

How Genghis Khan Has Changed the World

By

Paul D. Buell

Center for East Asian Studies, Western Washington University

Steppe empires, some of which had embraced considerable territory and had exerted a profound influence, had come and gone by the early thirteenth century when the Mongols first appeared. None of them has had the impact of the Mongol Empire which followed; the largest steppe empire in history. Its borders stretched from the Gulf of Bohai into Russia, from southern Siberia into Tibet and the Middle East. It was also easily the most influential, marking the true beginning of global history. The Mongols made communication within Eurasia possible in ways never dreamed of before. Although contacts were momentarily lost in the 14th century with the gradual disappearance of the Mongol world order, they were resumed at European initiative after 1498. Vasco da Gama finished what Genghis Khan had started, and our globalized age is the result.

Empire

When Genghis Khan died in 1227 his empire was vast but still growing. During the next 32 years his successors continued to develop the founder's behest. They expanded the empire physically and refined its organization. In the process, they produced a remarkable imperial structure that grafted the best that East and West had to offer onto a Mongol foundation (Buell 1977; Buell 2003a). Simultaneously, with political restructuring, the Mongols also engendered a common imperial culture. This culture gradually seized the imagination of much of the Old World. Subject peoples and many located far beyond Mongolian frontiers rushed to imitate the Mongol elite. They did so in everything from using bows to play musical instruments (de Rachewiltz 2007), to clothing styles and food (Buell, Anderson and Perry 2000). Encouraging such development was an unprecedented exchange of people from many different cultures. The Mongols recruited from one end of Eurasia to the other. Thus Khwarazmians from Central Asia served in China and Khitan, from north China, in Bukhara (Buell 1977; Buell 1979). Tibetans and Chinese went to Iran (Allsen 2001; Buell *Islam and Tibet* forthcoming). A Parisian goldsmith designed the great tree of life dispensing liquor to imperial guests in Kharakhorum, the Mongol capital (Buell, Anderson and Perry 2000: 32-4). Chinese and Muslim doctors saw to the ruler's health (Buell *Asian Medicine, Tradition and Modernity* forthcoming). The Mongols also moved groups as well as individuals. The khan's guard, for example, included troops from almost everywhere; even a force of Russian knights (Hsiao 1978).

To support their new life style as world conquerors, the Mongols also encouraged a free exchange of goods. In part they did using their unexampled postal system, the *jam*, which stretched from one end of their empire to the other and allowed goods and information to move more quickly than ever before. They even actively participated in long distance trade themselves,

in collaboration with merchants (Allsen 1989). Mongol rulers and princes wore the most beautiful cloths available, imported from anywhere in their empire (Allsen 1997). They used the best available medicines and spices, even extremely rare ones such as African grains-of-paradise, a rare cardamom (Buell, Anderson and Perry 2000). As warriors, they drew upon the best that the Old World had to offer in military technology: Chinese technology was used in Iran and Middle Eastern in China (May 2007; Nicolle 1990). They created an innovative coinage and economic system to support it (Kolbas 2006). Few areas escaped their attention and little was left unchanged.

Successor States

Although the former world empire of the Mongols fell apart into four competing khanates after 1260, the patterns of the unified empire continued and intensified (Buell 1977; Buell 2003a). In the east was Mongol China (Yuan Dynasty 1260-1368) under Khubilai (r. 1260-1294), the brother and would-be successor of khan Möngke (r. 1251-59) (Rossabi 1988; Buell 2003a). This was to Europeans the Realm of the Great Khan: it was the most powerful and sophisticated of the successor states. In the far west was the Golden Horde under the descendents of Jochi, oldest son of Genghis Khan, dominating Russia and western Siberia. If Mongol China was the most sophisticated part of the old Mongol world order, the Golden Horde, largely steppe based, was the least (Buell 2003a). This may have been an advantage. It lasted the longest of all.

In the center of the Mongol world was the Khanate of Chaghadai, under his descendents. It controlled the rich oasis cities of Turkistan and surrounding steppe areas. Finally, in Iran and Iraq was the Ilkhanate, ruled by Hülegü, younger brother and ally of Khubilai and his house. A fifth qanate, in Siberia, was controlled by the rebel Khaidu, attempting to assert the prerogatives of the deposed house of Ögödei (r. 1227-1241) and his son Güyük (r. 1246-48). For many years Khaidu effectively controlled the Khanate of Chaghadai.

Except for a brief period of agreement of the warring parties in the early 14th century, conflict was the rule rather than the exception (Buell 2003a). Nonetheless, what was most remarkable about the post-imperial make-up of the Mongol world was a remarkable degree of continuity with the past. Cultural exchange continued on a broad scale and even gathered momentum; the successor khanates in many ways enjoyed a common elite culture even if disunited.

Foods

Nowhere was the common elite culture more noticeable than in food. This is area well documented in many surviving recipes and in the art of the time. It shows feasting Mongols and their guests, consuming the elite foods of the era. The Mongol banquet soup (*shülen*), the preferred dish of the khans, had become the prestige food of a world order. The *shülen* was basically boiled mutton with thickeners. These included hulled and ground chickpeas, from the Middle East, and rice, a Chinese touch. Spicing was often international, although subtle. The result was not always a soup. A dish could be cooked dry. Wolf and even bear could substitute for the mutton (Buell, Anderson and Perry 2000; Buell 2006).

The following is an example of a *shülen* consumed in Mongol China. It is from the imperial dietary manual *Yinshan zhengyao* 飲膳正要, “Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor’s

Food and Drink,” presented to the court in 1330. Like most recipes in the text, it is assigned medicinal properties. Note that a *sheng* 升 is about 31.5 cu in and a *he* 合 is one tenth of a *sheng*. A *sashuq* is a small coin. The word, like *Shaqimur*, in the title of the recipe, is Turkic, pointing up the international atmosphere of the Mongol court in China. The *shaqimur*, like many other raw foods popular at the Mongol court in China, was imported from the West:

***Shaqimur* [Rape Turnip] Soup**

It supplements the center, and brings down *qi* 氣. It harmonizes spleen and stomach.

[Ingredients:] Mutton (leg; bone and cut up), tsaoko [large smoky] cardamoms (five), chickpeas (half a *sheng*, pulverize and remove the skins), *shaqimur* (five); this is like *manqing* 蔓菁 [silver beet or Swiss chard]).

Boil ingredients together and make a soup. Strain [broth. Cut up meat and *shaqimur* and put aside]. Add 2 *he* of cooked chickpeas, 1 *sheng* of aromatic non-glutinous rice, and [the] cooked *shaqimur* beet cut up into *sashuq*-sized pieces. Add [the] cut-up meat. Evenly adjust flavors with a little salt (Buell, Anderson and Perry 2000: 278-79).

Eaten alongside the banquet soups were a variety of other foods called *ash*, variously: “grain foods,” even “side dishes” (to soups). Among the *ash* were noodle foods that became the rage. One of them was *tutumash*, originally a Turkic dish, a large stuffed noodle eaten with a sauce of cream and basil. It was known from Turkey to China, and still persists today in Middle Eastern cookbooks (Buell, Anderson and Perry 2000; Buell 1999; Buell 2006). Another was the ubiquitous *manta*, a steamed bun, also originally Turkic. It was broadly popularized by the Mongols and still a major part of cuisine in the Islamic world. In the following example, the usual dough covering has been replaced by hollowed-out eggplant:

Eggplant *manta*

[Ingredients:] Mutton, sheep’s fat, sheep’s tail, onions, prepared mandarin peel (cut each up finely), “tender” eggplant (remove the pith).

Combine [other] ingredients with meats into a stuffing, but [instead of making a dough covering] put it inside the eggplant [skin] and steam. Add garlic, cream [or yogurt], and finely ground basil. Eat (Buell, Anderson and Perry 2000: 313-14).

Also a part of Islamic and, in this case, world cuisine today is another Mongol era creation: bakhlava. The name is from a Mongolian word meaning to pile up in layers. Although today’s bakhlava is a far cry from what this popular dessert was in the 14th century, a recipe book from China contains a dessert that is without question an early baklava. It is called in Turkic *güllach*, i.e., “flower bread food:”

Güllach

Combine evenly egg white, bean paste [or durum flour] and work in cream [to make the dough]. Spread out [the dough] and make into thin cakes. Use a layer of white powdered sugar, [ground up] pine nuts, and [ground up] walnuts for each layer of cake. Make three or four layers like this. Over the top pour honey dissolved in ghee. Eat (Buell 1999:220).

The result is delicious, definitely worthy of a khan.

Also consumed by preference as part of this new world cuisine were many liquid foods. These are *umdan* in Mongolian, “drinks,” constituting along with *shülen*, “soups,” the two fundamental categories of food in the *Secret History of the Mongols*. *Umdan* were served to Genghiz Khan at his orders by the imperial bodyguard (Buell, Anderson and Perry 2000: 44). The most important of these was *airag*, or kumiss, that is, fermented mare’s milk. Fermented mare’s milk was the prestige food of the Mongols, although made and consumed by many other steppe peoples as well. Also popularized by the Mongols were many other kinds of drinks. They included variants of the Arabic *sharāb*, sweet drinks made with fruits and berries, favored by the Mongols. Some of these drinks were alcoholic, in one case due to freeze distillation to concentrate alcohol at a low level. Far more alcoholic were distilled beverages, also popularized during Mongol times, along with mobile stills. That most of these have Turkic names indicates the primary source of inspiration, but some of the liquors in question were not originally distilled. This seems to have been a Mongol-era innovation (Buell, Anderson and Perry, 2000: 48-49).

Also a part of the Mongol liquid cuisine during the era was tea. The Mongols learned tea-drinking in China and soon produced their own variants. The first recipe for Mongolian milk tea, tea long boiled in milk or cream, for example, comes from the *Yinshan zhengyao* (Buell, Anderson and Perry 2000: 111). But did they popularize tea outside of China? In view of the increased popularity of tea-drinking almost everywhere after the Mongols, they must have.

Porcelain

To support a predominantly liquid diet required special preparations. Among them was the introduction of a new type of pottery. This was porcelain, which reached far beyond where the Mongols touched directly. Although the term is often applied to late Chinese pottery in general, porcelain is a more specialized product. It is produced by using special clay combinations and fired at an extremely high temperature. The final product is finely glazed, strong but light, and relatively dense and nonporous. As such it was ideally suited to the liquid diet of the Mongols. Porcelain dishes do not absorb liquids placed in them, hold hot liquids with ease, and are easy to wash and thus relatively sanitary (Carswell 2000).

The Mongols began using porcelain dishes almost immediately, including perhaps the favorite blue dish of the Ong Khan, Genghis Khan’s steppe rival (de Rachewiltz 2006: I, 644-45). At first these were trade goods. Later, with the conquest of more and more of China, culminating in the complete incorporation of the south in 1279, Mongol China controlled the major sources of production. These it used to meet its own needs and export. At first this involved a land trade but later most porcelain moved by sea (Carswell 2000). In any case, a huge trade was involved as the porcelain craze took in much of the Old World and even went overseas after 1492, to colonial Latin America.

The Mongols at first used Chinese porcelain in the relatively subdued colors it came in and with Chinese decorations. They soon added their own touches. This included painting dishes prepared for them and for export with a cobalt blue underglaze, resulting in an even more stunning appears. In this case, blue almost certainly represents the Mongols themselves, the favorites of Blue Heaven, the supreme spirit (Buell 2002). The Mongols also had their potters

introduce new shapes to accord with their particular needs, including their cuisine. They ordered pots with Islamic decoration, and styled after Western vessels. This helped Mongol China's exports (Carswell 2000).

The use of essentially Islamic decorations on Chinese pots points up the importance of the artistic exchanges taking place during the Mongol era. Islamic designs and colors came to China, and Chinese painting and Chinese painting techniques moved west. In the Europe the most notable change in Mongol era art was the gradual disappearance of a simple solid gold background in early Renaissance painting and the appearance of Chinese style landscapes. The same thing was happening in Iranian art where miniature painting shows the obvious influence of Chinese views of landscape (Komaroff and Carboni 2002). An increasing standardization of what was being produced also suggests knowledge of Chinese printed books and imitation of their contents. These offered standardized versions of texts and even art. In the West, the idea seems to have first developed in Mongol Iran. There appeared standard editions of the Iranian national epic, the *Shahname*, a tradition carried on under the Tamerlane and his descendents in Turkistan (Lentz and Lowry, 1989). A possible European connection may be found in the nearly contemporary standard books produced by Christine de Pisan (1364-1441), doubling as publisher as well as poet (Buell, 2001).

Medicine

Closely associated with the dietary revolution of the Mongol era was an exchange of medical ideas. This was part of a process by which virtually a single medical tradition was created throughout Eurasia. Prior to the Mongols, the most important medical tradition was so-called Arabic medicine. This was basically Greek and Syrian, but the basic texts were translated into Arabic starting in the 9th century. It was through the Arabic language that the medical classics of the tradition, by Galen, Hippocrates, Paul of Aegina and others, including some original Persian and Arabic writers, spread throughout the Islamic world (Ullmann, 1978; Pormann and Savage-Smith, 2007). And they even went beyond, back into Europe where translations from the Arabic became the basis of medical education (Kristeller, 1982). This was before the European rediscovery of the most important Greek texts in their original language.

The Mongols had their own medicine, but began using the medicines of others as soon as expansion began. Mongol medicine emphasized a limited intake of herbs and the consumption of specific parts of animals to treat specific conditions. They also had methods for wound treatment and bone repair (Buell, Anderson and Perry 2000; Buell *Silk Road* forthcoming); but none of their practices was as sophisticated or as developed as the medicines of the world outside Mongolia, with their rich written traditions, well-thought-out theories, and thousands of herbs and many other forms of treatment. Thus Chinese medicine was used at imperial court at an early date, along with Tibetan, another rich and original tradition, practiced by missionaries and envoys from Tibet going to Mongolia (Buell *Islam and Tibet* forthcoming). And through the court these medicines spread throughout the Mongol world, including to Mongol Iran where at least one Chinese manual, on pulse lore, was translated for local consumption (Buell *Asian Medicine, Tradition and Modernity* forthcoming).

Nonetheless, despite Mongol exposure to Chinese and Tibetan medicine, it was Arabic medicine that ultimately became the preferred medicine of the elite, including in Mongol China. There the Mongols attempted to introduce it on a broad scale. They did so by promoting a vast

translation effort to make available the medical lore and specific treatments of Arabic medicine in China. This effort included the compilation of a huge encyclopedia, more than 3500 dense manuscript pages, of which major fragments still survive, now called *Huihui yaofang* 回回藥方, “Muslim Medicinal Recipes.” This is the only text in the Chinese tradition to actually quote Galen and other Western authorities by name and was important enough for a new edition to be made during the Ming 明 period. The present fragments derive from it. This text typically shows not a pure Arabic medicine but a carefully reworked Arabic medicine that uses many of the terms and categories of Chinese medicine (Buell *Asian Medicine, Tradition and Modernity* forthcoming; Buell *Silk Road* forthcoming). It also shows Tibetan influence, in the humoral system, for example. Tibet at the time had its own Western medical traditions as well as Indian and even Central Asian (Garrett 2007; Buell *Islam and Tibet* forthcoming). As result of Mongol patronage, the medical systems of much of Eurasia, as well as Europe, were at the same place. The same texts were studied from one end of the Old World to the other. The Mongols thereby promoted a cosmopolitan Eurasian tradition of medicine as they attempted to create a system in which all the major traditions of medicine in Eurasia were integrated.

Other Sciences

The Mongols encouraged exchanges of ideas and synthesis in many other areas, to create new modified systems. One was astronomy. Islamic astronomers went to China, and Chinese to Iran and elsewhere (Dalen 2002; Allsen 2001). Geographical knowledge spread resulting in advanced Chinese awareness of the entire world, even Africa, and the best and most accurate maps in existence (Fuchs 1946). Part of the spread of better geographical knowledge was that people travelled more widely. Marco Polo is the most famous example, but during the same period the first East Asians travelled all the way to Europe (Rossabi 1992).

A typical production is a calendar now in a Russian collection. It begins its dating system in 1206, the date of the formal establishment of Genghis Khan. It is written in Persian and in Chinese. The Persian is written using a Chinese brush and shows the influence of Chinese calligraphy. The paper also appears to be Chinese. The same sort of calendar was in use elsewhere and shows a concerted Mongol effort to create one universal era (Dalen 2002). Also typical of the times are coins with Chinese, Mongolian, and Persian inscriptions, informing us in these languages that all are “real” money, legal tender. They were issued as part of a uniquely Mongolian coinage system, another effort to unify and synthesize. The Mongols in Iran also attempted, unsuccessfully, to introduce Chinese-style paper money at the end of the thirteenth century; it was the first effort to print documents there (Kolbas, 2006). In the end, is it so surprising that Jerome of Prague, in a lost Italian wall painting, is shown reading a ‘Phags-pa text, written in the script that Khubilai had invented to write all of the world’s languages (Mack 2002: 52)?

After the Mongols

Although, except in Russia, the successor states of the Mongolian Empire vanished in the 14th century, the effects of Mongolian imperial unity and of the common cultural elements of the successor states lingered. One of the most important legacies of the Mongol age was the modern nation states that grew up out of the ruins of the former khanates. There had been no unified China for four hundred years. The Mongols created one country out of what had once been three

states in the 13th century. Except for brief periods of weakness, there has been no disunified China since. The reunification that the Mongols accomplished in 1279 has persisted. Also persisting has been China's province system, a Mongol-era innovation, with Beijing, the former winter capital of Mongol China, with its forbidden city, first appearing under the Mongols, at its head (Buell, 1977).

Russia is also fundamentally a creation of the Mongols. The political system adopted by Muscovy clearly mimicked the structure of the Golden Horde and the new Russia achieved its centralization thanks to a Mongol destruction of an older decentralized order, Kievan Russia. In a way, the former Soviet Union was the ultimate successor khanate, with its orbit of provinces, secondary states, surrounding a Mongolian-style imperial center (Buell, 1977).

Iran too felt the impact of the Mongols. In the six centuries before the Mongols, Arabic culture had dominated the Middle East. After the Mongols a revitalized Iran reassumed a key role for the first time since the 7th century. The structure of post-Mongol Iran also had many Mongolian features, including much of its governmental and economic system. The Mongol also helped restore the *Shahname* as the Iranian national epic, and helped introduce Shism that ultimately became paramount.

No nation state as such emerged in Turkistan, but Tamerlane, who claimed descent from Genghis Khan through his wife, did create his own khanate. It resulted in the last golden age of the region, and if Tamerlane was not a Mongol, except by marriage, he used Mongol methods in government. He and his successors also fully exploited the Mongol cultural heritage, including an architecture that emphasized porcelain tiles, many of them the classic blue (Lentz and Lowry 1989). Much of the achievement of Tamerlane has persisted right down to the present, permanently influencing the cultures and politics of Turkistan.

States then carried on the Mongol tradition as such in general terms. But they also did so in more specific terms as well. Ming China, for example, maintained a great interest in the Mongolian language and in Mongolian documents, including the *Secret History* (Rachewiltz 2006). Its most important version is a Ming reworking. The Ming also studied the Chinese documents of the Mongols, including Mongol China's material on Islamic medicine (Buell *Asian Medicine, Tradition and Modernity* forthcoming). Most important of all, Ming China for many years continued the overseas explorations started by the Mongols. Mongol China was the first dynasty in Chinese history able to maintain an effective sea power capable of operating long range. Although not successfully, the Mongols invaded Japan twice, Vietnam once, and Java once, all using huge fleets comprised of ships very large by the standards of the time and technologically superior. The Mongols in China also moved massive amounts of grain by sea for the first time in Chinese history. They used their maritime power to maintain an association with Mongol Iran, after the land routes were cut by civil wars. The Ming Zhenghe 鄭和 voyages that are so celebrated today simply continued what the Mongols had begun (Deng 1999). They even continued the Mongol practice of mounting cannon and other heavy gunpowder weapons on ships to achieve a complete superiority over any enemies. We now know, for example, that hurled exploding bombs were a feature of the Mongol invasions of Japan (Delgado 2003), and examples of hand guns and cannon survive from Mongol China that are earlier than any others found anywhere in the world.

Not only China, but other parts of East Asia were profoundly influenced by the presence of the Mongols there. For Korea, physically occupied, its Mongol connection was one of the great

watersheds in its history. Unlike Japan, where the military class went on to become dominant, Korea's equivalent of the Samurai class was destroyed resisting the Mongols. Post-Mongol Korea is the story of Confucian factions struggling for power in a highly unified country, far more unified than at any other time in its history, and not of the rise of regional military barons (Henthorn 1963). The Koreans also took over substantial parts of Mongol-era court culture, including foods, its national costume, fashioned after the Mongol robe, the *deel*, and even the idea of its syllabary. This was created in clear imitation of the international 'Phags-pa script of Mongol China

Japan, by contrast, was never conquered. Nonetheless, the myth of the Divine Wind or *kamikaze*, the great hurricane sent by heaven that destroyed the second Mongol invasion fleet, became a national obsession. This was so even if the second great Kamikaze, of 1945, failed to save Japan, and the myth of Japanese invincibility was shattered once and for all. Vietnam too, invaded but not conquered by the Mongols, was profoundly affected by its three Mongol invasions. They played a key role in the birth of the idea of a Vietnamese nation, out of a time of national disunity and weakness (Yu 2006). Tibet too emerged changed from contact with the Mongols who patronized one dominant religious house over all the others in place of the old anarchy. This method of governance persisted until the recent past.

Farther afield, also in many ways a product of Mongol times and Mongol influence was the Ottoman Empire. It drew heavily upon the Mongol Ilqanate of Iran, which had dominated their predecessors the Seljuqs, for inspiration (Uzunçarşılı 1970).

Europe was threatened but never directly conquered by the Mongols. It never forgot its experiences with them. Fear of the Mongols amplified ancestral fears of invasion from the steppe going back to the Huns and before (Weiers 2006). At the same time, European experience with the Mongols involved it for the first time with a larger Eurasian world almost without boundaries.

At one level, Europe emerged from relative seclusion thanks to the Mongols. Europeans became part of a great internationalization encouraged by the Mongols. At the same time, Europe took full advantage of the technological and other achievements of the Mongol world to move from backwardness to a position of ultimate superiority. Although the mechanisms of transfer and the time sequence are unclear, printing and gunpowder must have come with the Mongols, to mention just two of the new technologies of the period that had such a great impact. Also coming with the Mongols was a new attitude towards international commerce and the role that Europe was to play in it (Phillips 1988).

East Asia moved on to a new era with the end of direct or indirect Mongol influence. This new era continued traditional patterns of culture and society. The Zhenghe voyages ended in the 15th century. China never again maintain naval forces of such a magnitude nor was exploration of distant areas ever as remotely important. This was not true for Europe. Just at the time that China stopped exploring, Europe stepped up its search for the Realm of the Great Khan. The aim was to restore lost commercial and other contacts. By then, Europe had become a radically different society thanks to the impact of the Black Death, another Mongol gift. It decimated the European establishment and forced change (Benedictow 2004). East Asia was spared and went on much as it had before.

European merchants and missionaries had moved freely in the Mongolian world well into the 14th century (Phillips, 1988). It was only with the fall of most of the Mongolian successor states

that contacts ceased, and even then, not entirely. Genoa, for example, seems to have made a concerted effort to stay in contact with the east, although most of the contact was kept secret. But Europe kept trying, driven on by the most famous travelogue of all time, the *Travels of Marco Polo*, dictated by Polo to a writer of Romances. Polo, a Venetian, told of the wonders of Asia, of the court of the Great Khan of China in particular. He did so in a way that Europeans found fascinating, and they never forgot what they read in one of the most translated and most widely disseminated books in European history, second perhaps in importance only to the Bible.

What kept the Europeans away was technology, but local development, and technological transfers before and after the Mongols soon brought them up to the level of China. Two of the critical innovations were the stern-post rudder and the compass. Later Europeans introduced fore and after rigging, already common in East Asia, and making their ships far more efficient in tacking against the wind than ever before. At first they sailed in small open caravels, then larger and larger fully decked ships. In 1498 the Portuguese finally found a new way to reach the fabled east, around Africa. In so doing they avoided a land route that had been highly disturbed. By the early 16th century they were in China, although the first Portuguese arrival came in a Chinese junk. Not long after, other Portuguese discovered a land never visited by Marco Polo, but mentioned in his *Travels* and thus familiar to Europeans: Japan (Buell 1990). Across the Atlantic, Columbus set out with his own copy of Marco Polo, it is said, and thought he had reached India with the Realm of the Great Khan just beyond. The search across the Atlantic went on well into the 16th century before it was clear that something intervened between Europe and China. By that time the Spanish too had established their own direct contacts with the fabled east via the Manila Galleon, sailing across the broad Pacific Ocean.

As the 16th century ended and the 17th began, Europe gradually reestablished the globalized connections of the old Mongol era, although this time by sea and not primarily overland. They had found the Realm of the Great Khan and become great khans themselves. Appropriately, some of the very same products playing such important roles in Mongol times played a role in the new trade too. This included blue and white porcelain, a product that more than any other was a symbol of the time. Although first appearing in Europe in the early 14th century, in Bulgaria (John Carswell personal communication to the author 2005), it was in the 16th and 17th centuries that porcelain took Europe by storm; the first world art craze resulted.

Taking place along with the physical expansion of Europe to restore the world to what it once had been, was an expansion of knowledge. This included the first evaluation of Asian sources dealing with the Mongols and their empire, once the Realm of the Great Khan so longed for by Europeans. By the 17th century, Europeans knew full well that there was no Realm of the Great Khan in Asia, that the Mongols were over and done with. Nonetheless, they remained fascinated with them, and with the figure of Genghis Khan, considered the great despot and bloody barbarian, an individual scarcely human and driven only by his passions. Only gradually, as scholarship improved, did this image change. Among the first to adopt a more balanced picture was the British historian Edward Gibbon, who emphasized a social interpretation for the rise of Genghis Khan and attributed skill to his empire building. The picture further improved with the publication and translation of Rashid al-Dīn and other Persian historians of the Mongol era for a European audience. Gradually the first Mongolian sources became available, culminating between the late 19th and mid-20th century in the recovery and translation of the *Secret History of the Mongols*, providing the Mongol side of the story (Buell, 2003a, 2003b).

Now the pendulum has swung entirely the other way: the Mongol age is now considered a critical period in world history and the Mongol conquerors the creators of the first globalization, and thus the inventors of the modern world. This is the view presented by Jack Weatherford in his *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*, an extremely popular book. Weatherford, in the view of some, goes too far, but on-going research keeps discovering more and more about the cultural exchanges of the Mongol era. Weatherford may in the end have understated what really took place. Weatherford is right in any case. Despite the importance of the exchanges and events before Genghis Khan, his conquests truly marked the beginning of our world. History might have been entirely different without him. We might be entirely different without him.

Bibliography

Allsen, Thomas T.

- 1989 Mongolian Princes and Their Merchant Partners. *Asia Major*, 2: 83-12
- 1997 *Commodity and Exchange in the Mongol Empire, A Cultural History of Islamic Textiles*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization).
- 2001 *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization).

Benedictow, Ole J.

- 2004 *The Black Death, 1346-1353, the Complete History*, Woodbridge, Suffolk: the Boydell Press.

Buell, Paul D.

1977. *Tribe, Qan and Ulus in Early Mongol China: Some Prolegomena to Yüan History*. unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Washington, 1977.
- 1979 Sino-Mongolian Administration in Mongol Bukhara. *Journal of Asian History*, XIII, 2: 121-151.
- 1990 Fact and Fiction in Fernão Mendes Pinto's Account of China. *Crossroads*, I,1: 71-86.
- 1999 Mongolian Empire and Turkicization: the Evidence of Food and Foodways. In *The Mongol Empire and its Legacy*, edited by Reuven Amitai-Preiss, 200-223. Amsterdam: E.J. Brill.
- 2001 Christine de Pizan (c. 1364-1431). In *The Late Medieval Age of Crisis and Renewal, 1300-1500: A Biographical Dictionary*, edited by Clayton J. Drees, 103-104. Westport, Conn. And London: Greenwood Press (Great Cultural Eras of the Western World).
- 2002 Review of John Carswell, *Blue & White, Chinese Porcelain Around the World*. *International Journal of Maritime History*, XIV, 2, 405-407
- 2003a *Historical Dictionary of the Mongolian World Empire*. Lanham, Md., and Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, Inc. (Historical Dictionaries of Ancient Civilizations and Historical Eras, No. 8).
- 2003b Age of Mongolian Empire: A Bibliographic Essay. *Silk Road*, I, 1 (January): 16-25
- 2006 Steppe Foodways and History. *Asian Medicine, Tradition and Modernity*, 2.2: 171-203
- Islam and Tibet* forthcoming. Tibetans, Mongols and Cultural Fusion. London: Warburg Institute
- Asian Medicine, Tradition and Modernity* forthcoming. How did Persian and other western Medical Knowledge Move East, and Chinese west? A Look at the Role of Rashīd al-Dīn and Others. *Asian Medicine, Tradition and Modernity*, 3.2

Silk Road forthcoming. Food, Medicine and the Silk Road: The Mongol-era Exchanges.

Buell, Paul D., Eugene N. Anderson and Charles Perry

2000 *A Soup for the Qan: Chinese Dietary Medicine of the Mongol Era as Seen in Hu Szu-hui's Yin-shan Cheng-yao*, London: Kegan Paul International (Sir Henry Wellcome Asian Series).

Carswell, John

2000 *Blue and White, Chinese Porcelain around the World*, Chicago: Art Media Resources.

Dalen, Benno van

2002 Islamic and Chinese Astronomy under the Mongols: A little Known Case of Transmission. In *From China to Paris: 2000 Years Transmission of Mathematical Ideas*, edited by Yvonne Dold-Samplonius, Joseph W. Dauben, Menso Folkerts, and Benno van Dalen: 327-56. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Delgado, James P.

2003 Relics of Kamikaze. *Archaeology* (January): 36-41.

Deng Gang

1999 *Maritime Sector, Institutions, and Sea Power of Modern China*. Westport, Connecticut, London: Greenwood Press (Contributions in Economic and Economic History 212).

Fuchs, W.

1946 The Mongol Atlas of China by Chu Ssu-Pen, and the Kuang Yü Thu. Peiping: Fu-Jen University Press (*Monumenta Serica Monographs*. No 8).

Garrett, Frances

2007 Critical Methods in Tibetan Medical Histories, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 66, 2 (May): 363-387.

Hsiao, Ch'i-ch'ing

1978 *The Military Establishment of the Yuan Dynasty*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kolbas, Judith

2006 *The Mongols in Iran, Chingiz Khan to Uljaytu, 1220-1309*. London and New York, Routledge.

Komaroff, Linda and Stefano Carboni (eds.)

2002 *The Legacy of Genghis Khan, Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Kristeller, Paul Oskar

1982 Neue Quellen zur salernitaner Medizin des 12 Jahrhunderts. In *Medicine im mittelalterlichen Abendland*, edited by Gerhard Baader and Gundolf Keil, 191-208. Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Lentz, Thomas W. and Glenn D. Lowry (eds.)

1989 *Timur and Princely Vision*. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1989.

Mack, Rosamond E.

2002 *Bazaar to Piazza, Islamic Trade and Italian Art, 1300-1600*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.

May, Timothy

2007 *The Mongol Art of War*. Yardley, PA: Westholme Publishing.

Nicolle, David

1990 *The Mongol Warlords, Genghis Khan, Khublai Khan, Hülegü, Tamerlane*. Poole Dorset: Firebird Books.

Phillips, J. R. S.

1988 *The Medieval Expansion of Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Peter E. Pormann, Peter E. and Emilie Savage-Smith

2007 *Medieval Islamic Medicine*, Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press

Rachewiltz, Igor de

2007 Address to the Mongolian Parliamentary Delegation. Australian National University (March 21).

Rachewiltz, Igor de (ed. and translator)

2006 *The Secret History of the Mongols, A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*. Second edition. Two volumes. Leiden and Boston: E. J. Brill.

Rossabi, Morris

1988. *Khubilai Khan, His Life and Times*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

1992 *Voyager from Xanadu: Rabban Sauma and the first journey from China to the West*, Tokyo, New York: Kodansha International.

Ullmann, Manfred

1978 *Islamic Medicine*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Uzunçarşılı, İsmail Hakkı

1970 *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtına Medhal*. Ankara: Türk tarih Kurumu Basımevi.

Weatherford, Jack

2004 *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*. New York: Crown Publishers.

Weiers, Michael

2006 *Zweitausend Jahre Krieg und Drangsal und Tschinggis Khans Vermächtnis*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag (Tunguso Siberica 21).

Yu Insun

2006 Lê Văn Hưu and Ngô Sĩ Liên: A Comparison of Their Perception of Vietnamese History. In *Việt Nam, Borderless Histories*, edited by Nhung Tuyet Tran and Anthony J. S. Reid, 45-71. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press