

ОРИГИНАЛЬНЫЕ СТАТЬИ

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AN ANALYSIS OF JOČI'S DEBATED PATERNITY
AND HIS ROLE IN THE *ALTAN URUĞ* ROYAL
LINEAGE OF ČINGGIS KHAN**O. Agatay***L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University
Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan
agatayotkirbay@gmail.com*

Abstract: *Research objectives:* This article discusses Joči's military-political role and status in the Mongol Empire (*Yeke Mongol Ulus*), beginning in the early thirteenth century and within the intra-dynastic relations of Činggis Khan's chief sons. In particular, the article seeks to answer questions about Joči's birth. Discrepancies between the *Secret History of the Mongols* and other written sources cast doubt on whether Joči was even a legitimate son of Činggis Khan, let alone his eldest one. In addition, this article includes an analysis of Joči's place within the family and the traditional legal system of the medieval Mongols based on the principles of majorat succession outlined in the Mongol Empire. It establishes evidence of his legitimacy within the Činggisid dynasty's imperial lineage (*altan uruğ*) – a point of view supported by his military-political career, his pivotal role in the western campaigns, his leadership at the siege of Khwārazm, and the process of division of the ulus of Činggis Khan.

Research materials: This article makes use of Russian, English, and Turkic (Kazakh, Tatar, etc.) translations of key primary sources including the *Secret History of the Mongols* and works of authors from the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries, including Al-Nasawī, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī, 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā-Malik Juvāynī, Minhāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī, Zhao Hong, Peng Daya, John of Plano Carpini, William of Rubruck, Jamāl al-Qarshī, Rashīd al-Dīn, Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī, Ulūgbeg, Ötämiš Hāji, Lubsan Danzan, Abu'l-Ghāzī, and Saḡang Sečen. New secondary works regarding Joči published by modern Kazakh, Russian, Tatar, American, French, Chinese, Korean and other scholars were also consulted.

Results and novelty of the research: Taking into consideration certain economic and legal traits of the medieval Mongols, their traditional practices, military-political events, and longterm developments in the Mongol Empire's history, descriptions of Joči being no more than a "Merkit bastard" are clearly not consistent. The persisting claims can be traced to doubts about Joči's birth included in the *Secret History of the Mongols*, the first extensive written record of the medieval Mongols which had a great impact on the work of later historians, including modern scholars. Some researchers suspect this allegation may have been an indirect result of Möngke Khan inserting it into the *Secret History*. This article argues that the main motivation was Batu's high military-political position and prestige in the *Yeke Mongol Ulus*. After Ögödei Khan's death, sons and grandsons of Ögödei and Ča'adai made various attempts to erode Batu's significant position in the *altan uruğ* by raising questions regarding his genealogical origin. This explains why doubts about Joči's status in the imperial lineage appeared so widely following his death in an intra-dynastic propaganda struggle waged between the houses of Joči and Tolui and the opposing houses

of Ča'adai and Ögödei's sons. This conflict over the narrative was engendered by the struggle for supreme power in the Mongol Empire and the distribution of conquered lands and property.

Keywords: Joči, *altan uruġ*, Činggis Khan, Mongol Empire, intra-dynastic conflict

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Introduction: Background and Historical Context

The inheritance of supreme authority among the medieval nomadic tribes of Eurasia had to strictly comply with genealogical principles. A leader who stood out from his people for bravery might emerge to conquer his enemies and then attempt to impose a sacred worldview over his society through different beliefs to shore up his position of preeminence. After his death, a system was created so that only his descendants would retain authority by means of these sacred beliefs and by forbidding other members of the society the right to take potestary power. Due to the development of increasingly complex social and economic relations in the nomadic communities of the Middle Ages and the strengthening of military and political institutions, surviving historical sources permit us to witness a process of sacralization in the Mongols' and Turks' *khan* in Eurasia.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, after Činggis Khan and his followers united the “whole of the Mongols” (*qamuq mongol*) and while various Turkic tribes remained at war with one another, they devised a unique genealogical account accompanied by various religious, mythological, and heroic motifs. By institutionalizing this genealogy as the core ideology of *altan uruġ*, they established their own mandate; only Činggis Khan and his descendants could rule the world. These descendants of the great founding figure also ensured the viability and stability of this ideology in the later Turco-Mongol public consciousness and worldview through *shamans* and *bakshy* bards, thus ensuring the mandate's strict implementation. Through these means it was made clear that if any person aspired to political power and declared himself *khan* (*qa'an*), he would be punished as one who had angered Mōngke Tenggrī [28, p. 19, 21; 64, p. 25, 26].

In the *Secret History of the Mongols* (hereafter *SHM*), Činggis Khan's eldest son, Joči (also rendered as Jochi, Joči, Juchi, Jöči, Tuši/Duši, Tossuc etc.), is described as a “Merkit bastard” (*merkidei cul ülja' ur-a*) in the words of Ča'adai – a clear accusation that he was not a biological son of Činggis Khan. We see here that casting doubt on Joči's genealogy was intended to remove him from Činggis's close circle of kin, eliminate his important role as the eldest son, and delegitimize Joči's and his sons' claims to preeminent power in the Mongol Empire.

Činggis Khan united warring factions, caused major displacement among the nomadic Turkic-Mongol tribes (*ke'er-ün irgen*) of Inner Asia and the Altai region, and subjugated the Siberian forest peoples (*hoi-yin irgen*). By uniting them under one political system and implementing the political structure of a tribal confederation as a means to create a global empire, Činggis Khan initiated wars of conquest of neighbouring countries with completely different economic and cultural structures. The Tangut Xixia, Kitan Liao, and Jürched Jin empires in the area of northern China collapsed militarily and politically, being forced to pay taxes to the newly formed *Mongol Ulus*. The next step was the conquest of *Khwārazm*, the largest medieval Islamic power in Central Asia with its frontier stretching to the Chu River.

Before the beginning of this campaign, we read in Chapter §254 of the *SHM* that the question of the heir to the empire was raised. According to this source, Yesüi-qatun, one of the wives of Činggis Khan, took up the issue and asked which of Börte's sons would assume the throne in the event of his death in battle. Činggis Khan, taking the advice to designate a successor seriously, gathered all his sons for a council and proclaimed, "The eldest of my sons is Joči! What do you, Joči, say? Speak up!"¹, Ča'adai interrupted Joči immediately and said, "When you say, 'Joči, speak up', do you mean that you will appoint Joči as your successor? How can we let ourselves be ruled by this bastard offspring of the Merkit?"² [55, p. 172]. This is the origin textual record of "Joči's secret".

This section of the *SHM* has led many early and modern scholars to conclude that Joči was Činggis's stepson. For example, Timothy May notes, "The name Jochi means 'guest' and was probably chosen as Jochi appears not to have been the son of Temüjin. The actual father was a Merkit to whom Börte was given. Although Temüjin accepted Joči as his legitimate eldest son throughout his life, it eventually became a source of tension among his children" [42, p. 31]. Zardykhan Kinayat noted, "...I have no doubt that Joči is the son of a Merkit". And "It is impossible to escape the fact that Joči's father was a Merkit" [33, p. 47–48, 53]. Yet, a number of overarching facts surrounding Joči's life suggest that these conclusions are unfounded, especially with respect to several issues: his early life and name; his military and political role along with the division of Činggis Khan's power and land which hint at his legitimacy; lastly, Joči's legacy within the *altan uruğ* lineage, and other factors.

Joči's Early Life and Name

In the *SHM*, Joči is described as a "Merkit bastard", but in this same text we find Činggis Khan not only calling Joči his firstborn son, but strictly forbidding that any doubt be expressed about it: "How can you speak thus about Joči? Isn't Joči the eldest of my sons? In future do not speak like that!"³. Following these words, Ča'adai insincerely confessed his guilt, smiling and saying of Joči's seniority, "The eldest sons are Joči and I"⁴ [55, p. 175, 176]. With this gesture of reconcili-

¹ "kö'üd-ün mino aqa joci bui-je ya'u ke'emü ci kelele" [52, p. 150].

² "joci-yi kelele ke'erün joci-yu'u tüsin ügülemüi ene merkidei cul ülja'ur-a ker mede'ülkün bida" [52, p. 150].

³ "joci-yi yekin teyin ke'emüi ta kö'üd-ün minu aqa joci ülü-ü bui qoyina teyin bu ke'etkün ke'en jarliq bolba" [52, p. 151].

⁴ "kö'üd-ün aqa joci ba qoyar bui je" [52, p. 151].

liation having been made, according to the *SHM*, Činggis Khan ended any discussion about Joči's birth.

Of course, we see clearly here that Činggis Khan did not provide any evidence or specific information supporting his claim that Joči was his biological son. As the supreme monarch, he was not obligated to prove anything to his children; it was enough that he simply said Joči was his "eldest son". The subsequent claims that Joči was a "Merkit bastard" were based upon this exchange in the *SHM*. Therefore, I will present facts, evidence, and theories regarding this passage on "Joči's secret". Some researchers have argued that the passage was deliberately fabricated *post factum* when the principal participants in the council about succession had died, primarily Činggis Khan and Joči themselves. Da-Djün Yü wrote about the dating of the exchange, "This event did not necessarily happen in the year 1219, but it reflects a long-standing and deep-seated antagonism between the line of Jöči and the lines of Čaghatai and Ögödei" [73, p. 298]⁵. The fact that the *SHM* is replete with anachronisms is attested to by nearly all scholars [4, p. 1–48]. Considering that the dynastic council about succession in which the hostile exchange occurred took place soon after the "Otrar Incident", the event which saw Chinggis Khan's merchant-emissaries murdered in 1217, then it may have taken place in the summer or autumn of 1218. However, İsenbike Togan's assumption is that Joči is unlikely to have taken part in that dynastic council, since he was engaged in suppressing the unrest of Siberian forest peoples in 1218–1219 and afterwards commanded a lengthy military campaigns against the West [66, p. 155, 156, 171]. As such, even the historicity of the episode has been put in question.

The date of Joči's birth is another key issue for determining the validity of any claim of his illegitimacy. Due to insufficient data, it is impossible to accurately determine when Börte-üjin was pregnant with Joči, when she was captured by the Merkit, and how many months or years she spent in captivity. Only a few sources suggest when Börte-üjin became pregnant with Joči. For instance, Rashīd al-Dīn and Ötämiš Hāji recorded that Börte-üjin was pregnant with Joči before her capture by the Merkit [58, p. 65; 46, p. 16]⁶, while *Mirza Uluġbeg* in his *Ta'rikk-i ulūs-i arba'a-yi Čingizī* and Joči's own descendant, Abu'l-Ghāzī Bahādur⁷, wrote in more detail that Börte-üjin was in her sixth month of pregnancy with Joči before being captured [68, p. 90; 24, p. 388]. However, these sources are exceptions, and almost all records state that Joči was born only after her rescue from captivity.

The personal views of Zardykhan Kinayat on this issue are germane. That author refers to the *Erdeni-yin Tobči* written in 1662 by the Ordos Mongol chronicler, Sayang Sečen, who stated that "Temüjin married Börte at the age of 17 in the year of the Yellow Dog (1178)" [33, p. 42]. Zardykhan Kinayat then refers to the *SHM*, noting that when the marriage took place, Temüjin's house received a black sable

⁵ Da-Djün Yü also claims that Joči was an illegitimate son, resulting in Ča'adai, Ögödei, and their descendants inciting hatred for Joči and his descendants. Da-Djün Yü also points out that even though Činggis Khan considered Joči to be his eldest son, none of Joči's descendants became a Great Qa'an, leading to hatred between Joči's descendants and those of Ča'adai and Ögödei [73, p. 298].

⁶ Paul Ratchnevsky was skeptical of Rashīd al-Dīn's data. According to him, when the official chronicler, Rashīd al-Dīn, wrote about the incident, his intention was to preserve the reputation of Činggis Khan and the dignity of Börte-üjin [59, p. 35].

⁷ Furthermore, we should remember that Abu'l-Ghāzī was a Jočid-Shibanid.

coat from Börte's mother as a dowry. Afterwards, Temüjin presented it to the *khan* of the Kereyit, To'oril. Soon afterwards, the Merkits raided Temüjin's home and took Börte captive. In desperation, Temüjin went to To'oril and asked him to save his wife from captivity. To'oril told him, "When you gave me the black sable coat last year, I promised to gather your scattered tribe to you, and I will keep that promise". Zardykhan Kinayat concludes, based on the reference to "last year" that "the Battle of Bogura-Kheger took place in mid-autumn 1179"⁸, when the combined forces of To'oril, Jamuqa, and Temüjin fought the Merkits to save Börte. "On the battlefield, Temüjin recognized Börte by moonlight and ordered that she be returned home without understanding the significance of the changes in her appearance. On the road home, in the same month or at the end of October 1179, Börte gave birth to her firstborn, Joči. It is known that in the autumn of 1178 Börte was captured by the Merkits, after which a year passed until her rescue. Börte, of course was held against her will in the house of the Merkit strongman, Čilger. But there is nothing against nature, the measure of nature is time. In this case, no matter how many heroes are born, the time is calculated as nine months and nine days. And Börte was in the hands of Merkits for a year (1178. IX–1179. X)" [33, p. 42–46]. Thus, Zardykhan Kinayat effectively attempts to demonstrate that Joči was the biological son of the Merkit, Čilger Bökö.

In spite of the complexities of this issue, I believe that Zardykhan Kinayat boldly investigated the question and approached the data from his own point of view for a specific purpose. It is a fact that we find in the *SHM* To'oril's statement, "you gave me the black sable coat last year" (§104) [55, p. 32], we read "it was a "moonlit night" when the camp of Merkit was attacked" (§110) [55, p. 38], and we encounter Čilger Bökö's regretful poem "I hope for Börte-üjin" (§111) [55, p. 38, 39]. However, there are no reliable data in the text or elsewhere for determining the exact year of Temüjin's marriage to Börte except for that found in the *Erdeni-yin Tobči*. As to the question of why it is so, Zardykhan Kinayat says that it is "because historians have tried to portray Joči as the firstborn son of Činggis Khan".

Another important consideration is that Saġang Sečen's *Erdeni-yin Tobči* contains more folkloric beauty, anachronisms, and inconsistencies than the *SHM*. Without listing them all, we can observe that is only when we view these details against the larger body of earlier sources on the events described that the author's gross errors are evident. For example, Saġang Sečen says, "At that time, Temüjin was 17 years old in the Year of the Yellow Dog (1178), and took as wife 13-year-old Börte-üjin who was born in the Year of the Red Dog (1162)" [62, p. 61]. However, from the *SHM* we know that Temüjin was a year younger than Börte. Elsewhere, Čiledü is referred to as "Tatar Yeke Čiledü" [62, p. 57], but he was of the Merkit tribe in the other sources. With such frequent errors pertaining to the larger

⁸ Zardykhan Kinayat refers here to the Chinese historian Saisha'al, hinting that he was working with "Chinese primary sources unknown to us" [33, p. 42, 44, 45]. But I have determined that Saisha'al was a Mongolian historian from what is now the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in China. In addition, I could not find any chronicle account of Börte's release from Merkit captivity in the available Chinese sources, including in Paul Ratchnevsky's research on the topic [59, p. 36]. Paul Pelliot and Louis Hambis, who were familiar with all the available Chinese primary sources regarding the Mongols, as well as with the *Erdeni-yin Tobči*, also were unable to determine precisely when this event took place.

context of these events, we cannot consider the *Erdeni-yin Tobči* a reliable source for determining the exact year and month of Joči's birth.

According to the *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh*, written by Rashid al-Din at the beginning of the fourteenth century, the eldest of Temüjin's children was Princess Fujin Beki [56, p. 165; 58, p. 60]. Temüjin did not formally have a wife before Börte, so Fujin Beki was evidently Börte's child [57, p. 68, 70] and Joči could not have been the firstborn of Temüjin and Börte, or have been born immediately after their marriage. In the Chinese *Mengda Beilu*⁹, a daughter of Činggis Khan is referred to as the "eldest princess" as well. As additional corroboration, that document refers to the eldest son of Činggis Khan as a prince named *Bi-yin* 比因 who was killed during the capture of the Jin Empire city, Xijing¹⁰. This is the only primary source in which a son of Činggis Khan older than Joči is recorded. The author of the *Mengda Beilu* was the Song Dynasty ambassador, that is, an official who had contact with the military-political elite of the Mongols, and in particular with the esteemed commander, Muqali. He must have been well informed. However, Nikolai Munkuev claims that the record of Činggis's eldest son in the *Mengda Beilu* is incorrect [45, p. 56].

Paul Pelliot and Louis Hambis came to the conclusion that the campaign against the Merkits led by To'oril, Jamuqa, and Temüjin may be a composite story in which two or even three military operations that took place in different years were amalgamated. Accordingly, the release of Börte from Merkit captivity as recorded in the *SHM* is probably a romanticized version of events fabricated by the editors. Regarding Joči's year of birth, the two renowned French Orientalists wrote that the date of birth of Ögödei, who died in 1241 at the age of 56 according to the Chinese calendar¹¹, was 1186. As such, the latest possible year (*date la plus basse* – *P.P., L.H.*) of Joči's birth would have been 1184 [48, p. 266, 267]¹². It would be strange if there was such a lengthy gap between the two sons' births as almost a decade.

While agreeing with the views of Paul Pelliot and Louis Hambis that the story had been romanticized, Paul Ratchnevsky further elaborated on this idea and suggests that Börte's captivity by the Merkit probably lines up with historical facts. Otherwise, Paul Ratchnevsky observed, it would be hard to explain Činggis's Khan's selection of Ögödei as the *yeke qa'an* if the Mongols had no doubts about the Joči's legitimacy [59, p. 36, 37]. There is other scholarship concerning the year of Joči's birth. For example, the Kazakh historian Aibolat Kushkumbaev assumes that Joči was probably born in the first half of the 1180s, noting that suggestions in scholarship range between 1179 and 1184 [39, p. 141].

There is another important element of this story – namely, Joči's given name. Later Persian and Turkic chroniclers' interpretations of the meaning of Joči's name as "unexpected guest" added to the skepticism about his legitimacy as a son of the empire's founder¹³. Paul Pelliot, one of the first to analyze the anthroponym *Joči*,

⁹ The closest source in terms of being dated to the period of Joči's life, c. 1182–February 1227.

¹⁰ The modern city of Datong in Shanxi Province, China – *N.M.*

¹¹ According to the Gregorian calendar 55 years – *P.P., L.H.*

¹² According to the *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh* [58, p. 43].

¹³ This information is available in the *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh* by Rashīd al-Dīn [58, p. 65], *Nosaq-e jahānārā* by Ġaffārī [24, p. 402], *Ta'rīkh-i ulūs-i arba'a-yi Chingīzī* by Ulūġbeg [68, p. 90], *Ķārā Tavārīh* by Ötämiš Hājī [46, p. 17], *Shajara-yi Türk* by Abu'l-Ghāzī [24, p. 388] and other written sources.

had doubts that its meaning was “unexpected guest” after studying its various forms and pronunciations. We see that among Mongol military commanders of the early thirteenth century, there were several famous people named *Joči*, which was a common name at the time and the existence of this name did not have a meaning specific to the unique situation of Činggis Khan’s eldest son¹⁴. Paul Pelliot attempted to elucidate the etymology of the name *Joči* in Turkic to determine its meaning [47, p. 19, 26, 27]¹⁵. İsenbike Togan further developed this idea, suggesting that the name *Joči* was derived from the Turkic noun *Döš/Töš* [13, p. 582], which also means “honorable” or “precious”. Zardykhan Kinayat expressed this opinion as well. According to his analysis, the name *Joči* means “broad-chested” (*anaïmөc*) in the modern Kazakh language [33, p. 47]. Thus, the Mongolian *Joči* or “guest” is a folk etymology, a nickname given to Joči since he was born on the road after Börte-üjin was freed from her captivity [66, p. 149].

In addition to these considerations, Peter Golden made an in-depth philological analysis of the anthroponym *Joči* based on the Uyghur and Qarakhanid writings of Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī, a scholar of the Qarakhanid Dynasty, and Muslim authors who wrote about the Mongols. According to Golden, the name of Činggis Khan’s eldest son, Tuši/Duši, was translated into Turkic from the Mongolian word *Joči*, “guest”, which is preserved in modern Turkic from an early Uyghur and Qarakhanid concept, *tuši* – “to come (unexpectedly) face to face with someone”, an alternative form derived from the verb. In other words, the anthroponym means “an unexpected encounter with someone”. At present, it seems to be the case that the Mongolian word *Joči* was translated into Turkic as *Tuši/Duši*, signifying that Joči was an “unexpected guest” [17, p. 148, 149].

Joči’s Military-Political Career and the Division of Činggis Khan’s Empire

In assigning responsibilities to his sons, Činggis Khan entrusted Joči with negotiations in state affairs and the most significant and honorable duty in nomadic society – that of conducting the battue (*aba, abalaba*), or the role of “game driver”. The Persian historian ’Aṭā-Malik Juvāynī and the Mamlūk encyclopedist Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī called this duty “the greatest honor for the Mongols” [10, p. 40; 21, p. 139]. Abu’l-Ghāzī, a chronicler and khan of Khiva from 1643 to 1663 remarked, “Činggis Khan appointed each one (of his sons to) a task: negotiations, holding celebrations, and games (hunting – *O.A.*) to Joči; punishment and adher-

¹⁴ “Jöči (~ Čöji?) était un nom fréquent chez les Mongols; il n’y a donc pas à y chercher une valeur spécifique dans le cas du fils aîné de Gengis-khan” [47, p. 26].

¹⁵ “Je considère comme presque certain que ‘Tuši’ (> ‘Duši’) est une forme turque correspondant au joči, juči, Čöji des Mongols, et Tuji[-Bahlawān] ~ Tuji[-Pahlawān] représente peut-être un stade dialectal de cette alternance”. “Si nous devons lire jöči (Čöji) et Töši (ou à la rigueur jüči [? Čüji] et Tüši), il peut s’agir, comme dans le cas de Mängü ~ Mōngkä (Mongka), d’un nom primitivement turc, dont l’initiale palatale au lieu de dentale serait un fait mongol. Ramstedt et moi-même avons depuis longtemps fait une hypothèse analogue pour le nom Činggis (Gengis-khan) que nous considérons comme une mongolisation du turc *tängiz*, ‘mer’, ‘ocean’. Mais je ne vois pas quel mot turc ce Töši ou même Tüši pourrait représenter” [47, p. 19, 27].

ence to law to Ča'adai; state property and its management to Ögödei; military order to Tolui"¹⁶ [66, p. 175].

Dafeng Qu and Jianyi Liu opined that Joči's role was insignificant compared with the duties of other princes, seemingly hinting that Joči was a stepchild of sorts [51, p. 285, 286]. But we should observe these "specializations" through the prism of the system of values of the nomadic Turkic-Mongol world at that time. In fact, the organization of game drives or battues fell under the command of the state army, i.e., the high command [71, p. 95; 10, p. 27; 66, p. 160]. Since the time of the Xiongnu and the Turkic khanates, hunting was been the only training method for war and military tactics. During the Mongol Empire it became a strong institution within the state structure. It was also a more important social factor than warfare and played a critical role in political investiture [71, p. 40, 73, 80–82; 6, p. 452; 70, p. 225; 37, p. 19]. According to the Mongol *Jasaq* (also *Yasa*) legal code, Činggis Khan required nomads to engage in hunting in their spare time, presumably to hone their military skills.

We can observe the performance of Joči's official duties as a commander in subjugating the Siberian people without any armed conflict or loss of life; his conquest of the cities of the Jin [8, p. 143; 11, p. 27]; successful campaigns against the *Khwārazm-shāh* Muḥammad II and his son Jalāl al-Dīn at the Irghiz River; and in his appointment as commander of the Western Campaign [59, p. 119; 51, p. 284, 285; 50, p. 36, 37; 66, p. 158, 160; 5, p. 37, 38, 50, 54]. From these appointments and responsibilities, we see strong suggestions that Činggis Khan considered Joči as the heir to his throne [5, p. 50]. Yakinf Bichurin, in his *History of the First Four Khans of the House of Činggis*¹⁷, notes that Chinese material, recorded during the Chinese Song Dynasty, defined Joči as "heir", while Činggis's other sons, Ča'adai and Ögödei, were only described as "princes" [8, p. 121]¹⁸. The Song Dynasty diplomat Peng Daya who visited Qaraqorum during Ögödei Khan's rule and recorded valuable information about the Mongols in his *Heida Shilüe*, referred to Joči as the "heir to the throne" [19, p. 49]¹⁹. Also, in the *Yuan Shi*, the official chronicle of the

¹⁶ "Her birini bir iška ta'ayin qılıb irdi; şohbet ve toy ve oyun-ñi jučigā; yarġu aldurmaq ve tutdurmaqni Čaġatayġa; memleket-niñ malini ve daḡt qılmaqni Ogedayġa; čerig tartibini Tuligā [...] birib..." [66, p. 182].

¹⁷ This work by Yakinf Bichurin is a translation into Russian of the later parts of the Chinese historical chronicle *Tongjian Gangmu* and fragments of the *Yuan Shi*. For more details see: [8, p. 4–16].

¹⁸ The point in the chronology where Joči appears begins with the death of Muqali and immediately moves on to the *Khwārazm* events: "1223. Осмнадцатое лѣто Гуй-вэй. Весною, въ третій мѣсяць, Визирь и Король Мухури скончался. Лѣтомъ Чингисъ-Ханъ уѣхаль отъ жаровь къ рѣкѣ Порманъ. Наслѣдникъ Чжоцишъ, Царевичи Чаганъшай, Угэдэй и Бала, возвратились съ войсками и присоединились къ Чингисъ-Хану".

¹⁹ Peng Daya was a member of a delegation sent by the Song Dynasty government to the Mongols in 1233 to negotiate a joint military action against the Jurchen Jin. At this time, Joči was no longer alive. Listing the Mongol warlord and commanders, Peng Daya himself commented: "Так называемый престолонаследник Джочи (он уже погиб)". The value of Peng Daya's notes lies in the fact that they are based on his direct observations of Mongolian society in the thirteenth century and, possibly, on the stories of officials who witnessed the key current events and the formation of the Mongol Empire. For more details, see: [40, p. 133–136]. Later in the text, the second author of the *Heida Shilüe*, Xu Ting, depicts Ögödei as heir following Činggis Khan's death [19, p. 53].

Mongolian Yuan Dynasty in China, Joči is described as a “crown prince” as well [20, p. 522]²⁰.

In general, in the medieval Turko-Mongolian system of political power, the tendency of the eldest son to assume the throne by right of primogeniture had long been preserved. This practice can be found in many medieval narratives [71, p. 49, 51; 59, p. 125; 36, p. 341–374]. According to the *Jāmi’ at-tawārīkh*, the eldest son of Joči, Orda, had every reason to inherit the *Ulus of Joči*, but gave his consent for the his brother, Batu, the second son of their father to become ruler [58, p. 60], and the Shibanid *Qārā Tavārīh* specifically states that the power in the *Ulus of Joči* was initially based on the primogenetic principle belonging to Orda, but he refused in favor of his younger brother, Batu, although he often argued that younger brothers had an obligation to obey their elder male siblings [46, p. 28]. During the struggle for power in Qaraqorum following the death of Ögödei Khan in 1241, supporters of Döregene-qatun argued that Güyük was the “eldest son” and that he deserved to assume the throne vacated by the Great Khan [64, p. 45, 46; 10, p. 251].

It is necessary to clearly distinguish between the power of the Great Khan (*yeke qa’an*) and the ownership of territory (*yurt, nutug*). Many researchers do not understand the differences between the two concepts. Rashīd al-Dīn, who was working under the Toluid aegis, wrote that Činggis Khan initially wanted to leave his throne to his fourth son, Tolui, but later changed his mind. Instead of the throne, he decided to bequeath him the homeland in Mongolia, the paternal tent palace (*ger*) and territory (*yurt*), an army, local allies (*cerig*), and an imperial guard (*keshig*) [58, p. 107, 108]²¹. In the tradition of the medieval Mongols, the father’s property was always inherited by the youngest son, who was called *otčigin*, meaning “guardian of the hearth” [71, p. 49, 54, 55].

William of Rubruck, a Franciscan friar who visited Däst-i Qipčaq and Qaraqorum in 1253–1254 during the time of Batu’s reign in the Volga River region, also wrote that, according to Mongol tradition, the youngest son always inherited his parents’ house [50, p. 88]. From the genealogical book of the Mongol khans, *Sir-a tujuji*, which appeared at the end of the seventeenth century, it can be concluded that this tradition was carefully preserved. For instance, when Činggis Khan allotted territories to his four sons, his will was as follows: “Joči to Tūqmāq (Däst-i Qipčaq), Ča’adai to Sarta’ul (*Māwarā’ al-nahr*/Turkestan), Ögödei to our country, and Tolui at the father’s house”²²[67, p. 82].

It is relevant to note that this tradition is still present in Kazakh families. For example, when a father passes away, the youngest son assumes ownership of his father’s household and property²³, and the eldest son is considered the head of the

²⁰ “Напали на русских в горах Те-эр, покорили их, захватили главу их государства Мстислава. Чжэбэ приказал Исмаилу представить его перед царевичем-наследником Джучи и [потом] его казнили”. According to the *Yuan Shi*, this pertains to events that took place during the raid of the Mongolian army under the command of Sübe’tei-bahadur and Jebel-bahadur through Iran to the Caucasus and western Däst-i Qipčaq in 1220–1223.

²¹ Rashīd al-Dīn wrote that following the death of Činggis Khan, Tolui not only inherited the “native, *yeke yurt*, capital” but “took the throne” [58, p. 109].

²² “jüči-yi toymuy-tur: čayadai-yi sartaγul-tur: ögüdei-yi öberün orun-tur: tolui γal γolumta sakin atuγai” [67, p. 144].

²³ As is recorded in the *Jāmi’ at-tawārīkh*, during the campaign against the Tanguts, when Ögödei, Köten, and Güyük asked Činggis Khan for *soyurğal*, or property, he replied: “I have

family; the other sons obey him and listen to his advice [63, p. 101, 102, 105]. In the political tradition of the medieval Turkic-Mongols, state power often belonged to eldest sons²⁴, and the father's property, house, and pasturelands were bequeathed to the youngest sons. We see in the case of the Mongol Empire that customary family law among Inner Asian nomads had been applied to the level of the highest political system and was reflected in its structure.

After the formation of the new *Mongol Ulus* in 1206, Joči initiated a campaign to conquer the neighboring Siberian forest peoples to the north. To this end, in 1207 Joči was appointed commander-in-chief of the right-wing army. During the campaign, the Oyrats, Buryats, Kyrgyz, Tö'eles and other peoples were subjugated and were given to Joči as a domain (*ulus*) by Činggis Khan [35, p. 174, 175; 12, p. 173, 174; 55, p. 154, 155; 38, p. 113]. The principal reason for Činggis's generosity to Joči is related to a simple family tradition of the steppe peoples: as a ruler reaching maturity, he was establishing his own household and leaving his father's house [66, p. 154]. As well, it is important to note regarding perceptions of Joči in his lifetime that in Mongol political traditions, only members of the ruling lineage, the *altan uruġ*, had a right to own subordinate people (*ulus irgen*) [16, p. 33].

If we examine the genealogy of the early Mongols, we can see that kin relationships in these tribal communities were strictly observed, and members of the ruling dynasty were keenly interested in preventing divisions. If the paternity of a member of a dynasty was doubtful, that person often had to separate from the community without receiving any share (*inju*) and form his own tribal unit (*bölög irgen*). In some cases, adopted sons received the same property as other male offspring [71, p. 46, 51, 52, 54, 61], but if we examine the genealogy of the *altan uruġ*, which is described in Chapters §23, 24 of the *SHM*, we see that Dobun Mergen had five sons with Alan Qoa: Belgünütei, Bügünütei, Buqu-Qatagi, Buqatu-Salji, and Bodončar. During the division of family property left by their father, Dobun Mergen, Bodončar did not receive anything, being considered "weak, dumb, and a stranger (*jad*)" [35, p. 81; 12, p. 5; 55, p. 4].

By way of another example, we can consider an episode in 1206 when the *Mongol Ulus* was established. Činggis Khan began the process of dividing positions and shares of wealth and troops to commanders (*noyon*) who actively took part in the formation of the Empire, as well as the process of distribution of subordinate people (*ulus irgen*) among the younger brothers of Činggis. Shigi-Qutuqu, an adopted stepbrother of Činggis rescued from the destruction of the Tatar people, asked the Khan: "How can I, as an adopted one, have an equal share with others of the same blood?"²⁵ [35, p. 160]²⁶. From these examples we can see that in the dis-

nothing. The entire wealth and property are now in the hands of the Otčigin of yeke yurt of Tolui" [57, p. 251].

²⁴ In the time of Činggis Khan, this tradition of seniority among nomadic Turkic-Mongols was replaced by charismatic leadership and loyalty to the monarch [71, p. 49–51; 36, p. 345–355].

²⁵ "Sigi-χutuχu ügüleriün: Mino metu oroču degü sačayu deng-gečen χubi ker abχu?" [35, p. 477]. Francis Cleaves and Igor de Rachewiltz, in translating "late[-born] younger brother", do not include the "blood kinship" context [12, p. 144; 55, p. 128].

²⁶ I believe Sergei Kozin tried to translate the context of the *SHM* correctly, emphasizing Shigi-Qutuqu as Činggis Khan's "stepbrother" (*oroču degü*). When Činggis allotted the subject people to his biological brothers as a share, it was "taken for granted", but when it came to Shigi-Qutuqu, the problem of blood kinship surfaced, i.e., Shigi-Qutuqu himself raised the ques-

tribution of resources, the different roles between biological sons and adopted sons are clearly distinguished. If, in ordinary family relations, adopted sons received some share, it would have been ordinarily impossible for dynasties who ruled the Empire. Apart from that, even if one was a legitimate biological son of a ruler, the origin and the standing of one's mother within the kin group had to be of a high level [10, p. 40].

In one of the articles of the *Jasaq* law²⁷, analyzed by Valentin Riasanovsky, there is a regulation decreeing that, “The distribution of wealth is based on the condition that an elder son receives more than younger sons; the youngest son gets father's place” (*nutug, yurt – O.A.*) [60, p. 15, 21]. According to the *SHM* and *Altan Tobči*, we can see that Joči was indeed given this larger share, and during the process of forming the *Mongol Ulus*, Činggis Khan divided subordinate people (*ulus irgen*) among his four sons from Börte-üjin. For instance, Joči received 9000 people, Ča'adai – 8000, Ögödei – 5000, and Tolui – 5000 [35, p. 176; 12, p. 175; 55, p. 157; 41, p. 186]²⁸. Later, conquered lands were allotted among princes as noble *appanages* (*ulus medekün kö'üd, qubi*). As far as we know from the sources, Joči received East Däst-i Qipčaq, *Khwārazm*, North Jetisu²⁹, the city of Mazandaran in Iran, and lands to the west, “as far in that direction as the hoof of Tartar horse had penetrated” [10, p. 42; 7, p. 59]. Referring to the writings of al-'Umarī, a secretary under the Mamlūk Sultan al-Malik an-Nāšir, and the Persian historian, Waṣṣāf, who acted as a tax administrator in the Īlhānate, Peter Jackson concludes that the territories to the south and west of Āmūya and the cities of Arrān and Ādharbāijān, Tābrīz, Hamadān, and Marāgha in the South Caucasus, though eventually falling under the control of Hülegü, had been initially allotted to Joči by Činggis Khan [21, p. 177, 178, 182; 26, p. 209, 235; 27, p. 232, 236].

Radik Temirgaliyev argued that Činggis Khan, impressed by Joči's demonstrated fidelity and dignity for not permitting the throne to be handed over to him, gave a “generous share” to Joči as a compensatory gesture before the *Khwārazm* campaign [65, p. 133, 143]. But I look at this issue from a different perspective. I assume more subordinated people (*ulus irgen*) and the vast territories given to Joči, as the eldest son, had been distributed in accordance with the long-standing family tradition and majorat principles of the nomadic Turkic-Mongols which contributed to the formation of *Jasaq* law. As mentioned above, Rashīd al-Dīn noted that, according to medieval Turkic-Mongol tradition and the principle of majorat, a large amount of wealth and property (*mal*) was obligated to go to the eldest son; the father's house (*ger-yurt*), personal retainers (*nökör*), an army (*serig*), and imperial guard (*keshig*) remained with the youngest son [58, p. 107].

tion of his share and his genetic relationship to Činggis's clan. But Činggis allotted “the people from the towns that have walls of rammed earth” (*I. de R.*) to Shigi-Qutuqu for meritorious service.

²⁷ Although the original *Jasaq* laws have not survived to our time, their absence is not a critical loss. Analyzing the social and political systems of the medieval Mongols, we see that the basis of *Jasaq* norms, in addition to the reforms of Činggis Khan, were derived from traditional ways of life, customs, and elements of faith of all Turkic-Mongol nomads, and taken from the *Bilig* as well [6, p. 89; 71, p. 10; 59, p. 188, 189, 196; 54, p. 213].

²⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn, in his *Jāmi' at-tawārikh*, writes that each received 4000, but in place of Tolui, he records Kölgen [57, p. 274–276; 27, p. 231, 232].

²⁹ “The Area of Seven Rivers”. In Russian, this toponymy is “Semirechye”.

The uneven division of territory reflected established custom. Ča'adai received southern Jetisu and Transoxania (*Māwarā' al-nahr*); Ögödei received the southern Altai region, Emil, Qobuq, and Tarbagatai; and Tolui was given the native *yurt* (e.g., Mongolia). Joči, compared with the above-mentioned princes, received much more land (*ulus medekün kö'üd, qubî*). In accordance with political traditions of the nomads, in addition to the division of property, the eldest son also inherited official power and governing authority, while the youngest son inherited his father's main holdings, namely the house, wives, livestock, pastures and, most importantly, his father's sacred house [59, p. 125; 36, p. 372]. From the works of Boris Vladimirtsov, Peter Jackson, Nikolai Kradin, and Tatiana Skrynnikova, we see that in medieval Turkic-Mongol genealogies, and in social, dynastic, and political relations in the division of property, that the majorat principle and inheritance of power by the eldest son was established as a traditional regulatory mechanism of long-standing [71, p. 49–51; 26, p. 193, 195; 36, p. 345–355].

There is widespread consensus that “the most fertile lands were given to other princes, and Joči received barren lands, deserts”. According to Zardykhan Kinayat, “Even when the inheritance was divided, Joči's share was on the periphery”. Zardykhan Kinayat refers to the Mongolian author Anandyn Amar who wrote, “Since the territory given to Joči was the result of a successful one-year war, its acquisition or loss would not have had much effect on the rise or fall of the Mongol Empire” [33, p. 43, 49]³⁰. However, I do not agree with this conclusion at all. We must bear in mind that the economic basis of nomadic Turkic-Mongol peoples was their livestock holdings. In other words, for nomads it could be taken *a priori* that the potential of the herd population will be much greater if animals grow freely on open steppes and pasturelands, and the range of annual migration is extensive. Moreover, the lands given to Joči were rich in onagers and other wild animals. As such, they were very suitable for hunting, which also provided nomads the opportunity to hone their military skills.

For the Mongolian elite, captured cities undoubtedly played the role of strategic, financial and economic centers – springboards for the conquest of new lands. However, since the Mongolian elite relied on the nomads for their military strength, people who were extensively engaged in livestock rearing, the distribution of pasturelands was perpetually a thorny issue [59, p. 210]. Peter Jackson shows clearly that political and economic tensions in the Mongol Empire revolved around two main issues: “distribution of pasturelands” and “inheritance of power and property” [26, p. 192–198]. For illustration, we ought to consider that some cities in the domain of Ča'adai had been turned into pasturelands which shows that this issue was particularly important [7, p. 66, 151; 50, p. 110]. Jamāl al-Qarshī, who lived in the *Ulus of Ča'adai*, recorded in his *Mulhaqāt al-Surāh* (c. 1303) that the Mongols were great “lovers of pastures and horse racing” [22, p. 119]. In fact, Ča'adai's domain consisted of a combination of oasis-desert biomes and pasturelands. The political elite that occupied the region faced local cultural and economic difficulties. For newly arrived Turkic-Mongol tribes, the alternative between large-scale cattle breeding and, on other hand, forced settlement and Islamization were sharp and clear. This dilemma eventually led to the split of the *Ulus of*

³⁰ In fairness, Zardykhan Kinayat simultaneously points out that Joči received the largest share of all Činggis Khan's sons [33, p. 126].

Ča'adai into the *Moghul Ulus – Jete*, which was invested in retaining its nomadic tradition, and the *Māwarā' al-nahr*, which began to convert to Islam [15, p. 50]. The problem of adequate pasturage also existed in China where Qubilai Khan even issued a special edict prohibiting the Mongols from using cultivated land as pastures [59, p. 177, 178; 29, p. 68].

The military expansion of nomads was often based on the dynamics of rapid increases in livestock populations. For that reason, they always sought to increase their pasturelands. According to Anatoly Khazanov, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, for the population of the Mongolian Plateau, the balance was disturbed between livestock and natural resources (primarily pasturelands) [31, p. 463]. Paul Ratchnevsky has argued that the first Mongol war against the Tanguts may have been carried out to replenish livestock adversely affected by bad weather [59, p. 169]. Therefore, the steps taken by nomads to build an empire were generally preceded by the opening of vast pasturelands essential for their animal husbandry. As such, the domain which belonged to Joči, his descendants, and people (the *ulus irgen*) was very conducive to rapid acculturation without Mongols losing their political dominance to the Qanglis and Qipčaq because of similarities in lifestyle and economy [15, p. 48; 59, p. 213]. Moreover, Jūzjānī states that Joči loved the Däst-i Qipčaq more than his homeland [24, p. 40]. But regarding the peripheral location of Joči's *appanage* from the native *yurt*, Vasily Barthold has suggested that Činggis Khan probably followed the Mongolian folk custom that “not only demanded that the father's possessions be given to the younger son, but also that the degree of remoteness of the *appanage* of each son should correspond to their age” [6, p. 459].

Compared with Činggis's other sons, the symbolic evidence of Joči's superior dynastic and political role is the leadership with which he was delegated in the conquest of Khwārazm (Urgench), the largest city in all the Mongol-conquered countries, and the awarding of that territory to Joči by Činggis Khan [5, p. 38, 50, 53]³¹. Al-Nasawī, a contemporary chronicler of these events and not apparently influenced by the Mongols, said: “I paid special attention to the siege of this city (Urgench – *O.A.*). It is more important than any other city, and its fall was the beginning of the Mongols' triumph” [2, p. 132]. The importance of this region is also reflected in Kamal al-Din Binai's *Shaybānī-nāma* which suggested that whoever dreamed of conquering from the West the East (or vice versa), must first conquer Khwārazm, which was the largest trading center in the region and the key to accruing power throughout Central Asia [66, p. 169].

Prior to the invasion of Khwārazm, Činggis Khan distributed, among his sons and other relatives, subjugated peoples unattached to any particular territory (*SHM* §242), but the issue of the distribution of conquered lands was unresolved with respect to the capital of Khwārazm, Urgench. The center of the Khwārazm-shāh territory was then allocated to Joči, suggesting that prince had a high degree of

³¹ The Jin Empire, no smaller than Khwārazm, and one of the conquered lands of Činggis Khan, was not completely subjugated at that time. The land suffered from three military expeditions between 1211–1214 and, as a result, was bound to pay taxes. The 20-year campaign ended in 1234, when only northeastern China was fully controlled [11, p. 27–30, 36]. The complete conquest of China began with the establishment of the Mongolian Yuan Empire. In addition, due to the traditionally settled, intensively-agricultural Chinese way of life, China provided poor grassland coverage, which was essential for Mongolian households [26, p. 210].

legitimacy in the political arena of the *Yeke Mongol Ulus*³². The division of *Khwārazm*³³ was a prerequisite to the subdivision of the whole empire [66, p. 162, 164, 169]. Therefore, after Činggis Khan distributed Urgench to Joči, Joči treated it as his property, showing compassion to its inhabitants³⁴, and was committed to preserving the city an economic, transportation, and strategically important center [2, p. 133; 51, p. 285]. On matters of ruling the state and wars of conquest, Joči always followed his own principles, quite separate from those of other princes and even Činggis Khan himself.

We can see Joči's independence in foreign policy before these events since he established ties with Jalāl al-Dīn, the son of *Khwārazm-shāh* Muḥammad II, after receiving a private domain within the newly-formed *Mongol Ulus* long before the major war erupted [59, p. 137; 43, p. 23, 24]³⁵. Apparently because of those ties, Joči, who played a leading role in the western war of conquest from 1219 to 1224, faced hostility from Činggis's other sons [5, p. 54]. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, the capture of Urgench took seven months due to a dispute between Joči and Ča'adai [57, p. 216]. The conflict between the princes probably concerned the preservation or destruction of Urgench. In other words, Ča'adai's aim was to capture the enemy's capital by any means, whereas Joči sought to minimize damage. That is, he first tried to preserve its trade, economic, and strategic roles, because this city was of supreme value to him. In addition, *Khwārazm* served as a convenient springboard for the forthcoming second western campaign, and for the conquest of the Qipčaq. Partly for that reason, it had been allotted to Joči [3, p. 278].

The *SHM* and *Altan Tobči* reveal no information about conflicts among the princes during the conquest of the city. However, rivalries among them can be seen in that, when the city was besieged. Joči, Ča'adai, and Ögödei asked Činggis Khan the following: "Our troops surround Urgench; whose orders must we obey?". One important detail that must be considered is that the *SHM*, *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh*, and *Altan Tobči* all suggest that Ögödei was the commander of the operation to capture Urgench [55, p. 180; 41, p. 226, 227; 57, p. 216]. However, Christopher Atwood is skeptical of this conclusion. Al-Nasawī, the personal secretary of Jalāl al-Dīn and an opponent of the Mongols, stated that Joči was in direct commander of the conquest of *Khwārazm* [5, p. 38, 53]. Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayri, an Egyptian encyclopedist who served the Mamlūk Sultan al-Nāšir Muḥammad I (r. 1293–94,

³² "...the siege of Urgench was the last time the three brothers were together and their father still alive; if one of those brothers had been appointed by their father to command at that siege, then that brother had a strong presumption to rule after Chinggis Khan's death" [5, p. 54].

³³ Starting from the invasion of *Khwārazm*, despite Činggis Khan's bestowing that territory upon Joči, arguments about its possession continued between descendants of Joči and Ča'adai until the mid-thirteenth century [66, p. 162, 163; 5, p. 54]. Later, *Khwārazm*, having joined the *Ulus of Joči*, was transformed into the most significant political, economic, craft, commercial, cultural, sacred, and religious center in Central Asia [3, p. 308].

³⁴ The fate of the inhabitants of the city and its preservation or collapse is described differently by each author. For example, Jūzjānī writes about it based on what he heard from witnesses of these events in his work (the *Tabakāt-i-Nāširi*): the city was destroyed during the conquest, and its people were mocked and killed, suffering greatly [24, p. 39, 40]. Ibn al-Athīr (*al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*) writes how, during the campaign, none of the city dwellers survived and the city was flooded by the Āmūya River [21, p. 52].

³⁵ Ilnur Mirgaleev writes that Joči was connected with the Abbāsīd Caliphate. Unfortunately, I did not identify such a connection in the original historical data.

1299–1341), wrote, “Joči Khan, the son [prince] of Činggis Khan, is the one who conquered Khwārazm while his father was alive” [21, p. 139]. It is possible that al-Nuwayrī’s writing was influenced by contact between the rulers of the *Ulus of Joči* and the Mamlūk sultans, but the Persian historian Jūzjānī, who was opposed to the Mongols in the Delhi Sultanate and had not been influenced by the descendants of Činggis, gave Joči primacy on this issue as well, confirming that he was a leading commander in the conquest of Khwārazm [24, p. 39].

In ’Aṭā-Malik Juvāynī’s writings, Joči, during the Khwārazm campaign and particularly during his raid down the Syr-Darya river, is referred to by the title (*laqab*) of *Ulus-Idi* (“lord of the ulus” – *J.B.*) [10, p. 86–90]. John Boyle believes that Joči was afforded this title posthumously as Tolui was given the posthumous title of *Yeke-Noyon*. It is an ongoing mystery why this title was selected for Joči. Perhaps it was because Činggis Khan, in his lifetime, first allotted the subjugated Siberian peoples to Joči as an *Ulus*, or perhaps because Joči’s descendants in the mid-thirteenth century had established a Great *Ulus* – much later known as the Golden Horde [9, p. 152]. But why is the title of the “lord of the ulus” unique to Joči? Why, for example, was Ča’adai, who had his separate *Ulus*, not given that same title posthumously?

As pointed out above, Christopher Atwood indicates that before the Khwārazm campaign, Činggis Khan considered Joči his heir apparent [5, p. 50] and Chinese primary sources refer to Joči as “the heir to the throne” [8, p. 121; 20, p. 522; 19, p. 49]. Paul Ratchnevsky also points out that despite doubts concerning Joči’s parentage, Činggis Khan originally considered him his successor [59, p. 166]. In other words, we can cautiously presume that during the “Urgench Event”, Činggis Khan, through the abrupt alteration of the dynastic status of Joči, changed his mind and appointed Ögödei the future ruler of the Mongol Empire and allotted Khwārazm and its vast territory to Joči for his future second western campaign which saw the Mongols eventually advance against the Qipčaq and eventually the Russian princes in 1222–23.

According to Jūzjānī, Joči’s reputation was so unassailable that his father began to fear him; Joči told his servants that, “his father had gone mad and destroyed many nations and cities” (Joči’s alleged words were conveyed to Činggis Khan by Ča’adai). Also, Joči intended to unite with Khwārazm-shāh Muḥammad II to govern the country, something which seems to be an anachronism as the that ruler had perished already in 1220³⁶. Regardless of precise details, Joči wanted to oppose his father because of his own political ambitions. In the end, according to Jūzjānī, these ambitions precipitated not only the end of his career as a nascent ruler, but his life as well [59, p. 137; 24, p. 40, 41]. Abu’l-Ghāzī recorded in his *Shajara-yi Türk* that Joči resented Činggis for allowing Ögödei to rule over him, and so Joči left for the Dāst-i Qipčaq after conquering Khwārazm [1, p. 91; 66, p. 167]. Dafeng Qu and Jianyi Liu believe that there was no quarrel between Joči and his father before the Khwārazm campaign and that his resentment, grief, and eventual disobedience to his father were due to Činggis Khan’s appointment of Ögödei as heir to throne [51, p. 286–288]. If we look deeper at this situation, Ilnur Mirgaleev writes that the reason for the enmity between the princes lay in the family’s psychological drama. Perhaps because of this,

³⁶ By this time, Khwārazm-shāh Muḥammad II was dead. However, it is possible that Jūzjānī was referring to a previous situation as if it happened later.

Činggis himself removed Joči from the campaign to conquer Khwārazm and took the side of Ča'adai and Ögödei [44, p. 75].

Of course, there may have been other reasons we are unaware of regarding the conflict and resentment between Činggis Khan and Joči. Moreover, it is uncertain whether such a conflict even took place. Nevertheless, at the time of the invasion of Khwārazm, we can detect in the sources difficulties and some kind of secret held between father and son [66, p. 171; 5, p. 54]. At first glance, this seems to be due to the failure of Joči's aim to seize power over the Mongol Empire. In any case, the traditional rules of the former Turkic-Mongol political system regarding the status of the eldest son or younger brother³⁷ in the line of succession had changed. According to Činggis's new principle, it was mandated that the "most capable son" would assume the throne, and that was Ögödei [26, p. 193; 66, p. 176, 177].

It is thus apparent that Joči failed to inherit his father's imperial power not because of his dubious origin, but rather because of this new edict and Činggis Khan's personal desire and will³⁸ to make Ögödei the next Great Khan. In my opinion, the main reason why the *Yeke Mongol Ulus* was not bestowed upon Joči is that he maintained his own unique stance outside of the principles and ideology of Činggis Khan. According to available data, in his conquests of lands and people, Joči relied on diplomacy, trying to avoid bloodshed [43, p. 24]. Accustomed to more destructive and cruel ways of waging war, Činggis Khan believed that Joči's "soft character" was unsuitable to the make-up of a military leader [51, p. 285]. In other words, the most suitable candidate for the throne was "a loyal and capable successor to the position" of Činggis Khan – Ögödei – and not the "independent" Joči, "strict" Ča'adai, or the *otčigin* Tolui.

Rashīd al-Dīn reported on how Ögödei, by strictly adhering to the Činggis's rules, settled the argument and disagreements between Joči and Ča'adai. He deployed the demoralized army around Urgench in an orderly way, referring to his father's edicts [57, p. 216; 58, p. 78, 94, 95]. Perhaps when Činggis Khan determined to make Ögödei his heir, he hoped that Ögödei would keep the Mongol Empire united by means of his coolheadedness [58, p. 8; 64, p. 39; 10, p. 179, 180; 6, p. 531, 532]. Although it may have been recorded in the genre of folkloric fancy, it should be taken into account that Lama Lubsan Danzan in his *Altan Tobči* reported that among his sons, Činggis Khan was only pleased with Ögödei who never disobeyed his orders and always followed his advice [41, p. 166]. Yet it is evident from many sources that Joči had a distinguished career before the "Urgench Event" and assumed all the privileges of the ruler's firstborn son in the *altan uruġ*.

The Aftermath of Joči's Rule and his Legacy within the Altan Uruġ Lineage

Following Ögödei's ascent to the throne as Great Khan in 1229, a pan-empire assembly (*quriltai*) was convened some years later during which it was decided to initiate expansive wars on several fronts, one of which was another western cam-

³⁷ We know that Činggis Khan's youngest brother, Temüġe-Otčigin, rebelled over the issues of power and inheritance, and was killed by Güyük Khan, Činggis's grandson [58, p. 116, 119; 27, p. 238; 32, p. 327, 328].

³⁸ In the Mongol Empire, the monarch's personal will played a key role in the handing over the throne [36, p. 352, 353].

paign. This one, focused on the invasion of lands from the Edil and Jayaq³⁹ rivers to Central Europe, was a massive military effort. Those lands which were to be invaded were considered commonly held, i.e., the property of the Mongol Empire, but they must have in fact been included in the *Ulus of Joči*. The initial concept of this operation emerged already during the lifetime of Činggis Khan in the early 1220s and its implementation was delegated to Joči. Thus, since Joči was already dead when the campaign could at last take place, the role of campaign leader was given instead to his son, Batu, in 1235 [8, p. 298; 58, p. 72, 79; 11, p. 45; 43, p. 23, 27]. This campaign began with the participation of the highest generals and political figures of the Empire, such as the veteran Sübe'tei; the son of Činggis Khan born from Khulan-qatun, Kölgen; the son of Ča'adai (alive then), Baidar, and his grandson Büri; the sons of Tolui, Möngke and Büjegy; the sons of Ögödei Khan, Güyük and Qadan; and others [10, p. 269].

I will not delve deeply into the details of the western campaign, except to remark that the campaign did not transpire without conflicts between the princes and to explain the reasons for their occurrence. According to the *SHM* (§275), when the western campaign had achieved the conquest of Meget in the Caucasus, the princes arranged a celebration, during which Batu, being an older brother, was first to offer a toast. Angry at this apparent affront, Güyük and Büri together with an important military leader, Harqasun, began to upbraid Batu, offending his dignity by saying that he looked like a woman. In response, Batu sent a message of complaint to Ögödei Khan [55, p. 194, 195]. Hodong Kim claims that the “fight” described in the *SHM* is not factual, but adds, “Their insolence might have stemmed from the allegedly illegitimate birth of Jöchi, Batu’s father” [32, p. 317]⁴⁰. Peter Jackson states that Güyük and Büri may have offended Batu during the campaign pointing out that his origin was suspicious: “the quarrel was over Batu’s right to command at all and involved the usual aspersions on his father Joči’s legitimacy” [26, p. 199]. As an alternative account that seems related to these events, William of Rubruck wrote that Ča'adai’s grandson, Büri, asked jealously: “Am I not a descendant of Činggis, just like Batu? Why shouldn’t I also receive pasturelands on the Edil?” [50, p. 110].

I am inclined to believe that the source of the conflicts between princes Batu, Güyük, and Büri lay in the methods of warfare employed and the policies of conquest. Otherwise, Ögödei Khan, being well aware of the psychological tensions within the family and taking into account the sensitive topic of Batu’s origins, could have foreseen and prevented conflicts. It is difficult to believe that Ögödei Khan could not have foreseen that the elder sons would be offended and respond arrogantly to the fact that the son of a “Merkit bastard” was leading them and the entire campaign. This would inevitably engender competition among them and preventing a successful campaign. Such tensions had arisen earlier of course. According to the *SHM*, Ögödei was angry about Güyük’s arrogant rejection of Batu’s seniority in the western campaign. While at the council with his sons many years earlier, Činggis Khan closed his eyes when Ča'adai referred to Joči as a “Merkit bastard,” and even ignored false and serious accusations that Börte-üjin had been raped by Čilger Bökö.

³⁹ In Russian, these toponyms are the “Volga and Ural”.

⁴⁰ Hodong Kim asserts that the real reason for Güyük’s accusation against Batu was his incompetence as a commander [32, p. 317, 318].

The grandson of *amīr* Temür, the ruler of *Māwarā' al-nahr* (*Ulus of Ča'adai – O.A.*), *Mīrzā* Muḥammad Tārağay bin Shāhrukh (Uluğbeg), wrote in his 1425 chronicle, *Ta'riḫ-i ulūs-i arba'a-yi Čingīzī*, that Ča'adai and Ögödei concocted a lie about Joči, labelling him a “Merkit bastard” due to their envy of Činggis's great love for Joči. Referring to this “great lie”, Uluğbeg wrote: “No matter how good a son he is, a father's love for his own son and stepson is like day and night. Moreover, in the affairs of the khan, it is unthinkable for any righteous person to prefer a stepchild to his own children”. Elsewhere, this author asserted: “Later, this lie was repeated in the works of Ča'adai's scholars”⁴¹. In the opinion of Uluğbeg, this slander spurred conflict between Joči's sons and those of Ča'adai and Ögödei [68, p. 90, 91]. Of course, we cannot rely fully on these data as facts. From the writings of Uluğbeg, we can see that skepticism about the legitimacy of Joči's birth was a longstanding topic of discussion among the Turkic-Mongol political elite. However, it should not be ruled out that perhaps Uluğbeg intended to indicate that the political and dynastic wars of the sons of Joči, Ča'adai, and Ögödei were based on topics of genealogical significance.

On the other hand, this issue was ignored in the *Altan Tobči* which appeared in the seventeenth century. However, there is a difference: its author, Lama Lubsan Danzan, wrote the *Altan Tobči* with the ideology of uniting the Mongol tribes that had been subordinated by neighboring empires in order to bind them together [41, p. 37–39]. Here, we do not see Ča'adai's words calling Joči a “Merkit bastard” (*merkidei cul ülja' ur-a*) as we do in the *SHM*⁴². To the contrary, Lubsan Danzan provides sermons and advice in his poems, using the words of Činggis Khan to his two eldest sons to make a call for brotherhood as if he were keenly aware of the hatred of Joči's and Ča'adai's descendants for each other [41, p. 229, 230]. Abu'l-Ghāzī, who lived in the seventeenth century, in his work *Shajara-yi Türk* also admonishes Činggis's descendants to not be at each other's throats, but rather “be in agreement with each other; do not fight”⁴³ [1, p. 66]. Unfortunately, both Lama Lubsan Danzan and Abu'l-Ghāzī wrote their works in accordance with the values and political environment of the time, allowing folkloric elements to supercede careful historiography.

Discussion

As can be seen, the “doubts” and “lies” expressed about Joči's origin remain only in the *SHM*. There is no mention of Joči being a “Merkit bastard” in the works of Persian, Arabic, European, Turkic, Chinese authors, including Al-Nasawī (*Sīrat al-sulṭan Jalāl al-Dīn Mankburni*), Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī (*Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab*), 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā' -Malik Juvāynī (*Tar'riḫ-i-Jahān-Gushā*), Minhāj al-Dīn Jūzjānī (*Tabaqāt-i-Nāširī*), Zhao Hong (*Mengda Beilu*), Peng Daya

⁴¹ This information is repeated in Abu'l-Ghāzī's *Shajara-yi Türk* [24, p. 388, 389].

⁴² Christopher Atwood explains why these data were not included: “If the *Altan tobchi* text is not significantly earlier than the *Yuan chao mi shi* text, why then is the succession passage missing? The reason is fairly obvious: the passage deleted in the *Altan tobchi* was one of the most scandalous in the history of the Mongol empire, where Ča'adai calls Jochi a ‘bastard offspring (*chul ulja' ur*) of the Merkid’ and Činggis Qan's companion Kōke Chos acknowledges that she was in fact violated” [4, p. 27].

⁴³ “...bir biriñiz bilān muvafaqat qılñ muḥalefet itmañ tidi” [66, p. 182], (*Muvafaqat* – an Arabic loanword in Persian موافقت meaning “mutual agreement” or “consent.” *Muḥalefet* – also an Arabic loanword into Persian مخالفت meaning “confrontation” or “opposition”).

(*Heida Shilüe*), William of Rubruck (*Itinerarium*), Jamāl al-Qarshī (*Mulhaqāt al-Surāh*), Rashīd al-Dīn (*Jāmi' at-tawārīkh*), Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī (*Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār*), Mu'izz al-ansāb, Ulūgbeg (*Ta'rīkh-i ulūs-i arba'a-yi Chingīzī*), Ötämiš Hāji (*Kārā Tavārīh*), Lubsan Danzan (*Altan Tobči*), Abu'l-Ghāzī (*Shajara-yi Türk*), *Sir-a tuyuji*, and Saḡang Sečen (*Erdeni-yin Tobči*).

Scholars have put forth various opinions and conclusions concerning who the author(s) of the *SHM* was/were and when it was written, including Piotr Kafarov (also known by his monastic name, Palladius) [30, p. 7], Sergei Kozin [35, p. 35], Lev Gumilyov [18, p. 237–260], Harry Jackendoff [25, p. 5–35], Francis Cleaves [12, p. xvii–lxv], Igor de Rachewiltz [55, p. ix], and Christopher Atwood [4, p. 1–44]⁴⁴. The opinions and conclusions of all the authors mentioned here are beyond the scope of the present paper and, recognizing that this is a distinct, specialized historiographical work, I decided to touch only on aspects relevant to Joči and his origins.

The *SHM* was not a uniform document written in a single stage. It has been altered and supplemented through time to strengthen the legitimacy of each successive khan and their specific political views and positions. Christopher Atwood has stated that any portion of the *SHM* may have been supplemented between 1228 and 1260, so it does not correspond with the author's original views [4, p. 2, 3]. Igor de Rachewiltz states that the dynastic council depicted in such an epic manner in the *SHM* was concocted *post factum*; that is, it was interpolated on the initiative of official Mongolian political elites and other high officials to deprive Joči's and Ča'adai's sons' rights to power. However, Igor de Rachewiltz, like other scholars, concludes that Činggis Khan did harbour doubts that Joči was his biological son [53, p. 923, 927].

Regarding this matter, certain questions arise. For instance, why do modern historians and other scholars build their hypotheses and doubts on this issue as though Činggis Khan is recorded to have ever expressed such doubts? Where does the conclusion concerning doubts on behalf of Činggis Khan come from? In what original written sources, epic, folkloric, chronicles or other documents were such doubts ever recorded to have been expressed? According to the chronicles of the Mongol khans, the *Altan Tobči* and *Sir-a tuyuji*, which appeared in the centuries after the events themselves, Joči and his descendants were never separated from the *altan uruğ* in terms of kinship and their bloodline. For example, in the *Sir-a tuyuji*, it is recorded that Hargāčug, one of Tolui's descendants who ruled the Khalkhas in eastern Mongolia in the mid-1400s, said, "The khans of Tūqmāq, the descendants of Joči, are my relatives"⁴⁵ [67, p. 86], acknowledging that the descendants of Joči were his blood relations. In the western part of the post-Mongolian world, the

⁴⁴ An interesting aspect of the genealogy of the Činggizids and Timūrids, called *Mu'izz al-ansāb*, was written in the fifteenth century in *Khurāsān* in Persian. The anonymous compiler of the *Mu'izz al-ansāb* genealogy points out that *Khurmāgū*, the cousin of Činggis Khan's father Yisūgei, was "the author of *Tūpčān*" [23, p. 27]. The Kazakh researcher Zhaksylyk Sabitov, based on the oral assumptions of the Turkologist Napil Bazylkhan, commented to the translator of the *Mu'izz al-ansāb*, Shodmon Vohidov, that *Tūpčān* was meant to be *Tobčiyan* – the abbreviated name of the *Mongqol-un niuča tobča'an* (*Secret History of the Mongols*) [61, p. 60]. Of course, this requires further source analysis. Therefore, at present we do not know for certain whether the *Tūpčān* recorded in the *Mu'izz al-ansāb* is identical to the *Mongqol-un niuča tobča'an*. But, even if it is, we should not forget that the author of the *Secret History of the Mongols* may have in fact been several authors [30, p. 7; 55, p. ix].

⁴⁵ "toymuy-un qad jüci-yin üre mini" [67, p. 165].

Ča'adaid rulers like *Amīr* Temür and his descendants considered it an honor to be considered in-laws of the Jočids, fully recognizing them as one branch of the Činggisid line. I reason that *Amīr* Temür and the Temürids knew the genealogical records of the Mongol khans perfectly well [69, p. 79].

It seems as if from the very beginning of the Borjigin tribe, the harbouring doubts about a member's origin was justification to exclude from all family rituals and traditional events. If we examine the bloodline of the khans recorded in the *SHM* more closely, we can see a precedent similar to "Joči's secret" involved the sons of Činggis Khan's ancestor, Bodončar. According to Chapters §§43, 44 of the *SHM*, we know that Bodončar had a son, Je'üredei, who was the offspring of a concubine. During his father's lifetime, the boy was included in a Mongol ritual called *jügel*⁴⁶ on behalf of the family. However, after Bodončar's death, his relatives cast doubt on Je'üredei's status as their brother and refused to let him take part in family events because they suspected that he might be the son of one Adangqa Uriangqai, a frequent visitor to their home [53, p. 276, 277, 280–283; 55, p. 8].

As already mentioned above, Bodončar himself was once excluded from the family share (*inju, mal*) by his brothers. Of course, here we are not considering whether Bodončar and Je'üredei were indeed the biological sons of their fathers. Since the *altan uruğ* chronicles in the *SHM* are replete with mythological and folkloric accounts, these early events are still largely unknowable. However, the *SHM* is an artifact that coalesced in an atmosphere of beliefs, traditions, and values of nomadic Turko-Mongol society in the middle of the thirteenth century. Therefore, it is noteworthy that in this document, the strict confines of kinship, family purity, family ties, and values were extended back to the time of Alan Qo'a and Bodončar. On this matter, Harry Jackendoff draws parallels between the example of Je'üredei in the *SHM* and "Joči's secret": "Yet this current ostracization of Jewuredei would seem to bear an even more important precedent to the later history, for Činggis's first son Juci is ostensibly kept from the succession to the qanship because his brothers, *to Činggis's face*, suggest that he is of Merkit blood (*SH* 254), fathered by the captor of Borte, Činggis's wife, in the raid immediately following Činggis's marriage (*SH* 101)" [25, p. 26]. İsenbike Togan refers to Harry Jackendoff, who pointed out that the *SHM* was influenced by the negative views of the chronicler. Jackendoff presumed that the author was someone of the Uriyangqai tribe who bore past bitterness towards the Činggisids and was motivated against the descendants of Joči [66, p. 173]. According to Lev Gumilyov, the author(s) of the *SHM* wrote false accounts to legitimate or denounce some of Činggis's descendants [18, p. 239, 242].

Let us turn now to one more related topic. We know from the sources that many of Činggis descendants repeatedly offered Batu the throne of the Great Khan [49, p. 36, 37]. Following the deaths of Ögödei and Ča'adaı, Batu⁴⁷ was recognized as the greatest (*aqqa*) personage in the Činggis lineage and the most honorable individual to rule the empire [58, p. 71; 34, p. 208]. However, the sons of Ča'adaı and Ögödei did not agree or accept conferring on him further status.

Jūzjānī wrote that after the death of Güyük Khan, all the descendants of Činggis, except for Ča'adaı's lineage, concurred to appoint Batu as the Great Khan, but Batu himself did not agree [24, p. 42]. Even if Batu had accepted this offer, his opponents

⁴⁶ "jügel" sacrifice in which meat is hung on a pole and offered to Heaven" – *I. de R.*

⁴⁷ His brother Orda was the eldest of Joči's sons, but relinquished rule while retaining senior status (*aqqa*) to Batu.

were enormously powerful. After the death of Ögödei Khan, his wife-regent, Döregene-qatun, who temporarily assumed his position, and her son, Güyük, became increasingly cold to Batu in the aftermath of the western campaign, leading almost to a state of open warfare [26, p. 200; 11, p. 47; 32, p. 314–320, 329].

Batu, for his part, did not recognize Döregene's regency or Güyük's legitimacy to assume the Great Khan's throne and had reason for such hesitancy. Döregene had cunningly obtained the regency with the help of Ča'adai (and some of the other princes) and had gained the support of high-ranking officials by giving them bribes, gifts, and *paiza*. Thus, she ascended to the regency without the consent of all members of the ruling elite. According to Juvāynī⁴⁸, from the time of Ögödei Khan, Döregene resented some high-ranking officials and hated them outright. After her treacherous seizure of power over the Mongol Empire, she punished everyone, leading to rampant gossip, violence, and other atrocities committed in Qaraqorum [10, p. 240, 241]. The reason that Batu did not recognize Güyük's assumed status was because Ögödei Khan did not appoint Güyük to the throne during his lifetime, but rather considered Shiremün, his grandson from his third son, Köchü, as a worthy heir to the throne⁴⁹. Döregene and Güyük not only disobeyed the edicts of Činggis Khan and Ögödei Khan, but also wreaked havoc throughout the dynasty, and their supporters were able to seize power by force [58, p. 9, 10, 112, 114, 115, 118, 129; 64, p. 42–46; 42, p. 49]. According to Hodong Kim's analysis, Güyük is never mentioned in the edicts of the Yuan emperors, so they did not recognize Güyük as a legitimate khan. Hodong Kim proves that Güyük was nonetheless a capable khan during his short reign [32, p. 311].

Of course, we are well aware that Juvāynī and Rashīd al-Dīn⁵⁰, the official chroniclers of the İlkhānate's Toluid Dynasty, may have exaggerated the negative discussion of Döregene and Güyük in their chronicles written in the middle of the thirteenth and in the early fourteenth centuries because the descendants of Ögödei and of Tolui were fierce rivals for supreme power in the *Yeke Mongol Ulus* from the very beginning; they mutually discredited one another. But the negative role of Döregene among the Mongols is confirmed in the sources by European authors such as John of Plano Carpini, who was present at Güyük's enthronement and met high-ranking officials of the Empire. He even had a face-to-face meeting with Döregene who gave him gifts. Thus, Carpini, while mentioning Činggis Khan's sons and grandsons, focused on Möngke: "One is named Mengu, whose mother is Seroctan⁵¹; this woman is the most highly respected among all the Tatars, except for the Emperor's⁵² mother" [50, p. 39]. Carpini wrote all his observations as a report to the papacy just after his arrival in France in 1247. As a result, it can be stated that he did not come under any administrative influence of any of the com-

⁴⁸ Hülegü's political and administrative influence impacted Juvāynī's writings, but I do not consider that Juvāynī gave false information about Döregene.

⁴⁹ Ögödei Khan, like Činggis Khan, decided the issue of succession to the throne in favour of another son according to his own will, not according to the principles of majorat, which would have made his eldest son, Güyük, the named heir.

⁵⁰ Rashīd al-Dīn, in writing the *Jāmi' at-tawārīkh*, used valuable governmental documents and the archives of Mongol political elites and shared his thoughts with an official envoy, Pulad Ching-sang (*chengxiang* 丞相), "Minister Pulad", sent to the İlkhānate by Qubilai Khan. He also gained information from other "high officials" who witnessed different events [11, p. 231].

⁵¹ Sorğaqtani-bike.

⁵² Güyük Khan.

peting houses of Činggis Khan's sons after the Toluid takeover of power in the 1250s. Therefore, the information in the pro-Toluid sources on Döregene's character cannot be negated.

According to Juvāynī and Rashīd al-Dīn, Batu sent his brothers Orda, Shaiban, Berke, Berkecher, Tangut, and Tuka-Temur to Güyük's khan election *quriltai*, while Orda set Güyük upon the throne with his own hands [10, p. 249, 251, 252; 58, p. 118]. However, the political and dynastic conflicts between Güyük and the descendants of Joči can be seen in the writings of Jamāl al-Qarshī, who lived in the *Ulus of Ča'adai* in the late thirteenth century and was close to its rulers. For example, Jamāl al-Qarshī writes that Güyük's ascension to the throne took place without the consent of Joči's sons [22, p. 119]. We can cautiously conclude that Döregene, Güyük, and Būri had intentions to negate Batu's great impact and role in the *altan uruġ* by spreading rumours about the doubtful origin of his father, Joči.

After the death of Ögödei Khan in 1241, the pan-empire *qurultai*, which had to be held for the election of a new khan, was summoned already within one or two years. However, the *qurultai* did not take place until 1246 owing to the delay in the participation of several of Činggis's descendants, and Batu declined to attend it even when it did happen [58, p. 80, 117; 42, p. 51]. Here, the discussion of a parallel situation again proves relevant. Just as Bodončar's son from his concubine, Je'üredei, who was not included in the sacred family event, the *jügeli*, because the Borjigin considered him extraneous (*jad*), perhaps Döregene and his accomplices referred to Batu as the "son of a Merkit bastard" during the interregnum in an attempt to refute Batu's right to participate in the election. According to Rashīd al-Dīn, during the interregnum and its political stagnation, members of the Mongol elite employed any tools and tactics that could score them political points and shape opinion [58, p. 116].

During the interregnum in Qaraqorum and the subsequent reign of Güyük Khan (1246–1248), Döregene and the sons of Ča'adai and Ögödei, with the help of their supporters, sought to prove that Batu's status as *aqa* of the dynasty and his elevated role in the *altan uruġ* were unfounded. In my opinion, it is possible that not only did they spread rumors about his origin (i.e., "bastard son of a Merkit" – *merkidei cul ülja' ur-a*), but they also, through *bičigčei*, included such slander in the *SHM*⁵³. But Da-Djün Yü expresses a different opinion about this matter. In his opinion, Chapters §254 and §255 of the *SHM*, discussing a gathering called by Činggis Khan in 1219 before his western campaigns which was convened with the participation of princes and which concerned Ögödei's appointment as heir apparent, contain an important clue. These passages which record that if Ögödei's sons could not rule the country, then other sons of Činggis would be khans (as well as a passage in which Ča'adai cast aspersions against Joči in Chapter §254), were rewritten during a *quriltai* held in August 1252 by Möngke's subordinate *bičigčei* with the aim of legitimizing Möngke to assume the Great Khan's throne. They were *not*

⁵³ The intra-family conflict became so intense that with Batu's help, Möngke became *khan* in 1251. The rebellious descendants of Ča'adai and Ögödei and the *noyons* who supported them were severely punished by Möngke and Batu. Būri and Yesū-möngke were sentenced to death by Batu's personal order [58, p. 133–137; 26, p. 186, 205; 73, p. 300]. According to Peter Jackson, Būri's dispute with Batu over pasturelands along the Edil led to this punishment: "Būri had one day (while drunk) asked querulously why he should not move his livestock to the Volga and pasture there as Batu did: the remark subsequently cost him his life" [27, p. 235].

written earlier during the great *quriltai* of 1240, the preceding mouse year, which was held during the time of Ögödei Khan [73, p. 297, 298, 300, 303].

According to Da-Djün Yü, *bičigči* did not dare include in the *SHM* any word about Joči being a “Merkit bastard” because of a shameful scandal that took place during Činggis’s and Ögödei’s lifetimes. Later, after the deaths of Ögödei Khan and Güyük Khan, Möngke’s *bičigči* had the courage to make the internal conflicts public when the offspring of Joči and Tolui and their opposing party, the descendants of Ča’adai and Ögödei, openly slandered one another. Da-Djün Yü sums up his thoughts on these “changes and additions”, saying that the people directly related to the event, namely Činggis Khan, Joči, Ögödei, Tolui, Ča’adai, Bo’orchu, Muqali and others, had all passed away before 1250. Thus, he concludes that none of them had an opportunity to prove the validity of any of the claims in the text and expose fabricated information [73, p. 297, 298]. We can see in the works of Hodong Kim and Christopher Atwood that the sons of Tolui managed to rewrite the chronicles in accordance with their dynastic and political interests to refute the legitimacy of Ögödei’s sons to assume the throne of the Mongol Empire and diminish Joči’s important military and political roles [32, p. 313; 4, p. 52, 53; 5, p. 54, 55]⁵⁴.

The following questions are especially germane: why did Möngke decide to expose to his *bičigči* in the *SHM* the dynastic shame and doubts surrounding Batu’s father, Joči, who supported him and helped him ascend the throne by boldly changing Činggis’s precepts and other texts in §§254–255? Did Möngke, at a time when kinship was strictly preserved, for the sake of truth, sacrifice Batu’s reputation of legitimacy in the system of the *altan uruğ*? If we look for political underpinnings in Yü’s findings, we can see that Tolui’s sons completely destroyed the collective political ambitions of the descendants of Ča’adai and Ögödei in Qaraqorum. If Joči’s posterity had such claims to supreme power, they were now curtailed by genealogical doubts. Evidently, the Toluids wanted to establish a monopoly on the supreme power of the *Yeke Mongol Ulus*. Nonetheless, according to Rashīd al-Dīn, the official chronicler of the Īlkhānate, Batu had no ambition to ascend to the throne as Great Khan. Details regarding why the disputes and confrontations between Joči, on the one hand, and Ča’adai and Ögödei, on the other, arose were either omitted or more likely erased from the text of Rashīd al-Dīn’s history at some point – though when this happened is not clear [58, p. 65].

Evidently, Toluids considered Joči a biological son of Činggis Khan and remained on good terms with his eldest brother’s sons [58, p. 65]. For example, when Batu convened a *quriltai* in the Dāst-i Qipčaq to elect Güyük’s successor, the sons of Ča’adai and Ögödei said, “The homeland (native *yurt*) of Činggis Khan is on Onon and Kerulen, so we do not have to go to Qipčaq”. By this statement they assigned their membership in the *quriltai* to their *noyons* [26, p. 203]. At this time, on the advice of his mother, Sorğaqtani-bike, Möngke traveled to Batu in Dāst-i Qipčaq to receive dynastic support and consent to ascend to the throne [58, p. 80,

⁵⁴ “The *Secret History of the Mongols* and *Jāmi’ al-tawārikh* were written or edited under the Toluid dynasties of the Īlkhānate and the Yuan Empire, while the *Yuan shi* was based on materials compiled over the course of the Yuan period. It would not be surprising if the ideology of the Toluid rulers, who hoped to legitimize their seizure of imperial power from the family of Ögödei, is reflected in these materials” [32, p. 313].

81, 113, 129]. The chronicler, Juvāynī⁵⁵, who served as an administrator for the Ilkhānate Toluid Dynasty wrote that after the death of Güyük Khan, the princes sought Batu's support, and Batu assigned Möngke to the throne [10, p. 263, 266]. According to Peter Jackson, Batu offered the throne to Möngke and was satisfied with managing the large *appanage* given to his father and the lands of *Māwarā 'al-nahr* taken from the sons of Ča'adai⁵⁶. In general, Möngke ruled the east side of *Yeke Mongol Ulus* and Batu held the west. Scholars often note that Batu's prestige was recorded to be greater than Möngke Khan's [26, p. 207; 50, p. 39]. Perhaps this is indirectly confirmed in the *Mu'izz al-ansāb*, whose author points out that "the power in the *Ulus of Joči* (as well as the power over Činggis Khan's grandchildren) after the death of Činggis Khan's sons, belonged completely to Batu Khan" [23, p. 40]. Overall, there seems to be no reason for the sons of Tolui to have fabricated the relevant *SHM* text through their *bičigčei* or, as, Da-Djün Yü noted, to make public the doubts regarding Joči's origin.

Conclusions

According to Paul Buell, the rumors about Joči were probably unfounded among the early Mongols [11, p. 172]. I agree completely and would like to conclude with two additional observations concerning the origin of accusations that Joči may have been a "Merkit bastard":

1. At the time of the interregnum in Qaraqorum (1242–46), when adversarial exchanges within the imperial family were being played out on the political stage, Döregene and her son, Güyük Khan, as well as their allies, the sons of Ča'adai, had solid motives to include the embarrassing tale of Jočid illegitimacy in the *SHM* through *bičigčei*, i.e., Döregene and her supporters attempted to cast doubt into the minds of high officials (*noyon*) about Batu's origin, as a son of Joči, in order to diminish his influence in the *altan urug*, and inhibit his ability to gain supreme power in the Mongol Empire. In addition, due to the fact that the convening of a *quriltai's* purpose to elect Güyük as khan could not occur without Batu's participation, I believe that it was a political tool invented to make Batu's participation irrelevant and eliminate the legitimacy of any role he could play in the *quriltai*. In other words, the anti-Joči "slander" that appears in the *SHM* might have appeared initially in the political and ideological arenas dominated by the houses of Ögödei and Ča'adai which were hostile to Joči – and to Batu especially.

2. After the interregnum of Döregene and during Güyük Khan's reign, when rumours about Joči as a "Merkit bastard" were growing in Qaraqorum in the upper echelons of power and harming the reputations of his sons, Möngke Khan, with the aim of strengthening Batu's reputation in the *altan urug* through his *bičigčei*, ordered additional text inserted into the *SHM*, where, through an 'extrapolation decree' (*jarliq*) of Činggis Khan⁵⁷, an end would be put to those destructive rumours and aspersions. If we take into consideration that Igor de Rachewiltz, who studied the *SHM* for many years, found Chapters §§254, 255 appeared to have been added

⁵⁵ Juvāynī was a contemporary of the events and visited Qaraqorum and Mongolia several times.

⁵⁶ Peter Jackson speculates that Batu was hesitant to ascend to the throne due to doubts about his father's origin: "It has been suggested that Batu hesitated to assume the sovereignty because of the stigma attached to his father's birth" [26, p. 207].

⁵⁷ "ke'en jarliq bolba" [52, p. 151].

after Möngke's ascension to the throne [53, p. 923], then this second assumption might be close to the truth.

But why did the first Toluid ruler of the Mongol Empire fail to delete any damaging material about his close ally, Batu? It could relate to the continued development of the text long after Möngke and Batu's reigns were over and hostility existed between the Jočid and Toluid houses from 1260 onward. Igor de Rachewiltz assumes that most of the changes made to the original *SHM* text took place during the reign of Qubilai Khan (1260–1294). He notes, “*Yüan chao pi-shih* 元朝秘史 (*Secret History of the Yüan Dynasty*), or *Mongqol-un niuča to[b]čä'an* (*Secret History of the Mongols*), is a much altered, expanded, and elaborately edited version of the Mongol text that was first printed shortly after 1400” [55, p. ix, x].

In conclusion, in this article I have tried to provide as much information about Joči as possible, although I have not been able to address all the issues in great depth. A deficiency to this study is that I have not been able to perform an in-depth analysis of Zardykhan Kinayat's two statements about Joči due to limited space; the first is that the Khentei Mountains (*yeke üteg*), where the khans and famous people of the Činggisid dynasty were buried, Joči and his descendants were not included, because Joči was considered extraneous (*jad*). The second is that no descendants of Joči were chosen to be a Great Khan [33, p. 50].

I have already discussed the second question indirectly and I believe that the validity of the first could only be confirmed from complex, large-scale archaeological research. However, according to Christopher Atwood, the sons of Činggis, who were apportioned separate territories. Especially the rulers of the Īlkhānate and the Golden Horde built their own “great *qoruqs*” and were buried in areas they settled and ruled [3, p. 189]. One such place is the *qoruq* of *Joči Khan* near Mount Ulytau, located in the middle of the Kazakh steppe. A Kazakh archaeologist who has studied these burial grounds, Zhuman Eginbayuly, states that Ulytau, where Joči was buried, was a khan's *qoruq*, just like Burqan-Qaldun in Mongolia⁵⁸, where Činggis Khan was allegedly buried [14, p. 90–106]. This conclusion is indirectly confirmed by Rashīd al-Dīn who recorded that Činggis Khan and his descendants, Tolui, Möngke, and Qubilai were buried in the Great Khan's *qoruq* at Burqan-Qaldun, but the tombs of Činggis Khan's other sons were located elsewhere [56, p. 125]⁵⁹.

The writings of John of Plano Carpini, who visited the *Ulus of Joči* and Mongolia during the time of Batu and Güyük, also contain information about the mortuary customs of medieval Mongols. Commenting on Mongol burial traditions, Carpini wrote that wherever the Mongol khans, *noyons*, and high officials died, their bodies would be buried in a specially guarded cemetery if it was convenient to transport them [50, p. 29]. In that context, it may have seemed impossible to transport the bodies of all the members of the *altan uruğ* scattered across the vast Mongol Empire to Burqan-Qaldun in the Far East for burial. Thus, it appears that only the master of the native Tolui *yurt* and his descendants were buried at Burqan-Qaldun.

⁵⁸ In his chronicles, Rashīd al-Dīn mentions the burial place of Činggis Khan as Burqan-Qaldun, while the later Mongol chronicle, *Sir-a tuquji* states that it is located south of the Khentei Mountains [67, p. 246]. However, due to the ancient Mongol custom of keeping the burial areas of rulers strictly secret, the exact location of his tomb is still unknown.

⁵⁹ According to the chronicles of Rashīd al-Dīn, the buried place of Ögödei Khan lies somewhere in the Altai region, and Güyük Khan's in his *ordo* along the Emil River [58, p. 43, 121].

The questions surrounding Joči and his origins in general are not limited to the analyses and conclusions presented here. Additional multi-disciplinary research is essential, including the latest revealed historical sources supplemented by archaeological, genomic (aDNA), and oral data that must be synthesized in order to more fully understand the circumstances of Joči's birth, early life, military-political career, role in the *altan uruġ* clan, death, and ultimately the place of his burial. Only then will we perhaps know with a degree of confidence how closely Joči was biologically related to his *altan uruġ*.

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About the author: Otkirbay Agatay – Ph.D. Candidate of the Department of Archaeology and Ethnology, L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (2, Satpayev Str., Nur-Sultan 010010, Kazakhstan); ORCID: 0000-0002-8840-010X. E-mail: agatayotkirbay@gmail.com

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АНАЛИЗ СОМНИТЕЛЬНОГО ПРОИСХОЖДЕНИЯ ДЖУЧИ И ЕГО РОЛЬ В ДИНАСТИИ АЛТАН УРУГ ЧИНГИЗ-ХАНА

У. Агатай

*Евразийский национальный университет им. Л.Н. Гумилева
Нур-Султан, Казахстан
agatayotkirbay@gmail.com*

Цель исследования: отвечая на вопрос касательно сомнительного происхождения Джучи, рассматриваются его военно-политическая роль и место во внутрдинастийных отношениях в Монгольской империи. Особое внимание уделяется наличию сомнения в письменном источнике «Сокровенное сказание монголов» в отношении того, что он был родным сыном Чингиз-хана, и несоответствию этого сомнения содержанию других письменных источников, фактам и событиям. Косвенно также анализируется место Джучи в семейной традиционной правовой системе средневековых монголов, основанной на принципе мажората. В частности, рассматриваются его легитимность в политической системе династии Чингизидов (*алтан уруг*),

военно-политическая карьера, его роль в западных кампаниях в процессе разделения на отдельные улусы, его решающая роль в завоевании Хорезма.

Материалы исследования: в статье использованы такие переведенные и транслитерированные на русский, английский, тюркские языки первоисточники, как «Сокровенное сказание монголов», и труды авторов, живших между XIII–XVII вв.: ан-Насави, Шихаб ад-дин ан-Нувейри, Ала ад-дин Ата-Малик Джувеини, Минхаж ад-дин Джузджани, Чжао Хун, Пен Дая, Иоанн де Плано Карпини, Гийом де Рубрук, Джамал ал-Карши, Рашид ад-дин, Ибн Фазлаллах аль-Умари, Улугбек, Утемиш-хаджи, Лубсан Данзан, Абульгази, Санан Сэцэн, а также классические и новые труды и статьи современных казахских, русских, татарских, американских, французских, китайских, корейских и др. историков и специалистов, касающиеся Джучи.

Результаты и новизна исследования: если системно анализировать традицию средневековых тюрко-монголов, экономические, правовые аспекты, а также военно-политические процессы в Монгольской империи, предположение в отношении того, что Джучи, возможно, был «сыном меркитского плена», определенно не соответствует действительности. Мы видим, что сомнения относительно происхождения Джучи в «Сокровенном сказании монголов» оказали заметное влияние на другие источники и на труды современных исследователей. По мнению некоторых исследователей, Мункекаган имел косвенное отношение к фиксации этого «сомнения» в вышеуказанном источнике. По нашему мнению, этому способствовали, главным образом, повышенный военно-политический статус и авторитет Бату в Монгольской империи. После смерти Угедей-кагана можно увидеть попытки игнорирования важной роли Бату в *алтан уруге* со стороны сыновей и внуков Угедея и Чагатая, например, посредством внедрения сомнений относительно его генеалогического происхождения. Вследствие этого в данной статье предполагается, что слухи и предположения в отношении того, что Джучи являлся чужим в династии Чингизидов, появились после смерти самого Джучи в результате внутрдинастийной информационной войны между домами Джучи и Толуя, с одной стороны, и противостоящими им домами Чагатая и Угедея, с другой; что было вызвано борьбой за верховную власть в Монгольской империи, а также – вопросом о разделении завоеванных земель и имущества.

Ключевые слова: Джучи, *алтан уруг*, Чингиз-хан, Монгольская империя, внутрдинастийная борьба

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Сведения об авторе: Уткирбай Агатай – докторант кафедры археологии и этнологии Евразийского национального университета им. Л.Н. Гумилева (010010, ул. Сатпаева 2, Нур-Султан, Казахстан); ORCID: 0000-0002-8840-010X. E-mail: agatayotkirbay@gmail.com