their subjects to Qubilai Qagan on the mechanics of rule and governance. A detailed examination of their contents would require more space than this project permits, but a brief survey of their contents reveals different positioning along two axes. The first of these relates to the way in which these memorials make their claims to relevance, distinguishing between references to classical antiquity and abstract principle on the one hand, and specific situational need on the other. The second categorization relates to the

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Conflict Between Hanfa (Han Ways) and Huihuifa (Central Asian Ways) in the Early Yuan Dynasty', *Minzu Yanjiu*, 5 (2005), 78–86.

<sup>35</sup> See de Rachewiltz et al., 'Introduction', p. xxvi. On Liu Yin 劉因 (1249-1293), see *Yuanshi* 171.4007-10; *Mingchen shilue* 15.299-301; *YR*, p. 1773.

<sup>36</sup> On Lian Xixian 廉希憲 (1231-1280), see *Mingchen shilue* 7.124-42; *Yuanshi* 126.3085-97; *YR*, p. 1507; C.C. Hsiao, "Lien Hsi-hsien (1231-1280)", in *ISK*, pp. 480-99; Zhao Yongchun 趙永春, 'Yuanchu Weiwu'erzu Zhengzhijia Lian Xixian 元初畏兀儿族政治家廉希憲 (The Early Yuan Uyghur Administrator Lian Xixian)', *Songliao Xuekan*, 2 (1984), 77–81 (86).

<sup>37</sup> On Shi Tianze 史天澤 (1202-1275), see *Yuanshi* 155.3658-65; *Mingchen shilue* 7.114-24; *YR*, p. 235; C.C. Hsiao, 'Shih T'ien-tse (1202-1275)', in *ISK*, pp. 27-45.

<sup>38</sup> On Dong Wenbing 董文炳, (1217-1278), see *Mingchen shilue* 14.270-79; *Yuanshi* 156.3667-79; *YR*, p. 1604; C.F. Hung, 'The Tung Brothers', especially pp. 627-33.

<sup>39</sup> On Dong Wenzhong 董文忠 (1231-1281), see *Mingchen shilue* 14.287-91; *Yuanshi* 148.3501-5; *YR*, p. 1603; C.F. Hung, 'The Tung Brothers', especially pp. 640-45.

<sup>40</sup> On Dong Wenyong 董文用 (1224-1297), see *Mingchen shilue* 14.279-87; *Yuanshi* 148.3495-3501; *YR*, p. 1602; C.F. Hung, 'The Tung Brothers', in *ISK*, pp. 621-45, especially pp. 634-39.

<sup>41</sup> On Hantum (1245-1293), see *Yuanshi* 126.3081-84; *Mingchen shilue* 1.8-14; *YR*, p. 2228; *RPN*, p. 26; de Rachewiltz, 'Muqali (1170-1223), Bōl (1197-1220), Tas (1212-1239), An-T'ung (1245-1293)'; de Rachewiltz, 'Muqali, Bōl, Tas and An-T'ung', in *ISK*, pp. 45-62; Xiu Xiaobo 修晓波, 'Yuanshi antong, naimantai, duo'erzhi, duo'erzhiban liezhuan dingwu 《元史》安童、乃蛮台、朵儿只、朵尔直班列传订误 (A Collation of the Errors in the *Yuanshi* Biographies of Hantum, Naimantai, Dorji and Dorjibal)', *Guji zhengli yanjiu xuekan*, 3 (1998), 35–38.

range and detail of matters addressed in these submissions to the monarch, thereby suggesting the scope of the role ascribed to the Qağan.

The biographies of Dou Mo 竇默 (1196-1280) present a vivid narrative, incorporating both praise and censure, and as such provide an ideal starting point. Summoned to Qubilai's princely residence in 1249, Mo declined a post as tutor to the crown prince and served as Expositor at the Hanlin Academy 翰林侍講學士 on and off from 1262 until his death in 1280.<sup>42</sup> His biographies quote an assessment of government delivered to Qubilai in 1261 which, in closely parallel *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* versions, analyses problems and provides recommendations for their solution.<sup>43</sup>

Dou Mo's advice is phrased as a specific response to immediate circumstances, based on his own experience. This is clear from the opening lines, which refer to his time at court and then move on to a positive assessment of Qubilai's intentions:

In the second year [1261], [Mo] addressed the emperor, saying, "Your servant has served Your Majesty for more than ten years, undertaking to provide advice on numerous occasions; some, due to Your Majesty's urgent pursuit of government, have never not had the benefit of the populace and the peace of the country at heart."<sup>44</sup>

This praises the Qağan's commitment to governance, and the positive effect this had on certain members of his staff, leading them in dedication to peace and populace. The *Yuanshi* compilers' only intervention was adding four characters to the opening lines to

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<sup>42</sup> On Dou Mo 竇默 (1196-1280), courtesy name Zisheng 子聲 (initially known as Jie 傑, courtesy name Hanqing 漢卿), from Feixiang 肥鄉 in Guangping 廣平, see *Yuanshi* 158.3730-33; *YR*, p. 2108; *Mingchen shilue* 8.151-54; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, p. 216. After a 78-character preface, the main text of Dou Mo's *Mingchen shilue* biography is divided into 12 sections. No sources are extant; Wang suggests the *shendaobei* and *muzhi* by Li Qian drawn on by Su Tianjue indicate the extent of material available at the time, and further that Su condensed these greatly. See Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, p. 216.

<sup>43</sup> The address is found at *Mingchen shilue* 8.152-53; *Yuanshi* 158.3731.

<sup>44</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.152:

二年，公言于上曰：「臣事陛下十有餘年，數承顧問，有以見陛下急於求治，未嘗不以利生民，安社稷為心。」



state that, “Your servant has served Your Majesty for more than ten years, undertaking to provide advice on numerous occasions, participating in sagely instruction.”<sup>45</sup> Otherwise transmitting Mo’s advice whole, the *Yuanshi* addition seems designed to underline the close intellectual involvement between monarch and advisors, and perhaps, in referring to ‘sagely instruction’, shift Dou Mo’s involvement away from a purely situational engagement with policy and towards more abstract and eternal concerns.

Contrasting strongly with Mo’s advice in terms of scope and justificatory logic, Liu Bingzhong 劉秉忠 (1216-1274) famously submitted a lengthy memorial of advice to Qubilai in about 1249, and the content of this, not found in the *Mingchen shilue*, is summarized in his *Yuanshi* biography.<sup>46</sup> Bingzhong joined Qubilai’s princely court, later serving as Grand Guardian 太保 and Participant in Deliberations at the Central Secretariat 參領中書省事.<sup>47</sup> The opening lines of Bingzhong’s memorial, which Chan suggests are the only parts transmitted intact, position his advice in a very different way to Dou Mo’s, highlighting the “three bonds and five constant principles”, and naming

<sup>45</sup> *Yuanshi* 158.3731:

臣事陛下十有餘年，數承顧問，與聞聖訓，有以見陛下急於求治，未嘗不以利生民安社稷為心。

<sup>46</sup> The summary is found at *Yuanshi* 157.3688-92. On the memorial, see Chan Hok-lam 陳學霖, ‘Liu Ping-chung 劉秉忠 (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman at the Court of Khubilai Khan,’ *T’oung pao*, 53, (1967): 98-146 (117-22). Li dates the memorial to 1242, and Chan to 1251; see Li Zhi’an, *Hubilie zhuan*, pp. 33-34; Chan, ‘Liu Ping-chung’, pp. 248-50.

<sup>47</sup> On Liu Bingzhong 劉秉忠 (1216-1274), courtesy name Zhonghui 仲晦, from Xingtai 邢臺 in Shunde 順德, see *Mingchen shilue* 7.111-14; *Yuanshi* 157.3687-95; Hok-lam Chan 陳學霖, “Liu Ping-chung 劉秉忠 (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman at the Court of Khubilai Khan,” *T’oung pao*, 53, (1967): [98]-146; Chan, ‘Liu Ping-chung (1216-1274)’, in *ISK*, pp. 245-69; *YR*, p. 1840; Fan Yuqi 范玉琪, ‘Yuanchu mingchen liu bingzhong shudan “guochao zhongxiu queshan shenyang wangmiao zhi bei” kaoyi 元初名臣劉秉忠書丹《國朝重修鵲山神應王廟之碑》考釋 (Investigation and Explanation of the Eminent Early Yuan Official Liu Bingzhong’s “guochao zhongxiu queshan shenyang wangmiao zhi bei”)’, *Wenwu chunqiu*, 4 (1994), 51–56. Liu Bingzhong’s *Mingchen shilue* biography comprises an 82-character preface followed by 11 sections of main text and 2 of annotations. The 1,117 characters of the main text are mostly drawn from the *shendaobei* by Wang Pan (745 characters, 67%, preserved as Wang Pan, ‘Liu taibao beiming’ 劉太保碑銘, in *QYW*, ii, pp. 299-302.), the preface by Li Pan (韋軒李公撰文集序 297 characters, 27%) and a *xingzhuang* by Zhang Wenqian (75 characters, 7%). Two sections of notes are taken from an unidentified *muzhi* 徒單公履撰墓誌 (55 characters, 61%) and Xu Heng’s *Luzhai wenji* 魯齋文集 (34 characters, 39%).

historical exemplars in observing these.<sup>48</sup> This is therefore advice claiming a basis in eternal principle and historical precedent. Bingzhong's specific advice on governance, effectively involving the monarch in policy, is presented as ten points, and is headed by a passage highlighting the importance of the Chief Councillor 相, who, he argues, leads the various officials in educating the populace and dealing with the innumerable affairs of the empire.<sup>49</sup>

The second part of Mo's address identifies problems, which are blamed on, and situated in, previous Činggisid courts:

Because 以<sup>50</sup> former emperors were on the throne, treacherous ministers arrogated authority and controlled the property and taxation of 'all-under-heaven', grasping

<sup>48</sup> Chan, 'Liu Ping-chung 劉秉忠 (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman', 119:

Since the restoration of the Han it, during the one thousand and three hundred odd years down to the Five Dynasties 五代, rulers who followed the Path (of the sages by observing the established institutions) were only to be found among five emperors: Wen 文, Ching 景 and Kuang-wu 光武 of the Han Dynasty, and T'ai-tsung 太宗 and Hsüan-tsung 玄宗 of the T'ang Dynasty, although the latter was not without faults.

*Yuanshi* 157.3688:

漢興以來，至于五代，一千三百餘年，由此道者，漢文、景、光武，唐太宗、玄宗五君，而玄宗不無疵也。

On Han Wendi 漢文帝, or Liu Heng 劉恆, r. 180-157 B.C.E., see Michael Loewe, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Qin, Former Han and Xin Periods (221 BC-AD 24)* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 306-11. On Han Jingdi 景帝, or Liu Qi 劉啟, r. 157-141 B.C.E., Wendi's son by Empress Dou 竇, see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 338-44. On Han Guangwudi 光武帝, or Liu Xiu 劉秀, r. 25-57 C.E., who is credited with establishing the Later Han polity (25-220 C.E.), see Loewe, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 389. On Tang Taizong 太宗 (r. 626-649 C.E.), see Howard Wechsler, 'T'ai-tsung (reign 626-49) the Consolidator', in Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank (eds) *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 3: Sui and T'ang China, 589-906* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 188-241. On Tang Xuanzong 玄宗, r. 712-756 C.E., who is credited with engaging in sustained reform, reinvigorating administration and Censorate, see Denis Twitchett, 'Hsüan-tsung (Reign 712-56)', in Twitchett and Fairbank (eds), *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 3: Sui and T'ang China, 589-906*, pp. 333-463.

<sup>49</sup> See Chan, 'Liu Ping-chung 劉秉忠 (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman', 120.

*Yuanshi* 157.3688:

Of those to whom the lord gives responsibility, within [the capital] none are greater than the Grand Councillor; as the Grand Councillor leads the 'hundred offices', and educates the 10,000 populace; outside, none are greater than the general; the general, through command of the three armies, pacifies the Four Regions. Inside and out aiding one another is the urgent duty of the realm, and this must be the priority. But the greatness of 'all-under-heaven' [is such that] no one person can reach; its myriad affairs [are such that] no one mind can investigate.

君之所任，在內莫大乎相，相以領百官，化萬民；在外莫大乎將，將以統三軍，安四域。內外相濟，國之急務，必先之也。然天下之大，非一人之可及；萬事之細，非一心之可察。

<sup>50</sup> The *Yuanshi* compilers altered this first character to 'when', or 'at the time when' 時.

all control in their [own] hands, gathering tribute in the rare and the valuable, bragging and flaunting the magnificent [153] in order to delight and divert the emperor's heart. In their incitement of factionalism, those driving families apart (lit., cutting apart bone and flesh), were all members of this group.<sup>51</sup>

Dou Mo here condemns the monopolization of power and function, the focus on collecting revenues, and the exploitation of this for personal status, characterizing those responsible as 'factions'. Returning to Qubilai's intentions, Mo's address situates the transgressive 'faction' of previous courts in opposition to them:

This faction blocking the way, Your Majesty was therefore unable to satisfy completely your original intention, saving the world for a heartbeat [with] years of self-control.<sup>52</sup>

Reporting that treacherous ministers had succeeded in monopolizing authority and control over tax and wealth, and had prevented Qubilai from implementing his 'original programme' in full, Mo effectively takes a – vaguely defined – position on what that programme would (or should) have entailed. Ambiguously phrased, however, this only prescribes self-control and better recruitment, shifting Qubilai's role towards appointment and away from active implementation of measures beyond that.

Song Zizhen's biographies depict their subject providing detailed advice to the monarch at some point in the early 1260s, apparently after returning from the campaign against Li Tan. Zizhen's advice is concrete and specific. The *Yuanshi* version reads as follows:

Zizhen returned, submitting a memorial laying out ten beneficial policies, in broad outline he stated: "Offices and rank are under the control of the monarch; the regulations on selection ought to be entirely returned to the Ministry of Personnel

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<sup>51</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.152-53:

以先帝在上，姦臣擅權，總天下財賦，操執在手，貢進奇貨，銜耀紛華，[153] 以娛悅上心。其扇結朋黨，離間骨肉者，皆此徒也。

*Yuanshi* 158.3731:

時先帝在上，姦臣擅權，總天下財賦，操執在手，貢進奇貨，銜耀紛華，以娛悅上心。其扇結朋黨、離間骨肉者，皆此徒也。

<sup>52</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.153:

此徒當路，陛下所以不能盡其初心，掇世一念涵養有年矣。

*Yuanshi* 158.3731:

此徒當路，陛下所以不能盡其初心。救世一念，涵養有年矣。

吏部. Laws and regulations provide law and order for the realm, and should be amended and fixed as a priority. If the Censorate supervises a route, but do not select the talented, and they are not content with the prestige, [I] request that the just and even-handed, talented and virtuous be selected for this. At the moment, prefectural and county office is handed down the generations, levying illegal taxes, leaving the populace in poverty with nowhere to turn; [we] ought to select and rotate [staff], in order to expel this malpractice.” He also requested that they establish dynastic schools to educate imperial descendants, and urged each administrative district to establish schools and open examinations, with a national selection once every three years. There was a decree ordering the Secretariat to implement these in appropriate sequence.<sup>53</sup>

Stressing the importance of appointment, this has received detailed edits at the micro level, condensing it somewhat from the *Mingchen shilue* report.<sup>54</sup> Zizhen’s recommendations, like Mo’s, primarily address the means and logic of appointment, but also notably place the regulation of this under the Ministry of Personnel, shifting this away from imperial family influence and towards a bureaucratized structure.<sup>55</sup> A key

<sup>53</sup> *Yuanshi* 159.3737:

子貞還，上書陳便宜十事，大略謂：「官爵，人主之柄，選法宜盡歸吏部。律令，國之紀綱，宜早刊定。監司總統一路，用非其材，不厭人望，乞選公廉有才德者為之。今州縣官相傳以世，非法賦斂，民窮無告，宜遷轉以革其弊。」又請建國學教胄子，敕州郡提學課試諸生，三年一貢舉。有旨命中書次第施行之。

<sup>54</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10. 202:

Returning in triumph, the gentleman submitted [a memorial] on ten beneficial policies, saying in broad outline: “Offices and rank are under the control of the monarch; they should be removed from the court; from the lowest grades upwards, and should be combined under the Ministry of Personnel 吏部, who can be eternally responsible for selection. Laws and regulations provide law and order for the realm, but now those who offend against the populace each, through their office, determine the weight of their offence; [this] should be amended and fixed as a priority, clearly promulgating this to ‘all-under-heaven’, causing the officials to understand that which they protect, and the populace to understand that which they avoid. Additionally where the Censor supervises the governance of a route, but employ the mixed and the low, they must not suppress people’s hopes, [I] request that the just and even-handed, talented and virtuous be selected for this, and caused to occupy these offices. Up to now, office and populace are all passed down the generations, levying illegal taxes, causing distress and poverty with nowhere to turn; [we] ought to select and rotate [staff], in order to expel this long-term malpractice. Moreover establish state schooling to educate imperial descendants, and urge each administrative district to establish schools and open examinations, with a national selection once every three years, with those passing selection to enter service, so that the talented of each generation are brought out.” A decree ordered the Central Secretariat to implement this. [Muzhi]

凱還，公上便宜十事，大略謂：「官爵，人主之柄，當自朝廷出，一命以上，並付吏部，以為永選。[三] 律令，國之紀綱，今民所犯，各由所司輕重其罪，宜早刊定，明頒天下，使官知所守，民知所避。且監司總統一路之政，所用猥雜，不厭人望，乞選公廉有才德者，俾居其職。臨民官皆相傳以世，非法賦斂，困苦無告，亦宜遷轉，以革久弊。又立國學，教胄子，勅州郡提學課試諸生，凡三年一闈，貢舉中第者入仕，則人材輩出矣。」詔命中書施行之。[墓誌]

<sup>55</sup> See *FG*, pp. 175-76.

element of this advice, in the *Mingchen shilue* formulation, specifically condemns the inheritance of office:

Up to now, civil offices are all passed down the generations, levying illegal taxes, causing distress and poverty with nowhere to turn; [we] ought to select and rotate [staff], in order to expel this long-term malpractice.<sup>56</sup>

The *liezhuan* adjusts this to highlight the effect on the populace *min* 民, but otherwise the effect is broadly similar, placing the focus on deviance in office manifested as extortion:

At the moment, prefectural and county office is handed down the generations, levying illegal taxes, leaving the populace in poverty with nowhere to turn; [we] ought to select and rotate [staff], in order to expel this malpractice.<sup>57</sup>

Both versions of the outcome element following the text of the memorial place the onus on the Central Secretariat as the institution expected to implement these recommendations. The key terms addressed here are popular welfare, which, our texts suggest, was affected by the greed of hereditary officials operating with impunity. The solution to this is positioned in bureaucratically operated and regulated selective means and open national examinations. The *Jinshi* examinations, as held under the Jin and briefly under Ögödei, were not revived until 1313; as Chan suggests, in the absence of such formal recruitment routes, the personal recommendation was the best mechanism possible, but this may help to explain the ongoing factional conflicts we see playing out in our narratives.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>56</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10. 202:

臨民官皆相傳以世，非法賦斂，困苦無告，亦宜遷轉，以革久弊。

<sup>57</sup> *Yuanshi* 159.3737:

今州縣官相傳以世，非法賦斂，民窮無告，宜遷轉以革其弊

<sup>58</sup> See Chan Hok-lam 陳學霖, 'Liu Ping-chung 劉秉忠 (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman', 137-39. On the Jin examination system, see Tao, 'The Influence of Jurchen Rule', 128-29. For a thorough survey of Mongol-era examinations, see Benjamin A. Elman, 'The Transformation of the Civil Service Curriculum Between 1250 and 1400 and the Role of the Yuan Dynasty in Classical Studies', in *Yuandai Jingxue Guoji Yantao Huilun Wenji* 元代經學國際研討會論文集 (*Collected Papers from the International Seminar of Yuan-Era Classical Studies*), ed. by Yang Jinlong 楊晉龍 and Chen Shuyi 陳淑誼, 2 vols (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan zhongguo wenzhe yanjiusuo chouben chu yinxing, 2000), i, pp. 23–47.

Yao Shu's biographies present text from a memorial assessing governance at the beginning of the *Zhiyuan* regnal period (1264-94, so probably referring to the mid-1260s), and this is transmitted almost identically between his *shendaobei*, the *Mingchen shilue* and the *Yuanshi*.<sup>59</sup> The episode starts by describing criticism of the Central Secretariat, which apparently angered Qubilai and prompted Shu's response.<sup>60</sup> After this, Shu, in contrast to Mo, described specific problems, in terms of ballooning bureaucracy, excessive punishment and punitive taxation, resulting in impoverishment of the populace.<sup>61</sup>

Dou Mo follows his criticism of previous practice with praise for the establishment of Qubilai's rule, and, based in popular acclaim, his assessment makes clear that this approval rests on the development of effective governance:

Now heaven has submitted and the people complied, the great treasure [throne] has been ascended, among the populace of 'all-under-heaven' none do not 'leap and jump with joy and happiness', craning their necks [in anticipation of] flourishing government.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup> The episode is found at Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei', p. 581 / *YWL* 60.21b / *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.221; *Mingchen shilue* 8.162-63 (an unannounced cut made to the first line being transmitted to the *Yuanshi*); *Yuanshi* 158.3714-15. It has been summarized by Chan, who dates it to 1266, see 'Yao Shu (1203-1280)', p. 398.

<sup>60</sup> Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei', p. 581; *YWL* 60.21b; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.221:

或言中書政事大壞，帝怒，大降大臣罪，有入不測者。

*Mingchen shilue* 8.162:

或言中書政事大壞，帝怒，大臣罪有入不測者。

*Yuanshi* 158.3714-15:

或言中書政事大壞，帝怒，大臣罪且不測者。

<sup>61</sup> Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei', p. 581 / *YWL* 60.21b / *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.221:

公上言：「太祖開創，跨越前古，施治未遑。自後數朝，官盛刑濫，民困財殫。

*Mingchen shilue* 8.162:

公上言：「太祖開創，跨越前古，施治未遑。自後數朝，官盛刑濫，民困財殫。

The unannounced cut made to the first line is transmitted to the *Yuanshi* version. *Yuanshi* 158.3714-15:

太祖開創，跨越前古，施治未遑。自後數朝，官盛刑濫，民困財殫。

<sup>62</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.153:

今天順人應，誕登大寶，天下生民莫不歡欣踴躍，引領盛治。

*Yuanshi* 158.3731:

今天順人應，誕登大寶，天下生民莫不歡忻踴躍，引領盛治。

The basis of success in popular feeling here addresses the humanitarian imperative interrogated further in chapter five; again, the substance of governance remains vague. Dou Mo's address follows its report of conditional popular approval with a condemnation of short-term profit and the 'petty people' who promote it, contrasting that against principled scholars:

Nonetheless, to pacify and govern 'all-under-heaven' one must employ honest people and principled scholars 士; the eloquence of petty people 小人 speaks only of momentary benefit, and can of necessity not establish the foundation for the realm, which is making plans for long-distant descendants.<sup>63</sup>

The aim for governance here is a long-term platform for future generations, and the practical manifestation of this aim suggested by Dou Mo functions through appointment.

On appointment, Yao Shu's advice to Qubilai, transmitted identically from shendaobei to *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*, likewise recommends the pursuit of talent, but his recommendations are more specific than Zhi's, making particular mention of reclusive scholars:

Open up to ability and virtue; choose the retiring and the hermit; be prudent in examination and selection; discard [unsuitable] functionaries; thereby preventing monopolization by hereditary nobility and the loss of talent.<sup>64</sup>

Shu also provides a more specific vision of failure and what to avoid; the alternative to pursuing talent, he suggests, is the entrenchment of hereditary privilege.

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<sup>63</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.153:

然平治天下，必用正人端士，唇吻小人一時功利之說，必不能定立國家基本，為子孫久遠之計。

*Yuanshi* 158.3731:

然平治天下，必用正人端士，唇吻小人一時功利之說，必不能定立國家基本，為子孫久遠之計。

<sup>64</sup> Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei', p. 576; YWL 13b-14a ; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.217:

辟才行，舉逸遺，慎銓選，汰職員，則不專世爵，[14a]而人才出。

*Mingchen shilue* 8.157:

辟才行，舉逸遺，慎銓選，汰職員，則不專世爵而人才出。

*Yuanshi* 158.3712:

辟才行，舉逸遺，慎銓選，汰職員，則不專世爵而人才出。

Shi Tianze is portrayed by his biographies offering a memorial of advice to the newly enthroned Qubilai in 1260, and the *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* provide identical descriptions of this.<sup>65</sup> This memorial differs significantly from Dou Mo's recommendations in its specificity, recommending steps that monarch or court should take, and going well beyond appointment:

“The court should first establish a central government 省部 to rectify law and standards, set up Surveillance Commissions 監司 to supervise the various *lu* 路, bestow benevolence profusely to pacify the unsettled, remove the avaricious and greedy to employ the virtuous and able, issue official salaries to nourish honesty, prohibit bribery to prevent treachery; [when] many can communicate from top and bottom, inside and out will recuperate and multiply.” The emperor admiringly accepted this.<sup>66</sup>

This places the establishment of the the *shengbu* 省部 (i.e., a central government, read by Li Zhi'an as a specific reference to the Central Secretariat and its subordinated Six Ministries) above all else, and states that this will enable the rectification 正 of principle and law 紀綱.<sup>67</sup> This is followed by recommendations for generosity in distribution, the replacement of morally flawed officials with the morally and technically superior, the formal payment of salaries and prohibition of bribery, and finally ensuring open communication across hierarchies. The consequences forecast are the pacification of the unsettled, nourishment of honesty and prevention of treachery, and a general recuperation and flourishing within and beyond the palace.

<sup>65</sup> See Hsiao, 'Shih T'ien-tse (2102-1275)', p. 36. This episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 7.119; *Yuanshi* 155.3660. Hsiao's summary of the memorial only highlights recommendations to revive the Central Secretariat and the Six Ministries alongside fixing official salaries to combat corruption. See pp. 35-36.

<sup>66</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.119:

「朝廷當先立省部以正紀綱，設監司以督諸路，霈恩澤以安反側，退貪殘以任賢能，頒俸秩以養廉，禁賄賂以防奸，庶能上下丕應，內外休息。」上嘉納之。

*Yuanshi* 155.3660:

「朝廷當先立省部以正紀綱，設監司以督諸路，霈恩澤以安反側，退貪殘以任賢能，頒奉秩以養廉，禁賄賂以防奸，庶能上下丕應，內外休息。」帝嘉納之。

We follow Hucker in identifying *jiansi* 監司 as 'Surveillance Commission', referring to an institution rather than the post implied by 'Overseer', as Farquhar translates this term. See *HD*, p. 150; *FG*, p. 131.

<sup>67</sup> See Li Zhi'an, *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 116.



Another, earlier, piece of substantial and detailed advice attributed to Yao Shu is presented in near-identical texts. Offered to Qubilai while the latter was still in his ‘princely residence’ – i.e., before his 1260 assumption of the throne – and dated by Chan to 1251, it is distinctively phrased, presenting thirty three-character recommendations, each followed by outcome predictions.<sup>68</sup> The first part makes recommendations on centralization, appointment and the investigative agencies.<sup>69</sup> The second, addressing measures outside the central administrative system, is examined in chapter five below, in relation to the humanitarian imperative. Again, Shu’s advice here is specific and policy-based; delivered to Qubilai it effectively involves the monarch in governance at a detailed level.

The second element prescribes immediate action in problem regions, recommending the establishment of three local offices and focusing on selective appointment, publication of salaries, dismissal of unsuitable officials, and promotion of agriculture and sericulture.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> The episode is found at Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’, p. 576 / *Mu’anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.217; *Mingchen shilue* 8.157-58; *Yuanshi* 158.3711-12. *Mingchen shilue* and *shendaobei* place this after incidents in 1250 and before Möngke Qaghan’s succession in 1251. See Chan, ‘Yao Shu’, pp. 390-91.

<sup>69</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’, p. 576 / *Mu’anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.217; *Mingchen shilue* 8.157:

「立省部，則庶政出一，綱舉紀張，令不行於朝而變於夕。辟才行，舉逸遺，慎銓選，汰職員，則不專世爵而人才出。班俸祿，則臧穢塞而公道開。定法律，審刑獄，則收生殺之權于朝，諸侯不得而專，丘山之罪不致苟免，毫髮之過免罹極法，而冤抑有伸。設監司，明黜陟，則善良姦竇可得而舉刺

*Yuanshi* 158.3711:

「立省部，則庶政出一，綱舉紀張，令不行於朝而變於夕。辟才行，舉逸遺，慎銓選，汰職員，則不專世爵而人才出。班俸祿，則臧穢塞而公道開。定法律，審刑獄，則收生殺之權于朝，諸侯不得而專，丘山之罪不致苟免，毫髮之過免罹極法，而冤抑有伸。設監司，明黜陟，則善良姦竇可得而舉刺。

<sup>70</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’, p. 581 / *YWL* 60.21b / *Mu’anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.221:

如邢州、河南、陝西皆不治之甚者，爲置安撫、經畧、宣撫三司。其法選人以居職，頒俸以養廉，去污濫以清政，勸農桑以富民，不及三年，號稱大治。

*Mingchen shilue* 8.162:

In the third section Shu provides a more general assessment of Qubilai's governance during the *Zhongtong* regnal era (1260-64).<sup>71</sup> This congratulates the Qagan on 'employing historical systems, establishing the *shengbu* 省部 (i.e., central government and possibly specifically the Central Secretariat and its subordinated Six Ministries) within, and setting up supervisory offices 監司 outside'.<sup>72</sup> As we have seen, these are precisely the measures Shu reportedly recommended to Qubilai in a previous advice memorial examined above.

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如邢州、河南、陝西皆不治之甚者，為置安撫、經略、宣撫三司，其法選人以居職，頒俸以養廉，去污濫以清政，勸農桑以富民，不及三年，號稱大治。

*Yuanshi* 158.3714-15:

如邢州、河南、陝西，皆不治之甚者，為置安撫、[3715] 經略、宣撫三使司。其法，選人以居職，頒俸以養廉，去污濫以清政，勸農桑以富民。不及三年，號稱大治。

<sup>71</sup> Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei', p. 581 / *YWL* 60.21b-22a / *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.221-22:

諸路之民望陛下之治，已如赤子求母。先帝陟遐，國難並興，[222] 天開聖人，續承大統，即用歷代遺制，內立省部，外設監司，自中統至今，五六年間，外[22a] 侮內叛，繼繼不絕，然能使官離債負，民安賦役，府庫粗實，倉廩粗完，鈔法粗行，國用粗足，官吏轉換，政事更新，皆陛下克保祖宗之基，信用先王之法所致。今陛下于基業為守成，于治道為創始，正宜息聖心，答天心，結民心，睦親族以固本，建儲副以重祚，定大臣以當國，開經筵以格心，脩邊備以防虞，蓄糧餉以待歉，立學校以育才，勸農桑以厚生，是可以光先烈，可以成帝德，可以遺子孫，可以流遠譽。以陛下才畧，行此有餘。

*Mingchen shilue* 8.162:

諸路之民望陛下之治己，如赤子之求母。先帝陟遐，國難並興，天開聖人，續承大統，即用歷代遺制，內立省部，外設監司。自中統至今五六年間，外侮內叛，繼繼不絕，然能使官離債負，民安賦役，府庫粗實，倉廩粗完，鈔法粗行，國用粗足，官吏轉換，政事更新，皆陛下克保祖宗之基，信用先王之法所致。今陛下於基業為守成，於治道為創始。正宜息聖心，答天心，結民心，睦親族以固本，建儲副以重祚，定大臣以當國，開經筵以格心，脩邊備以防虞，蓄糧餉以待歉，立學校以育才，勸農桑以厚生，是可以光先烈，成帝德，遺子孫，流遠譽。以陛下才畧，行此有餘。

A small unannounced condensation of the second to last sentence is carried across to the *Yuanshi*: the *shendaobei* has: 是可以光先烈，可以成帝德，可以遺子孫，可以流遠譽。

*Yuanshi* 158.3714-15:

諸路之民望陛下之拯己，如赤子之求母。先帝陟遐，國難並興，天開聖人，續承大統，即用歷代遺制，內立省部，外設監司，自中統至今五六年間，外侮內叛繼繼不絕，然能使官離債負，民安賦役，府庫粗實，倉廩粗完，鈔法粗行，國用粗足，官吏遷轉，政事更新，皆陛下克保祖宗之基、信用先王之法所致。今創始治道，正宜上答天心，下結民心，睦親族以固本，建儲副以重祚，定大臣以當國，開經筵以格心，修邊備以防虞，蓄糧餉以待歉，立學校以育才，勸農桑以厚生。

<sup>72</sup> Following Li Zhi'an's reading of this praise – see *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 116. Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei', p. 581 / *YWL* 60.21b / *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.222; *Mingchen shilue* 8.162; *Yuanshi* 158.3715:

即用歷代遺制，內立省部，外設監司

Further praise underlines the importance of, and celebrates broad success in, reducing debt among clerks and officials and tax and corvée burdens on the populace, the establishment of granaries, repositories and a paper money system. Alongside this, and of direct importance for the bureaucratic apparatus, is what is termed the “transference and exchange of government posts” and a general reform of government affairs.<sup>73</sup> All of this is put down to the Qağan’s success in preserving links with ancestral and historical precedent.<sup>74</sup> The fourth element speaks of the results expected from these policies, which mirror the historical precedent logic; Shu emphasizes the monarch’s establishment of a virtuous legacy to pass down through the generations.<sup>75</sup>

Zhang Dehui’s biographies likewise include advice to Qubilai describing good governance, reportedly delivered in 1261.<sup>76</sup> Here the *Mingchen shilue* text clearly provides the basis for the *Yuanshi* version, but the latter is greatly condensed, omitting the detailed analysis of consequences and instead presenting four brief prescriptions for action without such justification, shifting Dehui’s recommendations away from

<sup>73</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’, p. 581 / YWL 60.22a / *Mu’anjī* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.222; *Mingchen shilue* 8.162; *Yuanshi* 158.3715:

然能使官離債負，民安賦役，府庫粗實，倉廩粗完，鈔法粗行，國用粗足，官吏轉換，政事更新，

<sup>74</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’, p. 581 / YWL 60.22a / *Mu’anjī* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.222; *Mingchen shilue* 8.162; *Yuanshi* 158.3715:

皆陛下克保祖宗之基，信用先王之法所致。

On the importance afforded by the *Yuanshi* compilers to such ancestral maxims, see Cleaves, ‘Memorial’, 63; *Yuanshi* 4673; Humble, ‘Princely Qualities and Unexpected Coherence’, 321. On the position of such ‘ancestral instructions’ in sinophone courts more widely, see Deng Xiaonan 鄧小南 and Christian Lamouroux, ‘The “Ancestors’ Family Instructions”: Authority and Sovereignty in Song China’, *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 35 (2005), 79-97.

<sup>75</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’, p. 581 / YWL 60.22a / *Mu’anjī* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.222:

是可以光先烈，可以成帝德，可以遺子孫，可以流遠譽。以陛下才畧，行此有餘。

*Mingchen shilue* 8.162:

是可以光先烈，成帝德，遺子孫，流遠譽。以陛下才略，行此有餘。

We should note the unannounced condensation of this section, which is carried across to the *Yuanshi*. *Yuanshi* 158.3714-15:

是可以光先烈，成帝德，遺子孫，流遠譽。以陛下才略，行此有餘。

<sup>76</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 10.208; *Yuanshi* 163.3825.

situational application and towards abstract principle.<sup>77</sup> The measures in questions are: select officials strictly by ability; award salaries to nourish honesty; change inherited posts and transfer them between capital and cities; reform punishment and amnesties.

Returning to Dou Mo's address, we see him pick out the appointment of people who abandon devotion to longer term stability for short-term profit and status for condemnation:

Those who sell this for profit, curry favour, beg for affection and take to themselves doting regard, their will must absolutely be prevented from being implemented; this is the appropriate [course]. With regard to investigating to fathom and figure out, the logic of ruling people by harsh methods and disturbance, this is nothing but expelling the various virtuous ones and is only capturing political power.<sup>78</sup>

This element of the address focusses on appointment as a key role for the monarch; repeatedly emphasizing the responsibility to distinguish the virtuous; it is notable that the pursuit of material profit is clearly not within the bounds of such virtue.

The next section of Dou Mo's address likewise highlights appointment, requesting that Qubilai take both specific and general steps:

In my humble opinion choose other scholars 士 who are impartial, understanding and have achieved the Way, employ them for important duties, and then 'all-under-heaven' would be extremely fortunate."<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.208:

二年春，考績于京師，為十路最。陛見，上勞之，命疏時所急務，具四事以奏：一曰嚴保舉以取人，所以絕請託而得可用之才；二曰給俸祿以養廉能，所以禁贓濫不使侵漁於民；三曰易世官而遷郡邑，所以考治迹、革舊弊而摠民之冤；四曰正刑罰而勿屢赦，所以絕幸民、息盜賊而期於無刑。皆深切時事，上嘉納焉。[行狀]

*Yuanshi* 163.3825:

二年，考績為十路最。陛見，帝勞之，命疏所急務，條四事：一曰嚴保舉以取人材；二曰給俸祿以養廉能；三曰易世官而遷都邑；四曰正刑罰而勿屢赦。帝嘉納焉。

<sup>78</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.153:

其賣利獻勤、乞憐取寵者，使不得行其志，斯可矣。若夫鉤距揣摩，以利害驚動人主之意，無它，意在擯斥諸賢，獨執政柄耳。

*Yuanshi* 158.3731:

其賣利獻勤、乞憐取寵者，使不得行其志，斯可矣。若夫鉤距揣摩，以利害驚動人主之意者，無他，意在擯斥諸賢，獨執政柄耳，

<sup>79</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.153:

Overall, the memorial underlines the importance of recruiting virtuous scholars, emphasizing the qualities of honesty, principle, imperiality and understanding; harshness, profit-seeking and seeking favour at court are all condemned as short-term tactics employed by petty people.

It is notable that Liu Bingzhong's recommendations, as quoted in the *Yuanshi*, effectively approve hereditary appointment, proposing the government recruit from among the descendants of meritorious officials.<sup>80</sup> Bingzhong's phrasing also emphasizes the function of investigative offices in dealing with persistent errors among the officials through promotion and dismissal, a theme to which we return in section 4.5. As Chan notes, the memorial ends with the specific recommendation that a compartmentalized bureaucracy be established.<sup>81</sup>

Dou Mo's biographies quote Mo presenting a second set of advice to Qubilai, and this undated episode sees him offering the advice as one of a group of virtuous advisors.<sup>82</sup> Our texts provide differing lists of people involved in the consultations; the *Mingchen shilue* mentioning Liu Bingzhong, Yao Shu 'and others', while the parallel section in the

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伏望別選公明有道之士，授以重任，則天下幸甚。」

*Yuanshi* 158.3731:

此蘇、張之流也，惟陛下察之。伏望別選公明有道之士，授以重任，則天下幸甚。

<sup>80</sup> *Yuanshi* 157.3688:

當擇開國功臣之子孫，分為京府州郡監守，督責舊官，以遵王法

Chan emphasizes merit in his discussion of this section, and this consideration is certainly prominent, but not as prominent as the source of officials – the progeny of those officials previously involved in building the empire. See Chan, 'Liu Ping-chung 劉秉忠 (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman', 120.

<sup>81</sup> See Chan, 'Liu Ping-chung 劉秉忠 (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman', 120.

*Yuanshi* 157.3692:

立朝省以統百官，分有司以御衆事，以至京府州郡親民之職無不備，紀綱正於上，法度行於下，是故天下不勞而治也。今新君即位之後，可立朝省，以為政本。其餘百官，不在員多，惟在得人焉耳。

<sup>82</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 8.153-54; *Yuanshi* 158.3732.

*Yuanshi* names these ‘others’ specifically as Liu Su and Shang Ting – once more the compilers’ edits have left the account *more* specific than its source material.<sup>83</sup>

Dou Mo’s thoughts on appointments were reportedly expressed in response to a request from Qubilai for candidates who could be compared to the famous Tang-era minister Wei Zheng 魏徵.<sup>84</sup> Mo’s response differs substantially between our texts; in the *Mingchen shilue*, he merely describes Xu Heng as such a person and describes Shi Tianze as suited to the role of Grand Councillor.<sup>85</sup> In the *Yuanshi*, however, this response is altered considerably, adding an appreciation of the qualities ascribed to Wei Zheng, here described as fearless and unbending admonition, represented by Xu Heng, and careful planning, ascribed to Shi Tianze.<sup>86</sup> It is notable that the result element of this episode (in both texts) only features an appointment for Shi Tianze.<sup>87</sup> This implies criticism of Qubilai, suggesting that the Qağan was unwilling to accept principled Confucian advice.

<sup>83</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.153-54:

公嘗同太保劉公、左丞姚公等待上前，詢及治道，公言：「君有過舉，為臣者當直言匡正，不可諂隨，都俞吁咈，此隆古所尚。今則不然，君曰可臣亦以為可，君曰否臣亦以為否，莫敢少異，非嘉政也。」上默然。詰旦，復同侍幄殿，會獵者失一海東青鵲，上盛怒，一侍臣從傍曰：「是人去歲失一鵲，今又失一鵲，宜加罪。」上釋獵者不之問，移怒侍臣，且杖之。諸 [154] 公出，咸揖公賀曰：「非公誠結主知，安得感寤至此。」 [神道碑]

*Yuanshi* 158.3732:

默嘗與劉秉忠、姚樞、劉肅、商挺侍上前，默言：「君有過舉，臣當直言，都俞吁咈，古之所尚。今則不然，君曰可臣亦以為可，君曰否臣亦以為否，非善政也。」明日，復侍帝於幄殿。獵者失一鵲，帝怒，侍臣或從旁大聲謂宜加罪。帝惡其迎合，命杖之，釋獵者不問。既退，秉忠等賀默曰：「非公誠結主知，安得感悟至此。」

<sup>84</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 8.152; *Yuanshi* 158.3731. See also Chan, ‘Tou Mo (1196-1280)’, p. 410. On Wei Zheng 魏徵 (580-643 CE), celebrated as a scholar, compiler and fearlessly direct advisor to Tang Taizong, see David McMullen, ‘Wei Zheng 魏徵’, in *Routledgecurzon Encyclopedia of Confucianism*, ed. by Xinzhong Yao (London: Routledge, 2003); *Jiu Tangshu* 71.2545-63; *Xin Tangshu* 97.3867-85.

<sup>85</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.152:

上即位，首召至上都，問曰：「朕嘗命卿訪求魏徵等人，有諸乎？」對曰：「許衡即其人也。萬戶史天澤有宰相才，可大用。」遂拜天澤為丞相。

<sup>86</sup> *Yuanshi* 158.3731:

祖即位，召至上都，問曰：「朕欲求如唐魏徵者，有其人乎？」默對曰：「犯顏諫諍，剛毅不屈，則許衡其人也。深識遠慮，有宰相才，則史天澤其人也。」天澤時宣撫河南，帝即召拜右丞相

<sup>87</sup> Chan notes that Shi Tianze’s appointment also only took place a year later, after the appointment of Maḥmūd Yalavač and Wang Wentong. See Chan, ‘Tou Mo (1196-1280)’, p. 410.

This criticism, implied by the mention of Wei Zheng in the *Mingchen shilue*, is made overt in the *Yuanshi*, which portrays Mo taking a position on what Zheng represented, and Qubilai only partially responding to that position.

These examples all coalesce around the operation of a centralized bureaucracy, the effective selection, payment and superintendence of staff, either advocating meritocratic selection or managing hereditary appointees by transfers, and the observance of precedence and historical method; precisely what our *liezhuan* define, although none quite so coherently and consistently across our generic versions as do these sets of recommendations. This points to their function in the texts: beside the constantly changing events, these memorials of advice lay down a kind of moral baseline against which the monarch's – and their court's – actions can be judged.

#### 4.2 De-centring the Qaḡan

The advice examined above is all delivered, in one way or another, to the monarch, and its assessments ostensibly praise the Qaḡan (and criticize his predecessors) for governmental actions, but the range of actions recommended to him varies considerably. Dou Mo's memorial especially, and to a lesser extent Zhang Dehui's, noticeably addressed only the choice and governance of staff, rather than the details of policy in governance more broadly. Did our compilers therefore intend to position Qubilai (or future monarchs) at the heart of government?<sup>88</sup> Although not uniform, there is a visible tendency for *Yuanshi* edits to distance the monarch from decision-making, promoting

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<sup>88</sup> Chan argues that in Chinese historiography "[w]hile the sovereign who receives the Mandate of Heaven rules by virtue of his sage qualities, he is dependent on his wise ministers for counsel and assistance." See Chan Hok-lam 陳學霖, "Liu Ping-chung 劉秉忠 (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman at the Court of Khubilai Khan," *T'oung pao*, 53, (1967): 98-146 (102).

what might be termed an ‘official-centred’ and therefore essentially administrative ideal over a Qağan-centred court.

In Chucai’s *Yuanshi* biography, the compilers removed Ögödei from active decision-making at several key points, a tendency that seems to align with, on the one hand, a Song Neo-Confucian treatment of the monarch as a symbolic presence rather than an active ruler, and, on the other, what Charles Hartman describes as a ‘literati urge for due process’.<sup>89</sup> It is largely manifested in edits, mostly at the micro scale, that shift the activity – and therefore function – of the monarch away from policy-making and direct involvement in decisions towards delegating these via appointment and selection.

This is visible in the biographies for Muqali’s great-grandson Hantum (1245-1293), who served in both military and civil posts under Qubilai, was involved in the factions opposing Qubilai’s ministers Aḥmad Fanākātī and Sangha, and fought on the northern border, being imprisoned by Qaidu between 1277 and 1284, the latter only indirectly alluded to in his biographies.<sup>90</sup> Hantum’s opposition to the appointment of Sangha in

<sup>89</sup> See, for example, Ögödei’s personal involvement in the Xiandebu affair and the tone of his response to Chucai’s ban on gifts, at section 2.2 above. See Dardess, ‘Did the Mongols Matter?’, p. 127; Hartman, ‘Sung Government and Politics’, p. 41. On Song-era attempts to balance power and function and maintain a distinction between imperial will and monarchical action, see Hartman, ‘Sung Government and Politics’, pp. 36-37. Peter Bol’s characterization of Song-era Neo-Confucian scholars’ priorities echoes this somewhat, too, suggesting that the imperial family and individual was the lowest priority and perhaps highest risk factor. See Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 307 (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), p. 121.

<sup>90</sup> On Hantum, see *Yuanshi* 126.2955-60; *Mingchen shilue* 1.8-14; *YR*, p. 2228; *RPN*, p. 26; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 174-75; de Rachewiltz, ‘Muqali (1170-1223), Bōl (1197-1220), Tas (1212-1239), An-T’ung (1245-1293)’; de Rachewiltz, ‘Muqali, Bōl, Tas and An-T’ung’; Xiu Xiaobo 修晓波, ‘Yuanshi antong, naimantai, duo’erzhi, duo’erzhiban liezhuan dingwu’ 《元史》安童、乃蛮台、朵儿只、朵尔直班列传订误 (A Collation of the Errors in the *Yuanshi* Biographies of Hantum, Naimantai, Dorji and Dorjibal), *Guji zhengli yanjiu xuekan*, 3 (1998), 35–38. After a 61-character preface, Hantum’s *Mingchen shilue* biography comprises 22 sections of main text (2,033 characters) and one of annotation. The main text draws primarily on the lost family biography by Yuan Yongzhen (18 sections, 1,702 characters, 84%) along with the *Wangbei* by Yuan Mingshan 元明善 (4 sections, 331 characters, 16%). Yuan Mingshan 元明善, ‘Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei’ 丞相東平忠憲王碑, in *QYW*, xxiv, 340–46; *Qingheji* 清河集, 3.18a-24a, *YRCK*, v, pp. 171-74. A single section of notes are taken from the Li Qian’s *Yezhai ligong wenji* 野齋李公文集 (127 characters), and arranged to provide a secondary perspective on Sangha. The *Yuanshi*



1288 and the latter's apparent (implied, but not overtly stated) connection to the establishment of a Secretariat for State Affairs illustrates the subtle distancing of the monarch in the *Yuanshi*.<sup>91</sup> Handled similarly in both *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*, the compilers of the latter intervened to reduce the agency the account assigned to Qubilai.<sup>92</sup> Hantum's *Wangbei* (and the excerpt from it presented in the *Mingchen shilue*) state that the Qagan had 'decided' to establish a Secretariat for State Affairs.<sup>93</sup> In contrast, the *Yuanshi* merely refers to the establishment of this institution as an event without overt connection to any individual.<sup>94</sup> This opens a lacuna that effectively associates decision and institution with Sangha – mentioned in Hantum's appeal very soon after, and thus associated indirectly by juxtaposition – rather than with the monarch.

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biography follows the main text (from both sources) fairly closely but without incorporating Li Qian's material, and merely summarizes the content of a memorial apparently transmitted in full from the *Shijia*. Wang suggests that the biography also draws on a further inscription by Huang Jin 黃潛, although I have not yet been able to identify this. Wang (*Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 174-75) names the inscription as 'Yun wenzhong wang baizhu bei' 鄆文忠王拜住碑; this is not found in either *YR* or the *QYW* title index. On Yuan Mingshan 元明善 (1269-1322), courtesy name Fuchu 復初, from Qinghe 清河 in Daming 大名, present-day Hebei, see *Yuanshi* 181.4171-74; *QYW*, xxiv, pp. 280-81; *YR*, pp. 30-31. The seven *juan* of his *Qingheji* 清河集 are found at *YRCK*, v, pp. 159-210. Li Qian 李謙 (1233-1311), courtesy name 受益, hao Yezhai 野齋, served in the Hanlin Academy under Qubilai and Temür Öljeitü, and provided many of the source texts drawn on by the *Mingchen shilue*. See *Yuanshi* 160.3767-68; *YR*, pp. 498-99.

<sup>91</sup> Farquhar dates the re-establishment of this Secretariat to 1287; see *FG*, p. 170; it is discussed in more detail in the following section. The incident is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', p. 344; *Qingheji* 3.21b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 173; *Mingchen shilue* 1.12; *Yuanshi* 126.3084.

<sup>92</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', p. 344; *Qingheji* 3.21b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 173:

二十四年，上決意立尚書省。奏曰：「臣力不能回天，乞不用桑葛，別相賢者，猶或不至虐民誤國。」不聽。

*Mingchen shilue* 1.12:

二十四年，上決意立尚書省，奏曰：「臣力不能回天，乞不用桑葛，別相賢者，猶或不至虐民誤國。」不聽。[勳德碑]

*Yuanshi* 126.3084:

是歲，復立尚書省，安童切諫曰：「臣力不能回天，乞不用桑哥，別相賢者，猶或不至虐民誤國。」不聽。

<sup>93</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', p. 344; *Qingheji* 3.21b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 173:

二十四年，上決意立尚書省。

*Mingchen shilue* 1.12:

二十四年，上決意立尚書省，

<sup>94</sup> *Yuanshi* 126.3084:

是歲，復立尚書省，

The handling of an episode found in the biographies of the general, official and junior Činggisid relative Čerig sees the same processes in action. Čerig (1260-1306), descended from Činggis Qan's nephew Eljigidei, served Qubilai and Temür Öljeitü as an official in Fujian and Jiangzhe, receiving credit for exposing the crimes of Sangha, and was ultimately appointed Privy Councillor of the Central Secretariat 中書平章政事.<sup>95</sup> The episode in question, dated to 1297, likewise distances the monarch (Temür Öljeitü Qaġan) from active involvement in governance.<sup>96</sup> Examined as a whole in section 4.5, with reference to limiting the role of the Censorate, it is the episode's outcome that is relevant to the present discussion. The *shendaobei* (and the excerpt transmitted in the *Mingchen shilue*) comment on Temür Öljeitü's views on hearing Čerig's address: "he considered the conduct and discipline of gaining posts to be a cardinal principle, thinking profoundly about the Censorate", thereby praising the monarch as actively engaged in the operation of the Censorate and thus a participant in government.<sup>97</sup>

In a meso-level adjustment, the *Yuanshi* compilers omitted this assessment of the outcome, instead bringing forward a report on Čerig's later appointment as Privy Councillor of the Branch Secretariat for Jiangsu and Zhejiang.<sup>98</sup> This rearrangement of events appears a substantial distortion when read alongside both Čerig's *shendaobei* and

<sup>95</sup> On Čerig (1260-1306), see *Yuanshi* 130. 3161-63; *YR*, p.2329; *Mingchen shilue*, 4.67-71; *YR*, p. 2329; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, p. 181. After an 80-character preface, Čerig's *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged in eleven sections of main text, all drawn from Yao Sui's *shendaobei*, with a single section of annotation from the *Wusong jiangji* 吳松江記, following and commenting on a discussion of Čerig's work on watercourses in Jiangzhe 江浙 in 1304. Yao Sui 姚燧, 'Pingzhangzheng Xu Guogong Shendaobei' 平章政事徐國公神道碑, in *QYW*, ix, pp. 566-69; *Mu'anji (Yaosuiji)* 14.206-9; *YWL* 59.21b-26b.

<sup>96</sup> The incident is found at Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng Xu Guogong Shendaobei', p. 568; *YWL* 59.24b-25a; *Mu'anji (Yaosuiji)* 14.208; *Mingchen shilue* 4.70; *Yuanshi* 130.3162-63.

<sup>97</sup> Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng Xu Guogong Shendaobei', p. 568; *YWL* 59.25a; *Mu'anji (Yaosuiji)* 14.208: 帝聞之，以為得職風紀大體，微意柏臺。

*Mingchen shilue* 4.70:

帝聞之，以為得職風紀大體，微意栢臺。[神道碑]

<sup>98</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3163:

帝聞而善之，改江浙行省平章政事。

Su Tianjue's summary of his career, both of which date the Branch Secretariat appointment to 1303, six years after the Censorate speech.<sup>99</sup> Making the appointment appear causally related to Čerig's explanation of, and commitment to, the Censorate and its proper function, this intervention separates the monarch from direct involvement with these issues. The Qaġan's response, in this formulation, is limited to appointment. Moreover, this response – moving Čerig out of the Censorate – can be read as the removal of an inconvenient critic.

An unusual episode in Lian Xixian's biographies, undated but placed contextually around or after 1277, appears at first glance to run counter to this tendency to distance the royal court from direct involvement in governance.<sup>100</sup> This portrays an intervention on Xixian's behalf and against Aġmad Fanākatī from Jingim, Qubilai's proposed heir.<sup>101</sup> We read that the prince sent emissaries on the Qaġan's behalf appointing Xixian to head a Chancellery Department along with assurances that opposition to him would be curbed.<sup>102</sup> The result clauses relate that this initiative failed, various versions either implying or stating outright that Aġmad blocked it.

<sup>99</sup> Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei', p. 568; *YWL* 59.25a; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 14.208: 七年, 改浙省平章政事, 其治如臺, 門無私謁, 以轉粟京師, 多資東南, 居天下什六七。

*Mingchen shilue* 4.70:

七年, 改浙省平章政事, 其治如臺, 門無私謁。

<sup>100</sup> The episode is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei', pp. 352-63; *YWL* 65.14a; *Qingheji* 5.53b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 189; *Mingchen shilue* 7.141; *Yuanshi* 126.3096. Hsiao connects it to Xixian's return to court in the fifth moon (23<sup>rd</sup> of May to 21<sup>st</sup> June) of 1278, but Franke dates it to 1277. See Hsiao, 'Lien Hsi-hsien (1231-1280)', p. 495; Franke, 'Aġmad (?-1282)', p. 547.

<sup>101</sup> Qubilai's second son by Čabui, Jingim, temple name Yuzong 裕宗 (1243-86), widely portrayed as a champion of Confucian causes, was the Qaġan's intended heir and father to his eventual successor Temür Öljeitü Qaġan. On Jingim, see *Yuanshi* 115.2888-93; Atwood, *Encyclopedia*, p. 278; Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan*, p. 226; Buell, *Historical Dictionary*, p. 291 (under 'Zhenjin'); *YR*, p. 2417.

<sup>102</sup> On the Chancellery Department, see 4.3 below.

This episode is drawn from Xixian's extant *shendaobei*, which is both more detailed and in some ways more circumspect than the other versions, and which highlights the prince's active favour towards Xixian, expressed via an imperial gift:

The Crown Prince had recently begun to pay attention to the governance of 'all-under-heaven' and sent people with a grant of (grape) wine and to address [Xixian]: "The emperor orders the gentleman to lead the Chancellery Department and not to be troubled by groups of petty people. We<sup>103</sup> will act for the gentleman's virtue." Especially unfavourable to Aḥmad, this was stopped.<sup>104</sup>

The *Mingchen shilue* made several unannounced changes to this report, cutting mention of the gift in a manner familiar from other redactions of such honours.<sup>105</sup> Su Tianjue also reduced the discussion of Jingim's actions and motivations, but made the second half of the prince's message more direct, reporting that he promised not only to support Xixian but to step in actively and remove his opponents:

At that time the Crown Prince had recently begun to pay attention to governance and sent people to address [Xixian]: "The emperor orders the gentleman to lead the Chancellery Department and not be troubled by groups of petty people. We will remove them on the gentleman's behalf." Unfavourable to Aḥmad, this was stopped.<sup>106</sup>

Su Tianjue's edits removed royal gifts from the report and reduced the specificity of the aim at Aḥmad. The phrasing nonetheless identifies 'petty people' with the Central Asian, even if action against such people was not 'especially' disadvantageous to him.

<sup>103</sup> Or perhaps 'I': here Jingim is understood to be speaking for some combination of himself and Qubilai.

<sup>104</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei', pp. 352-63; *YWL* 65.14a; *Qingheji* 5.53b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 189:

皇太子方聽天下政，遣人賜蒲桃酒，諭王曰：「上命公領門下省，勿難羣小，吾為公德阿哈馬，不利而止。」

<sup>105</sup> Here the *Mingchen shilue* makes another significant unannounced cut. The *shendaobei* has:

皇太子方聽天下政，遣人賜蒲桃酒，諭王曰

Whereas the *Mingchen shilue* only transmits

時皇太子方聽政，遣人諭王曰

The *Yuanshi* adopts these interventions, presenting only:

皇太子亦遣人諭旨曰

On Su Tianjue's habit of making unannounced cuts to his excerpts, see section 1.2 above.

<sup>106</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.141:

時皇太子方聽政，遣人諭王曰：「上命領門下省，勿難羣小，吾為公除之。」阿合馬不利而止。[神道碑]

The *Yuanshi* version is briefer still, its changes in part reflecting Su's treatment, particularly Jingim's promise to remove opponents, but reducing comment on the prince himself, omitting mention of his 'new' interest in governance, perhaps due to its implication of previous disinterest. The result clause is more direct, stating specifically that Jingim's initiative was blocked by Aḥmad, thereby emphasizing his individual (and transgressive) agency:

At that time the Crown Prince also sent people to announce a decree, saying, "The emperor orders the minister to lead the Chancellery and not to fear groups of petty people. We will remove them on the gentleman's behalf." Ultimately [this was] stopped by Aḥmad.<sup>107</sup>

Here a conflict implied in Xixian's *shendaobei* between Jingim and Aḥmad has been sharpened and made more specific in two stages of editing by Su Tianjue and the *Yuanshi* compilers.

The *Yuanshi* compilers' further removal of material on Jingim narrowed focus to the conflict alone, and adjustment of the result clause made more of a direct claim to (transgressive) agency and influence on Aḥmad's part than did either of the previous versions. Jingim's involvement here is again passing on decrees of appointment and the removal of enemies, again characterizing royal activity as appointment. Here, the prince, aligned with Xixian and opposing 'petty people', is directly blocked by Aḥmad's agency and power. Action taken in government, if by undesirable people, is portrayed overwhelming the efforts of a senior member of the imperial family.

In describing a previous, and more successful, conflict with Aḥmad (dated to 1264), the *Yuanshi* compilers also removed indication of Qubilai's personal involvement in their

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<sup>107</sup> *Yuanshi* 126.3096:

皇太子亦遣人諭旨曰：「上命卿領門下省，無憚羣小，吾為卿除之。」竟為阿合馬所沮。

handling of Lian Xixian's biographies.<sup>108</sup> Both *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* accounts connect several problems to Aḥmad's power, namely his leading both right and left elements of the Secretariat, infighting among his 'faction' and fear at court preventing proper investigation.<sup>109</sup> The element of difference is the statement in the *Mingchen shilue* version that Aḥmad was "favoured and doted on" 寵眷, implying an active distribution of imperial favour. The *Yuanshi* omits this, in a micro-level intervention. This distances Qubilai from involvement with – and, perhaps power over, and responsibility for – Aḥmad. Reducing the monarch's control over that situation, this made Aḥmad the principal agent rather than an instrument of policy.

There is a further aspect to this intervention. Lian Xixian's investigation of Aḥmad, and Aḥmad's resultant dismissal and punishment, importantly also involving the return of his posts "to those [with formal] responsibility" 有司, are common to both accounts, their use as a contrast to Aḥmad implying that he did, or could not, himself possess such authority.<sup>110</sup> Success here is thus characterized as a rescue of 'proper' administration from Aḥmad's transgressive power. Only in the *Mingchen shilue* is the process of defeating the transgressor also, if indirectly, characterized as dislodging an imperial favourite and therefore challenging the Qagan's will.

<sup>108</sup> On this episode, see also Franke, 'Aḥmad (?-1282)', p. 541; Li, *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 182.

<sup>109</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.134:

時阿合馬寵眷日隆，已領左右部，其黨自相攻擊，上命都省推覆，衆畏其權，莫敢問。  
*Yuanshi* 126.3090:

奸臣阿合馬領左右部，專總財賦，會其黨相攻擊，帝命中書推覆，衆畏其權，莫敢問。

<sup>110</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.134:

公獨窮治其事，阿合馬竟得決杖，遂罷所領，復還有司。

*Yuanshi* 126.3090:

希憲窮治其事，以狀聞，杖阿合馬，罷所領歸有司。

Compared to an episode in Lian Xixian's biographies which sees him reprimand an unnamed princess and her retinue for hunting across the capital city's suburbs, we see a related phenomenon in the form of the imposition of civil government over royal kinship. Xixian's success here lies in forcing a high-handed member of the elite to apologize to and compensate the populace after taking advantage of them, by threatening to submit a memorial on her conduct.<sup>111</sup> As such it is directly comparable to the account, also examined above, of Xixian humiliating the abusive pseudo-*fuma*; despite the transgressor's escape in that case, it is clear that oppression by elites is seen as the key problem addressed by Xixian's avenging actions, and bureaucratic action the solution.<sup>112</sup>

Hantum's biographies likewise place him, as a minister, in a superior position *vis-a-vis* members of the imperial family, portraying his employment by Qubilai to humiliate problematic Činggisid relatives after Nayan's suppression in 1287.<sup>113</sup> The *Yuanshi*

<sup>111</sup> The incident is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei', p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188:

長公主及國壻入朝，縱獵郊原，發民牛車，載其所獲，徵求須索，其費至鈔萬五千貫。王譙公主，從者怨食不及，王曰：「我天子宰相，非汝庖者。」國壻怒起，王隨之，曰：「駙馬縱獵原禽，非國務也。費民財不貲，我已馳奏矣。」國壻愕然，入語公主，公主出，飲王酒，曰：「從者煩民，我不知也。請出鈔如數償民，幸公止使者。」自後貴人過者，皆不敢縱。

*Mingchen shilue* 7.137:

長公主及國壻入朝，縱獵郊原，發民牛車，載其所獲，徵求須索，其費至鈔萬五千貫。王燕公主，從者怨食不及，王曰：「我天子宰相，非汝庖者。」國壻怒起，王隨之曰：「主壻縱獵原禽，非國務也。費民財不貲，我且馳奏矣。」國壻愕然，入語公主，公主出飲王酒，曰：「從者煩民，我不知也。請出鈔如數饋民，幸公止使者。」自後貴人過者，皆不敢縱。  
[神道碑]

*Yuanshi* 126.3093:

長公主及國壻入朝，縱獵郊原，擾民為甚，希憲面諭國壻，欲入奏之。國壻驚愕，入語公主，公主出，飲希憲酒曰：「從者擾民，吾不知也。請以鈔萬五千貫還斂民之直，幸勿遣使者。」自是貴人過者，皆莫敢縱。

The incident is reminiscent of the *Yuanshi* celebration of Čabi's role in preventing *kešig* officers extending grazing lands across the capital's suburbs in 1273. See *Yuanshi* 114.2871; Francis Woodman Cleaves, "The Biography of the Empress Čabi in the 'Yüan Shih'", *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3/4 (1979-80), 138-150 (142-43).

<sup>112</sup> See section 3.1 above; the episode is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei', p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188; *Mingchen shilue* 7.137; *Yuanshi* 126.3093.

<sup>113</sup> The incident is found at *Mingchen shilue* 1.12; *Yuanshi* 126.3083-84. On Nayan, a descendant of Činggis Qan's younger sibling Temüge Otčigin, and the 1287 conflict, see Biran, *Qaidu*, pp. 45-47; Paul Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo* (Paris: A. Maisonneuve, 1959-73), p. 788.

compilers made several micro-level changes to this text, including to reported speech from unnamed people presented as Činggisid aristocrats. These *Yuanshi* edits reposition those humiliated nobles, the terms of their description moving them away from a dynastic frame of reference. Hantum's lost *Shijia*, as transmitted in the *Mingchen shilue*, describes the humiliated nobles as 'descendants of Taizu' 太祖子孫, placing them in a direct relationship with the imperial ancestor, while the *Yuanshi* compilers shifted them towards a broader and more vague corporate identity as 'close relatives of the imperial house' 帝室近親, as opposed, in this case, to members of the government.<sup>114</sup>

Another episode in Hantum's biographies dated to summer 1286 seems to trace the limits of the Qagan's personal involvement in government. Here, both *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* present a discussion between Hantum and Qubilai on the selection and oversight of court staff.<sup>115</sup> The section, originating in the *Shijia*, is transmitted to the *Yuanshi* with

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*Mingchen shilue* 1.12:

宗王乃顏反，上親討平之。他宗室誑誤者，勅公按問，多所平反。一日朝退，出自左掖門，諸免死者爭前迎謝，至有執轡扶公上馬者，公毅然不顧。或乘間言於上曰：「宗室雖有罪，皆太祖子孫，陛下昆弟，丞相雖尊，人臣也，奈何悖慢如此！」上良久曰：「汝等誠小人，烏知安童之所為。彼特招辱之，使改過遷善耳。」[世家]

*Yuanshi* 126.3083-84:

二十四年，宗王乃顏叛，世祖親討平之。宗室誑誤者，命安童按問，多所平反。嘗退 [3084] 朝，自左掖門出，諸免罪者爭迎謝，或執轡扶上馬，安童毅然不顧。有乘間言於帝曰：「諸王雖有罪，皆帝室近親也，丞相雖尊，人臣也，何悖慢如此！」帝良久曰：「汝等小人，豈知安童所為，特辱之使改過耳。」

<sup>114</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 1.12:

宗室雖有罪，皆太祖子孫，陛下昆弟，

*Yuanshi* 126.3084:

諸王雖有罪，皆帝室近親也，

<sup>115</sup> The incident is found at *Mingchen shilue* 1.12; *Yuanshi* 126.3083.

*Mingchen shilue* 1.12:

In summer, the fourth moon of the twenty-third year [25<sup>th</sup> April to 24<sup>th</sup> May 1286], the Central Secretariat submitted upwards a draft list of Grain Transport Office 漕司 officials' names, and the emperor addressed the gentleman, saying: "For posts such as Privy Councillor, Senior Chief Councillor and others, We should personally make the selections; the rest are all the responsibility of my minister and others." The gentleman therefore presented a memorial, saying: "Your servant has recently heard the sage intention, wishing to rely upon the various close attendants to serve as eyes and ears. Now your servant humbly undertakes to appoint to various roles, some matters implemented contravene the law in upholding decrees; the degree of seriousness of these crimes can only be determined by the emperor. Now close courtiers await opportunities to recommend other



little amendment, and therefore must be taken to be uncontroversial in its portrayal. The episode outlines two major problems. The first of this seems to relate to the Central Secretariat consulting Qubilai about relatively minor appointments to the Grain Transport Office 漕司, and here we see Qubilai making a policy decision, reserving the right to appoint the most senior officials, while having lower ranks dealt with by ministers.<sup>116</sup>

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types, saying such and such an occupant of such and such an office, such and such acting in such and such a post, and thereby submitting lists to the Central Secretariat to enact. Your servant suggests that the way to make selections can only be by a settled system, and especially as we have no precedents; your servant's former rules having been abandoned. Please consider that, if your servant's faults are reported to the emperor, it would be fortunate if Your Majesty investigated them." The emperor said: "My minister's words are correct. From now on [matters] will not be implemented like this; if they present memorials rashly come and report this." [Shijia]

二十三年夏四月，中書列上所擬漕司官姓名，上謂公曰：「如平章、右丞等職，朕當親選擇之，餘皆卿等責也。」公因奏言：「臣比聞聖意，欲倚近侍諸人為耳目者。今臣猥承任使，或所行非法從其舉奏，罪之輕重惟上裁處。今近臣伺隙援引非類，曰某居某官，某為某職，以所署奏目付中書施行。臣謂銓選之法，自有定制，其尤無事例者，臣嘗廢格不行。慮有短臣於上者，幸陛下察之。」上曰：「卿言是也。今後若此者勿行，其妄奏者即入言之。」[世家]

*Yuanshi* 126.3083:

In the twenty-third year [1286], the Central Secretariat submitted a memorial with all the Grain Transport Office 漕司 officials' names, and the emperor said: "For posts such as Privy Councillor, Senior Chief Councillor and others, We should personally make the selections; the rest are all the job of my minister and others." Hantum presented a memorial, saying: "Your servant has recently heard the sage intention, wishing to rely upon the various close attendants to serve as eyes and ears. Now your servant humbly undertakes to appoint to various roles, if matters implemented contravene the law in upholding decrees, the degree of seriousness of these crimes can only be determined by Your Majesty. Now close courtiers therefore await opportunities to recommend other types, saying such and such an occupant of such and such an office, such and such acting in such and such a post, and thereby submitting lists to the Central Secretariat to enact. Your servant suggests that the way to make selections can only be by a settled system, and especially as we have no precedents; your servant's frequent rules having been abandoned. Please consider that, if your servant's faults are reported by their faction, it would be fortunate if Your Majesty investigated them." The emperor said: "My minister's words are correct. From now on [matters] will not be implemented like this; if they present memorials rashly come and report this."

二十三年夏，中書奏擬漕司諸官姓名，帝曰：「如平章、右丞等，朕當親擇，餘皆卿等職也。」安童奏曰：「比聞聖意欲倚近侍為耳目，臣猥承任使，若所行非法，從其舉奏，罪之輕重，惟陛下裁處。今近臣乃伺隙援引非類，曰某居某官、某居某職，以所署奏目付中書施行。臣謂銓選之法，自有定制，其尤無事例者，臣常廢格不行，慮其黨有短臣者，幸陛下詳察。」帝曰：「卿言是也。今後若此者勿行，其妄奏者，即入言之。」

<sup>116</sup> The incident is found at *Mingchen shilue* 1.12; *Yuanshi* 126.3083.

*Mingchen shilue* 1.12:

In summer, the fourth moon of the twenty-third year [25<sup>th</sup> April to 24<sup>th</sup> May 1286], the Central Secretariat submitted upwards a draft list of Grain Transport Office 漕司 officials' names, and the emperor addressed the gentleman, saying: "For posts such as Privy Councillor, Senior Chief Councillor and others, We should personally make the selections; the rest are all the responsibility of my minister and others."

二十三年夏四月，中書列上所擬漕司官姓名，上謂公曰：「如平章、右丞等職，朕當親選擇之，餘皆卿等責也。」

*Yuanshi* 126.3083:

Čerig's biographies, in describing his involvement in Sangha's impeachment in 1291, provide subtly differing accounts of a disastrous loss of court control, employing contrasting formulations of who it was that *ought* to wield that power.<sup>117</sup> This again sees the *Yuanshi* compilers shift governance from nobility to bureaucracy. Čerig's *shendaobei* (and the *Mingchen shilue*) report that:

The flames of cruelty overpowered the heavens; lesser princes and imperial relatives 諸王貴戚 too had no solutions, and submitted to him without exception.<sup>118</sup>

The *Yuanshi*, in contrast, reports that “Court officials 廷臣 had misgivings, but none dared speak out.”<sup>119</sup> The two accounts each suggest a different group of people who readers should expect to be in control of such matters – in the earlier texts these are imperial aristocrats, but in the *Yuanshi* they are ‘court officials’, locating presumed authority differently within the court.

Among these examples, the direction of travel is clear; the *Yuanshi* compilers shifted the ruler and the imperial family away from active engagement in policy matters and towards a more symbolic presence. Decision-making having been delegated to their appointees, the question posed to the monarch becomes whom to choose rather than what to do. This has been accomplished by a combination of detailed edits to the narratives. Mostly at the

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Those such as the Privy Councillors 平章 and the Senior Chief Councillors 右丞 and others, We should personally select; others (should) all be my ministers' appointments.

二十三年夏，中書奏擬漕司諸官姓名，帝曰：「如平章、右丞等，朕當親擇，餘皆卿等職也。」

<sup>117</sup> The episode is found at Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng Xu Guogong Shendaobei', pp. 566-67; *YWL* 59.23a; *Mu'anji* (Yaosuiji) 14.207; *Mingchen shilue* 4.68; *Yuanshi* 130.3162.

<sup>118</sup> Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng Xu Guogong Shendaobei', pp. 566-67; *YWL* 59.23a; *Mu'anji* (Yaosuiji) 14.207:

虐焰熏天，諸王貴戚亦莫誰何，無不下之。

*Mingchen shilue* 4.68:

虐燄熏天，諸王貴戚，亦莫誰何，無不下之。

<sup>119</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3162:

廷臣顧忌，皆莫敢言。

micro level and as adjustments to the framing of individuals, the content of reported speech and the outcome of events, these also, as in the case of Čerig's speech on the Censorate, involved substantial meso-level rearrangement of chronology and causality. The effect is to provide a substantially different version of the logic behind court life to that found in our foundation texts.

### 4.3 The Centrality of the Central Secretariat

If the ideal government posited by *Yuanshi* biographies is not monarch-centred, where would that centre lie? A survey of our texts indicates a broad positioning of the Central Secretariat 中書省 in that space.<sup>120</sup> As a Song Censor reportedly remarked in 1267 (in Charles Hartman's translation):

“... orderly government is what proceeds through the Secretariat; disorderly government is what does not proceed through the Secretariat. The world's matters should be shared with the world; they are not the private domain of the ruler.”<sup>121</sup>

The Central Secretariat is generally described as one of a trinity of principal governing institutions in Mongol-era China, alongside the Bureau for Military Affairs and the Censorate.<sup>122</sup> Endicott-West describes the Secretariat as the “nerve center of the entire civilian bureaucracy” under Činggisid rule, noting that it was a principal conduit for

<sup>120</sup> As noted above, Li Zhi'an argues that, when Shu (or, and this it ought to be stressed, his biographers) uses *shengbu* 省部 as a term referring to centralized government, it refers specifically to the Central Secretariat 中書省 and its subordinate 'left and right' ministries 部. See *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 116.

<sup>121</sup> Charles Hartman, 'Song Government and Politics', p. 42. The quote is taken from the biography of Liu Fu 劉黻, and is found at Toqto et al., *Songshi* 宋史, (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1977), 405.12248:

故政事由中書則治，不由中書則亂，天下事當與天下共之，非人主所得私也。

<sup>122</sup> See Elizabeth Endicott-West, 'The Yüan Government and Society', in *CHC*, pp. 587-615 (p. 588). On the Bureau for Military Affairs 樞密院, established in June-July 1263 and referred to as the 'Privy Council' in *CHC*, see Endicott-West, 'The Yüan Government and Society', pp. 590,601; Li Zhi'an, *Hubilie zhuan*, pp. 137-41; *HD*, p. 436; *FG*, pp. 247-48; Ōshima Ritsuko, *Mongoru no seifuku ōchō*, pp. 58-64. See also Chan Hok-lam, 'Liu Ping-chung 劉秉忠 (1216-74), A Buddhist-Taoist Statesman', 131.

On the Mongol-era Censorate 御史臺, see Endicott-West, 'The Yüan Government and Society', pp. 602-4; Farquhar, 'Structure and Function', pp. 53-54; Ōshima Ritsuko, *Mongoru no seifuku ōchō*, pp. 64-66; Charles O. Hucker, *The Censorial System of Ming China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1966), pp. 25-28. For summaries of the Censorate's operation under Qubilai, see Li Zhi'an, *Hubilie zhuan*, pp. 141-47; Rossabi, 'The Reign of Khubilai Khan', in *CHC*, pp. 414-89 (pp. 428, 471).

memorials to – and therefore information for – the Qagan, and held the power of appointment to most government departments, with only the military, Censorate and a couple of other institutions lying beyond this control.<sup>123</sup>

As we have seen, the Central Secretariat is recorded, at least nominally, as the key institution through which Yelü Chucai's governing activity was executed under Ögödei, and this post-Jin arrangement may have influenced Qubilai's institutions after an intervening period without such titulature.<sup>124</sup> The Central Secretariat is well-represented in our sample, and Su Tianjue's career summaries associate 22 of our 47 *Mingchen shilue* subjects with the institution. In view of the dominant position of Qubilai's princely retinue in our texts, it is not surprising to learn that his Central Secretariat emerged from that retinue (and at his Kaiping 'princely residence') very soon after Qubilai's succession.<sup>125</sup> At that point the Central Secretariat employed two echelons of upper-level staff. These seem to have comprised policy-makers, usually drawn from the Mongol nobility and who limited their activity to high-level decisions, and administrators, dealing with more routine affairs.<sup>126</sup> Subordinated to the Central Secretariat were the 'Six Ministries' of Personnel, Revenue, Rites, War, Punishments and Works.<sup>127</sup> Likewise under (theoretical) Central Secretariat control were Branch Secretariats, building on and

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<sup>123</sup> Endicott-West, 'The Yüan Government and Society', p. 588.

<sup>124</sup> See section 2.2 above. Qubilai's Central Secretariat, set up in the image of Ögödei's, had more in common with Jin precedents than other historical arrangements. See Ōshima Ritsuko, *Mongoru no seifuku ōchō*, pp. 54-55; Endicott-West, 'The Yüan Government and Society', p. 588; Li Zhi'an argues that Qubilai's initial establishment of the Central Secretariat drew on the Jin Secretariat for State Affairs model (rather than that of the Central Secretariat); see *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 116. de Rachewiltz et al. refer to the institution as the 'Secretarial Council'; see *ISK*, p. 708. For an essentializing but insightful summary of Jin governing institutions, see Jing-shen Tao, 'The Influence of Jurchen Rule on Chinese Political Institutions,' *The Journal of Asian Studies* 30 (1970): 121-30.

<sup>125</sup> P.D. Buell, 'Sayyid Ajall (1211-1279)', in *ISK*, pp. 466-79 (p. 472).

<sup>126</sup> See C. C. Hsiao, 'Bayan', in *ISK*, pp. 584-607 (pp. 585-86).

<sup>127</sup> On these ministries, see Endicott-West, 'The Yüan Government and Society', pp. 589-92; Farquhar, 'Structure and Function', pp. 36-40; *HD*, pp. 316, 318, *FG*, pp. 171-73. On Song-era equivalents, see Kuhn, *Age of Confucian Rule*, p. 38.

formalizing the flexible *xingsheng*, *darugači* and *liushou* arrangements established before Qubilai's enthronement to govern specific regions.<sup>128</sup>

There are precedents for Central Secretariat primacy in previous polities; Kuhn notes that, under the Song, although formally operating alongside the Chancellery and Secretariat for State Affairs, the Central Secretariat enjoyed unique spatial priority “inside the palace precinct”, becoming the centre of regular contact between monarch and officials and for policy-making.<sup>129</sup> Central Secretariat dominance was not, however, the only framework available to Qubilai and his court; other options previously experimented with to varying degrees include primacy for the Secretariat for State Affairs<sup>130</sup> or Chancellery Departments<sup>131</sup> and periodic use of a State Finance Bureau 制國用司.<sup>132</sup> After Qubilai, reforms in 1310 under Qaišan Qagan (Wuzong, r. 1307-11) saw the Secretariat for State Affairs briefly reinstated, its role nominally restricted to “policies relating to fiscal

<sup>128</sup> See Endicott-West, ‘The Yüan Government and Society’, pp. 592-93. Farquhar argues that these institutions were more semi-independent territories than branches, over which central control was fragile, exercised only through Central Secretariat control over personnel and upward communication; on the other hand, Dardess cautions against stress on this independence, noting that the warlordism of Yuan collapse fragmented along lines other than those of the Branch institutions and therefor suggesting the existence of other institutional boundaries. See Farquhar, ‘Structure and Function’, pp. 52-53; Dardess, ‘Did the Mongols Matter?’, pp. 125-26.

<sup>129</sup> Kuhn, *Age of Confucian Rule*, pp. 38, 43.

<sup>130</sup> On the Secretariat for State Affairs 尚書省 (referred to by de Rachewiltz et al. as the ‘Presidential Council’, see *ISK*, p. 707), see *FG*, p. 170; Ōshima Ritsuko, *Mongoru no seifuku ōchō*, pp. 67-78, 85-92; *HD*, p. 412 (under ‘Department of State Affairs’). Hsiao calls it the ‘Department for State Affairs’, and it is omitted from the *CHC* index. Jin government operated through a Secretariat for State Affairs through the latter half of the twelfth and the early years of the thirteenth centuries. See Tao, ‘The Influence of Jurchen Rule’, 125-26; Herbert Franke, ‘The Chin Dynasty’, in *CHC*, pp. 215-320 (p. 269).

<sup>131</sup> On the Chancellery Department 門下省, see Endicott-West, ‘The Yüan Government and Society’, p. 588; *HD*, p. 329, *FG*, p. 400 (exclusively in relation to Koryo).

<sup>132</sup> de Rachewiltz et al. refer to the institution as the State Finance Bureau; see *ISK*, p. 709. Hucker mentions a post of State Finance Commissioner *zhi guoyong shi* 制國用使 and a State Finance Office *guoyong si* 國用司, but refers to them as exclusively Song-era institutions, despite the mention of the State Finance Bureau at several points in the *Yuanshi*. See *HD*, pp. 160 and 300 respectively; *Yuanshi* 6.116, 40.866, 64.1593, 163.3820, 167.3924, 170.4003; the *Yuanshi* biography of Zhang Hui 張惠 reports that the State Finance Office was replaced with a Secretariat for State Affairs, but does not provide a date. See *Yuanshi* 167.3924. Farquhar refers to the State Revenue Commission 制國用使司 as a fiscal management body, established in 1266 and effectively replaced by the Central Secretariat in 1270. See *FG*, p. 170.

reform”, but, going further than either Aḥmad or Sangha had, overriding and replacing the Central Secretariat and attempting to take control of the Branch Secretariats.<sup>133</sup>

The Chancellery Department 門下省, only discussed by Farquhar in connection to the Koryŏ administration, is described by Hucker as an advisory institution developed from an informal privy council, either controlling upward information flow from Central Secretariat to monarch or functioning in parallel to the Central Secretariat, before both were abolished under the Jin, later proposals for re-establishment always being abortive.<sup>134</sup> It is notable that establishment of a separate Chancellery in 1082 under the Song emperor Shenzong (r. 1067-1085) is interpreted as an attempt to balance power among officials of the Central Secretariat, Chancellery and Secretariat for State Affairs.<sup>135</sup> Our sample narratives typically connect the Chancellery to transgressive officials, portraying its promotion as a threat to ideal government; the proposal examined above to create a Chancellery under Lian Xixian’s control being a conspicuous exception to this tendency.

Hok-lam Chan illustrates the overall thrust of our texts’ take on the challenges posed by Aḥmad and Sangha’s influence at court:

... new institutions solely devoted to financial management were created, abolished, restored and dissolved, such as the State Finance Bureau and Presidential Council, to give Aḥmad and Sangha supreme authority, independently of the Secretarial Council.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>133</sup> See Hsiao, ‘Mid-Yüan Politics’, pp. 510-12.

<sup>134</sup> See *FG*, p. 400; *HD*, p. 329; on the Song-era Chancellery, Smith, ‘Shen-tsung’s Reign and the New Policies of Wang An-shih, 1067-1085’, p. 462; Tao Jing-shen, ‘The Move to the South and the Reign of Kao-tsung (1127-1162)’, in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part One, The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907-1279*, ed. by Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 644-709 (p. 652).

<sup>135</sup> See Paul Jakov Smith, ‘Shen-tsung’s Reign and the New Policies of Wang An-shih, 1067-1085’, in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 5, Part One, The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907-1279*, ed. by Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 347-483 (pp. 461-63), and Hartman, ‘Sung Government and Politics’, p. 98.

<sup>136</sup> H.L. Chan, ‘Wang Wen-t’ung (?-1262)’, in *ISK*, pp. 520-38 (p.536).

Chan's analysis positions the rival institutions as purely fiscal in focus, and his phrasing suggests that they were intended only to facilitate rule by Aḥmad and Sangha. His comment to the effect that these institutions operated "independently of the Secretarial Council" (i.e., the Central Secretariat) underlines an assumed normative hegemony for that institution. This phrasing neatly expresses a vision of administrative arrangements aligning closely with our compilers' intentions.

Yao Shu's advice to Qubilai examined above sees him portrayed identically across our texts recommending that central government be established, on the basis that policy should emerge from a single source, in order to avoid contradictions and unpredictable change in rule and law.<sup>137</sup> The ideal is thus a monolithic source of regulation and the undesirable opposite a combination of multiple sources acting without coordination.<sup>138</sup> Yao Shu's biographies also provide a short piece portraying Qubilai's idea of the ideal operation of Secretariat for State Affairs and Central Secretariat.<sup>139</sup> This quotes the Qagan

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<sup>137</sup> Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei', p. 576 / YWL 60.13b / *Mu'anji* (Yaosuiji) 15.217:

立省部，則庶政出一，綱舉紀張，令不行于朝而變于夕。

*Mingchen shilue* 8.157:

「立省部，則庶政出一，綱舉紀張，令不行於朝而變於夕。

*Yuanshi* 158.3712:

「立省部，則庶政出一，綱舉紀張，令不行於朝而變於夕。

Li Zhi'an argues that, when Shu (or, and this it ought to be stressed, his biographers) used *shengbu* 省部, it refers specifically to the Central Secretariat 中書省 and its subordinate 'left and right' ministries 部. See *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 116.

<sup>138</sup> Dardess identifies centralization as a key process and aim for Zhedong thinkers such as Song Lian, for whom, he argues, "identifying the dynamic of power centralization" was of vital importance. See Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, pp. 278-79.

<sup>139</sup> Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei', p. 580; YWL 60.19b-20a; *Mu'anji* (Yaosuiji) 15.220:

詔赴中書議事，講定條格，其勉諭曰：「姚樞辭避[20a]台司，朕甚嘉焉。省中庶務須賴一二老成同心圖贊，仰與左三部尚書劉肅往盡乃心，其尚無隱。」條成，與丞相史忠武公奏之，帝深嘉納。

*Mingchen shilue* 8.161:

詔赴中書議事，謀定朝格，其勉諭曰：「姚某辭避台司，朕甚嘉焉。省中庶務，須賴一二老成同心圖贊，仰與左三部尚書劉肅，往盡乃心，其尚無隱。」條成，與丞相史忠武公奏之，帝深嘉納。[神道碑]

*Yuanshi* 158.3714:

in direct reported speech describing a partnership between senior figures working wholeheartedly and without concealment:

The various affairs of government need to depend on one or two experienced and virtuous [people] united in thought to plan and assist, and We rely on you, together with Liu Su 劉肅 of the Secretariat for State Affairs, devote your heart, assisting without concealment 隱.<sup>140</sup>

This speech, which received only very slight amendment from the compilers, suggests that Qubilai's Central Secretariat and Secretariat for State Affairs could work in harmony, and locates the principle of such success, and thus also the potential for failure, in communication, indicated by the danger of *yin* 隱 (a term with connotations of concealment, secrecy, and darkness). This problem of secrecy and the monopolization of information flows between bureaucracy and monarch is prominent in our texts' discussion of the Secretariat for State Affairs.

The primacy of the Central Secretariat is again to the fore, if handled quite differently, in a short section taken from Hantum's *Wangbei* and transmitted via the *Mingchen shilue*. In the first two texts, this sees Hantum repeatedly attempting to resign in response to the movement of all the 'great duties' of 'all-under-heaven' to the Secretariat for State Affairs in 1288:

In the twenty-fifth year [1288], the great duties for 'all-under-heaven' were returned to the Secretariat for State Affairs as one; [Hantum] repeatedly presented the Central Secretariat seal to the emperor [i.e., tried to resign], but was not permitted to.<sup>141</sup>

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詔赴中書議事，及講定條格，且勉諭曰：「姚樞辭避台司，朕甚嘉焉。省中庶務，須賴一二老成同心圖贊，其與尚書劉肅往盡乃心，其尚無隱。」及修條格成，與丞相史天澤奏之，帝深嘉納。

<sup>140</sup> *Yuanshi* 158.3714:

省中庶務，須賴一二老成同心圖贊，其與尚書劉肅往盡乃心，其尚無隱。

Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei', p. 580; *YWL* 60.19b-20a; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.220; *Mingchen shilue* 8.161:

省中庶務須賴一二老成同心圖贊，仰與左三部尚書劉肅往盡乃心，其尚無隱。

<sup>141</sup> The incident is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', p. 344; *Qingheji* 3.21b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 173; *Mingchen shilue* 1.13; *Yuanshi* 126.3084.



At stake here is the function and duties of the Central Secretariat – this is presented a primarily administrative matter. The *Yuanshi* version alters these stakes somewhat:

In the twenty-fifth year [1288], the great authority over ‘all-under-heaven’ was entirely returned to the Secretariat for State Affairs; [Hantum] repeatedly sought to withdraw, but was not permitted to.<sup>142</sup>

Both accounts, in context, indicate that Hantum’s Central Secretariat function was, and should have been, entirely dominant, and responsible for all matters pertaining to ‘all-under-heaven’. What is at stake in the *Yuanshi* is not responsibility, however, but rather the ‘great authority’, i.e., power. Though likely to refer to the same thing, the replacement has a different effect, portraying a more straightforwardly power-based conception of governance, privilege and status. Neither account states overtly to whom these duties (or power) might be transferred, only making it clear that they were taken away from the idealized subject.

Öčičer’s biographies also associate a particular set of problems with the establishment of the Secretariat for State Affairs, which is attributed to Sangha in a report dated to 1290.<sup>143</sup>

In the inscription and *Mingchen shilue* we see a range of accusations, most prominently relating to extortion and the sale of ill-gotten property.<sup>144</sup> The *Yuanshi* account has been

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Yuan Mingshan, ‘Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei’, p. 344; *Qingheji* 3.21b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 173; *Mingchen shilue* 1.13:

二十五年，見天下大務一入尚書省，屢上中書印，不許。明年罷相，止掌環衛。

*Yuanshi* 126.3084:

二十五年，見天下大權盡歸尚書，屢求退，不許。二十八年，罷相，仍領宿衛事。

<sup>142</sup> *Yuanshi* 126.3084:

二十五年，見天下大權盡歸尚書，屢求退，不許。二十八年，罷相，仍領宿衛事。

<sup>143</sup> The episode is found at Yuan Mingshan, ‘Taishi qiyang zhongwu wangbei’, p. 334; *Qingheji* 2.11b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 168; *Mingchen shilue* 3.44; *Yuanshi* 119.2949.

<sup>144</sup> Yuan Mingshan, ‘Taishi qiyang zhongwu wangbei’, p. 334; *Qingheji* 2.11b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 168:

二十七年，桑葛既立尚書省，簀鼓上聽，殺異己者，箝天下口。以刑爵為貨而販之，咸走其門，入貴價以買所欲。貴價入則當刑者脫，求爵者得。不四年，綱紀大紊，人心駭愕。

*Mingchen shilue* 3.44:

二十七年，桑葛既立尚書省，簀鼓上聽，殺異己者，箝天下口，以刑爵為貨而販之，咸走其門入貴價以買所欲，貴價入，則當刑者脫，求爵者得，不四年，紀綱大紊，人心駭愕。

decisively condensed, omitting the lengthy description of Sangha's crimes for a pithy summary, but the phrasing ties this clearly to his agency. This effectively removes Qubilai's input from both the crimes and the institutional arrangement.<sup>145</sup> Intriguingly, this also sees the effect on the populace dropped, the *Yuanshi* retaining only an assessment of the effect on principle and law, precisely those imperatives linked to the *shengbu* 省部 by Yao's advice as we saw in section 4.1 above. The timescale is also collapsed; in the earlier versions, the negative effects are said to have emerged 'within four years', while the *Yuanshi* changes this to the non-specific 'soon' 既而, making the effects appear more urgent.<sup>146</sup>

The handling of Boqum's biographies provide one of our clearest examples of the *Yuanshi* compilers' tendency to tie specific transgressors to (inappropriate) administrative reform. This sees a specific assessment of administrative problems associated with Ahmad and Sangha, placing these in a context of arrogated authority and subversion of, rather than alternatives to, the Central Secretariat model, linking this unequivocally to moral failure and personal disaster. Undated, the episode's context implies occurrence in the early 1290s, and features Boqum's condemnation of a suggestion from Majd al-Dīn, a long-serving member of government under Qubilai, to reinstate the Secretariat for State Affairs and combine the Ministries of Revenue, Works and Punishments.<sup>147</sup> Notably,

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<sup>145</sup> *Yuanshi* 119.2949:

二十七年，桑哥既立尚書省，殺異己者，箝天下口，以刑爵為貨。既而紀綱大紊。

<sup>146</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Taishi qiyang zhongwu wangbei', p. 334; *Qingheji* 2.11b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 168; *Mingchen shilue* 3.44:

不四年，綱紀大紊，人心駭愕。

*Yuanshi* 119.2949:

既而紀綱大紊。

<sup>147</sup> The incident is found at *Mingchen shilue* 4.64-65; *Yuanshi* 130.3169. On Majd al-Dīn, identified in the biography of Cui Yu 崔彧 as one of the agents behind Sangha's demise, see *Yuanshi* 173.4041; *YR*, p. 2454. Majd al-Dīn also apparently, in association with Sangha, proposed the establishment of a Department of State Affairs in 1286. See Franke, 'Sangha', p. 562.

although Majd al-Dīn is introduced as ‘Privy Councillor to the Central Secretariat’ in the *Mingchen shilue*, the *Yuanshi* compilers dropped this institutional modifier.<sup>148</sup> This framing of individuals via selective inclusion in bureaucratic frameworks is a narrative tactic used prominently across our texts, perhaps most visibly in ‘Abd al-Rahman’s treatment.<sup>149</sup> In this case the compilers’ intervention both reduces Majd al-Dīn’s authority and removes the implication, clear in the *Mingchen shilue*, that such reform could have been suggested from within the Central Secretariat itself.

The two accounts of Boqum’s speech opposing Majd al-Dīn’s proposal report a similar logic. The *Mingchen shilue* provides a lengthy quote from Boqum laying out an analysis of how the transgressive extremity made possible by first Aḥmad’s, and then Sangha’s, monopoly control, led to crisis.<sup>150</sup> the *Yuanshi* compilers again edited this to a brief summary, however:

Aḥmad and Sangha misled the country, losing their lives and [causing] the obliteration of their families; with this mirror before us and not yet distant, how could one possibly wish to imitate them?<sup>151</sup>

<sup>148</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.64:

中書平章麥朮丁請復立尚書省，專領戶、工、刑三部，召公至上都議，  
*Yuanshi* 130.3169:

麥朮丁請復立尚書省，專領右三部，

<sup>149</sup> See section 2.3 above, and the example of the labelling of Toqtoq in section 3.1.

<sup>150</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.64-65:

The gentleman opposed [him] saying: “Aḥmad once acted corruptly by leading the Central Secretariat 中書 elements Revenue and Works, acted corruptly serving as State Revenue Commissioner 制國用使 too, acted corruptly in the Secretariat for State Affairs too; therefore these were combined and returned to the Central Secretariat; ultimately that collected by bribery and brutality was [65] taken by execution and confiscation. Afterwards, Sangha established the Secretariat for State Affairs, seizing the six divisions entirely; his might and cruelty, embezzlement and corruption increased to an extreme, at which he too was then executed. The idea of re-establishment has already been abandoned; [are we] about to follow the example of those two people?”

公詰曰：「阿黑馬嘗以領部分中書戶、工敗，為制國用使又敗，為尚書省又敗，則併歸中書，終以奸賊狼戾，以 [65] 取誅籍。後桑哥立尚書省，盡奪六部，其威虐貪墨益極，亦就梟夷。既廢復置，將効尤兩人耶！」制是之。[神道碑]

<sup>151</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3169:

不忽木庭責之曰：「阿合馬、桑哥相繼誤國，身誅家沒，前鑒未遠，奈何又欲效之乎！」

This re-phrasing is effective; unlike the earlier, lengthy version, discussing how, having amassed power, transgressive individuals misused it to terrible effect, Boqum's revised speech shifts this transgression to Majd al-Dīn's suggestion.

Equating that proposal with the 'mirror' 鑒 offered by Aḥmad and Sangha, the *Yuanshi* rework portrays Boqum accusing Majd al-Dīn of wishing to imitate them, linking changes to the institutional structure with devastating consequences. At their heart, Boqum's arguments present monopolizing governing authority as inherently dangerous in moral and practical terms. Presenting tyranny and destruction as inevitable consequences, the interventions present challenges to Central Secretariat primacy in the same way, removing any room for individual agency or contingency from the process. Establishing a Secretariat for State Affairs and bringing together any combination of control over the Central Secretariat's subordinate bureaux can only, in the compilers' formulation, follow the transgressive pattern established by Aḥmad and Sangha.

The biographies of Xu Heng portray a series of debates that show a related approach. Xu Heng 許衡 (1209-1281), a famous Confucian scholar and educator, served Qubilai in various roles,<sup>152</sup> and receives a long and complex *Mingchen shilue* biography arranging excerpts from five sources.<sup>153</sup> A celebrated episode, dated by context to 1270, sees Xu

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<sup>152</sup> On Xu Heng 許衡 (1209-1281) courtesy name Zhongping 仲平, *hao* Luzhai 魯齋, from Henei 河內 in Huaiqing 懷慶, see *Yuanshi* 158.3716-30; H.L. Chan, 'Hsu Heng', in *ISK*, pp. 416-447; *Mingchen shilue* 8.164-80; *YR*, pp. 1225-27; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 215-16; Luo Xianyou 羅賢佑, 'Xu Heng, ahema yu yuanchu hanfa, huihuiifa zhi zheng 許衡、阿合馬與元初漢法、回回法之爭 (Xu Heng and Ahmad and Conflict Between Hanfa (Han Ways) and Huihuiifa (Central Asian Ways) in the Early Yuan Dynasty)', *Minzu Yanjiu*, 5 (2005), 78-86.

<sup>153</sup> The main text comprises 5,758 characters in 42 sections, alongside 552 characters of notes in seven sections, not including 256 characters of preface. See Liu Yonghai, 'Lun yuanchao mingchen shilue de bianzuan yili', 59. The main text draws primarily on the *Kaosuilüe* (祭酒耶律公撰考歲略) by Yelü Youshang 耶律有尚 (4,371 characters, 76%), supplementing this with sections from the *Guoxue shiji* 國學事跡 by the same author (866 characters, 15%), further sections from the collected writings of Yu Ji (242 characters, 4%), and sections from the preface by Liu (眉山劉公撰文集序) 202 chars main text (4%). Of

Heng discussing the position of Aḥmad's household, and suggesting that disastrous abuse inevitably follows the concentration of power.<sup>154</sup> Notably, although the *Mingchen shilue* treats the episode as *kaoyi* notes rather than part of the central narrative 'spine',<sup>155</sup> the *Yuanshi* compilers afforded it considerable detail and a careful reworking.<sup>156</sup> Their edits also shifted the episode forward from its order in the *Mingchen shilue* biography, and framed it by inserting a brief passage describing Heng's stubborn defiance of Aḥmad despite his 'arrogation of authority' 擅權 and the fact that other ministers pandered to him.<sup>157</sup> This states that, due to Aḥmad's management of the Six Ministries 部 of the Secretariat for State Affairs, his power 'overwhelmed court and public' 勢傾朝野. Unusually, the *Yuanshi* edits also assigned Aḥmad a formal post as Privy Councillor to the Central Secretariat 中書平章政事 in a prominent reversal of the tendency to deny transgressive individuals such status.<sup>158</sup> This may be intended to underline the underline

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the notes, most are taken from the *Kaosuilüe* (294 characters, 53%), alongside sections from the *Guoxue shiji* (116 characters, 21%), Yao Sui's collected works (106 characters, 19%) and further sections from the as yet unidentified *Jing'an bilu* 靜庵筆錄. Wang argues that Heng's *liezhuan* draws rather on the *shendaobei* by Ouyang Xuan. This is Ouyang Xuan 歐陽玄, 'Yuan zhongshu zuocheng jixian daxue shi guozhi jijiu zeng zhengxue chiuxian zuoli gongchen taifu kaifu yitong sansi shangzhuguo zhui feng weiguogong shi wenzheng xu xiansheng shendaobei' 元中書左丞集賢大學士國子祭酒贈正學垂憲佐理功臣太傅開府儀同三司上柱國追封魏國公謚文正許先生神道碑, *QYW*, ix, pp. 635-42.

<sup>154</sup> The incident is found at *Mingchen shilue* 8.172; *Yuanshi* 158.3727. See also Chan, 'Hsu Heng', p. 434; Ma Juan, 'The Conflicts between Islam and Confucianism', pp. 65-66.

<sup>155</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 8.172:

又云：阿合馬欲以其子典兵柄，先生以為不可，謂「國家事權，兵民財三者而已。父位尚書省，典民與財，而子又典兵，太重。」上曰：「卿慮阿合馬反側耶？」先生曰：「此反側之道也。古者姦邪，未有不由如此者。」上以此語語西相，相詰先生曰：「公何以言吾反？」先生曰：「吾言前世反者皆由權重，君誠不反，何為由其道？」相復之曰：「公實反耳。人所嗜好者，勢利爵祿聲色，公一切不好，欲得人心，非反而何？」先生曰：「果以君言得罪，亦無所辭。」

<sup>156</sup> *Yuanshi* 158.3727:

已而其子又有僉樞密院之命，衡獨執議曰：「國家事權，兵民財三者而已。今其父典民與財，子又典兵，不可。」帝曰：「卿慮其反邪？」衡對曰：「彼雖不反，此反道也。」阿合馬由是銜之，亟薦衡宜在中書，欲因以事中之。俄除左丞，衡屢入辭免，帝命左右掖衡出。衡出及闕，還奏曰：「陛下命臣出，豈出省邪？」帝笑曰：「出殿門耳。」

<sup>157</sup> *Yuanshi* 158.3727:

未幾，阿合馬為中書平章政事，領尚書省六部事，因擅權，勢傾朝野，一時大臣多阿之，衡每與之議，必正言不少讓。

<sup>158</sup> See *FG*, pp. 170-71.

the formal irregularity of combining attachment to the Central Secretariat with action via control of the Secretariat for State Affairs and its subdivisions.<sup>159</sup>

Čerig's biographies describe Sangha and the establishment of the Secretariat for State Affairs as a division of the Central Secretariat, rather than, as Farquhar has it, the replacement of the State Revenue Commission 制國用使. His *shendaobei*, as excerpted in the *Mingchen shilue*, reports:

In the twenty-fourth year [1287]<sup>160</sup> Sangha 桑葛 divided the duties of the Central Secretariat 中書 and established the Secretariat for State Affairs 尚書省, initially as Privy Councillor 平章 and later as Senior Chief Councillor 丞相. [Sangha] entirely employed former thieves and killers to lead the ministries. Acting as State Revenue Commission 制國用使, [and] as Secretariat for State Affairs, outstanding land tax was gathered and returned to the Central Secretariat, raising false allegations that the Central Secretariat had omitted to levy this and killing its two Senior Chief Councillors 相.<sup>161</sup>

The *Yuanshi* removes mention of the latter institution:

In the twenty-fourth year [*Zhiyuan*: 1287] the Central Secretariat 中書 was divided to form the Secretariat for State Affairs 尚書省. Sangha served as Senior Chief Councillor 相, appointing members of his faction; when they inspected the land tax, all the years accumulated under Aḥmad 阿合馬 [3162] were in arrears; when the matter of the missing taxes was raised in the Central Secretariat 中書, a memorial [recommended] the execution of the two Vice-Grand Councillors 參政.<sup>162</sup>

The *Yuanshi* amendments thus keep the focus firmly on the Secretariat of State Affairs as the key transgressive arrangement; they also, by altering the description of the two

<sup>159</sup> On this post, see *FG*, p. 170.

<sup>160</sup> Here the *Mingchen shilue* replaces the date marker; it is unclear why, as the report follows one on 1286.

<sup>161</sup> On this process, see *FG*, p. 170.

Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei', p. 566 / *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 14.207:

明年，僧格分中書庶務，立尚書省，初為平章，後為丞相。凡昔盜殺臣為領部，為制國用使，為尚書省，所逋錢粟併歸中書，舉誣為中書失徵，殺其二相。

*Mingchen shilue* 4.68:

二十有四年，桑葛分中書庶務立尚書省，初為平章，後為丞相。凡昔盜殺臣，為領部。為制國用使，為尚書省，所逋錢粟，併歸中書，舉誣為中書失徵，殺其二相。

<sup>162</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3161-62:

二十四年，分中書為尚書省。桑哥為相，引用黨與，鉤考天下錢糧，凡昔權臣阿合馬積 [3162] 年負逋，舉以中書失徵，奏誅二參政。

executed officials, position them in a more specifically formal manner, again mapping status through formal position.

The handling of a pair of incidents in biographies for Dong Wenyong and Jia Juzhen revolve around the transfer of virtuous subjects out of the political centre and into high status offices with less practical influence. Dong Wenyong 董文用 (1224-1297), courtesy name Yancai 彦材, served in Qubilai's princely residence and then in various posts, including the Censorate.<sup>163</sup> Wenyong's biographies, concerning his appointments, in 1289 and 1290, as Grand Supervisor of Agriculture and Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy, suggests some effort from the *Yuanshi* compilers to disguise a less than ideally bureaucratized appointment system.<sup>164</sup> The appointments are discussed in *xingzhuang* and *Yuanshi*, the latter transmitted from the *Mingchen shilue*, and clearly adopting Su Tianjue's (unannounced) revisions to the *xingzhuang* phrasing. The accounts portray Wenyong, serving as Grand Supervisor of Agriculture, stubbornly opposing the proposed establishment of agricultural colonies on lands seized from the populace and subsequently being transferred to serve as Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy.<sup>165</sup> While the *xingzhuang*

<sup>163</sup> On Dong Wenyong see *Mingchen shilue* 14.279-87; *Yuanshi* 148.3495-3501; *YR*, p. 1602. Wenyong's *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged in to a 147-character preface and its 14 sections of main body text are all based on his *xingzhuang* composed by Yu Ji. A single 50-character section of notes is simply labelled *yishi* 遺事, which I have not yet identified. A further *shendaobei*, by Yan Fu and preserved in the *YRCK*, is almost entirely lacunae. The *Yuanshi* biography follows the *Mingchen shilue* arrangement closely, but omits a number of sections and does not include Su's interpolated note on Wenyong's warning to Qubilai about the need to pursue Möngke's vacant throne. Yu Ji 虞集, 'Hanlin xueshi chengzhi donggong xingzhuang' 翰林學士承旨董公行狀, in *QYW*, xxvii, pp. 160-67; *Daoyuan leigao* 50.1a-13b, *YCRK*, vi, pp. 452-58; Yan Fu, 'Zhaoguo zhongmu dong gong shendaobei' 趙國忠穆董公神道碑, *Jingjianji* 靜澗集 5.36b-42a, in *YRCK*, ii, pp. 558-61. *Mingchen shilue* 14.280:

又遺事云：公從世祖圍鄂，聞憲宗登遐，猶欲待城破，公一日三諫，以神器不可久曠，宜俟登位後，以一偏師來，即了江南事，遂班師。

<sup>164</sup> The episodes are found at Yu Ji 虞集, 'Hanlin xueshi chengzhi donggong xingzhuang' 翰林學士承旨董公行狀, in *QYW*, xxvii, pp. 160-67 (p. 165); *Daoyuan leigao* 道園類稿 50.1a-13b; *YRCK*, v, pp. 452-58; *Mingchen shilue* 14.285; *Yuanshi* 148.3500. Dates for the appointments are found in Su Tianjue's summary of Wenyong's career at *Mingchen shilue* 14.279. On the posts of Grand Supervisor of Agriculture 大司農 and Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy 翰林學士承旨, see *FG*, pp. 214-17 and 128, respectively.

<sup>165</sup> Yu Ji, 'Hanlin xueshi chengzhi donggong xingzhuang', p. 165; *Daoyuan leigao* 50.9b, in *YCRK*, vi, p. 456;

phrasing, transmitted in the *Mingchen shilue*, links these events with the character *ze* 則, to make a causal connection, the *Yuanshi* drops this, leaving only a suggestive juxtaposition. While both texts hint that this new role combined prestige with a lack of administrative influence, the *Yuanshi* compilers took care to remove the overt causal statement clearly present in Yu Ji's *xingzhuang* and therefore perhaps the suggestion that his transfer was a shift away from power.<sup>166</sup>

The biographies for Jia Juzhen likewise illustrate this kind of internal institutional exile, but this is only apparent in his *liezhuan*, and the effect is created by the deft employment of constructive ambiguity on the part of the *Yuanshi* compilers.<sup>167</sup> Creating the impression that Jia Juzhen was shifted out of the Central Secretariat at Aḥmad's behest, this underlines the Central Asian's position as an opponent of the institution and suggests the use of historical compilation as a kind of internal exile. The *Mingchen shilue* reports as follows, Su Tianjue slightly condensing the *shendaobei* account in unannounced edits:

In the fifth year [1268], he again served as Senior Supervisor of the Office of the Left and the Right. The Murderous Bandit Minister 盜殺臣 Privy Councillor, wanting to arrogate all power to himself, and resenting the tying of his hands and that the Central Secretariat could not do just as he wished, submitted a memorial seeking to divide the many duties of the six ministries; establishing the Secretariat for State Affairs; [Juzhen] was appointed Imperial Diarist<sup>168</sup> to the Central Secretariat, and along with the Grand Councillor, [they] alone signed off on imperial decrees. Together with the two Grand Councillors Duke Shi 史公 and Duke Yelü 耶律公 he polished the dynastic history.<sup>169</sup>

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大司農時又欲奪民田為屯田。公固執不可，則又遷公為翰林學士承旨。  
*Mingchen shilue* 14.285:

遷大司農。時欲奪民田為屯田，文用固執不可。遷為翰林學士承旨。

<sup>166</sup> This can be compared to Dreyer's suggestion that the *Yuanshi* compilers were mostly, after the work's completion, employed in conspicuous but toothless places, lending Zhu Yuanzhang's project legitimacy without imposing themselves on his policy-making. See Edward L. Dreyer, *Early Ming China: A Political History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982), p. 94.

<sup>167</sup> The incident is found at Yao Sui, 'Canzhi zhengshi jia gong shendaobei', p. 643; *Mu'anji* (Yaosuiji) 19.297; *Mingchen shilue* 11.231; *Yuanshi* 153.3623.

<sup>168</sup> On this office, see *FG*, p. 152.

<sup>169</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 11.231:



The *Yuanshi* condenses this account drastically to give the impression that Aḥmad (now identified as the “murderous bandit minister”) was able to move Juzhen out of the Central Secretariat and away from the levers of power:

In the fifth year he again served as Senior Supervisor to the Central Secretariat. At that time, Aḥmad monopolized authority and, resenting him [Juzhen], transferred him to serve as Imperial Diarist. Together with the Grand Councillor Shi Tianze and others he compiled the national history.<sup>170</sup>

The function of the Imperial Diarist, as summarized by Farquhar, is separate from the Central Secretariat, so it may well be that Juzhen’s responsibilities, exaggerated by his *shendaobei*, were corrected in the *liezhuan*. Whatever the underlying reality, the dissociation of Juzhen’s new post from the Central Secretariat is clear; its function linked instead to historiography. The impression created by the compilers’ interventions is of a successful assault by Aḥmad, who was able to remove staff from the Central Secretariat, the institution preventing him from a complete monopoly of power.

Hantum’s biographies see him pitted against Aḥmad in 1268, the latter apparently linked to a proposal to move Hantum to an ostensibly senior, but effectively powerless, position,

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五年，再為左右司郎中。盜殺臣平章欲擅利權，病其束手，中書不得肆欲，奏求分六曹繁務，立尚書省，授公中書給事中，與丞相惟署制敕而已。同兩丞相史公、耶律公潤色國史。  
[神道碑]

Yao Sui, ‘Canzhi zhengshi jia gong shendaobei’, p. 643; *Mu’anjì (Yaosuiji)* 19.297 (items in italics edited out of the *Mingchen shilue* version):

From the fifth year [1268], he again served for *three years* as Senior Supervisor of the Office of the Left and the Right. The Bandit Murdering Minister 盜殺臣 Privy Councillor, wanting to arrogate all power to himself, and resenting the tying of his hands and that the Central Secretariat could not do just as he wished, submitted a memorial seeking to divide the many duties of the six ministries; establishing the Secretariat for State Affairs; [Juzhen] was appointed Imperial Diarist to the Central Secretariat, and along with the Grand Councillor, *only* [they] alone signed off on imperial decrees. Together with the two Grand Councillors Duke Shi 史公 and Duke Yelü 耶律公 he polished the dynastic history in the *Hanlin [Academy]*.

五年，再為左右司郎中者三年。盜殺臣為平章，欲擅利權，病其束手中書，不得肆欲，奏求分六曹繁務，立尚書省，授公中書給事中，丞相惟署制敕而已。隨同兩丞相史公、耶律公，潤色國史翰林。

<sup>170</sup> *Yuanshi* 153.3623:

五年，再為中書郎中，時阿合馬擅權，忌之，改給事中。同丞相史天澤等纂修國史。

and establish a Secretariat for State Affairs presided over by Aḥmad.<sup>171</sup> Again, the term used to describe the positively portrayed individuals preventing this move is *Ru* 儒, but here this use is consistent across the texts and they are exemplified by Shang Ting 商挺 (referred to in both *Wangbei* and in the *Mingchen shilue* transmission of the *Shijia* in connection to his role at the Bureau of Military Affairs) instead of Yao Shu.<sup>172</sup> Here the *Wangbei* seems to have contributed an element to the *Yuanshi* phrasing at the micro level, namely the idea that this ostensible promotion would really constitute the ‘worship’ or ‘esteem’ 崇 of an empty title; this character is not found in the *Mingchen shilue* version.

It is notable that the *Yuanshi* version of Shang Ting’s speech, in all three versions, differs from our other examples in that it seems to focus primarily on the impact on Hantum’s contribution as a virtuous *individual* rather than directly relating to institutional structures. This appears a conscious choice on the part of the compilers, as the *Wangbei* account, which the *Yuanshi* compilers consulted for phrasing elsewhere, reports a different basis for Shang Ting’s objection. The *Wangbei* quotes Ting arguing that Hantum “leaving the Central Secretariat for [even] a single day is unacceptable”.<sup>173</sup> This element

<sup>171</sup> The episode is found at Yuan Mingshan, ‘Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei’, p. 343; *Qingheji* 3.20b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 172; *Mingchen shilue* 1.10; *Yuanshi* 126.3082. The *Wangbei* differs from the other two versions in stating that Ahmad himself consulted on the change. On this incident see also de Rachewiltz, ‘Muqali (1170-1223), Bōl (1197-1220), Tas (1212-1239), An’ T’ung (1245-1293)’, p. 10; H.L. Chan, ‘Shang T’ing (1209-1289)’, in *ISK*, pp. 336-47 (p. 342); Franke, ‘Aḥmad (?-1282)’, pp. 542-43.

<sup>172</sup> Yuan Mingshan, ‘Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei’, p. 343; *Qingheji* 3.20b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 172:

五年，阿合馬議立尚書省，乃先奏忠憲三公，詔諸儒議。樞密商挺倡言曰：「安同，國之柱石，一日不可出中書。進三公，是崇以虛名，奪其實權也。」衆起和之，事挫不行。

*Mingchen shilue* 1.10:

五年，廷臣密議立尚書省，欲以阿合馬領之，乃先奏公宜進為三公。事下諸儒議，樞密商挺倡言曰：「安童，國之柱石，若然，則是與虛名而奪實權，甚不可。」衆以為然，事遂已。  
[世家]

*Yuanshi* 126.3082:

五年，廷臣密議立尚書省，以阿合馬領之，乃先奏以安童宜位三公。事下諸儒議，商挺倡言曰：「安童，國之柱石，若為三公，是崇以虛名而實奪之權也，甚不可。」衆曰然，事遂罷。

<sup>173</sup> Yuan Mingshan, ‘Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei’, p. 343; *Qingheji* 3.20b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 172:

positioned the Central Secretariat as the ideal institution threatened by Aḥmad's action; it was not, however, selected for transmission to the *Yuanshi*. The *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* accounts' positioning of Hantum as an individual, separating him from the positive institutional framework, nonetheless still highlights the importance of his holding real power in a clear context of opposition to Aḥmad, and the latter's connection to the Secretariat for State Affairs.

A further incident, dated to April-May 1270, portrays conflict between Hantum and Aḥmad (the latter only named indirectly), conflict again focusing on the Secretariat for State Affairs.<sup>174</sup> The problem is indicated in a memorial from Hantum complaining that the Secretariat for State Affairs, in monopolizing information flows to the Qagan, therefore violated previous edicts; Qubilai agreed and decreed that the situation be restored to a broader sharing of information.<sup>175</sup> Here, again, despite the *Mingchen shilue* drawing on Hantum's lost *Shijia*, and this likewise providing the basis for the *Yuanshi* account, some details of the *liezhuan* phrasing are taken from the *Wangbei*.<sup>176</sup> Qubilai's assessment of Aḥmad's involvement, the only mention of the latter's name, likewise

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樞密商挺倡[YWL: 昌]言曰：「安同，國之柱石，一日不可出中書。進三公，是崇以虛名，奪其實權也。」

<sup>174</sup> The episode is found at *Yuanshi* 126.3082; *Mingchen shilue* 1.10; Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', p. 343; *Qingheji* 3.20b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 172.

<sup>175</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', p. 343; *Qingheji* 3.20b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 172:

七年，奏曰：「臣近言尚書省宣奏如制，其大政令、大章程，聽與臣議，然後得聞。今尚書臣違詔徑行。」上曰：「阿合馬恃朕信用，敢爾自專，勅尚書如前詔。」

*Mingchen shilue* 1.10:

七年夏四月，公奏：「臣近言：『尚書省、樞密院宣奏，並如常制，其宏綱大務，從臣等議定，然後上聞』，已有旨俞允。今尚書衆務一切徑聞，似違前奏。」[七]上曰：「豈阿合馬以朕頗信用，故爾擅耶。不與卿議，非是。勅如卿所言。」[世家]

*Yuanshi* 126.3082:

七年四月，奏曰：「臣近言：『尚書省、樞密院各令奏事，並如常制，其大政令，從臣等議定，然後上聞。』既得旨矣，今尚書一切徑奏，似違前旨。」帝曰：「豈阿合馬以朕頗信用之，故爾專權耶。不與卿議，非是。」敕如前旨。

<sup>176</sup> For example, referring to the matters at hand as its great governing decrees 其大政令, as found in the *Wangbei*, rather than 'great principles and important affairs' 其宏綱大務, as in the *Mingchen shilue*.

draws on the *Wangbei*, where Aḥmad is described as having ‘monopolized’ 專 authority, rather than ‘arrogating’ 擅 it, as in the *Mingchen shilue*.<sup>177</sup>

The expression of the problem here – Secretariat for State Affairs control over information flow – varies on the micro level, and in each case we see terminology altered to formalize this issue. The *Mingchen shilue* version sees a multitude 衆 in the Secretariat for State Affairs monopolizing information (or perhaps more literally, ‘notification’) 聞 and disobeying a previous memorial 奏. *Yuanshi* alterations have the Secretariat for State Affairs *itself* monopolizing memorials 奏 and violating a previous decree 旨, making accusations that might be read as an administrative spat appear outright bureaucratic mutiny.<sup>178</sup> The involvement of Aḥmad in the matter is expressed exclusively via reported speech from Qubilai.

The biographies of Zhang Wenqian describe several barbed interactions with Aḥmad relating to these issues. Zhang Wenqian 張文謙 (1217-1283), summoned to Qubilai’s princely residence in 1247, later served as Junior Chief Councillor of the Central Secretariat 中書左丞, Vice Censor-in-Chief 御史中丞 and Grand Academician of the

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<sup>177</sup> Yuan Mingshan, ‘Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei’, p. 343; *Qingheji* 3.20b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 172:

上曰：「阿合馬恃朕信用，敢爾自專，勅尚書如前詔。」

*Mingchen shilue* 1.10:

上曰：「豈阿合馬以朕頗信用，故爾擅耶。不與卿議，非是。勅如卿所言。」[世家]

*Yuanshi* 126.3082:

帝曰：「豈阿合馬以朕頗信用之，故爾專權耶。不與卿議，非是。」敕如前旨。

<sup>178</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 1.10:

今尚書衆務一切徑聞，似違前奏。

*Yuanshi* 126.3082:

今尚書一切徑奏，似違前旨。

*Zhaowen* (Glorification of Literature) Institute 昭文館大學士, among other posts.<sup>179</sup> The *Mingchen shilue* version of Zhang Wenqian's arguments against Aḥmad's monopolizing tendencies combines 'ancient' principles with present-day considerations.<sup>180</sup>

In the third year [*Zhongtong*, 1262], Aḥmad was leading both the left and right offices of the Central Secretariat, controlling the offices of property and taxation; he wished to monopolize every matter and usurp authority so submitted a memorial [proposing] that he not [have to] report to the offices of the Secretariat, and it was decreed that the court officials discuss the matter. [Wenqian] spoke openly, saying, "Dividing responsibility for finances, the ancients observed this principle; [running] the Central Secretariat without precautions would be to neglect this principle. Moreover, [if] wealth and tax are [treated as] a single matter, and if the Secretariat dare not criticize, will the Son of Heaven himself oversee it?" Aḥmad's suggestions were then blocked.<sup>181</sup>

Here 'ancient' principles demand internal compartmentalization of financial governance. Present-day considerations demand Central Secretariat oversight of financial matters, and the inadvisability of combining wealth and taxation in a single pair of hands is reiterated. The alternative, in this formulation, would be to leave Aḥmad in sole charge of finances with only the Qaḡan to constrain him. *Yuanshi* edits to this account present another

<sup>179</sup> On Zhang Wenqian 張文謙 (1217-1283), courtesy name Zhongqian 仲謙, from Shahe 沙河 in Shunde 順德 (or Xingzhou 邢州), see *Mingchen shilue* 7.142-48; *Yuanshi* 157.3695-98; *YR*, p. 1118. Wenqian's *Mingchen shilue* biography includes a preface of 90 characters, of the 2,264 characters of the main text, 1,815 characters (80%) are taken from the *shendaobei* by Li Qian 李謙, and 449 (20%), in a single concluding section, from the *xinrongbei* by Yu Ji. The *Yuanshi* biography shows some signs of bypassing Su's edits, especially with regard to Wenqian's apparent alarm and attempts to resign under pressure from transgressive court figures. These are found at Li Qian 李謙, 'Zhongshu zuocheng zhang gong shendaobei' 中書左丞張公神道碑, *QYW*, ix, pp. 101-5; Yu Ji 虞集, 'Zhang shi xianrong bei' 張氏先塋碑, *Daoyuan leigao*, 45.4b-7a, in *YRCK*, vi, pp. 330-32.

<sup>180</sup> The episode is found at Li Qian, 'Zhongshu zuocheng zhang gong shendaobei', p. 102; *YWL* 58.11b; *Mingchen shilue* 7.144; *Yuanshi* 157.3696.

<sup>181</sup> Li Qian, 'Zhongshu zuocheng zhang gong shendaobei', p. 102; *YWL* 58.11b:

三年，阿合馬領中書左右部，總司財賦，每事欲專輒奏聞，不關白省府，詔廷議之。公昌言曰：「分制財用，古有是理，不關預中書，無是理也。且財賦一事耳，若中書不敢詰，天子將親蒞之乎？」世祖曰：「仲謙言是也。」阿合馬語遂塞。

*Mingchen shilue* 7.144:

三年，阿合馬領中書左右部，總司財賦，每事欲專輒奏聞，不關白省府，詔廷臣議之。公昌言曰：「分制財用，古有是理，不關預中書，無是理也。且財賦一事耳，中書不敢詰，天子將親蒞之乎？」世祖曰：「仲謙言是也。」阿合馬語遂塞。[神道碑]

*Yuanshi* 157.3696:

三年，阿合馬領左右部，總司財用，欲專奏請，不關白中書，詔廷臣議之，文謙曰：「分制財用，古有是理，中書不預，無是理也。若中書弗問，天子將親蒞之乎？」帝曰：「仲謙言是也。」

definition of insitutional failure, by replacing Wenqian's warning "if the Central Secretariat *dare not criticize*" with "if the Central Secretariat *does not question*".<sup>182</sup> This micro-level amendment seems to suggest that timidity in the Secretariat was not to be feared as much as a threat to its very function.

These examples show a strong tendency in *Yuanshi* edits to stress the importance of Central Secretariat primacy over all alternatives, altering any and all aspects of the narratives in micro-level interventions to redefine secondary subjects, types of threats faced and definitions of success in the pursuit of this aim. Selectively drawing on *Mingchen shilue* and foundation texts, the compilers have reinforced a tendency to define positive governance in institutional terms, making the Central Secretariat the only acceptable instrument of the imperial will.

#### 4.4 Surveillance and supervision; positioning the Censorate

The Censorate was, alongside the Central Secretariat and Bureau for Military Affairs, one of three paramount institutions in Mongol-era civil governance, with significant reach beyond the capital and metropolitan province. The *Yuanshi* annals record that Qubilai established the Yuan Censorate on 13 August 1268, at which point it was placed under the control of Tačar, a grandson of Činggis Qan's younger brother Temüge Otčigin via his second son Jibügen.<sup>183</sup> In 1269 the Censorate was supplemented by Regional Surveillance Offices spread across the territory (at prefecture, county and other levels)

<sup>182</sup> Li Qian, 'Zhongshu zuocheng zhang gong shendaobei', p. 102; *YWL* 58.11b:

若中書不敢詰，天子將親蒞之乎？

*Mingchen shilue* 7.144:

中書不敢詰，天子將親蒞之乎？」

*Yuanshi* 157.3696:

若中書弗問，天子將親蒞之乎？」

<sup>183</sup> See *Yuanshi* 6.118. On Tačar, see Hambis, 'Chapitre CVII', 34, 38, n. 11; *YR*, p. 2638.

and across the bureaucratic apparatus.<sup>184</sup> With the exception of material kept secret for military reasons, censors theoretically enjoyed access to all government records in pursuit of their central verifiatory role. The Mongol-era Censorate, perhaps following Jin precedent, combined this with remonstrance, the responsibility of separate offices under other ‘Chinese’ polities.<sup>185</sup>

Yao Shu’s recommendations associate Regional Surveillance Offices with openness in official promotion and demotion, positioning this investigative institution (and presumably, by extension, the Censorate at large) as a primary mechanism for implementing reward and punishment among officials.<sup>186</sup> The Song Censorate fulfilled an investigatory and prosecutory role, gathering evidence against malefactors while (theoretically and variably) distanced from the offices applying punitive law to the subjects of their submissions; under Mongol rule, this distancing was removed, with Censors, in certain cases, bearing both investigatory and punitive powers.<sup>187</sup> Our sample

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<sup>184</sup> See Ōshima Ritsuko, *Mongoru no seifuku ōchō*, p. 65; on the Regional Surveillance Offices 提刑按察司, later renamed (*suzheng*) *lianfangsi* (肅政)廉訪司 and sometimes referred to as *jiansi* 監司, see also *FG*, p. 242.

<sup>185</sup> See Endicott-West, ‘The Yüan Government and Society’, p. 603; Charles O. Hucker, *The Censorial System of Ming China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1966), p. 28; Herbert Franke, ‘The Chin Dynasty’, in *CHC*, pp. 215-320 (p. 269). Tao, by contrast, argues that the Jin removed the censors’ admonitory function. See Tao, ‘The Influence of Jurchen Rule’, 128.

<sup>186</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng yao wenxian gong shendaobei’, p. 576; *Mu’anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 15.217; *Mingchen shilue* 8.157:

設監司，明黜陟，則善良、姦竇可得而舉刺  
*Yuanshi* 158.3712:

Establish Regional Surveillance Offices 監司 (see *FG*, p. 242; *HD*, p. 150); clarify demotion and promotion, thereby the good and honest and the evil and corrupt can be rewarded and unmasked.

設監司，明黜陟，則善良姦竇可得而舉刺。

<sup>187</sup> See Charles Hartman, ‘The Inquisition against Su Shih: His Sentence as an Example of Sung Legal Practice’, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113 (1993): 228-43; Hucker, *The Censorial System of Ming China*, pp. 24, 27. Tao argues that the function of the Censorate had been altered by centralized Jin despotism, that its admonitory role had been erased, and that it effectively provided a combination of bureaucratic document checking and espionage, facilitated by its administrators’ personal access to the monarch. See Tao, ‘The Influence of Jurchen Rule’, 128. Tao cites the *Jinshi* biography of Chen Gui 陳規, in which we find one of several memorials submitted in the seventh moon of the fourth year *Zhenyou* 貞祐 (July-August, 1216), complaining that admonitory officials avoided their duty and the Censors were reduced to checking administrative documents. See *Jinshi* 109.2404-5.

texts emphasize this law-enforcement role, the *Yuanshi* edits underlining the importance of punitive intervention.

Song Zizhen's biographies discuss the early establishment of investigative bodies in the 1230s under Ögödei.<sup>188</sup> The *Yuanshi* compilers substantially reworked the portrayal of the situation surrounding this, leaving only the opening lines recognizable. The *Mingchen shilue* defines the problems faced by Zizhen in terms of ignorance and lack of oversight and regulatory control:

In *yiwei* 乙未 [1235], he was appointed Director of the Right Office 右司郎中 and of the more than fifty towns under the Branch Censorate's jurisdiction that still possessed fortresses for the various households, from Service Officials 守令 on down,<sup>189</sup> all were great and small minor clerks, suddenly increasing their field [allowances], they were unable to appreciate rites and regulations, ignorant of the ways of government; clerks and officials connived together to harm the populace. At that time, 'all-under-heaven' was somewhat pacified and the various matters were first set out; leaders and controllers proliferated, as did the harrassment from barracks and camps; law and systems not having been established, the populace could not live in peace.<sup>190</sup>

The *Yuanshi*, however, outlines a related but substantially divergent set of issues:

In the seventh year [1235],<sup>191</sup> Taizong [Ögödei Qaḡan] ordered Zizhen to serve as Director of the Right Office of the Branch Censorate 行臺右司郎中. In planning to pacify the Central Plains, many affairs were begun, and of the over fifty cities governed by the Branch Censorate, of the prefectural and county officials some were promoted from among the military officers, some rose from among the ranks of the populace; they were usually ignorant of the conduct of government affairs. This reached the point where they concentrated on extortion and amassing wealth by heavy taxation [thinking this] ability; officials and clerks connived for personal gain through harming the populace.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>188</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 10. 201; *Yuanshi* 159.3736.

<sup>189</sup> On this rank, see *FG*, pp. 23-24.

<sup>190</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10. 201:

乙未，受朝命遷右司郎中，行臺所轄五十餘城，仍有堡寨諸戶，自守令以下皆大偏小校，偃起田畝，不閑禮法，昧于從政，官吏相與為囊橐以病民。是時，天下略定，庶事草創，率斂之繁，營屯之擾，法度未立，民不安生。

<sup>191</sup> This eccentric dating method suggests either that Su Tianjue corrected the dating method employed in the *Mingchen shilue* and the *Yuanshi* compilers did not, or, less likely, that the compilers drew on another source for this section.

<sup>192</sup> *Yuanshi* 159.3736:

七年，太宗命子貞為行臺右司郎中。中原略定，事多草創，行臺所統五十餘城，州縣之官或擢自將校，或起由民伍，率昧於從政。甚者，專以掊克聚斂為能，官吏相與為貪私以病民。



The compilers' edits shifted the definition of poor governance somewhat, linking this more directly to the influence of the military, and describing the effect on the populace exclusively in terms of extortion and heavy taxation, dropping complicating references to the profusion of local officials.

Both descriptions of Song Zizhen's remedy for this situation base it on historical precedent. The *Mingchen shilue* account addresses precisely the issue of confused leadership identified in its description of the problems, before moving on to discuss the investigative function:

The gentleman said: "[Like] 'Ten sheep to nine shepherds'; the populace are impoverished with nobody to turn to." He therefore imitated previous dynasties by establishing investigative agencies on the Investigative Commissioner model, divided into three *dao*, restraining, removing and checking documents, equalizing the imposition of taxes, censuring and impeaching officials and clerks, equitably mediating and managing their affairs.<sup>193</sup>

The *Yuanshi* version again drops mention of this leadership issue, instead exclusively emphasizing the supervisory and investigative function, or in other words the need to exert direct control over local officials:

Zizhen followed previous dynasties' practices of governance through observation and investigation, ordering his officers to divide into three routes to supervise the government officials, establishing them according to the [accepted] formula, setting up meetings on specified dates, dismissing the lazy and the avaricious, encouraging the incorruptible and the diligent.<sup>194</sup>

The *Yuanshi* compilers similarly condensed their description of the outcome of Song Zizhen's efforts. The *Mingchen shilue* reports:

Thereupon new patterns were established, setting meeting times in advance, dismissing the selfish and rewarding the diligent, overseeing those who came later

<sup>193</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10. 201:

公謂：「十羊九牧，民窮而無告。」乃倣前代設觀察採訪之比，分三道按刷文檢，均科賦稅，糾舉官吏，公居中主其事。

<sup>194</sup> *Yuanshi* 159.3736:

子貞倣前代觀察採訪之制，命官分三道糾察官吏，立為程式，與為期會，黜貪愷，獎廉勤，

and beating them; officials and populace began to understand the governance of officials and offices and the way of comforting and managing. The single *dao* of Dongping 東平 contained more than 200,000 households, its populace no less than a million, and due to this they were able to achieve peaceful lives and carefree eating; this was the gentleman's merit.<sup>195</sup>

The *Yuanshi* version is greatly condensed, stating only that “the administration began to possess some moral standards, and the populace found relief and respite”.<sup>196</sup>

Dong Wenyong's biographies likewise portray the investigative agencies in a primarily punitive enforcement role, describing ongoing challenges from local officials wishing to downgrade or control these bodies. He is portrayed tackling one such attempt in 1283, facing a challenge originating among unidentified staff in the Jianghuai 江淮 *sheng* 省, who reportedly attempted to arrogate power to themselves.<sup>197</sup> This provokes two speeches from Wenyong on the Censorate's function, arguing that the threat it posed to transgressors was the only guarantee of government integrity. The speech also positions the Regional Surveillance Offices as a vital, and threatened, aspect of this function. Once more, Aḥmad Fanākatī is employed as the primary transgressive example. The *Yuanshi* version reports:

“[This is] not appropriate. The Censorate 御史臺 is like a crouching tiger; although it has not yet bitten anyone, people still fear it as a tiger. Now the Censorate 司憲 is an empty name, only just existing, law is still in decline; if this too should be suppressed, the integrity of government will be weakened and there will be no hope

<sup>195</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10. 201:

於是初立程式，與為期會，黜私獎勤，視其後者而鞭之，吏民始知有官府之政，撫治之道焉。東平一道二十餘萬戶，生口不啻百萬，所以安居暇食，得享有生之樂者，公之功也。  
[尚書李公撰神道碑]

<sup>196</sup> *Yuanshi* 159.3736:

官府始有紀綱，民得蘇息。

<sup>197</sup> The episode is found at Yu Ji, ‘Hanlin xueshi chengzhi gong xingzhuang’, p. 163; *Daoyuan leigao* 50.6b-7a, in *YRCK*, vi, pp. 454-55; *Mingchen shilue* 14.283; *Yuanshi* 148.3498; see also Hung, ‘The Tung Brothers’, p. 637.

Yu Ji, ‘Hanlin xueshi chengzhi gong xingzhuang’, p. 163; *Daoyuan leigao* 50.6b-7a, in *YRCK*, vi, pp. 454-55; *Mingchen shilue* 14.283:

二十年，江淮省臣有欲專肆而忌廉察官者，建議行臺隸行省，狀上，集議，

*Yuanshi* 148.3498:

二十年，江淮省臣有欲專肆而忌廉察官，建議行臺隸行省，狀上，集朝臣議之。

for its reversal.” [Wenyong] again spoke, “In former times 昔 when Aḥmad was in power, merchants and lowly people all bribed their way into office; when he was defeated, it was intended that his people be entirely dismissed, the court discussed this and believed that it was inappropriate for Aḥmad to sell his favour, and the court suddenly restrained and blamed him. Therefore they had the Regional Surveillance Offices expose and dismiss those who were inappropriate, and afterwards clerks had something to fear and the populace had ways to lay charges 訴. Therefore the Regional Surveillance Offices should be encouraged and ordered by the realm, and ought not to be curbed or repressed.” All followed the gentleman’s advice.<sup>198</sup>

When compared to the *Mingchen shilue* account, the *Yuanshi* compilers left Wenyong’s speech largely intact, presenting the Regional Surveillance Offices as a solution to the problem of removing “merchants and lowly people” who, we read, “all bribed their way into office” under Aḥmad’s rule.<sup>199</sup> Interventions at the micro level sharpen the rhetoric, adding characters to state, on top of the report that it was barely existing, that the institution was ‘an empty title’ 虛名. The compilers altered the activity that the Regional Surveillance Offices facilitated for the populace, from ‘appealing’ 懇 to ‘suing’ or ‘bringing charges’ 訴. The earlier formulation of the episode already positioned the investigatory agencies in a primarily punitive role, but the *Yuanshi* edits emphasized this further.

<sup>198</sup> *Yuanshi* 148.3498:

文用議曰：「不可。御史臺，譬之臥虎，雖未噬人，人猶畏其為虎也。今虛名僅存，紀綱猶不振，一旦摧抑之，則風采蕭然，無可復望者矣。昔阿合馬用事時，商賈賤役，皆行賄入官，及事敗，欲盡去其人，廷議以為不可，使阿合馬售私恩，而朝廷驟斂怨也。乃使按察司劾去其不可者，然後吏有所憚，民有所赴訴。則是按察司者，國家當飭勵之，不可摧抑也。」悉從文用議。

On this incident, see also Hung, ‘The Tung Brothers’, p. 637.

<sup>199</sup> Yu Ji, ‘Hanlin xueshi chengzhi gong xingzhuang’, p. 163; *Daoyuan leigao* 50.6b-7a, in *YRCK*, vi, pp. 454-55; *Mingchen shilue* 14.283:

公議曰：「不可。御史臺譬之臥虎，雖未噬人，人猶畏其為虎也。今司憲僅在，紀綱猶不振，一旦摧抑之，則風采蕭然，無可復望者矣。」又曰：「前阿合馬用事時，商賈賤役皆行賄入官，及事敗，欲盡去其人，廷議以為不可使阿合馬售私恩，而朝廷驟斂怨也。乃使按察司劾去其不可者，然後吏有所憚，民有所赴懇。則是按察司者，國家當飭勵之，不可摧 [7a] 抑也。」後悉從公議。

Örlüg Noyan's biographies likewise present the near-verbatim transmission of a comparable episode describing a threat from local officials to Censorate independence, in the form of a suggestion that it be subordinated to local transport offices (*caofu* 漕府) and that local government clerks regulate themselves rather than be subject to external surveillance.<sup>200</sup> All three texts describe those making this proposal as 'profit-seeking' 興利, and Örlüg Noyan's reply is identical across all three versions: "Morality and law are what restrain treachery; if this is [adopted], it will harm the systems for supervision and investigation."<sup>201</sup> Associating 'morality and law' with the surveillance agencies, this again suggests that the Censorate arrangement is the only alternative to treachery and evil.

Reports of Lian Xixian's defence of Censorate and Regional Surveillance Offices against protests from Aḥmad, undated in *Mingchen shilue* but dated to 1268 by the *Yuanshi*, outline both the unacceptable face of opposition to the investigative agencies and one aspect of their justificatory logic.<sup>202</sup> In two broadly similar accounts, Aḥmad's complaints reflect concern that administrators were hampered by investigative agencies' interference;

<sup>200</sup> Yan Fu, 'Taishi guangping zhenxian wangbei', p. 258; *Jingxianji*, 3.12a-b, in *YRCK*, ii, p. 546:

興利之臣欲援亡宋舊制，併憲司入漕府；他日當政者又請以郡府之吏，互照憲司檢底。公言：「風憲所以戢姦。若是，有傷監臨之體。」其議 [12b] 乃格。

*Mingchen shilue* 3.42:

興利之臣，欲援亡金舊制，併憲司入漕府；他日，當政者又請以郡府之吏，互照憲司檢底，公言：「風憲所以戢姦，若是，有傷監臨之體。」其議乃格。[勳德碑]

*Yuanshi* 119.2947:

興利之臣欲援金舊制，併憲司入漕府；當政者又請以郡府之吏，互照憲司檢底。玉昔帖木兒曰：「風憲所以戢奸，若是，有傷監臨之體。」其議乃沮。

<sup>201</sup> Yan Fu, 'Taishi guangping zhenxian wangbei', p. 258; *Jingxianji*, 3.12a, in *YRCK*, ii, p. 546; *Mingchen shilue* 3.42:

風憲所以戢姦。若是，有傷監臨之體。

*Yuanshi* 119.2947:

風憲所以戢奸，若是，有傷監臨之體。

<sup>202</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue*, 7.135; *Yuanshi* 3092. See also Li, *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 190; Franke, 'Aḥmad (?-1282)', pp. 542-43. On the Regional Surveillance Offices 提刑按察司, see *FG*, p. 242.

a concern parallel to that opposed by Örlüg Noyan.<sup>203</sup> It is in Xixian's counter-arguments, however, that we find significant, if fine-grained, adjustment. In the *Mingchen shilue* Xixian states that establishing the Censorate and Regional Surveillance Offices is “*not only* service through respecting the ancient system” 不獨事遵古制 before expanding on the functions of the investigative offices.<sup>204</sup> Although highlighting the importance of a projected past in a similar way to Song Zizhen's reliance on historical precedent, this acknowledges that such historical pedigree was not, in itself, sufficient argument for his position. The *Yuanshi* compilers' intervention rephrased Xixian's speech, having him state that “establishing the Censorate *is* the ancient system” 立臺察，古制也, suggesting that placement in such a Chinese past was, or at least should have been, sufficient.<sup>205</sup>

Xixian's discussion of the Censorate and Regional Surveillance Offices is also adjusted to suggest a different aim for Aḥmad, using an indirect technique of manipulating reported speech familiar from the reworking of Chucai and Ögödei's argument over tax-farming.<sup>206</sup> In the *Mingchen shilue* Xixian begins the second part of his argument with, “if it is as you propose, ...” 如君所言, expanding on the risks of reducing the

<sup>203</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.135:

始建御史臺，外設諸道提刑按察司。時阿合馬專總財利，迺曰：「庶務責成各路，錢穀付之轉運，必繩治若此，胡能辦事？」

Here we find an intriguing usage of the character *hu* 胡 in its less common function as a counterpart to *he* 何 ('how?', 'why?'), with potential ethnic (northern) overtones; it is notable that this character is not transmitted to the *Yuanshi* account.

*Yuanshi* 3092:

五年，始建御史臺，繼設各道提刑按察司。時阿合馬專總財利，乃曰：「庶務責成諸路，錢穀付之轉運，今繩治之如此，事何由辦？」

On this incident, see Franke, 'Aḥmad (?-1282)', p. 543; Li, *Hubilie zhuan*, p. 190.

<sup>204</sup> *Mingchen shilue*, 7.135:

公曰：「今立臺察，不獨事遵古制，蓋內則彈劾姦邪，外則察視非常，訪求民瘼，裨益國政，無大此者。」

<sup>205</sup> *Yuanshi* 126.3092:

希憲曰：「立臺察，古制也，內則彈劾姦邪，外則察視非常，訪求民瘼，裨益國政，無大於此。」

<sup>206</sup> See section 2.3.

investigative arm's control over administrators.<sup>207</sup> The *Yuanshi* reworks Xixian's opening statement, having him say, "if it were *abolished*, ..." 若去之, before similar, if decisively condensed, consequences.<sup>208</sup> This amendment alone makes Aḥmad more of a direct enemy of the Censorate than did the foundation text.

When this positioning is combined with the amended reference to the 'ancient system', Aḥmad appears a direct opponent of ancient cultural heritage, this differing substantially from his *Mingchen shilue* portrayal. As with Chucai's biographies, the *Yuanshi* compilers removed complexity to produce a straightforward binary in which Aḥmad and Xixian represent culturally opposed poles, leaving little room for parallel or unrelated activity beyond their conflict. In so doing the compilers also staked a firm claim for the investigative agencies as an essential 'Chinese' institution, based on 'ancient' heritage.

Zhang Wenqian's biographies similarly discuss a 1276 conflict with Aḥmad over (*dao*-level) Regional Surveillance Offices, by which, we read, Aḥmad again felt constrained.<sup>209</sup> His apparently having succeeded in dismantling these institutions at that time, they were then restored at Wenqian's instigation. The texts portray this in very similar terms, but the *Yuanshi* compilers made a significant cut to the earlier texts' description of the problem.

*Shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue* ascribe growing power and impunity to Aḥmad:

In the thirteenth year [1276], [Wenqian] was promoted to Vice censor-in-Chief. At the time Ahmad's might and authority was daily more prosperous, unrestrained and acting outside the law; he worried that the Censorate would unmask his evildoing, and therefore presented a memorial [suggesting] the abolition of the Regional Surveillance Offices in the various *dao*, in order to weaken the Censorate. This

<sup>207</sup> *Mingchen shilue*, 7.135:

如君所言，必使上下專恣，貪暴公行，然後事可集耶？」權臣語塞。[家傳]

<sup>208</sup> *Yuanshi* 126.3092:

若去之，使上下專恣貪暴，事豈可集耶！」阿合馬不能對。

<sup>209</sup> The incident is found at Li Qian, 'Zhongshu zuocheng zhanggong shendaobei', p. 103; *Mingchen shilue* 7.145; *Yuanshi* 157.3697. See also Franke, 'Aḥmad (?-1282)', p. 547.

remained [the case] for several days, but [Wenqian] presented a memorial and restored it.<sup>210</sup>

The *Yuanshi* drops this direct attack on Ahmad, leaving only the next statement that, concerned the Censorate might ‘unmask his evildoing’, he presented a memorial proposing the abolishment of the Regional Surveillance Offices in order to weaken the Censorate:

In the thirteenth year [1276], [Wenqian] was promoted to Vice Censor-in-Chief. Ahmad was worried that the Censorate would unmask his evildoing, and therefore presented a memorial [suggesting] the abolishment of the Regional Surveillance Offices in the various *dao*, in order to weaken [it]; Wenqian presented a memorial returning to the old [situation]. He knew, however, that criminal ministers feared him and sought determinedly to leave office.<sup>211</sup>

While still condemning Ahmad’s transgressions, these are moved to the background, their occurrence accepted as a precondition for his challenge to the Censorate and its associated investigative offices. The message is therefore clear that only people with something to hide challenge the surveillance agencies.

The *Mingchen shilue* account ends at Wenqian’s apparent success in defeating this challenge, and drops a final element included in the *shendaobei* on Wenqian’s alarm and subsequent attempts to resign, seemingly in the face of retaliatory pressure from unnamed people dissatisfied with his reinforcement of the Censorate.<sup>212</sup> This element is, however,

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<sup>210</sup> Li Qian, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng zhanggong shendaobei’, p. 103:

十三年，拜御史中丞。時阿合馬威權日熾，恣為不法，慮臺憲發其姦，奏罷諸道提刑案察司，以撼內臺。居數日，公奏復之。自知為姦臣所忌，不辭去未已也，亟請避位。

*Mingchen shilue* 7.145:

十三年，拜御史中丞。時阿合馬威權日熾，恣為不法，慮臺憲發其姦，奏罷諸道提刑按察司，以撼內臺。居數日，公奏復之。[神道碑]

<sup>211</sup> *Yuanshi* 157.3697:

阿合馬慮憲臺發其姦，乃奏罷諸道按察司以撼之，

<sup>212</sup> Li Qian, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng zhanggong shendaobei’, p. 103:

居數日，公奏復之。自知為姦臣所忌，不辭去未已也，亟請避位。

*Mingchen shilue* 7.145:

十三年，拜御史中丞。時阿合馬威權日熾，恣為不法，慮臺憲發其姦，奏罷諸道提刑按察司，以撼內臺。居數日，公奏復之。[神道碑]

*Yuanshi* 157.3697:

文謙奏復其舊。然自知為姦臣所忌，力求去。

found in the *Yuanshi*, the compilers likely developing their report directly from the *shendaobei* rather than via the *Mingchen shilue*, and choosing to highlight this danger to Wenqian – the implication being that it came from Aḥmad’s allies – and therefore underline the transgressive nature of challenges to the investigative arm. Here, as with Chucai’s biographies, the *Yuanshi* compilers chose to retain a strong moral binary between subject and opponent instead of following Su Tianjue.

Harqasun’s biographies also deal directly with the question of the investigative agencies, featuring an exchange with a sceptical Qubilai in which their merits are discussed in the same terms as those raised by Aḥmad in Lian Xixian’s biographies.<sup>213</sup> Here we see Qubilai ask whether Regional Surveillance Offices, in the *Mingchen shilue*, “hinder and oppose”, and in the *Yuanshi*, merely “hinder”, local government.<sup>214</sup> Harqasun’s answer comprises two parts, and the first of these differs in our two versions. The *Wangbei* text, which is transmitted by the *Mingchen shilue*, portrays Harqasun arguing that “the role of the Censorate is to rectify perfidy and fraud; the suffering of venal officials quickly leads to slanders, that is all.”<sup>215</sup> This rhetoric complements the narrative strategy we have seen above implying that all opposition to the Censorate must emerge from uneasy consciences, ruling out other reasons for opposition or challenge. The *Yuanshi* adopts

<sup>213</sup> The episode is found at Liu Minzhong, ‘Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei’, p. 539; *YWL* 25.5a; *Mingchen shilue* 4.57; *Yuanshi* 136.3292. It should be noted that the *Mingchen shilue* version involves an unannounced intervention, with the date moved across the first line. This amendment is partially followed by the *Yuanshi* compilers, although the result in the *Yuanshi* is an analepsis and a free-floating account without clear dating.

<sup>214</sup> Liu Minzhong, ‘Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei’, p. 539; *YWL* 25.5a; *Mingchen shilue* 4.57:

帝問王：「人言廉訪官反撓吏治，朕已令視之，卿謂若何？」

*Yuanshi* 136.3292:

問曰：「風憲之職，人多言其撓吏治，信乎？」

<sup>215</sup> Liu Minzhong, ‘Chici taifu youchengxiang zeng taishi shunde zhongxian wang bei’, p. 539; *YWL* 25.5a; *Mingchen shilue* 4.57:

The prince said: “The role of the Censorate is to rectify perfidy and fraud; the suffering of venal officials quickly leads to slanders, that is all.” The emperor regarded this as correct.

王曰：「憲司職糾姦弊，貪吏所疾，妄為謗耳。」帝以為然。



much of Harqasun's argument here, but rephrases it slightly to quote him stating that "the court established the Censorate in order to rectify perfidy and fraud".<sup>216</sup> This neat intervention effectively brings 'the court' and Censorate together, thereby opposing complainants against a universal common purpose.

The *Yuanshi* also obscures some discussions of the Censorate's investigative function, however. An episode in Hantum's biographies, for instance, pits their subject against Lu Shirong 盧世榮, and describe the latter's impeachment, which the *Yuanshi* dates to 1285.<sup>217</sup> Both Hantum's *Wangbei* and the very similar *Mingchen shilue* report, which draws on the lost *Shijia*, provide a detailed account linking this impeachment to a memorial submitted by the Investigating Censor 監察御史 Chen Tianxiang 陳天祥, and summarize this memorial in some detail.<sup>218</sup> The *Yuanshi* drops all of this, taking sections of text from the beginning and end of the *Mingchen shilue* report to state that Hantum and 'various *Ru* 儒' investigated and dismissed Lu Shirong and his employees, shifting this activity out of the Censorate and towards a less clearly bureaucratic association of individuals.<sup>219</sup> The latter element, referring to people associated with Shirong, has been

<sup>216</sup> *Yuanshi* 136.3292:

He replied: "The court established the Censorate in order to rectify perfidy and fraud; the suffering of venal officials quickly leads to slanders, that is all." The emperor agreed with his speech.

對曰：「朝廷設此以糾奸慝，貪吏疾之，妄為謗耳。」帝然其言。

<sup>217</sup> The episode is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', pp. 343-44; *Qingheji* 清河集, 3.21a-b, *YRCK*, v, p. 173; *Mingchen shilue* 1.11-12; *Yuanshi* 126.3082.

<sup>218</sup> On Chen Tianxiang 陳天祥 (1230-1316), courtesy name Jifu 吉甫, who later enjoyed considerable eminence, see Wang, *Yuanren*, p. 1311. The memorial text is preserved, via Su's *Yuanwenlei*, as 'Lun Lu Shirong shu' 論盧世榮疏, *QYW*, viii, pp. 268-69. Elsewhere the *Yuanshi* biography of Cui Yu 崔彧 (d. 1298) credits its subject, along with Majd al-Dīn, with Shirong's exposure. See *Yuanshi* 173.4041.

<sup>219</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', pp. 343-44; *Qingheji* 清河集, 3.21a-b, *YRCK*, v, p. 173:

監察御史陳天祥劾奏右丞盧世榮，略曰：「人思至元初治，不能忘也。去春，丞相安同還自北邊，天下聞之，室家相慶，咸望復膺柄用，治期可立而待。果承恩命，再領中書，貴賤老幼，喜動京師。時政之治與不治，民心之安與不安，繫丞相之用與不用爾。又如大夫玉速鐵木兒、丞相伯顏，朝廷專任三相，事事咨而後行，無使纖人從旁沮撓。能者進能，善者行善，誠厚天下之大本、理天下之大策，又安用掎克在位，倚以為治哉？」[21b] 其年世榮敗，中書條上世榮所為掎克諸事，詔皆罷之。奏漕司諸官，上曰：「平章右丞，固取朕裁，餘皆

added from an unknown source, an intervention extending the transgressive (and punished) element beyond Shirong's person and perhaps serving as justification for the identification and pursuit of 'factions' as well as individuals. The role of the 'various *Ru*' here is also telling, suggesting that such figures were considered qualified for consultation on very specific matters without occupying a specific place in the bureaucracy.

This example aside, we can see a general tendency in *Yuanshi* edits to highlight subjects' investigative and punitive activity in the Censorate, and to underline the need for this role by emphasizing the transgressive placement of opposition to the surveillance agencies. This oppositional positioning is present in the earlier texts; it was not invented by the *Yuanshi* compilers, but their edits sharpen moral binaries, sometimes in direct contrast to the *Mingchen shilue* formulations, to further underline the importance of this enforcement function.

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卿事。顧欲一一相煩，有失寄託 [344] 初意。」因奏曰：「比覺聖意，欲倚近習爲耳目者。臣猥列台司，所行非道，從其彈射，罪從上賜。奈何近習伺間抵隙，援引姦黨，曰某人與某官，以所署事目付中書，曰準勅施行。臣謂銓選自有成憲，若此廢格不行，必有短臣於上者，幸陛下察之。」上曰：「卿言甚是，妄奏者入上其名。」

*Mingchen shilue* 1.11-12:

二十二年，監察御史陳天祥劾奏右丞盧世榮，其略曰：「人思至元初年之治，至今莫能忘也。去春，丞相安童自邊還，天下聞之，室家相慶，咸望復膺柄用，再整宏綱，思仰治期，謂可立待。十一月二十八日，丞相果承恩命，復領中書，貴賤老幼，喜動京師。今丞相亦國家之名賢也，時政治與不治，民心安與不安，係丞相用與不用之間耳。又如玉昔帖木兒大夫、伯顏丞相，皆天下之所敬仰，海內之所瞻依者。朝廷果專任此三名相，事無大小，必取決而後行，無使餘人有所沮撓，三相博采衆議，於內外耆舊之中，取其聲望素著，衆所推尊者，為之參贊，則天下之才悉展效用，能者各得進其能，善者皆得行其善，誠厚天下之大本，理天下之大策。為今致治之方，莫有過於此者。又安用掎克在位，倚以為治哉。」其年世榮 [12] 敗，詔公與諸儒條世榮所為事，悉革罷之。[世家]

*Yuanshi* 126.3082:

二十二年，右丞盧世榮敗，詔與諸儒條其所用人及所為事，悉罷之。

#### 4.5 Conclusion: ‘ancient’ compartmentalization and exceptions

First, as with Chucai, *Yuanshi* and *Mingchen shilue* portrayals are closely related, portraying many of the same events in a broadly similar way. Detailed interventions were, however, made in many places by the *Yuanshi* compilers at the micro level, and these have an impact on the impression readers receive of events and personalities. As ever, moral binaries are typically sharpened by the *Yuanshi* edits, leaving incidents more vital and vivid, idealized subjects more positive and opponents more villainous. Aḥmad is made more extreme; no longer intending to restrict the investigative arms of government, he is portrayed trying to abolish them. These investigative offices are also adjusted to appear not just *part* of the ‘ancient system’ but central to it. Aḥmad is not favoured by Qubilai but somehow separate from his imperial sponsor and therefore not part of a complex court situation but its chief villain. This simplification and scapegoating is seen again when we see Aḥmad pitted against Jingim, where comment on the complexities of the prince’s actions is muted to bring the conflict between Aḥmad and Lian Xixian centre-stage. Agency is shifted to emphasize that the transgressor was even able to oppose the crown prince, the latter also shifted some way out of court politics.

We finish with an intriguing report found in Dong Wenyong’s biographies that seems to run counter to all the tendencies identified so far in this chapter, apart from the general imperative to show idealized subjects opposing Aḥmad’s transgression. Although apparently foregrounding abuse of bureaucratic structures by Aḥmad’s ‘faction’, the incident implies a general willingness among all factions at court to manipulate

appointments and structures, and underlines the importance of personal connection to the monarch.

The episode, transmitted in very similar terms in Wenyong's *xingzhuang*, the *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*, appears to portray Wenyong's deployment as a pawn against Aḥmad by Hantum.<sup>220</sup> The episode, dated to 1275, describes how Wenyong replaced Aḥmad's unidentified client He Shili 紇石里 as Vice Minister of the Ministry of Works.<sup>221</sup>

Aḥmad's unnamed followers subsequently caused an unnamed 'eagle supervisor' 鷹監 – an office presumably under Wenyong's supervision, although why this should be the case remains unclear – to petition the Qaḡan reporting neglect of the birds since Heshili's

<sup>220</sup> The episode is found at Yu Ji, 'Hanlin xueshi chengzhi donggong xingzhuang', p. 161; *Daoyuan leigao* 道園類稿 50.4b-5a; *YRCK*, v, pp. 453-54; *Mingchen shilue* 14.282; *Yuanshi* 148.3496-97.

<sup>221</sup> 工部侍郎. On this incident, see C.F. Hung, 'The Tung Brothers', p. 636. On the Ministry of Works and the post of Vice-Minister, see *FG*, pp. 175-76; 200-1. He Shili remains unidentified; Hung identifies him as a Jurchen named He Shili, but the source of this identification is unclear.

Yu Ji, 'Hanlin xueshi chengzhi donggong xingzhuang', p. 161; *Daoyuan leigao* 道園類稿 50.4b-5a; *YRCK*, v, pp. 453-54:

In the twelfth year [1275], the Grand Councillor 丞相 Duke Hantum 安童公 presented a memorial that [Wenyong] serve as Grandee of the Nineteenth Class 中順大夫 and Vice Minister of the Ministry of Works 工部侍郎, replacing He Shili 紇石里; this Shili was personally connected to Ahmad. His followers between themselves tried to remove Hantum from office, and thus caused the eagle supervisor 鷹監 to submit a memorial saying, "Since He Shili went, the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Works has not provided the eagles with food; the eagles are close to starvation." The emperor was angry, summoning [Wenyong] at once to punish him and so he was swiftly arrested and taken in for an audience; the emperor looked at him and said, "How can Dong Wenyong 董文用 be the one managing the feeding of eagles?" He was pardoned without questioning and dismissed from the position, which was given to those with [formal] responsibility, and Aḥmad understood he could not be slandered.

十二年，丞相安童公奏公為中順大夫、工部侍郎，代紇石里。石里者，阿合馬私人也，其徒間安童公罷政，即使鷹監 [5a] 奏曰：「自紇石里去，工部侍郎不給鷹食，鷹且瘦死矣。」上怒，趣召治之，因急速公入見。上望見曰：「董文用顧為爾治鷹食者耶？」置不問。別令取給有司，阿合馬知不可譖。

*Mingchen shilue* 14.282 (dropping mention of Wenyong's honorary position):

十二年，丞相安童公奏公為工部侍郎，代紇石里，紇石里者，阿合馬私人也。其徒間安童公罷政，即使鷹監奏曰：「自紇石里去，工部侍郎不給鷹食，鷹且瘦死矣。」上怒，輒召治之，因急速公入見，上望見曰：「董某顧為爾治鷹食者耶！」置不問，別令取給有司。[行狀]

*Yuanshi* 148.3496-97:

十二年，丞相安童奏文用為工部侍郎，代紇石里。紇石里，阿合馬私人也。其徒既讒間安童罷相，即使鷹監奏曰：「自紇石里去，[3497] 工部侍郎不給鷹食，鷹且瘦死。」帝怒，促召治之，因急捕文用入見，帝望見曰：「董文用乃為爾治鷹食者耶！」置不問，別令取給有司。

departure.<sup>222</sup> Qubilai, angered by this, summoned the accused, but on seeing Wenyong merely asked why he was responsible for eagles.<sup>223</sup> Surprised at the appointment, Qubilai removed Wenyong from the post without punishment, and it was returned to those with formal responsibility 有司, whoever that might have been; the phrasing remains constructively vague.

Several things can be drawn from this account. In terms of commemoration or social biography, the incident functions for Wenyong's Dong lineage by underlining both prominence and civil credentials. The ruler knows of them, but does not connect them with hunting birds; a cultural, and perhaps ethnically tinged, difference highlighting the Dong family's literary and governing pedigree. The complaint that the eagles had been neglected is framed as a transgressive attempt to attack Hantum by discrediting his appointee, framing that expresses sympathy for Hantum over Aḥmad. Aḥmad is implicitly criticized for protecting his adherent He Shili, and for using the eagle supervisor against Hantum and his appointees.

The account also, however, effectively acknowledges Hantum's tactical use of appointment, using Wenyong to dislodge He Shili because the latter was Aḥmad's client. Whoever had 'formal responsibility' for feeding eagles, it was not Wenyong, who seems to have been caught in the middle of a larger conflict, and did not, apparently, retain his

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<sup>222</sup> Farquhar's discussion of the Ministry of Works (on which see *FG*, pp. 200-214) makes no mention of hunting or eagles, only artisans and construction, and does not feature *yingjian* as an office; this is the only occurrence of the character pair *yingjian* 鷹監 in the standard histories, and Tang-era posts involving *ying* 鷹 do not seem to be related (see *HD*, p. 583). We do find a reference to the conceptually related office of *šibaḡuči* (昔寶赤, Mong. 'falconer', at *FG*, p. 90), under the ambit of the Court of the Imperial Stud 太僕寺 (on which see *FG*, pp. 88-90), although without mention of the Ministry of Works, and a number of falconry-related offices were apparently subordinated to the Ministry of War (see *FG*, pp. 197-99).

<sup>223</sup> In the *Mingchen shilue* Qubilai is only quoted identifying him as 'one of the Dongs' or 'Dong someone' 董某; Wenyong's personal name is probably avoided as a taboo.

position. It is also unclear what Wenyong did in this role, and notable that the next section of the biography sees him serving outside the capital, possibly indicating a demotion.<sup>224</sup> The account, which clearly indicates to readers that conflict involving Hantun and Aḥmad played out in appointment and patronage, received little tailoring from the *Yuanshi* compilers to hide this.

The implication seems to be that our interventionist editors favoured condemning Aḥmad and those aligned with him over consistency in promoting bureaucratic means. The broad tendency of edits – emphasizing the importance of a compartmentalized bureaucracy subordinated to the Central Secretariat and policed by an independent Censorate – remains clear. The compilers were nonetheless prepared to sacrifice coherence for vividness and impact in illustrating the threat posed by transgressive individuals, something we also see in the following chapter’s assessment of their handling of our third theme, the humanitarian imperative.

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<sup>224</sup> Wenyong’s *xingzhuang* reports his 1276 posting as *Shaozhong daifu* 少中大夫 (an honorary post not found in *FG*’s list of these at p.25, omitted from the *Mingchen shilue* in an unannounced cut and not mentioned in the *liezhuan*) and Director-General for Weihui 衛輝 *lu*, in 1276, the year after his run-in with the eagles. See Yu Ji, ‘Hanlin xueshi chengzhi donggong xingzhuang’, p. 161; *Daoyuan leigao* 道園類稿 50.4b-5a; *YRCK*, v, p. 454; *Mingchen shilue* 14.282; *Yuanshi* 148.3497.

## 5. Positioning humanitarianism and popular welfare

This chapter interrogates the positioning of popular welfare as a criterion in assessing behaviour and success in the *Yuanshi* handling of our narratives. The issue, while perhaps most clearly prominent in accounts connected to the Činggisids' notorious policy of massacring resisting urban populations, is, as we have seen in the case study on Chucai, also deployed in connection to a range of other circumstances. Employed to characterize both problems and the actions taken to tackle them, the humanitarian imperative is most often visible in either the earlier sections of an episode to establish the types of problems faced, or in the result clause, demonstrating, and thus defining, a subject's success. As such its positioning has impact beyond the episode and life to which it is applied, altering the moral and political ground over which conflicts are seen to play out and changing what is seen to be at stake in their resolution. The imperative also functions in the negative, providing further criteria, beyond the cultural, geographical and institutional, for the marginalization of transgressors portrayed acting against the popular interest, either engaging in abuse of the populace or leading them astray.

We can distinguish multiple typologies of narrative engagement with the humanitarian imperative in our samples. Threats to the humanitarian, usually introduced as problems for our subjects to tackle, include those without blame, including natural disasters like failed harvests, alongside some problems apparently caused inadvertently, such as the impact of troops passing through inhabited regions, which shades into our second type. These problems are blamed on individuals or groups (often left unidentified, as we have seen), and include the 'massacre policy' alongside various types of abuse by civil and military officials. As we have seen in Chucai's biography and in other cases, placing such

people in opposition to popular welfare can function as powerful condemnation; its operation often hinges on the willingness to identify the transgressors in question.

We have already examined Hantum's opposition to the 1288 appointment of Sangha with regard to the latter's apparent connection to the Secretariat for State Affairs.<sup>1</sup> Although other aspects differ between *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*, the phrasing of Hantum's appeal to Qubilai is identical, arguing that, if someone other than the virtuous were to be made Grand Councillor, this would be little short of 'harming the populace and undermining the realm' 虐民誤國.<sup>2</sup> This is the only usage of this particular set of characters in the Standard Histories. Elsewhere Hantum's biographies present a condemnation of Aḥmad Fanākatī in very similar terms – deceiving the realm and harming the populace. Hantum's *Wangbei* reports that a memorial of impeachment was submitted by an unnamed party accusing Aḥmad of 'cheating the realm and harming the populace' 欺國害民, likewise an unusual usage.<sup>3</sup> The *Mingchen shilue* draws on the lost *Shijia* here, which states that Hantum submitted the memorial and reports that Aḥmad 'robbed the realm and harmed the populace' 蠹國害民; a formulation apparently exclusively adopted by the *Yuanshi* compilers to refer to Aḥmad.<sup>4</sup> These characterizations

<sup>1</sup> See section 4.2 above. The incident is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', p. 344; *Qingheji* 3.21b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 173; *Mingchen shilue* 1.12; *Yuanshi* 126.3084.

<sup>2</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', p. 344; *Qingheji* 3.21b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 173; *Mingchen shilue* 1.12:

二十四年，上決意立尚書省。奏曰：「臣力不能回天，乞不用桑葛，別相賢者，猶或不至虐民誤國。」不聽。

*Yuanshi* 126.3084:

是歲，復立尚書省，安童切諫曰：「臣力不能回天，乞不用桑哥，別相賢者，猶或不至虐民誤國。」不聽。

<sup>3</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang dongping zhongxian wang bei', p. 343; *Qingheji* 3.21a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 173: In the eleventh year [1274], an impeachment memorial reported that Aḥmad deceived the country and harmed the populace; there was evidence on numerous matters.

十一年，劾奏阿合馬欺國害民，有徵數事。

This formulation is only employed once in the *Jinshi*, in a condemnatory speech; see *Jinshi* 100.2210.

<sup>4</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 1.11:

In the eleventh year [1274], the gentleman presented a memorial that Aḥmad robbed the realm and harmed the populace in numerous matters.



of governmental failure partially separate popular welfare from ‘the realm’ while at the same time juxtaposing the two, and therefore neatly encapsulate a version of the balance we seek to interrogate in our texts.

### 5.1 Positioning a ‘populace’

The existence, and importance of, a ‘populace’, usually referred to as *min* 民, is a given in our texts but one only vaguely delineated, and our compilers are fairly consistent in their adjustments to ensure that both humanitarian problems and outcomes reflect this terminology. The *liezhuan* for Öljei (1246-1303),<sup>5</sup> reporting how he cared for a suffering populace following Sangha’s execution in 1291, adjusts the terms of his success in a micro-level intervention, replaced *ren* 人 with *min* 民, again underlining the construction of a general populace.<sup>6</sup> A comparable adjustment in the *Yuanshi* edits to the episode

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十一年，公奏阿合馬蠹國害民數事；  
*Yuanshi* 126.3083:

In the eleventh year [1274], a memorial reported that Aḥmad robbed the realm and harmed the populace in numerous matters.

十一年，奏阿合馬蠹國害民數事；

This formulation is employed three times in the *Yuanshi*; here, in the Annals of Shizu describing Hantum’s complaint (at 8.158), and in the Annals’ report on Aḥmad’s death (at 9.241), where it is reported that the plot to kill him was caused by Aḥmad “robbing the realm and harming the populace”. The construction is not widely employed elsewhere, although it is employed eight times in the *Songshi*. This is a strong element of condemnatory rhetoric, and we see a single intervention drawing partially on the *Wangbei* logic by removing Hantum from direct involvement. Its phrasing therefore has the effect of withdrawing Hantum from the matter in a way comparable to the *Yuanshi* shifting Chucai away from personal entanglement in Xiandebu’s impeachment (see section 2.2 above); it is notable that the Annals do identify Hantum as the petitioner. *Yuanshi* 5.158:

壬寅，安童以阿合馬擅財賦權，蠹國害民，凡官屬所用非人，請別加選擇；其營作宮殿，資緣為姦，亦宜詰問。

<sup>5</sup> Öljei (1246-1303) a Tübeḡen, served in Jingim’s princely establishment and under Qubilai Qaḡan as Senior Chief Counsellor of the Central Secretariat 中書右丞相, undoing measures introduced by Sangha, and later served closely under Temür Öljeitü Qaḡan. On him, see *Yuanshi* 130.3173-74; *Mingchen shilue* 4.53-55; *YR*, p. 2511; *NPR*, p. 1960; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 182-83. After a brief (53-character) preface his short *Mingchen shilue* biography is arranged into nine sections, all of which draw on a single source, an inscription by Yan Fu, and one of which, on Öljei’s family and early years, is presented as annotation (and therefore likely to have suffered the same condensing as the passages on ancestors seen elsewhere). The *Yuanshi* biography follows this fairly closely, but a section dated to 1260 and placed out of chronological order at the start of the *Mingchen shilue* biography is moved to date order in the *Yuanshi*. The inscription is found at Yan Fu, ‘Chengxiang xingyuan zhongxian wangbei’ 丞相興元忠憲王碑, *QYW*, ix, pp. 268-69; *Jingxianji* 3.20a-21a; *YRCK*, ii, pp. 550-51.

<sup>6</sup> Yan Fu, ‘Chengxiang xingyuan zhongxian wangbei’, p. 269; *Jingxianji* 3.20a-21a; *YRCK*, ii, pp. 550-51:

portraying Lian Xixian's humiliation of the pseudo-*Fuma*, who is described as having committed extortion against what are described in *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue* as 'wealthy households' 富家. This description of his targets is adjusted in the *Yuanshi* to 'wealthy [members of] the populace' 富民, again highlighting the status of *min* as the people to protect.<sup>7</sup> The same shift towards *min* is seen in reports of Hao Jing's tragic childhood.<sup>8</sup> In describing how Jing revived his mother after unidentified soldiers had attempted to burn out refugees hiding underground, we find the *Yuanshi* editors used *min* in place of *ren* in portraying the victims of this violence, shifting its impact from 'some people' to 'the populace'.<sup>9</sup>

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至元末，姦臣竊弄威福，事敗伏辜，端接難其人，博選於衆，無以踰公，乃拜中書右丞相。登進善良，湔除弊法，朝政煥然一新。方權姦之熾，分遣使者乘傳諸道，以會計爲名，肆爲掊克，公私騷然。公爲奏請，自中統初積歲逋懸一切釋而勿論，迄今人賴其利。

*Mingchen shilue* 4.54:

至元末，奸臣竊弄威福，事敗伏辜，端揆難其人，博選於衆，無以踰公，乃拜中書右丞相。登進善良，湔除弊法，朝政煥然一新。方權姦之熾，分遣使者，乘傳諸道，以會計爲名，肆爲掊克，公私騷然，公爲奏請自中統初積歲逋懸，一切釋而勿論，迄今人賴其利。[勳德碑]

*Yuanshi* 130.3174:

至元二十八年，桑哥伏誅，世祖咨問廷臣，特拜中書右丞相。完澤入相，革桑哥弊政，請自中統初積歲逋負之錢粟，悉蠲免之，民賴其惠。

<sup>7</sup> This incident was examined in detail in section 3.1, and is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei', p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188; *Mingchen shilue* 7.137.

<sup>8</sup> Hao Jing 郝經 (1223-1275, courtesy name Baichang 伯常, from Lingchuan 陵川 in Zezhou 澤州), joined Qubilai's princely establishment in 1252 and provided detailed advice on matters military and civil, recorded in lengthy memorials in his *Yuanshi* biography. In 1260 Jing was appointed Reader of the Hanlin Academy 翰林侍讀學士 and sent as an envoy to the Song, who detained him for sixteen years. On Hao Jing see R.J. Lynn, 'Hao Ching', in *ISK*, pp. 348-70; *Yuanshi* 157.3698-709; *Mingchen shilue* 15.294-99; *YR*, p. 967; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 201-2. Hao Jing's *Mingchen shilue* biography consists of sixteen sections, plus a 69-character preface. The main body consists of 1277 characters, sources identified as the *mubei* by Lu Zhi 盧摯 (c.1235-1300) (main body 926, 73%) and the *muzhi* by Yan Fu 閻復 (main body text 351, 27%). 1,201 characters of notes are taken from Jing's own account of his captivity 公與宋論本朝兵亂書, (434 characters, 36%), the *xingzhuang* written by Gou Zongdao 苟宗道, Jing's advice on withdrawing troops 公班師議, (272 characters, 23%) and 臨川吳公文集, (159 characters, 13%). The biography displays unusual proportions, with a high volume of notes almost equalling that of the main text. Alongside the foundation texts cited by the *Mingchen shilue* we also find a *shendaobei* by Lu Zhi 盧摯 and Gou Zongdao 苟宗道, 'Gu hanlin shixueshi guoxinshi hao gong xingzhuang' 故翰林侍學士國信使郝公行狀, in *QYW*, xi, pp. 708-16. The *shendaobei* is transmitted as Lu Zhi 盧摯, 'Hanlin shixueshi guoxinshi haogong shendao beiming' 翰林侍讀學士國信使郝公神道碑銘, at *QYW*, xi, pp. 15-18. On Lu Zhi 盧摯 (c. 1235-1300), see *YR*, p. 1961.

<sup>9</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 15.294:

潛匿窟室，兵士偵知，燎煙于穴，燬死者百餘人，母許以預其禍。

*Yuanshi* 157.3698:

河南亂，居民匿窖中，亂兵以火熏灼之，民多死，經母許亦死。

Song Zizhen's biographies provide a partial counter-example to this generalizing tendency, in describing his prevention, in the late 1230s, of the seizure of Dongping households by military officers, who were apparently arrogating tax and corvée duties to themselves.<sup>10</sup> Here the *Yuanshi* compilers left the result clause untouched from the description cited in the *Mingchen shilue*, in a formulation stressing benefit to 'people' 人, but altered the description of the problem to read 'seized the populace' 占民.

Jia Juzhen's biographies see a similar amendment in terminology, with the *Yuanshi* compilers altering a potentially narrow characterization of those suffering under problematic governance. His *Mingchen shilue* biography includes an account, presented as a *kaoyi* annotation, that reports the problems Juzhen faced when appointed Pacification Commissioner 宣慰使 for Hubei *Dao*, and this sees problems affecting an at once vague and specific section of the populace:

... the 'arrogant and imperious would not heed orders', contending with might and power, their ambitions on wealth and fortune, being devoted to plunder and pillage, secretly intending the slaughter of noble families 大姓.<sup>11</sup>

The *Yuanshi* compilers included this in his *liezhuan*, intervening to remove the specificity and the potentially segmenting construction and again simplifying the definition of those affected:

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<sup>10</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.201:

時諸將校例有部曲戶，謂腳寨，幾四百所，各擅賦役。公請罷歸州縣，行臺初難之，既而政令歸一，人以為便。[墓誌]

*Yuanshi* 159.3736:

東平將校，占民為部曲戶，謂之腳寨，擅其賦役，幾四百所。子貞請罷歸州縣。實初難之，子貞力言乃聽，人以為便。

The reports are undated, but placed between an incident dated to 1235 and the death of Yan Shi 嚴實, dated elsewhere to 1240.

<sup>11</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 11.233:

驕將悍卒，爭用威力，志在財幣，酣嗜虜掠，密有屠戮大姓之議。

... the ‘arrogant and imperious [who] would not heed orders’ united in conspiracy to harass the populace 民;<sup>12</sup>

This moves the account towards both brevity and defining a unified and generalized ‘populace’ as the victims on whose behalf Juzhen acted.

We also distinguish two broad approaches to describing outcomes relating to the humanitarian imperative in our texts, allowing us to draw a partial distinction between a ‘disinterested’ and an ‘instrumental’ conception of humanitarianism. The first of these typically sees a subject’s performance of a humanitarian act followed by a desirable result relating exclusively either to the saving of lives or other direct benefit to the populace. A typical method for describing humanitarian success in this way, especially in crisis situations, is seen in the biographies of Čerig, in the form of statements that “those whose survival depended on this were very many” or “those relying on” the subject and his action “probably numbered several hundred thousand people.”<sup>13</sup> The same formulation is seen in the biographies of Song Zizhen, where the *Yuanshi* compilers’ interventions condensed a specific account of famine relief after the fall of the Jin capital to a simple aid operation resulting in his saving tens of thousands of lives.<sup>14</sup> Celebrating the saving of life in this way as an outcome, without reference to other criteria, can be taken as an endorsement of humanitarianism as a good in its own right; in such constructions, popular benefit equates to success.

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<sup>12</sup> *Yuanshi* 153.3624:

而驕將悍卒，合謀擾民，

<sup>13</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.68:

賴賜穀帛牛馬脫寒飢者，亡慮數十萬人。

*Yuanshi* 130.3161:

乃賜邊民穀帛牛馬有差，賴以存活者衆。

<sup>14</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.200:

繼而汴梁潰，飢民北徙，殍殣相望。公議作廣廈，糜粥以食之，復以羣聚多疫，人給米一斛，俾散居近境，所全活無慮萬計。

*Yuanshi* 159.3735-36:

汴梁 [3736] 既下，饑民北徙，餓殍盈道。子貞多方賑救，全活者萬餘人。

Our second category, in which action presented as humanitarian is connected to other results, such as (typically in a military situation) the peaceful submission of further areas, has a more complex nature. Still clearly promoting the pursuit of humanitarian objectives, the continued demonstration of practical value alongside the humane imperative partially undermines that imperative's idealization. Effectively subordinating or equating humanitarian ethics to power politics or at least equating the two, it seems to shift the humanitarian imperative away from an abstract purity of purpose and towards a more negotiated position alongside pragmatic concerns. As we will see, this balancing of imperatives is, as one would expect, manifested in the diegetic world, where it is discussed or otherwise communicated to actors in the events portrayed. It is also, however, manifested in the reader-facing narratorial voice, describing events in a manner comparable to editorial commentary.

Such balancing might be read, especially in social biography, as a nod towards loyalty to the ruler in whose name action was undertaken and thus more visible in Mongol-era texts than the *liezhuan*. We might not be surprised if the latter, compiled as part of a project which, as we have seen, selectively excluded many foreign 'conquest dynasty' elements to define a 'Chinese' centre of political and cultural gravity for the nascent Ming, severed links between virtuous humanitarian subjects and their rulers' priorities. The precise balancing of humanitarian ideals with other imperatives, such as the success, stability and security of the ruling house, itself arguably contributing to the security and welfare of subject populations, is, of course, a focus for debate well beyond the Mongol era. The degree to which pure humanitarian concern could be allowed to trump a ruler's mandate to act (however selfishly) for strength and stability remains open to question.

This chapter therefore assesses the extent to which the various writers of our foundation texts, Su Tianjue and the *Yuanshi* compilers take differing positions between the ‘disinterested’ and ‘instrumental’ poles when portraying the humanitarian imperative in their narratives, and the impact of this on readers’ understanding of events. Section 5.1 interrogates portrayals of the Činggisids’ notorious ‘massacre’ tendency, in which the humanitarian challenge to our subjects seems plain, but, as we will see, our writers and compilers find room for manoeuvre between absolute preservation of the populace and the martial business of conquest. Section 5.2 interrogates the selective approval of violence and violent acts performed against those positioned as enemies of the populace, and thus the degree to which humanitarian concerns may be mobilized to isolate transgressors. Section 5.3 examines the position and limits of extractive policy in our narratives, and therefore our texts’ construction of ‘just’ and excessive taxation. As we will see, this builds on the tendency towards a geographical marginalization of the profit motive. Overall, the *Yuanshi* compilers exhibit a broad, though as ever not entirely consistent, tendency to emphasize the humanitarian impact of transgressive acts and characters.

As we have seen, discussion of the Southeast Asian expedition in Harqasun’s biography likewise shifts the basis of opposition from pragmatic strategic concerns to a basis in concern for the populace of the Huguang region. We have examined this in section 3.3 with regard to its centring of Zhongguo, but it also places the welfare of the populace 民 of Zhongguo over the imperative to pursue further conquest.

Harqasun's opinion having been ignored, the outcome is negative, expressed in the *Mingchen shilue* in straightforward policy terms, seeing a substantial force returning ingloriously.<sup>15</sup> In the *Yuanshi* the outcome is discussed in very different terms, describing the heavy burden placed on the populace in the region through which the expeditionary force passed.<sup>16</sup> The *Yuanshi* assessment of results is tailored to bear out Harqasun's local concerns – the success of the expedition is immaterial, its negative impact on the populace of Huguang being the only important aspect of the outcome.

Čerig's biographies provide a report of his assistance to northeastern populations after an undated uprising that seems likely to be Nayan's, but which all three texts place by context in the early 1280s rather than 1287.<sup>17</sup> The *Yuanshi* account is notable in that it focusses the weight of the reader's attention on the vivid description of the problems faced by the populace, shifting characters from the foundation text's outcome discussion to describe them suffering "cold, hunger and death":

... reporting therefore that in places passed through by the army the populace could not bear their harassment, suffering cold, hunger and death, and that aid ought to be increased;<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.58:

In the end a memorial proposed sending two myriads of the Huguang 湖廣 army, with several tens of thousands of strong corvée labourers for provisioning; losing discipline, they ultimately returned without merit.

竟奏發湖廣兵二萬人，丁壯役餽輓數十萬，將失紀律，果無功而還。

<sup>16</sup> *Yuanshi* 136.3293:

不聽，竟發兵二萬，命深將以往。道出湖廣，民疲於餽餉。

<sup>17</sup> The episode is found at Yao Sui 'Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei', p. 566; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 14.206-7; *Mingchen shilue* 4.68; *Yuanshi* 130.3161. Nayan's rebellion notably drew Qubilai Qaġan out on campaign in person, which is noted here. On Nayan, a descendant of Činggis Qan's younger sibling Temüġe Otčigin, and this conflict, see Biran, *Qaidu*, pp. 45–47; Paul Pelliot, *Notes on Marco Polo*, (Paris: A. Maisonneuve, 1959-1973), p. 788.

<sup>18</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3161:

因言大軍所過，民不勝煩擾，寒餓且死，宜加賑給，

Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei', p. 566; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 14.206-7:

When the revolt had been pacified, he submitted a memorial that 'the military exceeded the populace', that poverty was 'stripping skin' and without relief aid they would soon be without livelihood; those relying on grants of grain, silk, oxen and horses to escape cold and hunger probably numbered several hundred thousand people.

跳梁既平，爲秦兵餘之民艱窶剝膚，不賑恤之將不生活，賴賜穀帛牛馬 [14.207] 脫寒饑者，無慮數十萬人。

The *liezhuan* also adds a degree of formality and process to the matter, stating that Qubilai Qaġan accepted his advice:

the emperor followed this, so border populations were granted differing amounts of cereals and cloth, oxen and horses, and those whose survival depended on this were very many.<sup>19</sup>

Čerig's aid and the outcome are broadly similar across the texts, but the narrative makes the danger posed to the populace by military activity more vivid and extreme. The outcome, enumerating those saved, aligns neatly to the 'disinterested' category of humanitarianism; saving life is a good in its own right.

As we have seen, Harqasun's biographies report his dispatch to Qaraqorum by Qaišan in the early fourteenth century, and discuss problems he faced and his responses at some length.<sup>20</sup> Broadly speaking, these problems are expressed in terms of food supply and starvation among the northern populace, i.e., as a humanitarian issue, so solving these problems in any way must be read as a humanitarian good. Harqasun's success is however characterized in terms of pragmatic governance, both versions describing the result of his efforts as 'great order' 大治; not directly humanitarian.<sup>21</sup>

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*Mingchen shilue* 4.68:

跳梁既平，為奏兵餘之民，艱窶剝膚，不賑恤之，將不生活，賴賜穀帛牛馬脫寒飢者，亡慮數十萬人。[神道碑]

<sup>19</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3161:

帝從之，乃賜邊民穀帛牛馬有差，賴以存活者衆。

Yao Sui 'Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei', p. 566; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 14.206-7:

those relying on grants of grain, silk, oxen and horses to escape cold and hunger probably numbered several hundred thousand people.

賴賜穀帛牛馬 [14.207] 脫寒饑者，無慮數十萬人。

*Mingchen shilue* 4.68:

賴賜穀帛牛馬脫寒飢者，亡慮數十萬人。[神道碑]

<sup>20</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 4.59-60; *Yuanshi* 136.3294-95 and has been discussed in detail at section 3.3.

<sup>21</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 4.59-60:

至和林，獲盜米商衣者，即斬以徇，攘竊屏息，行旅為便。分遣使發廩賑降口，復奏請錢七千三百萬緡，帛稱是，易牛、羊給之，又給網數千，令取魚食。遠者厄大雪金山，命諸部置傳車，相去各三百里，凡十傳，餽米數萬石，牛、羊稱之。又度地立兩倉，積米以待來者，全活不可勝紀。有飢乏不能達和林，往往以其男女弟姪易米以活，皆贖歸之。和林歲糴軍餉



The biographies of Dong Wenbing 董文炳, (1217-1278) promote humanitarianism as a way to earn respect from one's peers. Wenbing, courtesy name Yanming 彥明, was from Gaocheng 藁城 in Zhending 真定. An official and general, appointed to the Branch Bureau of Military Affairs 行樞密院 at Zhenjiang 鎮江, he later served alongside Bayan in the conquest of the Song and as Junior Chief Councillor of the Secretariat 中書左丞, before, in 1277, being appointed Junior Assistant Director of the Bureau of Military Affairs 僉樞密院事.<sup>22</sup> One episode reports that, after suffering slights from colleagues due to gaining his position through his father, Wenbing realized that he could gain respect via judging cases with mercy.<sup>23</sup> The outcomes described by our texts here are particularly noteworthy. The reader understands that Wenbing was guided by mercy in his actions,

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恒數十 [60] 萬，主吏視利繆出納囊橐，滋弊久矣，立法遏其源。稱海屯田廢弛，重為經理，歲得米二十餘萬斛。益購工治器，擇軍中曉耕稼者，雜教部落。又浚古渠，溉田數千頃。穀以恒賤，邊政大治。[勳德碑]

*Yuanshi* 136.3294-95:

至鎮，斬為盜者一人。分遣使者賑降戶。奏出鈔帛易牛羊以給之，近水者教取魚食。[3295] 會大雪，民無取得食，命諸部置傳車，相去各三百里，凡十傳，轉米數萬石以餉饑民，不足則益以牛羊。又度地置內倉，積粟以待來者。浚古渠，溉田數千頃。治稱海屯田，教部落雜耕其間，歲得米二十餘萬。北邊大治。

<sup>22</sup> On Dong Wenbing see *Mingchen shilue* 14.270-79; *Yuanshi* 156.3667-79; *YR*, p. 1604; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 201-2. Sources for the biographies are a *jiazhuan* by Yuan Mingshan, and a *shendaobei* by Wang Pan. See Yuan Mingshan, 'Gaocheng dongshi jiazhuan' 藁城董氏家傳, in *QYW*, xxiv, pp. 312-21; *Qingheji* 7.74a-83a, in *YRCK*, v, pp. 199-204; Wang Pan, 'Zhaoguo zhongxian gong shendaobei' 趙國忠獻公神道碑, in *QYW*, ii, pp. 286-91.

<sup>23</sup> The episode is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Gaocheng dongshi jiazhuan', p. 314; *Mingchen shilue* 14.270-71; *Yuanshi* 156.3667.

Yuan Mingshan, 'Gaocheng dongshi jiazhuan', p. 314; *Mingchen shilue* 14.270:

In the year *jiwei* 乙未 [1235], because of his father he served as Office Manager of Gaocheng 藁城, all his colleagues were his father's contemporaries; they looked down on [Wenbing], and the clerks too did not hold him in respect. He remained half a year, and realized that through judging cases with mercy he could consolidate his authority;

歲乙未，以父任為藁城令，同列皆父時人，少公，吏亦不之憚。居半歲，明於聽斷，以恩濟威，

*Yuanshi* 156.3667:

In the year *jiwei* 乙未 [1235], because of his father he served as Office Manager of Gaocheng 藁城. His colleagues were his father's contemporaries; they slighted Wenbing, and the clerks too did not hold him in respect. Wenbing realized that through judging cases with mercy he could consolidate his authority.

歲乙未，以父任為藁城令。同列皆父時人，輕文炳年少，吏亦不之憚。文炳明於聽斷，以恩濟威。

but this benevolence is not employed for the sake of principle alone, and nor is it explained to the reader on that basis. The practical results of his approach have already been hinted at, and they are underlined by the *Yuanshi* compilers' micro-level adjustments. These alter the timescale to emphasize the speed of positive change, and intensify the effect on the populace, who, we read, became 'greatly', rather than simply, 'obedient'.<sup>24</sup> Here the criteria presented for readers to judge benevolence are aligned with the subject's own interests and an ideal of stable governance.

The biographies of Li Dehui 李德輝 (1218-1280) provide a useful example of narratives recording successful humanitarian outcomes through the quantification of beneficiaries. Li Dehui served variously in Qubilai's princely retinue, briefly in the Secretariat for State Affairs and in various posts across northern China and as part of the Prince of Anxi's administration.<sup>25</sup> Li Dehui's people benefitted from his policy, in this case being freed from slavery. Li Dehui's *Xingzhuang*, and the *Mingchen shilue* reports:

In the third year [1262], the evil and selfish Grand Councillor having rebelled and been executed, [Dehui] thus served as Pacification Commissioner for Shanxi 山西. Powerful and influential criminals registered the populace as slaves, and those he redeemed as respectable people approached a thousand.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Gaocheng dongshi jiazhuan', p. 314; *Mingchen shilue* 14.270:

his colleagues were helpless to belittle him, the clerks holding the case were seeking office, and did not dare raise their heads, and the villagers also became obedient.  
同列束手下之。吏抱案求署，不敢仰首，里人亦化服。

*Yuanshi* 156.3667:

Before long, his colleagues were helpless to belittle him, the clerks holding the case were seeking office and repute, and did not dare raise their heads, and the villagers also became greatly obedient.  
未幾，同列束手下之，吏抱案求署字，不敢仰視，里人亦大化服。

<sup>25</sup> On Li Dehui, courtesy name Zhongshi 仲實, from Lu County 潞縣 in Tongzhou 通州, see *Yuanshi* 163.3815-19; *Mingchen shilue* 11.212-17; *YR*, p. 552; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 223-24. His *Mingchen shilue* biography draws on a *xingzhuang* by Yao Sui (Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng li zhongxuan gong xingzhuang' 中書左丞李忠宣公行狀, in *QYW*, ix, pp. 484-89; *Mu'anji* (Yaosuiji) 30.458-65) and a lost *shendaobei* by Li Qian. After a short (103-character) preface, Dehui's biography cites 12 sections (1,718 characters, 80%) from his *xingzhuang*, followed by three sections (437 characters, 20%) from the *shendaobei*.

<sup>26</sup> Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng li zhongxuan gong xingzhuang', p. 485; *Mu'anji* (Yaosuiji) 30.459; *Mingchen shilue* 11.213:

三年，惡已相反誅，以爲山西宣慰使。罪權勢之籍民爲奴，免而良者，將千人。

The *Yuanshi* compilers' edits to this are subtle:

In the third year [1262], Wentong was executed for rebellion, Dehui then rose to serve as Pacification Commissioner for Shanxi 山西. Influential and powerful households had registered the populace as slaves; all those were suppressed and those he redeemed and who returned to their occupations approached a thousand people.<sup>27</sup>

This amended version identifies Wang Wentong 王文統, Privy Councillor in the first years of Qubilai's administration, executed in 1262 due to his marital connection to the rebel general Li Tan, as the *Xingzhuang*'s 'evil and selfish Grand Councillor'.<sup>28</sup> The identification is a normative generic change from social biography to *liezhuan*; more significant is the compilers' treatment of the second element of this episode. On the one hand, the edits emphasize Dehui's action against the powerful transgressors who had mistreated the populace, but on the other the revised account emphasizes his return of that populace to their occupations, i.e., to productive activity in imperial service. Where the earlier version's definition of success was – disinterestedly, and on the basis of absolute principle – based simply in their freedom, this seems to require that they were able to continue as productive units.

Čerig's biographies, in reporting Sangha's impeachment, provide slightly differing bases for action, and therefore formulations of the problems faced should Sangha continue in office.<sup>29</sup> The *shendaobei* (and the excerpt transmitted in the *Mingchen shilue*), quote Čerig arguing that silence risked deceit of the monarch and the possibility that the court would gain a reputation for ignoring advice and admonition:

as his arguments were unable to stop this, he said: "Although [your] servant bears no enmity towards him, selfish deceit of the emperor simply cannot be borne. I dare

<sup>27</sup> *Yuanshi*:

三年，文統以反誅，德輝遂起為山西宣慰使。權勢之家籍民為奴者，咸按而免之，復業近千人。

<sup>28</sup> On Wang Wentong, see *Yuanshi* 200.4594-96; *YR*, p. 159.

<sup>29</sup> The episode is found at Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei', pp. 566-67; *YWL* 59.23a-b; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 14.207; *Mingchen shilue* 4.69; *Yuanshi* 130.3162.

because if I was struck by a thunderclap and thus had my tongue tied, causing the Brilliant Emperor to be known as one who does not accept admonition, your servant would truly resent and be ashamed of [that].”<sup>30</sup>

The *Yuanshi*, retaining the latter theme, replaces the former with the risk of continued “suffering of the populace”:

Čerig only argued more determinedly, and also said, “Your servant has no enmity with Sangha, striving therefore to number his crimes but without designs on his person; purely thinking of the dynasty, and nothing more. If [I] fear to anger the emperor, and do not speak again, then how will an evil minister be dismissed, and how will the suffering of the populace cease? Moreover Your Majesty may become known for rejecting advice; [my] secret fear is just this.”<sup>31</sup>

Another element we see employed in the *Yuanshi* compilers’ edits revolves around the specific use of terminology to denote prioritized individuals and groups. As we will see over the next two sections, this basic deserving populace could be re-divided when necessary, and could certainly be separated from deviant elements for whom such protection was not desirable.

## 5.2 Massacre logics (1): mercy and success

A ‘Mongol’ tendency to indulge in brutality and massacre, especially towards urban populations, has been widely noted.<sup>32</sup> As seen in the case study on Yelü Chucai, advising clemency for defeated commoners is an important element of our meritorious subjects’ portrayals, and opposition to such clemency is clearly transgressive. Those placed in such opposition are often, though by no means always, presented as an anonymous plurality,

<sup>30</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei’, pp. 567; *YWL* 59.23a-b; *Mu’anjī* (*Yaosuiji*) 14.207; *Mingchen shilue* 4.69:

辯不為止，曰：「臣非有仇於彼而然，直不忍其罔上自私。敢因雷霆一擊，遂爾結舌，使明帝有不受言之名，臣實憤恥。」

This is precisely the accusation levelled at the Jin court; see Tao, ‘The Influence of Jurchen Rule’, 125.

<sup>31</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3162:

徹里辯愈力，且曰：「臣與桑哥無讎，所以力數其罪而不顧身者，正為國家計耳。苟畏聖怒而不復言，則奸臣何由而除，民害何由而息！且使陛下有拒諫之名，臣竊懼焉。」

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, the survey in Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven, CT, London: Yale University Press, 2017) at pp. 155-60.

suggesting the existence of a bloodthirsty faction or tendency, without committing to specific identification.<sup>33</sup> Atwood's analysis of Mongol-era massacres' punitive logic emphasizes two broad tendencies which ring true with our texts' approaches. First, while Persian-language sources tend to observe the results of massacre, Chinese-language narratives usually record their prevention. The second element relates to the virtuous subjects' arguments in opposing such tactics, which often stress that only where rebellion reflected a population's 'true nature' should they be killed.<sup>34</sup> These combine in accounts where virtuous subjects either entirely prevent this sanguinary chastisement, or limit it to deviant individuals or groups blamed for rebellion or resistance.

This is neatly expressed in the *Yuanshi* biography of Jia Tükel Buqa, which, though beyond the scope of our sample, identifies precisely the logic we tend to see in our accounts.<sup>35</sup> Here we see Tükel Buqa, opposed by unidentified people, urging mercy for northern populations caught up in Nayan's 1287 rebellion:

Those of Qanggai are basically our people, and someone led them into rebellion; how could it be their true nature? Moreover according to the ways of war killing the surrendered is inauspicious, we should pardon them.”<sup>36</sup>

Tükel Buqa's primary argument, common across *shendaobei* and *Yuanshi*, neatly expresses this idea about the rebel leadership being separate and deviant, leaving the 'true

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<sup>33</sup> In Yelü Chucai's biographies we see 'various' or 'all' the 'generals' 諸將 squabbling over loot at Lingwu and an unnamed multitude 衆 opposing his amnesty plan; see sections 2.1 and 2.2 above.

<sup>34</sup> Atwood (2016).

<sup>35</sup> The episode is found at Yu Ji, 'Jia zhongyin gong shendaobei', p. 277; *Daoyuan leigao*, 40.26b-27a; *YRCK*, vi, pp. 235-36; *Yuanshi* 169.3970-3971.

<sup>36</sup> Yu Ji, 'Jia zhongyin gong shendaobei', p. 277; *Daoyuan leigao*, 40.26b-27a, in *YRCK*, vi, pp. 235-36: Those of Qanggai are our people, and someone led them into rebellion; how could it be their true nature? Now they come to surrender, we should console and preserve them; this is undoubtedly the way of righteousness and benevolence. Those who secretly counsel killing the surrendered; according to the ways of war, this is inauspicious, can it be permitted? 亢海吾人也，或率之以叛，豈其心哉？今來降，宜撫而存之，固仁義之道也。或竊 [27a/236] 議將殺降者，於兵法為不祥，其可為乎？

*Yuanshi* 169.3970-3971:

杭海本吾人，或誘之以叛，豈其本心哉！且兵法，殺降不祥，宜赦之。

nature' of the populace untainted. His second point differs between the texts, however. The *Yuanshi* quote is condensed, omitting an extra element appealing to the 'way of righteous benevolence' 仁義之道 and a more direct condemnation of an anonymous group calling for executions.<sup>37</sup> These amendments shift the basis away from a positive duty towards the humane and towards the 'auspicious' and therefore perhaps the militarily expedient; they also shift the focus away from transgressive violent elements and towards Tükel Buqa's persuasive power.

The biographies of the northern Chinese general Yan Shi present a double episode which sees him saving thousands of people. Yan Shi 嚴實 (1182-1240), a northern Chinese warlord who joined the Mongols and wielded considerable influence, is also known for establishing a haven for former Jin intellectuals in Dongping, involving a number of people featured alongside him in the *Mingchen shilue*.<sup>38</sup> The *Yuanshi* biography follows the broad structure of Su Tianjue's version, omitting only sections of praise toward the end. The biographies portray Yan Shi's salvation of the populace of Zhangde 彰德 and Puzhou 濮州 after their 1225 conquest by Muqali's brother Daisun (identified merely as Junwang 郡王 in *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue*).<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Yu Ji, 'Jia zhongyin gong shendaobei', p. 277; *Daoyuan leigao*, 40.26b-27a, at *YRCK*, vi, pp. 235-36: Those who secretly counsel killing the surrendered; according to the ways of war, this is inauspicious, can it be permitted?

或竊 [27a/236] 議將殺降者，於兵法為不祥，其可為乎？

<sup>38</sup> See *Mingchen shilue* 6.91-95; *Yuanshi* 148.3505-8; *YR*, p. 2104; Hsiao Ch'i-Ching, 'Yen Shih (1182-1240)', *Papers on Far Eastern History*, 33 (1986), 113-27. Yan Shi's *Mingchen shilue* biography, arranged in thirteen sections after a 64-character preface, draws exclusively on the *shendaobei* by Yuan Haowen. See Yuan Haowen 元好問, 'Dongping xingtai yangong shendaobei' 東平行臺嚴公神道碑, *QYW*, i, pp. 584-88.

<sup>39</sup> The episode is found at Yuan Haowen, 'Dongping xingtai yangong shendaobei', p. 586; *Mingchen shilue* 6.94; *Yuanshi* 148.3506. On Daisun, see *YR*, p. 2340.

The first account, in all versions, lays out the problem in reports that Daisun was angry at Zhangde's 'repeated rebellion', and describes him expelling tens of thousands of people with the intent to slaughter them.<sup>40</sup> Shi's response to this is to argue that the populace were distinct from the military, without strength, and had been forced into disobedience; again essentially arguing that rebellion was not part of their true nature.<sup>41</sup> The outcome of Yan Shi's intervention is expressed slightly differently between our texts. *Shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue* report that Daisun followed his advice and released the populace without punishment, while the *Yuanshi* compilers opted for brevity, reporting only that Daisun followed the advice; a small intervention that might be read, despite the clear implication that the populace were spared, as decreasing the focus on their wellbeing, and thus the importance of their experience.<sup>42</sup>

The next part of the account sees Daisun, having conquered Puzhou 濮州, again wishing to engage in slaughter.<sup>43</sup> Here Yan Shi's response is similar in its separation of the 'common people' 百姓 from the military, but differs in arguing, in pragmatic terms, that

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<sup>40</sup> Yuan Haowen, 'Dongping xingtai yangong shendaobei', p. 586:

彰德既下，又破水柵。郡王怒其反復，驅老幼數萬欲屠之。

*Mingchen shilue* 6.94:

初，彰德既下，又破水柵，郡王怒其反復，驅老幼數萬欲屠之。

*Yuanshi* 148.3506:

初，彰德既下，又破水柵，帶孫怒其反覆，驅老幼數萬欲屠之。

<sup>41</sup> Yuan Haowen, 'Dongping xingtai yangong shendaobei', p. 586:

公解之曰：「此國家舊民。吾兵力不能及，為所脅從，果何罪邪？」

*Mingchen shilue* 6.94:

公曰：「此國家舊民，吾兵力不能及，為所脅從，果何罪耶？」

*Yuanshi* 148.3506:

實曰：「此國家舊民，吾兵力不能及，為所脅從，果何罪耶！」

<sup>42</sup> Yuan Haowen, 'Dongping xingtai yangong shendaobei', p. 586; *Mingchen shilue* 6.94:

王從公言，釋不誅。

*Yuanshi* 148.3506:

帶孫從之。

<sup>43</sup> Yuan Haowen, 'Dongping xingtai yangong shendaobei', p. 586:

繼破濮州，復有水柵之議。

*Mingchen shilue* 6.94; *Yuanshi* 148.3506:

繼破濮州，復欲屠之，

slaughter would be less desirable than allowing the populace to continue as providers of fodder.<sup>44</sup> The result is expressed identically among our texts; all report that those saved in Puzhou were numbered in the tens of thousands; reporting success to the reader in purely humanitarian terms.<sup>45</sup>

The biographies of the celebrated general and statesman Bayan of the Bārin (1236-1294) make this avoidance of bloodshed their defining theme. Bayan, a senior member of Qubilai's court from 1265, fulfilled both civil and military roles before commanding the final Song campaign through 1275 and 1276, later operating on the northern borders in the 1280s and performing a central role in Temür Öljeitü's 1294 succession.<sup>46</sup> The *Yuanshi* compilers used Bayan's biography to describe the conquest of the Song, bringing in substantial sections from Bayan's own account of the Song conquest. This is prefaced

<sup>44</sup> Yuan Haowen, 'Dongping xingtai yangong shendaobei', p. 586:

彰德既下，又破水柵。郡王怒其反復，驅老幼數萬欲屠之。公解之曰：「此國家舊民。吾兵力不能及，為所脅從，果何罪邪？」王從公言，釋不誅。繼破濮州，復有水柵之議。公為言：「百姓未嘗敵我，豈可與兵人並戮之？不若留之農種，以給芻秣。」濮人免者又數萬。

*Mingchen shilue* 6.94:

初，彰德既下，又破水柵，郡王怒其反復，驅老幼數萬欲屠之。公曰：「此國家舊民，吾兵力不能及，為所脅從，果何罪耶？」王從公言，釋不誅。繼破濮州，復欲屠之，公言：「百姓未嘗敵我，豈可與兵人併戮之。不若留農種，以給芻秣。」濮人免者又數萬。

<sup>45</sup> Yuan Haowen, 'Dongping xingtai yangong shendaobei', p. 586:

濮人免者又數萬。

*Mingchen shilue* 6.94:

濮人免者又數萬。

*Yuanshi* 148.3506:

濮人免者又數萬。其後於曹、楚丘、定陶、上黨皆然。

<sup>46</sup> On Bayan, see *Yuanshi* 127.3099-3116; *Mingchen shilue* 2.16-23; *YR*, p. 2270; *RPN*, pp. 1594-95; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, pp. 176-77; C. C. Hsiao, "Bayan", in *ISK*, pp. 584-607; Francis Woodman Cleaves, 'The Biography of Bayan of the Bārin in the *Yüan Shih*', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 19 (1956), 185-303. Bayan's *Mingchen shilue* biography starts with a 122-character preface, followed by 30 sections of main text (2,801 characters), of which the inscription by Yuan Mingshan provides 25 sections (2,292 characters, 82%), the *miaobei* by Liu Minzhong 劉敏中 4 sections (240 characters, 9%) and one section (269 characters, 10%) from the collected works of Li Qian 李謙, as yet unidentified. Two sections of annotation are drawn from Wang Yun's collected works (147 characters, 82%) and the same author's *Yutang jiahua* 玉堂嘉話 (33 characters, 18%). Yuan Mingshan 元明善, 'Chengxiang huai'an zhongwu wang bei' 丞相淮安忠武王碑, in *QYW*, xxiv, 346-52; *Qingheji* 3.24a-29b; *YRCK*, v, pp. 174-77. The *miaobei* by Liu Minzhong 劉敏中 is preserved as 'Chici huai'an zhongwu wang miaobei' 敕賜淮安忠武王廟碑, in *QYW*, xi, pp. 480-83. On Liu Minzhong 劉敏中 (1243-1318), courtesy name Duanfu 端甫; hao Zhongan 中庵, see *Yuanshi* 178.4136-37; *YR*, p. 1849.



by an account of Qubilai's famous injunction to his general to emulate the prominent tenth century commander Cao Bin 曹彬 and to conquer the territories of the Song with minimal harm to the populace.<sup>47</sup> *Yuanshi* edits to this, though clearly placing it in a military context, portray Qubilai requesting a surprisingly gentle and harmonious approach to conquest.<sup>48</sup> The two versions of Qubilai's address to Bayan each propose suggest a different balance of idealism and pragmatism in the pacification of the south, and thereby set up differing ideals of the merciful conqueror.

The *Mingchen shilue*, drawing on Bayan's *Wangbei*, includes a strong element of instrumentalized humanitarianism, as Qubilai is portrayed arguing that Cao Bin succeeded because of his mercy and unwillingness to kill:

The Emperor said, "Cao Bin took no pleasure in killing people and pacified Jiangnan 江南 in a single sweep. You, taking Our present intentions to heart, will act as Bin anciently did, and will not cause my people to suffer untowardly the spear-point or knife-blade."<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> See Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang huai'an zhongwu wang bei', p. 347; *Qingheji* 3.25a; *YRCK*, v, p. 175; Cleaves, "Bayan", 208-9, 277; *Yuanshi* 127.3100. On Cao Bin, see Toqto et. al., *Songshi* 宋史 (*Song History*) (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1977), 258.8977-83. Qubilai's order is mentioned specifically in Ariq Qaya's biographies, examined in detail below, which see the Uyghur general refer to the Qagan ordering Bayan "to avoid killing as did Cao Bin" 以曹彬不殺. The speech is discussed by Wright, but the source of his version is unclear; see David Curtis Wright, 'Debates in the Field During Bayan's Campaigns Against Southern Song China, 1274-1276', in Peter A. Lorge (ed.), *Debating War in Chinese History*, History of Warfare, 83 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 141-62 (p. 144).

<sup>48</sup> Song Lian's preface to Bayan's *Mingchen shilue* biography highlights the Cao Bin link, alongside a discussion of might and benevolence. See Song Lian, *Qianxiqianji* 潛溪前集, in *Songlian quanji*, 1.2: 淮忠武王伯顏

淮王桓桓，凝峻寡言。一言之間，如雷破山。及履上台，四國爾瞻。誓師南征，大亂汝戡。三軍飛渡，目無江南。前扼其吭，宋膽自寒。老梟既夜遁，直擣臨安。俘厥君臣，大敷帝仁。皞皞熙熙，市肆不移。宋鼎已易，而民弗知。崇德報功，王謙讓弗居：「此天子德威，臣何能為？」古有曹彬，於王見之。

<sup>49</sup> Cleaves, "Bayan", 277:

The Emperor said, "Because Ts'ao Pin 曹彬 disliked killing people, he pacified Chiang-nan 江南 in a single movement. Thou wilt understand Our desire of the present and will emulate the deeds of [Ts'ao] Pin of old. Do not cause my children (赤子) (=people) to suffer bloodshed untowardly."

*Mingchen shilue* 2.17, drawing on Bayan's *Wangbei*, by Yuan Mingshan, at p. 347; *Qingheji* 3.25a; *YRCK*, v, p. 175:

上曰：「曹彬不嗜殺人，一舉而定江南。汝其今體朕心，古法彬事，毋使吾赤子橫罹鋒刃。」

Cleaves' translation of the *Wangbei* emphasized and made overt an implied causative conjunction between Cao Bin's unwillingness to indulge in bloodshed and his success in conquest.<sup>50</sup> The *Yuanshi* compilers made a number of micro-level interventions, including making the causative conjunction clear. In Cleaves' translation:

In the seventh moon, in the autumn [4 August-1 September], when he was taking leave of the Throne, Shih-tsu instructed him, saying, "Formerly Ts'ao Pin 曹彬, because of his dislike of killing, pacified Chiang-nan 江南. Thou wilt understand Our desire and be our Ts'ao Pin."<sup>51</sup>

First, inserting *yi* 以, the compilers made a more definite overt link between Cao Bin's restraint and military success. Secondly, omitting the reference to the strategic value of Cao Bin's single decisive sweep downplayed the martial nature of that success.

Moreover, we see the alteration of 'pacified' *ding* 定, a term with connotations of (strong and stable) settlement and suppression, to 'pacified' *ping* 平, a term with overtones of peace and harmony. This shift towards a gentler characterization is reinforced by the omission of Qubilai's statement of what Cao Bin's example meant, which, asking that the populace not "suffer untowardly" implies the acceptability of a degree of military force.<sup>52</sup> The *Yuanshi* amendments thus substantially alter the balance of the episode; although the context is clearly martial, the Qagan's revised order seems intended to avoid all killing rather than making a carefully judged employment of violence. In the *liezhuan*, this is expected to result in harmony, too, rather than a peace based on suppression and force.

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<sup>50</sup> Cleaves, "Bayan", 277:

The Emperor said, "Because Ts'ao Pin 曹彬 disliked killing people, he pacified Chiang-nan 江南 in a single movement.

Qubilai's order is mentioned specifically in Ariq Qaya's biographies, examined in detail below, which see the Uyghur general refer to the Qagan ordering Bayan "to avoid killing as did Cao Bin" 以曹彬不殺.

<sup>51</sup> Cleaves, "Bayan", 208-9. *Yuanshi* 127.3100:

秋七月，陞辭，世祖諭之曰：「昔曹彬以不嗜殺平江南，汝其體朕心，為吾曹彬可也。」

<sup>52</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 2.17, drawing on Bayan's *Wangbei*, by Yuan Mingshan, at p. 347; *Qingheji* 3.25a; *YRCK*, v, p. 175:

毋使吾赤子橫罹鋒刃。」

The biographies of the famous Jalayir general Muqali (1170-1223) provide an example of the instrumental, or pragmatic, argument that mercy produces results. One of Činggis Qan's 'Four Stalwarts' (Mo. *dörben külügüt*) alongside Boğorču, Boroqul and Čilağun, Muqali was a key figure in the Činggisid conquest and consolidation of Jin territory between 1211 and his death in 1223.<sup>53</sup> Faced with the recently surrendered Jin city of Beijing 北京 in 1215, Muqali was reportedly angry, wishing to bury 坑 the populace alive.<sup>54</sup> It is notable that, although the *Mingchen shilue* does not seek to explain this anger, the *Yuanshi* compilers added a phrase reporting that this was due to their delay in surrendering. Likely intended to explain or soften this condemnatory element of the account; its absence in the earlier texts might suggest that such anger was not questioned at the time of their composition.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> On Muqali, see *Yuanshi* 120.2955-60; *Mingchen shilue* 1.1-8; *YR*, p. 2482 (under 'Muqari'); *RPN*, p. 1493; and also Igor de Rachewiltz, 'Muqali (1170-1223), Bōl (1197-1220), Tas (1212-1239), An-T'ung (1245-1293)', in *ISK*, pp. 3-12; de Rachewiltz, 'Muqali, Bōl, Tas and An-T'ung', *Papers on Far Eastern History*, 15 (1977), 45-62; Kwanten, 'The Career of Muqali: A Reassessment'; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, p. 161. After a 51-character preface Muqali's biography is arranged into twenty-five sections. The main text comprises 2,823 characters, to which the lost family biography (*Shijia* 世家) by Yuan Yongzhen 元永貞 contributes 18 sections (2766 characters, 98%) and the *xinglu* by someone identified as Zhang Kuangyan 張匡衍 only one section (57 characters, 2%). Following de Rachewiltz on this identification. Yuan Yongzhen is not found in Wang's index of Yuan literary figures; Li reports only that he was appointed to the Censorate 御史 during the *Yanyou* 延祐 period (1314-20), and the *Yuanshi* Annals of Taiding report that a Junior Supervisor at the Ministry of Rites 禮部員外郎 of the same name addressed court on the subject of Tegši and Temüder's crimes on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 1325. See *QYW*, xxxv, p. 292; *Yuanshi* 29.660. Muqali's *Mingchen shilue* biography exhibits a prominent tendency to insert notes within excerpts, a practice seen elsewhere in the work by no means the norm. Its 694 characters of notes are arranged in five sections, to which the *xinglu* contributes three sections (319 characters, 46%), the celebratory stele by Yao Sui (identified as 牧菴姚公撰招撫使王興秀碑) one (268 characters, 39%), the 使趙璫碑 another (15 characters, 2%), and a final section which remains unidentified (92 characters, 13%). On Yao Sui 姚燧 (1238-1313), courtesy name Duanfu 端甫, the nephew of Yao Shu, see *Yuanshi* 174.4057-60; *YR*, p. 733.

<sup>54</sup> This Beijing is the Jin northern capital, present-day Daming City 大名城 in Liaoning, known as Daning 大寧 under Mongol and Ming rule. See de Rachewiltz, *Secret History*, ii, p. 921. The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 1.3; *Yuanshi* 119.2931.

<sup>55</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 1.3:

王怒，欲坑之

*Yuanshi* 119.2931:

木華黎怒其降緩欲坑之

Muqali's deputy general Xiao Esen (a Kitan commander also known as Shimo Esen) makes a fairly standard instrumental argument for showing mercy to the conquered, partially on the basis that killing the surrendered would prevent future capitulation.<sup>56</sup>

*Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* report this central point very similarly and both accounts state that Muqali accepted the advice. The *Mingchen shilue* reports:

Xiao Esen 蕭阿先 spoke to [Muqali], saying, "Beijing 北京 is an important garrison for Liaoxi 遼西; we ought to pacify and reassure in order to ease the expectations of the masses. If, now they have begun to surrender, we bury them, what of submitting defenders in future?"<sup>57</sup>

The *Yuanshi* version cuts vital elements from this speech. Shifting its basis to deal only with the medium-term military imperative, it therefore either makes this a valid priority or, perhaps, positions Muqali as an individual to whom representations must be based on military logic:

Xiao Esen said: "Beijing is an important garrison for Liaoxi; if, having surrendered, we bury them, how will there be surrenders later on?"<sup>58</sup>

The element of Xiao Esen's speech in the *Mingchen shilue* dropped from the *Yuanshi* version, to the effect that the conquerors "ought to pacify and reassure in order to ease the expectations of the masses", is something to which we return below. The speech ascribed to Xiao Esen in his own *Yuanshi* biography is not quite like either of these, but closer to the version in Muqali's *Yuanshi* biography than that found in the *Mingchen shilue*.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 1.3; *Yuanshi* 119.2931. Xiao or Shimo Esen (1177-1217), served under Muqali in the campaign against the Jin, prominently at Dongjing and Beijing. See *Yuanshi* 150.3541-43; *YR*, p. 275.

<sup>57</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 1.3:

蕭阿先說王曰：「北京為遼西重鎮，當撫摩以慰衆望。今始降而即坑之，後詎有降者乎？」

<sup>58</sup> *Yuanshi* 119.2931:

蕭也先曰：「北京為遼西重鎮，既降而坑之，後豈有降者乎？」

<sup>59</sup> *Yuanshi* 150.3542:

歲乙亥，移師圍北京，城久不下，及城破，將屠之。也先曰：「王師拯人水火，彼既降而復屠之，則未下者，人將死守，天下何時定乎！」因以上聞，赦之。

The accounts then demonstrate the practical effectiveness of this advice by reporting the surrender of two further areas, Xingzhongfu 興中府 and Jinzhou 錦州, achieved in both cases by the rebellion of their populace, who executed local officials unwilling to submit.<sup>60</sup> Here the *Yuanshi* provides more specific detail than the *Mingchen shilue*, stating that a ‘Wulibu’ 兀里卜, the official in charge of Xingzhong, had killed one of Muqali’s envoys.<sup>61</sup> There are two elements to the instrumentalization of humanitarian concern here. First, the accounts commonly depict a subject – often the primary subject, but sometimes, as in Muqali’s case, someone else – explaining the military benefits of mercy to a bloody-minded commander, and thereby negotiating for the humanitarian imperative via the logic of conquest. This is therefore usually expressed in pragmatic, rather than idealized, terms. The second level of instrumentalization, occurring in the portrayal itself, is aimed more directly at the reader. This is the demonstration, usually found in a result clause, and expressed in the narratorial voice, of humanitarian action’s practical effect.<sup>62</sup>

We find both elements in Muqali’s mercy to the populace of Beijing; advice from Xiao Esen, delivered to Muqali and reported to the reader, lays out the advantages of mercy in the pursuit of conquest; the reader ‘watches’ the general being persuaded in the diegetic

<sup>60</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 1.3:

是歲，興中府民殺守將烏里卜，推石天應為帥，天應來降，以為興中尹。錦州張鯨殺節度使，自立為臨海郡王，至是來降。[世家]

*Yuanshi* 119.2931:

遣高德玉、劉蒲速窩兒招諭興中府，同知兀里卜不從，殺蒲速窩兒，德玉走免。未幾，吏民殺兀里卜，推土豪石天應為帥，舉城降，奏為興中尹、兵馬都提控。錦州張鯨聚眾十餘萬，殺節度使，稱臨海郡王，至是來降。

<sup>61</sup> ‘Wulibu’ is not visible elsewhere; see Qiu Shusen, *Yuanshi cidian*, p. 49.

<sup>62</sup> Song Lian’s preface to Muqali’s *Mingchen shilue* biography lyrically relates the commander’s martial prowess, but also states that where he restrained his hand, people surrendered. See Song Lian, *Qianxiqianji* 潛溪前集, in *Songlian quanji*, 1.2:

魯國忠武王木華黎

阿難之河，白氣如虹。王生其中，虎首虬鬚，為天下雄。光輔帝極，憲天惟聰。如鷹之揚，如鼙之發，如雲之從。右執大斧，左囊彤弓。鐵壘層層，一劈而崩。適駿有聲，諸部用平。相彼完顏，逞于淫凶。我伐用張，旗鼓有容，僵屍百餘里，澮河為紅。太行以南，斂手就降[叶音紅]。帝錄其功，錫茆土之封。丹書鐵券，與國始終，傳世于無窮。

world of the account. The description of subsequent surrenders in Jinzhou and Xingzhong confirms the effectiveness of this strategy by presenting evidence. This proof is not necessarily delivered to Muqali in that diegetic world as part of Muqali's decision-making process. Although understood as something likely to have helped persuade Muqali of the rectitude and expertise (morally and militarily) of his advisor by demonstrating the wisdom of his approach, its persuasive impact is primarily directed at the reader. This seems to position the reader as someone expected to be receptive to such concerns, rather than expecting humanitarianism to be sufficient as a principle and good in itself. It should, of course, be recognized that these peaceful surrenders imply further avoidance of bloodshed. The terms of their recording, however, relate to military success.

The biographies of Ariq Qaya (1227-1286) provide contrasting views on mercy and massacre as Činggisid policy and show considerable micro-level editing by both Su Tianjue and the *Yuanshi* compilers. An Uyghur general and official, Ariq Qaya served as Regional Investigation Commissioner for Henan, General Regional Military Commander for Han Armies in the final Song campaigns, Senior Chief Councillor of the Central Secretariat 中書右丞相 and Privy Councillor, among other posts.<sup>63</sup> In describing the assault on Tanzhou 潭州 (in present-day Hunan) in 1275-76 during the final Song

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<sup>63</sup> On Ariq Qaya, see *Yuanshi* 128.3124-28; *Mingchen shilue* 2.31-37; *YR*, p. 2219; *RPN*, p. 8; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, p. 177; Wang Enchun 王恩春, 'Beiting weiwu'er lishi mingren zai yuanchao de yingxiang' 北庭畏兀儿历史名人在元朝的影响 (The Influence of Famous Beiting Uighurs on the Yuan Court), *Heilongjiang shizhi*, 9 (2011), 3-4, 13 (3). After a preface of 95 characters his *Mingchen shilue* biography comprises 17 sections of main body text (2,487 characters), of which 15 sections (2,093 characters, 84%) are taken from Ariq Qaya's *shendaobei*, by Yao Sui (Yao Sui 姚燧, 'Huguang xingsheng zuochengxiang shendaobei' 湖廣行省左丞相神道碑, in *QYW*, ix, 551-58; Mu'anji (*Yaosuiji*), 13.187-93; *YWL*, 59.1a-10b), which likewise forms the basis of the *Yuanshi* biography. A further 2 sections (243 characters, 10%) are from a lost *gongbei* by Liu Zheng 劉整. An unidentified section of 103 characters (4%) appears to be an interjection by Su Tianjue. On Liu Zheng 劉整 (1213-1275), courtesy name Wuzhong 武仲, posthumous title Wumin 武敏, see *Yuanshi* 161.3785-88; *YR*, p. 1806. He is not found in *QYW*.

campaign, Ariq Qaya's biographies provide contrasting accounts of the Činggisid 'massacre policy' referred to obliquely in the *Yuanshi* explanation of Muqali's anger.<sup>64</sup>

We have three distinct versions of this episode. The *shendaobei* version is distinct and somewhat exceptional in that it portrays Ariq Qaya and his generals plotting together in order to match Qubilai's Cao Bin order:

After three days they took it. Plotting 謀 with the various generals he said:  
 "According to the rule of the dynasty, a conquered city must be slaughtered..".<sup>65</sup>

In the *Mingchen shilue* account Ariq Qaya, introducing the idea of this policy, is not discussing it with them, but addressing them. In both cases he goes on to oppose the imposition of this rule in the specific case of Tanzhou, but only after Su Tianjue's intervention is he portrayed addressing (and thereby instructing) the generals, rather than working for humanitarianism alongside them.<sup>66</sup>

In the *Yuanshi* the clause raising the issue of this rule is omitted from Ariq Qaya's speech and instead we read, as a narrative report, that "the various generals wished to massacre".<sup>67</sup> This intervention makes absolute the separation between these transgressive (if anonymous) individuals and the virtuous subject. It also makes their bloody desire, rather than a systemic issue of longer term policy, the problem to which Ariq Qaya had to react. In both versions, Ariq Qaya's speech recommending mercy refers back to Qubilai's

<sup>64</sup> The episode is found at Yao Sui, 'Huguang xingsheng zuochengxiang shendaobei', p. 555; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 13.190; *YWL*, 59.6b; *Mingchen shilue* 2.34; *Yuanshi* 128.3127.

<sup>65</sup> Yao Sui, 'Huguang xingsheng zuochengxiang shendaobei', p. 555; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 13.190; *YWL*, 59.6b:

三日而拔。謀諸將曰：「國家為制，城拔必屠。」

<sup>66</sup> Yao Sui, 'Huguang xingsheng zuochengxiang shendaobei', p. 555; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 13.190; *YWL*, 59.6b; *Mingchen shilue* 2.34:

三日而拔。語諸將曰：「國家為制，城拔必屠。」

<sup>67</sup> *Yuanshi* 128.3127:

諸將欲屠之，阿里海牙曰：「是州生齒數百萬口，若悉殺之，非上諭伯顏以曹彬不殺意也，其屈法生之。」復發倉以食饑者。

famous instructions to Bayan, and in both versions Ariq Qaya speaks of bending the law 屈法 in order to spare the populace.<sup>68</sup>

Turning to the result clause, *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue* report that Ariq Qaya opened granaries to feed the starving and then that further settlements surrendered, the implication being that their capture was due to these merciful actions.<sup>69</sup> This is clearly an example of ‘applied’ humanitarianism, where the imperative, as presented to the reader, is effectively placed in the service of conquest. The *Yuanshi* goes some way beyond this, presenting a different list of settlements and adding further content to alter this definition of success:

He opened the granaries in order to feed those who were hungry. Sending envoys to make proclamations in the various prefectures of Chen 郴, Quan 全, Dao 道, Guiyang 桂陽, Yong 永, Heng 衡, Wugang 武岡, Baoqing 寶慶, Yuan 袁, Shao 韶 and Nanxiong 南雄, their defending officials led the populace out to meet [the envoys], saying “We hear that the Grand Councillor embodies the well-born righteousness of the emperor, not killing prisoners, touching not a feather of that which they pass; the populace now, having again experienced the great peace, offer their esteem and come to submit.” By the ‘Grand Councillor’, they were referring to Ariq Qaya. He presented a memorial [recommending] that they employ all the surrendering officials, exactly as in Jiangling 江陵.<sup>70</sup>

This intervention significantly expands the description of peaceful submission employed as the outcome in *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue*. Retaining the instrumental and essentially military description of success in terms of territory taken, the submission of

<sup>68</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 2.34-35:

是州生齒繁夥，口數百萬，悉魚肉[35]之，非帝諭伯顏『以曹彬不殺』者也。其屈法生之。」

*Yuanshi* 128.3127:

「是州生齒數百萬口，若悉殺之，非上諭伯顏以曹彬不殺意也，其屈法生之。」

<sup>69</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Huguang xingsheng zuochengxiang shendaobei’, p. 555; *Mu’anzi (Yaosuiji)* 13.190; *Mingchen shilue* 2.35:

發倉以賑餓人。傳檄郴、全、道、桂陽、永、衡、武岡、寶慶，江西袁，連，皆下之。

<sup>70</sup> *Yuanshi* 128.3127:

發倉以食饑者。遣使徇郴、全、道、桂陽、永、衡、武岡、寶慶、袁、韶、南雄諸郡，其守臣皆率其民來迎，曰「聞丞相體皇帝好生之德，毋殺虜，所過皆秋毫無犯，民今復見太平，各奉表來降。」丞相，稱阿里海牙也。奏官其降官，皆如江陵。



those settlements becomes an opportunity for the populace to offer praise for Ariq Qaya's humanitarian dedication. This, paralleling the treatment in Muqali's biography, indicates that mercy and feeding the starving are intended to be seen, in disinterested and purely principled terms, as sufficient result in themselves.

Song Zizhen's biographies quote him explaining the logic behind extending mercy to enemies to Qubilai Qaghan in 1259.<sup>71</sup> The opening of Zizhen's answer blends pragmatism and principle, arguing that the realm was "mighty in arms and possessed of provisions, [but] in terms of magnanimity not yet in harmony".<sup>72</sup> He goes on to argue, in the *Mingchen shilue*, that the population of 'all-under-heaven' are "clamouring and wailing having nothing to rely on, and therefore those who defy [your] orders especially have only death to fear".<sup>73</sup> Zizhen's solution is to extend mercy to those who surrender and to those 'unwilling accomplices' 脅從者 of rebellion, the latter returning to Atwood's point about assessing and establishing the 'true nature' of a 'rebellious' populace.<sup>74</sup> It is notable that in both versions the result of such a policy, according to Zizhen and addressed to

<sup>71</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 10.202; *Yuanshi* 159.3736.

<sup>72</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.202:

公對曰：「本朝威武有餘，仁恩未洽。

*Yuanshi* 159.3736:

對曰：「本朝威武有餘，仁德未洽。

<sup>73</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.202:

天下之民嗷嗷失依，所以拒命者，特畏死爾。若投降者不殺，脅從者勿治，則宋之百城，馳檄而下，太平之業，可指日而待也。」上善其言，禮遇甚厚。[神道碑]

*Yuanshi* 159.3736:

In the year *jiwei* 己未 [1259], Shizu [Qubilai Qaghan] [launched an] expedition southward, and summoned Zizhen to Pu 濮, asking him about the general plan. He replied, saying, "The existing dynasty is mighty in arms and possessed of provisions, [but] in terms of magnanimity it is not yet in harmony. Therefore those who defy orders especially fear death only, and if those who surrender are not killed, and unwilling accomplices are not punished, then the Song prefectures and towns may circulate the proclamation of war and be pacified." Shizu was delighted with his words.

歲所以拒命者，特畏死爾，若投降者不殺，脅從者勿治，則宋之郡邑可傳檄而定也。」世祖善其言。

<sup>74</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.202:

若投降者不殺，脅從者勿治，

*Yuanshi* 159.3736:

若投降者不殺，脅從者勿治，

Qubilai in the same speech (rather than to the reader this time), would be the pacification of the regions in question.<sup>75</sup>

Zhang Dehui's biographies include another variation on the balance between disinterested and instrumentalized humanitarianism, in describing the effect of Dehui's advice on the treatment of the populace of Guangzhou 光州 in 1235 and more specifically a number of deserters, who had walled themselves in.<sup>76</sup> Here both versions relate that Dehui caused these people to be summoned to surrender rather than attacked; the outcome of this was indeed their submission, but both versions then report that this saved a great number of lives – in the *Mingchen shilue* these were 'beyond counting' 不可勝計, and in the *Yuanshi* 'extremely numerous' 甚衆.<sup>77</sup> This formulation highlights both the practical effectiveness of his strategy and its humanitarian impact.

### 5.3 Massacre logics (2): partial clemency

Another aspect of the portrayal of massacre is appeals for partial clemency, where, often after the suppression of rebellion, our idealized subjects petition to restrict execution to ringleaders. The biographies of Zhang Hongfan likewise portray him restricting

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<sup>75</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.202:

則宋之百城，馳檄而下，太平之業，可指日而待也。」上善其言，禮遇甚厚。

*Yuanshi* 159.3736:

則宋之郡邑可傳檄而定也。」世祖善其言。

<sup>76</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 10.205; *Yuanshi* 163.3823.

<sup>77</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.205:

乙未，從開府南征，凡籌畫調度，倚公為重。軍士多避役亡去，獲必戮以厲餘者，公極言其不可，後配之穴城而已。光州下，蕪山農民團結為固，開府令攻之，公曰：「鄉民為自保計，當以禍福開諭，如或旅拒，加兵未晚。」從之，皆相繼來降，全活者不可勝計。

*Yuanshi* 163.3823:

歲乙未，從天澤南征，籌畫調發，多出德輝。天澤將誅逃兵，德輝救止，配令穴城。光州蕪山農民為寨以自固，天澤議攻之，德輝請招之降，全活甚衆。

punishment to the leaders of a revolt that took place after the Song surrender.<sup>78</sup> This example is notable in that the *Yuanshi* compilers, in their considerable condensation of the account, omit the foundation texts' mention of a 'multitude' 衆 requesting more wholesale slaughter.<sup>79</sup> The compilers thereby shifted the narrative away from the pattern seen in Chucai's biography where the subject and their humanitarian instincts are elevated over (in this case anonymous) secondary subjects.

Čerig's biographies, recording his successes against the bandit Ou Gou 歐狗, who had apparently been terrorizing parts of the southeast, again stress the practical benefits of mercy towards unruly or criminal elements.<sup>80</sup> Receiving substantial micro-level reworking at the hands of the *Yuanshi* compilers, the report was transmitted largely intact in terms of its overall structure. It is notable that, considering this level of adjustment, Čerig's speech promising mercy to surrendering bandits is portrayed delivering practical results, and so its impact is instrumental rather than disinterested. The *Mingchen shilue*

<sup>78</sup> The episode, dated to 1276, is found at Yu Ji, 'Huainan xianwu wang miaotangbei', p. 219; *Daoyuan leigao* 37.22a; *YRCK*, vi, p. 191; Wang Pan, 'Zhang hongfan mubei', pp. 298-99; *Mingchen shilue* 6.104; *Yuanshi* 156.3682.

<sup>79</sup> Yu Ji, 'Huainan xianwu wang miaotangbei', p. 219:

而十三年，浙東又叛，王力疾討之。師次台州，遣人持書往諭，守將殺使焚書。我師怒拔之，衆請屠城，王不許，誅其首禍者而已。台民至于今感之。

Wang Pan, 'Zhang hongfan mubei', pp. 298-99:

十三年，浙東叛，公奉行臺命往討之，行至台州，先 [299] 遣人持書以溫言告諭守將，曉以禍福。守將不聽，殺使者而焚其書，衆咸忿怒，攻破其城，將士皆言宜盡屠之，公曰：「執迷不聽命者，守將也，小民何與焉？」遂擒其渠魁戮之，餘並釋放不問，台人戴其德，以為更生之恩。宋相文天祥竄伏山谷，兵士得之，縛之麾下，公與語，嘉其不屈，節命釋其縛，待以客禮，仍為訪其族屬被俘者，悉還之。師還，授江東道宣慰使。是歲即入覲請兵討平嶺海之時也，事已見前，茲不重敘。

*Mingchen shilue* 6.104:

宋亡，其主既歸朝，而十三年浙東又叛，王力疾討之。師次台州，遣人持書往諭，守將殺使焚書，我師怒拔之。衆請屠城，王不許，誅其首禍者而已，台民至于今感之。[廟堂碑]

*Yuanshi* 156.3682:

In the thirteenth year [1276], Taizhou 台州 rebelled; they attacked and pacified it, only executing those leading it.

十三年，台州叛，討平之，誅其為首者而已。

<sup>80</sup> The episode is found at Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng Xu Guogong Shendaobei', p. 567; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 14.207-8; *Mingchen shilue* 4.69-70; *Yuanshi* 130.3162.

draws on Čerig's *shendaobei*, and, apart from a substantial unannounced cut at the beginning of the excerpt (dealing with honorary rank) transmits the episode verbatim.<sup>81</sup>

The vividly described account portrays Čerig solving the bandit problem without direct military engagement, instead employing troops to display imperial might.<sup>82</sup> This impression of strength is then exploited by his engineering an opportunity to address the rebels; in *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue*:

Some among the bandits pretended to surrender, to observe what they were up to, and were therefore liberally provided with wine and meat, food and drink, and told: "You formerly, because you were unable to bear corrupt officials and their bullying ways, absconded to dwell here; you can leave your mountain passes and return to farming and silkworms, as regular members of the populace. How could we call you rebels and add to the slaughter; [be] wives to the lonely, sons to the solitary, father and mother to the abandoned, and benefit their property."<sup>83</sup>

<sup>81</sup> The *Mingchen shilue* drops both an appointment and an honorary rank in selecting the excerpt; the former edit is made by starting the excerpt later, but the latter by excising text from within it. The *Yuanshi* compilers adopted the latter cut but not the former. Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng Xu Guogong Shendaobei', p. 567; *Mu'anji (Yaosuiji)* 14.207:

明日，拜御史中丞。無幾時，拜榮祿大夫、平章政事、行省福建，賜為兩金五十，銀五千。  
*Mingchen shilue* 4.69:

拜平章政事，行省福建，賜為兩金五十、銀五千。

*Yuanshi* 130.3162:

進拜御史中丞，俄陞福建行省平章政事，賜黃金五十兩、白金五千兩。

<sup>82</sup> Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei', p. 567; *Mu'anji (Yaosuiji)* 14.207-8; *Mingchen shilue* 4.69:

[Čerig] imposed strict order (lit. "When ordered to go, stopping is forbidden"), and the populace found convenience and ease. Only Ting 汀 and Zhang 漳, occupied by fierce bandits for many years, remained unpacified, so the gentleman personally led soldiers from the various garrisons, vowing to restrain them, not embezzling or oppressing, not trampling crops, not entering the dwellings of the populace, but only displaying the martial might of the emperor, passing their stockades without attacking, showing themselves entirely at leisure, in the day they surrounded them in the hills, in the night they released them in the fields, 'lowering the banners and muffling the drums'.

令行禁止，民便安之，惟汀、漳劇盜積歲未平。公身將諸戍之兵，申明約束，不貪勝，不蹂禾 [14.208] 稼，不入民舍，惟張皇武威，過柵不攻，示以整暇。晝則合圍山中，夜則稅野偃旗仆鼓。

*Yuanshi* 130.3162:

In Ting 汀 and Zhang 漳 the violent bandit Ou Gou 歐狗 had long been unpacified, but then he led troops on campaign against him, giving orders that troops must behave perfectly [lit. 'not hurt an autumn feather'] on their passage.

汀、漳劇盜歐狗久不平，遂引兵征之，號令嚴肅，所過秋毫無犯。

<sup>83</sup> Yao Sui, 'Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei', p. 567; *Mu'anji (Yaosuiji)* 14.207-8; *Mingchen shilue* 4.69-70:

賊或偽降覘其何為，乃豐酒肉飲食，曉曰：「汝昔由不堪汙吏侵暴，潛逃居此，能棄險而還耕桑，則平民矣。吾安忍被汝反名，而 [70] 加諸夷，寡人之妻，孤人之子，獨人父母，而利其財。」

This positions the bandits as victims, stressing their social value to family members and society more broadly. The *Yuanshi* amends this speech somewhat, altering the image of the ‘common person’:

He honoured and fed those who surrendered, consoling them and dispatching a message, saying, “How could I regard you as rebels? [You are] good people reacting to the tyranny of officials and bureaucrats. Now you have come in submission, you are common people and how could I have the heart to sin against you? They will return your fields and silkworms, and calm your communities; have no fear.”<sup>84</sup>

This formulation drops the emotional language of bonds to family and others, instead making a more straightforward opposition between virtuous populace and transgressive bureaucrats.

Both versions of the outcome emphasize Čerig’s success in pacifying the region in practical terms. As ever, the *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue* version is more verbose:

They were all released and submitted to him. The other stockades who heard of this led one another out. Their chief Ou Gou fled daily further south, the great army following him; after dragging out an ignoble existence in a small fort, his gang tied him up and delivered him to the army, the bloody blades only finding a single ear. From then on, for three thousand *li* 里 around, the bandit warnings never sounded, and the seat of honour in their halls was his only mark of approval.<sup>85</sup>

This version also underlines Čerig’s modesty and selflessness – his success seeks no further reward. The *Yuanshi* condenses this considerably:

When his [Ou Gou’s] camp heard this, they all submitted peacefully. Before long Ou Gou was delivered, bound, by his clique to the army, and beheaded as an example, but not one of those forced to follow him were executed; Ting and Zhang were pacified.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>84</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3162:

有降者則勞以酒食而慰遣之，曰：「吾意汝豈反者耶，良由官吏污暴所致。今既來歸，即為平民，吾安忍罪汝。其返汝耕桑，安汝田里，毋恐。」

<sup>85</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Pingzhangzheng xu guogong shendaobei’, pp. 567-68; *Mu’anji (Yaosuiji)* 14.207-8; *Mingchen shilue* 4.69-70:

悉縱歸之。他柵聞者相率以出，其渠歐狗新日戡南奔，大兵隨之，偷生隄中，其黨縛致于軍，血鋒刃者纔是一馘。自是方三千里，抱鼓不鳴，[568]正席其堂，畫諾而已。

<sup>86</sup> *Yuanshi* 130.3162:

他柵聞之，悉款附。未幾歐狗為其黨縛致于軍，梟首以徇，脅從者不戮一人，汀、漳平。

Both versions draw on the same logic we have seen throughout this section to position members of a populace vulnerable to condemnation as bandits and rebels as essentially virtuous but driven to desperation. Once again, the blame is placed on anonymous officials, and on the bandit leader, implicitly in the *shendaobei* and *Mingchen shilue*, but directly in the *Yuanshi*. Ou Gou's death is clearly presented as part of the solution, and his distance from the basically virtuous populace emphasized in the *liezhuan* by the addition of a character stating that he had 'coerced' 脅 them into rebellion.

It seems relatively clear that the *Yuanshi* intensifies the application of a logic which presents the broad populace 民 as virtuous and deserving. The compilers are ready, however, to define boundaries to this protected group, placing rebel influences beyond the margins. *Yuanshi* edits make the 'Mongol massacre' more normative than it was in the earlier versions, emphasizing violent impulses among generals and stressing the need to demonstrate practical as well as principled reasons for clemency. This practicality is frequently aimed at the reader, however, as much as at the participants in the campaigns reported. Our compilers were not, perhaps, entirely certain that principle alone would convince the officials and generals of the future. There were, however, exceptional honourable and acceptable outlets for blood-lust, and our next section further interrogates the position of force in defending the humanitarian.

#### 5.4 Governance for whom? Order versus ease?

The varied handling of Chucai's punitive response to the Yanjing bandits laid out multiple images of virtuous rule. The *shendaobei* emphasized order and obedience on the one hand and harmony on the other. The *Mingchen shilue* edits privileged order alone,

*Yuanshi* edits harmony.<sup>87</sup> We see our texts deploy the linked, but by no means identical, concepts of order and ease, and alongside this a strong tendency to oppose ‘profit’ to what we might call popular wellbeing. As we have seen, the advice proffered by Li Zhi to Qubilai characterized the standard Confucian contrast between the various *junzi* and the petty *xiaoren* as, respectively, ‘the prudent and cautious’ on the one hand, and those concerned with profit on the other.<sup>88</sup> We have identified a tendency to externalize a concern with profit and wealth by associating this with individuals and groups separated ethnically and, in the hands of the *Yuanshi* compilers, geographically, from a broadly virtuous and deserving populace.<sup>89</sup>

As we have seen, the *Yuanshi* compilers (and Su Tianjue) cut Chucai’s speech positioning heavy taxation as a practical danger to court revenue in favour of a discussion of its effect on the Qa’an’s subjects in disinterested humanitarian terms.<sup>90</sup> This shifted the ground of the policy discussion from pragmatic governance to humanitarian ideals. Činggisid rule involved both conquered and conquering in a set of relationships based on revenue and disbursement. After Möngke’s reforms, taxation included a *qubčiri* ‘poll tax’ based on Inner Asian precedents, applied to adult males and levied on an individual basis across the empire, alongside taxes on settled agriculture (*qalan*) and on commercial transactions.<sup>91</sup> These include the so-called *tamğa* tax, apparently named after the ‘seal’ applied to goods on which duty had been paid.<sup>92</sup> Alongside these requirements, populations also bore ongoing *alba* demands from the centre for corvée labour, military

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<sup>87</sup> See section 2.2 above.

<sup>88</sup> See *Mingchen shilue* 13.261 and section 3.1 above.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. the handling of Nizām al-Dīn in section 3.1.

<sup>90</sup> See section 2.3 above.

<sup>91</sup> Thomas T. Allsen, *Mongol Imperialism: The Policies of the Grand Qan Möngke in China, Russia, and the Islamic Lands, 1251-1259* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 144, 148-49.

<sup>92</sup> On the *tamğa* tax see Allsen, *Mongol Imperialism*, pp. 158-62.

service, the *jam* postal service and periodic supplementary exactions from princes and other senior figures.<sup>93</sup>

The question of how, and in whose benefit, rule is exercised, is conceptually related to previous discussions of the purity of humanitarian motivations and ideals. The nature of successful and therefore desirable order and rule varies across our texts. On the one hand, as we saw above, Xiao Esen's advice to Muqali in the *Mingchen shilue* that, after the capture of Beijing they "ought to pacify and reassure in order to ease the expectations of the masses", was dropped from the *Yuanshi*.<sup>94</sup> This might be read as an indication that 'pacification' – in the sense of suppression – was no longer seen as a desirable end.

Li Chang's biographies show a strong correlation between *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* on this subject. Li Chang 李昶 (1203-1289), courtesy name Shidu 士都, of Xucheng 須城 in Dongping 東平, a *Jinshi* scholar under the Jin, served Yan Shi 嚴實 as a family tutor and later Qubilai Qagan in the Hanlin Academy, in Dongping and as Minister of Personnel and Rites 吏禮部尚書, among other posts.<sup>95</sup> Accounts of Li Chang's advice to Qubilai in 1259 on the meritorious use of force being "to punish the criminal or save the

<sup>93</sup> On these latter levies, Allsen provides the examples of Ögödei's 1232 demands on Koryō and the general Jebe's demands for provisions from Nishapur in 1220 for his Khurasan campaign. See Thomas T. Allsen, *Mongol Imperialism: The Policies of the Grand Qan Möngke in China, Russia, and the Islamic Lands, 1251-1259* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), p. 146.

<sup>94</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 1.3:

Xiao Esen 蕭阿先 spoke to [Muqali], saying, "Beijing 北京 is an important garrison for Liaoxi 遼西; we ought to pacify and reassure in order to ease the expectations of the masses. If, now they have begun to surrender, we bury them, what of submitting defenders in future?"

蕭阿先說王曰：「北京為遼西重鎮，當撫摩以慰衆望。今始降而即坑之，後詎有降者乎？」

*Yuanshi* 119.2931:

Xiao Yexian said: "Beijing 北京 is an important garrison for Liaoxi 遼西; if, having surrendered, we bury them, how will there be surrenders later on?"

蕭也先曰：「北京為遼西重鎮，既降而坑之，後豈有降者乎？」

<sup>95</sup> On Li Chang, see *Mingchen shilue* 12.247-49; *Yuanshi* 160.3761-63; *YR*, p. 470; Wang, *Yuanshi tanyuan*, p. 219. Chang's *Mingchen shilue* biography draws exclusively on a lost *mubei* by Li Qian.



populace and not for the love of killing” are transmitted identically between his *Mingchen shilue* biography and the *Yuanshi*.<sup>96</sup> As such, they underline a perceived need to permit punitive action against transgressors as a distinct good in and of itself. As we have seen in Chucai’s biographies, both Su Tianjue and the *Yuanshi* compilers altered the logic of an account of suppressing bandits in Yan from the version presented in the *shendaobei*.<sup>97</sup> Their edits took the accounts in different directions, Su favouring order as a measure of success and the *Yuanshi* the ease of the populace.<sup>98</sup> The question of how much, and what sort, of violence is appropriate to an idealized subject in pursuit of humanitarian ends therefore requires careful consideration.

Bayan’s biographies portray him tackling the issue of criminals timing their activity to coincide with an amnesty and therefore avoid punishment.<sup>99</sup> The incident, connected with the 1294 enthronement of Temür Öljeitü Qagan, sees Bayan respond to a demand from an unnamed official for the execution of a thief before he can be saved by the upcoming amnesty.<sup>100</sup> Bayan’s response defends due process as much as the life of the accused, but

<sup>96</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 12.248:

用兵則以伐罪、救民、不嗜殺為對

*Yuanshi* 160.3761:

論用兵，則以伐罪、救民、不嗜殺

<sup>97</sup> See section 2.2 above.

<sup>98</sup> Song Zizhen, ‘Zhongshuling,’ p. 171; *YWL* 57.13a:

遂刑一十六人，京城帖然，皆得安枕矣。

*Mingchen shilue* 5.75:

遂刑一十六人，京城帖然。

*Yuanshi* 146.3457:

戮十六人于市，燕民始安。

<sup>99</sup> The episode is found at Yuan Mingshan, ‘Chengxiang huai’an zhongwu wang bei’, p. 350; *Qingheji* 3.27b; *YRCK*, v, p. 176; *Mingchen shilue* 2.22; *Yuanshi* 127.3115; Cleaves, ‘Bayan’, 284, 270.

<sup>100</sup> Yuan Mingshan, ‘Chengxiang huai’an zhongwu wang bei’, p. 350; *Qingheji* 3.27b; *YRCK*, v, p. 176:

宰臣請誅盜內府銀者，曰：「幸赦而盜，不可長也。」王曰：「盜何時無？今以誰命誅人？」其守正體，大多類此。

*Mingchen shilue* 2.22:

宰臣請誅盜內府銀者，曰：「幸赦而盜，不可長。」王曰：「盜何時無，今以誰命誅人？」其守正體大多類此。[勳德碑]

The term *zaizhi* 宰執, translated by Hucker as ‘State Councilor’, seems to be a Song-era vague collective term for senior ministers, and to serve here as another application of an anonymizing descriptor to a transgressive individual. See *HD*, p. 514.

nonetheless suggests the prioritization of mercy over the demands of justice. It is notable that Bayan's response is transmitted almost identically from foundation text to *Yuanshi*, with a minor but perhaps telling exception. In *Wangbei* and *Mingchen shilue*, Bayan asks the minister (here adapting Cleaves' translation), "now by whose order will you execute people?"<sup>101</sup> The *Yuanshi* version adapts this slightly to make it more specifically about the crime in question: "now by whose order will you execute him?"<sup>102</sup> This intervention is unusual in that it restricts reference to that particular case, rather than setting up the more typical conflict between longer term tendencies. The outcome of the matter is also edited; the two earlier versions report that this was typical of Bayan's approach to orthodox ways 正體, thereby highlighting the principle behind his actions.<sup>103</sup> The *Yuanshi*, on the other hand, provides another definition of success, reporting that, in Cleaves' translation, "[e]veryone respected him for his wisdom."<sup>104</sup> This intervention shifts the balance of approval away from an appreciation of his principles and towards an appreciation of acclaim as a criterion for success.

This theme also relates to the portrayal of humiliation and violent punishment meted out to transgressors identified as enemies of the populace. Like the leaders of rebellions and

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<sup>101</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang huai'an zhongwu wang bei', p. 350; *Qingheji* 3.27b; *YRCK*, v, p. 176: 今以誰命誅人?

*Mingchen shilue* 2.22:

今以誰命誅人?

<sup>102</sup> *Yuanshi* 127.3115:

適有盜內府銀者，宰執以其幸赦而盜，欲誅之，伯顏曰：「何時無盜，今以誰命而誅之？」人皆服其有識。

<sup>103</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Chengxiang huai'an zhongwu wang bei', p. 350; *Qingheji* 3.27b; *YRCK*, v, p. 176: 其守正體，大多類此。

*Mingchen shilue* 2.22:

其守正體大多類此。[勳德碑]

<sup>104</sup> *Yuanshi* 127.3115:

人皆服其有識。

resistance, they are placed in opposition to the humanitarian imperative and therefore not entitled to protection under it, but rather exposed to righteous violence in its defence.

The biographies of Yang Weizhong 楊惟中 (1206-c.60) present a fairly extreme example of divergent ideals in this regard. Serving as an interpreter, military officer, official and scholar, Weizhong is credited with replacing Yelü Chucai during a crisis in the latter's career.<sup>105</sup> Here *shendaobei*, *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* present three, clearly related but distinct, versions of their subject's sanguinary chastisement, apparently in the 1250s, of the Myriarch Liu Fu 劉福, Director of the Henan *Dao*.<sup>106</sup> The latter's transgression is characterized identically in all three accounts, describing his rule as "avaricious and mean, cruel and brutal, harming the surrendered populace 遺民 for more than twenty years."<sup>107</sup> Also common across our accounts is the further explanation for Weizhong's violent reaction, portraying Fu feigning illness to avoid him, although some paring down of detail was affected by both Su Tianjue, in unannounced edits, and in the *Yuanshi*

<sup>105</sup> On Yang Weizhong (1206-60, according to Chan Hok-lam, or 1206-56, according to Wang), style-name Yancheng 彥誠, see *Yuanshi* 146.3467-68; *Mingchen shilue* 5.85-86; *YR*, p. 1557; Chan Hok-lam, 'Yang Wei-chung (1206-1260)', in *ISK*, pp. 185-94; Chan Hok-lam, 'Yang Wei-Chung (1206-1260)', *Papers on Far Eastern History* 29 (1984), 27-44. Yang Weizhong's *Mingchen shilue* biography presents a 72-character preface, followed by nine sections of main text, drawing on Hao Jing's 1260 *shendaobei*, and supplementing this with a section of notes, on the establishment of scholars in Yanjing, also taken from Hao Jing's *Zhouzi citang bei*. The *Mingchen shilue* biography clearly follows the *shendaobei* text overall, only moving Hao Jing's character summary of Weizhong from the inscription's opening section to a final summary position. The *Yuanshi* biography likewise follows the *shendaobei* text closely, with relatively little interference, and without adopting the *Mingchen shilue* interpolation from the *Zhouzi citang bei*, but follows Su's unannounced edits in a number of places, suggesting either that Su's work influenced the compilers or that they followed closely related editing principles. See Hao Jing 郝經, 'Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei' 故中書令江淮京湖南北等路宣撫大使楊公神道碑銘, in *QYW*, iv, pp. 441-43; Hao Jing, 'Zhouzi citang bei' 周子祠堂碑, *QYW*, iv, pp. 405-7.

<sup>106</sup> The episode is found at Hao Jing, 'Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei', pp. 441-42; *Mingchen shilue* 5.86; *Yuanshi* 146.3467-68. Liu Fu 劉福 only appears once in the *Yuanshi*, and little else seems to remain of him. See Qiu Shusen, *Yuanshi cidian*, p. 1050.

<sup>107</sup> Hao Jing, 'Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei', p. 441; *Mingchen shilue* 5.86; *Yuanshi* 146.3467:

福貪鄙殘酷，虐害遺民二十餘年。

compilation process.<sup>108</sup> Aside from their general condensing tendency, the edits to this section of the episode significantly alter the nature of the violence meted out to Fu.

In all of these, we read that Weizhong beat Fu with a large club, causing his death several days later; in the *shendaobei* version:

the gentleman then lifted the great club and knocked him senseless; when he arose he hit him again and again; Fu crawled away, extremely frightened. Several days later, Fu died. The common people drummed and danced to mark their happiness and Henan was greatly ordered.<sup>109</sup>

but only the *shendaobei* contains the graphic detail, “when he arose [Weizhong] hit him again and again; Fu crawled away, extremely frightened.” This element is removed from the *Mingchen shilue* in an unannounced edit, portraying Weizhong beating Fu senseless, without the repeated blows:

<sup>108</sup> Hao Jing, ‘Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei’, pp. 441-42:

When the gentleman arrived, he summoned Fu to hear the agreed restrictions, but Fu, fearing the gentleman, feigned illness and did not attend. The gentleman ordered the display of a great club at his seat, and again summoned him, his envoy addressing Fu: “If you do not uphold the decree, we will treat you according to military law.” Fu brought several thousand people supporting and protecting him, and when he stepped down from his carriage to see the gentleman,  
公至，召福聽約束，福畏公，稱疾不至。公命設大梃於坐，復召之，使謂福曰：「爾不奉詔者，吾以軍法行事。」福 [442] 以數千人執梃擁衛，下車見公，

*Mingchen shilue* 5.86:

When the gentleman arrived, he summoned Fu to hear the agreed restrictions, but Fu feigned illness and did not attend. The gentleman ordered the display of a great club at his seat, and again summoned him, his envoy addressing Fu: “If you do not uphold the decree, we will treat you according to military law.” Fu brought several thousand people supporting and protecting him to see the gentleman,  
公至，召福聽約束，福稱疾不至。公命設大梃於坐，復召之，使謂福曰：「爾不奉詔，吾以軍法行事。」福以數千人擁衛見公，

*Yuanshi* 146.3467-68:

When Weizhong arrived, he summoned Fu to hear the agreed restrictions, and when Fu feigned illness and did not attend, Weizhong displayed a great club at his seat, and again summoned him, his envoy addressing Fu: “If you do not uphold the decree, we will deal with the matter according to military law.” Fu had no choice but brought several thousand people supporting and protecting him to see Weizhong;

惟中至，召福聽約束，福稱疾不至，惟中設 [3468] 大梃於坐，復召之，使謂福曰：「汝不奉命，吾以軍法從事。」福不得已，以數千人擁衛見惟中，

<sup>109</sup> Hao Jing, ‘Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei’, p. 442:  
公即握大梃擊蹈之，方起，又連擊之，福匍匐褫魄而去。數日福死，百姓鼓舞稱快，河南大治。

the gentleman then lifted the great club and knocked him senseless, and several days later Fu died. The common people drummed and danced to mark their happiness and Henan was greatly ordered.<sup>110</sup>

This element is then altered again in the otherwise almost verbatim account in the *Yuanshi*, where Weizhong only hit and ‘knocked him down’.<sup>111</sup>

At each stage the level of violence employed by the idealized subject is altered, the frenzied beating of the *shendaobei* becoming what appears a mighty single blow in the *Yuanshi*. This does not significantly alter Fu’s fate in material or historical terms; his death occurs at Weizhong’s hands in all three versions. Weizhong’s violence, however, is adjusted from emotional outburst to controlled might. A similar treatment is afforded to the *Yuanshi* portrayal of Weizhong’s conflict with the *duanshiguan* judge of Pingyang 平陽 *dao*, Seče.<sup>112</sup> The *Yuanshi* compilers’ interventions condense the account considerably, removing detail and dropping a reference to popular acclaim in relating the outcome of the Weizhong’s action.<sup>113</sup>

Weizhong’s biography dwells at length on the question of how to punish brutal transgression against the populace, with a further section that records another execution

<sup>110</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 5.86:

公即握大梃擊踣之，數日福死。百姓鼓舞稱快，河南大治。

<sup>111</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3468:

Weizhong then lifted the great club and knocked him down. Several days later Fu died, and Henan was greatly ordered.

惟中即握大梃擊仆之。數日福死，河南大治。

<sup>112</sup> The episode is found at Hao Jing, ‘Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei’, p. 441; *Mingchen shilue* 5.85; *Yuanshi* 146.3467. Seče has not been further identified; he is not found in *YR*, and is confusingly linked to Möngke’s reign by the *Yuanshi cidian*. See Qiu Shusen, *Yuanshi cidian*, p. 757.

<sup>113</sup> Hao Jing, ‘Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei’, p. 441: 谷幽皇帝即位，平陽道斷事官斜徹橫恣不法，詔公宣慰，公按誅之，出一府繩擗，莫不健其決。

*Mingchen shilue* 5.85:

定宗即位，平陽道斷事官斜徹橫恣不法，詔公宣慰，公按誅之。出一府繩擗，莫不健其決。

*Yuanshi* 146.3467:

定宗即位，平陽道斷事官斜徹橫恣不法，詔惟中宣慰，惟中按誅之。

and quotes Weizhong explaining his policy in direct reported speech.<sup>114</sup> The *shendaobei* report is transmitted verbatim in the *Mingchen shilue*, which describes his violent treatment of an offender against popular welfare, dated by context to the 1250s.<sup>115</sup> This is followed, apparently, by a justificatory speech balancing the imperative towards benevolence with the need to punish uncontrolled aggression by claiming that such punishment should itself be thought benevolent:

Transferred as Senior Control Officer 宣撫大使 for Shanyou 陝右 and Sichuan 四川, because the various armies were harsh and extravagant and injured the populace, the Chiliarch Guo 郭 being particularly extreme, killing people's husbands and seizing their wives; their sons having reported this, the gentleman sliced off his ear 馘 as a public example,<sup>116</sup> and Guanzhong 關中 was awed. The gentleman addressed people, saying: "I do not like killing, but the realm's principles and regulations not yet having been established, therefore these people were thieves and tyrants to the ordinary populace; without laying charges, they would not go and there would not be benevolence; how can that be thought benevolence?"<sup>117</sup>

The *Yuanshi* version of this incident is very similar overall, but the ambiguous use of the character *guo* 馘, usually employed to refer to slicing off the left ear for battlefield corpse-counting purposes, is replaced, and Weizhong's speech is reworked:

He was transferred as Control Officer 宣撫使 for Shanyou and Sichuan. At that time the various armies were harsh and extravagant and injured the populace, the Chiliarch Guo being particularly extreme, killing people's husbands and seizing their wives; their sons having reported this, the gentleman executed him by slicing 戮 as a public example, and Guanzhong was awed. The gentleman addressed people, saying: "I do not like killing, but the realm's principles and regulations not yet having been established, therefore these people were thieves and tyrants to the ordinary populace; without any way of laying charges; even if [I] wished not to expel them, could that be appropriate?"<sup>118</sup>

<sup>114</sup> The episode is found at Hao Jing, 'Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei', p. 442; *Mingchen shilue* 5.86; *Yuanshi* 146.3468.

<sup>115</sup> Su Tianjue's career summary places Weizhong's initial posting to Henan in 1252, and a further transfer after this event in 1259. See *Mingchen shilue* 5.85.

<sup>116</sup> The meaning of the character *guo* 馘 here is ambiguous, but Weizhong's later reference to killing suggests that Guo did not survive the encounter.

<sup>117</sup> Hao Jing, 'Guzhongshuling jianghuaijing hunanbei denglu xuanfudashi yanggong shendaobei', p. 442; *Mingchen shilue* 5.86:

遷陝右四川宣撫大使，以諸軍帥橫侈病民，郭千戶者尤甚，殺人之夫而奪其妻，其子告，公馘之以徇，關中肅然。公語人曰：「吾非好殺，國家綱紀不立，致此輩賊虐良民，無所控告，不去不仁，何以爲仁乎！」

<sup>118</sup> *Yuanshi* 146.3468:

Here the compilers have resolved the ambiguity in the description of Weizhong's violence against Guo's person. They also formulated his speech quite differently. The *liezhuan* retains the *shendaobei* construction of the problems with governance blamed for these abuses, which, stemming from a lack of law and regulation, provide no way for the populace to appeal or complain. The *liezhuan* makes no attempt to reconcile this violence with benevolence, however; the imperative here is punitive, and does not require further explanation.

Returning to a section we have already examined in Lian Xixian's biographies which sees him reprimand an unnamed princess and her retinue for hunting across the capital city's suburbs, Xixian's success here likewise lies in forcing a high-handed member of the elite to apologize to and compensate the populace after taking advantage of them.<sup>119</sup> As such it

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遷陝右四川宣撫使。時諸軍帥橫侈病民，郭千戶者尤甚，殺人之夫而奪其妻，惟中戮之以徇，關中肅然。語人曰：「吾非好殺，國家綱紀不立，致此輩賊害良民，無所控告，雖欲不去可乎！」

<sup>119</sup> The incident is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei', p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51b, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188:

長公主及國壻入朝，縱獵郊原，發民牛車，載其所獲，徵求須索，其費至鈔萬五千貫。王譙公主，從者怨食不及，王曰：「我天子宰相，非汝庖者。」國壻怒起，王隨之，曰：「駙馬縱獵原禽，非國務也。費民財不貲，我已馳奏矣。」國壻愕然，入語公主，公主出，飲王酒，曰：「從者煩民，我不知也。請出鈔如數償民，幸公止使者。」自後貴人過者，皆不敢縱。

*Mingchen shilue* 7.137:

A senior princess and the imperial son-in-law entered the court, hunting freely across the outskirts, sending out ox-carts belonging to the populace to carry their catch; petitioners made demands for compensation?, their expenses reached 15,000 strings of cash. The followers of the Prince of Yan's princess were angered that their provisions were insufficient, and the prince said: "I am a minister to the Son of Heaven, not your cook." The imperial son-in-law 國壻 rose in anger, but the prince followed him, saying: "The prince consort indulges in hunting for the catch; this is not a state matter. The cost to the populace is immeasurable, and I am about present a memorial." The imperial son-in-law fearfully entered to address the princess. The princess emerged, poured wine for the prince and said: "I was unaware that my retinue had vexed the populace. I request to return money sufficient to feed the populace; we hope you will halt the envoys." From this [point] on prominent transgressors never dared act with [such] abandon.

長公主及國壻入朝，縱獵郊原，發民牛車，載其所獲，徵求須索，其費至鈔萬五千貫。王燕[譙]公主，從者怨食不及，王曰：「我天子宰相，非汝庖者。」國壻怒起，王隨之曰：「主壻縱獵原禽，非國務也。費民財不貲，我且馳奏矣。」國壻愕然，入語公主，公主出飲王酒，曰：「從者煩民，我不知也。請出鈔如數償民，幸公止使者。」自後貴人過者，皆不敢縱。[神道碑]

is directly comparable to the account, also examined above, of Xixian humiliating the abusive pseudo-*fuma*; despite the transgressor's escape in that case, it is clear that oppression of inviolate elites is the key problem addressed by Xixian's avenging actions, the *Yuanshi* portrayal intensifying its description of both the harm caused by the transgressor and the degree of humiliation and fear suffered by him at Lian Xixian's hand.<sup>120</sup>

Lian Xixian's biographies also include a curious episode in which he is portrayed rejecting scarce and expensive granulated sugar sent to him by Aḥmad Fanākātī as medicine.<sup>121</sup> The *Yuanshi* treatment of this episode, likely to date to the 1270s, again seems intended to widen the gulf between Xixian's virtuous subject and the condemned opponent. If we accept Xixian's model status, this sets up an intriguing ideal of ministers showing near-suicidal dedication to the rejection of such transgressive figures. It also, again, makes Aḥmad more of an arch-enemy than a rival, while emphasizing his personal wealth, the opposite of the genteel poverty highlighted in biographies of Chucai and Bayan of the Bārin, among others.<sup>122</sup>

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*Yuanshi* 126.3093:

A senior princess and the imperial son-in-law entered the court, hunting freely across the outskirts, causing extreme trouble to the populace; Xixian personally instructed the imperial son-in-law, desiring to enter [the court] to present a memorial on it. The son-in-law was shocked and entered to address the princess. The princess emerged, poured wine for Xixian and said: "I was unaware that my retinue harassed the populace. I request to return 50,000 strings of cash directly to the populace; we hope you will not send envoys." From this [point] prominent transgressors never dared act with [such] abandon.

長公主及國婿入朝，縱獵郊原，擾民為甚，希憲面諭國婿，欲入奏之。國婿驚愕，入語公主，公主出，飲希憲酒曰：「從者擾民，吾不知也。請以鈔萬五千貫還斂民之直，幸勿遣使者。」自是貴人過者，皆莫敢縱。

The incident is reminiscent of the *Yuanshi* celebration of Čabi's role in preventing *kešig* officers extending grazing lands across the capital's suburbs in 1273. See *Yuanshi* 114.2871; Francis Woodman Cleaves, "The Biography of the Empress Čabi in the 'Yüan Shih'", *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3/4 (1979-80), 138-150 (142-43).

<sup>120</sup> See section 3.1 above; Yuan Mingshan, 'Pingzhang zhengshi lian wenzheng wang shendaobei', p. 358; *Qingheji* 5.51a, in *YRCK*, v, p. 188; *Mingchen shilue* 7.137; *Yuanshi* 126.3093.

<sup>121</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 136; *Yuanshi* 3092-93.

<sup>122</sup> Zhao Yongchun reads Aḥmad's possession of the sugar as a significant indication of his greed, going beyond the texts to state that his household was 'without nothing'. See Zhao Yongchun 赵永春, 'Yuanchu



There are several differences between *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi*. The first sees the *Yuanshi* compilers distancing Xixian from Aḥmad's charity by dropping mention of Xixian's own brother having asked Aḥmad for the medicine, making it appear that Aḥmad responded to a general appeal.<sup>123</sup> The second amends Xixian's reaction to Aḥmad's offer. His defiant speech, in the *Mingchen shilue*, rejects *recovery from illness* 愈疾 through the gifts of evil people.<sup>124</sup> The *liezhuan*, more vividly, portrays him rejecting the *saving of life* 求活 in this way – this subtle difference making Xixian's condition more acute and resistance more heroic.<sup>125</sup> The *Yuanshi* does, however, temper this by removing another aspect of the description of Xixian's refusal. In the *Mingchen shilue* he is described as throwing the sugar on the floor.<sup>126</sup> By dropping this the *Yuanshi* account shifts focus to his speech, which as we have seen, in this version indicates preparedness to sacrifice his life in preference to accepting gifts from evil people. In both versions the episode is resolved by Qubilai giving the medicine to Xixian.<sup>127</sup>

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weiwu'erzu zhengzhijia lian xixian' 元初畏兀儿族政治家廉希宪 (The Early Yuan Uyghur Administrator Lian Xixian), *Songliao Xuekan*, 2 (1984), 77–81, 86 (80).

<sup>123</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 136:

王疾大作，上遣醫三人診視，或言須砂糖作飲良，時最艱得。王弟某求諸阿合馬，與之二斤，且致密意，

*Yuanshi* 3092-93:

希憲嘗有疾，帝遣醫三人診視，醫言須用沙 [3093] 糖作飲，時最艱得，家人求於外，阿合馬與之二斤，且致密意。

<sup>124</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 136:

王推著在地，曰：「使此物果能活人，吾終不以姦人所遺愈疾也。」

<sup>125</sup> *Yuanshi* 3092-93:

希憲却之曰：「使此物果能活人，吾終不以奸人所與求活也。」

<sup>126</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 136:

王推著在地，曰：...

*Yuanshi* 3093:

希憲却之曰：...

<sup>127</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 136:

上聞，特賜三斤。[神道碑]

*Yuanshi* 3092-93:

帝聞而遣賜之。

The account is not entirely consistent with the ideal of impersonal service seen in Chucai's *Yuanshi* biography, where the portrayal of attacks on Chucai by Shimo Xiandebu, for example, highlight Chucai's restraint and magnanimity in the face of enmity, making impersonal service the ideal and personal enmity negative and transgressive.<sup>128</sup> Aḥmad's apparent gift of medicine might also be compared to Chucai's treatment of morally questionable troops after the looting of Lingwu. On the other hand, both accounts emphasize their subjects' dedication to maintaining separation from morally tainted individuals. In this way Xixian's is perhaps consistent in distancing 'good' Xiyuren from 'bad' as Chucai the 'good' Kitan is distanced from Xiandebu's 'bad' Kitan.<sup>129</sup>

Returning to Muqali's biographies, we see the *Mingchen shilue* transmit a report, dated to 1220, that portrays the virtuous secondary character Shi Tianni 史天倪<sup>130</sup> advising the general on his duties as conqueror.<sup>131</sup> The account, as reported in the *Mingchen shilue*, defines a range of problems facing the populace, and suggests that solving these was Muqali's duty:

Now the Central Plains are already largely pacified, and where those who were missed still indulge in looting, this is not the Prince's intention of 'consoling the people and punishing the tyrant.' Moreover, the Prince has acted as eliminator of bandits for the [6] realm; how can one [not] undertake to continue and imitate this role?<sup>132</sup>

<sup>128</sup> Song Zizhen, 'Zhongshuling yelüogong shendaobei,' p. 172:

不數月，會有以事告咸得不者，上知與公不協，特命鞠治。公奏曰：「此人倨傲無禮，狎近羣小，易以招謗。今方有事於南方，他日治之，亦未爲晚。」上頗不悅，已而謂侍臣曰：「君子人也，汝曹當效之。」

*Yuanshi* 146.3458:

屬有訟咸得卜不法者，帝命楚材鞠之，奏曰：「此人倨傲，故易招謗。今將有事南方，他日治之未晚也。」帝私謂侍臣曰：「楚材不較私讎，真寬厚長者，汝曹當效之。」

<sup>129</sup> Hsiao's reading of this episode as showing Xixian's "contempt for his foe" is a fair characterization. See Hsiao, "Lien Hsi-hsien (1231-1280)", p. 493.

<sup>130</sup> On Shi Tianni (1197-1225), courtesy name Hefu 和甫, elder brother of Shi Tianze, who garrisoned Jinan was killed in Wu Xian's uprising in 1225, see *Yuanshi* 147.3478-82; *YR*, p. 235.

<sup>131</sup> The report is found at *Mingchen shilue* 1.5-6; *Yuanshi* 119.2933.

<sup>132</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 1.5-6:

In the *Yuanshi* this advice suffers a significant cut, significantly narrowing the range of problems facing the populace by cutting mention of bandits and tyrants, and simplifying matters:

Now the Central Plains are largely pacified, and where those who were missed still indulge in looting, this is not the Prince's intention of consoling the people.<sup>133</sup>

This edit again effectively elevates the ease of the populace over the punishment of transgressors, placing humanitarianism over order in a similar way to the edits made to Chucai's Yanjing outcome. Muqali's orders also differ somewhat, although the result clause is identical – populace and clerks were delighted.<sup>134</sup>

Li Dehui's biographies provide a partial counter-example to these episodes stressing selectivity and process in punishment. Here, Li Dehui is portrayed as a hard-pressed official executing bandits in Yanjing around 1260, and seems to have attracted the enmity of the (transgressive) Wang Wentong, precisely because he was seen to have performed summary executions without reference to the Central Secretariat, a positioning, if the reader is expected to sympathize with Dehui, that sits uneasily alongside the general tenor of Chucai's *liezhuan*.<sup>135</sup> Dehui's *xingzhuang* reports:

That year, the emperor ascended the throne, and it was the first year of the change to *Zhongtong* 中統. In the fifth moon [11<sup>th</sup> June to 9<sup>th</sup> July], he again served as Control Officer 宣撫使 for Yanjing 燕京. Yan had many bandits, who made illicit currency, mixing it with the genuine and passing it among the populace. Secretly connecting sworn friends, making oaths to one another to kill people against whom they bore grudges; the gentleman seized and executed them all. Although the

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「今中原已粗定，而所過猶縱鈔掠，非王者弔民伐罪意也。且王為天 [6] 下除暴，豈復效其所為乎！」

<sup>133</sup> *Yuanshi* 119.2933:

今中原粗定，而所過猶縱兵抄掠，非王者弔民之意也。

<sup>134</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 1.6:

下令敢有擅剽虜者，以軍法從事，所得老幼，咸歸遣之，軍中肅然，吏民大悅。

<sup>135</sup> The episode is found at Yao Sui, 'Zhongshu zuocheng li zhongxuan gong xingzhuang', p. 485; *Mu'anji* (*Yaosuiji*) 30.458-65; *Mingchen shilue* 11.213; *Yuanshi* 163.3816. On Wang Wentong 王文統, executed in 1262 after being linked to Li Tan's rebellion, see *YR*, p. 159; *Yuanshi* 206.4594-96; H.L. Chan, 'Li T'an (?-1262)', in *ISK*, pp. 500-19 (p. 516).

Central Secretariat opened an office in Yan, with ‘strict enforcement of orders’ 令行禁止, much was not reported upwards, and due to this [Dehui] offended the Grand Councillor at that time, and was expelled from his position.<sup>136</sup>

The *Mingchen shilue* transmits this almost verbatim, adjusting the first characters relating to the incident’s precise dating and, more significantly, inserting characters at the end to change the manner of Dehui’s dismissal:

In the first year *Zhongtong*, he served as Control Officer for Yanjing. Yan had many bandits, who made illicit currency, mixing it with the genuine and passing it among the populace. Secretly connecting sworn friends, making oaths to one another to kill people against whom they bore grudges; the gentleman seized and executed them all; but although the Central Secretariat opened an office in Yan, with ‘strict enforcement of orders’, much was not reported upwards, and due to this [Dehui] offended the Grand Councillor at that time, and was expelled from his position *through slander* 以誣.<sup>137</sup>

The *Yuanshi* version is greatly condensed, primarily simplifying the ‘problem’ element of the episode, but also notably not following Su Tianjue in overtly accusing Wang Wentong of slander in Dehui’s dismissal:

In the first year *Zhongtong*, he served as Control Officer for Yanjing. Yan had many bandits, who made counterfeit currency, gathering a faction who were sworn to the death and killing people. Dehui seized and executed them all; but many affairs not being reported to the Central Secretariat, however, he therefore offended the Privy Councillor Wang Wentong, and was removed from his post.<sup>138</sup>

These accounts all position Dehui against the disgraced Privy Councillor, the *Yuanshi*, unlike the previous versions, overtly naming Wentong. The effect is to invite the reader once again to side with the decisive execution of criminals, rather, in this case, than with an official of the Central Secretariat. The incident is reminiscent of the uneasy

<sup>136</sup> Yao Sui, ‘Zhongshu zuocheng li zhongxuan gong xingzhuang’, p. 485; *Mu’anji* (Yaosuiji) 30.458-65: 其年，皇帝卽位，中統改元。五月，又以爲燕京宣撫使。燕多劇賊，造私幣，雜真行民間，陰結死友，相誓復仇怨殺人，公悉捕誅之。雖中書開府在燕，令行禁止，多不上白，由是忤時相意，以誣去位。

<sup>137</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 11.213:

中統改元，爲燕京宣撫使。燕多劇賊，造私幣，雜真行民間，陰結死友，相誓復仇怨殺人。公悉捕誅之，雖中書開府在燕，令行禁止，多不上白，由是忤時相意，以誣去位。[行狀]

<sup>138</sup> *Yuanshi* 163.3816:

中統元年，爲燕京宣撫使。燕多劇賊，造偽鈔，結死黨殺人。德輝悉捕誅之，令行禁止。然事多不白中書，由是忤平章王文統意，去位。

combination of Chucai's decisive executions in Yanjing with his insistence that capital sentences be checked by the Secretariat.<sup>139</sup>

Song Zizhen's biographies relate a somewhat exceptional response to a military situation, dated to 1232.<sup>140</sup> Both versions effectively implicate their subject in brutality, and this in the service of pacification, stability and the conquest of the Jin, rather than a clearly humanitarian outcome. Both versions report that Zizhen recommended the beheading of subjects spreading rumours of an imminent Jin advance, and when this was carried out, the region in question was pacified successfully. The *Yuanshi* reports:

In the fourth year of [the reign of] Taizong [Ögödei Qaghan] [1232], Shi garrisoned Huangling 黃陵, and the Jin spared no effort in their assault. Fighting without success, the enemy strength spread considerably, and all south of Cao 曹 and Pu 濮 quaked. Some, who had fled from the enemy ranks to submit, said that the Jin troops were about to arrive in force, and people were gripped with fear. Zizhen made a request to Shi that the heads of the boastful be cut off in order to instruct the various cities, and those within the borders were therefore pacified.<sup>141</sup>

This account is rare in its portrayal of a subject prepared to act brutally without stressing direct popular benefit, and although some micro-level interventions were made to the *Mingchen shilue* version, these do little to alter the overall approval of directed violence against elements of the populace *in extremis*.<sup>142</sup> There are signs that this *liezhuan* is distinctive; another feature suggesting a further lack of coordination with other *Yuanshi*

<sup>139</sup> See section 2.2 above.

<sup>140</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 10.200; *Yuanshi* 159.3735.

<sup>141</sup> *Yuanshi* 159.3735:

太宗四年，實戍黃陵，金人悉力來攻。與戰不利，敵勢頗張，曹、濮以南皆震。有自敵中逃歸者，言金兵且大至，人情恟懼。子貞請於實，斬揚言者首以令諸城，境內乃安。

<sup>142</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.200:

In the year *renchen* 壬辰 [1232], the Branch Censor [Yan Shi] garrisoned Huangling, and the Jin troops spared no effort in their assault. Our army fought without success, the enemy strength spread considerably, and all south of Cao 曹 and Pu 濮 quaked in fear. Some, who had fled from the enemy ranks to submit, said that the enemy were about to arrive, and people were gripped with fear and dread. Zizhen made a request to the Branch Censor that the heads of the boastful be cut off in order to instruct the various cities, and those within the borders were pacified anew.

歲壬辰，行臺戍黃陵，金兵悉力來攻，我師不利，敵勢頗張，曹、濮以南皆震懾。有自敵中逃歸者，言敵且至，人情恟恟。公請行臺斬橫議者首，以令諸城，境內復安。

biographies is the dating method. Although the *Mingchen shilue* employs the sexagenary cycle commonly in use for dates before the adoption of regnal era titles, the *liezhuan* describes the date as the ‘fourth year of Taizong’, a distinct and unusual usage and one that is hard to explain.<sup>143</sup>

In an episode examined in the previous chapter in relation to investigative powers, the *Yuanshi* compilers significantly reworked a report found in Song Zizhen’s *Mingchen shilue* biography.<sup>144</sup> As we have seen, the previous version lays out problems in terms of their effect on the populace, blamed on connivance between officials, proliferating local officials, military harassment, the effect of this summarized as leaving the populace unable to live in peace.<sup>145</sup> The *Yuanshi* compilers’ interventions altered the nature of these administrative failures:

This reached the point where they concentrated on extortion and amassing wealth by heavy taxation was treated as ability, and officials associated on the basis of self-interest through harming the populace.<sup>146</sup>

Popular welfare remains the key criterion, but the threat to that is described in exclusively fiscal terms, characterized as excessive and abusive tax demands. As we have seen, the

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<sup>143</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10.200:

歲壬辰，

*Yuanshi* 159.3735:

太宗四年，

<sup>144</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 10. 201; *Yuanshi* 159.3736. See section 4.4 above.

<sup>145</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10. 201:

In *yiwei* 乙未 [1235], he was appointed Director of the Right Office 右司郎中 and of the more than fifty towns under the Brach Censorate’s jurisdiction that still possessed fortresses for the various households, from Service Officials 守令 on down, all were great and small minor clerks, suddenly increasing their field [allowances], they were unable to appreciate rites and regulations, ignorant of the ways of government; clerks and officials connived together to harm the populace. At that time, ‘all-under-heaven’ was somewhat pacified and the various matters were first set out; leaders and controllers proliferated, as did the harassment from barracks and camps; law and systems not having been established, the populace could not live in peace.

乙未，受朝命遷右司郎中，行臺所轄五十餘城，仍有堡寨諸戶，自守令以下皆大偏小校，偃起田畝，不閑禮法，昧於從政，官吏相與為囊橐以病民。是時，天下略定，庶事草創，率斂之繁，營屯之擾，法度未立，民不安生。

<sup>146</sup> *Yuanshi* 159.3736:

甚者，專以掊克聚斂為能，官吏相與為貪私以病民。

*Yuanshi* also describes a more punitively focused solution than the *Mingchen shilue*, substantially condensing the description of the result of Song Zizhen's efforts. The *Mingchen shilue* reports:

The single *dao* of Dongping 東平 contained more than 200,000 households, its populace no less than a million, and due to this they were able to achieve peaceful lives and carefree eating; this was the gentleman's merit.<sup>147</sup>

The *liezhuan* states instead that "the administration began to possess some moral standards, and the people found relief and respite."<sup>148</sup> While both focus on the effect on the populace, the *Yuanshi* adds a direct link between this and the morality of governance, a morality contrasted here directly against extortion and unfair taxation.

Lian Xixian's *Mingchen shilue* biography draws on the *Jiazhuan* in a section addressing the 'lamb profit' high interest loan practices and reporting that Xixian solved the problem in a manner identical to Chucai's measures; namely, the capping of interest.<sup>149</sup> The text describes the problem Xixian faced – the effect on the populace – in lyrical terms:

The violence of their extortion was like fiery pressure in summer and building an ice room in winter; the populace could not stand their poison.<sup>150</sup>

The *Yuanshi* omits this section, however, possibly, like Li Dehui's, indicating an overall refocusing of Xixian's activity towards his career under Qubilai Qagan.

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<sup>147</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 10. 201:

東平一道二十餘萬戶，生口不啻百萬，所以安居暇食，得享有生之樂者，公之功也。[尚書李公撰神道碑]

<sup>148</sup> *Yuanshi* 159.3736:

官府始有紀綱，民得蘇息。

<sup>149</sup> The episode is found at *Mingchen shilue* 7.125-26. On Chucai's measures, see section 2.3 above.

<sup>150</sup> *Mingchen shilue* 7.125-26:

其徵取 [126] 之暴，如夏以火迫，冬置凌室，民不勝其毒。

The ‘lamb profit’ logic is approached again in Dong Wenyong’s biographies, which recount a conflict with Lu Shirong in the early 1280s over exactions.<sup>151</sup> All versions of the account report Shirong’s claims that his measures would not “harass the populace”, quoting him in direct reported speech and thereby positioning this as a criterion used within court discussions:

We could enact laws on the management of wealth, so that each year it [capital] should double; this will not harass the populace.<sup>152</sup>

Wenyong’s response to Shirong’s proposal goes to the heart of the humanitarian-pragmatic differences we saw in the handling of Chucai’s appeals against ‘Abd al-Rahman’s tax-farming and quota raises, but here the *Yuanshi* compilers leave their foundation text largely untouched:

Those who herd sheep each year regularly shear their wool twice; if now the herders of people shear their wool daily and present it, then those responsible must indeed be delighted at receiving wool<sup>153</sup> in such quantities. Nonetheless, if the sheep have nothing by which to avoid cold and fevers, and are exhausted to the point of death, how can more wool be obtained? The wealth of the populace also has its limits; taking it on a regular basis [I] fear will be harmful and damaging; if now we cut away all and leave nothing,<sup>154</sup> can there still be common people 百姓?<sup>155</sup>

<sup>151</sup> The episode is found at Yu Ji, ‘Hanlin xueshi chengzhi donggong xingzhuang’, pp. 163-64; *Daoyuan leigao* 50.7a-b; *YRCK*, vi, p. 455; *Mingchen shilue* 14.283-84; *Yuanshi* 148.3498. On Lu Shirong, see the introduction to chapter four above.

<sup>152</sup> Yu Ji, ‘Hanlin xueshi chengzhi donggong xingzhuang’, p. 163; *Daoyuan leigao* 50.7a; *YRCK*, vi, p. 455; *Mingchen shilue* 14.283; *Yuanshi* 148.3498:

「我立法治財，視常歲當倍增，而民不擾也。」

<sup>153</sup> Here the *xingzhuang* has *li* 利 ‘profit’ rather than *mao* 毛 ‘down, wool’; this was altered by Su Tianjue and this change was carried across to the *Yuanshi*, suggesting consultation of his version here.

<sup>154</sup> This is the only change made by the compilers to this speech; the omission of the character *cui* 毳, here signifying fine down, or, in context ‘even the finest down’.

<sup>155</sup> Yu Ji, ‘Hanlin xueshi chengzhi donggong xingzhuang’, p. 163; *Daoyuan leigao* 50.7a-b; *YRCK*, vi, p. 455:

牧羊者，歲常兩剪其毛，今牧人日剪其毛而獻之，則主者固悅，其得利之多矣。然而羊無以避寒熱，即死且盡，毛又可得哉！民財亦有限，取之以時，猶懼其傷殘 [7b] 也，今盡刻剝無遺毳，猶有百姓乎？」

*Mingchen shilue* 14.283:

牧羊者歲常兩剪其毛，今牧人日剪其毛而獻之，則主者固悅其得毛之多矣。然而羊無以避寒熱，即死且盡，毛又可得哉！民財亦有限，取之以時，猶懼其傷殘也，今盡刻剝無遺毳，猶有百姓乎！

*Yuanshi* 148.3498:



Here Wenyong's *liezhuan* provides an argument against heavy taxation based, like Chucai's *shendaobei*, on the pragmatic grounds that tax-payers cease being a renewable resource beyond a certain point of extraction. Unlike in Chucai's biographies, however, here this theme is transmitted to the *Yuanshi*, shifting the basis of the idealized character's concern.

Wenyong's relatively pragmatic argument is, however, balanced somewhat by the response reported from the various ministers addressed by him, among whom only Hantum is named. *Xingzhuang*, *Mingchen shilue* and *Yuanshi* all report praise from these figures, and this is primarily on the basis of benevolence *ren* 仁; the *Yuanshi* edits achieving some brevity without altering the central thrust. Here, in contrast to Chucai's biographies, we see the balancing of a pragmatic argument in the diegetic world of the text, i.e., in the Mongol era, and the delivery of a principle-based argument to the reader. Here the *Yuanshi* compilers appear to have followed Su Tianjue, adopting his shortened version of Hantum's speech.<sup>156</sup>

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牧羊者，歲嘗兩剪其毛，今牧人日剪其毛而獻之，則主者固悅其得毛之多矣，然而羊無以避寒熱，即死且盡，毛又可得哉！民財亦有限，取之以時，猶懼其傷殘也。今盡刻剝無遺，猶有百姓乎！

<sup>156</sup> Yu Ji, 'Hanlin xueshi chengzhi donggong xingzhuang', p. 163-64; *Daoyuan leigao* 50.7b; *YRCK*, vi, p. 455:

The Grand Councillor Duke Hantum addressed the dignitaries seated [there], saying: "If all the gentlemen were like Minister Dong, there would truly be none who waste their government salary." When the discussants left, they all thanked the gentleman, saying: "The gentleman, with a single speech, convinced the gathered ministers and was generous to the populace." The benefits of a virtuous person's words are abundant; how could they not be? Shirong was ultimately punished for this.

丞相安童公謂坐中曰：「諸君若董尚書，真不虛食俸祿者。」議者出，皆謝公曰：「公以一言，折聚斂之臣而厚本，仁人之言，其利博哉，豈不信 [164] 然！」世榮竟以是得罪。

*Mingchen shilue* 14.283-84:

The Grand Councillor Duke Hantum addressed the dignitaries seated [there], saying: "The Minister Dong is truly no waste of government salary." When the discussants left, they all thanked the gentleman, saying: "The gentleman, with a single speech, convinced the gathered ministers and was generous to the populace." The benefits of a virtuous person's words are abundant; how could they not be? Shirong was ultimately punished for this.

丞相安童公謂坐中諸君曰：「董尚書真不虛食俸祿者。」議者出，皆謝公曰：「公以一言，折聚斂之臣，而厚邦本。」仁人之言，[284] 其利博哉，豈不信然。世榮竟以是得罪。

Dong Wenbing's biographies include an undated account, placed by context at some point in the later 1230s or the 1240s, describing him reluctantly taking up local office. This leading to conflict, Wenbing made a speech and resigned, and the phrasing of this, making a clear link between the occupation of government office and profit-seeking, is tailored to criticize an apparent norm of greed at the expense of the populace.<sup>157</sup> The Dong family *Jiazhuan*, cited in the *Mingchen shilue*, reports:

The gentleman said: "I will never be able to gouge 剝 the populace in seeking profit 規利." He immediately abandoned his post and left.<sup>158</sup>

This term, *wan* 剝, 'to gouge', is used elsewhere in the *Yuanshi* in relation to eyes and flesh, but is never employed in the Standard Histories in conjunction with *min* 民 'populace'; it does not seem to be permissible language, and might reflect a copyist's error.<sup>159</sup> The usage *guili* 規利, 'scheming' or 'planning' for 'profit' or 'gain' is also seen only rarely, and only occurs once in the *Yuanshi*, in a speech by Tuğ-Temür (Wenzong 文宗, r. 1328-32) dated to 2 December 1328, conceding a pardon on the grounds that the accused had attempted to protect their own household; it is therefore somewhat less than condemnatory in tone.<sup>160</sup> The *Yuanshi* edit rephrases Wenbing's speech in two micro-level edits:

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*Yuanshi* 148.3498:

The Grand Councillor Hantum addressed the dignitaries seated [there], saying: "The Minister Dong is truly no waste of government salary." When the discussants left, they all thanked Wenyong, saying: "The gentleman, with a single speech, convinced the gathered ministers and was generous to the populace; [these were] truly a virtuous person's words." Shirong was ultimately punished for this.

丞相安童謂坐中曰：「董尚書真不虛食俸祿者。」議者出，皆謝文用曰：「君以一言，折聚斂之臣，而厚邦本，真仁人之言哉。」世榮竟以是得罪。

<sup>157</sup> The episode is found at Yuan Mingshan, 'Dong jun jiazhuan', pp. 314-15; *Qingheji*, 7.76b; *Mingchen shilue* 14.271; *Yuanshi* 156.3668.

<sup>158</sup> Yuan Mingshan, 'Gaocheng dongshi jiazhuan', pp. 314-15; *Qingheji* 7.76b; *YRCK*, v, p. 200; *Mingchen shilue* 14.271:

公曰：「吾終不 [315] 能剝民規利。」即棄官去。

<sup>159</sup> See, for example, *Yuanshi* 105.2673; 194.4405.

<sup>160</sup> *Yuanshi* 32.718-19:

Wenbing said: I will never be able to flay 剝 the populace in the search for profit 求利.”<sup>161</sup>

This phrasing, in which the new characters ‘flay’ 剝 and ‘seek profit’ 求利 provide strong visual echoes, is more normative; the editors have moved Wenbing’s comments into the mainstream and removed doubt or concession in favour of clear moral categorization; yet again, reported speech is vulnerable to our editors’ alterations.

### 5.5 Conclusions: inconstant tendencies

The humanitarian imperative is prominent across all of our texts, and it is usually emphasized by the *Yuanshi* compilers, seemingly to lend vividness and immediacy through the portrayal of threat to a virtuous and deserving populace. This protected populace is usually signified by *min* 民, and the terminology is quite carefully preserved. Alternative or more specific formulations for which it was perhaps more difficult to claim moral weight, such as ‘wealthy households’, were usually removed in *liezhuan* narratives. The deployment of this populace as an idealized set of beneficiaries has not, however, been straightforward. Particularly in the military context, narratives placing humanitarian aid as a sufficient good in and of itself are matched by others in all our texts illustrating the benefits of mercy to conquest and pacification. This stands in stark contrast to the treatment of Qubilai’s ‘Cao Bin’ instruction to Bayan, which the *Yuanshi* compilers tailored considerably, restricting the general to the gentlest of persuasion.

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帝謂中書省臣曰：「朕在瓊州、建康時，撒迪皆從，備極艱苦，其賜鹽引六萬，俾規利以贍其家。」命郡縣招集被 [719] 兵流亡之民，貧者賑給之。

<sup>161</sup> *Yuanshi* 156.3668:

文炳曰：「吾終不能剝民求利也。」即棄官去。

On the other hand we observe a broad readiness to countenance harsh treatment of the brutal, and the violent employment of might against those who can be separated from the virtuous mainstream *min*. This punitive strain, visible in our foundation texts, is strengthened in the *Yuanshi* edits.<sup>162</sup> The existing readiness to distinguish deviants from ‘hard working families’, in other words, to restrict the scope of the deserving populace, is intensified by the narrative handling of both transgressive and idealized subjects. This punitive tendency extends to the condemnation of exploitation through greed and appropriation; our texts draw a normative opposition between popular welfare and the pursuit of profit. As with some of the incidents examined in chapter four, the imperative to select and condemn transgressive characters such as Aḥmad Fanākatī sometimes seems to outweigh evidence of those characters’ complexity in favour of a one-dimensional portrayal.

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<sup>162</sup> On this punitive tendency in Song Lian’s thought, see Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*, p. 171.

## 6. Conclusions and further avenues for research

As we have seen, the *liezhuan* narratives making up the scope of this investigation were subjected to multiple and detailed interventions during the brief window permitted by the *Yuanshi*'s hasty compilation. Neither uniform nor entirely consistent, these interventions nonetheless did much to shape these key narrative sources. This is not, however, to suggest that the compilers deformed previously pristine or objective material. Beginning with our Mongol-era source texts, it is clear that social biography is an idealizing genre intended to operate at both familial and court levels, and therefore both responding to and participating in long and short term processes shaping social status. The career-focused sections of these present episodic elements well suited to juxtaposition in *liezhuan* narrative format. This is partially due to their compatible investment in, and consequent reification of, the framework of formal appointment, reinforcing and reproducing the 'scholar-official' class from which they emerge. As we have demonstrated, perhaps most clearly in the case of the Jia family biographies, although temporally closer to the events concerned, social biography texts show considerable rhetorical tailoring in their own right. Contributing to their *genjiao* function, this is likely, as Chucai's *shendaobei* perhaps reveals, to address challenges facing subjects' heirs and families as well as societal priorities more broadly.

Su Tianjue's *Mingchen shilue* compilation demonstrates the use of such fragments in two ways. His presentation of labelled excerpts, and the effect this has on Chucai's biography, diluting the *shendaobei*'s moral binary structure, illustrates the power of such arrangement. At the same time, the sheer volume of his unannounced edits within these excerpts exposes the limitations of the verbatim cut-and-paste technique, through both the

generic adjustments to dating formulae required to maintain coherence and the number of more significant edits to content. Su Tianjue's widespread redaction of honorary rank grants alone indicates that we must treat the *Mingchen shilue* preservation of lost texts with caution and raises further questions about his approach to textual transmission.

The *Yuanshi* compilation process, while rushed and far from coherent overall, likewise involved a broad generic set of amendments, many of which were made to our sample texts, if not to all the *liezhuan* for which we have comparators. Beyond these, aside from a general requirement for brevity, all interventions can be considered a tailoring of the narrative record. Aligning with the compilation team's priorities, we find the intensified promotion of centralized government, frugality, and humanitarian concern alongside the punitive marginalization of deviance and transgression. These interventions are primarily manifested at the meso and micro levels, affecting chronology and reported speech and the framing of events and individuals, although, as we have seen, some meso-level interventions hint at subordination to a larger scale arrangement. The process of compiling *liezhuan* for the *Yuanshi* goes – albeit to varying degrees – beyond the development of moral exemplars to produce life narratives that focus less exclusively on the individual and instead make rhetorical statements on the nature of their times.

The biographies of Yelü Chucai, placed to lead the 'Han' subjects in the *Mingchen shilue* and the 'Han-Nan' *liezhuan* in the *Yuanshi*, received intensive editing from both Su Tianjue and the *Yuanshi* compilation teams. Involving the full range of editorial tools identified in our opening chapter, these operate at both the meso level of incident order and at the micro level of reported speech and the framing of individuals. All elements of Chucai's portrayal underwent alteration in developing the binary structure of his moral

superiority, the *Yuanshi* compilers overhauling and sharpening Song Zizhen's rhetorical structure contrasting superior subject against inferior anti-subjects and opponents.

Their adjustments deliver a strengthened condemnation of Ögödei's later years and Töregene's regency, at first emphasizing the monarch's role in endorsing the idealized subject's action in the outcome phase and then, removing the later rulers from this, moving them over to the inferior side of a sharpened moral binary. The resultant narrative not only opposes these rulers to Chucai but to the welfare of their subject population, adding as specific humanitarian gloss to the status of legitimate authority. The importance of this theme is seen from the 'unicorn' incident onwards, and sets even the rule of Činggis Qan into a framework of humanitarian conditionality. Chucai's policy as reported in the *Yuanshi* is always disinterested and pure; in episodes such as the Yanjing bandits incident, his success is only measured through the effect on the population. This position is narrower than that taken by the *shendaobei* and opposed to the logic of Su Tianjue's *Mingchen shilue* formulation.

The *Yuanshi* compilers' interventions are multiple, detailed and subtle, drawing on a range of techniques and leaving little unaltered. Direct speech is selectively employed to highlight certain incidents, condemning inferiors and opponents 'before the camera'. Speeches left almost intact are re-framed, episodes are moved, individuals' posts are adjusted and the storytelling builds a simpler and more focused version of Chucai's life, resembling that of the inscription but distinct from it. Discarding much of the complicating detail of the *Mingchen shilue* biography, the *liezhuan* is more focused on moral status and oppositional court dynamics than were either of its antecedents. The

compilers were prepared to manipulate a considerable range of material in order to effect this.

Repeatedly removing or downplaying aspects of the inscription account that might be identified as non-Chinese, Chucai's *liezhuan* encompasses Mongols, spirits and all other aspects (apart from Chucai's nickname) within a frame reaching back through time rather than extending spatially. This serves the work's purpose of establishing the new Ming polity as complete and sovereign through a claim (both political and cultural) to all Great Yuan *Ulus* possessions without subordinating those possessions to Inner Asian conquerors, or Eurasian empire as a whole. This serves the work's purpose of establishing the new Ming polity as complete and sovereign, succeeding the Činggisids but in no way beholden to them.

Beside this, the compilers' amendments tighten the focus on formal bureaucratic definitions of status. Repeatedly emphasizing formal posts and structures, these interventions distance the idealized subject and his activity from patrimonial rule, shifting agency away from the imperial family and towards the bureaucracy, most prominently the Central Secretariat and Chucai's post-Jin staff. Denying official standing to opponents such as 'Abd al-Rahman, Chucai's personal links to both Ögödei and Antianhe are also carefully downplayed. This has a direct impact on the portrayal of the period, and all elements of Chucai's portrayal – especially secondary subjects – seem to have been fair game for the *Yuanshi* compilers in developing the binary structure of his moral superiority.



Advice is always to compartmentalize and formalize, subordinating retinue and military to the technical and moral superiority of governance through a *Ru* class of informed activists, although the compilers avoid directly identifying historical figures with this idealized epithet. The compilers' definition of success can be discerned where Chucai is portrayed enjoying influence, and likewise in the specific types of costs to challenging this. The *liezhuan* shifts this, subtly but significantly, towards a purely humanitarian imperative, removing the *shendaobei*'s balancing of popular welfare against political stability and court income. Shifting the logic of events to situate all opposing Chucai or his measures as opponents of popular welfare, this aligns the idealized with a 'pure' humanitarianism and centres all court events on the clash thus engineered between principle and transgression.

Surveying the handling of our broader sample, we see rather less consistency in the *Yuanshi* bounding of a 'Chinese' cultural sphere, but strong evidence of a deliberate rhetorical programme affecting the portrayal of these key figures and the courts and events among which they lived. We can discern a broad tendency to reclassify people receiving the vague 'Huihu' ethnic tag in the foundation texts with the beautifully vague but clearly external geographic marker of connection to the 'Western Regions'. We also detect a more direct linking of such people to transgression, especially in connection to taxation and lending, links, if already established in the *Mingchen shilue* and foundation texts, reinforced and made more overt through the manipulation of chronology and reframing of secondary subjects. This refining of scapegoating is also, as we have seen, a fairly standard technique employed by our compilers, intensifying transgression and tightening the focus on selected secondary individuals.

Less consistently applied is the tendency to downplay Other cultural and linguistic elements through selective mention and explanation. Applied to politically inflected institutions such as the *kešig* and *darqan*, it does not, however, extend to discussions of name grants. It should be stressed that these are subject to interventions which, while inconsistent, are ever-present; their extent and marked inconsistency seems to suggest a degree of importance alongside a distinct lack of coordination. *Yuanshi liezhuan* offer neither ethnographic explanation of the Činggisid phenomenon nor blanket commendation, but they do serve to draw fuzzy boundaries to the Ming inheritance, shifting the moral centre of gravity onto a much more ‘Chinese’ space than seems to have been occupied by the Great Yuan *Ulus*.

Moving away from the edges, the tendency to mark a positively desirable centre, placing this in ‘Zhongguo’ and defining it through ritual, is somewhat more consistent. Stated baldly in Xu Shilong’s advice to Qubilai, this also lies in the background to Wang Pan’s biographies and the *Yuanshi* compilers’ interventions distinguishing additional degrees of spatial division within the court precincts. Harqasun’s biographies add nuance to this, the compilers’ additional condemnation of Tang and Song politics challenging assumptions about the shape and nature of ‘Chinese’ models for government.

In their portrayal of governing institutions, *Yuanshi* and *Mingchen shilue* narratives are closely related, portraying many of the same events in a broadly similar way. Detailed interventions were, however, made in many places by the *Yuanshi* compilers at the micro level, and these have an impact on the impression readers receive of events and personalities. Moral binaries, sharpened by the *Yuanshi* edits, leave incidents more vital and vivid, idealized subjects more positive and opponents more villainous. Aḥmad

Fanākatī in particular is positioned as a direct enemy of appropriate governance, and the offices to which he is opposed are adjusted to appear not just *part* of an ‘ancient system’ but central to it. Separated from Qubilai, Aḥmad is not part of a complex court situation but its chief villain, simplification seen again when he is pitted against Jingim.

Complexities are muted and agency shifted to emphasize the power held by transgressors and the threat posed by this to morally inflected ‘proper’ authority. As illustrated by the account of Dong Wenyong’s ‘eagle-feeding’ episode, the *Yuanshi* compilers were prepared to sacrifice coherence for vividness and impact in illustrating the threat posed by transgressive individuals, shifting subjects’ conflicts to serve as verdicts on court and era.

The humanitarian imperative is prominent across all of our texts, and it is usually emphasized by the *Yuanshi* compilers, seemingly to lend vividness and immediacy through the portrayal of threat to a virtuous and deserving populace. This protected populace is usually signified by *min* 民, and this terminology is employed methodically, with alternative formulations usually removed from *liezhuan*. The deployment of this populace as an idealized set of beneficiaries has not, however, been straightforward. Particularly in the military context, narratives placing humanitarian aid as a sufficient good in and of itself are matched by others in all our texts illustrating the benefits of mercy to conquest and pacification. This stands in stark contrast to the treatment of Qubilai’s ‘Cao Bin’ instruction to Bayan, which the *Yuanshi* compilers tailored considerably, restricting the general to the gentlest of persuasion.

On the other hand we observe a broad readiness to countenance harsh treatment of those who can be separated from the virtuous mainstream *min*. This punitive strain is strengthened in the *Yuanshi* edits. The existing readiness to distinguish deviants from

‘hard working families’, or in other words restrict the scope of the deserving populace, is intensified by the narrative handling of both transgressive and idealized subjects. This punitive tendency extends to the condemnation of exploitation through greed and appropriation; our texts draw a normative opposition between popular welfare and the pursuit of profit. As with some of the incidents examined in chapter four, the imperative to select and condemn transgressive characters such as Aḥmad Fanākatī sometimes outweighs evidence of those characters’ complexity in favour of a one-dimensional portrayal.

Returning to a point raised in the opening pages of this thesis about moral conduct and matters of importance in biographical narratives, we can conclude that moral conduct, its nature and its presentation as an urgent matter for governance was vitally important to our compilers. Defining the moral and upstanding and marginalizing the threatening and deviant is central to the editorial activity exposed by our interrogation of *liezhuan* and their development in relation to foundation texts and the *Mingchen shilue*. This function demands vividness and story-telling in developing its impact and thus power over readers. In its pursuit we have seen, at some time or another, all other elements of the historical record, including rank and position, reported speech, chronology, location and the identity of secondary subjects, altered or re-framed to some degree.

The relationship between Su Tianjue and his foundation texts requires considerable clarification; we have observed a great deal of micro-scale unannounced alterations to the source texts we have available, and these persist when compared against representative editions of his own *Yuanwenlei* collection. This requires further interrogation that goes beyond the scope of this thesis, both at the stemmatic level of establishing connections

between extant social biography versions and in terms of the intention behind compiling the *Mingchen shilue* through the employment of excerpts and *kaoyi* notes.

These are all elements detectable at the micro or meso-levels of intervention. Further examination of the macro-level arrangement within and between *liezhuan* collections – something hinted at by the deletion of episodes within Li Dehui’s biography – may tell us much more about our compilers’ intentions for the work. Requiring the large-scale comparison of texts, this may be facilitated by ongoing projects like the MARKUS text marking project based in Leiden and the indexing activity of the ERC Mobility, Empire and Cross Cultural Contacts in Mongol Eurasia Project based at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The power of, and role played by, narrative construction, and the repertoire of effects deployed by compilers, deserves further attention and offers substantial scope for further research. This certainly includes broader work on *Yuanshi liezhuan*, both those based on our significant range of social biography texts and the great many biographies constructed from other records. Further comparative work on other ‘standard histories’ and foundation texts may expose shifts in the elements of the narrative toolkits or repertoires employed by our historian-compilers. Understanding how these changed across a single ‘dynastic’ period would grant valuable insights into the effects of events on, in a terrifying tail-swallowing fashion, our perceptions of events. What we might call ‘the long Mongol era’ in East Asia (i.e., extending from the late Jin-Song polities to the early Ming) is perhaps eminently suited to this endeavour. Representing a manageable period that saw the production of several ‘standard histories’ and for which we retain a very substantial corpus of related texts, both those written in Chinese and those in other

languages, originating elsewhere within and beyond the Mongol imperium, it offers great potential for tracing seams and continuities in narrative handling and editorial practice.

A linked question which also fell beyond the scope of this thesis is the readership, reception and effect of social biography and especially *liezhuan* portrayals of primary subjects, secondary subjects and events. Again, the Mongol era, at the cusp of the extant range of gazetteers, and well within the antiquarian fashion for rubbings, is well placed for such research. Ultimately, our biographies, in the form of artifacts of the events they portray, and as artifacts of their multiple composition and compilation processes, hold considerable value. The ways in which they make claims to authentic and definitive recording and the types and forms of narrative material they present to historians in order to make that claim demand our attention, and anyway, they sometimes tell good stories.

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