

*The Eleven Queens' Qoš Ordos and the Imperial Ancestral Sacrifice under the Mongol-Yuan Dynasty**

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*This paper collects the Chinese sources and depicts the Qoš Ordo as a form of Ordo under the Mongol-Yuan Dynasty, referring to the ordos administrated by the deceased emperors' widowed queens. After the widows' death, their ordos were inherited by other imperial female members. The institution of Qoš Ordo took its origin in Chinggis Qan's Four Great Ordos; it experienced an evolution from the steppe to North China in the mid-13th century, probably under Qublai's reign. By the end of the Yuan Dynasty during the mid-14th century, the Chinese sources attested to Eleven Queens' Ordos. This paper argues that the Eleven should be identified with the eleven deceased Mongol emperors who were worshipped in imperial rituals, which indicates not only the Chinese influenced the Imperial Ancestral Temple (太廟), but also the Mongolian traditional sacrificial ritual (Mong. *tüleši*).*

As is well attested, an *ordo/orda* 'imperial encampment' with its property, subjects and troops, served as the political, economic, and cultural core of the Mongols. The ritual of the *tüleši* sacrifice, called in Chinese the *Shaofan* 燒飯 or 'food-burning', to worship the ancestors has been considered to be one of the most significant nomadic rituals.² However, very little attention has been paid to the relevance between the *ordo* and the *tüleši* until the recent papers pub-

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² For an introduction of classic and recent researches in Chinese, see Liu Xiao 劉曉, *Yuan History Studies* 元史研究, Fuzhou 2006, 184–185. A most recent study, see Liu Pujiang 劉浦江, "A Study on Qitan Custom of Immolating Human Victims: also on the *Shaofan* custom under the Liao, Jin and Yuan," 契丹人殉制研究——兼論遼金元“燒飯”之俗 *Wenshi*《文史》2012:2, 179–205.

lished by Gao Rongsheng.³ The fact has been pointed out that a form of *ordo*, namely the *Qoš-ordo* or a Queen's Ordo, was closely related to the *tüleši* sacrifice. This paper aims to discuss the origin and evolution of the *Qoš-ordo*, how it became the Eleven Queens' Ordos, and their combination with the *tüleši* sacrifice, especially in light of several newly found Chinese texts.

1. The qoš in the Middle Mongolian and Chinese sources

In *The Secret History of the Mongols* (in the following, *SHM*), we find both the forms *qoš* and *qošiliq*. The form *qoš* in the *SHM* §169 is translated into Chinese as *Fangzi* 房子 'tent/house/ger'. When Badai and Qišliq, two horse herders from the Kereid tribe, decided to inform Temüjin (Činggis Qan) about Ong Qan's conspiracy, that evening they killed one of their lambs in their *qoš* and cooked it, and then mounted and set off. The form *qošiliq* in *SHM* §80, 245, 246 is translated as *Zhangfang* 帳房, which means the same as *qoš*. In §80, when Temüjin escaped from Tayiči'ut's pursuit into a thicket on the Tergüne Heights, he spent six days inside and wanted to get out. He found that a white rock the size of a tent (*qošiliq-un tedüi*) fell at the entrance of the thicket, blocking the way.⁴

As indicated by Radloff, Poppe and Róna-Tas, *qoš* is a word of Turkic origin, meaning a temporary dwelling, travel-tent, a conical pole-tent with a felt cover.⁵ In pre-classical Mongolian, *qošiliq* is a derivation; the suffix *-liq* was also copied from Turkic.⁶ The difference between *qoš* and *qošiliq*, as proposed by

³ Gao Rongsheng 高榮盛, "Three Remarks on the Sacrificial Rituals during the Yuan period," 元代祭禮三題 *Journal of Nanjing University*《南京大學學報》2000:6, 73–82. Idem., "The *qoš* and *kešig/qoja/nü-hai-er* during the Yuan period," 元代 '火室' 與怯薛/火者/女孩兒 in his *Yuanshi Qianshi*《元史淺識》, Nanjing 2010, 69–98. Idem., "Again on the institution of the succession of the palace during the Yuan period," 元代守宮制再議 *Yuanshi Luncong*《元史論叢》14 (2014), 1–10.

⁴ *The Secret History of The Mongols: A Mongolian Epic Chronicle of the Thirteenth Century*, trans. & annot. Igor de Rachewiltz, Leiden 2004, Vol.1, 88, 173–174, 23. *Secret History of the Mongols: A Textual Critical Edition (Yuanchao Mishi Jiaokanben)*《元朝秘史 (校勘本)》ed. Ula'an, 烏蘭, Beijing 2012, 177, 327, 49.

⁵ Nicholas Poppe, "The Turkic Loan Words in Middle Mongolian," *Central Asiatic Journal* 1 (1955), 36–42, esp. 40–41. András Róna-Tas, "Preliminary Report on a Study of the Dwellings of Altaic Peoples," In: Denis Sinor ed., *Aspects of Altaic Civilization: Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the Permanent International Altaic Conference Held at Indiana University, June 4–9, 1962*, Bloomington 1963, 50. Wilhelm Radloff, *Versuch eines Wörterbuch der Türk Dialekte*, Vol. 2, The Hague 1960, 635–636, cited by Murakami Masatsugu's 村上正二 Japanese translation and annotation of the *Secret History of The Mongols* モンゴル秘史, Vol. 2, Tokyo 1972, 119–120. I would like to thank Dr. Bayarma Khabtagaeva and Dr. Balázs Danka for drawing me deeply into the Turkic origin issue.

⁶ On the *-liq*, see Even Hovdhaugen, "The Mongolian suffix *-lig* and its Turkic origin," In: *Researches in Altaic languages*, ed. Louis Ligeti, Budapest 1975, 71–78.

Igor de Rachewiltz, seems to be that the latter had a regular smoke-hole (*erüge*).⁷ The question remains unresolved, as neither *qoš* nor *qošiliq* has been commonly used in Mongolian since the 17th century, except for in the Kalmük and modern Ordos dialects.⁸

In the *SHM* §245-246, after Teb Tengri the shaman was killed by breaking his backbone, Činggis Qan had a grey *qošiliq* brought and placed over his body, and then fastened the harness to the carts and moved on from there. This can be explained by the Mongols' taboo on the site of a death,⁹ as the *Yuan Shi* related: "As long as an emperor or empress was struck by fatal disease, presumably incurable, he or she will move out to another tent. Upon his or her decease, the tent is used as the mortuary. After the burial, the Shaofan (*tüleši*) sacrifice with sheep was performed twice a day, until the forty-ninth day" (凡帝后有疾危殆, 度不可愈, 亦移居外氊帳房。有不諱, 則就殯殮其中。葬後, 每日用羊二次燒飯以為祭, 至四十九日而後已).¹⁰

In this sense, a close link existed between the *qoš/qošiliq* tent and the Mongols' funeral customs along with the *tüleši* sacrifice.

The 13th-14th century Chinese sources attested *qoš* by combining the transcription and translation in forms like *Huoshi fangzi* 火室房子 'Huoshi tent', *Heshi fangzi* 禾失房子 'Heshi tent', or *Huoshi zhanfang* 火失氈房 'Huoshi felt tent'. The word *qoš* probably became a specific term under the Yuan Dynasty (1260-1368). As is widely known, the Yuan Dynasty established two capital cities: Shangdu 上都 or Xanadu 'upper capital' in modern Inner Mongolia and Qanbaliq or Dadu 大都 'great capital', i.e. modern Beijing. In a Chinese poem on a serial theme in the Yuan capital Shangdu by Yang Yunfu 楊允孚, who lived in the late Yuan period, he praised the Deceased Emperors' concubines' *qoš* encampments that arrived at Luanyang (Shangdu) in advance [of the Emperor] according to the imperial decree (先帝妃嬪火失房, 前期承旨達灤陽), and remarked that the *qoš* encampments were the palace-carriages (or movable palaces) of the deceased emperors' queens and concubines(火失氈房, 乃累朝后妃之宮車也).¹¹

Yang's contemporary Xiong Mengxiang (熊夢祥), a literate who lived in the suburb of Dadu, compiled the *Xijinzhì* (析津志), a gazetteer of the Dadu area that preserved amazingly valuable and abundant information about the Mongol-Yuan court. However, the original volume was lost after the 15th century, except for citations by Chinese authors in the 14th and 15th centuries, especially the famous encyclopedic cannon *Yongle Dadian* (永樂大典), compiled by the order of Emperor Yongle (r. 1402-1424). In the 1980s, in the National Library of

⁷ de Rachewiltz, *The Secret History of The Mongols*, Vol.2, 374, 885.

⁸ G. J. Ramstedt, *Kalmückische Wörterbuch*, Helsinki 1925, 189. A. Mostaert, *Dictionnaire Ordos*, Peking 1941, 308.

⁹ de Rachewiltz, *The Secret History of The Mongols* Vol.1, 173-174, Vol.2, 885-886.

¹⁰ *Yuan Shi*《元史》, chap. 77, Beijing 1976, 1925.

¹¹ Yang Yunfu, 楊允孚 *Various Poems on Luanjing*, 《灤京雜詠》 chap. 1, Zhibuzuzhai Congshu edition 知不足齋叢書, f.4a.

China in Peking, scholars attempted to reconstruct *Xijin zhi* by collecting these citations. The result is a volume of more than 200 pages, where one can find the following important entry: “The Qoš tents are the palaces handed down by the old Queens of the former Emperors. The position per se sets forth first, and the subject officials follow. The word *qoš* in the State Language (Mongolian) means that as ever after Emperor Shizu (Qubilai Qa’an), all the positions of the queens are inherited, in charge of the Palace Sacrifice, administrating an *ordo* and its *kešigten* (guards) and girls, and receiving provision yearly without deficiency” (火室房子，即累朝老皇后傳下宮分者。先起本位，下官從行。國言火室者，謂如世祖皇帝以次俱承襲皇后職位，奉宮祭，管一斡耳朵，怯薛、女孩兒，關請歲給不闕).¹²

Hence, we can conclude that a *qoš* is a form of *ordo*, which specifically refers to the *ordo* that is inherited by a female from a deceased emperor’s queen. The *qoš* encampments constitute a group of Queens’ *ordos*. The household members are *kešigten* (guards) and girls. A *qoš* receives *suici* (歲賜), a ‘yearly provision’, from the dynasty in the same way as a prince. It should be noted that the Palace Sacrifice (宮祭), ‘*ordo* Sacrifice’, refers to the *tüleši* sacrifice to the ancestors.

2. The origin of the qoš institution: the sacrifice in Činggis Qan’s Ordos

For the Mongols, there were two types of imperial sacrifices to Činggis Qan. The first type was witnessed by John of Plano Carpini, who reported: “They (the Mongols) have also made the idol of the first Emperor (Činggis Qan) which they have placed in a cart in a place of honour before a dwelling, as we saw before the present Emperor (Küyüg Qan)’s court, and they offer many gifts to it.”¹³

The idol of felt made in the image of a man, or later in the form of a portrait, was called *Ongyun* in Mongolian, and *Xiaoying* (小影) ‘small portrait’ or *Xiaoyingshen* (小影神) ‘small portrait of idol’ in the Chinese texts. The idol was placed inside a tent to be worshipped every day.¹⁴

The second type should be considered to be more important. When Činggis died in 1227, mourning was held each day in a different camp (*ordo*). When the news reached the nearby places and distant sites, every several days ladies and princes arrived from every direction to hold mourning.¹⁵ The Ordos became the major place to perform sacrificial rituals to Činggis, especially considering

¹² *Xijin Zhi Jiyi*《析津志輯佚》, Beijing 1983; 2nd edition 2001, 217–218.

¹³ C. Dawson, *The Mongol Mission: Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, New York 1955, 9.

¹⁴ See Shang Gang, 尚剛 “Imperial Portraits of the Yuan Dynasty,” 元朝御容 *Journal of the Palace Museum*《故宮博物院院刊》2004:3, 31–59, also in his *Guwu Xinzhi*《古物新知》, Beijing 2012, 170–209.

¹⁵ *Rashiduddin Fazlullah's Jami u t-tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles. A History of the Mongols*, trans. & annot. W. M. Thackston, Harvard 1998, 264.

that the Mongols were customarily buried secretly without a visible tomb. A Japanese-Mongolian joint archaeologist team excavated the Avraga ruin along the upper Kerülen river. A lot of horse and ox bones were unearthed beside a huge construction base of 30 meters in length. According to the C14 analysis, Professor Shiraishi Noriyuki has identified it as a temple for sacrifices to Činggis, which was built during Ögedei's reign and was rebuilt during end of the 13th and early 14th centuries.¹⁶ As Rashīd al-Dīn accounted: "The four great *ordos* and another five, making in nine in all, are there. [...] They have made images of them and constantly burn incense and aromatics. Kamala (son of Qubilai) has also made a temple for himself there."¹⁷

Hence, the Avraga site should be a major residence of Činggis Qan's four great *ordos* during the summer and autumn.

The great Qa'ans of the Mongol Empire before Qubilai Qa'an usually resided in the land of Onan-Kerülen every autumn when princes and *qatuns* came together to join a *quriltai* or meeting and made traditional sacrifice rituals, which stood for the legitimacy and rule of the Empire. As Činggis was born, enthroned and buried around that territory, his four great *ordos* remained there. The sacrifice combined with his four great *ordos* defines the most important ritual of the Činggis cult.

Ever after Qubilai was enthroned, the ruling centre of the Empire moved south to North China. Considering the fact that Qubilai himself merely stepped on the land of Onan-Kerülen again, the geo-political structure, and the institution of *ordos* and sacrifice changed.

3. The appearance of qoš under Qubilai Qa'an's Reign

From the 1260s to the 1270s, Qubilai Qa'an established the two capitals of the Yuan Empire. The Qa'an himself could not carry out the sacrifices to Činggis in Onan-Kerülen, the residence of Činggis' Four Great Ordos. Thus, he created a new type of sacrifice in Shangdu, called the *Wangji* (望祭) 'looking afar and performing sacrifices', the ritual of which was described by Zhou Boqi (周伯琦) (1298-1369): "Every 7th or 9th July, the Emperor and Empress both dress in pure colored clothes, and perform sacrifices towards the Graveyard in the far north by sprinkling mare milk wine. All the participants are nobles' descendants." (國朝歲以七月七日或九日，天子與后素服，望祭北方陵園，奠馬酒，執事者皆世臣子弟).¹⁸

¹⁶ Shiraishi Noriyuki, 白石典之 "The Origins of the Shrine of Chingis Khan," チンギス=ハーン廟の源流 *Toyoshi Kenkyu* 東洋史研究 63:4, 2005, 847-866. Idem., "Avraga Site: The 'Great Ordu' of Gengghis Khan," In: *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, ed. L. Komaroff, Leiden 2006, 83-93.

¹⁷ Thackston, *Compendium of Chronicles*, 464.

¹⁸ Zhou Boqi, 周伯琦 *Jinguang Ji*《近光集》, chap. 2 "Five Narrative Poems on the first day of Autumn" 立秋日書事五首" In: *Siku Quanshu*, Taipei, rpt. vol. 1214, 523.

The first known witness of this type of ritual is Yan Guangda (嚴光大), a former official of the Song Dynasty. The Song Imperial family, chancellors, and officials surrendered in 1276 and were ordered by Qubilai to move from the Song capital Hangzhou (杭州) to Shangdu. Yan Guangda was one of them. He recorded their itinerary as follows: "On the 22nd day [of April] [...] [we] arrived at Shangdu [...]. On the 30th day, the [Yuan's] Military Academy (樞密院) invited the [Song's] Imperial Dowager, the young Emperor, Prince Fu and the chancellors, officials, servants and eunuchs to go out of the west gate [of Shangdu] and worship the Imperial Ancestral Temple towards the north. On the 1st of May, in the morning, 5 *li* away outside the west gate, [...] a purple fabric *Fúsī* (紫錦罽毼) was set up in the north, which is the ancestral temple. [All] genuflected to kowtow twice. [...] Another person spoke in front of the *Fúsī* and genuflected to kowtow twice and then withdrew."¹⁹

Here, the *Fúsī* can be identified as an *ordo*, as Professor Chen Gaohua (陳高華) correctly pointed out, but without explanation.²⁰ It should be noted that *Fúsī* in Chinese means net, screen, or a type of net-shaped architecture, none of which are related to the *ordo*. In fact, *Fú* (罽) is described in the 'Phagspa script as *hwow /vɔw/*, which could easily be confused with guttural /hɔw/ or velar /xɔw/ or /ɣɔw/ in some southeastern Chinese dialects, which were probably spoken by Yan Guangda.²¹ Thus *Fúsī* can be identified with *qoš*. Yan Guangda's description of a person who spoke in front of the *Fúsī* probably indicates a shaman performing prayers to the ancestors. The *qoš* turned out to be the carrier of the sacrifice to the ancestors. This function of the *qoš* appeared only under Qubilai's reign, perhaps because Činggis' Four Great Ordos could not be moved from Mongolia to North China.

4. Which Eleven?

It is widely known that, according to the Mongols' state custom, the *ordo* of a deceased Mongol emperor was never empty; queens or concubines keep charge of it in turn (國制, 列聖賓天, 其帳不曠, 以后妃當次者世守之).²² In theory, all the Mongol emperors' *ordos* remained to be inherited. During the reign of Shundi (順帝), a.k.a. Toγan Temür, the last emperor of the Yuan Dy-

¹⁹ Yan Guangda, "Itinerary of the embassy suing for peace," 祈請使行程記 in *Qiantang Yishi*《錢塘遺事》ed. Liu Yiqing, 劉一清 chap. 9, the Wulin Zhanggu Congbian edition, f. 13b-15a. There is a rather brief correspondence, see *Yuan Shi* chap. 9, 182.

²⁰ Chen Gaohua and Shi Weimin, 史衛民 *Studies on Dadu and Shangdu of the Yuan*,《元大都上都研究》, Beijing 2010, 229-230.

²¹ For the words 火 *hwo /xwɔ/* and 禾 *xwo /ɣwɔ/*, see W. South Coblin, *A Handbook of Phags-pa Chinese*, Honolulu 2007, 162, 170.

²² Xu Youren, 許有壬 *Zhizheng Ji*《至正集》chap. 46, the Yuanren Wenji Zhenben Congkan 元人文集本叢刊 edition, 223.

nasty, the *Eleven Palaces* (十一宮), *Eleven Houses* (十一室), and *Eleven Queens' Ordos* (十一室皇后斡耳朵) were recorded in the *Xijin Zhi*.²³ Until now, no satisfactory explanation on the number eleven has been presented.

According to the Chinese texts of the mid-14th century, the *De'eji Ordo* 'primary encampment' is primary among the *Queens' Ordos* (迭只則又序于諸帳之上者焉).²⁴ An office was established to supervise the subjected population and economy under the *De'eji Ordo*.²⁵ In terms of the military, three generations of officials, *Taču* (塔出), his son *Sarman* (撒里蠻), and his grandson *Tegüder* (帖古迭兒) held the post of *Chiliarchy of De'eji Ordo* (迭只斡耳朵千戶) on a hereditary basis. The post probably could be dated from the early reign of Qubilai Qa'an.²⁶ This paper assumes that the *De'eji Ordo* can be identified with Yan Guangda's *Fúsī* in 1276. It served as the place of worshipping Činggis. During Qubilai's reign, the *De'eji Ordo* was probably in the charge of Qubilai's queens or concubines. It was once called *Shizu's Queen's De'eji Ordo* (世祖皇后迭只斡耳朵),²⁷ but this should not be confused with the *Shizu Ordo* (世祖斡耳朵), referring to Qubilai's bequeathed ordo, as Xiong Mengxiang's *Xijin Zhi* clearly lists the *De'eji Ordo* and *Shizu Ordo* separately.²⁸

Činggis held four *ordos*, as did Möngke and Qubilai. However, it is not confirmed whether or not every Yuan Emperor after Qubilai had four *ordos*, as Emperor Wuzong or Qaišan Qa'an (r. 1307-1311) seemed to have five *ordos*.²⁹ No matter how many *ordos* each emperor had, I argue that, as for the eleven *qoś*, each *ordo* refers to one emperor, not queen. The best evidence comes from the sacrifice rituals. The Yuan Dynasty made sacrifices to the ancestors according to the rules of both the Chinese traditional Imperial Ancestral Temple and the traditional nomadic *qoś ordo*. During the time of Emperor Shundi, there were eleven deceased emperors in the Imperial Ancestral Temple: Taizu 太祖 (Činggis Qan), Ruizong 睿宗 (Tolui), Shizu 世祖 (Qubilai), Yuzong 裕宗 (Jingim), Shunzong 順宗 (Darmabala), 成宗 (Temür), Wuzong 武宗 (Qaišan), Renzong 仁宗 (Ayurbarbata), Yingzong 英宗 (Šidbala), Mingzong 明宗 (Qošla), Ningzong 寧宗 (Irinjinbal).³⁰ At the same time, there were eleven *qoś* *ordos*. This is not a coincidence. Thus, the *Eleven Queens' Ordos* actually refer to the eleven deceased emperors.

²³ *Xinjin Zhi Jiyi*, 216.

²⁴ Xu Youren, 223; Gao Rongsheng, 2014, 3-4.

²⁵ *Yuan Shi*, chap. 89, 怯憐口諸色民匠達魯花赤並管領上都納綿提舉司, 2271-2272.

²⁶ Taču, son of Sirgis, was the first Chiliarchy of the *De'eji Ordo*. Taču's son Sarman inherited the post sometime after Qubilai defeated Ariq böge. After Sarman died during Temür Qa'an's Reign, his son Tegüder inherited as Chiliarchy of *De'eji Ordo*. See *Yuan Shi*, Chap. 122, "Biography of Sirgis," 昔兒吉思 3015-3016.

²⁷ Xu Youren, 223-225.

²⁸ *Xijin Zhi Jiyi*, 106.

²⁹ *Yuan Shi*, chap. 90, 2290.

³⁰ See Ma Xiaolin, 馬曉林 "On the Imperial Ancestral Temple of the Yuan Dynasty," 元朝太廟演變考——以室次為中心 *Historical Researches*《歷史研究》2013:5, 67-82.

5. *The tūleši sacrifice and the qoš ordos*

An important function of the *qoš ordos* is to perform the *tūleši* sacrifice. The *Yuan Shi* reports: "Each year, during the ninth month and after the 16th day in the twelfth month, inside the Shaofan Yuan 'tūleši yard', with one horse, three sheep, mare milk wine, rice wine, three pieces of red *nasij* and silk textiles, under the decree a Mongol tarqan (達官), along with a Mongol shaman, digs a hole into the earth to burn out meats, rice wine and mare milk wine. The shaman calls out the deceased emperors' names in State language and performs the sacrifice"

(每歲，九月內及十二月十六日以後，於燒飯院中，用馬一，羊三，馬漚，酒醴，紅織金幣及裏絹各三匹，命蒙古達官一員，偕蒙古巫覡，掘地為坎以燎肉，仍以酒醴、馬漚雜燒之。巫覡以國語呼累朝御名而祭焉)。³¹

The *Xijin Zhi* provides more details in the entry of the *tūleši* yard: "Shaofan Yuan 'tūleši yard': [It lies] south of *Penglai Fang*. From the east gate turning to the west, there is the red gate of the south yard. Each has a tree and an altar for performing sacrifice. Inside the yard, there are no buildings, but dozens of pine and cypress trees, luxuriant and tall, just like the emotion of pathos. In the west of the fences and walls is the Shaofan Red Gate, which is the sacred gate for the Eleven Queens to pass through to perform the *tūleši*. Nobody dares to go through, as there are soldiers guarding it. On every occasion of sacrifice, one from the inner palace rides with wine and sacrificial offerings, and goes into the yard to perform the *tūleši*. Male and female shamans pray in the State Language, sprinkling all the milk wines, and burning the sacrificial meat with fire. The prayers are quite detailed. Before, the Shaofan yard was in south of the Haizi bridge which is now abandoned as an official sacrificial yard" (燒飯園 在蓬萊坊南。由東門又轉西，即南園紅門，各有所主祭之樹、壇位。其園內無殿宇，惟松柏成行，數十株森郁，宛然若高棲愴之意。闌與牆西有燒飯紅門者，乃十一室之神門，來往燒飯之所由，無人敢行往，有軍人把守。每祭，則自內庭騎從酒物呵從攜持祭物，於內燒飯。師婆以國語祝祈，遍灑漚酪酒物。以火燒所祭之肉，而祝語甚詳。先，燒飯園在海子橋南，今廢為官祭場)。³²

The eleven *qoš ordos* resided in an area to the east of Yanchunge (延春閣), north inside the Donghua Gate (東華門) of the palace in Dadu city. The *qoš* crew went from the inner palace to the Shaofan yard to perform the sacrifice. The combination of a hole, a tree, and an altar in the sacrificial site is absent in any Chinese rituals, thus it must represent the nomadic tradition.

The *Yuan Shi* attests two dates for the sacrifice in the *tūleši* yard of Dadu. The 17th century Mongolian *White History* (Mong. *Arban buyan-tu nom-un čayan*

³¹ *Yuan Shi*, chap. 77, 1924.

³² *Xijin Zhi Jiyi*, 115.

teike) accounted four dates for the sacrifice to Činggis: 21st of the third month, 16th of the fifth month, 12th of the ninth month, and 3rd of the eleventh month.³³ The 12th of the ninth month could correspond to the 16th day in the twelfth month in the *tüleši* yard of Dadu. The last date each year to perform the *tüleši* according to the old custom of the modern Ordos region is on the 29th of the twelfth month near the Činggis Temple,³⁴ and still for many areas in Mongolia today this is before New Year's Day,³⁵ which both perfectly correspond to after the 16th day in the twelfth month in the *tüleši* yard of Dadu. As is widely known, a Yuan emperor would stay in Dadu from about the ninth to the first month, and in Shangdu from about the second to the eighth month each year. Thus, it can be assumed that during the emperor's stay in Shangdu, the *tüleši* was performed twice, once in the third month and another time in the fifth month. The earliest *tüleši* sacrifice in *SHM* §70 was performed by the Mongols in the spring (see below), which agrees with the third month. The fifth month in Yan Guangda's narrative as mentioned above probably reflects a matter of routine in Shangdu. Added up with the two dates in Dadu, the *tüleši* sacrifice was performed four times each year during the Yuan period.

The earliest account of the Mongols performing the *tüleši* sacrifice is preserved in *SHM* §70. After Yisügei died, that spring, when Örbei and Soqatai, the wives of Ambaqai Qa'an, went to perform the sacrifice to the ancestors (*yekes-e qaǰaru inerü qaruqsan*), Lady Hö'elün arrived late and she was left out of the sacrificial meal.³⁶ While scholars have long debated the meaning of *yekes-e qaǰaru inerü*, the most satisfactory explanation so far by Igor de Rachewiltz is that the two words *qaǰaru inerü* might constitute the beginning of the invocation made at the ceremony.³⁷ Nevertheless, as the *SHM* itself translates the term as *Shaofan*, there seems to be no doubt about identifying it with the *tüleši* sacrifice, described in the form of *tülešilen* (土烈食連) in the *SHM*, §161 and §177. It is an astonishing fact that all the performers Örbei, Soqatai and Hö'elün were widows, which forms a parallel to the widowed queens in the Eleven Qoš Ordos. Besides this, the fact that Örbei, Soqatai, and Hö'elün had to go somewhere away from their camps also corresponds to the fact that the widowed

³³ Q. Č. Qongtaiji, *Arban buyan-tu nom-un čayan teike*. Hohhot 2000. A Chinese translation by Wu Bochun 吳柏春 and Baoyin 鮑音, In: *Journal of the Minzu Normal College of Inner Mongolia* 《內蒙古民族師院學報》1988-4, 39.

³⁴ Erdentai 額爾登泰, Oyun Dalai 烏雲達賚 and Asaraltu 阿薩拉圖, *Selected Lexicon of the Secret History of the Mongols* 《〈蒙古秘史〉詞彙選釋》, Hohhot 1980, 108.

³⁵ Naran Gerel, 娜仁格日勒 *Innate Character and Cultural Connotation of Mongolian Ancestor Worship*.《蒙古族祖先崇拜的固有特徵及其文化蘊涵》 Hohhot 2006, 104-105.

³⁶ de Rachewiltz, *The Secret History of the Mongols*, Vol.1, 17.

³⁷ de Rachewiltz, "The expression *qaǰaru inerü* in Paragraph 70 of *The Secret History of the Mongols*", In: *Indo-Sino-Tibetica: Studi in onore di Luciano Petech*, ed. P. Daffinà, Rome 1990, 283-290. de Rachewiltz, *The Secret History of the Mongols*, Vol.1, 341-344.

THE ELEVEN QUEENS' QOŠ ORDOS...

queens in the Eleven Qoš Ordos needed to leave their residence inside the palace city to visit the *tüleši* yard.

It is worthy of note that as the Qoš Ordos followed the emperor each year travelling between Shangdu and Dadu, the widowed queens would perform the *tüleši* in Shangdu twice each year, though the actual site is unknown to us.

Conclusion

To sum up, the *Qoš Ordo* as a form of *Ordo* under the Mongol-Yuan Dynasty refers to the *ordo* administrated by a deceased emperor's widowed queen, whose one important task was to perform the *tüleši* sacrifice to the imperial ancestors. This tradition was already being carried out by Mongolian noble widows in the earliest times. The institution of *Qoš Ordo* originates directly from Činggis Qan's Four Great Ordos serving as the carrier of the sacrifice and was adopted from the steppe to North China in the mid-13th century with the adoption of the Turkic term *qoš*, probably under Qublai's reign. By the end of the Yuan Dynasty during the mid-14th century, the Chinese sources described the *Eleven Queens' Ordos*, which should be identified with the eleven deceased Mongol emperors who were worshipped not only in the Imperial Ancestral Temple under Chinese influence, but also in the Mongolian traditional *tüleši* sacrifice. It is noteworthy that the latter was performed by the members of the *Qoš Ordos*, and the specific rituals and dates can be confirmed by the *Secret History of the Mongols*, by the 17th century *White History*, and even by modern Mongolian customs, which prove to be a permanent cultural tradition of the Mongols.