

JONGKUK NAM

MONGOLS IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE

At their peak, the Mongols built a large empire unprecedented in world history. At that time, the Mongol Empire covered a vast territory stretching from the Far East to Eastern Europe. Thanks to the Mongol conquest and the creation of a world empire encompassing Central Asia, Europe and Asia experienced unprecedented exchange and contact. Not only goods and people, but also ideas and diseases passed through the Mongol Empire to the north, south, east, and west. The Europeans and the Mongols directly experienced each other's worlds, and the active exchanges and contacts between them had a great influence on the development of world history.

Various studies are being conducted on several aspects of East-West exchange during the period of the *Pax Mongolica*. These include many studies on European missionaries and merchants who traveled to Asia. Marco Polo, merchant of Venice, was the most well-known of several European merchants who traveled between East and West during the period of the *Pax Mongolica*, although he cannot be said to be a merchant by strict standards. Even though there are many studies on Marco Polo's travels to the East, it was in fact Genoese, not Venetian merchants who were more active in trade with the Mongol Empire. There is not much research on the commercial activities of Genoese merchants in Asia.¹ Missionaries including John of Pian di

¹ A representative figure was Andaló da Savignone, a Genoese merchant, who served as a merchant and diplomatic envoy to and from Beijing and Europe on several occasions. Giovanni Meriana, *Andalò da Savignone: un Genovese alla corte del Gran Khan*, Genova, De Fer-

Carpine, William Rubruck, John of Montecorvino, John of Marignolli, and Odoric also left behind accounts, brief reports, and letters of their travels to the East, and many studies have analyzed these sources.²

On the other hand, there have been relatively few studies dealing with the Mongol people who visited or permanently settled in Europe during the Mongol period.³ This article will examine in detail the purpose for which the Mongols came to the European world, what types of people came, and whether they came temporarily or settled permanently. This study will fill the gaps in previous research that has been mainly focused on the activities of Europeans who entered Asia and provide a comprehensive understanding of exchanges and contacts between East and West during the Mongol period.

This does not mean that there is no research on Mongols who came to Europe. Recently, research on European perceptions of the Mongols has been increasing. These studies specifically analyze how the Mongols were represented in European paintings, literary works, and maps.⁴ These studies showed that in the mid-13th century, the Mongols were identified as denizens of hell, but European perceptions of the Mongols also changed as exchanges and contacts with the Mongol realm increased. These studies interpret that European Christians hoped for military cooperation with the Mongols against Islam, and that this hope led to a positive view of the Mongols. However, interpretations based on paintings and literary works show only one aspect of the Europeans' attitudes toward and perceptions of the Mongols. At the end of the Middle Ages, the Mongols generally came to Europe as diplomatic envoys, or were imported as slaves to Europe. Clearly, their existence directly or indirectly influenced Europeans' perceptions of the Mongols.

In this context, to accurately understand the perceptions and attitudes of medieval

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2 Michal Biran - Jonathan Brack - Francesca Fiaschetti (eds.), *Along the silk roads in Mongol Eurasia: generals, merchants, and intellectuals*, California, University of California Press; Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221-1410*, Harlow, Essex, Pearson Longman; Giovanni Meriana, *Andalò da Savignone: un Genovese alla corte del Gran Khan*, Genova, De Ferrari; Christopher Dawson, *Mission to Asia*, Toronton, Buffalo and London, University of Toronto Press; A. C. Moule, *Christians in China before the year 1550*, London, Society for promoting Christian knowledge; I. de Rachewiltz, *Papal envoys to the Great Khan*, California, Stanford University Press.

3 Hannah Barker, *That most precious merchandise: the Mediterranean trade in Black Sea slaves, 1260-1500*, Philadelphia, PA, University of Pennsylvania Press; Morris Rossabi, *Voyager from Xanadu: Rabban Sauma and the first journey from China to the West*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, University of California Press; Thomas Allsen, *Biography of a cultural broker: Bolad Ch'eng-Hsiang in China and Iran*, in Julian Raby - Teresa Fitzherbert (eds.), *The court of the Il-Khans, 1290-1340*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 7-22.

4 Michele Bernardini, *Un Mongolo nella Crofissione trecentesca del sacro speco di Subiaco*, in M. V. Fontana - B. Genito (ed.), *Studi in onore di Umberto Scerrato per il suo settantacinquesimo compleanno*, Napoli, Università degli studi Napoli L'Orientale, pp. 77-103.

European Christians toward the Mongols, two examinations must be undertaken. The first is an analysis of the Mongols who visited Europe for a while or settled there permanently, and the other is an analysis of Mongol images in paintings and literary works. The Mongol people to be analyzed in this study are not identified as a racial category in a narrow sense but include other Asian people from various ethnic groups who worked as ambassadors, soldiers, or merchants for the Mongol Empire.

The most difficult problem in the study of the Mongols who directly experienced the European Christian world is related to the terms used to refer to the Mongols. At that time, European records used the term Tatar more often than Mongol (Nam 2022: 8-11). By strict standards, Mongol and Tatar refer to different races, but these two terms were almost synonymous in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages. However, Tatar does not correlate directly to Mongol, so a careful approach is needed.

This article aims to review the previous interpretation that Europe and Asia first made contact as Vasco da Gama and Christopher Columbus opened new routes in the late 15th century. According to previous interpretations, Europeans discovered Asia and America. Based on these perceptions, they have neglected or devalued the history of active East-West exchanges and contact in the Mongol period, instead emphasizing the modern period. However, this study will emphasize that the Mongols visited Europe before modern times, and for that reason, Europeans already knew Asia and its people well.

MONGOLS WHO VISITED EUROPE

There were two main categories of Mongols who visited Europe or finally settled in Europe during the period of the Mongol Empire. One was diplomatic envoys, the other was slaves who were forcibly brought to Europe. Unlike European missionaries and merchants from the West who visited the Mongol realm to spread the gospel and trade (De Rachewiltz 1971; Richard 1977), Mongol diplomatic envoys to Europe sought close military cooperation with the European Christian world. On the other hand, few Mongols came to Western Europe for commercial activities.

However, the Mongols did not pursue a military alliance with Europe from the beginning. At the time of their first contact with Europe, the Mongols considered Europe to be an object of conquest and did not regard it as an equal ally. Indeed, Mongol monarchs at that time urged the delegation sent by the papacy to obey them. In 1246, *Güyük* Khan said in a letter to Pope Innocent IV, that “From the rising of the sun to its setting, all the lands have been made subject to me. Who could do this contrary to the command of God?”, showing off Mongol strength and not even considering friendly relations or cooperation with Europe (Dawson 1980: 85-86).

However, Eljigidei, the Mongol military leader, who conquered Persia in 1247, proposed to King Louis IX of France that they should attack the Abbasid Caliphate together, having sent an envoy to him. When the Mongols conquered the Abbasid

dynasty, Eljigidei also promised to protect Christians living in Islamic lands. However, this proposal of a military alliance was not approved by the Mongol Khan, but was a temporary measure taken by the commander in the field at a strategic level (Di Cosmo 2023: 786).

The Mongols began to seek close cooperation with Western Europe after they lost the battle of Ayn Jalut against the Mamluk Empire (Boyle 1976: 25-40). Among the many Mongol khanates, Il Khanate was most hopeful for a military alliance with the Christian world in Western Europe. Although Il Khan was in military confrontation with the Mamluk Empire, another Mongol state north of the Black Sea, the Golden Khanate, did not seek a military alliance with the Christian world because it maintained a favorable relationship with the Mamluk Empire.

From the 1260s until the early 14th century, Il khans sent several envoys to European rulers to form military alliances with them (Paviot 2000: 306; Richard 1973: 212). The first diplomatic mission began in 1262, when a Mongol envoy visited Louis IX of France (Richard 1979: 295-303; Meyvaert 1980: 245-259). In a letter addressed to Louis IX, *Hülegü*, Il khan, introduced himself as a conqueror of the Islamic world and a friend of the Christian world. *Hülegü* (1256-1265) suggested to Louis IX that they conduct a joint military operation against Islam, promising he would take the holy city of Jerusalem and the Holy Land from Islam and return it to the pope as long as Louis IX obeyed Mongol rule. This letter shows a change of Mongol attitudes toward the Christian world before and after the battle of Ayn Jalut, but the Mongols still maintained their high position (Richard 1977: 296-297). In 1262, Pope Urban IV received a Mongol envoy sent by *Hülegü* and entered into correspondence with *Il-khan*. *Hülegü* proposed an alliance not only with the pope and the king of France, but also with the king of England. Toward this goal, he sent an envoy to England in 1264 (Meyvaert 1980: 246-249).

Abaqa Khan (1265-1282), who succeeded *Hülegü*, also actively sought military cooperation with the Christian world. In addition to the French king and the pope, he also sent a delegation to propose military alliances with the king of England, and the king of Aragon (Lockhart 1968: 23; Bueno 2016: 165). In 1267, a Mongol envoy dispatched by Abaqa Khan visited the pope. In 1274, the Mongol envoy sent by Abaqa Khan attended the general council of Lyon, and it is said that some Mongol members of the envoy converted to Christianity (Borghesio 1936: 363-372). According to European records at the time, the Mongol envoy numbered 16 people. After 1280, there was a rumor circulated that the Khan had also converted to Christianity. There is a record of a Mongol envoy who visited the king of England in 1280, but its veracity not certain (Paviot 2000: 310-312). Mongol attacks on Syria in 1280 and 1281 failed, but false rumors spread in Europe that the Mongols had won a great victory (De Rachewiltz 1971: 149; Schein 1979: 809). Despite Abaqa Khan's efforts, a military alliance between Il Khanate and Christian Europe was not formed.

Tekuder (1282-1284), son of *Hülegü*, who succeeded his brother Abaqa as Khan,

accepted Islam and sought friendly relations with the Mamluk empire. He tried to establish peaceful relations by sending a delegation to the Mamluk empire, instead of dispatching a diplomatic envoy to Europe. However, his rule was short, and the new Khan Argun (1284-1291) returned to previous policies and sought military cooperation with the Christian world. In 1285, Argun, the fourth Il khan sent an envoy to Pope Honorius IV (1285-1287). According to a letter written on May 18, 1285 by Argun to the pope at the time, Terciman Ase, Bogagoc, Menglic, and two Genoese merchants named Thomas Anfossi and Terciman Ugeto were the main figures of the envoy. Given the fact that name Terzman comes from the Arabic word *tarjumān*, which means interpreter, Ase and Ugeto may have served as interpreters. Ase may be Isa Kelemechi, considering that the term of Ase is a modified pronunciation of Isa. He was an envoy sent to the court of Il khan by Kublai, the Great Khan, in 1283. Shortly after having arrived at the court of Il khan, Isa joined a mission sent by Argun to the papacy. Anfossi and Ugeto must have been likely of Genoa. This presumption is due to the active commercial activities of Genoese merchants in the court of Il-khan and the capital of Tabriz at the time. As such, the Mongol envoys dispatched to Europe during the period of the *Pax Mongolica* were mainly composed of Mongols and Italian merchants. In his letter to the pope, Argun proposed forming a military alliance and collaborating with Christian Europe against the Mamluk Empire to drive out Muslims from Holy Jerusalem (Lupprian 1981: 78, 244-246; Kim 2020: 260).

In 1287 Argun (1284-1291) sent a diplomatic envoy to Europe. This envoy included Rabban Sauma, the famous Nestorius priest. He was an envoy to the Ilkhanate from Kublai of the Yuan Empire. He accompanied Bolad Aqa to Europe, whom the Great Khan had sent to Il-Khan's court together. The two Genoese merchants of Anfossi and Ugeto also participated in the envoy of the year 1287 (Petech 1962: 561; Chabot 1894: 570-571). The ship carrying Rabban Suma arrived at Naples on 23 June 1287, and in Paris at the end of September. Il khan's ambassadors met Philip IV, king of France, and the French king promised Il khan that he would send troops if he went to war against the Mamluk Empire (Moestaert – Cleaves 1962: 4). After leaving Paris, the Mongol envoy arrived in Bordeaux in mid-October 1287, meeting Edward I, king of England and delivering to him a letter from Argun. Rabban Sauma, being welcomed by Edward I, thought the negotiations were successful and left Bordeaux for Genoa (Rossabi 2010: 99-138). On 2 April 1288, the Mongol envoy visited the pope Nicholas IV and delivered a letter sent to the Pope by Argun. The pope was not willing to accept military cooperation with Il khan (Lupprian 1981: 247-250). On the other hand, a French delegation led by Gobert de Helleville accompanied Rabban Sauma to Tabriz, the capital of Il khan.

However, the military alliance between the Ilkhanate and France did not materialize immediately. In 1289, Argun again sent an envoy to king Philip IV of France. It was Buscarello Ghisofi, a merchant of Genoa engaged in commercial activities in Tabriz, who delivered the Khan's correspondence to the French king (Paviot 1990:

107-117). In the letter, Argun renewed his proposal to form a military alliance and together attack the Mamluk Empire. Specifically, he would march with his army to Damascus in the spring of 1290 and promised to offer Jerusalem to the king of France. If Il khan had conquered Jerusalem, it is questionable whether he would have ceded the Holy Land to the king of France. However, it is assumed that Argun was quite trusted by the Christian world, considering that the Dominican monk Ricoldo of Monte Croce said on his pilgrimage that «he [Argun] is the worst human in all crimes, but a friend for Christians (*homo pessimus in omni skeleton, amicus tamen Christianorum*)». (Moestaert - Cleaves 1962: 4; Schein 1979: 809). The Mongol envoy also visited king Edward I of England (Di Cosmo 2023: 787; Paviot 2000: 314).

However, Philip IV of France did not actively respond to Argun's proposal for a military alliance, and no European monarch, including the pope, signed a military alliance with Argun. Philip IV told Argun about the loss of the Holy Land and Edward I's crusade, assuring him that the Crusades would succeed with the military support of Il khan. However, with the death of Argun in March 1291, and the death of the pope the following year, negotiations on military alliances between the two were not concluded (Moestaert - Cleaves 1962; Schein 1979: 809).

Rabban's travelogue tells in detail what the Mongol envoy to Europe was like. Through his travelogue, we can learn about the journey, the people they met or contacted, the impact of their visits on Europe, etc. The major cities they visited were as follows. Constantinople – Naples – Rome – Genoa – Paris – Bordeaux – Genoa – Rome. They met not only the pope and kings but also many Europeans on their long journey. Rabban Sauma asked the pope to carry out the Eucharist, which the pope approved. Records show that “On that day a very large number of people were gathered together in order to see how the ambassador of the Mongols celebrated the Eucharist.”(Budge 2014: 190; Rossabi 1992: 160). It may have been an exceptional event to see Mongols in Rome, the center of the Christian world, in the late 13th century.

Ghazan (1295-1304), son of Argun and the seventh ruler of the Ilkhanate, also hoped for a military alliance with Europe with which to together attack the Mamluk Empire. He actively attracted Europeans to Tabriz, and used Buscarello, a Genoese merchant, as an ambassador to Europe.

Ghazan marched to Syria in December 1299, and Hetum II, the Armenian king, also joined the war. Ghazan entered Damascus on January 6, 1300. During his march to Damascus, Ghazan sent a delegation to the king of Cyprus and the knights of the Crusades, asking them to join him in the war against the Mamluks. Ghazan's envoy to Henry II, king of Cyprus, included Iso le Pisan from Pisa. But the Cypriot king did not join this military operation. The Mongol and Armenian forces marched south to Gaza in Palestine. The two armies retook the holy city of Jerusalem from the Islamic forces. According to one record, Hetum II stayed in Jerusalem for 15 days and visited the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. On January 6, 1300, Il khan and the king of Little Armenia held a Mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Il khan had ruled

Jerusalem for about four months. Mamluk Sultan al-Malik al-Nāsīr (1293–1341) accused Il khan of placing Christian Armenians in Jerusalem, the most important Muslim holy city after Mecca (Schein 1979: 805-806).

Il khan's occupation of Jerusalem created several rumors in Western Europe. Many chroniclers recorded that in 1300, the Mongols conquered Jerusalem and handed over the Holy Land to Christians. Pope Bonifacius VIII said in his letter to king Edward I of England that non-Christians conquered Jerusalem and transferred it to Christians. Some chroniclers refer to Ghazan as a Christian. According to one chronicle, the Mongol king miraculously converted to Christianity when he married the daughter of the Armenian king, and his entire kingdom accepted Christianity. And according to another chronicle, the Mongol and Armenian kings who conquered Jerusalem held mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher on January 6, 1300. Some records mention that Il khan was baptized with his entourage (Schein 1979: 806-807). The fact that the Mongols conquered Jerusalem was slightly inflated and passed on to Europe, and in Europe, exaggeration and distortion were added (Schein 1979: 810).

Ghazan sent a diplomatic envoy to deliver the good news to pope Bonifacius VIII. The Khan's delegation arrived in Rome around the summer of 1300. Several records show that a Mongol envoy visited Rome (Armour 1997: 8). According to an inscription on a wall on *Via della Fogna*, a street near Santa Croce, Florence, several Tatar people visited Rome in 1300 and received indulgence from the pope. According to another record, Ghazan also sent a delegation to the papacy in 1302. Ghazan also continued to send delegations to the Christian world to seek military alliances with Europe (Schein 1979: 819; Dunlop 2018: 2).

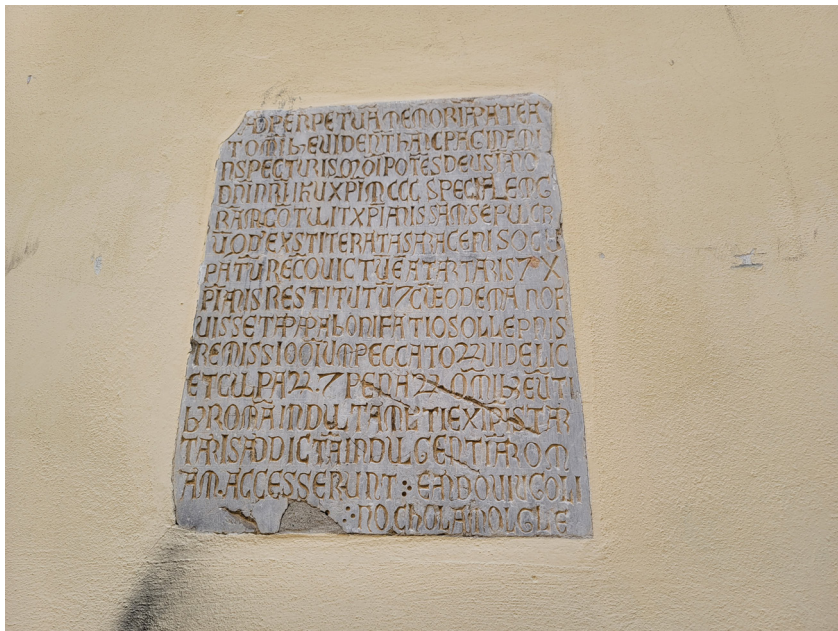


Fig 1: Inscription on villa della Fogna.

Oljeitu (1304–1316), successor of Ghazan, continued the previous strategy of military alliance with Europe and sent envoys to various European monarchs in 1305 (Meyvaert 1980: 248). The Genoese merchant Buscarello joined the mission. Of the correspondence sent in 1305 to the pope, Philip IV of France, and Edward I of England, only the correspondence to the king of France remains. Oljeitu sent missions to the Christian world several times. However, as the Ilkhanate and the Mamluk Empire signed a peace agreement in 1322, no more delegations were sent to form a military alliance with Europe.

Although not as often as the Ilkhanate, the Yuan Empire also sent envoys to Western Europe. However, their envoys to Europe differed in many ways. The Il khans sent diplomatic envoys to form a military alliance with Western Europe against the Mamluk Empire, but the Yuan Empire had no urgent reason to form a military alliance with Western Europe. The Yuan Empire sent delegations to answer the pope's letters that were delivered by missionaries from the papacy or to request the dispatch of Christian missionaries.

A representative example was the envoy sent by the Emperor of the Yuan Empire to the pope in 1336. In his letter to the pope, the Great Khan proposed regular diplomatic exchanges, asking the pope to send a priest to lead his Christians subjects and to provide him with European horses and rare items (Daumet 1899-1920: col. 337). The envoy consisted of not only Mongols, but also European people such as Genoese merchants and Alans. This envoy arrived at Avignon around 31 May 1338, and stayed there for three weeks, receiving indulgence from the pope (Jacquet 1831: 417-433; De Rachewiltz 1971: 187; Kedar 1979: 371-377).

How many Mongols were there in the envoy of 1336 to Avignon? The number can be estimated from the Great Khan's letter. In his letter to the pope, the Great Khan said that "We are sending our envoy Andrea Franco and an entourage of 15 to the pope, head of the Christians (*Nos mittimus nuncium Andrea Francum cum quindecim sociis ad papam dominum christianorum*)" (Daumet 1899-1920: col. 337). These sixteen people may only be the key figures, and there would have been more Mongols to assist them. However, the historical records do not provide detailed information on all the figures who participated in the mission. Andrea Franco, whose mention in the letter indicates his importance, is clearly a merchant of Genoa.

Another person whose name is mentioned in the letter is Toghai from the Alan tribe. We must understand a longer historical background to know how the Alans came to be included in the mission. The Alans had been European Christians living on the Black Sea. They were defeated by the Mongol army around 1223 and accepted Mongol rule in 1235. Since then, 30,000 mounted Alan soldiers had been sent to Central Asia (Iklé 2013: 31-32). They were initially stationed in Karakorum but were later sent to Beijing to become the Great Khan's military guard. They were also dispatched to conquer Southern Song. The Alans believed in Christianity until the middle of the 14th century. After the death of the first archbishop of Beijing, the heads of the Alans

asked the Great Khan to replace the dead archbishop with a new one, and the great khan accepted their request and sent an envoy to the papacy (Heyd 1885: vol.2, 218; Petech 1962: 554-555; Lopez 1975: 171-186; Lopez 1977: 445-457; Kedar 1979: 371-377; Arnold 1999; Meriana 2001).

The Mongol envoy may have entered Europe via Ilkhanate, and must have visited Naples, Genoa, Venice, and Avignon. Like the previous Mongols diplomatic envoys, that of the Great Khan of 1338 passed through Naples (Petech 1962: 554-555). Arriving in Avignon at the end of May 1338, the Mongol delegation stayed for three weeks and met a lot of people. The delegation visited Venice in December and conveyed to the Venetian government their desire to purchase horses, and the Venetian Senate accepted the request after deliberation (Nam 2019: 113-114). But the Mongol ambassadors eventually purchased horses in Genoa. The Mongol envoy's visit to Venice would not have been exceptional compared to the Mongol delegation's visit to Rome in 1300. Many Mongol slaves had been present in Venice when the Mongol envoy visited in 1338.

MONGOLS SETTLED IN EUROPE

As seen above, diplomatic Mongol missions aimed at military alliances left Europe after a brief visit, but some Mongols settled permanently on European soil. Unlike Western European missionaries and merchants who went to Asia for evangelistic or commercial purposes during the period of the Mongol Empire, generally Mongols did not settle in Western Europe for commerce or evangelism. Most of the Mongols who settled in Western Europe were slaves. In general, it is not well known that a lot of Tatar slaves were sold to Western Europe before modern times. In fact, however, at the end of the Middle Ages, many Tatar slaves were sold from the Black Sea to European, especially Italian cities. Of course, it is difficult to regard all Tatar people mentioned in medieval European records as Mongols. However, considering that the term Tatar was more commonly used than the term Mongol at the time, it is certain that not a few Mongols were brought to Europe and came to have permanent settlement.

Tatar slaves began to be imported into Western Europe in the mid-14th century. Particularly in the late 14th century, right after the Black Death, the import of Tatar slaves increased markedly. There is still controversy over whether Western Europe encouraged slave imports to compensate for the decline in population caused by the Black Death, or whether there were other economic or social factors that triggered the increase in foreign slave imports (Schiel 2014: 365-376).

It was mainly merchants of Genoa and Venice who supplied Western Europe with Tatar slaves after the Black Death, and it was in the Black Sea that they purchased them. There are not a few records of this slave trade left by Genoese and Venetian merchants. In Tana, a port north of the Black Sea in the mid-to-late 14th century, the

Venetian merchant Niccolo Baxeio purchased a teenage Tatar boy called Jaqmaq and a teenage Tatar girl called Aqbughā and brought them to Venice for sale to his fellow citizens (Barker 2019: 1). On his return from Beirut in 1399, a Venetian aristocrat brought in another manumitted Tatar slave who wanted to convert to Christianity and live in Venice, leaving him to other manumitted Tatar slave who sold him to Zanino Calcaterra for 20 Ducato, and Zanino sold the purchased slave to a Catalan merchant (Verlinden 1970, 147-172; Barker 2019: 27). Therefore, this Tatar slave went to the Iberian Peninsula. In 1370 Francesco di Casale, a merchant of Genoa, sold 15 Tatar slaves to merchants of Barcelona and Mallorca. Francesco di Marco Datini, a merchant from Prato, also sold a female Tatar slave named Margherita to a Barcelona merchant (Origo 1957: 92).

The vast majority of slaves imported to Genoa in the 1360s were Tatar slaves. The proportion of Tatar slaves, which exceeded 90% in the 1360s, gradually decreased, but remained 60-70% until the 1400s. In the 15th century, as the proportion of Caucasian slaves increased, the proportion of imported Tatar slaves fell to 20%. In Venice, imports of Tatar slaves accounted for more than half of all slave imports from the mid-14th century to the mid-15th century (Parker 2019). As the import of Tatar slaves increased, on July 11, 1368, the Venetian government banned the import of Tatar-speaking slaves. The reason for the Venetian government's ban was that «they were wrong and bad and could easily spread scandals and wrongs in our city by arguing and creating a commotion every day (*prave et male condicionis et cotidie faciunt brigas et rumores et de levi posent induche scandla et errors in haterra.*)» (Verlinden 1970: 163).

According to records of the Florentine government's purchase of slaves in the late 14th century, many of the imported slaves were Mongol slaves who were called Tatars. Of course, it would be difficult to regard all the Tatar slaves in the record as Mongol slaves, but it is certain that the large number of Mongol slaves were imported to Florence (Nam 2022: 1-24; Origo 1955: 321-366). How many Tatar slaves entered medieval European Christian society? Although the exact figures are unknown, we can guess to some extent the number of Tatar slaves who were brought to Italian cities such as Genoa, Venice, and Florence. At least hundreds and at most thousands of Tatar slaves were surviving a difficult life in these Italian cities around 1400. According to a survey by Hannah Barker, 1256 slaves were sold in Genoa in 1387, with 4,417 slaves held by Genoese citizens (Barker 2019: 138). Considering that Tatar slaves accounted for about 80% of the slaves imported to Genoa at the time, it is estimated that there were about 3,500 Tatar slaves. According to this figure, in the late 14th century, an enormous number of Tatar people were present in Genoa.

For that reason, it was common to see Tatar people in Italian cities in the late Middle Ages. At the end of the Middle Ages, the middle class in Italian cities also owned Tatar slaves (Rodocanachi 1906: 389; Barker 2019: 85; Verlinden 1968: 165). The price was different depending on the age, gender, and race of the slaves, but it

was about 20-50 ducats. As such, slaves were not too expensive for the urban middle classes to purchase them (Boni – Delort 2000: 1070-1077). Slaves became part of the everyday life of Italian cities. The brides brought slaves as marriage goods, doctors sometimes received slaves instead of medical expenses, and priests had slaves who served them (Origo 1957: 90-91). Young female Tatar slaves who were forced to live in the Christian world worked as domestic servants at home and often had children with their owners. Indeed, a lot of Tatar slaves imported into Europe in the late Middle Ages were girls in their late teens and early 20s.

In her article, Iris Origo says that “a traveler arriving in Tuscany at this time might well have been startled by the appearance of the serving-maids and grooms of the Florentine ladies. Mostly small and squat, with yellow skins, black hair, high cheek bones and dark slanting eyes, many of them deeply marked by smallpox and by scars or tattooed patterns on their faces, they certainly seemed to belong to a different race from the Florentine.” She pointed out that there were not a few Asian slaves in Italian cities at the end of the Middle Ages, but this fact was not widely known (Origo 1955: 321). Since then, many studies have been conducted on slaves from the Mongol realm imported into Europe at the end of the Middle Ages, and thanks to these studies, we have come to know that many Tatar slaves existed in Italian cities at the end of the Middle Ages (Barker 2019).

EUROPEAN PERCEPTIONS OF THE MONGOLS

The Mongols often appeared in European paintings and literature at the end of the Middle Ages (Manzari 2018: 192; Dunlop 201:5). European perceptions of the Mongols changed depending on the period and historical context (Connell 1969). When the Mongols invaded the Occident in the mid-13th century, Europeans considered them to be terrifying barbarians and messengers of hell who frequently looted and destroyed Europe (Jackson 2005: 142-147). Matthew Paris, a Benedictine monk from England in the mid-13th century, wrote in his chronicle, that «The terrible people of Satan, countless Tartars, rose out of their lands surrounded by mountains and covered by rock walls, as if demons had come out of hell. (...) Like swarms of grasshoppers covering the earth, they destroyed the Eastern world with fire and swords, and left cities in ruins. Trees were cut down, gardens were uprooted, and people in urban and rural areas were killed. (...) They were rather monsters than humans». (Paris 1852: 341-342; Paris 1883: 112). This perception is revealed in Friedrich II's letter to Louis IX of France in July 1241. In the letter, the emperor described Mongols as residents of hell or barbarians. A letter received by the archbishop of Bordeaux in 1243 also clearly contains false rumors that Mongols eat people (Paris 1852: 469-470; Richard 1973: 212-213).

In the mid-13th century, some Europeans viewed the Mongol invasion from an apocalyptic perspective. They believed that the Mongols were denizens of hell and

descendants of Gog and Magog, who would be released again at the Last Judgement, and that their invasion hinted at the end of the world (Jackson 2005: 142; Paviot 2000: 306; Burnett - Dalché 1991: 160; Burnett 1984: 152; Ho 2012: 950).

On the other hand, as commercial exchanges and diverse contacts, including sending missionaries, exchanging diplomatic envoys, and seeking military cooperation increased, European perceptions of the Mongols gradually changed. In 1260, when the Mongols attacked Syria, Europeans described them as soldiers of the Antichrist or as Gog and Magog of the apocalypse. On the other hand, when the Mongols attacked Syria in 1280, they were described as a glorious Christian ally who defeated the Saracens (Schein 1979: 808).

What brought about this change in perception? The change in military strategy of the Ilkhanate, which was defeated by Mamluk forces at the Battle of Ayn Jalut in 1260, was the starting point for this change. After this Il khans sent their diplomatic missions to Western Europe to seek military alliances or cooperation, and this strategy allowed Western Europe to regard the Mongols as their ally against the common enemy. The change in European perceptions of the Mongols is also seen in literature and paintings. In Marino Sanudo's manuscript book, Mongols appear as lion-like archers hunting leopards symbolizing the Mamluk Empire. Interestingly, the book describes each country or nation as animals, with lions representing Mongols, leopards representing Mamluks, wolves representing Ottomans, and dragons and snakes representing pirates. The Mongols, symbolized by the lion, were also part of the Christian alliance fighting the Mamluks, but they were still recognized as scary and frightening (Manzari 2018: 206-208).

The image of the Mongols fighting the Mamluk people emerged as a frequent topic in Western European literature and painting in the late Middle Ages. In the middle of the 14th century Christoforo Orimina produced manuscripts at the palace of Anjou in Naples, with Mongols depicted in the margins of the manuscripts. A Mongol knight wears a triangular hat with feathers on top, a typical Mongol outfit. This pointed cone-shaped, triangular hat with feathers on top came to represent a typical image of the Mongols of the 14th century (Prazniak 2010: 187; Burke 2002: 461).

Jacques Paviot has interpreted how, although the military alliance between the Mongols and Europe did not take place, European chroniclers began to depict Mongols heroically after 1300, owing to the contact between the two worlds, and the changed European perceptions of the Mongols (Paviot 2000: 318). Even as European perceptions of the Mongols improved during the process of seeking military cooperation, negative thoughts about the Mongols still did not completely disappear. The Mongols in the Cocharelli Codex, produced by a merchant from the Cocharelli family in Genoa in the 1330-40s for the education of his son Giovanni, represented one of the seven deadly sins. The book shows seven virtues and vices, and the Mongols, who are gobbling up food, are portrayed as committing the crime of gluttony. On both sides of the Mongol monarch are two European servants dressed in Mongol

style, followed by two Mongol musicians, with dogs in front (Manzari 2018: 196-197; Dunlop 2018: 8-9; Fabbri 2013: 98). This perception may have come from the personal experience of Genoese merchants, who were engaged in commercial activities in the Mongol realm (Concina 2016: 189; Dunlop 2018: 9).

To some extent, negative European perceptions of the Mongol food culture stems from different eating habits. In the mid-13th century, when the Mongols were first encountered, Europeans often talked about Mongols eating raw meat, and not bread. The Mongols did not eat the bread, wine, or fish that European Christians consumed daily at the time. In addition, the Mongols ate various kinds of meat that Europeans did not eat, and this food culture would have given Europeans a sense of rejection. Therefore, they described the Mongols as sinners who committed the crime of gluttony (Jackson 2005: 139-140).

The negative perceptions of the Mongols also appear in a painting titled “Crucifixion.” According to the Gospel of Matthew, it was Roman soldiers who took Jesus’s clothes after the execution on the cross. But in 14th-century paintings, Mongols and Arabs were drawn instead of Roman soldiers. These paintings suggest that European Christians at the time identified the Mongols with Arabs, who were enemies of Christians and heathens. One good example of these kinds of paintings is the Crucifixion of the Sacro Speco, a cathedral belonging to the Benedictine order in Subiaco near Rome. It is a “Cross Execution” painting from a fresco made in the early 14th century. Under the cross, five people, including a Mongol, are throwing dice on Jesus’s clothes. The central figure is presumed to be Mongol, with almond-shaped eyes, long red hair, a long beard stretched out in four strands, and a conical hat (Bernardini 2003: 78). These five represent individual races. The leftmost figure is an Arab, with a European in a Western-style pitch right behind him, a Mongol in the middle, a white-skinned Jew next to him, and finally a European with a knife. Considering that Jesus’s execution occurred in the first century, Europeans and Jews might have been at the execution, but Muslims and Mongols are anachronistic. This characterization shows that the 14th-century European Christians who produced this painting had hostility toward the heathen Arabs and Mongols. The appearance of Mongols playing dice to take Jesus’s clothes at the crucifixion was a frequent theme in Italian paintings in the 14th century (Manzari 2018: 204).



Fig. 2: Crucifixion of the sacro Speco.

CONCLUSION

Through analysis of various sources, several features that should be noted and emphasized about Mongols in medieval Europe can be identified. The first is the fact that human exchanges and movements between Europe and the Mongol world were active during the period of the *Pax Mongolica*, but the two worlds had different purposes in these movements and exchanges. The Europeans went to the Mongol realm mainly for commerce, evangelical propagation, and military alliances against Islam, while the Mongols visited Europe for military cooperation or were forcibly brought into Western Europe as slaves.

The second is that the number of Mongols who came into Western Europe was not small. There were thousands of Mongols in Italian cities. Particularly, in Italian cities, Europeans could come across Mongols daily. For this reason, Mongols with exotic features could often appear in Italian paintings at the end of the Middle Ages. Indeed, Petrarca called the Asians brought as slaves to the Italian city a “domestic enemy”, and painters like Lorenzetti were able to paint their typical faces with verisimilitude because they had access to Mongols in their daily lives (Origo 1955: 321).



Fig. 3: Martyrdom of the Franciscan friars by Ambrogio Lorenzetti.

The third is that European perceptions of the Mongols as strangers were negative overall. Of course, the perceptions of the Mongols changed depending on the period and historical contexts. For example, in the late 13th century when Europe and the Ilkhanate sought the possibility of military cooperation to defeat the Mamluk Empire, Western Europe's perceptions of the Mongols were favorable, even if temporarily. However, this military cooperation did not take place, and fear and hatred of the Mongols continued in the 14th century.

The fourth is that Europe had already secured considerable information about Asia and Asian people through exchanges and contacts with Asians represented by the Mongols before the Age of Discovery. Mongol diplomatic envoys traveled through various parts of Europe during their visits to the papacy, Italy, France, and England, and met many Europeans in the process. In addition, many Mongol slaves settled in European cities. Further research is needed to determine what impact these Mongols in Medieval Europe had on Europe in the Later Middle Ages and beyond.

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